CHAPTER - III

BHAGWATICHARAN VERMA’S ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMAN

• Indian Values about woman
• Views of Bhagwaticharan Verma on Woman
• Classification of Verma’s Women.
The chapter II of this monograph deals briefly with the life and works of Bhagwaticharan Vermaji and now we proceed to discuss about the idea of a woman as reflected in his novels. Before going through his ideas on women, it is meet and proper to have a glimpse of Indian as well as the Western ideas about women.

**3.01 INDIAN IDEAS ON A WOMAN (A NAARI):**

In human life, the term ‘Naari’ (a woman) has the same status with the ‘Nar’ (a man). But it has been also used as the symbol of the female gender. In the human society it is generally not used in that general sense as it has a higher status than that of a man:

"एक नहीं दो दो मात्राएँ,

नर से बढ़ कर नारी।” (1)

Some important virtues like ‘Komalta’ (delicacy), ‘Dridhta’ (Firmness), Spriha (longing) etc. are available in a woman more than that in a man. Not only in this but also in cases of beauty, formation of the body, working behaviour and style of living, she is the result of a higher plan of the creator. Parvati, Gargi, Sita, Savitri, Maharani Laxmibai etc. are some of the examples of high section of women.

In Indian literature a woman has several names, which reflect the various qualities in her. Since she is related to a ‘Nar’ or the ‘Nar-dharm’, she is a ‘Naari’. Because of this name ‘Naari’, her ordinary relationship is attached to a ‘Nar’. Therefore, the term ‘Naari’ is not ‘self-complete’ (Swatah Sampum) nor it has always been used in an ‘absolute’ sense. On the other hand she represents some virtues like ‘Shakti’ (power), ‘Saundaryya’ (Beauty), and ‘Shalinata’ (Shyness) for which she is well-related to a man. In addition to them, the peculiar physical and mental elements present in her made her more meaningful. In the Rik Veda, a woman is called
the ‘Mena’ since he has been honoured by a man:

“मानवति एना: पुष्या” (2)

She is also known as the ‘Stree’ since there is the question of ‘Lajja’ (shyness) in her.

“सत्यायते: अपत्रण कर्मणः” (3)

When a ‘Naari’ offered herself to a ‘Purush’, then she is known as ‘Yosha’:

“योपायते: मिश्रणार्थ्य: यौति मिश्रीभवति, योपति पुराणसमू: साहि मिश्रवति आत्मानं पुरुषेण साक्षा’” (4)

She is also called ‘Pramda’ as she can excite, enthril and delight a man.

“‘श’ उपसर्ग मद्य हर्ष्य ग्लेपनमोऽ” (5)

Further she is ‘Lalsamaye’ (Lustful) and makes a man lustful, hence she is a ‘Lalna’.

“लल्न ई पायाम्” (6)

She is a ‘Manini’ since she is ‘Manpriya’ (lover of arrogance). She is a ‘Kamini’ who excites ‘Kaam’ in the man. It hints at the attractive nature of a woman also. She has direct link with “Ragatmak Chetna” (emotion of love). She has a very high place in the love-world of men. But man wants to make her a means of love and as such she does not refer to the whole world of love.
A woman has several names which need analysis for the better understanding of her qualities. She is equal to a man as she is able to perform all types of activities in life. She is not only an attendant but she is a ‘Sahadharmini’ (a performer of rites equally or co-equal) and ‘Sahachari’ (a friend). She has to live together with a man. The right hand of a man is the symbol of ‘Purushartha’ (energy or valour) while the left of ‘Vijoy’ (victory) and ‘Safalta’ (success).

"हृद में दक्षिण हस्ते ज्योम में सब्ज आहितः।" (7)

A woman is the symbol of ‘Shakti’, Jyoti Aur Siddhi’ (power, splendour and success) for a man.

"यों देख रहे ये राम अंतल अंगुरागी।
योगी के आभे अलख ज्योति ज्यों जागी।" (8)

Therefore a woman is always in the left side of a man. She is known as the ‘Vama’ (belonging to left). A woman performs more household duties than a man; and therefore, she is known as the ‘Grihini’. (One belongs to household or one mastering over household). She is honourable in all forms like ‘Mata’ (mother, ‘Patni’ (wife), and ‘Putri’, (daughter), for a man. So, she is known as a ‘Mahila’ (a lady).

"मान + इलाच + टापू।" (9)

With all these different names with different connotation a woman can be known to us. She is a delightful person who has shyness, emotion and beauty and is quite skillful for which she is known as the ‘Purn-Naari’ (full womanhood). In addition to these, the ‘fullness of manhood’ (Purush Sapex Purnatw) always depends upon her. This form of a woman gets its full exposition in the following words of the great poet Prasadji:
The real beauty of human life is inherent in the very term 'Naari'. A 'Stree' is delicate and beautiful and handsome on her own accord. According to Niralaji:

"साहित्य के एक पृष्ठ में एक विकल्प नारी मूर्ति, तम के अतल प्रदेश में मृणाल दण्ड की तरह अपने शत - शत दलों को संकुचित संपूर्णतिर लेकर , बाहर आलोक के देश में, अपनी परिपूर्णता के साथ - खुल पड़ती है। जड़ों में प्राण संकुचित हो जाते हैं, अरुण में भुवन रोहिणी ज्योति: स्वरूपा नारी।" (11)

3.01:1 DIFFERENT FORMS OF A 'NAARI'

In Indian literature, various pictures of different appearances of women have been depicted. Of these, the following are major ones-- (a) Devi, (b) Mata,(c) Patni, and (iv) Kanya.

From the point of transcendence of a woman, she begins as 'Kanya' (daughter) and then rises to the position of a 'Devi' (a goddess). But the theist and believers, as the Indian writers are, their point of view focuses at the highest and divine form of a woman i.e. a 'Devi' and then descends towards the worldly feminine form of a woman i.e. Patni and others. Let us analyse her identity in the Indian process beginning with her the 'Devi' form.

3.01:2 DEVI RUP ( In the form of a Goddess) :

In the vedic literature, a woman has been depicted in the form of a Devi. There have been worshiping of a in the form of Aditi, Usha, Indrani, Eaidit, Sita, Suryya, Wak, Saraswati and others. (12) With the 'Puran' age, divine virtues are attributed mainly to the three 'Devis' — Saraswati, Durga and Laxmi only. In addi-
tion to them divinity was ascribed to different natural phenomena and names were attributed to them like — Usha, Sandhya, Jyotsna, Diva, Nisha etc. But primacy was ascribed only to the three 'Devis' mentioned above. In the class-divided Indian society, these three 'Devis' had such emotional relationship that they became indispensable part to the society. Goddess 'Saraswati' became the goddess of worship for the Brahmins and in the same manner Durga for the 'Kshatriyas' and Laxmi for the 'Baishyas', in accordance with the source of living for different classes of people. The worship of Goddess, Durga in her different forms was introduced for different sects. The 'Durgasaptashati' as included in the 'Markandeya Purana' introduced several forms of 'Shakti' which became the idol of worship for many without any distinction of caste, creed or nationality. The divine forms of a 'Naari' have been ascribed to many natural incidents and objects. The emotions, consciousness, and thought of human life are also thought of in the form of 'Devis', i.e. some type of women. In the 'Durgasaptashati', the nature of worship of the Devi by the Devtas has been known by several names such as Bhadra, Neetya, Gauri, Dhatri, Krishna, Dhumra etc. (13) In addition to that, the existence of 'Shakti' in the hearts of all creatures has been described as the Vishnumaya, Chetna, Shraddh, Kanti, Laxmi-Vriti, Smriti, Daya, Tusti etc. and has been worshipped accordingly. (14)

During the puranic days, one new 'Devi' in the shape of 'Shiwpatni Parvati' in addition to the three existing forms was introduced. This new goddess won fame and name as a devoted and ideal wife (Sati and Adarsh Patni). The sage women and 'Guru Patnis' as related in the Vedic literature, Puranas and Sanskrit Kavyas were also accepted as Devis by the society. The names Gargi, Ansuya, Maitreyee, Arundhati, Matangi etc. also referred to some forms of 'Devis' or bore certain connotation in them. What we can conclude is that the depiction of 'Naaris' in the form of 'Devis' in the Indian literature is nothing but respect to a 'Naari' here in India.
3.01:3 MATRI RUP (In the form of a mother):

In Indian literature the glory of a woman can be seen in her ‘Matri Rup’ i.e. in the form of mother. In the formation of the term ‘Mata-Pita’ (as a result of Samasa), the word ‘Mata’ comes first.

"न यथा सातुर्ज नितोर बारि
न मातरा पितरा तू निम्नरूपी " (15)

In the ‘Rik Veda’ Aditi has been described as the proud mother and she had been more proud of the heroic activities of her sons.

" आ या ध्रमे समधानो अवृहितिः
बहिन आस्तामदिति: सुपुत्रा स्वाहादेव अभृता मादयन्ताम " (16)

According to the ‘Vashisth Dharmsutra’ and the ‘Manusmriti’, an ‘Upadhyay’ is ten times more glorious than an ‘Acharyya’ while a pita (a father) is hundred times than the Acharyya and a Mata (a mother) is thousand times more glorious than a father.

"उपाध्यायानु दशाचार्य आचार्यांसां पिता
सहस्रं तु पितृमाता गौरवणातिरिज्ये" (17)

According to the Vashisth Dharmsutra, one can sever relationship with a debased father; but not with a mother.

That a mother is given the highest place in Indian social life is made quite clear by the fact that the supreme being has even been worshipped in the form of a mother:

"वैमय माता च पिता त्वमेव बन्धुरूप सचा त्वमेव
त्वमेव विधा द्रविण्य त्वमेव, त्वमेव सर्वमम देव देव " (18)
The statement of Ram - “जननी जान्म भूमिस्वः, स्वर्गादिपि गरीयसि॥” undoubtedly proved the respect for a woman by the Indian sages. The worshiping of different forces of nature in the form of a ‘Mata’ also supplements to this idea. Even the sacred rivers are described as ‘Mata’ like Ganga Maiya, Yamuna Maiya, Sarwati Maiya etc. According to ‘Valmiki Ramayana’ the ‘Naritw’ flowishes best with ‘Matritw’. The ‘Mata’ and not the ‘Pita’ is the builder of character of a man.

“न पित्य मनु वर्तले मातृके द्विपदा इति॥” (19)

In the ‘Raghuvarsh’ and the ‘Abhigyan Shakuntalam’ of Kalidas there have been praises of ‘Matritw’ (motherhood)20. In this manner, a ‘Naat’ in the form of a ‘Matri’ has been praised in different ways.

3.01:4 PATNI RUP (In the form of a wife):

In the Vedic literature, the ‘Patni’ had given the highest status in the family. In the ‘Rik veda’, a ‘Patni’ has been called the ‘Kalyan karini’ (Auspicious) for the whole family. It is a clear opinion of the Vedas :

“मिस घर में पत्नी नहीं, उस घर में दिन का निवास नहीं।” (21)

Again:

“यथा सिद्धुरुद्रीनां साम्राज्य सुपथवृद्धा। 
एवा त्वं समाजवेधि पत्नुरस्तं परेत्था।” (22)

According to Manu a wife is honourable:

सिद्धो तुरोचमानायां सर्व तद्रोच्चते कुलम्। 
तस्या त्वरोचमानाया सर्वभैः न रोचते॥” (23)
The authors of ‘Smriti’ also speak of certain rights of a ‘Patni’— No husband can desert a wife without reasonable grounds. If somebody does it, he will have to pay heavy fines. The Smritis also regard ‘Polygamy’ as defamatory.

“न द्वितीयर्ष साध्वीनांकविद्ध भर्तोपदिष्टयेत।”(24)

According to Manu, a second marriage is not allowable when the first wife is still alive. He further says that one who cannot defray the expense, of his wife’s lively should be penalised.

Considering equal rights of a ‘Patni’ with the ‘Pati’ the Vedic literature says that a ‘Pati’ marries a ‘Patni’ only to increase his fate. Therefore, one is always to behave honorably with the wife. Such a relationship has been described in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and other Sanskrit Scriptures. In the ‘Adi Mahakavya’ i.e. Ramayana, the sole aim was only to establish the glory of a ‘Naari’ in the form of a wife. It is indicated in the ‘Aswamedhyagya’ of Ram. Dr. Shantiram Nanuram Vyas remarks:—

“भारतीय महानाथ ने यह मत स्वर्ग किया है कि महाभारत द्वारत धार्मिक है, भारतवत चौर प्रसंग है ते रामायण की यथार्थ संज्ञा स्त्री प्रसंग है, क्योंकि इसमें नारी का ही गौरव गान है।”(25)

In ancient Indian literature the duties of a ‘Naari’ have also been indicated along with their rights. The first among these duties is referred to as the service to her husband (Pati sewa). According to Manu, a ‘Patni’ should do, nothing against the liking of the ‘Pati’:—

“पति लोक महीपल्ली ताव्यवेत् किषिद्धियम्।”(26)
Sanskrit literature of the later age, the status of women began to go down since certain evil activities of ‘Naari’ began to have been depicted therein. This tradition has been followed even by Sanskrit and the Abhrans literature of the later age.

3.01:5  KANYA RUP (In the form of a daughter):

The depiction of this ‘Rup’ — i.e. the ‘Kanya Rup’ is comparatively less than the other three forms discussed above. In the Vedic literature, every family is expected to yearn for a ‘Kanya’ and it should take proper care for her bringing up. During this period there was no difference between a ‘Putra’ (a son) and a ‘Kanya’ (a daughter). Father, therefore had to ascribe the idea of ‘Putra’ on a ‘Putri’ and a ‘Dauhitra’ (son of the daughter) should be treated equally with ‘Pautra’ (son of the son). This idea has rather been established in the ‘Smriti’, that a daughter is equal to a son.

“बैवात्मा तथा पुत्र: पुत्रेण दुहिता समा।” (27)

During the Pauranic days, the status of a ‘Putri’ was higher than that of a ‘Putra’. During this period a ‘Kanya’ has been established as a ‘Devi’. This tradition has been proved through the worship of ‘Kanya Pujan’ in the Astik Society.

The status of a girl in the ancient Indian society was a high one. Gradually the idea of attainment of Mukti (salvation) through a ‘Putra’ gained ground. People began to institute ‘Pujas’ for getting sons. Step by step this idea became more and more for which Valmiki, who first said that ‘Tapsya’ was required to get a female child, now began to say that a ‘Kanya’ is the source of all trouble for a ‘Pita’.

“कन्या - पितृत्वं दुहिति सवेष्ठा मान कांशिताय।” (28)

This new trend can be regarded as the result of traditions in the Indian society relating to marriage, dowry, widow-system, and economic rights. The new trend
began to flourish in the later period. But in the Vedas, a ‘Kanya’ has been made
‘Daybhagini’ equally to a ‘Putra’. Gradually this idea has been abandoned and a
‘Kanya’ has been placed in such a low grade and despisable status that people
began to kill her as soon as she was born. Even some western critic tried to ascribe
this hateful idea to the Vedas, which can only be regarded as ignorance of Vedic
literature on their part. Western scholars Geemar and Delbruick in their ‘Vedic
Index’ referred to this idea that a ‘Kanya’ was left at the house of the ‘Var’ at the
time of marriage while a ‘Putra’ was not left outside his house. They interpret this
idea as a daughter should be killed at the of birth and not a son be killed. Such
interpretation does more harm to Indian life style than good.

3.02 NAARI IN DIFFERENT AGES:

India is primarily a country of religion and culture. Therefore a woman is
treated always honour and respect. During the ancient times a woman had very
high status in the society. She was equally respected and highly placed as a man.
She enjoyed rights equally with a man. She was regarded as pure and soft-hearted.
In Indian society she had different forms and greatness. It is therefore necessary to
ascertain her status in different ages.

3.2:1 ‘NAARI’ DURING VEDIC PERIOD:

During the Vedic Period the sages praised a woman abundantly. In this period,
a woman acquired knowledge equally with a man and tried to spread it. She was
regarded as the best one from the point of ideal, religion and duty. She was honoured
as the mistress of the house, an important element, a wife and a mother. The sages
praised her considering her love, service and other household qualities. They were
also asked to be more faithful and dutiful. These women in the Vedic period
became a matter of worship due to their inherent good qualities. Manu went to the
extent of saying that where there is a worship of a ‘Naari’ there is the worship of
‘Devtas’.
In Vedic literature, a ‘Stri’ is the household.

In the ‘Aitareya Brahmana’, a ‘Naari’ has been placed in the place of a friend and she has been regarded as equal to man. The ‘Satpatha Brahmana’ equalised a ‘Naari’ in all fields with a ‘Purush’ and said that ‘Stri’ and ‘Purush’ are but the two branches of the same tree. The ‘Upanished’ goes a step further when it says that the ‘Stri’ fills up the whole vacant world of creation:

3.2:2 NAARI IN THE POST-VEDIC PERIOD:

The post Vedic period is important as regards to the nature of ‘Naari’. During this period there were several forms of the Naari. The princesses of the Aryyavarta were equally adept in the use of arms and amunitions. They were also adept in administration and the use of armies. In the field of education also they were well-versed and were victorious over the princes. Gargi, Maitreyee and others are its best examples. They were at high positions in the society due to their knowledge and education. They appeared in the shape of ‘Tapaswinis’ which made us respectful towards them. Even they left good examples during this period as lovers also. The love of Sita for Ram, of Shakuntala for ‘Dushyant’ and of Damayanti’ for Nal left good examples for all times to come. These Naari’s in love of the post Vedic period remained as the symbols of valour also. The Rajput women had the capacity to infuse life in the dead bodies. The stories of Rani Durgawati, Tarabai etc. of their valour are written in red letters in the Indian history. The Naaris of the Rajput era were far ahead in their knowledge and education. Practically speaking the post-vedic women were the living symbol of knowledge and ideals which are to be
highly appreciated by all.

3.2:3 ‘NAARI’ IN THE MIDDLE ERA:

It is very sad to see the status of a woman during the middle ages which had been lowered to the position of a slave gradually. It particularly sad because immediately before this period a woman was in the status of a ‘Devi’ and they were equal, if not higher, to a man in all fields.

The middle age is the period of the rule of the Mughals and Yavanas. The Islamic traditions began to rule over all fields in the society. In their society a woman has no status. They were kept in curtains. This ‘Purda-pratha’ was in its extreme point and a woman was not allowed to go out of their homes. She was not allowed to take part in social as well as in cultural celebrations. Child-marriage began during this age.

Another evil began in the shape of the ‘Sati-Pratha’. One can find that the extent to which there was freedom for a woman during the Vedic and the post-vedic period, turned into extent of domination and bondage to her during this middle ages. This process of the middle ages was the result of a long trend. A ‘Naari’ is naturally thoughtful and comparatively more emotional than a man. Certain virtues like tenderness, love, pity and affection are more available in her than in a man. So she is ahead of the man as regards to self-sacrifice and services. Such and other tender feelings and emotions forced her to surrender to men. She now began to surrender with the thought of love and service as a result of which a man took it as her weakness and made her slave easily. Now, therefore, a ‘Naari’ was no longer a ‘Sahadharmini’ but a means to satisfy his carnal desire and she became a slave to look after the household duties and the children.

Getting the upperhand, a man wanted to established his authority over women
for good and made some rules in his favour:—

"नारी जब तक कुवारी रहे पिता उसकी रक्षा करे, पति और बुद्धि में पुत्र रक्षा करें अर्थात नारी कभी स्वतन्त्र न रह सके।"

Now a question arises as to why women did never rebel to freed themselves from such a bondage. Two reasons may be advanced in reply — first, illiteracy and economic dependency. The best means to suppress women was to keep them away from literacy so that they might not realise their position and revolt. Women also owned religions blind faiths due to their ignorance. To fulfill their own desire, they made rules to marry several women and advised the women to remain loyal to them. They warned the women that if women would be attracted men other than their husbands they would go to hell. Had women be educated then they would never accept this or such a view. They could have been saved from such blind faith with education. But due to ignorance they regarded the ill-motives of men as divine rule. As a result the women became the slaves, nurses for their children and housemaid only. To deceive them, men began calling them 'Laxmi' or 'Rani' of the household, which they regarded as fortune for them.

Another cause of the subordination of women was economic slavery. When a woman engaged herself in the service of a husband, naturally all means to earning went to the man. So, a woman became a slave to a man as without economic resources one cannot have one's livelihood nor one can have one's own security. Under such circumstance a woman could not rise against her husband even when she wanted to do it due to absence of her security out side the authority of her husband. Men made rules to ostracise women when they left their husbands and began to live with others. In this manner, economic helplessness, future insecurity and Social repression compelled women to confine themselves within the fort made by men.
During the middle-ages, the fate of women began to go down as a result of rule of aliens and feudalism. Several evil customs like puradh system, Sati system, child marriage and killing of female child began during this period, for which the Hindu society had to remain backward for centuries. The puradh system was introduced by men when they suffered from inferiority and were incapable of giving security for them. Being defeated by the foreign aggressors and submitting to them, the men began to torture the womenfolk only to show their valour at home. The system of 'Swamvar' being obsolete, men began the system of marriage to safeguard one's heredity and communal purity. These rules being so rigid, poor people were not able to get their daughters married with suitable grooms. Side by side the system of 'Dowry' and inequal marriage came into existence, for which a woman was downgraded into the position of some 'material' rather than living beings and they were brought and sold like anything. The 'Dowry' became something like 'due' which one had to pay. Now therefore, a time came when the birth of a female child was regarded as 'Shok Divas' and some people began killing a girl as soon as she was born. Another important example of torture on women was the system of 'Widow' (vidhava pratha). A man was allowed to marry even when he had his first wife living; but a woman was not allowed to re-marry after the death of her husband. She had either to die with husband or had to remain ever-widow for life and had to bear the tortures of the society. It shows as if a 'Naari' during the middle ages was not a 'Naari' but a torture-bearing 'machine' in the form of a woman.

3.2:4 NAARI IN MODERN DAYS & NEW CULTURE:

The position and status of a woman during the modern days undergo several changes. In administration she gets equal rights with men. In the society she gets equal place now-a-days. Education for women has been introduced and as a result they become self-sufficient in the economic field. They are not in need of security from men now. Gradually a man has to give up the idea of torturing her. Along with education, the days of purdah system, dowry system, inequal marriage,
polygamy etc. have to go away from the society. Although the dowry system in one form or other still remains in the society yet it will definitely perish someday. Today, a woman walks hand in hand with men in all fields. Whenever one takes stock of the progress in India after independence one cannot but take rise of women into account. A woman, who was asleep throughout centuries, has now come out of the household. Of course, she still manages the household, but not as a house-maid. She does it as the owner of the house. When a woman realises her position in the society, her life changes. She works in every field of life. Therefore, in literature also she can be the focal point without any doubt. Generally in literature a woman has been depicted in the connection with love. But the connotation of the term 'love' has also been changed with the change of social relationship and values, the definition of love has been changed. Now it comes out of the boundary of morality and enters in the field of sex only. It has been used in revolutionary sense also.

3.3 ‘NAARI’ IN THE PRE-VERMA HINDI NOVELS :

To analyse the status of women in Hindi novels in the pre-Verma period, one should consider, first of all, the status of women in the novels of Premchand who first spoke of reformation of society as regards to the position of women and gave primacy to them in his novels. We therefore, wanted to make three divisions of the study considering the writings of Premchand as the basis or standard as — (a) Naari in Pre-Premchand novels, (b) Naari in the novels of Premchand and his contemporaries, and (c) Naari in Post-Premchand novels.

3.3:1 NAARI IN PRE-PREMCHAND NOVELS :

From the point of historical development of novels, this period remained as
the period of experimentation which was made on the basis of advice, education and wonder. Several organisations began movements to improve the lots of women in the society. But in spite of all these the status of women remained unaltered. The impact of many customs and beliefs prevailing during the age fell upon the novelists and some of them translated certain novels having ideal characters. Some historical characters were also made the characters of the novels. Gradually detective novels also got their way in literature. Of these women were given primacy in the social novels and opinions were expressed on them. During this period a woman was in such a cross-road that on one hand it led to ancient customary land while the other led to novelty and freedom. But she hesitated to go to the new world and wanted to remain in the old and customary one. Novels written during this period indicated a clear picture of the status of women although they donot have much value as novels. But as a matter of fact these novels made the way clear for Premehand who depicted the pictures of Indian ideal women.

3.2:2 NAARI IN THE CONTEMPORARY NOVELS OF PREMCHAND:

There had been a revolutionary change in Hindi novel literature with the coming of Premchand. He set aside the prevailing imaginary, thoughtless, idealless, impractical tendencies, and gave a new form to novels by introducing newer elements in them. Prior to Premchand days, the womenfolk suffered from double mental standards. A woman did not enjoy any right in the family and had no means of livelihood. She was not allowed to go for education and due to the social customs and bondages, her life was full of troubles. All these the then tendencies of the society reflected in the novels of the period. The women were not depicted as human beings but for good virtues they were depicted as ‘Devis’ and for evil virtues as ‘Danvis’. But Premchand set aside the previous ideal and establish her as a human being. He rather rebelled against this existing tradition and introduced a comprehensive outlook on women. He realised the lamentable condition of women and illustrated the various forms of a woman in his novels. He gave up ancient
tendencies and inspired to depict newer ideals. He realised different problems of women and expressed them in his novels. He realised the distress suffered by prostitutes and widows and also the evils of dowry. He opposed inequal marriages and the system of Purdah. He wanted to release women from the Purdah and give them liberty. He advocated for woman education and wanted that she should take part in social and political field. His sympathy towards them gave rays of hope for Indian women, and they wanted to step on the way he showed on this Pandeyaji remarked:

"प्रेमचन्द ने नारी समाज के प्रबल समर्थक, उसकी दर्द भरी दांतांग के लेखक, उसकी पीड़ा के चित्रे, उसकी बाँधियों तमन्ना, उसके व्यापारी, उसके गर्भ, उसके ग्राम के घाटे और उसके गरिमा के उद्योग नारी जगत को नयी आशा, नयी दिशा, नयी सात और नया तराना, नयी तमन्ना और नयी रोशनी प्रदान की।" (37)

In addition to Premchand, other important novelist of the age like Joyshankar Prasad, Vishwambhar Sarma, Chaturvesh Shastri, Suryya Kant Tripathy, Vrindavanlal Verma and Bhagwatchesaran Verma also realised the problems of women and depicted them in their novels. Of the novelists of the period, some were attracted to social problems of the day, some others interested in the ancient stories and still others wanted to give primacy to psychological aspect. More others were interested in obscnce literature calling them realistic literature.

3.3:3 NAARI IN THE POST-PREMCHAND NOVELS:

When the novels of Premchand era placed women on the solid basis of self-respect and freedom and of economic liberty, the novelist of the post-premchand era, depicted a woman associated with making her ‘self’ and her independent identity. She now acquired the capacity for economic liberty and thereby she thought of her own liberty. Her education gave birth to intellectual uprising and her taking part in politics made her responsible to her duties. There had been several criticisms
against her freedom and yet she made much progress. She even choose to live singly to make her free from the bondage of the man. She also rose against the tortures on her within the family. Such and other tendencies began to reflect in the novels. There are certain novels of the post Premchand period which speak of the rights of a woman to marry more than once like a man. Now a woman has a new outlook regarding the man, the widow and their duties and freedom. She approves of living as husband and wife without formal marriages. After all she wants to establish new values of life. As a result the views of the novelists on women began to change. They are also influenced by the movements for reformation in connection with women and her position in the society. With the new status of women in the society, the novelist begin depicting new values and new women.

3.4 VIEWS OF BHAGWATICHARAN VERMA ON WOMEN:

Bhagwaticharan Verma is a unique novelist. He can be regarded as the 'Jiwan Drashta' (one who sees life as it is). In his novels, he evaluated women in a very wise way. Vermaji tried to depict minutely the psychology of a woman considering the differences of the body and the mind. Excepting a few, his woman characters established relationship with men which can be regarded corporeal from external view but from internal point of view it was quite psychological and mental. Saroj (Teen Varsh), Chinki and Jaidei (Bhule Bisre Chitra) and Manjit (Prasna Aur Marichika) showed their 'love' which are not corporeal but something divine.

A woman is weak; but she is weak only to certain extent. Whenever and wherever the man tries to kick out a woman, then and there, she stands up as equal and proves the statement 'Ka Na Karai Abala Prabal'. Chameli, Shyamala and Kesarbai come under such examples. To understand the view point of Vermaji on women, one has to go through them with wide vision. Commenting on the 'Terhe Merhe Raaste', Dr. Chandiprasad Joshi remarked:--
Practically speaking in no novel has Vermaji supported polygamy. In the ‘Terhe Merhe Raaste’, Mahalaxmi compromised with the marriage of her husband only not to create unnecessary trouble in the family. The root of her acceptance of the marriage of her husband with a heavy heart was due to the culture of Indian women. If the writer, being respectful towards such a culture, depicts some female character, it cannot mean that he has been accepting traditionalism. If Mahalaxmi of the ‘Terhe Merhe Raaste’ is grouped under woman of traditional culture, then in what group will ‘Veena’ come? In reality, Vermaji depicted a woman only after touching her mind. The rights bestowed upon women in a healthy society stand for the good of the society. The good of the society does not depend upon what is written and is not written in its scriptures. The value of a woman depends upon the love, affection, sympathy and righteousness of a man towards her. The creator has made them weak to be supplemented by men. The scriptures with their unintelligible writing can not supplement the weakness in women.

The analysis of major female characters of Vermaji made one thing clear that they are the result of Vermaji’s ideas on women. An Indian woman enjoys his full sympathy and pity. His sympathy is the result of the idea that a woman is weak and helpless. Love for a man is only temporary excitement while it is the complete identity for a woman. Therefore, she has been defeated all the times. It is the root cause of Vermaji’s sympathy towards a woman. He has given a high status to a woman always. He selected those women who were neglected by the society and were degenerated in their view. He is quite sympathetic to Chitralekha, Saroj, Chameli, Chinki, Shyamala, Kesarbai and others as they were ‘Patitas’ (degraded women) in the eyes of the society. Because ‘Patitas’ in the eyes of the society were the matters of sympathy for him. He believed that:—
Vernaji’s female characters in his novels touch our hearts because of their reality and life-full vigour. Sharat Babu has given appropriate reply to those who criticised Vernaji calling his characters as chaotic in the following words:—

“नारी जालिसम्बन्धेआमार्चरित्र कौनो कालेकुर्व्हेखल खिल ना, एखानु नय।” (39)

He means to say that our character was never unrestrained in connection with women and still it is not so. Similar statement may be made in connection with Vernaji that relating to womenfolk his judgement was never unrestrained or chaotic one. His woman characters remained as unique creation.

3.4:1 CLASSIFICATION OF WOMAN CHARACTERS OF VERMAJI:

Vernaji had a tendency to depict woman characters well and therefore, he gave more attention to them. In most of his novels, the primacy was given to female characters. Some of his novels are named after women like the Chitralekha, the Rekha etc. Again in some other novels some female characters are depicted in such a way that they may be regarded as the ‘Spine’ of the whole novel. Maankumari in the ‘Samarthya Aur Seema’ is such a character. Therefore, his female characters are found in almost all forms like - Maa (mother), Putri(daughter), Patni (Wife), Bahn (sister), Nanad (sister-in-law), Marni (Maternal aunt), sas(mother-in-law), putra badhu (daughter-in-law), and others. They are also found outside the family relationship like the ‘Premika’ (lover), Vaishya (Prostitute), and others. If one considers these characters from the point of ‘Kavya Shastra’ all the three classes of heroine are present in Vernaji’s novels. They are - Swakiya, Parkiya, and Samanya.
From the point of personal character, almost all types of women are present in Vermaji's novels. Of these women, some are the symbols of 'Shakti' (power), 'Tyag' (abandonment), 'Utsarg' (sacrifice) and 'Maryada' (rectitude), while others are of luxury and corporeal happiness. There are some prostitutes and degraded women also. In this way, he depicted all classes of women - literate, and illiterate, characterless and with good character, beautiful, liberal, loving, jealous and such others. All these women are related to each other from the external point of view. But from the internal point, wise, reasonable, vigilant and rebellious women stand side by side with idiotic, helpless and dumb ones. All these different classes of women can never be studied individually within one research paper. Therefore we have taken up only two broad classes — the Parivarik Rup (in the family) and the Samajik Rup (social form) of women in this monograph. Moreover, Vermaji wrote mostly social novels and as such it is meet and proper to study the woman characters of Vermaji in the following forms (Rup) :-

**NAARI (in family & social Rup)**

i) **Patni** (a wife)

ii) **Maa** (a mother)

iii) **Bahn** (a sister)

iv) **Putri** (a daughter) and

v) **Premika** (a lover)

We propose to analyse the character after this classification in the following chapters.
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