

CASTE AND CLASS CONFLICT IN THE NOVELS OF MULK RAJ ANAND'S THE UNTOUCHABLE AND THE COOLIE

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Abstract:

Everywhere in society there is social stratification. Just to differentiate one from another. It may be caste, religion and race etc. as these have turned out to be problematic in society, and it is because of politics involved in it. This has created a huge barrier among human being which segregates one from another. Therefore, it leads to identity problem. Thus, in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand's the Untouchable and the Coolie, draw the attention towards caste conflict as this issue still remains in our society. How the promise of great man changed the life of the protagonist.

Key words: *Caste, Identity, religion, social, politics.*

Everywhere in society, there is social stratification based on socio-cultural aspects of society just to differentiate one from another on basis of identity to which group they belong to. It may be on basis of caste, religion and race etc., as these have turned out now to be problematic in society as there is politics involved in it. Besides, this has created huge gap among human beings which segregates one from another. Thus, now it leads to big problem of the society.

I would like the plight of Bakha by narrating the incidents how Bakha faced the problems. According to C.D. Narasimhaiah, "Bakha seems to be a typical representative untouchable exemplifying the plight of not only the so-called Hindu untouchables but also of dispossessed people everywhere." (The Swan and the Eagle, 110)

Novel itself will tell the plight of Bakha, who belongs to low caste and how much problem he has to face being untouchable in the society and on other he works as a manual scavenger at the behest of his father, Lakha. Firstly, with Bakha's sister Sohini, as reader we come to know that the water of the well is not be touched any low caste as it is to be touched by only upper caste community. Therefore, his sister goes to get water for them from the communal well. as the untouchables are not allowed to draw water themselves, they have wait for someone who belongs to the upper caste Hindus would come and pour water for them as it

is belief that the touch of an under caste will pollute the well. This has led many problems further they are punished and put heavy fine for them, further it is to be purified with rituals. Over her priest comes Kali Nath comes gets water for the people.

On other, while Bakha sweeping the streets. He accidentally brushes up against a Brahmin Hindu, who starts shouting as he is polluted by Bakha. The man shouts at Bakha as a mob gathers, joining in the insults. The man slaps Bakha before a Muslim cart driver breaks up the fight and disperses the mob. The Muslim man does not care about the Hindu castes, since he is also treated as an Untouchable.

Bakha goes to the temple and looks inside, which is forbidden to him. He sees his sister, Kali Nath who has seen Sohini's beauty desires to fulfill his lust as she tries to seduce Sohini who appears, crying. Over there he accuses her of polluting him with her touch. However, she claims that he sexually assaulted her by grabbing her. It was only when she rejected him that he began shouting that she had touched him. Bakha tells her to go home and says he will take responsibility for gathering food. He spends the rest of the afternoon begging for food, all while being subjected to various indignities and cruelties from the upper caste Hindus. He is increasingly disgusted with the mistreatment he suffers, and when he gets home he tells his father the story about the man who hit him.

After collecting the hockey stick from Charat Singh, Bakha starts playing street hockey. While playing a fight broke out between two teams and in that one of the rocks hits a little boy in the head. Bakha picks him up and carries him to his mother, who recognizes him as a street sweeper. Even though he is trying to help she screams that he has polluted her son. This shows that how much caste is fore grounded in the minds of people as they are not ready to accept the help of lower caste who badly needs his assistance. Mulk Raj Anand clearly shows with example how the system has been collapsed in name caste.

With coming of Mahatma Gandhi to his town was relief to Bakha's problems as he listens to the

speech of his. Listening to speech he became enthused however he does not know enough to determine whether Gandhi's suggestions are naïve. After the speech, Bakha overhears two educated men's discussion as they were debating each one was a poet and another one was a lawyer. The lawyer believes that Gandhi's aims are childish and irrational. Longstanding traditions are rarely overturned, and he believes that the caste system will endure despite protests for reform. The poet believes that the barbarism of the caste system will be eliminated, particularly in light of the fact that the flushing toilet is rumored to be coming to their town. Once the people have flushing toilets, there will be no need for the Untouchables to dispose of the town's refuse, which would require a rethinking of their role and duty to society. Thus, the writer puts in words of realist and imaginative ideals of the persons. Lawyer being realist believes that it will not likely to eradicate caste system and poet says on the modernization may bring change. However, both ideals have been fulfilled now.

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In *Coolie* (1936) the depictions of class conflict is seen. Munoo is an orphan and he is looked by uncle and aunt. They cannot afford him further they decided to him to join to work banker house Babu Nathoo Ram house as a servant and they made him to work at the age of 14. Munoo conflict starts with joining Babu Nathan Ram house, however he treats with some kind and compassion, whereas his wife Bibiji used to beat and ill-treats him. On the other he is not allowed to visit the rooms of other family members in Babu Nathoo Ram's house. He is not given food properly and often scolded with the use of vulgar words such as "you eater of your servant", "pig", "owl", "monkey" etc. Munoo used play with Sheila by playing the role of monkey dance, once accidentally he bites and gets injured Sheila, he is beaten up by parents and out fear runs away from the house.

On the other side, in this reader see that Sheth Prabha Dayal owns the factory is forced give Sir

Todal Mal free pickles and a jam. So that he will not shut down the factory. This shows how both same class people enjoying their liberty. On other the capitalist and the higher class always stood at the privileges and the lower strata of the society remains poor and helpless.

In Bombay, Munoo works as a labourer in the factory of Sir George Mill and he is paid very less salary. Mr. Mill being capitalist exploited his worker a lot. This exploitation overturned many things. Ratan demands the unity of labourers against the capitalist. However, Ratan demands turns out nasty and everything turned out to be in chaos. Ratan wants give justice to people, whereas capitalist are very scheme.

Munoo meets an accident and he was taken by Mrs. Mainwaring to Shimla. In Shimla, he used to work in her house and on the other, he used to pull her up and down road with hand pulled rickshaw. Gradually due to malnourishment his health deteriorated, he dies with tuberculosis. It is evident in the discrimination where Munoo is treated as a subhuman being. In this novel Mulk Raj Anand shows that how a young boy was made to work as a servant in home and factory as well as in circus and being collie in railway station. Wherever, he worked he is being treated badly by not giving proper food and better treatment by his employer.

In India class conflict is not popular only few scholars speak about it. The capitalist always have their way of solving problem. They know how solve it most ethical and logical way.

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