

Mulk Raj Anand: A Study of Social, Domestic, Economic and Human Values

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Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand, a prominent Indian English writer renowned for his novels that depict social justice and human dignity, was born in 1905 in India. The socio-political situation of India which includes caste oppression, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict, domestic suffering, and gender oppression is dealt with in his fiction. The selected novels of Anand. Untouchable, Coolie, Two leaves and bud, big heart, and Gauri (old woman and cow) are studied for social, domestic, economic and human values in this paper. The paper investigates Anand's use of social realism to depict the plight of marginalized individuals and highlight institutional oppression. Through characters such as Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, Anand shows us the problems of untouchability, labour exploitation, violence of colonizers, industrial change and patriarchal oppression. The paper further explores Anand's humanistic vision invoking compassion, equality, dignity, and social reform. Anand's fiction relies on the harmony of realism and moral concern and transforms fiction into social awareness and ethical responsibility. According to the findings, Anand's novels have a relevant application with regard to the socio-economic inequality and human values of modern Indian society.

Keywords: Mulk Raj Anand, social realism, human values, caste oppression, economic exploitation, colonialism, gender inequality, Indian English literature.

Introduction

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the earliest novelists in Indian English literature to use fiction as a vehicle of social criticism and humanitarian expression. During the colonial period, Anand with his writing shifted the focus of Indian English fiction from elite interest to the lives of the marginalized suffering from caste discrimination, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict, and patriarchal oppression. The novels have social realism and depict the harsh realities of Indian society at the time of transition in India. Critics like M. K. Naik and K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar sees Anand as one of the best social realist writers in Indian English literature because of his deep sympathy for the oppressed and commitment to moral and social reformation (Iyengar 2019; Naik 1982).

Novels of Anand are not romantic or escapist fiction but portray the struggle of the ordinary people against the system. His writings reveal untouchability, poverty, labour exploitation, colonial violence, and mechanised industrialisation and gender injustice. Anand's realism does not only describe, but it is goal-oriented and ethical in nature. The characters such as Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, are symbols of oppressed communities that are ever shaped by social and

economic constraints. Anand's depiction of their suffering shows that society fails to help them achieve dignity, equality, and compassion.

The present study examines Anand's principal novels including *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, *Two Leaves and a Bud*, *The Big Heart* and *Gauri* (*The Old Woman and the Cow*). The book *untouchable* is the story of a boy named Bakha who endures ritual humiliations and caste oppression. The book *coolie* is the story of Munoo who tragically suffers labour exploitation and industrial capitalism. In the same vein, *Two Leaves and a Bud* denounces colonial violence and the exploitation of plantations; *The Big Heart* discusses the conflict between traditional craftsmanship and industrial modernization; and *Gauri* highlights the domestic suffering and patriarchal oppression of women in Indian society. In collaboration, these two novels produce a thorough critique of social injustice in colonial India. The association of Anand's realism with Marxism and humanism offers fruitful insight. Anand's representation of class exploitation, alienation of labour and material inequality is influenced by Karl Marx whereas the realist theory conceived by Georg Lukács explains Anand's depiction of commonplace man in the midst of historically important social conditions (Lukács 1964, Marx 1975). Meanwhile, Anand's fiction remains profoundly humanistic as it transcends merely portraying a culture and instead affirms compassion, dignity and moral responsibility even in the most oppressive system. His stories show that social reform must rest on an acknowledgement of shared humanity.

This essay investigates the social, domestic, economic, and human values as represented in Mulk Raj Anand's selected novels through the lens of social realism and humanism. Anand uses documentary realism and humanism to use fiction as a resource of ethical awareness and social change, claims the study. Anand's writing of lives of marginalized people illustrates that literature can create awareness of social inequality and minimal essential human dignity.

Literature Review

Mulk Raj Anand - Social Realism and Critical Perspectives

Mulk Raj Anand is regarded as one of the major early practitioners of social realism in Indian English literature. At a time when Indian English fiction was largely preoccupied with upper-class and romantic concerns, his novels brought the lives of the oppressed, poor and socially marginalised to the centre of literary discourse. Critics note that Anand transformed the Indian English novel into a tool of social criticism by depicting caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonial violence, industrial conflict and patriarchal injustice. His narrative art, therefore, should not merely be viewed as fiction and an artistic representation, but as a serious ethical engagement. M. K. Naik, in *A History of Indian English Literature*, points out that Anand might be one of the earliest Indian novelists who have established a significant tradition of English fiction socially committed (Naik, 1982). Naik argues that Anand's realism is shaped by the intensity of emotions, and humanitarian concern rather than detached observation. He asserts that Anand's novels are powerful because they take pity on those crushed beneath the wheels of social and economic systems. Naik further observes that Anand brought back the focus of Indian English fiction to the experiences of untouchables, labourers, peasants and women to democratize representation in modern Indian writing.

Anand's fiction evokes a response of 'compassionate indignation' accompanied by a social protest. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. 2019. Iyengar argues that Anand's novels are a mixture of realism and moral commitment. Additionally, he argues that Anand does not simply use suffering to arouse mere pity. The chief characters Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, who belong to various oppressed social groups, uncover the structural violence within caste hierarchy, colonial exploitation and industrial capitalism and patriarchy. Iyengar sees Anand as a writer with a deep commitment to moral reform and social justice.

Marxist literary theory has often been used to interpret Anand's social realism. Karl Marx's influence on Anand is most telling when it comes to his representation of the exploitation of labour, class oppression and material inequality. According to Marx (1975), Anand's characters' identification is conditioned by oppressive social structures, which reflects the philosopher's idea in his writing that social existence shapes consciousness. In *Coolie*, alienation of Munoo, within the ambit of the structures of industrial capitalism, reveals the dehumanizing effects of labour exploitation. In the case of *Two Leaves and a Bud*, the focus is on the 'economic' basis of imperial domination, which was set into full motion through plantation labour, colonial capitalism and above all racism. Anand's work invariably shows that poverty, class position and dependence impact the lives of the deprived.

Anand's realism has also been linked by critics to the work of Georg Lukács, who defines realism as the presentation of ordinary people in significant social conditions (Lukács, 1964). Arun Joshi's protagonists are not all heroes and draw their strength from the truths of colonial India. Through the means of elaborate social descriptions and documentary realism, Anand reveals the workings of caste, class, colonialism, and industrialization. His tales mirror the social totality of colonial India and not personal suffering alone. Anand's realism is thus considered historically grounded and socially committed. Anand's essential vision is to address the critique of colonialism. One of the potent fictional protests against British imperialism in Indian English literature is *Two Leaves and a Bud*, claim critics. Anand depicted the colonial authority as exploitative, violent and hypocritical. The plantation system represented in the novel shows the ideas of Frantz Fanon who contends that colonial domination takes place through economic exploitation, racial hierarchy and psychological control (Fanon, 2004). Through the portrayal of colonized workers' suffering, Anand reveals the harsh reality behind claims of civilization and progress. The violent nature of colonial capitalism is depicted through the tragic outcome of Gangu.

Feminist critics have focused most on Anand's Gauri (*The Old Woman and the Cow*) as an exploration of domestic oppression and gender inequality. The story highlights the patriarchal system which puts women in less advantageous positions. Academics relate the representation of Gauri in Anand's work to Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that patriarchal society creates woman as "the Other" or denies them an independent identity (Beauvoir, 2011). Marriage, household labour and social conventions are designed to suppress women's autonomy and dignity, Anand shows. However, the critics argue that Anand has painted a picture of women who are morally resilient and capable of resistance and self-awareness despite the circumstances imposed upon them.

Anand's fiction is decidedly humanistic in its orientation. Critics comment that Anand's novels are animated not only by ideological protest but also by an abiding faith in the dignity and moral

responsibility of man. According to Raymond Williams, common human values are more essential than economic or cultural values, and Anand's total fiction is a strong affirmation of that humanism (Williams, 1983). Anand conveys empathy, equality, and ethical obligation despite depicting anguish, humiliation, and injustice. Despite the detrimental social structures and rigid castes, his protagonists do not fail in their search for dignity and emotional recognition. As a result, his realism does not degrade into pure pessimism. While a fair amount of scholarly attention has been given to Anand's individual novels, most of the criticism looks at specific themes like caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonialism, or feminism in isolation. There are comparatively fewer studies that endeavor to explore the relationship between social, domestic, economic, and human values together. The study attempts to fill this gap by examining a selection of Anand's novels together from the perspective of social realism and humanism. Anand's fiction is not mere social documentation; it is an act of moral intervention which challenges institutional injustice and restores dignity to the lives of the marginalized.

Social Oppression and Human Dignity in Untouchable

Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable* is among the most important works in Indian English literature on caste discrimination and social inequality. Through the character of Bakha, a young sweeper boy, Anand portrays how the harsh reality of untouchability humiliates an individual in colonial Indian society. The text conveys that caste is not just a social practice, but a system created by institutional forces, sustained by ritual purity, social conditioning and religious orthodoxy. The plot takes place over a single day, which highlights the endless and monotonous nature of caste humiliation. Bakha follows a disciplined and regulated life that does not allow him to be dignified and equal. His compulsion of shouting 'posh, posh, sweeper coming' in public places marks the internalization of the inscribed degradation of the untouchables. Anand utilizes this act of repetition to demonstrate how caste oppression becomes internalized.

Owing to an accident, when Bakha touches an upper-caste Hindu in the market, it is one of the novel's most powerful incidents. Although Bakha did not inflict harm intentionally, he gets publicly insulted and beaten up for "polluting" the man. This scene reveals the irrationality and cruelty of the caste system. Anand shows us that the notion of purity is not related to immorality but to social hierarchy and power. The humiliation faced by Bakha shows the structural inequality that Indian society is rife with. M. has critiqued the work, among others. K. Naik notes that Anand's fiction redirects the attention of Indian English literature away from the elitist preoccupations to the conditions of the downtrodden (Naik, 1982). Through the suffering of Bakha, Anand transmutes the untouchable into a symbolic illustration of social injustice and moral neglect. Bakha is excluded from public life. He cannot take any respect due to the caste system. In addition, he is isolated socially. All these reveal how the caste system can dehumanize a human being.

The temple incident further reveals the duplicity of religious institutions. The temple priest harasses Bakha's sister Sohini, and when she is thrown out, the same priest accuses Bakha of polluting the temple. Anand exploits this paradox to criticize the use of religion to maintain social equality. Spiritual authority henceforth becomes a tool of oppression rather than morality. This novel thus questions the moral justification of caste discrimination. The realist representation of the ordinary in *Untouchable* reflects an influence from Lukács' repeated insistence that literature must depict the

ordinary individual in socially relevant circumstances. Bakha is not made out to be some exceptional hero but a mouthpiece of an oppressed social group. Anand's detailed representations of the outcaste colony and the public spaces and social interactions among these people reflects a documentary realism, which shows the everyday violence of the caste society. Even though the representation of oppression of the caste system is prominent in *Untouchable*, equally noteworthy is the novel's concern with dignity and reformation. Anand presents Bakha not as just a passive victim. He presents Bakha as a sensitive and complex person with emotions who desires respect, acceptance, and equality. Bakha admires British soldiers and modern clothing because he associates them with a higher status. He also wants to get an education so that he can escape the humiliation of social caste.

The oppression's psychological dimension is an important aspect in the novel. Anand's characterization of how social structures shape consciousness shows the influence of Karl Marx (Marx, 1975) in his writing. As Bakha experiences constant treatment as an impure person, he internalizes that he is inferior. Through his expressions of shame and self-blame, it is evident that the oppression of caste impacts both the body and the mind. Anand indicates that institutionalized inequality acquires strength when the oppressed accept it psychologically. At the same time, he highlights Bakha's emotional sensitivity and moral innocence to support the humanity of Bakha. Bakha appreciates cleanliness, discipline, and personal dignity that upper-caste characters who pretend to have ritual purity. Anand purposely juxtaposes Bakha's moral uprightness with the hypocrisy of the caste society. This discrepancy undermines the conventional views on cleanliness and uncleanness and highlights the ethical failure of the social order.

Critics like K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar labels Anand's fiction as protest fiction because he believes Anand's realism stems from feeling pity for an oppressed class (Iyengar, 2019). Anand aims to do more than merely expose suffering; he hopes to awaken moral consciousness. The ending section of the novel suggests that reformist ideas like equality, sanitation and modernisation can bring about social change. The flush system is symbolic of the removal of caste-based occupations and their associated ritual pollution. Anand's humanism is the moral foundation of the novel. In spite of showing oppression and humiliation, he acknowledges the dignity of marginalized lives and insists on compassion, equality and social responsibility. As represented in Bakha's experiences, *Untouchable* is not just a protest against caste discrimination, but a larger plea for human dignity and social change.

Economic Exploitation and Colonial Violence in *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*

In *Coolie*, Mulk Raj Anand offers a stark critique of economic exploitation and industrial capitalism in India. Through Munoo's unfortunate life journey, Anand critiques the suffering of labourers who are on the fringes of poverty, displacement and class. Unlike *Untouchable*, which focuses entirely on caste oppression, *Coolie* opens up Anand's social realism into the realm of industrial labour and economic exploitation. In the novel, colonial modernity transforms human beings into commodities with capitalistic designs.

Munoo's voyage from the village to the industrial city signifies the dislocation brought on by economic chaos and colonial capitalism. Due to poverty, he has to migrate from one place to

another to survive. In the entire story, Munoo is subjected to different kinds of exploitation like first a servant, then, a factory worker, and later a servant in the upper class of colonial society. Anand challenges conventional understanding of exploitation as an act of cruelty on the part of an individual. He shows not individual acts, but a demand for systematic economic structures that result in exploitation.

The factory scenes in Bombay demonstrate the influence of Karl Marx and his theory of alienation of labour (Marx, 1975). Munoo works in exhausting conditions where the task becomes mechanical and dehumanised. Workers are only recognised due to their production while no attention is given to health and dignity. Capitalism puts individuals to work as mere instruments of profit, demonstrates Anand. Munoo gradually loses a sense of emotional security, personal identity, and physical strength in the exploitative industrial system.

The book further depicts the grim realities of migration and city poverty. Anand reveals how cities have been turned into symbols of opportunity due to colonial modernity. Instead of progress and freedom, Munoo encounters slums, exploitation, and social isolation. Anand criticizes a system which enables the industrialists to enjoy economic development but the labourers continue to be miserable and insecure. Critics including M. K. Naik considers **Coolie** to be one of Anand's most powerful social realist novels as it depicts exploitation at a gross social level (1982). Anand's narrative is documentary in nature. It depicts hunger, illness, physical exhaustion, and emotional suffering but avoids idealizing poverty. Munoo's death from tuberculosis indicates the cost of human lives in the industrial-capitalist world and the regime of expendable labour. The novel's realist representation also recalls Lukács' analysis of the ordinary character as a representation of social totality (Lukács, 1964). The life of Munoo stands in for the lives of millions of labourers who are victims of industrial exploitation and colonial economic inequality. Anand uses Munoo's suffering to create an indictment of capitalist modernity against individual tragedy.

Coolie deals with industrial capitalism while on the other hand, **Two Leaves and a Bud** focuses on colonial violence. Anand, through the experiences of Gangu, a poor Punjabi peasant who migrates to Assam to work in a tea plantation, exposes the violence and moral rottenness of Colonialism. The novel propagates the contradicting statement that imperialism is not a civilizing mission but an exploitative system sustained through violence and racial hierarchy.

The British powers operate through fear and surveillance, while exerting control in tea estates, which are symbols of colonial capitalism. Labourers are imprisoned by exploitative contractual chains, devoid of freedom and dignity. According to Anand, colonialism is a structure that benefits the imperialists while the native workers are mere tools of labour. Gangu's migration to Assam illustrates how poverty and lack of opportunity push peasants into forced labour through the economic helplessness of other people.

It was with the ideas of Frantz Fanon in mind that it became clear by the middle of the novel that violence exercised in the novel was as a result of colonial power. Workers are intimidated, exploited and racially humiliated in the plantation system. British officials' kindness often has a paternalistic tinge as well as an air of superiority. Anand shows how colonial power degrades and undermines the self-determination of those it subjugates.

The novel also reiterates a Marxist idea, the exploitation of labour and surplus value. The wealth created by plantation workers serves the imperial interests of Britain, even as they remain poverty-stricken and dependent. Anand sheds light on poor working conditions, low wages and exploitative labour processes to reveal the economic foundations of the empire. Colonial rulers become prosperous at the expense of suffering of labourers like Gangu.

A significant turning point in the novel occurs when Gangu tries to save his daughter from sexual exploitation by a British official. This incident shows the hypocritical nature of colonialism's claim to civilization and morality. Anand presents the colonial power elite as fundamentally corrupt and violent. When Gangu resist they are not met with justice but repression showing the nature of colonial power relations.

K. and others critiqued R. R Srinivasa Iyengar notes that Anand's fiction creatively mixes a questioning of society with deeply felt human sympathy. Even though **Two Leaves and a Bud** shows tragic suffering, Anand presents Gangu as a human and morally innocent. The book thus becomes a critique of imperial exploitation, at once a tribute to human dignity.

Through *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand deepens the reach of Indian English social realism by linking labour exploitation with colonial capitalism. Through this assignment, we will explore how both Goodman and O'Brien present unpleasant consequences due to bad economics. Through Anand's empathetic depiction of the oppressed, the text serves as an indictment of social and colonial injustice.

Domestic Conflict and Industrial Transformation

Mulk Raj Anand's novel *The Big Heart* is a significant exploration of industrial transformation and its impact on traditional Indian society. Unlike **Untouchable** and **Coolie**, which mainly address caste oppression and labour exploitation, *The Big Heart* discusses the tussle between hereditary craftsmanship and mechanized industrialization. Anand describes the social, economic and mental impact of industrial modernity in pre-independence India through the life of the copper smiths of Amritsar. The novel showcases Anand's concern with the breakdown of community life and the decline of traditional human values in capitalist industrial systems.

The hereditary artisans presented in the novel subscribe to a cultural and economic order founded on skilled labour and co-operation. For people, their job is not just a way to earn their livelihood, but also a way to define who they are and which community they belong to. Anand depicts artisanal labour as a kind of creative, human-centred production in which work is associated with dignity and craftsmanship. Despite this, the advancement of mechanized trade endangers the existence of this ancestral universe. The production rate of goods is higher at the factories and at cheaper rates. Thus, artisans economically suffer and are socially dislocated. The clash of artisans with industrial capitalism reflects Marx's impact on the destruction of pre-capitalist modes of production. (Marx 1975) Anand shows that capitalism is gradually eliminating traditional and labor-intensive means of production in favor of mechanized ones, designed to make a profit and sold in the market after production. The factory system minimizes an individual's labour to a mechanical process and

reduces his labour value. With this transformation, workers also lose their economic security as well as their emotional and cultural connection to work.

Critics point out that Anand does not fully reject modernization or technology. He condemns a certain kind of industrialization that dehumanizes man and destroys society. In the view of Raymond Williams, industrialization shatters community and dislocates age-old patterns of life, which is very much explicit in the novel (Williams, 1983). The mechanized economy creates tension between generations, weakens solidarity, and competition over cooperation. “Anand depicts modernity as something that comes under disguise to promise progress but breeds alienation and disintegration.”

The novel is centered on Ananta’s character because he epitomizes Anand’s humanist approach to social change. Ananta does not out rightly oppose industrialization nor support exploitative capitalism. He suggests instead balance, reform, and moral rebirth. In Ananta, Anand asserts that economic development must not be at the cost of human dignity and social obligation Critics thus interpret Ananta to be a voice of Anand’s reformist vision that seeks a harmony between technology and man. Georg Lukacs, who saw realism as the representation of historical and social contradictions through ordinary lives, has his views reflected in *The Big Heart* (Lukacs 1964). Anand does not treat industrialisation as a theoretical economic process, but rather as a social experience that impacts families and communities and identities. By offering vivid accounts of the workplace, the conditions of labourers, and social relationships, Anand reveals the cultural and emotional impact of mechanized modernity.

Thus, **The Big Heart** offers a significant critique of industrial capitalism and limitless modernity. According to Anand, it is essential to preserve human dignity, community values, and a sense of ethical responsibility in the course of economic transformation. In the end, modernization without humanization will only lead to social disintegration and loss of morals.

Mulk Raj Anand shows the same social realism in his short story *Gauri* (The Old Woman and the Cow), as in his novels. The protagonist’s own struggle for identity is reflected through the female characters in the novel. Anand's earlier novel examines caste oppression, labour exploitation, colonial violence and *Gauri* discusses the subordinate condition of women and the injustice in traditional social order. Through the experiences of *Gauri*, Anand reveals how women in Indian society face emotional, economic, and social oppression.

Marriage is not portrayed as a space of fulfillment in the novel but an institution related to domination, dependence, and suffering. *Gauri* suffers from neglect, humiliation, and emotional distance in her house. Anand shows how patriarchal traditions bind women and subjugate them within the family to limited roles. Women should obey, sacrifice, and be silent because of social expectations, while men go unchallenged. Critics see Anand's depiction of women in the light of Simone de Beauvoir who argues that patriarchal society defines woman as the Other and denies her independent being (Beauvoir, 2011). *Gauri*'s identity is constructed more through her domestic roles and social duties than through her personal desires and identity. Anand shows women response to the social expectations and accept the suffering in their fate. However, the novel gradually depicts *Gauri*'s emotional awakening and disturbing injustice.

Another important dimension to the patriarchy is an economic one. Anand argues that women's dependence in the domestic sphere is intimately linked to economic disparity and social isolation. In this context, Friedrich Engels' ideas about family as an institution with property and male control comes into focus (Engels, 2010). Gauri is a vulnerable person, both emotionally repressed and economically dependent and socially powerless. Despite the suffering and humiliation Gauri faces, Anand does not depict her as a victim. On the contrary, he highlights her resilience, patience, and moral strength. Critics have noted how Anand portrays these women as individuals possessing the ability to endure, resist or even become self-aware in an unkind social system. Despite the oppressive patriarchal set-up, Gauri retains her dignity and her moral strength is what Anand has in mind for the humanistic philosophy.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar states that the fiction of Anand fuses social protest with moral concern for human dignity (Iyengar, 2019). Anand expands this protest toward the domestic sphere by exposing injustice within patriarchal traditions in **Gauri**. The book implies that if we remain oblivious about women's plight, there will be no social reform. Genuine social progression requires equality of sexes, emotional respect and absence of domestic oppression.

Through **Gauri**, Anand seeks to broaden the scope of Indian English social realism by showing that injustice does not merely reside in public institutions but also in family structure and social relationships of everyday life. Thus, the novel is both a critique of patriarchy as well as an affirmation of female dignity and human equality.

Anand's Humanism and Social Realism

Mulk Raj Anand has often been acclaimed as one of the earliest exponents of social realism in Indian English literature for consistently addressing the lives of social outsiders. In his fiction, he does not romanticise society but presents its ugly face of caste-oppression, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial conflict and patriarchal injustice. Anand's novel reveals the inherent inequalities of colonial India and so ends up becoming a medium of protest. Consequently, his realism acts not just as a form of artistic representation but also as a social and moral intervention.

K. Naik noticed that Anand turned Indian English fiction in a different direction towards the experiences of people from the oppressed communities which had not been part of elite literature (Naik, 1982). Through Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta and Gauri, Anand highlights the oppression of common people caught in the web of a system. These characters are not super heroes, but representatives of deep social realities. Anand's realism derives its power from his ability to depict social injustice as something that is part and parcel of everyday existence rather than an isolated incident or an expressionless tragedy. Through Bakha's humiliation and social exclusion, Anand reveals the cruelty of caste hierarchy in **Untouchable**. The narrative brings to light the way in which untouchability annihilates the dignity of individuals and turns them into mere instruments of ritual impurity. Munoo's suffering and displacement illustrates the exploitation of labour under industrial capitalism in **Coolie**. Anand emphasizes how economic systems convert workers into commodities based solely on their efficiency and output. In **Two Leaves and a Bud**, colonization acts as a violent and exploitative system that continues through racial domination and plantation

labour. Anand critiques the hypocrisy of imperial claims of civilization and superiority through Gangu's tragic fate.

Anand's realism goes into domestic and industrial spaces. **The Big Heart** looks at the destruction caused by mechanized industrialization on artisanal communities while **Gauri** deals with oppression of women in patriarchal families. Therefore, Anand constructs social injustice as multidimensional, which works through the interplay of caste, class, colonialism, industrialization, and gender hierarchy. The fiction of his is a multi-dimensional critique of social systems that deny equality and dignity to outcasts. Anand is shaped by Georg Lukács' documentary realism and representation of ordinary people in historically important circumstances. (Lukács, 1964). Anand depicts not only the individual suffering but also the social structure responsible for it. Thus, his realism is socially analytical rather than merely descriptive. Anand's detailed descriptions of slums, factories, plantations, workshops and domestic spaces create a vivid picture of colonial Indian society and its institutional foundations of oppression. However, Anand's realism is not merely ideological or propagandist writing. For it is rooted all the way down in emotional and ethical experience. His protest comes not from hatred but rather from love. Anand does not only condemn society but aims to rouse moral conscience and social responsibility. Literature, in his mind, is a weapon against injustice and a spur for reform. His novels thus simply establish social realism as the art of a social protest.

Conclusion

Mulk Raj Anand's fiction refuses to remain indifferent to human suffering. Thus, he is arguably the most powerful voice of social realism in Indian English literature. The setting of His novels is colonial India, but their emotional and moral effect extends well beyond a single historical moment. Through **Untouchable**, **Coolie**, **Two Leaves and a Bud**, **The Big Heart**, and **Gauri (The Old Woman and the Cow)**, Anand depicts a society fragmented by caste hierarchy, economic exploitation, colonial domination, industrial disruption and domination of patriarchy. Not only does his fiction document injustice, but it is also such that it humanizes those whom the society seeks to silence, marginalize and dehumanize.

The research asserts that Anand consistently centers ordinary individuals in order to contradict structures of power and inequality. The writer has not made any of his protagonists like Bakha Munoo Gangu Ananta Gauri a heroic figure in the literary sense. Anand converts personal pain into social criticism via these characters. The humiliation of Bakha brings to light the cruelty of untouchability; the tragic journey of Munoo reveals the brutality of industrial capitalism; the suffering of Gangu exposes a narrative of violence against imperialism; the dislocation of artisans in **The Big Heart** exposes the devastating impact of modernity and mechanization; and Gauri's struggle brings to light the emotional and domestic oppression of patriarchy. All these accounts work together to condemn a system that is fundamentally unequal and exclusionary.

Anand's storytelling displays extraordinary realism and high sensitivity which is one of the greatest strengths of Anand's fiction. His novels are not cold sociological documentation; they are narratives that are morally empowered by compassion and ethics. Anand's portrayal of degradation caused by poverty, humiliation, labour exploitation and social discrimination is honest and intense.

Nevertheless, his characters do not lose their humanity. His characters remain persistent even in adversity for dignity, validation, love, and autonomy. Anand's realism has abiding power because of this humanistic aspect that makes him different from ideological writing. Indeed, his fiction does not simply lay blame on oppressive systems, it affirms the worth of human life.

The research also illustrates Anand's vision of literature as something which should concern itself with society and oppose injustice. In his novels, he continuously interrogates social customs, institutional authority as well as moral hypocrisy. Anand uses literature as the awakening of ethics at the social level as it criticizes caste orthodoxy, capitalist exploitation, colonial violence, industrial greed and patriarchal domination. Through his imaginative work, readers are brought face to face with realities the world forgets. In this perspective, Anand transmutes the novel into an instrument of protest, reform and humanitarian consciousness. Another critical element of Anand's success is the continuing relevance of his themes. His novels are set in colonial India, but the issues he raises are still relevant. In our present-day society, there is social inequality, exploitation of labour, denial of gender rights, division of classes, denial of dignity and many more. As a result, Anand's fiction transcends its historical context and continues to speak to contemporary concerns around justice and equality. The significance of his novels lies in their power to open the eyes of the readers to suffering and to the systems producing it.

In the end, Mulk Raj Anand is truly more than just a protest novelist. A writer whose realism cannot be dissociated from a certain faith in humanity. His fiction tackles that no matter how brutal a social system, human beings will never completely lose their craving for dignity and equality. By fusing social realism with deep compassion, Anand created a literary tradition that recorded the voices of the underprivileged and turned Indian English fiction into a platform for moral resistance and social awareness. The author's novels continue to survive because they remind readers that literary works can make most sense only when they speak for men against evil.

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