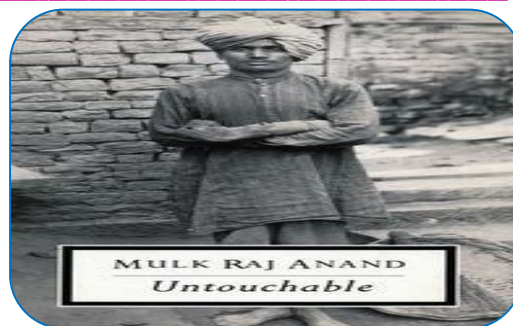




CASTICISM IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S NOVEL 'UNTOUCHABLE'

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses Race and Caste in Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable. This is the universal issue in India throughout the ages. Upper classes people are neglected lower class and ill treated them. Mulk Raj Anand discusses this issue through the characters actions. He creates The protagonist Bakha narrates one day event of his life. He faced many obstacles while working in his life being an untouchable. The novelist draws the attention on the miserable condition of lower caste peoples universally.

KEYWORDS: Bakha, Caste exploitation, Mulk Raj Anand, Social problems, Untouchable.

INTRODUCTION :

The novel Untouchable written by Mulk Raj Anand published by 1935. Mulk Raj Anand is one of the leading novelists who have written novels on different issues. The novel is set in Indian town Bulshaha. Bhaka's aunt tells the real event when she had a meal with a Muslim woman and was treated as an outcaste by her family. Bakha is a young sweeper boy who is "untouchable" because of cleaning latrines. The novel is pathetic cry of the suffering of the low class people under British rule and also under the pressure of outdated Hindu/Brahmin customs and oppressive traditions. The Indian society had been suffering under the burden of slavery for the past two hundred years. Age old practices of discrimination on the basis of caste and class continued to crush the free spirit of man and also continued to separate man from man. The society suffered at different levels but could not think of uniting, regardless of any bias, under one banner of humanity. They remained disintegrated under different flags. To a sensitive heart like his, this discrimination was digging at the roots and was eating away the vitality of the country. Anand could see and understand that discrimination rampant in society was weakening the nation. Thus Untouchable is a pathetic but also a heart rending cry of the author against the cruelty and prejudice of the higher caste people towards the lower castes, the dalits and the subalterns. Caste-system is gradually growing throughout India.

For Mulk Raj Anand casteism is become traditional made by the powerful and wicked in society to uphold discrimination. His intention is to remove caste system because it damages social cohesion. It is hydra-headed evil, contagious like small pox which spread among the people and destroys the dignity of man. The issues brought in the novel such as class exploitation and religious discrimination. In India caste system is powerful and few privileges given to few people according to their superiority.

In the novel dalit characters are not allowed to go to temple, eat good foods, and listen Vedic mantra and voting also. Anand has created a loveable character in Sohini. The dignified restraint that she shows when Gulabo unnecessarily abuses her at the well or the dignified composure that she exhibits when a molestation attempt is made in the temple, reveals Anand's attitude towards women.

He may not be a feminist yet his essential humanism considers women at par with men. Professor Gowda appears to have erred in his appreciation of Anand's stance when he suggested that Sohini should not have resisted the priest's molestation attempt and should have instead demanded a price for it. (Gowda 53) Bhaka's sisiser Sohani goes to temple but priest not given to permission to her on the contrary he tries to rape her. This is done due to she is untouchable Bakha's sister.

Mulk Raj Anand's "Untouchable" is mainly a story of protest against the set norms of casteism in Hindu society. He has tried to hard the deeply rooted castism in Indian society in his famous work „Untouchable. Untouchability which is predominant evils in our Indian society isolates the sweepers and the scavengers from the main stream of the society. Anand is the first Indian novelist to have depicted in the novel from the stigma of this evil which isolates a man from his own society.C.D. Narasimhaiah rightly remarks that Bakha seems to be a typical representative untouchable exemplifying the plight of not only the so-called Hindu untouchables. Anand succeeds in exposing the oppression, injustice, exploitation of the outcastes in India. Towards the end of the novel, the author suggests three solutions to overcome the vice of untouchability-Christ, Gandhi and the flush system.

Attitude of Bhaka's father

Bakha's father Lakha and his younger brother Rakha have completely internalized the dominating ideology. They firmly believe in the Manichean opposition of their inferiority and the superiority of the upper castes which has been created by the discourse of truth of religious ideology. They are at peace with the work of scavenging and accept their lot as the will of God. It is because of the internalization of the dominating ideology that they never realize that their economic and social condition is determined by the master discourse which wants to use and exploit them mercilessly.

Solution on Untouchability

Mulk Raj Anand suggests solution on the untouchability through Gandhi's views. He believed that standing at the heart of the inherited Hindu tradition, including its caste system, it was possible to overcome untouchability. "In my opinion, untouchability is a blot on humanity and therefore upon Hinduism. ... According to the Mahatma, "the caste system is a hindrance, not a sin. He felt that the age-old untouchability was a curse and a kind of disease to Hindu society. Anand's very first novel Untouchable is a novel based on Gandhian voice against untouchability. Anand in the novel depicts the stigma of this evil that isolates man from man from his society.

CONCLUSION

Mulk raj Anand requests all the people in India to eliminate and eradicate the caste system. He shows the caste system through the character of Bhaka and other people.

Anand concludes the novel with a note of faith and idealism. As Bakha returns his mind is raised with the hope that soon the flush system would come to the sweepers and people like him:"Can be free from stigma of untouchability and assume the dignity of status that is their right as useful members of a casteless and classless society. Bakha fervently hopes for the dawn to his nature of work and his relevance in the society without the label of an untouchable. Anand meticulously brings out the inner life of Bakha in the novel.

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