Sociology of literature is not one of the high powered areas of sociology. Part of the reason for this is surely that the field of the subject has not been systematically defined. More particularly, the great traditional weakness of the sociology of literature has been its refusal to progress beyond a type of superior cultural criticism based on often dubious readings of literary classics. I have tried to nudge the sociology of literature in broader horizons.

It is a well known fact that Sociology of literature is a rather touchy field of literary Scholarship, as their have been conscious efforts to muddy the conceptual framework of this subject, so as to deviod it of any meaningful discussion. So to approach the subject, the first task will be to clean the field of intellectual debris.

Indeed a theoretical exuberance plagues the subject so that for example, to a great deal of recent efforts have been centered attempt to unravel the intellectual debris offered by recently hailed luminaries such as John Hall, Althusser, Deriada etc. Beneath the most of tradition to be considered lies the conception of 'the beautiful. Unfortunately, the aesthetic philosophy has been muddied by the subject to the extent of devoing it of its socio-historical context of human existence. Moreover the Beautiful is not the only
part of human existence.

One way in which the subject may be approached is by considering the various theoretical strands involved in its development. The approach is essential to be applied particularly in the field of sociology of literature because the conceptual framework of the subject has generally been devoid of mutual dialogue.

A glance at sociology of literature would show that whether it is man, moment and milieu or the homology between socio-economic conditions and literary structures, the effect has been to correlate the changes in the form and content of literature with the socio-historical context. Distinctions have been made between active and potential consciousness on the one hand and between normative and prevalent historical conditions on the other, but emphasis has all along been to establish the nexus between consciousness and social conditions.

There are so many possible intellectual constituents of the subject, but generally there have been only two schools of thought - Marxist and Non-Marxist, and both of these approaches have many offshoots of their own, sometimes seemingly independent as well. The literature has, of course, been considered frequently and forcefully by Marxists, and, therefore, perhaps a dialogue with Marxist position would result.

An analysis of the western intellectual tradition since
reinassance and social developments in Europe tempt one to see a close relationship and reciprocity between social conditions and consciousness. Attempts have been made to establish one-to-one correspondence between changing social conditions from feudalism to capitalism and an attempt to provide an exposition and analysis of the issues involved in considering the possibilities of sociology of different complements of literature.

Literature, in fact, is a form of reflecting reality in artistic image in the mind of man, while reflecting the surrounding world, literature tends to understand it. The cardinal feature of literature is that, in contrast to science, it reflects reality not in abstraction but in concrete form perceivable by senses in typical artistic image. The diversity of attempts and phenomenon, and also different methods of reflecting it in the working of literature, have given rise to different genres of literature. In the second chapter I have tried to trace the socio-historical conditions that made novel, and thus Punjabi novel, emerge as a powerful literary genre.

The writer creates the artistic image revealing the essential features of reality, the concrete phenomenon of nature and social life. The more vivid, the more tangible the human traits of the artistic character, the greater is its attraction and influence. The socio-historical conditioning, pa the class character and theoretical commitment, if any, of the author, condition the
artistic image created by him. So in the third chapter I have tried to understand the sociology of author.

Literature is not an end in itself. It has a very set motive of reaching and influencing the thought and emotions of the reader, the ultimate consumer. In the modern world the relation of literature and reader is that of product and consumer, whereby the product becomes an object of use and enjoyment, of individual appropriation. Reader is subject to socio-historical conditioning. In the modern utilitarian world of bourgeois society the product (literature) is, to a great extent, influenced and regulated by the market culture. So, how far this receiving end of literature has influenced, accepted or rejected the production end is discussed in the forth Chapter.

In India, despite the process of change that was unleashed by the alien rule, the new social institutions, technology and cultural values, the relationship and interaction between socio-economic conditions and consciousness had not been close one. The basic reason of this phenomenon may be that the transition from one system to another i.e. feudalism to capitalism has been affected not from within. This unique phenomenon has eventually found expression in Punjabi novel. In the fifth chapter I have tried to find out the balance of socio-historical conditions and the level of consciousness of Punjabi society, the inherent conditions lying in the society and its historical milieu, as depicted in Punjabi novel.
I have taken period from 1950 to 1970 for the specific purpose of this work, but I have taken a few authors and novels of the period prior to the aforementioned time limit as it is necessary to trace the socio-historical background of the Genre of Punjabi novel. I have included a few books in the Bibliography which have not been quoted in this work, but these books have been of great help to me to develop a general outlook as to the subject.