CHAPTER - IV

IDEAS AND ATTITUDES - THE FORMATIVE YEARS: MORNING FACE
CHAPTER IV

IDEAS AND ATTITUDES - THE FORMATIVE YEARS: MORNING FACE

Morning Face, the winner of the Sahitya Academy Award for 1972, was published seventeen years after Seven Summers. Anand has divided the novel into three parts namely, 'City of Dreadful Nights', 'The Prison' and 'The Regiment'. In the first part Krishan realises that Amritsar where he has arrived from Nowshera cantonment is not the 'Ocean of Nectar' but a filthy 'City of Dreadful Nights'. In the second part his life with his elder brother at Ludhiana is like 'The Prison'. In the concluding part 'The Regiment' he narrates his life at the Jhelum cantonment. Anand dedicates his novel to the protagonist Krishan himself. In his dedication which is prefixed to the novel, Anand writes:

Dear Krishan: I am offering this novel to you, because though I was to be your creator, you took control of the book, almost from the beginning and wrote yourself out, almost as if you were the author. So it is really your book and I am only the catalyst of the words in which your body-soul burns and melts.
When you first appeared in "Seven Summers", the critics said variously that you were an incarnation of Krishna of the Yadus or just a Punjabi "Spark". They were not far wrong, because, if I may confess to you the truth, the old myth was dormant in my heart and mind as these myths are inherited by every Indian. If Krishna stole curds, you stole mangoes. And his innocence became your innocence. The "Spark" of the street urchin was, however, also in me and I may have imbued you with it. But, as you will find out, in your later incarnations, you are really not the Krishna of the age of the gods. You cannot be, because the age of the gods is over.

Seven Summers ends with the beginning of First World War. Morning Face covers six years of Krishan's life -- from the outbreak of the First World War to the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. When the father leaves for war the family has to shift from Nowshera cantonment to Amritsar, the hometown of Krishan. Uncle Pratap and aunt Devaki, who leave a lasting impression on him live in Amritsar and their house is next door to his. Krishan can still remember the
smell of motia and molsari flowers which emanated from his aunt. At the Amritsar railway station, he witnesses the English Station Master kicking two passengers and shouting "Bloody fool". Anand narrates such incidents to show how the English misused their powers and showed scant respect for the Indians.

At Amritsar Krishan comes across the Dutt brothers who discuss with Ram Chand the eternal theme of whether Agha Khan is a God or not. It was during the time that the Agha Khan had issued a fiat saying that those who wished to remain his followers should immediately become Muslims. The coppersmith brotherhood of Krishan were in a predicament. They were Ismaili-Hindus, the special tribe who looked on the Agha Khan as an incarnation of the Prophet of Islam as well as Lord Krishna. One is reminded of Anand's father, Lal Chand Anand, who remained a Hindu after being Ismaili-Hindu for some time.

At the cantonments Anand had come across the pathetic plight of the downtrodden and underprivileged. At Amritsar also he finds that the dirty coppersmiths led tragic lives working all day. They were considered untouchables by the caste Hindus because they were Ismaili-Hindus for generations. This might be the main reason for Anand's
father—like Ram Chand—abandoning his family profession and joining the army.

Anand points out how the gossip of grown-up people in the presence of children can be harmful. The tales being circulated about his favourite aunt—that she drinks liquor, plays cards regularly with men and smokes cigarettes—deeply hurt him. The city of Amritsar—ocean of nectar—becomes a city of dreadful nights for him. Remembering those days he feels that the innocence of his childhood was outraged by the knowledge of ugly and evil things forced on him by the bad grown-up talk of Amritsar.

The school master Sher Gul of Nowshera, who also beat students, appears a kindlier person than the master Bishan Singh of Amritsar. School life does not seem to bring pleasant memories to Krishan. The school masters mercilessly beat the students and are unnecessarily cruel. Of course, he mentions some school masters who treat the boys with affection. Bishan Singh beats the students so that they will come to him for private tuition at twenty rupees per month. The students also know that if they take tuition from him they will not be beaten inside the classroom. When Krishan complains about the school master to Paro, wife of Dev Dutt,
he is told her pathetic story. She consoles him saying that everyone in this world wants to inflict pain on someone else. Paro advises him that he has to bear the pain of growing up in this hard world. The accepted method of teaching in all schools was to drive sense into children with the cane. The fatalism of Paro can be seen in some of the novels of Anand later on. In his novels people inflict pain on the helpless and the victims suffer cruelties with acceptance. He believed that the educational system prevalent during the English regime was useless.

Dev Dutt, who could not get through his M.A. examination because he was an Arya Samajist and the examiner an Englishman, has a strange theory of education. He condemns the schools in India which are run on the English system where teaching means beating the students. He supports the theory of Bertrand Russell, who believed firmly that the students learned more if they were allowed to do what they wished at school. According to Dev Dutt the schools of Aryavarta in ancient times are the ideal ones. Krishan exclaims, "Somehow, I imagined that I could learn everything if there was a romance attached to it, not barren teaching with the cane but with stories lovingly told" (Morning Face 75).
It is during this time that Krishan learns all the abusive epithets used by Amritsari roughs. He also begins to speak to imaginary courtesans the love words he has heard his uncle Pratap use to Devaki. Two persons whom he remembers vividly are his aunt Devaki and her daughter Kaushalya. They leave a deep impression on his mind. Of them he writes, "The beloved of my fantasies was, obviously, my aunt Devaki, but as she was like a second mother to me, I replaced her image by that of her daughter, my lovely cousin Kaushalya" (Morning Face 81). In the novel, the vision of Kaushalya lying on the cot with tuberculosis in an advanced stage leaves a deep imprint on Krishan's soul because he feels guilty for having allowed her to play with the bones in the Durgiana tank. The death of Kaushalya destroys Krishan's world of happiness and also makes him feel that he is not a little boy any longer but a mature person. Krishan states, "The death of my cousin, Kaushalya, seemed to me, even then, but gradually all through my life, the first turning point in my growth from innocence to awareness" (Morning Face 90).

In the autobiographical essay, "My Childhood", Anand says about the death of Kaushalya, "Also, this love of life seems to have been strengthened later by the doubts about
immortality and about any ordered design in the universe, which I began to feel, when I was eleven, through the death of my nine-year-old cousin Kaushalya" (38).

It is to be remembered that the duo--his favourite aunt Devaki and her beautiful daughter Kaushalya -- figure equally in the novel and in Anand's life. The way he shifts from life to fiction--transferring men and events from life to fiction, even without the fig leaf of a change of names, makes one feel that Anand wanted his fiction to be read as pieces of his autobiography. All works of art are personal in inspiration and origin; but as the work develops and concretises itself it slowly undergoes a process of depersonalization and universalisation. In Anand's case, the process seems to have been reversed.

When there was cruelty and inhumanity Anand's nature instinctively revolted and his heart went out to the victim. He describes the brutal behaviour of the English Inspector of Schools, Mr. Marsden whose idea of maintaining discipline was by slapping and kicking the school children with his black booted feet. Anand's sympathy is always with the outcaste who meekly accepts his position of an untouchable. If in Seven Summers there is the sweeper-boy Bakha who leads a
pathetic life; in Morning Face it is Gughi a sweeper-boy of Amritsar. Because of his caste he cannot go to school but he can do so if he converted to Christianity. As with Bakha in the Nowshera cantonment, Krishan promises to himself to make Gughi his life long friend. Moreover he promises to teach Gughi for one hour every week. This is an atonement for the sin of betraying Gughi on some occasions. All school teachers are not painted by Anand as tyrants. At Amritsar is the gentle and quiet Master Shir Ram Das, who was a classmate of Krishan's father at Church Mission High School. The visit of Marsden has a profound effect on Krishan for some time. His exhortation that the school children of Amritsar should be like English school boys makes him long to look like an Englishman. However, a visit to the coppersmith shop, seeing the tragic lives led by them and the wise sayings of Haria make Krishan realise how foolish it is to try to imitate the sahibs. He is very much moved by the revolutionary talk of his uncle Dev Dutt to such an extent that he develops a hatred for the British. Already Dev Dutt has replaced Krishan's father as his hero. He, however, cannot understand how Dev Dutt, who can instill patriotic fervour with his stories of revolution, can at the same time be unkind to his wife Parvathi.
Gughi, the sweeper-boy, waxes eloquent when discussing the men of religions to Krishan. He informs Krishan that no untouchable can become a saint because of the rules laid down by the priests of the Hindu religion. In sheer frustration he declares that the sins of his ancestors has condemned him to be an outcaste for several lives and there is nothing he can do but accept meekly. The pathetic speech of Gughi makes Krishan question the existence of God, for he cannot understand how He could make upper castes and lower castes. He prefers Devaki who drinks with men to his mother who prays daily before Gods. Anand never spares the Brahmin priests and comes down heavily upon them for their greed. The family priest, young Pundit Bhola Nath, and his wife who have come to impersonate the spirits of the dead grandpa and grandma of Krishan appear to him as Brahmin dogs who had come to gorge on good food. If the humiliation showered on the untouchables infuriates Anand, the exploitation by the Brahmin priests of the illiterate people in the name of religion disgusts him.

Part Two of the novel titled 'The Prison' describes the boyhood days of Krishan. Thoughts of the existence of God trouble him and he suspects that there is no big God the
people talk about. His mother worshipped many incarnations of the Almighty. Anand, remembering his own boyhood days, writes:

I remember how, when I was a child, my mother would place little brass idols of the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon side by side with a crucifix which she had picked up somewhere, a picture of the Aga Khan, and of Guru Nanak, the first saint of the Sikhs, on a raised platform for worship on various festivals. That always seemed to me to be incongruous, and I do not think that I learnt much about religion from her. (Apology 29)

If in mind Krishan is disturbed with thoughts of God and death, he is acutely aware of the incompatibility of his eldest brother Harish and his wife Draupadi. Draupadi's inability to bear children and Harish's drinking habits and friendship with prostitutes make the household at Ludhiana a veritable prison for the sensitive Krishan, who longs for love. He is treated as an untouchable for eating meat and made to sit outside the kitchen and take food. However, good food and the prospect of starting a football team dispels the gloom that has temporarily fallen on the young boy. Indeed
it is on such trifling expectations that his boyish enthusiasm is based.

Anand lets slip no opportunity to describe the superstition and prejudices prevalent during the pre-Independence days in India. Thus one finds Draupadi ordering the boys to wash their hands as they have touched Muslim boys and the leather football. Anand describes admirably the state of mind of Krishan during this period. Krishan realises that once hatred possesses him he cannot convert it into love or relent into the mood of normality.

As in Seven Summers, Anand describes elaborately the maniacal attitude of school masters in Morning Face also. Readers are shocked to the core at the inhuman treatment meted out to the children in the name of discipline by master Budh Singh. Unfortunately even today one finds that there are schools where the masters firmly believe in using the rod liberally to discipline the students. Krishan's temperament is such that he cannot endure the sulking silence of any woman. His desire for harmony in the household and relaxation of the tension that prevailed there make him go and boldly lie down by Draupadi and put his head on her lap. This gesture prompts Draupadi to unfold her inner feelings to
the childling. When one bears about the plight of Draupadi one is not sure whether she can be blamed for the tantrums she throws. The drawbacks and miseries of ill-matched marriages are firmly portrayed by Anand through the unhappy household of Harish and Draupadi. Obviously such a household is not the place for a child to grow up and the impact on the sensitive boy Krishan is great to such an extent that he even contemplates suicide. The Fakir caretaker instructs him that all life is in vain and one has to endure it as well as possible. Accordingly, Krishan decides that if one decides to endure unhappiness it will not affect him. However, the enforced isolation encourages his imagination to run riot and live in a world of fantasies. He even attempts to write poetry in his mother-tongue. A thought that recurs constantly to Krishan is that the world is full of violence and evil. Strangely enough he feels attracted by evil because everyone despises it. As it is forbidden he plans a strategy to make his brother Harish take him to the house of ill-fame. Thus another woman enters the life of Krishan who is longing for affection. The woman is a Muslim prostitute named Mumtaz, who is the mistress of Harish. Constant nagging from his wife makes Harish seek consolation in the arms of Mutaz. In his fantasies Krishan imagines that Mumtaz could replace his sister-in-law Draupadi. The fondling of
Mumtaz evokes sensual feeling in Krishan and emboldens him to visit her during school recess. Anand waxes eloquent while describing the great pleasure Krishan derives in the company of women. As in the case of other women he is physically attracted to Mumtaz, whose influence leaves a great impression on his young mind. However, in the case of Mumtaz there is a difference. Mumtaz hails from a prostitute class and as such is looked down upon by society. The fact that she is considered an untouchable and a forbidden one by the caste Hindus makes her all the more lovable for Krishan. He declares:

Perhaps, the mysterious, unspoken looks exchanged between myself and Mumtaz, and the evasive smiles she had given me, as she had opened my bleary, sleep-haunted eyes, during our first meeting, were to hold me prisoner to the ideal of illicit love all my life. Maybe, because the love she gave me, then, was a secret hidden in my soul, and it became the echo-augury of all those longings which I was to aspire to during my later prolonged adolescence.

(Morning Face 199-200)
Often in the novel Anand highlights the moral problem of Hindu families trying to adjust its relations with families which followed the Agha Khan. Harish does not want to send Draupadi to her house because her family follows the Agha Khan. He is afraid that his family will be excommunicated by the elders of the brotherhood for having relation with followers of the Agha Khan. This religious issue was a serious one during the pre-Independence days and Anand's family was also faced with it.

Anand tries to analyse the reason for the school teachers being sadists. Master Bishan Sing's cruelty in Amritsar School stems from his desire to get rich by giving tuitions. Master Budh Singh is brutal because of a sense of inferiority. He wishes to be like an Englishman by practicing violence like an Englishman. Added to the cruelty is Master Budh Singh's shameless command to the students to bring to his house presents for the festival of the white sahib's Christmas. The inhuman treatment meted out to the students by the depraved Master Budh Singh is described in great detail in the novel. Probably Anand wanted to show that the school masters had a wrong notion as to how education should be imparted. Anand himself felt that the educational system in the pre-Independence days served no
There was no religious instruction given in the British-Indian Schools which I attended, though, on the festivals of all the main religions of India, we were given holidays which were very welcome. And, as the education imparted in these schools was imitative, giving very little idea of Indian tradition, but mainly bastardized version of English curricula, in English, with particular emphasis on English history, ideas, forms and institutions, deliberately calculated to show everything relating to Indian history and tradition as inferior, I early acquired a bias against all indigenous customs and grew up hating everything Indian. (Apology 33-34)

These thoughts are reflected by Krishan also. However, for Krishan the misery at school is relieved by the thought of the beloved Mumtaz. At Ludhiana also he is troubled by indifferent health. On one such occasion when he falls ill his only regret is that he cannot kiss Mumtaz who has paid a visit to him. It is only natural that a sensitive boy far removed from his parents should crave for affection. The
visit of Mumtaz and her genuine concern for his health are described in great detail and one appreciates Krishan's keen sense of observation.

Anand, who had a taste of the village people during his own childhood days, takes great pleasure in giving meticulous details of their customs and mannerisms. So one reads how a villager treats himself to snuff from a little box and later on wipes his hands on his dhoti. Such observation, though trivial, makes the narration realistic. The visit of two villagers from Lalton with a marriage proposal for the schoolboy Ganesh is admirably described. Krishan observes these people with a critical eye and understands that the innocent village people have shown their simplicity of mind.

Krishan is again reminded of the uncertainty of life when informed of the death of his uncle Pratap. He wonders how a person breathing a moment ago can be dead the next moment. Again Anand shows how people view things from the angle of superstition. Harish, though he claims not to be superstitious, blames the villagers from Lalton for bringing bad luck through the proposal of an orphan girl. Anyway, Krishan considers death as a vague, frightening and impalpable nothingness. However, what makes death a
despicable thing is the manner of the mourning by the women of the coppersmith brotherhood. Krishan feels embarrassed because he cannot feel much sorrow on the passing away of Pratap.

A person who can view death dispassionately and condemn the unnecessary mourning displayed by the coppersmith women is Dev Dutt. To him the mourning of the women is like that of the bleating of a herd of goats. With ill-nourished body and a lifetime spent on hard work for a pittance it is no wonder the coppersmiths die prematurely. Dev Dutt laments that his religion has become just ritual and decadence. He is all the more sorry that Arya Samaj is not able to reform the people who are steeped in superstition. Though he can sympathize with the tragic life led by the coppersmith community, Krishan supports the views of Dev Dutt. So he is no longer a child that will naively accept the actions of his elders but has a developed mind that questions and criticizes the actions of the elders. Listening to the speech of Dev Dutt who enjoins the boys to help the helpless people, Krishan resolves to become a revolutionary. Dev Dutt plays a prominent part in moulding the character of Krishan. The gentle school master Shah Nawaz is engaged to coach Krishan in arithmetic as he is very weak in it. Like Krishan, Anand
too was weak in arithmetic as revealed in the autobiographical *Apology for Heroism*, "And then a weakness in arithmetic, due to a disturbing illness and bad teaching, made me abandon the original intention to study science at the University and forced me to take up an arts course, including philosophy" (37). Draupadi is the only female character portrayed by Anand as a despicable one devoid of any sense of humour. She is always pictured as sulking on a cot. Though she is justified in some of her actions, she does not possess the native intelligence that the village women possess in tackling household problems. Such is her character that she cannot understand and appreciate a practical joke played on her by her husband and she attempts suicide by pouring kerosine all over her body. Living in a hostile atmosphere Krishan repeatedly longs for the gone innocence of childhood. Anand in many of his writings harps on this theme of the innocence of childhood.

During the British rule some Indians acted as C.I.Ds for the English and reported on the activities of the other Indians. They did it obviously to curry favours. The British Raj survived with the help of these traitors in India. One such person is Master Budh Singh, that tyrant of
a school master who acts as a CID and is able to get his misdeeds to students condoned and get reinstated for the services rendered to the British.

A visit to the Superintendent of Police makes Krishan realise that there are other worlds that are completely unknown to him from his little world of school and home. He understands that the supreme Gods of these other worlds are the white sahibs who do what they like without being questioned by anyone. Having witnessed the absolute power wielded by the British it is not surprising that Anand developed deep hatred for the British. Krishan begins to lose faith in God and even doubts His existence because he has not come to the rescue of the helpless school children who have been cruelly treated by Master Budh Singh. He argues that if God had existed at all he should have died of shame for having betrayed the little innocent boys.

Anand did not accept the belief that one suffered in the present life for the misdeeds of the previous life because there seemed to be no credit given for the good deeds in the present life. In the novel Krishan realises:
If there was any stage in my young life when I definitely and clearly began to doubt the existence of the Omnipotent Almighty God of orthodox religion, the Providence, who is said to be Just and Merciful, it was now in Ludhiana, when I was caught in a prison from which I could not escape and when I saw other prisoners of so-called "fate" about me. And it was mainly through the obvious injustice of God's Justice that I revolted against Him: "Who are you above that vast sky, that you gaze down on us, but never care about our troubles."

(Morning Face 201)

Anand poignantly describes the pathetic life led by the prostitutes Mumtaz and Moti. It is remarkable that at an early age itself Krishan gets an opportunity to mingle with people from different walks of life. In fact, he spends one night in the house of Mumtaz and she narrates her life history to him. Though Anand was resentful against the Muslims insisting on thick veils for their women, he found them generous on the whole.
Krishan has typhoid and is taken to Amritsar and as the fever does not subside he is removed to the Jhelum cantonment hospital. An interesting belief of the Hindus is mentioned by Anand here. When Krishan's condition becomes critical he is taken down from the bed to the earth because no Hindu can die on a bed or a raised platform. The Hindus believe that the soul of the dead would not rise to the heavens above the skies unless the person was in touch with Prithvi, the earth goddess, who would lead him to the Almighty. Serious illness and subsequent convalescence provide Krishan a lot of time for extra reading and self-examination. In the autobiographical book titled Apology for Heroism Anand writes about a similar period in his life:

One or two critical illnesses during these years had, however, given me a rather reflective bent of mind, and, apart from my school courses, I had been reading voraciously in Urdu and English literatures. All this reading was, of course, discursive and mainly snobbish, a kind of aid to cleverness, so that I could show off as a more important person than most of my fellow-students, who kept strictly to the school text books. (37)
Anand gives a good description of the life style of the British soldiers in India during the pre-Independence days. The Britishers ensured that the best landscape in any town was reserved for the army. There was absolute discipline in the cantonment and the roads were maintained in perfect condition. Generally absolute silence was maintained and the presence of the British officers was awe-inspiring. Indian children were not allowed in the vicinity of the sahibs' bungalows and the sahibs had a variety of dogs to guard them against such intruders. The British officers believed in maintaining the distance between themselves and the Indian Officers. Though they had not mastered the Hindi language, the British attempted to converse with the Indians in Hindi.

Anand devotes some pages to give in detail the lectures of the patriotic school masters. At the Jhelum School, the Headmaster and the Second Master insist that the children should wear shorts and shirts like the English. One Urdu master Rati Ram, however, ridicules this practice and praises the dress of the people in Jhelum district who wear loose salwars and tunics with closed collars. A fine lecture is given by master Rati Ram to the students pointing out the unhygienic customs of the Englishmen. With sound reasoning he proves that eastern learning is far superior to European. It
is said that people like Master Hari Chand and Dev Dutt were deprived of degrees because of their anti-British attitudes. The History Master Hari Chand gives a long lecture on the fraud practiced by the English on the Indians. He cites the example of Mr. Wathen, an Englishman, who did not know even Hindustani, put his name into a book written in Urdu. Evidently the book was written by an Indian, Lalla Man Mohan, and Wathen's name was added to the title page of the book so that it could become a textbook. Hari Chand also describes the pathetic plight of the poor peasants who are harassed at District court and also by the police. In short the British sarcar is abounding in bribery, corruption and nepotism. Krishan feels an instinctive sympathy for Hari Chand because the Master's criticism of the British sarcar seems just. Anand describes these situations for the readers to get an idea of the kind of government that existed during the pre-Independence days in India.

Krishan's diminutive physical frame is a constant source of embarrassment and worry to him. Frequent illness adds to the misery. However, he is aware that he is different from his school fellows and thirsts for knowledge. His friends who do not quite understand him consider him an eccentric and make fun of his habit of questioning every
thing. Unfortunately for such a sensitive boy as Krishan the life at home does not prove to be congenial one. At Ludhiana he witnesses frequent quarrels between Harish and his wife because of his visiting the prostitutes' lane. At Jhelum his parents quarrel because his mother suspects his father of having an affair with Devaki. It should be said in Krishan's father's favour that he does not wish his children to witness the quarrel between himself and his wife. He proves to be a very practical man and ingeniously saves his son Harish from going to jail for stealing twenty thousand rupees worth of cotton bales from the Borstal Jail stores. Though he appears not to be much bothered about the moral side of the issue he rises to the occasion when a crisis occurs in his family. He proves to be good at manipulating things when he gets for his erring son the post of Quarter Master Clerk in the 15th Sikh regiment. However, Krishan is not impressed by his father's cleverness as he considers it immoral and feels that his mother is more honest. He exclaims:

In the seething cauldron of this false life, I felt that mother was perhaps more moral, in spite of her superstitions, than father, because she had some pangs of bad conscience about doing bad things. If only the priests did not make her do rituals of all
kinds for their gains, she, the worshipper, might become the object of my worship. It was said that God was in all human beings. Mother was being human. \textit{(Morning Face 364)}

It is perhaps, the fact that his mother is basically honest and is troubled by conscience whenever a wrong is done that makes Anand revere her more than his father. It must be mentioned that Anand, like Krishan, maintained cordial relationship with his mother throughout her life.

Another instance of the brutality of the British Sarcar is when Commanding Officer, Major Oglivie, gives orders to shoot the Garwahlis who have refused to go on parade. The shooting results in the death of two hundred Garwahlis soldiers. This incident only proves to Krishan that what Master Hari Chand and Dev Dutt had said against the British Sarkar was justified. Anand gives such incidents to highlight how the British who wielded absolute power misused them and committed atrocities on the Indian people without fear of retribution. In all his works Anand finds fault with the British for making the people enervated and cowardly. The Englishmen who committed the crime and deserved severe punishment were let off with a mild punishment.
Anand shifts scene from cantonment to village to show how even there all was not well. Krishan is sent to Kanowan where his favourite aunt Devaki is having a well dug for the temple. However, he does not feel any respect for the hereditary custodian of the shrine who smokes hashish. Anand never lets go any opportunity to ridicule the priests who pretended to be holy and the ignorant people who had implicit faith in them. In all Anand's novels the priests are painted as greedy and lecherous. No doubt his childhood experiences had left a deep impression on his mind. When Krishan meets the priest Mahant Nandgir he wonders how deep the holy man's religion is.

In the villages Anand found that the poor farmers were exploited by the big landlords and moneylenders. In his novels one finds Anand lamenting the plight of the illiterate and poor farmers. In spite of agriculture not helping them in their poverty these farmers had great attachment to their lands. They were proud to be the tillers of soil and held the townspeople in contempt. Obviously Anand's sympathy is always with the poor peasants. Krishan knows that he spends much time in thinking and wishes that he could be like other children given to the happiness of the moment. At Kanowan
also he realises that people are more bighearted and hospitable in a village than in a town. Here he realises how important a part money plays in village life also and how money could change the whole of one's temperament and make one hardhearted. He understands by observing his beloved aunt how money spent on digging a well that has no prospect of yielding water, makes even a genial person turn into a grave one. At the same time he is certain that his aunt is a generous and not a mean person by nature.

It makes light reading as Anand takes time to describe the bewilderment of the protagonist not comprehending the realization of puberty. It is at Kanowan that Krishan has the shock of finding his pyjamas wet with secretion and is consoled when Devaki informs him that it is a sign of his coming of age. When approached Uncle Ananta gives sound advice and also offers a glass of whisky! However, the advice of Ananta makes Krishan concentrate all his thoughts on the physical form of woman. He remembers the naked women he has seen in his life. The first is, of course, his mother and he does not want to reconstruct from his imagination what she looked like. Though he realises that his aunt is like a second mother to him she is an object of his desire. He becomes restless for days when he begins to be intensely
aware of the contrast between the world of sense and the world of poetry. He plunges into confusion when he decides to write poetry praising the beauty of his beloved aunt Devaki. His schoolmasters inform him that the intellectual beauty of poetry has very little to do with the object which inspire the words. He is also told that ideas are quite distinct from the physical life of the senses. To be rid of the confusion and ensuing torment he resolves to write a novel centered around Devaki. He is convinced that his aunt will love him forever if he becomes famous as a writer. He believes that he can derive great satisfaction by mocking people including his parents in the narration. He feels that as a writer he can understand people and become superior like the Almighty. Anand expresses the same view when he writes in his autobiographical book, "The writer is like a God who realises his own many freedoms and confers them on others" (Apology 131).

Krishan sheds his vanity and hauteur when he meets the labourers who dig the well. He feels ashamed that he has allowed himself to be taken down the well sitting on somebody's shoulder like the son of a Nawab. Indeed Anand's Marxian ideas are expressed here clearly through the character of Krishan. When Krishan comes out of the well
after feeling sympathy for the toiling labourers, he finds to his chagrin that sweets and special silk are offered only to the holy man Mahant Nandgir who had never done a single day's honest work. Anand is besides himself with rage while narrating this injustice and in an angry vein writes:

I felt the difference between man and man, just then, finally and forever. The upper order of the well-to-do who always got more, and the poor who worked with hands and had a nibble at everything. This sentiment burnt itself into my heart, though I went on pretending to be a good, well-brought up, educated little Babu, playing up to the rich holy man's status exactly as aunt Devaki directed.

Always, after that day, I hated those who exploited the poor and the outcastes in the name of their superior status, or their literacy and Babuhood, like my father and his friends did, or the merchants with their gold-laden wives. (Morning Face 406)

Leaving the pleasant countryside Kanowan and living the routine life of the cantonment at Jhelum only makes
Krishan more wretched. He feels alienated from his family and he feels happy to be in the company of the sweeper-boy Bakha. Bakhha is no ordinary sweeper-boy but a bard himself who knows by heart the verses of the Punjabi poets and can even recite some cantos of Waris Shah's *Heer Ranjeh*. Krishan offers to teach him to read and write English. He is touched to the core to learn that the sweeper-boy is prevented from acquiring knowledge because he is an untouchable. He accepts the fee of four annas per lesson from Bakha because he has inherited from his father the worship of money! Bakha is a tragic figure in this novel and Krishan feels that God has committed an injustice by creating untouchables. He advises Bakha to become a Christian because in Christianity there is no caste system. It was from his boyhood friend Bakha that Anand was able to know the plight of the untouchables and it left an indelible impression on his mind. This is how he remembers his Bakha: "Superficially, it seems that a rare human being, whom I had known from my childhood and adored as a hero because he was physically like a god, played all the games superbly and could recite whole cantos from the epic poem *Heer Ranjeh* of Waris Shah, was knocking at the gates of my awareness" (*The Story* 5).
Anand introduces another woman character named Shakuntala, wife of Dr. Chunni Lal, with whom Krishan at once falls in love. With motherly intuition Krishan's mother declares that he is always falling in love with women older than himself. Shakuntala proves useful to him in helping him do the homework and because of the prospect of seeing her everyday, he finds even going to school a joyous activity. Through Dr. Chunni Lal the readers are informed further of the damage done to the civilization of India by the British. The Britishers did not allow Dr. Chunni Lal to become a full doctor by taking the MBBS course in Lahore or London. Higher ranks were meant only for Englishmen and Indians who came from exalted families. No Indian was considered by the British to be worthy of commanding a battalion. Like Dev Dutt, Dr. Chunni Lal also fires young Krishan's mind with patriotic fervour with his diatribes against the British. Another revolutionary introduced by Anand is Kedar Nath who narrates the cruelties of the Angrezi Sarcar which passed the Defence of India Act and arrested innocent Indians in thousands. They were falsely charged and transported to the Andaman Island. The fact that grown-up people talk to him of revolutions makes Krishan feel superior to his school fellows.
In the novel Krishan wants to take up philosophy and gives his reasons for doing so. Obviously the same reasons had prompted Anand also. Ever since the death of his little cousin Kausalya and his uncle Pratap, Krishan has felt frightened. He has been troubled by questions like why a man is born only to die and wonders if there is any life in Heaven determined by one's good and bad deeds. Again he is in doubt about the existence of God. Obviously, like Anand, Krishan too does not wish to accept things as they are. At Amritsar, Dev Dutt educates Krishan on Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and his non-violent and non-co-operation methods. He realises that he is torn between the two worlds in which he lives -- the world of the compromises of his father and the world of ardent principles of the Nationalists.

Krishan reads a little pamphlet called Hind Swaraj written by Gandhi which leaves the deepest impression on him and is to turn his life upside down. He is bored with the bickerings among the womenfolk in his home and is excited at the freedom struggle going on in the outside world. He declares that he is hungry and thirsty for brave words and marvellous deeds. He unwittingly disobeys the curfew order and is arrested by the police along with many other
protesters. At the police station he feels humiliated when the policemen tie his hands together. A humiliation he never forgets throughout his life is the seven stripes with the cane he gets from the constable at the police station for defying the curfew. It is during this time that the massacre of Jallianwallah Bagh occurs when Dyer Sahib goes with an armed force to a walled enclosure called Jallianwallah Bagh, where a meeting of Indians is held, and without giving any warning, orders the platoon to shoot, killing hundreds of unarmed and innocent Indians. Anand was a couple of miles away from the scene of this dastardly act of the British and describes at length the untold misery undergone by the people who opposed the British in a peaceful manner. Viewing from this distance of time it will be difficult for one to imagine the sense of insecurity and fear the Indians felt during the British rule. From Anand's description it is clear that people were shot, flogged, fined or imprisoned if they were seen on the streets after eight in the evening. Students had to report to the police four times a day. Dyer inflicted further humiliation on the Indians who peacefully protested against the Rowlatt Act. When the English Doctor Miss Sherwood was beaten by a crowd in Amritsar, he ordered every Indian passing along the street to crawl on his belly! Public platforms for whipping had been erected in the main
streets and bicycles, other than those owned by the Europeans, had been commandeered.

This is how Anand describes this phase in his autobiographical essay, 'Looking Back':

As I saw corpses of men carried in carts to the graveyard after the Jarnal Sahab of the cantonment ordered sepoys to shoot on a Jirga of Pathans in Hoti Maidan, and my mother said their ghosts would come to throttle us, because father was a servant of the sahabs, there began inner stresses in me. These were to become permanent after I got seven stripes of the cane from the police in Amritsar, in 1919, as I had wandered out of home to see what the curfoo was about. (V)

At Kangra valley Krishan understands the grim existence of the peasants and his heart is moved to pity. One consequence of this is that he becomes preoccupied with the dichotomy between loyalty to the British and sedition--between people like his father who are loyalists of the British Government and the revolutionaries who want to fight for their motherland.
Colonel O'brien had ordered that when Indians met British Officers they should salute and dismount if they were riding bicycles and lower their umbrellas if they were carrying any! Captain Doveton, Administrator in Kasur, was a genius at inventing new punishments for Indians. He had people whitewashed with lime until their skin was burnt. Bosworth-Smith, who administrated the law at Sheikhupura, tried five hundred Indians in just two weeks and ordered them to be flogged! These three British Officers did not spare even the Indian children. The school boys were ordered to parade three times a day, to salute the Union Jack and repeat that they had committed no offence. The children fainted in the heat of the sun. Such inhuman treatment was the British Officers' idea of inculcating in the Indians respect for the British Raj!

In the midst of these emotions Krishan is diverted by the beauty of Helen, daughter of Jimmie, the clarinet player. It is nothing but sheer physical attraction that draws him to her. He is now in the tenth class and is tormented with conflicting emotions within himself and consequently feels lonely. However, the antidote for the suffering he is undergoing is the warmth of a woman. He confesses, "I needed
the healing touch of a woman's body, the tenderness of soft flesh, of whispered love, to silence the kernel of my fiery heart. And I wanted to be embraced. To be dissolved in love" (Morning Face 536). When punished by father for joining the procession of Lalla Lajpat Rai, Krishan follows Gandhi's method of protest with a hunger-strike and a vow of silence. He is suspended from school by the Principal for taking part in the procession. However, through the intervention of Ajitan Sahib, Captain Terence O'Sullivan, he is readmitted to the School. Captain Terence O'Sullivan, a man of mixed Irish and English ancestry is sympathetic to the Indians. The novel concludes with Krishan writing his first poem at the age of fifteen.

About this novel Saros Cowasjee writes, "Morning Face is Anand's last significant work in which he makes doubly sure that he will live --both as author and character" (183).

Similar is the opinion of K.N.Sinha when he writes in his book Mulk Raj Anand:

"Truly, Morning Face is one of the richest, most passionate and dynamic novels of Anand, which in a way, is a syncopated, epical assertion of his
prowess as a novelist. The narrative tends toward a kind of poetry which breaks time and again into salient metaphor, obsessive imagery, and tense powerful rhetoric. All in all, *Morning Face* is a beautiful piece of writing, offering a sentient look into the author's emotional life. (138)

There are instances galore of the novelist projecting himself or herself into the fictional world he or she creates. For instance, the difference between *Wuthering Heights* and *Pride and Prejudice* is, to a large extent, accounted for by the difference between the personalities of the authors. Hardy's characters become playthings for the powers-that-be of the universe because that was the perspective the novelist had of life. But in all their instances the author hides himself/herself behind the curtain of neutrality and, like clever puppeteer pulling his strings, remains unseen while moving the action to a predestined conclusion. But Anand deviates from this pattern in that he allows a deliberate superimposition of his personality on the main character and leads the reader along in a world of obfuscation as far as the identities of the characters are concerned. He makes characters who seem to walk straight out of the
personal world of the author but then mystifies the reader by talking about them with an air of aloofness and impersonality. This is a kind of deliberately ill-concealed make-believe and Morning Face conforms to this pattern. For the character, experiences and even the innermost thoughts of the hero are exactly the same as of Anand as revealed to us from different sources and at different times. The events and characters cited from the novel here are only those with their counterparts in the author's life as revealed from time to time by his numerous occasional autobiographical writings like 'Looking Back', 'My childhood', and 'Why I Write'. And the fellow-actors in the little dramas of the young boy's small but expanding world bear the same stamp and names as their counterparts in Anand's life. Dev Dutt, Lala Kedar Nath, Nihalu are all examples. The hero Krishan is different from Anand only in his name. It is Anand's story and Anand's world looked at from Anand's angle. While the other novelists restrict themselves to the role of an ambient but unseen presence directing events and men, Anand comes to the centerstage and struts back and forth as the main character itself.