

**SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
CHITRALEKHA & AGNIVARSHA**

*Dissertation Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the award of the degree of*

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Submitted by:
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CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the dissertation entitled “**Sociology of Literature: A Comparative Study of Chitrlekha and Agnivarsha**” submitted by me under the guidance of **Dr. Amit Kumar Sharma** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy**, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university.

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Forwarded by

(SUPERVISOR)

(CHAIRPERSON)

Dedicated to
My
Brother

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Chapter-1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This research is an attempt to delve into sociology of literature and also entails the comparison between Chitrlekha and Agnivarsha. The significance of this research is to highlight the distinction between sociology of literature and literary criticism. It also deals with different matters applied in sociology of literature. Some of these occupy the centre stage of this chapter.

Any study of sociology of literature cannot be complete without taking into consideration the different approaches related to it and also the major contributions of various thinkers like Taine, Marx, Lowenthal & Goldmann etc which is the content of the second chapter.

Taking two Indian works Chitrlekha and Agnivarsha and comparing them has to be supplemented with the Indian perspective regarding the sociology of literature in particular and sociology of India in general. Here we have to take into consideration the contribution of different Indian sociologists highlighting the Indian literature and the problems faced by the Indian sociologists in analyzing the Indian literature sociologically.

Chitrlekha, a novel written by Bhagawati Charan Varma and Agnivarsha a play, written by Girish Karnad have been taken up for comparison in order to examine the social context of these works. These two works have been taken with the objective to examine the historical period and the social environment in which a novel was written. The other work which is a

play deals with a myth associated with Mahabharata. Myth is an important part of sociology as well as of literature. This research endeavors to draw a comparison of the two literary works on the basis of the criteria like social milieu, values, social institution, sociology of religion, status of women, social stratification and social change.

The findings of the research have been concluded in the last chapter.

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

Sociology of literature being a new field of sociology basically means understanding the sociological context of the literary work produced. Some sociologists take sociology of literature as sociology through literature but in reality the literature that deals with sociology through literature is considered as a social fact only. There is a continuous interaction between the writer, his writings and his society. As a result of these interactions, a structure is formed and on the basis of this structure, a writing is formed. The branch that studies these forms objectively is sociology of literature.

The aim of sociology of literature is to study literature in the context of sociological principles. Literature in its concrete form is a writing but in its abstract form, it is the personality of the writer which is formed by his social environment. Therefore, for the complete study of literature, it is important to study its social aspects that affect its existence and importance. The condition in which a writer composes a literature is his social environment.

The social condition and the social context on the basis of which a writing originates is the social environment of writing. There is a strong relation between the environment of the 'writer' as well as environment of the 'writing' but both are not the same. Sometimes the writing passes through a situation or stage which is different from the normal situation of the writer. Therefore, the aim and objective of sociology of literature is to study the interrelation between society and literature.

Sociology of literature is often studied under sociology of knowledge in sociology. The questions like – "How knowledge and thought originated?" "What is the role of culture and society in determining its forms?" helped in evolution of sociology as a discipline. Thus, this branch of sociology deals with the system of knowledge and thought and interrelation of socio-cultural factors. As a result of knowledge and thought, a literature is composed. Hence, sociology of knowledge completes the sociology of literature. Sociology of knowledge is based on the fact that all types of knowledge whether religious, philosophical, legal, political is the result of society. In other words, the socio-cultural factors have a great impact in the evolution and development of knowledge.

Sociology of knowledge in its present form originated in the 19th century but it existed in one form or the other always. Bacon opined that, like nature on human mind, there is an impact of internal factor like age, sex,

place, health, sickness, beauty and ugliness as well as of external factors like family, money, needs, progress, status, prestige.¹

Marx and Durkheim contributed a lot in its origin and development of sociology of knowledge. According to Marx, the whole knowledge is distorted by the struggle between the interest of suppressed and the suppressing class.² Durkheim tried to see the origin of knowledge in a different perspective. In his view, the main elements (place, time, cause) of knowledge and experience sequence are the result and part of social structure that makes social life living.³

There has not been a great deal of empirical work in sociology of knowledge itself but there has been considerable activity in some of its branches particularly in sociology of literature and science. The former typically asks how social institution influences particularly literary form or novelists. Later, these microsociological questions arise, for example of investigation of how scientists decide what is to count as knowledge.⁴ In this way sociology of literature relates to sociology of knowledge. Social institutions have a great impact on a writer. Literature is often considered as an independent writing in itself. They are seen as having their own structure. Here the external factors are also very important which have a great impact on literature.

¹ Harikrishan Rawat , Samajshashtriya Vishwakosh, 1998, pg. 373.

² Ibid, pg. 373.

³ Ibid, pg. 373.

⁴ The penguin Dictionary of Sociology, 1988, pg. 237.

For a sociologist, social interaction are very important which form the basis of sociology because with the increase in interaction the “complexity” of relations take place in society. Literature is always written by a person who is social. Aristotle has said that, “Man is a social animal.” When man is social so his creations are also social. Literature is created by man and without understanding a society, it is impossible to understand its literature.

At the content level, sociology of literature are alike. Content is the base of both. The sociologist studies the society scientifically and objectively. He studies social institutions and social processes of society. A sociologist raises questions as to whether a social order is possible and the reasons for its existence and the working of the order. Social institutions which consist of institutions like religion, economy, polity firmly form a structure. The individual tries to mould himself according to this structure. This aspect of sociology relates to social stability and continuity between different societies. It is related to those methods through which the individual gives importance to institution and accept them. Sociology also deals with processes that changes society and it also studies the impact on social structure due to these changes.

Like sociology, literature also deals with the social world, acceptance of social world and to bring about change in that social world. Literature is concerned talks about family and institutions, conflicts and tensions taking place in these institutions. In pure records, literature also deals with social, economic and political structure as is dealt by sociology. According to

Hoggart, in the absence of literary evidence, student of social science will be unaware of completeness of society.⁵

There is a difference between sociology of literature and literary sociology. Sociology of literature deals with sociology while literary sociology deals with literature. P. Foster and C. Kenford in one of their writings expressed the view that sociology of literature is a branch of sociology and in its development literary sociology is a threat to it. They have written that whatever is being written and thought in the name of sociology of literature, most of them are actually literary sociology. It can be called as much a literary criticism that works with the help of general knowledge of sociology. This difference is to be noticed that sociology is linked with literature.

METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

In the view of Taine, the problems arising in historical processes have solved some problems of literature. Sometimes, problems even solve unsolved mysteries. After that to understand literature, it was compulsory to move out of literature. Therefore, an effort was made to study literature through linguistics, psychology, history and sociology.

The sociological thinking of literature is an authority of literature in today's society and is a result of intellectual effort of meaningful identity. In the modern society, sociology of literature is an effort to understand literature

⁵ R. Hoggart, "Literature and Society' A guide to the social science, 1966, N. Meckengee, London, Widenfield and Nicolson, London.

through real situations and realistic approaches. There has always been the problem of a social aspect of literature. Today writers critiques and sociologists talk about the social aspect of the literature. The problem of social aspect of literature is one thing and is an organised view, and problem of identification is the other thing. Sociology of littérature has taken into consideration the problem of identification. Today, there are two methods of studying sociology of literature. In one there is the search for expression of society in literature. This is called the critical method. In the second method the social position of literature is explained. This is called empiricism. In the critical methodology Marxism, critical sociologist and structural views are there whereas in empiricism positivism and structural functional views are seen.

In literature we see social events. There are three main aspects of literary processes – writer, writing and reader. To understand the process of literature, the knowledge of the correlation of these three aspects is important. Another important thing is to understand the change of process from socio-historical process to literary process. The literature takes place in socio-historical process, therefore, the relationship between writer, writing and reader can be understood as a part of socio-historical process through realistic approach. One cannot understand literary process on the basis of some facts and experiences. For this one need theoretical base in which there is a possibility of explanation of changing relations of historical process and is that changing relation of writer, writing and reader. This is the reason why critical thinker believes in forming a theoretical base for the explanation of

developing relation of society and consciousness. Goldmann has given this explanation successfully than any other thinker. In contrary, to it empiricists take effort in making a theory as more important. They give importance to the facts collected through experience Adorno has criticized by saying that social facts and events are never unaffected by society in social life. Objectification and collection of fact is influenced by society. Empiricists emphasise on experience and ignore explanatory understanding. But in such a situation one cannot know the reality. As said for critique methodology, explanation is more important and in this regard Jeanet Woff has given three aspects of sociology of literature—explanation of the writing, identification of ideology in the writing and description of the aesthetic sense of ideology. Critique stress on the peculiar form of writing that is why they have problems of selection of writing.

For the solution to this problem, the knowledge of value consciousness is important. They differentiate in serious and superficial literature. Most critique choose only important writings for the sociological analyses. The critique's tend to ignore the contemporary literature because by historical standards, contemporary literature is not a great literature and they even ignore popular literature.

Raymond Williams gives importance to structure of feelings. He writes, the problem of relation between culture and society arise only when there are some changes in the historical view of society and culture. Only those thinkers are important, who have knowledge of both society and culture for studying different relations of culture with the society. Such thinkers only show way to

the culture related thought. Their writings are important even for today and are also meaningful for tomorrow. Raymond Williams is one such thinker. As Lukacs is important in German language, in the same way Williams is important in English language.

Dr Amit Kumar Sharma writes, there was a time when it was believed that literature is the mirror of the society and by studying literature one could directly understand the social structure, social facts and social relations. This view was used by historians for studying ancient and medieval traditions. After the development of structuralism, in sociology at least after the decade of 1970 literature is taken as the lamp of society in the light of which a sociologist can catch a key to the grammar of society. Hence the use of literature in studying society is not direct but indirect.⁶

⁶ Samved-Kisna Kaljani, Writer Amit Kumar Sharma- Samaj Shastriya Vimarsh Ke Ayam se (article), Feb. 2002, Pg. 125.

Chapter-2

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE: THINKERS AND APPROACHES

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE: THINKERS AND APPROACHES

In this chapter, "Sociology of Literature: Thinkers and Approaches", one will be looking at the different approaches and view points of various western thinkers. The main approaches that are dealt with are, structuralism and functionalism. These two approaches have been discussed in detail. Various thinkers views on the sociology of literature and its significance and importance is focused upon.

Structuralism is a method of analysing events which was used for the first time in linguistics between 1900 to 1930. In the 1960's, Many Field adopted this methodology, Structuralists are of the view that social events are also structured in the same way as language in structured. Structuralists emphasise on systematic as well as related nature of social events. According to them, a social event should be studied and analysed in relation to the other events taking place in that system rather than focusing on the internal quality of the social event.

When there is a change in the form of social event that event is analysed on the basis of causal explanation. However it should be analysed on the basis of structure. Structuralists while explaining the events in a social system hardly talk about the superficial knowledge of events.

Their term 'structuralism' was first used for the methods and principles developed by French social Anthropologist Levi-Strauss in his works (Structural Anthropology, 1968 second edition 1977) the Elementary Structure of Kinship, 1969, the Savage mind, 1966). According to Levi Strauss all cultural elements are the result of one psycho process which is equally present in whole human culturally. They may look diverse but they are same from inside and this shows the similar structure of man's thinking. While talking about structuralism, he talks about 'myth' and writes that myths bring out those paradox that always surround man's thinking. Thus with this these myths tries to remove the paradoxes.

When we talk about structuralism, another thinker that comes to our mind is Jene Peaget. His book 'structuralism' (1971) is very important, here he tried to see the common linkage to structural views in Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Psychology, Philosophy and Social Sciences.

Hence same important results stated below take place whatever form structuralism has. The inner elements of a structure are stable different kind of relations between these elements gives birth to different type of languages, thought system and society. Therefore, the focus shift from the writing to the inter-relation of elements. Part structuralism has emphasized even more on these relations.

The social order, in sociology of literature, it is very important to study, the environment of the writer, literature as it makes us aware of the needs of society. What an individual should do or should gita do etc & what not. The

most important question of functionalism is how does society fulfill the needs of the individuals? It is seen that every institution or custom has a questional utility to the society which helps in maintaining the structure of the society. Social processes and institution are always often as functional to society.

The term 'Function' in sociology was used by Comte & Herbert Spencer. They saw an analogy between Human Society & Human Organism. It was Durkheim, however who first used it scientifically. According to him, the contribution goes to Malinowski & Radcliff Brown who had popularised the term. They emphasised on the fact that social & cultural events should be studied in the content of the whole society. According to them, every social event is functional to social system and these social events are linked with one another on the basis of functions. This view later came to be known as functional.

Functionalism stresses on the fact that any social event should be seen as a part of a social system and not separate from the social system. In the same way, sociology of literature also takes social event as the part of social system. The sociological view can broadly be understood in two forms. The popular view is that it accepts literature as an important document. The logic behind this is that literature is the mirror of society. This phrase has a long history behind it. French philosopher Louis de Bonald was of the view that by reading literature of a country one can tell about the people of that country. Some thinkers raise the question as to whether literature is a mirror of the society? Literature portrays a picture of the society but its characters are

fictitious. If the characters are fictitious then how can they represent a real society is an important question to be raised. For instance in M. Premchand's 'Godan', the characters are fictitious but they seem so real when they are seen on the basis of social life.

In sociological explanation of society, the concept of mirror should be used cautiously. A good writer never writes about society in explanatory language. They create artificial situations and try to see their own fate through their characters. Society is not a result of only social institutions but there are other things like pattern & norms which are linked to it. There are values in society on the basis of which literature throws light on pure sociological things in society. This can be seen in 'Chitralkha' & 'Agnivasha'.

Literature also indicates towards different change taking place in the society and ways in which individuals are socialised in the social structure. As literature portrays man's tensions, hopes and desires. That is why it serves as a paradigm of human reaction. As the complexity of socialising processes increase, change & structure will increase, the analysis of literature on the basis of image will become difficult. It was easy to analyse literature on the basis of image in preindustrial society.

With industrialisation the complicated structure of society developed, in which there was a diversity of class and status and increasing division of labour was there. With the increase in mass media this became more difficult. Novels became parallel to industrialisation and if one finds any reflection of social structure, it is actually in the reflection of social problems.

The second view of literary sociology focuses on self-production like aspect and social status of the writer than on the literary writing. According to the French sociologist Robert Escorpit, the centre of thought process should be conservation and production cost than the literary lessons. So from medieval period till 18th century elite class, the close relationship between the writer and the owner of the mean is always a question.

The cheap publication and more consumption resulted into the dictatorship of the publishers and sellers. The rise of middle class reader in 18th century has also changed writers position from dependency to commercialisation. According to German sociologist Karl Mannheim, in the origin of the novel which is a literary discipline of middle class, the gradual democracy has played an important role. The status of writer has risen up. His creative power impresses in various ways. The relation between his historical base and development of literature is the main area of literacy sociologist. One basic problem is the problem of relation writing and its background. One should take care that a writing should not merely become a sub-element of its environment. In this way there are two aspects to study sociology of literature. One that literary sociology is different from sociology of literature. Second literary sociology is to see society through literature. In sociology of literature, the literature is seen through sociological angle. Both the aspects of sociology of literature prove one another. But as it happened with other discipline, the nature of division of labour has separated that while conducting research *either on the sociological context of the writing is emphasised or on the literature and its social meaning.* According to Lucien Goldmann, a great

writer who gives meaningful literature hardly gets a good status in society where as the second category of the writer is that in whose writings social situations dominates the structure & content of the writing and the writing becomes purely social. There is a debate on Lueien's categorisation. In 18th & 19th century most of the writers wrote for a special reading class. They produced such literature which were in according to their values. Dickens & Boljok belong to this category. Their novels dealt with sex, crime etc. Goldmann's characterisation is right if we take into account the modern literature. Great writers do not write popular literature. This is done by the second category. The point to be noted is that it has become difficult to establish significant relation with the reader, publisher and social class.

There is a third angle to it which demands a lot of skill. In this, those methods are searched in which at a specific historic time, in a specific society writing accepted in a meaningful way. Thus in the last 20 years of 19th century acceptance of Maupasso's work in England has helped English literature to move away from vague literature to modern literary world. For example, in the writings of Thomas Hardy & George Moor, sex is more explicit than in the writings of Dickens and George Eliot. This change is an example of struggle of values between traditional writers and modern writers in post Victorian era.

In Bhagwati Charan Verma's novel Chitrlekha, the elaboration of love making and also the sensuality of the heroine is bold and quite modern. He writes, "*Chitrlekha ki Ankho Mein Matwalapan tha aur uske arun kaplo mein ullas tha. Yovan ki umang mein saundarya kilole kar raha tha. Aalingan ke*

pash mein vasna has rahi thi. Chitralkha ne Madira ka ek ghoont piya. Iske baad veh muskurai. Ek shan ke liye uske adhro ne Beejgupt ke adhro se maun bhasha mein kuchh baat kahi, phir dheere se usne uttar diya – Masti.”¹

This method of explanation is very modern. The moral connotation of a woman consuming liquor takes a secondary place and emphasis is more on the social compulsion and realities which forced Chitralkha to do so. Chitralkha when becomes a widow and later whom she shows her audacity to become pregnant with Krishnadatya's child is shunned by the society. This forces her to take up dancing as a profession. Sociology takes into consideration morality & immorality in literature but observes the social condition prevailing in the society.

In Lowenthal's view, artist's depiction is more real than reality and Richard Hoggart is of the view that great literature is deeper than human experiences because it has capacity of seeing basic and deep movements. Along with this, it has a capacity of combining different events into one.

The centre point of sociology is to understand the nature and working of all societies and to understand the position of man in this nature and working of society. To understand man's position in society, folk culture plays an important role.

Literature not only reflects society but acts beyond that. In such a situation it is impossible for literature to stay away from society. In literary

¹ Bhagwaticharan Verma, Chitralkha 2002, pg. No. 10.

writings, one can see the exploitation by feudal. The fact can be seen in Kabiels writings as well as in Prem Chand's writings. In the same way if we see the writings of capitalistic society, it shows the form of exploited society or the living style of the elite class. With the origin of capitalism, there have been changes in the ways of exploitation and it has taken a new dimension. These new dimensions have positive as well as negative aspects as it has changed the man under the influence of machine and hence today man is fully mechanised. Capitalism has enslaved human consciousness and has destroyed men's creative capacity. Sociology of literature deals with all such writings.

THEORIES OF SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE

Literature and society are related to one another. This relation was just discovered by French philosopher and Cretu Ten (1828-99). Plato also tried but before Tain, the sociological angle was never observed. Tain is considered as the founder of sociology of literature. Like Auguste counte, he also developed he scientific view. He tried to use the same methods of natural sciences in sociology of literature. He stated that quality and defect are productions like sugar and copper sulphate, so they are equally the subjects of research. Tain criticise those writers who have given emphasise on moral aspects of writing than one the pure explanation of writing. Like Madam Estal and Hindon, Tain also tries to see the economic base of society with literature.

Tain is of the view that literature mixes the scientific methods and comes out as a definite form. Literature after getting linked with science

becomes a subject of sociology of literature. According to some sociologists, sociology of literature in order to be objective should always be ready to study any type of literature whether it is good literature or bad literature.

But Tain does not agree to this. He is of the view that only a good writer can write about his age and era because he gets deeply involved in the writing whereas other writers may involve certified social records but even then, they do not impress the reader and do not represent an era.

For Tain, art is a form of collective expression. Tain used three concepts – race, moment and environment. These three concepts are the causes for all types of social movements and economic base and are inter linked, each having more importance than the other two aspects at one or the other occasion. For example, in his study of English literature, race factor plays an important role. He describes race on the basis of hereditary, nature and body structure. Moment is described as being time & era specific. The third concept is described as related to theory and cause and effect-related explanation of literature.

Tain's objective planning is very vague. He says that root of all big changes is not in social structure but in human soul. Social conditions are effected by psychological and mental processes. This has been the basis of Tain's criticism as social structure do influence human society. The change in society and literature is due to change in social structure. Mental state is also influenced by the social position, rank or status of an individual. An Indian can

think like an American only if his social environment is changed. Thus, a social structure is very important for an individual.

The Marxist theory emphasized on the primacy of the economic aspect (base) over the social, political and cultural aspect (super structure). Due to changing mode of production and transfer of means of production from the labourer to the capitalist, relation of production changed. The formation of two antagonistic classes in the era of capitalism led to class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The result of this struggle would be the dictatorship of proletariat leading to the stage of socialism, i.e., state ownership of the means of production. Production should be for the people, for their needs, and for the welfare of society and not for profit motive.

In the same way in literature the main theory is that literature should not be for the flattery of people and it should also not be there for profit making. It should be for the development of society and the development of the personality of the mankind.

Marks in one of his writings has called "Ideology as peculiar social consciousness of special historical content". It can be called as "class consciousness". According to Marks, in the ideological forms men are conscious of their struggles and they keep on struggling till the victory is achieved.² In his writings where Marks called Ideology a class consciousness, he has talked about legal, political, religious, philosophical and aesthetic

² Manager Pandey, Shabad aur karam, 1981, pg. 12.

sense ideologies. Lenin has accepted the Marxist explanation of socialism as the ideology of working class. Manager Pandey calls this way of developing Marxism as Leninism.

Talking about ideology, Marx and Engeles views can be summarised as, "Ideology is not the flow of ideas but it is also a combination of views, faith, belief and value consciousness". This is a social consciousness constructed in a special historical content, a composition of activities of consciousness and the capacity to mould consciousness in its own way.³

The origin of any literature is in relation to any era. The writer observe his era and records it in the literary form according to his experiences. As in an ideology views, faith, belief and value consciousness plays an important role in the same way for the literature also these things are very important without adding or combining these things it is impossible to make a literature as a record of an era.

According to Manager Pandey, in Marx and Engeles writing, the meaning of ideology is not the same everywhere. There has been changes and development in the concept of ideologies. Marx & Engeles have called ideology as 'class consciousness' and has stressed on its functional form. They say that in ideology instead of real knowledge of fact, the misconception about fact is more there. By this concept of ideology one can say that there is

³ Ibid, pg. 13.

relation of fact with the ideology, though it may be the opposite reflection of the fact. Such ideology also has a special role to play.⁴

An ideology is born in an individual's social role. All the individuals in a society have a role and a status according to which the individual thinks. How his status and role affects his thinking can be seen in his ideology. Society is divided into classes and the interest of these classes clash with one another. Every class has their own way of thinking. An ideology should not be seen as a collective programme but it should be seen in the form of individual experiences.

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Lucas says that ideology is not a flag which has to be hoisted in the battle field. In the context of literature, it is more apt. Ideology is imbibed and can be seen in the whole literature.⁵ One should not decree through literature, it will be harmful for both writing as well as for the writer. A person's ideology can not be described on the basis of his comments, it is described on the basis of his functional trade. To know the ideology of a writer, his writings are the best medicine.⁶ Ideology should come in literature in such a form that it should not be burdensome for the reader.

Like Marx and Engeles, the French writer Sentebbe identified the commercialised nature of literature but even then he did not think about division of labour. The commercialisation of publication is encouraging the substandard literature. The standard of good literature is deteriorating. Marx

⁴ Manager Pandey, *Shabad aur Karam*, 1981, Pg. 13.

⁵ Ibid, pg. No. 18.

⁶ Manager Pandey, *Shabad aur Karam*, 1981, pg. No. 23.

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and Engeles felt the present man to be inferior to the man of the era of revivalism, on the base that division of labour has given birth to social format at a large scale. For instance, the area of language of people of revivalism was really expanded but modern man believes in edition. Marx and Engeles meant that the previous kind of totality can be achieved through socialism and communism.⁷ The downfall of literature is because of capitalism.

Marx and Engeles has seen capitalism as the establishment that creates writings full of alienation and objectification. In this type of society, man cannot make natural relations with one another. This type of writing is incomplete and fragmented.⁸

Marx calls Shakespeare and Baljok as great artists Marx has not given any sociological explanation to it but Engeles has given Marxism a literary theoretical cover. Engeles had considered literature as the mirror of society but has not given any theory on literature and society. Russian writer Plackhnov has further developed the literacy thought. In his writing, the concept of mirror and reflection is also there. He has talked about sociological base is the art and literature. According to him art is important only when it directs the emotions, activities and situations and make them understandable to the people.⁹ He further states that literature is related to the class and bourgeoisie sovereignty has no relation with the good literature.

⁷ Nirmala Jain, Sahitya ka Samaj Shashtriya Chintan, 1992, pg. No. 24.

⁸ Ibid. Pg. 35.

⁹ Nirmala Jain, Sahitya ka Samaj Shashtriya Chintan, 1992, pg. No. 43.

George Lucas is also of the view that literature reflects the class struggle. He says that whole literature is written on the basis of some class and has a world view. Lucas like Plackhnov takes socialism as the scale of writer's writings. He states that the literature that is against socialism actually keeps itself bind and leaves the opportunity for evaluation in present and loses the capacity of any type of creation except the undynamic literature.¹⁰ Lucas believes in realistic socialism. According to him this realistic socialism will cross the elite and will portrait the struggling man to achieve socialism.

Goldman begin by tracing the outlines of the structure described by Laukacs. This structure may not, as Lukacs believed, characterize the novel form in general, but it does characterie at least its most important aspects (and probably, from the genetic point of view, its primordial aspect). The novel form studied by Lukacs is that characterized by a hero that he very felicitously calls the problematic hero.

The novel is the story of a degraded (what Lukacs calls 'demoniacal') search, a search for authentic values in a world itself degraded but at an otherwise advanced level according to a different mode.

By authentic values, Goldman mean, of course, not the values that the critic or the reader regards as authentic, but those which, without being manifestly present in the novel, organize in accordance with an implicit mode its world as a whole. It goes without saying that these values are specific to each novel and different from one novel to another.

¹⁰ Ibid. Pg.45.

Since the novel is an epic genre characterized, unlike the folk tale or the epic power itself, by the insurmountable rupture between the hero and the world, there in Lukacs an analysis of the nature of two degradations (that of the hero and that of the world) that must engender both a constitutive opposition, the foundation of this insurmountable rupture, and an adequate community to make possible the existence of an epic form.

The radical rupture alone would, in effect, have led to tragedy or to lyric poetry; the absence of rupture or the existence of a merely accidental rupture would have led to the epic poem or the folk tale.

Situated between the two, the novel has a dialectical nature in so far as it derives specifically, on the one hand, from the fundamental community of the hero and of the world presupposed by all epic forms and, on the other hand, from their insurmountable rupture; the community of the hero and of the world resulting from the fact that they are both degraded in relation to authentic values, the opposition resulting from the difference of nature between each of these two degradations.

The demoniacal hero of the novel is a madman or a criminal, in any case, according to Goldman a problematic character whose degraded, and therefore inauthentic, search for authentic values a world of conformity and convention constitute the content of this new literary genre known as the 'novel' that writers created in an individualistic society.

Setting out from the relation between the hero and the world, he distinguishes three schematic types of the Western novel in the nineteenth century, to which is added a fourth that already constitutes a transformation from the novel form towards new modalities that would require a different type of analysis. In 1920, this fourth possibility seemed to him to be expressed pre-eminently in the novels of Tolstoy, which strive towards the epic. The three types of novel on which his analysis bears are as follows:

- (a) The novel of 'abstract idealism'; characterized by the activity of the hero and by his over-narrow consciousness in relation to the complexity of the world (Don Quixote, Le Rouge et le Noir);
- (b) The psychological novel; concerned above all with the analysis of the inner life, and characterized by the passivity of the hero and a consciousness too broad to be satisfied by what the world of convention can offer him (Oblomov and L'Education sentimentale);
- (c) The Bildungsroman, which ends with a self-imposed limitation; although the hero gives up the problematic search, he does not accept the world of convention or abandon the implicit scale of values- self-imposed limitation that must be characterized by the term 'virile maturity' (Goethe's Wilhelm Meister or Gottfried Keller's Der grüne Heinrich).

At a distance of forty years, Rene Girard's analyses are often very close to those of Lukacs. For Girard, too, the novel is the story of a degraded search (which he calls 'idolatrous') for authentic values, by a problematic

hero, in a degraded world. The terminology he uses is Heideggerian in origin, but he often gives it a content that is somewhat different from that of Heidegger himself; Without going into detail, we might say that Girard replaces Heidegger himself; Without going into detail, we might say that Girard replaces Heidegger's duality of the ontological and the ontic by the obviously related duality of the ontological and the metaphysical, which correspond for him to the authentic and the inauthentic; but whereas, for Heidegger, any idea of progress and retreat is to be eliminated, Girard confers on his terminology of the ontological and the metaphysical, which correspond for him to the authentic and the inauthentic; but whereas, for Heidegger, any idea of progress and retreat is to be eliminated, Girard confers on his terminology of the ontological and the metaphysical a content much closer to the positions of Lukacs than to those of Heidegger, by introducing between the two terms a relation governed by the categories of progress and regression.

Girard's typology of the novel is based on the idea that the degradation of the fictional world is the result of a more or less advanced ontological sickness (this 'more or less' is strictly contrary to Heidegger's thinking) to which corresponds, within the fictional world, an increase of metaphysical desire, that is to say, of degraded desire.

It is based therefore on the idea of degradation, and it is here that Girard introduces into the Lukacsian analysis a precision that seems to be important. For Girard indeed, the degradation of the fictional world, the

progress of the ontological sickness, and the increase of metaphysical desire are expressed in a greater or lesser mediatization that progressively increases the distance between metaphysical desire and authentic search, the search for 'vertical transcendence'.

Nevertheless, by introducing the category of mediation, and even by exaggerating its importance, Girard has elucidated the analysis of a structure that involved not only the most important form of degradation in the fictional world but also the form that is, from a genetic point of view, probably the first, that which gave birth to the literary genre of the novel, the novel itself having emerged as the result of other derived forms of degradation.

From this point on, Girard's typology is based first of all on the existence of two forms of mediation, external and internal, the first characterized by the fact that the mediating agent is external to the world in which the hero's search takes place for example, the novels of chivalry in Don Quixote), the second by the fact that the mediating agent belongs to this world (the lover in *The Eternal Usband*).

Within these two qualitatively different groups, there is the idea of a progressive degradation that is expressed by the increasing proximity between the fictional character and the mediating agent, and the increasing distance between this character and vertical transcendence.

Let us now try to elucidating an essential point on which Lukacs and Girard are in fundamental disagreement. As the story of a degraded search

for authentic values in an inauthentic world, the novel is necessarily both a biography and a social chronicle. A particularly important fact is that the situation of the writer in relation to the world he had created is, in the novel, different from the situation in relation to the world of any other literary form. This particular situation, Girard calls humour Lukacs call it irony. Both agree that the novelist must supersede the consciousness of his heroes and that this supersession (humour or irony) is aesthetically constitutive of fictional creation. But they diverge as to the nature of this supersession and, on this point, it is the position of Lukacs that seems to me to be acceptable and not that of Girard.

For Girard, the novelist has left the world of degradation and rediscovered authenticity, vertical transcendence, at the moment he writes his work. This is why he thinks that most great novels end with a conversion of the hero to this vertical transcendence that the abstract character of certain endings is either an illusion on the part of the reader, or the result of survivals from the past in the consciousness of the writer.

Such a notion is strictly contrary to Lukacs's aesthetic, for which any literary form (and any great artistic form in general) is born out of the need to express an essential content. If the fictional degradation were really superseded by the writer, even though the ultimate conversion of a number of heroes, the story of this degradation would be no more than a mere incident and its expression would have at most the character of a more or less entertaining narrative.

And yet the writer's irony, his autonomy in relation to his characters, the ultimate conversion of the fictional heroes are undoubted realities.

However, Lukacs thinks that precisely to the extent that the novel is the imaginary creation of a world governed by universal degradation, this supersession cannot itself be other than degraded, abstract, conceptual, and not experienced as a concrete reality.

According to Lukacs the novelist's irony is directed not only on to the hero, whose demonical character he is well aware of, but also on the abstract, and therefore inadequate and degraded, character of his own consciousness. That is why the story of the degraded search, whether demoniacal or idolatrous, always remains the sole way of expressing essential realities.

Thus the novel, in the sense given it by Lukacs and Girard, appears as a literary genre in which authentic values, which are always involved, cannot be present in the work in the form of conscious characters or concrete realities. These values exist only in an abstract, conceptual form in the consciousness of the novelist in which they take on an ethical character. But abstract ideas have no place in a literary work, where they would form a heterogeneous element.

The problem of the novel, therefore, is to make what in the novelist's consciousness in abstract and ethical the essential element of a work in which reality can exist only in the mode of a non-thematized (Girard would say mediatized) absence or, which is equivalent, a degraded presence. As Lukacs

says, the novel is the only literary genre in which the novelist's ethic becomes an aesthetic problem of the work.

The problem of a sociology of the novel has always preoccupied sociologists of literature, though, as yet, no decisive step towards its elucidation has so far been attempted. Basically, the novel, for the first part of its history, was a biography and a social chronicle and so it has always been possible to show that the social chronicle reflected to a greater or lesser degree the society of the period- and one does not have to be a sociologist to see that.

On the other hand, a connection has also been made between the transformation of the novel since Kafka and the Marxist analysis of reification. Here, too, it has to be said that serious sociologists should have seen this as a problem rather than as an explanation. Corresponding to the analysis of reification as developed by Marx and later Marxists, the problem arises as to why, when this analysis was elaborated in the second half of the nineteenth century and concerned a phenomenon that appeared in a still earlier period, this same phenomenon was expressed in the novel only at the end of World War 1.

In short, all these analyses concern the relation between certain elements of the content of fictional literature and the existence of a social reality that they reflect almost without transposition or by means of a more or less transparent transposition.

But the first problem that a sociology of the novel should have confronted is that of the relation between the novel form itself and the structure of the social environment in which it developed, that is say, between the novel as a literary genre and individualistic modern society.

It seems to me today that a combination of the analyses of Lukacs and Girard, even though they were both developed without specifically sociological preoccupations, makes it possible, if not to elucidate this problem entirely, at least to make a decisive step towards its elucidation. As said that the novel can be characterized as the story of a search for authentic values in a degraded mode, in a degraded society and that this degradation, in so far as it concerns the hero, is expressed principally through the mediatization, the reduction of authentic values to the implicit level and their disappearance as manifest realities. This is, obviously a particularly complex structure and it would be difficult to imagine that it could one day emerge simply from individual invention without any basis in the social life of the group.

What, however, would be quite inconceivable, is that a literary form of such dialectical complexity should be rediscovered, over a period of centuries, among the most different writers in the most varied countries, that it should have become the form par excellence in which was expressed, on the literary plane, the content of a whole period, without there being either a homology or a significant relation between this form and the most important aspects of social life.

This hypothesis seems to me particularly simple and above all productive and credible, though it has taken me years to find it.

The novel form seems to be, in effect, to be the transposition on the literary plane of everyday life in the individualistic society created by market production. There is a rigorous homology between the literary form of the novel. Goldman defined it with the help of Lukacs and Girard, and the everyday relation between man and commodities in general, and by extension between men and other men, in a market society.

The natural, healthy relation between men and commodities is that in which production is consciously governed by future consumption, by the concrete qualities of objects, by their use value.

Now what characterizes market production is, on the contrary, the elimination of this relation with men's consciousness, its reduction to the implicit through the mediation of the new economic reality created by this form of production.

In other forms of society, when a man needed an article of clothing or a house, he had to produce them himself or obtain them from someone capable of producing them and who was under an obligation to provide him with them, either in accordance with certain traditional rules, or for reasons of authority, friendship, etc., or as part of some reciprocal arrangement.

If one wishes to obtain an article of clothing or a house today, one has to find the money needed to buy them. The producer of clothes or houses is

indifferent to the use values of the objects he produces. For him, these objects are no more than a necessary evil to obtain what alone interests him, an exchange value sufficient to ensure the viability of his enterprise. In the economic life, which constitutes the most important part of modern social life, every authentic relation with the qualitative aspect of objects and persons tends to disappear antihuman relations as well as those between men and things and be replaced by a mediatized and degraded relation: the relation with purely quantitative exchange values.

Of course, use values continue to exist and even to govern, in the last resort, the whole of the economic life; but their action assumes an implicit character, exactly like that of authentic values in the fictional world.

On the conscious, manifest plane, the economic life is composed of people oriented exclusively towards exchange values, degraded values, to which are added in production a number of individuals the creators in every sphere- who remain essentially orientated towards use values and who by virtue of that fact are situated on the fringes of society and become problematic individuals and, of course, even these individuals unless they accept the romantic illusion (Girard would say lie) of the total rupture between essence and appearance, between the inner self and the social life, cannot be deluded as to the degradations that their creative activity undergoes in a market society, when this activity is manifested externally, when it becomes a book, a painting, teaching, a musical composition, etc. enjoying a certain prestige, and having therefore a certain price. It should be

added that as the ultimate consumer, opposed in the very act of exchange to the producers, any individual in a market society finds himself at certain moments of the day aiming at qualitative use values that he can obtain only through the mediation of exchange values.

In view of this, there is nothing surprising about the creation of the novel as a literary genre. Its apparently extremely complex form is the one in which men live every day, when they are obliged to seek all quality, all use value in a mode degraded by the mediation of quantity, of exchange value- and this in a society in which any effort to orientated oneself directly towards use value can only produce individuals who are themselves degraded, but in a different mode, that of the problematic individual.

Thus the two structures, that of an important fictional genre and that of exchange proved to be strictly homologous, to the point at which one might speak of one and the same structure manifesting itself on two different planes. Furthermore, the evolution of the fictional form that corresponds to the world of reification can be understood only in so far as it is related to a homologous history of the structure of reification.

The problem important for the sociologist, of the process by which the literary form was able to emerge out of the economic reality, and of the modification that the study of this process forces us to introduce into the traditional representation of the sociological conditioning of literary creation.

One fact is striking at the outset; the traditional scheme of literary sociology, whether Marxist or not, cannot be applied in the case of the structural homology just referred to. Most work in the sociology of literature established a relation between the most important literary works and the collective consciousness of the particular social group from which they emerged. On this point, the traditional Marxist position does not differ essentially from non-Marxist sociological work as a whole, in relation to which it introduces only form new ideas.

- The literary work is not the mere reflection of a real, given collective consciousness, but the culmination at a very advanced level of coherence of tendencies peculiar to the consciousness of a particular group, a consciousness that must be conceived as a dynamic reality, orientated towards a certain state of equilibrium. What really separates, in this as in all other spheres, Marxist sociology from positivistic, relativist, or eclectic sociological tendencies is the fact that it sees the key concept not in the real collective consciousness, but in the constructed concept (zugerechnet) of possible consciousness which, alone, makes an understanding of the first possible.
- The relation between collective ideology and great individual literary, philosophical, theological etc. creations resides not in an identity of content, but in a more advanced coherence and in a homology of structures, which can be expressed in imaginary contents very different from the real content of the collective consciousness.

- The work corresponding to the mental structure of the particular social group may be elaborated in certain exceptional cases by an individual with very few relations with this group. The social character of the work resides above all in the fact that an individual can never establish by himself a coherent mental structure corresponding to what is called a 'world view'. Such a structure can be elaborated only by a group, the individual being capable only of carrying it to a very high degree of coherence and transposing it on the level of imaginary creation, conceptual thought, etc.
- The collective consciousness is neither a primary reality, nor an autonomous reality; it is elaborated implicitly in the overall behaviour of individuals participating in the economic, social, political life, etc

These are evidently extremely important theses, sufficient to establish a very great difference between Marxist thinking and other conceptions of the sociology of literature. Nevertheless, despite these differences, Marxist theoreticians, like positivistic or relativistic sociologists of literature, have always thought that the social life can be expressed on the literary, artistic, or philosophical plane only through the intermediary link of the collective consciousness.

Although we find a strict homology between the structures of economic life and a certain particularly important manifestation, one can detect no analogous structure at the level of the collective consciousness that seemed hitherto to be the indispensable inter-mediary link to realize either the

homology or an intelligible, significant relation between the different aspects of social existence.

The novel analysed by Lukacs and Girard no longer seems to be the imaginary transposition of the conscious structures of a particular group, but seems to express on the contrary (and this may be the case of very large part of modern art in general) a research for values that no social group defends effectively and that the economic life tends to make implicit in all members of the society.

The old Marxist thesis whereby the proletariat was seen as the only social group capable of constituting the basis of a new culture, by virtue of the fact that it was not integrated into the reified society, set out from the traditional sociological representation that presupposed that all authentic, important cultural creation could emerge only from a fundamental harmony between the mental structure of the creator and that of a partial group of relative size, but universal ambition. In reality, for Western proletariat, far from remaining alien to the reified society and opposing it as a revolutionary force, has on the contrary become integrated into it to a large degree, and its trade union and political action, far from overthrowing this society and replacing it by a socialist world, has enabled it to gain a relatively better place in it than Marx's analysis foresaw.

Furthermore, cultural creation, although increasingly threatened by the reified society, has continued to flourish. Fictional literature, as perhaps modern poetic creation and contemporary painting, are authentic forms of

cultural creation even though they cannot be attached to the consciousness—even a potential one of a particular social group.

Before embarking on a study of the processes that made possible and produced this direct transposition of the economic life into the literary life, we should perhaps remark that although such a process seems contrary to the whole tradition of Marxist studies of cultural creation, it confirms nevertheless, in a quite unexpected way, one of the most important Marxist analyses of bourgeois thought, namely the theory of the fetishization of merchandise and reification. This analysis, which Marx regarded as one of his most important discoveries, affirms in effect that in market societies (that is to say, in types of society in which economic activity predominates), the collective consciousness gradually loses all active reality and tends to become a mere reflection of the economic life and ultimately, to disappear.

There was obviously, therefore, between this particular analysis of Marx and the general theory of literary and philosophical creation of later Marxists, who presupposed an active role of the collective consciousness, not a contradiction but an incoherence. The latter theory never envisaged the consequences for the sociology of literature of Marx's belief that there survives in market societies a radical modification of the status of the individual and collective consciousness and, implicitly, relations between the infrastructure and the superstructure. The analysis of reification elaborated first by Marx on the level of everyday life, then developed by Lukacs in the field of philosophical, scientific, and political thought, finally taken up by a

number of theoreticians in various specific domains, and about which I have myself published a study, would appear therefore, for the moment at least, to be confirmed by the facts in the sociological analysis of a certain fictional form.

Having said this, the question arises as to how the link between the economic structures and literary manifestations is made in a society in which this link occurs outside the collective consciousness.

With regard to this Goldman has formulated the hypothesis of the convergent action of four different factors, namely:

- The birth in the thinking of members of bourgeois society, on the basis of economic behaviour and the existence of exchange value, of the category of mediation as a fundamental and increasingly developed form of thought, with an implicit tendency to replace this thought by a total false consciousness in which the mediating value becomes an absolute value and in which the mediated value disappears entirely or, to put it more clearly, with the tendency to conceive of the access to all values from the point of view of mediation, together with a propensity to make of money and social prestige absolute values and not merely mediations that provide access to other values of a qualitative character.
- The survival in this society of a number of individuals who are essentially problematic in so far as their thinking and behaviour remain dominated by qualitative values, even though they are unable to extract themselves

entirely from the existence of the degrading mediation whose action permeates the whole of the social structure.

These individuals include, above all, the creators, writers, artists, philosophers, theologians, men of action, etc, whose thought and behaviour are governed above all by the quality of their work even though they cannot escape entirely from the action of the market and from the welcome extended them by the refined society.

- Since no important work can be the expression of a purely individual experience, it is likely that the novel genre could emerge and be developed only in so far as a non-conceptualized, affective discontent, an affective aspiration towards qualitative values, was developed either in society as a whole, or perhaps solely among the middle strata from which most novelists have come.
- Lastly, in the liberal market societies, there was a set of values, which, though not trans-individual, nevertheless, had a universal aim and, within these societies, a general validity. These were the values of liberal individualism that were bound up with the very existence of the competitive market (in France, liberty, equality, and property in Germany, Bildungsideal, with their derivatives, tolerance, the rights of man, development of the personality, etc). on the basis of these values, there developed the category of individual biography that became the constitutive element of the novel. Here, however, it assumed the form of the problematic individual, on the basis of the following.:

1. The personal experience of the problematic individuals
2. The internal contradiction between individualism as a universal value produced by bourgeois society and the important and painful limitations that this society itself brought to the possibilities of the development of the individual.

This hypothetical schema seems to me to be confirmed among other things by the fact that, when one of these four elements, individualism, has gradually been eliminated by the transformation of the economic life and the replacement of the economy of free competition by an economy of cartels and monopolies (a transformation that began at the end of the nineteenth century, but whose qualitative turning-point most economists would place between 1900 and 1910. It witnesses a parallel transformation of the novel form that culminates in the gradual dissolution and disappearance of the individual character, of the hero; a transformation that seems to me to be characterized in an extremely schematic way by the existence of two periods:

- The first, transitional period, during which the disappearance of the importance of the individual brings with it attempts to replace biography as the content of the work of fiction with values produced by different ideologies. For although, in Western societies, these values have proved to be too weak to produce their own literary forms they might well give a new lease of life to an already existing form that was losing its former content. First and foremost, on this level, are the ideas of community and collective reality (institutions, family, social group, revolution etc) that had

been introduced and developed in Western thinking by the socialist ideology.

- The second period, which begins more or less with Kafka and continues to the contemporary nouveau roman, and which has not yet come to an end, is characterized by an abandonment of any attempt to replace the problematic hero and individual biography by another reality and by the effort to write the novel of the absence of the subject, of the non-existence of any ongoing search.

It goes without saying that this attempt to safeguard the novel form by giving it a content, related no doubt to the content of the traditional novel but nevertheless essentially different was to produce at the same time parallel orientations towards different forms of expression. There may be here elements for a sociology of the theatre of absence (Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov during a certain period) and also of certain aspects of non-figurative painting.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that problem that might and ought to be the subject of later research. The novel form that we have just studied is essentially critical and oppositional. It is a form of resistance to developing bourgeois society. An individual resistance that can fall back, within a group, only on affective and non-conceptualized psychical processes precisely because conscious resistances that might have elaborated literary forms implying the possibility of a positive hero (in the first place, a proletarian oppositional consciousness such as Marx had hoped for and predicted) had not become sufficiently developed in Western societies. The novel with a

problematic hero thus proves, contrary to traditional opinion, to be a literary form bound up certainly with history and the development of the bourgeoisie, but not the expression of the real or possible consciousness of that class.

But the problem remains as to whether, parallel with this literary form, there did not develop other forms that might correspond to the conscious values and effective aspirations of the bourgeoisie; and on this point it should be mentioned merely as a general and hypothetical suggestion, the possibility that the work of Balzac whose structure view might constitute the only great literary expression of the world as structured by the conscious values of the bourgeoisie: individualism, the thirst for power, money, and eroticism, which triumph over the ancient feudal values of altruism, charity, and love.

Sociologically, this hypothesis, if it proves to be correct, might be related to the fact that the work of Balzac is situated precisely at a period in which individualism, a historical in itself, structured the consciousness of a bourgeoisie that was in the process of constructing a new society and found itself at the highest and most intense level of its real historical efficacy. With the exception of this single case, this form of fictional literature had only a secondary importance in the history of Western culture, why the real consciousness and aspirations of the bourgeoisie never succeeded again, in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in creating literary form of its own that might be situated on the same level as the other forms that constitute the Western literary tradition.

On this point Goldmann make a few general hypotheses. The analysis that developed extends to one of the most important novel forms a statement that now seems to be valid for almost all forms of authentic cultural creation. In relation to this statement the only expression that can be seen for the moment was constituted precisely by the work of Balzac, who was able to create a great literary universe structured by purely individualistic values, at a historical moment when, concurrently, men animated by a historical values were accomplishing a considerable historical upheaval (an upheaval that was not really completed in France until the end of the bourgeois revolution in 1848). It seems that there is valid literary and artistic creation only when there is an aspiration to transcendence on the part of the individual and a search for qualitative transindividual values.

Slightly altering Pascal, Goldmann has written 'Man passes beyond man', this means that man can be authentic only in so far as he conceived himself or feels himself as part of a developing whole and situates himself in a historical or transcendent trans-individual dimension. But bourgeois ideology, bound up like bourgeois society itself with the existence of economic activity, is precisely the first ideology in history that is both radically profane and a historical; the first ideology whose tendency is to deny anything sacred, whether the otherworldly sacredness of the transcendent religions or the immanent sacredness of the historical future. The fundamental reason why bourgeois society created the first radically nonaesthetic form of consciousness. The essential character of bourgeois ideology rationalism, ignores in its extreme expressions they very existence of art. There is no

Cartesian or spinozian aesthetics, or even an aesthetics for Baumgarten – art is merely an inferior form of knowledge.

It is no accident therefore if, with the exception of a few particular situations, one do not find any great literary manifestations of the bourgeois consciousness itself. In a society bound up with the market the artists is a problematic individual, and this means a critical individual, opposed to society.

Nevertheless refined bourgeois ideology had its thematic values, values that were sometimes authentic, such as those of individualism, sometimes purely conventional, which Lukacs called false consciousness and, in their extreme forms, bad faith, and Heidegger's 'chatter'. These stereotypes, whether authentic or conventional, thematized in the collective consciousness, were later able to produce, side by side with the authentic novel form, a parallel literature that also recounted an individual history and, naturally enough, since conceptualized values were involved, could depict a positive hero.

It would be interesting to follow the meandering of the secondary novel forms that might be based, quite naturally, on the collective consciousness. One would end up perhaps with very varied spectrum, from the lowest forms of the Dely type to the highest forms to be found perhaps in such writers as Alexandre Dumas or Eugene Sue. It is also perhaps on this plane that we should situate, parallel with the nouveau roman, certain best sellers that are bound up with the new forms of collective consciousness.

However, the extremely schematic sketch by Goldmann provide a framework for a sociological study of the novel form. Such a study would be all the more important in that, apart from its own object, it would constitute a not inconsiderable contribution to the study of the psychical structures of certain social groups, the middle strata in particular¹¹.

Every society or class has some basic values. The expression of these values in literature make a literature good. According to Marxian literacy thought literature reflects society. In reality, Marxism is a new view but there is flux in Marxism. Marxism has developed by taking elements of old culture. Therefore it is very important for a writer that when he writes something he should first learn from the previous writings.

Society & literature are closely related. They are dependent on one another. Both influence each other and also express one another. If the society is going on a wrong path, literature of that era will bring it on right path and if literature is going on the wrong path, the society will take care of it. The root cause of the French revolution is the literature of the French thinkers. In the freedom of any country, the literature has played an important role. Even in the Indian Freedom struggle our literary thinkers have contributed a lot.

Dr. Amit Sharma opines that there is a complete relation between literature and society. If this relation is seen through human consciousness then this relation is dialectical. There has been organised efforts to

¹¹ Goldmann, Lucien-Towards a Sociology of Novel, 1964, Pg. 1-15.

understand this relation. In these efforts, the latest, the well organised and the most balanced effort is the sociology of literature.¹²

- In this way sociology of literature is an effort to understand literature through sociological view. The change that takes place is the base of society. Literature tries to understand that change. The change that takes place in literature, society tries to understand that. In the era of globalisation the importance and role of sociology of literature will increase. When man will run here & there to be a machine then sociology of literature will give it a new vision.

¹² Samred-11, Sampadak Kishan Kaljeyi, Pg. no. 118, writer–Amit Sharma, Samaj Shashtariya Vimarsh ke Aayam, Feb 2002.

Chapter-3

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE IN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE IN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

India is a complex civilization especially when its literary tradition is concerned. Indian social thought in pre-modern times was the articulation of a multi-ethnic society. Indian society has been changing and adapting itself to new conditions and has wide ranging influence on the life style and values. The freedom of enquiry prevailed in India and there was no persecution of any group on grounds of belief. Hence, a tolerant attitude towards each other characterised the Indian social groups. Indian philosophy was mainly cultivated among the literate, urban-based classes.

When we see Indian social structure we notice that traditionally caste system, joint family and Panchayats are the bases of Indian social life. In this caste system with its complexities is a secondary institution. The caste system served as a first field to be studied. In this field D.N. Majumdar, Risley and Hutton have also worked in this field. According to Risley, the different castes are a result of Anuloma (Hypergamy) whereas for Hutton, the occupation is the criterion for dividing society into castes. The division of society is well portrayed in Indian literature. Literature is an authentic record of everyday life of people. In literature the history of social life is recorded as society as constructed on the basis of social interaction.

The relationship shared between history of literature and history of society is similar to the relationship between sociology of literature and sociology for the development of history of literature, the development of

historical writing of society is important. In the same way for the development of sociological view of literature, the development of sociology is important.

As the developments of historical writing of literature helps in the historical writing of society, in the same way, sociology helps in creating the sociological view of art and literature¹. Manager Pandey emphasises that in Hindi literature the historical writings of society have influenced in many ways the historical writing of literature². Though it is true about Hindi, the same cannot be said about sociology. Dr. Amit Kumar Sharma writes that in the tradition of sociological discussion, literature has not been used fully in understanding the Indian society and culture even today. T.N. Madan in his book, 'Non-Renumeration' has for the first time tried to understand Indian culture through U.R. Anantha Murthy's 'Samskara', Bhagvaticharan Varma's 'Chitrlekha', Vishnu Sakharam Khandekars Vayati and T. Jankiraman's 'Appu ki ma ka Paap'. Sudhir Kakkar has tried to explore the man-woman relation in modern Indian society by making Krishna Sobatis novel 'Mitromahajani' as the base of his psychoanalysis³.

In spite of this, sociology of art and literature in India has not been developed fully. This is substantiated by D.P. Mukherji's statement in 1956. 'Field of sociology of art is still in the dark age'⁴.

¹ Manak Pandey, Sahitya ke Samajshashtra in Bhumika, 1989, Pg. No. 66.

² Ibid, 77.

³ Samved-11, Edited by Kishan Kaljaji, writer Amit Kumar Sharma, Samaj Shashtriya Vimarsh ke Aayan, Feb. 2002, pg. 128.

⁴ Manager Pandey, Sahitya ke Samajshashtra ki Bhumika, 1999, Pg. No.78

Dr. Kapadia has tried to analyse the Hindu kinship and Indian family relations through his works- 'Hindu Kinship' (1947) and 'Marriage and family in India'. Dr. Ghurye has put forward his theory of caste and class in his book 'Caste and class in India' (1957). This book has been rewritten by him. Ghurye has made a comparative study of institution of family in India and Europe in his book, 'Family and Kin in Indo-European culture' (1955). In 1953, he had conducted a study on 'Indian Sadhur', which is also a great contribution in the field of study of sociology of India. Another important name in this field is P.N. Prabhu. His main writing 'Hindu Social Organisation' (1954) is an important writing. In this book, a detailed analysis of caste system and ashram system has been done.

In modern times, the studies have been conducted not only in relation to social institutions but also in relation to rural communities. In this field the two important thinkers are M.N. Srinivas and S.C. Dubey. Dr. Kailash Nath has also studied caste system and leadership in rural community. After independence not only government but Indian sociologists are also studying rural communities in detail. That is why, rural sociology has developed in India in which different aspects of Indian rural life are being studied. Rural life is real Indian life. If through literature, one wants to know the life of rural India then the literature by Premchand is quite enriching. 'Hori' and 'Dhania' represents the reality of poor farmers. The novel also enquires into the social conditions compelling farmers to become labourers. If we look for a reason, for this social reality, it is due to the changing social structure and arrival of capitalism.

Sociology of Literature- Indian Thinkers View Point

Today's sociological thought is devoid of news on culture, art and literature but it should not be concluded that in sociology there never was a tradition of sociology of culture. The significant beginning of sociology of culture and literature can be seen in the writings of D.P. Mukherjee, with the beginning of sociology of literature in India.

D.P. Mukherjee was a writer apart from being an economist and a sociologist. He was a famous critic of Bengali literature of his times. He has written many books in Bengali. In the introduction of his book 'Diversities', he writes that ten of these books are in Bengali and nine are in English. In Bengal, he is considered as a lover of literature and music and in the rest of the country, as a Sociologist and Economist⁵. D.P. has evaluated the works of Rabindra Nath Tagore and other contemporary writers. He was associated in the process of making of modern Bengali literature.

D.P. Mukherjee was a supporter of linking sociology with North Indian social tradition and individuals. In one of his lectures, he said that, for an Indian sociologist it is not important to be a sociologist but what is important is that he should also understand the Indian social structure. He should also know the ways and customs of social life. Manager Pandey opines that to know elite class, one should have knowledge of Sanskrit and to know local

⁵ Manager Pandey, *Sahitya ke Samajashashtra ki Bhumita*, 1989, Pg. No. 79.

culture, one should know the local dialect. Generally, sociologists of today do not know Sanskrit and Persian.

In sociological thought until the help of Sanskrit and other languages are taken, it is difficult to understand the tradition and symbols of Indian society⁶. Manager Pandey looks at sociology with literary view. He takes different languages as a problem but it is not so, as now a days everything is available through translation in all languages. One need not see society through language but through social view. To understand Indian social structure, there is need of modern view, i.e. to understand Indian Social System, it is important to understand interaction between individuals.

D.P. Mukherjee takes historical view of sociology. He says that a science that gives importance to fact only, that cannot be called science and in the same way, history that does not involve anything except facts cannot be a history of social change. The scientific study of facts does not mean search for facts but for relations between facts and values and validity and symbols. According to D.P. Mukherjee, Sociology is mainly a study of tradition in which study of symbols has an important place⁷. On the basis of this sociological view D.P. Mukherjee has helped in the development of the sociology of art and literature. He is of the view that culture is man made and as its study is possible through historical view. Mukherjees view about culture is in the

⁶ Manager Pandey, *Sahitya ke Samajashashtra ki Bhumita*, 1989, Pg. No. 81.

⁷ D.P. Mukherjee, *Diversities*, 1958, Pg. No. 239-240.

interest of people. With this view he has sociologically explained the change and development of Indian art, culture and literature.

D.P. Mukherjee's sociological view about art and literature can be seen in his book. In the context of art, it is not difficult to search the effect of sociological reality and changing views. Generally in sociology of art and literature one can see such explanations. D.P. Mukherjee had also begun sociological explanation of art in this form only.

He opines that because of weakness of relationship between literature and society, the development of sociology of literature is not taking place and whatever is taking place is not authentic. The critique of literature does not have a knowledge of sociology and sociologists do not have knowledge of real situation or condition of contemporary literature. The biggest problem is that most sociologists in the name of specialisation in the field of knowledge ignore totality and as a result, there is less possibility of development of sociology of literature. The lack of collective view instead of unifying them has treated a distance between the various branches of sociology of knowledge.

D.P. Mukherjee is of the view that in Hindi, Bengali and Urdu poetry, one finds effects of social change. The subject matter of modern poetry is not confined to love and nature. Today all the aspects of life are explained in the poetry. Poetry is written on subjects like Shums, rail engineer, poles, black crows, factories and strikes. The things present in reality in modern life are finding place in literature and they are expressed in novels and stories. }Such

changes have not taken place in folk songs and folk tales, therefore, their context still speaks of the old things⁸.

According to Amit Sharma, to understand sociology of literature, the use for consultation is possible only in the analysis of mythologies, topics and novels. With the help of stories and poetry one can understand the events of social life through psychological view but not the society. To understand society, the content of literature should be understood⁹.

Mukherjee, himself was a writer and he had talked about the sociology of novel in one of his articles named, 'Social problems-problems in literature'. In this article he has minutely investigated each part involved in the making of a novel and has shown the social aspect of each part. He has written that modern novel moves with the modern life style¹⁰.

D.P. Mukherjee has explained the belief and values that inspired the literature of late 19th century and early 20th century. Faith in progress, faith in individual, faith in discretion and faith in mankind are the social beliefs, according to Mukherjee¹¹. These beliefs are found in all Indian literature. He also studied critical literature apart from creative literature and its development. He further studied the western influence on the history belief.

⁸ Menager Pandey, Sahitya ke Samajashastra ki Bhamita, 1989, Pg. No. 83.

⁹ Samved-11, Edited by Kishan Kalayji, Writer Amit Kumar Sharma, Samaj Shashtriya Vimarsh ke Aayam, Feb. 2002, Pg. 128.

¹⁰ Manager Pandey, Sahitya ke Samajashashtra ki Bhumika, 1989, Pg. No. 84.

¹¹ Ibid, Pg. 84.

Though Marxism has helped in understanding the condition of historical development but has not given a satisfying solution to human problems. He says it can only be solved by reforming Indian culture.

Anand Coomarswamy has been one of the pioneer social thinkers, who contributed a lot in sociology. He was an idealistic thinker, who believed in God and gave importance to values like good deeds. He extensively explored the evolution of art in India, especially architecture and sculpture. Coomarswamy is of the view that Indian art in its various forms is not merely a thing for decoration but it is a symbol to understand the Indian mind which recognises oneness of all in the universe or unity in diversity. It is a permanent certificate of a great civilisation. His important writings are "Dance of Shiva" and "Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art". He has tried to study the art from sociological point and his contribution in the field of sociology of art and literature has been commendable.

G.S. Ghurye had great interest in Indian art. In his view, there are some common elements in monuments of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Their subject matter was based on Vedas, epics and puranas whereas the Muslim art inherit the culture of Persian and Arabian, whose base was not Indian. Ghurye did not agree to the view that in movements of Indian Muslims, there is a combination of Hinduism and Islam. In Muslim buildings, the elements of Hindu art were used only for decoration purpose. He opines that unlike Muslims, Rajputs retained Hindu values and patterns though they were politically controlled by Muslims. Ghurye has written about the attires of

people from Ancient to Modern India. He has tried to show the diversity in dresses through the art of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. In this way, he has tried to study the Indian society through art which forms an important part of sociology of art and literature.

Radha Kamal Mukherjee has also written about Indian art but his views differ from Ghurye. He has looked at art as an important vehicle of values and ideals of civilization whereas Ghurye has seen art in the aspect of Hinduism. Ghurye says that by looking at Rajput art, their faith in Hinduism can be observed but Mukherjee has seen his artistic fact with a different perspective. He says that Rajputs were busy in making monuments enthusiastically so that their monuments are conserved as cultural heritage in centuries to come. They used their resources to conserve the art. Thus, in this way, Radhakamal Mukherjee has seen the society through art from different perspectives; which give a whole new perspective to Sociology of art and literature.

P.C. Joshi has further developed the sociological thought and tradition of Lucknow School. While talking about the important characteristics of Lucknow School, he says that values make a deep relation between Sanskrit and Sociology. Without the knowledge of culture, sociology seems insignificant. It does not only lose its path but also looks very inhuman. In the same way, culturalist also get inspiration from sociology. The debate between the two is very helpful and is very important in today's India to understand the

deteriorating condition of values in this selfish world¹². P.C. Joshi tried to put forward this debate.

P.C. Joshi believes that struggle, economic resolution and cultural awareness are linked with one another. Therefore, he analyses the cultural problem through historical social view by keeping the aim of revival of national of democracy. It may be possible that literature does not agree with it but one cannot doubt on their tension about Indian society and culture. For them, sociology is not a subject of neutrality but it is a medium of making people understand Indian society, culture and real situation of people. On these grounds, he has developed his sociological thought.

Dr. Amit Kumar Sharma writes that the importance of Anand Coomarswamy's in Lucknow school of thought is same as that of Ram Chander Shukla in Hindi. Radha Kamal Mukherjee has written two books on Indian art, one is "Cosmic art of India" and the other is the flowering of Indian art". In these books to understand the Indian culture, composition of art and literature and symbolic structure, he has adopted Anand and Coomarswamy's views¹³.

In spite of all these thoughts, the sociology of literature is not so developed. According to Dr. Amit Kumar Sharma, "the proper development of sociology of literature in Indian sociology has not yet taken place but sociology of knowledge, sociology of culture and sociology of symbols have

¹² P.C. Joshi-Parivartan aur Vikas ke Sanskritik Aayam, 1987, Pg. No. 74.

¹³ Samwed-11, Edited by Kishan, Kalyaji, with Amit Kumar Sharma, Samaj Shashtriya Vimarsh ke Aayam, Feb. 2002, Pg. 127.

developed a lot and its new tradition is used for understanding the Indian religion and culture. After the decade of 1970 there has been a qualitative change in the study of society and culture. These changes can be seen in the writings and books of thinkers like J.P.S. Oberoi, A.K. Saran, C.N. Venugopal, Veena Das, T.N. Madan, Louis Dumont, Milton Singer, Mckim Marriot, Ronald Indane and Ved Prakash Batuk¹⁴. He further writes that unfortunately this has not been added to the part of the syllabus of sociology and it is not seen in English also¹⁵. His views are very apt because for the development of sociological perspective this thought should be those.

¹⁴ Samwed-11, Edited by Kishan, Kalyaji, with Amit Kumar Sharma, Samaj Shashtriya Vimarsh ke Aayam, Feb. 2002, Pg. 127.

¹⁵ Ibid, 127.

Chapter-4

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE: AN ANALYSIS OF CHITRALEKHA AND AGNIVARSHA

SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE:

AN ANALYSIS OF CHITRALEKHA AND AGNIVARSHA

The present Chapter deals with Comparison between ChitraLekha and Agnivarsha in relation to sociology of literature. Chitralekha was written by Bhagwati Charan Verma in 1993. It portrays the life of to the times of Chandergupta Maurya. It presents a picture of that era. The other work is Agnivarsha written by Girish Karnad in 2001. It is based on a Myth. The idea of comparing novel with the play which is based on myth, is that the each presents a different literary form. Even Amit kumar sharma writes in 'Samved' that, to understand sociology of literature, its use as a discourse is possible only in the analysis of mythologies, epics and novels¹.

Agnivarsha is a myth related to Mahabharata and its central theme is forest festivity. When Pandavas were in exile, the tale of Agnivarsha was narrated to them by Saint Lomesh. The Vastness of epic of Mahabharata renders this particular narrative on its margin and so has been largely ignored by its reader. However, Girish Karnad discovered this episode, took vivid interest and is deeply influenced by it. This resulted into a very popular play of Agnivarsha of its times. The storyline of chitralekha and Agnivarsha have become so famous that their scripts have found a place in film industry.

¹ Samwed-11, Edited by Kishan, Kalyaji, with Amit Kumar Sharma, Samaj Shashtriya Vimarsh ke Aayam, Feb. 2002, Pg. 127.

Before entering into comparison between Chitrlekha and Agrivarsha, a summary of the respective themes would be underlined.

Chitrlekha opens with a questions which two disciples ask of their guru: they would like to know what *Papa* is, it being presumed that they have already been instructed in the nature and significance of its binary opposite, *Punya*. The guru says that he does not know what *papa* is, having no personal experience of it, suggesting that deductive reasoning will fail to provide an answer. He therefore decides to send the two young men to discover for themselves what *papa* is. One of them, a Brahman, is sent to become a disciple of a great yogi, Kumaragiri, and the other, a Kshatriya, is assigned as a servant to a feudal aristocrat Bijagupta.

Kumaragiri, is a yogi. Though youthful, he claims to have overcome all bodily desires and worldly attachments and found what he considers true happiness. Worldly life is to him the means to an end which is the life beyond corporeal existence. He is a scholar and an adept in ritualistic practices and has spiritual attainments to his credit. The peculiar combination of youth and non-attachment has given him the unique distinction of possessing both an effulgent presence and moral power.

Bijagupta is the opposite type: he is a young, handsome and wealthy feudal lord of high social status. Worldly attachments and joys, here and now, are the *summum bonum* of his life. Though unmarried, he has an apt companion in Chitrlekha, the city's most gifted and celebrated dancer. She is an intelligent and cultured person, and shares with Bijagupta his world

view. Born a Brahman, widowed at an early age, involved subsequently in a love affair, mother of an illegitimate child, life's ironies have led her through several changes of fortune into the affection of Bijagupta. 'Though his mistress, she lives independently of him, in a style which matches his. In their own eyes, and in the eyes of many people, their life too represents a moral choice which proclaims the superiority of life-affirming eroticism (using the word in its broadest sense) over life-denying asceticism.

The sequence of events which brings out the implications and significance of these choices is triggered off by a chance encounter between Kumaragiri and Bijagupta and Chitrlekha when the latter two seek shelter in his hermitage one night. Kumaragiri is greatly upset by the presence of a woman in his hut. On Bijagupta's inquiry as to why an ascetic, who has acquired mastery over his senses, should be reluctant to give shelter to a woman, Kumaragiri answers that woman represents the darkness of attachment, desire and illusion and has no place in the world of knowledge. This leads to a discussion between him and Chitrlekha over such metaphysical issues as appearance or the relativity of perception and reality or the thing-in-itself. The encounter produces an unusual result: the yogi sees knowledge as the dancer's most outstanding attribute and she finds him an irresistibly handsome man.

This encounter is followed by another in the royal court where Kautilya, the king's chief adviser, is expounding on the conflict between statecraft conflict between statecraft and justice (*niti*) on the one hand and

religious and moral duty (*dharma*) on the other. Kautilya is a rationalist and a pragmatist and considers morality, religion and even God as cultural constructs and, therefore, subject to criticism and rational reformulation. Kumaragiri, also present in the court, is unable to match Kautilya's logic but demonstrates spiritual power by performing a miracle.

Chitrlekha, who is also the court dancer, engages the yogi in argument and succeeds in making him confess that he had resorted to the performance of a miracle because he could not establish by argument the existence of a divine being or the supremacy of *Dharma*. Defending himself, he emphasizes the importance of faith and imagination for the seeker of the spirit. Chitrlekha is, however, judged by the court to have won the argument. Kumaragiri also knows this to be true; his particular sense of defeat arises from the fact that he has been vanquished in a philosophical debate by a 'fallen' woman, a mere dancer.

Defeated and dismayed, Kumaragiri retires to his hermitage but is visited there by Chitrlekha. She tells him that she has come to receive spiritual instruction from him; but actually she is in love with him. The yogi finds the situation incomprehensible: how can one devoted to the body's pleasures possibly become a seeker of things spiritual? Chitrlekha tries to silence his doubts, saying she has turned her back on her past. She knows, however, that she poses a threat to his whole being. This is, in fact, the threat that the realm of nature seemingly always poses to that of culture. While the human agent seeks *punya*, he is pursued by *papa*.

Moreover, Chitrlekha tries to teach Kumaragiri a view of the nature of woman contrary to that enunciated by him at their first meeting. Women is spiritual power (*Sakti*), she says, and the principle of creation. He who fears woman is unworthy of his humanity. Kumaragiri begins to experience, besides the power of her intellect, the attraction of her bodily beauty. He holds his ground, nevertheless, refusing to accept her as a disciple. He tells her that if he consents to impart spiritual instruction to her, he fears he will himself end by becoming her devotee, and that he is not prepared for such a reversal of roles. The vulnerability of his own moral choice is apparent to him.

Chitrlekha decides to leave Bijagupta. She informs him that she thinks she has become a burden on him and, therefore, ought to pull out of his life so that he can marry. However, she pledges eternal love for Bijagupta, love based on the union of souls rather than that of bodies. She thus recommends the transformation of the carnal relationship into a spiritual one.

Seeing through Chitrlekha's protestations, Bijagupta is greatly shaken by the turn of events. Without seeking it, he is thrown into the company of another feudal lord and his daughter, Yashodhara, while on a visit to Kashi. Yashodhara had earlier been offered to him in marriage but he had refused the offer, saying that, though he was formally unmarried, he considered Chitrlekha his wife. For him this was a question of moral

judgement rather than legal fact: marriage is not an event, he had said, but an everlasting physical-cum-spiritual bond between man and woman.

On one occasion an interesting conversation takes place between Bijagupta and Yashodhara about nature (*Prakrti*) and culture (*samskrti*). He is unmoved by her unbounded enthusiasm for nature and its beauty, and draws her attention to its harsh and ugly aspects. He also points out to her that, from the point of view of human beings, nature is incomplete. Human creations, without which life is impossible, have their origin in nature's imperfections.

Bijagupta subsequently has an encounter with a sannyasi who tells him that, though the creations of culture are intended to lighten the burden of nature, they are artificial and must not be regarded as being constitutive of life: such an attitude amounts to a denial of life itself. Culture extends and refines nature but, in the process, sets up its own tyranny. On another occasion, Bijagupta expounds a monistic doctrine in a discussion with Yashodhara's father, describing renunciation as not the opposite of attachment but only a change of the 'locus' of love.

Meanwhile, Chitrlekha has gone to Kumaragiri's hermitage. They undergo a transformation: she becomes genuinely interested in spiritual life and he falls in love with her: the erotic urge becomes the ascetic quest and vice versa. It is now Kumaragiri who propounds the doctrine of attachment and love of an embodied being. He who calls himself the renouncer of the unattached man (*viragi*) is, in fact, attached to the divine (*brahma*). The love

of the divine must include the love of all beings. He tells Chitrlekha that for him she is now the goal of his life. She, in turn, extols the virtue of self-control and advises him to try to conquer himself and not her—to try to seek the spirit and not the body. Finally, overwhelmed by desire, Kumaragiri lies to Chitrlekha that Bijagupta has married Yashodhara. This is a blow Chitrlekha finds hard to bear and, in her shock, she gives herself up to Kumaragiri.

Bijagupta is faced with his own moral choice. Considering himself free of any obligation to Chitrlekha, who has left him of her own accord, he finds himself drawing emotionally closer to Yashodhara and contemplates marriage with her. He, however, learns from Shvetanka, his companion—the same person who has come to him to find out what *papa is*—that the latter is in love with Yashodhara. His first reaction is to ask Shvetanka to move out of his way, but then he changes his mind: he makes his choice guided by the value of self-sacrifice. He advises Yashodhara's father to marry her to Shvetanka. To make this possible, he transfers all his wealth and property to Shvetanka: in the process, he bestows the social rank of a feudal lord on the young man. Bijagupta thus becomes a renouncer himself. On learning of all this, and of Kumaragiri's deception to her, Chitrlekha gives up Kumaragiri and her wealth, and joins Bijagupta in the quest of the spirit.

A year has passed since the guru sent out his two disciples to discover through their experience the significance of *papa*. They now return to him, each affirming the virtues of his own master. The guru points out to

- them that human beings are not autonomous moral agents at all; they are not free but engulfed in situations in the making of which they play no part.
- People neither commit sins nor perform meritorious acts; they simply do what they have to do, they make the choice dictated by their situation (*Paristhiti*). The Notion of 'situation' obviously includes the actor's own self as moulded by his or her previous choices.²

The play *Agnivarsha* by Girish Kanad open with the drought condition. The "Yagya" (religious Performance) is taking place for the drought. It is headed by a king and the main "purohit" (Priest) of the "yogya" is Parvasu, who is being called Adharvayu. A Kartanat (play director) enters the stage and is accompanied by an actor. He requests the king that they should be allowed to enact a play that will help the rain to come as it will please "Indra", the god of rain. The king is reluctant in allowing them because one of the actor is the brother of the Purohit (the main priest) who had been banished from that state by the purohit. Finally, the purohit gives confirmation for the enactment of the play and the flash back of the play takes place.

Aravasu, the younger brother of Pravasu, is talking to a girl Nittllai (a tribal girl) about their marriage, ceremony. She asks Aravasu to come and meet her parents in the evening as they want him to marry her that day itself. While talking, they discover Vishaka (sister in law of Aravasu and wife of Paravasu) making love with 'Yavarki', the cousin of Paravasu and this discovery shocks them. Yavarki and Vishakha were lovers before she got

² Madan, T.N.- Non-renunciation, 1987, Pg. 77-82.

married to Paravasu. Yavarki takes to asceticism for ten years and has come back now. He is said to have pleased the God "Indra", the God of rain and has come after seeing him. Vishakha tells him that Paravasu knew about her affair with Yavarki and he loved her a lot for one year and after that he left for presiding over a "Yagya" and has not come for seven years as he cannot come in the middle of the "yagya".

Nittallai gets into a argument with Yavarki about his seeing "Indra" and in the heat of the argument she asks him that whether he can predict time of his death if he has gained so much of knowledge. Yavarki loses his temper and says that he does not know the time of his death but is sure that she (Nittallai) will die within a month. At this Nittallai runs back to her place asking Aravasu to come before evening for the wedding as it will not take place after the sun set.

Vishakha and Aravasu come back to their home where Aravasu's father "Raibhya" is waiting for them. When they reach their home, Raibhya accuses them of having illicit relationship and asks for an explanation. Vishakha and Aravasu refuse at which Raibhya starts beating Vishakha who in rage tells Raibhya that she was with her Yavarki (her former lover). At this Raibhya 'takes an oath to destroy Yavarki. With his spiritual power he produces a devil called "BrahmRakshash" and sends him to destroy Yarvarki. Vishakha and Aravasu runs to save Yavarki and tells him to run from there but the arrogant Yarvarki refuses to take the threat seriously. He tells Vishakha that he has planned all this and now he will destroy Raibhya

and Parvasu. He shows them a pot in which there is some water and says that nobody can destroy him till the water is there in the pot. Vishakha is taken a back and in the rage of anger she splits the water. In the meantime the "Brahmrakshash" comes and kills Yavarki.

In the another scene, the whole tribe in sitting, five to six members are sitting on one side and the rest on the other side. They all are waiting for Arvasu to come. The sun is about to set and Arvasu's arrival was awaited.

Nittalai father is very tensed and doubts the arrival of Arvasu because the latter was a Brahmin and he will never marry a tribal girl. Nittalai faith in Arvasu however, is not deterred. After hours of waiting, Nittalai's father declares that as, Arvasu did not come, the marriage proposal of Nittalai is extended to the whole tribal community and with the announcement of such a proposal, a man cover forward and marries Nittalai, Arvasu, on the other hand reaches there but it is too late so he goes back in despair.

When Arvasu reaches his home, he finds his brother, Parvasu and father arguing as Prvasu has ran away from the Yagya and has come to meet his wife because he has heard the episode of Yavarki, his father, Raibhya Scolds him for doing so as it is a sin to leave the place of Yagya till the time Yagya is over. Parvasu meets Vishakha who tells about her miserable life and also the ill-treatments meted to her by her father-in-law. Parvasu in fit rage, takes his bow and arrow and kills his father. Vishakha is shocked and says that now her husband will never know that if she was

telling a lie or not. Pravasu returns back to the “Yagya” ordering his younger brother to Perform the rituals of his father’s crination.

When Pravasu is returning to the place of Yagya he meets the Brahmrakshash, who was produced by Raibhya to kill Yavarki. Brahmrakshash asks Parvasu to set him free from his “Rakshash” birth but Parvasu ignores him and go.

Next day when he is sitting in the ‘Yagya’ and enchanting Mantras, Aravasu comes to meet him. Parvasu without showing any trace of recognition asks him who he is and why has he come there Aravasu replies that he has come after performing the rituals of his father’s death who had a sudden death. When Pravasu asks how his father died, Aravasu replies that his son killed him Pravasu is astonished at his brother’s audacity and he accuses Aravasu of murdering his own father he order the guard to set him out of the city prohibiting from entering the city.

In the third seen, it a has been shown that Aravasu is unconscious and Nittalai in taking care of him. When he regains concisousness, he is shocked to see Nittalai and asks her how come she is here. Nittalai tells her that when she came to know about Aravash’s condition, she left her home and came to take came of him. She also tells him that he has been saved by actors. Aravasu discloses Nittalai that he wants to take revenge for what his brother has done to him but Nittalai asks him not to do so. Aravasu in very happy to be in the company of actors because he wanted to be an actor but his social status of being Brahmin did not allow him to do so. Now as his

sacred thread has been cut off because he was accused of killing his father, there are two charges on him Pitri Hatya (killing of father), and Brahmin Hatya, so he is no more a brahmin. He requests the Karta nat (Play director) to take him into his play. The Kartanat agrees to his request and enact a play to please the God of rain, Inder. Nittallai goes for food hunting where she see that her brother and husband are looking for her. She comes back to Aravasu. Here, the scene comes back to present where Karta-nat has got the Permission of enacting a play. The play starts with three character who are brothers, Inder, Vritrasur and Vishvaroop. The play shows that Inder who is son of brahma and is God of rain hates his brother Visharoop who in the king of the earth. Inder hates him because people like his brother a lot. The third brother Vritrasur is a demon and who always stay with Vishvaroop so that Indra would not kill him. Inder plans out and cleverly calls Vishvaroop for the Yagya which he is performing at his place. When Vishvaroop and Vritrasu reach the Yagya. Vritrasur is stopped by the guards because he is the son of a demon lady. Vishvaroop request Vritrasur to wait outside till he completes the Yagya. Vishvaroop is killed by Inder inside the Yagya.

Aravasu, who is playing the role of Vritrasur cannot take it and shouts. The real demon haunts Aravasu and he destroys everything around. When people try to stop him he starts killing them. Paravasu finds relation between the play and his life and feels guilty and gets killed in the destruction Nittallai come on the stage and remove the Mask, the moment mask is removed, Aravasu comes back to his senses. Here Nittallai is seen by his brother and husband and they kill her.

At this the God of rain, Inder comes and tells Aravasu to ask for whatever he wants. Aravasu tells God to give life back to Nittallai. At this Inder Says that if she is given life again then all the people who are dead will be given life and then you will have same problem. The crowd tells him to ask for rain and then suddenly the Brahmrakshash appears on the scene who pleads to Aravasu to ask for his freedom. Finally, Aravasu asks for Brahmraksh's freedoms from sorrows and rain comes.

COMPARISON OF THE TWO WORKS:-

The social milieu in both the works is very different. One take place in the jungle and the other one takes place in luxurios life of kings, lawyer and advisors. The novel revolves around the erotic and ascetic discussion and the play revolves around the spiritual discussion. In both the works the reality is far from being real in other words in both the works the character pretend to possess the virtue of goodness but in actuality, they are jealous, cunning and filled with hatred. In the language of sociology of literature, this says about the environment of writers. They have taken up the issues of Indian culture which states their interest and inclination towards Indian culture and society. they have talked about the minutest details of the culture and heritage that exist. They have also taken utmost care to mention the values and belief that are there in the Hindu system. The social set up is described in such a way that one while reading find himself in the social environment of that era. The life style of the tribes, actor and Brahmin depicted in the play shows their social status and position in the society. In the same way the life

style of Beejgupt, Kumargiri and Chitralkha depicted in the novel show their social position. The social environment by the writer is shown in such a way that it does not seem that they are written in modern age when the simple life has changed to machanised life. This social environment is important for the study as it affects the importance and existence of the literary works. In the opening of the Chitralkha when disciples ask their guru, the difference between *Papa* and *Punya*. The guru is unable to answer the questions and decided to send the two young men to discover for themselves the difference between *Papa* and *Punya* by their own experiences. In sociological term the experience comes with interaction and interaction amongst people create a social environment which make the study of the novel very sociological. The writer with the help of *Papa and Punya* does not want to show the morality and immorality but wants to show the "social consciousness" amongst the member of the society, which is the main base or crux of Marxism. In the end when both the character come back and tell about their experiences, their experiences are situation based which are, socially created. They define their definition of *Papa* and *Punya* on the basis of the social milieu they were given.

This shows how man is a slave of the social conditions or situation. In reality social condition or situation and social milieu is a part of human ecology. Park & Burgers have talked about human ecology. According to them human ecology can be defined on the basis of those temporary relations on which there is an impact of unequal and distributive power. Human ecology basically studies the impact of social circumstances on

human institution and human behaviour in relation to time and space. In the making and development of human community, ecology plays an important role. It affects all the aspects of a social system.

The importance of social environment and impact of social circumstances can be seen in Agnivarsha also. When Aravasu arrives at the place of Yagya and tells that he has completed the death rituals, Pravasu out of social fear accuse Aravasu of killing his father even before Aravasu could complete what he wanted to say. It was Pravasu who killed his father but his social circumstance force him to do so with Aravasu whom he has loved and brought up like his own son.

Thus the social milieu in both the literary works plays an important role and has great impact on the characters of both the works.

Apart from social milieu, the other things that plays an important role in sociology of literature is the type of social institution and values. The social institution like marriage has been the most important institution in the social set up. In Agnivasha Nittalai says, "*Nahi... Byah ke Pehle... Bilkul.....kuchch Bhi Nahi. Uske Pehle ladki apne honewali Marad ko Chhuye Bhee to Galat Hota hai. Hamari Yahan aisi hi Manta chaili aayi hai...*"³ " This throws light on the importance of marriage in all type of societies whether it in tribal or civilised.

³ Karnad, Girish, "Agnivarsha" 2001, Pg. 20.

In Chithralekha also the institution of marriage is given more importance than any other value. Mrityunjay when approaches Beejgupt with his daughter's Marriage proposal, Beejgupt says that he considers Chitralekha as his wife. At this Kumargiri said "*par vivah shabed Samaj dwara Nirmit Hai.. Shashtra istri aur Purush Ke Sambandh Pavitra mankar Samaj mein manya kara deta hai.*"⁴

Hence it shows, social institution are important part of literature. Literature can never be complete without having the knowledge of society and sociological view about the day-today happening of the society. This sociological view of everyday life form the basis of sociology of literature.

With marriage as an important institution, other values that finds a place in the writings of Bhagwaticharan Verma and Girish Karnad are love, sacrifice and, mercy. Chithalekha said "*Is parvatan sheel sansar mein kisi bhee ceez ka badal jana aswbhawik nahin hai*"⁵ she further says "*prakriti Ka Niyam Parivartan hai, prem usi Prakriti ka ek bhav hai, Prakirti ka niyam prem par beeh lagu ho sakta hai*"⁶ But Beejgupt does not believe in this and he says that though everything may be in flux but not love and keeping his words he even does not marry Yashodhra and in the end he renounces the world for love. In the same way in Agnivarsha, Aravasu leaves everything for Nittalai. Even Nittallai leaves everything else for her husband to take care of Aravasu. In the same way sacrifice and mercy play an important role.

⁴ Verma, Bhagwati Charan, 'Chitralekha', 2002, Pg 67.

⁵ Verma, Bhagwati Charna, Chitralekha, 2002, Pg. 58.

⁶ Ibid, Pg. 58.

Beejgupt sacrifices everything for Chitralkha and Shvetank. Nittallai sacrifices everything for Aravansu and in the end of the play "Agrivarsha" Aravansu sacrifice shows the relationship between the written and his writings. Writer believes in all these values that in why they have prominent place in his writing. The sociology of literature cannot do away with the relation to the write and the writing is an important aspect two literary works fulfill this demand of sociology of literature.

One of the important branch of sociology of art and literature is the study of art, which finds its place in the views of R.K. Mukherjee, D.P. Mukherjee, Anand Coomarswamy and G.S. Ghurye. In Chitralkha and Agniversha" the art of dancing and acting is portrayed. Though in both literary works to dance and act is seen according to status but at other times both the arts are seen respectfully. Twice at the arrival of Kumarangiri, the dance of Chitralkha was stopped in between at which the she felt insulted and wanted to leave the place. She loves her art and respects it. She is able to impress everybody because of her values and Charisma. That in why as a dancer also she earns great respect in the society. This also throws light on the historical aspect of sociology of literature and art. In Mauryan period (On the basis of this work) people had great respect for art and they understood the sociology of art and literature though not in its present form but in some form it was there. Thus as said in the introductory chapter that sociology of literature which in considered as a part of sociology of knowledge was always in the society in one form on the other. This is not only expressed in 'Chitralkha' but also in the myth 'Agniversha'. In 'Agnivarsha" the upper

caste Brahmins see acting as a profession of lower class and caste but for the artists, this is their religion. They firmly believe in it and even try to please God with their presentations.

The study of Indian society, literature or any aspect cannot be complete without studying religion and it forms an important part of Indian social system and Indian literature. One branch of sociology is also called sociology of religion. Spiritualism is a part of sociology of religion. This spiritualism can be seen in both the literary works. The main characters of both the literary works revolve around spiritualism. Though Chanakya presents a rational view and believes in the theory that end justifies the means even then the spiritualism has a great impact on its characters. Chitrlekha changes and decides to lead an ascetic life. The central theme of 'Agnivasha' is to please 'God Indra' for rain. There are a lot of discussions on spirituality in 'Chitrlekha' which take place between Chitrlekha, Chanakya and Kumarargiri. In Agnivarsh Nittalai talks about Spiritualism with Andhahar baba. With the help of these characters the writers have tried to portray their concept and doubts about spiritualism. All this is a major part of spiritualism which helps in the development of sociology of religion.

The other field that attracts the sociological attention is the stratification. Stratification is the division of society on the basis of caste, class, sex, status, role, rank, position, etc. This stratification is clearly seen in "Chitrlekha" and "Agnivasha". The status of Chitrlekha and Beejgupt is different so the society does not approve of their relationship though

'Beejgupt always consider Chitrlekha as his wife, the society however does not give approval to it. In the same way in "Agniversha" Nittallai and Aravasu belong to different communities. Though Aravasu due to unavoidable circumstances could not reach on time for the marriage, but Nittalai's father is always doubtful about Aravasu marrying Nittallai because Aravasu was a Brahmin He is of the view that the upper caste people can only fulfill sexual needs with the tribal women but would not ever marry them. This shows the stratification that existed at that time. it gives a clear picture of society and the way it was divided into various categories. The stratification described in the literature not only help is the understanding the society sociologically but also helps in enrichment of sociology of literature.

Apart from discussing social milieu, social institution, religion, stratification what truly depicts the real picture of society is status of women. No society can be understood in its actual form without knowing about the status of women of that society. the four females that one there in both the literary works are Chitrlekha and Yashodara in "Chitrlekha" and Nittallai and Vishakha in "Agnivarsha". All the four women are very intelligent and logical than their male counterparts. Chitrlekha is very influential and always won all the logical arguments about everything. Yashadhara though calm and serene shows her intelligence and presence of mind at times. In the same way Nittallai is very intelligent and even challenges 'Yavarki' to which Yarvaki has no answers. Vishakha also overpowers Yavarki and pravasu with her logical arguments. Though all the women are intelligent and are influential yet it does not improve their status. Their male counterpart do

not see them as human being but as objects which is to be used. Arvasu and Beejgupt do respect females but other member of society do not have the same respect for them. In the views of Kumargini the woman represents the darkness of attachment, desire and illusion and has no place in the world of knowledge. When Komargiri is defeated in an argument by Chitrlekha, he cannot accept that he has been vanquished in a philosophical debate by a fallen woman, a mere dancer. Yarvaki also uses Vishakha to destroy Parvasu and his father. Thus it can be seen from the above illustration that though these male members have attained spiritualism, they do not take woman as human but as an object. This shows their respect for women and the status of women in that society. A society cannot develop if its women are not respected and are not treated equally. Both the either works have beautifully shown this aspect. This is not only helpful in the understanding sociology of literature but also helpful in understanding sociology.

Thus the comparison between the two works help us in understanding sociology of literature because the two have depicted the societies of two different eras. The striking feature in that the values, culture, institution and environment in both the works show that there is a continuity in tradition and values and today they are the same. One do not get an altogether different picture of society. Further, it should also be noted that in both the literary works, the female protagonists were given a bold and important role. The women were shown audacious and rational which is a powerful representation of society even though the position of women is not good in the society. These literary works also highlight the weakness of men unlike

the typical heroes who are too strong to be true. It also shows their vulnerability in certain situations where the female protagonists handle the situation more tactfully.

To conclude, we can say that though it is difficult to compare two literary works of two different eras and one being a novel and other a play. Yet striking similarities are seen in the social environment. This is important as it portrays a continuity of the same social environment with some changes. The two literary works give a very interesting account of the society and makes the reader aware of the social realities of those times.

Chapter-5

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

While comparing the two literary works Chitrlekhe and Agnivarsha, we can see that there is a continuous interaction between the writer, his writings and his society. The sociological significance of these two literary works is immense as all shades of the society are portrayed by both the authors. Sociology of literature also highlights this relationship between sociology and literature. As already stated in the very first chapter, literature in its concrete form is a writing but in its abstract form, it is the personality of the writer which is formed by his social environment. Here the two literary works relate not to the writer's present social environment but they belong to a different era altogether. This is what makes their work more interesting and important and both Bhagwati Charan Verma and Girish Karnad produced literary works of different era.

The comparison led us to the fact that there is a continuity in Indian culture and tradition from the era of Mahabharata to till date. This makes the study of sociology very interesting and gives an account of Indian tradition and culture which helps in the enrichment of sociological literature. The writers though live in the present environment have successfully written the works of historical eras. Their interest in the cultural aspect of India can be seen in their writing which is of immense in understanding the sociology of literature.

Every character in the works is virtuous and represents a category or class. The women portrayed in the literature are bold, intelligent and logical. Though live in the world of men, they are able to represent the women folk of that time as well as of present times. The position of women is though very low but they overpower the male counterparts of that era.

In both the literary works it is observed that though the social milieu was different but both of them give equal importance to values, customs tradition, religion etc. they are present in the play as well as in the novel though their historical times are different. In the language of sociology of literature one can say that it also shows the environment of the writers in which they have written their writings. The environment in which they live is full of value and flourish with Indian heritage which forced them to go back to history and write on the themes of history and mythology.

In comparing the two work, it was noticed that the sociology of literature in India suffers from some drawbacks. The sociology of literature in India is devoid of methods and perspective. The thinkers of Indian sociology of literature have oversimplified Marxism. The literary thinkers have worked in the field of sociology of literature but this field has largely been ignored by sociologists of India. If these drawbacks are taken care of the sociology of literature can emerge as a full-fledge discipline in itself.

Thus there two literary works of Bhagwati Charan Verma and Girish Karnad have an important place in Indian literature. We can say that both these works have been able to portray the sociological context through the medium of literature successfully. Portrayal of society, culture, polity etc in the form of literature makes it interesting and also makes us aware of the various shades of society in a particular temporal content and enables us to understand the present social environment helping in bring about social change.

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