Chapter — II

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The human predicament depicted in *Reward for Sacrifice* and *The Unchaste* of Pillai is similar to the one found in Anand's *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud*. In the early novels of Anand and Pillai, the emphasis is given to human concerns. Both of them want a change of human heart to take pity on the pathetic plight of human beings who suffer at the hands of the human and the society. They are deeply concerned with the life of common man. Srinivasa Iyengar delivers his evaluation of Anand with the following statement:

> We have in Mulk Raj Anand a novelist who is not so interested in portraying the beauty or ugliness of life or espousing Mark or the machine, as in sensitizing us to the horror of poverty and suffering. The heartlessness of the few which thwart the promising life of the helpless young, and flameless idealism of others which will burn
itself out because it can't cope with the many cornered attack in its half-developed state. (133-4)

It is quite applicable in regard to the novels of both Anand and Pillai. Among the Indian novelists, each of them has an equal claim to be called as great writers in exposing a great concern for the downtrodden people of Indian society. Their novels present minute pictures of Indian society with special focus on the plights of the poor people.

The fact that Anand uses literature as a means to modify society has led critics to consider him as a propagandist despite his repeated emphasis on the fact that the Indian context demands art with purpose. He boldly accepts the negative appellation. Anand admits that:

All art is propaganda. The art of Ajanta is propaganda for Buddhism. The art of Ellora is propaganda for Hinduism. The art of western novel is propaganda for humanity against bourgeois. Gorky as humanist dared to speak of man, man, condition, not only to say how awful it
is, but he also suggested what man could be. And thus he did propaganda for man. (92)

Both Anand and Pillai are similar by their common attempt to preserve the humanistic values in opposition to all the evil forces bent on extinguishing them. Their earnest interest in the welfare of the suppressed in particular man in general is admirable. This is evident from writings of Subba Rao, "Both are committed artists, and are quite definite in their aims as humanists" (168).

Anand and Pillai can not turn away from the social realities of their time, since they want to bring out image in their arts with their social awareness and insight into life. Through a realistic presentation of the tragic predicament of man in modern society, they make a forceful plea for the helpless victims to get away from the social injustice done on them. K.P. Appan, after observing the novels of Pillai, says, "His stories often exhibit the presence of the artist who is in love with the poor and who hates those who exploit them" (22).
Both Anand and Pillai deserve credit even for their thematic choice for their first novels. Balaram Gupta's comment on Anand is apt in this context:

A choice which is perfect consonance with his humanistic concern for man as man, irrespective of his social status. To have chosen a mere untouchable adolescent as his protagonist to project the pathetic predicament of a vast segment of Indian society, which has for centuries been the victim of cruel contempt and heartless exploitation at the hands of hypocritical society, is a daring act which established Anand as a pioneer fictionist with a burning social consciousness, indeed a step ahead of his illustrious predecessors and contemporaries, such as Sharat Chandra, Tagore and Premchand.(102)

Similarly K.M.George's observation of Pillai is also apt:

Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai was active in the field of story writing since 1929. He brought realism to
Malayalam fiction in his own way and championed the cause of the insulted and the humiliated with profound sympathy. The abused and the abandoned, the slum-dwellers, the untouchables and, above all, the poor peasants of his own native village, form the broad spectrum of human life projected through these stories. This evoked a new social awareness in Kerala. (25)

Both Anand and Pillai, in their earlier works, have portrayed the relationship between the individual and the society. According to them, society is an organic pattern. Anand brings out this idea in the words of Dr. John de la Havre in *Two Leaves and a Bud*:

Social development also was a complicated process of action and reaction, of separation and systematization, in so far as an individual existed only in his relation to the community, in so far as he was the product of the climate in which he was born and reared, of the customs of the society in which he grow up, of habit and chance, of heredity and of all the transformation in the
atmosphere in and through which he lived and flowed into the lives of other human beings. (15)

The idea expressed in the above statement is implicit in all the early works of both Anand and Pillai. The interdependence of the individual and his social environment are the pictures of life described by both the writers in all the works and especially in their early works. They share similar humanistic conviction that man, being a social animal, can realise his aspirations or reach his manhood through his interaction with the society in which he lives. The individual will not be in a position to learn anything and all his potentialities go in vain, if he fails to make an interaction with the society

The human concerns, in fact, are the driving force behind all their writings of both Anand and Pillai. They act as a catalyst to their creative output. Anand and Pillai in their early novels expose the realistic rendering of a sad social situation that existed in their contemporary society to express the pathetic plight of the common man. Under the influence of the spirit of the time and being well aware of the significance of novel at the time of writing, both the writers
felt the need of writing about the basic problem of the period—the split between man and society—with all its various aspects. They have been more interested in analysing the crushed human beings. The characters in their novels are generally struggling against a system or the restrictive forces that entraps them and they do not know how to disentangle themselves from the tyrannous clutches. Dr. John de la Havre quotes from “Reports on Labour Conditions in India” which reveals:

‘The position of the plantation coolies in India’ ... is in many respects, similar to that of the cotton plantation slaves of the Southern States of North America, of whom Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote in Uncle Tom’s Cabin. If there be any difference, I think that actual inquiry would prove that the present economic condition of Indian coolies is worse than was that of the Negro slaves in America’. (124)

The primary aim of Anand and Pillai is to project human predicament of the social situation. Anand chose to concentrate on the pathetic condition of Indian proletariat,
while Pillai focused his attention towards the wretched plight of women in Indian society. Thus Anand's early novels provide a composite picture of the Indian proletariat of the 1930s, those of Pillai present a convincing picture of women in the contemporary Indian Society. Both the pictures are alike in many respects, while Pillai presents the hapless human condition of Kerala in South India, Anand presents similar pictures of North India during their contemporary periods. It is clearly seen that both the writers present the whole picture of India.

Languages of Anand and Pillai might be different, but the theme in the early works of Anand and Pillai, is the same, that is, 'human predicament of the individual in society'. Their earlier novels are about man's relation to man and the various social and moral values involved in it. They are about the agony of people, in the depths of degradation, in wretchedness beyond wretchedness, forced upon human beings by other human beings through causalities often known to both them. The common sad picture of man as a helpless captive of certain powerful evil forces in society and his desperate struggle to escape from them is clearly shown.
E.V.Krishna Pillai expresses his opinion on Pillia's *The Unchaste* in this way:

Human life a poetic eye that watches with sympathy a situation that is not so unusual in itself -- that is what we encounter in the book. We see in this beautiful poem the naked figure of human greatness that piteously cries out under the fangs of atrocious evil which, as is said somewhere in this book, God himself has created. This picture gallery has been made attractive by endowing emotions which are otherwise vague with concrete shape. (12)

Pillai draws the disastrous effects of the prevailing socio-economic conditions on the lives of the poor women workers in India, when he makes Bhasi in *Reward for Sacrifice* portray the sad predicament of the women:

They should not provoke those who measure rice in the shops, displease the shop owner. If displeased, job would end; full starvation. In such a situation, won't woman yield, even if she has
sense of morality? Even such a meagre income is not enough for her belly. Thus she bargains for her purity. (112)

**Coolie** too highlights the pains and predicament of poor working people. The description of Munoo's pathetic plight is also typical kind of the common picture of all the coolies:

Thus they worked from day to day in the dark underworld, full of the intense heat of blazing furnaces and the dense malodorous smells of brewing essences, spices and treacle, of dust and ashes and mud, which became kneaded into a sticky layer on the earth of the passage with the overflow of water from the barrels of soaking fruit, and plastered the bare toes of the labourers. They ran about bare-foot and naked except for loincloths. (110)

The protagonists of Anand and Pillai are all shown to be victims of not fate but of certain subterranean forces over which they have no control. They are all condemned by the prevailing evil system. In this connection, Upendra Prasad's
remarks are apt: "Anand's social criticism is directed at the exploitation...This section recalls Dickens at many points. Employers, exploiters, sycophants, policemen, and financiers are all thoroughly exposed" (60).

Depiction of the tragedy of man and his desire to live in modern society as a normal human being is the central theme in the early works of Anand and Pillai. By a realistic portrayal of them, both Anand and Pillaii achieve a genuine tragic vision of life and evoke the profound tragic emotions, providing all with insights into the darkest corners of their hearts. With man as its main concern, each of their novels follows the same pattern of the confrontation of the protagonist against the society. It is this confrontation that determines its entire framework.

The Unchaste and Reward for Sacrifice by Pillai are the tragic stories of two women. Parukutty Amma in Rewards for sacrifice has been forced into prostitution by the pressure of circumstances. Her sociological approach is quite clear from her handling of prostitution, an issue of public concern. She is originally a poor woman engaged in the strenuous work of removing husk from rice by hand
pounding and selling it to the rice merchants in the market. The confrontation of protagonist, Parukutty Amma and her prostitution are the natural outcomes of the socio-economic conditions under which she lives. It is presented as something unavoidable for her under such circumstances; once it is accepted, it is incapable.

In The Unchaste, Janaki Amma is an innocent victim of circumstances, being raped by a gipsy and afterwards as a pregnant girl married to a self-centered man, Padmanabha Pillai. He "rationalized the whole thing, his marrying a pregnant girl" (5). He accepts her on condition that her illegitimate child will not have any place in his life. But the reality of the loss of her virginity turns the rest of her into one of exploitation, ill treatment and denial of all her rights as a wife or a mother. All her attempts to reach out for love, understanding and sympathy prove to be a failure and she is doomed to remain a captive in her husband’s house, suffering from isolation, exploitation and despondency. Janaki Amma thinks:

Not quite a desirable thing. Those twenty-one years she had spent in that house as his wife had
been horrible years, years of burden, suffocation. Life had become simply intolerable as one groaned and reeled under the weight of that inhuman burden, one might speak out once in a way. (23)

The entire situation of her helpless existence is reflected in the sense of loss felt by her towards the end:

Janaki Amma had a lot to think about. She concluded that her life was a story of failures. She knew where it had all begun. That child should not have been born. She should not have married Padmanaba Pillai... But the last twenty one years had been one continuous journey through hell. (55)

But Anand's protagonists, Munoo in Coolie and Gangu in Two Leaves and a Bud, are all driven to their inevitable and inescapable predicaments by similar conditions prevailing in their environment. It is their determination and their urge to live forcing Munoo and Gangu to become coolies. Munoo
Wanted to get away from this riot of human beings... He wanted to drown in some pit of oblivion where he could forget, forget the humiliating memory of the beating he had suffered. He did not want any one to recognize him. He hurried through the street, taking long steps and short capers, and then actually ran. The sweat poured down his body. (74)

Similarly, Gangu thinks:

In the white emptiness of his mind there was the sudden pulsation of wild urge to live. He shook his head and swerved round as if to cast the pallid roll of a desolate sky that hovered over his brain, as it to straighten the curve of his soul dented by the sharp edges of time, as if to throw aside the weight of his persecuted, shrunken resignation. (146)

All of them, under the great pressure of circumstances fall into the depths below depths of a bottomless woe and suffer all indignities both physical and mental.
After analysing the two novels, Coolie and Two Leaves and a Bud, C. J. George comments:

Coolie portrays the sufferings of an individual coolie in a class ridden society while Two Leaves and a Bud pictures the same problem as a group experience in the frame of a leviathan capitalistic set-up. Both are stories of crushed humanity of sighs and tears, of what man has done to man.

(52)

Similarly it is not the sexual urge that leads Parukutty to prostitution, but the urge to live. There is a charge against Pillai that in his early novels, he is obsessed with sex and that he tries to arouse the sexual feeling of the readers. In this connection, K.P. Appan defends the writings of Pillai by saying, "Thakazhi never wished to conceal reality from his readers. The Thakazhi of the early days as well as the Thakazhi of the later days shows the same interest in prostitution as a fictional subject" (21). In fact, Parukutty has been presented as tragic figure, in order to arouse the readers' sympathy and bringing their attention to the tragic plight of woman in Indian society. A close study of these
works will show that it is about the decayed social systems and values that create prostitutes. Pillai’s real intention is to present his humanistic perception that a prostitute is also a human being like others who have been ill-treated and the society reject them as immoral.

In order to carve out a better future for her brother, Gopi, by providing a college education, Parukutty sacrifices her dignity and her health and finally comes to tragic end. It is a tragic end similar to that of Munoo in *Coolie*

The life’s desire joined with last breathing... Ha!
last moment How you snatch away the desire – bound soul from the sumptuous world. All the plans formulated in the mind for the life that joined the womb of imminent future are all in the grave broken!. The germs of desires and potentialities are decomposed with the body...
How many dreams are shattered and dissolved with the tears falling in the grave!. (157)

Like Parukutty, Munoo also dies as a crushed human being due to tuberculosis, utterly broken both in body and soul.
Munoo is a victim of one of the social evils of exploiting economic social system. He is ultimately destroyed by the blind evil forces. His death is a powerful plea for a social change. Coolie is clearly a social tragedy in which the ordinary human being dies at the age of sixteen. He is not given the opportunity of living though he has a zest for life. But at the end, Anand writes, Munoo "in the early hours of one unreal, white night he passed away-the tide of his life having reached back to the deeps" (318). After seeing the tragic end of the boy, Munoo, Dr.G.S. Balarama Gupta writes, "a little more sympathy, that a little more tenderness on the part of the society could have turned Munoo into happy individual, and also averted his tragic end" (45).

Munoo is unable to avert his tragic end and this reveals the central theme of the novel. He is condemned to live a miserable life. At every place he is made to realise his pathetic predicament. Munoo thinks, "This modern world was fearsome. Approached through spacious growth which surrounded the bungalows of sahibs, impressively empty in contrast to the congested world in which he lived, he felt like the outcaste he was"(160).
In *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Gangu, like Munoo, is a hardworking man. The cunning Tea planter's agent, Buta, lures Gangu by false promises of high wages and bright prospects to go to work as a coolie in the Machperson Tea Estate in Assam. The journey of Gangu and family is described as "a journey into the unknown" (1) even at the beginning of the novel. In *Coolie*, Munoo strenuous walk towards Sham Nagar with his uncle, Daya Ram, is a prelude to his sufferings that are to follow.

Like all the early novels of Anand and Pillai, *Two Leaves and a Bud* too presents a realistic presentation of man's cruelty against man, and the frustration of man's aspirations and potentialities. The inhuman treatment of Gangu by his exploiters, and the physical as well as the mental tortures he suffers at their hands make one realises the truth of Dr. John de la Havre's statement: "Man is selfish, man is evil, there is nothing more horrible in this universe than the cruelty of man to man" (128).

Anand and Pillai write of the people, for the people and as a man of the people. Their early novels reveal an aim and a sense of direction as a surge of force. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar
comments on **Coolie** and **Two Leaves and a Bud**: “He (Anand) described a waif like Munoo in **Coolie**...an indentured labourer like Gangu, and set them at the centre of the scheme of cruelty and exploitation that held India in its vicious grip” (334). But it is the inevitable lot of each of the protagonist to be a prisoner of his environment and suffer alienation and isolation in the midst of humanity, confronted with the socio-economic barriers everywhere, each of them fails miserably to escape his destiny or to realise his aspiration for a better life. One common feature of the tragic predicament thus rendered in these novels is its inevitability and inescapable nature.

In **Two Leaves and Bud**, Narayan has been confined to the plantations for twelve years, even after executing a contract of three months. This is clear that it is impossible to escape from the place even if it is a contract for a short period. The description of the tea plantation by Narayan, a coolie, is symbolic of the insulated world of the poor coolies from which there is no way of escape: “You will soon know brother”, said Narain. “First water, afterwards mire! This prison has no bars, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail.
The Chowkidars keep guard over the plantation, and they bring you back if you should go” (38). Gangu poignantly recollects everything. “In a flash, he seemed to comprehend the tragedy not only of his sex, but the significance of that ugly fact which stared him in the face—death” (107-8). Thus, the process of exploitation makes the people dehumanized and bereft of finer sensibilities of life.

In Coolie, Munoo has come to realise that there are only two castes in the world, the rich and the poor. “Money is, indeed, everything, Munoo thought. And his mind dwelt for the first time on the difference between himself, the poor boy, and his masters, the rich people, between all the poor people” (69). Munoo soon realizes the true value of money. Money decides human relationships and it can make and sever friendships. The evil effects of money are brought out forcefully in this novel.

In Pillai’s The Unchaste, the pathetic situation of Janaki Amma’s insulated existence is shown in this way:

She recollected her exchanges with her husband.

Her life was almost doomed. Somehow she has
just managed to exist. Wifehood and mother-hood were a means of livelihood. And to that day she could not remember if anyone had loved her. (41)

Munoo, a frail boy in a hostile world moves from the village to the town, from the town to the city but eventually he is swept away. Thus, in one way or other, all these characters are doomed to suffer isolation, deprivation and degradation in varying degrees as the hapless victims. There is a common quality of desperation and resignation in the life of all these characters. Finding no way of escape, they resign themselves to their fate. There is a tragic dignity in such resignation. Gangu, a Rajput by birth, with a lot of fighting spirit and Munoo, a Hindu Kshatriya, also of the warrior caste are all degraded to the position of servile sub-human status. Gangu does not allow himself to retaliate against the wrongs done to him because: "he had determined not to let his senses always be conspiring to wreak the only vengeance open to him through the Rajput code-murder" (173).

Both Pillai and Anand have chosen protagonists who will appeal by their pathos and not by the strength of character. This pathos about them raises each of them to
great height of tragic involvement. The important fact about Pillai’s Parukutty is not that she is a prostitute, but that she is human. Same is true of Anand's Munoo and for that matter of all the other protagonists in their early works. With their strong faith in humanism, both Anand and Pillai uphold human dignity and assert that these wretches are also human. They humanize these wretches giving them feelings, mind, heart and soul.

Although these works are mainly about the plight of their protagonists in a naturalistic vein, they are more importantly a plea on behalf of their class as a whole. This plea is made more forceful by an indirect projection of a humanistic vision of man or world-view and a critical exposure of the evil forces which are responsible for the social situation presented in each novel. Both Anand and Pillai have used art as an instrument to focus humanism. C.J George opines: “In all his novels Anand stresses the need for a humanistic approach life. He is an artist with a mission and a poet of the aspiring spirit. Like most Indo-Anglian novelist, he is inevitably concerned with man in society” (1). Similarly,
Pillai too recognizes the need of exercising a critical sense in writing. He says,

While analysing life I have tried to analyse in a matter of fact way with a scientific bent of mind.
Let me make another claim. I have also been particular to have the discretion of where to any, and how to any what is to be said, I have taken much care for critical sense. (213)

By an effective use of this method of implication, and the juxtaposition of the two contrastive societies and their values, Anand and Pillai have succeeded in resolving the apparent conflict between their humanistic outlook and the naturalistic bent of their technique.

The confrontation in these novels is not between rich and poor of upper and lower castes, or capital and labour, or man and women, but between alternative societies and their values, What Lucian Goldmann spoke about the novel in general could be applied to the novels of Anand and Pillai. “The novel implies a struggle between the genuine values of humanism and the degraded values of humanism and the
degraded values of the capitalist society” (3). This is true of most of the early novels of both Anand and Pillai. In each of them they try to project in all boldness their similar vision of a humanistic society against the grim background of a decadent society. This vision of society underlying each novel is diametrically opposite to the one expressed in a naturalistic vein. Each novel seeks in the words of Anand, "the desire image, that is to say to suggest what the writer would like life to be like, by implication, as against what it is, in the negation of life" (98).

The primary concerns of Anand and Pillai, in their early works, is their stress on the importance of the vital connection between man and his environment, and on the need of reviving the essential moral and social values to solve the problems of the age, its conflicts and inequalities and the inequalities of man-made laws and systems. They suggest a civilized society where each individual is accepted as human without any discrimination, where he can fulfill himself by the dynamic relation between him and his environment, where men love and understand each other by a sense of fraternity, and where the laws of mercy and justice,
conscience and compassions govern the relationship between them.

Anand and Pillai share humanistic view of man or world view based on their common faith in the essential dignity of man. They insist on the formation of a society which will recognize that man's need for his fellow beings is basic to his humanity. For both of them, man is the totality of his social connections. It is this humanistic belief that makes them stress the need of breaking down the barriers between the individual and society and bringing about the reunion of these two aspects of human existence.

Much of the humanistic conception of society in these novels is revealed in their common denunciation of the prevailing socio-economic conditions and the manipulative value systems. The exposure of cruelty of man against man in all its various forms like exploitation, victimization economic and sexual oppression and others has always been one of the principal motives in the writings of both Anand and Pillai. But in their early novels they are not as much relentless in their indictment of human brutality as they are in their later novels. Here it is blended with their humanitarianism. They
are compassionate with all their characters and extend their sympathy even to the meanest among them. Both of them try to view the human behaviour in their wider vision and arrive at the truth behind it. They try to see man in his littleness, helplessness and futility.

In *Reward for Sacrifice*, Parukutty is well aware that it is not the human nature which is responsible for her tragedy, but the facts of life in the contemporary society. Pillai understands the selfish urgencies that move man to unsocial behaviour which causes misery and ruin to others. In his early novels, his tone is that of a brooding, compassionate and philosophical observer.

Anand, too, is not harsh towards the wicked characters in his early novels. Like Parukutty, Gangu, wants to forgive all his persecutors towards the end. To another coolie, Narayan, Gangu says, “he had suffered a greater pain than the pain of humiliation, he was inclined to forgive” (172). Anand’s comments are significant:

Forgiveness, therefore, was not fickleness. ‘Men with abiding purpose cherish neither hatred nor
love,' he had heard the proverb quoted. They forgave lightly. But forgiveness did not mean that they should cease to strive against wrong. Indeed, true forgiveness was a hard battle, than which only one other battle was harder: to be humble and not proud in forgiveness. (173)

As with Pillai, hatred is for the decadent and dehumanizing systems and values that create such hypocritical, greedy and immoral people. This is clear from the words of Dr. John de la Havre in *Two Leaves and a Bud*: “It is no use hating anyone. It is the system. You must hate the system” (134). Cowasjee brings out the plight of the coolies in a pathetic way:

the coolie—though apparently free to move about and choose his own work—is in fact functioning under a system even more rigid. He has nowhere to go: he is often underpaid and overworked, he is cheated by his employers and lives in constant dread of losing his job. (62)
In their early works, the wicked characters are shown the agents of those evil forces like capitalism, imperialism and conventional morality which are the root causes of social and economic inequalities prevalent in Indian life. The tragic predicament of the protagonist is shown as the inevitable outcome of the disastrous effect produced by such oppressive systems and others. Under the influence of environment and heredity, they become the instruments at the hands of the evil systems of society. For instance, Ganapath in Coolie, Reggie Hunt in Two Leaves and a Bud, Padmanabha Pillai in The Unchaste, and Gopi in Reward for Sacrifice are all typical examples of people who are the products of their background.

In Reward for Sacrifice, Gopi is pictured as a young poor man, highly superficial and snobbish, with an excessive desire for social status and with false notions of conventional morality. The author shows how Gopi ill-treats and deserts his sister who has sacrificed everything for him. But he does not portray him as one essentially wicked. He is shown to be natural in all his desires and actions in a society which is dominated by money and materialistic values. He is
presented as one obsessed with his fascination for a luxurious world. His final betrayal of his sister is something motivated by this obsession in him.

Ganapath is a rich man’s son, born and brought up in the lap of luxury. He is mere a parasite because he has neither the skill nor the will to work. He spread rumours about his partner, Seth’s accumulating debts. This misrepresentation makes Seth to suffer more and he loses his goodwill among the customers and creditors. Anand says in Coolie: “During Ganpat’s absence from Daulatpur there was peace on earth and goodwill among men” (113). Reggie Hunt is an assistant manager of the Macpherson Tea Estate in Assam. He is an embodiment of an evil. In Two Leaves and a Bud, Anand says, Reggie Hunt “felt he would love to come up to the coolies in the posture in which Napolean must have come up to his men, towering like a giant over the pigmies, and infuse them with an awe and respect for him” (45).

Commenting on Anand’s attitude towards the wicked characters in his early novels, K.R. Srinivasan Iyengar says: “The exploiter is a fool no less than a knave, more fool than knave, perhaps, because all knavery is, after all, a form of
folly" (335). This is equally true of the bad characters in Pillai's early novels as well.

In *Reward for Sacrifice*, Gopi, in many ways, resembles Ganapath of *Coolie*. Leading a life of parasitism, he shares with Ganapath his tough skin, a bullying manner and ambition to amass wealth. Reggie Hunt also has a complaint against fate for making his past life bitter by his step-mother's heartless treatment of him, his father's indifference and his mother's immoral life and his present financial constraints. It is obvious that Anand creates Dr. John de la Havre with the sole aim of exposing the monstrous crime against humanism committed by the capitalist planters. Dr. John is a man of many moods like Anand. He is physician, an ideal humanist, a sympathizer of the poor, a lover and a poet. Through Dr. John, Anand pleads for a better Indo-British relationship based on mutual love, understanding and above all humanness. Anand, through Dr. John, utters his diatribe against the British rule in the following:

I tell you. The white sahibs have done nothing.

Only imposed machine civilization on people with
the sword. Money is the white man's god. Exploitation is his religion! They have sapped the energy of the people everywhere! (186)

Commenting on Gangu, C.J. George writes: "It's central character Gangu, an unheroic hero, is a typical farmer facing debt, hunger, malaria, insult and even death with a strange natural dignity" (69).

Through Gopi, Pillai has drawn the picture of a young poor man, highly superficial and snobbish, with an excessive desire for social status and with false notions of conventional morality. The author shows how Gopi ill-treats his sister who has everything for him. But he does not portray him as one essentially wicked. He is shown to be natural in all his desires and actions in a world which is dominated by money and materialistic values. He is presented as one obsessed with his fascination for a luxurious world. His final betrayal of his sister is something motivated by this obsession in him. The similar judgment of man found in the early novels of Pillai and Anand is akin to the Freudian judgment that man is sick rather than villainous. Like Pillai, Anand too does not try:
to all in judgement so much as to understand the motivations deep down in the subconscious minds of his characters... the reasons for the hardness of heart and the evil nature of even those who become the instruments of oppression.(139)

Anand and Pillai expose the evil effects of the prevailing socio-economic systems or values which are the root cause for the contemporary social crisis. Their common humanistic belief that man is the measure of all things, springing from their deep love for the victims of social injustice, prompts them to denounce all such exploitative systems and values.

In Pillai’s *The Unchaste*, the society bound by traditional value system does not accept a woman like Janaki Amma as a human being, despite all her accomplishments and virtues. Though Padmanabha Pillai was willing to accept her as his wife, he is confronted with the moral barrier, set up between them by a conventional moral system. Padmanaba Pillai scolds her, “You whore! I picked you up from the gutter of immorality. I should have looked into your antecedents” (28).
The society as portrayed in these novels is shown to be essentially decadent and immoral degenerated by hypocrisy, prejudices, corruption and greed for money and sex. But both the writers suggest that the social situation presented here is the outcome of the evil effects of the existing capitalist system. Both of them identify the role of money in modern society. They make one aware of the cash-nexus and its social and moral consequences. Money is one of the important forces that shape the whole life of society. In Coolie, Anand makes his hero come to realise his position in the society: "I am only a coolie...probably I might earn enough ...to go beyond the black waters" (167).

Sauda, a trade union worker, stresses the fact that the coolies are extorted: "You can't pay either the capital or the interest because you have to pay, you go home to die of misery and hunger. Oh, when will you realise when will you learn that for centuries you have been the victims of graft and extortion" (266).

Similarly, in Two Leaves and a Bud, Anand exposes the dehumanizing power of money in a capitalist society:
The present system of plantation labour...is a curse and a crime. It is a monstrous crime against humanity. All that was said generations ago, by the Wilberforces and Cannings and Garrisons and Lincolns against the hideous shame of slavery, could be repeated and added to, in respect to what is transpiring to-day on the tea, coffee, rubber and other plantations in India.

(125)

Like Anand, Pillai also shows how in a capitalist society the human values are sacrificed for money. In his novels the female characters, having no economic means to preserve their dignity and purity are always prone to the blatant sexual assaults and repression from their exploiters. This is similar to the fate of such helpless women workers, Narain says, “Nobody’s mother or sister is safe in this place” (42) in Anand’s Two Leaves and a Bud. The veiled, but vehement attack of Pillai and Anand against the prevailing socio-economic conditions and the value systems is typical of the identical method they have employed in their early novels to
expose the social evils and at the same time to project a 
humanistic vision of society.

In this chapter a survey has been made to analyse the 
similarities of these two authors in regard to the human 
predicament against diverse social circumstances depicted in 
their early novels. In the chapters to come their similar points 
of view with regard to the social ills of those times will be 
revealed.