

A critical Study of Exploitation and Social Realism in Mulk

Raj Anand's Novels, Dr.Sudhir Kumar Thakur

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Late R.K.Narayan writes his novels to serve the principle of art's for art's sake and let him create comic visions to laugh with his Raju and Mr. Sampath, but Mulk Raj Anand will look around and find that, though God is in heaven, all is wrong with the world. Hence, Anand becomes a novelist with a mission, a crusader in the cause of humanity. That is why his novels are always the novels of protest and revolt. Anand's humanism makes him a novelist with a purpose, he writes and uses his art for the betterment and uplift of the underdogs of the society. Anand's humanism, his concern for the underdogs of society is reflected in all his novels, but *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*, are particularly significant in this connection. In these novels, Anand's deals with the miseries, wretchedness and humiliations of the underdogs and their struggle for better life. His novels focus the attention of the readers on certain very important social and political problems affecting the life in India. So the world of Anand's novel is a microcosm of India.

In this novel, Anand has described the Indian scenes, situations, and characters with unflinching realism and deep understanding. That way he may be compared with Premchand and Sarat Chandra Chatterjee. Some critics have placed him in the rank of Charles Dickens, Like the novels of Dickens, Anand's novels are also filled with a reformation zeal, and have a fine blend of experience and imagination of humour and pathos. Anand plays the role of the propagandist a little to obviously but though a committed novelist Anand does not believe in sacrificing the formal values of fictions. He does not believe that a novel is a piece of pure philosophy or a piece of pure propaganda. Anand's Art's for Art's sake is not in this line.

Mulk Raj Anand is a realist. He has written realistic and naturalistic novel in the manner of Balzac or Zola. He does not leave even the ugliest and the most unpalatable situation aside. Things like dirt and squalor poverty, and prostitution have been faithfully presented. Realism has Anand's Fort. He shows a sure grasp of the psychology of both the castes Hindus and

untouchables in his novel "*Untouchable*", Anand, as a novelist has always been a champion of the underdogs. He revolts against social distinction and man made barriers. His main aim is to expose the folly and hypocrisy of the privileged classes. His novel '*Untouchable*' deals with the social injustice and the curse of untouchability. The novelist mercilessly cites down the man-made-barriers between the upper classes people and the underdogs. Bakha, the hero of '*Untouchables*' says, 'They think we are dirt because we clean their dirt . It is a Bakha, a Munnu or a Gangu who wins our sympathy. His characters are full - blooded living and breathing human beings like those of Dickens and Premchand.

Anand has all sympathy for the poor and down trodden. His novels depict the life of the oppressed and the glimpses of the oppressors. They are marked by social realism and reveal his deep sense of humanism.

As Anand's greatest allegiance has been the case of suffering humanity, '*Untouchable*', '*Coolie*', and '*Two Leaves and a Bud*', is rich human document having varying degrees of excellence. The novel unfolds a sensitive records of events of a single day in the life of a teen-aged sweeper named, Bakha. The whole novel is a series of graphic and moving scenes with the hero as the central focus. The very contour of Bakha suggests tense Physical energy. The sun imagery has been nicely built as in *The Stranger* of Camus. The sun is symbolic of potentiality of life. The hero's adventure is mapped out in terms of the sun's progress in the sky. The morning sun initiates the rhythm of life while the afternoon sun marks it warning. Thus, the sun becomes the dominant symbol of the nature of human experience. Like Dostoevsky's '*The Idiot*', Charles Dickens, '*David Copperfield*', and '*Great Expectations*',.

Premchand's, *Godan*, Mulk Raj Anand has created a unique protagonist Bakha in *Untouchable* and Munoo in '*Coolie*. In his novel *The Coolie* he describes the life history of Munoo Which is the life history of starving millions of India who are bitten from pillar to post, and being overworked

and treated as beast of burden they die prematurely of hunger and suffering and in case, Munoo is a universal figure larger than life character, and one who represents the suffering and starving millions of India.

In 'Untouchable' and Coolie, Mulk Raj Anand presents the Indian downtrodden and labourers with their problems social rejection, poverty, starvation, poor health, misery, death and humiliation. Anand's immortal creation of the protagonist Bakha and Munoo represent Indian Society. One finds that Bakha's life at each stage, tragedy deepens and intensifies without any respite. Bakha is a poor untouchable, tradition follower who is an idealist and cannot think of going against society, religion, beliefs, and the agents of the religious institutions.

'Two Leaves and a Bud', is the description of the oppression of the poor, and is about a peasant who tries to protect his daughter from a British soldier The story is based on the tea plantations of Assam. The book was subsequently adapted to a Hindi film, Rahi, by Dev Anand and simultaneously released in English as The wayfarer. The book depicts in details the concept of haves and have not and the exploitation of one at the other, in pre- independence India. It is a heart-rending novel of Anand that depicts the unnerving plight of the marginalized class. i.e. the poor crushed by the capitalist forces and the colonizers ill treatment of thousands of poor labourers at the hands of small clique of selfish and self-satisfied British Planters on a large tea estate in Assam forms the main theme of the novel.

Anand is always blind with fury at the relentless cruelty that these Englishmen and their Indian lackeys inflict on the helpless coolies on whose sweated labour rest all their luxury. The marginalized often suffer at the hands of cruel forces in the society and have no identity of theirs. The novel delineates the miseries and innocence of the naive working class matures into experience, to which the protagonist of this novel stands for. Anand as a writer of social reformist has social concerns and humanity for the oppressed people. The social reality which Anand has displayed in the entirety of his real novels made him a socialist and humanist. He is really a genuine protagonist and reformist.

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