CHAPTER
CHAPTER - I

Introduction

Beyond Literary Naturalism

So I Struggled to weigh up the double burden on my shoulders, the Alps of the European traditions and the Himalayas of my Indian past, all my senses aching to realize the significance of the history of my country.¹

Literary Naturalism claims to present a more accurate picture of life than realism. It implies not only a special selection of subject matter, in a special literary manner; but a mode of fiction that was developed by a school of writers in accordance with a specific philosophical thesis. This thesis, a product of post-Darwin biology in the mid-nineteenth century, held that man belongs entirely in the order of nature and does not have a soul or any other connection with a religious or spiritual world beyond nature. Man is therefore, merely a higher-order animal whose character and fortunes are determined by two kinds of natural forces, heredity and environment. He inherits his personal traits and his compulsive instincts and is subject to the social and economic forces in the family, the class and the milieu into which he is born. The French novelist Emile Zola, beginning in the 1870s, did much to develop this theory. In *The Naturalist School of Fiction in France* (1990) he affirms:

In a civilized society all things are linked together. When one branch of human thought has been set in motion, other branches follow and general action ensues. This literature, guided by the example of science, turned to the experimental method. The great philosophical movement of the eighteenth century was a colossal enquiry which though often proceeded in a
groping fashion, had for its one constant object, the study and solving of every human problem. In history and criticism, the examination of facts and surroundings replaced the old scholastic method. In purely literary works, nature intervened, and soon began to reign with the school of Jean – Jacques – Rousseau. Forest, rivers and mountains became as it were beings, resuming their places in the world’s mechanism. Man was no longer an intellectual abstraction; his environment determined and completed him ... war was raged upon the worm eater edifices of conventions and arbitrary rules. Magnificent were the stride of the period, colossal was the toil whence present-day society emerged. It was an era, which may be taken as the starting point of the centuries into which mankind is entering, with nature as its basis and method as its tool. It was to this evolution that I gave the name of Naturalism.²

Nevertheless, this evolution in letters as in science, implied a return to nature and humanity, combined with careful scrutiny, exactitude of anatomy and truthful portrayal of whatever existed.

Naturalism in other words, is a scientific and objective representation of contemporary reality and life by using the ‘experimental method.’ It is an outgrowth of the eighteen century thought which began in fiction and being militantly insistent upon fact for fact’s sake, it became a subject of controversy and was often misunderstood. Nonetheless, many of the trends initiated by eighteen-century naturalists continue till today even though the form and techniques have undergone some changes and modifications.

In the mid-eighteen century, the French naturalist Comte-de-Buffon maintained that the variation of animal species depended on the physical
environment. Jean-Baptist-Pierre Antoine de Lemory suggested that the evolutionary changes in some animal species may take place through the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Such evolutionary theories as that of Auguste Comte, in his *Cours de Philosophic Positive (1855)* published in six volumes, presented an empirical formula of finding truth. Comte conceived society as passing through evolutionary stages, and his main aim was to reform society through scientific means. He classified science according to the degree of complexity and constructed a philosophy which arranged the general laws yielded by different sciences and found a method common to man. Comte found sociology most complex in its positivistic stage; it dealt with the activities of man and his progress, which meant the perfection of man in society. This emphasis laid by positivism on reason and evolutionary stages which led to the perfection of man in society affected the development of naturalistic philosophy. The chief theories of movement was Hippolyte Taine, whose *History of English Literature (1864)* provided another perspective to the new philosophy. He believed that every work is the product of man who works behind it. The moral constitution of the people differs in various ages, and vice and virtue are products like vitriol and sugar. Every complex phenomenon according to Taine, springs from other complex phenomena on which it hangs and when one considers the question of moral perfection it is necessary to consider the whole race. The three different sources which help to produce this moral state is the race, the surroundings and the epoch. History is thus shaped by these three factors. Taines conception of race centers around the innate and hereditary dispositions which each individual is born with. After his birth, he has to reconcile himself to his surroundings. Man is forced to accommodate himself to circumstances and develops a character
corresponding to them. His characteristics thus acquired are transferred on to his progeny.

The second factor which plays a decisive role in the formation of character is the surroundings in which man lives. Thus the religious, social and geographical background of a man also helps mould his character. The third factor, besides race and surroundings, is the epoch or acquired momentum: it is with people as with a plant; the same sap, under the same temperature, and in the same soil, produces, at different steps of its progressive development, different formations, buds and flowers. The great historical events, such as renaissance, are formed after this law. Any change in these characteristics brings about a corresponding change in the rest, because they are so firmly interconnected.

The novel *Madame Bovary (1965)* of Gustave Flaubert, ushered in a new trend in fiction giving rise to the school of “realistic” fiction. Guy de Maupassant wrote that the appearance of the novel was a revolution in literature. It was a study of human life that was “surprising and complete . . . It was life itself making an appearance. . . .” The novel was a reaction against romantic philosophy and ideas. Besides Flaubert, Goncourt brothers (Alphonse and Daudet) also contributed to the rise of the naturalistic novel; but the fountain head of naturalism rests with Emile Zola.

It is against the background of political pessimism in France and hostility to the Republic, literary naturalism was championed by Emile Zola. Its seed had been
sown at the end of the eighteen century in the "Positivist" age. Within the positivist scientific structure, the biological sciences had come to the fore; thanks to Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), the theory of evolution was in the air with its themes of struggle for life, survival of the fittest and the permanence of hereditary characteristics of original types. Taine had greatly fostered the idea of heredity and environment as vital factors in the development of mentalities, Claude Bernard, the psychologist, had shown that by following a rigorous scientific method, the hitherto empirical art of medicine could itself become a science.

Zola had imbibed the scientific ideas of his generations, his ideas on hereditary and environment. He believed that the novelist must become a species of scientist, the novel 'experimental'. Influenced by Taine and on the basis of these twin forces, hereditary and environment; Zola proceeds to build his family genealogy through four generations in his *Rougon Macquart* (1871) series in twenty volumes. His purpose was to show that hereditary and environment influences, gave common characteristics to a family of individuals who appeared apparently dissimilar. He also published his literary manifesto *The Experimental Novel* (1893) in which he built the theory around the ideas expressed by Claude Bernard's *Introduction to the study of Experimental Medicine* (1865). Zola distinguished the experimenter from the observer. According to him, the observer is one who applies the simple or complex process of investigation to the study of phenomena which he lives as they are; but the experimenter is one who uses the process of investigation to vary the phenomena, making them appear under circumstances and conditions in which nature does not present them. The novelist is both an observer and the experimentalist. By
observation and experimentation, "you possess the knowledge of man, scientific
knowledge of him, in both his individual and social relation ... ."  

Heredity and social environment influences the individual. The naturalists are
not photographers but artist; because even though they start with indestructible facts,
the mechanism of these facts can only be shown by modification and direction of
phenomena and in this lies the genius of the novelist. Science has proved to us that
determinism governs inanimate phenomena. It also, "governs the stone of the
roadway and the brain of man." Heredity and environment thus influenced this
determinism. In fact, the naturalists are experimental novelists because they show, by
experiment, in what way passion act in certain social condition. Hence, 'naturalism'
as Zola termed, involves the application to the literature of two scientific principles;
determinism or the belief that character, temperament and ultimately, behaviour are
determined by the forces of heredity and environment and the historical moment, and
the experimental method which entails the objective recording of precise data in
controlled conditions.

In the years following the American Civil War, many important political,
ecological and social changes took place in the United States, because of which
emerged an industrial nation thus bringing a corresponding change in the concept of
man’s place in the universe. Efforts were made in literature to reinterpret this change
with the help of a new technique. The old traditions and values were disintegrating and
literary naturalism with its deterministic view of life, seemed to be the ideal method
of representing the disorganized state of crumbling values. Besides the prevailing
social conditions, philosophical controversies also provided an impetus to the growth of literary naturalism. C. C. Walcutt traces the philosophical tendencies conducive to naturalism as far back as the Renaissance, with the Middle Ages in the background.

Late in the seventeenth century Isaac Newton expounded that the universe was regulated by a set of mechanical laws. He proved that the universe was not a subject to God’s laws or any other miraculous interventions; it operated on its own. These ideas, according to Walcutt were entirely ‘naturalistic’, provided basis for new philosophies stimulated by the scientific thought, Newton’s theory if applied to man, would produce mechanistic determinism, one of the bases of naturalism. In the eighteenth century, pre Darwinian theories were developed in the context of biology and these evolutionary theories maintained that progressive evolution operated within the species. Spencer, under the influence of Darwin’s theory, believed in the evolution of man from a lesser species and considered sociology to be the end of all science. The doctrine of laissez-faire and the survival of the fittest came to be the general strain in Spencer’s social philosophy. Besides reshaping certain philosophical concept, Darwinism and its sociological version in the doctrines of Spencer revolutionized the field of psychology. Under its impact, the pioneers of psychology, learnt to study the human mind in relation to external phenomena. Darwin had demonstrated that the aesthetic and moral values of man are subject to variation and natural selection while William James conceives of the mind as capable of adjusting itself to its surroundings maintaining an ever shifting equilibrium or adjustment with its environment. Dewey on his part stressed the individual as part of the community.
In America, the contemporary social and literary trends favoured the growth of naturalism. As Vernon Louis Parrington has observed in his essay, "The Development of Realism" (1959), the phases of realism in America have synchronized closely with the periods of economic depression. He traces these phenomena from Howells to Sherwood Anderson. But in the works of Garland and others who succeeded Howells, the effects of science can be clearly felt. There was a transition from transcendentalism to biology, from biology to physics; "from the doctrine of the innate Godhead to the doctrine of biological perfectibility through evolution and thence to the doctrine of materialistic cosmos" that takes no account of theological ends. The romantic conception of freedom of 'will' gave way to stark pessimism with an undercurrent of mechanistic determinism. This intellectual background in the nineties saw the emergence of fiction writers who followed Zola's naturalism rather than Howells's realism. Naturalism in America, however, was not the same literary credo as it was in other countries; the early documents of the movement in America by Garland and Edward Howe were marked by a sense of bitter protest against the desperation of contemporary life in the Middle West. Stephen Crane was a naturalist by force of the economic and socio-cultural conditions prevailing in his native region. Frank Norris was, however, more directly stimulated by the theories of naturalism than Garland, Howe and Crane; Jack London's novels are mostly based on the various theories of naturalism. While Theodore Dreiser was an 'experimenter' and 'observer' in the manner of Zola's naturalism, Edith Wharton, sought to portray the social manners of the day in a
naturalistic manner but in all these writers, native forces mingle with the theories of the European Naturalism.

Naturalism as it emerged in American fiction, is distinct from Howells's 'realism' as Lars Ahnebrink clarifies: "Realism is the manner and method of composition by which the author describes normal average life in an accurate and truthful way. Naturalism on the other hand, is a manner and method of composition by which the author portrays life as it is in accordance with the philosophic theory of determinism."^ James D. Hart defines American naturalism as a "method of literary composition that aims at a detached scientific objectivity in the treatment of natural man. It is thus, more inclusive and less selective than realism, and holds to the philosophy of determinism. It conceives of man as controlled by his instincts, or his passion, or by his social and economic environment and circumstances."^ William K. Frankena too, has defined naturalism as a style of fiction which aims at scientific objectivity with "environment rather than the individual character as the driving force affecting plot development."^9

The naturalists believed in mechanistic determinism; and influenced by Taine, they tried to show that the forces outside the control of man helped to determine his life and character. They also believed in the omnipotence of the forces outside man's control. C.C. Walcutt, however, explains that naturalism, "moves among three patterns of ideas: the religion of reason – nature .... the attack on the dualist of the past; the recognition and slowly growing fear of natural forces that men might study but could not control."^10
From these definitions mentioned above, certain characteristic features of naturalism became clear. For example, the subject matter of naturalistic novels had to be ordinary and common place in contemporary reality. Secondly, the life of the lower class people provided the writers with an opportunity to prove the deterministic theories of the effects of race, milieu and the epoch on the individual. Finally, the essential animal qualities of man fascinated the naturalists as such as his external environment. By exposing the man beneath his social conditions and by stripping him from his social norms, they demonstrated the feasibility of Darwin’s theory of the origin of man through the process of natural selection. Literary naturalism made a late appearance in the Indian Scenario.

Indian writing in English in the late nineteenth century was romantic. Toru Dutt, Romesh Dutt, Manmohan Ghose are part of a world-wide romantic literary scene. With Toru Dutt and Rabindranath Tagore, the spirit of Indian lyricism seemed to be peculiarly akin to the European romantic literature of the period. Tagore and Manmohan Ghose, among others, were however merely returning the compliment paid to the East by the orientalism and exoticism of romantic writers. Tagore’s Gitanjali (1912) brought up on the romantic view of India, which the theosophists and mystics had never ceased to praise, a country of spiritual longings and spiritual realities. In fact, his poetry was essentially more Spartan and naturalistic than the picture of India that the romantic writers like Pierre Loti had given. For many Indian critics, Tagore’s muse was more western than oriental. Nevertheless, the religious subject-matter and the required oriental flavour to western
palates. Tagore’s Bengal took her place side by side with the Persia of Omar Khayyam, and the China of Confucius, Lao-Tse and Li Po and the Japan of Lafcadio Hearn. Gradually India became the most popular of these literary landscapes when Rudyard Kipling’s stories burst like a bomb into the literary drawing-rooms in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Tagore’s plangent romanticism was accompanied by imagery drawn from observation of the natural scene, an aspect of the real India just as Kipling’s romantic imperialism was modified by realistic portrayal of the scene.

After World War I, when nineteenth century romanticism and orientalism began to lose their hold on the western imagination, it was time for India to change her image. The First World War had weakened Europe, England and France, the nominal victors, sapped their morale and started the decay of Europe as a world power. Naturally, European imperialism suffered from the general sapping of self-confidence. The end of British rule in India was forecast. Indians had fought for British victory and supported Britain’s war effort in the expectation of freedom. When these hopes were apparently not honoured, there was agitation, followed by repression, bloodshed and reaction. Many Indian nationalists were of the opinion that there cause was handicapped rather than helped by the image of a spiritual life – negating, passive and contemplative India. Such emphasis on an ascetic or metaphysical religious consciousness could be an ally of the foreign rulers in keeping India quiescent. At the same time India like every other country in the nineteen-twenties was shaken by the speed of technical advances and by the communist and
nationalist revolutions in Russia, Turkey, China and Italy. With the demand for political independence went the dream of revolution, of ending the outmoded cast system and of liberating the sluggish Indian masses in the villages and the great sprawling cities. Writers, artists and scholars were all part of the intellectual ferment in post 1918 India. The writers who identified themselves with the nationalists and revolutionary causes were bound to change the image of India and challenged the vision of Tagore, Kipling and the orientalists and mystics.

The vernacular Indian fiction, represented by the works of Tagore and Sarat on one hand, and Premchand and Jaisankar Prasad on the other, had, besides projecting the total consciousness of modern reality under the impact of many sided change, moved in its later day development towards a new creative dimension. Tagore in his *Binodini (1959)* and *Four Chapters (1950)* and Premchand in his *Gabon (1966)*, had given the Indian novel a new naturalistic orientation whereby the delineation of character became subsidiary, and the exploration of the deterministic patterns of the milieu and the circumstance became the major purport of fictional art. But, the naturalism of Tagore and Premchand was profoundly influenced by their mystic attitude towards the ultimate truths of human existence and destiny. It was left to the younger generation of novelists to make the direct frontal assaults on a reality which lay rooted in the present and the immediate. Revolutionary ideas and ideals entered into the impulsive radicalism of these writers who, as they matured in art, discovered a deterministic content no less vital in the interpretation of cultural change than the mysticism of the older writers. Life flowed with impetuous rush into their novels dictating and controlling the aesthetic form itself, not withstanding
the barriers of the past and the present. Social awareness in its wider amplitudes of fact, as well as in its deeper locutions of sensibility, became the focus of the plot. A new organic form was coming into being which had no time or patience to achieve leisurely sophistication but in which the compulsions of experience had to strike out the patterns of whatever vision lay underneath. The fiction of these younger realists and naturalists in spite of its ephemeral enthusiasms has a raw, unshaped yet a heady power about it. Its force was straight, direct and disturbing. It is to this group of writers, that Mulk Raj Anand's novels must be traced.

Literary Naturalism varies with each individual author because even though it aims at an objective representation of life, the point of view of the individual novelist differs from each other. For example, in the Indian context, it is not the twin forces of biological heredity and environment which shapes the individual's destiny but the social heredity and environment which moulds a man's life. Albert Solomon in his *Critique on Sociology and the Literary Artist* (1957) says that the novel emerges as a new literary form, not because bourgeoisie, patrician and people as such are different from the knights of chivalrous romance but because the sociological awareness, the totally new factor became the focusing development of the plot. In the simplest possible terms society is now the destiny of the individual, the horizon under which the individual lives is determined by the pressure, power and the control of society. Social heredity and environment is thus a major shaping factor in a man's life. Mulk Raj Anand, the pioneer of the Literary Naturalism in the Indian context, is of the view that man does not suffer due to a tragic flaw as per Aristotelian theory, but because his destiny is controlled and shaped by society,
which makes for his social heredity and environment. According to Anand, human behaviour is thus a result of external forces, not inner character.

The individual in Anand's view is in the process of evolution and the purpose of the novelist is to depict such an evolution. It is a kind of evolutionary dialectic of conflicts that shapes the character. However, Anand gives great significance to the experience of life at various levels, in different situations. The confrontation with reality shapes the individual, and the purpose of the novelist is to depict such a reality. Keeping in mind naturalism in the European and American context, the Literary Naturalism in India can be considered as an extreme form of naturalism best exemplified by Anand in his major novels.

Mulk Raj Anand has established himself as the chief spokesman of the Indo-Anglian 'Literary Naturalism'. All his novels have a strong social meaning; his artistic modus operandi seems to be the mechanistic determinism that implies a minute observation and a comprehensive recording of the life of man as the 'animal rationale', controlled by ineluctable social forces. The Leit-motif of Anand's Novels is Naturalistic projections of social reality, utterly devoid of either any sentimental attachment to the past or any nostalgic longing for effete tradition. Treating literature as an anthropocentric, Mulk Raj Anand makes an objective study of the historically developing national spirit with no fetishistic regard for traditional values. This scientific and pragmatic approach towards the national tradition seems to be quite in conformity with the spirit of the age of Renaissance and Reformation. For, Renaissance does not mean a reactionary revival of the musty manners of the past.
but an inspiring rediscovery of the solid bedrock of the national culture for the promotion and progress of the contemporary social values.

In their rebelliousness and objectivity, minute observation and broad documentation and environmental magnification and personalized detail, the novels of Mulk Raj Anand reveal a positive conceptual concentricity with the western naturalistic tradition. The novel, in Anand’s opinion, is the “most humane of European forms of creative literature.”¹¹ His representation, through space and time, of the internal changes in the lives of characters and his vision shared alike by great naturalist novelists like Balzac, Dickens, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Flaubert and Zola point out the fact that the novel is a powerful vehicle of expressing “an epic sense of reality on many planes, and an intense awareness of the possibility of individual growth, as well as a criticism of life.”¹² K. R. S. Iyengar commenting on *Indian writing in English (1999)* says; “none of them cared to produce realistic naturalistic fiction after the manner of a Balzac or a Zola. It was Anand’s aim to stray lower still ... And to show to the west that there was more in the orient then could be inferred from Omar Khayyam, Li Po, Tagore or Kipling...”¹³ while A. V. Krishna Rao in *The Indo Anglian Novel and The Changing Tradition (1972)*, pointed out “Mulk Raj Anand has established himself as the chief spokesman of the Indo-Anglian Literary Naturalism with a proletarian bias.”¹⁴ Gajendra Kumar in a *Manifesto of Indian Socio-Political Realism (2000)* maintains that “Anand is a great realist and naturalist like Zola, Balzac and Flaubert and exposes the social evils and enigma.”¹⁵ Critical acclaim and reviewers thus, placed Anand among the leading Indian naturalist novelist of the times.
However, his achievement is not merely methodological but creatively original in the fictional application of the philosophy of naturalism. The basic attitude that man is the accidental product of heredity and environment and that his behaviour can be explained in terms of these physical factors; changes into a definitive manifesto of the Indian Literary Renaissance and Social Reformation in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand.

The general idea of philosophy of naturalism, a break with the past, denial of religion, respect for science and sympathy for the individual in his conflict with the society, – are all predominant in his novels. But the artistic interpretation of this philosophy involves a study of certain types of human behaviour in hostile environment, characterized by caste, creed and social stigmata.

All his novels are undoubtedly the creation of a great artist who has discovered the effectiveness of novel form and used it to express his passionate love for the suffering people, who after a long struggle managed to get political freedom but not yet, inspite of the continuous struggle, succeeded in getting freedom from caste and class feelings, freedom from religious hypocrisy and superstition, parochialism and fanaticism, freedom from poverty, exploitation and sexual discrimination etc. In fact Anand emphasized social development which is the driving force behind all these writings. It acts as a catalyst to his creative output.
Born in Peshawar, in a Hindu coppersmith family, Anand has narrated the story of his upbringing in the autobiographical Apology For Heroism (1946). “I grew up,” he says, “like most of my contemporaries, a very superficial, ill-educated young man, without any bearings,” since the creation of those days glorified western culture at the expense of the Indian tradition. Two critical illnesses during early years had given him a reflective turn of mind which was counter balanced by his native Punjabi realism and activism. Participating in the Gandhian movement while at college, Anand suffered a brief imprisonment. He went to England to pursue research in philosophy in 1924 where he became interested in the study of Indian art and also came in touch with avant-garde movement and left wing politics and even joined International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. On his return home, he founded in 1946, the art magazine Marg. Anand was an indefatigable traveler and was actively associated with numerous literary and cultural associations both in India and abroad, besides engaging himself in social works.

Anand’s fiction has been shaped by what he himself calls “the double burden on my shoulder, the Alps of the European traditions and the Himalaya of my Indian past.” To his Indian past, however, Anand’s attitude is ambivalent. On one hand, he is critical of the deadwood of the hoary Indian tradition-its obscurantism and fossilization; on the other, as his lifelong interest in ancient Indian art and the intuitive understanding of the Indian peasant mind in his writing indicate that, he is aware of its finer and enduring aspects as well. It is mainly from the European tradition that Anand acquired his fervent socialist faith and his vision of a modern
egalitarian society. His numerous novels form a fictional chronicle in eclectic humanism and his humanitarian compassion for the underdogs are persistent themes.

Both these themes found ample fictional treatment in his first novel *Untouchable (1935)* which describe and eventful day in the life of Bakha, a young sweeper from the outcaste’s colony of North Indian cantonment town. This particular day brings him his daily torments and more but in the end it also suggests three alternative solutions to his problems. A missionary tries to persuade him to embrace Christianity; he listens to Gandhiji, who advocates social reform; and he hears of mechanized sanitation as the only answer which is possible. The novel ends with Bakha “thinking of everything he had heard, though he could not understand it all.” Anand’s treatment of the theme in this novel is remarkably objective and restrained, which saves the book from the sentimentality which mars some of his later novels. Apart from the long harangue on modern sanitation at the end, the entire narrative is a thing of perfect unity and finish.

In his chronicles of coolies – *Coolie (1936)* and *Two Leaves and A Bud (1937)*, Anand turns to the lot of another class of underprivileged. The range and scope of his fiction widened and expanded, and there is an orchestration of themes. *Coolie (1936)* is the pathetic odyssey of Munoo, an orphaned village boy from Kangra Hills, who sets out in search of a livelihood. His several roles as a domestic servant, a coolie, a factory worker and a rickshaw puller, takes him to various places and ultimately to an untimely death. The novel is an indignant comment on the tragic denial of the fundamental right to Munoo and his fellow coolies who are exploited by
the forces of industrialism, capitalism, communalism and colonialism. With its constantly shifting scenes, its variety of characters from all classes of society and its wealth of eventful incident, *Coolie* (1936) has an almost epic quality. However, humanitarian compassion distorts action and character even more disastrously in *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937). The protagonist of the novel Gangu, a poor Punjabi peasant is lured by fabulous promises to go to a tea-plantation in Assam. Compelled to work in an unhygienic condition and starved, Gangu lost his wife and is shot dead by a British officer, who tries to rape his daughter. Anand tries to be objective by showing how the British attitude to the Indian can be both imperialistic as in the case of Reggie Hunt or liberal as in that of Dr. de la Havre, but on the whole, the impression is unavoidable that Gangu is presented as a veritable Indian labourer. The injustice of the British Raj, the exploitation of the colonialists and the misery and suffering of the Indian masses are all exposed in this novel.

Anand in his trilogy- *The Village* (1939), *Across The Black Waters* (1940) and *The Sword and The Sickle* (1942), offers a realistic picture of his life in a typical Punjabi village in the early twentieth century. A young man Lal Singh, who is an insider turned outsider, rebelled against all the village mores and finally escapes by running away and ultimately returns home from a German prison only to end up in another prison. Thus, Lal Singh’s quest of possible seriousness is deprived. These three novels contain the quintessence of Anand; they illustrate his strength as well as his weakness; they reached his finest achievement and also marked his decline. In an essentially picaresque manner, the trilogy traces the career of Lal Singh through various experiences in India and abroad. *The Village* (1939) deals with Lalu’s
boyhood in a Punjab village; Across The Black waters (1940) takes him to Europe as a soldier in the Great War; The Sword and The Sickle (1942) tells of his involvement in the Indian independence movement. Lalu shares most of the characteristics of the other adolescent protagonists of Anand.

*The Big Heart (1945)*, is undoubtedly one of Anand’s better efforts, though marred at the end by compulsive preaching. Ananta, the young coppersmith, called ‘Big Heart’, owing to his generosity, aggressively champions the machine and modernity in a traditional society and finally pays the price with his life. The novel has a special niche in the heart of the author, since it presents an intimate picture of a segment of society to which Anand belongs; and Ananta is perhaps the best realized of Anand’s heroes. The entire action takes place on a single day like Untouchable (1935) and has a taut structure. *The Big Heart (1945)* is Anand’s last novel before independence. Anand with his keen interest in contemporary social and political problems found the immediate post-independence scene an exciting and rewarding artistic challenge. But on his return to India in 1945, Anand has suffered a nervous breakdown as a result of a personal tragedy which made him turn inward and escape into the past rather than confronting the immediate present.

Another attempt to achieve a personal catharsis was *The Private Life of an Indian Prince (1953)*, in which the hero has a nervous breakdown. This controversial novel, admired by few of Anand’s critics but attacked by many others; is a pathological study of a neurotic maharaja. The novel deals with the collapse of Princely Indian following independence and the suffering of the Indian Prince
Victor, the Prince has all the vices of royalty – he has wives whom he ignores or ill treats, he has a mistress Gangi, who tyrannizes over him, he has moods and musings and he wallows generally in luxury and sloth. Sadar Patel summons him at last to Delhi, keeps him waiting till he looses his nerve, then he is made to sign the Instrument of Accession but the administration of his state continues to be rotten. Victor has fresh troubles, and he goes to the United Kingdom on an enforced holiday. He is soon called back, being implicated in the murder of the rival in love; on returning to India, he becomes mad and enters an asylum where Anand is content to leave him. It is clear that Anand does not know his prince and the prince’s milieu as intimately as he knows his Punjabi peasant. The mad Maharaja’s excesses are as odious as the contrived plot with its inevitable tiger-hunt, juggler show, and egg-eating contest is theatrical. Above all, it is almost comic to see the champion of the downtrodden weeping over the downfall of a Maharaja.

Fortunately, Anand returns to his peasants in The Old Woman and The Cow (1960). The ‘cow’ is Gauri, a simple peasant girl forsaken by her husband and actually sold to a rich merchant by her mother, whose logic is reminiscent of that of Hardy’s peasant. “It was a choice between my Gauri and my cow.” Gauri escapes, becomes self reliant and is transformed into a veritable tigress. This is a neat reversal of the age-old Sita myth in the modern context. Unfortunately, Anand in this novel also, blots his artistic copy-book by resorting to direct statement through his mouthpiece, Dr. Mahindra, Gauri’s benefactor.
Anand's next two novels are slight works, showing how he has never been able to sustain his art at a consistently high level. *The Road (1963)*, is a rehearsal of the *Untouchable (1935)* theme, adding little that is new by way of thought or insight and *The Death of a Hero (1963)*, a short novel on a Kashmir freedom fighter again reveals how Anand resorts to mere conventionalities when he is cut off from native-Punjab scene. In the seventies, Anand returned to the autobiographical vein, which he first exploited in *Seven Summers (1951)*, *Morning Face (1970)*, *Sahitya Akademy Award (1972)* and *Confession of a Lover (1971)*, which are part of a long fictional volume. *Morning Face (1970)* covers the period of his school days and adolescence, and the story of the growth of Krishnan Chander's mind specially his sharpened political awareness is evocatively narrated. An interesting aspect of the novel is the number of characters and situations from Anand's fiction reappearing in it. Though it lacks the freshness of the much shorter than *Seven Summers (1957)*, *Morning Face (1970)* is an authentic document of the revelation of a mind and its milieu. In *Confession of a Lover (1971)*, Krishan Chander goes to college, has an unsuccessful love affair with a young married Muslim girl, dabbles in poetry, journalism and politics and at the end leaves for England. As one watches Krishan Chander grow up, one feels that his sensitivity, amounting almost to morbidity at times, and his inhibited self – love – qualities rather engaging in the child and adolescent – are increasing less in the youth. The story of Krishan Chander and Yasmin has its tender moments but seems to move dangerously close to the world of romantic conventionalities, especially when the hero indulges in not infrequent rhetoric.
The strength of Anand’s fictions lie in its vast range, its wealth of living characters, its relentless realism, its deeply felt indignation at social wrongs, and its strong humanitarian compassion. His style, at its best, is redolent of the Indian sort, as a result of his bold importation into English, words, phrases, expletives, turns of expression and proverbs drawn from his native Punjabi and Hindi. A tendency to slip into easy sentimentality and lose artistic control, a weakness for preaching, and a frequent insensitiveness to the nuances of expressions, which often makes him write in a footloose, frenzied and even slipshod manner, have made his work extremely uneven, though his total fictional achievement with all its limitations, remains impressive enough.

Anand’s study and presentation of man and the milieu went well beyond the scope of naturalism to what may be called hopeful humanism. This was greatly augmented by the impact of Gandhi on the Socio-Political life of India. Politically India was in a great turmoil for struggle of freedom. Nationalism was the weapon for getting rid of the British imperialistic colonial regime. The emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the undisputed leader of the Indian National Congress was a major factor in the freedom struggle of India and had a tremendous impact on the Indian people. In his struggle against racialism in South Africa, he had developed his philosophy of action, Satyagraha. He implemented this in Bihar and Gujarat which brought Gandhi into close touch with the masses who later became the active participants of the movement. The countrywide general hartal against Rowlatt Bills on 6th April, 1919 and the massacre of Jhalian Wala Bagh of April 15 added a dimension to the freedom struggle. The Punjab tragedy also brought Gandhi into the forefront of Indian
politics. His arrest on 10 March, 1922 in connection with Khalifat Movement became another burning issue of the time. The electrifying impact of Gandhi’s arrival on India’s political life has been described in the following words:

he was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breath, like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and allowed us to see clearly at last; like a fierce wind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people’s mind. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and continually drawing attention to them and their terrible condition. Get off the backs these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by their exploitation; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery. Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content. Much that he said we only partially accepted or sometime did not accept at all. But this was not the real important thing. The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth, and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view. We had been told in our ancient books that the greatest gift for an individual or a nation as Abhaya (fearlessness), not merely bodily courage but the absence of fear from the mind. Janaka and Yajnavalkya had said, at the dawn of our history, that it was the function of the leaders of a people to make them fearless. But the strongest impulse in India under British rule was that of fear-fear which spread everywhere, which weighed down heavily on every one, and choked everything; fear of the army, the police, the wide-spread secret service; fear of the official class, fear of laws made to keep people down; fear of prison; fear of the landlord’s agent; fear of the money lender; fear of unemployment and at starvation, which always threatened. It was against this fear which spread into everything that Gandhi’s quiet and determined voice was raised. Be not afraid. Was it so simple as all that? Not quite. And yet fear creates its own ghosts which are more fearsome than reality itself, and reality, when calmly analyzed and its consequences willingly accepted, loses much of its terror.

24
His Dandi march electrified the national consciousness of the people and a fever August 1932, brought a new sense of fear and crisis among the people. Gandhi took the award as a challenge and went on fasting against it and ultimately succeeded in forcing the government to amend it.

However, there was good deal of fresh thinking before the World War II. The socialist trend was visibly forceful in the leadership outside the congress. At the same time, many of the political workers involved in the education and the organization of the rural peasantry, were powerfully stirred by the Marxist ideology which was being pulled forward by the communists and socialists of the time. In the meantime, communal tension took an ugly turn after 1937 due to the British imperial policy of dividing people on communal and caste lines. By then, it became clear to people that “the outstanding feature of British rule was their concentration on everything that went to strengthen their political and economic hold on the country.”

When the Second World War broke out, Indian leaders found themselves in a difficult situation. The British government was dragging Indian leaders into the war without consulting the Indian legislature. The Indian congress found the British government completely unrelenting to its demands and finally passed on 8 August, 1942, the famous ‘Quit India’ resolution demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India. A mass struggle was also sanctioned under the leadership of Gandhi, who gave his famous call for non-violent war or ‘ahimsa’. Meanwhile, on the basis of the political settlement reached in 1947 between the British and the
Indian leaders, India was partitioned into two sovereign states on 15 August 1947, despite Gandhi's opposition to the plan. Thus, the pride and joy felt in the achievement of freedom was marred and diluted by the pain and misery of partition. Gandhi, the father of the nation was weeping and treading the solitary path of riot-torn villages of the country, when the people at large were to have the first experience of being citizens of a free and independent country.

The nineteenth thirties were thus, crucial to modern Independent India and the Indo-Anglian novelists of the times were naturally preoccupied with the grim struggles against the alien power as they were witnesses to all the events mentioned above, that happened during the freedom movement. They felt the spirit of the times in their own veins and the result was their writings which reflected the growth of political consciousness. The prospect of national independence and the vision of India after the freedom acted as a stimulating factor for these writers. Hence their novels suggest the trend of political consciousness among various groups of people of that time. The writers were immensely influenced by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi who dealt with the evils of contemporary society and fought for the cause of underprivileged classes, the downtrodden and defenseless. It is around a small group of intellectuals headed by Gandhi, the political strategy for the abortion of untouchability was built up, inseparable from the idea of independence. These personalities modernized revolutionary ideas, which had been stirring in the country, around the revolting nature of untouchability. Their perception of this phenomenon was as a sociological irrationality, and they demanded equal access to the higher reaches of Hindu cult, inspite of strong opposition from the upper castes.
Gandhi is traditionally associated with the ethical awakening of Indian society to the problem of untouchability. His stay in South Africa made him verify the “universality” of the discriminatory behaviour by privileged groups in relation to either the socially or culturally underprivileged. In India too, his progressive contact with untouchables suggested to him the relativity of the criteria of discrimination. The concept of a link between politics and religion determined his attitude towards the untouchables in a very significant way. His mystical awakening, as all his religious itinerary, is characterized by a methodical enquiry into Hinduism, a religion that allows the existence of strongly degraded and humiliated social groups. Gandhi’s aim was social reform, transforming the untouchables into a Varna and removing its former stigma, rectifying in this way the original spiritual corruption of Hinduism. The eradication of untouchability would result in a change in the attitude of the other castes that, like them, the untouchables are children of God, harijan. This quest compelled him, nevertheless, to the effective inclusion of the subject of untouchability in the Congress Party program, making it inseparable from the project of independence. His idea of eliminating untouchability by a “humanistic” change in the other castes however, jeopardized his political intensions irreparably.

The writers of the Gandhian era began to expose the age old social evils and traditions which were suffocating the lives of the poor and downtrodden masses. The fictions of the Gandhian era have reflected the various incidents and happenings of the life and activities of Mahatma Gandhi in particular and the religious upheavals in general. He gave to the literature as to the world, a new perspective on the problems
of untouchability; he spoke of the dignity of labour and the plight of the harijans. The works of these writers are not simply the collection of historical facts or event; they are highly literary, saturated with poetic grandeur and artistic craftsmanship. A close study of their works clearly reveals the fact that though they portrayed the contemporary movements; they are never devoid of the aesthetic function of a great work of art.

One of the silent features of Gandhian literature is the simplicity and clarity of language. Mahatma Gandhi strongly believed in the dictum - 'simple living and high thinking.' The writers of this age discarded ornateness, artificiality, pedantry and labourious artistry in their language both in English and in the vernaculars. The novelists preferred in theme, the village to the city, the poor to the rich, the cultural heritage of the village to the urban luxury and sophistication. Almost all the protagonists of the novels come from the lower class of society – a society afflicted with British imperialism, economic exploitation, racial discrimination, religious conflict and above all political crisis. Among the authors whose works deal with Gandhian thought and the contemporary freedom struggle - are Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Manohar Malgaonkar and Bhabani Bhattacharya.

Mulk Raj Anand was born in a period of history when socio - political events had a strong impact on the contemporary Indian literature and the Indian English novelists were showing their concern with the changing national scene and the political upsurge. His novels are related to the upheavals and tribulations of the society of his time. Anand took upon himself the task of championing the cause of
the downtrodden section of the society, and thus revolted against those who had
oppressed them and kept them under subjugation. He selected significant themes of
his time, including the subjects like political independence and social problems.
Anand was convinced that a writer should take up contemporary issues, as he
himself, was inspired to the write due to the compelling historical events of his times.
The impact of the political angle could be gauged from what Pramila Garg says:

The twentieth century Indian novelist in English had
primarily being concerned with the changing national
scene in respect of the political upsurge which
compelled the British to withdraw from India. The
freedom movement in India was not only a political
struggle but an all pervasive national experience for the
first few decades ......Hence, no Indian writer writing
in those decades or writing about them could avoid
reflecting this national upsurge in his novels.20

On the whole, social, economic and political climate of the time presented such a
gloomy picture that Anand’s writing could not but remain the true depiction of the
social reality of his time. His early days as a writer were very significant because it
was during that period that Indian political leaders were showing their heroic
attempts to prove India’s capacity for self - government. Anand, being the novelist
of the Gandhian era also saw how India’s old and familiar concepts were challenged
by the new ideas introduced due to Indian intellectuals though western through and
learning. He had the first – hand experience of the period immediately after the
independence during which India faced many problems of serious magnitude in the
wake of its emergence as an independent country as the freedom it gained, was in the
hour of communal disturbances of unprecedented ferocity and unbelievable
bestiality. Millions of people had to leave their homes and properties while fleeing to
escape from the impending death. Thus the freedom, brought with it both the moments of glory as well as the doom.

Anand was drawn into the events of the pre-and the post independent India. The struggle served to restore links between literature and society, between national history and the prized traditions. The Gandhian ideology offered immense possibilities for the creative writers of the time. The struggle for independence impelled the creative writer to discern order in disorder, and a pattern in the seemingly un-patterned muddle of emotions and the rapid gyration of events and historical experience. There are sufficient evidences to suggest that the Indian fiction in English should be studied keeping in mind, the political motif that has been very prominent from the beginning. The Indian novel in English was born before the independence and the politics of the freedom struggle has played an important part in it. There is an intimate connection between the growth of the freedom movements and the rise of the Indian novel in English because most of the pre-independent novels outlined and advocated Indian aspirations for freedom and independence from the Raj as explained by M.K. Naik:

Upto the 1930s there was no Indian novelist who could claim sustain and considerable achievements in fiction originally written in English. Then came a sudden flowering, and it is significant that it came in the 1930s – a period during which the glory that was Gandhi attained perhaps its brightest splendour. The Indian freedom struggle was already more that a generation old, but with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi it was so thoroughly democratized that freedom consciousness percolated for the first time to the very grassroots of Indian society and revitalized it. It is possible to see a connection between the development and the rise of the Indian novel in English; for fiction, of all literary
forms, is most vitally concerned with social conditions and values.  

Unlike in the post-independence era, novelists of the 1930s were bound to exhibit a certain attitude to the British rule. For them, literature became a valuable and convenient way to dramatize and popularize their cause. After “World War I, the literature of the Indo-Anglian writers became determinedly more realistic, less idealized and a more earthy presentation of India was sought.”

Though Indian English writers had started focusing their attention on political and social questions much before the appearance of Gandhi on the national scene, with his arrival; all nationalists; revolutionaries and writers were imbued for the first time with a ray of hope. K.R.S. Iyengar has aptly illustrated the political importance of Gandhi in literature during the early twentieth century in the following words:

The next twenty years saw a further spread of English education, but there were heard of notes dissent and discontent also. Then came Mahatma Gandhi, and from 1920 to 1947 he led a unique revolution against the British bureaucracy in India, with sudden storms and unruly lulls alternating, till the British divided the country and withdraw as a political force on 15 August 1947.

As is evident, a number of novelists began to write in English during the 1930s with a view to communicating their feelings through their novels in the context of the Indian people’s suffering at the hands of imperialists. Hayden Moore William has also rightly illustrated the socio-political scene of the time in the following words:

English writing in India from 1920 onwards was considerably modified, naturally, by both nationalism and socialism. The very fact of writing about the Indian problems made the Indo-Anglian writers a
partisan whether willing or not of independent self-assertion. Some writers kept clear of politics—Narayan's early novels are mainly non-partisan. Others submerged their art in the political struggle or entered into an uneasy alliance of art and propaganda. Raja Rao in Kanthapura and Mulk Raj Anand in his novels of the nineteenth thirties (Coolie, etc.) were highly conscious of the role of the writer in the political struggles of the Indian people.24

Anand can be comprehensively evaluated by having a genuine understanding of the socio-political history of his time which has a strong bearing on his major novels. His own explanation in the following lines further reveals the reason behind taking his art as a means to the development of the consciousness of the toiling masses with a view to bringing them closer to victory over their oppressors:

The era to which I had been born was, thus, the historic turning point of my country. For, having gone so far through the sheer logic of its own acts of aggression the British bourgeoisie refused to go any further, while the Indian people, growingly conscious of the exploitation of their country, had begun to challenge authority and to demand their right to carry out the social evolution in India to its inevitable conclusion. We wanted to win control of the means of production to abolish the profit system and to undertake large schemes of industrial and social planning with the help of the latest researchers in science and technology, through which alone we could appease the great hunger all over the country and become dignified members of the human family.25

Thus the foregoing analysis of the thirties movement under the leadership of Gandhi brings to the light the socio-historical scene of India. He came to the limelight not only on the pages of history and social sciences but also in literature. Gandhi gave to the world a new doctrine—a new way of giving expression to people's demands and claims; a new strength and inspiration to unarmed masses. He spiritualized politics by his strict adherence to the doctrine of truth and non-violence. His powerful impact
on the socio-historical background of the 1930s, particularly on the Indo-Anglian literature was immense that Anand could not but be influenced by the contemporary events in India which deeply stirred him and defined his aesthetic principles in close alliance with the forces of history.

India was groaning under the imperialistic rule of the Britishers when Anand was born. The people had lost their moorings; the old values were crumbling. Religion had become a matter of meaningless ritual and arid ceremony. Fatalism and superstition dominated the minds of the poor masses, nor did the alien rulers ever think of the necessity of integrating the aspirations of the natives. The education imparted by the British Indian schools seemed to have no vital links with the genuine needs and interests of the ruled. It failed to enable the Indians either to acquire a clear understanding of his own culture or to get a correct appreciation of the European culture.

Most men lived lives fraught with squalor, poverty and caste consciousness. Anand knew that the old world was dead and the European Renaissance had become a spent force. The rapid growth of science and the consequent Industrial Revolution had resulted in colonialism and imperialism. Simple values like love and beauty had receded to the background. In the midst of this, Anand came to realize that only a new humanism with its respect for man and the massage of live and let live and compassion could restore peace and harmony to the war - torn world.
Traditionally humanism implies love of man, the whole man with all his weaknesses, instincts and impulses. It may be defined as a system of thought; in which, human interests, values and dignity are held dominant. Humanism implies devotion to the concerns of mankind. It is an attitude of mind that concentrates on the activities of man rather than on the supernatural world and the world of nature. The history of Western Humanism goes back to the Renaissance and it arose as a result of the study of the ancient classics which emphasized things human, and of this world as contrasted with the medieval preoccupation with the supernatural and life in the other worlds. Historically, humanism is a Renaissance doctrine which stresses the essential worth, dignity, and greatness of man as contrasted with the older view that man was wicked, worthless and doomed to destruction both in this life and the life to come. Renaissance humanist, deriving their belief from the study of ancient poets, historians and philosophers, came to believe that man is capable of living a life of reason, dignity, morality and even happiness.

Anand’s insistence on dignity of man irrespective of caste, creed and wealth, his plan for the practice of compassion as a sole value, his conception of the whole of man, the profound importance attached to art and poetry as instrument for developing the masses, his crusade against superstition, feudalism, and imperialism are some of the chief characteristics of his brand of humanism.

The humanism of Anand set forth in detail in *Apology for Heroism (1946)* and *Prolegomana to a New Humanism (1958)* however, does not rest on divine sanction, as does the mystical humanism of Gandhiji. It puts its faith in the creative
imagination and unconquerable spirit of man. It can be possibly achieved through socialism, for socialism alone can restore economic and political freedom and thus, help the growth of a full man. Anand believes that only his new humanism can restore order and decency in the world. His faith in humanism has made him optimistic about the future of mankind. He was confident that nothing could wipe off humanity from the face of the earth. The human heart is bound to survive all the destructive changes.

Like most of his other humanist friends, Anand declares his immense faith in the Protogorean dictum "man is the measure of all things" which implies that he believed in measuring all values and all actions in relation to the personality of human beings. He firmly believes that man is potentially capable of rising from the lower passions to magnificent heights of splendour and he has in him enough creative energy and imagination to transform himself and raise to a glorious pinnacle of dignity and to rid mankind of its unspeakable misery and pain, all through his tireless physical and mental energy. It is to enable man to achieve this end that Anand fervently pleads for the emergence of a new conception of the role of man in this vast universe.

Anand's humanism thus makes him a novelist with a mission and his theory of the novel is naturally in line with his commitment to his creed. His concern for the oppressed and the downtrodden is reflected in all his novels. All his heroes like Bakha, Bhikhu, Munoo, Gangu, Lall and Ananta break down, unable to fight against the oppression and exploitation mounted on them in an organized manner. All of
them pass through miseries, encounter all impediments boldly and emerge essentially unvanquished and hopeful. But Gangu's death, Bakha's return, Ananta's death, Bhikhu's journey and Lall's turning into communist at the end of the novels do not suggest a pessimistic resignation but rather it paves the way for a hopeful vision of a future.

If Anand's naturalism and humanism is viewed properly, then the inevitable third term arises: the relation between the two. For Anand, the third term is the Integrating Factor or what he called is Bhakti, the relation of personal, efficacious love, between the members of the units of society, family, community, nation or the world:

But, if there is no war, from deep within the orbit of the Indian tradition of individualism, shorn of its religious sanctions, may grow the gradual limitation of the power of the state. Except that the old individualism will also have to shed its egoism and concern for personal salvation and take on the bhakti - yoga, or devotion through works, which integrates the individual into community.26

It is the maintenance of this relationship of loving service, which constitutes the wholeness of Anand's ideal man. It is indeed clearly pointed out as Iqbal Nath Sarsar in Untouchable (1935), speaks of mechanizing the mode of the disposal of garbage which will ultimately eradicate caste. Sauda in Coolie (1936), exhorts the workers to go on strike for the betterment of their lot and Purun Singh in The Big Heart (1945) voices Anand's highest conception of value in human life. The protagonists of Anand often portray the dedicated universal compassion and tolerance of bhakti. De La Havre, the English physician of Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), Lall in The Sword and the Sickle (1942), Dr. Shankar in The Private Life of an Indian Prince (1953),
and Dhooli Singh, the enlightened landlord in *The Road* (1963) are the examples of such a portrayal.

The new religion, a new value system supplanting superstitions, personal devotion to god by rational devotion to man are the values which Anand proposes to his countrymen. The traditional religion, he maintains, made men indifferent to the ills on this earth yet the new religion of bhakti, requires impassioned, practical efforts to remove not only external signs of ill – filth, poverty, pain, disease, hunger and ignorance but also the evils which are deeply rooted in social, political and economic institutions. Outside bhakti there is no other world, according to Anand, therefore, if men are to find it at all, they must find its happiness here. The condition for human progress is the fullest possible freedom and equality for all; Bhakti strives towards such a condition.

In the final analysis, the novels of Mulk Raj Anand expressed us, as the product of the Indo – Anglian Literary Naturalism but the artistic exegesis of his philosophy involves a study of certain types of human behavior in a hostile environment. This naturally results in a tedious stereotyping of the basic attitude of the writer under the thin veneer of diverse situations and different individuals. The final impression is one of admiration for the solidity of factual details in the extreme precision in his study and presentation of man and the milieu, rather than for the fulfillment of art itself.
However, the achievement of Anand is not merely ‘methodological’, nor do the protagonists of his novels always meet with death. The tragic ends of the heroes of his novels do indeed suggest the remedy for the social disease, which arrest the healthy growth of the personality of the individual. Thus for example, industrialization or more precisely, mechanization is the remedy for the evils of untouchability. Scientific education and socialist outlook can effectively put an end to the capitalistic exploitation; and a voluntary and free acceptance of this social reality is a ‘revolution’ in an organized way, rectifying the various wrongs of the society.

Anand can not in fact, be charged with pessimism or fatalism; as the ultimate aim of his protagonists is always social upliftment and human betterment. The mechanistic determination is instrumental in bringing about the eventual catastrophe of the protagonist. The triumph of Anand seems to be in his transcendental comprehension of the social dynamics that determines the destiny of every individual. His imposition of the patterns of his own thought on the fictional papier-mâché of experience is in complete consonance with the philosophy of naturalism. As such, his novels are living milestones in the tradition of the Indo-Anglian literary naturalism.

Despite the tragic notes of the novels, the ideas of scientific humanism are sustaining and pervasive in his novels. In fact, it his consciousness of the need to raise the untouchables, the peasants, the serfs, the coolies and other suppressed
members of society, to human dignity and self awareness in view of the abjectness, apathy and despair in which they are sunk, made him a naturalistic humanist.

Anand’s humanism places man in the centre of all things and believes in the ethical equality of all men. He feels that all men are equal and there is no division of caste, creed, or race, which are obstacles for human development to the full height and dignity. According to him, the conquest of pain should be the supreme goal of all individuals and all nations. He strongly condemns the cruelty and the pain inflicted upon the underprivileged by the higher sections of society and firmly believes that one of the most urgent needs of mankind today is to infuse love and tenderness into the hearts of all men.

But even today, the solid bedrock of the national culture is being upheld in a fanatical manner in one form or the other. Man’s life is determined by the social norms as we have miserably failed to develop a scientific outlook, which is the need of the hour. It is well nigh impossible for us to effectively shape the destiny of the oppressed, to improve the quality of life and to provide the basic necessities of life unless we are steeped in science. For science, awakens the urge to inquire and research for the truth and this kind of attitude would probably help bringing about a social change removing from its surface, the mark of traditional ties that has kept us in its vicious grip. Many of the social values that were upheld in the ancient times are outworn and irrelevant in the changing times, and are to be discarded once and for all. Therefore, what we need is not the militant revival of a moribund culture but the creation of a dynamic contemporary society as envisaged by Mulk Raj Anand.
Having indicated the crucial importance of literary naturalism in the European, American and Indian context as contributory factors in the shaping of Anand’s literary manifesto, we find in his works a distinct movement beyond naturalism towards hopeful humanism. The following chapter will study this trend as well as document the pattern of social heredity and the role of environment in his major novels.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


5 ibid. , p. 55.


17 ibid.: p. 155.


