INTRODUCTION

I
GETTING ACQUAINTED

The negation of certain sections of people from the pages of literature through un-representation or misrepresentation eventually leads to their under-representation. However, through the pen of certain socially conscious writers, these unrepresented people find appropriate representation. The works of such writers not only serve as landmarks in regional context, but gain significance in representing all the deprived people who suffer similar tragedies. Through the portrayal of individual predicaments, their works transcend all boundaries of caste, class, religion and nationality too because the language of emotions is same the world over. It is due to the universality of experience in such works that these writers are widely translated and studied.

In recent times, translated literature has gained immense importance in cultural and literary studies all over the world. Translated works are increasingly being viewed as potent means of developing bridges across geographical and linguistic spaces. In India, translation of literary works into various languages, including English, is attracting the energy of many translators, academicians and students. A substantial body of translated works is now available for analysis and absorption, which has opened new vistas for people from other cultures to engage with the world of writers of different languages.

One author who, in recent times, has generated considerable interest in translation of representational literature, is the prominent Punjabi writer, Gurdial Singh. Following the tradition of the social novel-writing of Sant Singh Sekhon, Surinder Singh Narula, Amrita Pritam and Narinder Pal Singh, Gurdial Singh has furthered the social novel and the short story in Punjabi literature. His works have gained recognition for their authentic account of the social, cultural and historical life of the rural Punjab, especially that of the Malwa region. Acclaiming Gurdial Singh’s rootedness in Punjabi ethos, Darshan Singh Maini writes in his
"Introduction" to the translated version of the novel *Parsa*, "Like Hardy in England and R.K. Narayan in India, Gurdial Singh has given his stories a unique regional ambience" (v).

This regional ambience is based on authenticity of experience that makes his works, like all works of literature, difficult to translate. In this regard, highlighting the difficulty in translating Gurdial Singh’s works, Rana Nayar writes that:

...translating Gurdial Singh’s fiction was an extremely gratifying, though not a less challenging, experience. Perhaps, it was so gratifying only because at every juncture it threw up new and entirely unexpected challenges... .

There is something about Gurdial Singh’s fiction which doesn’t submit itself readily to an act of translation and least of all, to an English translation. (Tarsem and Sushil 112-113)

Gurdial Singh was born in a small village Bhaini Fateh, near Jaito in Faridkot district of Punjab on 10th January, 1933. His father, who was a carpenter and blacksmith, withdrew him from school after the eighth grade to help him as an apprentice. Gurdial Singh was unhappy about this break in studies. His teacher and mentor, Master Madan Mohan, Headmaster of the Middle School in Jaito helped him to resume his studies. He passed his Matriculation exam and got a job as a Primary Teacher but did not discontinue his studies. After he improved his education he was promoted as a High School Teacher. He gained a Master’s degree in Punjabi in 1967. Though Gurdial Singh left his village for education and employment, he could never distance himself from his roots. Therefore, after retirement he made Jaito his permanent home.

Gurdial Singh has been widely acclaimed as a writer. Many literary honours have been conferred upon him for his works. He was honoured with the Sarvottam Pustak Puraskar consecutively for three years in 1966, 1967, and 1968 and then for the fourth time in 1972 by the language department, Government of
Punjab. The Sahitya Akademi award was conferred upon him in 1975. In the same year, he got the Nanak Singh novelist Award. In 1976, Gurdial Singh received the Punjab Sahitya Akademi Award. He received the Soviet Nehru Award in 1986. In 1992, the Government of Punjab awarded him the best Litterateur award. In the same year, Guru Nanak Dev University conferred upon him the Bhai Veer Singh award. In 1997, he received an honour at Uttar Pradesh Hindi Sahit Sammelan. The President of India honoured him with Padam Shree in 1998. In 1999, Gurdial Singh was awarded the Dr. Ravi Memorial Award and the Jnanpeeth Award. On receiving the Jnanpeeth, Gurdial Singh said, “It’s a recognition of those who live in my pages” (Tarsem and Sushil 9). In this regard Amar Tarsem and Kumar Sushil, editors of Re-Reading of Gurdial Singh’s Fiction point out that “Jnanpeeth is not just a personal triumph of an individual, but of all those who are still fighting desperately for the retrieval of honour and dignity that history has denied to them through ages” (9).

Gurdial Singh’s art as a novelist has given a new dimension and meaning to novel writing with social responsibility. He is a writer of the ordinary folk of Punjab and writes about them with compassion. His writings are not about the extra-ordinary heroic characters and their heroisms, but about the day to day struggles and strifes of the humble folk, especially of the Malwa region of Punjab. He writes about the common and not so worthy people of this society, but his writing makes them unforgettable characters. Gurdial Singh’s protagonists are the landless agriculture labourers of Punjab or the seerie class, and also the poor peasants, who through Gurdial Singh’s pen become representative of their class. Tarsem and Sushil write: “He is a novelist of the subaltern and downtrodden and captures the inner strifes and struggles faced by the peasants and workers during the fall of the feudal era which is turn tries to generate social consciousness in low-class people” (vii).

It is Gurdial Singh’s social awareness that provides realism to his works. His most significant contribution to Punjabi Literature is his portrayal of the rustic life in all its details. He writes about the rural Punjab with authenticity and
precision. Gurdial Singh’s rootedness in his native soil and his inherent love for
detail of his subject matter, make his writings a “finely crafted minimalism, which
undoubtedly has a rare sculptor’s touch” elucidates Rana Nayar (Tarsem and
Sushil 114). Nayar also writes:

This minimalism is evident not only in the way in which he
designs the mise-en-scene of his novels, but also in the
selection of his subject matter, his skilful, deft use of the
language and his microscopic vision of life. (Amar and
Tarsem 114-115)

In addition to these, his art of characterization is what adds to his works the
regional ambience and grace. The use of lesser words and compact narrative that
avoids unnecessary decorations and elaborations is purposeful in letting the readers
understand the text better. The deprivation in his characters’ lives finds appropriate
expression in his minimal use of words.

Even in his terseness of expression, Gurdial Singh pays great attention to
other details. In story line, plot-structure, characterization and unfolding events he
is particularly careful and observant about the physical, mental and psychological
processes of characters that enable him to create larger than life characters even
though they belong to ordinary backgrounds. The strength of his fiction lies in
creating life-like characters that have become truly memorable. He is therefore a
true miniaturist whose appropriate detailing and in depth insight impresses the
readers.
The ‘small’ characters that he writes about in his works are authentic
representations of labourers and peasants in small strokes.

Admiring Gurdial Singh’s versatility and excellence as a writer Rana Nayar
asserts:

A true miniaturist, he often applies small, finely tuned
strokes, making capital out of moments we either tend to
forget or are rather dismissive about. 'Arching of an eyebrow' or 'twitching of a lip' or 'rippling of the calf muscles' are not simply physical gestures in Gurdial Singh's fictional repertoire. These are, in fact, the very soul and substance of a man's inner world, signs that reveal the seething ruptures in his soul, authorial interventions into the little known realm of his character's unconsciousness.

(Amar and Tarsem 115)

Gurdial Singh's works exhibit what Jaidev calls 'Mamatva'. In the *Politics of Literary Theory and Representation: Writings on Activism and Aesthetics*, Pankaj K. Singh elucidates Jaidev's idea of Mamatva in the following words:

'Mamatva' rules out excessive egotism, solipsism, narcissism; it attempts at sharing, community communication and involves reaching out to others, usually the less lucky ones who deserve not only the narrator's *Mamatva* but also the reader's . . . (17)

It is Gurdial Singh's own *Mamatva* that makes him a social revolutionary. His extension of *Mamatva* to the lower classes and castes of the Punjab enables him to look at and portray them with empathy. Through his writings he gives voice to the voiceless and silenced people. In his works like *The Last Flicker*, and *The Survivors*, Gurdial Singh provides visibility to the invisible and the suppressed. In his creations, he provides a place to the displaced and dispossessed. His voice becomes the voice of the marginalized and deprived people who have undergone inexplicable and extraordinary subjugation. His word gives power to the powerless and expression to the muffled. Through his writings, he desperately wishes and honestly tries to bring the *dalit*, underprivileged, under represented and the downtrodden communities to the forefront because they have been relegated to the fringes of society, particularly in the villages.
It is this agenda of empowerment that the critics have widely acclaimed in Gurdial Singh. In their view, the village that he writes about, has transcended its boundaries and his works have become an extremely sensitive exploration of the economic and social changes that have deep emotional impacts. Regarding his sensitive social realism and universalism, Rana Nayar writes in his “Introduction” to Earthy Tones, a translated collection of Gurdial Singh’s short stories that:

Gurdial Singh’s interest in village, its life and people does not merely perform a sociological function, as it is often assumed, but has a definite transcendent function too. Put simply, he tends to view it as a microcosm of the world where all kinds of human conflicts and predicaments could and do play themselves out. Such an element of universalism is what mostly accounts for the timeless appeal of his short fiction. (no pag.)

Gurdial Singh’s fictional world is built around the basic concept that emancipation of the masses lies in their own hands. His protagonists have a revolutionary potential, which when provoked, can battle the obdurate and oppressive society. The crux of Gurdial Singh’s writings is the conflict between the traditional and the modern. He juxtaposes the past with the present to compare and contrast life. His characters are often seen engaged in establishing a place for themselves in a fast changing society. Though the protagonists in his fiction are rustic, the quandary and problems that they face also find resonance in urban settings. The inherent tension in his works is a result of the dilemmas faced by his characters who live in modern times with an old set of values. Nayar writes in the “Introduction” to the translation of The Survivors that, “The historical importance of Gurdial Singh’s fiction lies in the fact that, it sought to encapsulate the dialectics of tradition and modernity, trying to attain a rare synthesis of the two … .” (no pag.).

Thus, Gurdial Singh’s fiction is of immense socio-cultural, political and historical importance. The relevance of writers such as Gurdial Singh increases
because it is through their representative characters and works that the vices of a heartless society stand exposed. Gurdial Singh underlines the twin factors of heredity and environment that determine the life of his characters. Gurdial Singh’s fictional world opens the cultural patterns of social misgivings, history, myths, folklore, customs and practices of Punjabi society. His novels and short stories relentlessly examine the history and mechanics of oppression employed to relegate the low-caste and the poor to the fringes of society.

Gurdial Singh’s protagonists and characters combat this marginalization through silent resistance and token rebellion or through open defiance. They take up various modes of showing resilience to the onslaughts of the upper sections of society. The inherent defiance of Gurdial Singh’s characters marks their basic indomitable spirits though they may have to occasionally succumb to pressures due to familial and economic constraints. One such manifestation of resistance can be seen in Gurdial Singh’s character Bishna in the novel, *The Survivors*, (Unhoye) who while combating the unjust officials says defiantly, “All right! If there’s justice on this earth, I’ll claim it with all my might. Never again shall I come cringing before you. And I shall bear the brunt of all that befalls me upon this very chest … .” (28)

There is also an acute existential quest which underlies the dominant themes in his novels. The hero is seen engaged in a quest to understand the mysteries of life and death. At the same time, the hero is involved in a desperate attempt to find and establish his own place in the vast arena of life. This existential search leads the hero also to the explorations of his ‘place’ and the meaning of his struggle as an individual. One such attempt to understand the mysteries of life and death is made by Jagseer, the hero of *The Last Flicker*, who is baffled at the condemnable human existence in dehumanizing circumstances of squalor and extreme poverty. He questions and wonders how human beings live a life worse than that of animals or worms even though they are said to have taken birth after eighty four lakh other lives. Disillusioned with life Jagseer confides in his friend Raunaki:
Raunaka, what if man says, no, I don’t want to be born. They say man is blessed with human life after passing eighty four lacs other lives; what if man insists not to opt for a human incarnation again? What if he prefers the life of an animal?" Will God still condemn him to a man’s life? (121)

Gurdial Singh’s works bring him closer to the post-colonial writers such as the native Canadian writer, Maria Campbell and the Aboriginal Australian writer, Sally Morgan. In their works *Half-Breed* and *My Place* respectively, the atrocities experienced by the Canadian Natives and the Australian Aborigines under the British colonizers are described with such vividness that the narratives jolt the reader’s consciousness and conscience both and give voice to the so far unrepresented and marginalized people. The two texts are set in two distant continents and cultures but are so similar and almost identical in their related experience. This shows that similar socio-political contexts result in similar outcomes as is evident from the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized depicted in the two narratives. This is also true in the Indian context.

Gurdial Singh’s works also show close affinity with Dalit Indian writers such as Om Prakash Valmiki, who express the social concerns of the marginalized, victimized, deprived and the ‘other section of society in his autobiographical novel *Joothan*. Gurdial Singh, an outsider-insider, who has great insight into the lives and strifes of the *dalits* and the downtrodden is also comparable to Munshi Prem Chand.

However, the focus of this study is not on *dalits* and their resistance but on Gurdial Singh’s art in making his characters representational. It is also important to point out here that the concern of the present study is class-conflict rather than caste-confrontations though both may become synonymous at times.
II

LITERARY BACKDROP

Before venturing upon the specific study of Gurdial Singh's fiction, it would be worthwhile to look into the literary background of the Punjab. However, since the scope of this study is limited to the modern period, the literary trends and works of the modern period are being taken into consideration. The main reference source for this will be *A History of Punjabi Literature*, co-authored by Sant Singh Sekhon and Kartar Singh Duggal (subsequent references will be quoted from this book).

The first notable contribution to Punjabi literature which can be called modern in the history of the Sikh kingdom is *Sikhan De Raj Di Vithia* (1985). It is an account written by Sharda Ram Philauri, a brahmin Munshi on commission in the British residency. Sekhon writes, “Sharda Ram’s account is quite trustworthy about facts he has inevitably a slant in favour of the British” (106).

Some translations were also published in the 19th century. The Ludhiana Mission brought out the Punjabi translation of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim's Progress* along with the translations of the gospels of the Bible. A Bengali novel, *Jyotir Uday* (The Birth of Light) was also translated in the 19th century. Sekhon writes that this novel “is a hagiographical account of the birth and death of Jesus” (106). Baily’s grammar of the Punjabi language was another pioneering effort.

Towards the end of the 19th century a detailed and authentic account of the history of the Sikhs was written by Giani Gian Singh in Punjabi. It is written in four volumes and is titled *Tawarikh Khalsa*. Giani Gian Singh belonged to the sect of Nirmalas who mostly spoke in the old Braji language, “but his Punjabi in the *Tawarikh* is singularly free of Braj idiom and vocabulary” writes Sant Singh in his book on the history of Punjabi literature. Another prose writer during the period of Giani Gian Singh was Bihari Lal Puri whose works are *Vidya Ratnakar* (Treasure of Knowledge), *Chitravali* (A Pageant of Pictures) and *Anek Darshan* (Varying
Scenes). He also wrote a book each on Punjabi grammar and Punjabi prosody. But unlike Giani Gian Singh, his Punjabi has a slight trace of Braji in it.

Bhai Dit Singh (1853-1901) also made an effective contribution to Punjabi writing during the same time. About him Sekhon writes, “He was primarily a Singh Sabha reformer who fought against the old Brahmanical and folksy modes of worship that had crept into the practice and ritual of the Sikhs (107). His writings include *Niti Prakash* (A Light on Morals), *Gurumat Arati Prabodh* (Worship according to the Guru’s Canon), *Danib Vidar* (The Dispenser of Pretence) and *Guga Safoura* (The Serpent Saint). His writings too show a strong influence of Braji.

The most eminent of all the Punjabi writers of the late 19th century was Dr. Charan Singh (1853-1908). Sekhon writes, “Unlike the writers mentioned above who wrote with purposes other than pure literary, Dr. Charan Singh’s writings had primarily a literary motivation” (107). His prose writings include *Maharani Sharabi Kaur, Jang Marauli, Vir Bhai Gurudas* and *Bani Beora*. According to Sekhon, Dr. Charan Singh’s translation of Kalidas’ *Shakuntalam* still remains the most authentic version to this day.

Towards the close of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, there was an evident change in the Punjab. British rule had established itself and the way of life of the British came to be increasingly felt. The native people adopted their quest for knowledge and tried to emulate them to further the process of education. Schools and colleges were opened. Libraries and reading rooms were set up. Printing presses were also set up and books were printed in large numbers.

In an attempt to understand the western culture better, study of English literature and learning of the English language became popular. Western thought influenced the Punjabi sensibility, but at the same time, the latter vehemently resisted some of its unwanted and unacceptable influences. Due to this conflict, the
people became conscious of the negative impact of the encounter with the west. They quickly retaliated particularly to the onslaughts directed against their religion and belief. The Singh Sabha movement was one such reaction against the conversions made by the Christian missionaries. Various denominational schools sprang up in an attempt to safeguard and preserve the respective cultures and traditions of various religions against the unacceptable intrusions of Christianity.

This religious upheaval resulted in creating awareness along with social and political consciousness against the outsiders. Kartar Singh Duggal writes, “This awareness became acute after the First World War when Punjabi soldiers fought with British shoulder to shoulder, won laurels on the battle-field and proved their supremacy indisputably” (109).

However, the impact of British learning and mannerisms also had some important and positive results. With the widening of horizons and shrinking distances, certain elevating thought processes and pursuits came to be noticed. There was a yearning for reading materials, a demand for updated knowledge, a desire to keep pace with the west and a lust for living a better life. Education of women was no longer objected to and a literary atmosphere fostered their growth and prosperity.

Due to this change in the social scenario within a few decades of the early 19th century, Punjabi Literature changed considerably. What was modern in the very early 19th century and was considered different from the traditional, came to be mocked at by the revolutionaries of the thirties. They further “styled themselves as New (navin) or Forward (agragami) or Experimentalists (prayogvadi)” (108), writes Duggal.

In Punjabi fiction, “Bhai Vir Singh (1972-1957), the grand old man of our time, upheld the torch of modernism”, writes Duggal (109). He was a profound scholar of a number of Indian languages and he also made a careful study of the English language. He was in fact the first writer who took up writing as a
profession with a definite purpose. His four novels Sundari, Bijay Singh and Sukhuant Kaur (in two parts) fall in the category of historical romances. An imaginative account of Punjabi life can be read in his work Subhag Ji Da Sudhar Rahin Baba Naudh Singh, briefly called Baba Naudh Singh.

About his intention or purpose, Bhai Vir Singh writes in the Foreword to Sundari that his purpose in writing these accounts was to revive self-respect in the minds of the Sikhs of his time who under British and other influences had fallen from their earlier glory and had taken to the ways of the British. He was pained to see that Punjabi people had forgotten the glorious achievements of their ancestors and how they dishonoured the Punjabi language by considering it as an unrefined rustic dialect.

In this regard Sant Singh Sekhon writes, “... Bhai Vir Singh declares his purpose to prove to his countrymen that the Punjabi language is a rich and capable medium for literary expression as much as the other Indian languages” (237). In his novels, Bhai Vir Singh delineates all his Sikh characters as ideal in every respect and portrays Mughal Afghan characters, with a few exceptions, as corrupt and evil. He portrays Hindus as timid, subsequent intriguers, bent upon destroying the Sikhs. His works can be considered as eye-openers for the Sikh community though they also appear to be biased or prejudiced against all non-Sikhs.

Bhai Vir Singh’s contemporary, Charan Singh Shahid, wrote historical romances Daler Kaur and Chanchal Murti and a novel Do Vahutian (Two Wives). He also wrote Badshahian which is humorous in nature. His monumental work is a weekly Mauji devoted to wit and humour.

The reformist strains of Bhai Vir Singh can also be seen in Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid’s writings. He writes with a clear aim to bring back the Sikh youth to the panth and lead an ideal Sikh life. Mohan Singh Vaid condemned those who stray from their religion and adopt a western way of life. He advocated education for all Sikh boys and girls. His important works include Ik Sikh Gharana (A Sikh

The socially conscious writings were nurtured by Nanak Singh (1897-1971). His novel *Chitta Lahu* talks about social oppressions to the limits. Acclaiming Nanak Singh's social consciousness Sant Singh Sekhon writes: “It looks as if Nanak Singh was determined to expose in this novel all the misdeeds and corruptions that are perpetuated by our feudal middle class” (242). However after the laboured portrayal of the passive Gurdei in *Chitta Lahu*, Nanak Singh puts greater moral strength in Sarala of *Fauladi Phul* (1934). Sant Singh Sekhon writes that Nanak Singh himself described her as, “delicate as a flower but hard as iron” (243). Heroic in their own way, novels like *Fauladi Phul* gave rise to novels of resistance, heroic endurance and strong will that later find expression in Gurdial Singh's works too. Nanak Singh also wrote some politically influenced works like *Garib di Duniya* (The World of the Poor), *Tuti Vina* (The Broken Lyre) and *Gangajali Vich Sharab* (Liquor in the Flask of Sacred Water).

The theme of class oppression is dealt with in *Jiwan Sangram* (Life's Battle) and *Dhundle Parchhaven* (Misty Shadows). These novels target social inequality and the vulnerability of the poor and dependent women. Many of Nanak Singh's novels have women as protagonists along with other silenced people. He gives mistresses and prostitutes a chance to talk for themselves, as in *Dhundle Parchaven, Tuti Vina and Gangajali Vich Sharab*. In *Love Marriage* Nanak Singh presents his prediction about true love and marriage as he elucidates three kinds of marriages: ideal, low and middling. *Dur Kinara* (The Distant Shore) is another sentimental story.

Nanak Singh’s social awareness seeks to cure all weaknesses of society through idealism though he does not advocate or hope for any revolutionary
change in social order. He talks about individual triumphs, as in *Chittrakar* (The Painter). He also transforms his heroines from weaklings of his early phase of writing to fighters against male dominance, economic difficulties and social bindings. His later women protagonists are winners in their own individual struggles as in *Kati Hui Patang* where Kamini boldly deserts her husband and becomes a successful writer, earning wealth and fame for herself. Gurdial Singh’s close affinity with Nanak Singh’s art of socially aware writings is evident from the fact that like him, Gurdial Singh also does not profess huge social upheavals or revolts. He too feels that nothing can change overnight. Nevertheless, his optimism is exemplary.

In Nanak Singh’s more mature phase of life he comes out “from all this labyrinth of unlikely events” so that “art has been substituted for love and sacrifice as the panacea for all evils” (249). *Adam Khor* is one such novel where he subscribes to the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and through his work he ambitiously desires redemption of all mankind. Nanak Singh’s agenda of social reform through art is influenced by Munshi Prem Chand. Gurdial Singh also shows considerable affinity with Nanak Singh’s and Munshi Prem Chand’s writings in depicting the sufferings and resistance of the disadvantaged.

The art of Punjabi writing by this time came to be more realistic. Realism characterized the majority of works. Sant Singh Sekhon is the pioneer of Punjabi fiction whose novels are adorned with realism. In his novel, *Lahu Mitti* (Blood and Soil), Sant Singh Sekhon has shown the life of the peasants of the Punjab. Kirpal Singh Kasal comments:

> This novel is the first standard work which narrates the life history of an impoverished peasant family in its proper social and economic environment. This family reduced from the level of peasants proprietor to that of tenant, struggles to regain its lost dignity. (Sekhon and Duggal 251)
The characters in this novel are representatives of their class. Their strong notion of individuality not only establishes identities for themselves but also forges collective identities for many like them. The novel is also characterized by inner conflicts and mental strifes.

In his novels, Sekhon celebrates ordinary Punjabi folk as heroes. His novels are about the masses who struggle hard to establish a place for themselves in society. In Baba Asman (Grandfather Sky) 1973, Sekhon delineates the journey of a young peasant, Sava Singh of Ludhiana who ventures out to Shanghai to escape poverty. But he falls a victim to racism and discrimination and suffers at the hands of his fellow workers. Another writer, who like Sekhon, shows great interest in peasant life as the theme for his novels is Sohan Singh Seetal. He is rooted in the countryside of Central Punjab and deals with rural life in his works. His novel Jug Badal Gaya won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1974.

Realism in Punjabi fiction is seen in its most vibrant colours in Surinder Singh Narula's works, Jag Bitti (The Outer Story) and Sil Aluni (The Saltless Rock). Narula's socially relevant theme, large scale violence during the partition, finds place in Din Duniya (The Spiritual and The Temporal) in which he describes the social, communal and industrial life of Lahore on the eve of Independence. Dil Darya (The Ocean of the Heart) also talks about partition.

The theme of dispossession and displacement finds place in Narula's Apne Paraye (Friends and Strangers). In this novel, he describes the plight of the original people of the land between Sutlej and the Ravi who are displaced by the new settlers from nearby districts.

Kartar Singh Duggal, who is primarily a short story writer, talks about colonial oppression particularly after World War-I. In his novel Hal Muridan Da, he talks about the division of India, as a calculated effort of the defeated British. Some prominent works of Duggal are Andran (Intestines), Nahin Te Mas (Nails and Flesh), Maila Anchal. Hal Muridan Da, along with Jal Ki Pyas Na Jaye
(Water Remains Thirsty) and *Ma Pio Jaye* (Born of the Same Parents) forms a trilogy. Sant Singh Sekhon writes, "The last part of the trilogy *Jal Ki Pyas Na Jaye* is an attempt at depicting the new India with waves of foreign forces influencing it" (254). He also launched another trilogy *Nanak Nam Chardi Kala, Tere Bhane* and *Sarbat Ka Bhala*. This trilogy tells the story of the Sikhs from the advent of Sikhism upto Guru Tegh Bahadur and portrays the Sikhs in search of their identity.

With Amrita Pritam, women issues came to be highlighted. The problems of Indian women were discussed in her novels like *Doctor Dev* and *Pinjar* (Skeleton). She is a highly sensitive writer who deals with the feelings and condition of women with extreme insight and understanding of women psychology. *Yaatri* and *Tehravan Sooraj* are other important works of Amrita Pritam.

Another prominent woman writer who talks about the oppression of women in a male dominated society is Dalip Kaur Tiwana (b. 1935). She writes about, her own soil, her own tradition and folklore. In her works she talks of the economic exploitation of her people and the social curbs inflicted upon her sex in society in the Punjab. She is a versatile writer with about a score of novels and over 100 short stories to her name. Some noteworthy works of Dalip Kaur Tiwana are *Nange Pairan da Safar* (Barefoot Journey), *Lang Gave Darya, Srishti Rachna* and *Zamin Puchhe Asman*. She is self expressive in her novels. *Ek Hamara Jeena* (This My Life) won the Sahitya Akademi Award.

Another writer who wrote heroine oriented novels in rural settings is Jaswant Singh Kanwal (b.1910). His works *Such Nu Phansi* (Truth on the Gallows), *Pali, Puranmasi, Rupdhara* (The Stream of Beauty), *Hani* (Playmate) focus on varied themes like romance, compulsions of caste, pre-marital love in Indian society and dilemmas of womanhood. The author’s tolerance, understanding and broad-mindedness can be felt in his novel *Jera* (Tolerance) in which the
protagonist, Harinder wishes to cohabit with the younger brother of her impotent husband and the husband has no choice but to live with this arrangement.

Narinder Pal Singh’s (b.1923) *Shakti* (Power) portrays women as the driving force of a family and of its well being. Singh also wrote four historical novels. *Khannio Tikhi* (Sharper than the Sword), *Valon Nikki* (Finer than a Hair), *Eti Marga Jana* (This is the Way to Go) and *Ik Sarkar Bajhon* (Without a Sovereign). Narinder Pal Singh explores the stream of consciousness technique in *Punia Ke Massia*, a technique also used by Surjit Singh Sethi in *Khali Piala*. Singh’s experimental novel writing presented the readers with an anti-hero in *Tapu* (Island). Another novel by Singh, *Vikendrit* (Eccentric) has an unnamed protagonist who is a refugee from Pakistan. His novel *Ba Mulahza Hoshiar* (Prepare Yourself for the Royal Visit) received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979. The novel portrays the demise of modern western culture in India. About the novel Sant Singh Sekhon writes:

The author makes use of fantasy in which he sees the western world afflicted with a nervous twitch which distorts the patient’s face. The author shows that there is an area of the central part of India of which the vegetation and climate provide a cure. Symbolically he shows Indian civilization to provide a cure for this disease. But the sexual hunger lying dormant under the much-vaunted morality of the Indian people is also disappointing. (263)

Narinder Pal Singh’s *Kal Akal* (Time and Eternity) and *Sutradhar* (Director) both present success stories of their respective protagonists in service, industry, and in love. *Kal Akal* is the author’s own story, though largely exaggerated.

By the 1930’s Punjabi literature came to be centered upon the realities of deprived rural life and frustrated urban life. Fiction, written at this time, was about
common people who struggled and were disappointed but whose spirits remained undaunted. An extremely sensitive writer, Niranjan Tasnim (b. 1929) writes about the lower middle class who escaped from the clutches of industrial inhumanism. However, he refrains from attributing tragedy their frustration and dilemmas as is evident in *Hanera Hon Tak* (Till Darkness Descends). The writer presents their attempts to overcome their problems with sensitive humour. In *Parchhaven* (Shadows) and *Kasak* (Pangs) the writer talks about the inexpressible sexual desires of the characters. The author's greatness in just leaving the characters without exalting them to tragic heights is remarkable. Niranjan Tasnim's experimental works include *Ik Hor Nawa Sal* in which the use of flights into the past and future narrates the life of Banta, the hero. His later works *Jadon Saver Hoi* (When The Sun Rose) and *Yugan to Par* (Beyond the Centuries) present the tragedy of lovers and an artist, respectively.

As we scan the works of the early modern period of Punjabi literature, we see that it is characterized by varied themes and voices of different concerns. In the early phase, religious writings with spiritual concerns are predominant. This phase is followed by reformist writings in which the contemporary Punjabi society is brought under scrutiny. The writers voice their social concerns through their works in which they attempt to reform the society as well. Their socially conscious writings aim at raising the awareness of the masses and at bringing about certain reformative measures. Social evils and women issues such as widowhood become their chosen subjects as socially-conscious writers.

Another cult which occupies a central position in Punjabi writing is historical romance. The Punjabi folklore and Punjabi culture also find a central place in Punjabi writings. The rich art of folk-lore and oral narration is furthered through such writings which tell legends of idolized romances as of Soni Mahiwal and Mirza-Sahiba. Apart from the historical romances, the Modern Punjabi writings have also taken up history as a subject with historical heroes and heroines as protagonists.
In modern Punjabi writings, realistic writing became a dominant form. This realistic form of writing is characterized by straightforward presentation of subject matter without idealizing or idolizing. In them the writer does not aim at prophesizing or propounding theories but at elevating social consciousness alone.

In this tradition, the writings that deal with feudalism and the economic divide in Punjabi society will be the concern and centre of our study. In these writings, the writers talk of class-oppression and class-caste divides. Their works also talk of colonial intervention and its impact on Punjabi feudalistic society. The tyrannies of the landlords who ruin the interests of the worker class are also dealt with in these texts. Here, land becomes a major cause of concern and dispute. The small landowners and the landless are shown as victims who fall prey to the vicious greed of the established landowners or zamindars.

The settings of such works are mostly rural with a few urban locales too. These works show how the dislodged and dispossessed people are forced to live lives of want and scarcity. They are often shown grappling with the notion of belongingness and rootedness as they live and die non-existent lives. The later modern writings as we have seen, deal with partition of India. The pain of partition and its ensuing evils are also dealt with in them. The total dislocation and dispossession of people is dealt with humanistic concerns.

Thus we see that Gurdial Singh is preceded by writers who have been concerned with and considerate towards social concerns and representations. Gurdial Singh continues in their line of writing and the representational quality of his characters and his works is particularly noteworthy due to various reasons, the first being his life-like presentation of characters. The specific character traits of each protagonist, mixed with general characters lend a unique hue to each one of them. Their delineation involves costumes, language, mannerisms and regional touch. Their involvements with society and their relationships with others complicate their predicament and their dealings with others are presented with uniqueness.
Along with the physical portrayal of characters, Gurdial Singh pays great attention to their psychological delineation as well. His protagonists in the novels under study like Jagseer, Bishna, Moddan and Parsa battle the society and its dominant culture. They challenge the norms and laws in an overt and covert manner. They are shown involved in a duality between aspiration and reality, desire and hopelessness, individual assertion and marginalization as they struggle to establish their identities.

All their endeavours and efforts to carve a place for themselves in society through self-assertion may eventually result in personal loss, but it does leave a ray of hope for many like them. Their love, desires and passions may remain unexpressed but their desperation for establishing their individuality is commendable.

One of the central concerns of Gurdial Singh’s works is his characters’ existential search for their real identities. They are seen grappling with their creator’s (God’s) idea behind sending them into this world without defining their life’s purpose clearly. The best example of this existential quest is seen in the discussion between Jagseer and Raunaki in The Last Flicker which is extensively discussed in the first chapter. The protagonists in other novels too voice similar existential concerns and dilemmas.

The delineation of all the characters by Gurdial Singh without imposing his subjectivity lends them a unique authenticity. Their thoughts, feelings and ideologies are never overshadowed by those of the author’s. Gurdial Singh remains an objective creator and this quality turns his characters into real-life protagonists, who stand as representatives of their classes. The subtle psychological analysis of these characters lends them a greater significance. Gurdial Singh seldom indulges in sermonizing or philosophizing. He lets the readers understand and contemplate his under strokes and scanty descriptions regarding character delineation.
His skillful, deft and apt use of language and idiom, though minimal, is self-expressive in itself. The significance of such use of language lies in its understatement of hidden purpose and intent. Therefore, another asset of Gurdial Singh’s writings is his terse but appropriate use of language. This helps the writer to give an unsentimental representation to characters and situations. He does not propose any solution; nor does attempt any redemption. He talks of common masses, common villages and common situations without generalizing. However, his compact plot construction and close-knit sub-themes lend variety and versatility to his works.

Gurdial Singh’s purpose lies not in just portraying the society, but in the inclusion of all deprived and marginalized people into the mainstream. The benefit of this lies in the fact that the hidden strata of society and its silenced people stand represented. His works expose the challenges of the ones living on the fringes of society. He does not talk of religious divides or cultural issues. His concerns are the woes of the relegated sections of society. He talks of belongingness and the pain of rootlessness in one’s own homeland due to dispossession.

His villages, neighbourhoods and families are all representational in nature and so have no specific names as pointed out by Dr. Attar Singh in his essay. He explains that the purpose behind not naming his villages and towns in his novels is to represent the entire India. His locales and places though are unnamed and unidentifiable; they are still very real and convincing.

Gurdial Singh therefore talks of the psychological, emotional, mental and physical dispossession of people from their very own motherland without naming it. His works ironically amalgamate and juxtapose individual identities of the unrepresented individuals and forge collective identities of many like them through unnamed and un-specified places.

However, his concerns regarding society, traditions, culture and representation are never linear and univocal in analysis. There is always an area of
grey as he avoids black and white representations. The complexity in his characters, situations and the related issues are highlighted in this grey area. His characters become central and indispensable due to their intricate involvement in earnestness of purpose even in seeming nothingness.

There is also a kind of deconstruction that takes place in his works, specially in the case of seeries or peasants- the working class. He deals with their concerns and problems in a purposeful manner. In a way, his dealing with marginalized classes brings him closer to Marxists because he talks of the emancipation of such classes at large and not just individuals.
III

SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The agricultural colonization of the Punjab began during the period of British rule. A province in the north-western part of the British Indian empire, the Punjab, experienced rapid and extensive economic growth from the late nineteenth century onward. This resulted from the development of canal irrigation, accompanied by a process of migratory settlement in its western parts in the area that came to be known as the ‘canal colonies’. This part of the Punjab did not benefit from monsoonal rains as did the eastern parts of the province to support settled agriculture. As a result, cultivated lands were confined to areas accessible to irrigation either from groundwater sources or from seasonal canals utilizing river water.

The Punjab was annexed by the British in 1849. The ensuing century saw great turbulence due to the fall of the Mughal empire and infighting among tribes for territorial control. The British established their absolute control on the Punjab by overcoming Ranjit Singh’s Kingdom of Lahore, thereby asserting their control over the entire province. The British rule brought stability to the Punjab through various measures. In his book, *The Punjab: Under Imperialism 1885-1947*, Imran Ali writes: “Ruling groups, if they had desisted from provocation against British interests, were not replaced but confirmed as useful intermediaries between the state and the people”(4). This cooperation continued throughout the period of imperialist rule. Along with this, the Punjabis sought employment in the British army, thereby establishing themselves as the martial race.

Soon after the British established their administrative presence, they undertook the enormous task of revenue settlements in each district. These revenue assessments served as a means of establishing proprietary status through individualization in property rights. This move was a marked shift from collective ownership by village communities and other groups to individual proprietorship.
This process of individualization gave way to the prospect of alienation of land rights. As the province saw an increase in the marketing of agricultural produce along with the spread of road and rail network, land came to have an increased monetary value. Landowners now became aware of the treasure that they possessed in the form of land. They realized that land was an asset through which they could enjoy better lives through social expenditure and increased consumption.

However, this craving for a better and more enjoyable life soon took its toll as the small landowners sold their meager shares to bigger landowners, who in turn fell prey to the vicious plans of the non-agricultural money lenders. Imran Ali writes:

Debt entailed mortgaging the only asset they possessed; their land. Unredeemed mortgages were converted to alienations by recourse to another institution introduced by the British, a civil and penal code. The new laws gave exceptional powers of manipulation to money lenders, and turned law courts into arenas of agrarian conflicts. (4)

At this juncture, due to the intervention by the British, the remarkable Punjab Alienation of Land Act was passed in 1900. This forbade the passing of land from agricultural to non-agricultural classes, and allowed land transfers only within related agricultural class groups in each district. According to Imran Ali, “... the period of British rule in the Punjab was dominated by three major themes: political entrenchment, revenue extraction, and military requirements” (5). Thus, the economy of the Punjab began to be reshaped from 1885 onwards through the extension of agriculture in the Punjab brought about by canal colonization.

It was due to the British interest in opening up the organization frontiers in the west that led to the cultivation of ‘virgin lands’ and setting up of the largest irrigation systems in the world. As a result four large canal colonies, namely, the Rechna Doab, Jhelum, Lower Bari Doab, and Nili bar along with two smaller ones,
Upper Chenab and Upper Jhelum colonies were set up. A total of nine canal colonies absorbed the lands of Bari, Rechna and Jech doabs. The last doab of the Punjab was finally colonized in 1947 with the introduction of the bulldozer which overcame the unevenness of the terrain that had passed obstruction to human efforts and labour. Therefore, an entirely new society was established on the barren wasteland of the Punjab by the state authority with the active co-operation of the native population.

Ironically, all this surface development had an entirely adverse effect on the Punjab and its economy. Ali writes, “The Punjab, like many other colonized economies, suffered the fate of retarded development and underdevelopment” (56). This theme of the coexistence of significant growth with continued economic backwardness which is the concern of the present discussion which will be discussed particularly in relation to the seerie or the landless labour class who suffered the most due to economic retardation though they actively participated in the agricultural growth.

Colonization had a major impact on the societal set-up of the Punjab particularly on that of the canal colonies. According to Imran Ali, the process of colonization was in turn moulded by two forces; the state and the social structure. The society that came to be in the colonies was a very complex one because it included the beneficiaries who were granted the fertile land and the migrated labour which also came from within the province. Ali writes: “Existing stratifications and hierarchies in the Punjab population were bound to be projected onto the new sphere” (10).

The society that came to flourish under the British colonization in the canal colonies turned out to be feudalistic in nature. This feudalistic set-up gave rise to economic and cultural crisis of the lower peasantry who got gradually dispossessed from their land with the fragmentation of the soil from generation to generation as a result of overgrowth in population. Also, the lower peasant class was incapable of maintaining its economic standard due to lesser land and produce.
On the other hand the greed for possession of more land among the feudal class lured the small landowners to sell or mortgage their petty landholdings to the landlords. Similar ventures of the feudal class or the Zamindars did not remain limited to land-grabbing but also put forward the notion of survival with power, honour, dignity, money and competition with other land owners. With every acquired piece of land the feudal class landlords flourished while the poor landless peasants saw a steep decline in their status, dignity and living conditions. This degradation of the dispossessed peasants and the flourishing of the landowners created a rift in the society and the two sections of society got involved in the power game which never saw an end.

There came to be felt a cultural danger that originated from an additional conflict between the social relations and values based on feudal standards and the age old value system of the landless. The roots of this animosity were related to expansion of property on one side and relegation of the landless to the margins on the other side.

The rural society was divided into the extremely wealthy landowners and the extremely poor cultivators or landless labourers. “Between these were intermediate layers of richer peasants and medium sized landlords and, in addition, the urban-based strata of the bourgeoisie and working class” (Ali 10). But the main conflict and area of this study pertains to only the rural landowners and landless. Apart from the difference in economic status, the society was divided on the basis of the caste system which as Imran Ali writes, “... pervaded human consciousness and divided society into groups of superior and inferior status” (10).

The so called superiors were the ones who were economically, socially and politically more sound than their inferiors. They controlled the means of production and, therefore, naturally controlled the life of their subordinate classes. They were at an advantage, and thought of themselves to be privileged to exploit the new opportunities in agriculture and also dominate the new dispossessed labour class. This exploitation led to suppression of the poor and relegation of the landless
to the fringes of society. Therefore the landless were pushed to the margins of the economy and as a result the poor became poorer and the rich accumulated more wealth. Due to this uneven distribution of wealth and resources, the Punjab became witness to a distorted economy and areas of backwardness in spite of unprecedented agriculture revolution.

In his seminal essay on this distorted economy of the Punjab, Nirmal S. Azad writes:

In the whole process of agrarian transformation, the main emphasis remained on extension and improvement of infrastructure and on development and application of productive forces. In this development, the play of market forces has further altered the distribution of production means in favour of the rural-rich and, the evolution of agrarian relations strengthened the class position of the rural bourgeoisie while reducing the non-capitalist peasantry and the rural proletariat, on the whole, to the position of a marginal community. (48)

Besides the class-biased gains of the green revolution, other sources of income such as taxes were levied unequally. The benefits were arbitrarily conferred upon the different peasant classes. Due to this prejudiced economic distribution the poor labourers or farm wage-workers increased in number in the years of the green revolution. In addition to this, the industrial or manufacturing sector also failed to incorporate these workers because they were not skilled in the job. Further, the low growth rate of the public-sector and nominal industrialization forced these poor peasants to resort to labour in the fields even though they were openly exploited. Later, the increase in the use of mechanized farm implements and better facilities rendered many of them helpless and forced them to comply with the extreme oppression, subjugation, injustice and marginalization.
Yet another factor that was largely responsible for the alienation of the rural poor labourers or seeries from the mainstream was the class or caste divide. Azad writes: “The obvious cleavage in the rural society of Punjab is between the land-owners (the whole of the Jat-Sikh peasantry) and the landless workers (the low-caste population)” (49-50). He further dwells upon the various reasons why the tables had been turned against the landless. Azad further elucidates:

Wage-labour hiring peasants do not automatically raise the wages of farm workers when productivity of wage labour and their farm income rises. The conditions under which these wages can be raised at first, an increase in the demand for labour outside agriculture; second, shortage of available wage-labour within agriculture; and third, the class agitations of the farm-workers. (50)

However, since the first two possibilities seemed non-viable due to obvious reasons, the only way left was agitation which in itself seemed non-viable because of the lack of co-ordination except for a few expectations among the labour class. As a result, the relationship between the farm employees and the employers became more and more political in the rural Punjab.

More so, the lack of rapid industrialization marred whatever growth and prosperity was generated by the agricultural revolution. The capacity that the industrial revolution had to transform the economic and socio cultural scenario in the Punjab had failed to materialize and manifest its impact. Therefore, in an essentially agrarian Punjabi society, the social development and cultural change became synonymous with land and agricultural development. Further, the capitalization based on land related issues increasingly impacted the Punjabi society in more than one ways. In the book, Punjab—Past, Present and future, Satish K. Sharma observes:
Capitalist development in Punjab agriculture has differential effect on the different sections of peasantry, capitalist farmers have been the largest beneficiaries and are producing more than what is required for family consumption. They are producing surpluses which are invested in agriculture and in other income generating activities. The small and marginal farmers experienced some gain in their income levels in the initial period but they are unable to sustain it. Many small and marginal holdings have become non-viable. (Singh 294)

Satish K. Sharma also gives relevant data to show how the marginal or small farmers were almost wiped off by the evil capitalistic set up that threatened to swallow up all small fishes in the ocean. Sharma writes:

Survey carried on between 1976-77 and 1977-78 indicates that marginal and small farmers’ households were annually running into an average deficit of Rs.1513.17 and Rs.1648.19 respectively. Consequently 24 per cent of small farmers and 31 percent of marginal farmers were living below poverty line by 1979-80. With the rise of development crises in agriculture, the small and marginal farmers are finding it difficult to survive. Between 1970-71 and 1980-81 large number of such holdings have disappeared. (295)

The condition of the ones already deprived of land during the establishment of canal colonies also suffered largely at the hands of the money lenders. Even their future generations served hard to pay the never-ending debts. Their condition became even more deplorable with time and changing conditions. In this regard Sharma observes: “... the uneven economic development and the resultant widening of structural inequalities have alienated the masses in general from the ruling-elites” (347).
Therefore it is clearly evident how the powerless, landless and voiceless farm workers were cut off from the mainstream and how they suffered marginalization due the very land that they worked hard on but which they could never call their own. They suffered enormous pain, ill-treatment and humiliation. Hence, the power game or power-play came to be centered about land. For the landless, life was as if non-existent except for the fact that they breathed.

There were several ways of oppression that the rich and powerful resorted to. Many a times, the powerless were even deprived of what was rightfully their namely wages, social acceptance, participation in customs and fulfillment of basic needs of life. This deprivation gradually resulted in the viewing of the non-powerful and relegated sections of society as the ‘others’.

This ‘otherness’ was based on division in society in terms of money (economy) and status. Here, the juxtaposition of the dominant versus subordinate re-confirmed the cultural divide which resulted in the relegation and oppression of the ‘other’ section of society. The acceptable norms and rules were decided by the ones in power, for the powerless to follow, but never to contest or question. Their ideas materialized or consummated into becoming laws which usually benefited the makers though they often were the law-breakers. Writing on Dalit Literature and African American Literature, Kashinath Ranveer quotes Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels from their book German Ideology that:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, that is the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production its disposal consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideals of those who lack the means of material production, are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideals are nothing more that he ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas… (Narang 107)
The social and political injustices of the hegemonic order in the Punjab rendered the low castes or Dalits born prisoners of the unjust system. The hierarchal order ignored or even erased the knowledge systems of the powerless, whereby they could contest their subjugation. Here, it is interesting to note how the powerless resorted to peace, some due to lack of courage and some due to fear of being rebuked and punished. But this peace of repression had its roots embedded deep in the sub-conscious or racial remembrance of the caste-divide so very inherent in Indian culture and mentality. However it is pertinent to note that, it was not the peace of consent or compliance but a peace of age old submission to suppression that had a deep seat in their consciousness. Along with this the fear of societal norms, non-conformance to which usually caused disharmony and ostracization, also prevented them from reacting and revolting.

The relationship between the employers and employees, landowner and landless or powerful and powerless may be best described as in Waiting for Godot, a ‘love-hate relationship’. It was a relationship between that of the giver and the needy or even vice-versa. The landowners needed the working class for obvious reason such as crop-rearing and other menial tasks while the workers needed the owners to sustain their lives. However, the sole cause of serfdom and servility was due to the deprivation from access to knowledge. It is here that literature played its part. On the one hand, it became a manipulative tool in the hands of the advantaged who used it to misrepresent the disadvantaged. On the other hand, it also acted as a weapon to propagate prejudiced misrepresentations through which the elites controlled the lives of the poor.
IV
UNDERSTANDING KEY TERMS IN CULTURE STUDIES

The interaction between a text-writer and text-reader leads to various processes of interpretation, analysis and assimilation. These processes are a result of a deep understanding and meaning making within a given social group and they finally give way to the formation of culture constructs that people share and imbibe. Defining culture in his phenomenal work, *Cultural Studies: The Basics*, Jeff Lewis writes in the first chapter named Defining Culture: The Scope of the Task that, “Culture, therefore, is both the context of existing meanings and the dynamic which stimulates the productions and dissemination of new meanings” (3).

Formation of culture is an outcome of the interaction between a broad range of social groups and social practices. In this, the contributions of family, neighbourhood, caste, religions and nationality all have a definite part to play. However, the resulting culture studies and theories are particularly limited to specific cultural contexts. In this regard, Jeff Lewis writes, “They function and exist within an existing framework of meanings and knowledge, and they attempt to stimulate new ideas and meanings” (2).

While trying to understand what culture really means, one needs to focus on the term society because the two are closely related or are rather indispensable although both have specific definitions and concerns. In the second chapter of *Cultural Studies-The Basics*, Lewis, explains the two terms as: “The concept ‘society’ refers generally to assemblages of people, while ‘culture’ refers to assemblages of meanings and meaning making process” (39). He further writes, “Culture as a symbolic or aesthetic activity, is distinguished from the concept of society, which is the general aggregation of people into a more or less homogenous formation” (39).
Ironically, these differentiations reiterate that, though society is an amalgamation of people and culture a product of meaning-making, neither can exist in isolation. This is so because, for people to prosper culture is essential and for cultural meaning-making the involvement of people is essential. So, the two are inter-dependent.

In earlier forms of social studies, culture was considered a servant of society. Later, 'the fathers of sociology', Emile Durkheim and Max Weber established the utility of culture towards society and its importance for social groups and social activities. Jeff Lewis observes regarding this, "Durkheim and Weber... developed a systematic and thoughtful account of how symbols and meaning-making practices are shaped in relation to social organizations and institutions (2).

Their studies provided the basis for the development of sociology as a branch of study at the University of Chicago. Later, The Chicago Approach developed 'phenomenology'- a study of phenomena allowing sociology to interact with everyday practices. Recent studies in sociology aim at diversity within social groups, the mediation agencies like television and press and the meaning of construction leading to accommodation of new ideas and different opinions.

Jeff Lewis points out that, "Society, therefore, comes to be created through symbolic modes and relationships as much as through the sheer congregation of human beings” (40). However, with time, the meaning and implication of the term society has acquired new dimensions. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, 'society' came to be understood as the aristocratic community and the elite class who reigned over the ordinary folk, their beliefs and resources too. A number of texts by writers like Jane Austen, George Eliot and Oscar Wilde portray the 'gentry' as the regulators of the lives of the common people. They are shown using their power and privileges to overrun the interests of the worker class.

With the advent of the modern era, a new society came into being where an acknowledgement of the individuality of small groups and ethnic gatherings was
also given importance. In this concern Jeff Lewis writes, “Recent sociology has begun to move away from its conceptualizations of society as a homogenized human system toward a greater interest in diversity, mediations and meaning making” (40).

This meaning-making referred to by Jeff Lewis encompasses varying perspectives and different approaches leading to mediation and culture constructions. To illustrate this, Lewis quotes the example of Roland Barthes who explains how a representation or symbolization depends on system of meanings and how it constitutes a text. Jeff Lewis further explains that Barthes was of the view that an individual can only relate to or understand the world through some form of mediation like a text. To quote Lewis, “Thus, all objects in the universe become available to human knowledge and the human mind when they are represented as texts” (7). Hence, it is clear that the world of actual phenomena has no meaning in cultural analysis unless it is represented.

This further leads to an ‘indentificatory process’ as explained by Julia Kristeva in her essay “Identification and the Real”. She writes about the implication of identification that, “Far from being a simple equivalent of the signifier or of symbolic schemas, it involves the real...” (Collier and Ryan 67). In the same book Homi K. Bhaba points out in his essay “Articulating the Archaic” that, “Cultural identity is the ability to put the right word in the right place at the right time” (25). He writes in relation to the question of signification that: “This is not simply a matter of language; it is the question of culture’s representation of difference-manners, words, rituals, customs, time … .” (25).

The representation of culture in cultural theory or cultural studies is called cultural discourse. It largely means a regulated system of meanings or representations. This system excludes any alternative interpretations or meanings. Jeff Lewis describes discourse as one which “produces the meanings of the word (knowledge) in an intelligible way; we understand an object, event, person or practice because it is placed within the symbolic or discursive order” (25).
As far as the literary discourses are concerned, they transcend all boundaries of nations, cultures and castes. This is so because for a literary writer the ultimate concern is humanity and its existence in all diversity and complexity. In relation to this transcendent nature of literature, H.S. Narang writes in *Writing Black, Writing Dalit* :

It is because of this concern that even when the literary text is historically situated, the literary discourse transcends the given historicity and arrives at a universality that we can appreciate across cultures, across races and across times.(3)

The term discourse as explained by Jeff Lewis is sometimes used interchangeably with similar concepts such as representation, textualization, language and signification. He further enlarges the scope of discourse as explained by Michel Foucault who believed that the process of meaning-making in a discourse is always associated with the relationships of power. Lewis writes:

For Foucault and others who follow this perspective, discourse and power are so thoroughly interrelated that they constitute a virtual compound ‘discourse / power’. One must always operate in reference to the other. Discourse, therefore, is an essential part of human relationships and human knowledge. ‘Knowledge / power’ can only exist in relation to discourse. (25)

Power, in general, is that which enables a person, group or an organization to exert its supremacy, will and interest over others. Power-play gives rise to various tensions in society whereby the relationship between the powerful and the powerless become strained and a cause of concern. The unequal distribution of power leads to an imbalance in life-standards, particularly in the capitalistic set up of society.
In cultural theory, there are two general approaches to power as elucidated by Jeff Lewis in his landmark book. The first is considered to be attached to the social structures like class, ethnicity and gender. This is also referred to as the modernist approach. It claims that “power is a facility of the capitalist hierarchy whereby certain groups maintain privilege in a relatively ongoing manner” (Lewis 25).

Lewis further goes on to explain this approach by explaining how Marxists believe that power is used as a weapon by the elite class to rule over the subordinate classes and to unjustly and disproportionately relegate them to the fringes of society. In the second approach Jeff Lewis relates power to personal manifestations. He says that, “this ‘microphysics’ sees power in terms of processes and exchangeability. All people are engaged in relationships that involve power (26). This ‘microphysics of power’ can be understood in everyday life and in dealings between people. The subtle power-game involved in relationships as those between husband and wife, teacher and taught, employer and employee etc. reveal how power plays an important role in real life and that its inevitability cannot be overlooked.

Hegemony is a concept closely related to power. This concept was developed by Antonio Gramsci to describe the working and operating of power relations. According to Gramsci, ruling groups (organic intellectuals) maintain their power through a process of negotiation with subordinate groups. Leadership operates through the process of give and take and the subordinate are more than willing to accept oppression as a part of the ‘negotiations’ of control. A very fine and relevant example of hegemonic power relation is explained in the writer-reader relationship. Here, the interpretations, and meanings are ‘negotiated’ upon through the groups in a community who exert greater cultural influence than others so that a ‘dominant reading’ suppresses all individual interpretation.

The resultant of this ‘dominant reading’ is the formation of an ‘ideology’, which refers to a ‘set of politically related beliefs’. Ideology as pro-pounded by
Karl Marx was a kind of ‘false consciousness’, a set of beliefs which are propagated by the ruling classes and which the under-classes take up as their own. As a result, the interests of the ruling classes become a part of a generalized social belief system. In this regard Lewis Althusser (1971) explains that the subordinate classes comply with the ruling class and their oppression because they have absorbed the interests and beliefs of the ruling classes into their own common sense view of things. Jeff Lewis writes in relation to this, “Like power, ideology is forever forming and never complete; it is challenged at the moment of formation” (29).

The outcome of such ideological interventions is the establishment of culture in its varied forms such as popular culture, dominant culture, sub-culture and subaltern culture. An important aspect of investigation in cultural studies is an interrogation of the everyday lives of everyday people. This egalitarian or democratic activity aims to shake the foundations of the hierarchy and hegemonic meaning-making. Jeff Lewis explains in his book how popular media-texts are used as synonyms of culture itself where the creative and active reading of texts is used to establish a popular culture in relation to popular reading. Jim Collins argues that, “Popular culture ... may be understood as the interaction between commonly mediated texts and the everyday meaning” (Lewis 33). Another critic John Fiske is of the view that popular culture is a set of practices rather than a set of texts; these practices or positionings are fundamentally political.

The concept of ‘sub-culture’ was developed by sociologists in 1960’s and they conceived it as a deviation from the larger, main-stream group, as that of the drug-takers, hippies, etc. Subaltern cultures as explained by Jeff Lewis are those that exist at the margins of the dominant culture. These include postcolonial migrants and non-westerners. The subalterns can be called the marginalized groups who are often conceived as the ‘other’ than the dominant group, whereby the latter establishes or conceives of its normality because it is not the ‘other group’.

This ‘othering’ of society gives rise to counteracts such as ‘individualism’ and ‘assertion of the self’ where they encounter the outside world with demands of
acceptance as they are. However, it is also true that such assertions of subjectivity (being a subject) offers openness to society and dynamism to culture. In this regard Lewis writes, “... an individual is not fixed but develops in relation to cultural meaning-making contexts and mediations” (30). He also writes that, “In cultural studies’ terms ... our knowledge of the world and our construction of ourselves are formed in relation to texts (30).

Identity may be articulated through various means such as clothing, language, choice of words, relationships, use of products etcetera. Whatever is the choice, the question of identity has become central to cultural studies, especially in the case of the subjugated, relegated and marginalized sections of society. In their case' identity assertion has become a universal urge towards liberation. The quest of establishing the self and the identities of many like one’s self has become the only means of contesting the dominant culture. In this regard, the use of the ‘mighty word’ empowers such individuals to voice the concerns of thousands like them and resist the onslaughts of the society.

In the book, Contesting Power: Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia, the editors Douglas Haynes and Gyan Prakash write, “Resistance, we would argue, should be defined as those behaviours and cultural practices by subordinate groups that contest hegemonic social formations, that threaten to unravel the strategies of domination ... ”(3). To understand resistance in its basic sense, means to consider the various processes by which power is contested by the subordinates and by which they establish an alternate place for themselves higher than that at present. The subalterns lapse back into the ruling ideology when they do not challenge power directly and adopt their dictates, hegemonies and discriminating rituals.

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to mention here that one cannot expect huge upheavals and revolutions to happen whenever oppression comes up. Resistance and its manifestations have to be considered and understood as everyday phenomena and as subtle rebellions. Douglas Haynes and Gyan Prakash write in this regard:
If resistance is an everyday phenomenon, then it need not always be seen as a product of extra-ordinary transformations in material and social conditions. Furthermore, even in the most commonplace of circumstances, resistance has important consequences for power. (3)

The manifestations of revolt and non-compliance of the underdogs can be seen in both overt and covert forms. This struggle to contest power, and yet not become extremists, is the middle path adopted by many who are powerless and marginalized. James C. Scott writes in this regard in his book, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*: “Most of the forms of this struggle takes stop well short of collective outright defiance. Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth” (29). This method of passive resistance may not be outwardly defiant but is nevertheless unbeatable.

This type of ‘everyday resistance’ rarely makes headlines. It is so subtle a form that hardly any historian or sociologist makes a record of it as a potent means of combating power. However, if this resistance is penned down in literary works by a writer, it does have the potential to become a ‘movement’ towards liberation. The power of the word gives such covert rebellions the required energy to contest hegemony and oppression. In short, it is the content and context of the literary piece that renders certain actions the contestatory nature.

In the Introduction to *Contesting Power: Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia* a book edited by Douglas Haynes and Gyan Prakash, the Indian scenario in this context is discussed as:

The overwhelming image of India’s subordinate peoples—women, peasants, industrial workers and low-caste labourers—produced in historical and anthropological
scholarship has been that of passivity. Specialists and non-specialists alike have presumed Hinduism, patriarchy, social dependency, and especially caste, to be obstacles to the development of a capacity for resistance on the part of South Asia’s underclasses. Stereotypes of Indians as ‘feminine’, dependent, quiescent and consensus-oriented abound, not only in the writings of colonial administrators but also in those of contemporary social scientists. (5)

These prejudices and stereotypes compound the problem for historians because the chief sources of their research materials are either the British civil servants or the ‘educated upper-class Indians’ who themselves appropriated colonial understandings.

In recent writings by marginalized Indian writers, a number of which are subalterns, the exploration into the politics of representation has gone quite far. Their studies dealing with popular mentalities, gender relations, and the less visible struggles of the dominated groups have extended the consideration of resistance and identification to everyday life. This has compelled historians to give such everyday struggles a central place in the understanding of power instead of relegating these as issues supplementary to those of nationhood and tradition. However, India is known more for its non-conformist and silent revolt strategies as propounded by Gandhiji than for its outward rebelliousness specially that of the Indian peasantry.

In this regard, Michael Adas quotes Barrington Moore in his essay “South Asian Resistance in Comparative Perspective” to explain that the political docility of Indian peasantry owes much to the caste system and its hegemony. He writes: “India provided him (Moore) with a negative case, where the peasantry displays little of the rebelliousness that movements and regimes in other areas must harness or quell. Moore sees the Indian peasantry, past and present, as stasis-prone, inefficient, self-repressive ...” (Scot 293). Adas goes on a little further to explain
that for comparativists like Moore and Welch, caste was the key variable behind a pattern of social organization and ritual performance that has no counterpart elsewhere.

In the Indian scenario, the predicament of the Dalits, their position and status has been invariably defined by people in power and not by themselves. They are often seen in relation to those who are in power. Like the African Americans, the dalits in India, over a period of time, suffered extreme dehumanization and were enslaved by the ruling classes and castes with the help of their dominant ideology. Kashinath Ranveer explains in his essay that they “were brought under the cultural hegemony so that they should never regain their humanity and selfhood unless they become conscious of the designs of social constructs subtly built by the ruling class” (Narang 109).

Lately, these oppressed groups have begun responding to their predicament through their art and literature. Basically, the literatures of the dalits and African Americans are the literatures of the people who were denied access to knowledge and knowledge systems. These writers tried hard to come out from the darkness of obscurity to voice their peoples’ concerns regarding oppression and subjection. Through their works, they not only establish an identity for themselves but also forge a collective identity for many like them. They, thus revert the age-long process of self-negation, self-hatred and self-scorn to self-acceptance, self-praise and self-appreciation. This new awareness and confidence leads them from dependency, helplessness, passivity, docility, subservience, complacency and powerlessness to independence, assertion and authority.

In this regard, Kashinath Ranveer writes in his essay:

In addition to this, their literature is also a literature of consciousness. These writers while speaking about themselves or their communities, try to reveal that they are victims and try to understand as to why they are being
victimized... and awakening and awareness about their own state and condition of victimization generates in them a kind of consciousness which could be called as African American or Dalit consciousness. (111)

The main agenda of dalit writers is to expose the callous culture-construction by the upper castes by which they subjugate them and perpetuate their own domination. Through their writings, these writers aim to raise the consciousness of their lot so as to make them understand that their oppressors are not justified in subjugating them. Only because they are powerful and belong to the upper caste does not make them superior. The writers expose how propagation of certain myths and false notions about the under-classes relegates them to the margins. They also highlight the techniques and methods which enable the established classes to destabilize them. Through their works, the under classes reveal social inequalities and disharmonies observed in relationships between the powerful and the powerless that deepens the rift between them. They also portray the hard realities of life and societal based on discrimination and oppression.

The underprivileged writers expose the actual social reality in contrast to what is perpetuated for personal and class benefits by the privileged beneficiaries. They also try to awaken the readers to make them aware of the hostile forces at work which are responsible for their undeserved treatment and predicament. “They display the sufferings of their people in such a way that the victims understand and realize that like them others are also made to suffer in the same way”, writes Kashinath Ranveer (112). This develops a feeling of openness and sense of solidarity among the downtrodden. Through the exposure of the injuries and humiliation suffered by the writer, the readers identify with him and his condition through self-involvement. This creates a new awakening and generates a feeling of new-found power of identification. The writers also engrave into the minds of their readers that the only way to fight out such situations is by facing it and not by hiding away. Confrontation, therefore, is their weapon to combat marginalization and subjugation.
Thus, the very possibility of an attack on their interests, prepare the relegated classes to guard them. This solidarity voices their strength and establishes a new social-status for them. Hence, the literatures of both Dalits and African American become the voice of the voiceless, face of the faceless and power of the powerless.

In his essay “The Dalit Discourse” H.S. Gill writes:

When the blacks, the dalits, in the process of assertion of their beings, reverse the order of this universe of reflection, when those who were the objects for centuries, suddenly refuse to be subjected to the other’s gaze, and begin to constitute their own discourses, there is necessarily a tumultuous upheaval in the order of things, the things of this empirical world. The blacks, the dalits, the oppressed transform the object with subjects and those who were used to the comfort of the all powerful, invincible, sacred position of the subject, suddenly find themselves being subjected to the gaze of those who earlier dared not look at them, and the logos, the inalienable word changes hands. (Narang 1)

This reversal of roles reflects the reversal of societal set-up and anthropological parameters. However, for a writer, the ultimate concern is not just creating a social upheaval but to achieve a universal solution to such problems. As H.S. Gill points out:

No one can deny the ideological context of a literary text, but for a literary writer, it is only a point of departure, the ultimate concern in human existence in its extreme complexity. It is because of this concern that even when the literary text is historically situated, the literary discourse transcends the given historicity and arrives at a universality.
that we can appreciate across cultures, across races and across times. (Narang 3)

In another essay in the Book Writing Black, Writing Dalit, Neerja Jayal Chand observes that the case of Dalit Indian writers is more noteworthy with regards to marginalization and their relegation to the fringes of society because they are the ‘other’ in their own homeland. Like the native Canadians and aboriginal Australians, they suffer more than the Black Canadians or African Americans because the former are the original inhabitants of their respective nations and not immigrants like the latter. She writes in her essay, “Moving the Centre: Black-Canadian and Dalit Literatures”:

_Dalit_ Literature in India emerges from totally indigenous sources. ‘Dalits’ so to speak, were always there, as an integral though marginalized ‘other’ segment of the Indian social fabric earlier, known as ‘untouchables’, ‘Harijan’ or ‘scheduled caste’ as against high caste Brahmin. (79)

Neerja also writes that, the fact of being insiders and indigenous people makes the Dalit case more noteworthy, tragic and important. This is so because they have just one homeland unlike the immigrants like the Blacks in Canada. The fact that a real and rightful inhabitant of a country is treated as an ‘other’ is in itself a painful reality that the Dalits face and write about. They feel rejected and dejected by their own motherland which becomes a pertinent theme and a recurrent motif in dalit writings. This sense of un-belongingness and un-wantedness raises various existential issues and leaves many questions behind about their roots and belongingness. The feeling of rootlessness in one’s own country is enough to shatter one’s self.

She further points out that unlike Black Literature, the Dalit Literature lacks universal readers because it is in regional dialect or in Hindi. Only recently, the Dalit writings have received a wider readership because it is now being
translated into English. Along with this Neerja Jayal Chand also feels that *dalit* literature is definitely less polite in its attitude to the dominant discourse because it is in a very raw form as compared to the more stylized, literary and sophisticated manner of the Black Canadian Literatures. This raw nature of *Dalit* Literature is attributed by her to the provocative language used by the propounders of the *Dalit* movement who were writers and also activists. She writes about the movement, “*Dalit* Panther like Black Panther in USA brought the poet and the activist together and it was a rare moment of creative upsurge...” (81).

Whatever the case, *Dalit* literature has been successful in shifting the focus from core to the periphery and has brought the literatures of the marginalized section of society to the forefront. Consequently, there has been a sudden spurt in such writings which grapple with the reality of ‘othering’ in ones own birthplace. On one hand there were writers who were insiders and who had first hand experience of the unjust treatment became vocal through their writings. On the other, there were writers who belonged to other sections of marginalized society but voiced the concerns of the *dalits* and specially the labourer class. This labour class suffered extreme slavery and slander at the hands of their employers who were the so called ‘land owners’. The landless *seeri* or worker class toiled hard and suffered relentlessly for years, even till death, without any hope of betterment and upheaval.

In this context, the key terms representation, unrepresented and misrepresented need to be understood. Literature, as it is said, generally acts as a mirror to contemporary society. It represents the time and its people in their diverse colours and vibrancy. Therefore, literary representation is a close portrayal of society.

Misrepresentation on the other hand gives a distorted picture of reality and life just like a faulty mirror which distorts any image. Though the use of the pen, stereotypical images are created by the powerful to suppress and subjugate the less powerful to keep them under control. For this they are misrepresented by creating
prejudiced and biased notions about the sufferer class which is nothing else but the point of view of the dominant class. This helps in ‘othering’ the down trodden from the dominant society through exclusion. The already powerful create such misrepresentations to counter any upheavals that may be dangerous to the power equation and economic standing of the elite. Here societal pressure is created to keep the revolting individuals from making the other suppressed people aware of the injustices. Through literature misnomers like women as the weaker sex or the low castes as incompetents are circulated to maintain the unjust hierarchal order.

Literature therefore plays as significant role in stereotyping the powerless with time because the weak neither have the power nor the means to counter them. The manipulative contributions made by the prominent literarians of the upper, privileged class with vested interests, helps in engraving their lop-sided views in the mind-set of the society so very deeply that it requires centuries to break these and establish new ones that are fair and objective. James C. Scott writes: “Collectively; this unlikely cabal contributes to a stereotype of the peasantry, enshrined in both literature and history as a class that alternates between long periods of object passivity and brief, violent and futile explosions of rage” (37).

However, there is yet another most under-privileged section of society, the unrepresented ones, who are not even thought worthy to be subjects of or be talked about in literature. The eerie silences about their existence echo that they have been purposely and very conveniently been forgotten. This unrepresented section of society lacks not only a voice but even visibility through literature. These silent tillers of land live dark, underground lives and live and die unsung and unappreciated lives. This section of society still suffers the fiercest form of relegation and negation to the point that their very existence seems non-existent. They live with no hope and no freedom.

It is this section of society that Gurdial Singh’s works portray and give voice to. He represents the unrepresented through his poignant works in which the so far unnoticed longer remain invisible. In this regard Amrik Singh writes in the
"Foreword" to *The Last Flicker* a translated version of *Marhi Da Diva* by Gurdial Singh that:

Not only has he given utterance to the love and longings of those who, to quote the title of another novel of his, live as if they did not exist, he has also given literary standing and personality to a relatively neglected region of Punjab.

Gurdial Singh’s literature is one of consciousness. He has an acute awakening and awareness about the state and condition of the victimized which generates a consciousness among his readers through his realistic works. Most of his works provide a critique of the feudalistic set up and upper-caste domination primarily based on land. In his writings, there is a conscious-raising of the oppressed brothers and sisters. His works demonstrate that victimization is in no way earned or deserved. It is always inflicting by the ones in superior positions on the ones who are on the receiving end. Hence, the display of the sufferings and ordeals of his characters makes us understand and realize that the vulnerable are made to suffer inevitably in a society based on oppression.

Elucidating upon this Jeff Lewis writes in his book *Culture Studies: The Basics* about Karl Marx’s revolutionary views on power and social relationships that: “The power of Marx’s analysis rests in its compassion and its recognition that the new economic system of capitalism created great comfort and pleasure for some but great injustice and hardship for the majority” (76).

Like Marx, Gurdial Singh himself though not one of the sufferers, but he identifies with the marginalized group and works towards their emancipation in his own special way. Gurdial Singh’s writings show great impact of Marxism on his psyche and his works. As opposed to Hegel’s overtly abstracted idealism, Gurdial Singh seems to be impressed with Marx’s dialectical model of thesis and
antithesis. His ultimate aim is to ensure a perspective of the human experience which is grounded in the real conditions of human life.

Marx’s image of history coloured by suffering and suppression and the image of an alienated individual and his class who struggles to gain freedom and identification, is what Gurdial Singh writes about. Like Marx Gurdial Singh seems to believe that new communalism is achievable through the real struggles of real human beings. The only way to attain liberation then seems to individual assertion and revolt.

The knowledge of oppression in itself may also be redeeming because the very act of being aware of suppression causes the sufferer to make an attempt to improve his condition or retaliate and register his unwillingness to being suppressed further. Lewis explains, “freedom is difficult to conceive when we don’t have it, it’s a lack, an absence, an abstraction” (80). Therefore, ideology can be thought of as a false consciousness which is born of and propagated by the ruling class keeping in mind their vested interests.

Nevertheless, the repressed section of this worker or peasant class has always shown some symbolic retaliation which however stops well short of collective outright defiance. In his book Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance, James C. Scott writes: “...I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander as on, substance and so forth” (29). Further, the author points out that, “the struggles are marked less by massive and defiant confrontation than by quiet evasion that is equally massive and often for more effective” (32) and nearly unbeatable.

The present thesis proposes to study Gurdial Singh’s novels that have been translated into English from a socio-cultural prospect. The writer’s attempt to give representation to the unrepresented of any class or caste through his works, will be
the prime focus of interest under the title of the study *Representing the Unrepresented: A Study of Selected, Translated Works of Gurdial Singh*.

The works under study will include the novels, *The Last Flicker, The Survivors, Night of the Half Moon*, and *Parsa*.

*NOTE-* (*Earthy Tones*, a collection of translated short-stories could not been included in this study because some of the stories did not fit well into the theme. Some of the quotations from the Introduction may reoccur in the chapters for establishing the context. This research work is an attempt to study and analyze the texts intensively, establishing them as representative texts and their protagonists as representative characters. This study is largely based on the in depth analysis of the novels and due to the limited secondary reading material available, a major part of the thesis is an original attempt to understand and establish the underlying purpose of the texts in representing the deprived, desolate, dispossessed and disinherited people in a dehumanized social set-up).
WORK CITED LIST


