CHAPTER-3

Mulk Raj Anand’s three novels ‘The Village (1939), ‘Across The Black Water’ (1940) and The Sword And The Sickle (1942) form a trilogy which is popularly known after the name of its protagonist Lalu Trilogy. The Trilogy is Anand’s most ambitious and largest work.

To regain close contact, he goes back to the days of his own youth, to the tales of his mother and father, and starts off in the years before 1914, Lalu is a sensitive lad who early comes in to collision with the codes and customs of the village.¹

These self-contained novels are held together in more than one way. First of all and most obviously, they are bound together by Lal Singh whose exploit and career are traced in them. Secondly the three novels together depict the saga of resurgent India, though Lal Singh who is, as Alastair Niven says, “an Indian Every man.”² He observes:

The three books should be considered as a single unity, for in them lies Anand’s most explicit explanation of his political philosophy. His earliest novels, Untouchable and Coolie, show an accumulated outrage at the state of India and a profound horror at the apparent petrification of the feudal system. Lalu is born into a state of subservience not dissimilar to that of Bakha or Munoo, but what they passively accept he forcefully rejects.³
In the *Trilogy* Anand traces the career of Lal Singh over a period of some years, shortly before the First World War to the disturbed post-war years in India- The Gandhian age. Thus boyhood, youth and early manhood are the themes of the *Trilogy*:

The thematic significance and unity of the *Trilogy* lies mainly in the protagonist's revolt against the conventional social values—a revolt which towards the end takes a pro-communist turn. Furthermore *The Trilogy* has an epic conception underlying its composite structure.⁴

*The Village* (1939) is the first novel of the *Trilogy*. Several themes of the autobiographical novels are expressed in it. The novel deals with Lalu's boyhood in a Punjabi village. It describes the fun and pranks of Lal Singh and his friends, Gughi and Churangi. He is different from his fellow villagers in his faith in the possibility of improvement, in his distress at the surrounding filth, in his hatred of customs that divide man from man.

*The Village* is set in Nandpur, a typical Punjabi village, and explores the problems of modern India with a pointed focus on rural social set up with its peasantry, caste-system, landlordism and tradition bound ethos in a manner that the novel covers the entire gamut of social protest. According to Dr. Iyenger –

The atmosphere of the village, Nandpur, is vividly evoked —and Nandpur, in its main outlines, is like any other village in India. The
typical ingredients of village life—landlord and Sarkar, Sarkar and mumbo-jumbo, convention and superstitions, mass conformity and mass hysteria, the cupidity and cruelty of some and the apathy and helplessness of the many—inevitably conspire to daunt all but crush the free and ardent spirit of Lalu Singh. At every turn he is seized with discomfiture, and the agony and the anger seem to be in vain. His heart beats in response to the primordial life of the village, but his mind incessantly rebels and yearns for the dim, distant, alluring horizons. Visiting a neighbouring town to see a fair in progress, Lalu has a variety of experience, the climatic being a visit to the king George V.Haircutting and shaving saloon where he gets his kaish shorn away in a rebellious impulse. This causes a commotion at home, and his father feels that the family has been disgraced by this impious act. The people of the village go one better even, and wish to parade him with his blackened face on a donkey’s back; but Lalu fights them all, and manages to wriggle out of the situation with but a few bruises on his body....Lalu loves his village, but these explosions of prejudice and hatred make him want to leave his village for good. In despair as such as in relief, he enlists as a sepoy, and soon finds kinship with other
sepoys. In the village, however, there are sudden developments: Lalu's brother, Sharm Singh, murders the landlord's son in jealousy and revenge, and is with his afflicted parents for a while, but he has presently to join his regiment and make the trip across the black Water to fight along side of British soldiers against the armies of Kaiser Wilhelm II. Shortly before sailing from Karachi, Lalu hears that his father has passed away, but his new found friends help him to bear the shock.5

The novel deals with the boyhood of Lal Singh. The protagonist of The Village, who is the youngest of the six sons of Nihal Singh, a seventy-year-old villager, farmer of his own land living happily in his own house in a village of Panjab. He is a lad of Progressive views and this brings him into trouble.

The novel opens with Nihal Singh getting down from a train at Nandpur Railway station. While returning to the village, Nihal Singh meets Lal Singh. The old man had been to the district town of Manavadar to sell his cotton and maize but the harvest failed to fetch even enough to pay the rent due on his land. He is a victim of landlordism. He had inherited twenty-five acres of land but he has lost ten acres to Teja Singh, the landlord of the village. After the death of the landlord, his son, Harbansh Singh, has taken away another five acres by producing a false deed supposed to be signed by Lalu's father, for which he has filed a suit against the landlord. He is also fighting against the undue favour shown to the landlord by the British Government.
Lal Singh or Lalu listens to his father’s tale of woe, and is filled with compassion and resentment. His object of inspiration is his father with his courage, fearlessness and patience. He also loves his mother, Gujar Kaur. His two elder brothers Sharm Singh and Dayal Singh are also a source of strength to him. He loves them all but is completely unlike them. He is little educated and is in conflict with the traditional social order. He does not believe in conservatism and religious fundamentalism.

Once when he goes to a fair, he gets his hair cut as an open symbol of war against religion and tradition. This act of rebellion on the part of Lalu causes much furore in the entire village community including his own family. He is taken to task for his transgression against religious orders. He is publicly humiliated and paraded on a donkey through the streets of his village with his face blackened. Beaten and bruised, he is provoked into rebellion, and runs away from the village to join the British Indian Army in a salary of eleven rupees per month. He is disgraced and unable to bear this trouble of dignity.

But before he joins the army, Lalu is arrested on account of a false charge of stealing three bundles of fodder from the fields of Harbansh Singh, the landlord of the village. This is a cooked up case to implicate him in theft because he is in love with Maya, the daughter of landlord and was seen playing with her. At Ferozpur he is, however, freed from the charge of theft by Mr. Hercules Long, the deputy commissioner of Manabad. Captain Owen allows him to continue in the army as a soldier.

After five months of training, Lal Singh visits his village and finds things changed. His father is seriously ill. He knows that his
brother Sharm Singh has been hanged for murdering the landlord’s son. He further learns that his family is in debt. He, however, has to leave for his barracks. The novel ends with his speedy departure to France to fight the Germans as the first world war has broken out. At Karachi, Lalu receives the sad news of his father’s death. The event symbolises the death of old order. Thus, Lal Singh exiles himself from the conservative and narrow world of Nandpur as he comes into conflict with its codes and customs, modes and manners. He feels a new kind of experience while undergoing training at Ferozpur. Lal Singh leaves his village to carve out a new destiny for himself.

**The Village** explores the growth of rebellious attitude to tradition bound ethos in Lal Singh and his consequent break with past. It is symbolically suggestive that Lal Singh receives at Karachi the news of his father’s death; It signals the death of the old world to which Lalu has turned his back. According to Dr. G.S. Balarama Gupta:

> At once the tragedy as well as the hope of India, the novel presents a clear picture of a typical Indian village in transition. The village described here is still in the grips of poverty and hunger, ignorance and superstition. But there is also a hint at Anand’s faith in the eventful awakening and emancipation of peasantry, easily discernible in the dashing, rebellious character of the hero who fights against all hypocrisy and tries to emerge in to a richer and more honest word.⁶
To me, the novel does not seem to present a village in transition as Dr. G. S. Balarama Gupta opines. Rather it presents typical Indian sympathetic feelings for village with all traditional aspect in a manner that breeds and protests in Lalu, who rebellious by nature and having had some education in a mission school, reacts sharply to the codes and customs of the village.

Due to the characteristics of the revolt against the traditional and hypocritical society, Lal Singh is live Bakha in Untouchable. Infact, the novelist tells the tale of the historical downfall of Nihal Singh’s family whose at the centre of the state is Lal Singh. He is very much against the orthodox social customs and religious rituals, living in a more respectable group. Having been educated, he has raised his status higher than his predecessors like Munoo, Bakha, Bhikhu, and Gangu. The novel begins with a sharp anger of Lalu, when Nihal Singh tells him about the corruptions which are prevalent in the Corn Mandi at Manavad in Punjab. He becomes very angry to the clerk who has cheated his father. Consoling him Nihal Singh says that he will handle these things with tact. However, Lalu shows his resentment against the corruption saying:

Tact or no tact, I will punch their heads and teach them the lesson of their lives. They all take advantage of you, the swine, because you are an old man.⁷

This is the chief characteristic of his character that he is against all kinds of corruption, orthodoxy and other evils of society. The condition of Nandpur village is very pitiable. The poor peasants like
Nihal Singh are exploited by the landlord Sardar Harbansh Singh, priest Mahant Nandgiri and the cunning moneylender Chaman Lal. Peasant’s fortune is gradually declining through the debts and mortgage of the land by the landlord. For instance, Harnam Singh, Lalu’s uncle describes the situation to Lalu as,

I am ruined. I have had to mortgage the whole of my land to Chaman Lal. But I am not only one almost the whole village is ruined.\(^8\)

About this reference M.K. Naik says,

Lalu finds the rustic a victim of all-round exploitation by numerous agencies—the landlord, the moneylender, the trader, the lawyer, the religious leader, the government official and also the unjust laws and policies of the land-grabbing feudal lords by the British government and the exploitation by them from generation to generation.\(^9\)

Nihal Singh says that the landlord had snatched his five acres of land, but he is hopeful about the return of his land. So he expresses the painful feelings of his heart saying:

I will see that the wrong is righted: I will fight this suit about my five acres as I have fought it for ten years.\(^10\)

Previously he displays his heroic quality that he had fought against firungies for the sake of the panth. Now he curses himself that it
is better to die fighting against firungies rather than live to be deprived of his three acres land by Harbansh Singh. Although he is not disappointed, he rather is hopeful that he will settle the land problem in the lower court. This shows the cruelty of the landlord Harbansh Singh who had snatched his land. Besides Lalu, his mother Gujari is a very sensitive woman. When Nihal Singh and Lalu discuss the cruel act of the landlord Harbansh Singh, she consoles them saying:

It is a terrible world in which only thieves and robbers seem to prosper. Look at Harbansh Singh in his white clothes, and his good-for-nothing son. And that Sahukar, who has had a mansion built. The dirty black, Bikandri had nothing to eat when he came here.¹¹

Her words attack the wrong system of society and dishonesty of the landlord. Again the novelist presents the contrast between traditionalism and modernism. Unlike Lalu, his parents, the landlord, the moneylender are supporters of traditionalism. Through the consciousness of modernity, he wants to destroy all the rituals and customs of the village, which come in the way of progress of the village. Besides his angry temperament, Lalu has enough knowledge to understand the hypocritical behaviour of the landlord, moneylender and Mahant of the village. In this reference Riemonschneider remarks:

His education has made him aware of that foundation of hypocrisy stereotypical behaviour and dishonesty on which the life of the community rests. Not only does he comment
ironically on religious beliefs he is also a shrewd judge of the village-‘priest's dishonesty, Moneylender's glib tongued talk, ‘the stupidity and naivety of the farmers. ¹²

Infact, the peasants of Nandpur village are ignorant. They cannot understand the cruel behaviour of the religious men. However Lalu’s attitude toward religion marks a gradual growth in The Trilogy and is based upon his harsh reality. Margaret Berry thus records Anand’s literary attack on religion.

More direct in the village by close of Across The Black Water the challenge takes the form of ridicule and mockery in The Sword and The Sickle Lalu’s mockery of religion persists and his spirits of the Idea of God. ¹³

In The Village, Lal Singh is a rebel, warm hearted, full of kindness, believer of truth and honesty, endowed with a critical faculty. He is a humanist to core. Lal Singh’s protest against the rituals emanates from his rational approach. His faith in unorthodoxy and rationalism acquired by putting every conventional belief to critical mental scrutiny impels him to disapprove of the so-called sacred symbols of the Sikh community. The Sikh community shows vehement opposition as they learn of his having hair cropped. All the reactionaries, from the Sikh priests to the landlord’s son, get determined to stifling the stance of defiance. Anand can still recall how his hero was put to humiliation after he had his hair cut:
Even the Sikh faith has become ritual. The subjection of my hero to utter humiliation (you know, Lalu is put on a donkey, he is forced to go to the streets of the village, because he had his hair cut) was to me the abnegation of all human sense.  

Hating the rituals and customs of the sikh religion and traditional views of the village, Lalu shows his anger by eating meat from a Muslim cook shop in the town and cutting of his long hair which is not easily permitted by his community. Then he denounces Sikh religion as religion of donkey, a religion of bullocks. So he wails.

The Katch, Kara, Kripa, Kesh and Kanga might will have been necessary when Guru Govind was fighting Aurungzeb. Then it was said he enjoyed his men to wear shorts because he could not get clothes bangles and swords for symbols and long hair because he could not get barbers to shave them and combs to tidy their hair such provisions were dictated by necessity and common sense.  

When Maulvi says that his dying father cannot go to heaven because he is an infidel, then Lalu bursts,

Surely, there is no favoritism shown to men in heaven, if there be a such place, just because men belong to one religion or another.
He ties his hair and says himself that he will have it cut in town and he would not return to the village with his long hair. After returning from the fair he had the hair-cut, but he fears what the reaction of the people of his act would be. When Ramji Das, a barber of the village asks him why he got his hair cut, he utters the truth, full of confidence,

I paid a visit to the king George with hair cutting saloon in the town this morning and left the ponderous weight of my Sikhim behind on the floor.\(^\text{17}\)

The Christians also exploited the poverty of the untouchable to attract them to their fold. In *The Village* Bhupa is lured into Christianity by the missionaries by providing him a job in the hospital:

He had often walked this way as a child, and he recalled how he used to sneak out to go fishing with Bhupa, the sweeper boy, who later on had become a Christian under the influence of father Annandale and had got a job as a dresser in the Sherkot hospital.\(^\text{18}\)

Father Annandale, the bearded missionary Sahib, the Head Master of the Middle School of Sherkot, visits the sweepers and leather workers to look after their comforts.

He was driving away probably from the outcaste's homes where he went to visit the
sweeper and leather workers whom he had 
converted to Christianity.\textsuperscript{19}

Lalu’s parents and brother shouted and abused him for his hair cutting. Nihal Singh springs forward and slaps on his face and shouts at him for spoiling the religion, a sort of religious fanaticism of his father. In spite of the opposition of parents, he hopes that the people would admire him and he would be victorious because he did this act according to the dictate of his soul. Through this incident, he has lost parents’ faith. His elder brother Sharm Singh does not even like him to touch the food. Hence when he goes to the kitchen for food, Sharm Singh bursts,

\textbf{Do not you touch our food, you are dirty contaminated dog or pig.} \textsuperscript{20}

Not only do his parents but also the people of the whole village go against him. When Arjun Singh, a priest of the Sikh temple, comes to know about his hair cutting, he curses him for spoiling the religion and disgrace the whole village. He has enough intelligence to understand what his words mean. They want to disgracing him publicly by taking him with black face through the streets of the village. After some time, he finds himself on the back of donkey through the land towards the corner of the village. After seeing his black face the children cries,

\textbf{Oh! Look at the black face! Look at the black face.} \textsuperscript{21}
Therefore he wants to escape from his family because his parents treat him badly. The cruel behavior of the people as well as of his parents and this incident makes him very weak and docile. At the age of seventeen, with his limited social experience, he takes a stand and sticks to it. But in the conflict between traditionalism and modernism, he gets alone and isolated. About his condition Meenakshi Mukharjee says,

A representative of the forces of modernity or progress he rebels against all the rituals and customs of the race. He wants to defy traditions by having his hair cut because it is such an affliction in the hot weather...the heavy load of a turban.\textsuperscript{22}

It is simply a traditional approach of the Nandpur village that a religious Guru of the village, is a confirmed glutton and leacher. But he becomes religious teacher of the village. The Mahant possesses his position by exploiting the credulity of the common men of the village. He is not only a hypocrite and drug addict but also lascivious. Ambuj kumar Sharma remarks,

Mahant Nandgiri reveals his greed by fleecing the poor of the village and taking gifts, money and other delicious in exchange for mantras and other religious rituals.\textsuperscript{23}

Lalu, the protagonist, says that he is a “religious teacher who in greed is so gluttonous that he will suck the blood of the poorest.”\textsuperscript{24}
He forces the poor to give grains, clothes and other gifts while they die of hunger.

How beautiful it is! Mahant said, handling the sick but he added as an aside, with a little more emphasis as if to impress on the other peasants that though he would accept this present, he preferred dearer variety. This is Japni silk.  

The ecclesiastical hypocrites like Nandgiri feed upon the life-blood of the poor peasants. Lalu confirms this in The Village. The leacher! He ate sumptuous food, dressed in yellow silks, smoked Charas and drank hemp, and if reports were true, whored and fornicated. And he was kept as a holy man, The Guru of the community.

In the same novel, Mahant Nandgiri fornicates Sharm Singh’s wife Kesari after drinking on the bank of the river in the forest. M.K.Naik comments upon Mahant Nandgiri’s lust.

Mahant Nandgiri, the religious Guru of the village, is a confirmed glutton, drug-addicted and Leacher.

In the Lalu Trilogy, we come across, a village rustic, a victim of all round exploitation by numerous agencies- the landlord, the moneylender, the trader, the lawyer, the religious leader, the government official, and also unjust laws and policies of the land
grabbing feudal lords of the British Government. Nihal Singh thus narrates his tale of exploitation:

Think of the iniquity, people! We lost ten of the twentyfive acres we had inherited, through that thuggery by the Sarkar.............Zulm!

How lies prosper.  

There is also a glimpse of caste prejudice. This happens when Lalu and his colleague Gughi buy some sweets from a confectioner shop, the confectioner asks them,

Who are you Hindu or Musalman or Bhangi.  

Lalu becomes very angry through the rude behaviour of him and shouts:

What has it to do with you who he is ? He will pay with the money for what he buys.

Mr. Hercules Long, deputy commissioner, visits the village of Nandpur. He meets Lal Singh and is pleased with his intelligence and awareness of the progress of the village. Having been impressed by him, commissioner makes him the leader of the local troops of the boys. Shaileshwar Seti Prasad observes:

Hercules Long is in the line of the liberal English man created by Anand who is emotionally on the other side like De-la-Havre of Two Leaves And A Bud and Captain Owen of Trilogy itself.
Now he looks more conscious of solving the problem of the village. Dr.P.K. Rajan says:

He 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. 32

The novelist depicts the love relationship between Lalu and Maya, a daughter of the landlord. A great tragic thing happens when Sardar Harbansh Singh finds that Maya is playing with him. Hating Lal Singh, the landlord snarles at her,

Maya, Ni Maya, May you die! come away you shameless one. what are you doing here? And as for you scoundrel are not you ashamed to commit badmashi with my daughter like that? 33

Thus the happy surroundings of the marriage ceremony of Nihal Singh’s family turn into a tragic scene when policeman Nipoo Singh insists on handing over Lal Singh immediately. The old man Nihal Singh asks him about the offence of Lal Singh. Meanwhile Sardar Harbansh Singh appears and orders the policeman to arrest him. But the old man does not understand the offence of him. Shaking his feet he says,

Look people, take the name of Wahe Guru what injustice? What terrible, uncalled for cruelty is being perpetrated. 34
Then the landlord blames him that he has stolen three bundles of fodder from his field and brought it home. Lalu thus reacts to his charge:

I am not a thief, I tell you, and I shall break your head if you utter that word again. \(^{35}\)

We all know that he is not a thief of fodder and the landlord charges him because of his relationship with his daughter Maya, not for stealing fodder. This fact is also proved through the words of landlord’s wife. She curses him saying,

Hear the tale of his crimes. At first the leacher catches hold of my daughter and attempts to spoil her. Then he goes thieving into our fields. \(^{36}\)

To escape the cruelty and clutches of law, he decides to leave the village for good and joins the army. That is why on his recruitment, he is rather glum and reticent. Since he cannot forget the cruel behaviour of the landlord, he takes it as an opportunity to kill those who had wronged him and sent him away. When Farid Khan, a Thanedar, questions him in the army recruiting cantonment in presence of captain Robert Owen, an English officer, about the charges, he speaks the truth that he has not stolen anything. He tells them that the landlord of the village has charged him because of his relationship with his daughter Maya. Being fully convinced of his innocence, Mr. Owen shows sympathy for him and orders Farid Khan to leave him. Like De- La-Havre of Two Leaves And A Bud, Mr. Owen is the first person, who shows utmost sympathy for him.
Later when Lalu pays a short visit to his village, he comes to know through Jhandu that Hardit Singh and Mahant of the village have spoiled all the happiness of his family. Even Kesari, the wife of Sharm Singh was molested by Hardit Singh and Mahant of village. Full of anger and retaliation, Sharm Singh murders Hardit Singh for which he has been hanged at Manabad Jail on Monday. This shows the cruel and inhuman behavior of the landlord’s son and Mahant of the village towards his family. Through this incident Lalu becomes very sad and loses all his patience. Now he visualizes only three things: Sharm Singh is dead; Bapu is dying and Harnam Singh is ruined. Lalu is really very intelligent young man. About the rude behavior of Lance Naik Lok Nath, he says:

**Never walk behind a horse or before an officer**

*For both will kick.*

Interestingly the English officers we meet in the novel is very kind and generous even though the British Sarkar is characterized as the first culprit in the ruin of the peasantry. As we see, Hercules Long, Lieut. Audley and Captain Robert Owen are all extremely kind to Lalu. Besides Lok Nath all Indian sepoys like uncle Kripu and daddy Dhannoo show a human behaviour towards him. Lalu suffers not only the miserable condition of the peasant and his relatives but also own frustration. According to his nature he shows kindness and help to others and he needs love and believes in frank expression of emotion.

Lal Singh’s hatred for his people has sprung from how the elderly people of the community cannot comprehend his newly evolved faith based on human endeavour. Similarly, he plans to build up a new modern village, keeping with the ideas he has evolved. He becomes
frustrated because his elders do not permit him to express his views. Since nobody pays proper heed to his views and actions, he is virtually put in an utterly miserable state. K.R. Srinivasa Iyenger expresses his condition as,

Lalu’s heart beats in response to the primordial life of the village but his mind incessantly rebels and yearns for the dim distant alluring horizons.\(^{38}\)

Like Lalu, his father Nihal Singh also tries for the welfare of the peasantry. He is a noble figure and has courage and faith, which are the chief characteristics of the Indian peasants. His sick-bed fare well to his son who is going back to the army shows the magnanimity of his heart:

Parents breed children not for themselves but to fight public causes let him go out and reap the harvest of experience.\(^{39}\)

The pride, dignity and fearlessness that Nihal Singh demonstrates in facing his adversary are not uncommon to the Punjab peasants. Since truth, honesty and toil have been a peasant’s source of strength in the face of odds of life, the rumours of theft or of dishonesty should be most disgraceful to him. Nihal Singh’s pride is a characteristic of Indian peasantry in the face of class enemy:

We have our pride, we have our dignity, and our name is breathed with a prayer and not a curse. You think you will ruin my family both inside and outside the courts. You heartless imposter! You have usurped my land and now
you want to send my son to jail. But you forget that you are dealing with an old soldier and not weakling. Just you touch him.  

Despite quite a few modern traits, Lalu presents a memorable picture of Indian peasants. He seems fighting against all the tradition and cruel system of society more rounded and effective than his predecessor Gangu in **Two Leaves And A Bud** (1937).

According to Nihal Singh, the firungies are responsible for the feudal system in Punjab. The poor people like him are exploited by them from generation to generation. Marlin Fisher expresses the truth of his heart saying,

> Only I can never forget that those firangies took the Punjab by a fraud to make Teja Singh a landlord: Think of the inequity people! We lost ten of the twentyfive acres we had inherited through the thuggery by the Sarkar.

Thus **The Village** gives a memorable picture of the pre-Independence Indian rustic life. However the weaknesses of the traditionalism are exposed by the protagonist who is a votary for modernity and wants to change the whole system of the village. About the significance of the novel, M.K.Naik says,

> The village registers with full force the collision between the adolescent and the adult world. Its basic theme is the helplessness of its hero, half
child, half-adult, in a pre-dominantly callous world. \(^{42}\)

In *The Village* Anand portrays the typical Punjab village Nandpur, with its pathos, sufferings and laughter. Quite often our heart bleeds for the poor rustics who confront all sorts of injustices heaped upon them. Though they are willing to carve out their own destiny, their every move is checkmated by self-centred vested interests.

Thus the first part of Trilogy, *The Village*, depicts the condition of the peasantry during the pre-First World war days in Punjab. Its unquestioned hero is Lalu on account of his many unforgettable sterling qualities. The Second part *Across The Black Water* is a gripping war novel which presents a Sikh peasant turned soldier having lots of experiences of the First World War.

II

*Across The Black Water* (1940) is the second novel of the Lalu Trilogy. It is a continuation of *The Village* in so far as it seeks to project Lal Singh’s growing dissatisfaction with his milieu. If the earlier novel explores the devastating impact of traditional order upon the individual, this novel is centrally preoccupied with “the devastating effect of war”\(^{43}\)

The publisher’s blurb thus makes a point:

*Across The Black Water* is the continuation of *The Village*. It is a book of extreme interest, since we believe it to be the first book written by an Indian about an Indian regiment in the
First World War, and shows the Indian troops in action at Messines and Festubert in 1914 and 1915 from their own point of view. It is, however, infinitely more than a war novel. The book is full of excellent characters: The older soldiers, Kirpu and Lachman Singh, who with their cynical and grim jokes, will face anything. The bullying yet childish corporal, Lok Nath, the young Subedar who got his promotion through his father and goes drunk on patrol; The kind English officers who get killed. And, best of all, Lal Singh, the protagonist, bewildered by a war which was out of his making and growing into some awareness of the madness of armed conflict.⁴⁴

Dr. M.K. Naik has also observed,

The second novel in the Lal Singh’s Trilogy, *Across The Black Water*, holds a unique place not only among Anand’s novels but in the whole gamut of Indian fiction in English also. It is perhaps the only major ‘War novel’ in Indian writing in English.⁴⁵

*Across The Black Water* (1940), is actually representative of the most significant phase of Anand’s literary career. It is the outcome of his bitter rebellious resentment to the British Imperial rule. The novel belongs to the crucial phase of the tension between the writer’s obsession with the problems of Indian poverty, with the atrocity and
banality of Indian life and Indian feudalism on the one hand and his visions of immediate freedom, on the other. The novel forms a part of Anand’s famous *Trilogy* (the two other novels being), *The Village* (1939) and *The Sword and The Sickle* (1942), which best exemplifies his mechanistic determinism.

The novel is based on Anand’s first hand knowledge of the Spanish trench-warfare and also the fighting in Flanders during the First World War. It depicts the horrors of trench warfare. The paucity of real action accounts for the general spotlessness of the novel. The sporadic dramatic incidents, some organically related to the theme of warfare and some trivial, mostly highlight the Indian soldiers’ immediate reaction to Europe. The major concern of the author, however, remains elusive. It is not a typical war novel, but an explicit indictment of the British rule, or an apotheosis of the brave Indian soldiers. The treatment of the theme of war receives a different twist as the novel strives to offer a limpid, realistic kaleidoscope of the impact of Europe on the Indian soldiers.

*Across The Black Water* is set in France and presents the first World War as seen by Indian soldiers, mainly by Lal Singh who is the central figure of this novel. It opens with his regiment disembarking at Marseilles. The Indian army joins the British and French armies to fight against Germany. The opening chapters of the novel describes the reaction of Indian sepoys to European life. They are surprised at seeing Tommies drink with sweepers. They visit bars and brothels. Their early days in France are days of discovery.

*Across The Black Water* immediately follows from *The Village*, which ends with Lalu embarking on a ship with his unit, bound
ostensibly for Vilayat (England). The book was first sketched out in a rough draft in Barcelona and Madrid during January and April 1937 and though afterwards re-written in the relatively more tranquil atmosphere of Chinnor, Oxfordshire between July and December 1939. It shows a knowledge of pity and suffering of war that comes as much from isolated impressions that Anand himself received of the Spanish Civil War as from his imagination or from the recollections of those who had fought in Flanders twenty years earlier. To read the novel immediately after _The Village_ pains the fundamental irony on which it is built: that the men who were herded by the thousands to fight in Europe for the king -Emperor were totally unsuited to modern warfare. _The Village_ offers a detailed picture of a community rooted in superstitions and ritual, in which the pattern of daily life has become a sanctified routine, scarcely affected by the technological changes that the Angrezi Sarkar has introduced. Just as that novel opens with Lalu's father startled by a train whistle, so in the first pages of _Across The Black Water_ a boat salute scares the sepoys as they arrive in France. Lalu is in fact puzzled to find that the ship is docking in French War.

The early days in Europe present for Lalu and his friends an opportunity to see things. They are amazed at the local girls with their manners and low-cut dresses-

_Such a contrast to the sedate Indian women who seemed to grow old before they were young, flabby and tired except for a cowherd woman with breasts like pyramidal rocks._  

46
In the first novel of the *Trilogy* Lalu felt the stirrings of sexual feeling in his idealistic affections for Maya, the landlord’s daughter. But their ‘Maya’ meant simply ‘appearance’ rather than reality. It is only in the second novel, the one under discussion now, we witness the real rather than the appearance of sexual desire. It forms the only refuse for Lalu from the surrounding horrors of war, a possibility that human love can be briefly re-affirmed amid the bewilderingly unleashed hatred. Anand parallels the sexual awakening of the sepoys. They are amazed to observe a mouth kiss, one of their fellows gets drunk in praising the French girls, knowledge of prostitutes becomes routine with an increasing disillusionment in their role in the war. They have hitherto imagined it exclusively in terms of heroic hill-skirmishes in Kashmir. The disillusionment centers on Lalu who, when confronted with the indelicate obviousness of ‘Western’ sexual overtures, withdraws into a shell of Indian shyness and black despair.

The girl lifted the edge of her skirt to show the naked flesh between her legs and then with a deliberate ‘ooh’ dropped it again......instead of laughing or smiling as the others did, Lalu found himself contracting into his own skin, till he felt himself reduced to an emptiness from the centre of which his two eyes seemed to see this world as an enormous enclosure, crowded by hordes of hard, gigantic shapes which were oppressing him.\(^{47}\)

This extract shows how Lalu’s sensitivity isolates him at an early point in his European experience from the rest of his community. They
come to share his pessimism about the war, and one of them even
drowns himself in a reservoir, but the hearty camaraderie which is a
feature of communal army life even under the most intense conditions
is seldom shared by Lalu who remains withdrawn and observant
throughout the course of the novel.

The ancient customs of India are soon abandoned in France Ville.
Apart from their sexual freedom, the men think nothing of eating beef
or wearing leather belts or handling food without first washing their
hands. Anand shows how the war affected the naive sepoys by
concentrating on the outward changes in abandoning ritual and
tradition, but he begins to work inwards to concentrate on the men’s
minds as the contingent moves towards the front line and sees the
horrifying sight of the wounded and dying who have already been in
battle. The men react to the suffering as if it is a fantasy, an appealing
chimera from a bloodthirsty legend rather than a reality towards which
they are themselves moving at this moment. Anand continues through
out Across The Black Water to make a universal statement about the
nature of war apart from the particular tragedy of the Indian Sepoys in
Flanders in 1914. His descriptions of brutality match in compassion and
outrage, and perhaps also in poetic flair, with those of Wilfred Owen
Siegfried Sasson (1886-1967) or David Jones.

In Anand’s case there is a duality of concern: For, on the one
hand, battle demands a total submission of personality to the general
order and yet on the other hand, it heightens the individuals sense of his
own personal doom. War is fought by armies and suffered by
individuals. This point is agonizingly revealed to Lalu as he sits in a
train waiting for it to draw out of a station on its way to the front. A
number of French soldiers are bidding sorrowful farewells to their families. Oh let the train not go, Lalu silently implores. Anand has selected a scene of common place occurrence in war time and through Lalu’s reaction he invests it with a harrowing universality. Repeatedly through the novel we feel this conjunction of the particular incident with the general truth about the nature of war that it reveals. The contingent of sepoys in which Lalu serves to become more regimented, closer to the ideal of utter subservience to official orders which is the aim of all army discipline yet at the same time Lalu finds that he contracts more and more into himself feeling a pervasive sense of isolation:

Alone in the gray morning of this vast alien earth, beyond which was a vaster earth or a vaster sea, beyond which again was the vaster sky. 48

Lalu’s naive intelligence cannot refrain from questioning the basis of the war which sacrifices so many lives to an unspecified general good.

The element of sanity in Lalu persisted in the face of guns and in the face of the insanity which had blown off the towers of the churches. and he could not believe that ordinary men and women of good sense, and the Governments of France, England and Germany, which were saner and wiser than the ordinary people over whom they ruled, could be engaged in a war in
which men were being killed and wounded and houses shattered.\textsuperscript{49}

Anand’s overriding concern in \textit{Across The Black Water}, almost the sole pre-occupation of the novel, is with the devastating effect of war upon the individual. The loneliness and insularity of man within a systematized order has been a chief theme in all books. I have so far referred to, in the earlier novels the hero’s isolation is shown within a society whose sense of permanence and almost ritualized inflexibility is the source of its perniciousness. War is an abnormal situation, which seems to heighten and to mirror many of the defects in the normal Indian society. It, for instance, presupposes the absolute authority of the elite, the irrevocability of hierarchy, and the necessity for those at the foot of the Pyramid to slave and suffer for the efficient working of the over all system.

Anand’s writing is, for its best, least given to a sort of poeticizing looseness, when it tries to convey strain and nervous intensity. For this reason \textit{Across The Black Water} is probably the best novel since \textit{Untouchable}, for it exactly communicates the catastrophic tension of men in the front line, the immanence of death and the pervading sense of inevitability which, though it is the source of Anand’s anger, it is at the same time at the root of so much Indian fiction. Here we never lose awareness that this is an Indian novel-not just a commentary on the plight of war. The lives of the men in the novel are plotted in terms of Indian traditional references. The lowering gray-green sky, which seems almost a condition of the Flanders’ scenery, whether it be day or night, is the exact colour of the roof of hell which the sages of India speak about, where the souls of sinners are
subjected to a series of nightmarish ordeals. These ordeals include trailing through mud and marshes being plagued by ravenous insects and lice, and a perpetual awareness of cold and hunger.

In other words, the actual physical realities of the trenches in the First World War (1914) are felt by the sepoys to be a Hindu hell made manifest. The battle, for which all these ordeals are only a preparation, is like the ordeal by fire which will purge the soul after death and bring it to the seat of final judgment on which Brahma is gloriously enthroned.

They had already come through the long and weary trail and were now in the stage of waiting in this vast, timeless universe for their doom to fulfill itself as if they had been suddenly transplanted in to the world of their ancestors where men struggled against the elements, the Gods and Destiny.  

*Across The Black Water* has other things than a humanitarian account of the exploitation of the lower ranks in wartime. But it is an expose of military officialdom that its social commentary is most explicit. In one of the lighter moments of this generally oppressive novel Lalu impresses the patronising Bishop of Chetpur by his ability-wholly insincere to recite in English a prayer to Jesus. A few moments later when the Bishop’s back is turned, he mocks the prayer delightedly. It is clear that there is a total breach of sympathy between those who run the war and those who fight it. Anand’s Compassion is firmly with the latter and he writes of their lives, particularly of the naive
camaraderie, which constantly springs up between the men, with admiration and affection. *Across The Black Water* shows suffering not against the almost timeless routine of rural life but in a period of crisis. I know of no Indian novel in which the plight of the ordinary man is more isolate, for these sepoys are thousands of miles away from home in an atmosphere that works their faiths and overrides many of their customs. There is literally no direction in which these men can turn other than towards death, mutilation, continuous battle or, as in Lalu’s case, being captured by the enemy and the final submission of self.

Anand lived in London from 1924 to 1945 and was greatly influenced by the Thirties movement which saw political social and human causes as genuine impulses for the novel and poetry. The thirties movement held that art serves life and should deal principally with structures. Anand’s work is in alliance with this movement and exhibits the uncritical approach to self-ideology common to it. *Across The Black Water* is a fine example of this tendeney. Like other works of its generation, Anand’s novel describes the life of the oppressed and offers insight into the motivations of the oppressors. It can be characterized as an example of a certain brand of realism, which disproportionately emphasizes human misery.

In *Across The Black Water*, Anand depicts Lalu as a sepoy in the British Army which forms the middle piece of Anand’s *Trilogy* chronicling the journey of Lal Singh from his stifled life in a North Indian village ruled by customs and religions to the Great War and then his return to India with a new political perspective. The novel begins with Lal Singh’s regiment disembarking at Marseilles. It gives the full picture of horror and wonder of the battle field. Some sepoys are full of
enthusiasm about the battle of France, but Lalu is sad to recall the memory of sudden death of his father Nihal Singh and a pitiable condition of his mother Gujri. He curses himself saying that if his father had been alive, he would not have liked him to join the army and punish all those who have sent him across the black Water. He thus records his feelings:

Perhaps It was the fear of the unknown, Now that they were getting to their destination. But he had himself slept badly the previous night and had dreamt a weird dream about Nandpur, in which his mother was crying over the body of his dead father and his brother Dayal Singh, was rebuking him for running away when they most needed him, only to him the village seemed far from here now.\(^{51}\)

In Franceville, Lalu is always reminded of the experiences of his Nandpur village. He thus recollects his humiliation caused on account of his craze for unorthodox views and modernity:

A few Sikhs of No. 4 company stood combing their long black hair. He recalled the brutality with which the fanatics of his village had blackened his face and put him on a donkey when he had his hair cut. The humiliation had bitten deep in to him. They must look odd to the Europeans, he thought. And he wondered how many of them would have their hair cut
while they were abroad or after their return to India. But the Sahibs didn’t like the Sikhs to have their hair shorn, as they wanted them to preserve their own customs, even though Audley Sahib had excused him when Lance Naik Lok Nath had reported him at Ferozepur.  

He likes freedom and equality for the people. That is why when he sees Sweepers and Tommies drink wine together without prejudice of any kind, he feels elated:

Look, look, there are two sweepers drinking wine by two Tommies, and also a woman! They have little religion or shame.  

But uncle Kirpu does not agree to his opinion and comments on the basic difference between English man and ordinary man.

The Sahibs travel first class’, commented Kirpu with an air of finality. “The Indian officers second class, Tommies, Havildars Naiks and Sepoys third class remember this and don’t be led astray.  

The novelist shows the brave deeds and heroic qualities of Indian soldiers in the battle of France. Through Lal, he recalls Indian soldiers in the battle of France and presents the hideous memory of the famine time in Punjab. Owing to this natural calamity many peasants in Central Punjab often turned into thieves and dacoits, because they had no food to eat. Sometimes he appears very happy but at another time he
becomes pale and disturbed to feel the horrible atmosphere of the war. He thus ponders on his state of affairs:

How he had run away from the village suddenly and joined the army just a year before he was pushed into active service in Europe where, after the felicity of a few day's sojourn and constant journeying.\textsuperscript{55}

The climate is very cold which makes him shiver and his brain is whirling. In spite of this he does not lose his patience and is determined to fight. The novelist has realistically shown the sufferings of Indian sepoys in France during the war who had hardly proper means for survival. When Lalu asks Kirpu about the significance of the war, Kirpu replies:

Obey the orders of the Sarkar and of God who made us servants of the Sarkar for our past misdeeds.\textsuperscript{56}

Utter confusion seems to prevail. The British are divided between the Sahibs and the sepoys, who themselves are divided among heroes and knaves. With particular care, Anand delineates the characters of Lalu’s friends. The fatalistic veteran fighter Dhanoo, interprets the war as God’s retribution of past misdeeds. He drowns in a muddy shell-hole. He symbolically represents the Indian soldiers’ inability to deal with this strange and foreign brand of warfare.

Likewise it is uncle Kirpu, who always increases the patience of Lalu and other sepoys of the Indian troops. But Lalu becomes very anxious when he sees the inhuman behaviour of Tommies towards
Indian sepoys. He does not even understand the significance of the war. He becomes quite worried as to why several Indian sepoys are slain by the German troops. In his enigmatic reply to uncle Kirpu, he says:

**The melon falls on the knife: The melon suffers.**

**The knife falls on the melon: The melon suffers.**

*Across The Black Water* begins with Lalu’s arrival in Marseilles and concludes with his capture by the German enemy. The narrative records this young sepoys’ impressions while fighting along with his countrymen in the Battle of France. With great clarity, Anand depicts the sepoys’ inability to comprehend their roles in the allied conflict with the central powers. They have no idea why they are in ‘France-ville’, the Indians’ fanciful name for France, and they are given no explanation. Their reactions are varied, due to the ethnic and religious diversity of the combatant Hindus, Muslems, and Sikhs. However, they come to gradual realization that they are totally unprepared and untrained for battle in the trenches. They are just to be used as cannon-fodder.

After such a realization, Lalu tries to remember the tactics of bayonet, fighting like a schoolboy, recalling his lesson just before entering the examination room. Infact the condition of Indian sepoys is very pitiable; they had no good weapons. When Kharkhu is killed by the troops of the Germany, uncle Kirpu thus exposes the worst conditions of Indian army.

**If we had had big guns and more big guns, we could have silenced the opposite tornado of**
Shrapnel and bullets. But this bitch of a Sarkar
hasn’t got as many big guns as the Germans.\(^{58}\)

After the tragic death of Kharkhu, Lalu becomes very sad and recalls the past memories of his childhood. He thinks when he was at Nandpur village, his mother gave him hot milk and sweet semolina plum before he went to bed, but here he does not get even proper food. He does not betray himself. Almost two yards away from the trench he finds the swollen dead face of his fellow daddy Dhannoo which is floating on the surface of water. The sight of his death brings a tragic vision in his mind which makes him very uneasy. Actually the atmosphere of the battle field is filled with horror and frightening sounds of guns. About the condition of war kirpu rightly says:

This land is like the others, it comes to be with the coming to the life and will go down with death.\(^{59}\)

The catastrophic events quite often take place. Once when the order comes for the counter-attack, Subedar Suchet Singh orders all the sepoys to show their bravery and follow their officers. Not all but one sepoy Hanumant Singh refuses to go forward because he does not want to fight against Germans for the sake of dirty sarkar. As he rebukes Suchet Singh:

Oh Subedarji forgive me, leave me here, I have not got fever, forgive me! I... I can’t fight! I will not fight for this dirty Sarkar.\(^{60}\)
After knowing his refusal, Subedar Suchet Singh shoots him with his revolver. This incident brings a tragic picture in the mind of Lalu. Likewise, when Lance Naik uncle Kirpu is entrusted with a humiliating assignment, he soon commits suicide. Lalu is not satisfied with the rude behaviour of Indian officers towards his fellows, and he curses for their wrong judgments. For instance, uncle Kirpu commits suicide for a wrong charge upon him. In the following lines he asks himself:

What was in his kismat what was his destiny?...more pain?...sorrow death.\textsuperscript{61}

About the pitiable death of Indian sepoys Dr. P.K. Rajan says:

Havildar Lachman Singh, a person of remarkable courage and kindness, is killed in action. The pious daddy Dhanoo is drowned whose swollen dead face Lalu sees floating on the water. Hanumant Singh who pleads, “I will not fight for this dirty Sarkar is shot dead by Subedar Suchet Singh, uncle Kirpu who is kept in the guard room for insulting a superior officer commits suicide, Dhyan Singh and Rikhi Ram die in the final battle.\textsuperscript{62}

Infact, the tragedy of the Indian sepoys is also shown to be essentially a tragedy of peasant’s innocence crushed by brutal mechanism of the war. By interweaving the experiences of the peasants and sepoys’, it seems that the novelist wants to show the poor condition of Indian peasants. On the deeper level, the novel shows the sufferings
of Indian sepoys as peasants in their villages. Because of their cruel
destiny, they join army and fight in distant lands, a war which they do
not understand at all. About the poor condition of Indian sepoys in
France, Alastair Niven rightly remarks,

The exact colour of the roof of hell which the
sages of India speak about, the actual
sufferings of the sepoys in the war are like a
Hindu hell made manifest. 63

Owing to their ignorance and dire necessities, they cannot ask
where war is or why it is being fought and how it happens that they are
going there. With their peasants’ background, they have no knowledge
to fight war with modern weapons. It is uncle Kirpu who is a critical
observer of the wrong system of the British Government. K.N. Sinha
rightly observes that Kirpu,

serves the purpose of a Greek Chorus. 64

As he criticizes the report of a posthumous award to Havildar
Lachman Singh,

Encouragement is a great thing, says Kirpu
with a breaking voice and flaming tongue,
‘Promotion is still better and a life pension
addressed to Holdar Lachman Singh, Village pool of
blood, Tehsil Purgatory District Hell-Wah, don’t
speak of it!... soldiers as he flared up at Kushi
Ram. 65
In the beginning Lalu becomes very sad to see the wretched condition of France, but gradually it gives a place to more understanding of the European situation. The Sahib and Memsahib always seem God to him. As a true Indian peasant's son, he sees the French farms and modern technique of farming. Through it he wants a radical change in the condition of Indian peasantry as well as their villages. He is impressed to see the modern technique of French farmers. He believes,

**Machine cannot only conquer the earth, but the Heavens.**

Infact, Bakha in *Untouchable*, and Munoo in *Coolie*, too experience such a vision Anand seems to reject the destructive role of the machine and share the hope of Lalu whose quarrel with the traditional views of Nandpur village is perfectly justified. The wide experience with Europe makes him aware of all the problems of the peasants. In a lengthy letter to his mother, he gives a detailed account of the experiences of the French peasantry. He expresses his desire to change the living condition of the rural peasantry by adopting such methods:

**This country is full of precious things, such as machine ploughs, steel implements, sheep, pigs, cows, chickens, beetroot, potatoes and apple wine. The Francies of Franceville and the flamands of Flanders are wonderful cultivators, They plough five times as much land in a day with tractor machines as we do in ten days with a wooden land scratchier. And they use**
manures full of medicines such as the Sarkar ought to invent in Hind. What a country! What a country! 67

After some time the Indian soldiers are transferred to the war front. They come face to face with the horrors of war. The arrival of the hospital train from the front is their first introduction to it. Then there follows the movement of troops, patrolling in the no man’s land and battles with the enemies. One by one Lalu’s friends die. But in the midst of horror, courage and violence, the human drama of love and jealousy also goes on. Lal Singh befriends Marie, a French farmer’s daughter. He writes about his impression to his mother Gujar Kaur:

The women here walk in public without purdah and look straight into the eyes of men. They read, write, play, ride on horses and playcards, but no one dares to call them immoral for these things. The daughter of my Francisi mother is a young girl, whom I like, but mother, rest assured that it is not considered wrong for men and women to like each other and there is nothing bad in it. I remember that you told me to regard every woman as a mother or sister, but mother, that would be a lie because men do not look at all women as sisters even if they say, they do. For love, fire and itch are not concealed. 68

Gradually as the war progresses through many pitched battles, Lalu becomes disillusioned and many questions lurk before him. When
Lalu's unit is ordered to attack the enemy trenches, the latter open fire and Peacock Sahib who was leading them is wounded. Rikhi Ram, Lalu and others are wounded. The Germans take prisoner Lalu because the attack of his battalion peters out shortly before he is taken prisoner, he asks himself.

Why is it that men like Kirpu, Dhanoo and Lachman, who were so good, should have suffered and died when I wretch am alive?^69^  

Lalu is sensitive enough to stand apart from the rest of his community in his European experience. In this respect, it is worth noting that there are two types of alienation in Lalu as revealed in *Across The Black Water*. One is the break from his traditional social milieu, which was initiated in *The Village* and which has come full circle here. Dr.A.V.Krishna Rao has rightly observed:

.....*Across The Black Water* fully establishes the fact of Lalu's alienation from the traditional society. First, his physical exile from his ancestral village under compelling social conditions anticipates the following journey across the black water which symbolizes his complete break with the past, for to journey across the black Water is considered by the orthodox as un-Hindu and therefore unholy. Secondly, his intellectual dissociation from the conventional mode of life is final after his career as a soldier.^[70^}
Lalu is also alienated from his fellow soldiers, which is underlined quite often in the novel.

They come to share his pessimism about the war, and one of them even drowns himself in a reservoir, but the hearty camaraderie which is a feature of communal army life even under the most intense conditions is seldom shared by Lalu who remains withdrawn and observant throughout the course of the novel.71

It is no doubt, clear that the bonhomie and the camaraderie, the little revelries and the minor peccadilloes that mark the Indian sepoys in France are imaginatively appended as forming the influential environment of Lal Singh but it is his own reaction to war and other allied aspects that constitute the main theme of the novel. If in his village Lalu noticed defects of what appears a normal Indian society, Lalu confronts the nearness of death and a terrible sense of isolation which grips him as he fights in the front line. He slowly grows disillusioned and cynical about war. Through his experiences Anand has presented a ruthless criticism of war as an evil. Other characters also share the protagonist’s contempt for and disillusionment with war. uncle Kirpu, for example, says:

....I wonder why they are killing each other and making a graveyard of this land.72
Lalu, however, survives all this and derives a lesson from his war experience. Commenting on the theme of the novel, S. C. Harrex has noted,

The action continually exemplifies the theme of man’s victimhood and his complementary capacity for an heroic promethean fortitude and moral courage. The death of many of the ‘good’ characters and Lalu’s survival at the end of Across The Black Water comprise an undying assertion of man’s dignity and integrity, a meaning in suffering. 73

Since his childhood, Lalu has been very conscious of changing the shape of his village. As Meenakshi Mukharji remarks:

Lal Singh is from his boyhood fired with a vague idealism and desire to change his village! These ideals have concrete objectives when he sees a French farm for the first time, observes the advanced methods of cultivations notices the resulting prosperity. 74

Thus his experience in Europe provides him with many answers to the problems of the village. About his experience, Dr.P. K. Rajan says,
The voyage *Across The Black Water* thus becomes at once a spiritual voyage towards a new destination of maturity and wisdom.\(^7\)

The sentiments of the sepoys for their kith and kin stir the depth of Lalu’s nature. Nevertheless he does not forget the cruel and inhuman behaviour of landlord of the Nandpur village. In his letter to his mother, he points out that in comparison to the peasants of his village, the peasants of France are very prosperous because they donot borrow money from moneylenders. He thus writes to his mother:

*When I come back, I shall ask the Karnel Sahib to order to bania, to give back our mortgages and to get the landlord to return the lands he has seized from as reward for fighting in this war, saying is one thing, you will say, doing another but have faith, mother, trust in me.*\(^7\)

Perhaps the tragedy of Indian sepoys is caused by the British exploitation. But in the *Trilogy* Anand presents all the British characters are pleasant and always show a human behaviour towards Indian sepoys. For instance, the British officers like Captain Owen, Lieutenant Hobson, Lieutenant Audley and even Major Peacock are brave, kind and sympathetic. On the contrary, Indian officers except Havildar Lachman Singh and Rihki Ram are all very cruel, petty and jealous. For instance Lance-Naik Loknath, Jamadar Subah Singh, Subedar Major Arbel Singh and Subedar Suchet Singh are all very selfish. It is Captain Owen who always shows a sympathetic behavior towards Lalu’s
problems. More over Lalu gets freedom from the clutches of the police simply because of his generous nature. Again in the cellar of Messiness, Lalu has a bad dream.

At the end of the novel after Dhyan Singh’s death, it seems to him that the

\[ \text{God of death was about with his hosts. And there seemed no way to exorcize the ghosts, Jinds, bhuts, howbatte and hobgoblins.} \]

Infact the whole atmosphere of the battlefield is filled with horror and the dead spirits of the sepoys. To S.C. Harrex,

\[ \text{Anand’s position seems to be something of humanistic paradox, he explains that Lalu, when his character is taken as a whole is shown in his middle novel of the Trilogy to be purging himself preparatory to exorcising the demons of the world.} \]

At the end of the novel, Lalu is wounded by the bullet of the enemy and finds himself in the prison of Germany. Through the display of Lalu’s adventures, Anand draws upon his own experience of war and cantonment life. Unlike The Village where Lalu shows an enthusiastic optimism about a radial change of Indian peasantry in Across The Black Water, he comes face to face both the positive and negative, constructive and destructive aspects of the machine. In this reference Meenakshi Mukharjee has rightly remarked:
The first two parts of the *Trilogy The Village* and *Across The Black Water* dealt with Lal Singh’s adolescence and later his youth as a soldier and prisoner of war in France and Germany.\(^79\)

The novel also deals with the great deeds of the war in France. In spite of many problems Lalu is conscious of his duty. The condition of Indian Sepoys is utterly worse. In fact, medals and rewards in the form of pension and Land allure peasants to the army. M.L. Darling writes that a retired Punjabi Military officer told him,

**Men become soldiers because they have not enough to eat.** \(^80\)

Although *Across The Black Water* is not merely a war novel, it is a preparation for the third book in which Lalu fights for the welfare of the peasants. As Shaileshwar Seti Prasad rightly remarks

**In *Across The Black Water*, the education of the orthodox, backward, peasantry is as significant a part of this second book of the Trilogy. It is a preparation for the third book in which Lalu goes back to the village to fight for the peasant’s cause.** \(^81\)

In this way we see that this second novel of the *Trilogy* presents quite a few touching scenes which aptly dwell upon the predicament of Indian sepoys in an alien country enrisking their lives merely for the petty means of their livelihood. They undergo countless sufferings and
pocket humiliations with little hopes of decent returns as rewards for their services. No doubt, the present novel serves to be a sort of preparation for the third book of *Trilogy* which will finally bring to light the plight of its protagonist Lal Singh.

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**III**

The *Sword and The Sickle* (1942), the third and last novel of the Lalu’s *Trilogy*. It traces Lal Singh’s career after being deprived of his job as a soldier. The title suggests the main theme of the novel-revolution and the cause of peasants. It is taken from the poem of William Black (1757-1822):

The sword sang on the barren heath,

The sickle in the fruitful field

The sword he sang a song of death

But could not make the sickle yield.

(From Genomic Verses- Merlin’s Prophesy)

The sickle is, of course, the vast mass of India’s labour force -the peasants, the untouchables, the lumpen-proletariat, as Frantz Fanon termed it -and the sword is that force which seeks perpetually to subjugate and to defeat their free individuality. So far as the plot is concerned, *The Sword and The Sickle* follows directly on from *The
Village and Across The Black Water. The war is now over. Lalu has spent some years in Germany as a prisoner of war-camp and returns to India in the high hope of official favour and the expectation of a grant of land. He finds, however, that he is considered a liability in the army. This is, for Lalu, the first betrayal. He is demobbed without honour or gratitude. Now he thinks about the loss – the wasted years he has spent across the black Water. The sense of bitterness is qualified when he returns to his village and sees a massive change in the attitudes of the people. No longer are they meekly subservient. The war has profoundly shaken not only the sarkar but also the confidence of the ordinary Indians in its infallibility.

In The Sword and The Sickle, Lalu returns to the city of Lahore after his release from a German P.O.W. camp at the end of the First World War. He hopes to get some Land, a medal, and also a handsome pension for his services in the war. But he is demobilised with just a paltry sum. He is rudely shocked by the British administrative dishonesty in betraying the soldiers. He goes to his village to find his family ruined. He comes to know that his mother is dead and his brother Dayal Singh has become a Sadhu. His property has also been auctioned to pay off the debts. However, he finds some happiness in that Maya, the girl, he had loved before enlisting, is now widow and is re-united with him. He comes in contact with comrade Verma and elopes with Maya to work at Rajgarh under Count Kanwar Rampal Singh, a rich landlord with Bolshevik ideas.

At Rajgrah Lalu helps the count in organising a peasant revolt against local landlords. As usual Lalu takes his work seriously but the count is an impulsive romanticist.
There is also the problem of coming to terms with different perspectives on the revolution—the views of the theoretician Professor Verma, Gandhi’s views and the views of the communist Sarshar. And there is Maya, who only wants a home and looks with distrust at her husband’s occupation.82

Lalu organises peasants to assert themselves against landlords. The story takes a new turn when Sukhua is evicted by the Nawab of Nasirabad from his land. The Count’s confabulations with the Nawab to ameliorate the condition of the peasants prove abortive. Count Rampal Singh and his comrades organise a meeting of the evicted peasants which ends in failure. But when he comes across the body of a labourer beaten to death, he gets a chance to expose the tyranny of landlords. Along with this, Lalu leads the procession of peasants to Allahabad where he meets with Gandhi. But after his interview with the Mahatma, he is disillusioned.

On his return to Rajgarh, Count Rampal Singh decides to open a Kisan Sabha head quarter. The opening ceremony is marked by violence and riot and nine persons are arrested. When put on trial, they are freed by an English Magistrate. But the Count learns that he and other revolutionaries are to be interned at Kishan Nagar. When the Count goes to Raibreilly, he is arrested there. In his support peasants resort to demonstration and protests. Many peasants are killed and many others including Lalu are arrested. While awaiting trial in jail, Lalu learns that Maya, his wife, has given birth to a son.
The Sword and The Sickle takes up the theme of exploitation and revolution, and Lalu, the rebel and the soldier, is now a full-fledged revolutionary. His domestic life is deftly dovetailed into the main plot. Anand perhaps shifted the locale of his novel from Nandpur in the Panjab to Rajgarh in U.P. for this purpose though there are many other purposes also. Commenting on this aspect of the novel, Saros Cowasjee has observed:

For one thing, Anand wanted to introduce a love story into his theme of revolution, and it would not have been easy for Lalu to marry Maya, his land lord's daughter and live in the village. The domestic troubles resulting from Lalu and Maya living in Nandpur would have got in the way of the protagonist's desire to bring about a revolution. Anand solved the problem by making Lalu elope with Maya to Rajgarh, where both the author and Lalu seem to forget for long periods that Maya exists. The conflict in Lalu's mind between his love for her and his devotion to the revolutionary movement is the least convincing thing in the book, and perhaps the only serious flaw in this very fine novel...83

It is largely true that the treatment of Lalu's personal life is not very convincing but at the end of the novel it does serve a literary purpose. While in jail Lalu contemplates his past and envisages the future of India. He hears the news that Maya has given birth to a son. The novel ends with a symbolic hope. In any case, the personal life of
Lalu is not given a central place in the plot of the novel. What is, however, prominent in the novel from the very beginning is Lalu’s awareness of the exploitation of the poor peasants and other related socio-economic problems. This aspect is universalized through Lalu’s cosmopolitan consciousness.

In Nandpur peasants are awakened about their rights and requirements. They are preparing themselves for a rebellion against exploitation by the cruel moneylenders and landlords. Destiny again changes the track of Lalu’s life by making him join a group of revolutionaries at Rajgarh. The revolutionaries here are a group of people with varying ideologies and approaches towards the goal of the liberation of landless peasants, who are still passive sufferers. The revolutionaries no doubt organise under the leadership of Kanwar Rampal and try to save the suffering and suppressed farmers turned labourers but they fail to achieve anything in reality. These self-styled revolutionaries try to be the saviors, but they are sufferers in their own way. Kanwar Rampal himself is evicted from his estate for incurring the wrath of his younger brother, Kanwar Birpal.

Prof. Verma is an intellectual, fit only for reflecting, brooding and theorizing. He is incapable of taking any concrete action. He is an armchair philosopher. Lal Singh is all the time vague about the real aim of the revolution and is never able to make any resolutions regarding the means to achieve the aim. He is torn between his duty towards his wife Maya and his allegiance to the organization of rebels. Mishra is treacherous and a traitor. Ram Din too fails to plan things properly. Moreover, these revolutionaries are mere parasites who have to depend on Kanwar Rampal even for their pocketmoney. Kunwar Rampal,
despite his great sacrifice of giving up the allurements of landlordism, fails to identify himself completely with the peasants. His complexes as a rich landlord suffer every now and then. Political leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and the poet Sarshar are also introduced in the third novel. But they too fail to liberate the peasants from their slavery to their masters. Mahatma Gandhi appears to be a distant, inaccessible leader who wants to impress upon others his ideology of non-violence in a dogmatic manner. His taciturnity and sternness are incompatible with his more humane image in *Untouchable*. The peasants themselves seem to be awakened rebels at some places whereas at others, they are still unable to resist the illogical dictates of the feudal lords.

The protagonist’s anguish and frustration is gradually brought before us. As we see the novel opens with Lalu in a train compartment in which the passengers, filled with new ideas, are discussing some political affairs. He expresses his anger about the wrong system of the government. In spite of his brave deeds in the battle of France, he does not find medal for gallantry. He shows his anger saying:

> On my arrival at the depot, I was demobilized without even the mention of a reward, just because I was a prisoner of war in Germany. There was no talk of medals or of the promises of land, with which they lured us to make shields of our bodies for the defence of their own lands.⁸⁴
But now his confidence in the good will and caring nature of the Sarkar is completely shattered. About his condition Dr. P. K. Rajan says,

Here is seen as a tormented soul, demobilized from the army without rewards and shaken by a series of domestic tragedies, finding himself at last within the fold of an insurrectionary group led by count Kanwar Rampal Singh of Rajgarh.\(^{85}\)

Through the description of his friend Gughi, Lalu comes to know that his brother Dayal Singh had turned into a mystic sadhu and his land was auctioned by Sardar Harbansh Singh and his mother scrubbed utensils in a big house. Infact this news makes him into a blind force and he wants to go and destroy his enemies. Even as he re-enters his village back from his war experience, he feels as an outsider and his house appears before him like a cave. Back in his village he stands alone near the cremation ground where his ideal father Nihal Singh and elder brother Sharm Singh lay in eternal sleep. Now he is gripped by a sense of grief and his good spirit turns into a malignant revenge. He feels that it is Harnam Singh who has brought all misfortunes to his family.

Infact, Lalu now understands the main problems of Indian society. After returning to his native village he finds everything changed and the condition of the people very pitiable. Lalu’s dilemma is-
One of conflicting loyalties he is between past errors, present commitments and future aspirations.\footnote{86}

Every where it was the same....There were no black or white people, no yellow or brown people, not even Francisis and Germans, and English and Hindustanis, and Chinis and Japanis, but there were only two races and two religions in the world, the rich and the poor....\footnote{87}

Such a feeling makes him a hard core rebel who feels for the poor and thus describes their fate:

....Oh, son, woe is me! But there is only one thing left for the poor man to do, and that is to buy a coffin by pledging his land and then to die! For there is no other choice.\footnote{88}

With assistance and guidance of Count Kanwar Rampal Singh and Prof. Verma, Lalu starts a revolt against the feudal system which he believes is responsible for the poor condition of the peasants. When the count of Rajgarh asks him about the condition of Punjab, he informs him that the condition of peasants in Punjab is very bad. Meanwhile comrade Shukhua comes there criticizing the cruel acts of Bhoori Singh, a landlord of Nasirabad estate. He tells them that the landlord of Nasirabad has turned him out of his fields which another tenants are ploughing. Lalu, who has already made up his mind to do some thing for the poor and the exploited, when comes to know about the problems of tenants of Nasirabad, wastes no time in uniting the peasants and
taking action against the cruel acts of the landlord. Many comrades gather on the bank of the Ganga on the Eclipse festival. Lalu tells Ramdin that the main hindrance of the well being of peasants is debt. Since he knows fully well the effect of the debt which took away his father Nihal Singh and ruined his whole family he is internally broken and quite bitter. He thus recalls the effect of debt upon his whole family:

If you are a cultivator you have to borrow to secure a crop, don’t you....If your holding is small and has to support more mouths that it can feed, you have to borrow again! If you want to avoid eviction on account of unpaid arrears of rent, you have to increase your borrowing a hundred fold, till debt becomes a mountain, the very Himalayas, whose shadow lengthens till your back is broken under the weight of this mountain. 89

Lalu cites an example of the peasants of Russia who previously suffered much due to the feudal system of the country. But now having their own raj, the peasants and workers are ruling there and living like brothers. Hence he too wants to unite all the peasants of the country:

What was the destiny of man without a sense of right or wrong? Throughout his life he himself had struggled to perfect himself, if not according to the pietistic ideas of his father who told beads of a rosary every minute of the day,
or like his brother Dayal Singh who quoted the words of Guru Nanak, but according to his own ideas of well being and those which he had found good in the teaching of the Church Mission School at Sher kot. He had been in revolt against the limitations of his own nature as well as against the prejudices of religion in Nandpur, and he had sought to perfect himself a man against evils though he had suffered. He had struggled, and always would go on struggling to remove his own ignorance and all the defects in his own nature. And since self-perfection was not enough, he would try to cleanse the blurred minds of all the peasants, to open their eyes to the iniquities, which were practised on them.  

Like Lalu, count Kanwar Rampal Singh is a very kind man, who is ready to help the poor peasants at any cost. When his secretary informs him that Chandra, the son of a tenant of Nasirabad, had been beaten so mercilessly by the manager that he died, the count and Lalu immediately decide to march towards the place of incident. Lalu’s heart melts when comes to know that the boy Chandra has died because he refused to cut the woods for the landlord. The cruel act of the landlord, advocate Sriyut Tiwari criticizes by saying:

It is difficult to believe that the Landlords can be so cruel.

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Lalu believes that the main figure of Chandra’s suffering is the Landlord of Nasirabad. Hence for the welfare of his family and for taking revenge, he asks his fellows:

We will show him!’ we shall take this body about in a procession in the villages and gather the peasants’....He paused for a moment and then he continued, almost challengingly: ‘Tiwari Sahib, what if we take the body in a procession to Allahabad, so that we can open the eyes of all those who don’t believe that these things happen?  

But Chandra’s father is frightened by the cruel behaviour of the landlord. For the sake of his family he begs the Count,

Maharaj, ask him not to turn me and Chandra’s old mother out and evict us from the land. We have nothing now. Nowhere to go.  

When the manager of Nasirabad Estate comes to know that the corpse of Chandra is being taken by the comrades to Allahabad, he tries to prevent their march by all possible means. Sukhua, thus criticizes the state of affairs of the poor peasant:

And then had come the Angrezi Sarkar, like an invisible shadow, as one – eyed Sukhua had said, spreading over this anonymous countryside, where men, and women and children and cattle had grown and died, nameless, like plants. And this Sarkar had
built roads and begun to push the peasants out on them by rolling up their land, the land which had belonged to them for generations, and donating it to whoever the Ferungis liked.

In the palace of Rajgarh, Lalu meets Gandhi ji and tells him about the tragic death of Chandra. Gandhiji gives a solution to the problems of the peasants,

It is to cast out fear....The real relief is for them to be free from fear....

But Lalu does not agree to his opinion and says,

They are suffering from poverty, and are weak. They cannot protect themselves against the continual threat of being beaten up. When we were intercepted in our march on the outskirts of Nasirabad, I called on them to hit back. That had the proper effect......

After returning from Allahabad, Lalu unites all the peasants and tells them to build a new house for the victims of the landlord, which would also serve as the headquarters of the kisan-Sabha, from where they would help the peasants. This shows that he has a desire to change the entire system of the peasantry. He wants to destroy the traditional ways of society, because he believes that it is also responsible for their sufferings. He gets shocked when he finds any person in a miserable condition. For instance, when he sees the wretched condition of men
and women of Oudh village, he heart bleeds for them. Infact in parts of Oudh, human existence has reached at its lowest depth. The people and children of landless peasants’ roam through streets of the village and they are so hungry that they are compelled to drink soup of bushes.

The novel also deals with cruel behaviour of the British officers. Razbi and other comrades believe that like landlords, the British officers are also responsible for the poor condition of the common men. They are surprised to see when peasants raise their hands for their demands, it is treated to be hooliganism but when they are beaten like animals by landlords every day, it is not hooliganism. The poor are dying due to starvation, but the viceroys and Governors hold their wonderful garden parties in the compound of Government house with Indian money. And so he is in favour of changing the whole system of the British Government saying:

If the English declare that they won India by the sword and by the sword shall they hold it, why can’t we say that we shall win India back by the sword and by the sword shall we keep it.... 97

Throughout the novel, Lalu looks very conscious of solving the problems of the peasants. At the end of the novel, we see him sad in the prison along with fellow peasants dreaming of their final liberation. Early in the novel, he looks very sure of the emergence of new fate in the place of old fate:

......a new fate to be wrestled with, a new fate which no one seemed to understand, for less
invoke, but which was somehow connected with the war to which he had been and against which everyone was fighting. It was a fate which was completely unlike the old Fate, Kismat, or God, though it was as cruel a Nemesis as the ancient Fate, and equally unknowable!  

Such an assertion comes quite close to Anand’s own distinction between a “living myth and a dead myth.”

With his inborn love of common men, and peasants, Lalu faces countless sufferings. Like a true leader in spite of odds and adverse circumstances, he always shows willingness to help the evicted peasants. As Dr. P. K. Rajan says,

"......... In all these different phases of his revolutionary work, Lal Singh shows his sincerity and devotion, courage and single-minded dedication. Lalu thus becomes Anand’s own ideal of a revolutionary activist."

While leading the peasants to Allahabad, he is caught with different thoughts and feelings:

Have I not been responsible for the death of Nandu? Have I not deadened all my love for Maya? Have I not been insincere to the idea of this revolution by dragging these men through the wilds?
The novel is replete with quite a few paradoxes. For instance Lalu is against the feudal system because it had ruined him, but he attaches himself to a great landlord in the struggle against landlordism. While he is highly opposed to the landlord of Nasirabad but he accepts landlord’s daughter Maya as his life-partner. The same paradoxes are perceptible in other major revolutionary leaders in the novel. Though Lalu welcomes the social change and longs for the success of the revolution with enthusiasm, but his working fear about the social change compels him to leave Rajgarh at critical moment. Dr. P. K. Rajan rightly remarks:

**Both the Count and Dr. Verma, the one as aristocrat-turned revolutionary and the other as intellectual-turne revolutionary represent two different attitudes to revolution with their inherent inadequacy and they are presented in a suitable ironical light.**

The appearance of two historical figures, Gandhiji and Nehruji is seen in the novel from the point of view of the struggling peasants. For the sake of peasants, Gandhi visits Rajgarh and addresses a Kisan Sabha. Like Lalu, Gandhiji wants to change the whole system of the peasants. Meanwhile Pandit Nehru visits Rajgar to see the wretched condition of the peasants but he disappoints the peasants because he has received an urgent telegram which compels him to leave. Another leader of the revolution is Sriyut Lal Ji Tiwari, a Congress leader of the peasants who hardly faces the onslaught and practically runs away from it. Other activists like Ramdin, Nandu, Mishra, Gupta and Sukhua, all
join the Count’s organization. The main figure of the revolution is Kanwar Rampal Singh, a scion of the Rajgarh family who wants-

to organize the peasantry of the big estates in
his province into Kisan Sabha.\textsuperscript{103}

Even though he is a landlord of Rajgarh estate, he understands the main problems of the peasants and is ready to solve their problems. M.K. Naik finds Anand’s attitude to the count

hopelessly ambivalent and still the novelist puts in his mouth many of his own favourite ideas and theories regarding the nature of Indian peasantry.\textsuperscript{104}

Later in the prison of Raibreilly, he finds himself tormented because of his failures. He thus expresses his disillusionment:

\textbf{What is the destiny of man how can I control it?}
Doomed to die I am? Where by is it that, after a long time to struggle’ I am where I am, after all the stress! After all the efforts I made to cure the defects of my own nature, going deeper than all my deeps. On guard against being taken in. Listening and considering every matter and doing only what I was sure about in the light of my experience. After seeking to grapple with my own destiny and that of others with a devotion even like that of the religious devotee Dayal Singh why
is it that I have ended up in this reeking hell, scratching my head, tossing restlessly from side to side......? \textsuperscript{105}

However D. Riemenschneider had identified real problems of protagonist in the novel as

gradual understanding of himself which makes his own inner struggle more and more obsessive with him. \textsuperscript{106}

Lalu- Maya relationship also plays a significant role. As she does not like him to be involved with comrades, she tells him:

I know you are impatient for the revolution but at least eat otherwise you will just fade away. \textsuperscript{107}

She, time and again, reminds him of the problems likely to come on his way: To M.K. Naik his relationship with Maya is-

virtually a digression totally divorced from the major concerns of the book. \textsuperscript{108}

Lalu Singh’s revolt against the traditional order in the village and feudal system of the country are in fact marked by the motivations of a historical period of transition through his encounter with Europe, and the changing facets of his own country.

Towards the concluding part of the novel, we see Lalu and other peasants arrested. Having nothing worth gloating over in present, the protagonist recalls a sad memory of his father and his mother and
thinks how daddy Dhanno=d drowned and Havildar Lachman Singh killed, and uncle Kripu’s suicide. He recalls that he has often felt that he had died in the war as if something in him had snapped. About the failure of revolution he becomes very frustrated and wants to go away to the Himalayas to forget and purify himself in sanyas. In spite of his suffering in the prison, he is still hopeful of success of the revolution. He expresses his desire saying.

Come worthy little people, come, we will now make a real revolution! Come, we shall work day and night and learn how to make a revolution...’ But his romantic gestures seemed absurd in the cage...so he sat up suddenly, coughed and cleared his throat of the phlegm, and tried to calm himself. 109

Thus the three parts of The Trilogy are bound together with a built in situation generating anger in the protagonist. In The Village Lalu shows his anger towards the traditional views of his family and of society. In Across The Black Water, Lalu and his friends know the system better and naturally they have their anger towards the system of government. In The Sword and The Sickle Lalu neither hates individuals nor curses his fate but he curses the feudal system and the cruel acts of the landlords. The theme of exploitation of the peasants by various agencies is handled adequately. Now Lalu, the protagonist has no choice other than that of fighting for the rights of those like him. Infact, he has found out that his personal resentment against the society matters little as long as he only reacts but does not act. He offers his
help to the peasants to improve their condition and gain their liberty and freedom from slavery and poverty. But in the group of revolutionaries, he encounters a number of conflicting ideas which quite often confuse and shake his consciousness. Inspite of all this he does not lose his will power and a driving force to struggle for the progress and prosperity of the peasants. For the sake of peasants’ problems, he goes to prison. Although his revolution may not succeed, yet he is hopeful about it. For the sake of peasant’s problems, he fights against the landlords and British Government. No doubt he is a champion of common men peasants and sufferers of society who are beset with problems at every positive step for the betterment of their lives. Not once or twice, but at countless occasions, we become helpless but to sympathise with these suppressed sections of society which all the parts of trilogy dwell up on.

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