

## **GURDIAL SINGH'S NOVEL "ANHOYE": A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**

**Seema Kumari**

**Research Scholar, Dept. of Punjabi, Sant Baba Bhag Singh University, Jalandhar, Punjab**

Analysing the literal meaning of Social study, we come across the fact that it has been derived from the combination of two words "social+study". It is the literal synonym word for English word; Sociology. "Socio" means society and "logy" means science. It can be said that Sociology studies the society alongwith its various functions. Sociology further has been derived from Latin root word "socian" and Greek root word "logos". "Socians" means companions and "logos" means study. Max Webber in his book "Social and Economic Organization" gives the definition of Sociology as;

"Sociology is the science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a casual explanation of its course and effects."

According to Arnold W. Green, "Sociology is the synthesizing and generalizing science of men in all his social relationships."

Sociology seeks for the explanation that why and how the society exists alongwith its operations. All those social institutions comprising of religious, economic and family institutions in collaboration structure the society.

Man is a social animal. He exists in society. Man creates literature while living in society. There is an obvious relationship between literature and people of times. In literature, all the customs, reactions, social activities and behavior of people find their place in the form of expression. Social science aims at studying human behavior in relation with social institutions and customs. In words of Dr. Namwar Singh,

"In case of Sociological approach to Literary study, it is important to understand the social setting to interpret a literary text. It is impossible to interpret a text without knowing the genetics. A literary text has an obvious relation with the society it occurs in."

Literature is an artistic representation of man's behavior. It advocates the illustration of human life in its complexities. In fact, living in society the man has constructed a number of norms like politics, religion, ethics, philosophy, science and arts are all various forms of social awareness.

From the social concerns arising out of literary texts, it becomes evident that literature and society are not only constantly related to each other but inseparable also. Manager Pande explains the relationship between literature and society as follows,

Contemporary society gets always represented itself in literature affecting the communities in a new and creative way. There is an undeniable effect of social conventions on literature of times.

A writer living in society cannot remain intact or unaffected from his surroundings. The virtual reality is that every good and evil finds its place in pages of an author. Therefore, literature is called the mirror of society. Many problems regarding the creation of and creative process can only be understood or solved by understanding the social context of the text in which it occurs. Tenn, Leo Lowenthal, Alan Swingewood, Goldman and many others have contributed to develop this technique. Tenn studied the relation between a work and society for the first time. He emphasized upon the social circumstances to evaluate the literary work. According to him, "A written piece of art always has a heavy influence of atmosphere around the writer." He gave scientific basis to study literature and society connection like other sciences. According to Manager Pande,

"Leo Lowenthal focuses on "essence of meaning" to study the connection between literature and society whereas Goldman emphasizes on studying Global analysis approach. Adorno advocates "interdisciplinary things" analysis. People considering Marxist literature as a tool for social awareness, study literature to understand the social structure.

Gurdial Singh occupies an important place in Punjabi novel writing. He breaking off from the prevAlant techniques and methods of writing novels, has given a new setup and themes to his novels. His collection of novels represents a realistic picture of transition of society from Jagirdari system (Feudalism) into Capitalist one. Dr. Tejwant Singh says,“ His art of novel writing is a witness to change rather than development or evolution. There is a mixture of both change and development in his writings. Hence, it can be said that he stands halfway/ in between

In his second novel “Anhoye (1966)” he represents the complex issues related to a threat to the existence of a common man in capitalist system in a realistic way. In this novel, the situation of socio-cultural existence of a man arises out of awareness of his individual and social importance, to maintain his conscience by breaking the socio-cultural norms to lead an independent life.

The protagonist of “Anhoye” is a common workman, but, he is well aware about existence and status. Leading a prideful life, standing out for rights, working with honesty, docility and caring nature are some of his strong personality points. Dr. Vinod calling Bishna (protagonist) a classical character of Punjabi novel says,“ Bishna is the first realistic character who carries the instincts of “Gurmukh” of Gurbani and of romantic lovers of Ballad tradition.

Social and cultural changes alongwith their effects on human life are predominant themes of Gurdial Singh’s novels. The loneliness and tensions with their change in time have all been described in his novels. Agriculture is the occupation of Punjabi people. A father earns bread and butter through it and feed their families by the earnings and distributes his land among his children in equal parts after their marriages. The children ready to die for each other before marriage turn out to be rivals after their marriage. As a result, their emotional bonds start getting broken. In the plot, Kartari refuses to cook for her brother-in-law by expressing her contempt.

Punjabi people are known for their honorable character. Living an honorable life, not stooping before anybody, ruination and rehabilitation have always been chief characteristics of Punjabi people. After leaving their house in the city, Bishna and his wife soon retired to the village make their old house for living. It took two days for Dyakur, Bishna and Buddha to clean the drawing room (haata). The repaired both walls facing the street. Hence, their hut became a place to live.

Gurdial Singh depicts the issue of Women exchange for money through a Baniya Hetiya who buys a Baghdad lady. Even though he is not able to get enough food for living, he buys a lady. He tells Bishna, “I have paid seven hundred and thirty for her, in cash.”

Anhoye novel begins with Authorities forcefully disinheriting Bishna from his legal property. Bishan got this house legally registered. But, the ruling authorities under British rule need his house for some further Urban development projects. Bishna is not even ready to accept money in return for it. He stands against the authority. He is even arrested for not letting the police occupy his house.

A man and a woman are two sides of a coin. They exist as correspondence to each other in society. The relationship between Bishna and Dyakur is also of a same ideal husband-wife type. They both understand each other very well. Bishna is a shot tempered person. Dyakur knowing him very well talks to him carefully. Dyakur, even being a woman stands beside her husband in every odd or even situation. She encourages him by supporting. She with Bishna also opposes the police came for occupying their house forcefully.

Bishna and Dyakur shouted the slogans loudly and themselves walked with the police men. Dyakur was full of enthusiasm at that time, shown on her face. She had not even wrapped her scarf (chunni) properly. Raising her one hand to shout slogans and handling her scarf with another, she was walking like a man throughout the way.

Gurdial Singh has portrayed characters picked from the lower classes and depicted their pathetic situations. Upper class people’s treatment of lower class has always been bad. We do not see this kind of maltreatment in Anhoye. Dyakur feeds the children of Boota (A muslim) with her own hands and treats them as her own children: “Sometimes, she cleans the utensils of both altogether.”

Giving a word of mouth and keeping it is considered an important thing in Punjabi culture. A person not keeping his promises is not considered worth being called a Man. Bishna scolds Toti Mall Seth for not keeping his words and for telling him to vacate the haata.

Beliefs play an important part in Punjabi culture. All those beliefs related to sins, blessings, birth and death have been given due importance and used nicely to make the plot interesting and more realistic. Dyakur is always double-minded while treating Boota's children equal to her own. She fears she should not get cursed by losing her religious sanctity. Buddha tells her, "These curses, blessings, Dyakur, have been constructed by the priests. A man is a man and a part of God. One who hurts somebody is a sinister, and one who helps others is a true religious person. All other things are useless. It has been even written in the scriptures."

According to Dr. Joginder Rahi, "Gurdial Singh is perhaps the first novelist to depict contemporary reality by taking references from the classics and portraying an intellectual story."

In his novels, all the issues concerning with the dawn of Capitalism have been described. People had not got rid of Feudalism and were not even ready for the new change.

Dr. T.R. Vinod says, "Under British rule common hindrance in the way of development of modern Punjab has been a lack of unity among mainstream people. Secondly, they are in scattered pieces and lastly, they could not become an effective part of trade and business. The few developed centers had only mediocre level industries and business prospects. Despite that, a craving for money became a tool for Capitalism which took control over people. They tried many fair and foul means to earn money, but only few could succeed."

Gurdial Singh, in "Anhoye", also portrays the oppression of lower class people by Seths, Shahukars and Chaudaries in Capitalism. They taking clues from the change had adjusted themselves in accordance with Capitalist system. For example, "Totu becomes Toti Mall Chaudhary and Shibbu becomes Shiv Ram Chaudhary.

Gurdial Singh has depicted the Dalit community in his novels. There is a struggle between oppressors and the oppressed in his plots. Even though, absolute political scenario has only been depicted in "Pau Phutale to Pehlan". In "Anhoye", Bishna raises his voice against government's oppression and stands against the authorities. He does not stoop in front of them even on the cost of lifetime miseries. His brother, Bhagta, considering the fact that there is no use of going against the government, does not support him.

Hence, it can be said that Gurdial Singh is a great novelist who depicts the psychological traumas and tension created by the new cultural change (Capitalism) in his novels very appropriately and nicely.

## Bibliography:

1. Anand Kumar, "Introduction to Sociology", Pg.1
2. "Sociology is the synthesizing and generalizing science of man in all his social relationships.", "Sociology: An analysis of life in Modern Society", Pg.4
3. Editor: Nirmala Jain, "Sociological analysis of literature", "Sociology and Literature", Swingewood, Allen, Pg.1-2
4. Editor: Karnail Singh Thind, "Literary Analysis methods", "Sociological Approach", Namwar Singh, Pg.192
5. Dr. Labh Singh Khiva, "Creation", Pg.58-59
6. Manager Pande, "Importance of Sociology of Literature", Pg.4
7. Manager Pande, "Importance of Sociology of Literature", Pg.5
8. Brahamjagdish Singh, "Novelist Gurdial Singh", Pg.10
9. Dr. Rajinder Singh, "Tragic view of Gurdial Singh; A Novelist", Pg.173
10. Sant Singh Sekhon, "Gurdial Singh's Shahkar: Anhoye", "Anhoye: An analysis, Pg.21
11. Gurdial Singh, "Anhoye", Pg.15
12. Gurdial Singh, "Anhoye", Pg.21
13. Gurdial Singh, "Anhoye", Pg.3
14. Gurdial Singh, "Anhoye", Pg.76
15. Gurdial Singh, "Anhoye", Pg.76
16. Dr. Joginder Singh Rahi, "Time and Dialogue", "Parsa: Sociological Background", Pg.200
17. T. R. Vinod, "Fiction Writer Gurdial Singh", "Novel Writing Art of Gurdial Singh", Pg.21