CHAPTER IV

Section I

A REBEL IN INDIAN SOCIETY

This chapter attempts to study the life story of Krishan Chander as depicted in the third autobiographical novel, the Confession of a Lover. The narrative portrays the growth and development of Krishan, from early adolescence to young manhood. This section attempts to trace and articulate, Krishan’s individual response as a rebel in Indian society, as depicted in the narrative. It is in the context of this individual response, that the study will attempt to define his rebellion, in the next section.

Meeting Krishan Chander as a College Student:

In contrast to the closing mood of the Morning Race, the Confession of a Lover begins on a note of euphoria. Krishan is jubilant to staying with aunt Devaki, pursuing his education, at Amritsar. The joy of being close to aunt Devaki and learning to ‘play rummy’, is heightened only by the delight
in the sense of freedom, that he experiences, away 'from the restraints imposed on me by my own family'.

Krishan enrols for the Arts course in Khalsa college. At the college interview, he introduces himself, as a poet-in-the-making with the nom-de-plume, Azad. He elaborates that he has been writing poetry 'off and on, for the last three years'. This is surprising because Krishan articulates at the end of the Morning Face, that his poetic lines to Helen was the 'composition of my first poem' (MF, p. 570). He also gives evidence of his nationalist aspirations, citing that he was 'given seven stripes by the police during Jallianwala Bagh days...' and that he had 'joined a procession in honour of Lalla Lajpat Rai...'. He, however, applies for the Silver Wedding Fund Scholarship, despite his moral qualms. He finally emphasises his belief in 'poetry and courage'.

Krishan makes the acquaintance of Noor Muhammad, (a first year Science student at college) who later becomes a close friend and confidant. Noor comes from a traditional Muslim family. He is the only son of a zealous muslim, the Chaudhri Sahab, who owns a confectionery shop. The other members of Noor's family are his stepmother Nargis, an aged
grandmother, his young wife Naseem and his young child. Krishan continues to be haunted by the confusions that trouble him as a school boy in the Morning Face. It is to Noor, that he expresses these feelings of discontent and turmoil, who in turn offers a sympathetic consolation. Krishan enjoins his friend to also take up cudgels against his tradition and to fight the hypocrisies. Noor accepts Krishan's view point but he hesitates to practically follow him saying that 'the teachings of Islam' have been instilled into him and that 'To respect the elders: To fear Allah Main, To read the Koran...' had become his life. Krishan who had 'such hopes of emancipation' for Noor is disheartened. Nevertheless Noor accepts Krishan as his leader.

Krishan's confusions which he figuratively calls 'Ghaon maoon' continues to haunt him. He begins to feel that he wants to 'escape into the other charmed life of portry.... with or without the actualities of the Gandhi movement'. Poetry seems to be his only consolation and appears to provide some answers to his confusions. But Krishan is troubled by the despise and disregard that all had for poetry, since it was not supposed to secure a Government job. He nevertheless, makes a resolution, and clearly articulates the direction of his life:
"... I was a rebel .... someone who refused to be satisfied with the given answers to all questions. I had decided to find my own way". (COL, p.43)

In view of the above resolution, Krishan probably opts for a course in philosophy, to seek answers to his confusions. But he finds that the academic course evades the actual questions: 'Who am I? What is life? The whole question of existence'. It is in this context, that Krishan's acquaintance with his teacher, Professor Henry gains importance. This is so because Professor Henry, an Irish bachelor, has made a deep study of Indian philosophy by reading the original classical texts. He also has an understanding and a faith in Theosophy. A voracious reader Krishan visits Professor Henry, to borrow books from his vast personal library. It is on such visits that he reveals his profound confusions to his teacher. Professor Henry tries to help Krishan by directing him to examine Indian philosophy and urging him to consider the answers given to such questions in the Upanishads.

The opinions that Krishan holds about the Upanishads, in the Morning Face, are expressed once again at this point in answer to his teacher's viewpoint. He, therefore, contradicts Professor Henry's suggestion because he believes that the
'Hindu Dharma is incapable of new inspiration'. He justifies his stand by referring to the treatment meted out to untouchables in the Hindu social system. Professor Henry admits the truth of Krishan's observation but reminds him:

"That is only in the debased Hinduism of today. It was not so in the Vedic age."(COL, p.68)

Krishan is unconvinced and finds fault even with the Aryan tradition which treated all blacks as outcastes. On the other hand he glosses over his teacher's opinion that Theosophy is a religious alternative, since it denies the caste system of organised Hinduism. Ultimately, Krishan does not change his opinion, though he cannot counter the faith of Theosophy. Nevertheless, he realises his drawback when he compares that in contrast to his teacher, he has not read 'the Vedas, the epics, the Gita' or become a Gandhian. (COL, p.70)

Developments Leading to Devaki's Death:

Krishan's position as a rebel alienates him from the coppersmith brotherhood. In fact he is barely able to tolerate their traditional way of life. His tolerant indignation turns to disgust when he hears that the brotherhood accuse aunt Devaki of not living according to the Hindu Dharma. She is asked to
stop the 'coming and going of cousin Ananta and other men'. She is also told that though '.... In your life time you can enjoy the gains of this property... But your guardian, Babu Ram Chand, should know what you have ...'. Devaki agrees to submit to this moral and social code dictated to her. But Krishan is filled with disgust and anger and believes that the real reason behind the moral censure of the brotherhood is to assert their share and say in her property. He also feels that their disapproval of Ananta is due to his role in 'organising all the poor coppermiths, and the apprentices of the elders, into a trade union'. In fact Krishan feels that Ananta is more spiritual than the elders because he 'did not do any hypocritical prayers and openly lived without marriage with Janki, whom he was said to have abducted....' Krishan also feels that Devaki was being tried 'because of her occasional show of the need for freedom'.

In his own case, Krishan defies the objection raised by the Head of the brotherhood, forbidding him from being friendly with Muslims. In addition, Noor's stepmother visits Devaki to conduct a seance in her home. Moreover both Krishan and Devaki spend a night in Noor's home, as a result of Krishan's
sudden illness. However the elders are outraged by this open disobedience and decide to ex-communicate them from the brotherhood. Unfortunately Devaki, who is faced with the consequences of the ex-communication as a widow, residing amidst the brotherhood, cannot face the disgrace and commits suicide. The death of his beloved aunt Devaki shatters Krishan and leaves him inconsolably sad and depressed. Neither studies, nor poetry, nor Professor Henry's philosophy, nor even Noor's friendship can console him. However Krishan's dark mood miraculously lifts after he is introduced to Noor's younger sister-in-law, Yasmin.

Krishan is irresistibly drawn to Yasmin and he feels attracted by her. He also realises that she also has an inclination for poetry but says 'out of fear of father' she has torn up her poems. Likewise he notices that she has a questioning attitude to the traditional practices of her religion. This adds to the charm of Yasmin's manner and he becomes fascinated by her. This happy reverie is, however, interrupted first by Nargis, and later by the Chaudhri Sahab, when both suggestively emphasise that Yasmin is already betrothed. Krishan gets the message that this is a warning to keep away from Yasmin and
the 'words made me sweat'. Nevertheless he feels the 'longing to be near her', and for the first time after the death of aunt Devaki, feels a great consolation.

Krishan spends a fitful night immersed in his feelings for the beautiful 'dark lady'. Early next morning, he dashes to Professor Henry to seek 'consolatory advice'. His teacher immediately understands the new mood and asks him to go ahead. This takes Krishan by surprise because he had expected Professor Henry to surmonise and quote scriptures, instead of giving positive sanction. But it is obvious that Professor Henry asks Krishan to 'submit' to the 'dark lady', subject to two reasons: First, he thinks that the confused and ever-questioning Krishan needs a personal attachment to help him to 'grow', especially since aunt Devaki is no more. Secondly, Professor Henry believes that 'sensous love is only a reflection of Divine Love'. Therefore, his teacher hopes that Krishan should experience this love, use it as a threshold to experience the Divine Love and thereby reach the realm of things beyond. In allowing this experience, Professor Henry, clearly, cautions Krishan that this relationship should be above 'mere desire' and passion. The implication of these conditions are not lost on Krishan but his attitude to love is totally different from that of his
teacher's. Krishan believes in personal love and he desires to experience aspects of life as suggested by the Urdu poets, in particular Galib. He says that these poets 'reveal insights' inspired by the 'fountains of life itself' which he wishes to experience. He therefore does not accept the conditions of Professor Henry's advice.

On the other hand Krishan is unsure of Noor's reaction to his feelings for Yasmin and reveals it in an implied manner. Noor, who is perceptive has already understood that his friend has fallen in love. He accepts the development and shows solidarity by asking Krishan to join them for a movie so that he can be near Yasmin. The movie episode, in this relationship, is a symbolic beginning to a long and eventful affair. Yasmin's surreptitious behaviour in the cinema hall confirms that she is also attracted to Krishan. In the movie Krishan is enchanted with the role of Charlie Chaplin as a lover. This reminds him of his own earlier attractions and he mentally recalls all the women to whom he was attracted as a young boy. Krishan surmises that he is 'so easily susceptible to the female', and that this could have 'begun with hugging mother tight'. Krishan also feels the 'assurance from a woman in the place of the woman I had lost' with the presence of Yasmin in his life.
On yet another level, the impulse to become a poet and to break into poetry seize him. This feeling makes him wonder whether his 'new-found love' will make him into a poet, and if so, will he later 'sacrifice Yasmin'? He is confused by the dichotomy of his feelings as a young man in love and as a poet in the making. However, he is excited by his feelings for Yasmin and decides to write a new type of poetry born out of his self-experience. In this process, he hopes to 'elevate love itself to the pedestal of Mama Dayal Singh's God; Professor Henry's Brahman.....' However, he also admits that in his 'soul' he desired to 'surrender to the folly of this passion', in his love for Yasmin.

Krishan's happy world of poetry and love receives a jolt the next day, when he learns from Noor that the Chaudhri Sahab disapproved of their outing to the movie. Noor also believes that his father has become suspicious and Yasmin is being sent back to Lahore. He gives Krishan a farewell poem, and a parting gift of the Kulliyat of Mir, from Yasmin. Krishan perceives the clear message of this development, and wishes that he was not Yasmin's lover, but someone examining her farewell poem objectively. Immediately, he acknowledges that it cannot be, as 'neither she nor I could escape our love' and
suddenly breaks down. Krishan's predicament touches the sympathetic Noor who attempts to understand the situation and also console his friend:

"..... It is no one's fault .... Not even the Chaudhri's He is afraid of a scandal. Her betrothal has already been arranged. And this Hindu-Muslim union cannot be....' ..............\'.... but she loves you. And I will send Naseem to ask her to break her betrothal". (COI, p. 129)

Krishan, who is overcome by tears, remains silent. Later, he tries to find consolation by reading the Kulliyat, and finds it 'inspiring'. On the other hand he is besieged by doubts and wonders whether Yasmin has left an implied warning in the tragic love poem, 'The River of Love', which is a part of the collection. Krishan believes that, being a 'Muslim Purdah woman she must have accepted the guilt specially because she was betrothed'. However, he decides that he will not accept the fatalistic answers of the Urdu poet. Alternatively he prefers to believe in the 'inevitable happy endings of the English love stories'. where 'love was not a crime'. Krishan considers certain issues¹ related to his situation and finally

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1. The issues that Krishan considers will be examined in the next section while analysing his individual response.
feels that his 'naturalness of love' was enough sanction against all objections. He thus brushes aside any doubts and decides not to break off with Yasmin.

During the holidays, Krishan receives an invitation from Lalla Kedar Nath to attend the Harat Mata Celebrations in Lahore. His eagerness to meet Yasmin adds to his desire to show his poems to poet Iqbal and he decides to accept the invitation. On the way to Lahore Krishan begins to fantasize on the physical aspects of his relationship with Yasmin. He cautions himself against such thoughts as Noor who 'almost had a telepathic connection' with him, might decipher his feelings. He realizes that he will have to be hypocritical with everyone about such feelings, because 'no older person, not even Iqbal, would admit such a thing as the desire for physical coitus in poetry'.

At Lahore, the euphoria of meeting Yasmin is completely overcast, when Krishan learns that the date for her marriage has been fixed. He despairs that the 'paradise was lost', with Yasmin going away and that 'only the present moment was precious'. On the other hand, he asserts himself and maintains that Yasmin belongs to him even though she is to be married to
another. Despite this assertion he fears as does Yasmin that they will 'be parted by fate' like the legendary lovers, Salim and Anarkali. This leaves him in a dejected mood.

Krishan's dejected mood vanishes after he is inspired by a visit to poet Iqbal's house. He shows the poet his poems and boldly tells him of his rejection of tradition, his disgust at superstition and his endeavour to make a new mould of man. The poet encourages Krishan to ask questions and advises him to read various philosophers, the Sufi poets and his own philosophical poem, *Aesar-i-Khudi*, which asks for the 'growth of man'. But Krishan's real happiness comes from poet Iqbal's sanction for Hindu-Muslim marriages, after he meets Yasmin:

"'Nothing will make me happier .... than if she marries Krishan'." (COI, p.174)

In this happy mood Krishan decides 'I shall break through, I shall win your hand' and sends the message to Yasmin.

**Krishan Entains for Bombay:**

The happy mood of positive resolution to win Yasmin's hand is put to trial when she is not allowed by her father to
go out alone. Krishan, who is waiting to meet her, receives the news and immediately perceives the meaning of the development. He realises that his society will never allow Jasmin to marry him, and feels that 'All the hates of our elders' had come between their relationship. The unbearable situation urges Krishan to entrain for Bombay and dramatically go away from Lahore.

Lonely and depressed, Krishan experiences the truth that love means suffering as poet Iqbal had told him. He is, however, disappointed that the 'beauty of our love' had not convinced Jasmin to break away. In his unhappiness he remembers his maternal uncle Mama Dayal Singh, who had also faced a similar situation, arising from his desire to marry a Christian nurse. But Krishan cannot accept the resignation of his Mama, who had sublimated his personal love into Divine Love and had overcome his sorrow at the loss of his love. Instead, he decides to face his suffering through poetry about Jasmin. Later Krishan, takes a vow to win her:

"I must win my Muslim girl, Jasmin, and show that I was above religion". (COL, p. 199)

Nevertheless, on his first day at Bombay, he is attracted to Lakshmi, the wife of a coolie in whose hut he stays for the
night. Krishan also admits that the image of Yasmin, is somewhat 'blurred' by the presence of Miss Dastur whom he meets. However, Krishan feels that he is 'obsessed only with my love for Yasmin' and wonders why he cannot attain love in the manner of Majnun.

On the contrary, he is also confronted with his belief in Gandhi and questions himself. Krishan thinks that 'If I believed in Gandhi, should I not adopt his simple way of life ... ? '. But immediately counters and rejects the proposal:

"But Gandhi was for Brahmcharya and forbade his followers to indulge in sex. And I wanted Yasmin.... That is why I refused all religions, which forbade these things". (COL, p.205)

Thus the desire for Yasmin, coupled with his attitude to personal love overrule his initial urge to follow Gandhi. Krishan's stay at Bombay is cut short since he has to return to Amritsar, for the beginning of the new academic year.

The developments in the life of Krishan culminating in his escape to Bombay, result in Babu Ram Chand taking his son to task in a letter. Krishan is severely reprimanded for
his rebellious ways and is asked to return to the path of
sanity. His father takes particular objection to his involv-
ment with Yashmin, and his desire to be a poet. He particu-
larly forbids him from seeing Yashmin again. He also exhorts
him to give up the madness of poetry and compete for the
Assistant Commissionership, or the King’s Commission. Krishan
is completely ‘unnerved’ by his father’s letter. However, his
own counter arguments convince him that he holds ‘opposite
ideas of a successful life’ from his father’s. He therefore,
rejects Babu Ram Chand’s advice and again reiterates, ‘I shall
be a rebel’.

With the re-opening of college Krishan tries to
concentrate on his studies. He also tries to probe the world
of music and poetry to resolve the conflicts within himself.
He seeks ‘rationalisation’ for all his feelings in the poetry
of thought about the self of Iqbal’. Though music and poetry
provide calm, they do not help him to overcome the ‘expecta-
tions’ of his feelings for Yasmin. He also rejects the
’spiritualisation’ of Mama Dayal Singh since his love is ‘too
sensual’. At the end of the academic year, Noor tells Krishan
the news that Yasmin is not quite happy. - She also suspects
that her husband has two other wives, Krishan’s immediate
reaction to the news is a revival of his hopes and he is all for going to Lahore to rescue Yasmin. Hereafter he plunges into a new mood and realises that the poetic inspiration and urge 'had gone' to be replaced by the need for 'bits and pieces of experience'. To describe his various feelings, he prefers the novel form to the poetic form, and begins a novel 'The Absent One'. In writing this novel, encompassing 'the whole of life' Krishan, who has earlier rejected Mama Dayal Singh's 'spiritualization' now reaccepts it as his mission:

"My Mission would be to make love into Love, as Mama Dayal Singh had wanted me to do". (COL, p.232)

The focus of Krishan's feelings for Yasmin temporarily eclipsed by his involvement in a strike by the students of his college. The strike is a protest against the highhandedness of the college management who dismiss a few staff members for their involvement in inviting Mrs. Annie Besant for a talk. The students involved in a non-violent dharna infront of the college, progressively lose the courage to follow Gandhi's idea of non-violence. Krishan begins to wonder what exactly is the meaning of 'satyagraha' and 'non-violence'. He confesses his misgivings to Mama Dayal Singh, who asks him to
convert himself slowly and realise Gandhi's message. However, in the actual confrontation with the police Krishan cannot remain truly non-violent. He is arrested and put into jail.

Yasmin comes to the fore again after Krishan is released from jail. In his intense desire to meet her, he presses Noor with friendly insistence to arrange the meeting. At this juncture Noor for the first time warns his friend about the danger and pain of this affair. Krishan replies that he cannot give up Yasmin and opines that there is pain in everything in life. He then emphasises that he is incapable of being either docile like Noor, or becoming philosophical like his Mama Dayal Singh about this obsession. At this point Krishan clearly decides to:

"... pass and get a job and marry her". (COL, p.280)

This is the first time that Krishan articulates his actual plan to offer Yasmin a permanent relationship.

Krishan continues to be confused and reveals the situation to Mama Dayal Singh who has come on a visit. Mama Dayal Singh has always seen a spark in Krishan's manner, and therefore, tries to advice him to rise above the situation. He asks Krishan to comprehend the problem, by asking him to
sacrifice his personal love for the 'higher things'. But Krishan is unable to appreciate the advice which goes against his desire. Mama Dayal Singh, then, asks Krishan to bring Jasmin to the Beas Guru Ashram and seek the Guru's blessings so that he can 'outgrow all such natural desire' by giving vent to them. Krishan, however, is very clear that he wishes to use this opportunity 'not to use up my desire but fulfillment'.

Krishan receives a letter from Jasmin, narrating to him her sorrows and pain in her husband's home. She says that she is bearing with fortitude the misery until Krishan can 'change it' for her. He is 'inwardly happy' to read about her suffering, because this could mean that 'there was the chance of my ultimately eloping with her'. Meanwhile Noor manages to include Jasmin and his wife Naseem in the trip to the Beas Guru Ashram. There Krishan wilfully takes Jasmin to the river bank to be alone with her and takes on the role of Charlie Chaplin as a lover. Krishan treats Jasmin as his newly married bride, while she accepts him fathering her child. Jasmin then asks him whether he will marry her according to Hindu and Muslim rites when she comes to him forever. In answer Krishan asserts that neither is she a Muslim nor he a Hindu and that they will
marry according to Gandharva rites and request the poet Iqbal to celebrate their wedding. Later in the day the foursome go to the Ashram to listen to a discourse by the Guru. Krishan walks out of the assembly when the Guru begins to speak about the irresponsibility of youth, which means a disapproval of all that Krishan symbolised — He refuses to listen to Mama Dayal Singh's plea to stay back and ask the Guru for his blessings and retorts:

"Nahin Mamaji, we will meet in Amritsar, my god is not here: I met him on the river". (COL, p.311)

These words clearly articulates Krishan's belief in free love and his rejection of the traditional attitude towards it.

After returning from the Beas River Ashram, Krishan plunges into preparations for the coming examinations. It is agreed upon that Yasmin will join him immediately after the final examinations. Some time later, Krishan brings up the issue of the Beas Guru in his conversation with Mama Dayal Singh and refuses to accept the 'strictures against the young'. He asks:

"Why can't we be free, to do what we like?". (COL, p.327).
Mama Dayal Singh concedes that the Beas Guru was wrong, but tries to tell Krishan that love and marriage are not the same. He also elaborates on the limitations of the western form of marriage. However, Krishan is defiant about his love for Jasmin. Finally, the Mama accepts Krishan's feelings and says:

"'Do marry her if you can. And bring her to the village. We will make her a Sikh'." (COL, p.329)

Krishan ponders over Mama Dayal Singh's message and tries to see divinity in everything. He decides to write poems to 'rise above egocentrism to real love for Jasmin and others.

Noor's wife Naseem, brings another message from Lahore for Krishan, saying that Jasmin is miserable but will come as soon as she can. Meanwhile, Jasmin's husband suspects the presence of a lover after he chances upon some love poems in an alien handwriting, and vows to 'murder the man'. On learning this Krishan has 'no hope of Jasmin ever coming' to him and he seeks the 'freedom which suicide' would give him. In fact, he is in the process of writing a farewell letter to Noor, before hanging himself, when the disaster is stalled by the unexpected arrival of his mother. Krishan is relieved to be 'saved' by her arrival. He tries to continue to study for his examination and
plunges into a mood of introspection about himself, Yasmin, God, Philosophy, etc. He also tries a sympathetic understanding of worship of work, as against his own personal worship of Yasmin.

After a few days Krishan is suddenly faced with the reality of Yasmin coming to him. He is overcome by tremors of 'timidity and fear and weakness'. He tries to gain time before giving a direct answer to Noor's insistence on his decision about Yasmin and realises:

"I realised that Noor was right in suspecting that my love was in my imagination. I had been unconsciously using it for the purpose of poetry, like all the Urdu bards". (COL, p. 341)

The reality of this situation, together with the news of his potential fatherhood, completely drains Krishan of his courage, who has now to come to terms with his non-conformity:

"... Why hadn't I thought of this before making love to her on the bank of Beas? Fool that I was .... No inner cunning would free me from my cowardice".

(COL, p. 341)
He is possessed by an 'inner panic' though he tries to put up a brave front. He now realises the pain for the child that has to grow under the circumstances, for Yasmin and for himself with the coming of responsibilities. He also realises that there is the problem of how to face all the people - in Kucha Fakir Khana, his friends, Dr. Iqbal, Mhaivir Singh, and his parents. However, after much brooding, and trying to read meaning into his dreams about Yasmin and listening to music Krishan informs Noor, to send a message to Yasmin, that he is ready to accept her.

The plan for the elopement of Yasmin along with her child from the previous marriage is chalked out by Noor, who arranges a trip to Kashmir. It is arranged that Naseem will bring Yasmin to Kashmir under the pretext of visiting relatives. Krishan and Noor proceed to Kashmir where they wait for the arrival of the ladies. Krishan is overjoyed at the prospect of Yasmin coming to him forever and thinks, that he has 'struggled and suffered and prayed to win you back ...'. While waiting for Yasmin, Krishan acknowledges however that he could 'never be noble as Majnun' - in fact he feels:

"If I was honest I wanted the physical pleasure of having Yasmin, more than my soul union with her, because I consider myself intellectually her superior". (COL, p.358)
The arrival of a telegram, informing them of the sudden death of Yasmin, comes as a shocking news. Krishan is overwhelmed by sorrow and cries in bitterness and anger. He firmly believes, that Yasmin has been murdered by her husband and decides to take him to the court of law. After returning to Amritsar, Krishan realises that it is he, who is the morally accused, vagabond lover, who had tried to steal another's wife, in the eyes of society. It is only Ananta who remains friendly and advises Krishan to turn a 'deaf ear' to the popular opinion, which he accepts.

Alone with himself, Krishan's mind is full of thoughts and counter-thoughts. He wants to be a Majnun without 'the complete faith of Majnun'. Yet he pledges eternal love for Yasmin and says that 'I love her as Majnun loved Laila'. Along with this feeling he calls out to God in whom 'I don't believe' saying:

"If only you could allow the young to be happy, to make love, to eat and drink and write poetry, walk hand in hand, I would believe in you and your justice. But I despise the working of Fate, which you ordain".

(COL, p. 368)
He tries to find consolation through poetry and through Buddha's message to end dhuka by 'working out one's salvation through Karuna Pity'. He rejects both these methods because, he feels that Urdu poetry was inhibiting and the method of the Buddha too abstract. He also considers suicide as a way out of this suffering but is held back, for various reasons.

Finally, Krishan firmly believes that the moral strictures against him, is a reflection of the ignorance and narrow-mindedness, of the elders of his society. He is convinced that they cannot appreciate the 'beauty of love'. He insists that they are hypocrites, who are afraid to acknowledge openly their own desires, but stealthily seek outlets for their passions. It is ultimately, such an opinion that leads to Krishan's final showdown with his father. As a consequence he quits his parents home, 'to be free of the restraints brought by the oldies...' Krishan conjectures about going 'across the black waters', to pursue his education and seeks poet Iqbal's advice in the matter. The poet encourages him to study for a Doctorate in Philosophy in London. Krishan decides to do so, and sets out on a journey '... to ask questions ... to study', and seek answers to his confusions about life.
Section - II

REBELLIOUS WAYS

In the earlier section, Krishan Chander's individual response as a rebel against the Indian society, has been articulated as depicted in the Confession of a Lover. It is seen that his decision in the Morning Race to be a 'supreme rebel' becomes a resolution to 'find my own way' in the present autobiographical novel. Accordingly, this section attempts to examine his rebellious ways and articulate his endeavour, to propose a 'contemporary myth of man' as an alternative way of life for Indian society.

A Sense of Freedom:

The opening mood of the Confession of a Lover is filled with Krishan's happiness, arising from his feeling of freedom. This suggests that he may become involved in the freedom struggle in accordance with his patriotic zeal, as expressed in the Morning Race. The opportunity for such participation must have been immense considering the charged atmosphere in the country after the 1920's with the coming of Gandhi on the political scene. It is surprising therefore, that Krishan
does not join the national struggle, throughout the Confession of a Lover. In fact, he appears to have fallen in accord with his father's 'plans for my future' by pursuing a collegiate education. Krishan thereby seems to have compromised on his patriotic feelings despite the freedom away from 'the vigilant hawk eyes of father', and his pledge in the Morning Face to 'fight against the Angrezi Sarkar till we win Swaraj'(MF,p.515). Nonetheless, he continues to express his differences from the accepted social and religious traditions of his society and decides to 'find my own way'. It is this resolution that this section attempts to examine by raising a few questions: How does he try to define his way? What parameters does he consider before rejecting the traditional way?

Personal Relationships: A Focus on Yasmin:

The narrative of the Confession of a Lover focusses its central concern on Krishan's relationship with Yasmin. In fact, it is in the context of this relationship that many significant issues arise that bear upon Krishan Chander's role as a 'supreme rebel' and articulate his resolution to 'find my own way'. In tracing the manner of Krishan's rebellious ways as seen in his relationship with Yasmin, the study attempts to examine his individual response, and put into sharp relief his endeavour to propose an alternate way of life.
Krishan meets Yasmin, when he is still sad, depressed and lonely due to aunt Devaki's death. He sees that Yasmin has an interest in poetry and a questioning attitude to her religious tradition. This adds to her charm and Krishan is attracted to her. Understandably, he seeks to fill the void created by aunt Devaki and desires the freedom to pursue his attraction for her. However, he realises the inherent problems that arise from Yasmin's position as a young and betrothed girl, from a traditional muslim family. Thus, he decides to go for 'consolatory advice' to Professor Henry. It is surprising, therefore, that Krishan neither mentions Yasmin's betrothed status nor her caste. In fact, he does not make an attempt to discuss the inherent problems nor does he articulate his way of countering the traditional opposition. On the other hand, Professor Henry gives sanction for the relationship without learning of these details. However, Krishan rejects the conditions that his teacher puts as a preliminary to the relationship. This is so because Krishan cannot accept the suggestion to rise to Divine love by sublimating personal love, since he desires to experience personal love at a human level. In effect, Krishan's individual response neither tackles the traditional objection, nor does it articulate the steps to counter them. Nevertheless, he cannot deny the desire for the experience of personal love and is inclined to pursue his inclination.
Krishan is also beseeched with doubts when he thinks of Noor’s reaction with respect to his feelings for Yasmin. He realises that the conformist Noor, may raise traditional objections and oppose his inclination for his young sister-in-law. Instead, Noor’s ready acceptance comes as a surprise and appears to be a reaction which neither considers his religious tradition nor Yasmin’s betrothed status. In fact, Krishan and Noor appear to overlook the fact that they are part of a traditional society in which they have to function. The end result is that, neither Noor nor Krishan discuss the issues involved, and with Yasmin’s behaviour at the movie the relationship is confirmed. Thus, the relationship begins with what actually appears to be a side-stepping of the issues and problems involved.

It is not surprising that Krishan’s reactions to the first objections raised in Noor’s house after the trip to the movie is one of despair. He cannot face the implied message in the Chaudhri’s Sahab’s decision to send Yasmin back to Lahore, since he has not thought of his way of countering traditional opposition. Further, Krishan’s silent acceptance of Noor’s decision to send a message to Yasmin to break her betrothal shows a poor understanding of the situation. It is also a
sweeping elimination of the issues involved. In actuality, however, neither does Krishan remind Noor, nor does Noor send a message to Yasmin. Nevertheless, Krishan cannot accept the logical development of the fixing of dates for Yasmin's marriage. In reaction, he asserts that she is his, and makes no effort to consider that with Yasmin's marriage, his relationship with her has to be re-defined. It is surprising, that Krishan still does not make any effort to plan a practical way of realising his relationship with Yasmin. In fact, a moody dejection takes succour by the sanction given by poet Iqbal, for Hindu-Muslim marriages. This general reaction of the poet cannot be understood as a sanction in this case because the poet has no idea that Yasmin is betrothed or that she will soon be married. It is well known, that poet Iqbal represents a religious understanding of life, therefore, his reaction in the knowledge of these details would have been different. In effect, by deciding to 'win' Yasmin's hand based on the poets reaction, Krishan again symbolises a response which is neither serious nor deeply considered.

In contrast to his vow to 'win' Yasmin's hand, Krishan impetuously leaves Lahore, when he is faced with an implied opposition from her family. In fact, he wonders why Yasmin does not defy her family and break away to join him. In this reaction,
he appears to overlook the fact that he has neither discussed the issue with Yasmin, nor has he given her the assurance of marriage. On the other hand, he maintains that he will win her. It is difficult to accept this assertion, because once married, Yasmin will be a partner in a permanent relationship. It is obvious, therefore, that Krishan, who has found it difficult to 'win' her during her betrothed status will find it even more so after her marriage. Nevertheless, Krishan maintains this position and therefore rejects his father's disapproval of the relationship, believing that it is an opposition to the inter-caste marriage. It is difficult to accept that Krishan appears to turn a blind eye to the other factors, even at this stage. His individual response as an endeavour to 'find my own way' therefore, does not seem to portray credibility.

On the other hand Krishan's active involvement in the affair is revived when he receives news that Yasmin is unhappy in her marriage, and he wishes to go and 'rescue' her. He again does not elaborate on how he would go about the plan to 'rescue' her or what he means by it. At this stage Krishan finally decides to 'pass and get a job and marry her'. It is not clear why he took so long to come to this serious but practical decision. In fact, it is too late and Krishan appears to
overlook the fact that Jasmin is already married. Therefore, his assertion that he will marry her is difficult to accept. It is at this juncture that Krishan reveals his confused state of mind to Mama Dayal Singh. It is evident that he cannot accept the Mama's advice to get over 'mere desire'. In this context, it is surprising that Mama Dayal Singh, despite his philosophical bent of mind, does not raise the moral-ethical questions of an affair with a married woman. On the contrary his suggestion to bring Jasmin to the Beas Guru Ashram is both surprising and unbelievable. The fact that Krishan accept his Mama's suggestion clearly reflects on his non-serious attitude towards the traditional norms of Indian society.

In the above context, Krishan's individual response to Jasmin on the bank of the Beas River, is a practical reality of his rejection of traditional values. Therefore, he has no objection to fathering Jasmin's child without the sanction of marriage. This action thereby articulates his desire for freedom to follow his inclinations. This freedom becomes an alternative way as opposed to the traditional norms that would have operated in this situation. In effect, Krishan's individual response symbolises his desire for individual freedom as a way of life. However the news of his ensuing fatherhood jolts
him from the world of his non-conformist beliefs. Krishan is suddenly beset by traditional doubts despite his non-tradi-
tional attitudes. It is significant that the social consequ-
ences bother him when he has to take responsibility for his 
actions. It is unbelievable that Krishan is bothered about 
facing the people when he had so clearly decided to rebel 
against the 'oldies'. Therefore, his realisation that he had 
unconsciously used Yasmin's love as an artifice for the 
creation of poetry when he is on the threshold of answering 
his responsibility to her, appears to be an excuse. In effect, 
Krishan's individual response as a rebel to 'find my own way' 
appears to wilt under its responsibility. This appears to be 
so because the issues involved in advocating freedom against 
'traditional norms' have not been deeply considered by him.

In contrast to the above feeling of despair, Krishan re-asserts his relationship with Yasmin, when he finally 
decides to send a message that he will accept her. However, 
he does not make it clear how he will face the consequences of 
such an action: How will he answer Yasmin's husband, his 
parents and society? How will he manage to support Yasmin, 
economically at least? These questions are not raised at 
all, but the plan to call Yasmin is carried out. While waiting
for her Krishan feels that he has '... struggled and prayed' to get her. It is difficult to see how he feels that he has struggled, because in reality Krishan does not make a single positive and practical move to 'win' her hand, despite his vow to do so. On the contrary, it appears that he hardly visualises the gravity of the move, asking Yasmin to quit her husband's home in a traditional society. However Krishan is not put to trial and does not face the traditional opposition that may have been, because of the sudden death of Yasmin. In fact, the practical reality of living a life, in the framework of his definition of freedom cannot be realised because of her death.

Krishan reacts to the news of Yasmin's death by accusing her husband as the murderer. He does not feel that his role in her life, may have also contributed to the cause of her death; since he represented a flagrant denial of traditional values by being the partner in Yasmin's adultery. On the other hand Krishan maintains that he has been wronged by society by its hypocrisy, its superstition and its dead-in-life customs which deny him the love of Yasmin. In accepting Ananta's advice to turn a deaf ear to social disapproval, Krishan symbolises a rebel who demands freedom to pursue his goals without social
or religious restrictions. In fact, he believes that freedom can be the only answer to the traditional quagmire and claustrophobia of Indian life. It is this belief that he echoes when he argues with himself after the development in which Noor's father sends Yasmin back to Lahore, at the beginning of the affair.

In the above context Krishan understands the implied message of opposition, when the Chaudhri Sahab sends Yasmin back to Lahore; he realises that tradition will never allow her to marry him. However, he argues against the situation by feeling that his attraction for Yasmin and the 'naturalness of his love' justifies the relationship. He, therefore, desires freedom without any constraints to fulfil his inclinations when he says:

"I wanted to go to the farthest limits of wrong doing to get her, I did not want .... ethics. I wanted fulfilment". (COL, p. 138).

In this reaction, Krishan appears to overlook the possibility that a combination of 'naturalness of love' and freedom outside a framework of ethics, may not be conducive to human freedom life as a way of life. On the contrary, Krishan believes that can be the only answer to the traditional system of society.
Thus, freedom becomes the operative principles in rejecting traditional practices, like conventional arranged marriages because of their apparent bondage. Krishan says that he prefers the love-marriages of the west since they are based on the concept of freedom. It is difficult to accept this viewpoint because conventional marriages in the west, despite their apparent operative freedom, were also subjected to religious and social sanctions. This choice of Krishan, therefore, appears to be made by an apparent and superficial understanding of the western custom. It is also obvious that Krishan's argument against conventional Indian marriages is based on his impression of the practice of his day, and not a deep understanding of the ideal system of arranged marriages. In fact, he does not make any effort to study the custom in its ideal form but rejects it by arguing against the present travestial practice. In the same manner, Krishan argues against customs like Purdah, early marriage and the traditional treatment of women. He is convinced that these customs have made Indian life completely 'dead-in-life'. Noor, who is listening to the argument cannot 'defend' these customs and Krishan feels that he has made his point. However, neither does Krishan try to make a study of these customs to understand their earlier relevance nor does he appear to see that their
irrelevance cannot justify a rejection of a whole traditional way of life. In fact, it is disappointing to see that Krishan overlooks the possibility that a serious person desirous of finding his own way will fight against these customs and thereby reinterpret tradition to make contemporary life more relevant. Therefore, Krishan's alternate 'way' desiring complete freedom appears to overlook this serious possibility.

In the same argument, Krishan, shows indignation at what he believes is the traditional 'containment of feminine consciousness'. In contrast, he argues that his idea of freedom will not only break the shackles of injustice but liberate women to equality. An attempt is made to examine the truth of this claim, from the knowledge of Krishan's relationship with Yasmin: Does freedom in this sense really mean liberation for women? We have seen that, in pursuing his relationship with Yasmin, Krishan involves her without offering her the support of marriage. In fact, the 'naturalness of love' and his desire to experience this love allows him to fulfil his feelings on the trip to the Beas Guru Ashram. In this case, it is clear that Yasmin's position as a woman becomes her weak point, in a system based on 'naturalness of love', 'fulfilment' and freedom. The validity of this observation is seen in Krishan's
reactions after being confronted with the reality of Jasmin leaving her husband's home to join him. Further, the news of his ensuing fatherhood, makes Krishan completely in despair of his role in the affair and he is slow in taking the responsibility of his actions. It is this vulnerability of Jasmin, as a woman, that becomes her weakest point in Krishan's concept of freedom and she becomes its most tragic victim. It is in this context that Krishan's vision of freedom appears to be limited in its capacity to liberate women. This is so because Krishan's approach seems to offer immediate results and apparent liberation, but does not tackle the problem to its logical conclusion. In the final analysis, this concept of freedom as an alternate way of life, does not appear to offer a better possibility for human life.

On the other hand, Krishan also connects his aspirations as a poet-in-the-making with his relationship with Jasmin. In fact, one of his first reactions after admitting his feelings for her, at the beginning of the affair, concerns his inclination as a poet. He wonders whether he is using Jasmin's love as a threshold for the creation of poetry and whether he will sacrifice her after he attains poethood. Accordingly, it is not clear why Krishan does not forget
Yasmin once she is married, since he had, had an experience of her love. Moreover, the denial of her love should have also provided the necessary threshold for the creation of poetry. Krishan's answer to this argument appears to be contained in his assertion that literature embodies 'real feelings and situations' and in his belief 'I want experience'. It is probably this idea of experience that allows him to fulfil his desire with Yasmin. She, therefore, becomes his partner both in his pursuit of happiness and in his definition of experience. This interpretation appears to be sustained by his thoughts when he articulates the 'desire for physical coitus in poetry'. However, it is difficult to accept Krishan's scope of experience for the development of artistic sensibility in this sense. This is so, because Krishan's insistence on experience appears to be a conscious effort, while it is the spontaneous experience that is a poet's aim. Further, this scope of experience, in the framework of freedom as defined earlier appears to be unacceptable as a way of life for society because of its obvious difficulties. It is also difficult to accept this claim of experience as a condition for artistic achievement, because even an artist has social responsibilities.
Finally, Krishan's endeavour as a rebel intending to 'find my own way' with respect to his response to the relationship with Yasmin appears to suggest two observations: The detailed study tracing his relationship with Yasmin, showed that Krishan does not attempt a serious, indepth consideration of traditional objections apart from mentioning them; further, in desiring freedom from traditional restrictions, Krishan does not articulate the parameters of his way in which he will try to achieve in practice his desire to form the relationship. However, the concept of freedom without constraints appears to be his proposal for an alternate way of life.

**Krishan's Individual Response to Religious Tradition:**

In the previous chapter Krishan's individual response to religion has been examined under the section 'The Making of a Rebel'. It is seen that he symbolises a rejection of the religious tradition of his society. Accordingly, Krishan responds by refusing to accept the prescribed rules of social behaviour arising from a religious tradition - His friendship with Noor and other muslims and his open inter-dining in their homes are first steps of his rebellion. In this response he represents a moral and spiritual war against the traditional way of life, which appears to be a mixture of hypocrisy,
fanaticism, superstition and narrow-mindedness. Therefore, he finds nothing morally wrong in Noor's stepmother visiting aunt Devaki or in their (his and aunt Devaki's) stay at Noor's home. In fact, Krishan quotes Gandhi and Kabir as religious authorities, who have approved of inter-mixing with other castes. In this way, Krishan lays the ground for his 'own way' against the traditional understanding.

In the above context, it is understandable that Krishan seeks to rebel against the brotherhood's objection to his friendship and inter-mixing. Nevertheless, he does not appear to consider that the brotherhood's objection arises from their fear of losing their caste status, if they displeased the Brahmins. Krishan, who knows that the brotherhood is under probation, should have realised that his and aunt Devaki's behaviour can jeopardise the caste status of the whole brotherhood. Instead, he could have expressed his rejection of narrow caste considerations by a voluntary declaration of his decision to willingly accept ex-communication for his beliefs. This

2. The coppersmith brotherhood were traditionally Ismaili-Hindus, who considered the Aga Khan as their spiritual head. Their caste status became uncertain when the Aga Khan issued a 'firman', asking them either to revert back to the Hindu fold or convert to Islam. The brotherhood chose to become Hindus, for which the Brahmins had put them on a probationary period before granting them complete acceptance.
would have established his seriousness to project a better moral alternative to caste fanaticism. On the contrary Krishan reacts with anger and disgust against the brotherhood's caste beliefs and is unconcerned that his behaviour will adversely affect their status. This appears to be a sorry alternative.

Against this background, it is quite clear that the brotherhood has no alternative but to excommunicate aunt Devaki and Krishan for their stay with Noor's family. This development finds Krishan severely indignant and critical for the sake of aunt Devaki. He also reacts by pointing to the hypocrisy of the situation because Babu Ram Chand, who interdined with other castes is spared since the 'brotherhood does not know that'. Therefore, Krishan feels that one can get away from traditional censure by being secretive and evasive, and decides to 'develop a cunning to match their cupidity'. Krishan's reaction to the apparent injustice of the situation is understandable but his decision to match their hypocrisy with cunning appears to be an unsatisfactory alternative. On the contrary, a proposal for a more honest and ideal social norm, where hypocrisy towards society and towards one's own conscience is condemned, would have made his decision to 'find my own way' appear more convincing and acceptable.
Instead, his direction appears to be a substitution for a traditional hypocrisy by a modern one.

The above attitude, consequently, gives rise to Krishan's opinion about Ananta. He feels that Ananta is being honest by openly living with Janki, whom he was said to have abducted. Further, he feels that Ananta pursued happiness with Janki without being hypocritical like the elders, who were secretive of such passions. In the same way, Krishan finds no fault in aunt Devaki's pursuit of a happy life, as against the traditional objection asking her to stop 'the coming and going of your cousin Ananta, and other men...'. He also feels that aunt Devaki is being tried for her 'occasional need for freedom'. We see here, the continuance of Krishan's opinions from the 

Morning Pace, where he does not consider the moral issues involved in a life symbolised by aunt Devaki. Thus, Krishan lays the ground for freedom, as an alternative against the apparent bondage of the traditional way of life. In this context, it appears that freedom is defined by a complete absence of social and religious restrictions or principles of limit. Freedom then becomes a way to pursue a life of happiness as implied in the phrase he uses - 'free as a bird'.
It is important to examine Krishan's proposal of freedom as an alternative, by considering his attempt to understand the religious and social tradition of his ancestors. It is obvious from the text of the Confession of a Lover that his opinions and objections to the religious traditions are similar to those in the Morning Face. This is apparent because Krishan again rejects a consideration of the traditional viewpoint as depicted in the Upanishads. He, therefore, does not accept Professor Henry's suggestion to read the classical texts of Indian tradition, by taking objection to the practice of untouchability and the caste structure of Indian society. In effect, Krishan does not make a personal study of the texts of traditional understanding but rejects their argument even without considering it.

Krishan's refusal to consider the religious alternative, as a way of life is also apparent when he glosses over Professor Henry's suggestions that Theosophy as a faith denies the caste structure of Hinduism; just as he overlooked the doctrine preached by the Arya Samaj in the Morning Face, Krishan does not consider the moral alternative offered by Theosophy. This rejection, when he knows that both these faiths condemn untouchability and caste structure, appears to be a sweeping
elimination. Moreover, the alternatives of Buddhism and Jainism, among others as religious faiths which also deny untouchability do not seem to be considered at all. Therefore, Krishan's rejection of the Indian religious tradition in the context of untouchability appears to be neither deeply nor seriously considered.

Krishan's individual response to the religious tradition of the Hindu system again seems to lack seriousness when considered with respect to Gandhi. It is well known that Gandhi had by the 1920's taken a stand to condemn untouchability and yet reinterpret Hinduism. Krishan who objects to the Hindu tradition because of untouchability, should have considered that Gandhi was tackling the very issue. He should have, therefore, examined Gandhi's point of view. However, Krishan does not do so and implies rejection by saying:

"... The best thing was to get out ..... from the shadow of these hypocrites.... But where ?... To Gandhi..... I had heard, however, that, apart from his work to emancipate the untouchables, the Mahatma was also an orthodox Hindu". (COL, p.53).

Thus, Krishan rejects Gandhi on the plea of his being an orthodox Hindu. Two observations seem to be inevitable in this
context: First, Krishan is not really as serious and worried about untouchability, but uses it to counter the norms of religion. Second, by therefore rejecting the whole religious way of life he makes a case for freedom defined without any principles of limit, in which the individual can pursue happiness. Accordingly, Krishan’s individual response does not show any inclination to examine Gandhi’s re-interpretation, since it may lead him back to religion and yet counter the practice of untouchability. This will directly lead to a denial of freedom in the scope and meaning that Krishan desires. Therefore, Gandhi is rejected on the plea that he is an ‘orthodox Hindu’ an objection that is neither defined nor scrutinised.

In the above context, Krishan’s references on the one hand, to Gandhi’s message and Hind Swaran and on the other, to poet Iqbal’s philosophical poem, Asrar-i-Khudi, need to be considered. Krishan expresses a desire to understand non-violence and satyagraha. Similarly, he desires to attain the concept of the self as propounded in the Asrar-i-Khudi. However, it is clear that Krishan cannot pursue such an endeavour, in the scope of freedom that he believes in. This is so because neither the message of Gandhi nor the philosophy of poet Iqbal can make
meaning in a framework, which is devoid of any principles of limit. In fact, Gandhi's message is meaningless in a system without moral constraints; so also, poet Iqbal's definition of man cannot exist outside a religious framework. Therefore, their influence on Krishan, as well as, his endeavour to understand them cannot be sustained in the life of Krishan Chander as depicted in the Confession of a Lover.

In the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that Krishan does not make a deep and serious study of his tradition before rejecting it. In fact, he does not consider any serious viewpoint, whether of Gandhi, Tilak or the original texts to attempt an understanding of the other point of view. In a similar manner, as seen in the Morning Face, Krishan argues against the travestial understanding of religion symbolised in the lives of people whose own commitment is either weak or superficial. Therefore, it is difficult to accept Krishan's endeavour to 'find my own way' if it does not tackle the issues in depth, seriousness and in their true sense. A quote from Hind Swaraj appears to be illustrative of the point being made:

"He is a true physician who probes the cause of disease, and if you pose as a physician for the disease of India, you will have to find out its true cause".  

Against this background, it is clear that the proposal for individual freedom does not take issue with the traditional way of life by serious commitment or deep contemplation. However, Krishan begins to advocate freedom as an alternative and it becomes his ultimate stand as his own way.

In the final analysis, the study, explicitly suggests that the rebel Krishan symbolises a rejection of his whole tradition by becoming a crusader for freedom. In examining his responses to religious tradition as well as personal relationships, it is clear that he desires freedom so that the individual can pursue life without any principles of limit. Freedom, then becomes Krishan's proposal for an alternate way of life. However, in his decision to go to England, Krishan opts for a society which appears to offer greater freedom than Indian society. Therefore, he will have the opportunity to examine this freedom in the actuality of life. This in turn, will offer ground for further consideration to examine Krishan Chander's proposal of individual freedom as a contemporary alternative for Indian society.