CHAPTER - VII

THE RELEVANCE OF WOMAN CHARACTERS OF BHAGWATICHARAN VERMA'S NOVELS

• Main Woman Characters Of His Novels
Novels are the imaginary story of real life of which the characters are the basis. Without characters no story can be developed nor dialogues can be planned. As a man has the most important place in the world made by the God, so the characters do have the most important place in the world created by the novelists. The more success in depicting the characters in the imaginary world, the more influence in the mind of the readers. Vermaji stood successful in this test.

Now-a-days modern novels are more character based than story-based. Along with complexity of relationship between a man and another, their internal and external complexities are no less important. Therefore, today in modern novels, there are great importance of the internal conflict of the characters. Vermaji selected characters in accordance with the need of the subject- matter and that too he did very carefully. He is very skillful in depicting characters. Therefore, he could create characters very lively and simple. He did not give more importance to the introvert tendencies of the characters and therefore he had nothing to do with the problems of conscious, sub-conscious and un-conscious aspects of a man. Vermaji is concerned with human activities dealing with various social, economic and political problems and impacts. He depicts all these activities through the characters. He saw the characters within such environments.

Below we endeavour to analyse the main woman characters in his various novels:

7.1 SARASWATI (THE PATAN):

Saraswati is the heroine of the novel ‘Patan’; yet her character has developed only through internal conflict. In her one can find a happy mixture of two contradictory virtues — love and lust. Vermaji has depicted on one hand, the bare love affairs of a married woman and on the other the ways of her downfall. Being neglected by her inactive and heartless husband she was attracted towards another
married person and friend of her husband Bhawanishankar although she was the
daughter-in-law of an aristocratic family. When she came to her in-law’s house -

“उस समय पूरे सोलह वर्ष की हो चुकी थी। सरस्वती गम्भीर प्रकृति की थी, और जैसी कि
उसने शिखा पाई थी, वह धर्म निष्ठा थी।” (1)

Although she was not in love with Prakashchand, an odd-looking and low
caste youth, yet she feigned as if she loved him:--

“प्रेम न करते हुए भी प्रेम करने का प्रयत्न करती थी।” (2)

But she was a strong woman.

“अत्तरात्मा प्रबल थी, उसे धर्म का अवलम्ब था। वह पति की सेवा करती थी, पति के दुःख
को अपना और अपने दुःख को पति का समझने की चेष्टा करती थी। वह पति में ही ममताको
मिला देना चाहती थी। पति के वर्षों में वह बैठती थी, उसे उस पर अनुराग न था, पर अनुराग
उत्पन्न करने का वह प्रयत्न करती थी, किन्तु फिर भी उसका ह्रदय विग्रह करता था।” (3)

The reasons of Saraswati’s disliking of and opposition to her husband were
social and economic. Prakashchand was beautiful neither in the body nor in the
mind. In addition to that he regarded her as a matter of enjoyment and source of
income only. Since she was always in economic hardships, a distaste against her
father-in-law’s house began to grow. Therefore she was easily attracted to
Bhawanishankar a near relative of her husband and who was beautiful in the body
as well as in the mind. Beautiful Saraswati was successful in attracting him towards
her also. Although both of them knew their positions well yet they could not but
bound together. When Bhawanishankar realised his position, he reminded Saraswati
about her duty, the latter replied:--
Now with the misbehaviour of Bhawanishankar towards her, she became sad and rebellious. Her downfall was faster than ever. When a woman crosses the limit of restraint and control once, she becomes restless and loses all propriety. Therefore she became the object of fulfilling the lust of Pratap Singh. She began to drink wine and made Bhawanishankar and Pratap Singh drink and thereby she became a complete prostitute. She was preparing to even murder Bhawanishankar out of her hatred towards him. But she could not commit the crime since her love for him which was passive till then began to come alive. She then told Bhawanishankar:

"भवानी बाबू ! तुम यही से जाओ। अब मैं तुमसे प्रेम के बदले धृष्टा करने लगी हूँ। मेरे हुदय को नहीं जानते – जानते होते भवानी बाबू । तो तुम अपनी पाशविक तृणा को शांत करने के पहले कुछ सोच समझ लेते। अब मैं तुम्हारे रक्त का वासी हो गई हूँ। तुम एक दम यही से चले जाओ।" (5)

Although she didn't love Pratap Singh yet, after fulfilling her lust through Prakashchand and Bhawanishankar, she accepted him. Again when her fulfillment of lust took the shape of luxury, she began to take each and every one who came to her as a partner to fulfill her desire. That was why she took up Ranveer as soon as she saw him and established emotional relationship with him. Such a fall in her character fills up the mind of the reader with hatred towards her. But if one considers the circumstances which compelled her to commit all these, one would feel pity for her. She would rather demand pity in stead of hatred.
7.2 CHITRALEKHA (THE CHITRALEKHA):

Chitralekha of the 'Chitralekha' was a beautiful widow of a middle-class Brahmin family, who was bound by family customs and traditions and who spent a restrained life of widowhood. In the mean time one Krishnaditya entered into the orbit of her life. Gradually their relationship turned into love. As a result Chitralekha was pregnant. Krishnaditya committed suicide since he could not tolerate insults and mental tortures. Chitralekha took refuge with a dancer. She kept her restraint of widowhood even when she was a dancer.

"चित्रलेखा ने एक बार फिर वैकल्य के संयम को पालने का प्रयत्न किया। कृष्णदिय और 
कृष्णदिय का पुत्र दोनों ही चित्रलेखा के जीवन में आकर निकल गए; पर दोनों ही अपनी अपनी 
स्मृति उसके हृदयपट्ट पर छोड़ गये।" (६)

One Bijgupt created havoc in her restrained life of dancer. Although she also fell attracted to Bijgupt yet in the second instant she recovered herself and to him:

"नहीं, मैं ब्यक्ति से नहीं मिलती। मैं केवल समुदाय के सामने आती हूं; ब्यक्ति का मेरे 
जीवन से कोई सम्बन्ध नहीं।" (७)

But this refusal was only for a moment. Because she began to remember Bijgupta and she wanted to surrender to him:

"चित्रलेखा बहुत सोच - विचार के बाद इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुँची है कि केवल एक ब्यक्ति उसके जीवन में आ सकता है। और वह है बीजगुप्त।" (८)

After the establishment of relationship with Bijgupta, she declared her loyalty to only one she told Swetank: --
But her pride diminished when she again had her contact with Kumargiri. She herself even could not understand when restraints turned into lust. It seems as if she was internally weak and therefore she took the help of external restrains. This veil of restraint was quite temporary and soon it was blown away and her lustful nature exposed itself. Chitralekha is the living symbol of unsatiated desire. Therefore, although she wanted to make Bijgupt believe:

"प्रियनाम संसार में कोई भी व्यक्ति इसे दोनों के बीच में नहीं आ सकता।"  

Yet it was true that as soon as she saw Kumargiri her love for Bijgupt began to decrease. Her efforts to make Bijgupt believe in her love was nothing but mere a deceit. Because from the very day she told Bijgupta that he should not suspect her love, she began to love Kumargiri.

There was another aspect of Chitralekha’s life in addition to her being luxurious and lustful. It was her boldness and virtuousness. Chitralekha’s this quality can be evidenced in her conversation with Kumargiri in the court of Chandragupt. She defeated Kumargiri with her logical power. Witnessing her strong personality no one could imagine that she was only a beautiful dancer of the town. In the same manner when she said:

"प्रकाश पर लुब्ध पतंग की अंधकार का प्रशांत।"  

While entering the cottage of Kumargiri and discussed about life and happiness with philosophical interpretations, her personality came to the forefront.
Along with the personality of a scholarly woman, her behaviour according to circumstances is also to be appreciated. From this point one can see that when she realised the weakness of Kumargiri she immediately overcame him and took him up. She even rebuked Kumargiri:

"मे जानती हूँ, तुम मुझसे प्रेम करते हो; पर मैं तुमसे प्रेम नहीं करती! एक क्षण के लिए मेरी इच्छा तुम पर आधिपत्य जमाने का हुई थी, और मैंने उसका प्रयत्न किया। यहूं मैं स्वामिनी हूँ, तुम दास हो। मैंने तुम पर आधिपत्य जमा लिया है, तुमने आत्मसमर्पण कर दिया है। किस बल पर तुम मेरा प्रेम चाहते हो।" (12)

In this way, she gave with all her self-confidence a befitting reply to the feudal lords who said —

"आज नतीज़ी चित्रलेखा को हमारी सम्भाव्यता करके हमारे समाज में आने के उपलब्ध में बधाई है।" (13)

In the following words:

"अपने सीवल्य के बल से अपना स्वागत कराने के लिए अभिमानित्य स्वियों को बाध्य करने वाली को बधाई की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं।" (14)

Chitralekha was very practical. Her anger might turn into a smile within moments. She had the capacity to control her own emotions. Being influenced, Yasodhara told her:

"बहन, तुम लोक व्यवहार में बहुत कुशल हो।" (15)

In reply to that Chitralekha said:

"तभी तो इतनी प्रभावशाली हूँ।" (16)
The nature of Chitralekha which appears to our mind is the nature of a boasting woman for her beauty and mad like luxurious woman, who played with men thereby making them victims of her lust.

7.3 PRABHA (THE TEEN VARSH):

Of the woman characters of the ‘Teen Varsh’, Prabha was a modern and educated woman who spent her life under Western culture and civilisation. She was the supporter of free society. She did not support that one’s freedom should be taken away by marriage. She regarded marriage as an economic relationship between a man and a woman. (17) She analysed her idea as follows:

"मैं तो विवाह को यह संस्था मानती हूँ, जिसके द्वारा पुरुष स्त्री के भरण पोषण तथा उसका रक्षा का भार अपने उपर लेता है। रक्षा काम वास्तव का प्रक्ष, वह बाद में उठता है।" (18)

She laid stress on the economic aspect of marriages. Marriages, where there was only a relationship of sex and love, were not recognised by her. Her idea was that love could be there without marriages; and therefore it could never be a basis of marriages "प्रेम को विवाह का आधार नहीं मानती।" (19) She told Ramesh humbly and clearly so that his sentiments were not wounded.

"रामेश गुज्जर पर कोई न हो न गुज्जर दुरा ही मानो। हम दोनों एक दूसरे से प्रेम करते है, इतना काफी है और सदा प्रेम करते रहने । विवाह की क्या आवश्यकता है?" (20)

The environment in which Prabha was born and brought up and the economic process in which she was habituated, were conducive to a poor person like Ramesh. Her out-spokenness was one of her characteristics. She made her stand clear in the same clarity and simplicity to Ramesh. She had no emotional attachment to life although she was a woman. She wanted to see life in its
practical live; and side by side she wanted love to play its part. Youthfulness, for her, was a necessary part of life:—

"दीवन का प्राण है आर्य और प्रेम में नियातत्र होना असम्भव है, प्रेम अराजक है।" (21)

Ramesh could not understand clearly this economic relationship between 'love' and marriage and therefore he called her a prostitute and slave of money, which had no real basis. The difference between Prabha and Ramesh was the difference between two points of view and two classes. Prabha's view was intellectual and to accept life in its real shape while for Ramesh life was a combination of emotion and imagination only. Therefore Prabha was the symbol of those who looked life in a realistic way and those who wanted to care for the needs of both body and mind, none of which could be neglected. Prabha did not want to mix them together and introduce chaos in life. There was another aspect of her life that she wanted to live. Under Western culture and therefore, wanted to regard marriage in a different connotation; and at the same time she thought of security of women. According to her:

"स्त्री असहाय है अबला है – संस्कृति के दो भागों में पुरुष सत्ता भाग है और स्त्री निर्वाल भाग। लेकिन तौर पर विवाह के वह संस्कृति मानती है, जिसके द्वारा पुरुष रूप के भरण – पोषण तथा उसकी रक्षा का भार अपने उपर लेता है।" (22)

Perhaps such contradiction in Prabha's philosophy of life was due to the fact that she supported theoretically equality of women with men and in practical field she was not prepared to face the struggle of life born out of the idea of equality and liberty of women. In this manner Prabha's view points on two aspects life were quite selfish.
7.4 SAROJ (THE TEEN VARSH):

Saroj is the second major female character of the ‘Teen Varsh’. Her story is related in the second part of the novel. Through ‘Saroj’, the writer wanted to take a liberal view of a prostitute, Vermaji believed that what society did towards the prostitute was not right. But this idea of his remained neglected during the time of writing the ‘Teen Varsh’. Introduction of the subject in this novel shows that vermaji wanted to expose the luxury and hankering after money of the then modern women. Therefore, along with Prabha, a character like Saroj has been introduced which has a different characteristic peculiarity from prevailing one.

In the ‘Teen Varsh’, Saroj appeared as a prostitute and it was their hereditary profession. Her mother wanted to make her free from that profession and establish her as a house-wife. But she was not successful in her attempt. Therefore, she who fell prey to this flesh-trading, was hankering after real love. When a person like Ramesh came to her life, she believed that her want would be fulfilled. She had to give up many thing for its fulfillment. In her love there was:

"प्रेम में त्याग चरम उत्कर्ष है, और प्रभा के प्रेम में प्राति की तरंग लालसा।" (23)

She wore away her life in the thought of ‘Tyag’. She began to feel a pitiful friendship at the first sight of Ramesh:

"आपके प्रेम ही हैं जैसा असर मुझपर कभी न होगा, जैसा आप रामस्वर स्वर है। मैं आपकी बातें सुनने बैठी हुई और वह समझकर सुनने बैठी हुई कि आप जो कुछ कहते हैं, वह, अप्रिय और कहु होगा।" (24)

Saroj had a soft-corner in her heart although she was a prostitute; for which she could know the human quality of Ramesh at the first sight, she did not take advantage of the weakness of Ramesh; but wanted to satisfy him with sympathy. Therefore, she tolerated all the insults of Ramesh and supported him before Bankelal:
In this manner Vermaji satirised on modern civilisation through Saroj. Ramesh always behaved rudely towards Saroj. She, being tortured, told him in a pitiful voice:

“मुझे तूम्हारे आने नहीं चाहिए, मुझे तुम्हारी मनुष्यता चाहिए।” (26)

She also asked for ‘love’ from him:

“तूम्हारा प्रेम चाहिए रमेश! चलो यहाँ से दूर चल कर हम दो साथ साथ रहें, पति पत्नी के समान। मैं तुमसे विवाह करने को नहीं कहती। साथ रहने में क्या कोई हर्ष है.... मुझे तुम्हारा आने नहीं चाहिए, मुझे तुम्हारी ज़हरत है।” (27)

Comparing the viewpoints on marriage of Saroj and Prabha, one thing is clear that in the opinion of both, love is not necessary for marriages although both of them were hankering after ‘love’. But the permanence which is evident in the love of Saroj, was absent in that of Prabha. That was the peculiarity in the character of Saroj. Saroj loved a person and regarded love as the permanent element of life, while love of Prabha was restless and it was the means to get pleasure for her. Saroj could sacrifice both her life and property for her love. In contrast to that, Prabha did not care the least to divorce Ramesh. Interestingly, she was not ashamed of when she proposed to marry the same Ramesh being allured to his property. In this manner, Saroj, although she was a prostitute, established an ideal – an ideal of love. There is nothing like selling and buying in case of love. Money cannot buy it. It can be had only through ‘Tyag.’ It is not an affair of the body but of the mind.
7.5 VEENA (THE TERHE MERHE RAASTE):

The powerful woman character in the 'Terhe Merhe Raaste' is Veena Mukherjee. Veena is the symbol of consciousness in women in the dependent India. She was from a middle-class family of Calcutta who did her M.A. there. She joined revolutionary party in her student life and dreamt the dream of an independent India. Being a member of the revolutionary party she had indomitable valour and courage. Right from her appearance in the novel, she was able to attract the attention of the readers. Prabhanath felt magical attraction at her courage:

"देखिये, मैं आपका नाम नहीं जानता ...... मुझे आपके साहस पर आश्चर्य है, आपके प्रति मुझे एक प्रकार के आदर का भाव जग उठा है।" (28)

This respect turned into faith and love between them in course of time. She told him at the first meeting in clear terms:

"वे लोग आप पर भरोसा करे या न करें, पर मैं आप पर भरोसा कर सकती हूँ, कर ही नहीं सकती, करती हूँ।" (28)

Veena’s faith turned into love and made her weak:

"नहीं मरने के लिए मैं हूँ - और सब है। लेकिन आप! आपके मरने का अभी समय नहीं है। आप अगर विपत्ति में पड़ जायेंगे तो मैं नहीं रह सकूँगी - नहीं रह सकूँगी।" (30)

Mannohan enlightened this weakness of Veena and told her:

"आपके प्रभावाथ के हिताहित का इतना ख्याल नहीं है जितना आपको अपने सुख और अपनी तुषिटि का है। आप प्रभावाथ से प्रेम करती है, और आप प्रभावाथ को अपने लेखक अपने सपनों की दुनिया में रहना चाहती है। इस दुनिया में दूसरों का आना आपको पसंद नहीं।" (31)

Veena’s love was not ‘lust,’ which was a love of Indian women inspired by
the idea of ‘Tyag’ and sacrifice and in which the beloved instead of standing on the
way of patriotism, became an inspiration to her lover. She kept her love disguised
even when she was so near to a person with strong personality like Ramnath. But
when time came for clarification she firmly told Ramnath :

“दुआ - आपने अपने पुत्र को खोया है, लेकिन मैंने अपना सर्वस्व खो दिया।” (32)

Ramnath’s strong personality bowed down before much stronger personality
of Veena, witnessing the rigidity of her character, she had to be accepted as the
daughter-in-law, without celebrating the marriage by a person none other than
Ramnath. He told Veena :

“हिंदू पत्नी के कर्त्तव्य को तुम जानती हो - मुझे तुमसे आशा है?” (33)

This statement of Ramnath hinted at the devotion of Indian women to their
husbands Veena replied with self-confidence :

“आपके मेरी ओर से निराश होने का अवसर न आएगा।” (34)

She finally proved it literally by sacrificing her life. There was emotion and
that emotion was powerful :

“इसी शक्ति के आधार पर यह दुर्भाग्य सी लड़की उस पराजयपूर्ण स्थिति को विनाश कर देती
है जिसके आगे रमानाथ का अवसर, धन - सम्पत्ति आदि, श्यामनाथ का उद्व शासकीय पद एवं
भागीदार, सभी असफल थे।” (35)

From this point of view she can be regarded as a colleague and helper of
Ramnath.
7.6 CHAMELI (THE AAKHRI DAON):

Chameli is the heroine of the novel 'Aakhri Daon'. She was a young woman of a middle-class family of Uttar Pradesh, whose life was full of conflicts. She was enormously beautiful in both body and mind. But there was none in her family to look into her mind. The neglect of her husband and tortures of her mother-in-law’s made her pathetic towards her father-in-law’s family. The basic reason of her misfortune was that she was a burden to her family economically. She had love for her active husband Damri. She was even trying to save him without caring for her troubles. She was found to craving for other’s love and good will till her death. Ratnu exploited her feeling and weakness. When Ratnu showed affection and sympathy towards her, she began to believe him. She told Ratnu :

“तुम मुझे छोड़ो तो नहीं।” (37)

But as soon as he arrived Bombay he deceived her. She was then furious against him and uttered :

“हूँ! तो तुम मुझे से यह काम करवाने के लिए मुझे बहाये हो! नरक के कीड़े! भगवान ने मेरे पापों का अच्छा दंड दिया है। लेकिन नह तुम कुछ नही होगा।” (38)

With such firmness she rebuked Seth Shiwkumar :

“सेठ! तुमने मुझे राखा के तरह रण्डी समझ रखा है क्या? अब अगर दूसरी बात मूँह से निकाली तो जीभ बीच लूंगी।” (39)

But her helplessness didnot allow her pride to survive long. Rameswar, who was her only resort, was suffering from economic hardships, and as such she had to go to Seth Shiwkumar. She now did everything which were to be performed very unwillingly. She said to the Seth :—
She surrendered herself to the Seth for only four thousand rupees. No reader would hate her for this downfall. Because it happened only due to helplessness on account of circumstances. In other words, she had weakness towards ‘love’ for which she fulfilled each and every wishes of Rameswar. But harshness of circumstances gave birth to internal conflict in her. As such she surrendered to the Seth against her will and her inner mind began to rebel:

“वह घूम कर शिवकुमार को तमामा मारे, पर उसका शरीर शिषियों भड़ा जा रहा था। उसका ऑर्जन सानो इस कुर्सीता के सामने आप ही बन्द हो गई। उसने अपना हाथ उठाकर शिवकुमार का हाथ अपने शरीर से ठाठा के एक कमजोर प्रश्न अवस्था किया, पर उसने अनुभव किया कि वह दूर चली आई है, अपनी इच्छा से चली आई, और इस बहाव में उसका वह जाना अविष्कार है।” (41)

Chameli carried on her rebellion against circumstances although she surrendered to circumstances and helplessness. But her rebellion could not gain momentum and activeness. She rebelled against Shiwkumar and when she could not carry the rebellion she told Shiwkumar:

“फिर सेठ! मैं अपने से नाराज हूँ परन्तु तुमसे नहीं। मूंगे अपने उपर म्यूथिम हो रही है। तुमने जो कुछ किया, वह तुमने बहुत पहले कह दिया था। और सेठ दुगर मूंगे मनचुर भी तो नहीं किया। जो कुछ दोष है, वह मेरा है, जो कुछ पाप किया है वह मैं।” (42)

She did not forgive Rameswar, because he had to tolerate all these for him. But her love for Rameswar was in tact. She told Rameswar:

“मेरी एक प्रार्थना स्वीकार कर तो - तुम अपना काम - काज छोड़ कर दुखियों समझाओं
This wish for getting help was everlasting necessity. Therefore, she said to Rameswar when she met him at Seth Sital Prasad’s house:--

“मे ककसभ खाती हूँ। अब मे केवल तुम्हारी बनकर रहूँगी – मुझे गत छोड़े इस तरह मत जाओ, हाथ जोड़ती हूँ।” (44)

Finally with such an idea she killed herself after killing Seth Sital Prasad. (45)

In the ‘Aakhri Daon’, Chameli was such a woman who took up the path of downfall as she was deceived by circumstances. But she was conscious of every step of her downfall.

7.7 CHINKI (THE BHULE BISRE CHITRA):

Chinki is the most powerful female character of the ‘Bhule Bisre Chitra’. Her character became more simple since she was associated with the lower class people. She was related to backward ‘Kahar’ caste whose duty was supposed to be the service of the higher castes. Chinki was the representative of the women class who was meant for entertainment of higher class of the feudal system. They earned their living by doing service to Zamindars and Talukdars of the feudal system. They had not only to serve the wives of these so-called high class families but also, from time to time had to meet the ‘lust’ of the husbands there. Chinki is a woman of such family. She served Munshi Shiwlal both physically and mentally. she had a particular place in Shiwlal’s family due to her service there.

In the preliminary part of the novel Chinki is found to be outspoken and with far-sightedness, she was conscious of her position, what it should be and what it was, in a joint family. When Jwalaprasad became the Tehsildar, she told about the right of a kept woman:--
Shiwlal recognised the rights of Chinki in his family and said:

"अरी तेरी हाथ हमने कब पकड़ा? जमा जाना तो सब तेरे हाथ में है, तु खुद बनवा ले।"  

Chinki had full idea of social decorum and her status in the society although she was a kept of Shiwlal. She even warned shiwlal against his drinking habit:

"राम राम! बिवाड़ खुले भए है, कौने देख लेई तुम तो दारू पीके बौराया जात हो।"  

Chinki is not found acting in the traditional way of a kept in the novel. In most cases, she is found to be a reasonable and vigilant woman. Right from the beginning she informed Shiwlal that the wife of Radha should not and could not get the position similar to that of the wife of Jwala in the joint family. Considering the position of Yamuna in the joint family, Chinki said:

"देखो, छोटी मालकिन बहू के साथ बही जादती करती है। बिचारी ज्वाला की बहू कदी उन्नति की, तीत दिन रात उड़से काम लेती है। हम पुछत हम तुम छोटी मालकिन का मना काहि नाही करत हो।"  

She was not disappointed to find that Shiwlal was not giving his attention to this matter. She knew how and when these things should be introduced. Therefore, she told Shiwlal that:

"हमार हुम लोग की मिरिस्ती भी कौनो अधिकार नाही आँ, ई हमका मालूम है और हमका एहिजी कौनो सिकायते नाही। मुला हम हुमसे पूछ रही हन कि का ज्वाला अब ते जाय रहा है।"
Even then Shiwlal did not care to send Yamuna with Jwalaprasad, Chinki tried to convince Shiwlal and used her last weapon:—

“परेद का मामला, ऊँचा का जोर और ऊँचे भवानी की उमिर! मान लें ज्वाला की अन्य ज्वान पत्थर हार माँ बाढ़ाय लें तू?" (51)

Now Chinki's aim was fulfilled and Shiwlal consented helplessly to send Yamuna to Ghatampur with Jwalaprasad.

Chinki showed mother-like affection to Jwalaprasad who was tortured by Radhelal and his family. She protested when it was proposed to send Jwala to find out Kisanlal in the following words:—

“सब कुछ तो कर रहे हैं बिचहारा ज्वाला, अब ऊँचा दर - दर किसनू का डुंठने जाय, इतनी बाकी रहिगया है। नैन कहो तो तहसीलदारी कर लें और कहो तो किसनू का डुंठन का बरे देस भर की परिक्रमा करे?" (52)

In the same manner she hinted at the expenditure incurred towards the family of Radhalal:—

“क्या बड़ा बड़ा आय, जब देखो पूरी मिलाई मंगा लें।" (53)

She also drew the attention of Shiwlal against the growing evil influence of the Radhalal family. She remarked:—

“इसे जो ज्वाला के बाढ़ा का खानदान ज्वाला की कमाई पर मीठे बारे का आय रहा है तोन दुर्घोधन का खानदान इकड़ा हुई रहा है!" (54)

Although it was not fair for Chinki to compare the family of Radhelal with that of Duryyodhana yet she knew how to express herself. Being uneducated she
could not mind the fairness of language. Devotion to husband in her was seen throughout her life. She could not safeguard the family of Jwala but offered her son Bhikhu to serve them for the whole life. That was why Shiwlal at his last moment of life wanted that Jwala should give him words to look after Chinki:—

"वह चिन्नी, यह तेरी दुःसरी माँ है। मैंने इसे बड़ा कष्ट दिया है; इसकी कोई बात नहीं सुनी मैंने। तो इसे अब तेरी दया पर छोड़ रखा है। तेरी सबसे अधिक सभी यही है।" (55)

This statement of Shiwlal recognised the devotion and the 'Tyagmayee' qualities of Chinki, which was rather impossible for Shiwlal and his family to deny.

Another aspect of Chinki’s life was that her idea was suffering from the inferiority complex of the lower caste tradition. Along with her respect for religion, the traditional culture was inherent in her. She believed in the traditional way that if a high caste person took food from a low-caste one then the former was ruined and degraded. So she said to Shiwlal:—

"राम - राम! कबी रक्षुद्वां माँ कैसे जाई? कल्पवास कर रहे ही, तीन घरम - करम का तो बयाल राखो। चौंका माँ हमरे जान से चौंका छूट होई जाइै।" (56)

When Shiwlal wanted it, she further said:—

"तुम्हारे हाथ जोड़ित है, इ पाप हमसे न कराओ - हम चौंका माँ न घुसब। तुम्हार परलोक हमरे हाथ न बिगड़ै।" (57)

Vermaji wanted to depict the helpless and pitious condition of the backward class on one hand and satirically hinted at the heartlessness and love of luxury of the Hindu caste system on the other. The woman, whom one can make bedmate, can never be allowed to cook food for one. It is the irony of Hindu society that if one takes food from the same woman with whom there is no objection to sleep in one’s
life in both the worlds will be ruined.

Chinki is such a character who could understand all the needs of her own time even when she was a woman from a backward Hindu caste.

7.8 JAIDEI (THE BHULE BISRE CHITRA):

Jaidei is another major character of the ‘Bhule Bisre Chitra’ besides Chinki. The story of Jaidei was related from the first part to the third part of the novel. She was born to a Vaishya family and was brought up in Vaishya family tradition. In her love and emotion were powerful the fulfilment of which was not possible within the boundaries of her family. She remained unsatiated due to the strict and neglectful behaviour of her husband Prabhu Dayal and as such she was attracted towards Jwala. Jaidei remained unsatiated in case of both wifehood and motherhood. Because she did not even receive the intimacy from her son Laxmikant for which she could have forgotten the ill-treatment of her husband. As a result, her whole life was full of discontent, dis-satisfaction and dullness.

If Jaidei had some near relatives they were none but Jwala and his family troubled Jaidei got some help only from this family. Jaidei’s husband Prabhu Dayal was greedy of money and a rude man who was the source of all trouble for Jaidei throughout her life. She related her life-long mental tortures before Jwala at the time of her last moment of life:--

“कितना सहा है इस जीन्थी में देवर्जी! भगवान ने मुझे सहने को जो पैदा किया था। पति दिया - बेदमान और निर्माण! कोश से पैदा किया बेटा - बेदमान और निर्माण! इन दोनों ने कितना सहना है। और मैं सबकुछ देखती रही अपनी छाती पर रखकर .... भगवान की यही ईश्वर थी देवर्जी, जानती हूं और उन्ही भगवान ने तुम्हारे रूप में एक देवता मेरे जीवन में भेजकर मेरा थोड़ा भूत ताप हरा भी। देवर्जी, उसी भगवान को संकी देकर मं कहती हूं, मैंने कोई पाप नहीं किया” (58)
Had Vermaji not made Jaidei to confess and made her last self-analysis like this, readers would not have changed their view that jaidei was sinful and luxurious woman.

Yamuna was the first person to understand the mental conflict of Jaidei. Because upto that time beauty of Jaidei kept Jwala over-powered. Yamuna analysed the troubles of Jaidei in the following lines :--

"लम्बरदार के चले जाने के बाद लम्बरदारिन ने तुम्हारा सहारा चाहा। क्योंकि तुम सहारा देने को तैयार थे, तो उसे तुम्हारा सहारा मिल भी गया। लेकिन तुम कहीं भाग न खड़े हो, उसे सहारा देना बन्द न कर दो, इसीलिए लम्बरदारिन ने तुम्हारे सहारे का मील बुकाया है धन से, मन से और तन से।" (59)

In practise, Jaidei had such a feeling towards Jwala till the end.

Jaidei fulfilled her urge of motherhood with the help of Gangaprasad whom she took him for her son and the same manner she fulfilled her love and lust through Jwalaprasad. Therefore, while she saw Santo at Allahabad, she warned Gangaprasad :--

"गंगा मैं छुआ चेताए देसी हूँ कि यह भीरस महतरमे है, इसके पंचे ने न पूरा जाना। जहार से भरा सोने का पहँच समझो इसको! तेरी घरवाती है। कैसा चाँद का मुख्यता है उसका! तेरे बाल बचे हैं, इसका आबाद है, हैसियत है और फूला है, तरी जिन्दगी में तेरे बीवी बचे ही काम आयेंगे। बाकी सब कुछ तो मृतकश्च्य त है।" (60)

It was Jaidei's 'Matri Rup' which was always wanted to save her son from possible dangers. Even she had her last wish at the time of her death to see Gangaprasad for the last time. She was dying to see him. She was greatly happy to see Gangaprasad at the last moment and said to him :--
On the other hand she expressed all her hatred towards Laxmi Chandra, her son:

"ठीक कहते ही देवर्जी, कोई अन्तर नहीं है बाप बेटे में। सोचा था कि मेरी कोश से जनमा है, लेकिन इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ा।" (62)

In this manner two forms (Rup) of Jaidei come to the reader’s view - one, a form of luxurious woman, who kept Jwalaprasad a captive of her beauty. It might not be her real ‘Rup’; because it might be the reflection of her’ helplessness and subordination to circumstances, which made her indisciplined temporarily. She got affection for which she was hankering throughout life from Jwalaprasad and therefore she did not like to break the relationship with him. She made herself a part of the family of Jwalaprasad. The other ‘Rup’ of Jaidei was a ‘Mamatamayee Naari’ (a kind-hearted woman).

7.9 SANTO (THE BHULE BISRE CHITRA):

The third major female Character is Santo whose story began in the third part and ended in the same part of the novel. One Gangaprasad accidently met her in the Delhi Durbar. Vermaji wanted to expose the changing values in a rich Johari family with their sexual relationship through the story of Santo. Santo was tired of the traditional customs of her family due to the neglect of her husband. Family traditions were so much binding on her that she could not make her free from them. She was quite helpless. But when her bindings slackened, she rushed into the path downfall far more quickly. She was, of course, conscious of her limits a long with her beauty. Santo at the very beginning explained the influence of her beauty over
Gangaprasad and told him that he came to her not because of her invitation but because of the attraction of her body:

"मेरे चचनों के निमंत्रण पर इतना नहीं, जितना मेरी सूदरता के निमंत्रण पर, मेरी अँखों के निमंत्रण पर! यही कहना चाहते है आप? लेकिन मैं अपने रूप को कैसे जला हूँ, अपनी अँखों को कैसे फोड़ूँ।" (63)

She further added with self-confidence and firmness:

"आप मुझे पाना चाहते है, लेकिन मुझे पा नहीं सकते।" (64)

She threatened Gangaprasad that she would call for her servant (65) when the latter made her helpless. This threatening was the reaction of her internal conflict. Because immediately she understood her fault and asked Gangaprasad to forgive her:

"मुझे माफ करना! जी होता है इस हाथ को आप में छुलस हूँ। ... मैं बड़ी अभागिन हूँ, बड़ी अभागिन हूँ मै आपका सहारा चाहती हूँ। मेरी आपसे हाथ जोड़कर यह बिनती है कि यह सहारा देने में आप इनकार न कर दीजिएगा। मुझे आप वचन दीजिए।" (66)

One can find the picture of Santo's mental imbalance through this statement, where there was, on one hand, the desire for happiness in life and on the other consciousness about her limits.

She became helpless after expressing her weakness before Gangaprasad. She was advancing towards luxury very swiftly and as a result she submitted to Gangaprasad easily. Gangaprasad exposed this bare truth when he embraced her and told her:
Once propriety is downgraded, it can never he restored throughout one’s life. She established relationship with high class society in Calcutta at the cost of her body and youthfulness and thereby she procured the title of Raja Saheb for Radha Kishan. But in heart of hearts she did not like it. She told Gangaprasad in clear terms:

“बधाई युक्त नहीं, बधाई तुम अपने के दो! यह सच है कि यह राजा बलारुप बने गरे प्रवाल से, लेकिन तुम्हारे ने तो मुझे यह बना दिया है जो में हूँ.... मुझे कभी कभी ऐसा लगता है कि मैं झूठ और फर्ज़ की दुनिया में आ गई हूँ और ये झूठ और फर्ज़ मेरे व्यक्तित्व के साथ बतू गए हैं.... यह सफलता, यह सुख, यह वैधता, ये सब झूठ और फर्ज़ की ही उपज तो है। जिसे लोग निर्धारित कहते हैं; वही उपर उठाना है।” (68)

In another place she told Gangaprasad knowing the secret of her success:

“में जाता चाहता था मेरे रूप, वह चाहता था मेरी जबानी, और बदले में दे रखा था पद, मर्यादा, रुपाया पैसा।” (69)

Santo remained as one Indian ‘Awala’ even after so much success. She was always waiting for power and help from a man, therefore she rebuked Radhakishna:

“अगर यह इतने जनके और बेशरम न होते तो इस घर में मेरी न्या हालत होती ? जन बूढ़ कर यह मुझे बढ़ावा देते थे, सब कुछ देखते हुए यह सब कुछ न देखे थे। रुपाया पैसा, मान मर्यादा, सब कुछ तो मिल रहा था इन्हें।” (70)

She further hinted at the luxury and cunningness of Ka:śī and used harsh words against him:
Along with hints towards the luxury of Kailash and his greed for money, she hinted at inactivity of her husband.

Radhakishan’s immoral connections with his sister-in-law was enough to change her basically. A strong mental reaction began against Radhakishan’s character; and that reaction took the shape of madness in her. She told Gangaprasad:

"‘मेरे पास मान है, मर्यादा है, ऐस्वर्य है, वैभव है। मैं रानी हूँ, मेरे पास लाखों रुपये हैं। और तुम अपनी तैयार तो देखो, तुम क्या हो? तुम जलते हो, कुछते हो, तुम्हारे अंदर घूमा है, तुम्हारे अंदर हिस्सा है।’" (72)

In this manner what woman character Vermaji created in the shape of Santo, was a strong woman pursuing Indian traditional customs even when she was related to high class society. But finally she was converted to a life of luxury due to the inactivity of her husband.

7.10 SHYAMALA (THE VOH PHIR NAHIN AAYEE):

Shyamala is the heroine of the novel ‘Voh Phir Nahin Aayee.’ She has been depicted as the neighbour of one Gyanchand, who was waiting in a hotel for Jiwan Ram. She told about Jiwan Ram:

"बह मेरा हूँ, जी का सितेदार होता है बेचारा! निरीह और निराशित! किस कदर निकम्मा सा आदमी।” (73)

This statement of Shyamala about Jiwan Ram gives such a picture of a man whose love of his wife turns into insanity. (74). Shyamala also could not live with-
out this ‘Bechare Pati,’ she said to Gyanchand :

"मैं जीवनराम की बी, छात्रचन्द्री, मैं जीवनराम की हूँ, मैं जीवनराम की हमेशा रहूँगी, मैं सिवा जीवनराम के और किसी की नहीं हो सकती।" (75)

This is one of the aspects of Shyamala’s personality.

In Shyamala there was a strange mixture of contradictions. On one hand she was the unique lover and admirer of her husband and did not give more importance to any other person than him and on the other, she believed that there was great importance of the body in the life of a woman. Therefore, she was aware of the power of her beauty when Gyanchand told her that "बात से ज्यादा मजेदार बात करनेवाली हैं।"

She humourously told him :

"मैं मजेदार हूँ या मेरा रूप और जवानी मजेदार है, मैं यह आजतक न जान सकी, और शायद मैं बही हूँ जो मेरा रूप है, जो मेरी जवानी है।इनसे मैं अभागी अलग अलग कैसे रह सकती हैं।" (76)

In this conversation of Shyamala, she expressed her idea about beauty of a woman along with her helplessness and inferiority. Shyamala could not get the sympathy of the readers at the beginning due to this contradiction of character. Moreover, it seems asif :

"श्यामला का चरित्र जिन परिस्थितियों में रखा गया है, वह तो असाधारण रूप से कृत्रिम है। कोई भी भारतीय नारी, चाहे वह जिस किसी भी वर्ग एवं समाज से सम्बन्धित हो, यदि वह अपने पति प्रेम एवं आत्मा की रक्षा करना चाहती है, तो वह शाहबाज के हाथों अपने सतीत्व को बचाने के पहले मर जाना अधिक पसंद करती। वह आदर्शवाद नहीं यथार्थवाद ही होता।" (77)
But such a blame may be charged only if Shyamala's character is viewed from the point of traditional Indian ideal. If one considers her in the context of the circumstances then one would show more sympathy to her than contempt. This is the success of Shyamala's characterisation. She became the wife of somebody due to her helplessness and for the same helplessness. She joined trafficking, Jiwan Ram wished to lead a life of comfort. Therefore, Shyamala wanted more and more money which she could procure only through prostitution. She did not hate her husband because she was overpowered with love and his liberal attitude. It is difficult to know how many other women who mixed up with evil persons and lead a life of helplessness. Although generally such persons are regarded as unique yet when considered from the point of particular circumstances, one can find them more practical than idealist.

The weakest aspect of Shyamala's character was her reactionary attitude towards circumstances. She could not control her environments and circumstances. She applied her beauty and youthfulness against men who were cruel to her. Perhaps she could not imagine that power of beauty was temporary and its unwanted use destroyed the very existence of a woman. Shyamala said:

"आज किसी का मेरे उपर कोई अधिकार नहीं, किसी के प्रति मुझमें किसी प्रकार की ममता नहीं। मुक्त और बन्धनहीन मैं घूमती रहती हूँ, मैं लोगो की जिन्दगी बिगाड़ती रहती हूँ, नष्ट करती रहती हूँ।" (78)

Gyanchand was fully aware of her reactionary character and therefore he kept the money returned by Shyamala as a security money:

"आज उसके पास रुपया है, यीवन है लेकिन कल जब उसकी जवानी खत्म हो जायगी, जब उसका रुपया दल जाएगा, तब उसे इन रुपयों की आवश्यकता पड़ेगी। उसी कल के लिए यह रुपया बैसा का बैसा रखा दिया है।" (79)
In this manner Shyamala in the 'Voh Phir Nahin Aayce', is such a woman of a high class family who lead an inactive luxurious life, and who sold herself for happiness in life.

7.11 MAANKUMARI (THE SAMARTHYA AUR SEEMA)

Maankumari is the only female character around which the subject matter of the novel revolves. Introducing Maankumari in the novel, the novelist has successfully done away with all dryness. The personality of Maankumari was so attractive that all the other characters lured to her. There was a happy mixture of beauty and wealth in her. The novelist depicted this mixture in the following words:--

"मानकुमारी को अद्वितीय सौंदर्य मिला था, आर्थ और मंगोल रक्षा का सम्मिलित। रानी मानकुमारी का वर्ण चंपा की मौति पीला तथा सुनहरा था। स्वस्थ और धूलील शरीर गठा हुआ। युवावस्था के रक्त के गुलाबी पत्ते उनके वर्ण को और भी निदार दिया था - पतली धूलील और नुकसानी नाक, पतले पतले होठ जिसमें मानी रक्त टपका पड़ता हो। रानी मानकुमारी के सौंदर्य को विवेशों में मुक्त केंद्र से स्वीकार किया गया था।" (80)

Rani Maankumari was the wife of king Shamsher Bahadur Singh of Yashnagar. She lost her husband a year ago and returned from Switzerland. During his life time, King Shamsher erected a dam on the river Rohini to produce hydro-electricity and planned to make Sumanpur an important industrial place. He made initial arrangement by building twelve 'Bungalows' at Sumanpur, but in the meantime abolition of Zamindari system kept his dream unfulfilled. The whole Zamindari slipped away from him to the cultivators and other property went to the government. It shocked the kind and he left his kingdom with his wife and other belongings and promising not to return. He died abroad.
After the death of her husband, Maankumari returned home. At that time Naharsingh, uncle of Raja Vijoy Singh and his only son were living besides Maankumari. Coming to Yashnagar, she kept them with her. Major Nahar Singh was the security officer for the ‘Rani’. He had affection to Maankumari more than to his daughter and guarded her till his death. He witnessed the death of his son with his own eyes. He was even wanted to jump into the water but for the safety of Maankumari, he did not do it.

Rani Maankumari after coming to India tried to regain her Zamindari. Along with Nahar Singh she met almost all major leader of the land and administrators; but she was not successful. Nobody paid heed to her and finally she was disappointed.

Rani Maankumari was very beautiful. One after another all the able persons bowed to her. At first Pandit Shiwanand Sharma was attracted to her. He advised the Rani to devote herself to poetry and literature, because he found such ability in her. He also promised all help in this respect like publishing the collection of poetry, translating it into English and to publish its translation so that it could be published in foreign countries etc. In addition to that he was prepared to vacate his house at Delhi for Maankumari.

Next victim of Rani’s beauty was Gyancswar Rao, the editor. He wrote articles in praise of Rani Sahiba and sent to the Republic for publication. He also told her that he would make necessary arrangements for her cases. He also promised to make the government pay rupees eight lakhs for her eight ‘Bungalows’. He also suggested that Rani Sahiba should go to Delhi and enter into politics.

Elbert Kisan Mansoor was the third paramour of Rani Sahiba. He wanted to make her the head of a cultural delegation to America of which the whole expenditure would be born by the government and which would be amounted to lakhs of rupees and would be handed by the Rani herself. It would relieve her from the
boredom here at home and moreover she would get one friend attached to her for life. The fourth victim of Rani Sahiba’s beauty was the renowned industrialist Makola who promised her to appoint her as the managing director of his company. Of these lovers Devlankar was the person to put forward the proposal of marriage while others beat about the bush by showing her allurements only.

Hence Maankumari had, on one hand, the evergrowing lust for life and on the other, her powerful desire for motherhood veiled under boredom of traditional culture. Her personality began to dwindle in the struggle of these contradictory emotions. Therefore, it can be easily assumed that although Rani Maan Kumari was a high caste lady with a happy mixture of property and beauty yet she had to lead a poor and helpless life due to her widowhood. In her personal life, she got a big mental shock at the death of her son and the husband and at the same time she was downgraded socially when she lost her Zamindari. She wanted to be successful in both the fields but unfortunately she failed disastrously in both of them.

7.12 SUSHILA (THE THAKE PAON)

Sushila is the main woman character of the ‘Thake Paon’. Her character was bound by traditional Customs and values and yet she struggled with circumstances of the new era. She was not a woman to retreat even against the most difficult situation, she adept herself to any changing situation in accordance with the age. At the beginning of the novel, she was a daughter-in-law of a middle class family who passed intermediate examination. She had a strong desire for higher education. Her personality was so simple and impressive that she was the centre of all attraction in the family in contradiction to the then idea of literate woman. According to Keshav:

“भोजन की पत्नी बास्तव में कुल लक्ष्मी थी, घर में आते ही उससे घर का काम समझ
लिया। केशव को अपनी बहू पर गर्व था।” (81)
Sushila has the unique quality of understanding a person and the circumstances. She was fully aware of the irresponsible behaviour of Kishan. But to keep the peace of the family in tact she offered the money saved by her husband to Kishan. She tolerated all the insults and tortures when Mohan was dismissed from his service. But she realised that the unemployment of her husband was solely responsible for all that happened. So she asked Maya:

"तुम समय बनकर कोई काम करता। यह किसी दूसरे पर निर्भर रहना ही सबसे बड़ी गुलामी है। अपमान लांछना - सबकुछ इस गुलामी में बदीमात करता पड़ता है। दुनिया में जो कुछ है वह पैसा है पैसा।" (82)

Like the majority of women of a middle-class joint family, Sushila had no independent position of her own. Whatever she had, it was due to her husband and that too depended upon the economic status of the husband. The brightest and the bravest part of her character became clearly evident at the time when her husband was suffering from consumption. Expenditure on such a dreaded disease became a problem for the family suffering from economic hardships, on such a critical time, Sushila showed her strong will and boldness and accepted the challenge of all troublesome circumstances. She sold her ornaments to meet the expenditures. She told Kesha:

"मैं अकेली सब कुछ कर लूंगी। आप विश्वास रखिये। समय पड़ने पर ऐसी सब कुछ कर सकती हूँ। इतनी शिक्षा पाई है भैने किस दिन के लिए?" (83)

In another time when Kesha objected to her joining the job, she explained the importance of the circumstances:

"भाबुर्जी, मजबूरी सब कुछ कर लेती हैं। मैं यह कर रही हूँ इसके लिए, इनके इनाम के लिए।" (84)
In this manner one can easily find that from the beginning to the end, Sushila remained conscious and vigilant towards her duties and circumstances. On one hand she respected the traditions of her family and on the other she proved her success as a progressive and rebellious woman when necessity arose. In her there were not only bare sentiments and high hopes but also a keen foresight to see the need of the time.

7.13 MAYA (THE THAKE PAON)

Another major female character in the ‘Thake Paon’ besides Sushila is Maya, who was troubled by the high expectations and inconsistencies of the modern age as she was born in a middle class family. As a result of modern education, Maya became a woman of high hopes and expectations. She had a brother like Kishan who encouraged her in this line. In the novel she had been introduced as a student of the B.A. class, who was more active in a dramatic society rather than in her studies. There was a shortage of good dress for her. She always borrowed good sarees from her friends to show her as a rich woman.

Due to the fallen economic condition of her family, a proposal was made to marry her to an incapable doctor. As soon as the proposal was made her rebellious character explicit. She immediately rejected the proposal and told her father.

“आप मेरे प्राण ले लीजिए, आपके पूरा अधिकार है; क्योंकि आपने मुझे जाना दिया है, लेकिन जो व्याय की बात है, जो सत्य है, उसे कहकर से आप मुझे नहीं रोक सकते। मैं अनुभव कि बात नहीं कह रही हूँ, मुझे विवाह नहीं करना - अंतिम बार मैं कहे देती हूँ।” (85)

This ‘Rup’ is not only true in case of Maya but also in cases of all educated young women who wanted to rise above the traditional customs and who were not allowed to free themselves from the shackles of hereditary traditions.
The middle-class parents, due to their economic and obsequious helplessness, donot like that their girls should marry on their own sweet will. This was the reason why girls had to resort to movement against such marriages.

Maya revolted against the middle-class marriage system in the following words:

"अम्मा, मुझे विवाह ही नहीं करना है। देख तो रही हैं तुम्हारी हालत, बौजी की हालत, बुआजी की हालत! विवाह के अर्थ हैं तक़ी को नरक में बकेल देना! और इस नरक में आप लोग मुझे नहीं बकेल सकते - मर जाना में नरक में पड़ने की अपेक्षा ज्यादा पसँद कहती हूँ। " (86)

This is the voice of the educated woman of the new-era who wanted to shater the age-old rotten traditions. What Maya showed in case of personal or family life could also be seen in social fields also. She gave befitting reply to uncivil behaviour of the engineer’s son on the street by throwing her ‘Chappal’ against him. It is the attitude of a modern educated young woman who has enough morla courage in her. Therefore, when she went to go to Kishan in Bombay, she wrote a letter to her father saying, :-

"घर में मैं भार बन कर नहीं रहना चाहती, अपना रास्ता मुझे खुद ही निकालना है। आप मुझ पर नाराज न हो। हम लोगों पर यह मुसीबत का समय है, हरेक को अपने अपने डंग से मुसीबत का सामना करना है।" (87)

Therefore Maya is such a progressive and rebellious woman who came out of the middle-class family troubled by economic difficulties and who wanted make her own way. She had the least faith on the troubled values of her own family. A middle-class family dwarfed the progress of a young woman because it could not effort the requirements of her progress. The middle-class regarded a woman as the means to produce children only. Maya was a victim of such cruel tradition.
7.14 REKHA (THE REIKA):

Rekha in the novel ‘Rekha’ is the heroine around whom the whole story revolves. She is present from the beginning up to the end. She had her impact over all the other characters in some way or other. She was the daughter of retired Col. Gyanchand of M.P. She was with beauty and youthfulness combined. At the beginning of the novel she was found.

“कमान की तरह खिंची हुई भौंड के नीचे मुख्ती के आकार की दो खड़े - दुभुख के सरोवर में मानो वे गहरी नीली गोलियाँ उतर रही हों। गहरी नीली पुलियाँ! रेखा की इन पुलियों में कौन सा आकर्षण है जो लोग उसके सामने खिलाते बन जाया करते हैं?”

Her beauty made her proud instead of a humble one. Any neglect of her beauty was regarded as a neglect to her existence. Therefore she was not so much hurt while she was rebuked by Prabhashankar in the class on the very first day as she would have been hurt for the neglect of her beauty:

“पूरे क्लास के सामने श्रीफेसर शंकर ने जो एक तरह से डांटा था, उससे उसके चोट पहुँची थी, और उससे अधिक चोट रेखा को इस बात से पहुँची थी कि अपनी बात कहते समय डाक्टर प्रभाशंकर ने रेखा को देखा तक नहीं था। वह आकृति ही नहीं, वह केवल नाम थी नाम।”

There was of course, some such attraction in the beauty of Rekha that she could influence anybody at her first sight. When Prabhasankar first saw beautiful Rekha, he felt:

“सीतार की साकार प्रतिमा बैठी थी उनके सामने, जिसकी मुख पर नील नील की आभा थी, जिसके ओँकर में कोंठेहरी की चमक थी, जिसके मुख पर स्वाभिमान से भरा आस्था विश्वास था। लेकिन इस सब के साथ एक अजीब सा मोहक भोलापन था, जिसके समर्थ अस्तित्व में।”

Not only the males but the women also praised Rekha’s beauty.
Devki told Prabhashankar when first saw Rekha:--

"मैं इन रेखा मिस साहेब को देखना चाहती थी। बला की चुबुरत है - लेकिन लेकिन इससे सावधान रहना। बड़ी सबल बर्बरता है इसका। जो भी पुरुष इसके जीवन में आए हो उसे तोड़ कर रख देगी। उन इसी बाँधों में कैसी आ गई है! " (91)

The fire of Rekha's beauty burnt whole of Prabhashankar's personality and turned it into ashes.

Along with beauty and wealth, there was emotion and love in Rekha to the maximum. Due to her excessive emotion she was attracted to Prabhashankar, a man of fifty year and finally married him. According to her:

"पता नहीं मैं आपसे प्रेम करती हूं, प्रोफेसर या नहीं, लेकिन इतना मिलता है कि मैं आपका प्रेम पाने को उत्सुक हूं और आपका प्रेम पाकर प्रसन्न हूं। शायद नारी का प्रेम पुरुष का प्रेम पाने की भावना हो, नारी तो अनुमति करना चाहती है। और प्रोफेसर, मैं तो न जाने कब से आपकी अनुमति बन चुकी हूं। " (92)

The above statement of Rekha's showed emotional condition of her mind. Considering all these one can easily conclude that she was lacking in the intellactual and thoughtful personality of a modern educated woman. Hinting at her excessive emotionality, Someswar told Rekha's brother Arun:--

"तुमने अपनी बहन के विवाह में न आकर अछा नहीं किया, बड़ी भावनात्मक है यह लड़की। " (93)

But Rekha turned her emotionality into a different matter at the call of her body. She began to offer herself to different men one after another.
There was another strong aspect of her character in addition to her weak aspects of love and emotion. She was a very intelligent and liberal woman. One can find her liberal attitude when Devki abused her at Prabhashankar's residence. Devki said:

"शिकार का थीक तो इन्हें है, लेकिन चेर चीते आविं जंगली झांबरों की शिकार का थीक नहीं है। यह शहर के आसपास उड़ने वाली चिंड़ियों का ही शिकार करते हैं, और इसमें इनका निशाना अभूक होता है।"\(^{(94)}\)

But when the same Devki came to her after her marriage for helping her son, she was quite liberal to her. Along with her liberalism, other qualities like keen wisdom, power of appearement etc. were also present in her. Her intellectual keenness and psychology can be evidenced when Prabhashankar asked her about Devki. She replied to Prabhashankar:--

"यह भी कोई पूछने की बात है सर! वह आपकी बहन हो नहीं सकती, वह आपकी कोई निकटस्थ रिस्टेंड़र भी नहीं हो सकती। अगर वह आपकी कुछ भी हो सकती है तो हो सकती है आपकी कमजोरी।"\(^{(95)}\)

The Satire which was associated with the term 'Kamjori' revealed her keen intelligence. This appearement of Rekha sometime appeared as 'Satire' and sometime as 'humour'.

In this manner one can find that she is not only the heroine of the novel but also the most successful and powerful personality of the novel. But her personality and her mental capacity reached their low, when she:--

"अनायास राते चलते बीड़ कर पुख्त को अंकस्थ करने लगती है तो उसके इस पतन को मानसिक विकृति की ही सज्जा मिलेगी।"\(^{(96)}\)
Rekha spoilt her whole life due to this downfall.

7.15 KULSUM (THE SIDHI SACHCHI BATEN):

Of the woman characters, Kulsum is such a one who moves along with the whole story and keep the story moving. She was such a character which not only influenced Jagatprakash but was also able to change his way of life.

Kulsum was the only daughter of a ‘Karorpati Seth’ of Bombay, who owned two mills there. Being related to a capitalist, naturally her sympathy was to be with that group, but it was not her thought and ideas were influenced by communistic ideals and she was a progressive woman. She was worried about the growing capitalism in the state. Although she was a supporter of communism on one hand, yet on the other she took the membership of the congress. Her love for communist became deeper due to Jaswant. He was a communist and she loved him. Explaining her political interest her father told Jagatprakash:

"मेरी बात मानो तो तुम कुलसुम की बातों में न पड़ना। इसे राजनीति से जोड़ है, क्योंकि इसके बाप की दो मिले हैं, और वह एक से एक कीमती जोड़ कर सकती है।"  

Kulsum herself agreed to what was said of her:

"इस लोगों के लिए कृप्यालिप्त एक फैसला है, मैं यह स्वीकार करती हूं, कम से कम अपनी बात की मैं यह कह ही सकती हूं।"  

As in the case of politics she had no firmness to stick to any principle so was the case with her love affairs. She could not stick to any person permanently. At the beginning of the novel she was found mad after one Jaswant, Kamalakant remarked on this matter:

..
In another place Kamalakant also told Jagatprakash:

"मेरी सलाह है कि इस कुलसुम से तुम दूर ही रहना। ऊपर से शिष्ट, शान्त और सीम्य, फिर यह सुंदर भी है, लेकिन इसका भरोसा नहीं किया जा सकता, यह लड़की केवल अपने लिए जीवित है, अपने मन की है।" \(^{(100)}\)

This opportunity of Kulsum is found in the whole novel. She loved Jaswant but married Parvej Jhakawala. She of course could not keep the secrecy in fact. She made it clear to Jagatprakash at her first meeting.

In the field of love affairs she went freely even after her marriage. She fell in love with Jaswant before her marriage and after marriage she had affairs with Jagat. She said to him:

"ऐसा मत कहो जगत! तुम मुझे अपना भले ही न समझ सके जाते, लेकिन मैं तुम्हें अपना समझती हूँ, मेरे जगत, मेरी रूह तुम्हारी है। तुम मेरे सपनों के राजकुमार हो।" \(^{(101)}\)

It is really interesting to note that there was a strange mixture of contradictory mental status in her. But it was the speciality in her character. She was primarily an emotional woman on which there was a blanket of intellectuality covering it. Therefore, whenever her emotion was hurt, she was much disappointed. Such a situation arose when she received news that Jaswant was going to marry Sharmistha. But following the ideals of a life of woman, she wanted to give life to Jagatprakash with her love and affection. Jagatprakash, who was disappointed from all sides finally regained his life in the goodwill and sympathy of Kulsum.

Kulsum had her sympathy towards the proletariat class although she was from a very rich and wealthy family. Although she had pity and sympathy towards
the poor yet her attachment to them was not so strong enough to make great sacrifice for them. Therefore, although she supported communalist principles, yet she could not lay down her life for them. Because in her personal life, she was not prepared to take trouble. In the same manner, in love affairs, she understood its importance in life but she realised that practical life was more important than love. Therefore, she did not marry Jagatprakash, whom she loved but selected Parvej for marriage since he was wealthy.

7.16 DHANWANT KUNWAR (THE SABAHING NACHAVAT RAM GOSAIN):

Dhanawant Kunwar was the wife of the minister Jabar singh and the strongest, and the most attractive woman character of the 'Sabahin Nachavat Ram Gosain'. Her character was very much different from that of her husband. Her husband regarded the wealth as indispensable to modern life while she regarded it worthless. She was born and brought up in a royal family and as such she was well-versed in the customs and traditions of that family. Therefore, when Ganga Devi wanted to surpass her in wealth and to teach her about royal customs then she said to her (Gangadevi) :

“हम राजपंचायत की प्रथा है कि जो कुछ भेंट हम लोग स्वीकार करते थे तो उसके बदले में उससे अधिक मूल्यवान चीज हम विवाह में देते थे। कुछ भेंट जिससे अधिक मूल्यवान चीज देना हमारी सामर्थ्य के बाहर होता था उन्हें हम छूकर वापस कर देते थे, तो बहन इस भेंट को छूकर हम वापस कर रही हैं।” (102)

She refused Gangadevi’s gift and said to her:

“यह तुम्हारी भेंट देखकर तो ऐसा लग रहा है कि जो काम करवाना चाहती हो, वह गलत है तभी तो मुझे रिश्वत दे रही हो। लोगों का कहना है कि तुम लोग दूसरों को खरीदने में बड़े पृथ्वी हो।” (103)
But her husband accepted the gift. Then she rebuked him calling him a 'Chamar'.

"तुम स्वामिनाथ पाव नहीं, चमार हो।" (104)

She satirised on the chaos that prevailed in the modern society and said to Ram Lochan "

"बचवा यह जो सरकार है, पुलिस कच्चहरी यह सब किसिए हैं? चारों तरफ बेबीमानी और उठाई गीरी खुलेखाम चल रही है और यंह अपराधी सजा भुगतने की जगह पनप रहे हैं, लानत है ऐसी सरकार पर।" (105)

She felt so much strangulated with the behaviour of her husband that she declared rebellion against him and helped his opposition parties with money. She even prayed for the victory of these opposition parties. The characteristic features of Dhanawant Kunwar were expressed by Pitambar Sarode in the following words:

"धनवंत हुवर का चरित्र कर्त्तव्यतिष्ठ को लियाने वाले, पाप के घने अन्धकार में पुष्प के उब्जल ज्योति घिस्ट की भूलि माना जा सकता है।" (106)

7.17 THE KESARBAI (PRASHNA AUR MARICHIKA):

In the 'Prashna Aur Marichika' Kesarbai has been depicted as a 'kept'. She was the kept - wife of Ramkumar Bagariya. She had both mental and Physical beauty in her. She loved Udayraj like her own son, but finally she established physical contact with him. She knew it well that what she was doing was sinful. She defined 'sin' to Udayraj, in the following words:

"किना पाप किये जाना नहीं जा सकता, पाप बढ़ा प्यारा होता है तभी रो हम सब पाप करते हैं, लेकिन पाप का परिणाम भयानक होता है चूंकि तारकीय व्यापा। अपने पाप में दूसरे को भगी बनाकर पूर्वपीय"
These two contradictory qualities behaved like that with a husband and loved like a son, made the salient feature of her character.

Afterwards Kesarbai made contact with men after men. When she had established relationship with Mohammed Ali and wanted to marry him, then she was perturbed as she was a Hindu and Ali was a Muslim. She wanted to prove the importance of Caste in marriage:

"नाई, अपना जीवन ऐसे नाई चलेगा। स्त्री के लिए सबसे प्यारी चीज होती है उसका सुहाग। सुहाग का ही तो दूसरा नाम है। अपना घर, अपना स्वामी, अपने बच्चे, अपना परिवार।"

While she was prepared for her marriage, other members of the family did not allow it. She began to live separately. But Ali was determined to marry her and submitted application for civil marriage in the court. She of course wanted that he could give her the status of a sister or a daughter to live with him. Udayraj was frightened to find that a prostitute was behaving like a common woman.

It can be easily assumed the character of Kesharbai was full of 'Vatsalya' and 'Mamta.' She had great affection towards Udayraj with whom she contacted physically. Therefore, this contradiction was the salient feature of her character. She was a guiltless woman whom the different kinds of emotions like hatred, affection, revenge, sense of service and welfare of the people etc. made her a remarkable.
7.18 ANCHALI (THE YUVRAJ CHUNDA):

Anchali is the major female character of the novel ‘Yuvraj Chunda’. She was the only child of Bheel Sardar Kamman. She, therefore, got much affection from all. She was exceedingly beautiful. She was of the age twenty-one or twenty-two and with a pleasing and attractive personality. Her attraction made the prince say:

“तुम्हारा नाम अंचली नही वन देखी है।” (109)

In her love there was a sense of ‘Tyag’ and submission. She loved the prince very much. There was the sense of devotion in her love. She regarded the prince as the angel and worshipped him. She was glad when she was allowed to go war with him. She was prepared to sacrifice her life for the sake of the prince. When the prince planned to enter into Mewar she entertained all the soldiers of Rathor with dance. Due to her help the prince was able to enter Mewar. She even saved the prince when Ronal hurled dagger at him by becoming the target of the dagger.

She remained nearby the prince like his shadow. The prince was also overwhelmed at her conduct. Her last wish to keep her head at the feet of the prince was the glowing example of her unlimited love towards him. She regarded sacrifice of life for the prince as virtuous when the prince told her that he could give her nothing, she replied.

“डेवला के प्राणों में की तो मेरे प्राण है .... बड़ी शातिः है।” (110)

Anchali had immense love to the prince, which was selfless and without any sense of return. There was a sense of self-sacrifice. This feature in her character attracted all other characters towards her.
7.19 VITHIKA (THE CHANAKYA):

Vithika is the major woman character of the novel ‘Chanakya’, who was the maid to Madhulika wife of the prince Padmakamal. She was with Madhulika all the times like a shadow and after her death. She (Vithika) went away from there silently. She wanted live with Chanakya. Chanakya told her that you were free and you could go wherever you like. But she explained the position of a woman of her time and told him.

“बन्धन ही नारी की गति है, निर्वर्त्तता नारी की घृटन और मृत्यु है। ”

She was with the sense of service and sacrifice. She served him selflessly and she did not care for her own happiness. She did not take, any rest for two days considering her ‘Tyag’ and affection, Chanakya said to her:

“देवी की संज्वा से विख्यात करते है। उसके इस प्रज्ञा के कायण ही चाणक्य उसके ओर आकर्षित होता है और अन्ततः परिणाम सूत्र में बैंध जाता है। वीथिका वर्माजी का पूर्णता: काल्पित पात्र है क्योंकि इतिहास में कही भी चाणक्य के दामः जीवन की वर्णन नहीं मिलता। ”

The character Vithika is the creation of Vermaji which has no historical relevance. Chanakya has been described as a bachelor. He wrote the ‘Kaamsutra’ from the sexual experience with Vithika. Vithika was such a female character, who with her limitless love, selfless service, Tyag and sense of sacrifice, could be the wife of a person like Chanakya. She became an ideal after all.

In the conclusion it can be asserted that the female characters in the novels of Vermaji were related to different ages, different classes and to different behaviour and cultures. Moreover all of them have their independent personalities. Vermaji depicted the different personalities minutely considering their various forms. Nowhere similarities between two characters are found. In some places he speaks of
ideals since some of his characters followed traditional customs while in other places some characters which follow newer values were quite rebellious. These features made his characters simple, natural, living and attractive, Vermaji is very skilful in depicting the characters. He depicted successfully a character like Chitralekha and young women like Rekha, Maya and others. It is his skill that makes all characters, whatever it is of a class or an individual one, natural and living. One touch of his hand makes the characters full of life. This new life makes his character different from the characters of other novelists. His characters are not fully traditional nor fully modern. But they are original creation with curious self-reliance. In creation of women characters in the novels, Vermaji achieved immortality, who depicted them with realities of life.
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