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## **Communism Reflected In The Novels Of Mulk Raj Anand**

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### **Abstract:**

*Mulk Raj Anand is one of the greatest novelists of India in English language. Although he prefers to express his creative urge in a foreign language, yet he is a pure Indian both in thought and spirit. As India is a country of villages, most of Indian population was living in villages in the time of Anand. He has a great concern for down trodden people of Indian society and his novels, therefore, throw light on the existing pains and predicaments of 'haves-nots'. His novels present minute pictures of Indian society with special focus on the plights of poor people. Anand's, nearly fifty years of fiction writing, has earned for him immense reputation both in India and abroad. He was awarded 'Padma Bhushan' in 1967.*

**Key Words:** Communism, Caste system, Fiction, Poverty.

"Mulk Raj Anand is the novelist of Social man", rightly said M.K.Naik in his book 'The Ironic Vision(1983)', "whereas R.K.Narayan is a novelist of individual man and Raja Rao, that of a metaphysical man". Anand chooses a central character through whose view-point he stares at the various absurdities, eccentricities and other aspects of society confronting a common man in day-to-day life. Mulk Raj Anand is a humanist and his prime concern, therefore, is human predicament. The major thematic concern of Anand is the economic exploitation of weaker section of society and the existing class distinction. Mulk Raj Anand himself accepts the truth and says, "It was natural, after I had probed the soul of the sweeper Bhakha in my novel " 'Untouchable and reproduced each wound of the heart and the body of the hill-boy Mundu in the folk epic Coolie(1936). That I should record the journey of the Hillman Ganga through the vicissitudes of his late life, after his eviction from the stony half area in the Punjab, Himalayas and his enticement as an indentured labourer to the tea estates of Assam. All these heroes as the other man and women who had emerged in my novels and short stories, were dear to me because they were the reflections of the real people I had known during my childhood and youth", Thus, Anand affirms categorically that sufferings of poor and deprived people are the major themes of his novels.

Anand's first novel *Untouchable* (1935) highlights the pitiable condition of down trodden people in Indian society and existing Brahmin's hypocrisy who live double standard, one for self, another for the people. The novel shows as to how an untouchable sweeperess is attempted molestation by a temple priest. The priest, who suggested people that even the fall of shadow of an untouchable make them sinful, does not hesitate to embrace the untouchable girl for satisfying his sexual urge when she was alone in the temple for cleaning. The problem of caste and poverty, squalor and backwardness, ignorance and superstition, has no easy solution in Indian society. Despite nearly 50 years of Independence, the problem continue unabated. Anand offers three solutions to Bakha's agony of the self abasement and total frustration. Firstly, there is colonel Hutchinson, a Salvationist, who asks Bakha to turn Christian and so end his caste. Secondly, there is Mahatma Gandhi who says,

“I regard untouchability the greatest blot on Hinduism”. Thirdly, there is the poet IqbalNathSarkar who simply says that when the scavengers change their profession, they will end their caste, and a modern sanitary system, the flush-will bring about this revolution.

His *Coolie* (1936) is a picaresque novel. The novel highlights the pains and predicament of poor working people. If the *Untouchable* is the microcosm, *Coolie* is more like the macrocosm that is Indian society. The hero Munnoo, a village boy from Bilaspur is presented as a victim of many misadventures all over India-rural, Urban, Beautiful and ugly. All the same, he meets with the tragic death of consumption.

Anand’s next novel *Two leaves and a Bud* (1937) may be called a dramatic novel which embody the tragic clash of interests and destiny. The novel starts from a village in northwest India and goes to the Macphason Tea Estate in distant Assam, whereas Bakha and Munnoo are mere boys, the hero of the novel, Gangu, is post middle age and he takes with him his wife, Sajani, and his children, Laila and Buddhu. The story is a succession of grim and traffic events, one after another. Ganga’s wife passes away due to Malaria and then the workers of the tea estate and the masters find each other at the daggers drawn. The strike of the workers is forced to end. The assistant Manager, Mr. Raggie Hunt, suffers from an ‘attack’ of lust. He approaches Laila, Gangu’s daughter, she runs away to her hut. But Mr.Raggie Hunt is now mad with lust and so he can not allow her to escape from his clutches. He follows her and sees her father there. And in an act of lustful madness, he shoots Gangu. The trial takes place, and the ‘Judge’ agrees with the ‘Jury’ (consisting of seven Europeans and two Indians) in finding Raggie hunt not guilty of the charges of murder and culpable homicide. The incident reminds one of the similar trial and injustice in *A passage to Indian*.

Anand in his next three novels-*Village* (1939) *Across the Black Waters* (1940) and *The sword and the Sickle* are somehow influenced by the concurrent Gandhian age. So boyhood, youth and early manhood are the theme of the trilogy. In the novel *village*, Lalu Singh, a village boy acts revolutionarily simply by having a hair-cut which is not allowed by his religion. This misadventures follow in his like. He becomes a recruit to the military services and is taken to france to fight on behalf of the British, against the German. He comes about the news of his father’s death there. In the novel *Across the Black Waters*, Laau’s experience of ware in France in narrated. Lalu has so many friends and enemies in the camp and on the battle field. His reaction to the war from his individual as well as humanitarian point of view is present here in the novel. The general mood of Indian sepoys is one of the fascination and bewilderment, why should be Europeans, who are obviously such superior and sensible people, go about killing one another, making a large graveyard of a fair country like France. He thinks of getting back the mortgaged property after his return to India. But his return to India involves him in the national politics of the Twenties. People respond to Gandhi and his call for the national movement. People are against the British Government. They find themselves divided against each other. The violence on the part of the government and the need for sacrifice on the part of the time are presented in the novel. *The Sword and the Sickle*, thus, shows the maturity and manhood approached by Lalu Singh through practical politics and various personal experiences.

*The Big Heart* (1945), *The Seven Summers* (1951) and collection of stories like *The Barber’s Trade Union and other stories* (1945) are his next important works. *Private life of an Indian Prince* (1953) is about Victor, one of the six hundred Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs that Sardar Patel found on his hands in August, 1947. As a Prince, Victor has all the vices of pampered royalty. He has wives whom he ignores or illtreats, he has a mistress, Gangi, who tyrannizes over him,. He has moods and musings, and he wallows generally in luxury and sloths. He goes to the United Kningdom. He is



called back being in the meanwhile implicated in the murder of a rival in love. After returning to India; victor apparently becomes mad and enter an asylum, where Anand is content to leave him to live.

*The Road* exposes, like other novels of Anand, the establishment' because that is the first steps towards the new world of freedom and equality, of human dignity and happiness. Pandit Suraj Mani, the lascivious priest in the novel, is the same character appearing under a different name. The devout Brahmin and religious leader of society, who is by heart merely old lecher, is a recurrent character in Anand's previous novels. This is in keeping with the ideals of progress and enlightenment because religion often becomes a reactionary force, an instrument of oppression and an obstacle to the development of independent thought. *Morning Face* (1969) is autobiographical in nature. *Confession of a Lover* is the sequel to it.

Thus Mulk Raj Anand is a writer of down trodden, is a writer of a very common people living in the villages. His communist urge is clearly found in almost his all writing. He is a keen observer of society who looks at every aspect which an ordinary eye is prone to miss. He may be regarded as one of the greatest novelists of Indian English literature.

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