CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE YOUNG PROTAGONISTS IN CHARLES DICKENS' AND MULK RAJ ANAND'S NOVELS
Literature is not simply an entertainer; it also presents various dimensions of the society. Every author is the product of his own contemporary social set up. The writers never deviate from their own social environment. Though the writers use imagination, they never miss to project the various dimensions of the society. They borrow the story and the characters from the society. According to Marxist theorists, literature should be related to the society. It should not be purely on imagination. The aim of literature is to help the people to identify themselves in relation to ethics. Literature should instruct the readers to see the pros and cons of various means of the society. Marxist theorists like Frederick Engels, Lenin, Gorky and the like consider art is a weapon for social change. It is the duty of the writers to create art for the amelioration of standards of the society. The writer should not forget to point out the evils of the society.

Society is a major concern in every literature. The relationship of the people in the society occupies at the centre of every work. In projecting the relationship among people, the writers' mind are pre-occupied with social evils, poverty, humanism, love, morality and the like. With the advent of industrial revolution many changes were brought in the society. Though there are many reformation were brought through the renaissance movement in every nation’s history, they have failed to bring many changes in the society. With the arrival of machines in the industries there was much productivity and unemployment. As a result of this the gap between the rich and the poor is further expanded and has led to many social and political changes. There is economical crisis in the society. Much importance is given to money rather than relationship and ethics. This has become a hard nut to crack for various economists and politicians.

Writers like Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy and George Eliot from England, Mulk Raj Anand, R K Narayan and Raja Rao from India penned their works mainly focusing on social relationships. Among them the portrayal of social relationships is laid special emphasis in the works of Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand. Though both of them belong to different periods and different nations they offer a vivid glimpse of their contemporary period of life.

A work of art with a telling message that glorifies humanity, directs towards the betterment of society. It paves the way for the uplift of the downtrodden and also identifies values. To uphold the true values and reject the false ones becomes “the best book of all
time”. Both Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand’s novels do certainly fall under this category because they are the products of “feel and real experiences”. Whereas other novelists who strive just to entertain their readers look ‘at’ themselves and the people around them, these two writers write with the singular view to enlighten his readers, look ‘into’ themselves and the people around them. Both Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand experience the agony and pain of coolies, child labourers, down trodden people, indentured-labourers, untouchables, whom they personally knew in their life.

Mulk Raj Anand turned a new leaf in the development of social consciousness and critical social realism in the Indian novel in English. He is deeply concerned with the social problems and he is committed to the eradication of the evils which infest modern society. (Cowasjee, Saros. P.58). To put it in a nutshell, Anand in Indian English fiction what Dickens did to English fiction. Whereas Dickens sacrificed art for the sake of his zeal for reformation Anand believes in the art for the life’s sake. His novels and short stories, deeply rooted in his real life observations clearly reveal his heart’s desire to rebuild a world. Moreover, his novels express in a committed manner his philosophy of life which is one of naturalism and humanism. He is a man of vision and an incurable romantic, a dreamer who strives hard to transform his dreams into reality.

Anand is Dickensian in his ultra-sensitivity to the existence of social evil in protean forms. That his deep concern and unpolluted love for those at the lowest rung of the society will not allow him to do even least harm for “the last little moth over the flame of the hurricane lamp” is revealed in his autobiographical novel Morning Face (P.335). He is very angry with those who impose greater troubles and hurdles upon the downtrodden and make the underprivileged a prey. No less angry is he with those who surrenders unconditionally and accepts everything unquestioningly. Yet he pities them for they are ignorant and innocent who slowly embrace death on an instalment basis.

Anand’s ‘felt experiences’, their passion, joys, sorrows naturally shape his poetic vision of life which has one and only goal in life - ultimate triumph of human spirit. Added to this vision is the perfect synthesis of forces and matter that enhances his greatness and his novels, his turning zeal for a change of society, his unifying zest for the emergence of a new world, help his adverse critics in calling him more sociological and
less artistic. But his innate ability to combine social realism and moral realism is neither be doubted nor underestimated.

The novels of Dickens are entirely to the humanitarian movement of the Victorian Age, of which they are indeed, in the sphere of fiction, by far the most important product and expression. He was from first to last a novelist with a purpose. In nearly all his books he set out to attack some specific abuse or abuses in the existing system of things, and throughout he adopted the role of a champion of the weak, the outcaste and the oppressed. Humanitarianism was indeed the keynote of his work; he may justly be regarded as one of the greatest social reformers of his age.

One kind of character developed by Dickens was that of the victim of society - usually a child. The possibilities of childhood for romance or pathos had been suggested by Shakespeare, Fielding, and Blake; but none of these had brought children into the very centre of the action or had made them highly individual. In Oliver Twist, Dickens centered his story in a child, Oliver Twist, and from that time onwards children were expected and necessary characters in his novels. Little Nell, Florence Dombey, and David Copperfield stand out in divine innocence and goodness, in contrast to the evil creatures whose persecution they suffered for a time. And further, they represent in a most effective manner the complaint of the individual against society.

Dickens presents a very human perspective on the use of the law as a double-edged sword in the achievement of justice. The literacy conclusion to be drawn is that the law is not the instruments through which justice can be attained. Dickens reserves a place for human sight and conclusions as a valid alternative to the application of substantive legal principles in the achievement of justice.

Dickens advocates the position that, with the employment of an adequate change of heart, the adverse conditions of Victorian society as reflected in its legal institutions can be improved and that the social and moral agendas, to the extent that they are agendas, advocated in his novels can be achieved.

Dickens portrays the cash nexus between crime and society as a vicious circle that may commence with need but ends with greed. He works this fact constantly into his
texts with his damning portrayals of a society that has created an underclass supported by institutions such as workhouses. He conveys the problem that for many members of an expanding but seemingly invisible underclass, a life of crime is the only viable economic alternative to the appalling circumstances of workhouse society. Once a person has embarked on a criminal career motivated by financial necessity, a downward spiral of dependence on crime often occurs.

Dickens is conscious of the way in which crime flourishes in an oppressed environment. Begging and sleeping under haystacks were against the law in some villages. Crime was often the only alternative to absolute poverty. As a Victorian writer concerned with the humanist morals of his age, however, Dickens maintains a careful balance between compassion for the less fortunate stratum of society forced into a life of criminal subsistence as an alternative to poorhouse culture, and appropriate condemnation of large-scale operators motivated by personal greed and aggrandisement.

As an author who is extremely conscious of the prevailing social condition in England, Dickens is sensitive to the desirability of upward mobility. The opportunities for actual social mobility in Victorian England were limited; however the myth of social mobility sustained an actual increase in the incidents of malpractice and business fraud in the community. The myth of social mobility also sustains. Oliver Twist and Phillip Pirrip were successfully able to transcend the barriers of class. Perceived success, even at the price of criminal activity, was the aspiration of many struggling members of Victorian society. Dickens, who had endured an impoverished childhood himself, extends literary empathy to those characters who attempt to improve their social status in life albeit by illegitimate means. They are the characters such as the Artful Dodger and Charley Bates. This leads to the condemnation of society rather than the individual. The moral turpitude of prepubescent offenders is, for Dickens, an indictment of the society in which they are raised rather than an indication of inherent vice or bad character. Dickens also attempts to salvage the reputations of criminal accessories such as Noah Claypole by granting him a free pardon for his crime in exchange for assisting law enforcement agencies with information. Dickens ridicules a society that victimizes juvenile offenders and creates a vicious cycle from which they are almost unable to escape.
The societal problems of Victorian England that contributed to the proliferation of criminal activity, particularly amongst juvenile offenders, were widespread but often masked behind the veil of an upright and moral society. Dickens wrote *Oliver Twist* at a time when it was estimated that there were about forty thousand children of paupers in union workhouses in England and Wales. Many of these children were orphans, or at least effectively so, being the illegitimate children of Victorian men who resorted to the use of prostitutes in a sexually repressed society. These men, often infected with sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, failed to acknowledge the existence of their illegitimate offspring. The surgeon in the workhouse who delivers Oliver believes that he is such an illegitimate child, Agnes Fleming having arrived at the workhouse without a wedding ring. In this way, Dickens suspends the reader in the belief that Oliver is a representative victim of his society right from the more respectable female professions in Victorian society, for example that of a seamstress or dressmaker. Dickens refers to the veiling of the profession in subtle literary terms, slipping the vernacular of his age subtly into his novels to point his readers to the real situations of his characters.

*Oliver Twist* presents a realistically high rate of criminal recidivism. Nancy refers to the vicious cycle of criminal activity when, in exchange for her assistance in the exertion of information from Monks she is offered a quite asylum in the United Kingdom or abroad [seemingly a Victorian version of modern witness protection programmes]. Nancy states that “I am chained to my old life” (*Oliver Twist*, P.415), a most unfortunate state of affairs for a young girl of the age of seventeen, even taking into account the fact that she has been involved in criminal activity since the age of five. Nancy can see no prospect of escape from a criminal lifestyle, no matter how far she may be physically removed from the necessity of it. Dickens thus draws attention to the self-esteem problems of criminals and the problems of lack of alternatives once a criminal career has been embarked upon. Only one member of Fagin’s junior crime syndicate, Charley Bates, displays and indication of rehabilitation. It would seem, perhaps, that criminal activity at a summary level does not generally create enough moral dilemmas for its perpetrators to seriously consider reform. It is only the atrocity of Sikes’ crime that forces Bates to reassess his lifestyle and arrive at the conclusion that an honest life is the best alternative. Dickens clarifies and fact that the path from crime to an honest existence is far from easy but possible with determination and perseverance in the line “He struggled and suffered
much, for some time; but having a contented disposition, and a good purpose, succeeded in the end" (P.477). It is difficult for Dickens to achieve a balance between a satisfactory literary resolution to his novels and a realistic portrayal of social problems in his society. As a socially reformist writer and a creator of legal fiction, Dickens is almost obliged, despite the improbability of the successful reform of characters such as Bates and Twist, to create positive role models who demonstrate that reform in possible.

It can be argued, from the point of view of Oliver as the representative victim of his social condition, that the progression of the novel Oliver Twist represents a case study of a criminal career unchecked by society. Sikes and Fagin exemplify the probable future prospects for Oliver if he is not rescued by the Maylies and Brownlow.

The novel Oliver Twist ultimately warns society that, unless the type of moral intervention and guidance supplied to Oliver by the Maylie through the scale of available offences to the point where rehabilitation is virtually impossible. As foreshadowed in the Preface to the novel, Oliver is constructed as a control study of the typical criminal. By providing Oliver with the opportunity for rehabilitation at an early age, Dickens creates Oliver as an example of the fact that it is possible to end, or at least reduce, the vicious cycles of criminal activity in Victorian England.

Hereditary and environmental factors in the foliation of the criminal character are explored in depth in Oliver Twist. Although Dickens invites the reader to choose combination of hereditary and environmental factors responsible for the proliferation of criminal activity in Victorian England. Monks is a specific case in point in this respect. Sharing some common genetic characteristics with Oliver as his half-brother, he nonetheless fails to transcend the criminal environment to which he is exposed despite the fortuitous fact of his partial inheritance. In further support of the conclusion that a combination of nature and nurture factors evolve into an individual, it should be noted that, for a large proportion of the novel, Oliver is jettisoned between the bourgeoisie and underworld of Victorian society, experiencing a range of prevailing social values. In the end, Oliver overcomes adversity, although not without substantial assistance from characters such as the Maylies and Brownlow. The reader is left with the impression that some degree of positive nurture is essential to the prevention of a moral downfall.
Dickens presents the functions of crime in relation to the cash nexus in various ways in *Oliver Twist*. Crime is incarnated in numerous forms including a leisure activity, casual work and full-time employment throughout the novel. One interesting thing which Dickens explores in Chapter 9 of *Oliver Twist* during a pick pocketing training session under the supervision of Fagin, Fagin would look a pick pocketing him, for fear of thieves. The process of the Dodger and Charley Bates practicing the time he turned round, that it was impossible to follow their motions. At last, the Dodger trod upon his toes, or ran upon his boot accidentally, while Charley Bates stumbled up against him behind; and in that moment they took from him, with the most extraordinary rapidity, snuff-box, note-case, watch-guard, chain, shirt-pin.

In terms of the social conditions, Dickens suggests that society at large shares the risks of crime at the hands of criminals such as Fagin and has a responsibility to address the underlying problems, such as poverty and the unfair distribution of wealth in society, which lie at the root of antisocial activities. At the most serious end of the criminal spectrum - that of organized crime - Dickens present crime as a veritable career path amongst the underclass. Such a career may take on various forms. The number of avenues of criminal activity into which a criminal may branch is the subject of active discussion between Noah Claypole and Fagin in Chapter 42 when Noah seeks to embark upon a life of crime. Fagin, in the role of career adviser, suggest a number of possibilities including spying, bag snatching and fancy work. The incentives in crime are certainly attractive, reverting to the cash nexus motif, including the prospects of living like a gentleman and achieving great expectations.

The potential of environmental factors to influence the formation and development of the criminal mind is found at the conclusion of Chapter 18. Fagin’s influence over Oliver is described in terms that suggest Fagin is capable of corrupting young Oliver and, "instilling into his soul the poison which he hoped would blacken it, and change its hue forever" (*Oliver Twist*, P.185). Oliver is constructed to show that an introduction to undesirable social influences at an impressionable age is likely to sway even the purest of souls towards antisocial demeanour. By placing Fagin in loco parentis of Oliver, Dickens seems to propel Oliver into a criminal outcome at this stage of the eventual moral salvation. From a socially reformist perspective, Dickens warns his
audience that prevention is essential to combat the proliferation of criminal activity in Victorian society.

Rose Maylie, however, is vociferous in her defence of Oliver. She acknowledges that his background may have been, to date, less than morally ideal but pleads with her family to assist the boy with pity and protection stating that his salvation from criminal enterprise is essential. At this stage of the novel, Dickens focuses on Oliver as the epitome of the physiognomic, and nature versus nurture, polemics. Both the doctor and Rose Maylie are partially correct in their analysis of his character based exclusively on his physical appearance. It is true that Oliver is in fact, at that point in the novel, involved [albeit reluctantly] in a criminal ring. On the other hand he is constructed by Dickens as an inherent innocent capable of rehabilitation under the right moral guidance. The underlying point made by Dickens is a criticism of a criminal justice system that appears to be highly influenced by physical appearance, therefore reflecting a society in which perceptions distort social justice. Such a system is not one in which justice can either be done, or even be seen to be done. The superficiality of prospects of criminal conviction literally on face value indicates a serious problem with the system and throws the system’s ideals of fairness and justice into chaos. In such an examination of the criminal system, Dickens pinpoints the gulfs between theory and practice, reality and illusion that characterise the most serious hypocrisies of Victorian society.

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society at large shares the risks of crime at the hands of criminals such as Fagin and has a responsibility to address the underlying problems, such as poverty and the unfair distribution of wealth in society, which lie at the root of antisocial activities.

The entrance of parentless children such as Oliver into undesirable company was almost inevitable. Juvenile delinquency and crime in the climate of Victorian society was a symptom of the fact that illegitimate or otherwise unwanted children were not acknowledged by society and were forced to survive without adequate care or guidance. In order to counteract the embarrassment of, and avoid taking responsibility for, a disintegrating society, Victorian society entrenched a myth that the poor were responsible for their own misfortune, laying the blame for social disorder at the feet of symptomatic conditions such as indolence, lack of employment skills and alcoholism. The destinies created for the victims of such a poor social system were almost inescapable, leaving it open to Dickens as a reformist writer to lead the way and inspire hope for the future by creating the occasional character, such as Oliver Twist, who is able to defy all odds and emerge triumphantly as a well balanced individual at the end of the novel despite a dismal start in life. Dickens parades the character Oliver as a beacon of light in a crumbling society. The close examination of the living conditions of the poor in the novel and the exposition of the social horrors of the Poor Laws show Dickens making every effort to communicate the pressing problems of the social condition of England to his audience. In case of Anand, he brings the Indian poor children and their plight in the novels. Dickens presents the same of English children though both of them lived in different times and they are different geographically and culturally. The plight of the poor is the centrifugal core of both of their novels.

The phrase "great expectations" pertains to several characters in the novel. Largely, of course, it is Pip's dream of gentility with which the story deals. But there is Magwitch's dream of transforming Pip into a gentleman. There is also Miss Havisham's dream of revenge upon all the men for the shame she has suffered at the hands of her faithless lover. All these expectations are inextricably connected. Pip's fantasies are tied to the unattainable Estella who has been trained by Miss Havisham in heartlessness. Magwitch succeeds in creating a gentleman who begins by despising him, while his own daughter becomes the cause of this artificial gentleman's despair. And presiding over all
these ironies is the mysterious Jaggers, himself a victim of his own defences, a hardened individual but one who is still concerned for the savage woman [Molly] he seems to abuse, foolishly saving her daughter [Estella] and making her the instrument and tool of Miss Havisham. The simple malevolence of Compeyson or Orlick seems almost refreshingly clear in a world of self-destroying fantasies that range from Pumblechook's snobbery or Wopsle's declamations all the way to the grim self-hatred of Estella who is convinced that she cannot love and can only be a curse to the man who wins her. And there are other expectations 'that are rewarded - the warm trust of Joe Gargery, the modest ambitions of Herbert Pocket, even Pip's own dreams once he is liberated from those social pretensions which are the reverse of the gentility of spirit. Pip cannot return to the marshes or to the life of a blacksmith or even to Biddy but his new outlook on life need no longer cut him off from the self he has been or from the life he cannot now share. The mature Pip can finally see Estella as what she is instead of as the fantasy he previously had of her; and for that reason it seems appropriate that she can return to him at the end. Each is a fantasist who has grown into maturity; each is a fantasy that has dwindled into humanity.

Certain themes occur again and again in the novels of Charles Dickens. Helpless and unhappy children, prisons and criminals, cruel and unjust institutions, greed for money and power - these are constantly recurring motifs in Dickens' plots. They all appear in *Great Expectations* and are woven into an interlocking pattern of great subtlety and intensity among the central figures.

Some of the most poignant scenes in the *Great Expectations* are the opening ones, which describe the atmosphere in which Pip grows up. He is introduced as "a small bumble of shiver", alone in the graveyard; and this is followed by the terrifying intrusion of the world of active violence and fear as the convict seizes him. Then one can see the household at the forge, where he is made to feel guilty and ashamed of his very existence; the Christmas party at which he is rebuked and bullied by his elders; his treatment at the hands of the hypocritical Pumblechook; his introduction to Estella who calls him coarse and common. Pip's agonies as a child are perhaps even more trying than those of *David Copperfield*. Dickens knew that in children there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as injustice, and looking back on his childhood. The atmosphere of the first stage of Pip's expectations is predominantly that of depression, alienation, and isolation.
Mingled with this atmosphere of emptiness and desolation is another suggestion which permeates the whole novel, *Great Expectations* and it is the suggestion of human guilt and imprisonment. On the marshes is an old gibbet hung with chains. Moored in the river are the prison-ships, known as the "hulks", which held the criminals. In the opening scene, Pip meets the terrifying and terrified convict, Magwitch, who is to play so vital a part in his expectations. The leg-iron, got rid of for the time with the file which Pip steals for the convict from Joe's forge, subsequently proves to be the instrument of an attempted murder.

As a child, while Pip is still helpless and innocent of any wrong-doing, he is treated as if he were guilty. His sister's attitude to him has always been that towards a young offender. Pumblechook pushes him before the magistrate, when he is to be legally apprenticed to Joe, exactly as if Pip had that moment picked a pocket or set fire to a corn-rick. Later Pip is to find that his great expectations are nothing but a cage; as he says, "the taint of prison and crime" seems to pursue him. After his first meeting with Estella at Satins House, when he thinks that a new life has begun for him, he is at once reminded of the past by an unknown man in the bar, who gives him a shilling wrapped up in two one-pound notes. His first view of London is of the grim shape of New Gate prison, the group of criminals and clients waiting to see the lawyer, Mr. Jaggers. As he goes later to meet Estella, he tries to shake the dust of New Gate prison off his coat, but feels impregnated with its atmosphere.

Dickens gives the bitterest satire on legal pretensions, and on the cruelties inflicted by the powerful upon the helpless, especially upon children. When the convict first appears in the opening scene, he is described as "a man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars." (Chapter, I, P.23). Symbolically this is what society has done to bring Magwitch to this condition, and when one hears his story later, one can see how from his earliest childhood he was doomed to become a criminal by poverty, degradation, and the explaining to Pip how he took the baby [Estella] from Magwitch's wife and gave her to Miss Havisham for adoption, he states his attitude towards his own action. From Jagger's description, one can learn that children were solemnly tried in criminal courts, imprisoned, whipped, neglected, cast out, and qualified in all ways for the hangman. Dickens is equally resentful of the
inhumanity of man to man. The directly personal cruelties of power are best symbolized in Pip's sister, Mrs. Gargery, who wears a coarse apron which she never takes off and which speaks vividly of her negation of all womanly love, because the apron bears a pattern of pins and needles on it.

Pip's journey through life, after he has been introduced to Miss Havisham's house, may be called a snob's progress. After meeting Estella, he at once begins to think that her standards are the correct ones and that he and his relatives are coarse and common. The forge now seems to him dirty, and he feels ashamed of Joe's ignorance and simplicity. When he is infonied by Mr. Jaggers about his great expectations, he never doubts that his benefactor is Miss Havisham and that Estella is part of the design of his fortunes. As he goes out alone on his last evening at home, intending to forget the marshes, he remembers with shame his meeting with the convict, but comforts himself with the thought that it was all a long time ago and that the man was now probably dead. Dickens' account of Pip's life as a gentleman in the city of London and at Hammersmith is a bitter satire on the possession of money without any sense of responsibility for its use. Dickens did realize the great value and importance of money.

After all, it is through money that Pip is able to learn the manners of good society, to acquire knowledge of the world, and to get some kind of education under the charge of Mr. Mathew Pocket. But the fact remains that Pip's life in the years of his prosperity is purely parasitic. During these years Pip leads an existence of empty futility, spending his allowance on clothes and pleasure, and leading his friend Herbert into expenditures which he cannot afford. In personality, Pip becomes absorbed into the background of his associates, who have no real human fellowship, no intellectual or artistic interests, and no purpose whatever. He lives in a world of make-believe and self-deception, restless, aspiring, discontented, haunted by the guilt of his rejection of Joe, and tortured by his unrequited passion for Estella. He sees his feelings as high emotions and, blinded by his infatuation, cannot recognize the total unworthiness of Estella. Into this world of false values and false hopes breaks, of course, the terrible truth that his benefactor is the convict whom he had helped on the marshes many years ago.

Just as the fears of Pip are described to the readers by Dickens at various times in his life, his sense of guilt is also vividly depicted. He has a sense of guilt after he has
stealthily given the food and the file to the convict. His sense of guilt is described in detail after he has told a number of lies to his sister and to Pumblechook about what he saw at Miss Havisham's house. His guilty state of mind is revealed when he has parted from Joe and Biddy without much show of feeling, in order to go to London. Subsequently Pip keeps telling the readers of his perpetual uneasiness at the thought of how ungrateful he has been to Joe and Biddy. All the pangs of conscience that Pip experiences at the thought of the indifference and callousness, which he has been showing towards Joe and Biddy, are clearly conveyed to the readers.

The feeling of inferiority which has been produced in Pip by Estella's behaviour towards him is also clearly depicted. Pip feels miserable at the thought that Estella has called him "coarse and common". The feeling of inferiority thus born haunts him; he speaks of it to Joe and he speaks of it to Biddy; and he tells the readers of his strong desire to become a "gentleman". The sight of Estella's beauty has produced new feelings in this boy, feelings which had never existed before. The result is that, when he is apprenticed to Joe, he feels even more miserable; and this miserable state of mind is also fully conveyed to the readers. Indeed, in this novel, *Great Expectations* as in certain others, Dickens shows a complete knowledge of the psychology of childhood and an extraordinary skill in being able to depict that psychology.

Pip's passion for Estella has also been adequately dealt with by Dickens on the psychological level. In spite of Estella's continued indifference and in spite of her repeated warning to him, Pip finds it impossible to "detach" himself from her. Even when he realizes the utter futility of his love for her, he tells that he "loved her against promise, against peace,' against hope, against happiness, against all discouragement" (P.253). The psychology of a blind passion has fully been conveyed to the readers.

The manner in which Pip's feelings towards Magwitch undergo a change is also skillfully traced. His attitude towards Magwitch at the outset is one of abhorrence. This attitude persists for some time, then came his attempt to smuggle Magwitch out of the country and the recapture of Magwitch. Pip's attitude, which has gradually been changing, now changes entirely. He realizes that he is tied to this man by unbreakable bonds of gratitude and affection. From this point onwards, Pip's devotion to Magwitch remains constant t and intense till the very moment of Magwitch's death.
The picture of society depicted in *Great Expectations* is by no means gratifying or pleasant or agreeable. Dickens was a censor of his age, and his novels expose many of the evils and abuses that were rampant in Victorian society. Dickens' view of Victorian society as embodied in this novel must have been highly unflattering to his contemporaries. One can see here a society riddled by cruelty, greed and injustice.

An attitude of cruelty is obvious in the manner in which Pip as a child is treated by those, with the exception of Joe and Biddy, with whom he comes into contact. Pip's own sister, Mrs. Gargery, who has brought him up "by hand", is a very hard-hearted woman who treats Pip most roughly, completely disregarding the effect of her ill-treatment on an impressionable mind. Mrs. Gargery is constantly scolding Pip, coming down heavily on him for minor lapses or for no lapses at all. She constantly reminds Pip of the great sacrifices which she has made in order to bring him up and rear him. Pip says that even when he was taken to have new suit of clothes, the tailor had orders to make them like a kind of refolinatory, and on no account to let him have the free use of his limbs. It is not only Mrs. Gargery who treats Pip thus. Pumbleshook, Wopsle, and Hubbles aid and abet her in this ill-treatment of the growing boy. Pip develops a strong hatred for all these persons because they all ride rough-shod over his feelings. Pumbleshook is constantly urging Pip never to forget the favour that Mrs. Gargery has done to him by bringing him up. Wopsle tries to humiliate Pip by comparing him with a swine and pointing him out as an example of the gluttony of a pig.

Pip recalls his sister's ill-treatment of him with much distress. His sister's upbringing had, he says, made him very sensitive, and he points out that, "in the little world in which children have their existence, there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as in justice" (*Great Expectations*, P.92). Within himself, says Pip, he had experienced, from his babyhood, "a perpetual conflict with injustices. He had known that his sister in her capricious and violent coercion was unjust to him. It is the cruelty and injustice that Pip suffers early in his life that he becomes in his own words "morally timid and very sensitive."

Estella is frankly haughty towards Pip; she calls him "coarse and common"; she is contemptuous of his manners; she is proud and insulting in her treatment of him. When she gives him something to eat and drink on the occasion of his first visit, she behaves as
insolently as if he was "a dog in disgrace", and Pip tells us that he was "humiliated, hurt, spurned, and offended". On the occasion of his second visit, she gives him a slap, calling him a "little coarse monster". Pip does not receive much kindness from Miss Havisham who repeatedly asks Estella to "beggar" him, and instigates her to. Exercise all her charms upon the boy in order to bewitch him. "Break their hearts, break their hearts, and have no mercy", says Miss Havisham to Estella. And Estella really grows into a merciless breaker of hearts, feeling absolutely no affection and love for anyone, not even for Miss Havisham. Even Mr. Jaggers speaks to Pip, when Pip first happens to meet him at Miss Havisham's house, in an admonitory tone, making most emphatic use of his forefinger.

The manner in which Miss Havisham brings up Estella is another striking example of the cruelty that human beings are capable of Miss Havisham has herself been treated cruelly and unjustly by her lover who deserted her at the last moment after robbing her of a considerable amount of money. Miss Havisham has become an embittered woman carrying a deep sense of wrong. She hardens Estella's heart and makes it impossible for Estella to respond to others. She brings up Estella in the candle-light darkness and decay of Satis House, and destroys Estella's capacity to live in the day-light of natural affections. Estella knows that, as Drumble's wife, she will be no blessing to her husband, and this is what she is fully aware of Miss Havisham's success in having stolen her heart away and having put ice in its place.

There is a lot of injustice, too, depicted in this novel *Great Expectations*; not only the injustice which individual human beings do towards one another under the influences exerted by money-values and otherwise, but also the injustice done by society collectively towards different individuals. Magwitch's account of his criminal career shows that society was partly to blame for his criminality and in the concluding chapters one can find that society is responsible for the excessive punishment given to a criminal even when he is repentant and reformed. In short, the overall impression that one has of Magwitch of that of a man more sinned against than sinning. In this context, Jaggers' account of the dangers to which children were exposed also fills the readers with a sense of outrage against society; Jaggers saved Molly's child to protect it from those dangers which he describes to Pip.
Dickens' discontent with the prison system is once more stressed in chapter 61 in connection with Littimer and Uriah Heep. Littimer is a man who is usually with Steerforth, and had come into his service at the University. In appearance he is a pattern of respectability: "[h]e was taciturn, soft-footed, very quiet in his manner, deferential, observant, always at hand when wanted, and never near when not wanted." (David Copperfield, P.250). He surrounds himself with an atmosphere of respectability but his respectability is only a mask. He masks his downiness. Not only does he help to Steerforth to seduce Emily but later it is Littimer who commits a fraud, forgery and conspiracy on the Bank of England. Uriah Heep like Littimer also covers his right face. He pretends to be the most humble man of the world but, in fact, he is hypocritical and envious. He masks villainy, as he undermines his employer, Mr. Wickfield, gradually insinuating himself into control of the law firm and attempts to extort Agnes to marry him. After compelled outgoing from Canterbury, he goes on stealing. In, the end Littimer and. Uriah come to the prison that David visits. The prison is a caricature of then English prison system, which Dickens called overriding system, providing good to the condemned ones and offering them plentiful repasts of choice quality. He criticizes this fact and asks the reader why this plentiful repasts are not provided to "not to say paupers, but soldiers, sailors, labourers, the great bulk of the honest, working community; of whom not one man in five hundred ever dined half so well." (David Copperfield, P.694). Mr. Creakle answers that the system requires it and David like Dickens says that "what uproar would have been made in the country, if any deluded man had proposed to spend one half the money it had cost, on the erection of an industrial school for the young, or a house of refuge for the deserving old." (David Copperfield, P.693) and that "nobody appeared to have the least idea that there, was any other system" (David Copperfield, P.694). He does not support these prisoners who will never change as the examples of Uriah and Littimer prove. The two are chasten only until they leave the state prison.

David not only criticizes the prison system but also the system of justice in general, laughing at omnipresent corruption and congregation of the judicial institutions. Mr. Creakle is an example of such a corrupted representative of the system. David asks Traddles:
How did you suppose he comes to be a Middlesex magistrate? [...] it would be very difficult to answer that question. Perhaps he voted for somebody, or lent money to somebody, or bought something of somebody, or otherwise obliged somebody, or jobbed for somebody, who knew somebody who got the lieutenant of the county to nominate him for the commission. (David Copperfield, P.692).

In David Copperfield one can find several characters representing certain archetypes. Clara, David's mother and Dora, David's first wife are nice but naive women. Although they are both married, they are still children. Dora even asks David to think of her as a married child. Agnes Wickfield is an angel, an ideal but also an idealized woman. Contrary to that idealization she is a very helpful and key-woman for David. She advises him, she consoles him; she gives him vigour to be better. As David claims: "Agnes! Ever my guide and best support!" (David Copperfield, P.704).

The society does not enable them to return. Once perpetrated, sin prohibits that woman to live her life as before. In the society that feels that women are the guardians of morality, this deviance is doubly shocking. She should live abandoned and painfully aware of her own culpability in the distance from all the others. Victorians expected such a woman to behave as if ashamed and deeply unhappy forever.

In spite of the grudge of the society, Dickens' seduced women keep the natural moral superiority. Martha, the shadow, helps Mr. Peggotty to find Emily in London. Emily tells Rosa Dartle: "I had been brought up as virtuous as you or any lady. [...] I believed him, trusted him, and loved him!" (David Copperfield, P.612). Despite her own wish to die Martha is saved. She accompanies Mr. Peggotty, Emily and Mrs. Gummidge to Australia. Australia or emigration in general is viewed by Dickens as a hope for these girls. In Australia people can begin a new life and may get a high position in society as in the case of the Micawbers and Mr. Mell but, though in Australia, Marta lives in distance to justify her sin:

Martha get married, Mas'r Davy, in the second year. A young man, a farm-labourer, as come by us on his way to market with his master's drays - a journey of over five hundred mile, theer and back-made offers fur to take her fure his wife, and then to set up fur their two selves in the Bush. She spoke to me fur to tell him her trew
story. I did. They was married, and they live few hundred mile away from any voices but their own and the singing birds. (David Copperfield, P.709).

Dickens advocates the position that, with the employment of an adequate change of heart, the adverse conditions of Victorian society as reflected in its legal institutions can be improved and that the social and moral agendas, to the extent that they are agendas, advocated in his novels can be achieved.

Mulk Raj Anand breathed life into the Indo-Anglian novel by introducing new subject-matter, characters, style, technique and approach. Prof. M.K. Naik is all praise for him for his bold departure from the beaten path of his predecessors in making 'a sweeper the hero of his novel'. True are the words of Paul Varghese who comments that a novelist "cannot turn his back on the social realities of his time but should carry man's image in his art with his social awareness and insight into life" (Paul Varghese, P.38).

Anand with his deep social awareness delineates the blight of certain social evils such as casteism, male chauvinism, poverty and exploitation, cash-nexus, religious hypocrisy, class-conflicts, industrial and colonial capitalism. The injustice inflicted upon and the inhuman treatment meted out to the inarticulate poor and the voiceless innocents infuriated Anand as a result of which he rose like a colossus championing the cause of the poor both in his personal life and in his career as a writer. He is not ready to accept or applaud anything which goes or acts against the interest of the poor. Naturally the organised religions, because of their insensitivity and hypocritical attitude towards the poor, incur his wrath, and hence he rejects them altogether. His pilgrimage towards integral humanism chiefly guided particularly by Buddha's attitude to life, his awareness of the pain of life and his existential attitude towards human experience and Tom Paine's defence of right of man. His new humanism was solidified by Buddha's advocacy of the enlightened will which aims would help in the conquer of pain and sorrow and is facing the inevitable.

In his account of Anand's novels as novels of human centrality C.D. Narasimhaiah comments on the scum world of Munoo in Coolie by referring to a conversation he had with Dr. Leavis in which the letter replied to a question on how he would judge a nude: "It depends he said - whether it reminds me of one's honeymoon or
one’s mother affection or wife’s devotion. “Anand’s response to near-nude to me shows striking nearness to Leavis; such is the sensitivity of the response - the response of an art critic getting into a creative work” (P.124). Acute sense of the age and the spirit of the time were the key factors that shape Anand’s sensibility and largely influenced him to expose “India’s degrading social practices and her abject submission to imperialism that was tantamount to spiritual weakness, immorality and irreligion. (C. D. Narasimhaiah, P.107). P.K. Rajan points out the characteristic dualism during the period of Renaissance and incisively comments upon how Anand was affected by the dualist propensities of the time. But its vital concerns were about the suffering masses of the country and these concerns were voiced in the language of the privileged classes. The natural result was that there existed a duality between the language that proponents the Renaissance employed and the actual content of what they said. It was more or less a discrepancy between the matter and the medium, the substance and the tone (Studies in Mulk Raj Anand, P.13).

Anand’s novels are fictional creations which serve as instruments of humanism in the context of the social and mental disintegration of ‘contemporary India in which he saw two races and two religions only: the rich and the poor’. His realistic portrayal of human predicament with “that willing suspension of disbelief on which Coleridge has laid so much emphasis” (Indo-Anglian Fiction: An Assessment, P.131) is the base of Anand’s artistic success. The range of his stark realism invites comparison to that of Zola, Dostoyevsky and Dickens.

Inspired by Gandhi’s ideals he wrote his first novel focusing on the curse of humanity - untouchability. Gandhi himself went through the original story of Untouchable and made necessary and relevant suggestions to complete it into a fine work of art in its present form Bakha’s humiliations gave the author the required platform to vehemently attack the rigidity and heartlessness of a system which dehumanises untouchables by treating them as non-entities.

His theme of a boy’s oppression by society is extended to oppression by society in general in his next novel Coolie. Extensive analysis of the Odyssey and the woes of man caught in the vicious web of class system dominated by money and power is the main thread of this novel. If Untouchable brings to the fore the evils of casteism Coolie does so of the ruthlessness and hostility of capitalism and exploitation which are no less
dehumanising than the former. Victims like Munoo the hero of the novel, who are socially and economically exploited are and can be rescued by and only by death.

The same theme of oppression of the poor by the rich is handled in his third novel Two leaves and a Bud in which his major concern of the novelist is the wretchedness of the hero, Gangu and the endless sufferings of his family in the form of debt, disease, death, false promises of an Utopia and inhuman cruelty. Here the colonial capitalism and imperialism are at work together to mercilessly suck the blood of the landless labourers for their own gains. The exploitation here is two-fold. Besides putting the labourers to the Herculean task of enriching the exploiters it plucks the flower of chastity from their women. The cruel fact that Gangu and fellow workers are considered nothing more than pawn in the game of money-making infuriates the novelist.

Anand's deep love for the socially wronged human beings and his genuine interests in their emancipation naturally lead him to write Untouchable which is "an extremely interesting book" because it is about things we don't know anything about writers by somebody who does know" (Cowasjee, P.178). The revolutionary, unusual and shocking theme of untouchability and hatred of the caste Hindus for the weaker sections of their own caste - the scavenger, the sweepers, the barbers and the like - resulted in the rejection of the novel by not less than nineteen publishers until Forster came to its rescue by offering an excellent and effective preface (The Theme of Exploitation in the Novels of Mulk Raj Anand, P.64).

The strict adherence to the unities of time, place and action as in a classical play, the remarkable achievement of maximum effect with minimum means and perfect fusion of content and form clearly prove, beyond doubt, the unquestionable creative genius of the author. Above all, the author's sincerity leads power and technical feat to make his very first novel a real classic.

A realistic rendition of the sad social condition and the bitter life of the downtrodden and their abject condition could be detected in this novel, which reflects man's relation to man and the different social and moral values connected to it. It is all about the agony of aloneness of people in the depths of degradation in wretchedness forced upon human beings by other human beings. A forceful and realistic portrayal of
characters enables Anand to achieve a genuine tragic vision of life and evoke the profound tragic emotions. The very choice of the theme with a sweeper as the hero was certainly a bold and revolutionary departure.

As a constituent member and integral part of the society in which he lives, man is free but certainly not independent; he is inter-dependent. He has to live in and maintain good and healthy relationship with his fellow-citizens of the society in order to uplift the human life in general and the life of the under privileged in particular. Rare exceptions like Robinson Crusoe and Sindbad, the sailor, cannot be considered as examples and precedents to term man as an island.

Absence of the essential qualities like social justice, equality, mutual understanding, comradeship and solidarity in a man makes him unworthy of being called civilized. A society which fails to practice or uphold these principles distances itself from civilization. Civilization is never tired of reminding the man of his social responsibility which he can never shirk. He is morally bound to extend his helping hand to his brethren in the society. It is with the singular intent of the well-being of all and welfare of the society as a whole the social systems were originated. But when man both as individual and a collective entity, began to forget these lofty ideals and when the law-makers turned into law-breakers the social-systems, instead of performing the role of stepping stones for the downtrodden, prove to be the stumbling blocks of their advancements.

They break the system for their own selfish ends and cause social injustice, disharmony, lawlessness, iniquity and mutual enmity and the victims are rendered helpless. The manipulation ultimately makes the society diseased which in turn changes the order into disorder. It is this core issue that provokes Anand to raise his voice against the society in his first novel, Untouchable. He addresses this poignant question from cultural, social and political contexts. The futility of these social systems, which eventually and inevitably results in more harm than good to the society irks and infuriates him.

The unfathomable tyranny born out of the rigidity of the man-made caste system under the guise of religious tradition and its deadly impact on the inarticulate poor of the society is his target of scathing attack in this novel. It is quite interesting to note that
nearly after a quarter century of the publication of this novel he published another novel The Road on the same issue when he found that the law of the land had failed to eradicate untouchability and produce the required and desired fruits.

Anand’s aim in these novels is one and the same, namely, the falsification of the popular myth that the essence of these systems is too sacred. He sincerely attempts to show to his readers that these man-made systems are not the God-gifted ones as they are largely believed to be and hence there is no sanctity in them. He strongly advocates for the total nullification of these systems which have miserably failed in their functioning to ensure better human relationships and interpersonal rapport.

He exposes the invisible and invincible forces that tirelessly and ceaselessly strive to keep the systems alive and active so that oppression and exploitation of the poor and the helpless can continue without an end. In his view the hapless victims of such eternal exploitation are “more sinned against than sinning”. As the staunch supporter of the exploited and the oppressed, Anand tries to elicit and evoke in his readers a sense of humaneness for the suffering lot. A thematic study of this novel is attempted here to ratify these impressions.

Diverse religions with innumerable sub-castes in them, multi-lingualism with countless dialects, varied cultures and the phenomenal growth of numberless political parties make India a unique country in the world. Yet, unity in diversity is the hallmark of this country of which every Indian is proud and which receives the deserving universal acclaim. But what the westerners are not able to comprehend in India is the casteism which is the curse of India and which is equal to the racism of the west. Even Christianity and Islam, founded millennium later than Hinduism the original religion of India, which are proud of being caste-free elsewhere could not escape the infectious influence of Hinduism here. Of all Indian social institutions and experiences caste-system is a unique reality that Robert Stern remarks “Caste is the warp and woof of Indian civilization and Indian Civilization is the warp and woof of caste” (Changing India, P.52). The very word ‘caste’ found its entry into India through the Portuguese, the first Europeans to set their foot on the Indian soil. In the beginning it meant something chaste and pure. Historical rather than etymological explanation of the term is necessary and relevant here for this
study deals mainly with the complex social system which perpetuate a hierarchical order
to separate man form man. The system has entered deep into the soul of a Hindu.

A born Hindu, therefore, has an unshakeable faith in the age old tradition that
the division of mankind into four groups is not man-made but god-given tenet the strict
observance of which would ensure maintenance and sustenance of ‘dharma’ (order) in the
Society. Least violation of this tenet or even an attempt to encroach upon the other
territory could, a Hindu is afraid, result in chaos in the society. But strict adherence to this
level assures a Hindu of the highest reward in another ideology of Hinduism namely
‘Punarjenma’ (rebirth). Proper and prompt following of Hindu ‘dharma’ and the good
deads, irrespective of group in his birth guarantees him a birth, in the higher group in
rebirth. It is true the other way too. That is, just the re-birth in a higher group does not
necessarily reserve a seat in the same class in the succeeding Janmas (births). It implies
that a ‘shudra’ can obtain the blessings of the gods for his rebirth.

The cycle of re-birth comes to an end when the soul attains the ultimate
liberation or ‘Moksha’ which is made possible by the perfect functioning and shouldering
his social responsibilities fully. The aspiration and ambition of the Hindu for the rebirth in
a higher group would dissuade him from questioning the validity of this god-given tenet.
A ‘Brahman’ born out of the mouth of ‘Purushan’ where in lie the speech-organs of the
body, belongs to the supreme class in the society as his main work of recital and preaching
of the holy scriptures is concerned with the divine and the hereafter; next comes in order
‘Kshatriya’ emerging from his arms, which imply valour, as he does the role of rulers and
warrior; the Vaishya, born out of his thighs - the lower middle portion of the body - should
look for the ways and means of generating wealth and sustenance of all in the society. Last
is the ‘Shudra; having been created out of the lowest limb of the human anatomy he
naturally occupies the least position in the society and he is destined to serve the society
with menial and manual works.

The holy scriptures of all religions invariably prescribe rules and regulations for
the better thing of their followers. These guidelines include the choice of food, the
selection of company and preference of place. These recommendations, if put into practice
fully and truly are believed to be capable of keeping the man and society totally free from
pollution and contamination. Vedic literature of Hinduism goes a step further as it lays
stress on purity of body, mind and soul. Such purity is the pre-requisite and an essential characteristic that goes with the status of the individual belonging to the afore-mentioned four groups. As such, the ‘Brahman’, the member of the upper-most group in the society breathes the purity of the highest order and the ‘Shudra’ as the member belonging to the lowest group lives in pollution.

Thus the fate of the ‘Shudra’ is supposed to be pre-destined. In order to keep the other groups of the society pure, he is impure. To free the society from pollution he carries all fifth including human excreta. As the carrier of all fifth he himself becomes the object of pollution and contagion. The meanest job he does for the welfare of the society has a negative effect on him. What he receives his return is not a floral tribute but brickbats; not a kind word but harsh and inhuman treatment; not recognition as a human being but isolation as a non-human entity. Even his touch is feared to be contaminated. Therefore, there arose a total ban on his mingling with the members of other groups of the society. This is the root-cause and origin of untouchability.

The later development of further classification of these four major groups into innumerable castes and sub-castes known as ‘Jatis’ still worsened the situation. Parochialism, an inevitable offspring of this jati-system adds fuel to the fire of discrimination and castes. The Jati-system is so venomous in nature that it nullifies the prime ideal of ‘Varnashrma’ which was to ensure social harmony by educating the people to live and function as one whole, well-knit and great society. The rituals, marriages, separate residential colonies, associations, ‘sangams’ and even politics are based purely on these ‘Jatis’ Whether it is the primitive society following the vedic principle of four major groups, or the medieval society following the castes or the modern society with its Jati-system the sledgehammer always falls on the untouchables only.

The oppressive feeling they suffer is heavy and lifelong. It is an undeniable but shocking fact that there is not much improvement in the living conditions of these untouchables. What was their pitiable plight in the nineteen twenties and thirties continues to be almost the same even today despite constitutional banning of Jati-system and untouchability. They live in squalor and misery. They are despised and humiliated time and again and their lovely life seems to be one to continue in servility and grovelling. No doubt, the governments at the centre and in the states enact laws and make amendments in
the constitution for the total elimination of untouchability and for the uplift of the untouchables. But as long as the beneficiaries are kept in dark about their rights and as long as they are only reminded of their servitude these enactments will be more in breathe than observation.

As a crusader of equality among humans, irrespective of caste, creed, language and status Anand viewed this caste-system as basically inhuman and a destructive force of the concept of equality. He was also angry with the Hindu Vedas for the introduction and implementation of ‘Varnashrama’ which opened the Pandora’s Box in the society. His stay in Sabarmati Ashram along with Gandhi for a couple of months had deepened his sympathy and strengthened his love for the untouchables.

For Gandhi who was religious within and without, untouchable was a sin. But, for Anand who is a non-believer of any religion, it is certainly national disgrace. His sharp intellect easily and quickly defects the cunningness and craftiness of the upper-caste people in employing this weapon to keep the lowly permanently in their place. Denial of opportunities for the advancement of untouchable proves, in the long run, detrimental to the national development. As a canker in rose it kills the feelings of self-esteem in the victims. He is vehemently opposed to their treatment and non-entities, an non-living objected as particles of dust.

Anand’s deep understanding of the problems of these untouchables inspired him to write Untouchable. His strong protest is against the stigma associated with birth and the caste-system with its impenetrable barrier and the socio-economic disparity which single out the untouchables and segregate them and forcibly confine them to their own world far away from the privileged society. In no unequivocal terms he condemns the apathy, self-centeredness and absence of human sympathy and understanding in the upper strata of the society for those who are at the lower rungs. As Pramila Paul remarks:

“The novel, indeed, presents Anand’s attempts at distilling a social metaphor which takes in its sweep a whole range of postulates of Hindu culture. It is a kind of dialectical work centers on an exploration of his possibilities of achieving synthesis or spiritual restoration.” (The Novels of Mulk Raj Anand: A Thematic Study, P.10).
Before it saw the dawn of publication the original draft of Untouchables underwent many changes. The chief contributor of suggestions was Gandhi himself. In fact, Anand’s stay, though brief at Sabarmati Ashram where he had the opportunity of having personal meetings with Mahatma himself proved a turning point in his life. He was not a passive spectator; he voluntarily took active part in the routine of Ashram duties; he was not reluctant nor did he feel shy to do any sort of menial work including cleaning of latrine. These experiences and Gandhi’s timely exhortation left a tremendous and long-lasting impact upon both his personal life and literary career.

A study of Tolstoy’s Childhood, Boyhood and Youth, given to him by Gandhi, made him wiser in the art of writing. He himself confesses in the essay “Why I write” that the reading of this book enabled him to combine the Tolstoy an emphasis on both the life in the raw and Flaubert an objectivity (P.14). Thus the lowliest of the low shaped his though-process and became a strong motivational force of his fictional writing.

His choice of theme of exploitation, oppression and marginalisation of a section of the society by another section of the same society under the pretext of birth, religion, carte, Jati and his choice of characters from among the under drop of the society like a coolie, an untouchable, an indentured labourer and his fictional technique of affirming stark realism go but to prove his earnest commitment to the cause of the poor and the downtrodden like Bakha, Munoo, Gangu and Bikhu.

Anand successfully shoulders the responsibility of exposing the venomous injustice on the inarticulate poor. He brings to the fore the impact of caste cruelty on the adult mind of Bakha. He does not agree with the defenders of the system that it is a well-intended but practiced system. A good tree William can never yield a bitter fruit. The blind tradition, ushered in by the system, is yet another means of spreading injustice permanently and targeting one particular class of people for marginalisation. The greatness and success of his novel certainly owes much to Anand’s efficient and effective narrative technique and ability to express his anger without bitterness. He is at once angry with the oppression and the oppressed - the former incurring his wrath for deceiving the innocent and ignorant with the so called god-given tenets and the later for their abject passivity and unquestioning acceptance of their fate. He is also infuriated by the concept of hierarchy among the untouchable themselves. They even ill-treat them as the caste Hindus ill treat
them. Guleso - a washer woman's ill-treatment of Sohini, Bakha's sister proves the veracity of his statement.

As a social realist, Anand deliberately portrays the distress and despair, poverty and penury of the people who are mercilessly oppressed and ostracized by the society in the name of religion, caste or money. He had a deep concern for the deprived and he dispossessed a grasp of the social structure of the contemporary society and the clearest vision of its injustices and malformation and the creative ability and fertile imagination of Anand enable him to produce protest literature a symbolic protest against the existing social order where exploitation, oppression, oppression and inequality prevail on account of social hierarchy, economic disparity, racial discrimination, colonial capitalism, dative feudalism and industrial mechanization. Anand is not just a novelist but a social reformer.

Hence he doesn't stop with diagnosis and collective conscience of the people, to fight for the dignity and equality of all human beings is the panacea. This awakened consciousness is found in almost all of heroes and even in Gauri, the only heroine of his fiction who represents those who are deliberately denied equality and legitimate right to live and craftily pushed out of the main stream of the society. They glow not only with burning desire for the liberation of the self and the community but also with intense feeling for the suffering humanity.

Bakha, for example, for more than once displays his anger to raise upto the occasion. He earnestly wishes that they would have given "a bit of mind" to those who humiliated him and his deep sense of self-respect makes him feel for having picked up the bread thrown by a house wife from the pavement. If it is a feeling of regret and self-pity here, there are occasions when he fumes with anger. On learning the evil design of the temple priest he advances; towards him like a murderer; again when Lalla, the touched man slapped, Bakha, for having defiled him Bakha has "the desire for revenge with horror, rage, indignation swept over his frame ... Bakha say to himself "I could have struck him" (P.71). He is however restrained from being rebellious - rather refrained from physically revolting - against the existing decadent social order.

The difference in the treatment the porters, sweepers and other workers received in England and India made Anand contemplate on the issue. The more he thought of it
more sorrowful and the more angry he grew. In fact in England he was astonished at...the peculiar dignity and self-respect with which the porters, sweepers and other workers bore themselves as against the coolies and sweepers in India who were always being kicked about and intimidated by some high caste or high class person and who were therefore of the abject in their humility. (Apology, P.89).

Further he is convinced that “average humanity is a bundle of selfishness and prejudice and often being capable of sadistic cruelty” (lyengar, P.340) the resulting which the coolie in India is not at all recognized as a human being with fleshe blood but just as a “beast of burden more manageable, less experience and eager to carry to his load”.

In his novels he makes an emphatic prophesy of “the democracy of future” through some of his characters who either by deed or words or both reflect the creator’s mind fully well. The protagonists who belong to the first category of “three classes” of his characters, like Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta, Lal Singh and Gauri are endowed with a strong will and mind to wage a war, though almost always successful, against oppression and exploitation. They heroically fight against the inexorable destiny and they stand beneath the blows of fate. Though desired changes fail to come, these protagonists are optimistic of a better future for the downtrodden. Their sincere and ceaseless efforts succeed at least in getting the road to socialism clearly mapped which ensures a society rid of all social evil.

Munoo, of Coolie, like his prototype Bakha of Untouchable, is endowed with the rituals such as human warmth, kindness and for life. He is a mixture of loveable simplicity and shocking passivity. It is reality remarkable that he remains untainted till the very and even under degrading and corrupting environment of cities and towns. Again, Anand in the portrayal of Munoo as a fatalist affirms this as fatalism is part of the norm of Indian society. Innocence of this romantic child of Anand, is his forte which remains unadulterated till the end, despite the bitter experience, he has in the corrupt and money-minded society. That he is able to survive even under the pressing alien and hostile circumstances is itself a victory of human spirit. Though the evil forces of the society succeed in joining together to expedite his death, the ultimate victor is not death. First, death is not a curse for a coolie but a welcome relief and release from the agony of life of exploitation and oppression. Secondly and more importantly his premature death, in fact,
takes away him from being corrupted and polluted by commercialized money-bases and status based civilization. The unchangeable fate of low-born Indian is re-established in his death.

The society which keeps the inarticulate and helpless poor in eternal bonds of slavery and which ruthlessly denies them the sources of a decent and dignified living incurs the wrath of the novelist who puts his creative ability and fertile imagination to perfect use to rouse, in his reader, the feelings of pity for the abused child. Munoo serves as a symbol for Anand to asset the romantic idealization of human nature and offer a poetic view of life - life based on the affirmation and vindication of human worth and human dignity.

It is not surprising that Anand chooses the child as a fitting symbol of his expression of social anger against a world which is governed by gross materialism and utilitarian value. The righteous anger, aroused by his keen observations of human condition- of what man has done to man and the worst of it, what man, out of his avarice, has done to the helpless child, is doubled at the continuity of the changelessness of that condition because of the exploiters turning a deaf ear to the strong protests by writers, thinkers and social reformers. The emotive experience, the resultant factor of such observation goes but to enrich the fertile imagination and sensibility of the author, as a result of which is born protest fiction to serve as the vehicle of expression of his awareness of the self-aggrandizing ways of the world.

The plot structure of Coolie is very much in tune with Anand's strong convictions that 'art's for not arts sake' but it should reflect and express the struggles and aspirations of the toiling masses and ultimately extend a helping hand in the formation of a socialist society. The Marxian vision of revolutionary praxis is almost glued to his mind and he is impelled by a passionate sense of social justice in the context of his keen awareness of the predicament of the poor and the oppressed in India. The novel has for its theme many aspects of Indian life-the contrast between rural and urban life; Hindu-Muslim relationship; relationship between the ruling Britishers and the ruled Indians.

The travails of Munoo, the protagonist, make M.K.Naik calls this novel 'the Odyssey of Munoo"(P.39). It is a tragedy of the deprived and dispossessed and Anand
narrates the travails of Munoo as a symbolic representation of the unequal class relationships sharpened by the capitalist system ushered in by the colonial rule. He keeps the class-consciousness of contemporary Indian society in which money has a predominant role to play in proper perspective throughout the novel. His anguish is up against that class-system which determines the social status on the basis of the purchasing power of the individual, which according to him, ultimately leads to social inequalities and mutual hostility and division among people into dehumanizing relationships.

Munoo, though a kshatriya by caste, is poor and he feels that “Poverty itself a caste. The capitalists treat coolie like a cattle”. (Pramila Paul, P.34) He is a miserable creature who received no compassion in society. The problem of class as it is pointed out by C. J. George “is a universal phenomenon but Anand’s interest lies in exploring the stresses and strains generated in Indian Societies as a result of the basic economic transformation brought about by various acts of the British Government (such as the new type land forms) the penetration into the Indian society by commercial and other forces from the outside capitalist world, and the establishment of modern industries in India, which necessarily demanded new class arrangements in society.” (Mulk Raj Anand: His Art and Concern - A Study of His Non-autobiographical Novels, P.34).

Munoo’s beginning is typical of the underprivileged section of the society. Indian peasants are peculiar in that they accept their as fate has awarded them. Munoo’s father also a peasant had died a slow death of bitterness and disappointment because he could not pay the interest due to his land lord on the money he had borrowed from him. Munoo could never forget the utter helplessness and tragic density of poor mother after the death of his father. Despite the sad memories and the ill-treatment meted out to him by his aunt and uncle, he is happy and contended. He is a sensitive and intelligent boy full of animal splits.

Munoo has to work very hard in the dark suffocating atmosphere in the primitive pickle factor. It is a wretched place where the labourers “worked from day to day in the dark under world full of intense heat of blazing furnaces and the dense malodorous smells of brewing essences, spices and treacle […] they worked long hours, from down to past midnight, so mechanically that they every notices movements of their own or each other’s hands”. (Cooie. PP.91-92).
Anand presents the other side of the coin also. “Poverty is not always the only cause of human suffering. To be a pauper is at times to be a Pollyanna. When responsibility weights too heavily on Prabha, he earnestly wishes that he were a coolie”. While debating with account books of business the goat-faced Ganapati says. “I am through with such a scum as you. You are coolies and belong to the street and there you shall go. I split on you” (Coolie, P.106).

The novelist describes how Munoo arrives at a point of total disillusionment when he wanders in the city of Daulatput, moved by the vastness of the suffering, hundreds of people stretched out on the roads in various suffering, hundreds of people, stretched out on the roads in various stages of disease and contamination. He comes to a state of unbelief which is impressive and dreamed of anger or emotion. “He faced the sky, a few glistening drops of white-blooded starts. There was no meaning in the sky beyond that” (P.119).

Munoo reaches Bombay ‘the wonder city’, with the help of the mahout, a circus, a circus elephant driver, another good Samaritan. Munoo, when he notices the vast anomaly under lying human behaviour, feels” why are some men so good and others so bad like prabha and the elephant driver, others like Ganapat and the police man who beat me at the railway station”. (P.147). it is a quest of Munoo to find out his place in the vast world and to understand the dichotomy in human behavior that differentiated man from man,” he becomes painfully aware of the truth of the elephant driver’s words. “The bigger a city is the more cruel it is to the sons of Adam...you have to pay even for the breath that you breath” in Bombay. (P.152). So he feels hard to get sleep admits the fellow poor people on the pavement and becomes aware of a hot blast of air which came loaded with the sickly, foetted a odour of ghee, sandal wood, urine, sour milk, fish and decaying fruit” (P.165) and a strong urge to escape. “He felt he must get strong rush away, away, somewhere beyond the confines of the street, some where there was a whiff of air to breathe. But he was afraid he would stumble on the bodies which lay along the pavement and then there would be a scene”. (P.166).

The most poignant picture that deplores the plight of the poor in the novel is described to use when Hari and Munoo are in search of a little bit of space to rest for the night. The cotton mills, another version of hell, where Munoo comes to work along with
Hari's family, are intended to expose the exploitation of the Indian proletariat and condemned to subhuman existence by British imperialists, Anand's political alignment with the workers is evident as he delineated the harsh lives of the workers and their families, the squalor of the Bombay slums and their exploitation by the money lenders. The labourers, including wives and children, have long working hours; the wages they get are quite inadequate.

The meagre wages do not reach the workers because there are agents between the workers and employers, as intermediaries to engage and supervise the workers as foremen, and they too add to the exploiters insisting on gifts and commissions for their favour of giving jobs. So says Jimmie Thomas, the head fore man of the mill, to Hari and Munoo at the time of their appointment, “And now I suppose you have no money; well, I will advance you ten rupees at four anns in the rupee, which sum I will go and fetch the money” (Coolie, P.174). This foreman gives huts at the rate of Rs. 3 per month to them and the huts whose “mad floor was at a level lower than the pathway outside, over grown with grass which was nourished by the inflow of rain water, the cottage boasted not a window nor a chimney to let in the air and light and to eject smoke” (P.176). On the day of payment Jimmie, giving Rs. 20 to Hari, says “Ten rupees you owe main cash. A rupee interest on the loan. There rupees rent one month. One rupee for repair of hut. Five rupees cut for damaged cloth. The reminder you receive for you, Munoo, your wife and children.

Ananta, “perhaps the best realized of Anand’s heroes” (M.K. Naik. P.77) the man with big heart from the thathiyar community, has been to Bombay and Ahmedabad and has experience of participating in the Gandhian freedom struggle. He also has the glimpses of labour movements and trade unionist activities in those places. The novel is structured as a day's journey in his life in effect it an account of the last day of life. He is rebellion against tradition and militant champion of the machine.

Ananta has no regard for religious based marriage but believes in amicable living of a man with a woman who has real love and regard for each other. And so he never hesitates to bring with him Janki, a young widow whom he loves and who is now slowly dying of tuberculosis, and lives with her in spite of all the twinges that people say against them. On his return to his native place he resumes his hereditary profession but like most to his copper smith brotherhood feels it difficult to make a living.
Unlike his fellow youth who blame the machine responsible for their starvation and unmixed evil, Ananta believes that the machine is only a tool, to be put to the right use by man. His explanation by comparing it to a bride is a good example of imagination. “When one is married off to a girl and she brings in her dowry with her, one does not refuse the bedstead because it is too high to get on easily. If one has a heart and is really capable of love, one like a polished bridal bet better than a broken old strong charpai. Like the fashionable vilayati bride we have accepted them, provided we keep our hearts and become the masters, machines don’t think or feel, it is men who do”. (The Big Heart, P.40).

Another aspect of modern civilization Ananta likes, which came with machines, is the freedom it brings from old moral taboos. He recalls how in Bombay, the more industrialized city, no one was worried about his liaison with Janki, but in a less modernized small town like Amritsar it made so much opprobrium. “Since Ananta is no intellectual, his welling visionary faith in the machine is complete, though he is not unaware of the seamy side faith in the machine is complete, though he is not unaware of the seamy side of industrialization. In his simplicity and noire optimism, he however, believes that these evils can easily be overcome, once the proletarian revolution gets going.

The older generation believes that “this is the iron age, the age of Death, which is to culminate in the doomsday”. (The Big Heart, P.19) for the young men in the factory, however

“This is the machine age, Sons
This is the machine age.
We are the men, who will master it,
We are new men of the earth of all the evil old ages!” (The Big Heart, P.19).

The trust of the young generation or modernization is incomplete which is still very much in the grip of tradition. They are divided in their response to the new god of the machine, Ananta worship it, because he accepts the machine as an inevitable tool of social change, but to his impoverishment by the machine, and a class between these two-young men leads to the final tragedy.
Two Leaves And A Bud can be described as a larger and broader version of its pioneer Coolie and Gangu, the hero of the former is the grown up Munoo, the protagonist of the latter. Whereas Munoo is totally innocent Gangu is much experienced in a wicked world governed by cash-nexus.

Anand in his letter to Brown describes, Two Leaves And A Bud as a poem in suffering which is "the most bitter of my novels, but it is poetic" the title based on the coolie song is suggestive and symbolic.

I will make a good sheaf
Plucking and plucking as plucking
Two leaves and a bud
Two leaves and a bud (Two Leaves And A Bud, P.110).

The title, no doubt, sounds romantic with a suggestion that work of plucking tea leaves in Arcadian landscape offers pleasure and satisfaction. In reality, the very little stands in sharp contrast to the tragic clash and destinies between the Indian coolies and the British master and their sycophants. The title is also symbolic of the coolies who are also as defenceless as the leaves and the bud that can be easily picked and crushed. And this defencelessness makes them a pray to the tyranny of power, greed and exploitation under the British colonial rule. The budding leaves are the blossoming hopes of hapless Indian coolies. The imperial capitalistic forces exhibit a sense of self-complacency through brutal exploitation and wicked bossism. As Naik comments,

"The Indian labourer is just a piece of property, a sub-human
Being with no rights and all duty, whose only utility is to be a
Serviceable tool in the vast machine of the plantation (Two Leaves And A Bud, P.471).

The central theme of the novel is the exposition of the ill-treatment of thousands of wretched labourers at the hands of a handful selfish and arrogant British planters and their sycophants on large tea estates in the thick hill forest area of Assam. The portrayal of the untold sufferings of the poor and poverty is realistic and down-to-earth. Anand pursues his main concern of the redemption of the downtrodden with the zeal of a reformer. In doing so, he naturally, emerges like all genuine and true artists, as at once the universal and an Indian nationalist.
In *Two Leaves and a Bud* Anand holds the enchanted mirror, which, with photographic accuracy reflects the predicament of the indentured labourers in the Tea Plantations in the hill regions of the colonial India. The deceitfulness of the society that turns him into labourers, untold suffering due to pennilessness even for the burial of his wife, vagaries of nature that play havoc in the life by destroying the meagre harvest of paddy and his in born docility make him more sorrowful than angry. The inherent fear of the inevitable makes him imperturbably called and he faithfully following his forefathers, is passively resigned to fatalism and self-pity. Anand touches the heights of realism, once again, when he shows in this novel, the triumph of evil over good which is in tune with the practical society even today.

Through his realistic presentation Anand projects his vision of a world dominated by social evils and of man at the mercy of various social forces. Anand's keen and unfailing observation of such a sordid and sorrowful world and his own personal experiences with the misery of such suffering people put him on the right path of creating a sense of reality in his portrayal of the contemporary life. He observes:

"The novel should interpret of life from 'felt experience' and not from books. And one shows adventure through life and always has him to see in the intricate web of circumstances of human existence, the inner reality, or at least attempt to probe the depths of human consciousness." (P.8).

Anand's portrayal of the lives of the poor clearly reveals this quality of 'felt experience'. Some of the characters and incidents have been taken from real life, the life of the individuals who have figured in his confessions. He spent his childhood in the midst of wretched people living in misery and social isolation. He also witnessed in his surroundings actual nights and scenes of the cruelty of man against man and the exploitation of man by man.

His deviation from the beaten-track of popular novel in India played a major role in determining the future course of fiction in India. His serious concern in his novels with the lowest drop of humanity doomed to live follows the naturalistic tradition found in European novel.
Anand spins the story realistically around the family of a hopeless peasant Gangu whose comfortable life with a small family- of wife Sajani, daughter Laila and son Budhhu- in a hamlet in Punjab came to a saddened unforeseen end. The homeless, landless and penniless peasant was then easily covered by wily Sardar Buta, a coolie-catcher for the British plantations. His rosy picture of plantain labourers with benign bosses, lucrative wages and good accommodation easily tempts the innocent rustic. Buta assures him of a veritable paradise and elaborates: “True I did tell you that. And by the grace of God, you will soon find yourself the owner of a field in which you can cultivate rice. But you may have to wait for that gift a little. If God says pull, he will give you a rope if he says ride, he will give you a horse. But you must be a patient at all costs: you must be patient” (P.6).

Gangu falls an easy prey to the temptation particularly by the promise of a piece of land of his own to cultivate. The plot begins with the journey Gangu and his family undertake with the firm hope, like Munoo of Coolie, of brighter future. As he is seated by the side of Buta in the train, Gangu is absorbed with a thought about “life as a journey... a journey into the unknown” (P.5). This thought is suggestive of the possibility that the journey, instead of taking him to place of peace and pleasure, could lead him to the domain of doom and despair. The conversations between Gangu and Buta during the journey strengthen the imminent and inevitable danger. To the query Gangu made about the attitudes of ‘Sahibs’ towards the coolies, Buta, the glib-tongued impostor, replies that “they are just like Mai-baap” (P.7) loving mother and father.

But the moment he sets his foot on the streaming valley of tea plantations, Gangu experiences “a vague perturbation in his soul... the ache of an unapprehended doom” (P.12) Buta’s language makes Gangu all the more uncomfortable as he suspects the prevalence of an atmosphere of hell” (P.14). Narain, a coolie in the estate, fans this suspicion and gives account of the inescapable prison life of coolies in the estate: Nobody knows what may or may not happen here brother said to Narain. Later he gives and elaborate picture of the situation: ‘you will know, brother’ said Narain, ‘First water, afterwards mire! This prison has no harm, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail. The chowkidars keep guard on the plantation and they bring you back if you should go... the chowkidars go round at night with a lamp and open every door to see if we are all at home. There used to be roll call every night before I came’ (P.30).
But as blatant lies are exposed Gangu gets less than eight ‘annas; as a salary for his whole family hard labour of one full week. Gangu is much worried that the total wages did not even work out eight annas a day for the whole family: three annas for him, two annas for his wife and three paise for his child’ (P.51). Gangu’s son and daughter are driven to the plantations even before they could open their eyes to have a look at the wonders of the world around them. Thought of the birth of a baby adds to their misery for they have ‘one more mouth to feed’. The coolies do care for progeny simply because it brings more hands to work and earn for the family. In spite of all hardships and sufferings the coolies seldom rebel and remain calm throughout, because, as Havre, the humanitarian doctor assesses them to be non-entities, running about like locusts. He rightly judges them to be “do like gutless, spineless coolies, who never rained their voices” (P.71).

Soon he realizes the fallacy of the promised paradise of plenty and he is awakened to the utter reality that it is only a mirage and he has entered into the portraits of “murky green hell” where even the right to escape is punishable. Against the bright background of promised good future the dark drama of ruthless exploitation is successfully enacted and the fact that there is no silver lining in their dark clouds identifies the armour of the tragedy. An uninterrupted course of tragic descent befalls him as he suffers from malaria just a week after his arrival. The news of the death of hundreds of coolies the previous year due to cholera frightens him more.

Mulk Raj Anand knows that the conscience of the readers must be aroused in order to make the change in the society. He wants to appeal to the people to change their outlook on the society. He gives the motto of human life. Human tenderness can be the only solution to the problems of the downtrodden. K. R. Srinivasa lyanger feels that Anand wants to say that man should cease to take coolie as “a cheap and useful machine, an uncomplaining target for uses and indignities” (Indian Writing in English, P.340).

Thus both the stalwarts, Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand, have discussed the problem of poverty which is the root cause of all the agonies of the people in the society. Both the writers worried much about the plight of industrialization and its consequences. Charles Dickens novels deals with child labour, exploitation and discriminations of the Victorian age. On the other hand Mulk Raj Anand’s novels point out the social evils like casteism, untouchability and other problems like poverty,
exploitation, colonialism and the like. Both the writers novels are absolutely society centred. They satirise all the evils and question the attitude and morality of the people.

Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand guide their readers that the society is interlinked. Nobody is separated from the society. There should be no immense gap between the rich and the poor. Everybody should strive for the amelioration of the poor people because poverty is so ugly. Charles Dickens stressed the importance of child labour acts and Mulk Raj Anand on exploitation. Both of the writers pointed out the importance of education and the reformations which should be introduced in the education. It is a testimony for the readers that the characters like David in David Copperfield, Pip in Great Expectations, Oliver in Oliver Twist are the victims of ruthless nature of the industrialists in England. Mulk Raj Anand is too much worried about the narrow minded Indians views on casteism.

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