

Vision of Life in Mulk Raj Anand's Novels

* Namita

Abstract

His chief preoccupation is with the people without land or with little land or with little land condemned to starvation and to seasonal or permanent emigration. His peasants are loaded with debt and disease, harvesting little grain but reaping a prolific crop of troubles all the year round.

India's economic impoverishment and the proletarianization of the peasants as a result of colonial exploitation had left a deep impact on Anand. He became an ardent admirer of Hegel's philosophy. He acquired mastery in varied fields of Eastern and Western knowledge. Maex, a lover of humanity and a terrible opponent of social injustice stressed the role of economics in man's exploitation and enslavement. He sought mass involvement in socio-economic change.

This dehumanization of man according to Marx, is due to his self-alienation under bourgeois order. Anand like Marx, believed in the Darwinian theory of evolution. According to Marx, capitalist system with classes, division of labour and money is the root cause of man's alienation. Marx's alienation theory can be termed as 'self-realization theory' according to some leading thinkers. Anand like Marx, was concerned with the problem of human alienation. Poverty has crushed the people and their individuality has been reduced to non-entity. The working classed and the poor are alienated and Anand wanted to elevate the downtrodden and help them overcome their alienation. There seems to be an awalening in the minds of the downtrodden in realizing their legitimate rights. A day will come when the shudra classes rule over India.

Bakha had principles. With him duty came first, although he was a champion of all kinds of games and would have beaten them hollow at Khuti.

Other features of his novels follow this basic quality. This type of social realism is found in Untouchable. The sufferings of Bakha delineated in the novel is the sufferings of the untouchables. Religion hypocrisy is exposed realistically through the Sohini episode. The novel is based on the tradition of social realism.

Anand's concentration in presenting the tragic and inhuman plight of the lowest dregs of Indian society, the class struggle and the championing of the proletarian class tempts us call him a doctrinaire Maexist.

"If I accidentally touched Bakha, I was asked to perform ablutions; and though I naturally obeyed, it was not without smilingly protesting that untouchability was not sanctioned by religion and that it should be so".

Transformation of the world was the sole aim of Marx, Gandhi and Anand. Marx gave a revolutionary gospel to change the course of history and his philosophy was based on the fittest. Anand does not have faith in open rebellion. In Marx we find intolerance but in Anand we find tolerance which is the powerful weapon given by Gandhi. The young poet, the mouthpiece of Anand, in Untouchable criticizes Gandhi's approach and suggests the introduction of flush system as the only solution to the problem of Untouchability. Though Anand advocates Gandhian approach to untouchability as one of the possible ways of eradicating the practice of untouchability, he does not endorse it. He is not able to dissolve the Marxist and Gandhian approach. There seems to be a synthesis of Marxism and Gandhian in his novel Untouchable.

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Anand's humanism recognizes the fact that pain and cruelty are two other serious melodies of the world. These are unavoidable. But with the practice of love and compassion for the weak and the low. It is not impossible to reduce and even remove miseries and unhappiness. In his notion, the conquest of pain should be the supreme goal of all individuals and all nations.

Anand as in omniscient maintains a steady distance and uses every significant event in the service of art to cast more light on the character and the incident. He records the cruelties and various forms of evil to which his protagonists and other minor characters are subjected. His all characters are not mere characters and shadow but they are representatives of their class. As Anand observes in his first ever novel.

In *Untouchable* the lives of the millions of untouchables are as represented through one single person, only incident i.e. The slap on the face evolved all the human relations, or many human relations. of the sixty five millions of caste Hindu. The essence of the situation of Bakha lies in this insult as in Dostoevsky's insulted and Injured as in Tolstoy's *Hadji Murad*.

If Anand's *Untouchable* gives us the microcosmic vision of life in India. Coolie is more like a macrocosm. Both in its conception and rendition. Coolie sensitively portrays the Indian life, with all its time tested social custom and traditional taboos. Though the novel is meant to give a cross section of the people, the lowly and the rich, the bewildered and bedeviled it in fact represented more than the Indian social life.

Munno is the central character of the *Coolie*. He is among the millions of coolies, tested and formulated by a myriad force of class distinctions, exploitation and dehumanization. In *Untouchable* it is caste that plays a significant role in understanding the evolution of the hero into self individualism, whereas in *Coolie* it is the class that discredits the individual's attempt at self survival.

You, the poor humble you the meek and the gentle, wretched That you are dwindled out of your rights, and broken in body And soul.

As a humanitarian Anand hearts bleeds having seen their pathetic condition. Not only they ill treated, oppressed but also they are sexually abused by their owners. The owner who seems to them God and father because they give them money to collect the food for themselves and family. Sometimes they have to pay even big price of what they get.

Anand seems to inveigh the whole system of exploitation and sympathizes with the lot of have-nots who suffer object, poverty, humiliation, and depredation. Gangu, the hero of the very novels, thus becomes not only victim hero but the very symbol sufferings. Like Munno, he had to move from one place to other in search of ideal place but simply remains failure inactivity and unmelodious. Anand asserts this inhuman task must be brought before the society. He says firmly,

"There is nothing more horrible in this universe than the cruelty of man to man".

The same thing has been included by a legendary film artist Amitabh Bacchan in a programme continued in public interest on Sahara T.V.

"We all are men and part of Nature how can we have hatred For man, we are brother than how can we exploit each other. It is not humanity".

Like *Coolie* and *Untouchable* Anand's *The Big Heart* and *The Road* to represent the meditative and conditions of human being who to live and enjoy the every part of life but it is always denied to them again and again. *The Road* is like *Untouchable* is a story of a lower caste boy Bhiku who struggle for his

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right Olay down road with the Upper caste people.

Anand is not unaware for women's predicament, so he presents their miseries and pain in his novel. The Old Woman and The Cow with mythological flavour,

But while most of his heroes register their protest within The framework of evil society. Gauri sheds her narrow domestic Coils before hey can strangle her to death, and escape into The refreshing world of modern modernity.

Profound humanism in Anand forces him to flight out the pronounced enemies of humanism – inequality and injustice, racial or economic- that reign supreme in the society. It is in this sense that the novel Two Leaves and a Bud is more or less a veritable chronicle narrating the novelist's crusade against social exploitation and injustice.

How can the poverty and starvation be handled because it is the thing that makes them compel to be exploited. In fact, Anand, very early in his life, had decided "to avoid the highways of romance and explored the balances of the outcastes and peasants the says and working people Being a proletariat it was his mission right from the childhood, to expose man's inhumanity to man.

I was only repaying the debt of gratitude I owed them for much of the inspiration they had given me to mature into manhood, when I began to interred their lives in my writing. They were not mere problems.....

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