



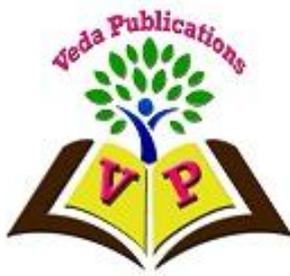
REALISTIC PORTRAYAL OF DOGRA SOCIETY IN B.P. SATHE'S SHORT STORY *KUDME DA LAHMA*

Rishika Sharma

(Research Scholar, Dept. of English, University of Jammu, Jammu.)

Email: rishika.sharma10@gmail.com

ABSTRACT



Dogri language is my mother tongue as I belong to the Dogra society. Dogras are known for their bravery and valour. India's Dogra regiment fought in the British army in the world war and thus brought laurels to the name of Dogras. Another major contribution of Dogras is the accession of Kashmir to India. It was because of active role of Dogra rulers that Kashmir became a part of independent India after partition. Now-a-days a whole genre of research has opened up Dogra culture and literature to be read and analysed. In this paper an attempt has been made to study Sathe's short story to bring out elements of reality in his fictional work.

Keywords: *Dogri Literature, Short story, Realism.*

Citation:

APA Sharma,R.(2017) Realistic Portrayal of Dogra Society in B.P. Sathe's Short Story *Kudme Da Lahma*.*Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature-JOELL*, 4(4), 202- 204.

MLA Sharma,Rishika. "Realistic Portrayal of Dogra Society in B.P. Sathe's Short Story *Kudme Da Lahma*." *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature JOELL*, Vol.4, no.4, 2017, pp.202-204.



Dogra region was flooded with a whole lot of orality in folk lores, songs, ballads, proverbs etc. In these folk tales and songs were sung the greatness of love, the stories of great personalities from Duggar land like Baba Jitto, Miya Dido etc. This oral tradition in Dogra culture cannot be looked out as insignificant because it has bound the people of this land into a single thread. The people share common folk lores and thus feel connected to each other.

In 1944, the Dogri Santha was formed and thereafter stress was laid to write literature in this particular language. Earlier it was used as a medium of communication only and there was scanty written record of it. All the literary work was done either in Hindi, Urdu or English. The frontrunners to writer in Dogri language were Bhagwat Prasad Sathe, Prof. Ram Nath Shashtri, Deenu Bhai Pant and Dharam Chand Prashant. To quote the words of Shivnath:

Deenu Bhai Pant's Dogri Poem "*uth mereya desa hoon lo hoi gayi*" became the watchword of the Dogri sanstha which drew up a Blueprint of its to awaken a spirit of renaissance among the community to develop love for and interest in Dogri culture and Dogri language among its members and to develop the Dogri language and literature. (17)

Shivnath also records that how people were ashamed of not using their own native language and how much the Dogri writers felt elated with the establishment of Dogri sanstha. The writers who were writing either in Hindi or Urdu decided to come up with their Dogri literature and it was received warm heartedly by the listeners and readers. The interest the general public developed towards the readings of Dogri literature boosted the morale of the writers and with this the Dogri literature started moving forward without looking back again. During 1940's and 50's various efforts were made to create and popularize Dogri literature. *Kavi Sammelans* and *Mushairas* were organized to involve general people, poets and writers in the process of evolution of Dogri literature. Poetry became the forerunner and short story developed after it in Dogri literature.

Horacio Quaroga says, "as long as the human language is our preferred vehicle of expression man will always make stories because the short story is the one natural, normal and irreplaceable form of storytelling". M.H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* says "the short story differs from the novel in the dimension that Aristotle called magnitude and this limitation of length imposes differences both is the effect that the story can achieve and in the choice of elaboration of the element to achieve those effects" (295).

B.P.Sathe has been credited of being the father of Dogri short story writing. His first compilation of short stories has been aptly titled "*Pehla Phuli*" and was released in 1947 as it was the first flower that bloomed in this literary genre of short story in Dogri language. This paper attempts to examine his short story '*Kudme da lahma*' (In-law's Reproach). It is a very short story of about 500 words but the impact this story creates is immense. The story gives an authentic account of life of dogras, their rituals and customs. The story is realistically told and the detailed compulsive description of the lower strata of society has been emphatically portrayed by the author.

To critically analyse the story I have used realism as my approach to view and comprehend the story. Realism is the representation of social species and not the social being alone. "It is more useful to identify realism in terms of the intended effect on the reader: realistic fiction is written to give the effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common reader, evoking the sense that its characters might in fact exist and that such things might well happen" (Abrams 269). He as well as his social circumstances presents the picture of real life. Lukacs describes realism in *Studies in European Realism* as, "Realism is the recognition of the fact that a work of literature can rest on a lifeless average as the naturalists suppose nor the individual principle which dissolves its own self into nothingness" (6). The greatest English critical realist was Charles Dickens who portrayed the plight and condition of his people emphatically in his works of fiction.

This short story *Kudme da lahma* which means 'In-Law's Reproach' is a story that deals with a *jogi* named Mohru. He belongs to a class of people



called 'jogis' and these jogis used to have some power to avert rains by chanting some hymns and *mantras*. Mohru believes it to be his duty to take care of people of his land and to protect the ripe fields from rain unless and until the farmers are done away with cutting and harvesting. Mohru had a daughter named Kesro and she has attained marriageable age. Mohru wanted to get her daughter married but there was a tradition of getting a jogi's girl married to another jogi. Mohru could find another jogi boy in a nearby village but the prospective groom's father Gangu and Mohru were not at good terms with one another. Mohru was always the frontrunner and Gangu was jealous of him.

Somehow they managed to get the consent of Gangu for the marriage. It so happens that Mohru falls terribly sick and his fever was so high that he is not able to get up from bed. The villagers were terrified and prayed that Mohru may get well soon as their crops were ready to be harvested standing in the fields, but God had some other plans. The dark clouds started hovering over the village and people became restless. They wanted Mohru to get up and do something in order to save all of them and their future. Mohru calls his daughter and tells her that it is her duty now to avert this disaster as he cannot get up from the bed because of his illness. He tells her that she should neither let the rain fall in their village nor in the village of Gangu who is to become her father-in-law.

Kesro was not that proficient in this wok but still she managed to move the hovering dark clouds. The clouds started moving Kesro however was unable to control them through her chants and the hovering clouds moved away from their village but poured in Gangu's village. Kesro narrated the entire episode to her father and Mohru felt very bad about it. He was in a dilemma that what would he say to Gangu, his would be relative. Kesro read her father's mind. Although she has saved her village from rain but she could not save her would be in-law's village and this thing was haunting Mohru. At this juncture Kesro takes a bold step and thinks of why she should let Gangu and his and his family to be her in-laws? She acquired the violent attire of Goddess kali and left her father's home forever. Her decision was a bold step in order to save herself and her father to be

insulted. Mohru tried vainly to find his daughter but she could not be traced however Mohru came across the reproach from Kesro's would be in-laws.

The short story realistically portrays the social realities of Sathe's contemporary period. People believed in jogis and there was mutual harmony among people living in a village. The daughter's in-laws are highly placed and care is taken not to offend them but when Kesro committed this mistake she repented and punished herself by leaving her home forever. The tension, the remorse and the aftereffects all have been beautifully woven in this story by Sathe. Although we are in the 21st century yet being a dogra I can relate to the customs and tradition of dogra society whereby people depend on a man to avert any problem. The fear of being bankrupt if rain would come and the loss of agricultural produce for entire community has been efficiently portrayed by the author within a span of around 500 words.

WORK CITED

- [1]. Sharma, Radhika. "An Introduction to Dogri Short Story and the Problematic Three Braided Confluence of Language, Literature and Culture." www.academia.edu
- [2]. Shivnath. *Makers of Indian Literature: B.P.Sathe*. Sahitya Akademi, 1985.
- [3]. Lukacs, Georage. *Studies in European Realism*. Groffct and Dunlop, 1964.
- [4]. Sathe, Bhagwat Prasad. *Pehla Phul*. Dogri Sanstha, 2006.
- [5]. Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Cengage, 2005.