

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL UNTOUCHABLE BY MULK RAK ANAND

A DISSERTATION

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS (M.A)**

IN ENGLISH

(FACULTY OF HUMANITIES)



UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF:-

Dr. MADHU MISHRA

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ENGLISH

SUBMITTED BY:-

VASUNDHARA SUMAN

ROLL NO- 20MA0400520

REG NO- RU2020023664

SESSION- 2020-2022

RANCHI UNIVERSITY, RANCHI

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CERTIFICATE

It is to certify that the present dissertation/ project work entitled “A study on the novel untouchable by Mulk Raj Anand” has been carried out by Ms. Vasundhara Suman of MA English, Semester 4, University Roll No. 20MA0400520, Registration No-RU2020023664, Academic Session : 2020-2022 under the supervision in partial fulfillment or the requirement for the award of the degree of the master of arts in English (Faculty of Humanities).

Ranchi University, Ranchi. She has made sincere effort to the justice to the topic of her research. In habit and the character the candidates is fit and proper person for the award of the degree of the master in English

Dr. Madhu Mishra
(Supervisor)

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Place: (Vasundhara Suman)

Date: Student

CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE NO.
• Introduction.....	6-12
• Life and work of Mulk Raj Anand...	13-26
• Major Themes in the novel Untouchable..	27-37
• Untouchable as a novel of social protest..	38-44
• Conclusion.....	45-46
• Bibliography.....	47

1--INTRODUCTION

This is a short novel, but it leaves with profound thoughts. Set in pre-independent India, *Untouchable* is a dirty story. We'll know why I said that when we read the delightful Preface by E.M Forster. This is a story of an ordinary lad, who is conscious of his status in society and yet can't help but question its unfairness. The book was inspired by his aunt's experience when she had a meal with a Muslim woman and was treated as an outcast by her family. The plot of this book, Anand's first, revolves around the argument for eradicating the caste system. It depicts a day in the life of Bakha, a young "sweeper", who is "untouchable" due to his work of cleaning latrines.

Untouchable is the first novel by Mulk Raj Anand. A classic! A novel which imprints a character sketch in our heart and then spells out some solutions too for the poignant states of affairs. Simply excellent!!! Published in 1935, *Untouchable* is Mulk Raj Anand's first major novel. The novel's format is very simple—it follows the day in the life of an "untouchable," a member of India's lowest social caste. Despite its simplicity, *Untouchable* exposed the "dehumanizing contradictions" and systematic oppressions inherent in India's stratified society. Though intelligent is a powerful work that and handsome, the book's main character, Bakha, is an outcast and forbidden from improving his life situation because his touch and presence are considered impure and corrupting. Using Bakha's story as a vehicle, Anand challenges the barriers and rules that inhibit the lives of untouchables and argues for the education of untouchables.

Considered revolutionary because of how it champions the cause of the untouchables and exposes India's social evils, *Untouchable* was well received and highly regarded both domestically and abroad. Within India, it caused a generation of educated Indians to think about

how India's internal colonialism was preventing the country's progression to a modern civil society. Outside India, prominent novelists of the age such as E.M. Forster hoisted up Anand's novel as having both historical and literary significance. Though India's caste system is still in place today, books like *Untouchable* raised awareness about the crushing inequalities and injustices the system fosters. This has resulted in the passage of numerous anti-discrimination laws and affirmative action initiatives along caste lines in contemporary India. Furthermore, the appearance of one Mahatma Gandhi in the novel explicitly places the book in a distinctive historical context. Finally, from a literary standpoint, *Untouchable* stands out because of its inclusion of Punjabi and Hindu idioms in English.

The author's experience as an Indian, and the fact that *Untouchable* was written while the caste system was firmly in place, give the novel an authenticity and accuracy that make it easy to empathize with Bakha and his family.

Untouchable is a unique opportunity for readers to experience the plight of the victims of the caste system. At the same time, the story identifies the complexities of Indian identity after the Great War as India emerges from post colonialism to globalism.

It's slightly slow paced as it gradually follows the events, thoughts meandering in Bakha through one single day. Mulk Raj Anand has been one of the prominent faces in Indian Writing in English. *Untouchable* was published in 1935 and is the major novel of the author. Though, the format of the novel is very simple as it talks about a day in the life of an untouchable who belongs to the lowest social caste of India. Though the novel is very simple, however, it exposes contradictions and oppressions in the classified society of the country. The protagonist of the novel Bakha is an intelligent and handsome boy but he is an outcast and untouchable as his presence and touch is considered impure and corruptive. Anand in this novel challenges the

rules and barriers made for untouchables and argues for their education.

The novel was very well received both domestically and abroad as it highlights the social evils of society and fights for the rights of the untouchables. In India, many educated Indians were forced to think about how the internal caste system of India is preventing its progress and in abroad, authors like E.M. Forster saw a literary and historical significance in the novel. Although today untouchability has been abolished to a great level, books like this raised awareness about inequalities and injustice done to untouchables. Many of the laws, rules and regulations were made after the publication of this book. The book stands out because it has a reference of one Mahatma Gandhi and Punjabi and Hindi idioms are used in this book abundantly after translating them into English.

The book is divided into different sections and the first sections starts with an imaginary town of Bulashah. The town is based on actual towns and city which existed within the country at that time. There are references to many Indian habits, the Hindu caste system and the British occupation of India which signify the time and place in the novel.

The book starts with an outcaste's colony located in the outer of Bulashah. The protagonist and his family live in that colony. There is a presence of the third person who describes the colony through five senses and focuses on smell. He says that there is a choking smell in the place which makes it unsuitable to reside. The conclusion of the place is described by the protagonist of the novel, Bakha. Lakha who is the leader of all Bulashah's sweepers has an eldest son Bakha who is 18 years old who is very intelligent and vain. He is obsessed with British dress and habits. This obsession makes him reject the customs of his own country and he favours the Tommies because of their dress and customs. There is a strained relationship between Bakha and his father as he rejects Indian culture and his father is very lazy when it

comes to their jobs as sweepers. After Bakha's mother demise, his father becomes even lazier. Bakha has now become the head of the family who takes up the responsibility of sweeping work.

There are many incidents in Bakha's life like his relationship with his father and his low-class life which he leads as a sweeper which makes us sympathetic towards him but it is very difficult for the readers to relate with him. His immature and biased adoration of Britishers in India seems offensive and contradictory to modern-day readers. The motive behind him doing so is to escape the harsh realities of his life.

Sohini, Bakha's younger sister is a much more sympathetic character than Bakha. She is a peaceful, calm and composed woman and tries her best to share Bakha's burden as the head of the family. Sohini tries her best to accept the hatred of people towards her and accepts her reality as untouchable. Though Gulabo's behaviour towards Sohini is a caricature of the actual treatment received by untouchables, however, there is no evidence to deny the behaviour. All the themes and symbols make an appearance in the introductory part of the novel. Bakha uses clothing as a medium to differentiate between Hindu and Muslim. There is also rejection of Indian roots when we see Bakha dressed up as an Englishman as he wants to create a link between himself and his cloth representation.

Cyclical oppression can also be seen in the novel as Bakha's father was born as untouchable so he and his siblings become untouchables for the rest of their lives. Class struggle can be witnessed in the novel from the beginning in the conversation between Sohini and Gulabo and Bakha and Charat Singh. Charat Singh promises to give a hockey stick to Bakha out of charity.

There are instances of flashbacks, hyperboles and other devices in the novel. Bakha goes into flashback while lying awake and waiting for his day to begin as to how his mother cared for him when she was alive.

When Gulabo's hurls insults at Sohini she uses many hyperbolic attacks calling her a slut who shows her teeth unnecessarily in the male presence. After Sohini's confrontation with Gulabo Sohini feels that something in her heart asks for mercy. Here we see that her heart is given the ability to speak. We can very well say that the novel reaches its climax in its early phases. The novel sees its climax when a high-class man accidentally touches and then slaps Bakha in the town centre of Bulashah. This scene impacts the upcoming interactions and events in the novel. This moment stays in Bakha's mind for the whole book and impacts his choices and behaviour to a great extent.

The climax also highlights some of the major themes of the novel. The first theme we see here is the untouchable's responsibility theme. Although it is the man who touches Bakha accidentally, he places the whole blame on Bakha's shoulders. He accuses Bakha of not maintaining the distance with him and not announcing his presence. Bakha then has an additional responsibility of maintaining the distance between him and high-class people and also between him and the angry group which gathers around him after he gets scolded, even though he wants to run away. Yet again we see that keeping the high class pure is the responsibility of the untouchable. The verbal abuses hurled at Bakha when he touches the man is used without any censors by the public as well as the man. The Punjabi idioms are translated into English for easy understanding and the phase gets a very decorative language. Some of the language and anger of the high caste can prove to be amusing for readers as the grievances of the high class is overrated. However, the use of verbal abuses against Sohini and Bakha is highly unacceptable. Both of them experience this behaviour for the first time and do not realize that this can soon turn into physical abuse. We can also find inter and intra caste conflict in the novel. Though all the friends of Bakha including Chota and Ram Charan are also untouchables but Bakha is a sweeper and ranks lowest in the caste among his friends.

The difference comes into the picture when all the friends discuss the marriage of Ram Charan's sister. Bakha has feelings for his sister but he cannot think of achieving them even in his dreams. Besides the caste, the girls' mother Gulabo might become a staunch opposer in their marriage. The struggle between different castes comes to light when Bakha thinks about lack of education. Bakha cannot go to school because his presence will pollute the environment and due to this none of the teachers and principals want to admit him to the school. He has been forbidden to read, write, and calculate as he is an untouchable which puts him at a disadvantage of the higher castes. The educational barrier to untouchables highlights the cyclical oppression theme. As they cannot learn anything significant at school or get a good job the untouchables cannot rise in society just by changing the professions. The lack of educational opportunities makes a vicious circle for untouchables of suffering, poverty and oppression. Another example of cyclical oppression is when Bakha asks a shopkeeper to give him candy the shopkeeper gives him less candy than the actual money and tries to cheat him.

This implies that the candy is much more expensive for Bakha than it would be for a non-untouchable individual. The higher prices for untouchables push them towards the dead-end of poverty. It feels very nonsensical to raise money for any product for those who cannot afford it even at the base price.

The religious theme is also embedded in the novel to the core. For instance, when Bakha asks a Muslim man for some coal to light his cigarette he does so without any grudges and also uses the same coal which has been used by Bakha which a Hindu would not have done. This shows how religion divides the people to a great extent.

When Bakha is slapped by a high-class person, the Muslim merchant is shocked and concerned about him, unlike the Hindu man who is

ignorant of these petty but major things. The compassion Muslim man shows to Bakha gives the novel a relieving factor. There are different similes and metaphors which have been used in the novel freely.

When Bakha stops for fresh air after escaping the smoky world of refuse he feels liberated but his liberation is short-lived as he is untouchable and will always be treated like one. At the end of the novel, we see some hope when there is a shadow of Bakha going to share his stories of the machine with his father.

2--LIFE AND WORK OF MULK RAJ ANAND

EARLY LIFE

Mulk Raj Anand was born in a Hindu family of Kshatriyas on 12 December 1905 in Peshawar, the central city of Northwest Frontier Province, now in Pakistan. He was

the third of five sons of Lal Chand, a silversmith turned sepoy. Anand's father belonged to the Thathiar caste. People of Thathiar caste were workers of copper and silver. Lal Chand left his hereditary occupation to attend school. He learnt English, took a British military examination and served in cantonments including Sialkot.

Ferozepur, Peshawar, Mian Mir, Nowshera and Malakhand. He was appointed ahead clerk, attached to the Thirty-eighth Dogra Regiment. He was said to be the only literate man in the whole regiment. He was a worldly man, highly ambitious for his sons' education and economic status. As an Arya Samaji, Anand's father also served. Untouchable as president of the Nowshera Samaj from 1910 to 1913. 'the society incurred the hostility of the British Officials for its rebellious activities, Lal, fearing the displeasure of his superiors and the British rulers in India, withdrew from the group.

Mulk Raj Anand inherited from his father a professional artisan's industry and minute attention to detail as also the revolutionary temperament.

Sikh peasant family of Sialkot. a part of Central Punjab. She was a religious Mulk Raj Anand (1905-) Anand's mother came from a devout woman who had a great faith in orthodox beliefs. She had a vast knowledge of folk tales, having heard them in her childhood from her own mother, as also legends, fables, myths and other narratives of

gods, men, birds and beasts. "So sure was my mother's gift for storytelling," says Anand, "that sometimes I found myself rapt in her tales with an intensity of wonder." .

The first twenty years of Anand's life seem to have been spent in the Punjab area After passing his matriculation in 1920, Anand entered Khalsa College, Amritsar. He joined non-violent struggle against the British government and courted arrest. His early recollections focus on two cantonments, Mian Mir and Nowshera In 1925. He graduated from Punjab University with Honours in English. The first break in Anand's life came when he received a scholarship for research in philosophy under Professor Dawes Hicks in London. It is here that he started creative writing. In 1926, he completed dissertation on the thought of great philosophers: John Locke.

George Berkeley, David Hume and Bertrand Russell. In- 1928, he was awarded Ph D degree by London University. He then associated with T.S. Eliot's literary periodical.

LITERARY CAREER

Mulk Raj Anand enjoys the reputation of being a pioneer novelist because of a corpus of creative fiction of sufficient bulk and quality. He is a prolific writer and is

continuing to write and publish at the age of ninety-six. Besides novels and short stories, he has written a number of books on art, paintings and literature. Anand became an exciting name with his early novels *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *No Leaves and a Bud* (1937) in which he started the new trend of realism and social protest in Indian English fiction. In his novels, he portrays the

doomed lives of the downtrodden and the oppressed. His protagonists—a sweeper, a coolie, a peasant—are all victims of exploitation, class-hatred, race-hatred and inhuman cruelty. Over the years, he has become a vigorous champion of the

oppressed and the downtrodden.

Untouchable, a powerful novel, can be regarded as quintessential Anand since it projects most of his characteristic concerns and fundamental issues of life. The main theme of the novel is untouchability as a problem in Hindu society.

In 1939-1942, he wrote a trilogy, a series of three novels dealing with the same protagonist called Lala Singh. The novels were titled *The Village* (1939), *Across Black Waters* (1940) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942). In 1951, he published *Seven Summers*, the first of a series of seven novels which Anand planned to write as a kind of autobiography in seven parts, corresponding to the seven stages of a man's life as described by Shakespeare in his play *As You Like It*. *Morning Face*, the second of the seven novels in the series, was

published in 1968 and received the Sahitya Akademi Award for 1971. This has been followed by

Confession of a Lover (1976), Bubble (1984), Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi (1990) and Nine Moods of Bharata (1999).

Besides novels, Mulk Raj Khanna has written more than seventy short stories which have been published in various collections entitled The Lost Child and Other Stories (1934), The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories (1944). Corn Goddess and

Other Stories (1947), Rejections on the Golden Bed and Other Stones (1953), The Power of Darkness and Other Stones (1959), Lajwanti and Other Stones (1966) and Between Tears and Lincgher (1973). In addition, he has retold older Indian tales in two collections: Indian Fairy Tales (1946) and More Indian Fairy Tales (1961).

AWARDS

In 1952, Khanna was awarded the International Peace Prize of the World Peace Council for promoting peace among the nations through his literary works. In 1967, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the President of India for distinguished

service to art and literature. In 1978, he won the E.M. Forster award of Rs.3000 for his novel Confession of a Lover which was adjudged the best book of creative literature in the English Language.' This was the first annual award instituted by the Arnold Heinemann.

THE THIRTIES MOVEMENT

"Among the Indo-English novelists," observes hniah Gowda, "Mulk Raj Anand is the most conspicuously committed writer.. . Perhaps the best word for it is the plainest: it is propaganda writing." The Propaganda novel in the true sense is one so dominated by its author's ulterior purpose that the propaganda cannot be ignored, and normally one who dislikes that line of propaganda would find the book unreadable.

Such a novel, Gowda opines, cannot rank among the great works of literature. In a similar vein, Chetan Kamani complains of the extra-literary intentions of the novelist:

"The trouble with Anand is that he is not able to hide his proletarian sympathies "2These 'determined' detractors of Anand, and some others, charge him of having used the artistic medium of the novel for pure propaganda. Indoctrination, they hold, does not go with the creative process and aesthetic experience.

Anand is not deterred by such-criticism: "I do not in the least mind criticism, even already been rewarded by the fact that they have gone into so many languages of the world in spite of their triffiness and exposure of many shams, hypocrisies and orthodoxies of India.

This is true, for in his fiction Anand was heeding his artistic conscience than following any pre-conceived formula. And that accounts for the abiding appeal of his novels.

Untouchable, as also some other early writings of Anand, cannot be fully appreciated unless studied in relation to the movement of the nineteen-thirties in Western Europe.

For, as a writer he was shaped in the Thirties when several problems bogged the face as a writer was not strictly a private, but a private-public problem."4 As it was, he found it impossible to maintain aloofness intellectuals. The problem that Anand "tried to from politics in the post-World War Europe.

Anand stayed in London for over two decades, from 1924 to 1945; he was therefore deeply influenced by the Progressive Movement in literature that flourished in the Thirties. In London, Anand came under numerous literary, political and social influences and it is in them that the sources of his synthesis of Marxist and humanist thought can be seen. "You will find that amorphous as my books are," writes Anand, "I did stick to the novel form, more or less, as an imaginative interpretation of Indian life rather than use it as a vehicle to sermonize. And the posing of the problems of human beings in the 30s by people like Malraux, Celine and Hemingway gave the necessary sense of discrimination to my own treatment of the predicament of our people as against the European view."⁵ He was an overt nationalist and championed the socialist cause in his fiction in common with many European and American writers of the day.

The writer was not only absorbing the atmosphere as a participant but also seemed readily inclined to reflect it in his writing.

Inspired by these ideas some Indian students studying in England assembled in London a few months after the Paris

Sajjad Zaheer who played a prominent role in the organization vividly recalls his association with Anand: "I have had the good fortune of having known Mulk.. since 1930, when we were both young and in our twenties and were students in England.

In 1935, Anand and I, together with a few other young Indians founded the Indian Progressive Writers Movement, spreading to almost all the great languages of India, blessed and supported by such eminent figures as Tagore and Premchand." The progressive writers believed that the principal function of literature was to reflect and express the aspirations and fundamental problems of the toiling masses and ultimately help in the formation of a socialist society. Even those who were not Marxists adhered to the idea of a basic social transformation and political independence. A new content is discerned in literature,

which not only bears out a radically revolutionary character but also a basically new rationale for such a change.

The Thirties movement defined in specific terms the position of the artists and the functions of his art. In *Apology for Heroism*, Anand places the writer on a very high pedestalbelieves that the work of a genuine creative writer is inspired by a mission. , glorifying him as "precisely the man who can encompass the whole of life. He is superior to the moralist, the scientist and the politician, each of whom takes a limited view of man, whole the writer "is uniquely fitted to aspire to be a whole man to attain, as far as possible, a more balanced perspective of life." novelist like any other artist is concerned chiefly with the truth. And he reveals it not like the philosopher who does it in a cold statement of dogma but only in terms of life, rendered through the devices of dramatization. Anand, like Lawrence, Gorky, and Eric Gill, He seems to be in full agreement with Arnold's dictum that literature at bottom is the criticism of life. He is strongly committed to his creed, and in his opinion "any miter who said that he was not

interested in a condition humane was either posing or yielding to a fanatical love of isolationism--a perverse and clever defense of the adolescent desire to be different.

The Thirties movement proved to be a watershed in the literary sensibility in Europe.

It shook the writers from age-old slumber and awakened them to the realization of new possibilities, which had so far eluded them. The early fiction of Anand was truly representative of the movement. His fictional world depicted not the feudal splendors and mysticism of traditional Indian literature, but the hard and suffering lives of the millions of his countrymen. Anand thus ushered in the realistic fiction.

In the choice of themes, therefore, Anand is unquestionably an innovator. He is the first novelist writing in English to choose as his raw

material the lower-class life of the Indian masses. In *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, he almost dreads the flight of imagination, feels shy of soaring high and keeps close to the ground with a vengeance. He does not hesitate to turn the floodlight on the darkest spots in Indian life.

AN OVERVIEW OF MULK RAJ ANAND'S WORKS:

Untouchable was written over a long weekend in 1930. Mulk Raj Anand tells us that it poured out like hot lava from the volcano of his imagination, and that during its composition he hardly slept for more than six hours in three days. In his article On the Genesis of Untouchable: A Note, Mulk Raj Anand tells in detail about the writing of the novel. During a long week-end in the early twenties in Dublin, he started writing the first draft of the novel, then called Bakha. A little later, he came across a poignant story about a sweeper-boy Uka, written with utmost simplicity by Mahatma Gandhi in Young India. Anand wrote to the Mahatma and was allowed to meet him in three months' time. In April 1929, he went to see Gandhiji in the Sabarmati Ashram in the boiling heat of Gujarat. He showed Gandhiji the novel he had written. Gandhiji was opposed to the writing of a novel depicting the love-affair of a boy and girl. Anand explained to him that it was about Bakha, a sweeper-boy, an untouchable. Gandhiji suggested that he should write a straightforward pamphlet about Harijans. Anand defended himself by saying that he wanted to tell the story just as Gandhiji had narrated his story about the sweeper Uka. Anand was allowed to stay in the

Ashram provided he promised not to drink, not to think of his English girlfriend and clean latrines once a week. The three-month stay in the ashram rejuvenated Anand.

The austerities that he practised there awakened his conscience and converted him to Anand read some portions of the novel to Gandhiji who suggested that he should cut down more than a hundred pages, specially those passages in which Bakha seemed to be thinking and dreaming like a Bloomsbury intellectual. Following Gandhiji's advice, Anand revised the entire novel during his three month stay in the ashram. Out of two hundred and fifty pages, only one hundred and

fifty pages were left. He read the revised version to Gandhiji who gave his approval to it.

However, the book failed to draw the attention of the publishers for more than two years. Anand felt quite disheartened by the fact that no found publisher the book worth publishing. Edward Thompson, - an eminent writer of several books about India, wrote a letter to Anand giving reasons for the publishers' rejection of the manuscript:

"It is true that Indian books do not sell. There is such a welter of propaganda and sentimentalism over everything Indian-British die-hard, National Congress journalist, fake poet and mystic, theosophist, Gandhi-adorer, American Women's club, all combine to make everything Indian depressing to anyone not half-witted. I seem to find signs that India is beginning to bore even Indians As a matter of fact, the novel was not accepted because it was unlike the traditional books. The main objection to the book was the squalor and dirt that it depicts.

Even Bonamy Dobree, a leading literary figure and friend of Anand, found the book wanting in some respects. He advised Anand "to make the beginning a little more different.. . . . It does smell rather strong." He wanted Anand to delete the descriptions of dirt and cruelty in novel, for he felt that "the average reader does not want to be instructed but amused." "Following the advice of Dobree and other critics, Anand revised the novel several times. For example, he tones down the opening pages of the novel. In writing of these, he had been greatly influenced by Dickens' description of London slums. Jonathan Cape, The Bodley Head, Chatto and Windus, and several other publishers turned it down, in spite of strong recommendation from Dobree. Perhaps the most encouraging response came from E.M.Forster. After reading the manuscript, Forster wrote to Anand a letter on 5 May 1934: "I found it extremely interesting.. . . .you make your sweeper sympathetic yet avoid making him a hero or a martyr, and, by the appearance of Gandhi

and conversation about machinery at the end, you give the whole book a coherence and shape which it would otherwise have

lacked." By September 1934, the novel had been rejected by as many as nineteen publishers. Anand felt so disheartened that he contemplated suicide. At that juncture, a young

British poet Oswald Blakeston took the manuscript to Wishart Books. The publisher accepted to publish it on the condition that the eminent English novelist E.M. Forster should write a Preface to protect it against being called 'dirty'. Forster not only quickly supplied the Preface but also insisted that Anand should accept the fee received for writing the Preface. He wrote the Preface as a matter of conviction. "It will be a great pleasure to me," he said, "if I should be of any help in introducing such an interesting and original piece of work to readers in this country." The book was published on 1 May 1935. It received a mixed response to begin with, but soon it established for itself a popularity that remains unrivalled for a work of fiction by an Indian author. In 1944, the Penguin edition of the novel was published. By now, the novel has been translated into thirty-six languages of the world. Anand now lives in Khandala, a small hill station about hundred kilometres from Bombay and is leading a very active life-writing, attending seminars and conferences, meeting people and doing social work. His busy schedule of work shows him to be one of the most energetic of literary men of the twentieth century. Theme of Discrimination and Segregation

Anand is touched with pity at the deplorable plight of the untouchables. The untouchables are segregated and discriminated against the rest of society. The colony does have several outcasts including washermen and leather workers but the scavengers hold the lowest rank in the hierarchy of castes. They deserve least human love and sympathy as ordained by the age old Vedic tradition. They have been subjected to sub-human status. In some respects animals

are better than untouchables because they are at large to use their surroundings without polluting them. Anand never harps on theme of romantic love affairs. The very choice of the theme was an intrepid step towards discouraging untouchability. He sailed against the current by making a sweeper the hero of his novel and it earned him the wrath of orthodox and fanatic caste Hindus. Anand portrays this predicament vividly,

“The outcastes were not allowed to mount the platform surrounding the well, because if they were ever to draw water from it, the Hindus of the three upper castes would consider the water polluted. Nor were they allowed access to the nearby brook as their use of it would contaminate the stream. They had no well of their own. They had to collect at the foot of the caste Hindu’s well and depend on the bounty of some of their superior to pour water into their pitchers.”

Novels

Untouchable (1935)

Kali ka ladai (1939)

Coolie (1936)

Two Leaves and a Bud (1937)

The Village (1939)

Across the Black Waters (1939), Orient Paperbacks, ISBN 978-81-222025-8-8

The Sword and the Sickle (1942)

The Big Heart (1945)

The Lost Child (1934)

Seven Summers: A Memoir (1951)

The Private Life of an Indian Prince (1953)

The Old Woman and the Cow (1960)

The Road (1961)

The Death of a Hero (1964), based on the life of Maqbool Sherwani
(adapted as Maqbool Ki Vaapsi on DD Kashir)

Short story collections

The Lost Child and Other Stories (1934)

The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories (1944)

The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories (1947)

Reflections on the Golden Bed and Other Stories (1953)

The Power of Darkness and Other Stories (1959)

Lajwanti and Other Stories (1966)

Between Tears and Laughter (1973)

Indian Fairy Tales (1946)

More Indian Fairy Tales (1961)[22]

Other notable works[edit]

The Golden Breath: Studies in five poets of the new India (1933) [23]

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Kama Kala (1958)[25]

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Sahitya Akademi Award – 1971

3--MAJOR THEMES IN THE NOVEL UNTOUCHABLE

Rejection of Indian Roots

The rejection of Indian habits and social customs is a central idea of *Untouchable*. Bakha is the best personification of this theme in the novel. We are first introduced to his distaste for certain Indian habits when he watches the Hindu men performing their morning ablutions. Anand writes that after working in the British barracks Bakha had become ashamed of the “Indian way” of washing up (Anand 34). Other Indian habits that Bakha shows contempt for are how some Hindu men and women relieve themselves in the open on the streets (Anand 36), the Indian tendency to wear “florid ornaments” (Anand 107), and even the Indian way of drinking tea (Anand 62). The disapproval Bakha feels for these various habits stem from British feelings about them. For example, when the British see Hindus relieving themselves on the ground in public, they say *kala admi zamin par hagne wala* (black man, you who relieve yourself on the ground) (Anand 35). These words are a condemnation and something to be embarrassed about, in Bakha’s opinion. His rejection of Indian ways of life is directly correlated to his embracement of British ways of life. If the British *sahibs* dislike something, they must be right, and he must emulate them in all things.

The rejection of Indian roots is closely intertwined with Britain’s colonization of India and extends far past Bakha to Indian society as a whole. Bakha is not the only Indian fascinated by English culture. The presence of the Salvation Army in Bulashah is a testament to this. It shows that there are some Indians interested in Christianity, the religion of the colonizer. Further, at the end of the novel it is suggested that accepting the European “machine” (i.e., moving away from an agricultural economy to an industrial one) might be the path to

salvation for untouchables. Rejecting the Indian way of clearing waste and embracing the European way of flushing it away without human contact could mean an end to the demands that sweepers satisfy, which would allow them to seek out other types of work that wouldn't make them untouchable.

However, things aren't always so straightforward. An example of this is the British-Indian penal code the poet Iqbal speaks of near the end of the novel. This code recognizes the rights of every Indian before the court, which on the de jure level makes everyone equal. And yet, the Hindu caste system simply adjusted and made profession the determinant of caste level. Because families typically have the same profession across generations, this did not alter much. After walking a day in Bakha's shoes it is clear that the caste system persists despite British attempts to eradicate it. While certain ways of Indian life have been rejected in the face of supposed British superiority, others are upheld. Here the push and pull between Indian and British sociocultural mores can be seen.

Class Struggle

At its core *Untouchable* is a tale about class struggle. The paralyzing and polarizing differences between the various caste levels shape Bakha's day and fuel the narrative. Class and caste play a role in every interaction Bakha has over the course of his day. When his hero Singh speaks with him in the morning, it is with a "grin [that] symbolized six thousand years of racial and class superiority." When Singh promises to give Bakha a hockey stick, he calls forth a "trait of servility" embedded in Bakha that he inherited from his forefathers. Bakha is "queerly humble" and passively content like a "bottom dog" (Anand 31). This is clear example of how caste levels and what they symbolize

about your station in life can be internalized and then manifested in your personality and demeanor.

Inter-caste inequality is not only about personal interactions. It is fueled by a set of rules that limits the lives and rights of outcastes, particularly the untouchables. For example, the outcastes are not allowed to draw their own water from the public well because this would make the water polluted in the eyes of the upper-caste Hindus. They must prevail upon the charity of higher-caste people drawing water to share some with them. Particular to the untouchables is the law of their untouchability. They must take care not to touch those of other castes, and to shout a warning about their presence wherever they go.

Though the struggle between the caste levels takes precedent in the story, intra-caste conflict also exists. Gulabo, Ram Charan's mother, is a great illustration of this. Though she is an outcaste like Bakha and his family, because she and her family are washer people, they occupy a higher place within their shared outcaste status than the sweepers. Gulabo uses her higher station to terrorize Bakha and Sohini. Thus the stratification of the castes isn't only an "inter" issue but also an "intra" one.

Charity

Charity occupies an interesting place in the world of Untouchable. The outcastes are dependent on the charity of higher castes for fresh water (Anand 50), food (Anand 130), clothing (Anand 20), etc. Oftentimes the begging of the outcastes is met with derision and anger by the higher castes. This uncharitable reaction is shortsighted when considering that outcastes must beg for water since the caste system deems them unworthy of drawing their own. The higher castes are unable to see the poverty of the outcaste is their own doing, not that of the outcaste.

On the other hand, in order to maintain their current status and/or rise in the caste hierarchy in the next life, Hindus must perform acts of charity. The Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, the two upper castes in Hindu society, claim they earned their positions because of all the good deeds they did in previous lives. So in a way the higher castes are dependent on charity as well.

Cyclical Oppression

The suffering of the outcastes is cyclical, generational, and perpetual. This is the idea that is at the center of Untouchable, the idea that Anand seeks to highlight and criticize. The Hindu caste system and the stigmas it casts upon the outcastes ensure that they stay poor and destitute while the other castes maintain their higher standings and better lifestyles. The inability of the outcastes to draw their own water from the community well or even gather together the funds to build their own well ensures they will always be dependent on charitable Hindus for water (Anand 43). Shopkeepers and food vendors charge outcastes higher prices, “as if to compensate themselves for the pollution they [court] by dealing with outcastes” (Anand 87). This is

nonsensical, making poor people that lack money pay more than rich people with money, and yet is somehow justified in the eyes of the higher castes. Furthermore, because teachers refuse to teach untouchables for fear of pollution, most of them cannot read and so must pay to have texts read to them or letters written (Anand 74). The answer would be teachers that are untouchable, but who would first teach them? Here we see the cyclical nature of the outcaste's plight.

The life of the outcaste is cyclical not only because it is perpetuated by corrupt interpersonal dealings, but also because it is generational. The oppression and terrible life standards the outcastes face persist across generations. Bakha began working in the latrines as a sweeper at the age of 6, same as his father, his grandfather, great-grandfather, etc. (Anand 75). His status and life as a sweeper was inherited and passed down by his forefathers. Unless untouchability is abandoned, the Hindu caste system eradicated, and the unequal treatment of outcastes stopped, Bakha's children will pick up the cross their father bears.

The Untouchable's Responsibility/Burden

Deeply intertwined with the themes of class struggle and cyclical oppression is the idea of the untouchable's responsibility or the untouchable's burden. Aside from their job as sweeper, the untouchables are also tasked with ensuring they don't touch higher-caste people and higher-caste people don't touch them. Bakha first mentions this responsibility after he bumps into a caste man. Surrounded by a mob of angry Hindus, Bakha realizes that "he was surrounded by a barrier, not a physical barrier... but a moral one. He knew that contact with him, if he pushed through, would defile a great many more of [the] men" (Anand 92). Instead of the burden being on the men to make sure they don't touch Bakha, he is the one that must take care. Bakha reinforces this idea when he apologizes to the man

he bumps into and says, “I have erred now. I forgot to call. I beg your forgiveness” (Anand 94). The call Bakha refers to is “Posh keep away, posh, sweeper coming, posh posh...” (Anand 98). Untouchables must shout this as they walk to notify others of their approach. Not only must they clean up the refuse of others, they must also protect the cleanliness of others.

The untouchable’s burden is another means of keeping the untouchable suppressed. This is best illustrated by Sohini’s brush with Pundit Kali Nath in the temple. Here we have a Hindu high-caste man that willingly touched Sohini in an amorous manner. When she rejected him, Nath cried “polluted, polluted” and accused Sohini of defiling him (Anand 120). Because she is an untouchable, Sohini has no means of defending herself. She cannot argue that Nath touched her of his own volition, because such a defense would make no sense to Hindus that observe the caste system. Making bodily contact negligence on the part of the untouchable and not the caste person allows sexual assaults like Sohini’s to be permissible. This is another example of the class struggles between untouchables and caste people, and another way untouchables are reduced to a subhuman status.

Religion

father, his Religion is the thread that connects all of the themes in Untouchable. Anand uses clothing to separate the Hindus from the Muslims from the Christians. The rejection of Indian roots is in part made manifest by the conversion of Indians from Hinduism to Christianity. The class struggles between the different caste levels and the cyclical oppression the outcastes experience is rooted in the hierarchy Hinduism created, as is the need for the higher castes to be

charitable. Furthermore, Bakha sees his responsibility of alerting the world to his presence as a moral obligation.

There are a few ways that religion acts as an explicit mediator between the characters of *Untouchable* as well. Of course Hinduism influences interactions such as Gulabo's with Sohini and Bakha's with the caste man he touches. There are other examples however. Colonel Hutchinson's interest in Bakha is fueled by his belief that Bakha wishes to convert to Christianity. Also, though alienated from his father Lahka, Bakha feels a connection to him when thinking about how his mother, and their forefathers all worshipped Rama, god of the Hindus (Anand 244). While religion is a source of the many issues the novel grapples with, it is also the force that brings our characters into contact with one another.

INEQUALITY

At the time of the novel's writing, the caste system had been in place for over two thousand years. It divides society into four tiers of privilege. The highest ranks comprise the wealthy, the intellectuals, and other positions of power. The Untouchables are actually even lower than the lowest caste, comprising a fifth class outside of rank, and is seen as filthy, even to the point of being able to pollute upper caste members through their touch. Early in the novel, Sohini goes to the well to fetch water. Water is a necessity to survive and should be available to all. The cruelty of the caste system is well-illustrated by the line of Untouchables waiting at the well, but who cannot step forward and draw their own water, no matter how thirsty they might be. Without water, the Untouchables cannot live, but they depend on the mercy of the upper Hindus to draw water for them. This system is cruel, but also illustrates how interdependent the society is. The Untouchables are often described by vile names, and Bakha's father

reminds his son frequently that the Brahmins are their superiors. In order to survive, Bakha must beg for food, which is thrown at him.

Theme of Discrimination and Segregation

Anand is touched with pity at the deplorable plight of the untouchables. The untouchables are segregated and discriminated against the rest of society. The colony does have several outcastes including washermen and leather workers but the scavengers hold the lowest rank in the hierarchy of castes. They deserve least human love and sympathy as ordained by the age old Vedic tradition. They have been subjected to sub-human status. In some respects animals are better than untouchables because they are at large to use their surroundings without polluting them.

Anand never harps on theme of romantic love affairs. The very choice of the theme was an intrepid step towards discouraging untouchability. He sailed against the current by making a sweeper the hero of his novel and it earned him the wrath of orthodox and fanatic caste Hindus. Anand portrays this predicament vividly,

“The outcastes were not allowed to mount the platform surrounding the well, because if they were ever to draw water from it, the Hindus of the three upper castes would consider the water polluted. Nor were they allowed access to the nearby brook as their use of it would contaminate the stream. They had no well of their own. They had to collect at the foot of the caste Hindu’s well and depend on the bounty of some of their superior to pour water into their pitchers.”

Theme of Social Realism

Anand is not quixotic about his principles and ideology. He is very pragmatic and realistic in his approach to the problem of untouchability. The theme of the novel is based on his childhood experiences. Anand has firsthand experience of the untouchables and their surroundings. As a child he used to play with the untouchable boys. Bakha, the hero's life is authentic. As E.M. Forster says,

“Untouchable could only have been written by an Indian, and by an Indian who observed from the outside. No European, however, sympathetic, could have created the character of Bakha, because he would not have known enough about his troubles.”

Theme of Untouchability

The cruelty and tyranny perpetrated on Bakha was peculiar to the untouchables alone although they shared the common hardship and indignity with other outcastes. Everybody detests them and loathes to accept anything from them or to give anything to them. The confectioner picks the coin after washing it

to perpetuate the ostracism and their sufferings merge with eternity.

when Bakha exchange it for some sweets. They wrap them in paper and throw as a butcher throws a bone to a dog; they are not entitled to relish fresh and good food so they subsist on leavings of food and stale food, considered sumptuous enough for the untouchables. They are denied entrance to temple even though they are Hindus. They believe that the untouchable could defile gods and goddesses and even the premises of the temple. This hypocrisy of Hindu tradition is well portrayed by Anand,

“Get off the steps, scavenger ! Off with you! You have defiled our temple ! Now we will have to pay for the purificatory ceremony. Get down, get away, dog !...”

The Vicious Circle

Thousand years of slavery has left an irrevocable marks upon the life and psyche of the untouchables. Weakness corrupts, and absolute weakness corrupts absolutely. Bakha, a scavenger boy is caught in a vicious circle from which there is no escape. Destined or subjected to clean dung and live in squalor, he has to survive on food left over by the caste Hindus and for water depends on the mercy of so called patrons of Hindu tradition. Health and hygiene are useless words for them. Neat and clean life is still a distant dream for them. The fact that they are untouchables seems to be the only reason.

Theme of Servility

Lakha and Rakha are dormant, idle and lethargic. They sit idle and suffer but do not even dream of protesting against social injustice and exploitation. Bakha, who has a sense of self-esteem, has enough potential to protest against untouchability which has left him mortified but centuries of servility has paralyzed him and sucked away the zeal and vigour to retaliate. His senses are paralysed when a caste Hindu says, "Keep to the side of the road, You low-caste vermin" Suddenly he hears some one shouting at him, "Why don't you call, you swine..."

It is servility of the untouchable which encourage Pundit Kali Nath to molest Sohini. Sohini's docile and servile temperament prompts her to yield to the libidinous and hypocrite priest. She is too innocent to detect the malicious intention of the priest.

Impartiality and Equilibrium

Since Anand has excellent grasp over the psychology of both the caste Hindus and the untouchables, his portrayal of their intercourse and relationship is impartial and equipoised. He does neither overstate or exaggerate the injustice and cruelty perpetrated on the untouchable nor does deride and censure all caste Hindus for being callous and unscrupulous. His caste Hindu characters are not all tyrant nor all his untouchables praiseworthy and commendable. Pandit Kali Nath, a hypocritical character stands in full contrast of Habildar Charat Singh who is a generous caste Hindu and he has transcended himself beyond the limits of caste prejudices.

4--UNTOUCHABLE AS A NOVEL OF SOCIAL PROTEST

Reflecting the cultural turn in the social sciences and humanities more broadly, recent strains of social movement theory and research add to the largely structural concerns seen in the resource mobilization and political process theories by emphasizing the cultural and psychological aspects of social movement processes, such as collectively shared interpretations and beliefs, ideologies, values and other meanings about the world. In doing so, this general cultural approach also attempts to address the free-rider problem.

One particularly successful take on some such cultural dimensions is manifested in the framing perspective on social movements.

While both resource mobilization theory and political process theory include, or at least accept, the idea that certain shared understandings of, for example, perceived unjust societal conditions must exist for mobilization to occur at all, this is not explicitly problematized within those approaches. The framing perspective has brought such shared understandings to the forefront of the attempt to understand movement creation and existence by, e.g., arguing that, in order for social movements to successfully mobilize individuals, they must develop an injustice frame. An injustice frame is a collection of ideas and symbols that illustrate both how significant the problem is as well as what the movement can do to alleviate it, "Like a picture frame, an issue frame marks off some part of the world. Like a building frame, it holds things together. It provides coherence to an array of symbols, images, and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is essential - what consequences and values are at stake. We do not see the frame directly, but infer its presence by its characteristic expressions and language. Each frame

ives the advantage to certain ways of talking and thinking, while it places others out of the picture. "Ryan and Gamson 2006 In view of many social protest theory this paper tries to purview the novel Untouchable by MulkRajAnand as a social protest novel. Mass society theory argues that social movements are made up of individuals in large societies who feel insignificant or socially detached. Social movements, according to this theory, provide a sense of empowerment and belonging that the movement members would otherwise not have. Social strain theory, factors that encourage social movement development:

1. structural conduciveness - people come to believe their society has problems
2. structural strain - people experience deprivation
3. growth and spread of a solution - a solution to the problems people are experiencing is proposed and spreads
4. precipitating factors - discontent usually requires a catalyst (often a specific event) to turn it into a social movement also known as value-added theory, proposes six
5. lack of social control - the entity that is to be changed must be at
6. least somewhat open to the change; if the social movement is quickly and powerfully repressed, it may never materialize

7. mobilization - this is the actual organizing and active component of the movement; people do what needsto be done In his realistic portrayal of the novel 'Untouchable' (1937) Anand is concerned with the sufferings of the masses i.e. Shudra- sweepers and his wish to bring about social happiness in their lives and to register his protest

against the evil in the social system of Hindus as well. As Anand himself accepts:

“From that time onwards my protest about the human predicament, under the empire and in the atmosphere of our own decay, often resulting from blind acceptance of bad habits and the taboos of the sage Manu and the Hadith tradition of Islam, became self-conscious.....In this way, I sensed the pain of life, which the more privileged took out of the weaker members of the flock.”

untouchable is Mulk Raj Anand's first novel and it brought to him immense popularity and prestige. This novel shows the realistic picture of society. In this novel Anand has portrayed a picture of untouchable who is sweeper boy. This character is the representative of all down trodden society in pre-independence of India. The protagonist of this novel is the figure of suffering because of his caste. With Bakha, the central character, there are other characters

who also suffer because of their lower caste. They live in mud-walled cottages huddled colony in which people are scavengers, the leather-workers, the washer men, the barbers, the watercarriers, the grass-cutters and other outcastes. The lower castes people are suffering because they are by birth outcaste. But Mulk Raj Anand had depicted the hypocrisy of the upper caste people that men like Pt. Kali Nath enjoy the touch of the Harijan girls. Mulk Raj Anand exposes all this hypocrisy and double standard or double dealing. In this novel Bakha is a universal figure to show the oppression, injustice, humiliation to the whole community of the outcastes in India.

Bakha symbolizes the exploitation and oppression which has been the fate of untouchables like him. His anguish and humiliation are not of his alone, but the suffering of whole outcastes and underdogs. Though the novelist communicates about a particular community in the novel subaltern Hindus, it is also implied to the rest of the world, where caste-based, class-based, racial and economic discrimination prevails.

His awareness of social exclusion and exploitation of the lower dregs of the society reflect his wish for excluders and exploitators to mend their inhuman ways and to change their social behaviour. For that he uses fiction as a tool, as it is "not only a representation of social reality, but also a necessary functional part of social control, and also, paradoxically, an important element in social change" .Untouchable shows the

evil of untouchability in Hindu Society The novel's emphasis is on an individual's attempt to emancipate himself from the age old evil of untouchability. Anand is here, concerned with evils of untouchability and the need for radical empathy. He describes the pathetic conditions of the untouchables through the character Bakha, their inmitigable hardships and physical and mental agonies almost with the meticulous skill of historical raconteur. In the words of Marlene Fisher:

"...Anand's first novel, then, is at one and the same time a fine piece of creative work in terms of its own artistic integrity and an indication of its author's humanistic commitments and future novelistic directions." Therefore, in this research paper social exclusion and exploitation of the subaltern takes its roots in the depiction of caste-system among Hindus in the novel and it was the root cause of the social protest. The caste-system came into existence in the Vedic era. The Vedic literature explores the division of Hindu society into four castes according to their 'Karma'- Brahmana (priests, teachers, spiritual masters, counselors), Kshatriya (kings, warriors), Vaishya (tradesmen) and Shudra (craftsmen, labourers, slaves). This four fold system places Brahmana at the top, while Shudra in the bottom in social order. This fourth caste is again divided in several sub-castes. Among them is sweeper, the lowest one. This sub-division of Shudra prevents them from being united and therefore they are socially expelled and exploited. Here one can sense the policy of divide and rule in its visible mark. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar also puts it thus,

"Caste system is... the division of labourers (which) prevents them from being united and makes them exploitable.

Sweepers whom even other sub-castes of Shudra consider lower than themselves have been excluded and exploited more than them for centuries. They are considered untouchables and compelled to dwell in the outskirts of the rest of Hindu dwellings. Anand was deeply moved by

this social discrimination and ill-treatment with sweepers and that is the purpose of his writing fiction. Anand says:

The novel is for world's continuance. It is urged by the wish to express oneself in uneasy syntax, in dim perspectives and from vague feelings of those who seek to break the shackles of serfdom. It is inspired by the urge for many freedoms, baulked by the demons of power. It is against the insults, injuries, deceits, lies, hypocrisies, the mortifications and murders, brought by men become monsters and for the celebrations of the simple pleasures of the miracle that is life... which we have often exalted and frequently degraded.

Since, Shudra are labourers, craftsmen and servants (as considered in caste-system), they are

the real builder of the society of the nation. They are potential contributors to the development and growth of the nation. And yet they are neglected, dissociated from the main stream of

social system? They have been subjugated for centuries and, therefore, they are poor and meek. They have no better choice for their careers. This is the reason that people like Bakha, son of Lakha who is the jamadar of the sweepers of the town, are bound to go for their ancestral work. Bakha is eighteen years of age. He has a masculine personality. He is dexterous workman and what he does- he cleans latrines and sweeps the roads. Work is worship for him. "He

went forwarded with eager step from job to job, a marvel of movement dancing through his work.

Work was a sort of intoxication which gave him glowing health and plenty of easy sleeps .

Bakha is a staunch follower of principles in his life. His great devotion to his duty- a dirty work is the example of it. He has other skills too. "He was a champion of all kinds of games and would have beaten hollow at Khuti (p.40)." This clearly reveals that he has not only physical capacity but also mental ability to play other jobs too. In modern terms, career making demands skills, willingness and devotion to work and all these traits are also essential for the job of sport. Bakha has these traits in him. In this way, he is no less than a sport hero in the modern context. Despite of that he is unrecognized, unsympathised and unloved. Rather, he is humiliated and hurt several times. Simply because he is poor, lives in a one-room house, has no other property and belongs to the lower caste. His hard work pays nothing to him more than some pieces of bread and clothes. This is his economic and social exploitation. The fact is that sweepers are forced to dwell

away from the village at the time of Anand's and even after the independence too. Their social exclusion is a matter of great concern. They are forbidden to take water from the well themselves as their touch pollutes it. This imposed rule by the caste-Hindu make sweepers stand away from the well and the so-called upper caste men pour water into their pots when they have leisure and wish to do so. Sohini, Bakha's beautiful sister undergoes to the same process: "She... went to... the steps of the caste-well where she counted on the chance of some gentleman taking pity on her and giving her the water she needed (p.24)." The irony is that when she goes to clean the courtyard of Kalinath, the lanky priest, he tries to get erotic pleasures from this

untouchable girl even in the temple premises. She revolts against him, it's her moral virtue. At this, he scolds and accuses her of polluting his holy place. This behaviour of the fake holy man is a part of social exploitation only. The priest is not ashamed of taking advantage of the lower social position of this girl and she is helpless. Her brother Bakha is also helpless to express his open resentment of

the wound and insult inflicted to his sister, to his own self and to his caste too.

CONCLUSION

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. It was growing concern for metaphoric untouchable in all cultures and walks of life.

Premila Paul remarks: The novel, indeed, presents Anand's attempt at distilling a social metaphor which takes in its sweep a whole range of postulates of Hindu culture. It is a kind of

dialectical work centered on as exploration of the possibilities of achieving synthesis or spiritual restoration.

Thus in *Untouchable*, Mulk Raj Anand's handling the problem of untouchability through Bakha shows that he hopes to have a casteless Indian society in which untouchability has no place.

By the end of the novel, Anand makes a compelling case for the end of untouchability because it is an inhumane, unjust system of oppression. He uses Bakha and the people populating the young man's world to craft his argument. Bakha's day starts with his father yelling at him to get out of bed and clean the latrines.

The ending of the novel *Untouchable* Mulk Raj Anand solves the predicament of untouchability by offering three solutions, which has great significance in the story. The ending stands as the resolution of the complications. The main character Bakha receives three solutions to his problem. Bakha is living in an inhumane society where he is

mistreated and not treated equally. He lives in old rural India where caste system has its roots and where majority of the people follow the caste system. Bakha was a part of the lower cast in Hinduism who are treated worst than animals by the upper caste in the society.

The upper caste treats the lower caste as ruthless as possible. People from the upper caste not only treat the lower caste people like Bakha bad physically but also mentally, they consider the lower caste people so filthy and soiled that they treat them as untouchables in the society. The presence of untouchables in the society describes the disparaging situation of the society itself. Bakha struggles in attaining basic needs such as water to unintentionally touching someone leading to him getting insulted for contaminating them.

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