CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD REMINISCENCES IN CHARLES DICKENS’ AND MULK RAJ ANAND’S NOVELS
According to William Wordsworth "Child is the Father of Man" which indicates that childhood life is very much important to shape the future of children. Presenting the Protagonist's past life is one of the major concerns in literature. Through this the readers can understand the psychological feelings and emotions of almost all the major characters in a work of art. Creative writers often dream about the childhood in order to recollect the childhood and write the same in their fictionalizing events. These childhood recollections appear autobiographical and become inevitable that such writers present these with care and commitment.

Describing Childhood, Erich Neumann has said.

What is childhood...the time of great events; the time in which the great figures are close at hand and look out from behind the corner of the house next door. The time in which the deepest symbols, of the soul are everyday realities and the world is still radiant with its innermost depth. This childhood reaches back to the earliest prehistory and embraces...In the childhood, there is as yet no separation between personal and supra personal, near and far, inward soul and outward world. The life stream flows undivided, joining godhead and man, animal and world, in the glow and colour of the nearby. (Art and the Creative Unconscious, P.138).

Childhood is generally considered to be either a natural biological stage of development or a modern idea or invention. Theories of childhood are concerned with what a child is, the nature of childhood, the purpose or function of childhood, and how the notion of the child or childhood is used in society. The concept of childhood, like any invention, was forged from a potent relationship between ideas and technologies within a frame of social, political, and economic needs. Theories of childhood as a concept are often highly coloured or emotive, that is to say, they deal with stark contrasts revealing the development over time of the psychological or emotional significance of childhood as viewed from the state of adulthood.

The theories of Childhood up to the 1990s, tended to be determined in a "top-down" approach which has been described as "imperialistic." This is true of theories about the medieval child as much as the modern child. Children themselves have not generally been considered as having a legitimate voice in influencing its production. However, the
unconvention on the Rights of the Child (1989) created a climate for reconsidering this tendency and a subsequent focus on listening to the views of the child and Children's Rights of expression in general. This has led some scholars to explore allowing children themselves to reflect upon their own experience of childhood, resulting in the use of inclusive research methodologies and more democratic frameworks for dissemination.

The significance of a state of being after the end of infancy, experienced by all humans in all societies, has produced sometimes contradictory theories from philosophical, religious, and scientific schools of thought as well as from the later established disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies. Throughout history, theorists have been fascinated with the distinctive character of human development, unique as compared with other mammals in having evolved a lengthy period of dependency known as childhood.

A child has been defined as any person below a notional age of majority, but this has been variously interpreted and there have been many differences throughout history in the ways that societies have come to recognize the exact beginning and end of childhood. The theoretical boundaries drawn between the relative states of childhood and adulthood have historically been highly significant across a range of cultures for social, political, religious, and legal purposes. The status of child awarded protection and acknowledged distinct limitations of personal responsibility within a context of parental or community belonging. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has for its purposes identified childhood as that stage of life experienced by any person between birth and fifteen years. Article I of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that a child is any person under the age of eighteen.

Childhood is a stage of life, associated with chronological age, located between infancy and youth, and including adolescence. The word child has been used in many societies to indicate a kin relationship but also to indicate a state of servitude. But biological determinants have not always been paramount in indicating childhood. Children in the past often lived with and belonged to households rather than their biological parents. The beginning of childhood has been considered variously to occur at birth or at the end of breast-feeding, which lasted sometimes until the age of three in medieval Europe or in preindustrialized societies of modern times. The Qur'an, for example, indicates thirty months
as the usual period. Medieval European society considered infancy to end at around seven years, coinciding with the beginning of a young person's competency at performing certain domestic or industrial tasks. At that time, the educational framework which modern societies have come to draw upon in distinguishing stages of infancy and childhood was yet to be invented.

Many reformations were brought to understand the inner psyche of children and to facilitate the life of children. Legal definitions of childhood have emerged gradually over time and during this long evolution the law can be seen to have reflected changing understandings of the meaning, span, and significance of childhood. Medieval English common law indicated, through its recognition of ages of majority, that a child was considered incapable or lacking sufficient means of carrying out a range of adult practices. The capacity of the individual to know and reflect upon the moral status of their actions has come to signify the capacity of belonging and contributing to civil society. The age at which a person can be considered capable of moral reflection upon their actions has altered over time according to changes in the understanding of childhood. Thus, for example, according to nineteenth-century English common law, it became established that children should be exempt from criminal liability under the age of seven. This was raised to age eight in 1933 and to ten in 1963.

The industrialization on one hand exploited the children on the other helped to introduce some reformations on work culture. The necessity of formulating a precise legal definition of childhood grew out of demographic, economic, and related social and attitudinal changes in the industrialized world that together forged a new recognition of the significance of childhood at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Before this time, children had been defined in strict relation to their status as the biological offspring of fathers who also were considered by law to own any of the child's possessions and to whom they were obliged to offer their services. The lowly status of children was reflected in the fact that child theft was not acknowledged by English law before 1814.

By the end of the nineteenth century, there was a growing concern among the newly formed middle classes with the moral condition of childhood and the domestic responsibility of parents. Accompanying this was a notion of childhood innocence and
vulnerability which was employed to argue for a new definition of childhood—one which associated it less with the world of industry and more with the world of education. Notions of protection and welfare developed strongly in parts of the world which were experiencing for the first time reductions in infant and child mortality.

There are two broad theories which have been emerged on the question of what the childhood was for. One argues that childhood is a characteristic of human evolution designed to ensure the survival and development of the species. The other suggests that the state of childhood or how childhood is viewed is significant in itself as an indicator of the evolution or development of societies and cultures toward notions of civility or modernity. The former, which encompasses the biosocial and evolutionary approaches, argues that childhood, as a stage of growth and development, has evolved in human society to provide the conditions for optimizing the prospects of maturity. In particular, this perspective has suggested that the distinctively rapid growth of the brain and the immaturity of dentition and digestive tracts characteristic of the early stages of human life have evolved over time to sustain human society. Such a view is consistent with an essentialist or universal view of childhood [that prioritizes biology over environment in explaining childhood] but has also recognized that social conditions and ecology play a part in constructing the social and cultural response to childhood. Somewhat related to bio-social theories, the perspective of evolutionary psychology came to regard childhood as directly linked to the evolution of what has been called a psychology of Parenting. This theory suggests that certain universal characteristics of infants and young children, such as relatively large heads and eyes in small bodies, act to trigger instinctive emotions and responses in adults, thus securing development toward maturity.

Based on the above said information one can see that childhood is a relationship and therefore can be understood in generational terms. The principle relationship of childhood is with adulthood, but more specifically with parenthood. The development or evolution of conscious parenting is the focus of a school of thought known as psychohistory, which has developed since the 1970s following the work of Lloyd de Mause. De Mause and his associates have developed a distinctive and controversial theory of childhood. This position establishes from empirical evidence that childhood, while seemingly held by society to be a time of freedom and innocence, has been for the
majority of children a time of oppression and abuse. De Mause has argued that the parental response to the infant or child has evolved over time from one which was generally abusive and cruel to one which became nurturing and affectionate. Such a development, according to this theory, not only reflected social, technological, and cultural change but indeed generated those changes.

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychology, is of the notion that childhood is of key significance in the adjustment of the individual to mature well-being. Freud developed his theories of the sub-conscious partly through considering the reasons early childhood memory becomes lost. Since childhood was regarded as the key stage in the successful, or unsuccessful, development of ego, psychological well-being in adult life hinged in this period of time and healing might be effected through the recall of repressed childhood experience.

Many disciplines came into emergence with the advent of science and technology. These fields stressed the importance of creating a healthy environment during the childhood. Before the second half of the twentieth century, physiological, psychological, and cognitive mapping of development was the dominant theoretical model for the study of childhood. However research and theory which emerged from the disciplines of history, anthropology, and sociology came to strongly question the developmental model, shifting the focus from the child itself to the socially and culturally constructed view of childhood specific to time and place. Since the eighteenth century, the dominant paradigm in Western cultures has viewed childhood as a stage of life characterized by dependency, learning, growth, and development. The notion that in the medieval world there was no concept of childhood was first introduced by the French scholar Philippe Aries in his Centuries of Childhood (1962), which focused mainly on France. Aries believed that the evidence drawn from European paintings and texts of the time revealed that children seemed to be viewed as miniature adults.

The globalization has put enormous efforts to safe guard the life of children. The idea of a universal state of childhood was challenged towards the turn of the twenty-first century through an increasingly globalized perspective which accompanied scholarly questioning through ethnographic, cultural, and anthropological studies. The shift toward a recognition and acceptance of children's voices in determining their own world-view
brought about a fragmented view which questioned the structural norm, of childhood and brought about a theoretical position about pluralities of childhoods. For such theorists as Chris Jenks and Jens Qvortrup, it is more accurate and helpful to talk of many childhoods or a plurality of experience both across cultures and within them. Diversity of experience according to class, ethnicity, gender, culture, place of residence, health, or disability rather than one common childhood is emphasized, in spite of growing recognition of the universalizing effects of globalization.

Popular writing and scholarship on childhood in the last decades of the twentieth century reflected on a changed state of being. The traditional Western notion of childhood, which had held from about the 1850s to the 1950s, was implied in its absence by notions such as "the disappearance of childhood" or David Elkind's "the hurried child." The emerging consensus was that notions of childhood innocence and dependency on adults could no longer be sustained in the context of children's access to and use of new media technologies. The notion of childhood as an apprenticeship period for adulthood was fundamentally challenged by the use of such technologies, particularly in the home. Such a material change, coupled with an intensification of child focused popular entertainment that began in the second half of the twentieth century, came to place strains on existing contemporary theories of childhood. What has been called by Shirley Steinberg and Joe Kincheloe "the dilemma of postmodern childhood" was characterized by democratization in family life which placed the expectations of children and the concept of childhood itself in conflict with many of its established institutions such as the traditional family or the authoritarian school. This has also been accompanied by a new vision of Children's Rights apart from and even in opposition to their parents.

Charles Dickens crafted his art by giving immense scope and importance to childhood. Charles Dickens is a writer who is very sympathetic towards his child characters. "He is personally aware of the exploitation to which the children are subjected because of his own history of workhouse incarceration, which parallels Oliver's workhouse experience" (Louis James, P.89). This explains the pathos in his novels, surrounding the uneducated and deprived orphans whose loss of childhood is echoed through their physical exploitation. Dickens' novels ultimately petition society to protect these assailed juveniles. However, the Victorian society is paradoxical because it
perceived childhood as essential, yet most of its juveniles are not given the chance to safely experience growth and transition into adulthood. Deborah Gorham states that: “...childhood had great symbolic importance, but many Victorians suffered from an uncertainty about the nature of childhood and the proper relationship of children to the structure of the family and the wider society. In the late – Victorian period, many people who were concerned about the welfare of children also found themselves uncertain about how the boundaries of childhood should be defined” (The 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' Re-Examined : Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late Victorian England, P.355).

The theme of childhood is ubiquitous in the novels of Charles Dickens. Dickens always cherishes the memories of his childhood. And childhood always chains him, enchants him, and holds him in its magic spell. Not a single impression is left out, not a single memory is forgotten. Everything appears fresh and lively. Hence, the actuality and poignancy of these pictures of childhood always impresses upon the readers.

Charles Dickens is sympathetic and empathetic towards the children of London. Dickens presents with infinite sympathy the woe and sufferings of child life. He is primarily interested in presenting the sorrows, sufferings and privations suffered by his child-characters. The hardships borne by David Copperfield, under the tyrannical domination of Mr. Murdstone and Miss Murdstone are brought out in a touchingly tender manner. The readers are inclined to shed tears for the lot of little David as he washes bottles and suffers the pangs of penury. A similar fate falls on Oliver Twist, who again wins our sympathy for the cruel treatment meted out to him by the parish administrators and mentors of workhouses. When Oliver asks for more food and is reprimanded by the dispenser, one can feel sympathy for the poor boy. The lot of Pip in Great Expectations in the earlier chapters is equally touching and moves the readers to sympathy for him.

Dickens' characters are representations of the actual world as Rosenberg remarks: “...the best Dickens' characters are examples of verisimilitudinous representation” (Character and Contradiction in Dickens, P.147). Dickens characters are not only representations of the world, but also reflections of existent beings, “...and assumed, by virtually all readers, to be representations of people” (P.148). Therefore, his
Child characters represent real children with actual experiences and backgrounds such as poverty, orphanage, neglect and deprivation of education.

Firstly, Dickens' child characters are usually orphaned or their parentage is unclear, for example Pip (Great Expectations), Esther (Bleak House), Oliver (Oliver Twist), Estella (Great Expectations) and Sissy Jupe (Hard Times). Estella and Esther are initially introduced as orphans, but the reader later discovers that they are actually abandoned children as is Sissy Jupe. All the three characters are adopted, for example Estella is adopted by Miss Havisham, while Esther is adopted by John Jarndyce and lastly, Sissy is adopted by Mr. Thomas Gradgrind. The three young ladies have a common background, that of lower class parentage, yet they are adopted by middle class guardians, therefore they eventually become members of that class. Charles Dickens' seems to suggest that a lower class member can never belong to the middle class unless the elevation into that upper class is generated by the middle class. Dickens' belief is that the lower class' dependency on the middle class is inevitable. To a larger extent, he is also suggesting that it is the middle class who can change the plight of the lower class and, therefore it is their responsibility to eradicate poverty.

According to Rawlins, Dickens' Great Expectations is a way for Dickens to "dream a healthy relationship with the child within him" (Great Expectations: Dickens and the Betrayal of the Child, P.668). One can certainly see how the tragedies of his lifetime would compel him to use his gift of writing as a psychological release. As Rawlins explains, "In his last years, the demons of his childhood tear at him with increasing violence; with increasing desperation he seeks escape in self-destructive behavior" (Great Expectations: Dickens and the Betrayal of the Child, P.668). Great Expectations was one of the last novels that Dickens completed, in 1860-61. It makes sense that the middle-aged Dickens might have been looking back on his life, evaluating the good and the bad. In this novel he records clearly all the joys and sufferings that one experiences in a life-time.

Besides being a moralist and novelist, Dickens was a great social reformer. He used fiction as a platform for arousing social conscience against the contemporary evils. In almost all his novels whether sad or humorous, he laid his finger on the drawbacks and evils of Victorian society. His chief merit as a social reformer lies in the fact that he could moralize with a smile on his lips, and mix his sermonic powders in such excellent jam,
that his contemporaries did not realize for a while that he was doctoring them for their good.

David was a posthumous child born six months after his father's death. He was brought up under the affectionate care of his mother and his nurse Peggotty. The only other relative, his aunt Betsey, had never visited the house since his birth. David was a very sensitive child. His sufferings started when his mother, whose undivided love he had so far enjoyed, married Murdstone, a dark man with moustaches, whom David did not like from the beginning. The boy naturally felt jealous. His heart was rent to pieces when he realised that this cruel man was trying to snatch his mother away from him. Murdstone thought that the child was being spoilt by his mother, and so he took up his education in his own hands. But he, a tyrant beat the child and punished him for no fault of his. David was intelligent. But he was afraid of Murdstone. Hence, he could not learn anything in fear. He was all the time afraid of Murdstone's cane. Whatever he learnt was forgotten in Murdstone's dark presence. He, in return, accused David of carelessness and beat him.

David was often beaten and ill-treated by Murdstone, his step-father. Once when David was being mercilessly caned, he bit his step-father in order to get out of his clutches. He was locked in a room for five days, at the end of which he was sent into another equally hateful and dismal place, Salem House, a boarding-school run by a very cruel man. Mr. Creakle, the headmaster used to beat the boys at the slightest opportunity. On his first day in the school, David was insulted, and a placard reading "Take care of him. He bites", was placed at his back, for the other boys to see and laugh at him. David wanted to get rid of such atmosphere. The only note of cheer was his friendship with the best boys - Steerforth and Tradles and the visit of Mr. Peggotty and Ham, who brought happy memories of Emily and others at Yarmouth. David's life and temperament were shaped by miseries. Not only was he ill-treated by his step-father and Headmaster of the school, his mother also died when he was in the school. He was taken out of school and sent out in the hostile world to work and earn his livelihood of six shillings a week at Murdstone and Grinby's. He was then only a child of ten. He, at last, decided to go to his aunt Betsey in Dover.

Murdstone engaged a donkey-cartman to carry his trunk to the coach-office. But the donkey-cartman cheated David and ran away with David's trunk and his half-guinea.
David had to walk all the way to Dover. On the way, he had to sell his coat in order to buy some food. When he reached his aunt, she, at first, took him for a beggar. David told her how he had been turned out of his own house, made to work under horrible conditions and had finally run away. On hearing his pitiful story, she decided to adopt him. Thus sufferings of David came to an end. He started a new life under the name of Trotwood Copperfield, with Betsey and Dick as his guardians.

Like Dickens' other novels, *David Copperfield* is a novel with a social purpose. Dickens has exposed and satirised the various social evils that prevailed in the England of his day. Schools were run out of profit motive; education was neglected, and the boys were cruelly treated. Salem House is one such private school. The prisons were dens of squalor, dirt, gambling and drinking. Penal laws were harsh, and the legal machinery inefficient and unjust. This one can gather from the pathetic picture of Mr. Micaber in the Marshalsea prison. Power was concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists and prestige went with wealth and birth. Social snobbery prevailed. Thus, at Salem House, Steerforth is flattered because he belongs to the aristocracy, and the assistant teacher Mr. Mell is ill-treated because Steerforth is displeased with him. But the worst evil of all was the employment of little children like David in industrial concerns where they were ill-treated and freely exploited.

Dickens is particularly good with children, and there comes to mind at once his delightful little Emily. But he is more than merely a charming picture-painter of little boys and little girls; he never forgets to set down the evils to which a faulty social system exposes young people, and by so doing to make a powerful appeal for amelioration. In *David Copperfield*, he treats particularly of child labour, and the reform of schools. No one can be tenderer than Dickens in protecting the innocence of childhood and the purity of young womanhood; in the latter respect, he comes once more into line with Shakespeare and Scott.

Dickens makes children highly individual. He brings them into the centre of the action. The central character of many of his novels is a terrified, unwanted, persecuted and helpless child. David in *David Copperfield* and Pip in *Great Expectations* convince the readers of the excellence of Dickens' description of child life.
The first half of David Copperfield is a profound study of child-mind. Dickens enters into the child's point of view and achieves great success. He studies David Copperfield's mind both from inside and outside. Some scenes of childhood appear sinister realities to children but wild burlesques to grown-ups. The scene in which David is unjustly suspected of eating the mutton chops may be understood in two ways; to an adult reader it is delineation of the waiter's dishonesty and to a child it is a sad experience.

Dickens describes children not from the point of view of an adult but from the point of view of a child. He becomes a child once more. He cannot easily forget the experiences of his childhood. He delineates his childhood experiences in this novel with the zeal, curiosity and energy of a child. With the help of his imaginative faculty he transforms his intense childlike vision of the world into something rich, strange and unique.

In Oliver Twist appears the lifelong preoccupation of Dickens with the tragic sorrows and terrors of children, which were to play so large a part in the Old Curiosity Shop, Dombey and Son, David Copperfield, Little Dorrit, and Great Expectations, together with his concern with crime and villainy, already anticipated in the interspersed tales of Pickwick Papers, which casts its gloom over Oliver Twist, Martin Chuzzlewit, Bleak House, A Tale of Two Cities, and The Mystery of Edwin Drood.

Dickens' attitude towards crime, like that of most literary artists, was highly complex. He was drawn to crime by the mere fascination of the ugly and perverse, by the opportunities it gives a writer for exploiting the sensations of mystery, suspense, and terror, and for throwing the cheerful elements into high relief. He was fond of showing the tragic retribution that follows on crime, and was particularly impressed by the thought of the criminal as haunted by evil. Sometimes, he was content with the mere aesthetic thrill induced by the spectacle of grotesque monstrosity. But more often crime and villainy take their place among social phenomena as inevitable effects of evil in the social body. Nancy, Sikes and the Magwitch are bred to crime as to an honest trade, or driven into it by poverty, ignorance, and injustice. Most obvious of Dickens' social intentions was the satirical exposure of particular institutions that were held to blame for much of the vice and misery of the time. In Oliver Twist the inhumanity of the Poor Law is exposed.
*David Copperfield* which was Dickens' favourite among his works, it is a magical novel. It has mellowness, even serenity, found nowhere else in Dickens. It is, in its first part, the most wonderful account of the secret of life of childhood in English and probably in any language; and it contains many of Dickens' finest characters. In Micawber, Miss Trotwood, Murdstone, Heep and Peggotty he produced some of the best portrayals of good-hearted, honest, simplicity of characters that for him truly shone like good deeds in a naughty world. It is the most humane of his novels, the most balanced, the most moving. It sums up a whole experience of life.

A third type of character which Dickens developed was that of the victim of society - usually a child. Oliver Twist, Pip, and David Copperfield stand out among such characters. These characters represent the complaint of the individual against the wrong done by society and its institutions. In nearly all his novels there is an attack upon some legal or social evil. Undoubtedly, there was something theatrical in his adoption of social wrong as a theme for fiction, but there was also much that was sincere. Dickens had himself known the lot of the persecuted; at the root of his zeal for social reforms was the memory of his own bitter childhood.

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.

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 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.
The novel, *Great Expectations* tells the story of Pip, a poor orphan, who rises to a state of prosperity and who attains what, by worldly standards, is a certain degree of success in life and gets married to the girl of his dreams. The theme of the poor orphan making good in life was certainly one which Dickens had already dealt with in *Oliver Twist* and *in David Copperfield*. In *Great Expectations*, Pip is brought up by his elder sister who does not, however, show him any affection. Pip seems destined to grow into a blacksmith after a certain period of apprenticeship to his brother-in-law, Joe Gargery. In these days of poverty, wretchedness, and ill-treatment at the aristocratic style at Miss Havisham's house. Estella seems to be completely beyond the reach of Pip who gets only rebuffs and insulting treatment from her; and his fate seems to be sealed when he gets apprenticed to Joe and begins to learn the blacksmith's trade. All that he might look forward to, in his present state, is becoming a fairly successful artisan and getting married to Biddy. But fortune smiles upon him, in its own inscrutable way.

A generous-hearted individual undertakes to pay for Pip's education in order to make a "gentleman" of him and hires the services of a well-known London lawyer, Mr. Jaggers, to give a practical shape to his plan. This unknown person, who for a long time is suspected by Pip to be no other but Miss Havisham, turns out to be Magwitch, a convict whom Pip helped with a file and some food on the marshes when he was just a child. The convict felt so touched by the service rendered to him by Pip that he decided to bestow all conceivable worldly advantages on the boy by means of the immense amount of wealth that he was able to acquire after his transportation to Australia.

Thus Pip finds himself in London, and duly develops into the kind of gentleman his benefactor wanted him to become. Pip has now bidden farewell to the days of poverty and misery at the village, and looks forward to a still brighter future. He has no doubt that, in course of time, he would be able to marry Estella as well. Thus is the theme of the poor orphan making good in life handled in this novel.

Besides applying his own experiences in his novels, Dickens also utilized many other sources of reality in creating his characters. He made an effort to really understand the thoughts and emotions of children. He viewed children as sensitive creatures whose thoughts and feelings deserved special consideration. In one of his late letters, for instance, Dickens described the intensity of children's feelings and how adults needed to be
sensitive to these feelings: "Force a child at such a time to, be Spartan with [the child], send it into the dark against its will, leave it a lonely bedroom against its will, you had better murder it" (qtd. in Collins, P.186). Dickens was very empathetic towards children. He seemed to understand their thoughts and feelings. Because he took that into consideration, it enabled him to add depth to the child characters in his novels, which made them more real to his readers. He simply applied his own mind and thought to read their status of life. He keeps his record and space in portraying the destitute children and suffering ones. He makes use of his writing attitude to bring out the attitude of children.

Dickens also had a life-long interest in education. As a child, he always aspired to be a gentleman. His hopes to achieve this were almost lost when he had to quit school and was forced to work at the blacking house. Dickens recalled:

“No words could express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship [the boys at the blacking house]; ...compared to the associates of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man, crushed in my breast” (qtd. in Collins, P.8).

It bothered him that the blacking house boys did not share his expectations. He created the character of the Dodger in *Oliver Twist* from the experiences he had with these boys. He believed that if children were educated then they would be able to make better lives for themselves. Besides making the characters in his novels suffer from poor education, Dickens also contributed generously to educational institutions to aid his cause.

There is no question that children were, in fact, his favourite subjects; and that many of his characters. Collins, the Dickensian critic suspects that it is Dickens' way of dealing with his own sufferings: “Dissatisfied, then, with his adult life, and bitterly resenting his childhood sufferings [...] he felt drawn to portraying children beset by suffering and evil” (P.117). Dickens also created these characters to testify to the mistreatment of children in Victorian society. Due to his success as an author, Dickens, in many ways, successfully took up the plight of children by creating characters that drew attention and sympathy from his readers. In his works, he gave children a voice that they desperately needed, yet never had before.
Throughout the occasional unwillingness of parents; child labour was a common phenomenon at the beginning of the 19th century and accepted as a normal way of earning money. It was considered to be an important contribution into a household budget of hard-pressed families and for the factory owners children's labour was still cheaper than the machines available.

But Dickens criticizes not only the working conditions as such but he is also convinced that this kind of labour is inconvenient for children in light of their innocence, childishness and inexperience. Children are not able to provide for themselves and lack love and somebody who would give them advice. Dickens' David wails:

[...] from Monday morning until Saturday night, I had no advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no assistance, no support of any kind, from anyone[...] I was so young and childish, and so little qualified - how could I be otherwise?-to undertake the whole charge of my own existence [...] (David Copperfield, P.140).

David fails to stand up to sweets at pastry-cooks' doors, spends the money for dinner there and then has to stay without it. David resembles Oliver Twist in this way. Both characters feel lonely.

In spite of all these matters, children are forced to act as adults. When David starts in Murdstone and Grinby, the person who shows him his business is Mick Walker, also a boy. A boy introduces another boy to the world of "small adults." Children loose their innocence and childishness sooner or later but people abuse their inexperience formerly. David is taken in several times by young men who know the world better; first by a waiter in a restaurant because he has not the faintest idea how much the letter paper costs and another time by a rogue with donkey who relieves him of his money and suitcase because David, although already experienced by the life on his own account, is still too credulous.

Dickens says that much better for any child is the trouble-free childhood and loving home that David experiences with his mother and Peggotty at Rookery before Mr. Murdstone disturbs this harmony and transforms paradise into hell. Another means which could deprive any child of his naivety, give him valuable instructions and advice
is education. Education can be provided by schools or parents at home. However, Dickens rejects too strict education under the compulsion as Mr. and Miss Murdstone do because this kind of teaching and upbringing will cause more harm than utility as David says: “God help me. I might have been improved for my whole life, I might have been made another creature perhaps, for life, by a kind word at that seasons. A word of encouragement and explanation...might have made me respect instead of hate him ...” (David Copperfield, P.49). Dickens reemphasizes the same rejection of strict methods of Mr. Creakle in the Salem House who based his authority on shouting and physical punishments. The best school for Dickens is the school of Dr. Strong. Neither physical punishments nor shouting nor degradation are used by Dr. Strong. Instead he instills in his pupils the pride in the school they study in, in the education they are given and thereby in themselves.

The novel Great Expectations as such is not so critical to any institution but it is still concentrated on prisoners as David Copperfield is. The difference between these two books lies in the fact that Great Expectations is more dedicated to the discovery that higher social class and wealth do not need to be a key step for happiness and for higher level of morality. Dickens emphasizes several times that it is just the other way round.

Another appreciable character is Mrs. Wopsle who keeps an evening school in the village. Dickens criticizes her methods of education. Pip describes Mrs. Wopsle and her school in the following way:

She [Mrs. Wopsle] was a ridiculous old woman of limited means and unlimited infirmity, who used to go to sleep from six to seven every evening, in the society of youth who paid two pence per week each for the improving opportunity of seeing her do it. She rented small cottage [...] where we students used to overhear him reading aloud in a most dignified and terrific manner, and occasionally bumping on the ceiling [...] and besides keeping this Educational Institution, kept in the same room - a little general shop. (Great Expectations, P.42).

This description suggests that the conditions for education of children were still deficient and sometimes teachers were the persons who have tuition as a subsidiary job. Classes were dark rooms with a lot of things unconnected with teaching. Pip, the
main child character of the novel, is a small boy who is brought up by his sister. He experiences quite a happy childhood thanks to Joe who is his best friend.

The fact that the whole book *Great Expectations* is told in the first person underlines that Pip is Dickens and as such he looks through Dickens' eyes and expresses his opinions: Pip as an innocent child wonders how traders work:

The same opportunity saved me for noticing Mr. Pumblechook appeared to conduct his business by looking across the streets at the saddler, who appeared to transact his business by looking across the street on the coach-maker, who appeared to get on in life by putting his hands in his pockets and contemplating the baker, who in his turn folded his arms and stared at the grocer, who stood* at his door and yawned at the chemist. The watchmaker, always poring over a little desk with a magnifying glass at his eyes, and always inspected by a group in smock-frocks poring over him through the glass of his shop-window, seemed to be about the only person in the High Street whose trade engaged his attention. (*Great Expectations*, P.51).

They do not work and notwithstanding they have money and they pretend to be aristocrats. Like Oliver Twist, Pip also complains about poor diet since Mr. Pumblechook and Pip's own sister feed him barely:

I considered Mr. Pumblechook wretched company. Besides being possessed of my sister's idea that a mortifying and penitential character ought to be imparted to my diet - besides giving me as much crumb as possible in combination with as little butter, and putting such a quantity of warm water into my milk that it would have been more candid to have left the milk out together [...] while he [eats] bacon and hot roll, in a gorging and gormandizing manner. (*Great Expectations*, P.52).

The fact that the children are the helpless part of society is present here again. Dickens reveals that the poor diet of the children is not only a problem of workhouses. Adult officers in workhouses are not the only persons who derive benefit from their positions and powers; even children's own families can think about their off-springs as the least important elements of the units which are not necessary to feed.
Childishness and innocence can be an advantage. Children can see the world without prejudices which adults experience and therefore they can see the world in a more realistic way. Pip confirms this fact by expressing perhaps one of the most important ideas Dickens wants to emphasize and propose to his readers as the main obstacle to any progress in all areas mentioned above:

"We Britons had at that time particularly settled that it was treasonable to doubt our having and our being the best of everything: otherwise, while I was scared the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not rather ugly, crooked, narrow and dirty. (Great Expectations, P.150)."

Although Pip is still a child he thinks that we should challenge even the best things of the world, as he proves in the case of London, and improve them constantly. But in the same way as Joe preaches Pip to be tolerant, Dickens also asks the reader to be indulgent to initial failures because all the improvements slowly lead to happy ending and progress.

In these novels, Dickens definitely refutes the prevalent opinion that higher social class is directly connected with higher morality. Nancy, Magwitch, Joe, Biddy, Pip, Pegotty, David and Oliver who, even for a short part of their lives, belong to lower social class, have higher moral standards and are better at heart than Compeyson, Miss Havisham, James Steerforth or Monks who belong to higher class. Nevertheless, Dickens denies that higher morale belongs exclusively to lower class: there are positive characters in higher class, i.e. Agnes, Dora, Rosa Maylie and Mr. Brownlow and negative figures in lower class, i.e. Fagin, Sikes, Orlick, Noah Claypole and others. Progress is omnipresent in all Dickens' works. He believes in the goodness of people and even if they commit wickedness they can recuperate themselves. But if they are not good at heart this recuperation is impossible and they have to be punished. This is true not only of his prisoners and criminals but also of all the other.

Dickens voices his opinion that prison was the worst possible solution for juvenile delinquency through Rose Maylie in Oliver Twist when she pleads for their not giving up young Oliver Twist who had been caught during the housebreaking operation. But even if he has been wicked, think how young he is; think that he may never have
known a mother's love or the comforts of a home that ill usage and blows or the want of bread may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt. Aunt, dear aunt, for mercy's sack think of this before you let them drag this sick child to a prison, which in any case must be the grave of all his chances of amendment [...] (Oliver Twist, P.30).

Dickens often repeated his conviction that the prisoners fared better than paupers in workhouse and even than the honest poor in their own homes and Dickens was by no means alone in this opinion. The prisoners themselves recognize this truth and they fully agree that they grudge the scanty food for the hard labourers in the workhouse whereas they get meals three times a day sufficient and wholesome good to keep them going. They are satisfied to be there, and they need not care for anything, so long as the British public health authorities look after them well, they will not be any scarcity of thieves! Of course the liberty which is the primary requisite for all living beings they are deprived of, and that is a sufficient punishment however winy and comfortable they are in the prison, except for the idle who well enjoy such an escape from responsibility. (Collins, PP.74-75).

It is a "pocket theatre" as Marion Crawford once happily phrased it, containing within itself not only plot and actors, but also costume, scenery and all other accessories of dramatic representation. Oliver so young and helpless now challenges Bumble who had been a terror to all the poor boys of the work house. Nancy, the only virtuous person amongst the gang of vicious is one of those children born and bred in neglect and vice, who has never known what childhood is. In fact while talking about these wretched children in the journal 'Street's Morning' Dickens remarks "Small office lads in large hats who are made men before they are boys'. This single sentence is enough to understand how deeply Dickens felt the lost childhood of the miserable tots. The hero's journey and the coach incident in Oliver Twist focus attention on the message of Dickens' parable. As an unimaginative adult world rattle past him, Oliver, always passive and vulnerable in the novel, proves an easy prey to the young Artful Dodger, whom he meets in Barnet.

Dickens was ever fond of depicting low life, and the world of these despicable crooks, therefore, offered a congenial subject for his pen. The leader of this desperate gang is Fagin, an old Jew, and Repulsive in appearance and unscrupulous in outlook this man is made by nature to prey upon society. Tactful, cunning and shrewd, this old schemer is
well able to hold his band of young and old law breakers together and bring them under contribution for purposes of plundering the public. His gang consists of some boys trained to be expert pickpockets, some daring house breakers, and a couple of ladies who are able to do jobs of a delicate nature such as decaying young boys from their homes.

As to the children and all the mistreatments they have to suffer, Dickens is very personal, sharply criticizes child abuse and all sorts of cruelties and suggests kindness and understanding. He deprecates physical punishments and severity as useless and strongly disapproves of child labour. Instead of slaving for hours they should obtain proper education. Education is considered by Dickens to be an important mean which can help any person, not only children to have a better future and to be a better person living in a better society and that are why it should support general education.

Dickens also criticizes institutions or rather the way the institutions and systems function. His overriding justice system should be replaced by a new and more human one. Also the system of workhouses is imperfect, though established for good purposes, because of their officials who misuse their power. This is the fault of the whole system which has to be changed. But although he emphasizes bad operation of the institutions and abuses of power, he believes that all these things are only initial mistakes which will be reformed sooner or later and reader should be patient. As well, as all the people have to be common scholars first to become extraordinary ones, all states and their systems have to progress step by step and reach small improvements before they reach great ones. And England is not an exception.

A thorough study of Dickens' novels reveals the importance that is attached to childhood and its joys and sorrows. Truly Dickens is a master in handling the theme of childhood and his experiences in his childhood are reflected in the novels he had written. There must be a greater volume of writing about children in Dickens than in all the other Victorian novelists put together.

Novelist, short story writer, art critic, art historian, author of children’s literature, professor, Mulk Raj Anand’s contribution to culture and literature is enormous. In the form of books it is around 100 volumes of highly creative, as well as profoundly scholastic, works, all in English. Mulk Raj was a path breaker. He, in company with Raja
Rao and R.K. Narayan, inaugurated the age of what is labeled the Indian English - or the Indo-Anglian Novel. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, was the forerunner of this genre, and the western literary circles pricked up their ears and eyes to the birth of this new writing. Mulk Raj was highlighting the life of the poor and the hapless in his country through his novels and short stories, and he enriched the English language by introducing into its body a mix of the Punjabi and Hindustani elements.

The class of society to which Mulk Raj Anand belongs must also have been responsible for endowing him with a great sense of compassion for the poor, exploited and downtrodden people. Anand's early life was lived in the midst of poverty and misfortune. It is possible that the suffering he saw and underwent in his childhood left a deep impression on him and later on reflected in his creative writings.

Mulk Raj Anand had miserable childhood that naturally bore tremendously on his works and ideology. Mulk Raj Anand, at the age of nine, lost his pretty cousin and playmate, Kaushalya - 'the first important crisis of his life' - came to entertain the gravest of doubts about divinity which in due course turned him into an atheist, undermining his faith in established institutions, religious, social or cultural. With the deep compassion for fellow human beings inherited from his mother, Anand set out on a quest of a social order, which would ensure justice, freedom and hope for them. He was deeply influenced by his mother, Ishwar Kaur, typically Indian, especially in her love, piety and innocence, lived her daily round of rituals, prayers and songs. His mother used to tell him stories from Shastras and epics in which gods and demons, evil and virtuous men embodied the moral forces governing man's existence. Anand got a scolding from his father, Lal Chand Anand, a craftsman in copper, silver and bronze, and an active member of the Arya Samaj, who rose through the ranks in the British army.

Anand was alienated from his father, who wanted to mould him according to his own image. Lal Chand's subservience to the British government worked like a cancer in his heart. His father insisted on an English education that would train him for a job in the government, marry a girl chosen by him and face the tedium of the so-called respectable life. He saw the World War I when he was nine years old. As a fourteen-year-old boy, Anand was a victim of General Dyer's flogging order in 1919. Thus a crusader against imperial oppression was born. He was not allowed to marry the Muslim girl he loved;
deep loss and guilt were added to despair when the girl committed suicide. However, Anand grew up in a small world materially poor, spiritually confined and limited.

His life was not a bed of roses and childhood was a curse for him. An early acquaintance with suffering prepared him to face the gross realities of life, which later on became the mainspring of inspiration for his creative writing. In the loving care of his mother, his days did pass smoothly; here we can compare Anand with Charles Dickens as regards to a miserable childhood. Dickens, Premchand and Mulk Raj Anand were brought up in the dark shadow of poverty and destitution. They protested against the prevailing evils, not because they were conscious about them as a writer of social novels but they themselves had suffered this agony that was later on reflected in their novels. Their novels are peopled with characters who are the most miserable victims of society.

Mulk Raj Anand selects a particular untouchable boy, Bakha, as the central figure of *Untouchable* and selectively narrates certain incidents that happen to him in a day's span. He suggests that the impact they have in effecting a gradual growth of the boy's personality and in producing in him an acute awareness of his low social status and the possible ways out of the situation. The very fact that Anand has chosen an untouchable as the hero, a boy from the lowest stratum of Indian society - ignored by his predecessors as an unsuitable theme for fiction - establishes Anand's fun faith in the dignity of man irrespective of caste and social position, a doctrine central to Anand's humanism.

The character of Bakha also illustrates Anand's concept of work as worship, his belief in dignity of labour, and the importance of developing man's personality as a whole. He does his work willingly and neatly. He has unconsciously assimilated the idea of devotion to his duty. Cleaning human excreta is regarded by many as a low and dirty work. But Bakha has no inhibitions and he looks clean and sensitive in spite of his work. In fact, the hard job has made him strong and well-built.

The most important doctrine of Anand's humanism that finds clear amplification in *Untouchable* is, however, rejection of casteism as a cruel evil, the practice of which results in suppression of untouchables, who are denied their fundamental right to grow into respectable citizens of society. These unfortunate men
are segregated from rural community, dreaded as lepers and treated most contemptuously because of the enormously useful work they do in tidying up the entire village as well as cleaning the dungpots of all castemen.

Lakha in the novel *Untouchable*, for instance, narrates how difficult it is for him in spite of his most pitiful, repeated requests - to fetch a doctor to attend his dying son, simply because he is a mere untouchable, worthy of only neglect and contempt.

Bakha, in fact, suffers no less. He is a fine boy-good, tender, and intelligent. But all the reward the society gives him is insult or injury, or a mixture of both. Though he is quite tired of his morning round of work of cleaning latrines, he goes out, at the instance of his father, to sweep the main road and the temple courtyard. It is, of course a welcome change for him - a change from his odorous world to a world of light and sunshine.

Bakha feels elated as he proceeds towards the gates of the town which offers him a gallery of colourful things - fruit-stalls, sweet-meat stalls, betel-leaf shops, and so on. Now he stops at a shop to buy a packet of `Red Lamp' cigarettes. He puts an anna [coin] on the board. The shop-keeper dashes some water over the coin, picks it up and throws it into the counter. Then he flings the packet of cigarettes at Bakha, “as a butcher might throw a bone to an insistent dog sniffing round the corner of his shop". (*Untouchable*, P.30).

A similar humiliating incident occurs a little ahead, in the main street. Bakha stands before a Bengali sweet-meat stall and asks for *jilebis* worth four annas. Feeling contemptuous about Bakha's low taste for cheap stuff, the shopkeeper weighs *jilebis* with great alacrity and hurls the packet at Bakha who catches it like a cricket ball. To Bakha's annoyance, this shopkeeper also splashes water on the coins to purify them.

Then a really serious incident - or accident - happens. Just when Bakha is walking along the street, happy and elated to be in a world of colours and pleasing smells, he happens, all inadvertently, to `touch' a Lallaji. This draws out an endless torrent of vulgar abuses from the `touched' man. Though Bakha did not intend to pollute
the Lallaji, the row attracts a big crowd and Bakha becomes the centre of recrimination from several on-looking high-caste Hindus.

Bakha, in the novel, feels sorry and begs Lallaji's pardon. The Lallaji and the crowd continue to scold him mercilessly. Bakha is confused, paralysed, and feels like collapsing. Meanwhile, encouraged by the crowd, the 'polluted' man deals resounding slap on Bakha's cheek. Bakha stands aghast, his turban fallen on the ground and his poor jilebis scattered in the dust. A tongawalla tries to console Bakha, who moves on, his eyes filled with the fire of vengeance, and his frame burning with rage and horror. All on a sudden he realizes his position in the world.

All of them abused, abused, why are we always abused? [...] Because we touch dung. It is only the Hindus and the outcastes who are not sweepers. For them I am a sweeper - Untouchable! Untouchable! Untouchable! That's the world! I am an untouchable! (Untouchable, P.38).

Mulk Raj Anand, in the novel Untouchable, portrays another incident of Bakha's humiliation. He reaches the temple courtyard full of all manner of men and women, singing and chanting the several names of gods which he can hardly comprehend. However unable to suppress his curiosity, he goes near the temple-door and catches just a glimpse of the dark sanctuary and its idols. He is moved by the chorus of the devotees. But the next moment he is stunned to hear the priest shout: "Polluted, polluted". The whole crowd takes up the cue and starts shouting the same words. Bakha is unnerved. Anand vividly pictures what would be Bakha's predicament and reaction.

Another torrent of abuses overpowers him. As if all this were not enough, another priest shouts now from near the temple that he too has been polluted, more severely so because he has been defiled by contact of Sohini, Bakha's sister. As Bakha manages to take Sohini away from the courtyard, she tells him how the priest had made improper suggestions to her when she was cleaning the latrine and held her by her breasts. Bakha is furious that the Brahmin dog should be vile enough to accuse: his sister of polluting him when he had actually tried to seduce her. He feels like going and killing the priest, but Sohini restrains him and persuades him to get out quietly from there. It appears as though Bakha has to live on insults.
After sending his sister home, Bakha goes to the silver-smith's lane to fetch food. There an orthodox house-wife is mad with fury that Bakha has defiled her house by contact. She promptly scolds him profusely and hurls some chapatties down from the fourth storey of the building. Down they come and fall on the dusty road. Bakha picks them up and walks off with disgust overwhelming him.

Yet another incident sours the boy's mind. In the evening he goes to play hockey. The match between the 31st Punjabis and the 38th Dogras remains incomplete because the little son of a Babu, an eager spectator of the match, is badly hurt. When Bakha carries the child to his home the Babu's wife is angry with him for he has touched and polluted her son. She even thinks that Bakha himself has hit her boy and so abuses him vehemently.

All these incidents reveal how unjustly the untouchables are treated by Caste-Hindus. The climax of the novel Untouchable, the incident wherein Bakha 'touches' the Lallaji, is especially significant, for the slap dealt on Bakha's face is symbolic not only of all the cruelty to which untouchables are subjected, but of the scornful treatment meted out in the under-privileged all over the world, as, for instance, the negroes in the U.S.A.

Untouchable indicates how man's cruelty to man in the form of caste-hatred and oppression results in the unspeakable misery of innumerable untouchables in India.

Meenakshi Mukherjee classified the novels written between 1920 and 1950 into two categories - the novels of existence and destiny and the novels that deal directly with the national experience which analyse the cause and effect of man's problem in the present society. All of Anand's novels belong to the second category. His novels are typical products of the thirties in that they deal with the nationalistic movement, using its experience as the background to a personal narrative. Anand, in his Apology for Heroism, bemoans;
If this is humanism, this humanism does not rest on a Divine
Sanction, as does the mystical humanism of Gandhi and Tagore.
But puts its faith in the creative imagination of man in his
capacity: to transfoiiii himself [...] and raise himself to tremendous
heights of dignity. (P.96)

Mulk Raj Anand satirizes the misuse of eastern humanism right from the
childhood to adulthood. While Dickens' presentation of children occurs with lawful
support, Anand exhibits them with realistic presentation. Both the novelists are critical
of the society in which they also lived and experienced the various ways of non-
humanistic tendencies of the humans towards their components.

Mulk Raj Anand's heredity, social milieu, his education, the books he has read
and the people he has moved with, shaped his mind and making of him as a novelist. His
concerns for the sufferings of the Indian masses have been the main focal point in his
novels.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* describes an eventful day in the life of Bakha,
a young sweeper living in the outcastes' colony of a North Indian Cantonment town. The
narrative begins with a description of the outcastes colony, a group of mud-walled
houses outside the town. The central character of the novel, Bakha, a sweeper boy of
eighteen is waken up early in the morning by his father Lakha so that he may begin daily
routine work of cleaning latrines.

A number of things happen to Bakha on this one day, all of which contribute
slowly to the changes in his spirit. He goes into town to sweep the gullies in exchange
for food. He chances to jostle a little Hindu merchant, and is slapped and abused. A
priest tries to seduce his sister Sohini, and when Bakha peeps into the temple: to see
what is happening, the Brahmins scream, "Polluted! Polluted". His father tells him how
once when he, Bakha, was ill with fever, he couldn't go into the Chemist's shop to buy
medicine for fear of defiling the place, and had to stand by the roadside, imploring
passers by to fetch it for him.

But in the midst of all these brutal setbacks, Bakha keeps on meeting people
who have what they think is a solution for the caste problem. First, an English
missionary tells him that Jesus does not recognize caste and that he died especially that untouchables like Bakha might be forgiven. Bakha, not able to comprehend what the missionary has said, hangs about in the hope of getting a pair of white trousers. But unfortunately with the arrival of the missionary's wife, he is scared and runs away from the scene. Bakha gets mixed up with the crowd waiting for Gandhi, and is impressed where he overhears people say that Gandhi is a saint; an incarnation of Vishnu and Krishna. Gandhi says that the sweepers are men of God and must keep themselves pure by eating only the right food and refusing the leavings of others. Bakha is more confused than ever, since if he were to refuse the food thrown to him for latrine jobs, he should starve. In the crowd however, he hears a poet's remarks that water-closets and a proper drainage system would simply eliminate the whole problem of untouchability. Bakha, finally returns to his home thinking about this as wonderful machine that "...can remove dung without anyone having to handle it." (Untouchable, P.176).

The novel Coolie is the story of Munoo, a fourteen years old hill boy, who is forced to leave his idyllic village in the Kangra Valley so that he may work and see the world. The first contact with reality shatters his dreams. Arriving in the house of a minor bank clerk, he falls foul of a shrewish and vindictive housewife, and before he flees from his employers' frenzied rage, he has relieved himself near their doorstep and thereby lowered their social prestige. He next finds himself in a primitive pickle and jam factory, hidden away among the reeking lanes and dark alleys of the feudal town of Daulatpur. The proprietor who has befriended him is bankrupt by the thievery of his partner and hurled back into the ranks of the labourers from where he had sought to rise. Out on the streets again, Munoo becomes a coolie, facing desperate competition from other coolies for a chance to serve as a beast of burden. From this struggle he is rescued by an elephant-driver in a circus, with whose help he reaches Bombay. In Bombay he attaches himself to a vagrant family and becomes one of the workers in a cotton mill. He sweats to earn his bread in appalling working conditions, living in leaky straw huts and, when those are washed away by the monsoon, in dilapidated insanitary tenement houses. He makes new friends. He has his first glimpse of the life in the red-light district and witnesses a Hindu-Muslim feud instigated by the factory bosses to break an impending strike.
Though Munoo's expectations are extremely modest, he is forced by poverty to be pulverized at the age of fourteen itself. His only prayer is "I want to live, I want to know, I want to work." (Coolie, P.183). The final act of Munoo's tragedy commences when Mrs. Main Waring, whose car knocks him down to Simla, as she wants a servant, his own wishes in the matter being, of course, of no consequence he joins her household. "A deep rooted feeling of inferiority to the superior people who lived in bungalows and wore angrezi clothes." (Coolie, P.257).

Khan observes:

It is not fate or Almighty who is responsible for the tragedy of Munoo, the hero of the novel, but the society in which he is brought up. He is a victim of social forces in his life like the tragic heroes of the great novelist Galsworthy. Munoo, the hero of the novel is a universal figure who represents the miseries of the poor and the down-trodden. Social forces of exploitation and poverty determine the life of Munoo in the novel. (Mulk Raj Anand's Coolie: A Critical Study, P.183).

The central theme of the novel is the exploitation of a poor boy by the different forces in the society supported by Indian social rigidity. There are two types of exploitations in general - social and economic. In the former the novelist deals with religious, sexual and domestic exploitation and in the latter, he deals with the feudal, capitalistic and industrial exploitation.

Munoo, an orphan, naive hill boy of hardly fourteen is compelled to move from place to place against his will in order to earn his living. His father dies of the feudal exploitation and mother of poverty and hunger. An orphan faces domestic exploitation at the hands of his uncle and aunt. They find their nephew, fourteen year old boy, old enough not only to earn his own living but also to support his uncle who works as a 'chaparasi' in one of the banks in the town. They send him to work as a servant in a middle class family in a small town. Here he is exploited by the wife of his master. She treats him like an animal and other members of family treat him like a monkey; an instrument of amusement. In one of such entertaining act in the role of a monkey he bites the daughter of his master. Nathoo Ram, the master considers it as a sexual assault on his daughter and beats him mercilessly. Munoo can no longer bear the cruelty and slips out of the house.
Munoo's saga of miseries begins with the feudal exploitation. As an orphan he faces domestic exploitation at the hands of his aunt and uncle. Then he is exploited by his master's wife. In a pickle factory he faces industrial exploitation. He is compelled to work for eleven hours a day on meagre wages. In the cotton mill he faces, with other workers, the capitalistic and colonial exploitation. He faces religious exploitation in the form of the communal riot at the end of his Bombay phase. The communal riot can be called a form of capitalist exploitation, because the employers engineer the riot in order to suppress the workers' strike. They use the blind faith of the workers as a weapon against themselves. The poor coolies and the wretched destitute are victimized. In the final stage he faces physical as well as sexual exploitation by his master. The graph of his exploitation goes up with every phase of his life.

Anand has used his protagonist in most of the novels as his spokesperson but in Coolie he uses a minor character as his spokesperson. Munoo, being a child of fourteen cannot serve as the writer's mouthpiece. Anand instead uses a union leader Sauda to give way to his views on the plight of the labourers. Anand poses some genuine problems of the poverty-stricken people through him. By presenting the Charter in which the expectations of the workers from the owners of the factory are given, he tries to show the difference between the rules and the realities. The Charter says that the workers are human beings and not machines. They live in and should be saved from the clutches of the moneylenders. But exactly opposite things happen. The foreman of the cotton mills appoints all the labourers on commission. They are offered such huts to live in that they do not have even essential amenities. Almost all the workers of the factory are indebted to their foreman, pathans and grocers. The interest rates are so exuberant that the maximum part of their meagre wages goes to pay the interest. Anand wants to express his anguish and anger towards such capitalist exploitation.

Though there are laws against such exploitation the rulers are always on the side of the exploiters. Anand shows his anger towards the administrators through the incident of Seth Prabha's arrest and the inhuman treatment given to him. The police arrest him without warrant and torture him, so as to make him admit the crime which he has not committed. The brutal treatment breaks the kind hearted person not only physically but also spiritually.
Though there is a law against the child-labour, children are openly exploited in the capitalistic society. They are compelled to work under inhuman and unbearable conditions for long hours on paltry wages. What Premila Paul says in this regard is Anand’s intention too. She says, “It is a noxious practice almost built in a capitalistic factory framework” (Paul, p.48). Anand wants to lay bare the social evil of child-labour through the tragedy of Munoo. When Anand was asked by Girija Priyadarshani in her interview with Anand in 1988 about the solution on the problem Anand had answered that labour problem can be solved neither in the British capitalistic manner nor by resorting to communism. It can be solved only by democratic socialism to which he calls a socialistic participatory democracy.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar reflects his impressions about this novel Coolie as follows:

If Untouchable is the microcosm, Coolie is more like the macrocosm that is Indian society: Concentration gives place to diffusion and comprehension, with several foci of concentration. Coolie is verily a cross section of India, the visible India, that mixture of the horrible and the holy, the inhuman and the humane, the sordid and the beautiful. (Indian Writing in English, p.340).

Finally, he is knocked down by the car of an Anglo-Indian Woman who takes him to Simla as her servant. Here he dies of tuberculosis, which is aggravated by his having to pull rickshaw for his mistress. Watching the peaceful hills and valleys he had abandoned the plains.

The novel Two Leaves and a Bud is the tragic story of Gangu, a Punjabi peasant. He loses his ancestral property owing to debt and is compelled in old age to indenture himself, his wife and his two children as labourers in a British owned tea plantation in far-off Assam. Little does he know that he is only jumping from the frying-pan into the fire. After being fleeced by the Indian money lender Seth Badri Dass, he is now going to be thoroughly exploited by the whole capitalistic machinery geared up in the Macpherson tea estate in the Assam Valley.

Gangu is allured to the plantation by the fabulous promises made by Sardar Buta who recruits labourers, the greatest temptation dangled before the victim being the
possibility of receiving a plot of land free of charge - a temptation which the peasant with his roots firmly embedded in the soil can never resist. Once he reaches the Estate, the promised land too turns out to be a prison with no bars but "nevertheless an unbreakable jail". Being paid very meagre wages, and compelled to live in unhygienic conditions and under nourished, Gangu and his wife fall a prey to disease. Eventually Gangu's wife passes away unable to bear the agony of the disease, malaria. As if the cup of misery of Gangu is not enough, Leila, daughter of Gangu found picking the tea leaves along in a bush falls in the lewd eyes of Reggie Hunt, a womanizer working as Assistant Manager in the estate. He chases her and tries to rape Leila and when Gangu intervenes Reggie shoots him down and flees the place. Gangu comes to the plantation to start a new life; but he ends up by losing his life. Pilgrimage of suffering on the earth being over he leaves the world.

Anand's presentation of the pitiable plight of the child-rejected, maltreated, exploited and castaway in perpetual but vain conflict with injustice and brutality is not only touching but also convincing. The cruel and wicked propensities of the adult world are the direct cause of the untold sufferings of almost all the child heroes of Anand. Various sorrowful experiences, experienced by these hapless urchins, inflicted by the individual and systematic exploitation prove, beyond doubt, that the society is but an ogre. Intolerably painful physical torture and starvation or under-nourishment are so powerful as to force upon these children a premature adulthood and they become what Collins calls "miniature adults" (P.188).

Oppression threatens in various forms resulting either in their death or leading them close to death. The inimical adult-world, by being uncomprehending and indifferent sees to it that even their basic needs remain unfulfilled. They are thus left with no alternative than tending for themselves. The total denial of love and affection by their parents or guardians throws them into their own word of loneliness where they eternally crave for the unavailable love and affection. The plight that is common to all of them is that they are all deprived and denied of the stability of a loving home. "The one adjective that applies to all of them, comments Frank Donovan, "is pathetic" (P.15). the central role Anand offers to children in his novels is not just to satisfy his own moral and aesthetic
purpose but as Joseph Gold points out, “to expose and explore the inadequacies of those who are alienated or threatened by children” (P.9).

Dickens was the first novelist to introduce a child as the hero in his novel *Oliver Twist* in the first half of the nineteenth century. Kathleen Tillotson gives all admiration for his successful attempt and comments that “to make a child the centre of a novel as distinct from a (romantic) tale for children was in 1837, almost unprecedented” (P.8). *Coolie* published almost a century after *Oliver Twist*, created a stir in the literary world and the discerning critics soon recognized in the author of the novel another Dickens.

But Anand’s passion for orphaned and oppressed was rendered into artistic reality even before this. His first short story *The Lost child* traces the loneliness and desertion of an orphan child. It’s a metaphor of all innocents suffering in a world of adult-wickedness. His first novel *Untouchable* shows his passion being turned into genuine compassion for children. It is a tragic tale in which the ossified ritualistic tradition of Hindu hierarchy stands up against Bakha, a sweeper boy and is not all ready to offer him any opportunity for his survival as a human being.

“A prose epic of modern India” [P.356] as it is described by K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, it is perhaps the pathetic plight of Munoo, an orphaned hill-boy in his teens, at the hands of exploiters who shamelessly exhibit their greed and mercilessly decimate his in nonce and zest for life. Invariably in all of these fictional narratives, the loneliness of the child is an integral part of Anand’s compassionate humanism in a vivid and clearer way. Discerning their oppression as a kind of conflict between the selfish and self-centered adult-world and the helpless and lonely world of children he skillfully strikes at the very root of the heartlessness of the adult-world which hinders the growth and happiness of ill-fated children like Bakha and Munoo. Thus in his first two novels, *Untouchable* and *Coolie*—Anand maintains the ogre-figure of the society as the focal point.

Both Charles Dickens and Mulk Raj Anand trace the life of children by mixing their childhood in their respective novels, having children as prime characters. Though the concentration of Charles Dickens is all type of children, Mulk Raj Anand cares alone the downtrodden. The children of Charles Dickens are destitutes, orphans, and left outs but Mulk Raj Anand’s children are untouchable and downtrodden. Children are instinctive
having strong imagination. They have both a sensitive and sensational nature. Charles Dickens children see life with no logic or philosophy. They view it blindly and passionately with curiosity and suspense. This shows that Charles Dickens has a thorough understanding of children. The child characters of both the writers have left an inedible impression on the minds of the readers. Charles Dickens' children are the victims of industrialization where as Mulk Raj Anand's children are the victims of both imperialism and casteism. No writer's child is born with silver spoon in his mouth. So they faced a lot of humiliation and suffering during their childhood which in disguise has helped them to understand what life is and to face it boldly.

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