CHAPTER 5
AJNEYA'S CONCEPT OF SOCIETY :

Man is a social animal. He remains attached to the society from birth till death. Society is the product of man's instinctive desire for association which finds expression in the aggregation of people having common interests and united together by what may be called 'consciousness of the kind'. Sociologists say that social relations are the thread of life. So, it is clear that without man there is no society and without society there is no existence of man. There is a deep relationship between man and society.

Living in the society the individual develops his character, strength, intellect and wisdom. An individual is the unit of the society. Society signifies aggregation of persons. Just as a tree is not a forest but the existence of forest depends on the presence of trees, similarly one individual is not society but the existence of society depends on the presence of individuals. Social life is the concrete dynamic and lively of various human relationships.

Society is the organisation which recognises and follows a particular way of life. The basis of society is the feeling of gregariousness. While living in the
group, every individual has to take care of the wishes and capacities of others. And so, different social principles are born. According to Mac Ivor and Page, society is the organisation of relationship which is the result of human inter activities and because of them it remains steady or undergoes change. Dr. Shanker Puntambekar has said that society is not just an aggregate of people. Society is that unit, the member of which are united with one another because of the feeling of internal reactions and feeling of give and take. ¹

**MEANING OF LITERATURE :**

There has been discussion about the meaning of literature since long. Many grammatical, philosophical and literary definition have been given. The famous critic of Sanskrit literature, Rajshekhar in his 'Kavya Mimansa', has accepted literature as a fifth discipline. He has defined literature as ----

"Shabdarthayoryathavatsahabhawena vidya Sahitya Vidya."

It means, literature is the discipline involving proper co-operation between the word and the meaning. According to Kuntal, literature is that in which there is competitive, captivating, praisable state between the word and the meaning.
Rabindra Nath Tagor has said that in the word 'Sahit' is found the feeling of uniting. This meeting is not only the meeting of feeling with feeling, language with language, book with book but the intimate unity of man and man, past with present, far with near which have no relation with any thing except literature. According to Henry Hudson. It is fundamentally an expression of life through the language. Leo Tolestoy has seen literature as a means of human unity. According to Mathew Arnold it is the criticism of life.

Scholars of Hindi Literature have presented many definitions to clarify the meaning of literature. According to Pt. Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi 'Jnan rashi kesha chitta kosha'. According to Jaishankar Prasad, literature is synonymous to poetry. Poetic literature is ever trying to reveal new secrets of the inner feeling of the spirit. Premchand in an essay - 'Sahitya ka Uddeshya' has taken literature to be a criticism of life.

According to Henry Hudson the following are the inspiration of literature:-

i) Our desire for self-expression;
ii) Our interests in people and their doing;
iii) Our interest in the world of reality in which we live, and in the world of imagination in which we
conjure into two existence; and

iv) Our love of form as form.²

The above mentioned four statements made by Hudson are very important. As man progresses so he becomes eager for the planning of refined and sublime elements in literature. Such a feeling of refinement in interest is a motivating element for true literature. Involvement has also an important contribution in the creation of literature because from the beginning of the creation, man after having a glimpse of the natural beauty has assimilated its wonder in his hearts.

Literature can not be kept alive by ignoring life, literature is not only related to the personal life of an individual but also attempts for the means of collective welfare.

LITERATURE AND SOCIETY :

Literature is called the mirror of the society because in it, on one hand the feeling of an individual get concrete form; and on the other hand the contemporary values are reflected. In this context Nanda Dulare Vajpayi said that Literature signifies the highest culture -- a permanent treasure of humanity.³ On one hand,
literature is considered to be the reflection of social reality, on the other hand, it is considered compulsory for the progress and welfare of humanity and a controller of society. Literature is the inner understanding of society and this inner understanding comes by living inside and outside at the same time. It is influenced by the basic forces of social life and therefore plays an important part in the transformation of life. Every writer is the true representative of his age. In his creations, the true picture of contemporary public life is presented. The environment in which he lives influences his point of view and philosophy of life. Therefore, there is appreciable difference in the point of view of contemporary writers. The changes taking place in the society influenced literature. Human consciousness is relative to the society. Literature also has the capacity to bring a change in the society. The novel is not an exception. No other form, except the novel has a wider canvas for the reflection of a particular society on literature. Because in the novel the sufficient thinking, analysis and evaluation of all the three - society, life and individual, is possible.

NOVEL AND SOCIETY :

Just like other forms of literature, novel
is also totally related to human-life. Because novel is considered to be the biggest mirror of contemporary life, therefore it contains within itself the depiction of the contemporary society, the conditions of the age and public life. Novel is the best source and medium for the depiction of life related truth. It progresses, while tied to the place and time, therefore the life of the character not being in vacuum is influenced by the life of the society, conduct and thoughts and the external conditions. Although in all literature human life and all its emotional tendencies are depicted against the background of the realities of life, in the novel this depiction is made in a clear, wider and interesting manner. The importance of novel is enhanced from this view, that in it all other forms of literature are contained.

Acharya Ram Chandra Shukla has considered the importance of the novel form as notable. In the present context novel has the capacity to say much as compared to other forms. The comprehensive depiction of the world, society and individual, as is possible in the novel cannot be effectively expressed in any other forms.

**NOVELIST AND SOCIETY**

The vigilant novelist looks and evaluates
minutely the age of changes taking place in the society. At the same time he is also influenced by it. Novelist cannot afford to be detached from the society, neither any creation of a novel is possible by keeping away from the society. The novelist by means of his experiences and thoughts presents an orderly form of the incidents taking place in the society. His beliefs, life views and thinking are affected by social happening. Bhisma Sahini, in his essay *Sahitya Ke Yathartha* throwing light on the relation of novelist and society has written that before the fictional creation attains a concrete form, there is a seeding of basic inspiration in the mind of the creator. This basic inspiration is derived from the incidents in society and social structure. The correct interpretation of the incidents of novel can be done only in social context. Separated from the society no incident can keep its special importance. Therefore, it can be said that a close relationship exists between novel and society.

According to Ajneya every aspect of social progress is reflected in novels. The disintegration of aristocratic and feudal society and beginning of the modern age, the increasing intensity of inner conflicts of the modern age and the dwindling of joint family system because of the development of capitalism, the representation of all of them is found in the novel. But
in describing the focus of the novelist has remained on individual.  

From the point of view of their relation with society, the novelists can be classified under three categories:

i) Under the first category are included those who totally accept all the convention and organisation of the society as they are. They ignore the short comings of the social rules and regulations even after being conscious of them. Their main aim is to keep the social organisation intact. This group is known as backward or reactionary writers.

ii) Under this category are those writers who see the short coming of social rules and regulations and feel them. But without destroying them totally they try to reform them. This group of writer is known as the reformist.

iii) Under this category comes those writers who are revolutionary and desire change. They not only criticise the differences and short comings of social rules and regulations, but also try to wipe them out. Because of their rejection of social organisations they are always opposed. Ajneya belongs to this category of writers.
Society is created out of the reactions within the individuals. The area of an individual's inner reactions is very wide. He lives many types of roles at the same time, in which family, society and nation are the main. He is influenced by personal feelings, predispositions, convention, tradition, sex etc. and at the same time he has to be active in family relations and as a social and national unit. Every one's mental make up is different from the other. Because of this there is a difference between his nature and thoughts. Some one is rebellious by nature and some one submissive. Society is made out of set of saintly, criminal, bad, intellectual, foolish, recluse and licentious persons. Therefore the novelist finds for his creative activities, enough material in the present person and incidences. The novelist according to his interest, back-ground and experiences can make any form of society the subject matter of his novels. It can be said definitely that some of the forms of the society is the subject matter of the novel.

SOCIETY IN AJNEYA'S NOVELS:

Ajneya has choosen in his novels the level of society where values are breaking, emotions scattered and the sensibilities are formed and destroyed after the
rise and fall of tensions that they are unable to retain their one form and level. Ajneya's novels are psycho-analytic novels, therefore, while analysing the hypothesis of the society in them, it is necessary to be careful about the limits of psycho-analytical novels. The discussed subject matter of his novels is individual and his inner world. The outer conditions -- social and political activities promotes the development of an individual and as such the social activities are depicted.

**CONCEPT OF SOCIETY IN AJNEYA'S NOVELS:**

Scholars differ in their views about the extent of element of social hypothesis in Ajneya's novels. Dr. Nagendra, while criticising *Shekhar Ek Jiwani*, considers this novel lacking from the social point of view. He said that no doubt in Shekhar, there is a deep and minute analysis of caste desperation, violence, social conditions of woman and other serious problems of the age of the creator's society but in it the society and time do not speak, Shekhar and Ajneya speak. But Dr. Sushma Dhawan is of the opinion that howsoever excellent a writer may be but he is the product of his social environment and expresses the consciousness of his age. According to Dr. Shiva Narayan Srivastava there are various valuable thoughts in *Shekhar Ek Jiwani* ranging from social,
cultural beliefs and actions to those relating to life, death, love, hate, violence, non violence, sin, virtues. Laxmi Sagar Varsneya while considering this novel as character centred accepts in it the extension of the environment. Although only Shekhar is the complete subject, the novelist has also presented Shekhar's environment in a realistic form. The terrorism of Fascist, struggle for freedom, Gandhism, Marxism and individualism have their deep influence on Shekhar. The basic inspiration behind this novel is contemporary middle class society which is chained with restrictions and is frustrated and complex-ridden.

So, it is clear that Shekhar Ek Jiwani is the story of Shekhar. Sitting under the shadow of death he in the world of his memory looks back to his past life and tries to evaluate. It clearly shows that the depiction of contemporary conditions is found in this novel, the only difference is that the writer has not described it but Shekhar has seen it with his own eyes, experienced it through heart.

Nadi Ke Dwip is the second novel of Ajneya. The critics have accepted it completely as an individualistic novel, and its main problem is the satisfaction of sexual desire. Critics are not unanimous
about its social nature. According to Shiva Narayan Shrivastava this novel isolating completely from institutional social environment aims at the depiction of the problems of individual lives and struggles of some persons. Dr. Viveki Roy also finds lack of social relevance in this novel. According to him Nadi Ke Dwip is an experiment as novel which though successful lack in social relevance. According to Dr. Gopal Roy to expect social elements in its current meaning from novel like Nadi Ke Dwip is irrelevant. Its aim is philosophy of love, the expression of which is done through some character which belong to a special class. Paramananda Srivastava of the opinion that we cannot demand from the writer of Nadi Ke Dwip or any other writer that in his creation must contain in totality the authentic picture of the entire society. Dr. Brahma Dev Misra, in this direction, discovers a new dimension. It is implicit in the name of Nadi Ke Dwip that through the relationship of river and an island, there is an attempt to discover the relation of the individual and society which forms the only subject matter of the novel. The metaphor of river and island under lines that the relation of society and an individual should be as the relationships between river and an island. These relations are not static but dynamic, ever changing according to context. In Atmanepad expressing his views in the context of Nadi Ke Dwip Ajneya has said that
this novel is not a portrayal of social life, the characters from the common angle are not representative but in it picture of that society and the lives of that society is a true picture.

Man is the product of his social conditions and there is a contribution of social convention to his struggle. In the present novel there is a picture of one aspect of Upper-middle intellectual society. In that there is a description of individual struggle and his emptiness born out of the depleted organisation of the society.

Apne Apne Ajnabi is the third novel of Ajneya. Its characters are foreigners and incidents of story take place in the foreign country but from a wider angle this novel shows encounter with the east and west. It contains in it the antagonism between two opposite points of views of death but behind them actually are seen the life views of the east and the west. These two points of views together discover a new dimension of human-life. According to Rajmal Bora the philosophy relating to death in this novel is not in a negative form. The protection of freedom is possible by accepting death and from getting freedom, existence can be protected and consequently human values can be established. Through Yoke and selma, the novelist has discussed the questions
relating to life, death, freedom of choice, belief etc.\textsuperscript{23} It is a new experiments, a satire on the civilization of alienation and loneliness on the basis of consciousness of the life produced out of a special condition of the fear of death.\textsuperscript{24} At the same time, in the mutual conflict between the two opposite mental streams born out of death consciousness, the same self restraint is emphasised which negates the extreme and inspires to transcend the death. At the same time it also advocates an emotional relationship between the units made out of individual freedom. Accepting as important integrated, cultural relation between intellect and emotions important for the humanity there is compulsion to look towards it from a theistic point of view. The basic concern in \textit{Apne Apne Ajnabi} is the concern of protecting the human values threatened by alienation.\textsuperscript{25} Ajneya, expressing his views on this novel, has said that this book is an answer to the existentialist hypothesis of Sartre and expresses choice, death and freedom in an entirely different theistic context. Through the acceptance of death the freedom of choice can be found.\textsuperscript{26}

\textit{Apne Apne Ajnabi} is a short novel in which the effect of existentialistic thinking is clear. In this novel attempt is made to establish that only through the acceptance of death, the freedom of choice can be found.
In this novel there is a problem of alienation also. The problem of aloofness is born when the values start breaking and an individual starts feeling that his values have no place in the society. Whenever there is anarchy in the political life and individual is not able to protect his existence, he starts feeling his life meaningless. In such condition the individual struggle with the problem of aloofness. The characters of *Apne Apne Ajnabi* are foreigners, the incidents also take place in foreign country but it cannot be denied that the speed with which our thoughts are being influenced by the foreign thoughts and the problem which is raised in this novel do not concern us. In reality the problem of aloofness is a burning problem of today. It can be in the real meaning called the problem of conflicting values. In it the dimension of the social elements are extended.

**CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENT IN AJNEYA'S NOVELS**

Ajneya wrote his novels at the time when the direction of Hindi novels was moving towards concrete social elements to subtle social elements. Ajneya has given importance to the individual and his inner-world in his novels. Therefore to look for contemporary environment like that of Premchand's novels would be an injustice to the writer and his creations. To analyse any writer it is important to keep in mind, what the point of view of the
creator is. Actually every writer is a product of his own conditions. His conditions always influenced his point of view. In the creation only his point of view is the inspiring element of cause. His point of view has behind it the important contribution of his family, education and social conditions. So before analysing the contemporary environment in Ajneya's novel, it is important to know his environment.

**AJNEYA'S ENVIRONMENT:**

Ajneya was born on 7th March 1911 in Kasia Archeological camp in Devria District of Uttar Pradesh. Ajneya's father Hiranand Shastri was an officer in the Archeological department. He has a generous heart but was a strict disciplinarian. Ajneya's grand father, Mulraj Sharma, was a great Scholar of Sanskrit and even being poor was respected in the society. Ajneya's grand father has allowed Ajneya's father to go his own way during his childhood and Ajneya was to be given all the opportunities to decide his way and to follow it. So, Ajney has got both the elements of love of discipline and freedom as a family heritage.

According to the family tradition, the early education of Ajneya took place at home. He was
taught Sanskrit, Persian and English. Coming to Lucknow he was sent to school. But because of the transferable job of his father, his education could not proceed in the formal way in any school. In 1925 he passed his matriculation as a private candidate. In 1927 he passed intermediate from Christian college, Madras. Here he got the inspiration of studying English literature from Prof. Handerson. Besides college education, Ajneya had a deep interest in poetry. Here he formed 'Tagore Mandali' which continuously developed his thinking. While studying in Madras, he encountered caste-desperity. Being a Brahmin he was put in a Brahmin hostel but as a protest Ajneya went to live in a hostel meant for the untouchables. With the help of his friends he tries to educate the untouchable children. In 1929 he passed B.Sc. examination from Forman College, Lahore and took admission in M.A. in English.

While studying M.A., Ajneya came in contact with the revolutionaries Devraj, Kamal Krishna and Ved Prakash Nanda. Because of the active participation in the freedom movement his study was interrupted. Ajneya and his friends made a plan to release Bhagat Singh from the jail. But due to the death of Bhagwati Charan Bohra it could not be successful. He remained a scientific advisor to Himalayan Toilets factory which actually made bombs. He
was arrested on 15th November 1930 with his friend Devraj and Kamal Krishna while working in a bomb factory at Amritsar. He had to spend one month in Lahore Court and about three and a half year in other jails. While staying in jail he assaulted an officer. Looking at the seriousness of the offence and the policy of the British he anticipated life Sentence. While in jail he studied Psychology, Economics, Law, poetry etc. because of which the back ground of his thinking became more fertile. For the publication of a story for protecting him from legal complications he was named Ajneya. The credit of which goes to Jainendra and Premchand.  

Ajneya's journalist carrer began in 1936 when he joined the editorial board of Sainik (Agra). At the time of his participation in Kishan Andolan he met progressive young writers Ram Vilash Sharma, Prakash Chandra Gupta, Bharat Bhushan Agrawal, Prabhakar Machve. In 1937 he joined the editorial board of Vishal Bharat (Calcutta) and during those days he came in contact with many writers and artists like Sudhindra Dutta, Buddhadev Basu, Balraj Sahini, Hazari Prasad Dwibedi. From 1940 - 42 Ajneya remained associated with All India Radio. In 1940 he married Santosh Mallik but very soon divorce took place.
The Second World War had its effect in India. In 1942 Ajneya participated in All India convention against fascists. In 1943 he joined the Army and worked on the Assam-Burma front as a captain. In 1946 he was relieved from army service. The same year his father expired and this incident disturbed him much. In 1947 he started publishing Pratik (Allahabad). Nagendra Nagaich, Sreepat Roy and Nemi Chandra Jain were among his colleagues. From 1952 - 55 he was again associated with All India Radio. During this time he edited the magazine 'Thought'. In 1956 he marries a second time Kapila Vatsyayan but that also was not successful. From 1958 to 1960, during his stay in Delhi he started an English magazine 'Walk'. In 1965 he edited 'Dinman' weekly. At the same time his younger brother Purnananda, his intimate 'Dadda', Maithili Sharan Gupta and his friend Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh died which shocked him badly. In 1972 he edited 'Everyman's on the insistence of Jai Prakashji.

Ajneya is very interested in travelling. He travelled across the country and outside. In 1955 he travelled to Western Europe on an invitation from UNESCO. In 1954 he went to Japan and Phillipines. In 1960 he again toured Europe. In 1961 he went to California University as a teacher of Indian culture and literature. In 1966 he travelled Eastern Europe. In 1967 he participated in a
A seminar -- 'Literary exchange in Asian countries' -- held at Australia, as a representative of India. In 1968 he went to California University on an invitation to deliver a lecture on the topic 'Kavya ki shravan parampara'. After this, on the insistence of the university, he taught intercultural communication (Poetry, modern novels etc.) for one year. Along with these he visited many important places of arts.

In 1971 Vikram Viswavidyalaya, Ujjain, conferred upon him the degree of D. Lit. Before this, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag, honoured him with the title of 'Vachaspati'. In 1972, Uttar Pradesh Hindi sahitya sammelan honoured him with the title of 'Viddya varidhi'. In 1978 he got the Jnanpith award on his poetry collection 'Kitni navo me kitni bar'. He donated the reward money of one lakh along with two lakhs from his side to 'Vatsal Nidhi', an institution aimed at helping the creative writers.

Ajneya's travels in the country and outside, teaching in American University journalism etc. Widened his creative experience. Looking at his life it becomes clear that family conditions had made him very much lonely. Because of his father's transfers he lived in different states and cities of India. The consciousness of
individual freedom which is found in the life and literature in Ajneya is given by his family environment. Being a science student his point of view had been scientific.

Living in a lonely environment from his childhood and not being allowed to associate himself with the outer world apart from his family, Ajneya became an introvert. This restriction gave him pain and the energy to rebel for the liberation from the pain.

Ajneya married two times but was unsuccessful both the times. The unsuccessful lover in the life within Ajneya compelled him to experience love in its depth. His novels provide sufficient examples.

The above mentioned environmentally related characteristic of Ajneya are seen in his novels. In this context the evaluation of contemporary environment in his novels will be attempted.

CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENT IN AJNEYA'S NOVELS :

The depiction of the contemporary environment in Ajneya's novels is done in a powerful way. In his novels there is a depiction of family, social,
cultural and political environment.

Family is the most important unit of the society. The family described in Ajneya's novels belong to the upper middle and middle class. Through the family environment of Shekhar, the contemporary family environment is depicted. In the family both mother and father have influence on the child. Shekhar's mother is an average Indian mother who want to develop the child according to her. In Shekhar's father the feeling that 'these boys are mine, I have total right on them' always remained. Generally the parents become frustrated towards their children. In this novel such a presentation of the parent is there. They consider their children fools.

Shekhar's father gave honour to the children when he liked something in them but while in rage beat them cruelly and a few minutes later praised them. But Shekhar's mother always found fault with her own children in comparison to the children of others. Shekhar was relatively more sensitive and naughty than his brothers and sisters. Therefore, his mother did not trust him. The result is that Shekhar starts hating his mother. His curiosities are suppressed. His queries are not correctly answered. Consequently he becomes rebellious. He wants to do the things which the so called civilized and cultured persons do not do. Because of this he has to bear
punishment. As a reaction to it many bad thoughts about his parents come to his mind.  

In Shekhar Ek Jiwaní through Sharada, the status of daughter at the family level in contemporary society is depicted. When the love between Shekhar and Sharada developing in the adolescence period is known to Sharada's mother, it is prevented in a soft way. She is made ready for the future wife hood. She is not able to break the restriction imposed on her. As a result the love between Shekhar and Sharada ends there. In Nadi Ke Dwip such a situation comes in Gaura's life for a while. But Gaura is firm in her decision and her parents accepting her decision express their complete faith in it.

In Ajneya's novels the relationship between husband and wife appears to be that of master and servant, which was prevalent in the contemporary Indian society. The marital relations of Shashi-Rameshwar and Chandra Madhav-Kaushalya are such relations. Rameshwar always keeps a strong vigil on Shashi. She is not allowed to talk freely. She is always apprehensive about what her husband may think about her talks. Rameshwar is critical of everything about Shashi. Shekhar comes to know of the wall of doubt between their relationship. One day when without informing Shashi stays with Shekhar, she is beaten.
In this matter her father-in-law and mother-in-law also co-operate. The torture given to her give a clear indication of the status of wife and daughter-in-law in the family.\textsuperscript{43}

Chandra Madhav in \textit{Nadi Ke Dwip} does not consider marriage anything more than a formality to legalise a progeny.\textsuperscript{44} His wife Kushalya is always ready to serve her husband when he comes tired and drunk. She takes of his shoes and socks and neck tie and according to her husband's wish provides sexual satisfaction to him.\textsuperscript{45} Even then Kaushalya keeps doubting that even after physical union her husband may not hate her.\textsuperscript{46} Kaushalya's family life shows that the husband does not consider the wife more than a mere servant and simply satisfy his sexual desires according to his wish.

The background of Ajneya's two novels \textit{Shekhar Ek Jiwani} and \textit{Nadi Ke Dwip} belong to the pre-independence period. During those days in social life the main problems were woman, castism and untouchability, the reflection of which can be seen in Ajneya's novels.

The social life of the woman is below expected freedom. She is sub-servient to man and is compelled to follow his directions. There is the depiction that what the position of the woman in the society. While travelling in the train in Madras Shekhar provides a
place to a woman because of which he finds himself in confrontation with an Anglo-Indian. People sitting in the train starts talking all sorts of things about him. Some see him as a cunning man who wants to seek a relationship with the woman through this small favour, for some he is a foolish youth who will oneday find himself in the snare of characterless woman, for some both Shekhar and the woman are mean. Shekhar feels that the collection of deadly lack of faith between man and woman in the mind of the people. One of the objectives of 'Antigonam Club' of Shekhar is to see that the account of serious dissatisfaction and change needed for the youth should also arise in woman. This man dominated civilization which has its satisfaction in its being a totality has to be destroyed and its claim for superiority has to be negated only then will be find the way to march forward. This lack of faith in womanhood and the regard for woman as sinful have to be destroyed. Shashi sacrifices her personal feeling for the society and family. The restriction imposed on Sharada as to not meet Shekhar, also has behind it a feeling related to tradition and 'Sanskar'. The marriage of Rekha in Nadi Ke Dwip is a satire on the marriage institution. After their marriage her husband enjoys with a Malaysian woman out side India and she, leaving job after job wanders her and there. Society does not allow her to live peacefully and wants to take advantage of the situation. Chandra Madhav finds job for
Rekha with the hope of getting something and when he did not get anything he makes her leave them. Hamendra divorce Rekha for his satisfaction of selfishness. Yoke has to become a prostitutes in Apne Apne Ajnabi. Pal who was her lover leaves her. She behaves as a mad person because of sorrow and torments. Before death her choosing Jaggaanathan in a innocent manner is seen with doubtful eyes by the people. 50

The above discussion shows that the condition of woman in the society was well below expectation. Shekhar says that intoxicated with manhood, our philosophers and critics says that to consider woman as a sinful, foul inspiration is the contribution of our romantic period. 51 The woman is so much tied to the shackle of morality and ideas made by man that she does not possess her personal existence. Pointing towards this Shekhar says that girls, while bearing the hellish torments, tell in their long apparently nice speeches that they are dying for their 'Pativarata' because 'Pativrata' is their highest quality, highest 'Dharma' for which hundreds had died, hundreds committed 'Sati' and humiliated themselves by committing 'Jouhars' and hundred were trampled under the feet of elephants, the illusion created by man for the male audience. 52 Contrary to this there are some women who are free from all the
restrictions and are emancipated. Manika represent this class.

The portrayal of contemporary caste and untouchability problem is found in Ajneya's Shekhar Ek Jiwani. One new cook is appointed in Shakhar's house. Shekhar reacts when he sees the feeling of untouchability in him. He teases the cook so much that he leaves the house voluntarily.\textsuperscript{52} Shekhar gets the permission to play with the neighbouring low caste girl Fula but he is not allowed to eat with her.\textsuperscript{54} The revolutionary Shekhar while running for self-defence asked water from a low-caste person, but the man refuses.\textsuperscript{55} His refusal is a refusal of a person ridden with social inequality. The low class people had been so much oppressed that they could not even dream of rising. They became habituated in living that type of life. They started taking their neglect as the destiny of their lives.

While studying in Madras Shekhar had experiences related to the feeling of caste and untouchability. The hostel in which Shekhar lived was for Brahmins only. His co-students refused to take food with him when they saw him not behaving according to the conduct of Brahmins. They complained about him to the principal but the decision was in Shekhar's favour because
he was a Brahmin. It is clear from this that the feeling of high and low was prevalent in the education system of those days.

Shekhar went to Malabar to see the conditions of the untouchables. There he saw the cruelty imposed on the out caste. No out caste could come near the areas of the Brahmins. They had separate road. They had to cross the rivers in boats because the bridge could be used only by high caste people. The out caste people could not hold the land near that of the Brahmins. If ever there is an encounter between the Brahmins and the out caste, the out caste was supposed to declare his caste. Here Shekhar saw an untouchable dying woman whose fault was that she was walking on the road which was prohibited for her. The above mentioned incidents high lights the contemporary conditions.

Through the student life of Shekhar in Lahore, the increasing immorality and craze for fashion in students are depicted. Being a writer Shekhar had to struggle with the problem of unemployment and at the same time had to be a victim of exploitation of editors and publishers. Shekhar was a new writer and so the publisher wanted to get his book edited by a well known writer, so that he (publisher) may earn profit thus damaging the writer's originality. Shekhar could not bear
this and takes his book back without publishing. This incidents shows how the publisher exploited the new writers.

Shekhar is an intellectual writer and so he wants to uplift the society by inducing reform. But he finds everyone working for one's own selfishness in the name of reform. In 'Hindu Sudhar Sabha' the extent of high motivation with which he enters, makes him withdraw with the same extent of frustration. In this novel the empty and self centred social reform-organisations organised in the name of reform are vividly described.

In Ajneya's novels in the context of cultural environment, the ideals, life, truth and reality, duty, civilization etc. are depicted. Expressing his ideas about ideals Shekhar said that our ideals are supported by the wall of fear, the foundation of the ideal of our high building is empty. According to vidya Bhushan the ideal is the feeling which tries to destroy the differences between man and man, expand his boundaries and ties extensively. According to Shekhar where the question of humanity arises nationalism becomes an impediment.

Ajneya has expressed many thoughts about life through his characters in his novels. Rekha suggests
Bhuban accepts life as a creator. Life is an extensive pattern which knits you, your every feeling is its elements, every sorrow is a collection of warp and woof. The huge fast current of life pushing and pulling washes every one away. Its flow is startling and all are flowing in it. This flow is difficult, unrestricted and compelling.

Expressing his thought on the meaninglessness of life Bhuban tells Gaura that nothing remains after life. This is complete, this is the end. Only this gives meaning to life. The pain of life is not valuable because it will get the reward in the after life but because there is nothing beyond this life. According to Rekha pleasure is not every thing in life. Life does not lies in comforts, it is the tendency of mind. According to her everybody can see the last view of life in one's own life not in the teaching of others. In Apne Apne Ajnabi, according to Selma life is always that last breakfast which is bought by giving away the life and that which is cooked by burning the life and it has to be shared because it can not be gulped alone.

Expressing his thought on truth Bhuban says that whatever fact is reality in our world of feelings that is the truth. That which only belongs to the
objective world is a fact, a reality. Truth is painful. We have to pay for emotional relationship. Truth is the creative and constructive form of fact and all creation is painful. According to Bhuban the truth is when it comes from within & according Rekha truth cannot be without suffering.

Expressing her thoughts on civilization Rekha tells Bhuban that the civilization starts regressing when the spontaneous character is buried under the tamed character nourished by the civilization. Individual becomes characterless then he does not create, he only adorns. Civilized life is the huge waiting room, and hotel etc. are the means of filling the gap between the passage of time. Therefore Rekha considers civilization is unnatural.

Shekhar considers civilization as a humbug and gives it another name for dependence on others. According to Baba Madan Singh our civilization is an unending effort to increase the childhood of humanity. It desires protection. But the manhood wants courage. Shekhar at the shore of Mahabalipuram thinks that beauty should have strength and inspiration. Wheresoever there is struggle, there is beauty and whosoever has strength within can see the beauty. One who has once seen that eternal strength has made himself capable for ever. According to Bhuban whatever is beautiful should not
The novels of Ajneya also contain the depiction of political environment. From the point of view of political activities Shekhar Ek Jiwani (Part-I) is not so active but in it the contemporary environment is clearly reflected. Here and there the mention of incidents like World War-I, firing in Punjab, non-co-operation movement etc. are found. The hate and anger develop towards the British are also presented.

From his childhood Shekhar comes under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. Because of his influence he throws the western dresses and starts wearing indigenous clothes. Not getting the permission from home he shouts the slogans coming from a far off procession while being in his house. One day he sets on fire all foreign clothes in his house. In order to become the true patriot he learns Hindi. Under the influence of Gandhiji, he writes a drama which begins with the praise of Gandhiji.

Shekhar Ek Jiwani (Part-II) gives an extensive picture of contemporary political environment. Shekhar, a student of M.A. participates in the congress session as a volunteer. In the camp the police arrest him for his confrontation with CID. He is tried in court and
then sent to jail. While in jail Shekhar's political thoughts become brighter by the thought of Vidya Bhushan and Baba Madan Singh. These three persons express their thoughts about violence and non-violence which are the result of contemporary environment. Shekhar does not consider violence creative but Vidya Bhushan accepts violence as compulsory. Expressing his views on non-violence, Baha Madan Singh says that non-violence is not inactive. In action cowardice is the most detested type of violence. If self torture and self sacrifice are non-violence then we reach to the conclusion that bloodshed may also be non-violence.78

After his release from the jail Shekhar becomes associated with revolutionary party and writes revolutionary literature for propaganda. After the death of Shashi, he intensifies revolutionary activities which becomes the cause of his getting life sentence.

In Nadi Ke Dwip Bhuban joins the army for the protection of the country. After the bombing of the Japanese on the Indian soil he sees clearly his duty. According to him war is detestable and patriotism alone carries no meaning for him, but it is the source of hate and war to protect India from this danger is greater than
NEGLIGENCE OF TRADITIONAL SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP:

The negligence of traditional social relationship is also found in Ajneya's novels. The characters of his novels represent that person of the modern age who has started the Post - Mortem of traditional social relations. Actually characters of Ajneya's novels belong to the upper middle class and middle class. The actual status and consciousness of the middle class are gradually declining, with the result that the individual has started neglecting social relations.

In Shekhar Ek Jiwani, Shekhar, deprived of the complete affection of his parents, find complete affection in his sister Saraswati. She never hurts his feelings. Shekhar has known for the first time the true affectionate attachment through his sister. But the novelist does not see Shekhar and Saraswati merely as brother and sister but sees them in simple and natural form. None else could teach Shekhar except Saraswati. He has a feeling of gratefulness towards Saraswati. He starts feeling that education could be acceptable and the teacher could be worshipable and he starts worshipping his sister. One day Saraswati becomes a sister to him and
from sister becomes only 'Saras'.

His nearness and attachment with Saraswati increases so much that the information of her marriage makes him restless. He develops 103° fever on the day of her marriage. It appears to Shekhar that Saraswati is the only person who understands and has sympathy for him. After her marriage, the never weeping Shekhar now and then starts weeping. This attachment of Shekhar towards Saraswati is contrary to prevalent moral standards, but modern psychology support it.

Because of social pressure, tradition, social point of view about woman and helplessness of her mother, Shashi decides to marry against her wishes. But her marital life inspite of her moral honesty, duty and complete devotion towards her husband could not become a happy one. At the conscious level Shashi and Shekhar behave towards each other affectionately like brother and sister. But in their behaviour there is a deep intimacy and fellow feeling which is normally not found in brother and sister. Shekhar asks Shashi that he has been addressing her as sister but she is not so near as a sister nor so far as a sister is. He says that whatever dreams he has seen all melts in her. Shashi also accepting this says that in him is that life which is her. She does not want to give any name to this
relationship. She was beaten and driven out from her husband's house. She starts living with Shekhar. According to her one should accept any relation through the heart. This neglect of social institutional relationship is her courageous act. About it Vidyawati (Mother of Shashi) also said that without following the path which the husband closes duty could be observed. Shekhar's hating his mother and not visiting her when ill, is in a way negligence for social relations.

In Nadi Ke Dwip when Gaura's parents think about her marriage, she is indecisive and writes to Bhuban for his suggestion. While not providing any suggestion, Bhuban, analysing the ideals of Shravan Kumar, writes to her that 'Bahangi' on the shoulders is not a symbol of devotion towards parents nor following of ideals and self-sacrifice, but a symbol of blind devotion, self deception and unworthiness of independent life. This shows that one should take the decision after analysing rather than blindly following parental dictates. So, here a negligence of the traditional relation between parents and children is reflected. Gaura's decision not to marry and to proceed for learning music is also congruent with this idea.

Rekha's husband Hemendra without caring for her stays with a foreign lady but does not divorce Rekha.
When he feels the need of divorce he resorts to legal action. He does not like the slow action on the part of his advocate. According to him if something is to be broken, it should be smashed directly. He does not care a bit for Rekha. Disregarding the marital relationship he chooses the life-partner of his own liking. Similarly Chandra Madhav not considering marriage a marriage but a custom to legalise the progeny shows a feeling of negligence for his family and children and expresses love, sometimes to Gaura and sometimes to Rekha. Being unsuccessful from both side, marries a film actress in Bombay.

Social relationship has no importance for Rekha. The entire 'Srimatitwa' is meaningless for her. She loves Bhuban only but sacrifices her love for Gaura and Bhuban.

In *Apne Apne Ajnabi*, even after being the mother of three sons Selma is compelled to die alone. She finds a partner Yoke, in a wooden house while surrounded by snow. Yoke too in the end tries to strangle her in anger in place of giving her sympathy and compassion. Abandoning of mother by her sons shows a negligence of the children towards the mother and Yoke's behaviour reflects a disregard for natural human values.
So, it becomes clear that in Ajneya's novels a negligence for traditional social relationship is seen. For an individual, for one's existence, the right of choice in life is most important. Shashi, Rekha, Gaura, Yoke, Selma demand this right.

**FRIENDLY ATTITUDE OF MAN TOWARDS THE WOMAN:**

The friendly relationship between man and woman is also seen in Ajneya's novels. This feeling develops into loving relationship between Shekhar and Shashi. In the lives of Rekha, Gaura and Bhuban, the relation of love is seen, while Rekha and Gaura have feelings of love towards Bhuban, but he shows predominantly the relation of friendship towards them.

Shekhar accepts that Shashi is not his real sister but in this relation if he feels any difference, it is not of the distance but of more nearness of an unobstructed friendly feeling. On asking him to give a solution of marriage problem by Shashi, Shekhar promise to support her in both the alternatives. That is, Shekhar extends his unconditional support to Shashi, whether Shashi decides to marry or remain unmarried. Her illness makes him worried. In order to encourage her Shekhar suggests to her to go to the meeting. On seeing Shashi
upset by an insult he expresses his anger by beating two persons. When Sheshi talks of going back for Shekhar's good, he declines with an intimate note. She does not want that Shekhar should stop his creative writing because of her but he pays more attention towards her health. This upsets Shashi. Shekhar feels wounded by Shashi's sentiments towards him. He feels that there is nothing beyond this fellow feeling -- that is nothing valuable and here friendship is the attainment and is a pleasure.97

In Nadi Ke Dwip, Bhuban, for the sake of Gaura, studies a number of books, searches, guesses and writes letters to experts to validate them. He gradually becomes from 'Masterji' to 'Bhuban Masterji' and then 'Bhubanda'. She develops a new loving fellow-feeling of equality.98 He always suggests to Gaura to take her own decision and never imposes his suggestions on her.99 Bhuban appears to keep friendly feeling towards Rekha also. He respects her feeling on every step. When Rekha undergoes abortion without the knowledge of Bhuban, he does not blame her and tries to give her emotional support. In this condition he takes complete care of her. Even after her marriage with Dr. Ramesh Chandra he does not say anything and sends good wishes and presents to her.
Looking to the two prominent male characters of Ajneya, it appears the depiction of fellow feeling of male characters towards the woman is done in the novels. Considering the psycho analytical context, it is difficult to say whether this relationship is based on anything other than subdued sex instinct.

**WOMEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONCEPT OF IDENTITY**

The women-characters of Ajneya's novels are very potent. They are conscious of their existence. An individual becomes conscious of one's existence when he or she has more sensitiveness. Shashi, Rekha, Gaura, Yoke and Selma are very sensitive. And therefore are conscious of their existence.

Shashi after being driven out of her husband's house does not return. She also declines to go with her mother. According to her mother has fulfilled her duty by giving her in marriage and she has no duty towards her now. She accepts Shekhar's love unhesitatingly. When Shekhar says that she is ruining herself, she replies that she is not ruining herself. In the making of Shekhar she will have equal contribution, therefore, there is no question of giving or taking anything from either side. So his hesitation or the feeling of gratitude will only be an insult to her. Like Shashi, Gaura is also conscious
about her existence. When Chandra Madhav writes to her that her marriage is broken because of Bhuban's decision, she asks that she herself did not have any opinion about her future how did he know it. She does not want to remain a burden on her parents and so takes a job.

Rekha has a belief that personality has its own track. Bhuban thinks that Rekha has a gap, a disunion with the society with which she is also untouched by it. Chandra Madhav wants to make Rekha a victim of his desires but is not successful because of her imposing personality and intellectual firmness. Rekha considers that decision is wrong which is taken under oppression. She always takes the important decision of her life alone. Bhuban proposes marriage when she becomes pregnant, she refuses. Because she knows that Gaura likes Bhuban. Her decision to undergo abortion is also her courageous step.

The difference between Shashi and Rekha is that while Shashi breaks in her making of Shekhar, Rekha steps aside for the bright future of Bhuban. She does not allow herself to break even after marrying Dr. Ramesh Chandra.

In Apne Apne Ajnabi both Yoke and Selma are conscious of their existence. Buried under the snow Selma asks Yoke whether she is afraid. Yoke replies that she is not afraid of snow. If she was afraid she would not have
gone there. She asks Selma not to worry about her. Selma's preparing breakfast for Yoke is not liked by her (Yoke). Knowing Selma's idea about God, it appears to Yoke that she is ruining her healthy youthful life. Selma also does not like that Yoke should pay more attention towards her. Talking about her illness, Selma says that she has not chosen Yoke as a witness and she will try her best that she (Yoke) many not have to see anything. Selma considers freedom in human life as impossible. But Yoke chooses her death herself and makes freedom possible. The characters in Apne Apne Ajnabi are stranger to each other. They have no relationship at all. It is an irony of natures that Selma, an old cancer patient and Yoke, full of youthful dreams are compelled against their wishes to live together. Inspite of mutual hate they live under the same roof. Looking at the age, the relation between them is like that of a mother and a daughter but here, is a feeling of non acceptance towards it.

Rekha believes that we are separate islands in the river. The river continuously makes the destiny for all. These islands while separate are continuously dissolve and are created again. Because of the consciousness of modernity, Rekha has her own views of life in the background of which are the individual greatness and humanitarism. In a letter written to Gaura, she expresses clearly that although pleasure is important in life but it
is not everything. Pleasure is the state of mind which remains the same amidst all the experiences. Rekha considers everyone as a unit. According to her everyone gets the last glimpse of life in one's own life not in other's teaching. Other's experiences may be the fertilizer which makes the substratum of individual experience. Expressing views on morality Rekha says that along with inner inspiration a consciousness of committing sin is associated. Morality may be incomplete if the personality who gives it is incomplete. She has tremendous power of choice. So, while choosing she takes her own decision. Her power of choice can be seen in her choosing Bhuban, in undergoing an abortion, in making Bhuban free and marrying Dr. Ramesh Chandra. She starts with the belief that an individual takes all the important decisions alone and bears all the pain. She considers a moment timeless. She is ready to bear everything for a meaningful moment.

Gaura is an ideal woman character impregnated with consciousness of modernity. The qualities and determination which are important for woman having a sense of modernity are present in her. She has also the courage and responsibility to apply all the qualities in her own life. According to her freedom is not only a social characteristic. It is a point of view, a state of
an individual's mind. If all people make an effort to train themselves for freedom then perhaps our society may also become free. Undivided and undividable freedom is the freedom, and if it is not so then that freedom is incomplete and reserved. Gaura, taking decision shows her power of choice. For her life is not a choice for once, it is unending choice. Her ideas about sorrows are very powerful. She says to Bhuban that only those can find peace on earth who has passed through pain, otherwise there is no meaning of this feeling.

In *Apne Apne Ajnabi* Yoke and Selma struggle with the problems generated by modern situations and try to achieve meaningfulness in life. Yoke putting a question mark on God asked Selma it is not to cover oneself with God by trying to determine to oneself what is settle for one. According to her God is a practice. She considers death to be only reality. She is always ready to invite danger. She has the capacity to choose adventure with freedom. Once she steps in to a glacier while climbing the icy rocks in the Alps. Yoke does not give any importance to death. According to her nothing happens in death. Every thing stops short of happening. It is the punishment of our moral consciousness accumulated through the ages that our dying may be incomplete.
Selma's previous life is dominated by economic consideration. She knows that money is the most important thing in the world. Therefore in the flood, when the communication were cut, she sells everything at double price. Because of her harsh behaviour, the photographer ends his life by jumping into the river. Because of this Yann hates her and criticises her. Then Selma undergoes a change in her. She enters into marriage with Yann. Selma's later life presents a diagnosis of the problems related to freedom and choice, death and God. She has no will to live. She is living at one time but in totality of time. She wants to dedicate herself completely to God. According to her no one is free. Nobody can choose for oneself. To consider oneself free is the root of all difficulty. Neither we are alone nor free. Therefore we do not have the right to choose. All such imaginations of freedom are mere pride.

Selma considers living form as God and only death is the recognisable form of God. The knowledge of total negation is the knowledge of God. All other things are superficial and false.

The hypothesis of society which is present in Ajneya's novels, contain a criticism of individual and
the society. It is the depiction of moral and mental struggle. The criticism of society and morality is done at the intellectual level. The necessary human relation between persons and peace are emphasized. Angry reaction toward prevalent social order and traditional institutional belief are expressed. The expectancy of natural relationship between man and woman is seen. Love is considered as the basis of life. The characterization is done by making love the centre. The problem of love is raised in social context and it is related to individual freedom and the right of choice.

Our traditional values of life and its basis are challenged. Illusary religious ideas are criticised. The depictions of knowledge of death, horror of war, frustration born out of war and meaninglessness etc. are expressed in a potent way. Light is also thrown on the lives and activities of revolutionaries.

Because of the influence of psychology, the description of definite movement, complete description of the reflection of inner-life is presented. In the child psychology sexual feeling and transfer of feeling shows Freudian influence.
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