CHAPTER- 1

‘Compassion’, the word reveals Anand's deep concern for the suffering humanity. What, however, caught my fancy was the use of the term ‘compassion’ which somehow, I had learnt to associate with Buddha and, only occasionally, with Gandhi or Mother Teresa. And now to think of it in terms of Mulk Raj Anand! It made me ponder:

What does compassion mean to Anand?
How must he be feeling to be compassionate?
Why can't he write more through his compassion?

Compassion, the sharing of a sorrow, a pity and sympathy, a desire to help, feeling another’s pain or plight as if it were one’s own, seeing those in chains as bound with them.1

Now the only thing that remained to be done was to include a question so as to elicit his response to the idea of compassion. The story is about the lawyer who ill-treats a coolie at the Lahore Junction and later feels repentant. He, however, confesses his crime to the narrator. The lawyer has undoubtedly erred against his fellow human being. Anand, however, has no word of condemnation for the porter who too has been guilty of a malpractice of smuggling people out of the station. Anand's compassion thus seemed to me to have been mis-directed and one sided affair. Anand observed:

Compassion is not just a feeling of sentimental pity, but total understanding of a situation. Something that makes you understand why a
thief steals, a robber robs and a ramp trades in flesh.\textsuperscript{2}

In one such letter Mulk Raj Anand wrote,

I have just returned from Punjab and Delhi where I have seen many orphans of the storm and mourning windows - the victims of communal barbarity. In the old days, I was always able to write through my compassion.\textsuperscript{3}

In all fairness, one must admit that Anand was born in an age when moralizing was unusually popular and at the same time they had plenty to moralize about, and revolt against. They delighted in the painting of those elements of human nature which called forth the common emotions of mankind - tears, anger, joy, sorrow, pity, sympathy, compassion and so on:

\textbf{Karuna}, compassion or tenderness, is a concept much used by Anand. His idealization of Hindu compassion, if not his wisdom in predicting events, appears in his early judgment that whatever be the shortcomings of the contemporary culture of India, one thing about it is certain: it is still full of the ancient tenderness, still full of old infinite kindness.\textsuperscript{4}

Starting on his novel-writing career, Anand was struck

\textbf{Not so much by the passion of religion, or ambition among men, as the insults they}
heaped on each other, the pain they extracted out of each other, and
I sought Buddhist compassion through which alone one could understand this.⁵

Anand says,

Compassion understands the failings of individuals and allows for improvement or growth in their personality through devotion or enlightenment.⁶

In this attitude, Mulk Raj Anand detects the Hindu doctrine which sees the unquenchable spark of divine fire in the worst villains and the remnants of a good conscience even in the worst criminals. From this very attempt at tenderness, he believes there will spring the dynamics of the new life, a new humanism. This tenderness or love is the creative center and root of all human living.

Neither contempt from above nor sentimental love from below, but a tender recognition of the essential similarity both in strength and frailty of human beings....The pervasive starting point of comprehension for each feeling, wish, thought and act that constitutes the world behind the scene of the human drama, from which catharsis or ultimate pity may arise.⁷

For Anand it is, above all, the low-caste and outcaste people who evoke compassion and challenge the resources of literary men.
No one in India has yet written the epic of this suffering adequately, because the realities were too crude for a writer like Tagore, and it was not easy to write an epic in India while all the intricate problems of the individual in the new world had yet to be solved. 8

Some evidence suggests that Anand himself hoped to write in a series of novels, the epic of the poor in India. Writing about the decline of compassion and its development in American fiction, Edmund Fuller complains that the world of respectable and economically stable people is not nice, not right, compared to the ineffable and intransigent 'little people. Fuller lays down two things as requisites for compassion—a generous view of life and a standard of values to judge from. Perhaps he finds a lack of judgment in showing sympathy to the social tastes but a generous view of life should not exclude them. According to Dr. Martin Luther King,

‘Love’ seems to be a synonym of compassion or sympathy. 9

Dr. King cites the Greek word ‘agape’ which he defines as an—

Understanding, redeeming goodwill, for all men. It is an over flowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative....It is the love of God operating in the human heart. 10
As a matter of fact the word ‘agape’ literally means to love feast, a community meal. Christianity where the community word stood for fellowship and the people who participated in it were said to be closer to Christ, who was at the head of the table in an invisible form, absorbed the pagan love feast.

In all religions, the sharing of food and drink is considered to be an expression of love and brotherhood.

In his broadside on the false compassion in the American novel, Fuller deplores that the elements of the true tragedy and compassion—the fall from a standard responsibility, however, extenuated, repentance, and the struggle for rehabilitation—are not in this philosophy.

This is exactly how Anand conceives art and literature, viz, as instruments of humanism, and himself as a creative artist who exhibits ardent love for all human beings, especially for the downtrodden and the poor. He came to have humanistic values under the influence of Marx (1818-1883), Guru Nanak (1469-153), Gandhi (1869-1948), M.N. Roy, Jawahar Lal Nehru (1889-1964), and other thinkers and saints of India and Europe. G.S. Balarama Gupta rightly discovers that in his humanism is the-

Protagorean concept of man as the measure of all things.$^{11}$

The most systematic exposition of Anand's philosophy of compassion is contained in his books. It is as follows:

1. The compassion places man in the centre of all things.
2. The compassion believes that matter precedes mind in any metaphysical attitude towards the universe.
3. The compassion believes that man is an evolutionary product of the matter of which he is part.
4. The compassion, which puts man in the centre of the universe, believes that human beings possess the potential power to understand many problems, hitherto undreamt of, both in relation to themselves and to nature.
5. The compassion believes in opposition to all theories of fatalistic acceptance of God, predestination and determinism, that human beings, conditioned by man's history, possess genuine freedom of creative choice and action.
6. The compassion believes in an ethic, which is based on human psychology and human values, in this earthly existence, achieved through the relations of persons and persons, and persons and society.
7. The compassion believes that the individual attains full manhood by integrating his personal satisfactions and continuous creative self-development through significant creative work with the hand, the heart and the brain.
8. The compassion believes in the widest and deepest possible development of creative art and the awareness of beauty.
9. The compassion believes in the brotherhood of man through the affirmation of love.
10. The compassion believes in the application of imagination, reason and scientific method in all human undertakings,
making room for the understanding of different instincts and emotions.

11. The compassion believes in the constant questioning of the basic assumptions and convictions of inventive science employing, throughout, human tests based on moral values.

12. The compassion wishes to connect itself to international humanism, so that in spite of differences a comprehensive universalist outlook may prevail.

These are the kinds of Anand's love of humanism, a principle of all embracing humanity and his immediate and ultimate concerns as a writer and passionate sincere sympathy for the downtrodden sections that continually inspire and stimulate him to write continuously and prolifically.

Anand, while describing the origin and development of Indian novel, has expounded at length on the 'Yoke of Pity'. He says,

This concept of Karuna or compassion came to men and women in travail as the first enunciation of expiation through art, centuries before Aristotle's famous Katharsis.\textsuperscript{12}

'Katharsis' as Aristotle in the \textit{Poetics} in relation to tragedy employs it means the purging of the readers or the spectators' emotions by evoking pity and terror at the suffering of the tragic hero. Anand's concept of Karuna or compassion also implies this.
The word ‘Catharsis’ is used to mean Karuna or Compassion. As opposed to Aristotle’s definition of Katharsis in the context of tragedy meaning the purging of the audience’s emotions by evoking pity and terror at the suffering of the tragic hero, Anand’s idea Karuna means expiation through art. The tragic hero, in Anand’s novels, comes from the lowest ranks of society. He has no ‘noble’ social status, nor does he suffer from a ‘Tragic flaw’ in the Aristotelian sense of term. On the contrary, the destiny of his Bakhas, Munooos and Gangus is controlled or shaped by society, especially by their heredity and environment. All the same, they strive and struggle heroically to change their destiny and suffer a lot in the process and claim the readers ‘aesthetic sympathy’. Anand’s concept of “Karuna” closely approximates to Elizabeth-K.-Adams’ definition of expiation through art’ as ‘aesthetic sympathy’ in her book The Aesthetic Experience. Both the writers stress that in order to arouse Karuna or aesthetic sympathy in the reader, the novelist must project the sufferings of his protagonist artistically, sincerely and impartially. This is reiterated by Anand elsewhere also.

Compassion, as Anand defines it, is similar to what Elizabeth-K.-Adams’, in her book “The Aesthetic Experience”, calls “Aesthetic Sympathy”:

Such a sympathy is always at the heart of a social determination of reality. In that sympathy, the opposition between individual and society breaks down.13

Anand has co-related the optimistic philosophy of the enlightened peasant. It holds a hope of good for the oppressed in their
struggle against their oppressors who have no compassion for the peasants’ class. Anand has launched attack on the cruel class system and pleaded for the awakened capitalistic system of the upper class. *Untouchable* is an artistic rendering of the plight of one force population in India of the pre-Independence period.

Gandhi (1869-1948) and Tolstoy (1828-1910), had created the philosophy of compassion and they had liked kindness. Anand should have been awakened to them - least of those corruption, illiteracy, lack of health and housing facilities, unequal distribution of wealth and income, economic slavery of the poor workers in factories and should have exposed them in his art if he wanted to maintain his stance of great writer of the pre-Independence day. Anand, however, feels that he still believes in socialism.

Mulk Raj Anand is a competent novelist, who has dwelt upon the society of the underdog. He was a champion of the poor, downtrodden, Dalit, sweepers and Pariyas. Mulk Raj Anand’s is a peculiar phenomenon with long and varied experiences. He had developed sympathy for the poor, the lowest in the most downtrodden sections of humanity from his very childhood. He, therefore, went to the lowest range of humanity. Anand has always loved poor and dirty classes and directly attacked higher and landlord communities. Anand has also explained the quality of compassion to the men and women. Without compassion the human being is totally cruel and uncivilized. He has stressed that compassion is a quality of humanity; compassion is a component of kindness and Godliness. Compassion is a glaring quality of human beings. Anand has stressed compassion as credibility of the mankind, nevertheless Anand has achieved this point and in the bargain
heightened the confounding inner turmoil of the hero by stressing the ideas that filled his mind. Anand (1905-2004), Dickens (1812-1870), Tagore (1861-1941), Premchandra (1880-1936) and Sarat Chandra (1876-1938) had laid emphasis on the universal compassion and universal humanism. It is rightly said:

The idea of Vasudhaiv kutumbakam, Premchandra's sympathy for the underdog and Sarat Chandra's deep understanding of the heroic sufferings and essentially noble heart of the humble folk- all these seem to have influenced the artist in Anand. What Anand accepts in this regard is of contextual importance.14

The element of compassion is the potential quality of man. It is also a sensation of God. Dickens (1812-1870), Thackeray (1811-1863) and Anand (1905-2004) have favoured the feelings of Compassion. The Hindi novelists Jaishanker Prasad (1889-1937), and Munsi Premchandra (1880-1936) have also favoured the compassion. Compassion is an eternal quality of the human being. Anand has established the stream of compassion in the society. Compassion means mercy and kindness towards the sufferers. People have co-related compassion with patience, leniency, persistence and forbearance.
Compassion stands against fatalism, casteism, capitalism, imperialism, feudalism and fascism as these divide man into two sections i.e. the rich and the poor. Without compassion the people become totally vulgar and wild. Anand has justified the practice of compassion. He has totally criticised unimaginative and corrupt bureaucratic underlinks in any system of society to whom power is given. Seen from the feelings of the victim, the life without compassion is perishable.

Pain and tragedy of the human being should be rooted out through the practice of sympathy, tenderness and compassion for the failure of the under privileged. Anand exposed the system of caste based society and the division of labour in early days. Disapproving it Anand has strived to modify the form of the Hindu society. As a noble reformer of society, he has stressed on the performance of duties by every section of the society. The so called upper sections of Brahmans and priests who always condemned and looked down upon lower sections were disapproved and criticized by Mulk Raj Anand in almost all his novels. He condemned those people who pick the pockets of poor peasants and extract money by conducting ceremonials. Brahmans and priests have no knowledge of real meaning of compassion. They often extract money by any possible means from the innocent and ignorant people of the rural areas.

Compassion creates a feeling of love between man and man. This passion does not make difference between the high and low. It is natural and God given emotional feelings that bind relationship between man
and man. It matters little if there is difference of any sort between their status and social position.

In Untouchable (1935), Anand depicts that there are among the Hindu society two upper classes - Brahmans and the Kshatriyas. They justify their superiority by asserting that they have earned their position by the good deeds done by them in different past lives. On one place a Muhammadan Barber also appears who is far from caste prejudice. He believes in equality with all. When Bakha asks for a piece of coal to light cigarette, the Barber replies:

**Bend down to it and light your cigarette, if that is what you want to do with the piece of coal.**

Naturally Bakha is highly impressed by the Barber because he compassionated on him who had no money to buy a match. This is the feeling of very heartily tenderness and also a kind of compassion shown towards the suppressed and the needy.

Havildar Charat Singh is another good person. He is a cricket player. He has many merciful merits for Bakha. He quite often helps and supports Bakha irrespective of his status in society. Havildar Charat Singh says to Bakha on one place.

**Drink it, Drink the tea, you work hard. it will relieve you fatigue.**

The scholarly novelist has thus recorded at another place Charat Singh’s compassionate feelings for Bakha:
Charat Singh was feeling kind, though he did not relax the grin which symbolised six thousands years of racial and class superiority to express his goodwill, however, he said, come this afternoon, Bakha, I shall give you a hockey stick. He knew the boy played that game very well. 17

This attitude of Charat Singh shows clearly feelings of kindness towards the downtrodden of which Bhaka is a member.

In his novel *The Road* (1964) Mulk Raj Anand has depicted a character named Lamberdar Dhooli Singh, a true sympathiser of the Chamars and Bhangies. When Sajnu and his son Lachman set fire on Bhikhu's hut, Dhooli Singh was ready to give him help. Lamberdar Dhooli Singh says to Bhikhu,

*Come, come all my sons, to my field. We will all live there. And work.... Come and fetch what we have in my home. And we will sleep on straw for the night.....And, tomorrow, I will go to Gurgaon and get enough money from the Sarkar for building new huts...* 18

This incident shows that in calamity there remains no difference between low and high castes. Such tragedies create a sentiment of brotherhood among different castes.
In *Coolie* (1936), we see a picture where Munoo is shown as an orphan. But he finds a mother and father in Prabha Dayal and Parbati. Munoo feels homely at their place and the author satirically remarks:

**It was the most sumptuous meal he had eaten since the feast on the death anniversary of his mother and father, which his aunt had given three months before he left the hills.**

Here the barriers of caste and communities break down to pieces because the upper caste rich people prepare to adopt Munoo as their real son, keeping aside his lower community. It is a fine example of showing compassion towards an orphan by the upper caste moneyed people.

In *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937), it is De-La-Havre who shows utmost sympathy towards the wretched condition of the labourers working on the tea fields. When the tea garden owners shower repression on them, he helps the labourers by showing sympathy and treating them well. He is so sympathetic towards them that all his activities virtually render him to act as a mouthpiece of the novelist, Mulk Raj Anand.

Dr. De-La-Havre is a British physician. He has been shown as an idealistic and a sympathetic doctor. In the tea garden, the labourers work very hard and often fall victim of diseases. Dr. De-La-Havre shows sympathy and treats them well. In this novel humanitarian compassion distorts action and character more disastrously. The working place is a tea garden in which Gangu, a poor Punjabi peasant is
lured by fabulous promises, but he is compelled to work in more pitiable conditions, suffer, starvation and is finally shown dead by a British officer who tries to rape his daughter. Here the writer distorts action and character of tea garden masters. This is the another example of humanitarian compassion presented in the form of its distortion.

Hazoor, you are my mai-bap! Talk a few words to the manager Sahib about the Sardar and save us from the anger of Raja Sahib.20

In Village (1939), Mr. Anand made out a story wherein Mr. Hercules, the Deputy commissioner visited the village of Nandpur and where he was pleased to meet Lal Singh. The commissioner was so impressed with Lal Singh that he appointed him the leader of the local troops of the boys. In this novel Anand has depicted the character of Mr. Hercules, the Deputy commissioner and also of Lal Singh. Mr. Hercules has sympathy towards the village people and wishes to improve their lives. With this desire in his heart, he encourages Lal Singh to become the leader of the village young boys:

He (Mr. Harcules) has an intense desire to save his village somehow for he knows that he can attain freedom only through the freedom of the whole peasant brotherhood.21

In the second volume of the Trilogy, Across The Black Water (1940), Mulk Raj Anand has depicted the character of Lal Singh as a freedom fighter in the first world war. Lal singh, leaving his mission to
educate and prepare the young men of his village, offers himself to join
the army with a deep desire of performing his patriotic duty towards his
country.

Similarly in the last novel of the Trilogy, *The Sword and The
Sickle* (1942), Anand has portrayed the character of Lalu in a confused
manner. Lalu gives up his allegiance to the Indian army. After release
from the German Jail, he joins the revolutionary party headed by
communists. With a new understanding that the British army due to its
capitalistic nature would not give any relief to the village farmers, Lalu
joins the revolutionary party. He offers his help to the peasants to
improve their lot and shake off their slavery. He organizes
demonstrations and starts revolutionary movements. In this novel Mulk
Raj Anand has mixed up tactics of both Gandhism and Communism.
Lal Singh is confused in tactics and strategies and proves unsuccessful
in providing relief to the farmers. Thus the confusion prevails in the
mind of Lal Singh. He feels disappointment and fails in his quest.

In his next novel, *Seven Summers* (1951), Mulk Raj Anand
gives a vivid description of the feelings of different characters in
relation to different places. There are echoes of events at different
places wherein the writer indicates new vital sensations. The tragic
experiences are interspersed by comic ones to intensify awareness.
There is a vivid description of the members of a family where Ganesh,
Prathavi, and others express their feelings over the actions and doings
of the members attached to their family. The action shifts from one spot
to another indicating vital sensations. Some incidents of beatings and
death and ill treatments create shock and sensations in different
characters. As a matter of fact, the novel *Seven Summers* is shorter in
size but it presents a lively document of the revelation of a mind and its milieu.

*Morning Face* (1968) covers the period of the hero's school days and adolescence and the story of the growth of Krishan Chander's mind, especially his sharpened political awareness is evocatively told. In the earlier novel, we see Krishan Chander's exploitation. Anand refers also to Krishan Chander's beating by the school master Buddh Singh to pay the fees for private tuition.

In *Confession of A Lover* (1976), Anand has shown the excommunication of the hero, Krishan Chander, and his aunt Devaki, when they mix up with the Mohammedans who are also considered to be semi-untouchables:

The Panchayat has ex-communicated you both because of your mixing up with Muhammadan. They had a meeting this morning and it was proved that you had stayed in the night in a musalman's house hold and had eaten there. I have asked them to call a meeting of the whole brotherhood, but they threatened to outcaste me also.²²

This citation shows how deep bitterness exists among different communities and even in difficulties, they are not in a position to brush out the caste feelings from their hearts. This incident also shows that in calamity they are all one but when the calamity passes out, the castes' difference is revived again.
In *The Bubble* (1984), fourth in the series of his autobiographical novels, Anand presents the young man, Krishan Chandar Azad, pursuing a doctorate under the guidance of Prof. Dawes Hicks. In this novel we find that Krishan wants to transcend the blindness around him and see what has been buried inside him under the debris of the broken spirit.

Another attempt to achieve a personal catharsis was *The Private Life of An Indian Prince* (1953), in which the hero has a nervous breakdown. This controversial novel is a pathological study of a neurotic Maharaja. He conceives the task of the novelist as that of an all comprehending ‘God’ who understands every part of his creation, through pity, compassion or sympathy, which is the only kind of catharsis possible in art.

In *Lament on The Death of A Master of Arts* (1939), Nur is a severe critic of the traditional religion, which is reduced to rituals. Nur wonders how his father who says his prayers religiously ill-treats him. Though he does not believe in prayers, as he is afraid of his father he runs to the Mosque to Wasu, who himself joins the congregation and follows it in the various postures: Sit, Stand, Kneel, Rub his forehead on the ground and murmer the verses in Arabic which the Mullah had taught him by rote. The Mullah teaches Nur tenets of his religion not to make his belief in God but to get new clothes from the Chaudhari. Nur feels that traditional religion is absurd. He did not learn Arabic well enough to understand *Koran* though he could repeat all the Suras.

Mulk Raj Anand, in his novel *The Big Heart* (1945) has shown the basic conflict between the forces of tradition and modernity. In the
beginning Ananta resumes his very hereditary trade, but in the end he begins to support the use of machine. Though Ananta suffers from the use of machines but ultimataly he begins to believe on their usefulness. Being pro and anti-machinery, he is unable to decide which way his farmers and people should proceed. In conflict between Gandhiji's rejection of machine and need of machanization in the present set up, Ananta is entirely confused and finds himself in an indecisive state. Consequently, during a conflict between the workers racking machines and the reformers, Ananta asserts himself and during the effort of saving the breaking machine, the angry crowd of workers kills him. Thus Ananta, by his dedication and sacrifice for the good of the Indian peasants provides a serious jerk to the understanding of the society Machine is good, useful and powerful in itself but its introduction also breeds unemployment and joblessness.

Anand returned to his peasant in *The Old Woman and The Cow* (1960). The Cow is Gauri, a simple peasant girl forsaken by her husband. She is actually sold to a rich merchant by her mother, whose logic is reminiscent of that of Hardy's peasants. Gauri escapes, becomes self-reliant and is transformed into a veritable tigress. This is a neat reversal of the age-old Sita myth in the modern context. In this novel we see the compassionate feeling for Gauri by Dr. Mahindra. Gauri, the simple unlettered girl learns to be competent nurse and midwife under guidance of kindly doctor who shelters her. After escaping from the grips of Seth Jai Ram, Gauri starts her new life as a nurse in colonel Mahindra's hospital. It is doctor Mahindra who teaches her the lesson of modernity, broadmindedness and independence. Through her contact with doctor Mahindra, she gathers courage and boldness to face
problems. It is a spirit of Gauri’s character that sometimes she appears more docile like a cow, but another time she becomes a bold and self-reliant young woman. It is Dr. Mahindra who shows utmost sympathy towards her suffering. As a social scientist and revolutionary apostle, he opens her eyes so that she could see her life in a new light.

Anand’s next novel *The Death of A Hero* (1964) shows how he has never been able to sustain his art at a consistently high level. *The Death of A Hero* has an untouchable theme and is a short novel on a Kashmir freedom fighter.

This survey of Anand’s novels reveal that the strength of Anand’s fiction lies in its vast range, its wealth of living characters, its ruthless realism, its deeply felt indignation at social wrongs, and its strong humanitarian compassion. Dwelling upon India’s basic problems relating to the change in the social order of society, Anand deals with various ills affecting our society such as poverty, wretchedness, and caste distinctions. His novels, half a dozen short stories, some pieces of criticism and autobiographies are all designed to change the whole system of society.

The condition of our society was very miserable when Anand started his career as a writer. Society was divided into two camps, the rich and the poor. In his writings, he has laid stress to forget those distinctions among different castes and creeds and has an appeal to forget those distinctions that go to divide the society in different groups. In his writings, Anand has introduced heroes that come from low ranks of society such as coolies, peasants and untouchable communities. By
introducing such heroes, he has expressed his confidence that such heroes of his fiction will rise as,

**The vanguard of the democracy of the future.**

As a champion of the common man, he points out the poor condition of the coolies, labourers and the peasants. In spite of hard manual work, they do not get proper living wages and there is no health or social insurance for them. It is a curse of society that their children cannot get proper education. The writer is of firm opinion that the coolies' sons might be more intelligent than their masters' son. Through the description of the condition of coolies, Anand wants to show the real condition of society. About his faith of common men, Anand says,

**It is true that my humanism seems to be biased in favour of the poor and the oppressed.**

Anand is a writer in the tradition of Indian Renaissance. He belongs to the tradition of other Indian writers like Tagore(1861-1941), Iqbal (1877-1938), Bankim Chandra (1838-1894), Sarat Chandra (1876-1938), and Prem Chandra (1880-1936) he seems to embody the main characteristics of the Renaissance Age. His domestic background of Punjab kindled his keen interest in folk literature and introduced him to various social problems of the state. His social interest makes him greatly aware of the heritage of India, especially in art and literature and his understanding of the major religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. His great enthusiasm in the national struggle led by Gandhi ji, his wide experience of Europe during the period of study, his wide knowledge of research work on Locke (1632-1704), Burkley
(1685-1753), and Russell (1872-1970), and lastly his encounter with Marxist literature, all these provided him a new approach to society and understanding of various problems of the country.

Anand is essentially a writer of humanism, which is the main characteristic of his fiction. As a representative of the Renaissance period Anand upholds humanism as a philosophy of his life, but his humanism is characterised by the basic difference of East and West, because the conditions are different from each other. Referring to his Indian and Western Influences, Anand says:

I struggled to weigh up the double burden on my shoulders, the Alps of European tradition and the Himalayas of my Indian past, all my sense aching to realize the significance of the history of my country, all my heart and brain devoted to search out of these causes which had led to its present degeneracy.\textsuperscript{25}

Facing various problems of Indian society, Anand has a great burden of East and West. He makes inquiries into meanings and values of people and their role in society. He finds himself caught by the pulls of the two traditions. Anand has a scientific and intellectual understanding of Indian problems and situations of the period when he was writing the novel. During this period he read Karl Marx's \textit{Letters on India} (1942), which produced a tremendous influence on Indian labourers, their poverty and inequality in Indian society. Karl Marx's writings have brought about a revolutionary change in his life.
Anand has also a deep and intimate knowledge of Indian events. Living in London, he had a close relation with Indian shape and situation. During his visit to India in 1929, he stayed at Gandhisji's Sabarmati Ashram in Gujrát. He discussed with Gandhiji the basic issues of untouchability, poverty and wretched condition of the underdog in India. After that he had widely toured the whole country and saw the wretched situation himself. It was a time when socio-political life of India was changing rapidly. However, social reforms brought about a rapid change in different parts of the country. He himself witnessed that the people are divided into different castes such as- Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras; the high castes and low castes. The highcaste people have become more powerful in society. The lower castes have been treated badly by them. It is a curse that the low castes are not allowed to enter the temple. For instance, Bhikhu in The Road (1961) cannot get a glimpse of God in the temple because he is a chamar by caste. About Anand's views of caste, Margaret Berry says,

Anand's novels present caste as only one element in the complex texture of social and economic particularism and inequality in Indian society.\(^{26}\)

Anand attacks the temple priests because they are not careful about their duties. They are hypocritical, lascivious and have various flaws in their characters. But it is a paradox of society that they go to honoured places. They are not only irresponsible about their duties but have also lascivious desires. For instance, Pandit Kali Nath, a temple Priest in Untouchable (1935) attempts the seduction of Bakha's sister
Sohini. Pandit Bhola Nath attacks the child Gauri in *The Old Woman and The Cow* (1960) Pandit Suraj Mani in *The Road* (1961) misguides landlord Thakur Singh against poor Bhiku. As Margrett Berry says,

**Brahmanism is a major target of Anand's attack on the Indian social order.**

Therefore with a few exceptions in all the novels, Anand attacks Lallas, Banias and shopkeepers and those who cheat and rob the poor. In regard to religion, his position is different. He declares that he does not believe in institutionalized religion and that God has been dead a long time. He also attacks the Hindu social order and its deep-rooted faith of Karma and Dharma. Women's marriage and the family are also the major social problems of the 20th century. The condition of the women was very bad. They have no liberty in society. Anand draws attention to their miserable condition in his novels. Women as workers in the factory and in the fields are badly treated by their masters. Even the condition of low caste girls is very miserable. They have been harassed by upper caste men. For instance, Sohini, Bakha's sister has been molested by temple priest Kalinath and Leila in *Two Leaves and A Bud.* (1937). In *The Big Heart* (1945) Ananta reports that,

**In Bombay you could buy a girl and run a brothel for what you and I eat here for a mid day meal.**

Like Anand there are writers who draw attention to social problems. For instance, Premchand, a great Hindi novelist gives a
solution to remove the miserable condition of untouchables. In *Vividh Prasang* he says:

**The method for uplifting the depressed classes was the joint electorate.**

He believes that when untouchables would be economically strong, they would come nearer the upper caste. In his novel *Karmbhoomi* (1932), he presents the problems of chamars and their miseries. In short story *Thakur Ka Kuwan* (1932), he narrates how the untouchables were tortured and they could not draw water from the well of upper castes. In *Mandir* he describes the cruel behaviour of uppercastes as well as the poor condition of untouchables. The condition was so bad that Untouchables could not get a glimpse of God in the temple. Like Premchand, Anand also gives revolutionary ideas to improve the condition of untouchables, poor peasants and the underdog of society.

Anand fell under the spell of Gandhi ji. It was Gandhiji who encouraged him to write something for suffering untouchables and common men of India. Anand had understood the feelings of untouchables by understanding them and their sufferings.

The main aim of Anand’s attacks on political as well as social and economic institutions are to expose the real condition of the poor. Through this description he wants to build a new order where poor and common men live without any harassment. In respect of his political attitude, he became more impressed by Karl Marx's *Letter on India* (1942) which revealed various issues, which were prevailing, in the contemporary society. About the effect of Marx's letters, Anand says,
A whole new world was opened to me and how he could see not only the history of India but the whole history of human society in some sort of interconnection.30

Besides Karl Marx (1818-1883), Anand was influenced by other political leaders like Tolstoy (1828-1910), Ruskin (1819-1900), Morris (1834-1896) and Gandhiji (1869-1948). During his stay in England he had met with several political leaders. Through the influence of Marx's letters, he joined international writers conference against fascism in Paris. He was closely associated with Marxian Theory. But in an interview he expressed his different opinion,

I am not a communist. I am a friend of all. I have my own independent opinion and it is no fault of mine if the present rulers of India think that anyone who does not belong to their group is their enemy. I have differences with the communists and if I ever had an intention of taking in active part in the politics, I could have joined any political organization. I do not want to do that. I will write novels and do my duty.31

Perhaps Anand was never an official member of the communist party. But he followed the human Marxist literary tradition. In Apology For Heroism, he defined himself as primarily a humanist,

I believe first and foremost in human being in man the whole man.32
Through the scientific and rational method for the study of society, Anand understood the policy of the Britishers. By the foundation of British industries in India, our handicraft was affected and the whole Indian economy. So the agony of India, especially of rural India was limitless. The growth of socialism in India is almost absolutely a phenomenon of the Twentieth century. There were many social problems in our society. For solving those problems many socialist thinkers were busy. The foundation of the Congress Socialist Party in May 1934 was an important forward step for the development of socialism in India. Jaya Prakash Narayan a benevolent leader of Bihar emerged to solve social problems of society. The socialists played a heroic role in the 1942- Movement. The nation was gradually heading towards Independence. The main social problem was feudalism. The landlord ill-treated the poor peasants. The result was that the peasants became poorer. So Anand was very anxious about removing feudalism from the society. He wanted to set up socialism in the country. His faith in socialism assumes,

The deepest socialism is the only base for perfecting the deepest human personality that two should be mutually inclusive and that is only by combing the two that a richer and more stable civilization will arise. Socialism alone can restore dignity and real freedom to every man because it insures him economic freedom, real democracy.
The condition of labourers was pitiable in India. In spite of the manual work, they did not get proper wages. It is true that Anand was attracted to Gandhi’s philosophy of politics and cultural heritage of India. Gandhi ji gave a new approach to society and challenged the foundation of modern civilization. He believed that Ahimsa and Satyagraha must be the best notion in socialism, because the first condition of non-violence is justice all around in every walk of life. He condemned the western-theory of socialism as it was full of violence. Therefore he gave a new approach to socialism, which was based on Non-violence and Satyagrah. For the sake of the nation, he fought for the evils of society such as- racialism, imperialism, communalism and untouchability. As a reformer of Indian society he fought for those problems of society, which came in the way of the progress of India. Previously he was engaged in abolishing the unjust economic and political exploitation of India. Later he condemned British imperialism because it brought about a great change in political, economic and cultural condition of India. Gandhiji accepted the concept of economic equality. He believed that all persons should be supplied with the necessary things as well as the natural needs. His concept of economic equality was based on balanced diet, a decent house to live in and medical relief and same facilities for the education of every family.

A rapid growth of industrialization produced a bad effect on Indian politics. The industrialists did not pay any regard to the labourers. Gandhiji believes that the equality of wages must be same for the lawyer, the doctor, the teacher and scavenger. Like him Anand also believes the equality of wages and equality of basic things for all sections of society. He criticizes the capitalism which is the main
problem of Indian economy. In his first novel, *Untouchable* (1935) Sarshar, the socialist calls for a casteless and classless society. In most of his novels we find all heroes appear to fight against capitalism and landlordism. *The Sword and The Sickle* (1942) presents the socialist revolution in rural India as well as the fight between tenants and landlords. Gangu, the protagonist of the novel, reveals the truth that landlord of the village is responsible for his poor condition. There are many coolies in the plantation fields who are tortured by landlords. His novel, *Coolie* (1936), deals with various problems of labourers and industrialization. The novel shows the detailed account of the Tata Steel Company at Jumshedpur, the poor condition of labourers in the pickle factory in Daulatpur and the same situation in Cotton Mill in Bombay. In Machpherson tea plantation, the condition of coolies is very poor. The wages are very low so that they cannot survive. Anand exposes the condition of low wages,

The low wages were so low that they amounted to no more than three pice a day. So thousands of coolies left the plantations. They were lying down on the roadside in scores. But they were determined not to return to the gardens. They had seen enough of life at three pice a day. 34

A direct and detailed presentation of the socialist programme first appears in *The Coolie* when labourers of the White Cotton Mill in Bombay raise a revolutionary cry against the exploitation. For the sake of labourer’s problem, Sauda, a worker speaks for revolution,
We are human beings and not soulless machines.' We want the right to work without having to pay bribes.' We want clean house to live in.' We want schools for our children and creches for our babies.' We want to be skilled workers.' We want to be saved from the clutches of the moneylenders. We want good wages and no more subsistence allowance if we must go on short work.' We want shorter hours.'

Anand's Marxist aesthetic required him to present the new patter of society where the poor and rich could live equally. The nationalist movement provided characters more or less involved in the plot of the novels such as- J.L. Nehru (1889-1964), Patel (1875-1950), Gandhiji (1869-1948), Jinnah (1876-1948), Joshi (1939-1993) and Bhave (1895-1982). During that time Acharya Vinobha Bhave emerged a great champion of landless peasants. He introduced a new movement which is known as **Bhoodan Andolan**. This movement brought about tremendous change in society. The battle of Flander-the worldwide famine of the thirties, famine in Punjab and Oudh, communal riots at the time of partition, government action on behalf of the untouchables provided material of which Anand's plots are made. All the characters of the novels appear to carry the burden of Anand's attack. They are emerging to fight for the equality of various problems of society.

About casteism, Anand has nothing but contempt. He has respect
for all kinds of castes and crafts such as - silversmithy, sweeping, playing and confectionary. He rejects all kinds of communal or religious orthodoxies. According to him, people must not be recognized by religions and castes. His rejection of religion seems when he eats halva at the shop of Nur, a Muslim confectioner. He ironically preaches to Ganesh.

There you will behave like father-keep one compartment in your heart for eating good Mughalai food, another for eating X-mas cake with Mr. Jones, the band Master and other two ventricles for the pure Hindu faith.\textsuperscript{36}

Anand raised many social, political and economical problems of society. Perhaps he has also touched upon the problems of national integration at many levels. In Anand's various novels, we find the heroes without caste or religious feeling. In \textit{The Old Woman and The Cow} (1960), Panchi takes a shelter in the house of Muhummadan porter whom he calls a Rafiq Chacha. Maqbool Sherbani, protagonist in the \textit{Death of A Hero} (1964), stands like a rock against all communal disharmony and makes a sacrifice for his vision of a secular India.

Gandhi ji gave a new approach to Indian politics. Ahimsa-Satyagrah are the fundamental weapons of his ideology of politics. He believed that India would get freedom by non-violence. Capitalism and colonialism were the basic problems of pre-Independence India. Anand's pre- 1947 novels naturally attack the English Sarkar at every turn and major problems such as- corrupt social institutions, exploiter of Indian labour and wealth and inequality of the administration. The \textit{Two
Leaves and A Bud (1937) and The Sword and The Sickle (1942) deal with those problems which prevailed in Indian society. For instance De-La- Havre, a wise British officer in the plantation, always criticizes the role of Britishers. Count Rampal Singh in The Sword and The Sickle (1942) criticizes the policy of the British government of establishing the landlord system. He believes that the Britishers were responsible for the major problems of Indian-peasantry. Anand designed situations, settings and characters to show the wickedness of the British. When coolies of Machpherson tea-plantation demand increasing wages, Mr. Croft-Cook, the head planter orders to crush their cry. But his cruel order was not enough and he calls the Royal Air Force bombers to crush a peaceful assembly of coolies. Apart from this, Anand presents another English character who pays a lot of attention to the basic problems of Indians. The poet-physician, John De-La-Havre in Two Leaves and A Bud (1937) is always ready to solve coolies' problems. The Deputy commissioner, Hercules Long in The Village (1939), always criticizes the orders of the British Government. Captain Robert Owens in Across The Black Water (1940) is a benevolent English officer who is out to solve the problems of Indian army.

The colour factor which is a sign of political as well as social distinction plays an important role in Anand's novels. Anand's presentation of colour factor is divided into three ranks, the white skins, the brown skins and the black skins. The white man Gora is seen as the power controlling all over the country. The brown skin man, the upper castes are powerful in society. But at the bottom are the black and sometimes the yellow who are the powerless oppressed in society.
The social and political conditions are different from pre-Independence and after Independence. In pre-Independence novels Anand attacks the social and political evils, which prevailed in our society. Now people live without fear of the British officers’ cruel behaviour. Political evil in Anand's novels is not limited to the British. India's dominant political power the Congress Party is attacked for vices. For sufferings of peasants and attitudes towards industry of peasants and modernization, Anand's attacks on the Congress party continued unabated. Victor in the *Private Life of An Indian Prince* (1953) observes.

Congress and Praja Mandal crowd as desiring not relief for the poor, but the opening of the backward areas to invest by the big monopolists.\(^{37}\)

Thus Anand's attacks on political as well as social and economic institutions bring out the real picture of our society. He wants to build a world of freedom and equality where people can develop their potential and give their best to society.

Mulk Raj Anand may rightly be considered as one of the outstanding figures among the Indo- Anglian novelists whose work represent the achievement of an age. He has written to date fifteen novels, seven collections of short stories and at least twenty four other books on art, culture, folklore and other matters. He was born in Peshawar, now in Pakistan. Even as a young boy Anand must have been a peculiarly gifted child in as much as his curiosity and observation showed both sensitivity and refinement.
Since 1935 Anand had published his novels. He represented India in the International Writers’ Conference. He continued to edit ‘Marg’ a journal devoted to art, painting, Architecture, sculpture, dance, drama, music, and to the study of Indian culture. His versatility has indeed the stamp of genius. Mulk Raj Anand stands out as a writer who is no less a man of action.

Anand is not only an art critic and philosopher, but also an active fighter for the modern movement in our country. But he is more than even these. He is a wonderful human being, a loyal friend, a versatile conversationalist. As a good and life long friend and colleague of Anand, I am always pointing to him his faults also: ‘My dear Mulk Raj Anand you wrote too much; you donot give your self enough rest; you are some times composed and electric. He listens to my advice and my criticism with impatience laughs and goes his way. 38

Dr. Mulk Raj Anand is a unique type of optimistic humanist, who is capable to move the most pessimistic man to action. He is very sensitive lover of all that is good and loveable on earth-good books, fine pieces of art, good manners. The manners of man that emerge out of these tributes is a man of great energy and widely-varied interests, a man whose creative endeavour reinforced by a deep sense of social commitment, a man, infact with a mission. Mulk Raj Anand, an Indian
novelist, art critic and editor, expressed the need of some faith. His faith came to be humanism, with India as its place of concentration revolutionary socialism as its political context, and Bhakti- Yoga as its characteristic dynamic and excellence. The association and experiences out of which Anand’s ideas emerged and the nature of theme is the matter of this enquiry.

Anand’s life easily divides into three periods, according to his main place residence: The early years in India, 1905-1925 : The years abroad 1925-1945 and the later years in India, 1945 till now. Mulk Raj Anand was born in a Hindu family of kshatriya, December 12, 1905 in Peshawar, Northwest Frontier province, the third of five sons of Lal Chand, a Silversmith turned sepoy, and Ishwar Kaur, a peasant mother from the Sialkot District, central Punjab.

The first twenty years of Anand’s life seem to have been spent in the Punjab area. His early recollections focus on two cantonments, Mian Mir and Nowshera, on his father’s hometown of Amritshar.

In 1925, according to the chronology, and the advice of Iqbal over the objections of Lal Chand and with the help of his mother, Anand went to London for studies at University College. During and after formal study, Anand underwent a period in search of a faith, reexamining Hinduism, exploring Christianity, studying modern intellectual development.

Mulk Raj Anand was 26 years old when he became fascinated by Marxian ideology. He had been in England for six years, pursuing studies for a Doctorate in Philosophy. In the security of the Marxian ideology, he attempted to lose his own insecurity, his goals were now
determined by the demands of an ideology. He decided to write for the cause. Dr. G. S. Balarama Gupta has made a similar point when he says:

**His acquaintance with western life and philosophy seemed to demand a synthesis of the European and Asiatic traditions. It was his quest for a clear understanding of the cause of the mental and material chaos in India's else where that compelled him to write.**

Mulk Raj Anand was aware that a great many of our people suffered from poverty and squalor around us with a patience that was truly heroic. No one in India had yet written the epic of this suffering adequately, because the realities were too crude for a writer like Tagore (1861-1941), and it was not easy to write an epic in India while all the intricate problems of the individual in the world had yet to be solved.

Anand is a prolific writer and has written a large number of novels and short stories. The problems that generally engage him in his novels are the exploitation of the poor, social discrimination based on caste and sex, the impact of industrialization, colonialism, race relation etc. Anand probes the lines of the people of the lower castes, peasants, lumpens and other eccentrics thrown up during the transition from the ancient orthodox Indian society to the self-conscious modernist secular democracy, A humanist by conviction, he strove to project the problems, conflicts and aspirations of the “Underdog” in Indian society in a compassionate manner. He is moreover a searcher, a seeker with an open mind and a large heart. According to Mulk Raj Anand, “No rounded answers are possible. Only hunches, insights and inspirations and Karuna that may come from understanding.”

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Anand conceives the task of the novelist as that of an all-comprehending “God” who understands every part of his creation, through pity, compassion or sympathy, which is the only kind of catharsis possible in art. His humanism is not vitiated by a dogmatic or doctrinaire approach rather, as Shyamla A Narayan says, “His humanism embraces all aspects of life, from contemporary shims to ancient Indian art and philosophy.”

Anand has an obvious propagandist streak in his works and this violates the canons of good art. He perhaps unconsciously allows the humanist in him to get the better of the artist in these works.

In a recent book entitled, *The Theme of Exploitation in The Novels of Mulk Raj Anand (1990)*, Ambuj Kumar Sharma has made a perceptive investigation into length, breadth and depth of the theme of exploitation. He has pointed out the social politico-economic exploitation as the two major categories with its myriad ramifications in the realms of religion, sex, colonialism, feudalism and industrial capitalism. Anand operates from the broad platform of humanism and concerns himself with the lives, issues and problems of the work-a-day world of the poor and downtrodden. In other words his commitment to the dehumanizing situation of the teeming millions of our country’s poor is absolutely unmistakable as one reads his novels. Mulk Raj Anand was the first Indian novelist to present the realities of modern India, He did not just denounce Kiplingesque attitudes and caste-honour. He showed their total inadequacy to deal with the massive social plight of the subcontinent. He did not deny the importance of fatalism, of the mystical and the spiritual, or the significance of legend.
and myth in contemporary India; he insisted that these characteristics be placed in proportion to the injustices of caste, the inhumanity of poverty, and the need for egalitarianism. Saros Cowasjee quotes from a private letter he received from Anand:

My knowledge of Indian life at various levels had always convinced me that I should do *comedie humaine*. In this the poor, the lonely and the untouchable were only one kind of outcaste. The middle sections and the Nababs and Rajas were also to be included as a species of untouchables. Unfortunately, there has not been time to show the poor rich of our country, who deserve pity more than contempt. ⁴²

Anand has tried in his fiction to look into his experience to analyse and understand it — and his sympathy for the underdog is not a form of sentimental pre-occupation but a form of intellectual sympathy, a kinship of spirit, a paean in the praise of man. Anand believes that,

as the novelist tries not to sit in judgement so much as to understand motivation deep down in the sub-conscious mind and his characters, he is nearer understanding of the reason for the hardness of heart and the evil nature of even these who become the instruments of oppression. ⁴³

Anand made up his mind to write novels and to bring out the reality of the British rulers to the notice of the world. In his novels he
revealed the underdogs and the workers who were the victims of the capitalism.

Mulk Raj Anand is the first Indo-English novelist to have assigned heroic role to the social marginals or non-entities like untouchables and coolies. Such characters, unattractive, lifted as they are from the lowest range of society, tend to acquire metaphoric implications of an open and naked, rather beastly and abject exploitation. This naturally brings into evidence a ponderable as well as perceivable continuity between human miseries acquring from various institutions of exploitation and the novelist's method of narration or narrative method. The narrative method presses into uses the poetic and the psychological potencies of language to secure transformation of these characters into metaphor, or into freestanding forms of concrete universals. Anand's language of compassionate objectivity achieves all these and much more.

This chapter, therefore, proposes to evaluate three prominent, though characteristic of the elements of compasion, traits and Anand's fictional structures. The first Anand's manipulation of narrative structure to secure an intended psychological response from readers. Anand prepares psychological grounds for readers’ emotional participation, the second, his use of imagery as a creative principle of organising multi references into a relation between verbal and structural organization i.e. between the verbal mode and plot arrangement, forms of characterization and the sociological significance of the themes.

Mulk Raj Anand is highly regarded as a novelist of the underdog in the Indian English tradition. He is not merely a writer but a creative
artist whose heart always aches at every act of cruelty and exploitation
and hence he seems to have committed all his novels for the poor and
exploited class. For him, the life and pleasure of the man value more
than other aspects. He has great love for man. Anand's works evince a
genuine compassion for the underprivileged. Like most humanists, he
starts with a declaration of his immense faith in the protagorean
dictum, "Man is the measure of all things and man is the root of
mankind." 44

Anand's humanism recognizes the fact that pain and cruelty are
two other serious maladies of the world. These are unavoidable. But
with the practice of love and compassion for the weak and low, it is not
impossible to reduce and even remove miseries and unhappiness. In his
notion, the conquest of pain should be the supreme goal of all
individuals and all nations. Anand detests such discriminatory policies
as Fascism, Feudalism and Imperialism because they come in the way of
progress. He believes in socialism, democracy and peaceful. Co-
existence where all the people get freedom without any encroachment
upon each other's freedom.

Thus, Anand's vision of life makes him use his art for the service
of humanity. Caste and other barriers have no significance for him and
he regards humanity and mankind above all. The aim of his life is to
focus attention on the plight of the underdogs and hence he tries to
arouse sympathy and kindness for them. Since this inhuman behaviour
of man to man is not the problem of any one country he has
universalized the human cruelties. In fact, Anand, very early in his life
had decided, "to avoid the highways of romance and explore the bylanes of the outcastes and peasants, the sepoys and working people." Being a proletariat it was his mission, right from the childhood, to expose man's in humanity to man. Undoubtedly he is a very compassionate creative artist whose heart always bled for the suffering humanity.

The present study in entitled “The Element of Compassion in the Novels of Mulk Raj Anand” in the following five chapters makes a thorough probe of his concerns for the suffering humanity. In the light of what has already been discussed in the preceding pages, an attempt will be made to analyse his novels with a view to exposing his compassionate feelings for the downtrodden, the exploited and the underdogs. Since Anand has been a prolific writer who constantly tried to universalize themes of interest, to draw parallels and to establish contrasts for ironic exposure of pretentious and moral degradations, an attempt will also be made to evaluate them on the bases of clues provided in his prefaces forewords and prologues and also letters written to his friends, agents and publishers. Critical opinions already available will also be thoroughly examined and used to substantiate insights and findings.

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