



# HUMAN RELATIONS IN SELETED SHORT STORIES OF MULK RAJ ANAND

**NAGENDRAPPA NANDA.**

**Research Scholar, Dept.of English**

**Gulbarga University Gulbarga**

**Cell: 9901556490**

**nanda14476@gmail.com**

## **Introduction.**

In the present paper is an attempt has been made to analyse and interpret the thematic patterns and techniques of Mulk Raj Anand's novels. The greatness of his fictional art lies in his ability to translate human misery and predicament into a live and pulsating reality. As an extremely sensitive and aware person, Mulk Raj Anand felt acutely the wide gulf between the 'haves and the have-nots'. The sheer insensitivity of the mighty and powerful ones of society towards the unfortunate poor baffled him. Even as a child he resented the orthodox restrictions levelled against the outcastes and low caste people. As he matured his emotional apprehension of reality shaped his intellectual response as well. Thus making his presentation not just emotional but also rational. His novels, therefore, embody the entire world of man and society. They depict the subtle aspects of human relationships which generate actions and reactions. The novels of Mulk Raj

For writing this research paper the writer has chosen two novels of Mulk Raj Anand to focus on the burning problems of pre-Independent Indian society. Anand's 'Untouchable' is a picture of a place, of a society – a picture of a place that is also an indictment of the evils of a decadent and perverted orthodoxy. It is a Sociological document that focuses attention

through a sweeper boy, Bakha, on a number of customs, traditions, social-evils, etc. of Hindu society during 1930's.

The present paper deals with the main thematic aspects of his major novels namely Untouchable, The Coolie, Two Leaves and a Bud, The Big Heart, The Lal Singh Trilogy, The Road, The Private Life of An Indian Prince, Lament On the Death of A Master of Arts, four autobiographical novels - Seven Summers, Morning Face, Confession of A Lover and The Bubble. The themes of his major novels are untouchability, hunger, poverty and suffering of Indian masses. In order to have a thematic appreciation it is necessary to be familiar with his major novels, such as Untouchable, Coolie, Two Leaves And A Bud, The Big Heart, The Road, The Private Life of An Indian Prince and his other novels.

**Key words and terms :** Humanity, optimistic attitude, social concern, Etc.

In his novels – Untouchable, Coolie, The Road, Two Leaves and A Bud and The Big Heart – Mulk Raj Anand emerges as the champion of the underdogs and a crusader against social distinctions and man-made barriers which divide humanity. He vehemently condemns the insensibility, self centredness and lack of human sympathy and understanding in the upper strata of society for the poor and the exploited. He is both a realist and humanist whose fundamental aim is to establish the fundamental oneness of mankind.

Mulk Raj Anand, the most prolific and the most widely criticized Indo-Anglican novelist, feels that characters in his novels have been the motivating force- rather the chief cause- behind the writing of his novels. In Anand's novel, it was not the action that decided the choice of characters in his novels. The action instead, was chosen according to the characters he decided to write about. His characters are mostly people who once were 'men and women'. Anand, in his childhood and youth had been intimate with them. He had himself shared their feelings, thoughts, action reactions, troubles and joys. And he had studied their emotions from such close quarters that he could easily identify himself with them. Anand's complete identification with his characters accounts for the remarkable authenticity in their portrayal.

The choice of characters in a novel is determined to a large extent, by the exigencies of the period in which the novel is written and by the writer's own interest, wims, and idiosyncrasies. That is why there is a noticeable change in the concept of hero from time to time. Tom Jones, Moll Flanders and Huckleberry Finn of the early and middle eighteenth century with its love for travelling and adventures gave place to Emma, Elizabeth, and Mr. Bingley enjoying the unperturbed, easy and comfortable life of upper middle class society of the decade of the same century. They, in their own term were replaced by David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, and Nicholas Nickel by fighting the naked and hard facts of life in the nineteenth century. In the modern age with its complexities and interest in psychology, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce rang the knell of the traditional hero and introduced heroes sans heroic qualities. About Indo-Anglian fiction, Williams aptly remarks that "it too seems to have begun with unheroic". Infact, Indian literature in English came to be written when India was engulfed by innumerable and enormous, social, political and religious evils. The nation was under the suppressing yoke of foreign rule. The British rulers subjected the poor Indians to slavish, subhuman existence the rigid class and caste structure of India itself caused intolerable sufferings to people. The exigencies of the situation demanded an exposure of these evils and agitation against them. The World was unrealistically and hopelessly dismal. To relief the gloom, he provides a ray of hope in the form of these selfless, benevolent, and beginning savior characters. The presence of savior heroes in these novels, according to the Anand, is not intentional, but is a consensual to life. About the savior figures he absorbs "actually the saving graces were not created in the novels with the intention to show every time that there is one character that may retrieve the situation. In life there are always such people. And in the presentation of contraries of good and evil, the leafs hope against despair. Despite Anand's assertion that the people like his savior characters are found in life, the fact remains that in the fictional world of Anand, many times these savior characters appear unwelcome intruders. Every often they appear to happen have been forced in the novel with the purpose to preach. They are often used as lifeless instrument to voice Anand message and often they preach the message so overtly that authorial presence is all too palpable. Unable to conceal his purpose in the vile of art, try to "put his thumbs in the scale, which, according to Lawrence is immoral on the path of the novelist.

Anand's choice of characters – both sufferers and saviors – is consistent with his theory of literature and life. Anand has not given a well-organized theory of literature, nor does he feel the need of formulating one for writing literature. As Anand absorbs “people who say I have no theory of fiction are more or less correct. And yet one does not need to formulate a systematic theory to write fiction or to react to its various impressions, to enjoy its flavors and even to write some criticism of one's own.” Anand realizes that the social content of the Indian novelist is different from that of the European writers. He wants that “we have, however, in our newly emergent societies, to understand that we are not the middle classes of Europe and America. We must see our self as we are, we are struggling about the days of contempt of the caste order, emancipating our minds from the submission to our man rule, we are dimly becoming aware of nature of our hopeless resignation in the past to the unknown faith, the supreme God Vishnu who will not wake up to help us, because the Kalyug is not yet over.” In such a period of transition Anand felt that “the old world was dead and gone only lingered in the minds of the sentimentalists who always dote on the past. And the old humanism, of which the old world was the product was a spent force,” but people were still groping for mooring in a changing world because the “individual disrupted by the commercialism which resulted through the industrial revolution that science had helped to perfect. And the ordinary human values, love, justice, beauty, prayer consequently perverted and destroyed. Like Matthew Arnold and felt torn between two worlds- “one dead and the other powerless to be born”.

Anand's humanistic philosophy is sufficient explanation for his choice of characters- the sufferers and the saviors. The sufferers reveal the real plight of contemporary India and the Saviors provide hope against despair. They reveal Anand's existentialism combined with a streak of an optimistic attitude towards life. The relation between the two heroes however differs in various novels. The present study categorizes my paper on the basis of the relationship between the sufferer and the savior. The relationship depends on the suffering hero's own personality. When he is too passive and weak to fight, a savior figure is introduced from a higher stratum of society. When the sufferer attains maturity of sensibility and strength of mind, he himself fights for the liberty of all those who suffer like him. And when the plight of the sufferer is beyond redemption, and when he is a man of high social



profile, no savior character is brought in. In other words, no savior characters are introduced when either the suffering protagonist himself is strong and combative enough to throw a challenge to the iniquitous and suppressive forces of society or when the conditions are so terrible as to be irremediable. In addition there are also some novels in the Anand canon which are fairly free from the shadow of suffering syndrome and therefore have a more disinterested aesthetic dynamic of their own. This study intends to trace the effect of the introduction of the savior characters on the overall aesthetic appeals of Anand's novels.

The greatness of Anand lies in his bold stride both in the choice and treatment of themes. He fearlessly chooses his protagonists from the “dregs of humanity” and tries to identify them with the so called high-caste and high-class people. Anand's delineation and use of the sufferer and savior characters is all his own, and to me, it seems to be a very important features of his fictional output, right from *Untouchables*. The present study proposes to analyze this essential component of Anand's fictional art and use.

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