

Chapter- IV

Conclusion

On the basis of the critical study of these two novels *The Himalayan Love Story* and *The Selector of Souls*, we have come to the conclusion that both these novels show the traumas of the Indian women and how they succeed in overcoming to these traumas and suppression, despair and depression to some extent. Namita Gokhale who writes *The Himalayan Love Story* and Shauna Singh Baldwin who pens down *The Selector of Souls* both raise an issue of feminine mystique throughout the course of the novels. Namita Gokhale, who is an Indian novelist, resides in Delhi, therefore sees each and everything from the Indian perspective and Shauna Singh Baldwin is a Canadian based Indian novelist who dwells at Milwaukee, Wisconsin in Canada and observes everything from the Canadian perspective. Namita Gokhale's *The Himalayan Love Story* delineates the traumas and suffering of a distressed, depressed, lonely, and alienated girl Parvati who from the very beginning till the very end suffers because of the situations she confronts in the course of her life. In her childhood she has a fear of a rabid dog after that a man-eater lion terrorizes her. She loses her father at a very tender age of one. Then she faces the hard poverty. Sometimes she along with her mother goes to bed with aching stomach. They cook during the day and the left over is used as dinner. She starts feeling at ease then she comes to know about the secret love of her mother with the shopkeeper. However her mother becomes widow in her youthful age. She also suffers a lot because of the widowhood. Parvati's maternal uncle hates her mother but he has to help Parvati's mother because being a brother he has to fulfill his duties of a brother. Otherwise he does not like to do so. At one place

Parvati also refers this and says that her mother was very beautiful and that was the reason my maternal uncle despises my mother. But come what may he comes in their rescue and offers them a two stored-house and he also lets them collect the rent of the shop which is situated at ground floor and they live in the upper part. Parvati's mother becomes widow at a young age. She also celebrates her sexuality like each and every young lady but she cannot enjoy those blissful moment because of her widowhood. But she tolerates all this for long but finally she performs adultery with the shopkeeper. At one place she is going against the set rules of the society and fulfilling her innermost feelings resulting going against the feminine mystique. Parvati cannot understand all this because of her tender age. She thinks that because of the shopkeeper, Shrikrishanji, her mother is going away from her. She feels alienated and depressed and cannot bear all this. After that her mother is diagnosed with tuberculosis and ultimately she also dies like her father. At this juncture Parvati feels heart-broken but soon she starts thinking about the happy and blissful life at Hiranand Joshi's house who is maternal uncle to Parvati like a modern girl who fills the chasm of loss of her near and dear ones by thinking about her splendid future at Hiranand Joshi's house.

Here she enjoys her life to a large extent in this happy house. So many teachers and students visit Hiranand Joshi's house. They admire her. She starts seeing her through the eyes of Mukul Nainwal, a student of her maternal uncle. Like a modern girl she is dazzled by the beauty of Salman Siddique who teaches history to senior classes. She makes love with him and more over she is not thinking about her future with him and like her he is also just enjoying his life with Parvati and fulfilling his sexual desires. She does not feel that she is doing right or wrong by having sex with Salman Siddique. It shows that she is enjoying her life to the full. When Salman

disappears she starts flirting with Mukul Nainwal. She is enjoying her life in the company of two young guys i.e. Mukul Nainwal and Lalit Joshi.

But suddenly her maternal uncle chooses a boy for her marriage in form of Lalit Joshi. Although she considers Lalit Joshi a boy and she deems herself a woman. Here she concedes everything like a baby girl. She does not say even a time that she loves Mukul Nainwal. As a result she suffers a lot in her later life. Lalit Joshi is a homosexual and he cannot consummate his married life. Because of this thing she suffers throughout her life. A girl who enjoys love making with Salman Siddique for a long time, and fulfill her silken dreams. She celebrates her sexuality till she is in close contact with Salman Siddique and Mukul Nainwal. But as soon as she comes in contact with her husband, her own sexuality becomes a burden on her. She feels heart-broken and alienated. She constantly waits for her husband to come closer but it never happens.

After that they come to Barallyand here also she thinks that this hot weather can change their relation but it never happens. But one incident changes the life of Parvati that is the meeting with Lalit Joshi's brother who has come there to seek a job. When he sees the desperate condition of Parvati he feels pity on her. One day when she was sleeping alone in the kitchen. He makes love with her for which she was waiting for a long time. This love making episode is a balm to her heart. She enjoys her sexuality. She performs adultery and considers it a right thing. Like a modern Indian woman she asserts her sexual aspirations which were hitherto hidden. But when find an opportunity they come fore. She does not accept what is happening as it is but she would like to bring some change for the betterment of her life.

Even when Raju leaves the place she goes on grooming herself. She sees light in her eyes. She is not that Parvati now she used to be before the visit of Raju. She was feeling extremely dejected because she was unable to fulfill her sexual yearnings since a long time but when she finds sexual pleasure, she regains her glory and beauty which was hidden since her marriage. But at this juncture she again faces a heart-rendering incident which is the death of her own husband, Lalit Joshi. He is diagnosed with tuberculosis and dies before he is taken to a good hospital. Although her husband appears to be dead even before his death but she like a traditional woman weeps a lot over the death of her spouse and sometimes she faints.

Simultaneously two incidents take place. One is the death of Parvati's husband and another is the marriage of Raju. But unfortunate thing is that she is sent to her maternal uncle's house because Raju's marriage is about to take place and in such an auspicious occasion a widow is not allowed taking part because of her widowhood. It is a great blot on the fare name of our society which appears milk bathed. Parvati appears to be a modern as well as a traditional woman who sometimes comes fore to face the hard reality and other times it appears that she will never be able to survive the hard circumstances. She tries her best but finally loses courage and aspires for her mother to be with her like a little child and we see that Parvati goes mad in her pursuit to be a modern woman and to some extent she succeeds.

Uncontrovertibly Parvati like a modern girl would like to change her life by adopting so many modern ways but she cannot bear the traumas meted out to her and ultimately goes mad when her traumas overpower her.

Shauna Singh Baldwin is an Indo-Canadian novelist born in Montreal, Canada and she sees Indian society from Canadian perspective. In matter of feminism

Canadians are far ahead to us. In Shauna Singh Baldwin's *The Selector of Souls* we see wind of change is blowing. In comparison to *The Himalayan Love Story*, *The Selector of Soul* presents more horrendous acts but characters of this novel are bold enough to face the reality of the world. When the novel starts a horrifying scene takes place. Damini takes the new born baby to the cave and commits infanticide against the baby because of no reason of hers. The baby's mother refuses to feed her and her father refuses to name her. It happens because Chunilal finds it difficult to afford the expenditure of the marriage of his already daughter. Now he gets one more baby. The condition of the society is such that girls are considered a burden on the parents because of poverty. Although Damini is not happy with her the decision of killing the new born baby but she does is out of guilty. She also prays to god that her future actions will compensate this loss. She also prays to God to form this soul when the world appears to be a good place to live in. Her second character is modern to a large extent. Anu who is a Delhi University graduate is married to a rich businessman who would like to marry somewhere else. But the girl's parents marry her off somewhere else. Observing the situation Vikash's parents finds a substitute in form of Anu. Vikash does not love her but he only beats her. She is considered a thing rather than a woman. She is repeatedly beaten by her husband. When Anu gives birth to a baby girl, everyone is unhappy. Vikash wants a son rather than a girl. When the girl grows up she is sent to Rano who is her sister and living in Toronto, America, Anu feels a little bit relaxed. Anu cannot tolerate all this for a long time and would like to come out from the shackles of four walls. Like a modern and bold women she files an application for divorce and starts working as social servant. This act of hers evidently reveals that Anu does not want money but what she wants is equality, social justice, freedom, and independence. When she finds that these features are not meted out to

her, she becomes a revolutionary woman and seeks divorce like a modern woman. She does not want to bear these social injustices and she revolts for this. It shows that she is not bearing all this like a mute animal. She opens her mouth even against extreme rich person who can purchase even police officers. She does not want to live under someone's supervision. She recognizes her individuality and by seeking divorce she would like to break the jinx. She does not want to bear all the traumas meted out to her. But on the other hand she would like to set an example before the society to be bold enough to face the reality of this phallogocentric world where only male are adored and respected. Thus she can represent all the down trodden and suppressed women who only aspire to be but because of some reasons and circumstances they cannot revolt against the society which only hear the voice of the males.

Undoubtedly Parvati and her mother also assert their sexuality to fulfill their bodily aspirations, desires, wishes and wants and assert their sexuality. They behave like modern women who know how to live their lives but even then their boldness is not like the boldness of Anu who without the support of family members revolts against the male chauvinism and fulfills her innermost desire to prop the society somehow. When we see these characters in the novels then we can say that wind of change is taking place in the society but this change is steady. Even a woman is the enemy of woman. Recently we see the case of Sheena Bohra who is murdered even by her own mother. Thus to change the society is not an easy task but it appears possible. When Parvati wrote the novel *The Himalayan Love Story* in 1996, things were changing at that time, but we see in 2012 when Shauna Singh Baldwin wrote *The Selector of Souls* things changed a lot. Although we cannot say that now this world is a better place for women but somehow it is under the process of becoming better. These two women are uncontrovertibly the representative of the oppressed and

downtrodden women who suffer because of male domination on this society but somehow they come out from the shackle of slavery and prove themselves to be the true axiom of society and set an example for the rest of the women to follow.