CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

Mulkraj Anand was born on December 12, 1905 in a Hindu Kshatriya family in Peshawar, now in Pakistan. His father Lal Chand was a traditional coppersmith, who left the ancestral profession and worked as a regimental Head Clerk in the British Indian Army. With the transfer of his father’s regiment from place to place, Anand had to move with him and, thus, he acquired new experiences both about Indian and the European society. He was in close touch of the life of officers and soldiers in barracks. Anand witnessed the grim and sorrowful spectacle of the villagers and the bottom dogs groaning under the yoke of poverty, hunger and exploitation. He keenly observed the activities of the humbugs and hypocrites – priests, money lenders, caste-Hindus and officers – who took devilish pleasure in sucking the life blood of the underdog. These experiences and observations of childhood left an indelible impression on Anand’s sensitive child mind and aroused his inborn sympathy for the poor and the exploited. His early human sympathies and talent for minute observation of changing social pattern and life values matured with the advancement of age and it deeply influenced his making as a novelist. The characters in his works are drawn from the society he saw around him. Commenting on the early influences on his characterization Anand Says:

All these heroes as the other men and women who had emerged in my novels and short stories, were dear to me, because they were the reflections of real people, I had known during my childhood and youth. [1]
The glaring disparities between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have nots compelled him to think about the amelioration of the underdog. In course of time Anand became a champion of the cause of the poor and the exploited and in his novels and short stories which are suffused with a note of protest and resentment, he led a crusade against these dehumanizing and barbaric distinctions. Anand’s close association with the poor and the rural segments of society enabled him to catch the beauty and raciness of the simple and unsophisticated language of poor and illiterate Indians. In order to impart a typical local flavor to English, he did his best to transliterate the native idioms and proverbs into English. Thus he pioneered the nativization technique in Indian English novel. Anand derived the knowledge of myths, songs, talks and epics of the village community from his mother – Iswar Kaur. He hated shams, hypocrisy and superstitions which he saw in his own orthodox family and disregarded untouchability and caste distinctions.

Anand’s father, Lal Chand was very careful about Anand’s education and intellectual development. He gave Anand great English novels like Reynold’s *Mysteries of the Court of London and Pope Joan*, Haggard’s *She*, Corelli’s *Sorrows of Satan*, Hardy’s *Tess*, Thackeray’s *New Comers*, Dickens’s *David Copperfield* etc. These works cultivated in him a taste for novel reading and later influenced his fictional technique. As he grew up, he rebelled against his father’s blind loyalty to British rule and his religious hypocrisy. Anand’s father read the Gita daily but he did not practice its commandments in his own life. Anand became a rebel against hypocrisy, his parents and childhood experiences and observations influenced his making as a novelist.

During those days the cantonment schools were centers of corruption. Teachers were engaging tuitions, accepting bribes and indulging in homosexuality. In *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts*, Anand has exposed and condemned
the uselessness, baselessness and fruitlessness of British patterns of Education in Indian context. Anand could not forget the three things in his life. The first crisis in his life was the death of Kaushalya, his pretty cousin and playmate. For the first time he saw the contract between life and death. The suicide of his aunt Devaki left him confused, bewildered and sad. She was ostracized for being friendly with a Muslim woman. These events forced him to stand against rebellion for dogmas and conventions. Thirdly, his arrest and caning by the police for breaking the curfew during the Jallian Wallah Bagh Massacre in 1919 made him an uncompromising denouncer of imperialism.

Anand’s education at Khalsa College, Amritsar in 1921 and at University in 1924 was eventful in many ways. He actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement of Mahatma Gandhi in 1921 and was imprisoned for a short term. He fled to Bombay where he turned a journalist and began writing notes and reviews for *Bombay Chronicle*. This was the beginning of Anand’s career as a writer. A review article of Anand, *The Secret of the Self*, was his most important publication during this period. On his father’s persuasion he returned to Amritsar where he came under the influence of Annie Besant and joined the student’s strike against the British Government. As a student he took keen interest in reading the poetry of Dr. Mohd Iqbal and the works of Tagore, Bankim Chandra, Sharat Chandra and other Indian writers. One significant event of his college life in Amritsar was his love affair with Yasmin, the sister-in-law of his intimate friend, Nur Muhammad. He made up his mind to elope with her to Kashmir but her husband came to know about this secret affair and one day she was mysteriously found dead. This tragic event disillusioned him and left a permanent impression on him.
Anand got a chance to visit England in 1925 for higher studies. Under Professor Dawes Hicks, the famous Kantian scholar in University College, London he joined Ph.D. in philosophy. He was awarded a Silver Wedding Fund scholarship for writing an essay on David Hume. He attended lectures of eminent philosophers – G.E. Moore, C.D. Broad and Dr. Radhakrishnan. The latter, exercised an abiding influence on Anand’s outlook on life. In London Anand met Irene the charming and talented daughter of a Professor of Biology at the University of Wales, on the peaks of Snow don. She cast a hypnotic spell on the sensitive heart of young Anand and they fell in love at first sight. Due to her inspiration Anand was encouraged to write an interesting account of his reminiscences, modeled on Rousseau’s Confessions. Irene and Anand went to Paris, Rome and Vienna. He became interested in the works of James Joyce who was at the height of fame at that time. He admired Joyce’s stream of consciousness technique and in several of his novels, especially in Untouchable Anand skilfully employed this technique. He also became interested in painting, music and sculpture.

While taking his Doctor’s degree, Anand met several Bloomsbury intellectuals, including T.S. Eliot, Bonamy Dobree, Virginia Woolf, Clive Bell and Herbert Read. He began to publish short reviews in Criterion magazine. He had already written a short novel Untouchable (1935) under the influence of James Joyce and Mahatma Gandhi. Anand had to transform his imagination of the old myths of tradition into the myths of contemporary man. He had to notice the hopes and despairs of people, the miseries and the ‘ironies of fate’ and thus he revealed their aspirations, their struggles and their failures. Anand had to enter new consciousness which had never been seen before in polite literature. He had to do it without being high minded or low minded. His heroes and heroines could not be
heroic in the epic sense of the Ramayan, Mahabharata, or the Iliad, in the tragic age, but he had to launch upon the eternal quest.

Thus Mulk Raj Anand became a writer. He was awarded the Ph.D. in 1930 for his thesis on the thoughts of Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Russell. Anand Coomarswamy inspired him to study Indian art. During his stay in London, Anand worked with Krishna Menon for the India League, an organization in England for Indians and British supporters of Indian independence during his stay in London. He vigorously fought for Indian independence and influenced British public opinion in India’s favor than any other Indian resident in Britain. The Coal-miners’ strike in 1926 was a vehement expression of resentment against the apathy and inconsideration of British Government towards the amelioration of the condition of coal-miners. He felt deeply for the coal miners who were symbolic of the suppressed humanity. He wrote in Apology for Heroism: “We had set out hearts on our liberation and of other oppressed people, whoever they were, wherever they were and of whatever shape, time and color.” [2]

The repercussion of Coal-miners’ strike compelled him to take interest in Communism and Marxism. He read Communist Manifesto and befriended Allen Hutt, the trade union leader and pamphleteer. He also read Marx, Engels and other communist thinkers. Anand felt that Marxism was “a scientific and national method for the study of society, a hypothesis which was leading to new discoveries.” He denounced capitalism and acquired a comprehensive view of socialistic thought of Tolstoy, Ruskin, Morris and Gandhi. To him socialism was the panacea to cure social evils-misery, ugliness and inequality. He was also aware of the shortcomings of communism for it denied to people the very liberties, and human rights for which the revolution was fought. In fact, Anand is neither a Marxist nor a communist but he is a humanist whose outlook has been moulded by
Marxism. As a staunch humanist he believes in the inherent goodness of man. In this reference Saros Cowasjee has remarked, “One must not lose sight of close relationship between Marxism and humanism in Anand’s mind – relationship that is better evident in his works than in his numerous protestations.”[3] A powerful undercurrent of humanism runs through all the novels of Mulkraj Anand.

Every writer is influenced by the things in and around his life. His vision of life is shaped by many factors, situations and circumstances of life. We notice that Mulkraj Anand’s works have been influenced by Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Chekhov, the soviet realists, Thomas Mann and D.H. Lawrence, the Ramayan and the ancient scriptures, Punjabi folklore, Chinese poetry and Persian romance. Anand is the product of East West culture. His novels, and short stories which vividly present Indian life and people, show the influence of Western thought. But from early childhood, Anand imbibed love and respect for ancient Indian culture, which potently influenced his views of life. The kind of humanism he believes in and the kind of world he hopes for are integral to the Indian tradition in which he grew up. In fact Anand’s fictional works are replete with Indianess at every step.

The Indian Freedom Movement gave him a new direction and brought to light the patriot in him. The nineteen thirties were the time for the Gandhian Salt Satyagrah Movement of 1930-32, the Round Table Conference, the Government of India Act of 1935, the introduction of the Provincial Autonomy of 1937, and the Gandhian Movement for political and social change. With these movements the Gandhian ideology left a deep impression on Anand’s mind. Anand skillfully correlates nationalism, socialism and humanism in his novels. It is said that Mulk Raj Anand united nationalism with socialism into one humanitarian movement, a single revolt against oppression.
Rabindranath Tagore, Prem Chand and Sarat Chandra Chatterjee influenced by Gandhian ideology and freedom movement, exercised considerable influence on Anand. Tagore’s humanism, Prem Chand’s realism and boundless sympathy for the underdogs, and Sarat Chandra’s remarkable knowledge of the human heart highly influenced both the thinking and the fictional art of Anand. Anand brought all these elements together and transformed them into a highly personal creative art. The Western writers like Jack Lindsay, Ralph Fox, Christopher Caudwell, John Cornford, Prof. G.D. Higgs and others influenced Anand’s fictional technique.

Indian English novel was not properly developed from the point of view of technique and craftsmanship. The Great Russian writers, Pushkin, Tolstoy and Zola greatly influenced the development of Indian English novel. Anand read Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist, As a Young Man, Ulysses* and parts of *Work in Progress*. Joyce’s method of the stream of consciousness technique left a deep impact on Anand and he used it with great skill in *Untouchable* and many other novels.

Anand has clear and well defined views on art and literature. His love for the entire mankind, transcending all constricting limitations of caste, creed, and economic or social status, and all geographical boundaries of nations, all of which are manmade – is at the root of Anand’s philosophy which animates all his activities, including his prolific writing. The essence of his humanism lies in the view that “man is the maker of all things.” [4]Anand did not believe in the art for art’s sake theory but he thought art exists for the sake of man. The primary aim of art is to refine and ennoble man, to stir up the dormant stores of tenderness in him for his fellow human beings and to inspire him into action calculated to achieve the well being of the mankind as a whole. Anand has always written to glorify the essential dignity of man and to inspire compassion in the hearts of men for the
oppressed and the downtrodden. Anand pointed out that the modern writer has to play a great constructive role in the reconstruction of human society. According to him the modern writer must go straight to the heart of the problem of our time, the problem of human sensibility in the present complex situation. In order to understand this tragedy it is necessary to “explore the sensibilities of all human beings whether in the factory, in the village square or in the drawing room in as far as they have been affected by the iron age.”[5]

Anand has been really interested in the inner struggle, through confusion, unrest and chaos, of men and women to break through from themselves and their weaknesses. Death in his novels is the tragic moment of life from which hope can be born. According to Anand, art reveals the dignity of human life and personality. The highest art interprets life for us and emboldens us to face the trials of life manfully. Anand believes that novel is an appropriate medium to express a writer’s concern for human problem. It effectively deals with the human situation and presents the problems of life of man in a comprehensive and convincing manner. Though a committed novelist, Anand does not believe in sacrificing the formal values of fiction. He believes that novel is a literary form which has its own integral technique.

In the traditional sense the business of the novelist, or a poet, is to show the sorriness underlying the grandest things and the grandeur underlying the sorriest things. But for Anand the major criterion of the beautiful in art is apparently its agitational content – as much its faithfulness to reality as its revolutionary purpose and a conscious promotion of certain ideas and values. He does not give credence to the theory that the artist’s creative activity should spring more from the intricate labyrinth of the unconscious mind than from the superstructure of thought. He generally chooses to ignore the magnificent in life and the subtler and finer
qualities of human head and heart. The world he seeks to recover, and to reveal, is in itself not beautiful. It is the scum that he portrays in his pages. Even in this very limited and narrow sphere he finds room enough for fanatic dogmatism. In being often harsh, bigoted and narrow, he is strictly conforming to the Marxist literary practice.

Mulk Raj Anand has the credit to bring social change in Indian English novel and he has portrayed the shams and hypocrisy underlying the polished social life with “Dickensian piquancy of realism”. Realism and social purpose are present in all the novels and short stories of Anand but from the viewpoint of technique he covered mainly four themes – social, political, cultural and autobiographical. Anand primarily deals with the misery and wretchedness of the poor and their struggle for better life. He has always been conscious of the need to help the untouchables, the peasants, the coolies and other suppressed members of society. Anand is a committed writer with a social purpose. In the words of Saros Cowasjee: “Anand is deeply concerned with social problems and that he is committed to the eradication of the evils which infest modern society.”[6] In his novels – Untouchable, The Road, Coolie, Two Leaves and A Bud and The Big Heart – Anand emerges as the Champion of the underdogs and a crusader against social distinctions and manmade barriers which divide humanity. Anand condemns the apathy, self centeredness and lack of human sympathy and understanding in the upper strata of society for the poor and the exploited. He is a realist and humanist whose fundamental aim is to establish the fundamental oneness of mankind.

Mulk Raj Anand has to his credit a number of novels, short stories, and books on varying themes and a host of essays and articles on different subjects of his life. His articles concern with the ills of Indian society. As Anand became eminent in the circle of other novelists, critics started to evaluate his works. There
is now a large body of writings on Anand. Most of his major critics have acclaimed him as a powerful novelist. The simple fact of his popularity is that his novels *Untouchable* and *Coolie* are available in 38 languages of the world. An important aspect of Anand’s fiction is its concern with the reality of organized evil. In all his novels he appears as a social critic. Before his *Untouchable* in 1935, Indo Anglian novels were mainly based on history or romance and they were primarily written for mere enjoyment and social concern. His missionary zeal for the welfare of the masses had added purpose and brought a new direction to the Indo-Anglian novels. His purpose in writing fiction has been to focus attention on the suffering, misery and wretchedness of the poor and the underdogs of society caused by the exploitations of capitalists or the feudal lords or by the impact of industry on the traditional and agricultural ways of life.

*Untouchable* and *Coolie* are excellent examples in this respect. They depict the wretched condition and ordeals of the depressed people and their struggle for a better life. Almost all of his novels that followed the above two novels are variation on the same theme and are intended to bring the same message to the reader. Anand has all along written novels and short stories with a view of teaching men to recognize the fundamental principles of human living and exercise vigilance in regard to the real enemies of freedom and socialism. It has been a life time apostolate for him to help raise the untouchables, the peasants, the coolies and the other suppressed members of society to fight for human dignity deliberately denied to them by the privileged sections of society. For him his life is his art and art, his life. Anand’s early education was in cantonment schools. 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. This had disastrous effect on Anand.

After his school, Anand joined the Khalsa College at Amritsar and he was here from 1921 to 1924. Here he reveled his literary taste by writing poems in Urdu. He frequently met the poet Mohammad Iqbal and had many literary discussions with him. But for that his college days were generally not a happy one. In those days he was active in non-violent campaign and once he suffered a brief imprisonment. The most terrible event that happened to him at Khalsa was his abortive amorous affair with a Muslim married woman named Yasmin. Just before the final examination unable to forget Yasmin, he made up his mind to elope with her to Kashmir getting the assistance of his friend, Noor. But knowing Yasmin’s plan her husband killed her on the day she was to flee. It became a big social issue. Her death led Anand to despair and his Confe\*\textit{position of a Lover} (1976) is a moving and honest story of his love for Yasmin and its consequences. The second period of Anand’s life can be considered after 1924. After his graduation from Khalsa College, though his father did not like the idea, he managed to leave for England for higher studies and research in philosophy. On his arrival in London, he got registered at the University College to do research for a Doctor’s degree in Philosophy, under Professor G. Dawes Hicks, the famous Kantian scholar and co-editor of the \textit{Hibbert} Journal. Professor Hicks set Anand to work on the history and theory of knowledge and in particular, on the treatment of such relations as cause and effect identity.

Anand appears in his fiction as a crusader against injustice of every type. He steadfastly opposes the exploitation of the poor by any class. This includes the imperial masters and the village money lenders. His concern for the poor the unscrupulous traders, the native rulers, priests and tea-planters is deep. The social
evil Anand first attracted to is asterism. He finds it to be the greatest evil of Indian society. He knows that India, the emerging republic from colonial rule could become a powerful nation only if caste system is done away with. Just as the caste system has been prevalent in India since times immemorial, attempts to abolish it have also been made from that time onwards. Swami Vivekananda wrote, “The caste system is opposed to the religion of the Vedanta. Caste is a social custom and all great preachers have tried to break it down from Buddhism downwards, every saint has preached against caste and every time it has only riveted the chains.”[6] Thus, right from the day of Upanishads, thinkers have spoken against the caste system. Buddha preached against it 2500 years ago. In the nineteenth century, there were four major movements with the main aim, among other things to abolish caste system. They are Braham Samaj, Arya Samaj, Rama Krishna Movement and the Theosophical Movement. These movements tried hard to educate people about and against the evils of caste system.

Mulk Raj Anand says casteism is an age-old lie made by the powerful and wicked in society to uphold discrimination. His prime concern as a social critic is to remove caste system for it damages social cohesion by giving certain sections of society unfair advantages over others permanently. It poisons and destroys the dignity of man. Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao began to expose in artistic form the reality of British presence and its intentions in India. By going through the novels like Coolie (1935) and Two Leaves and a Bud (1942), we will be able to perceive Anand’s opposition to capitalism and imperialism. They exploited the poverty and misery of India to make maximum profit. Munoo in Coolie and Gangu in Two Leaves and a Bud are victims in the tragic dramas of exploitation. The struggle of the peasant and tenants for “daybreak and daily bread,” is a major theme in Anand’s novels. In his novels, land lords, money lenders and lawyers are satanic
triples in search of the blood of the peasants. Poor peasants are subjected to boundless tyranny by these social leeches.

Mulk Raj Anand, the champion of the down-trodden, out castes and the abandoned, does not fail to portray in his novels the predicament of woman who is a pitiable victim of the rigid social system in all his novels. The Old Woman and the Cow considers the cause of women. Moreover, many of his short stories like Lajwanti, The Hiccup, The Silver Bangles and Torrents of Wrath concentrate on the pitiable and miserable life of women. His autobiographical novels, The Seven Summers, Morning Face and Confession of a Lover and his Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts contain references to the futility of our present system of education. Lamentable condition of our education system has also been presented here. Anand wants to lead the Indian society from the darkness of religion and nationalism based on it, to the light of secularism. It is with this view that he came out with the novel Death of a Hero.

Anand’s religion is his humanism. To be good and to do well is the gist of his religion. Anand is angered by the Hindu society’s acceptance of casteism and karma as the fundamental truth of its religion. He protests against the Christian theories of revelation, pre-destination, original sin and human depravity as they are impediments to human progress. He ridicules the inept practices of Islam and attacks impartially the awkwardness that has entered into every religion. He wants people to practice the true religion which is no other thing but humanism. He disapproves the way religion is reduced to more rituals and dead customs. Anand’s criticism of religion and hypocrisy is a major theme in Death of a Hero. This theme is artistically sprayed in all his fiction.
Anand, a great social critic and exponent of the promotion of culture, vehemently exposes all evils in human society which militate against culture. He thinks that literature aims at promoting culture which implies enlightenment, rational thinking and the recognition of the dignity of man. His novels are suffused with cultural consciousness. In novel after novel Anand questions the cultural background of India and feels the misery and suffering of the inert, disease ridden underfed and illiterate people about us. Anand exhorts man to a universal awareness of life which would enable mankind to come out of cultural stagnation.

In order to glorify the dignity of man Anand, first of all, looks angrily at the sordid spectacle of human life and culture in decadence and mercilessly exposes all the bleeding sores of life-flesh, wounds, flood and all. He sheds all sentimentalism and “writes with a fine touch of scorn of social and economic inequalities.” During the course of exposing all evils which harm culture, Anand glorifies the dignity of man and evolves a new technique for the expression of his faith in man. He calls it “poetic realism”. In this respect he was influenced by Prem Chand’s novels which are conspicuous for social realism and the humanistic approach in the novels of Rabindranath Tagore. Anand’s novels cover the entire cultural perspective of India. He envisions an era of cultural renaissance in India in which myopic considerations of caste, community, religion, provincialism etc. would have no place and the dignity of man as man would be accepted.

We have noticed how Anand exposes the hollowness of caste and class distinctions in society in Untouchable, The Road, Coolie, Two Leaves and A Bud and in The Big Heart. In Coolie and Two Leaves and A Bud, Anand also deals with the theme of the disintegration of the village community, which has plugged the poor villagers into untold sufferings and which has also disturbed the cultural unity of India. G.S. Balrama Gupta comments:
While *Untouchable* and *The Road* indicate how man’s cruelty to man in the form of caste, hatred and oppression results in the unspeakable misery of innumerable untouchables in India, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* point a ghastly picture of the lot of Indian peasants who, uprooted from their soil, lose their way, enter a wider and more cruel world, suffer countless indignities at the hands of the affluent and powerful men and eventually die premature and tragic death. [7]

In these novels Anand describes that discrimination on the basis of caste and class generates social tensions and disturbs the cultural balance of society. It is callous and inhuman. Anand deftly deals with the theme of disintegration of the village community. It has completely upset the cultural balance of India.

In *The Village Trilogy*, Anand describes with remarkable ease and frankness the cultural panorama of India. Its first part *The Village* appeared in 1939, the second part *Across the Black Waters* came out in 1940 and the last part *The Sword and the Sickle* was published in 1942. *The Village* depicts how landlords, sahukars, priests, lawyers and even law courts exploit poor and innocent peasants. The old ones are fatalists and resign themselves to their lot. Lalu, the youngest son of Nihal Singh, rebels against conservatism. He gets his hair cut and makes love to Maya, the landlord’s daughter. Harassed and tormented by Mahant Nandgir, the Sikh priest and the landlord, Lalu escapes from the village and joins the army. The youth, rebellious and uncompromising, leaves village. Thus, the disintegration of village community begins. *Across the Black Waters*, which is the first war novel in Indian English literature, realistically paints the life of soldiers. In it Anand frankly condemns that which dehumanizes man and annihilates the entire cultural development of society. *The Sword and the Sickle* which may be compared with Hardy’s *The Return of the Native* emphasizes the need of unity, freedom and place
for the growth and promotion of culture. Lalu, who has given up the sword, returns to his native village and exhorts his people to rise against the oppressors. He realizes that well organized and united strength of people alone can emancipate people from the bond of exploiters. Anand exposes superstitions, conventions, customs, religious orthodoxy, and the horrors of war which have completely devitalized Indian culture. Anand envisages an era of cultural awakening in India, when the caste and class distinction is completely abolished and the disintegration of the village community is stopped.

Man-woman relationship is the pivot of the flowering of culture in society. Exploitation of women is a stigma on society. It is a barbarous and uncultured social practice. A champion of the amelioration of women, Anand ruthlessly exposes the exploitation of women in *Gauri* (1960). Gauri, bullied, mistrusted, beaten and exploited by her husband Panchi, abandons her home and husband to live on her own and to lead her own life. Dr. Mahindra, a humanist, gives a new lease of life to Gauri by rescuing her from the clutches of a Seth to whom her father had sold her. Dr. Mahindra says: “And cash has become more valuable than the earth. And thus there is wretchedness everywhere. Your Amru turns crook and you sell your daughter, even as folks in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh are selling their daughters.”[8] In this novel Anand questions the supremacy of man over woman. In *Gauri* he employs myths and symbols from the comprehensive culture of his inheritance. K.M.N. Sinha remarks:

*The Old Woman and the Cow* is an effort to purify human conduct through a return to the primitive mythical aspects of human experience. The novel explores dimensions, the full impact of which can be grasped in the light of the modern experiment as a whole. [9]
Anand, an ardent exponent of humanism, exposes various manifestations of religious hypocrisy and exploitation in almost all his novels. Religious bigotry hinders the growth of culture. It promotes fanaticism, orthodoxy and passivity. Untouchable and The Road reveal the highhandedness of high castes towards untouchables, which is stamped with religious sanction. Pt. Kali Nath in Untouchable, Pt. Suraj Mani in The Road, the fat yogi of Bhagat Har Das Shrine in Coolie, Mahant Nandgir in The Village, lecherous Pt. Bhola Nath in Gauri, Pt. Jay Ram and Pt. Bal Krishna in The Seven Summers are the embodiments of the immoral, corrupt, and hypocritical priestly order in Hinduism. All of them are gluttonous, sensual, crafty, cunning and demoralized. His attitude to Brahmin priestly order is succinctly revealed in Two Leaves and a Bud “Never believe a barber or Brahmin.” Prof. Verma comments in The Sword and the Sickle:

Hinduism is no religion apart from the social organism of caste. Any one professing a belief is a Hindu, so long as he is born to one of the castes! And all this ritualism is a good Brahmin trick to keep people confused and to coin money through conducting ceremonial.

An advocate of religious tolerance and rational spirit, Anand condemns all institutionalized religions because they vitiate social life and arrest the growth of culture by spreading fundamentalism, obscurantism, intolerance, bigotry and exploitation. In some of his novels Anand is even critical of Islam. Nur in Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts indicates the irrational practices in Islam. The Muslim priests are also hypocrites. Religious and communal consciousness generates tensions and riots. Politicians cash the religious and communal sentiments of the people. In The Big Heart Sauda rings the clarion of rebellion among the laborers but the politicians fan the feelings of communal hatred between the Hindus and the Muslims and create riots in order to fulfill their nefarious
designs. Anand champions the cause of communal harmony and national integration by exposing the dirty and selfish designs of politicians. *Death of a Hero* is a novel about the “assault by traditional religious bigotry and obscurantism upon a people aspiring to modern democratic way of life.” Maqbool Sherwani, a glowing symbol of patriotism and national integration, condemns the orgy of murder and bloodshed by Pakistani invaders, who claim to be the followers of Islam.

Anand also mocks at the thoughtless rituals and religious bigotry of Christianity. He “is all admiration for Jesus Christ as a man full of love and grace, goodness and tenderness, he cannot accept Christianity in toto.”[11] He condemns Christian missionaries who are engaged in proselytization of Indians. Colonel Hutchinson in *Untouchable*, Padre Annandale in *The Village*, Claray Young in *Gauri* and De La Havre endeavor to convert the underdog into Christianity by giving them the hope of their economic betterment. To Anand religion is a unifying force. He forcefully exposes religious hypocrisy in order to purge human society and to promote the development of culture. Education, which is the backbone of culture, has been comprehensively dealt with in his novels – *Morning Face, The Village, The Road and Gauri*. *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts* is written on education as its main theme. Anand condemns the education he received in his childhood,

If education is the transmission of life from the living, through the living to the living, then we do not know how to describe the system of teaching that prevails here. It is carrying death from the dead, through the dead to the dead. [12]
Anand frankly expresses his views on education in *Lament on the Death of Master of Arts*. It is a “dig at modern education which leaves a man misfit.” In it Anand has made education a central theme, “a theme which is only peripherally death with or incidentally incorporated in his other novels.”[13] The novelist exposes the futility of education system which neither guarantees employment nor serves as a passport to meaningful life. The school teachers are corrupt. Nur, the protagonist, is severely beaten because he does not bring, sweets to the teacher. Nur, who wants to join his father’s profession, has been educated against his will. His father wants him to obtain an M.A. degree so that he might go up in social status. His academic qualification comes in the way of his accepting the jobs which he considers to be below the dignity of an educated man. He feels that the only izzat is in government service. In order to get a white collared job influential recommendations are necessary. Nur’s academic qualifications are meaningless without influence and recommendation. Nur’s friend Gama, who is uneducated, is a practical man. He joins the ancestral profession, mocking at the educational system he says: “What is there in education, brother! Waste of time!” Frustrated and dejected, Nur falls ill and dies in the full bloom of youth.

Nur has become a symbol of educated but unemployment youths who are often sacrificed at the altar of defunct, corrupt and meaningless system of education. *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts* is a brilliant satire on various manifestations of corruption in our educational set up. In it Anand presents an inimitable vision of education. Teachers are selfish and self centered and ignore the proper development of pupils. Teacher indulges in engaging private tuitions. Master Kashi Ram in this novel has a drudge against Nur because his poor father has not sent him anything for private tuition. He is homosexual. He attempts to kiss Nur at the end of school session but Gama teaches him a lesson. Master Budh
Singh in *The Morning Face*, Master Hukam Chand in *The Village* and Master Din Gul in *Seven Summers* have a family likeness as far as corruption in education is concerned. Shah Nawaz in *Morning Face* is the only ideal teacher in Anand’s novels. Anand’s education characters – Nur, Victor, Maqbool and Lalu turn out to be failures in real life.

Anand also advocates the cause of universal education, education for all. The poor and the exploited like Bakha, Bhikhu and Munoo, and women like Sohini, Leila and Gauri must get the light of education. Anand calls for a revolutionary change in educational system which will prove to be a powerful medium for the emancipation of the underdog and the establishment of egalitarians society. The theme of tradition versus modernity appears in almost all the novels of Anand. Non conformity, resentment and protest, tradition versus modernity and East-West encounter which he himself had experienced are realistically presented in his novels. All his protagonists - Bakha, Lalu, Ananta, Krishna, Nur, Maqbool, and Gauri etc. angrily protest against the barbarous and defunct existing social order and earnestly desire for a change in the light of new ideas. Meenakshi Mukherjee says:

> The heroes of Mulk Raj Anand are rugged individuals who suffer because they refuse to conform. Munoo, the coolie, Bakha, the untouchable, Bhikhu, the chamar, Lal Singh of the Trilogy all are persecuted by society for their non conformity, but all of them are indomitable in spirit. [14]

Indian English novelists have vividly depicted contemporary political situation in their novels. Anand too deals with the political theme in the *Sword and the Sickle*, *Private Life of an Indian Prince* and *Death of a Hero*. Anand could not
distance himself away from the political milieu of India. He writes about contemporary politics more or less as Trollope wrote about the British parliamentary politics of his day making minor adjustments in order to catch the spirit of the movement. As a writer of political novels Anand was influenced by European political ideologies, especially those of Lenin, Tolstoy and Marx. Though he never actively participated in politics, he was a great supporter of Leftist Peace Movements. It must be conceded that “politics claims but a part, a small part, not a whole of his life.”[15] During his occasional visits to India, the C.I.D. kept a close watch on him and he was condemned as a “Bolshevik”. Anand’s first three novels were considered to be explosive and revolutionary in content and spirit.

In the field of political thought Anand is obviously anti-Congress. He felt that congress politicians seldom paid any attention to the cause of peasants and workers. Anand believes that political power after independence merely added to hypocrisy, corruption and complacency of the Congress ties. He makes a dig at them in Gauri. “All these dhotiwallas pronounce half truths, partial prophets, compromising with big Seths, while they talk of socialistic pattern.”[16] He is sure that they make money from bribery and fraud, while the poor folks join hands to them.

His *The Sword and the Sickle* covers the politics of the twenties. The sword symbolizes tyranny, exploitation and destruction, while the sickle stands for freedom, production, prosperity and peace, and represents India’s vast labor force, especially the downtrodden peasantry which constituted over eighty percent of India’s population in the nineteen twenties. The title suggests the indomitable spirit of peasants who undaunted by their human oppression by rulers and landlords, work for the preservation and liberation of mankind. Anand believes that the
communists are the only people who are devoted with single minded devotion to uplift the underprivileged and the social outcastes – and that Russia is the only Pole Star in the proletariat’s search for happiness. In his novels on political theme Anand exposes the sheer futility and meaninglessness of existing political institutions like feudalism, exploitation and colonization. He presents a political vision which reveals the importance of socialism, democracy, equality, freedom and a just social and political order.

As a writer of autobiographical fiction his four autobiographical novels *Seven Summers, Morning Face, Confession of a Lover* and *The Bubble* form four volumes of his ambitious autobiographical work- *The Seven Ages of Men* which was intended to be written in seven volumes. Anand has sought to convey in his fiction “the wisdom of the heart. His emphasis, from the beginning of his career, has been on the objectification of felt experience through the presentation of individual men and women.”[17] *The Seven Summers* chronicle the first seven years of the life of Krishan Chander, who is Anand himself. The novelist recapitulates with remarkable power of imagination the experiences of childhood, dimmed by the passage of time. Anand’s second autobiographical novel *Morning Face* records his passage from innocence to experience. It depicts the growth of the hero from his childhood to adolescence, his loves and hates, his tensions and conflicts, his hopes and fears. Concomitantly, the novel is a record of Indian history of the difficult times of British oppression and subsequent corruptions of nationalist and revolutionary feelings and acts among the suppressed Indians. It shows the novelist’s early life in the opening decade of the twentieth century.

*Confession of a Lover* is the third of the series of Anand’s autobiographical novels. It depicts the years 1921-25 in Krishan’s life with the same energy and episodic variety, the same self exploration and wide perspective as in *Seven
Summers and Morning Face. It deals with Krishan’s life in Khalsa College, Amritsar where he comes across new experiences, develops new contacts and cultivates intellectual sharpness and maturity. His love affair with Yasmin, who prematurely dies, is the most crucial experience in his life at this stage. He is swayed by patriotic and nationalistic ardor. He takes his B.A. degree and decides to leave India for a while to study overseas. Confession of a Lover traces Anand’s development from adolescence to manhood. It ends with Krishaan poised on the discovery of another world, with its different culture and its equivocal morality. Marlene Fisher has asserted that Anand’s autobiographical novels narrate the novelist’s varied experiences, ideologies, love affairs and the cross currents in contemporary age and society.

Anand is a novelist with a vision. To him technique is a powerful medium for the expression of his vision. To him novel is only “a literary form”. He seems to agree with E.M. Forster who thinks that it is difficult to propound certain set rules for writing a novel. Anand believes that the function of literature is to expose social evil with a view to solving problems and creating egalitarian social order. Due to his innate concern for the uplift of the underdog and for removing social and economic disparities he is often dubbed as a communist and propagandist. He contradicts this opinion and asserts that he is primarily a novelist. Anand calls his vision imaginative realism and “comprehensive historical humanism.” He fashions his fictional technique to express his vision. Man is in the centre in the novels of Anand. The reason for Anand’s choosing the novel form is that “he could live the experience of other people and realize what silent passions burst in their hearts, what immediate and ultimate sorrows possess them, where they want to go, and how they grapple, in their own ways, with their destinies.”[18]
Anand’s vision of man and society is revealed with the functioning of his plot, characters, setting, style and language. Anand’s fictional craftsmanship combines Tagore’s humanism, Bankim’s romanticism, Prem Chand’s sympathy for the poor and affected, and Sarat Chandra’s boundless human sympathy. Many a Western writers like Gorki, Tolstoy, Victor Hugo, James Joyce and Dostoevsky taught him the technique of plot construction and perfected his craftsmanship. Anand adroitly amalgamated all these influences and made them his own by supplementing to them his personal experiences, observation and imagination. All his novels are born of the union of experience and imagination.

The plots of Anand’s novels are realistic in which he has taken the whole gamut of human relationships in their totality so as to precipitate the emergence of a revolutionary human being in accordance with the needs of the hour. Anand exhibits remarkable imaginative and artistic power which enables him to see more clearly and depict more convincingly a situation or a scene he has observed or experienced. His plots reveal his extraordinary power of imaginative realism. In such type of plots “the story is composed of a number of detached incidents having little necessary or logical connection among them, the unity of the narrative depending next not on the machinery of the action, but upon the person of the hero who, as the central figure or nucleus, finds the otherwise scattered elements together.”[19]

In his very first novel Untouchable Anand maintains coherence and unity in the loose and inorganic plot. He admirably preserves the unities, as in a classical play, for it converse the events of a single day in the life of Bakha in the town of Bulashah. In it Anand successfully employs the stream of consciousness technique which contributes to precision, coherence and unity in the plot of this novel. Anand modified the Joycean technique in this novel. In the plot of Untouchable, Anand
reveals conflict between individual and society. In it Bakha, an individual representing a community or a tribe is pitted against a whole society. *Coolie* is an innovation of the picaresque technique. It has, “what the English novel has lost-the space, the immense variety of incident and character that was once in the picaresque novel.”[20]

Its action covers several months. The unities of time, place and action have not been observed. It relates a series of adventures in the picaresque manner of *Huckleberry Finn*, but like Finn, Munoo is not rouge but himself a victim of world’s rogueries. Playing several roles he moves from village to town, from town to city, and from city to Bombay and from Bombay to Simla. He comes in close contact with a large number of people – Babu Nathu Ram, Setth Prabha Dayal and his wife, Jimmie and Mrs. Main Warring. Munoo’s character is a unifying factor among a large number of episodes. It may be called a character novel. The plot of *Two Leaves and a Bud* is more composite and well knit than that of *Coolie*. It describes the life of the Indian coolies at the Macpherson Tea Estate in Assam. The hero Gangu is more mature than Munoo in *Coolie*. His objection to Reggie Hunt’s indecent overtures to his daughter proves fatal. Gangu is shot dead. The peaceful demonstration by the coolies is sought to be quelled by a bombing expedition by the RAFA jury dominated by the British. It acquits the quality of the charge of murder. The study is narrated with utmost restraint and verisimilitude and the least of melodrama. The novel registers an advance on *Coolie* in as much as here it is the collective destiny of an entire class of coolies first time in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. It describes the romance of John De La Havre with Barbara, the beautiful daughter of Croft-Cooke.

In *Lament on the Death of A Master of Arts* Anand employs the modified and simplified form of the stream of consciousness technique to present a vivid
picture of Nur’s mind and milieu. Anand’s novels are inspired by all kinds of poetic realism – classical, romantic psychological and moral. The most popular narrative device which Anand employs in Untouchable, Coolie, The Road, The Old Woman and The Cow and Two Leaves And A Bud is the direct method in which the novelist is a historian narrating from the outside. He illuminates and interprets his material and makes it seem authentic. The author plays the role of an omniscient narrator. In the Untouchable the omniscient narrator reveals his remarkable knowledge of the pathetic lives of the underdogs and exposes various manifestations of social evil. The author-narrator attains remarkable concentration, subtlety and economy. In his autobiographical novels he uses the first person narrative method. Anand identifies himself with Krishna, the protagonist, who narrates the story in the first person. In his latest autobiographical novel, The Bubble Anand successfully and skillfully adopts the epistolary mode of narration.

Almost all of Anand’s characters “embody a particular vision of reality which the novelist assigns to them aspiring in the process of the rich substance of life.”[21] All his characters are remarkable for intimate touches of realism. He has written about the suffering and tragedy of the downtrodden and the poor whom he had actually seen and known in his childhood and youth. Anand loves his characters dearly “because they were the reflections of the real people he met in his childhood and youth. For Anand they were not mere phantoms….they were flesh of his flesh and blood of his blood.”[22] In fact, the fusion of experience and imagination has imparted vividness and semblance of reality to his characters. Anand represents a departure from the tradition of India fiction. He allowed the poor and the fallen to enter the pages of his novels. Like Chaucer who in the Prologue leads the caravan of full blooded characters representing the varied facets of contemporary English life, Anand leads the caravan of the sweeper, the peasant,
Anand’s characters are both types and individuals. They are round characters who grow and develop. In portraying major characters like Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Lalu, Nur, Maqbool, Gauri, Ananta and Krishan he skilfully employs the technique of “the inner working novelist” and aims at exploring their soul. Besides the exposition of the soul and psyche of his characters, he portrays vividly and realistically the contours of human body. Bakha, a young man of eighteen, is strong and able bodied. He recognizes the importance of work and is an expert in his job of latrine cleaning. His inexpressible agony when he is insulted by a high caste Hindu, his irrepressible anger when he comes to know about Sohini’s attempted rape by Pt. Kali Nath and his mental agony over his father’s ill treatment are vividly described. Anand’s protagonists are misfits in the established social system which founded on exploitation of the poor and distinction between high and low castes. Consequently they are unhappy and melancholic, isolated and rebellious against the deadwood of tradition. Bakha, Munoo and Gangu have a family likeness. Both Bakha and Munoo are highly sensitive, intelligent, energetic and skilled. They aspire to soar high to lead better life. They react sharply when they are insulted and humiliated.

Anand has been considered vehemently to champion the cause of the poorest poor and the underdog. His attempt to introduce the pariahs and the downtrodden in the realm of novel is a memorable contribution to Indian English novel. Sweepers like Bakha, cobblers like Chhote, barbers like Ram Charan, coolies like Munoo, labourers like Gangu, his wife Sajini and daughter Leila, road workers like Bhikhu, soldiers like Lalu, farmers like Nihal Singh and Sukhua, coppersmiths like Ananta, patriots like Maqbool, unemployed educated youths like Nur and machine
workers like Ralia whose destiny is to suffer, appear in Anand’s novels. Although all these characters are types yet their personal characteristics are clearly visualized. They have moments of humor and relief which tore down the inexpressible gloom of existence. Bakha tired and disgusted, spends some light moments in the company of Ram Charan and Chote. He has a fine sense of humor. When he sees Ram Charan in fine clothes, he humorously remarks: “I see! What a fine waistcoat! Only a bit frayed that gold thread on the velvet why don’t you iron it?”

Military officers, both English and Indian are corrupt, they unscrupulously exploit soldiers. Subha Singh has got his commission of jamadar through the influence of his father, Subedar Major Arbel Singh; Lace Naik Loknath tyrannizes the soldiers to show his qualities of leadership so that he might get promotion. These officers are out and out corrupt in Across the Black Waters. Teachers like master Din Gul in Seven Summers, Bhim Singh in The Village Trilogy, and Master Buddh Singh in Morning Face and Kansi in Lament on the Death of Master of Arts indulge in corruption and exploitation of pupils in schools. The leaders like the poet Sarshar in Untouchable and The Sword and the Sickle, and Puran Singh and Sat Pal in The Big Heart belong to the privileged class and exploit their sentiments and befool them. Their attitude towards the oppressed indicates that they are for the people, but not of them.

Besides these dominant character types, Anand has also depicted several woman characters in his novels. They are mostly portrayed as weak and exploited in a male dominated society. He sympathizes with them and champions the cause of their uplift. In Anand’s novels we come across both urban and rustic types of women. Sohini in Untouchable is a boldly drawn character. Although she is a minor, she has an individuality of her own. She is peerless in youthful beauty. Her
beauty tempts the lecherous priest Kalinath who attempts to molest her. But she is chaste and virtuous. In this respect she is a foil to Gulabo, the washer–woman who has been the keep of a gentleman in the town and who is also kind to her even in her middle age. Leila in *Two Leaves and a Bud* is a victim of Reggie Hunt’s lustfulness. Gauri in *Gauri* is a boldly drawn character. In the beginning she is exploited by her parents, husband and other lecherous persons but later on she rebels in order to find out a mode for her existence. Krishan’s mother in *Seven Summers* and *Morning Face* is an orthodox but affectionate woman who admonishes her son for playing with low caste boys. Anand has also portrayed minor woman characters like Devaki, Krishan’s Aunt, Mumtaz, the dancer and Gana Dasi, the concubine, who have strong sensuality as a predominant trait. Ganga Dasi can be treated as “a metaphor of disease of sex that corrupts human sensibility.” Lajo, in *Lajwanti*, is a poor low caste but a chaste woman of graceful character who opposes all the strong winds against her but fails at last.

In his novels setting or milieu which implies manners, customs and ways of life forms an integral element in Anand’s fictional technique. His settings are realistic and reveal his vision of humanism and sympathy for the underdog. The settings in most of his novels are related with poverty, exploitation, social and economic disparities and distinctions in convention ridden Punjab. In *Untouchable* Anand realistically presents the unhygienic and malodorous surroundings where the untouchables are doomed to live. *The Village* is a memorable picture of pre-independence Indian’s rustic life, drawn with understanding and objectivity. In *Across the Black Waters* the description of trench warfare is both detailed and realistic. In *The Sword and the Sickle* he realistically paints the background of India’s freedom movement. Anand employs various stylistic devices to express his vision of historical humanism in his novels. He has skillfully domesticated and
notarized English to suit the exigencies of his fictional craft. Indians speak and write English only as Indians. Anand remarks:

The psychology of Indian English is rooted in the Indian metabolism. Most Indians, who speak or write English, even when they have been to Oxford and Cambridge or London, tend naturally, to bring the hangover of the mother tongue spoken in early childhood into their expression….. But the pull of our mother tongue leads to a heavy sugar coating of ordinary English words, phrases and sentences – peculiarities which are congenital. [23]

Anand emerges as a great exponent of the nativization technique in his novels. Some proverbs and shades of expression which form an integral part of the oral tradition along with myths, legends, folk tales, songs etc. are included as possible nativization technique available to non-native writers in English. When an author intends to transfer elements from his own culture into his writing in an alien tongue, he employs the nativization technique. It occurs when “a particular speech community makes an unfamiliar language its own. If Standard English cannot provide a word or phrase with the appropriate meaning or emotional tie, then the native language fills the gap.”[24] Anand enjoys complete linguistic freedom for creating atmosphere and revealing his vision. His language is imbued with Indianness in rhythm of speech, nuances of feeling, syntax; swear words, curses, blessings, vocatives and interjections. He deftly transcribes Indian background and experiences in English.

Anand successfully transliterates Indian proverbial speech in place of cockney conversations used by Dickens in *David Copperfield*, *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*. He writes in this connection: “I translate literally all the
dialogue in my novels from my mother tongue and think out the narrative mostly the same way.”[25] His diction is redolent with the simplicity and racy vigor of Punjabi speech. He has an instinctive knack for transcribing from Hindi and Punjabi, for example: “May I be your sacrifice”, “To make one’s sleep illegal”, “Eaters of their masters”, “Munoo! Ohe Monoo! Oh Mundu! Where have you died, you the evil star?” Anand uses “eating the air” for taking a scroll, “breaking vessel” for exposing a secret, “black in the pulse” for something wrong. Indian proverbial expressions and terms of courtesy too have been transliterated, for example: “eating the dust of the roadside”, “drinking the liver of my blood”, “May the vessels of your life never float in the sea of existence!”, “how is your gentle temperament”, “come on our forehead”, “potter of somewhere” etc. Transliterations of Indian swear words and terms of abuse and curses, which impact realism and verisimilitude to his low characters, are scattered over all his novels and short stories. Some of them are “rape mother”, “rape sister”, “and rape daughter”, “lover of your mother”, “Illegally begotten”, “spoiler of my salt”, “eaters of their masters”, “son of a pig”, “devil without horns” etc.

Anand uses certain Punjabi words, which communicate typical Indian sensibility and tension which cannot be properly expressed in English synonyms. He uses “ghaon maoon” for confusion. Some popular Indian words and names which denote India’s cultural, religious and social contexts are Allah, Ashram, Bania, Begari, Bombai, Brahmin, Chamar, Durga, Dustoor, Hanuman, Havildar, Indra, Iqbal, Jalebi, Jaman, Kali, Karma, Kikars, Kismet, Karan Kutia, Motia, Neem, Parvani, Putar, Ramayan, Sahukar, Saki, Shiva, Sikhism, Yessuh, Massiah, Yama etc. Anand has also used Indian interjections like “Acha”, “Ohe”, “Are”, “Hai Hai “ etc. frequently in his novels.
Anand so skillfully arranges words from a rich stock that he achieves “the difficult task of telescoping character and incident.” He graphically communicates the mental makeup of his characters through language. Lakha’s words are indicative of his meanness and humbleness:

But I ran and ran. When I got to the Hakim’s house I just lifted the curtain and went straight in. I caught the Hakim’s feet and said: “Still there is a little breath left in my child’s body. Hakimji, I shall be your slave all my life. The meaning of my life is my child. [26]

Anand’s style is “well within the frontiers of common style and has its own intrinsic value. It conforms to the natural idiom of the dialect.” Naik remarks about his style: “His style, at its best, is redolent of the Indian soil, as a result of his bold importation into English of words, phrases, expletives, turns of expression and proverbs drawn from his native Punjabi and Hindi.”[27]

Anand’s style assumes poetic beauty and splendor, rhythmic felicity and eloquence, picturesqueness and sensuousness when he writes about profound human emotions and deep feelings. We notice a double-level in Anand’s style, passages of ornate conventional prose cluttered with adjectives and adverbs when the author speaks directly to the reader and dialogues in racy, peasant speech when the characters speak to each other. Paying his tribute to Anand as a stylist Marjorie Boulton says: “English people who will not trouble to write their own language well enough ought to be shared by reading the English of such Indian writers as Mulk Raj Anand.”[28] Anand stands unrivalled as a humanist in Indian English novel. H.M. Williams says:

Whereas Anand sticks to social realism excluding religion and Indian Philosophy as irrelevant to the struggle for economic and political
power by the under privileged, Raja Rao contently discusses the nationalist struggle and its revolutionary implications in terms of Hindu mythology, religion and culture. If Anand reflects Gandhi’s humanism (his sympathy with the powerless and the casteless), Raja Rao reflects his conservation and his charismatic religious consciousness, his essential humanism. [29]

Man is in the centre of the novels of Anand right from *Untouchable* to the *Bubble*. All his novels are novels of responsibility, involvement, of creative tension and its resolution, of profound humanism and moral values. Anand’s prime aim is to reveal an ideal humanistic vision of life. He aims at ushering human society into a just egalitarian order in which man, devoid of all prejudices and distinctions would enjoy real human dignity. He strikes a fundamentally humanitarian posture, poetizes the human predicament and calls for a total transformation of man to usher in an era of spiritual regeneration. He has taken within his preview the entire gamut of human relationships in their totality so as to precipitate the emergence of a revolutionary human being in accordance with the needs of the hour. Anand’s novels show a happy blend of idealism, revolutionary socialism and a comprehensive historical humanism which is rare in contemporary novel. He lashes out mercilessly at the cant, hypocrisy, superstition, caste and class prejudices, and the false prestige of the chauvinistic feudal order. Anand deals with man as a social being with a moral purpose-capable of self development. A. S. Dasan’s views on Anand may be quoted here,

A versatile genius and master of varied *genres* who was particular to fuse the functional integrity of art with life, Anand was also a cultural critic and connoisseur of arts. His commitment to and involvement in art appreciation became a kind of passion, passion to communicate
‘felt-experiences’ of his perception and understanding of the cultural and artistic history of India and other countries as well.[30]

Anjanyulu has studied MulkRaj Anand and his works. He says:

Mulk Raj Anand is perhaps the first Indian novelist in English who writes realistically in his fiction about the doomed lives of the downtrodden and the oppressed. In his novels he portrays the lives of a sweeper, a coolie, a peasant etc., who are all the victims of capitalistic exploitation, poverty, squalor, class-hatred, race hatred and inhuman cruelty. [31]
References:


4. Ibid., p.14-15

5. Anand, Mulk Raj. Apology for Heroism. p.79


