

## Chapter I

### Anton Chekhov: A Prominent Literary Voice

Anton Chekhov is one of the famous playwrights. Chekhov was born in the old Black Sea port of Taganrog on January 17, 1860. He is the best-known literary writer, especially for short stories, drama and play. He is always remembered in Russia for his several hundred short stories, many of which are considered masterpieces. Yet his plays are also major influences on the twentieth century drama. Chekhov's four major plays—*The Seagull* (1965), *Uncle Vanya* (1965), *Three Sisters* (1965) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1965) are frequently revived in modern production.

It is often said that little action occurs in Chekhov's stories and plays, but he compensates the lack of outward excitement by his original techniques for developing internal drama. The point of typical Chekhov story is most often what happens within a given character, and that is conveyed indirectly, by suggestion or by significant detail. Chekhov eschews the traditional build-up of chronological detail, instead emphasizing moments of epiphanies and illumination over significantly shorter period of time. As Tolstoy favored Chekhov's technique to that of the French impressionists, who daubed canvases with paint apparently without reason, but achieved an overall effect of vivid, unchangeable artistry. Although contemporary Russian literary critics celebrated Chekhov, international fame came only after World War I with Constance Garnett's English translation. Chekhov's plays were immensely popular in England in the 1920s and have become classics of the British stage. In the United States his fame came somewhat later, through the influence of Stanislavsky's technique for achieving realistic acting. American playwrights such as Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, and Clifford Odets have used Chekhovian techniques and only important playwright in the twentieth century could escape Chekhov's influence: for example, the work by

British playwright Michael Frayn is often compared to that of Chekov for its focus on humorous family situations and its insights into society.

Reading the play, *Uncle Vanya*, Yelena, a wife of a retired professor, who is of twenty seven years has been living with her emotions and sentiments suppressed. Due to this, Helena was always unhappy even though she pretends to be happy in front of others. But when she was drunk with Sonya, she reveals the truth that she is actually not happy with her marital life. It is the society Yelena is compelled her to marry the old professor. The society is actually guided by money matter and the professor is obsessed that along with the patriarchal compulsion for Yelena.

*Uncle Vanya* shows that the society is in the state of chaos where everyone is being frustrated, alienated and their pang and suffering are explored through their conversation. The beginning of the first act shows that the retired Professor is engaged in writing articles, books and papers which shows the intellectual capacity of males. Furthermore, the Professor is a rigid person who married a young girl Yelena. The professor is shown as a devoted in writing and ignoring all the social realities and even his wife too. He is shown as an arrogant character who wanted Yelena to stay under his feet and serve him like a servant. But Yelena who is young, energetic and beautiful lady becomes satisfied with Professor both physically and spiritually. The professor failed to address her emotions, desires and sentiments. By the ignorance of professor, Yelena becomes alienated, frustrated and tired. She doesn't find her role, identity and importance in the house rather she is behaved like slave by the professor. Yelena is actually not attracted by the appearance of professor rather his name and his wealth attracted her. She is stereotypically presented as attracted to money, feelings and emotions. Her inner dissatisfied actions shows that she is not happy with the old professor rather she wanted to have a young, energetic, bold and handsome youth. But

due to the social restrictions— the patriarchal norms, values and systems, she becomes unable to express her desires and emotions.

On the other hand, Sonya is also a frustrated character throughout the play. She is frustrated with her entire life. She is frustrated because she feels that she could not do anything in her life. She is also the alienated character since nobody has come to her life to help her. She is bound to suppress her emotions, feelings and desires and indulged herself in household activities. She is unable to utilize her intellectual power, her intellectuality is totally suppressed under patriarchy. As she is also frustrated with the entire life as Yelena they became friends and try to understand each other. But the obstacle is there the Professor who doesn't want her wife to cope with others. But anyhow Sonya and Yelena became friends and expressed their sorrows and sufferings to each other. They also get drunk to make their friendship closer.

Uncle Vanya is the another frustrated character. He is also entirely frustrated with Professor and the society as a whole. He wants to celebrate the beauty and physical charm of Yelena. He is engaged in lovemaking activities with Yelena but never succeeds. He wants to catch the attention of Yelena towards him. He is more frustrated on his wishfulfillment. His desire, emotions and feelings are suppressed. He also works for Professor days and nights translating his articles. He also regrets when Professor proposes to sell the estate. Vanya feels totally ruined by the Professor. His dualistic characteristic is also shown in the play as he explodes his rage to Professor since he sees Yelena embracing with Astrov. His dissatisfaction is expressed in front of Professor. He is also a envious character in the play.

Likewise, Astrov is also a frustrated character who engages himself in drinking wine and wasting his time. He is a doctor— family doctor of Professor and living with professor for almost twenty years. He spends his time talking to old Nanya. He is also

a envious character in the play. He is also attracted by Yelena and wants to entertain with her. He is the nature loving man and loves forest, woods and nature as a whole. He is also unhappy with the gradual degradation of forests and natural resources but he is more unhappy when he cannot entertain himself with Yelena and the departure of Yelena makes him frustrated. Thus, he decides to leave the estate at the end.

Anton Chekhov's short stories break the female stereo-typical images and represent them as bold, hard, resistant, career conscious women who take interest in social and external activities. Traditionally, the female are tagged with the stereotypical images of passivity, timidity, physical weakness, submissiveness, fragility, sewing, cooking, taking care of and being faithful to the husband and family. But Chekhov represents bold and hard women subverting this image. Chekhovian women challenge the patriarchal conception. They do not hide their desires and instincts: they are brave characters. Chekhov's stories reflect the women's quest for self autonomy and identity ignoring the patriarchal values.

Female representation from antiquity seems to be unsatisfactory for the feminists. Male-power is everywhere and it misrepresents women for male's own superiority and to relegate the women to the lesser important position. Religion, law and science are all methods of patriarchal control working to define and limit women. In most of the fairy tales, male ideology is implemented which creates the demarcation of male superiority and female inferiority. It equates femininity with submission, encouraging women to tolerate familial abuse, wait patiently to be rescued by a man, and views marriage as the only desirable reward for right conduct. It represents the female as timid, and incapable of rescuing herself and male as rescuer and masculine figure. Male discourse plays a vital role to tag the female with series of negative images and the male with weighty images. Even the agencies have

generated male discourse in the society. Most of the print and electronic medias have represented women either as an ideal house wife or as a recreational object but not as human being with a separate personality. So, female stereotypical image is constructed by male hegemonial power. It deserves to be broken. The main concern of feminist movement is to represent and understand female rightly and to break apart such constructed female stereotypical images; that Chekhov does in the representation of female characters in his short stories. Chekhov believes in the female boldness and their capacity to balance with the male. And therefore, he never considers women to be weak. What he wants them is to assert themselves and prove their ability to man, to make them understand that they are not inferior to male rather equalizer and sometime superior to male. Chekhov intention is to say that female are not deserve to be tagged with stereotypical images. As a result of this attitude, Chekhov writings reflect his very high opinion about women.

Patriarchy is the main ideology of the male dominated society, which restricts women to go in the open air. It binds women inside the home. They are restricted from enjoying and joining different professions. From the outset of human civilization, women are dominated and ill treated according to the deep rooted patriarchal rules and regulations. Society has been formed by the male oriented notion which has kept women in the inferior position and tagged with different negative images, social norms and values, behaviors and all other aspects of the society are controlled and guided by the male authority. So, they are tagged with weighty images. Men use their so-called superiority to dominate social, political, cultural, economic and religious aspects. In such society, women are not given any opportunities to uplift them. Rather they are forced to accept the male ideology. Patriarchy aspects women to serve men physically, taking care of husband, their homes, property, clothing. It

sexually expects women as wives, mistress or prostitutes. It expects in the case of physical strength as female are and should be weak, fragile and timid. Female should assure the husband of her chastity. They should not even think of extra-relationship except from their legal husband. Remarriage is strictly prohibited for them.

Chekhov is known for his advocacy of women's right and their higher social dignity. So, his stories are not written only to entertain his readers but also to reform the society. Chekhov challenges the Aristotelian concept of the heroic figure is only male, not female, and shows heroic figure in his short stories. His stories portray the female heroes to attack the society which regards female for their supremacy.

Chekhov represents activist women to create self autonomy and self-identity. He shows the power of female character. Those bold Chekhovian women neglect all patriarchal ideology and move step for their autonomy and selfhood.

Really, Chekhov did not write until *The Seagull* was resounding success in 1898 at Moscow Art Theatre this time. The reasons were different. Moscow Art Theatre was a newly formed theatre company by Constantine Stanislavski, Russian's most famous actor manager, and Nemirovich Danchenko, himself a playwright. Further, *The seagull* rejected most theatrical conventions, begun "in forte and finished Pianissimo" (Fen 21) in Chekhov's own words. Actually, the play itself concentrates so heavily on the experiences of creative and performing artists; two actresses and two writers. Danchenko knows the failure is due to the inadequacy of pre-existing theatres to give a fresh and intelligent approach. Treplev, the budding playwright in the drama itself says, "What we need is new kind of theatre. Now forms are what we need. And if we have not got them, we would be a sight better off with nothing at all" (70).

At Moscow Art Theatre, *The Seagull* not only gave Chekhov a hope for the theatre but also an actress wife named Olga-Knipper. After he had observed her role of Irina in the play, Chekhov reflected it as “superb. Her voice noble bearings and sincerity are so good that it brought a lamp to my throat. If I remained in Moscow, I should fall in love with Irina” (Fen 24). In May 1901, a few months after the first night of *The Three Sisters*; Knipper was his spouse to solace him from his failing health due to tuberculosis, and to inspire him move to play wrighting.

However, it took time for the audiences to gradually accept *Uncle Vanya* and *Three Sisters* as they had newer styles in themes and techniques. *Three Sisters*, for instance has four heroines and the spirit as Chekhov himself said, is “more gloomy than glom itself” (Fen 27).

In *Uncle Vanya*, Sonya’s hopeless love for Astrov is inadequately paralleled by his frustrated feelings for the beautiful Helen. All the three sisters along with Andrew have failures and dissatisfaction in love in *Three Sisters*.

### **Literature Review**

Chekhov's stories have drawn the attention of many critics. Many critics have attempted different possibilities of interpretation of his stories right from the beginning to the recent time.

Janko Lavrin in his "Chekhov and Maupassant" has discussed the utopian hope of present humanity. Besides, Chekhov himself realized the insoluble injustice of such a situation, for he jotted down in his note-book: “Let the coming generations attain happiness; but they surely ought to ask themselves, for what did their ancestors live, and for what did they suffer?” In other words, the past and present misery of humanity cannot be morally justified by any happiness of the generations to come.

Knowing this, Chekhov was honest enough to prefer a downright defeat to any high-faulting “messages”— what one might call the very poetry of fatalism:

“What can we do?” Sonya asks, at the end of *Uncle Vanya*. “We must live our lives. Yes, we shall live, Uncle Vanya. We shall live through the long procession of days before us, and through the long evenings; we shall patiently bear the trials that fate imposes on us; we shall work for others, without rest, both now and when we are old; and when our last hour comes, we shall meet it humbly, and there beyond the grave we shall say that we have suffered and wept, that our life was bitter, and God will have pity on us.”

Lavrin in this regard, further argues that:

Chekhov’s wavering between his idealistic nature and his scepticism constants strangely with the ruthless negation of Maupassant. An incurable pessimist on the one hand, and a sensual Epicurean on the other, Maupassant looks upon the world as a stage which, being both disgusting and amusing, provides at least plenty of raw material for his writing. Who does not know and admire the polish of these writing, which often are as perfect and also as cold as a crystal? Yet, if we dive beneath the surface of his work, we can perhaps find out what his studied coldness must have cost him. (19)

Regarding Chekhov’s plays Normand Berlin in his “Traffice of Our Stage: Chekhov’s Mistress” asserts that:

The end of *Uncle Vanya* is a deeper version of the beginning, deeper because we have experience the lives of the characters in the two hours’ traffic of our stage. Like Blanche du Bois, the professor and his

wife were just “passing through”, bringing to light the frustrations of the others, revealing the tensions. The other characters stay. Their future will be like the present of the play’s beginning, not necessarily because they are ineffectual people— a charge that could apply to almost all of Chekhov’s characters in all his plays— but because that’s the condition of life, the truth of things, as Chekhov sees it. What “might have been” never is, and “what will be” already is.

Berlin is of the view that Brecht’s characters reveal the frustration of others, revealing the tensions of humans. Chekhov’s plays are directly or indirectly related to the social instances, that he presents more dramatically.

What’s more, Chekhov has focused on different aspects of characters’ lives. They are significant not in the sense of clear-cut heroism and villainy but, perhaps, in being “honest,” honest to work, love, and hope. Obviously, they are modern in being chosen from the ordinary living, but yet they’re new from those of other playwrights. In this context, Ronald Hingley rightly studies:

Chekhov’s characters are less decisive and effective than he probably considers himself. He or she who feels outclassed and overlaid by an Oedipus or a Clytemnestra, by an Antony or a Cleopatra, by a Faust or a Mephistopheles, can smile condescendingly and affectionately at the manoeuvres of an Uncle Vanya, a Vershinin, a Lyuba Ranevsky.

(XXIX)

We find such homely environment as the major setting in any of his plays. Those settings are totally different from official or royal scenes of many other writers. Remarking on this, Tolstoy once said, “Where does one get with your [Chekhov’s]

heroes? From the sofa to the privy and from the privy back to the sofa?” (Hingley XXIV). One can hardly say so to Sophocles’ or Shakespeare’s or Shaw’s.

Chekhov’s issues are certainly not the accidental and specific but the human. Or rather, his dramatic techniques are at times submerged with excessive use of “subtexts” in which “the surface of the dialogue seems innocuous and meandering, but deeper meanings are implied” (Jacobus 705).

Naturally, Chekhov’s artistic ingenuity, as Stanislavsky also remarks, lies in his search for “the most intimate moods, in the most secret corners of the human heart” (Fen 8). Lastly, the characters are full of life because they have something to do, something to love, and something to hope for. Treplev, the young playwright always opts for “new forms” in theatrical arts. Vanya and Sonya feel their lives valuable in farm management works. Lebedev loves his permanent friend Nicolas Ivanov at all costs. In almost all of his plays, there’s a character who talks of a bright future ahead for the posterity, for the whole generation.

Shortly, the major interpretations on Chekhov’s plays unravel his primary focus in studying contemporary frustrated human moods against hopeful future expectations. The heroic characters themselves get victimized by subversive present situations which make the tragedy to be inevitable. And in the techniques, Chekhov is not making his plays carry larger-than-life actions and ideas as many others have done. In this, he’s rather closer to Beckett.

Elisaveta Fen further comments that Chekhov’s mature plays “reflect his mood of spiritual discouragement, hopelessness before the overwhelming, impersonal forces of circumstances, an awareness of personal insignificance.” And the characters “behave and talk as if they have lost their own future” (9). Yet they worship

humanity, respect for Man, and for that reason are always tolerant, gentle, courteous, and cooperative. They exhibit tenderness and sympathy over others without loose sentiments, with perfect adulthood. Peter Brook, a very famous present-age stage-director, points out, “Death is omnipresent [...] but there’s nothing negative or unsavoury in its presence. The awareness of death is balanced with a desire to live. His characters possess a sense of the present moment, and the need to taste it fully” (736).

Regarding this, George Steiner in *The Death of Tragedy* (1961) points out that Chekhov explores “an inner space, of an area of social and psychological turbulence midway between the ancient poles of the tragic and the comic” (309). Similarly, RP Draper finds that with Chekhov, “Man is significantly himself in what he says; what he does is nugatory and irrelevant” (Introduction 15-16).

Really, Chekhov has attempted a complete break from the tradition. The outside actions such as the report of the plague by the Priest and the quarrel between Oedipus and Tiresias, for example, are very crucial to develop the theme of *Oedipus Rex*. Or, the last sword fight between Hamlet and Laertes is a major turn showing the reversal of situation and makes the Shakespearian play very spectacular. Outward movements from city to city are very important in them. But, on the contrary, “Chekhov’s plays are full of actions” comments Stanislavsky, his contemporary critic and a founder member of Moscow Art Theatre, “not in their external but in their inner development. In the inactivity of his characters, a complex inner activity is concealed” (Fen 7).

Chekhov has rather focussed on the minute details of ordinary living. He himself has told his friends, “Let things happen onstage be as complex and yet as simple as they are in life. For instance, people are having a meal at the table just

having a meal, but at the same time, their happiness is being created, or their lives are being smashed up” (Fen19). He asserts that he shows “life and men as they are, and not as they would look if you put them on stilts” (Fen 31).

This thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first one is an introduction, which introduces the main thesis topic, main aim of feminism and includes literature review. The second chapter provides a theoretical basis for the analysis of the text. It primarily consists of a discussion on the definition of feminism, representation of women from antiquity and role of power in it and female stereotype. The third chapter explores the issues related to feminism as women’s identity crisis, suppression, domination and alienation in the patriarchal society on the basis of the theoretical modality developed in the preceding chapter. The last chapter summarizes the argument and ideas.

## Chapter II

### Theoretical Perspective: Feminism

This chapter makes general survey of feminism, feminist criticism and female identity based on which the interpretation of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* will be studied. The focus of the present work is on feminist literary theory along with the history of feminism.

The term 'feminism' doesn't have any agreed meaning that could be formulated as a set of belief, despite all protestations to the contrary. So feminism is a doctrine related on images and ideas advocating women's rights for the equality of sexes, identity and freedom. Feminism tries to reconstruct women's activities, works and aims from female-centered perspective. It is concerned with disregarded the culture as patriarchal culture, examine the experiences of women's from all areas and classes, rejection of the marginalization of women, voice against constructed issues like a 'secondary position', 'a second sex' 'submissive' 'docile' other etc. It seeks to liberates women creating new society in such a way that patriarchy is eliminated. So feminist thinkers regard feminism as different from the mainstreams as innovative, inventive and rebellious.

When we trace the women's subjection by men, we find that they have been subjugated from the beginning of human creation and civilization. Various myths and legends from both eastern and western parts of the world have portrayed them similarly as 'other', 'witches' and 'mad women'. On the other hand, they have been, to some extent, worshipped as equal to nature for their capacity of fertility and sometimes seen with respected eyes. But as a whole, women's image is negative rather than showing towards the good aspects.

Feminism pertains with marginalization of all women. It is the social movement that seeks equal right for women giving them equal status with men and freedom to decide their career and life pattern. This movement itself grows out of previous centuries of struggle by women to win equal rights. It questions such long-standing dominant male phallogocentric ideology, patriarchal attitudes and male interpretation in the society where there women have been excluded to marginality. Feminism is an aggressive conscious feeling of women who begin to reject their own passivity and aims to develop women's personalities. Sheila Ruth, about this movement, posits her view as; "A Conceptualization of the women's movement that strikes me as more helpful and more constructive is simply that of women moving toward greater strength and freedom both in their awareness and in their socio-political position" (444).

Women's movement aims to make and feel the women mentally and socially strength and freedom. Women are taken to be weak in term of education, culture, body whereas male are considered as strong in every aspect of life. Due to this deep rooted gender conception, men dominate women. Thus, the main target of the feminists has become to change or revolt against such misconception on gender construction, and to identify and remedy the sources of all kinds of oppression and subordination. So, feminists are ultimately in pursuit of a more radical change, the creation of the world where one gender does not set the standard of human values.

Many discussions attempt to fix origin of the women movement. Different scholars argue differently to pinpoint the origin of this movement. Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the abolition of slavery and the American Civil Rights Movements have been pinpointed for origin. These attempts have a certain logic, but they can be misleading. They tend to focus attention not on one movement but on

many; an eighteenth, nineteenth, or twentieth century movements each with a discernible starting point, each built around distinct needs and goals, and each with separate and characteristic political attitudes, personalities and strategies.

There is no harmony between man and women in relation to the status in the society. Women are silenced in the patriarchal ideology. Thus, feminists try to break the silence of women. All the feminists are concerned with the destruction of patriarchal ideology, its insufficiency and oneness. Maria Mies says, "feminists are those who dare to break the conspiracy of silence about the oppressive, unequal man-women relationship and who want to change it"(6). She talks in favour of women's autonomy, and views that feminists are against oppressive male ideology and unequal treatment to women which imposed upon them to be silent. For her, autonomy is the feminist effort to maintain and recreate the innermost subjective human essence in women. Toril Moi defines feminists as; "The word feminist or feminism are political level indicating support for the aims of the new women's movement" (217). Moi's concept about feminism focuses it as a political movement which aims at breaking the patriarchal boundary and hierarchy between men and women. Feminism is the search for equality in social, political, educational and cultural aspects. Or, in short, feminism is the quest for autonomous existence required by women. Likewise, Sandra Gilbert views as; "The feminist criticism wants decodes and demystify all the disguised questions and answers that have always shadowed of the connection between textually and sexuality, genre and gender, psychosexual identify and cultural authority" (334). Feminist criticism, for Gilbert, intends to make the clear relationship between text and male-female sexuality, sexual identification and cultural dictation upon female by male.

The women, specially of the third world, are not enjoying their humanity. Instead of developing women's personality, the new age has added more responsibility upon them. The world is not completely modern because half of its population lacks humanity. Humanity and feminism can be enumerated as synonyms. Feminism came into existence for the sake of women rights and human equality. So, most of the feminists who are concerned with the world's bias, demand equal rights for all human beings.

Feminism consider that the concept of feminity and masculinity are myths or ideologies. For these feminists, such beliefs are values that are not detached from social life. But females are subordinated by there traditional norms.

Cora Kaplan, Juliet Mitchel, Mary Jacobus and Rasalind Loward are some of the British feminists who combine Marxist theoretical interest in the production and ideology of literature with feminist concerns for woman's writing.

Apart from these major approaches of feminism, it includes other many aspects, such as radical and liberal feminism, black and lesbian feminism, post-colonial, gender, third-world feminism etc. Let us talk in short about liberal and radical feminism.

### **2.1 Prominent Feminist Theories (Criticism)**

“Women Liberation movement” is the origin of ‘Feminist Criticism’ in the Eighteenth Century and there has been a continuous agitation for women's rights-political, economical and cultural, the freedom and equalities of sexes in the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth century. However feminist criticism is actually a part of discourse of the new feminism emerged in Europe and America in the late 1960s to revive political and social issues of women. It emphasizes a different kind of reading to literature breaking the traditional monolithic way of examining literature from

feminist point of view. The task of feminist criticism is to concentrate in women's access to language in the lexical range from which words can be selected on the ideological and cultural determinants of expression. Toril Moi has indicated the advantage of recognition of feminist criticism and theory which are useful to learn social institutional and personal power relation between the sexes. She further says: "feminist criticism then is specific kind of political discourse, a critical and theoretical practice, committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism, not simply a concern for genders in literature".(204)

Feminist criticism questions about phallogentric ideologies, attitudes and male interpretation in literature and criticism to attack the male notions of values in literature and criticism. To subvert the complacent centuries of patriarchal culture, it offers critiques of male authors and representations of men in literature, and also privileges of women writers.

In the Nineteenth and Twentieth century too, women had to come across various challenges as the writers in the society. Feminism became a dominant approach in literature only in the late Nineteenth century. It had two centuries struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements. The campaign was earlier started formally through the writing of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). Wollstonecraft opines that a woman or a girl is affected by the misinterpretation of the life style of society. There learning is mere repetition of the some conventional ideas but not creative one. In a novel, a boy is depicted as an active person where as girl is presented as possive beauty. They read such novels and make an ideal picture of male and female in their mind. Not only this but she also claims for the political and social rights of women and goes beyond of strictly patriarchal and society. She advocates that mind does not know sex and

blames that society views for women in the role of convenient domestic slaves and luring mistress by denying their economic independence and encouraging them to be docile and attentive to their look to the exclusion of all else.

In American Margaret had agitated for women's movement in the middle of the Nineteenth century. In her well-known book *Women in the Seventeenth Century* she has depicted how women have been marginalized in our society. In the end of Nineteenth century J.S. Mill writes a pamphlet entitled "The Subjection of Will" in which like Wollstonecraft and Margaret Fuller seeks more equality and greater freedom for women.

Twentieth Century major feminist writers like Virginia Woolf and Simone de Beauvoir had made a great contribution in the field of feminist theories with their major famous works. Woolf, in her *A Room of Her Own* (1928) has explored the situation of women writers explaining how women are imprisoned within the domestic premises and are stopped from trying the pen. Her central argument is that women do not have money and a room of her own where they do not have separate space for writing. The social and economic obstacles extended before them always obstructed the women's creativity. She attacks that a patriarchal society has prevented women from realizing their creative possibilities. She asserts that libraries can be locked but freedom of women mind can not be locked. In her another essay "The idea of the Angel in the House" called for women to be sympathetic, genuine and unselfish. She says that the literary genres were made by men for their own utilization not for women. Only the novel gives women workable space and even then the form has to be reworked for its own new purpose expressing the female body and experiences.

There was also Dorothy Richardson's very important twelve-volume stream of consciousness novel *Pilgrimage*. The first volume of this book appeared in 1915 and the last in 1967. In these volumes, Richardson brought unpunctuated female prose and caused Virginia Woolf to observe that Richardson had invented the psychological sentence of the feminine gender.

Feminist criticism is a politically powerful tool whose main task is to make the patriarchal society realize that their rigid rules and regulations to make women conscious of the age. Feminism accepting Foucauldian theory claims that power being exercised by men who pretend to have knowledge about everything including women. A power relation varies according to circumstance the power of men no longer holds constancy.

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) established the principles of modern feminism. She focuses upon the pitiable condition of women in patriarchal society stating that where a woman tries to define herself. The main theme of the book is that what is masculine and feminine in identity and behavior are largely cultural constructs that were generated by the pervasive patriarchal biases of our civilization.

The whole culture sees women merely the negative object or "other" to men as dominating 'subject' who is assumed to represent the humanity in general. She assures that neither woman's biological nor psychological make up is responsible for the inferior condition of women. It is the society that has made women subordinate to men. Men have always been creative and inventive while women being the victim of species, has been destined for the repetitions of life. Woman is not allowed to act in accordance of her own nature but in accordance with man's expectation of her.

Elaine Showalter in her essay "A Literature of Their Own" she wants clearly articulated feminist literary theory. She favors such literary criticisms that give space

to the female experience but she opposes male based literary criticism which has been called universal. This so called universalism excludes female therefore a theory is needed to give space to the female experiences and she has named this theory 'Feminist Criticism'. Showalter divides feminist criticism into two distinct mode. The first mode is women as a reader which considers the image and stereotypes of women literature. It consumes male produce art but omits the misconception about women in criticism and breaks the male constructed literary history. 'Feminist Critique' is the name given by her to this type of analysis. The second mode of feminist criticism is the study of women as writers. It considers women as a producer of textual meaning with the history, themes, genres and structure of literature by women. Women as writer give space to express her own experience. It includes the psychodynamic of female creativity and the problem of female language. She labels it 'Gynocritics'. It is related to feminist research in history, anthropology, psychology and sociology. It is Gynocritics that seems to interest her most. Gynocritics eliminate the inevitability of male modes and theories and seeks a female model. They construct a female framework for the analysis of women's literature.

She further categorizes the past and present of literary history of women by dividing the three stages of women writers. They are 'feminine', 'feminist' and 'female'. The period between 1840 to 1880 is feminine period. This stage marks female voice but immensely influences by male literary tradition. Their works keeping their effort to equal those intellectual achievements of male culture. There was a trend of writing in male pseudonyms because there was no place for female in the literary tradition. They could not revolt against male domination. They had a kind of feeling inferiority. George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell and Bronte Sisters belong to this phase.

The second phase clearly demonstrated the determined efforts for political and social equality. This phase was represented by Woolf in which women did not remain silent. They found their domination in different sides of life and revolted against the male domination. It is the very phase from which they also got their voting rights. This phase dated from 1880 to 1920 including the writers like Elizabeth Gaskell, France Trollope and Olives Schviener.

The third stage is 'female' dated from 1920 to present which seeks the independent identity and existence of women. In this phase the dependency on opposition is being replaced by a rediscovery of women's text and aesthetics. They give up both initiation and protest because females realize that these two terms are the forms of dependency. Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and Rebecca West were the most important early female novelist in this stage.

Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar started an extensive study of women writers and set up a feminist literary theory. Their prominent work *The Mad Women in The Attic* (1979) is one of the influential books on historical study of feminism. In this book they concentrate on the figure of the suppressed females connotes to the realization of female identity.

They oppose Harold Bloom's model and named it patriarchal. They claim that his theory is male oriented and more than Bloomean anxiety women's anxiety are the problems appeared in the process of socialization which is dominated by males. They talk about the social anxieties, physical and mental illness crossing the boundary of Bloomean theory of anxiety of influence.

When we observe the development of whole feminist literary criticism we can find the existence of feminism from the very earlier literary history. At first females were presented as stereotypical figures. Continuously women writers became

conscious and insisted for a literature of their own. Finally there is a radical thinking of the conceptual ground of literary study and try to revise the accepted theoretical assumptions based on male literary tradition.

## **2.2 Identity Crisis**

The term identify has several facets of meaning. It is the conscious woman's 'will' that conceives herself to be and wills to act that gives her an individual identity. In this sense, woman is nothing else but what she makes of herself and her identify is first of all what conceives of herself. It is whatever meaning the individual assigns to herself.

Secondly, identity is the meaning of the individual on a part of groups or communities of various kinds. In fact, even when the single individual defines herself or is some how related to. In choosing to create or conceptualize an image and identity, the individual creates a universal image of women in general. The individual does so in terms of common values that defines individuals in her society. The individual conforms to the collective behaviours and common codes in gaining this social recognition. It is her social identity. From the social point of view, the self is expressed as the group level as well as at the personal. Personal identity is based on idiosyncratic life experiences and individual traits that make each individual distinct from all others, whereas social identity refers to the identity of the individual as a social member.

Identity involves reference to the essential self, including values of behaviour, attitude, experience and belief of the individual as a social member rather than a simple reference to mere 'appearance'. That includes not only the individual's evaluative and effective components such as self-evaluation and self-esteem but also

the society's recognition of her. The loss of one or more attributes of recognition for instance, one's job, title or prestige, definitely threatens the identity of the individual.

In Anton Chekhov's play *Uncle Vanya*; Helena and Sonya are the representative of woman who is living a life under the oppression of male dominated society. Its critics argue that the notion of identity is itself fundamental to the analysis of oppression but the fact remains here to be discussed is that women's identity has been totally ignored. So through presentation of Helena and Sonya, the major characters of the story, Chekhov suggests that the society is patriarchal; the feelings, sentiments and the desires of the women's were suppressed and limited within the four walls of the room. Their identity has been challenged by the patriarchal society and thus, women's were regarded as the second class citizen. In Chekhov's play Helena, the young wife of a retired professor has been suppressed; her desires, sentiments, feelings and emotions were totally ignored. The authority has not been assigned to her even to walk outside. She is totally compelled to stay under the supervision of family members and Alexander Serebryakov himself.

### **2.3 Self perception, Self Realization: Awakening**

Self perception is associated with our individuality, what type of person we are, especially the way we normally look or feel. It is linked with the social and cultural phenomena. Every female possesses their own 'self' and they try to perceive their selves in the circumstances and environments they live in. Society determines the self of a female or male within social structure. Self is different from person to person and culture to culture due to the social construction.

Our self-perception is not fixed which changes time and again which brings self realization and awakening. It shows the actuality of potentiality consist in the self. Self realization and self-perception are directly or indirectly linked to each other. In

*Uncle Vanya*, Chekhov presents the unchanging self-perception of Helena. She remains totally ignored to her Self. The self-perception and self-realization has been totally directed from the patriarchal norms and values that women should not interfere with other males except husband.

#### **2.4 Patriarchy and Stereotype of Women**

Patriarchy, the rule of father in literal, would refer not simply a society where men hold power, but rather to a society ruled by a certain kind of men wielding a certain kind of power. It is a society that reflects the underlying values of the traditional male idea. Patriarchy is a culture whose driving ethos in an embodiment of masculine ideas and practices. It has determined in very large part the nature and quality of our society, its values and priorities, the place and image of women with in it, and the relation between the sexes. Patriarchy expects women to serve the men physically, taking care of their homes, property, clothing or persons; economically, doing countless jobs for which women are ill paid or not paid at all; sexually, as wives, mistress or prostitutes; and reproductively, assuring men of paternity through female chastity. In a society, where men have controlled the conceptual arena and have determined social values, it is not surprising that women should have lost the power of naming, of explaining and defining for themselves the realities of their own experience. Sheila Ruth says:

In a patriarchal culture, men define the female as they define nearly everything else. The issue is not only that men perceive women from masculine perspectives, but that given the nature of socialization, all members of society, including women, perceive the female from the prevailing masculine perspectives. (84)

In patriarchy, male dominated is so much rooted that it evaluates women not regarding the human being but like everything else. Women are culturally compelled to perceive women from male perspective. The naming of women has been effected by men primarily through control of the social institution that determine behaviour and attitude. In patriarchy, everything is measured in the touchstone of male ideology.

Patriarchy sets the stereotypes for women. Stereotype is a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality. Anne Cranny- Francis, Wendy Warning, Pam Stavropoulos and Joan Kirkby Jointly write about stereotype as:

A stereotype is a political practice that divides the world into like and unlike, self and other. It is a radically reductive way of representing whole communities of people by identifying them with a few key characteristics. Different stereotypes applied to particular social group or community may attribute to them conflicting characteristics. This apparent contradiction reveal the fact that stereotypes are (a) generated by those outside the group and (b) are part of a political strategy for managing that group or community. . . (141-142)

Stereotypes exclude or reject everything which falls out of its definition, everything which is different. It sets up symbolic boundaries and then provides the mechanisms of cultural production for people to police those boundaries. People use stereotypes to determine who should naturally belong to one group or another. One person cannot produce and circulate a stereotype all alone; stereotypes function within groups of people as knowledge. Importantly, they are usually produced by people who are positioned to circulate their ideas widely, so that even the group stereotyped may then come to take on this as a kind of fact.

Sheila Ruth in her text *Issues in Feminism* posits her view on female stereotype and its effect as:

They all say that women as human beings are substandard: less intelligent; less moral; less competent; less able physically, psychologically, and spiritually; small of body, mind and character; often bad or destructive. These and other stereotypical images of women are destructive to us. In their negative, deprecatory and ugly aspect, they flourish in the minds of women, who are forced to live them. . . (96)

Female are stereotyped as unintelligent, incompetent, physically weak to male. This stereotypical image forces women to become substandard, weak and hapless creatures. Female stereotype is the patriarchal definition that is to be broken apart. In the play *Sonya*, the major female character has been presented as the weak character. Helena, another major character have been presented as the boring, unintelligent and helpless character. Furthermore, she is presented guided by feeling, emotion and sentiments and cannot control herself and engages in lovemaking with Astrov, the doctor.

### Chapter III

#### **Stereotypical Representation of Women in *Uncle Vanya***

This chapter mainly focuses on the instances and elaboration of issues of feminine self. It tries to excavate the issues of representation, identity crisis, dominated self and patriarchal ideology deep rooted in the then society to present females as submissive, irrational, emotional and less-intellectual being as presented in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*.

*Uncle Vanya*, Chekhov's most famous play, is full of feminine issues. It is different from previous plays from modern or pre-modern in terms of gender, setting, plot-construction, language, characters and its theme.

Chekhov, most of the times involve women in the unproductive and not-creative or non-intellectual activities so as to show them as less-intellectual, uncommon, emotional, submissive and irrational. He presents women as servants; who nonetheless involves in household activities being unable to train their brains, intellectual faculty and rational power, the creative power. Most of the times, the female characters were shown unhappy, emotional and desirous women who lack the creative power and always involve themselves in the household activities. He shows no single stance of their creativity and intellectuality. The female characters' desire, for most of the time is dominated by physical desires and being unsatisfied they became emotional and try themselves to involve with another person leaving their husband busy in creative work. The women characters were involved in talking to other person and wasting their time since they have nothing to do other except serving the male characters or the patriarchy, the so called society as it is the patriarchal society and always wants to dominate and take under the control of social system, norms, values and morals. On the other hand, for male characters it leaves no chance

to make irrational rather they were as the bold and optimistic characters who work hard and spent their life in the creative and intellectual work.

The Act One starts with spending of leisure time talking, Chekhov presents female characters as loving to talk to male characters. The female characters at the beginning serve the male characters as:

MARINA [*pouring a glass of tea*]: Have some, dear.

ASTROV: [*unwillingly taking the glass*]: I don't really want it.

MARINA: Perhaps you'd like a little vodka?

ASTROV: No, I don't drink vodka every day. And it's so close today.

The female character being servant asks Astrov to have some tea. But, the doctor Astrov, being unsatisfied with the service rejects to have tea. Astrov is presented here as not only unsatisfied with tea but also the other female characters. He seems somewhere hurt and begins his story. He talks about his changing nature in life as he thinks himself being changed, "Have I changed a lot since then?" (145). He further talks about his bad habit that he drinks and he cannot sleep at night. He tells his pathetic situation with Marina, Sonya and Yelena.

Chekhov questions the faithfulness of females towards their duty and their lord or their husband. He shows the illusion that whether female are faithful or deceiving their husband being, irresponsible, breaking the social norm, values, system and rules. When Astrov and Voynitsky are talking about the Professor's wife, they suspect that Professor's wife may not be faithful to him since she seems a bit little unsatisfied:

ASTROV: Is she faithful to the Professor?

VOYNITSKY: Unfortunately, yes.

ASTROV: Why unfortunately?

VOYNITSKY: Because the ‘fidelity’ is false from start to finish. It’s full of rhetoric but has no logic. To betray your old husband whom you can’t stand — is immoral, but to try and stifle in yourself your wretched youth and your living feeling — is not.

TELEGIN [*in a plaintive voice*]: Vanya, I don’t like it when you say that. Really... someone who betrays wife or husband must be without faith and could betray our country ! (149)

The female characters, though they may be faithful, are being suspected by the society. The suspicion further leads to danger that the betrayers i.e. females, were without faith and could betray the nation. The female characters, being, suppressed, cannot raise their voice and the society being patriarchal looks from the eyes of patriarchy and thus, the female characters morality is judged and suspected. They are supposed to have suspicious morality lacking faith.

To unveil their moral corruptness, Telegin further adds:

TELEGIN: Excuse me, Vanya. Because of my unprepossessing looks my wife ran off the day after our wedding with a man she loved. Since then I haven’t abandoned my duty. I still love her and am faithful to her, I help with what I can and have given up my property for the education of the children she had by the man she loved. I lost my happiness but I kept my pride. And what became of her? Her youth has now gone, by the laws of nature her beauty has faded, the man she loved has passed on... What has she left? (149-50)

Telegin, by the same token, charges that women are being irrational, unfaithful deviated from their duties— the duty to be loyal to their husbands. He also explores that he himself is the victim of woman since his wife ran off the day after their

wedding with a man she loved. She became unfaithful to him and pretended to take duty of being faithful but no sooner he married her, she left him and ran away. He also asserts that he, being loyal to her still loves her and helps her children and provides fund for her children for their education. He also says that women do not have the transcendence mind or reasoning since they love their beauty in their youth and they don't think that their beauty will fade away one day with the passing of time.

Chekhov presents his female characters as pessimistic ones who always live unhappily and they are likely to be sympathetic. The pessimism and unhappy life of female is being accepted by Yelena as she says:

YELENA: Ah yes, indolence and boredom ! Everyone criticizes my husband, everyone looks at me with pity: unhappy woman, she has an old husband ! That sympathy — I understand it well ! . . . Why can't you look at a woman neutrally if she isn't yours? Because— the doctor is right— in all of you sits a devil of destruction. You have no pity for the forests or the birds or each other. (155)

It is accepted by Yelena that everyone criticizes her for having old husband, unhappy woman. Everyone sympathizes her, but the patriarchal society cannot understand their obligation rather the patriarchy tries to break rules by themselves, it cannot be neutral. She also questions that males cannot stay neutral. They try to analyze it being biased. She also brings the reference of earth and nature that man is destroying the way they are breaking the hearts of woman, feelings, emotions and their importance in making harmonious relation.

Towards the end of the first act, Yelena accepts that they are guided by feeling and emotions, they have love, cooperation etc. As she says:

YELENA: The doctor has a nervous, exhausted face. An interesting face. Sonya is obviously attracted by him; she is in love with him and I understand her. Since I came he's already been here three times, but I'm shy and I haven't talked with him as I should, I haven't been nice to him. He thinks I'm ill-natured. Ivan Petrovich, we are probably such friends because we're both tiresome, boring people ! Tiresome ! Don't look at me like that, I don't like it. (155)

It also proves to the fact that Yelena is also attracted by doctor Astrov but since she is shy and boredom, she cannot talk with Astrov. She also accepts that she is tiresome, boring person as Ivan Petrovich is. But at the same time Chekhov shows that being frightened with the society women cannot speak quite frankly; they have the fear of someone hearing their talking as Yelena says: "Quiet, someone might hear you !" (156). But on the other hand Voynitsky is not feared with his determination of love for Yelena as he says: "Allow me to speak of my love, don't drive me away — just that will be the greatest happiness for me..." (156). As sooner Voynitsky expresses his desire with Yelena, she feels agonizing, which also shows that women in the patriarchal society cannot get love of males. As Voynitsky might have loved more than her own husband, but she cannot heartily welcome his love.

In the Act Two, the night scene, is presented and the night-watchman can be heard knocking the garden. Serebryakov is sitting in the armchair in front of an open window and dozing, and Yelena Andreyevna sitting by him and also dozing. The unsatisfied intention of Yelena is being fostered in the act. As Yelena speaks to Serebryakov stating his old age as the sole cause to blame himself. She says:

YELENA: When you speak of your age your tone is as if we were all to blame for your being old.

SEREBRYAKOV: You are the first to find me repulsive.

*[Yelena Andreyevna moves away and sits down at a distance.]*

Of course, you're right. I'm not stupid and I understand. You are young, healthy, beautiful, you want to live, and I am an old man, almost a corpse. Well? Do you think I don't understand? And of course it's absurd that I'm still alive. But wait a little and I'll soon set all of you free. I won't hold out much longer.

YELENA: I'm getting exhausted... For God's sake, stop. (p.158)

The conversation between Yelena and Serebryakov shows that the patriarchal society still dominates the women and gives them words of freedom but holds them so tightly that women will no more speak to themselves against the patriarchy. The same situation is being seen in the conversation. As Yelena in a melodic voice says the cause of his oldness is to be blamed. But, Serebryakov rather accepting the truth speaks in a loud voice and he himself shows rage towards Yelena and accepts the truth that he is giving no freedom to the family members as well Yelena but he will set all of them free sooner. This holding of other's right shows that the patriarchy is deep-rooted in the society so as to hold the freedom of women's in their grip. Serebryakov in a very rude manner reveals the truth as if he has got drunken. The conversation further goes on and turns ought to be clash between them. As Serebryakov further says:

SEREBRYAKOV: It turns out that thanks to me, everyone is exhausted and bored and wasting their youth, while I'm the only one to enjoy life and have satisfaction. Of course.

YELENA: Oh, be quiet ! You've worn me down !

SEREBRYAKOV: I've worn you all down. Of course.

YELENA [*with tears in her eyes*]: It's intolerable ! Tell me, what do you want from me?

SEREBRYAKOV: Nothing. (p. 158)

Serebryakov, in his rage to the blame by Yelena further evokes out and says that everyone is being exhausted and bored and wasting their youth and he is the only one with is enjoying life. He also says that he worn all of them. This shows that the patriarchy is in fact unjustly treating female race i.e. Yelena here. She becomes intolerable and asks him that what he want? But the arrogance of patriarchy, nevertheless wants nothing but to dominate her and which Serebryakov in reply says nothing.

When Serebryakov cannot convince Yelena he, then boasts on his power that he himself thinks to be learning. He talks about his ability of learning for a lifetime against his old age:

SEREBRYAKOV: I work all my life for learning, I'm used to my study, the lecture hall, colleagues I esteem – and then, I end up for no good reason in this tomb, see fools here every day, listen to worthless conversations . . . I want to live, I like success, I like fame, making a noise, and here it's like being in exile. To pine every minute for the past, to watch the success of others, to be afraid of death . . . I can't ! I haven't the strength ! And they won't even excuse me my age here !

YELENA: Wait, be patient: in five or six years' time I too am going to be old. (159)

Here, Serebryakov strongly argues that he has spent life for learning and studying in his lecture hall. He also charges that Uncle Vanya, Sonya and Yelena are worthless fools. To live in such situation is just like exile for him. This also signifies that except

Serebryakov's arrogant characteristics he wants to prove himself as a wise person and rest of others and especially to Yelena he says fool, failed and worthless. The argument put forward by Serebryakov seems to be patriarchal since he himself is dominating and holding other characters' freedom and his comparison is biased. The female characters are not provided with education and learning facilities.

After all Serebryakov and Yelena become silent when Sonya enters there and it's a time for Serebryakov to take his medicine. Serebryakov asks Sonya to bring medicines and complains when she picks up another medicine:

SEREBRYAKOV: It's stuffy . . . Sonya, give me the drops on the table !

SONYA: Here [*Gives him the drops.*]

SEREBRYAKOV [*crossly*]: No, not these ! One can't ask for anything !

SONYA: Please don't be difficult. Maybe some people like it, but kindly spare me ! I don't. And I have no time, tomorrow, I have to get up early, it's haymaking. (159)

It clearly shows the rude way that Serebryakov behaves with Sonya. He nonetheless without any reason bursts and speaks in a loud voice and Sonya mildly tries to convince him and she also shows her responsibility that she has to get up tomorrow early and it's after midnight. She has to do haymaking. The responsibility of Serebryakov and Sonya sharply contrasts since Serebryakov engages himself in intellectual works and Sonya, his daughter, being a helpless female is engaged in household works like haymaking. This shows the patriarchal domination according to their gender construct and females are assigned to household works and exiled from the world of learning and knowledge.

The unsatisfied and troubled memories of Yelena shows the pathetic condition of females in the play. After Serebryakov goes to bed Yelena expresses her pathos with Voynitsky:

YELENA: I'm worn out by him. I can hardly keep on my feet.

VOYNITSKY: You're worn out by him, and I by my own self. It's the third night that I haven't slept.

YELENA: This house is troubled. Your mother hates everything except her pamphlets and the Professor, the Professor is angry, he doesn't trust me and is frightened of you; Sonya is cross with her father, is cross with me and hasn't talked to me now for two weeks; you hate my husband and openly despise your mother; I'm angry and today I've started to cry twenty times. . . This house is troubled. (161)

Yelena reveals her inner pathos with Voynitsky that she is hardly living in the house and she is worn by Professor, her husband. She is actually not happy when other people blame her husband and her husband is also hateful to her since he troubles her. The professor's angry nature and his untrustworthiness to her makes her scream. And Sonya who is also angry with her and hasn't talked with her for two weeks makes her alienated. She also says that today she started to cry twenty times in house being unhappy with the behaviour of Serebryakov. The inner pathos, humiliation, pain and troubles of women is revealed in the male dominated society where women's existence is questionable, their right is questionable, their freedom is questionable and their sorrows, sufferings and pains are also questionable. Since no one hears to their suffering, they become alienated from the society.

This social hatred is further being revealed when Yelena says, "Ivan Petrovich, you are educated and clever and I think you must understand that the world

is being destroyed, not by bandits, not by fires, but by hatred, enmity, and all these petty squabbles . . . Instead of grumbling you should reconcile everyone” (61).

Yelena’s view is here clear that the world for female is totally destroyed by hatred, enmity and petty squabbles. The life of females in the house is being destroyed by the male domination. But Voynitsky doesn’t want to help her but wants to entertain her beauty, exploit her flesh for fulfillment of his sexual desire. He says:

VOYNITSKY: First reconcile me with myself ! My dearest . . .

[*Stoops to kiss her hand.*]

YELENA: Stop it. [*takes away her hand*] Go to bed !

VOYNITSKY: . . . A alone will not be refreshed by the storm. . . .

You have here my life and my love; where am I to put them, what am I to do with them? My feelings are going to waste like a ray of sunshine falling into a chasm, and I myself am going to waste.

YELENA: When you speak to me of your love, I somehow go numb and don’t know what to say. I’m sorry, I can’t say anything to you.

[*Moves towards door*] Goodnight. (163)

This shows the patriarchal lust for females’ body that they want to entertain with.

Yelena being troubled with her husband is feeling worthless and Voynitsky on the other hand is trying to exploit her sexually. This shows that the society is being guided by males and they want females to be mere puppets in their hands and want to entertain with their body and get pleasure from their beauty. This is further clarified by the fact that when she is going toward the door Voynitsky blocks her way and tries to persuade her but the helpless females can do nothing at all. As Yelena says:

YELENA: You never used to drink, and you never used to talk so much . . . Go to bed ! I’m bored with you.

VOYNITSKY [*kissing her hand*]: My darling . . . wonderful woman !

YELENA [*angrily*]: Leave me alone ! It's disguising. [*Goes out.*] (164)

This also proves that what males want from females is to entertain with their flesh, want to celebrate and make themselves rejoiced. Furthermore, women are treated as wonderful creates since Voynitsky calls her wonderful woman. She was only what she always used to be but Voynitsky takes her as wonderful woman since she cannot fulfill his desires. She is blamed by Voynitsky. In his rage he also blames the Professor, Yelena's husband also. When Yelena goes out Astrov and Voynitsky start their conversation where they talk about Yelena as Astrov complains Voynitsky for being gloomy, he says:

ASTROV: Or perhaps you're in love with the Professor's wife?

VOYNITSKY: She is my good friend.

ASTROV: Really?

VOYNITSKY: What does that 'really' mean?

ASTROV: A woman can be a man's good friend only in the following sequences of events: first friend, then mistress, then good friend. (164)

The behaviour of females is being criticized here. When Voynitsky says that Yelena is his good friend Astrov comments and says that a woman can be good friend only when she is first friend, then mistress, then good friend. This directly questions the character of Yelena that she cannot be a good friend of males. Females in the society cannot be a good friend of males. This orthodox belief of the patriarchal society is presented here.

When Sonya asks his about the tears that is coming from Vanya's eyes, Voynitsky says it's nothing:

VOYNITSKY: Tears? There's nothing . . . nonsense . . . You just looked at me like your dead mother. My darling . . . [*hungrily kisses her hands and face.*] My sister . . . my dear sister . . . where is she now? If she knew! Oh, if she only knew !

SONYA: What? Uncle knew what?

VOYNITSKY: It's not easy, not right . . . it's nothing . . . Later . . . Nothing . . . I'm going. . . [*Exit*] (165)

This also proves that the Voynitsky's desire for sex is not fulfilled and he's unhappy and he cannot express it with his sister. He also tells her that she's just like dead mother and kisses her since his desires were unfulfilled by Yelena and he tries to say that he wants Yelena but cannot express and goes out. This shows that males always ogle at female with sexual lust in their eyes. The patriarchy wants to entertain with female's body.

Sonya goes to Astrov and tells Astrov that Voynitsky is spoiled. Ignoring her blame Astrov talks about the beauty of Yelena and says:

ASTROV: A human being should be beautiful all through: face and clothes and spirit and thoughts. She is beautiful, no question about that, but . . . she just eats, sleeps, walks, enchants us all with her beauty – and that's all. She has no responsibilities, others work for her. . . It's true, isn't it? And an idle life can't be a virtuous one. (167)

The mind of the Astrov is deep rooted with the longing of Yelena. He is unsatisfied with his passions for Yelena. He wants Yelena to be beautiful through her face, clothes and spirit and thoughts. He further comments on her behaviour that she just sleeps, walks and enchants. The beauty of Yelena is praised by him. He also says that

Yelena has no responsibilities, she works for other; her life is commented as idle life where no progress happens. The beauty of Yelena has been stereotyped by Astrov.

Astrov further goes on to praising her beauty that excites his emotions, feelings, and passions:

ASTROV: What still excites me is beauty. I am not indifferent to that.

I think that if Yelena Andreyevna wanted to, she could turn my head in a day. . . But that's not love, that's not affection . . . [*Covers his eyes with a hand and shudders*]. (168)

It is said that the beauty of females helps to regain their emotion, they are the principle goods to turn his head in a day. That means his mind is full of wills and if Yelena wants to help him she can be helpful for him. This shows the patriarchal ogling notion at females. Thus, females are praised in a higher position by patriarchy and later they are criticized by the same patriarchy.

Yelena and Sonya take drinks. In order to forget the memories, pains, troubles and rumour of their whole life they try to forget with the help of wine. Yelena says:

YELENA: And there's some wine . . . Let's drink and be friends.

SONYA: let's.

YELENA: From one glass . . . [*pours*.] That's better. So, it's ty?

SONYA: Ty. [*They drink and kiss*] (169)

The above extract shows that being unsatisfied and troubled Sonya and Yelena are engaged in taking drinks. The another reason behind taking wine here seems to refresh their relationship which has been disturbed recently. This shows the females' unity. Furthermore, they talk about their envious nature:

YELENA: There, there . . . [*Cries*] You funny girl, I've started crying too . . . [*A pause*] You were angry with me because you thought I

married your father for ulterior motives. . . If you believe oaths, then I swear to you that I married him for love. I was attracted to this famous scholar. My love was not real, it was artificial, but I thought it was real then. I'm not to blame. But from the day of our marriage you never stopped punishing me with your clever, suspicious eyes.

SONYA: Pax, pax. Let's forget.

YELENA: You mustn't look at people like that — it doesn't suit you.

You must trust everyone, otherwise life is impossible. (170)

This shows that Yelena was attracted to Professor; famous scholar agreed to marry him. But the punishment given by Sonya troubles her because Sonya looks at her with suspicious eyes. Yelena also suggests Sonya that she must trust everyone in order to make life possible. This shows the praising nature of females. But the unhappiness of Yelena remains the same in spite of the intellect and fame of the Professor:

SONYA: Tell me honestly, as a friend. . . Are you happy?

YELENA: No

SONYA: I knew it. One more question. Tell me frankly — would you like to have had a young husband.

YELENA: What a little girl you are still. Of course I would. [*Laughs.*]

Well, ask me something else, ask . . .

SONYA: Do you find the Doctor attractive?

YELENA: Yes, very. (170)

The unsatisfied notion is being revealed here. Sonya asks Yelena whether she is happy or not with the Professor. Yelena easily says no. Yelena also desires for a young husband. Yelena, furthermore is attracted to the Doctor. This revelation shows the inner pathos of Yelena that she lives with unfulfilled desires, emotions and

passions. This also shows that Professor who boasts of his intellectuality is not able to provide her with enough love and affection. And, thus she feels frustrated, troubled and alienated. Yelena further reveals her unhappiness as she says:

Yelena: . . . I wish you happiness with all my heart, you deserve it . . .  
 [*Gets up*]. But I'm a boring incidental character . . . In my music and in my husband's house, in all my romances- in a word, in everything, I've always just been an incidental character, in truth, Sonya, if I think about it, I'm very very unhappy ! [*In her emotion, walks about the stage.*] There's no happiness for me on this earth. None . . . (171)

The expression of Yelena shows that she lived a life full of unhappiness and without romance in her life. She also knows that she never can be happy with the Professor. The professor's behaviour doesn't address her feelings, emotions and passions. She is compelled to live with compressed desires and under the control of Professor being mere puppet. Yelena also says that she is just like an idiot as when she says while playing piano: "I haven't played for years. I shall play and cry, cry like an idiot [*Through the window*] . . ." (p.171) This also shows her inner cry— the cry of her suppressed desires, the cry for her unfulfilled and unaddressed emotions, unearned love and depressed mentality. The second act ends with such cry of Yelena.

The third act begins with Voynitsky, Sonya and Yelena on the stage thinking of something, Voynitsky shows his rage over the Professor. Voynitsky also comments on the writing of Professor and says that he writes rubbish. Voynitsky says to Yelena:

VOYNITSKY: He has none. He writes rubbish, grumbles and is jealous, that's all.

Sonya[ *in a reproachful tone*]: Uncle!

VOYNITSKY: Yes, yes, I'm sorry. [*Points at Yelena Andreyevna.*]

Just look at her: she walks about reeling with indolence. Very nice!

Very!

YELENA: You've been droning and droning all day long— haven't you had enough! [*In an anguished voice*] I'm dying of boredom, I don't know what to do. (173)

It shows that Voynitsky is interested in Yelena. By backbiting against the Professor, he wants to gain the heart of Yelena. Furthermore, to do this, Voynitsky also praises the beauty of Yelena and says 'Very nice ! Very !'. His attitude here is to attract Yelena towards him. But suddenly Yelena reveals that she is dying of boredom and she doesn't know what to do in this situation. The pathos and laziness of the character Yelena shows the tiresome life of women's in the society. Sonya shows pity to Yelena when Yelena says she is bored:

SONYA: . . . Don't be bored, dearest. [*Laughing*] You're bored, you can't find a role for yourself, and boredom and inactivity are infections. Look: Uncle Vanya does nothing and just follows you round like a shadow, I've left my work and come running to you to talk. (174)

Sonya's sympathy shows that Yelena has been the victim among all. She is living with bored life. Sonya also says that she cannot find a role for herself. For her, boredom and inactivity are the infections. She also points the ray of hope and says that Uncle Vanya is longing for her. Sonya's convincing tone suggests that she also want Yelena to be with Uncle Vanya.

Voynitsky wants Yelena to raise her voice against the Professor. Yelena is just like creature to Voynitsy. The society behaves women as creatures, sometimes giants,

angels and devils. This identity of women snatches away their real identity. Yelena being furious to Voynitsky says:

YELENA: [*in anger*]: Leave me in peace ! You're so cruel [*Starts to go*].

VOYNITSKY: [*preventing her*]: There, there joy of my heart, forgive me. . . apologize. [*Kisses her hand.*] Peace.

YELENA: You must agree, you'd try the patience of an angel.

VOYNITSKY: As a sign of piece and concord I'll now bring you a bouquet of roses; I made it for you this morning . . . Autumn roses — lovely melancholy roses . . . [*Exit*] (174)

The above extract clarifies that Voynitsky wants Yelena to be a thing of entertainment. He wants to seduce her physically. His inner desire for Yelena's flesh can be seen. Yelena says to Voynitsky that he should also agree to try to be like angel. But Voynitsky kisses her hand and gets wishfulfillment. Women like roses and so does Yelena. This stereotypical representation of women shows that women are guided by emotion. Yelena does nothing when Voynitsky kisses her hands. On the other hand, she cannot resist Voynitsky when he blocked her way. This also shows that women do not have resistance power in the society. Patriarchal society is cruel to them so they even can not raise their voices against the society.

The conversation further goes between Yelena and Astrov about Sonya's love for the Doctor but doctor refuses Sonya because he wants Yelena. Astrov tries to persuade Yelena instead. Astrov also reveals his inner desire for Yelena and says: "I've dropped everything, I hungrily look for you . . . and you're terribly pleased by that, terribly . . . So? I am conquered, you knew that without any questions. [*Crossing his arms and bowing his head*] I submit. There, eat me up !" (180)

Astrov here says that he is waiting for her. He submits himself in front of Yelena and says to eat him up. Actually, Astrov wants to eat Yelena but he on the contrary he tells her to eat him. He knows that she cannot do that and he will do like he said. But Yelena says “You’ve gone out of your mind!” (180). But Astrov says that going out of mind is the cause of her. Then Yelena tries to go out saying she is better than the Doctor thinks. The inner hunger of Astrov reveals there and he blocks her way saying:

ASTROV: [*Blocking her way*]: I will leave today, I won’t come here, but . . . [*Takes her by the hand and looks around.*] Where shall we meet? Tell me quickly, where? Tell me quickly, someone might come in. [*Passionately*] What a marvellous voluptuous woman . . . One kiss . . . Let me just kiss your scented hair . . . (180)

Actually Astrov wanted to have physical relation with Yelena and blocks her way saying where to meet. He wants to meet in a secret place to entertain with her. He also praises her and says marvelous and voluptuous woman. He tries to kiss her by persuading her. The passion increases in Astrov and he says:

Astrov: . . . No need for superfluous words. What beauty ! What hands ! [*Kisses her hands.*]

Yelena: Stop, enough . . . go away . . . [*Pulls away her hands.*] You’ve forgotten yourself.

Astrov: Tell me, tell me where we’ll meet tomorrow. [*Puts his arm round her waist.*] You see, it can’t be avoided, we must see one another. [*Kisser her; at this moment Voynitsky enters with a bouquet of flowers and stops by the door.*] (180-81)

Astrov's emotion leads him to kiss her and he wants to meet her in a lonely place where he can easily entertain her beauty, her physical beauty, her charm and can easily hold her in his arms. At the same time Voynitsky enters there with a bouquet of roses and stops by the door. Yelena doesn't see Voynitsky and says, "Spare me . . . leave me . . . [*Lays her head on Astrov's breast.*] No ! [*Tries to leave.*]" (181). This shows that Yelena is also being troubled but she cannot have relation with Doctor. But the Doctor says to her, "Come tomorrow to the forestry station . . . about two . . . Yes? Yes? You'll come?" (181). After that Yelena goes out and Voynitsky follows her where Yelena says that she needs help from Voynitsky:

YELENA [*Quickly going towards Voynitsky*]: Try and use all your influence to see that I and my husband leave today ! Do you hear? Today !

VOYNITSKY [*Wiping his face*]: Ah? Yes . . . very well . . . Helene, I saw everything, everything . . .

YELENA [*irritably*]: Do you hear ! I must leave here today !

Voynitsky after watching Yelena and Astrov kissing tries to give more pain to Yelena. He says that he saw everything. The envy nature of Voynitsky is shown in the extract. Being feared with that Yelena wants to leave the place. She expects some help from Voynitsky but Voynitsy hurts her heart by telling her all what he saw with Astrov's. Serebryakov was upstairs and he hears all this. He immediately calls everyone and says:

Whatever the circumstances, one can accommodate oneself to ill health, but I can't cope with this way of life in the country. I feel as if I'd fallen from earth onto another planet. Please sit down, ladies and gentlemen. Sonya !

[*Sonya doesn't hear him, and stands sadly hanging her head*]

Sonya !

[*A pause*]

She's deaf [*To Marina*] Nyanya, you sit down too. (182)

Serebryakov explores his intention that he heard anything and he can no longer stay in the house and the whole country. He also tells that he felt as if he'd fallen from earth to another planet when he hears about Astrov and Yelena's rumour. He also shows his rage to Sonya when she didn't hear him and still standing sadly he calls her 'deaf'.

Serebryakov there proposes his land to be sold but Voynitsky opposes him saying that it is not his land. Serebryakov cannot make final decision of selling land.

Serebryakov's intention is to grab the money by selling estate:

SEREBRYAKOV: I'm proposing selling the estate.

VOYNITSKY: Excactly. You'll sell the estate, excellent, a splendid idea . . . And where would you like me and my old mother and Sonya here to go?

SEREBRYAKOV: We will discuss all that at the appropriate time. Not now. (184)

Here Serebryakov decides in favor of himself. He doesn't care for others. His selfish nature exactly wanted to dominate Sonya, Voynitsky and his mother. Voynitsky opposes his idea, he also claims that the land belong to Sonya not to Serebryakov. He says:

Wait a minute. Clearly until now I haven't had an ounce of common sense. Until now I've been stupid enough to think this estate belongs to Sonya. My late father bought this estate as a dowry for my sister. Up

till now I've been naïve, I assumed we weren't living under Turkish law and I thought the estate had passed from my sister to Sonya. (184)

Voynitsky claims that the land belongs to Sonya. But Serebryakov says that he is proposing to sell it with the consent of Sonya. But actually the debt of land was paid by Voynitsky by working hard for ten years. As the society is male dominated, Serebryakov wants to grab the estate by selling it. His intention is to deceive Voynitsky, Sonya and her mother. This shows the patriarchal self-gratifying nature and superiority in the society where women's interests, ideas and emotions are suppressed; they are obliged to do whatever their husbands or fathers decide. The same situation appears in the story. Voynitsky furthermore tells that he, Sonya and the old mother worked for Serebryakov and now Serebryakov wants knock out all of them except his wife. Voynitsky tells Serebryakov that he himself and his sister and mother have been suffering a lot and working for Serebryakov and serving as a mere servant; they gave all their feelings to Serebryakov. As he says:

VOYNITSKY: For twenty-five years I've sat with my mother here within these four walls – like a mole . . . All our thoughts and feelings belonged to you alone. By day we talked about you, about your work, we were proud of you, we uttered your name with reverence: we ruined our nights reading magazines and books which I now deeply despise ! (185-86)

The above extract also shows that Voynitsky and mother suffered and worked for Serebryakov like mole. They gave up their feelings for Serebryakov. He also tells that he is proud of Serebryakov but everything is in vain. He says that he and mother ruined their nights reading magazines for Serebryakov and for which now he regrets. But Serebryakov, indifferent to his saying, complains to Voynitsky as:

SEREBRYAKOV: What do you want of me? And what right do you have to speak to me in this tone? You are nothing ! If the estate is yours, take it, I don't need it !

YELENA: I am leaving this hell this very minute. [*She is shouting.*] I can't stand it any longer !

VOYNITSKY: My life is over ! I am talented, clever, ambitious . . . If I'd lived normally, I might have been a Schopenhauer, a Dostoyevsky . . . I'm babbling ! I'm losing my mind . . . Mother, I'm desperate!

Mother! (186)

Serebryakov, in his rage shows his pride and complains to Voynitsky that he has no right to speak like that. Serebryakov wants to establish his superiority over all. Thus he opposes Voynitsky. The quarrel between Serebryakov and Voynitsky actually tortures Yelena. The females are generally victimized by the quarrel. She says that she doesn't want to live a single minute. On the other hand, Voynitsky also regrets that he devoted his nights for Serebryakov and if he'd got chance he would have been like Schopenhauer or Dostoyevsky. He is more frustrated with his own life. The suffering of Yelena further increases. She says to her husband:

YELENA: [*To her husband*] We will leave here today ! You must give the instruction this minute.

SEREBRYAKOV: What a worthless fellow !

SONYA [*on her knees, turns to her father; nervously, with tears in her eyes*]: You must be merciful, Papa! Uncle Vanya and I are so unhappy! [*Trying to control her despair*] You must be merciful! Do you remember, when you were younger, Uncle Vanya and Grandmother used to translate books for you at night ! I and Uncle Vanya worked

without any rest, we were afraid to spend a kopeck on ourselves and sent everything to you . . . You must be merciful ! (187)

Here, Yelena is suffers a lot because she cannot bear the situation. She wants to leave the place. Sonya is shocked by the clash and apologizes with Serebryakov for having mercy on them. She regrets and says that Uncle Vanya and grandmother worked for nights for him. He must see that and be merciful and forget whatever happened recently. Suddenly there is the sound of revolver and Voynitsky appears there.

Serebryakov being frightened says:

SEREBRYAKOV [*running in, stumbling in fright*]: Hold him ! Hold him! He's gone mad!

[*YELENA and VOYNITSKY are struggling in the doorway*]

YELENA [*Trying to take a revolver from him*]: Give it to me! Give it to me, I order you!

VOYNITSKY: Let me go, Helene! Let me go ! [*Freeing himself, he runs in and looks for Serebryakov.*] Where is he? There he is! [*Shoots at him.*] Bang ! (188)

Yelena goes to stop Voynitsky but she cannot control him. She orders Voynitsky to give revolver to her. But Voynitsky frees himself and runs in and looks for Serebryakov. He sees Serebryakov and shoots. The sound of revolver's shot is heard and Voynitsky misses Serebryakov and in despise Voynitsky says:

Haven't I hit him? Missed again? [*Angrily*] The devil, devil . . . devil take you. [*Hurls the revolver on the floor and sits down on a chair exhausted. Serebryakov is in shock; Yelena leans against a wall, she is feeling faint.*]

YELENA: Take me away from here ! Take me, kill me, but . . . I can't stay here, I can't (188)

Voynitsky having missed to hit Serebryakov says that devil should take him. He hurls the revolver on the floor and sits down with exhaustion. But Yelena is more shocked by it and she leans against the wall in almost fainted situation. She says in a feeble voice that she wants to go away from there. She also says that she cannot stay there, she is ready to be killed but she doesn't want to live with violence. This shows that females' role in the society is to suffer. They can do decisive actions nor they can handle the situation. This shows that the females are not aggressive but they are submissive. They are inactive and weak characters. The clash between the Serebryakov and Voynitsky is also somehow related to the issue of females.

Voynitsky is speaking in favor of females' right but Serebryakov thinks himself superior and wants to dominate females as well as males. He thinks that everything is easy to handle in his estate but he fails here because Voynitsky speaks in favor of his sister and old grandmother. Serebryakov wants to dominate all characters. The domination of Serebryakov shows the patriarchal domination in the society where women are treated as second class citizens; complimentary of males.

Telegin and Marina are talking about the possible departure of Serebryakov and Yelena. They try to make guess where Serebryakov and Yelena go. There is also conversation between Voynitsky and Astrov. They talk about the event of shooting. As Astrov comments that shooting is Voynitsky's madness Voynitsky accepts that mad man has right to do so. As the conversation is going on they talk about the exploitation of Yelena. Voynitsky says:

VOYNITSKY: . . . I'm mad, unlike those who hide their lack of talent, their dullness, their crying heartlessness under the mask of professors, wise men. [. . .] I saw, I saw you embracing her.

ASTROV: Yes, I embraced her. And this is for you. [*Thumbs his nose at him*]

VOYNITSKY [*Looking at the door*]: No, it's a mad world, with all of you in it. (191)

On the one hand, Voynitsky and Astrov talk about the madness and on the other the exploitation of Yelena. Here, Voynitsky argues that those who marry old man and deceive their husbands are the real mad ones. He indirectly wanted to say that Yelena deceived her husband, she betrayed her old husband, thus she is mad. He also presents his proof that he saw Yelena deceiving by embracing Astrov. Voynitsky claims that he saw it. And in return, Astrov also assimilates that he did it but it was for Voynitsky's sake. Astrov and Voynitsky talk more about their life and hopelessness situation of their own. After sometimes, Sonya enters there and expresses her unhappiness. She says to Voynitsky:

SONYA: Give it back. Why do you frighten us? [*Tenderly*] Give it back, Uncle Vanya ! I may be no less unhappy than you, but I don't become desperate. I endure and will endure until my life comes to a natural end . . . You must endure. (193)

Sonya also expresses her unhappiness with Uncle Vanya. She also suggests Uncle Vanya that one should not be desperately unhappy. She also says that she will live her life with unhappiness until her life comes to a natural end or death. She is also sure that she will bear all the unhappiness. Sonya also tries to convince Uncle to go to Serebryakov and make arrangements politely. There on the stage Yelena also appears

and she gives her hand to Astrov saying goodbye. Astrov talks about their departure and plan of meeting in forestry station. Actually, Astrov's intention is to get satisfaction with Yelena's physical beauty. But Yelena opposes Astrov's plan and says:

YELENA: No . . . It's decided now . . . And I'm brave enough to look at you because our departure is now settled . . . I ask you one thing: think better of me. I want you to respect me.

ASTROV: Oh! [with an impatient gesture]. Stay, please. Admit it, you have nothing to do on this earth, you have no goal in life, you have nothing to hold your interest, and sooner or later you will surrender to feeling— it's inevitable. So rather than doing that in Kharkov or somewhere in Kursk, do it here in the bosom of nature . . . It's at least poetic, even the autumn is beautiful . . . Here we have forestry plantations, crumbling country houses a la Turgenev . . . (194-95)

The above extract shows that Yelena get courage because her departure is settled. Thus, her voice symbolically shows that she is afraid of the society and now she has courage because she is leaving the society and there is not danger of society to her at all. She wanted to be respected and she wanted Astrov think her positively. But Astrov says that her life is full of hopelessness, chaos and dissatisfaction she will never live happily. Thus he requests her to stay:

ASTROV: Oh! [*with a impatient gesture*]. Stay, please. Admit it, you have nothing to do on this earth, you have no goal in life, you have nothing to hold your interest, and sooner or later you will surrender to feeling— it's inevitable. (194)

Astrov tells her about her future life where she has no place and nothing to do. She is aimless character on the earth. She holds no interest and sooner or later she will surrender her feelings before her husband and it is inevitable. He tells her that she will never live happily with Serebryakov. She has no place on the earth to live happily and her interests will be dominated by the patriarchy. Every women in the society is living with the dominated self, no goal, no place of their own. Thus, the future as told by Astrov is the contemporary social reality. Astrov also blames both Yelena and Serebryakov. He says:

ASTROV [*shaking her hand*] Yes, go . . . [*Reflectively*] I think you are a good, sincere person but there's also something strange in your whole being. You came here with your husband and everyone who was busily working here and creating something had to drop what they were doing and devote the whole summer to looking after your husband's gout and you yourself. Both of you – he and you- infected all of us with your idleness. (195)

Here, Astrov not only blames Yelena for looking attractive at the same time but also Serebryakov for engaging other members to his service. In the patriarchal society, females are taken as the amazing creatures for they have amazing characteristics like menstruation, pregnancy and child bearing. Likewise, Yelena is behaved with such amazement by the society as Astrov says. Astrov also Blames Serebryakov for infecting all members of the house because he ordered his work to others. He also comments on his friendship with Yelena:

ASTROV: Isn't it strange . . . We were friends and suddenly, for some reason . . . we won't ever see each other again. It's like everything in the world . . . While there's no one here, before Uncle Vanya comes in

with a bunch of flowers, allow me to . . . kiss you . . . To say goodbye . . . Yes? [Kisses her on the cheek.] So . . . good. (195)

Astrov wanted to have relation with Yelena she became attracted him and they became friends. Astrov also knows that their relation will no longer be communicated. Astrov at the departure time with Yelena shows his inner lust— the sexual intention as he asks for permission and before she said something he kisses her on her cheek. Being a bit little satisfied with kiss he says “so . . . good.” Being unsatisfied with such relation that is going to end Yelena expresses her feeling of lust with Astrov. She says:

Yelena: I wish you all the best ! [Having looked round.] Just once in my life, come what may. [Impulsively embraces him and both immediately separate.] We must leave.

Astrov: Leave quickly. If the horses are ready, then go.

Yelena: I think someone’s coming. (195)

Yelena experiences for the first time in her life with the charm of young man. She regrets that she is going to leave such a man. But she can do nothing to take the man with her. It is inevitable that she must leave. Soon, Astrov and Sonya’s conversation stops and Voynitsky and Serebryakov make compromise and they promised their relation will be good as it was before. At the departure time Voynitsky shows his love for Yelena. As he says:

Voynitsky [*firmly kissing Yelena Andreyevna’s hand*]: Goodbye . . .

Forgive me . . . We’ll never see each other again.

Yelena [*touched*]: Goodbye, my dear. [*Kisses him on the head and goes out.*]

Astrov: [to Telegin]: Waffle, tell them to bring my horses round at the same time. (196-97)

Voynitsky's sexual lust is seen burst. He wanted Yelena to fulfil his sexual desire. But since she is leaving the place and Voynitsky cannot make her stay. He regrets himself and says that they will never meet again. He in a pathetic tone farewells her. Yelena also shows her love for Voynitsky. Her inner emotion for Voynitsky too is shown as she kisses him in his head. In fact, Astrov and Voynitsky are the representative of patriarchal society who want to entertain with female's body. They both wanted to have physical relation with Yelena. They were actually not attracted by her intelligence rather they were attracted by her beauty. Since society judges the beauty of women not the intelligent they show their hunger for her beauty. The patriarchal society's ogling nature for female is clearly shown. The hunger of flesh is beautifully presented in the story; the female body is taken as the stuff of entertainment for both Astrov and Voynitsky.

After the departure of Professor and Yelena, Voynitsky makes plan to live and work. He finds Sonya rather depressed than before when Yelena is gone far away. She became companionless. Thus Voynitsky tries to persuade Sonya when she is engrossed with depression, "Voynitsky [*to Sonya, stroking her hair*]: My child, how heavy my heart is. If you only knew how heavy" (200).

Voynitsky tries to adore his bravery with Sonya. He behaves her like a small child who is innocent and watching his bravery. He shows grandeur of his heart. Since Voynitsky succeeded to fetch away Professor and Yelena, he feels a bit little satisfied. For this, he adores his bravery. But Sonya, being frustrated to be separated with her step-father feels helpless. When Uncle Vanya sobs Sonya also tries to persuade him and says:

SONYA: . . . We shall live, Uncle Vanya. We shall live out many, many days and long evenings; we shall patiently bear the trials fate sends us; we shall labour for others both now and in our old age, knowing no rest, and when our time comes, we shall meekly die, and there beyond the grave we shall say that we suffered, that we wept, that we were sorrowful, and God will have pity on us. (200)

Sonya and Voynitsky being frustrated, still have hope in their hearts. Sonya further sees her future and many-many long days to live. She also knows that they should bear the trials of fate. Actually the females are bound to do whatever the patriarchy assigns them to do. Thus, their fate is created by the patriarchy. This fact becomes clear when she says, “We shall labor for others both now and in our old age”. The females do their duties not for themselves but for others— the patriarchy.

The females are given works without rest, they are bound to accomplish their duties restlessly and when the time comes they will meekly die. For they do not get any time to express their sorrows and sufferings with anyone. They will express it with God after they die. They hope that God will have pity on them. Thus, the situation of female is full of pessimistic. The females neither working for themselves, nor living their own life, nor getting any rest and wasting not only their youth but their last hours to serve the patriarchy. When Sonya sees tears coming from Uncle Vanya’s eyes, she wipes out as she says:

Sonya: I believe, I believe . . . [*Wipes away his tears with a handkerchief.*] Poor, poor uncle Vanya Vanya, you’re crying. [*With tears in her eyes*] You’ve known no joys in your life, but wait, Uncle Vanya, wait . . . We shall rest . . . [*Hugs him.*] We shall rest. (200)

Sonya also realizes that not only she but also Uncle Vanya's life is also ruined by the patriarchy. She finds Uncle Vanya too depressed and poor and crying like child. Both of them cry with tears in their eyes. They regret for they have no joys in their life. At last Sonya and Uncle Vanya hug and try to rest with fragmentation.

In this way *Uncle Vanya* shows the pitiful condition of females in the society. The root cause of their sorrows, suffering and fragmentation is the loss of their identity, suppression of their emotions, feelings and sentiments, ruined life, restless work for others and separation from their companions. Thus, the patriarchal society always considered females like sexual objects to be enjoyed. It wanted to seduce females' body. Thus, *Uncle Vanya* shows the contemporary social reality how patriarchal society behaves with females.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

The play *Uncle Vanya* focuses mainly on its representation of female characters as passive ones; who are actually deprived of their freedom. In the play, Chekhov has presented female characters as a mere substance and bound to repress their feelings, emotions and sentiments due to the social restrictions of patriarchal society. Reading the play, Yelena, a wife of a retired professor, who has lived with her husband for twenty seven years suppressing her emotions and sentiments. Due to this, Yelena is always unhappy even though she pretends to be happy in front of others. But when she is drunk with Sonya, she reveals the truth that she is actually not happy with her marital life. It is the patriarchal society which compelled Yelena to marry the old professor. The society is actually guided by money matter.

In *Uncle Vanya* all the female characters are presented in a stereotypical manner. The retired Professor actually cannot give satisfaction and love to his wife Yelena; instead he merely wants her to serve him and to take care of him. The professor considers her as a miserable as decorating object of his house. Her husband cannot make her happy satisfying her desires that she has been suppressing since long time ago.

Sonya and Yelena are suppressed, depressed and exploited characters in the play. They are suppressed by the patriarchal norms, values and systems. They are bound to work inside the house. Their freedom is confined by the patriarchal society. The Professor wants his wife to be mere servant for him. Uncle Vanya and Astrov treat Yelena as mere object of pleasure and satisfaction of their emotions and feelings. They want to exploit her sexually and morally. Yelena is being victimized in the play as the main cause of clash in the house due to her enchanting beauty. The professor

becomes unhappy with her because Astrov and Vanya chase her to exploit her beauty. He is also arrogant and domineering character who doesn't give his wife any freedom. He wants her to be mere puppet in his hand. Yelena and Sonya are deprived of their expression of feelings and emotions. They are painfully hooked by the patriarchy so they are inactive, non-resistant and weak characters. The prevailed social norms and values are the obstacles for them to express their feelings and emotions. Yelena also fails to express her emotions and feelings with other characters. The entire play is guided by the patriarchal norms, values and systems where women lack their identity. The women in the play are passive, emotional and guided by heart not by the mind.

We find Uncle Vanya full of patriarchal boundaries where women's role is merely of servants'. Women are only engaged in non-intellectual works. Their roles have been limited by rules and regulations. They are presented as pessimistic characters they are frustrated, alienated and troubled. They do not find any significant role in the society.

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