

CHAPTER- IV

INTRODUCTION:

The women novelists of both Hindi and Assamese literatures depicted the powerful picture of women who have broken the customs and traditions of the society, and who were struggling for personal liberty upholding the new values. These writers expressed almost all the complaints of the womenfolk, their exposed and unexposed grievances and after all their view points relating to life in a very powerful manner.

It is seen however the women of today have given birth to some type of new revolt against their troubled positions. The women began to fulfil their own role in every field of the society. Now they have proved the misunderstandings of the society about their weakness and inefficiency in comparison to men. They now fight for equality and humanity. Their forbearance has lost its delusions and therefore, the bindings of self control began to loosen. Now they want to be a “full human being”, Kshama Sharma remarked in this regard as follows:

यह मेरा शरीर है। इसजे बारे में फैसला ज़रूरे जा अधिज़ार भी मुझे ही होना चाहिए।¹

[This body is mine, I alone must have the right to take decision on it.]

It definitely reflects the voice of revolt in a male-dominated society.

A woman has knowledge, wisdom and talent and she has the capacity to fight against the difficulties that arise in the situations. But the society is dead against to her. Interesting fact about her is that she is in search of her own place against all the odds of the environment. So long our society would not learn to respect her, and give her equal rights, a healthy society would not be possible. A society, which does not regard women as human beings, can never be called a well – cultured society.

महिला लेखन के मूल में स्त्री चेतना का बीज है। इसलिए महिला लेखन न जाली है, न चुनौती, वरन वह मनुष्य, नागरिक और सामाजिक प्राणी की हैसियत से स्त्री के मानवीय अधिकारों की संघर्ष पूर्ण माँज करने वाला साहित्य है...²

[In the root of all writings of women writers there is the seed of woman consciousness. Therefore the women writings are not the words of abuse nor are they challenges. But these are the literature demanding humanitarian rights of a woman in the capacity of a human being, a citizen and after all a social being.]

In the Indian society sign of drastic change has been clearly seen. It can be said that with the development of individualistic thinking, a new consciousness about own independent identity has

grown up among Indian women. Gradually some type of revolt began to grow in their minds against adverse circumstances.

The women novelists in Hindi, began to depict such female characters who bear the revolutionary nature of women in its fullest form. The following are some of the important Hindi women litterateurs who depicted the rise and revolt of women in a very influential manner in their novels: - Krishna Sobti, Mridula Garg, Nasira Sharma, Prabha Khetan, Mamta Kaliya, Raji Seth, Usha Priyamvada, Mannu Bhandari, Manjul Bhagat etc. All these writers depicted revolutionary woman characters, who were able to establish themselves and were able to make their lives happy in spite of all odds of the social set up. Mahadevi Varma remarked in this regard as follows:

हमें -ा जि सी पर जय चाहिए, -ा जि सी से पराजय, -ा जि सी पर प्रभुत्व चाहिए, -ा जि सी पर प्रभुता। जेवल अपना वह स्था-न, वे स्वत्व चाहिए, जि-जि पुरषों जे निज्जट जेई उपयोग -हीं है, पर-तु जि-जे बि-ना हम समाज जा उपयोगी अंज ब-ा -हीं सजें जे...³

[We donot want to conquer anybody, nor want to be defeated by anybody. We donot want supremacy over anybody. Only we want a place and rights, which have no relationship with a man and without which we cannot become an useful organ of the society.]

Today there is a powerful change in women consciousness. But due to some superstitions and evil customs they could never change in proportion to their male counterparts. Although there had been considerable changes in their standard, values, mentality and education yet the modern society did not accept them completely. As a result a woman becomes the victim of severe situation, for which she feels herself humiliated and becomes rebellious.

Under such circumstances, the Bangladeshi revolutionary writer Taslima Nasreen remarked:

स्त्री जा दमन करने वाली तमाम तर्कों और शाजाओं को उखाड़ फेंकर समाज की जड़ पर चोट करने चाहती हूँ मैं। जानती हूँ, इस से मुझे हानि होगी। मेरा समाज-परिवार तहस-बहस हो जायेगा, मुझे लजातार जलील होना पड़ेगा। फिर भी यह जो जड़ी हूँ अजेली और निडर, मैं इसी तरह अटल जड़ी रहूँगी, मेरे हाथ में दो ही चीजें हैं-साहस और सच्चाई...⁴

[I wish to uproot all the bodies with their branches that dominate the women and to strike against the inertia of the society. I know that it would hurt me and my society would disperse. I shall have to suffer incessantly. Even then I stand alone and fearlessly. I shall stand firmly. I have two qualities – fearlessness and truth with me.]

In the process of ebb and flow of the social life, woman is going ahead. There are various problems and complexities before them.

There is only one way open for them that either she has to bear them or to contradict the traditional values and break them to go ahead.⁵

The names of Manu of the Chit Kobra (Mridula Garg), Shalmali of the Shalmali (Nasira Sharma), Mahrukh of the Thikare Ki Magni, Priya of the Chinnamasta (Prabha Khetan), Mandakini of the Idannammam (Maitreyee Pushpa) and Alma of the Alma Kabutari (Maitreyee Pushpa) are worth mentioning as revolutionary women in the world of Hindi novel literature.

In Assamese novel literature also such women of noble capacity are found who made the womenfolk great through their activities. The names of Subala in the novel Subala (Homen Borgohain), Menaka in the Antarip (Dr. Bhabendra Nath Saikia), Saudamini of the Nilkanthi Braja (Mamoni Roisom Goswami) and others are worth mentioning here. Giribala in the Datal Hatir Unwe Khowa Howda, and Saudamini of the Nilkanthi Braja fought against the fundamentalist society and achieved freedom for women.

Dr. Shailen Bharali in his articles in the Gariyasi speaks of the two characters Saudamini and Giribala as follows:

सौदामीनि आरु ञिरिवाला दुयो विद्रोहि-नी, सिहँतर विद्रोह समाजर रज-शीलता, जु-संस्कार, निष्पेक्ष आरु निर्यात-र विरुद्धे...⁶

[Both Saudamini and Giribala are revolutionaries. Their revolt was against the superstitions evil customs, exploitation and oppression.]

A voice against evils in the society and revolt against the same is also found in the novels of both Usha Priyamvada and Anuradha Sharma Pujari. In some cases their revolt becomes apparent and in some other cases they are in veiled form. Both of them expressed their own ideas through the characters of their novels. Their revolts as expressed in the novels under consideration can be classified into:

- i) Revolt against the society;
- ii) Revolt against the system;
- iii) Revolt against the values, and
- iv) Revolt against the untoward relationships

Below we discuss all these forms one by one:

4.1. Revolt against the society:

In the writings of both the novelists some characters are found which are always against the social evils like traditional customs, superstitions and evil practices.

In the Shesh Yatra of Usha Priyamvada, the heroine Anu can be cited as an example in whom we find a rebellious personality. After

their divorce, Pranav thought that Anu would not accept her portion. But contrary to his expectation, Anu not only accepted her portion but also she was able to establish herself as a woman of personality. There is anti-woman thinking in the Indian society. A woman is taught to be satisfied with what she get. Pranav also thought in that manner. But Anu thought it to be her right to accept her portion. Anu began learning to be favourable towards situations slowly. So Pranav, told her that she had been changing ⁷ and Anu replied boldly that perhaps she was changing.⁸

Anu revolted against that society which does not allow any woman to go ahead. The society recognizes a woman as a wife or a daughter, but it is afraid of recognizing her as an independent identity. When Anu lived as Mrs. Kumar, she was surrounded by many. But when she began to live alone, everybody turned their faces against her. Anu had the guts to prove her individual identity outside the society.

The rebellions mind of Anu did not revolt against the society nor against any individual but its revolt was against her own destiny, own identity and against her own feelings.

यह बात मुझे हर वक्त जचोटती थी जि मैं एज व्यक्ति जी हैसियत से जु छ भी -हीं रही, जो जु छ थी, वह सब श्रीमती जु मार जी हैसियत से। बार - बार

लज्जा जि मैं ने वह साल क्यों जो दिए, बिरिया-नी और जबाब ब-ाने में ? कुछ
जिया क्यों -हीं, अपने जो कुछ आये क्यों -ही ब-ाया...⁹

[It always vexed me that I am nothing in comparison to the capacity of a man. What I was, it was due to being the wife of kumar only. Once again I thought why I spent that one year- I did spend it only making Biryani or Kabab. Why did I not do anything; why did I not make myself something?]

When Anu felt some weakness in her, she began to remember her part. She began to remember the strenuous journey. For which she, formerly a simple girl, was turned into a practical and skilful woman.

One can find the glorious and strong personality of Wana, the heroine of the Antervanshi in another important novel of Usha Priyamvada. At the beginning any element of rebellion or contradiction is not found in Wana. But gradually the growing internal dis-satisfaction and sense of not getting free and open life began to make her restless. In this Western society, she finds no place for her. She then went out of her home stead and began to join in services. There was a tendency in her to oppose the ideas of Shivesh.

Finally she decided to revolt against the society which did not allow a married woman to fall in love nor she was allowed to display her love. Towards the last part of her life, she who lived only for others, began now to learn how to live for herself, Wana was not at all happy

with Shivesh: मैं -हीं जा-ती जि मैं आजे क्या ज-रूँजी - शायद रहती रहूँगी,
शिवेश जी पत्नी और आज्ञा विज्ञास जी माँ। ज-दम ज-दम पर समझौता, हर मोड़
पर दूसरे जी मर्जी से ही चलूँगी...¹⁰

[I did not know what I should do in coming days. Perhaps I should remain as the wife of Shivesh and mother of Akash and Vikas. There was compromise at every step and following others at every turning point.]

Neither the family nor the society allows a woman to live only for her. Wana could never break this domestic binding. But she took a decision that she should get her love and should go out of the society. Then and then only nobody would be able to stop her, neither the society nor the family.

Finally Wana took the most important and the biggest decision of life that she should have physical relationship with Rahul and should say good bye to Shivesh.¹¹

Sushma is a self-dependent woman who lived away from the sociality. She is the heroine of the first novel of Usha Priyamvada (Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren), who could not get herself married due to domestic and economic reasons. She finally decided to remain a spinster. But in spite of all limitations, she fell in love and had physical relationships. She did not take it as a crime nor felt any internal conflict about its legality. She did never care for any social dignity. It is difficult

to say whether she did it with her knowledge about it or did it in her weak moment. All the contradictions and disruptions in her character were due to the positions of time, society and material needs.

सुषमा जो प्रेमी -हीं चाहिए था। उसे पति जी आज्ञा भी - थी, पर ज भी ज भी उसका मन - जाने क्यों डूबने लगता। अपने परिवार का सारा बोझ अपने ऊपर लिए सुषमा जँपने लगती...¹²

[Sushma did not want lovers. She had no desire for a husband. But it is difficult to know why did her mind began to sink down. Sushma began to trouble as the whole burden of her family was on her.]

Aravind Jain remarked:

“ पचपन जंभे लाल दीवारेछ जामजाजी अविवाहित स्त्री जे सामाजिक परिवेश और व्यक्तिगत आज्ञाओं जे बीच जटिल अंतर्संबंधो जी मनोवैज्ञानिक स्तर पर जाँच पड़ताल और सामाजिक स्तर पर बेहतर विजल्प जी जोज में संघर्षरत पहली महत्वपूर्ण अभिव्यक्ति है। विवाह संस्था जी अनिवार्यता पर प्रश्न चिह्न लगती -नायिका का दृष्टिकोण -नितान्त व्यक्तिवादी है और -न ही पूर्ण रूप से परंपरावादी। इसलिए उसे हर बार व्यक्ति और समाज जे बीच जी संधि रेखा पर जड़े होकर सोच-ना समझ-ना पड़ता है...¹³

[The Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren is the important expression of struggle for working unmarried women seeking better alternative in the social stage and the internal conflict between complex

relationship in the psychological stage in the social environment and personal aspirations. The question mark as placed by the heroine on the organization of marriage is neither quite individualistic nor traditional one. That is why she has to stand on the border line between individual and the society all the times.]

When Sushma heard of the discussion on the relationship between Neel and herself she was quite angry. She herself uttered:

में जि सी जी परवाह -हीं ज रती...¹⁴

[I donot care for anybody.]

Again, after coming to the life of Neel when she was disturbed by the bindings, she began to think of her personal freedom. She told Minakshi

मेरे व्यक्तिगत जीव-न में जि सी जो दजल दे-ने जा क्या हज है ?¹⁵

[Who has the right to occupy my personal life?]

She continues –

तुमसे एज प्रार्थ-ना है जि अब मुझसे ज भी -न जह-ना जि और लोज मेरे लिए क्या जह रहे है...¹⁶

[Now I pray you not to tell me what others speak of me.]

It shows that she wanted to live her life in accordance with her own wishes. But the society does not allow her to do it. On this Aravind Jain remarks:

जहणे जो सही है जि जि सी जे व्यक्तिगत जीव-न में जि सी जो दजल दे-
जा क्या हज है? लेजि-न सामाजिज व्यवहार में इस सिद्धांत जी धज्जियाँ उडते हुए
हम सब प्रायः रोज ही देजते हैं। जोई सुषमा एज पुरुष-मित्र ब-नाजर तो देजे जि
परिवार, रिश्तेदार, सहेलियाँ, सहज-मी, छात्राँ और अ-य लोज क्या क्या आरोप -हीं
लजाते! इसजे बाद आत्मज्जानि, अपराध बोध, मा-नसिज विजिप्तटा..पिछले ३० सालों
में सारे सामाजिज, आर्थिज, नैतिज बदलाव जे बावजूद मध्यवर्जीय मा-नसिज-ता में
जोई विशेष अंतर दिजाई -हीं देता। दबाव पहले से अधिज बढ़ रहा है और सुषमा
जैसी लड़कियों जा जीव-न और ज्यादा घसंघर्षपूर्जड हुआ है...¹⁷

Sushma turns towards Neel only for mental and emotional happiness and security. But from the point of domestic duty and social prestige, she wanted to throw away Neel out of her life. Now there is the beginning of her new personality with the taking of decisions on her own matters.

The thought of living alone made Sushma different from other women.

Bhaswati and Mahua are two important female characters in Anuradha Sharma Pujari's novel Hriday Ek Vigyapan. The writer expressed her own social ideology through these two characters. Both of them are educated modern women, and both are living in their distinct ways. But several problems are found in their knowledge and understanding, social and moral view points, and in their mentality.

According to the writer the experience related to life for both Bhaswati and Mahua are different yet their visions to look on the situations are very similar.¹⁸

Both Bhaswati and Mahua were related to the advertising world. In this world, a woman has to face struggles to establish her identity and to keep it in tact. In this novel there is a living picture how the society exploits the working women. When the true picture of the advertising world revealed itself before Bhaswati, she was quite shocked. In this world a woman is a matter of enjoyment only. Witnessing the status of a woman in the working place, her mind began to revolt. Mahua was also a victim of such situation. She began to control the contractors of the society according to her own conditions. She was winner in this matter. Mahua becomes the mother of Chandan's daughter Kinnari without being bound by any social binding. Her family took it as a deface and left her. But Ranga Masi encouraged her and gave inspiration to live. When Kinnari was born after the death of Chandan, she became quite lonely. There was no place for her in the society. Then it was Ranga Masi who inspired her to live and Mahua lived without caring for the society. She uttered:

मोर माँ देउताई च-द-र सैते थजा बाबेई जा-गे मोज त्याज जरा -ासिल।
च-द-र मृत्युर पासत मोर जे-जे-वा बिपद हब पारे, मोर मा-सिज अवस्था जे-ने हब

पारे। एबारो सहा-नुभूतिरे साईसिल ने? ऐता स-ता-र अनुभव अनुभूतितई तेऊँलोजर वंश मर्यदा डांजर हल-ने ?¹⁹

[Had not my parents left me as I was living with Chandan? Did they consider with pity how danger might come to me after the death of Chandan or what my mental condition might be? For them, the dignity of the family became greater than the emotions of their child.]

The Sahebpurar Boroshun (2003) is another important novel of Anuradhajee. The heroine of the novel, Varsha represents a modern woman. Her thoughts and ideals are quite modern. In this novel she depicted the character of a woman establishing herself in the society. Dr. Gobinda Prasad Sharma remarked:

पुरुष आरु -नारी समा-ने शिजित हई-उलोवा एज-न समाजत -नारीये गिजर व्यक्तिसत्तार पुर्ज मर्यदा प्रतिपन्न जरिब जोजा एति परिस्थितिर प्रतिफल-न जरि ऐकराजी -नारीर चित्रज जरिले-जि करजित आमि देजा पाऊँ असमीया औप-यासत -तु-जै उलोवा सेई -तु-न -नारीर मुज...²⁰

[In the Sahebpurar Boroshun, the writer depicts the picture of a woman, who is trying to establish complete dignity of a woman in one society where a woman being educated equally with men and that in woman we find the face of a new woman.]

Varsha was dead against to the custom that a woman has to do and think as her husband wishes. After her engagement she discovered

that her would be husband Prantik was also a man of that thinking. She took her own decision: प्राण्टिज, मोर सम्पर्जे तोमार जि धारजा सेया लई मई तोमार स्त्री हब -गोवारिम, मोर जोगो मर्यदाय -गथाजिब...²¹

[Sorry, Prantik, I cannot be your wife because of your idea about me; as in that case I shall have no dignity.]

Varsha then began a new life. She became a member of a N.G.O. named 'Inset'. She hated that society which is always under controlled principles. A society should be a society which stands united and where one member respects the other. Now the society formed by Varsha, Shekhar, Hussain, Sanjib and Rakhi is not an artificial one and is not only for show.

In the Boragi Nadir Ghat, Anuradhajee depicted a picture of the changing social system. The development and changes of the society are forcing ahead. But sometimes these changes are for good while in some cases they are not good. The mentality of human being is also forcing ahead along with the social changes. In this novel there is a picture of the changing society as well as the mentality of some people who are going astray. Dharani and Mrs. Khanna raised their voices against such mentality going astray.

“ तुर आजतेई ठाईज-र जि परिवर्त-न, एई परिवर्त-न भाललई ने बेयालई। ज-ना बूझा मा-नुह जिगियेई जदि अ-याय आरु असत मा-नुहर पज लय, बल साहस

वृद्धि जरात हात ऊजा-न दिये, ते-ते एई समाजर परा सतता आरु धर्मर दरे
शब्दबोरज बहिस्जार ज राई भाल...²²

[What a change to this place instantly ! what for this change? –
for good or evil! If the learned men helped the unjust and evil men and
encouraged them then it was better to bavish the words like honesty
and religion from the society.]

What ever was done by Dharani and Mrs. Khanna to reform the
society and for the good of the society, had been always
misunderstood. There was a bad message against their names. But it
gave birth to a new dream in the minds of Dharani and Mrs. Khanna.
They fixed their aim in life and began to go ahead.

Considering the novels under this study, it is realized that the
present young generation wanted to show a new direction. They
wanted a total change. The new women generation who are educated
and wise do not accept the things as they exist.

Dr. Patharikar remarks: एज ओर पुरा-नी पीढ़ी जो परम्पराओं,
सामाजिज दायरो जे समर्थज है तो दूसरी और -या रक्त लिए -यी पीढ़ी, इस जे
लिए जुद्ध भी है, थजा-हारा जुजित भी है, जो जि सारे तर्ज ही-न सामाजिज दायरो
जो परे ढजे ल जर आजे निज ल-ने जी होड़ में है...²³

[On one hand the old generation who are the supporter of
traditions, social customs etc., on the other the new generation are

against them. Because they wanted to go ahead surpassing the old ones]

All the characters of both Usha Priyamvada and Anuradha Sharma Pujari are considerate and with reasonable ideas. They donot want to do something under the bindings of society, which their heart and understaning donot allow. The characters like Sushma of the Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren, Anu of the Shesh Yatra, Wana of the Antervarshi, Bhaswati of the Hriday Ek Bigyapan, Varsha of the Saheb Purar Boroshun and Mrs. Khanna of the Boragi Nadir Ghat are completely with independent identities. They did not accept the social standards also. Because they believed that in practice there is no social standard. Sushma of the Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren remarked on social standard as follows:

आप जे सामाजिज मापदज्जद यह जहते है जि आप सबजे सामने जि सी जे व्यक्तिगत जीव-न जी धज्जियाँ उड़ा दीजिए? हर एज जा जीव-न एज ऐसा अ-गुलंघ-नीय दुर्ज है जिसजा अतिज्रमज जर-ना जि सी जा अधिजार -हीं है...²⁴

[Your social standard means flying of personal ensign of somebody before all. The life of each and everyone is such an insurpansable fort that none has the right to overcome.]

The same mentality can be found in Varsha of the Sahebpurar Boroshun and in Mahua of the Hriday Ek Bigyapan of Anuradhajee. All

of them had their own ideal of life and had a receptive mind for which they did not allow them to be guided by others. Mahua once remarked:

तुमि तोमार विवेज्ज सुधि जम जरि जाबा, विवेज्ज फाजि दि सज लोडे
प्रत्यय नियाब पारि, निज्ज -नोवारि...²⁵

[Work with the permission of your own conscience. You can convince all other by telling lies to them but you can never do so to your self.]

It is a fact that the rebellion of the female characters of Ushajee is depicted freely and openly. Wana being bound by social norms could not get her love. She knows it well that if somebody wants to please others in accordance to social norms then somebody can never remain pleased. "Therefore, she broke her own limit and began her life a new for the sake of happiness. Varsha in the Sahebpurar Boroshun did the same. If she wanted something then she herself sought for it and gained it. Her own search made life meaningful." Varsha represented modern female society in that form.

Usha Priyamvada in her novels the Shesh Yatra and the Antervanshi, created independent woman in place of devoted wife. In the Shesh Yatra, Anu was satisfied for being a member of the high society, in which Pranav kept her as a queen. But when she faced the truth, then she realized to what extent the society was hollow and it

depended on showiness alone. Then she kicked at it and wanted to make her own fortune.

We can find similarity of thinking in all – Wana, Varsha and Anu. They lived in different environments. But all of them had the firm decisions to fight against the situations – the odds. They all are successful in their respective places.

4.2 Revolt against traditional social setup and the system :

In our social system, there had been exploitation of women on the basis of gender differences. Taking the advantage of their physical weakness, the male folk created the social system in favour of themselves and made the women folk easy prey of exploitation. Today the social values created by the capitalist society are based on the principles of enjoyment and as such even a woman is regarded as a means of happiness or enjoyment. As a result they are exploited mentally and physically. Premchand while expressing his views on women says:

नारी समाज का निर्माण करती है, संस्कार देती है, पोषण करती है।
इसलिए वह संघर्षशील है। जब भी जभी विद्रोही भी, टूटती है फिर भी उठती है, वह
पुरुष मना जो जानने वाली उसका जीवना बनाने वाली होती है...²⁶

[The women creates the society, reforms it and nurtures it. Therefore they are combative and sometimes they are rebellious. They sometimes fall and then rise. They know the mind of a man and at the same time they creat the life of men.]

The authority of the father is not so organized socially that it can survive with a woman. Therefore the man folk began to describe woman folk in a manner so that the necessity can go down. It is natural for a woman that she remains dumb about herself and as such she remain overlooked. In a patriarchal society, the woman is cast in such a mould or form that he remains there for the whole life in particular shapes. But now a days a conscious woman who is quite conscious for her own rights and privileges begins to revolt against such traditional system. The writings of woman writers become a successful medium for such revolution.

The Indian social system has profound influence on Indian literature. The heroes and heroines should be from the upper class of the society and this idea made the writers depict the 'Dalits' always as secondary ones. They also place the Dalits in a pitiable condition. In practice these writers can never break the social system and come out from it; and therefore, they dared not to write humanitarian and realistic literature. They are always dominated by injustice and exploitive social system.²⁷

Under such circumstances, the writers prepare stories related to problems of women through which only the pitiable condition of a woman is reflected. The voices of these writers are reformatory but they are not against the exploitation of women by men. Simply they want minor change in the social system.

Asharani Bohra while writing on the need of fighting against the system says:

प्रबुद्ध स्त्री-पुरुषों के सामने यह समस्या अधिष्ठ है, इसलिए उन्हे ही, कुंठाओं को उभारने के बजाए इस दिशा में पहल जरूरी चाहिए।व्यवस्था के अन्दर नारी शोषण जैसे विषय पर विभिन्न पहलुओं से, विविध विधाओं में जाफ़ी लिखा जाना चाहिए।²⁸

[This problem is more serious for learned couples. Therefore, they should take the initiative, rather than suppressing it.enough should be written about different aspects of exploitation of women.]

Most of the contemporary writers should agree with the idea that they should be able to understand reality and create more and more characters. They should look into the life through life itself. They should also know how to change the society. This is rather the social duty for them.

Women have already broken the limits of the middle ages. They now want to establish themselves in the society. They are always

against the systems for which they have been exploited so long. The women of today are against all systems which bind them in the name of religion and other superstitions.

Mahadevi Verma remarked:

धर्म ज़ा शासन-हमारे जीवन पर वैसा ही प्रयास ही-ना हो-ना चाहिए जैसी हमारी इच्छा शक्ति ज़ा आचरण पर होता है। सप्रयास धर्म जीवन ज़ा सबसे बड़ा अभिशाप है।²⁹

[The Rule of religion on our life should be devoid of exertion like that of our will power over our behaviour. A religion with exertion is the greatest curse.]

In the same manner Prabha Khetan asked:

कौन लोड हैं, जो हमें श्लोक सु-ना सु-ना कर बता रहे हैं ज़ि हम अविश्व-नीय, अबला पुरुष निर्भर और संजल्प ही-ना है ? शास्त्र द्वारा प्रतिपादित स्त्री की पहचान और पुरुष से उसकी भिन्नता दो-नो ही में मुझे भयानक षडयंत्र दिखाई देते हैं।³⁰

[Who is that one who only utters 'slokas' and says that we are faithless, weak man – dependent and devoid of imagination? I find a severe conspiracy in the identity of a woman as defined by Shastras and differences between a man and a woman shown by them.]

During the seventieth and eightieth decades of the twentieth century when women were trying to take the whole world in their grip,

there had been confusion every where on the question relating to problems of women. Writers like German Grior and Simone De Beauvoir strongly opposed the exploitation of women only because of their gender. According to these writers the way for revolution can be cleared for them only through their idea of revolt in them.³¹

The Women folk began to be conscious about their rights under new changes in their status as they are marching towards strengthening themselves. They began to revolt against male dominated society. The man folk does not recognize the fundamental rights of women and tries to dominate them in every step. On the other hand the women wanted to change the slavish mentality of the males and to establish their own identity. In a feudal society the women had their only recognition as wife, mother, sister etc; and had no independent existence. They began to be conscious of their own self due to modernity and knowledge. They also became conscious of their own emotion and wishes.

स्त्री आन्दोलन पितृसत्तात्मक समाज में चल रहे स्त्री- संबंधी पूर्वाग्रहों से पुरुष की प्रमिष्ट मुक्ति को असम्भव नहीं मानता, दोषी पुरुष नहीं है, वह पितृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था है जो जन्म से लेकर मृत्यु तक पुरुषों को लजातार एज ही पाठ पढ़ाती है जिस्त्रियां उनसे हीनतर है, उनसे भोजन साधन मात्र।³²

(The rebellion of women against male dominated society The men are not guilty, it is the patriarchal system which is

guilty because it teaches that a woman is inferior to a man; she is a matter of enjoyment only.)

In the novels the Shesh Yatra and the Antervanshi of Usha Priyamvada, the heroines Anu and Wana raised their voices against the male dominated social system.

Anu was cheated by Pranav. Anu said.....

मैं तो अपने पत्नीत्व में डूबी थी, पर शायद प्रजव जा एज ही स्त्री से जाम नहीं चलता।³³

(I was emerged in the wifehood, but Pranav can not go on with one women.)

In our society there is a domination of males over females. Pranav is a part of this society. Anu has to face the reality. At the beginning she was mad with her fate, but later she began to face the situation. The idea of Pranav is the idea of every individual of a male dominated society, whether he is of our own country or of any other country of the world. Pranav said to Anu- हम भारत में तो नहीं, -ा उस पुराने समय में, जि निभा-ना तो है ही..... जितने तनाव, जितने दवाब होते हैं, उसमें जाड़ी जींच-ना मुश्किल हो जाता है। जासतौर से मेरे जैसे स्वच्छ-द, बैचे-ा, आजुल प्रकृति जे व्यक्ति जे लिए।³⁴

Pranav did never think that Anu might have a separate identity. Anu began to turn into one whom Pranav wanted. In a family, a wife

should be such as her husband wanted. But Anu regained her own identity when she came away from Pranav. The novel also speak of her

आज वह सीधी सतर सामने बैठी है..... आत्मजरिमा और विश्वास से भरी। प्रजव ने चाहा कि वह सचमुच एजदम जहराई से अनु के लिए प्रसन्न हो सके, पर इस जज में कुछ जेद, कुछ जोया जोया सा क्यों लजा है ? क्या पतिभाव जहीं चोट जा रहा है।³⁵

A man with his ego takes a woman to be weak. But when he finds her contrary to his idea, his male ego is hurt.

When Anu finds herself weak then she says to herself.

याद करो वह अपमान, वह अवमानना, जज के सामने जा वह अद्धसत्य, वह अस्वीकृति, याद करो प्रजव की बेवफाईयाँ, अलज होने के बाद के वह घोर संघर्ष के दिन.....।³⁶

Anu fought against herself and showed Pranav that she was also a part of the society, where a woman was not merely a name. Anu also proved that she could go against the tradition and could find her own self. The character of Anu twisted the destiny. She challenged the man and turned the traditional idea of weakness of women into ability.

Ushajee in her 'Antervenshi' illustrated the domination of a man in the male-dominated society through Shivesh. There are two main

male characters – Rahul and Shivesh in the novel. But their characters are contradictory each other.

Shivesh lived in a foreign country and yet he was not free from the traditional customs of India. He had full support to all obstructions thrust upon women. Wana was in service which Shivesh did not like. Shivesh wanted his personal happiness only. He even did not take of Wana. She told him –

तुम्हारे दिमाग में आया तज -हीं जि वा-ना जा अप-ना सोच, अप-ना सुज हो सज ता है।³⁷

(You even could not think that Wana had her own thinking and she could have her own happiness.)

The self-centred thinking of Shivesh was realized by Wana and as such she had to suffer mentally. Gradually she began to revolt against all these as all the mental tortures went beyond her forbearance. She began to hate traditions of male – dominated society. She began studies and joined in services. When Wana began her studies, Shivesh, with his idea that a woman was not fit for anything, believed that Wana would not be able to do anything after passing her matriculation examination.

In other novels of Ushajee the voice against traditionalism is not very powerful; and yet it has been given prime place.

In the novels of Anuradha Sarma Pujari, the voice against traditional system is clearly found. The characters like Varsha in the Sahebpurar Boroshun. Mahua and Bhaswati in the Hriday Ek Bigyapan fought against male domination in the society.

Bhaswati was in service. She was suffering from the idea that a man always wanted to dominate over a woman internally and externally. Bhaswati was always against it. Her mind grow rebellious to find that the man always exploited a woman in the working places. Whenever she found the nude picture of a woman in the advertisement she was much disturbed. Her rebellious mind became more and more revolutionary.

एई डिरेक्टरबोरज आजौ जेवा हय घड्डिम माचे-टड। जि दम्भेरे एऊलोजे जिनि लैछे -नारीर उदंज पिठि, जा-ध.....।³⁸

(These directors are called the Dream Merchant ! with what pride had they buy the nude body of a woman?)

In this manner Varsha in the novel Sahebpurar Boroshun of Anuradhajee is found to be dead against to the traditional social system, where a son is given more importance than to a girl. When Prantik arrived home alone, everybody found Varsha to be guilty and even her parents spoke in Prantik's favour. Varsha was very much sorry when everybody believed Prantik and not her. She was much more sad; particularly when her mother said to her.

वर्षा, आमार परियालर मा-न मर्यदा सज्जलो शेष ज्जरिलि, देऊतारे आत्मीय स्वज-न जारोरे मुजलै चाब -नोवारे।³⁹

(Varsha ! you have finished the honour and respect of our family and we are not fit enough to show our faces to any body.)

She then simply told them that they should not believe everything related by Prantik. But no body cared. It was due to our social system, where nobody tries to understand a woman. Varsha opposed the idea. She does not like to live as a doll at the hands of men. She does not like that others should take decisions for her. She understands the nature of the male dominated society. Even in her own family her mother is not free to take any decision. She does not want that she should also suffer like her mother. Varsha, decided to leave Prantik in her own will and cancelled the marriage. It was a big challenge to the male – dominated domestic tradition.

निजर व्यक्तिसत्तार मर्यदार बाबे सजाज, निजर रुचि-अभिरुचिर मूल्य आरोप ज्जरा ऐई शिजिता -नारीर इयातेई आरम्भ हल पुरुषर अधिपत्यर विपजे प्रतिवाद।⁴⁰

(here begins the challenges against the domination of males by these educated and conscious women who put values towards their own personality.)

Once Varsha remarked

तुमि जे-जे देउतार इच्छा अनिच्छार पुतला है जीव-न ज ताईसा..... शिजिता
हईउ तुमि देउतार प्रत्येजटु अनुमतिर बाबे बातचाव लजा हय, ते-ने एता जीव-न
मयो पोवातो आशा जरा-ने ? मा मय तुमि -हय, मोज तोमार दरे हबले
-जबा.....⁴¹

(Do not except me live a life like you where you are nothing but a
toy at the hands our father all though you are educated, yet you
have to wait for the permission of our father.)

This mentality of Varsha reflected her revolt against the society as
well as for the male centric family. The mental condition of Varsha
when she decided to go to Tilwa, a poor village of Bihar leaving the air-
conditioned Railway bogie reflected a strong feminist mentality. The
way she went to devote herself in social services after canceling the
settled marriage proved her feminist attitude.

Both Anuradhajee and Ushajee depicted the female characters
in their novels as independent personalities. They donot retreat even at
hostile situations, but they go ahead challenging the situations. Both
these two novelists aised questions against the double standard of
male – dominated society and independent existence of women.

The male – dominated society framed all the moral ideology,
values etc. so that a woman remained as their wives, daughters etc.
only. But in the novels of these two writers women like Anu, Wana,

Bhaswati, Varsha, Mahua and others challenged the tradition of the society.

Wana of Priyamvadajee and Varsha of Anuradhajee are with different personalities, yet they are found to be very much similar to each other. Both of them have a strong will to challenge the male-dominated society. They represent modern educated women. Anu also learnt to fight against the society. Anuradhajee illustrated the position of working women through Bhaswati and Mahua.

Both of these two writers believed that when the relationship between a man and a woman would be established on equal basis, then and then only a healthy society would come into existence with all its development. It would be such a society where there would be absence of inhuman atmosphere.

There is enough influence of the western civilization on the novels of Ushajee. Therefore the women characters of Ushajee are found to be braver than those of Anuradhajee. Both Ushajee and Anuradhajee showed in their novels the significance and successfulness of the life of a woman. Although the female characters are weak to some extent yet they are not confused. They realized that they have a life beyond the bindings of the Society and the family. They have to way for their own life. But all the bindings are not trouble some. Where there is also the question of respect and honour. There was no satisfaction for Wana when she and Shivesh were bound together but on the other hand,

Rahul could give her satisfaction. Similarly Pranav cheated Anu but Dipankar managed her. In the same manner, Varsha was hurt at the hands of Prantik while Sanjib healed the wound.

All the characters of both the novelists like Wana, Anu and Varsha's found to be very much similar, but the situations were not.

4.3 : REVOLT AGAINST VALUES :

In the writings of feminist women writers there has been a very stringent, sharp and printed criticism of the Patriarchal society. Particularly how a woman is being neglected and how injustice is being done to her has been discussed. Not only the life of a woman but also her thoughts, feelings and aspirations all are trampled down. Therefore, the society is afraid of bold women and writers. The society recognized those women who respected the moral values of the male dominated tradition. These and such women are taken by the society as modest, loyal to husband, active and permissive women. Throughout the whole world a woman is under iron chain of violence. The cause and nature of violence may be different, but the truth is that a woman is always suffering from some type of violence in all societies. This has been in force for hundred years although it has been an injustice in the form of justice and valueless for all times. It has been in force without any logic behind it. Here the women remain illiterate,

poor, neglected, non-existent and lack of senses. Under such circumstances, freedom individuality and values are quite meaningless.

It is to be noted that although there has been destruction of the traditional morality, belief and values yet no firm basis of new morality and new values has been established. Indian women are suffering under such circumstances. They have on one hand the traditional Indian culture and on the other the pulling of western modernity. As a result there have been a powerful change, which strongly influences the direction and view points of the Indian women.

In both Hindi and Assamese literature, particularly in the writings of women, the change is quite evident. The women writers compelled the society to rethink on the matter by exposing the exploitation over women by men. Being cheated for thousand years the women writers showed their capacity how to rise against the bindings of the traditional customs, values and morality. In this connection Nasira Sharma remarks :

आज इ-न सारी औरतो जे सायें में एज -या औरत वर्ज उभर रहा है। जो अपने औरतप-न जो रजते हुए -नारी समाज में जाजृति, आत्मि-वश्वास, स्वावलंब-न जी राह पर चल-ने लजा है।⁴²

(Under the shadow of these women a class of new women came into existence, which began to walk on the path of awareness, self-confidence and self – dependence.)

The role of women under Indian tradition, religion, philosophy and culture, society and family was simply to obey and to support. Now an environment for independence and enjoyment of rights came into existence. The traditional values began to fall into pieces and the new developed women writers began to explain the values like morality, purity, forbearance etc. thrust upon women in a new way. Dr. Mali remarks:

परम्परा, व्यवस्था, परिवार तथा संबंधो जे प्रति -नारी जाजरुजता जे पजलेजर -नारी एज ऐसी यात्रा पर निजली है, जहा उसजी भाव-नाओं जी, अस्तित्व जी, आत्मनिर्जय जी सच्ची मंजिल हासिल जर सजे।⁴³

(Taking the side of awareness of women for tradition, system, family and relationships, the women came out in such a journey which can lead them to the goal of their emotions existence and in the last decade of the twentieth Century, the women raised the need of changing the established moral values. In this connection, Hindi women writers like Krishna Sobti, Maitreyee Pushpa, Malati Joshi, Mannu Bhandari, Mridula Garg, Sudha Arora, Nasira Sharma, Usha Priyamvada, Alka Sarawagi and others and Assamese writers like Nirupama Borgohain, Mamoni Roisom Goswami, Arupa Patangia Kalita, Rita Choudhury, Nilima Dutta and others tried to arrive at their destinations.

In the novels under our consideration both the writers depicted female empowerment by fighting against social values and challenging various traditions. They did not depict a woman as weak. Both of them challenged those values which are against womanhood. According to Anuradhajee, today educated women are not helpless in fighting against traditional values. They wanted to look into everything with logic.

All the female characters of Ushajee are educated and reasonable. They are creating new standards and values favourable to female life by dismantling the traditional standards. Today their own identity is at the peak of everything. Characters created by Ushajee like Anu, Divya and Wana; and like Bhaswati, Mahua, Ranga Mahi, Varsha, Rakhi, Vidya, Vinodini, Mrs. Khanna created by Anuradhajee are with their own view points on family marriage, love and domestic life. In other words they have thrusted new values of independent life in the society. In the Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren, Sushma refused to recognize the social values like marriages and did not regard the physical contact with Neal as immoral one. She loved Neal but could not marry him, because her responsibilities towards the family did not allow her to marry nor her own thinking regard marriage as a necessity. Gradually the traditional values of a marriage have been slacken down.

In the case of marital relationship also, there had been growing new view points. A revolutionary change has taken place in the male-

female relationship. At the same time there has been a revolutionary change in the traditional values of life. Now-a-days the vigil women objected to the ancient idea of godliness and ownership of a husband in Indian family. They showed sharp reactions against the egoistic mentality of a man whether he was a husband or a lover. All the Characters like Anu, Wana, Varsha, Mahua and others challenged the ancient values of male domination.

In the novel “Shesh Yatra”, Usha Priyamvada put forward a deep new ideology which questioned our traditional values. When Dr. Goodman asked Anu – “ What type of love is this? Selfish or without self respect? Touching the foot of those who kicked you off? This is what your civilization teachers?”⁴⁴ Here not only of Anu but it showed the hollow nature of the whole Indian social values.

Wana of the Antervanshi regarded herself as the prey of domestic exploitation. Which was a kind of Indian values in which the opinion of the girl was never sought at the time of her marriage? Here Wana expressed her displeasure :

शिवेश जे बाप ने पजड़ा दिया, मैं एज पशु जी तरह चली आई, जो बचप-
से, समाज ने शिजा दी वही लीज पजड़जर चलती रही।⁴⁵

Wana how began to revolt coming out of the fold. She left her husband and decided for her lover. In the same manner, like Wana, Varsha of the Sahebpurar Boroshun did not accept the tradition. She

did not want of lead a life like her mother, who was like a toy in the hands of her husband.

मई तुमि -हय मा, मोज तोमार दरे हबले -जबा ।⁴⁶

(I am not you, Do not ask me to be yourself)

In this manner, Bhaswati and Mahua came out the boundary made for a woman and fulfilled their own aim. Mahua became an unmarried mother and began to rear her daughter with pride.

All these female characters represent modern woman. They represent the changes in the mental psychology of all types of woman – educated, illiterate, rural, urban etc. They challenge all types of evils against woman like – the Pardah System, the Sati System, untouchability, the Dowry system etc.

Both the novelists Ushajee and Anuradhajee in their novels depicted certain such situations where there are the reflections of female mentality as it is.

This idea is very much exiting and revolutionary. This has been realized by modern writers and as such it became theme of literature now-a-days.

In the Indian Society there have been revolts against traditional values gradually. Now-a-days, logic and evaluation displace faith and belief and therefore, the reign of religion comes to an end. The women

began to feel that some established values, traditions and systems bound them and they should somehow get rid of them.

4.4 Revolt against unfavourable relations:

The women writers in their own literatures prepared new exposition of human being in the context of the age. Friendship between a man and a woman is not recognized as easy under Indian practice. It has been regarded as an influence of the Western Civilization. In Hindi, the women writers successfully depicted the changing of relationships under the changed mentality of people. Among the relationship shown, there are certain such relationships which can never be accepted and therefore, objection to these relationships are quite natural.

In the novel Pachpan Khambhe Lal Deewaren of Usha Prayamvada, there is love affair between Sushma and Neel, although Neel was younger to her. The society never accept this relation. Sushma could not own Neel. She began to think.

- नील जे बजैर मैं दु छ भी -हीं हूँ, जेवल एज छाया, एज जोए हुए स्वर जी प्रतिध्वनि, और अब एसी ही रहूँगी, म-न जी वीरानियों में भटजटी हुई।⁴⁷

(Without Neel I am non-entity- I am only a Shadow, an echo of a decayed voice. I shall remain as such- and shall wonder in the woods of mind.)

She was angry upon her friends. She did never interfere in others personal matter nor she did anything wrong to others. Yet they reported to the Principal and he (the principal) made her responsible for the immoral behavior.

Sushma could not make the society accept her relationship with Neel, nor she could put their relationship in the proper place in their lives. The sacred love between Sushma and Neel was never recognized by the society.

In the Shesh Yatra, Anu did not recognize the immoral relationship of Pranav. When she came to know of the relationship of Pranav with other woman, she lost her mental balance, But later she learnt to face the situations. In this novel, the relationships as established by Pranav, Vibha Chandrika and Namita can never be tolerated from any point of view.

In the Antervanshi, wana, Shibesh and Rahul were bound by some complicated relationship; wana was seeking some unknown desire

वस्तुतः वह जहरे प्रेमसमर्पण की अभिलाषिणी है। लेकिन यह जीवना का व्यंजन ही है, जो प्रेम उसे पति से नहीं मिलता सारिजा से दोस्त के रूप में उसकी हत्या के बाद ख्रिस्ती-नसे, उसके समलैंगिक सम्बन्ध में मिलता है, शिवेश की आत्महत्या के बाद वह प्रेम राहुल से मिलता है।⁴⁸

[In practice she was longing for deep love, But the irony of fate was that she did not get that love from her husband. She got it from Sarika as a good friend then after death of Sarika from Christina. She established homosexual love with Christina. After suicide of Shivesh she got love from Rahul, for which she was restless.]

It is seen that all their relationship are not acceptable under any circumstances.

Anuradhajee in her novels realized the delicacy of all types of relationship and studied about the delicacies. Opposition to any relationship stands only when it is not acceptable to oneself or to the society.

There are illustrations of very many relationships like that of Mahuwa Chandan, Ranga Masi-Avinash Bhattacharyya etc. in Pujarjee's novel Hriday Ek Vigyapan. Expecting the relationship between Prayag and Bhaswati, the society did not recognize the relationship between Ranga Mashi and her lover and mahuwa and chandan also

In the Saheb Purar Boroshun, Varsha did not find any reason in the relationship of her paramour Prantik with her sister on the ground that it might hurt her. Varsha thought.

- व-याई जे-जे माणि लले, जोआ तिनि बसरर बायेजर प्रेमिज, जार सैते सेई तारिजत विवाह होवार जथा आसिल, तेऊज ततज-ाते जीव-ा संजी जरिब पारि बूलि ? ⁴⁹

[How could Vanya think that the lover of her elder sister with whom her sister was going to marry on that day would take her as the life partner?]

Was it a revenge of Prantik on her? Could Vanya be happy with a marriage settled on revenge and pride?⁵⁰ In the same novel, Varshas friend Rakhi also objected the relationship of Vasudev and her mother.

In the Boragi Nadir Ghat, there are several instances, where the relationships were regarded as objectionable while they were considered right from the point of emotion.

In the society generally the importance is put on the male side in case of male-female relationship. The rules made by the society and traditional value accept certain relationships and reject certain others. Outside these relationships, there are certain such relationships which one wants to undergo but the society does not like to accept. Therefore one has to accept certain unwanted relationship under compulsion and helplessness.

Now-a-days it becomes difficult to assess a relationship between a man and a woman. It is better if the relationship between a man and a woman is according to their choice.

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