Chapter - 5

Consciousness of Death in the Short Stories of Ajneya
Ajneya was also a successful story-writer besides being a revolutionary, pioneering and successful novelist. The notes of his stories are similar to his poetries and novels --- new experiment, expression of the intricacies of mind and individual consciousness. In addition to this, different characteristics of death and ‘consciousness of death’ like terror, strangeness, moment, alienation etc are observed in most of his stories.

Ajneya wrote a total of 67 stories during his life-time. His first story ‘Jigyasa’ (जिज्ञासा) was written in the year 1929 and ‘Hajamat kaa Saabun’ (हजामत का साबून) written in 1959 was, perhaps, his last story. His stories were written under different circumstances during a span of nearly 30 years. Ajneya had a wandering spirit. While he spent a few year in the north-east of India, a few months were spent in jail also. Not only this, he spent some time remaining underground as a revolutionary and some time as a litterateur in Europe, Australia, Japan etc. This is the reason why variety has been observed in the themes of his stories. Therefore, it appears justified that the stories of Ajneya be classified appropriately in order to study them properly.

5.1 Classification of Ajneya’s Stories (अजन्य की कहानियों का विभाजन):

Classification of Ajneya’s stories prior to their criticism is desirable because every story written by him is not based on ‘deliberation on death’ or
‘consciousness of death’. Only those of his stories will be particularly critically examined in this thesis as are based either on ‘deliberation on death’ or on ‘consciousness of death’. Dr Shree Krishna Lal has divided his stories in the following forms — (1) Historical, (2) Autobiographical, (3) Dramatic, (4) Letter-form, (5) Symbolic and (6) Mixed. Om Prabhakar added two more divisions to those of Dr Lal — ‘यात्रा शैली एवं डायरी शैली’ [Travelogue technique and Diary Technique.] Dr Chandrakanta M Bandivadekar successfully attempted classification of Ajneya’s stories on the basis of themes and the background environment. He has classified Ajneya’s stories into the following forms — ‘क्रांतिकारी जीवन की कहानियाँ, चंद्र जीवन की कहानियाँ, सैनिक जीवन से संबंधित कहानियाँ, भारत विभाजन की तारीही और मानवीय मूल्य (से संबंधित कहानियाँ), मनोवैज्ञानिक यथार्थ (से संबंधित कहानियाँ), उद्देश्य प्रेरणा की कहानियाँ, रोजमर्रा के जीवन की कहानियाँ काम्यात्मक कहानियाँ, आदिम जीवन के प्रति जिज्ञासा की कहानियाँ, आत्म कथात्मक कहानियाँ, सार्थक अनुभूति की कहानियाँ, तथा व्यंग्यात्मक कहानियाँ.’ [Stories of the revolutionary life, tragedy of India’s partition and human values, (stories related to) psychological reality, stories of higher inspiration, stories related to everyday life, poetrical stories, stories of curiosity towards primitive life, autobiographical stories, stories of meaningful experience, and satirical stories.] Ajneya has himself divided his stories in four lots — stories of the first lot, stories of the second lot, stories of the third lot, and stories of the fourth lot. This classification is given in the introduction to the compilation ‘Ajneya ki Sampoorna Kahaniyaan’ (अजने की सम्पूर्ण कहानियाँ). However, Bandivadekar’s classification can be considered wide and meaningful. According to him, 23 of the 67 stories of Ajneya can be considered to be of a high standard. If 23 stories out of a total of 67 stories i.e., 33 percent of the total stories get success,
then this only implies an important achievement. Out of those 67 stories, the number of stories that are influenced by ‘consciousness of death’ are also not less. ‘Consciousness of death’ or ‘deliberation on death’ is also present in the form of a prominent instinct in the stories of Ajneya. Practically all characteristics of ‘consciousness of death’ can be seen in those stories. It will surely be proper to select relevant stories before discussing ‘consciousness of death’ reflected in the stories of Ajneya. But, that does not mean that ‘consciousness of death’ is totally absent from other stories.

Ajneya’s stories that are particularly affected by ‘consciousness of death’ are nearly 23 in number. Their titles are as follows --- Hariti (हारिति), Akalanka (अकलंक), Drohi (द्रोही), Vipathagaa (विपथगा), Chhaya (छाया), Angoraa ke path par (अंगोरा के पथ पर), Gangrene (गंग्रीन), Grihataaga (गृहतागा), Pagoda Vriksha (पगोडा वृक्ष), Manso (मानसो), Abhishaapit (अभिशापित), Badalaa (बदला), Jayadol (जयडोल), Neeli Hansee (नीली हैंसी), Heeli-bone ki Battakhein (हीली-बोन की बटाखें), Major Chaudhuri ki Vaapasi (मेजर चौधरी की वापसी), Nagaparvat ki ek Ghatna (नागपर्वत की एक गहना), Devisingh (देवसिंह), Naarangiyana (नारंगियाँ), Khitin Babu (खितिन बाबू) Dukh aur Titliyaan (दुख और तिलीयाँ). As in the novels and other writings of Ajneya, death has come out as a main subject in the stories also. In the following paragraphs, the stories of Ajneya are being critically examined and evaluated on the basis of main characteristics of ‘consciousness of death’. These characteristics are --- (1) Terror (संत्रास), (2) Loneliness (अकेलापन), (3) Irrelevance (विसंगति), (4) Deliberation on Death (मृत्यु-विचित्रानि), (5) Self-remorse (आत्मस्पर्द), (6) Momentaryism (क्षणवाद), (6) Unfamiliarity (अजनबीपति) and (7) Individualistic-Freedom (व्यक्ति-स्वतंत्रत्व).
5.2 **Terror (संत्रास)**:

When everything appears to be a void to man, the state can be termed ‘Santras’ or ‘terror’. Under such a situation, man’s inner self tries to save himself from, and find a solution to, this feeling of vacuum. This tendency is normally not found in other beings. This feeling of terror is what works behind the man’s intelligence and courage. While referring to the various forms and advantages of ‘Santras’ or ‘terror’, Veenu Bhalla writes — "‘संत्रास के विविध रूप हैं—दुःख, उदासी और निराशा। अधिकतर व्यक्तित्व के लिए संत्रास का होना अनिवार्य है। संत्रास पर विजय प्राप्त करने के लिए मनुष्य चेतनापूर्ण निर्णय करता है और उन निर्णयों द्वारा अपने अस्तित्व संकट का युकाला करता है।’" [‘Santras’ or ‘terror’ has got various forms — boredom, dejection, and despair. Existence of terror is essential for an authoritative personality. Man takes conscious decisions in order to achieve victory over terror and faces his crisis of existence with those decisions.] There appears to be a difference between ‘terror’ and ‘fear’. ‘Fear’ is an external reaction of man which can be understood and attempt for its removal can be made. But, as against this, ‘terror’ is an internal state which is unclear and impossible to understand. Terror is necessary in order to maintain concern for existence.

It is also necessary to think as to what is the meaning of ‘terror’ in Europe and how is its characterised in India. It is true that, from the point of view of civilisation and culture, there is a wide difference between Europe and India. Clarifying the distinction between Western and Indian concepts, Vinoo Bhalla has written — "पश्चिम का अमानवीकरण और भर्तूंकर अस्तित्व संकट वहाँ की विशिष्ट परिस्थितियों के कारण है। भारत के विध्वंस और विकृति ने मानवीय अस्तित्व के लिए ऐसी विकट स्थिति उत्पन्न नहीं की। यहाँ अस्तित्व के संकट का बोध परिस्थितिगत कम वैज्ञानिक अधिक है। ........ पश्चिमी देशों में संत्रास की एक लंबी परंपरा रही है और इसके पीछे एक पूरी
The inhumanity and grave crisis of existence of the west is because of peculiar conditions prevailing there. The destruction and distortion of India has not given rise to such a critical situation. Here, the realisation of the existential crisis is more intellectual and circumstantial. There has been a long tradition of terror in western countries and behind this there had been a full-fledged stream of thought whereas in our country the situation is not at all similar.

Peculiar circumstances of the west, terrible destruction in first world war, materialism and naturalism have been the main reason for the birth of existentialism. Loneliness, strangeness and crisis of existence are the result of these factors. If Keerkaygārd established religious existentialism there, then Jean Paul Sartre established artistic existentialism. This existentialism or terror had affected nearly all classes equally in the west, but India’s situation can be called different. Indian terror is different from the western one.

Here (in India) the human beings are terrified, but from their daily shortages, from sufferings, from a dark future, their own quarrels --- this alone is the role of terror.

Terror of our country is definitely different from that of the west. Terror exists with respect to clutches of politics, quarrels between native kings, then English rule, communalistic poisonous environment, post independent political corruption, intensifying economic crisis, disintegration of middle class etc. But, one thing that is true is that the crisis of existence is felt only by the educated class, the uneducated and uncivilised people have been subsisting traditionally, becoming victims of exploitation.

Ajneya is one of the successful writers of Hindi. The characteristics of
‘consciousness of death’ are found in many of his stories. The influence of Indian and Western viewpoints and environment are visible in his stories. Nomadic nature and travels to Europe and East Asian countries has imparted variety to his stories. Ajneya has been extremely efficient in writing stories based on his assimilation of European environment. He had observed, from close quarters, the terror, desperation and complexity of life existing there. There is no dearth of such story-writers in Hindi who adopt foreign influence in their writing in order to impress the readers but try utmost to hide the same. In the words of Ajneya: "हिन्दी का लेखक अपनी भंगिमाओं और 'तेवरों' से हिन्दी पाठक को प्रभावित करने के अपने अभियान में उन विदेशी साहित्य-स्रोतों को छिपाता रहता है जिनसे वह प्रेरणा पाता रहा है।" [Hindi’s writer keeps on hiding the foreign literary sources from whom he has been deriving inspiration in his campaign to impress the Hindi readers through his postures and stances.] Ajneya is probably that story-writer who had properly understood the European society, literature, realisation of era and sensitivity. As such, European peoples’ terror, pessimism, strangeness and frustrations have emerged naturally in his writings written in the foreign background.

5.2.1 Different Forms of Terror in Ajneya’s Stories (अज़ेय की कहानियों में संग्राम के विभिन्न रूप):

Various forms of terror become visible in the stories of Ajneya. Their critical analysis is being given below:

5.2.1.1 Boredom (ऊब):

The mental state that takes form on remaining in the same situation for some time is called ‘boredom’. In such a situation the feeling of ‘uneasiness’ arises. If the situation remains unchanged and becomes traditional, then man try to free himself from the same. That is the reason of boredom. This is the
characteristic of boredom. Picturisation of boredom is found in many stories of Ajneya. ‘Gangrene’, ‘Grihtyaga’, ‘Manso’, ‘Dukh aur Titliyaan’ etc are such stories in which a man finds the picturisation of the feeling of uneasiness.

Let us first take ‘Gangrene’ for consideration. At the centre-point of the story is the marital life of the doctor of the dispensary of a hilly village, Maheshwar and his wife Malti. Working in the hospital from morning seven o’clock to afternoon half past one, then taking lunch at home and going again to visit patients is the daily routine of Maheshwar. Malti live alone in the house along with their only child, no other business, no means of entertainment. Life starts moving in a specified way and this makes the life boring. Look at Maheshwar’s daily routine from the angle of the writer —

"...Prat: kala saat baane, dispensary chale jaate hain aur 7 ya 8 do baane lundte hain, uske baad doophar— bhar chhutti rahtey hain, keval shram ko ek do puchte fira chakkar lagane ke liye jaate hain, dispensary ke saath ke chhote-se aasman mein padhe hue rogiyain ko dekhein aur anay jhurri hidadain karein...... Unka jeevan bhi bilkul ek nirnitya dhare par chalata hai, nitya wahi kam ushi prakar ke mahina, wahi hidadain, wahi nukhe, wahi dawaiya. Vah swaray uktaaye hue hain aur isliye aur saath hi his bharyak garmi ke kaaran vah apne furusan ke samay mein bhi suast hi rahtey hain......" [Goes to the dispensary in the morning at seven o’clock and returns at half past one or two in the afternoon, after that the whole afternoon is recess, only goes again in the evening for an hour or two on a round for seeing patients lying in the small hospital alongside the dispensary and for giving other necessary instructions ... His life moves in a totally specified way, same work daily, similar patients, similar instructions, same prescriptions, same medicines. He is himself bored and, therefore, and also because of this terrific heat, he remains lethargic even in his free time ...] This monotony of life ends even the zeal of Malti’s mind. She continues to do her work mechanically, without any enthusiasm, as if Malti and Maheshwar
are both terrified of their lives. The situation has reached such a stage that the writer is unable to see any significant effect on Malti when her child begins crying. Consequently, the child has also become irritable. A person finds his life to be a burden in such a situation, he begins feeling as if it is impossible to pass time. Environment of the courtyard of Malti’s house also appeared unattractive to the writer —

“While stepping into that desolate courtyard, I felt as if the shadow of a curse loomed large over it, spreading there was something unspeakable, untouchable but even then heavy, vibrant and dense....] This changelessness and asymmetrical life fills the human mind with dejection and despondency. This ‘boredom’ can also be seen in some other stories of Ajneya — Several characters like Mahesh of ‘Manso’, the old man of ‘Grihtyaga’ (who lives in a dirty lane of Madras city) become a victim of ‘boredom’. The old man portrayed in ‘Grihtyaga’ was also very lonely because of which he used to get bored —

“The old man was alone in the room — very lonely. So much lonely that he was not even aware of his presence there — words appeared to be coming out of his mouth effortlessly and uncontrollably and it appeared that he himself was not listening them .... not even understanding them ....]"

5.2.1.2 Dejection (उदासी):

The dictionary meaning of the word ‘Udaasi’ is — a detached person, a recluse etc. Unfavourable circumstances and failures make a man dejected.
This dejection towards life and the world is the equivalent of ‘consciousness of death’. This is also a form of terror. A man demands something from his life and the world. When this demand is not fulfilled, the men become sad. For this very reason, the life of Malti of ‘Gangrene’ also turns into dejection. The dejection of Shekhar, a character of another story ‘Dukh Aud Titliyaan’ can particularly be observed. Shekhar who keeps busy in getting treatment for her mother who is on the verge of death, brings the doctor. His mother had ‘collapsed’ because of ‘heart attack’. Shekhar had the power of accepting death in a natural way. This death was also devoid of any effect on him. In such a situation, death also remains a feeling born out of individual sensibility.

There is a kind of sadness towards death also in the mind of Shekhar — "क्या यह व्यक्ति-संवेदना से उत्पन्न एक भावना-मात्र है ? उसके दुःख-जनित मोह को परछाई। किंतु वह तो इस घटना को बिलकुल असम्पूर्णता दृष्टि से देख रहा है, उसे तो यह जान ही नहीं पड़ता कि वह किसी प्रकार की पीड़ा का अनुभव कर रहा है। वह तो मानो सम्पूर्णता असंलग्न, निरोह होकर इसकी आलोचना कर रहा है।" [Is this only a feeling born out of individual sensibility? The shadow of his affection born out of grief. But, he is only observing this incident with a completely unattached view, he does not come to know whether he is experiencing any kind of pain. As if, he is criticising this innocently in a totally unattached manner.] The feeling that is working behind this sadness is ‘consciousness of death’.

Another reason for dejection may be the want of novelty in the work. A person gets bored on doing the same work repeatedly or everyday and this gives birth to dejection. Probably, for this reason, the government and non-government employees are given the facility of leave travel after an year or two in order to remove their mental lassitude or dejection. This travel works like a tonic for the removal of this lassitude or dejection. How dejected a man
becomes by keeping himself engaged in the same work is exemplified in the story entitled ‘Chhayaa’. It is not anything big to repeatedly see hangings (to death) for a person who is working as a jail warden, but seeing that time and again he no more gets frightened and only becomes gloomy in a way. Look at his own words --- ‘मैंने बहुत फौसियों देखी हैं—उन्हें देखने का आदि—सा हो गया हूँ। जब मेरी बड़ूटी फाँसी पर लगती है, तब मुझे घबराहट नहीं होती, मेरा जी नहीं मिलता। अपना काम पूरा करता हूँ और खुशी—खुशी चला आता हूँ, दूसरी बार मुझे उसका ख्याल भी नहीं होता। जैसा कहानियों में होता है, चलते—चलते ठठक जाते, खाना—खाते चौंककर देखने लगते कि हाथों में खून तो नहीं लगा है, सोते—सोते स्वजन में चिल्ला उठते, यह सब मुझे न होता है न कभी हुआ है!’” [I have seen many hangings (to death) --- I have become habitual of seeing them. I do not get nervous when my duty is set for hanging, I do not get nauseated. I finish my work and return back happily, I do not even think of it the second time. All that which happens in stories like wavering while walking, getting startled while eating and looking to confirm whether blood has not stuck to my hands, shouting in dream while sleeping does not happen with me and has never happened.]

5.2.1.3 Despair (निराशा) :

Dictionary meaning of the word ‘Niraasha’ is --- lack of hope, hopelessness etc. It is said that man lives by keeping hopes. But, when man’s hope is lost because of social, economic or physical reasons, then that negative situation is called ‘niraasha’ or ‘despair’. The desperate man experiences a void all around. This is ‘terror’ only. Desperation born out of social, economic and physical reasons have been presented in a detailed manner at some places in the stories of Ajneya. Despair born out of circumstances are portrayed in some of the characters of stories like ‘Gangrene’, ‘Drohi’, ‘Abhishaapit’, ‘Major Chaudhuri ki Vaapasi’, ‘Hili-Bone ki Battakhein’ etc. If despair born out of
static circumstances is found in ‘Gangrene’, then it is enthusiasm towards revolt or absence of such enthusiasm that is the reason for desperation found in ‘Drohi’ and ‘Abhishaapit’. Similarly, despair born out of physical reasons is found portrayed in ‘Major Chaudhuri ki Vaapasi’ where the desperation comes out of physical incapacity which a man normally hesitates to express. This story has particularly been cited by Ajneya --- ‘दूसरी ओर ‘मेजर चौधरी की वापसी’ जैसी कहानी का भी उदाहरण दे सकता हूँ : इसे वैसा ‘अतिरिक्त रोमांच’ नहीं कहा गया पर एक प्रश्न उसे लेकर भी पूछना चाहता हूँ। यौन संयोग के संदर्भ में नामदी की कहानियाँ मिल जाती हैं। वैसी स्थिति में पुरुष की यंत्रणा और ‘संत्रास’ का चित्र भी मिल जाता है। (यह तो आज का सामाजिक यथार्थ है।) पर युद्ध में आहत होकर सत्तानेत्रत्व के लिए असमर्थ हो गए युवा पति की मनोव्यथा का चित्र कहा है ? (और मनोव्यथा केवल ‘अपना’ दर्द नहीं होती, अपने कारण दूसरे को मिलनेवाले दर्द की पहचान भी होती है, प्रेमी की संबंधन का यह विस्तार भी एक मूल्य है।) १० [On the other hand, I can give example of a story like ‘Major Chaudhuri ki Vaapasi’ : this has not been termed that ‘extra romatical’ but I want to ask a question in that respect also. Stories of impotence in context of sexual union will be found --- the expression of man’s torture and ‘terror’ will also be found (after all, this is today’s social reality) but, where is the picture of that young husband’s mental agony who has been incapacitated from giving birth to a child on being injured in war? And, mental agony is not only one’s own pain, but also the identification of agony experienced by another person because of one’s own cause, this expansion of the lover’s sentiment is also a value.] Although Major Chaudhuri, the character of this story, gets ready to go home on vacation, he is completely desperation because of his incapacity for coition. In the same way, Malti of ‘Gangrene’ is also so despondent that she does not experience any significant enthusiasm on find her brother, in distant relation, present at her home.
5.3 Loneliness (अकेलापन):

Loneliness is the one amongst the principal reasons of ‘consciousness of death’. Man is a social animal. He can fulfil his physical and mental requirements only by living within the folds of society. For this reason, man is unable to live without society. He finds himself lonely and insecure on his work not being achieved in accordance with his desire. Such an experience can be readily found particularly in today’s youth section of society. This problem of loneliness is today spread throught the world. Probably, the greatest disease in contemporary times is loneliness and not cancer or AIDS.

Loneliness expressed by the intelligentia is the loneliness experienced while living within the society. Contemporary litterateurs and the intelligentia experience loneliness on the level of consciousness while living within the society. In fact, a part of every man remains ever lonely. Ajneya also accepts this. At one place, he has also written "मानव सभी एकाकी हैं, यद्यपि सदैव, सभी कालों में नहीं। किंतु काल पूर्वांपर होने के साथ-साथ समयी भी है : जो कभी भी था, या कभी भी होगा, वह इस समय भी है। अतएव प्रत्येक मानव का एक अंश सर्वदा एकाकी होता है।" [All humans are lovely, though not always and not at all times. But time is concurrent also besides being sequential (preceeding and succeeding): that was sometime, or that will be sometime, is also at this time. Therefore, one part of the man is always lonely.] Not only this, Ajneya has attached special importance to this loneliness because the lonely person only is usually the most active mentally - "यह एकाकी अंश ही प्रेम का अनुभव कर सकता है, शोष मानव तो केवल कामना करना जानता है और इसीलिए त्याग भी यह एकाकी ही कर सकता है, शोष मानव नहीं।" [It is this lonely part that can experience love, the other man simply knows breeding desires and, therefore, this lonely one can only do sacrifice, not the other man.] This kind of loneliness is admirable for the society. Ajneya likes to impart this
feeling of loneliness to the society ---

‘यद दीप अकेला स्तेनेहररा
है गर्भरा मदमाता, पर
इसको भी पंक्तित को दे दो।’ (‘यह दीप अकेला’ शीर्षक कविता)

‘This lonely lamp full of love
is full of pride, and arrogant, but
give this also to the row.’ (Poem entitled ‘Yah Deep Akailaa’)

Loneliness has come out as the basic inspirational power in most of Ajneya’s stories. The beliefs of the main characters of those stories relating to life and the world are born out of loneliness. ‘Pagoda Vriksha’, ‘Manso’, ‘Devisingh’, ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’, ‘Gangrene’, ‘Grihtyaga’ etc are such stories whose principal characters generally lead a lonely life, bear the circumstances born therefrom and express their reaction thereto. Here, it is worth mentioning that there are two kinds of persons who experience loneliness --- one are those who readily become introvert on experiencing loneliness, other are those who want to find solution of the situation of loneliness by fighting it. Both kinds of persons confront, in one way, the fear of death. Both type of persons are found in the stories of Ajneya --- introvert as well as extrovert (in one way). The introvert persons become strangers to themselves while passing through the phases of life. Dr Namvar Singh, while criticising such characters, writes --- “अकेला लेखक दियासलाई कि उस सलाई की तरह है जो टकराकर धोड़ा देर तो जलती है, लेकिन आधार के अभाव में बुझ जाती है।” [The lonely writer is like the stick of that match-box which burns out of friction for sometime, but extinguishes in the absence of base material.] But, writers of the type of Ajneya and their characters want to remain attached to the
community even in their loneliness so that a meaning is derived for the lonely life. The writers believe that loneliness is an indispensable part of thought and self-analysis. The widow named Sukhada of ‘Pagoda Vriksha’, Mahesh of ‘Manso’, Devisingh of ‘Devisingh, Heeli of ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’, Malti of ‘Gangrene’ and the old Gangadhar of ‘Grihtyag’ are such characters picturised in the stories of Ajneya as are the victims of loneliness. Diversity is found visible in the characters of these persons. Everyone’s thinking, thoughts and philosophies are different from each other. If some characters begin taking life as meaningless on getting a lonely life, then some characters undertaking meaningful activities by remaining attached to the society in order to make their lonely lives meaningful. Devisingh, Sukhada and Gangadhar are such characters who do lead a lonely life, but ultimately do something that imparts meaningfulness to their lives. One the other hand, Malti and Heeli readily become introvert on getting a lonely life. Devisingh, the main character of the story ‘Devisingh’ is particularly mentionable when it comes to the characters who breed unbreakable faith and interest towards life. Devisingh was alone, very poor, limping because of Polio, but he had strong shoulders. He did not lose courage inspite of poverty and physical handicap. Let us see the words of the writer himself --- “देवीसिंह के माता-पिता नहीं थे, कम-से-कम उसके सम्पर्क में नहीं थे, किसी चाचा ने उसे पाला था और फिर शहर के मौसम में डाल दिया था कि ‘हो सके तो कोई हरियाली ढांचा बुझूँ ले!’ किंतु देवीसिंह को जीवन में रुचि थी- अपार रुचि थी- वह हारा हुआ भिखारी नहीं बन सका था.....”” [Devisingh’s parents were not present, atleast not in contact with him, some paternal uncle had brought him up and then put him in the desert called city in the hope that ‘maybe he finds a green shelter for himself!’ But, Devisingh had interest in life, great interest --- he could not become a defeated beggar.....] And, the action he took to avoid becoming ‘a
defeated beggar’ is but only the ‘consciousness of death’. Not only this, he got himself treated in order to remain healthy and push away death as far as possible.

In this connection the old Gangadhar of ‘Grihtyaga’ can also be cited. Gangadhar’s character is definitely different from that of Devisingh, but his outlook towards life is not negative in any way. Where Devisingh wants to push death further away from him by getting himself treated, Gangadhar leaves himself on fate. Now, only old memory remains. Gangadhar’s loneliness has been expressed by the writer in the following way — "कमरे में बृद्ध अकेला ही था—बहुत अकेला। इतना अधिक अकेला कि उसे अपने बच्चे होने का भी ज्ञान नहीं था — उसके मुख से शब्द बिना आयास के या निर्यात्रान के निकलते जान पड़ते थे और ऐसा प्रतीत होता था कि वह स्वयं उन्हें सुन नहीं रहा — न समझ ही रहा है ..... ‘"[The old man was alone in the room — very lonely. So much lonely that he was not even aware of his presence there — words appeared to be coming out of his mouth effortlessly and uncontrollably and it appeared that he himself was not listening them .... not even understanding them ....] The lonely Gangadhar used to make toys to earn his living. But, his hand-made toys were incapable of competing with modern toys. He does clarify his views before the small girl Kanak, and also says how he has been trying to live on his own without caring for the society. ‘मैं फिर यही निश्चय किया कि किसी से कुछ आशा नहीं करना, अपने कार्य के अतिरिक्त किसी से कोई सम्पर्क नहीं रखना। इसीलिए मैं पागलों की तरह अपने आपको अपने काम में खो देने का प्रयत्न करने लगा। मैं रोज यह प्रार्थना किया करता कि मुझे में इतनी शक्ति, इतनी दृढ़ता हो कि मैं समाज की, मैत्री की, स्थिति के कभी और आवश्यकता का कभी अनुभव न करूँ, प्रत्युत उसकी उपेक्षा करता हुआ, उसकी इर्दगिर्द का पात्र होकर जिंदे।’"

[I, then, decided that I will not keep any hope on anyone, I will not keep any contact without anyone unconnected with my work. Therefore, I started making efforts to forget myself in my work]
like mad men. I used to pray every one that there ought to be so much power, so much determination in me that I do not feel the shortage and necessity of society, friendship, deficiency of love I live neglecting society and becoming an object of envy for it.] How different is this thought of Gangadhar from that of a common man. Is the mind of a person living a lonely life different from that of others? Without searching for another example, the example of Ajneya who was habituated of leading a lonely life can be taken up --- "एकान्तजीवी होने के कारण देश और काल के आयाम का उसका बोध कुछ अत्यंत अलग का है। उसके लिए सचमुच कालोहयय निर्विविधित्व काल का है, इतना निर्विविधित्व कि चिड़ियाँ उस के कंधों पर बैठ जायें या कि गिलहरियाँ उस की टोंगों पर से फूँदती हुई चली जायें!" [The magnitude of his perception of space and time is somewhat different because of his being lonely. For him time is really unending and space is the great expanse that is earth. He sits motionless for hours together, so much motionless that birds can safely sit at his shoulders or squirrels can run jumping over his legs] It is certain that the thinking of a lonely person is entirely different from that of others. It can also be said that the lonely person compromises with loneliness for only passing his life or for pushing death away from himself. Such characters are not averse to society.

As against stories of this standard, Ajneya has also written stories in which loneliness is responsible for turning a person into an introvert imparting him a frustrated and hesitant form. ‘Gangrene’ and ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’ are worth mentioning. Loneliness of Malti of ‘Gangrene’ is born out of circumstances, she is alone inspite of the company of a husband and a child. The husband goes to work and the child is still very small --- with whom shall she converse? This loneliness makes her practically lifeless, turns her speechless. She does not feel at home in any work and works only like a
[I was feeling as if the shadow hovering over this house was also controlling me inspite of its being unknown, as if I was also becoming as sapless and lifeless, yes --- like this house, like Malti .....] The kind of experience that has found expression in these line of the writer makes it clear that a person’s nature or behaviour definitely affects the person who meets him. On observing the behaviour of Malti, some critics also guess that --- ‘गैंग्रीन’ की मालती क्या अपने बच्चे के प्रति उदासीन होकर और अपने जीवन के आनन्द के स्रोत सुखाकर अपने नीरस पति से बदला लेना चाहती है। [Whether ‘Gangrene’s Malti wants to take revenge from her boring husband by remaining indifferent towards her child as also by drying out the source of her life’s happiness.]

The central character of ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’, Heeli, is probably the most citable in so far as the situations relating to victimization to loneliness is concerned. The mental state and ‘consciousness of death’ displayed by Heeli who leads a lonely life is particularly observable. Heeli is a Khasi young woman who is forced to live alone by her circumstances. ‘हेली बोन की बतखें’ मनोवैज्ञानिक आशय से समुद्र कहानी है जिसमें मनुष्य जीवन में गृहस्थ जीवन की अर्थता घर की विज्ञात आवश्यकता और उसके अभाव में पैदा होने वाली निर्धारित रिक्तता का संकेत है।] [‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’ is a story rich in psychological terms in which is found the indication of overpowering necessity of the family and the meaningless vacuum born out of it in a human beings’ household life.] The desire of a householder’s life could not be fulfilled in Heeli’s life. But, had she so desired, she could have been married because she was the most beautiful from amongst his sisters. Whatever be the reason, her marriage did not happen and she started rearing ducks to fill the consequential void.
The fox who preyed on her ducks was the problem of Heeli. Captain Dayal shoots that atrocious fox and followed the gravely wounded fox along with Heeli. The scene that came to Heeli’s view on reaching the burrow of the fox shook her completely — "नर लोमड़ी का प्राणहीन आकार दुलका पड़ा था..... भीतर शिथिलगत लोमड़ी उस शव पर झुकी खड़ी थी, शव के सिर के पास मुंह किये, मानो उसे चाटना चाहती हो और फिर सहमकर रुक जाती हो। लोमड़ी के पाँवों से उलझते हुए तीन छोटे-छोटे बच्चे कुनसुना रहे थे ..... माँ और बच्चों में किसी को ध्यान नहीं था कि गैर और दुश्मन को आखें उस गोपन घेरलू दृश्य को देख रही हैं।" [The lifeless form of male fox was lying crouched ..... inside, the stunned female fox was standing bent over that corpse with her face near the corpse's head, as if she wanted to lick it and then stops hesitatingly terrorised. Three small child foxes were crying entangled between the legs of the fox ..... neither mother, nor the children were aware that the strange and inimical eyes were observing that private family scene.] An overpowering feeling of guilt took birth in Heeli. Besides, it appeared as if the secret of her saples, empty and meaningless life got complete exposed before Captain Dayal. Heeli could find solace only on killing her ducks who she thought were responsible for the murder of the fox. She begun feeling that her happy household life had also been murdered. Rearing ducks in order to lonely life to an end got shattered only in a moment. This experiment of finishing one’s loneliness on the support of rearing household birds is only the ‘consciousness of death’.

It becomes clear from the foregoing analysis of Ajneya’s stories that it is not easy to lead a lonely life for human beings who are social beings. In such circumstances, the human being can become a victim of suffocation, frustration and despondency. Two facets of a lonely persons life come to the fore --- attempt to fight with loneliness by establishing contact with society or
trying to console oneself by adopting an introvert view and enclosing oneself inside an enclosure like a snail. Both the forms are affected by 'deliberation on death'.

5.4 Irrelevance (विसंगति):

Irrelevance is also a kind of 'consciousness of death'. 'Visangati' (irrelevance) is the translation of Kamu’s 'Absurd' which has become a popular idiom in the post independence era of Hindi Literature. It has also been called 'Avasangati' and 'Nirarthkatabodh' (consciousness of meaninglessness). Kamu has described the philosophy of 'Visangati' (i.e., irrelevance) in the book entitled 'The Myth of Sisyphus'. 'Sisiphus' passed an irrelevant life --- as if his life has been cursed with this meaninglessness. But, according to Kamu, a human being has to live his life even after knowing of its meaninglessness even if that life be aimless, futureless, and hopeless. The situation of irrelevance and dissolution that prevailed after gaining independence completely shook the hearts and minds of the common people. The individual started considering himself a useless and worthless being. People began experiencing the crisis of existence, meaningless and frustration in their lives. They became doubtful regarding their future.

In spite of such circumstances, we cannot say that the widespread feeling of insecurity in the Indian Society is synonymous with Kamu’s irrelevance. "यहाँ विसंगति का कारण समाज में फैले असुरक्षा-भाव अथवा रूढ़ियों के कारण है, जिनके बीच आज का व्यक्ति अपने को धीरा हुआ पाता है।" [Here, the cause of irrelevance is the feeling of insecurity that is spread in society or the prevalent conventions within which today’s individual finds himself surrounded.]
Such kinds of irrelevance finds reflected in many stories of Ajneya. But, we should forget one thing --- that inspite of leading an irrelevant life, an Indian does not show a any want of faith with respect to life and the world.

The stories of Ajneya in which life full of irrelevance is found portrayed --- ‘Drohi’, ‘Abhishapit’, ‘Grihyaga’ and ‘Major Chaudhuri Ki Vaapasi’ are worth citing.

A character named Raghunath has been taken up in ‘Drohi’ who is arrested alongwith his associates and is adjudged a seditionist. Everything appears alright till this stage but he gives a statement that goes against his associates and feels that he is himself a patriot. This feeling turns his life into an irrelevant one. His life becomes aimless. His irrelevant logic is worth citing --- "जब से मैं बन्दी हुआ हूँ मेरा आत्म-संयम दूर-सा गया है। मैं क्षण भर भी अपने मनोवेग को धार्म्निकता नहीं सकता। बेलगाम घोड़े की तरह वह मुझे विधि चाहता है, लेकर भाग जाता है और मैं उसके चिपटकर बैठा रहता हूँ कि कहीं गिर न पड़े, उसे रोकने का प्रयल करने के लिए मेरे हाथों को अवकाश ही नहीं मिलता।" [My self-control has broken ever since I became a prisoner. I cannot hold my passion even for a moment. It runs away taking me wherever it desires like an unrestrained horse and I keep clinging to it out of fear lest I fall down, my hands do not get hold of any space in order to make an effort to stop it.] Raghunath, who betrays his associates, starts giving logic reasoning to his betrayal --- "देखो रुखान, व्यक्ति की विचन्ता में क्यों पड़े हो? ऐसे व्यक्ति करने लगो, तो पागल हो जाओगे। मन तुम्हारा सच्चा मित्र है, उसकी भ्रमण का तिरस्कार मत करो।" [Look Raghunath. Why do you get entagled in useless worry? If you start interpreting in this way, you will get mad. Mind is your true friend. Do not disregard its inspiration.] He starts sufferring from a feeling of guilt.

Amongst other stories, ‘Major Chaudhuri Ki Vaapasi’ can be particularly cited. Major Chaudhuri is going on leave for ten days from the most difficult
area like Mokokchung in Nagaland which is a matter of envy for other armymen. But, Major Chaudhuri is not happy. Their is a feeling of anguish and indifference on the name of ‘home’. Incapacitated from sexual intercourse, Major Chaudhuri is helpless so far as giving his wife the pleasure of being a mother is concerned. This incapacity turns the life of Major Chaudhuri irrelevant. Now he feels complete separation from life. Life has become aimless, futureless and hopeless for him. This irrelevance has been presented by the writer (story-teller) very skillfully. The writer has admirably assimilated the grief of Major. But, unable to console Major Chaudhuri, the writer has only been able to write —

[got stunned. Could not speak anything. Such was the grief that it could not be bounded within words.] How dejected is Major Chaudhuri with regard to his future is observed from the following statement —

[Pradhan, this ‘compassionate leave’ is a big joke — who other than God can be compassionate and what else is there other than Death? Now, the beginning is from the end! Home!] Major Chaudhuri’s life definitely becomes irrelevant — aimless, without any purpose and hopeless.

Heeli, the heroine of this chapter’s extensively discussed story ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’ also experiences irrelevance in her life. She is a lonely woman of thirty-four years of age. She was very beautiful and everyone admired her. She did find love, but the affair could not make progress. Her life became a cursed life. ‘Log kahate the ki holi sunder hai, par svri nahi hai. Woh baangi kya jismen soap nahi basata.’ [People used to say that Heeli is beautiful, but she is not a woman. Will that be a snake-hole where a snake does not live.] Heeli’s eyes get denser
on knowing people’s views. A snake-hole without a snake —- although ugly is also devastating! Future appeared meaningless and devoid of hope. She rears ducks in order to get away from loneliness. When captain Dayal says —“आपका मकान बहुत साफ और सुन्दर है!” [Your house is very clean and beautiful.] Heeli replies —“हाँ, कोई कचरा फैलाने वाला जो नहीं है, मैं यहाँ अकेली रहती हूँ!” [Yes, because there is no one to spread rubbish. I live alone here.] This statement of Heeli only displays her life’s irrelevance and hollowness. It appears as if Heeling is making effort to hide the hollowness of her life by rearing ducks. Following the grievously injured fox, she reaches the den of the fox alongwith captain Dayal. What does she see there? She sees —“खोट की देहरी पर नर लोमड़ी का प्राणहीन आकार धुंधका पड़ा था— कास के फूल की झाड़—सी पूंछ उसकी रानों को ढंक रही थी। जहां गोली का जख्म होगा। भीतर सिर्दित—गल लोमड़ी उस शाब पर झुकी खड़ी थी, शाब के निर के पास मुंह किंचे, लोमड़ी के पांव पेट में उलझे हुए तीन छोटे—छोटे बच्चे कुमनुआ रहे थे ...... माँ और बच्चों में किसी को ध्यान नहीं था कि गैर और दुश्मन की आखें उस गोपन घरेलू दृश्य को देख रही हैं!” [The lifeless form of male fox was lying crouched on the threshold of the den —- His tail that appeared like a broom of the flower of ‘Kaas-straw’ covered his thighs. Where bullet’s wound ought to be. Inside, the stunned female fox was standing bent over that corpse with her face near the corpse’s head, as if she wanted to lick it and then stops hesitatingly terrorised. Three small child foxes were crying entangled between the legs of the fox ..... neither mother, nor the children were aware that the strange and inimical eys were observing that private family scene.] On seeing that scene Heeli gets nearly mad. It appears to her that her life’s hidden and secret things have been clearly exposed before a stranger. She immediately kills the eleven ducks responsible for that event. She rebukes Captain calling him a murder, compelling him to get away from her and once again she encloses herself in loneliness, as if closed in a chest.
5.5 Deliberation on Death (मृत्यु-चिन्तन):

‘Death’ is an ever-lasting problem of mankind. Even today, it continues to remain a mystery. What is ‘Death’? Everyone wants to understand this, but its mystery has not yet been revealed. As a result, people are under compulsion to embrace it, whether they like it or not. It is the Indian tradition to accept ‘Death’ in a natural and simple way. In Europe, after the first world war, people got worried about their existence which became the cause for the birth of Existentialism. The theory of faithlessness is one of the principle features of Existentialism. As against the tone of faithlessness found in Europe, a tone of faithfulness is heard in India. Influence of European thinking is found reflected in the literature of Ajneya. This is the result of nomadic inclination of Ajneya. It is said that the advent of the principles of Existentialism in Hindi began with the literature of Ajneya. But, the voice of extreme despondency that is found in Existentialism is not found in Ajneya’s literature. A person born and brought up in India cannot be free from the Indian tradition. The tone of despair is certainly found in the literature of Ajneya, but a continuous effort to come out of the clutches of despondency is also found. No question of being completely free from contemporary intellectual thinking arises. Atleast in the context of Ajneya, this reality is fully applicable. Thinking about death does not dismantle the society through the characters of Ajneya’s stories, but inspires them to keep it united. In many stories, deliberation on death does not give rise to the feeling of curiosity but only gives birth to non-violence and resignation. Although, deliberation on death is found in most of the stories of Ajneya, the following stories can be particularly discussed --- ‘Chhaya’, ‘Vivek Se Badhkar’, ‘Badla’, ‘Khitin Babu’ and ‘Abhishaapit’.

‘Chhaya’ is a story based on the lives of Indian revolutionaries. This
story is presented in the words of a Jail Warden. Habituated of continually seeing hangings, hanging by death no more affect the Warden. But, the hanging of a woman character, Sushma, described in the story compels the Warden to think about death. It appears to Arun, a political prisoner that Sushma is probably Sharda who had drowned. Sushma is hanged to death. She desires that if Sushma dies people should not feel aggrieved as because Sharda has already been accepted as dead by them. This is a bright face of revolutionaries’ willingness to readily sacrifice themselves. Arun wholeheartedly praises Sushma sitting besides her dead body. This incident compelled the Warden to think about death --- “शारदा की छा या को स पूंडक ने पूंडक दिया, पर यह सुधा की छा या, जो हर वकत मेरे पास रहती है, इससे छुटकारा कहा है।”[The shadow of Sharda has been blown away by the public, but where is my liberation from this shadow of Sushma which continually hovers near me?] He experiences how covetable is this kind of death. Many stories of this kind have been written in Hindi, but the experience of revolution similar to the one that Ajneya possesses is found in a very few of Hindi story writers.

A unique thinking about Death is found in the story entitled ‘Vivek Se Badhkar’. This thinking is quite sublime in support of which a statement of Victor Hugo has been presented which means --- the declaration of love can be made only on reaching the high peak of sacrifice. The story relates to a police station situated at the Siberian border where three revolutionaries named Maxim, Anton and Lyone are imprisoned in three different cells. Names of only two revolutionaries figure in the police report, and therefore, the officer commanding of the police station who is sympathetic towards them is in a position to release one of them. He asks Anton and Maxim separately as to who of them ought to be released. Anton and Maxim are deeply in friendship
with each other, but when the officer commanding puts this question to Anton as to who ought to be released, Anton suffers a dilemma because he knows that the success of revolution requires Lyone. Therefore, he requests that Lyone be released. Maxim also expresses the same view before the officer commanding. No better example of self-sacrifice and generosity is found. Dr Bholabhai Patel’s research has found one feature of Existentialism in this. When the officer commanding has talked of releasing one of the three prisoners and he has also asked the opinion of two of them separately then the situation of ‘freedom of choice’ is visible there --- ‘लेकिन यों कहानी उस स्थिति की है, जिसको हम सार्थ की वर्ण-समस्या के समांतर रख सकते हैं।’ [But, otherwise the story relates to that situation which we can put parallel to Sartre’s problem of choice.] This is certainly a unique story based on ‘deliberation on death’.

‘Deliberation on Death’ not only delivers despondency to the people, but sometimes thinking or philosophy of death brings out to the fore the inherent qualities of human beings. The story named ‘Badlaa’ belongs to this category. When humanity was decaying rapidly at the time of partition of the country, at the same time a sikh refugee from Shekhpure began serving the trouble-torn muslims after coming to India. That sikh had himself inhaled the poisonous steam of communal frenzy and had saved the family members from the calamity that had befallen them. But these abhorring scenes of death did not give rise to the feelings of resistance or wrath in his mind. Humanity survived in him even under those formidable conditions. He generously forgave the people responsible for communal riots. For him, the right way of revenge was to ensure that nothing happens to others that happened to him. He also says --- ‘मेरा मकसद तो इतना है कि चाहे हिन्दू हो, चाहे सिख हो, चाहे मुसलमान हो, जो मैंने देखा है वह किसी को न देखना पड़े, और मरने से पहले मेरे घर के लोगों की जो गति हुई वह परमात्मा न
My purpose is only this that what I have seen is not seen by others also whether he be a Hindu, Sikh, or Muslim and may God prevent others’ daughters and daughters-in-laws from experiencing the plight of my family members before their death.] After studying this story, it clearly comes to the fore that after digesting the agonies of death not only does the feelings of revenge come to the mind, but this agony may also awaken the feelings of pity and compassion in place of the feeling of revenge by shaking the human mind. This points towards the bright and glorious aspect of human character.

The strength of embracing death in a natural and simple way can be seen in Khitin Babu, the principal character of another of Ajneya’s story entitled ‘Khitin Babu’. This power of the Self makes the life of Khitin Babu covetable. Although such characters are rare, but it is not that faith of Khitin Babu towards life has been presented in in exaggerated way. As Chandrakanta M Bandiwadekar has written --- “खितिन बाबू की जीवन के प्रति आस्था कुछ अतिसाध्यता है वह भी जिजीविष्य की कहानी। कहानी लगभग असफल व्यौंक एकांतिक परंतु लेखक की दृष्टि को व्यक्त करती है!” [Khitin Babu’s faith towards life has emerged somewhat in an exaggerated way, but this also is the story of the life instinct. The story is practically a failure because it is private, but expresses the viewpoint of the writer.] Characters possessing faith of the nature of Khitin Babu are sometimes found in our society also. The extraordinary power of determination of Khitin Babu particularly impresses the writer. Look at the admission of the writer --- “खितिन बाबू : एक साधारण कवि की अति सुरक्षित दृष्टि : मृत्यु हो गई। लेकिन क्या सचमुच अब भी उन्हें देख सकती हूँ। कभी लगता है कि जिसे देखता हूँ वह केवल अंगिनी ही नहीं है मानो अशरीरी है, केवल एक दीप - अंगों से क्या? अवयवों से क्या? ‘जाना गेलो, ऐंठा छाड़ो चले’ - इस सबके बिना काम चल सकता है केवल दीपि : केवल
Khitin Babu: an ordinary clerk: an ordinary accident: death occurred. But, whether really? I can see him even now. Sometimes it appears that the person whom I see is not only maimed but as if he is incorporeal, only a flash --- what of organs? what of body parts? ‘departable has gone, this is also leaving’ --- work can be done without all these. Only a flash: only the power of determination.] This admission of the writers gives expression to the irrepressible desire of Khitin Babu to live an inherent life.

A special form of ‘deliberation on death’ is visible in ‘Abhishaapit’. A special revolutionary always want to embrace a glorious death. In the instant story also, this kind of death has been called great and its has also been said that a person who betrays his country gets disgraced. This form of ‘deliberation on death’ is particularly seen in a dialogue employed in the story --- ‘तुम विश्वास के अपात्र हो। तुम्हारे मुंह पर कलिख पुत गयी है। अब तुम कभी-भी उस महान कार्य में भागी नहीं हो सकते। तुम जहाँ जाओगे मृत्यु की छाया की तरह अपरिहार्य यह कलकं तुम्हारा पीछा करेगा कि तुम पर लोग विश्वास नहीं कर सकें.’ [You are not a fit character for belief? Your face has got black-washed. Now you can never be a partner in that great work. Wherever you will go, this disgrace will follow you like indispensable shadow of death that people cannot rely on you.....] It is clear that Sena definitely desires such a glorious death. This desire cannot be bound within the periphery of time and space.

‘Deliberation on death’ can lead the man towards spiritualism. In fact, this can be called a thinking established on a higher idealistic plane. Although psychological reality is found picturized in the literature of Ajneya, idealism’s relation with spiritual thinking can also be observed in his literature. A human being makes some effort or the other to attain happiness and peace. This can be called an ideal. Actually, ‘आदर्श’ मनुष्य के स्वभाव में निहित अद्वितीय प्रवृत्ति का ही
Ideal is the extension of the tendency of elevation inherent in man's nature. Man is a being who creates values. By nature, his efforts are directed towards getting cultured. This is his true journey. When he walks in the reverse direction, he walks towards annihilation. Literature is also an important form of tradition or culture.

Many things come out of the foregoing discussion. They are ---

* Death is a mystery because of which 'deliberation on death' is natural.
* There is a difference between Indian and Western thinking about death. Stress is laid in the Indian thinking on accepting death in a natural and simple way whereas in Europe one is compelled to think of death.
* Indian viewpoint is based on faith whereas the Western viewpoint is based on faithlessness.
* 'Deliberation on death' can lead a man towards spiritualism.

5.6 Self-remorse (आत्म-र्पलानि):

Repenting for any action taken by oneself and to adjudge oneself guilty is 'self-remorse'. People fall down in their own eyes on their own actions. Not only this, they can also imagine death also. This kind of self-remorse is also a characteristic of 'consciousness of death'. Characters who experience self-remorse are readily found in many stories of Ajneya. The stories whose characters are found mentally lax are --- 'Drohi' and 'Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein'. Some other stories can also be included in this list. On examining those stories the feelings of self-remorse inherent in their characters get exposed.
The story entitled ‘Drohi’ is one of the stories related to the revolutionary life of Ajneya. Although the subject of this story is revolution, but in this story Raghunath, who has been accused of treason, gives statement against his associates on being imprisoned. As a result, he not only falls down in the eyes of his associates but also in his own eyes. He then suffers from self-remorse. He feels that he had done all this for his beloved Kamla. Kamla’s love inspires him to go back on his statement. Even then, he gets only neglect and contempt from Kamla. He is the only character in the story who appears weak. Others’ character can be said to be bright.

Raghunath’s self-remorse can be particularly seen in the story. He suffers from self-remorse as a result of getting hate and neglect from his associates. "तब क्यों लोग मुझे कुत्ते से भी बुरा समझते हैं? जब मैं अदालत में जाता हूं, तब तक दरशक मेरी ओर कैसे देखते हैं— कैसी ग्लानि, कितना तिरस्कार, कितनी उपेश्व उनकी दृष्टि में होती है .... और उसके साथ ही एक घुमा-मिश्रित क़ुश्त, जैसा सड़क के किनारे पड़े मेरे हुए कुत्ते को देखकर होता है। जी में आता है, उन सब दरशकों की इतनी अँखें न होकर एक ही अँख दिखायी है।"

[Then, why do people consider me worse than a dog? When I go to the court then how do the people look towards me --- what remorse, how much contempt, how much neglect is present in they sight ... and alongwith that a hateful curiosity, like the one which happens on seeing a dead dog on the roadside. How I wish that those spectators had only one eye instead of so many.] Society’s neglect further aggravates the feeling of self-remorse. Kamla’s neglect and contempt made him completely hollow. He was left nowhere --- "मैं अपना बचाव नहीं करता। मैं अधम हूं। पर मेरे जीवन के सारे आधार, मेरे उद्देश्य, मेरी आशाएँ, सदाकांशाएँ, सब कमला की उपेश्व ने एक ही झोके में मिटा दी, और मेरे लिए उत्थान का कोई मार्ग नहीं छोड़ा।" [I do not defend myself. I am mean. But all of my life’s bases, my purposes, my hopes and good expectations, everything was erased by Kamla’s in a whiff, and did not leave any way for me to rise.]
The concealed form of self-remorse can also be seen in Heeli, the heroine of ‘Heeli-Bone Ki Battakhein’. Heeli is a Khasi who is thirty five years of age. She was beautiful. In the dance festival of ‘Nong-krem’, heeli is unanimously chosen the leader and the woman community follow her. Love had appeared in her life once but she is now completely alone without it. ""लोग कहते थे कि हीली सुंदर है, पर स्त्री नहीं है। वह बाँची क्या जिसमें साँप नहीं बसता।"" [People used to say that Heeli is beautiful, but she is not a woman. Will that be a snake-hole where a snake does not live.] She starts rearing ducks to get away from her loneliness. One male fox because the cause of Heeli’s worry because he always killed and took away one-two ducks of Heeli. A soldier, Captain Dayal kills the fox so that the ducks could be saved from his clutches. Heeli also reached the fox’s den with Captain Dayal to look at him. What did she she on the threshold of this den? --- ""नाम-लौमड़ी का प्राणहीन आकार दुबारा पड़ा था-..... लौमड़ी के बाँचों से उलझते हुए तीन छोटे-छोटे बच्चे कूदनुमा रहे थे। उस कूदनुमाने में भूख की आगुरता नहीं थी; न वे बच्चे लौमड़ी के पेट के नीचे पुस्सड़-पुस्सड़ करते हुए भी उसके थरों को ही खोज रहे थे...... माँ और बच्चों में किसी को ध्यान नहीं था कि गैर और दुश्मन की ओरिंग उस गोपन घरेलू दुस्स्य को देख रही है।"" [The lifeless form of male fox was lying crouched --- Three small child foxes were crying entangled between the legs of the fox. There was not restlessness because of hunger in them; nor were those children searching for the fox’s udders by crowding beneath her stomach ..... neither mother, nor the children were aware that the strange and inimical eyes were observing that private family scene.] This scene shook Heeli completely. On observing her mental state, it appears as if the scene within the den of the fox is a secretive scene within her mind. The cover on the secret scene of her heart got removed before an outsider, Captain Dayal. Heeli suffers from self-remorse because she only had given permission to Captain Dayal to kill the fox as a
result of which everything of her mind got exposed. Because of this self-
remorse she comes running back to her house and chopped off the heads of all
the eleven ducks and carried the dead ducks to leave them in the den of the
fox. Anger erupts in her mind towards Captain Dayal also whom she calls a
murderer and asks him to get away from her.

Sometimes a criminal, after committing a crime, immediately realises
that he has committed a crime thereby suffering from self-remorse and if
possible he immediately performs action which leads to removal of his feeling
of remorse. This fact comes to light in Ajneya’s story ‘Seb Aur Deb’. Gajanan
Pandit, the teacher of ancient history and archaeology goes to Kullu for his
archaeological studies. He feels great pleasure seeing the orchard of apples on
the way. As soon as he sighted the thief who was stealing apples, he got very
angry and slapped the thief. It appeared to him that it was not a simple crime
to steal apples. But, the same teacher could not stop himself from hiding an
idol of a goddess within his coat on finding the same in the ruins of a temple.
At that time he did not consider it a crime. When he was going after stealing
the idol of goddess, he met the apple thief on his way. This time again he got
very angry and beat the thief again. The thief stole an apple, and the Professor
! 

Suddenly, it appeared as if lightning had struck him. One blinding
flame wrote a sentence after burning before him for a moment — ‘This person
has only stolen apple, but you have robbed the temple.’ Somewhat nervous
and stunned professor sahib stood unshaken for a moment, then slowly started
walking back to the village.] His mind went into commotion. He felt remorse
and became guilty conscious. Then he decided to replace the idol at the place from where he had lifted it as a way of repentance. After replacing the idol, he felt at peace — "न जाने क्यों उनके मन में शान्ति—उमड़ आई, उन्हें लगा कि बुनिया बहुत ठीक है, बहुत अच्छी है" [Peace surged into his mind for an unknown reason and it appeared to him that the people are very right, very good.] The reader gets pure happiness on reading this admission of the professor.

Experience of extreme self-remorse is also done by Satya, a character of the story entitled ‘Kadiya’. Satya is a revolutionary who is imprisoned in the jail. He is being taken in a lorry to Meerut after being in custody at the Delhi jail for the last three years. He witnesses the rising sun of the morning after many days. There is commotion in his heart. On reaching Meerut, people will surround him and say — "भारत माता के सुपुत्र! देश को तुम्हारी बहुत आक्ष्यक्ता है!" [O good son of mother India! The country needs you very much.] Everything appears dream-like to Satya.

Suddenly a scene comes to his view — "एक अधेड़ उम्र का आदमी, नंगे—बदन, हाथ में लाठी लिए दौड़ा जा रहा है और उससे कोई आठ—दस गज आगे एक देहाती युवती है—भय, पीड़ा, लज्जा, करुणा और एक अवर्ण्य भावना—जब वह उछलती है, तो लहंगा कुछ उठ जाता है, घुटने तक उसकी टांगें दीख जाती है!" [A man of middle age, naked, is running with a stick in his hand and about eight-ten yards ahead of him is a village young woman — fear, agony, shame, pity and an inexpressible feeling — when she jumps, her skirt lifts up a little, her legs up to the knees become visible.] — The naked legs of the woman come before Satya — he starts cursing himself — ‘क्यों चार—चार मेरी दृष्टि के आगे वे ही आ जाती हैं?’ [Why do those (legs) come before my view repeatedly?] The country for defending which he goes to the jail, one of that country’s woman is greedily looked at by him! Satya repents — "मैंने अपना आदर्श भूला दिया है। वह अभी तक मेरे भीतर इतने उग्र
...Not only this, the mere imagination of the crowd assembled to pay respect and honours to him fills him again with self-remorse --- "मैं अत्यंत नीच, घृणित, पतित हूं। मुझे धक्के दे-देकर निकालो। नहीं फिर वापस जेल भेज दो। मैं इस योग्य हूँ!" [I am extremely mean, abominable, fallen. Remove me by pushes. No, send me again to Jail. I deserve it.] --- He cannot control himself and, therefore, goes to the bank of Yamuna by repeatedly halting the lorry. The scene that he had seen on the way, the scene that had compelled him to think wrongfully and he had felt self-remorse --- the reality of the scene was before him now. In fact, that woman was a labourer and the tyrant who ran after her was from the side of the owners.

Self-remorse of Satya purifies his soul. After two years of this incident, many people had died in the revolt done by the oppressed farmers and Satya was one amongst them.

5.7 Momentaryism (क्षणवाद):

The ‘moment’ has got special importance in Existentialism and ‘deliberation on death’. Every moment is important for them. "क्षण' का विशेष महत्व है। हर क्षण उनके लिए महत्वपूर्ण है। 'क्षण' शब्द का आधिपत्याधिक अर्थ है--- लम्हा; 4/5 सेकेंड, निमेश का चौथाई या 30 कलाके बराबर काल, अवसर अवकाश, शुभकाल, उत्सव, आनंद आदि।" [Nomenclaturewise the word ‘Kshan’ or ‘Moment’ means --- moment, 4/5 of a second, 1/4 of a ‘nimesh’ or time equivalent to 30 ‘kalas’, opportunity, space, good time, festival, happiness etc.] The suffix ‘Vaaad’ or ‘.....ism’ means --- statement. Therefore, the expression ‘Kshanvaad’ or ‘Momentaryism’ means --- a statement made in a time shorter than a ‘pal’ i.e., a statement of 1/12
degrees of a ‘muhurt’. Although such a sub-division of time cannot be said to be very useful except in a very few contexts, but each moment has a special significance for the Existentialists. They want to live every moment meaningfully.

Ajneya gives supreme importance to the ‘moment’ in his stories. While writing the preface to ‘Ajneya ki Sampoorna Kahaniyaan’ and while giving importance to ‘moment’ and ‘picture’ he writes --- “श्लण का अर्थ हम चाहे एक छोटा काल-खंड लगा लें, चाहे एक अल्पकालिक स्थिति, एक घटना, प्रभावी डायलॉग, एक मनोदशा, एक दृष्टि, एक बाह्य या आत्मतर झंकी, समझ का एक आक्रमिक उभयेश, संज्ञास, तनाव, प्रतिक्रिया, प्रतिक्रिया इसी— प्रक्तर ‘चित्र’ का अर्थ बर्णन, निरूपण, रेखांकन, सम्पूर्ण, सूचन, संकेत, अभिव्यक्ति, रंजन, प्रतीक, घोटन, आलोकन, रूपायन, जो चाहे लगा लें— या इनके विभिन्न जोड़-मेल।” [If we so desire, we may take the word ‘moment’ to mean a small period of time, a short term situation, an incident, impressive dialogue, a state of mind, a viewpoint, an external or internal scene, a sudden blooming of understanding, terror, tension, reaction, a preceding action. And similarly the meaning of the word ‘picture’ be taken as description, characterisation, underlining, accumulation, notification, signalling, expression, recreation, symbolising, illustration, illumination, formation, whatever meaning we may desire --- or their different combinations and mixes.] If this statement is kept in mind, it will be seen that the ‘moment’ has been important in nearly every story of Ajneya. Clearly, time-experience related notions are visible in the stories of Ajneya. Ajneya accepts only the moment of experience as important. The question now is --- what is this ‘moment of experience’. For Ajneya --- “अत्म का साक्षात्कार और ऐसा साक्षात्कार जो काल-मुक्त हो, अनुभूति का श्लण है।” [The realisation of the Atman and such a realisation that is free from the bondage of time is the ‘moment of experience’.] These moments of experience are found
available in practically all stories of Ajneya. Principal amongst those stories are ‘Purush ka Bhagya’, ‘Indu ki Beti’, Dukh aur Titliyaan’ and ‘Pagoda Vriksha’ etc.

The moments of experience of Sujata, a widow, have been specially presented in the story ‘Pagoda Vriksha’ written in 1933. Comparison of the mentality of a widow with the condition of a Pagoda tree has been found to be done. Sujata became a widow eight years earlier after having experience of married life for only four years. She did not have sensitive relations with her husband --- she was unable to get blooming the flowers of sensitivity like the Pagoda flowers, although the flowers of old age only bloom in the Pagoda tree also as portrayed in the story. A lonely revolutionary, Surya, gets shelter in the house of that lonely Sujata and the police officer, accompanied with his men, comes and arrests Sujata. To minutes’ time is given to Sujata to get prepared. Those two minutes were like the moment of experience for Sujata. She bent down suddenly while praying before the seat on which Surya had gone to sleep while sitting thereon. For Sujata --- “[वही जीवन का चरम उद्देश्य श्रृंगार का चरम साफ़त्व, अनुभूति का अंतिम विकास— सुख की अंतिम पराकाश— श्रुंगार का, इत्तेक्त पीड़ा का ज्ञान— ऐसी पीड़ा का, जो कि स्वयं अपनी इच्छा से, अपने हाथों की स्वागत भावना से, अपने ऊपर ली गई है— यह आत्म निष्ठावर की चेतना।”[This was the ultimate aim of life --- the peak success of the creation, the end development of experience --- the ultimate height of happiness --- the knowledge of pain, intense agony --- of such an agony which has been taken upon oneself by the welcoming gesture of one’s own hands of one’s own desire --- this conscience of self-surrender.] Sujata felt that she had received new energy, that she is a new woman. As such, this experience of Sujata remained meaningful only.

‘Indu ki Beti’ is also a story of meaningful experience like the ‘Pagoda
Vriksha’. The hero of the story, Ramlal has to pass the night in that railway station only where, twenty years ago, his wife Indu had died dismembered under the train. Twenty years ago, Ramlal had alighted from the train to bring water for her wife Indu. But, the train started before Ramlal could return back. Although Ramlal had somehow managed to get inside the train; Indu began looking for Ramlal from near the door. At that moment, she fell down and died getting dissected under the train. Twenty years after that incident, Ramlal tries to sleep at midnight on the same station, but the moment of that accident of twenty years ago suddenly flashes in his memory. Ramlal experiences as follows on that deserted dark night --- "Whenever man desires, he lives twenty years of life in just twenty minutes --- even twenty seconds and those twenty seconds also such that do not belong to today, have been past for twenty years, have died, and then his soul’s loneliness cannot be described, something can only be experienced in darkness ---] For Ramlal, there is special importance of that incident and moment of twenty years ago. But, the story does not stop here. That day Ramlal finds an abandoned infant-girl on the station. He believes that the daughter has definitely been gifted to him by her forgiving wife Indu only. The villagers know that Ramlal is carrying the load of someone else’s sin, but Ramlal’s life has been given a new direction in that moment, a new meaningfulness has been provided to him.

‘Moment’ and ‘Picture’ has also been experience by Shekhar, the character of the story entitled ‘Dukh aur Titliyaan’. Doctor has been called for the treatment of Shekhar’s mother who is on the death-bed, but she expires
before the Doctor arrives. Shekhar and the members of his family get affected by the death of his mother. But, Shekhar does not experience pain like others. It appears to him that his grief is different from those of others, his experience is sharper than that of others, but he cannot weep. At that moment a pair of butterflies came from somewhere and headed towards the burning pyre of Shekhar’s mother, then suddenly rose up on getting heated, but staggered and fell into the fire of the pyre because of smoke and got burnt. Mother’s and butterflies’ deaths appeared an ordinary and meaningless incident to Shekhar who believed death to be a very ordinary incident. But, the very next moment, his heart gets melted and he begins realising death as meaningful. His reaction goes like this --- "वह लड़खड़ा कर बैठ गया, एक बड़ा-सा बुलबुला-सा उसकी छाती में उठा और गले में आकर फूट गया, आँखें उमड़ आयी, और एक व्यथा-भरी सिसकी में वह रो पड़ा, बिखरे " [He staggered and sat down, a big bubble like thing rose in his chest and burst on reaching the throat, the eyes got watered, and taking agonising sob he started weeping, ‘Mother’...] This reaction of Shekhar is fully dramatic which is the creation of that special moment.

5.8 Unfamiliarity (अजनबीपन):

"अजनबीपन’ का अभिधानिक अर्थ है- अज्ञात, अपरिचित, नया आया हुआ, परेशानी, अवज्ञा आदि।" [Nomenclaturewise, the word ‘Ajanabi’ means --- unknown, stranger, newly arrived, foreigner/alien, ignorant etc] ‘Pan’ is a suffix which when suffixed to a proper noun makes an abstract noun. In this way, ‘Ajanabipan’ means --- consciousness of unfamiliarity, alienation etc. The character of a psychological novel finds his own character an unfamiliar one so that he is found to be making efforts to understanding his own self. A person may also find himself or familiar persons around him as strangers. An emotional person experiences unfamiliarity in loneliness or under adverse situations.
Ajneya is an emotional writer. Most characters of his stories are introvert and the feeling of curiosity is present in them. This feeling of curiosity inspires to analyse situations. He is affected by grief on the flow of events, or is compelled to think. Consciousness of unfamiliarity starts occurring under such conditions.

Ajneya has written many stories that portray the experience of unfamiliarity by a person. Besides, efforts to recognise one own self and others also becomes available. Prominently referrable amongst such stories are ‘Vipathaga’, ‘Milan’, ‘Pagoda Vriksha’ and ‘Heeli-Bone ki Battakhein’.

Effort has been made to look at, and examine, a woman revolutionary named Maria Ivanovna through the eyes of Master Nikolai has been made in ‘Vipathaga’ which has been written in the background of foreign environment. Maria leaves her husband and father to join a secret organisation of revolutionaries. She participates in the conspiracy to kill her own father in order to prove her dutifulness towards revolution. As because, her father was the helper of the public administration. A fearless and true revolutionary has to keep himself away from the feeling of tender famility relationships, profit-loss etc and have the revolution as his sole aim. For master Nikolai, Maria is a stranger --- he is unable to decide whether she is a human or a goddess ! Good or bad ! In the words of Niklooi himself --- "उसके शरीर में लावण्य की दमक थी, मुँह पर सौदर्य की आभा थी, होटों पर एक दबी हुई, विचार शील मुस्कान थी। किंतु उसकी आँखें ! उनमें अनुराग, विराग, क्रोध, विनय, प्रसन्नता, करण, व्यथा, कुछ भी नहीं था, थी केवल एक भीषण, तुषारमय, अथाह ज्वाला!" There was a shine of charm in her body, glow of beauty on the face, a suppressed and thoughtful smile on the lips. But, her eyes ! They did not have anything like affection, detachment, anger, humility, happiness, kindness, agony, if there was something it was a frightful, frosty,
infinite flame !] She committed the murders of characterless Gorobsky and General Kolpin and lateron committed suicide herself in order to defend her revolutionary ideal. This act of Maria impressed Nikolai but the question that keeps on rising in his even today is --- ‘मेरी इज़ाम़ी, तुम मानवी हो या दानवी य स्वर्गश्रद्धा विपथगा देवी।’ [Maria Ivanovna, are you a human or a demon, or heaven-deprived goddess gone astray.]

‘Milan’ is the story of two friends, ‘Sergius’ and ‘Dmitri’. Before separating from each other, both the friends promise each other that they will meet again in their school in 1920. By 1920, the school had been converted into a hotel. As per their promise, both of them meet at the hotel. Dmitri was working in the Communist army and Sergius was in the Czar’s army. Dmitri also gets his old friend Sergius arrested because he is now in the enemy camp. This question repeatedly arises in the mind of Dmitri before he gets his friend arrested that whether what he was going to do was right? He makes effort to console himself. He says --- Sacrificing the friend is bad or sedition, I do not know.

The past of widow Sujata of ‘Pagoda Vriksha’ was not very meaningful, she was only living her life. But, an incident took place in her life after which it began appearing to her that --- ‘उसका वर्षों का वैधव्य और उससे पूर्व की जीवनित मृत्यु, आज एकाएक अपनी सीमापर घूम गये हैं— समाप्त हो गये हैं और वह आज एक नयी स्त्री, एक नयी शक्ति हो गयी है ......’ [Her widowed life of years and the living death prior to that had suddenly reached their limit today --- have since ended and today she has become a new woman, a new powerful being ....]

The incident was this that an unfamiliar youth gets shelter in the house of lonely and widowed Sujata. That young man was a revolutionary and the police was following him. Sujata was an ordinary woman, she was practically unacquainted with passions like national feeling, revolution etc. She was ready
to go to jail also, if so required, for giving shelter to the young man. It will be 
better to associate this incident with individualistic attainment rather than 
nationalist feeling. Till now, the condition of Sujata was like the ‘Pagoda 
Vriksha’. The flowers of the Pagoda tree are different and inattractive as 
compared to other flowers. But, when Sujata recognised herself in a new form 
then — "रात-रात में पगोदा वृक्ष ने पुरानी केन्दुल उत्तर फूंकी थी या नये वस्त्र धारण कर लिये थे। आज उसकी कालिमा का चिह्न भी कहीं नजर नहीं आता था, वह फूलों से भरा हुआ, सौदर्य से आबृत, सौरभ से हृदय रहा था।" [Overnight, the Pagoda tree shed its old skin or had 
worn new clothes. Today there was not even a sign of its darkness, it was 
blooming with flowers, enveloped with beauty, swinging with aroma.] This 
was the reaction of Sujata who was able to recognise herself.

Unfamiliarity or consciousness of unfamiliarity has been presented in 
a unique and philosophical way in the story entitled ‘Heeli-Bone ki Battakhein’. 
The main characters of the story, Heeli and Captain Dayal remained strangers 
to each other till the end of the story.

Heeli is a Khasi young woman who lives alone. She rears ducks in 
order to get away from her loneliness. A male fox become a problem for Heeli 
because he usually steals her ducks away. Captain Dayal takes the responsibility 
of killing that fox on his shoulders. He gets introvert Heeli’s permission to 
kill the fox. Here, differences between the natures of Heeli and Captain Dayal 
come to the fore. On the one side is the introvert Heeli in whose nature the 
void of hilly beauty clearly shines, a kind of mystery glimpses through her 
personality. On the other side is Captain Dayal — sociable and curious. 
Although Heeli supported the intention of Captain Dayal to kill the fox, but 
even after that she continued to remain a strange young woman for him. This 
dilemma of Captain Dayal has been presented by Ajneya in the following
The visitor, then, looking at Heeli from head to feet. A question found expression on his face, but as if the modest and shrinken-within-herself posture of Heeli did not give him the courage to ask her. Changing the topic, he asked ‘So, your permission is there? I will come with the gun at night. Presently, let me see here and nearby at what place and from where to where the bullet can be shot’."

Not only this, Captain Dayal was due to be further surprised. Captain shoots at the fox. Heeli accompanies him following the fox to his den. The lifeless body of the fox was lying on the threshold of the den, the female fox had stopped terrified and her cubs were crying. This scene gravely affected Heeli on the mental plane. The reaction also came up. She goes running back to her home and kills the remaining eleven ducks and takes them to the den and offer the same to the dead fox’s family. She feels herself guilty for the death of the male fox. The events occurring at the den of the fox completely shake her up. It appeared to her that not only did the confidential environment of the fox family got exposed, but as if her own secret things got exposed before Captain Dayal who was only a stranger. She enclosed herself like the oyster in its shell. The poor Captain, at first found Heeli a strange woman. Till the end, Heeli remained a mysterious and strange woman for him. In the words of the writer — "कैप्टन दयाल ने कुछ कहना चाहा, पर अवश्य ही रह गये, क्योंकि उन्होंने देखा, हीली की आँखों में वह निर्भर सूचापन रहा हो आया है जो कि पर्यंत का चिरकन्तु विज्ञ सौंदर्य है?" [Captain Dayal attempted to say something, but got speechless, because
he saw in the eyes of Heeli that unrestricted loneliness get dense that is the solitary and everlasting beauty of the mountain.] This mysterious picture of Heeli is the central point of the instant story.

5.9 Individualistic-Freedom (व्यक्ति-स्वातन्त्र्य):

Individual has got special significance in Psychology as well as Existentialism. Freud has referred to three states of the mind viz., ‘Conscious’, ‘Unconscious’ and ‘Sub-Conscious’. According to him, the personality can be classified under three forms, namely, ‘ID’, ‘EGO’ and ‘SUPER EGO’. According to Freud, the three states of mind play a significant role in the development of a personality. Similarly, the individuality has a special significance in Existentialism. Psychology is the science of human mind and the different aspects of the human mind are analyzed in psychology. As against this, Existentialism relates mainly to philosophy — which can be called ‘philosophy in psychology’ if we so like. Existentialism is more closely related to ‘deliberation on death’ or ‘consciousness of death’ than Psychology. Therefore, the views of Existentialistic thinkers should only deserved to be cited in context of ‘Individualistic-Freedom’.

The influence of Existentialistic thinkers like Karl Yasparsa and Jean Paul Sartre is particularly observed in the individualistic philosophy that is found in the fiction of Ajneya. But, we must keep in mind that although the influence of western thinking is seen on Ajneya’s thinking, the soul of his fiction is Indian. Everyone is well aware that Ego plays a prominent role in the literature of Ajneya, and the feelings of revolt and the theory of suffering has only come in a supportive role, but at the end of every writing the voice of faith heard in accordance with the Indian philosophical thinking.
As in the novels, the characters of Ajneya’s stories also are found to be worried about their existence. Most of the characters are supportive of individualistic-freedom and consider it to be their right. They dislike anyone’s interference on their rights. The stories in which the feelings of revolt and the theory of suffering is visibly found are mainly — ‘Vipathaga’, ‘Heeli-Bone ki Battakhein’ and ‘Vivek se Badhkar’.

The heroine of ‘Vipathaga’, Maria Ivanovna is a woman revolutionary. There are some unique features in her personality which make separate her from other revolutionaries. The story-teller has pointed to this uniqueness in the very beginning of the story — “वह मानवी थी या दानवी, यह मैं इतने दिन सोचकर भी नहीं समझ पा रहा हूँ!” [She was a human or a demon, I have been unable to understand even after thinking for so many days.] It is clear that although Maria is a revolutionary she thinks independently. Self-confidence and couraged is filled to the brim in her. She is ready to do anything to make the revolutions successful. The story teller was unable to heartily support Maria at first, but Maria’s strong self-confidence, her faith towards individualistic-freedom and her sacrifice brings up radical change in her character and now he starts supporting heartily Maria and the Russian revolution. While supporting Maria’s work the story-teller has written — मेरी ने ‘सौभाग्य बेचकर अपने विश्वास की रक्षा की है, स्वतंत्र बिचार के लिए पिता की हत्या की है और अपना स्त्री रूप बेचकर देश के लिए भिक्षा मांगी है’ [(Maria has) sold her good fortune to save her belief, murder her father to save her right and has sold her woman form to beg alms for the country.] This work of Maria is definitely the result of her independent thinking. The murder of a father who served in the Police department, the promise to surrender her chastity to the atrocious Ruler in order to save one of her associate, then the murder of that tyrant and in the end her suicide — what is this if not independent individualistic thinking.
Ajneya has presented the individualistic thinking of a lonely and grief-stricken woman in ‘Heeli-Bone ki Battakhein’. The circumstances force Heeli to live alone. Being a social being, the human being expects mental and physical purposes from the society. Therefore, a lonely person finds himself completely insecure without the society. The compulsion to live alone often disturbs the mental balance of a person. The lonely person creates a world of his own and starts roaming there-in, thinks in his own way. Heeli is also no exception to this. She lives independently, thinks independently and rears ducks to remove her loneliness. In one way, her life was passing all right. There was only one cause of worry that a male fox often used to steal her ducks. At this point of time, Captain Dayal comes into the story. He tries to save her ducks by killing the male fox, but Heeli follows him and the fatally injured fox to the den of the fox whereupon unprecedented mental change come in her. The confidential scene at the fox’s den is seen by Captain Dayal also alongwith her. It appears to her that the scene was not the confidential scene of fox’s den but also that of her internal life. As if it was a liberating strike on her individual freedom. The following flow of events is the result of this thinking of Heeli. Poor Captain never come to know as to what conflict was going on deep within Heeli’s mind. For him, Heeli continued to remain a stranger.

Dr Bhlabhai Patel finds the situation of ‘freedom of choice’ of Sartre in the story entitled ‘Vivek se Badhkar’. According to this assertion of Sartre, the man is under compulsion to be free. In the instant story, a similiar problem as been presented. Three persons are imprisoned in the jail on the accusation of mudering the Governor. But, only two persons’ names are mentioned in the police report. The sympathy of the Officer Commanding of the jail is with them and he proposes the release of one of them. Anton and Maxim are
questioned separately as to who ought to be released! Both of them take the name of Leone. Leone gets freedom. But, when maxim comes to know that Anton had also taken the name of Leone, he gets shocked in his mind. Anton also thinks that Maxim could not understand his view. At the end of the story, both do discuss the perpetuity of revolution --- but it appears that both of them die harbouring a grudge against each other. The decision Maxim and Anton had taken had no other alternative.

Some other stories can be cited in addition to these three stories where individualistic-freedom is visibly found. In this respect, the story ‘Badla’ is worth mentioning. This story is based on partition of the country. At the time of the country’s partition terrific communal riots take place. A sikh of Shekhpura comes to India and helps the victimised muslims. He is an idealist persons who does not want to witness again what he himself had undergone. He takes the decision of saving the muslim victims of riots with full freedom. He says --- "शेखपुरे में हमारे साथ जो हुआ सो हुआ, पर मैं जानता हूँ कि उसका मैं बदला कभी नहीं ले सकता --- क्योंकि उसका बदला हो ही नहीं सकता। मैं बदला दे सकता हूँ और वह यही कि मेरे साथ जो हुआ है, वह और किसी के साथ न हो।"[Whatever happened with us in Shekhpura has happened, but I know that I cannot take revenge for the same --- because there can be no revenge for that. I can reciprocate the incidents and that also in such a way that whatever happened with me, should not happen to any other person.] In the perspective of communal riots taking place at the time of partition of the country, this decision of the Sikh can only be termed extra-ordinary. This decision of the Sikh is definitely the result of his individualistic-freedom.
5.10 Conclusion (उपर्युक्तार्थः):

As in the novels of Ajneya, 'deliberation on death' has also come out in the form of a special source in his stories. 'Deliberation on death' becomes readily available in stories related to the revolutionary, prison and military life of Ajneya. The characters of these stories are alert in so far as their existence is concerned. Various symptoms of 'consciousness of death' like terror, loneliness, self-remorse, unfamiliarity etc can be seen portrayed in their characters. Most of the characters of Ajneya’s stories appear to be emotional and philosophical. There are curiosities in their mind towards life and the world. Most of them have to fact difficult, intricate and unfavourable circumstances. These unfavourable situations force them to think deeply. Often, worries related to their existence troubles them.

Characters of Ajneya’s stories are of two types — Indian and Non-Indian. Stories related to revolutionary life have been written on the background of Russia, China, India and South America. For example, 'Vipathaga' and 'Milan' are based on the Russian Revolution, 'Akalank' and 'Hariti' are based on the Chinese Revolution and 'Chhaya' is based on the Indian Revolution. Humanistic feelings and 'consciousness of death' find exposition in most of the stories. Irrespective of whether the background of the stories is Indian or Indian, man’s everlasting concerns, problems and thinking has been presented in them. Death hovers generally around revolutionaries, prisoners and soldiers. The true revolutionaries do not care about death. They always desire a meaningful death.

Ajneya was himself a revolutionary because of which he was expert in presenting the thoughts and experiences of revolutionaries in a natural way. It appears as if Ajneya starts expressing his own experience through the medium of stories related to revolutionary and soldier lives.
Ajneya has also written stories relating to the mental situations attached with the disaster of country’s partition. On experiencing those formidable Ajneya also, being an Indian, felt the pangs of pain. According to Ajneya —

“ये कहानियाँ आहे मानवीय संवेदन को और मानव मूल्यों के आग्रह की कहानियाँ हैं। ...... मैं नहीं मानता कि मानव-समाज मूल्यों के बिना जी सकता है, अस्तित्व रख सकता है।”

[These stories are the stories of hurt human sensitivities and the assertion of human values. ..... I do not believe that human society can survive without values, even keep its existence intact.] From this statement of Ajneya it is clear that ‘consciousness of death’ is available in most of his stories, but death is not horrifying incident for the characters of his stories. Most of them are ready to accept death in a simple and natural way. Death does not hold any terror for them because they want to live their lives in a meaningful manner. This viewpoint can definitely be termed Indian.

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