CHAPTER – V

RACIAL EXPLOITATION

Unity in diversity is the peculiar feature of India. In spite of present cultural, lingual, geographical and racial differences there is a powerful undercurrent of unity and an awareness of common cultural heritage in India. The present study is an attempt to describe the impact of racial discrimination on women in Anand’s novels. To advocate the necessity of national integration through his novels, Anand analysed the racial issues. Anand highlights the relationship between Hindus and Muslims on the one hand and Indians and the Britishers on the other.

History of India reveals that the first great cultural synthesis and fusion took place between the incoming Aryans and the native Dravidians. In later ages many other races – Iraninans, Greeks, Parthians, Scyntians, Huns, Turks, Jews, Zorostrians and Muslims came to India and were absorbed. Due to colonisation the settlers dominated the natives.

Jayabalan, in his book *Economic History of India*, says, “India has been described as an ethnological (racial) museum in which a number of races of mankind are found” (4). Even to this day the Indian Muslims retain their distinctive culture and social systems and form a separate community along with their Hindu brethren. Yet in some places, people felt unrest due to racial issues based on various factors.
Anand emphasizes the harmonious relationship between Hindu and Muslim in many of his novels like *Coolie*, *Morning Face* and *Confession of a Lover*. *Coolie* is a novel written before independence. *Morning Face* and *Confession of a Lover* are the novels written after independence depicting the pre-independence period. Anand depicted the impact of British rule in India in his novels. Indians were deprived of all fundamental rights. *Two Leaves and a Bud* depicts the pathetic condition of Indian labourers in the Assam Tea Plantation. Anand emphasizes the harmonious relationship between Hindu and Muslim in many of his novels. But in *Confession of a Lover* Anand elaborately describes the impact of the friendship between the two races, Hindu and Muslim.

In the novel, *Coolie* also, Anand depicts how Hindu-Muslim dispute can be spread out without any basis. Workers did strike for their rights. But their strike was misused and misinterpreted as kidnapping the Hindu children by the Muslims. Generally, Anand introduced the forthcoming Hindu-Muslim problem in the novel through this rumour. The cunning society took the opportunity from the thrust of the pathetic labourers. M. K. Naik said,

A worker’s strike is easily broken by casual rumours of communal disturbances which divert the wrath of the labourers from the mill to the religious factions among themselves. The fires of communal hatred are further fanned by politicians, who have their own axes to grind. (42)

Here the Hindu Muslim problem did not affect any particular woman in the novel *Coolie*. Critics analysed, generally, the issues of racism in Anand’s novel. But, in the autobiographical novels, the individuals especially women suffered a lot by the society. Women’s sufferings are exposed only through Krishan, the narrator of the novel. Krishan is the
mouthpiece of Anand. His views on women’s freedom revealed through him. Krishan’s family faced a lot of problems due to racial issues.

Anand himself had suffered the injustice of white rulers. *Two Leaves and a Bud* had to be withdrawn from circulation in England for sometime simply because it openly castigated the white tea planters of Assam. Anand depicted the ill treatment of the Indians by the Britishers.*Two Leaves and a Bud* is one of the novels depicting the cruelty of the Britishers. It deals with the problem of indentured labourers who had to lead a life of inhuman subjugation. It depicts the tragic story of Leila, daughter of Gangu, a Punjabi farmer. Gangu along with his wife Sajani, daughter Leila and son Buddhu left their native place, Hoshiarpur. Gangu enlisted himself and his family as indentured labourers in Macpherson Tea Estate. In the Assam Valley this family became tools of exploitation of every kind. They “are leading unrewarded uncreative lives. They are cogs in a machine” (Niven 87).

The doctrine of racial superiority was deeply rooted in the minds of the Britishers. The planter Croft Cooke and the Assistant planter Reggie Hunt became suspicious of all Indians, their motives and their actions. Every coolie for them was a rebel. When the coolies came peacefully to seek redress with Croft Cooke, they were treated as revolutionaries and shot down. The labourers were treated like beasts and their wives and daughters if good looking, had to yield to the white sahibs like Reggie Hunt. Further, the living condition in the plantation was awfully bad. Among them, Dr. John De La Havre alone was a kind hearted man. He sympathized for Indians but he was unable to help the poor practically. Dr. Havre described the cup of tea as “The hunger, the sweat and the despair of a million Indians!” (TLB 22).

As the coolies were Indians, they had no chance of getting any fair deal at the hands of the British. “Almost all English men in India believed, with varying degrees of individual emphasis, that the Indians could not rule
themselves” (TLB 32). For them the Indian coolies were just a piece of property, and a sub-human being with no rights and only duty. “These coolies are sub-human, and do not altogether value the benefits of hygiene” (TLB 29). The labourers toiled to make the planters rich. The white planters terrorised and subjugated the coolies and enjoyed the fruits of their blood, sweat and tears. Their suffering was unmitigated and they led a marginal existence.

The tea estate provided security, comfort and luxurious living for the white planters. They lived in their bungalows, they played polo in the club grounds and indulged in little chit chats in the English club. The forest of the valley provided pastime to them for game hunting. They underestimated the Indian coolies. The Indians were criticized: “These natives are lazy. And we must not spoil them. They are born liars and they steal. I caught a coolie woman plucking roses from our garden the other day, and I shooed her half” (TLB 22). The poor coolies who served for their comfort were underfed, ill-paid, exploited and all ill-accommodated. They became victims of epidemics like malaria owing to unprotected water. The estate had no proper sanitation and water supply. The coolies were under the threat of dreadful diseases.

Exploitation of basic amenities like food, shelter and water, freedom of expression, sexual exploitation, justice exploitation and exploitation of education and employment were analysed in his novels. As M.K.Naik said, “Anand’s compassion for the underdog and his indignation at the exploitation of the Indian by the forces of capitalism, industrialism, communalism, colonialism and racism” (39) are explored in his novels. The method of the exploitation of the coolies in the plantation was very subtle and cunning. They employed the Indian subordinates to exploit the coolies of their native soil for favours from the white sahibs. This is an example of the divide and rule policy of the British.
A quarrel between the two coolies resulted in a riot. It was ruthlessly put down by Reggie Hunt, the assistant Planter. When the coolies went to represent their grievances it was looked as mutiny and the police and the army are summoned. Anand depicted the miserable condition of the coolies as people

live to till the soil in their own homes and the earning in their native land is a miserable pittance of three farthings a day, while in times of famine wages vanish. Now you can’t say that they are not better off here. They come here and increase their earnings tenfold, and may return to become landowners and capitalists themselves, one day, in their districts. (TLB 30)

So, Anand portrays the life of Indian coolies in the British plantation as as if they are in prison. They could not escape from that jail. “First water, afterwards mire! This prison has no bars, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail” (TLB 38). Havre says “these docile, gutless, spineless coolies” (TLB 198), never raised their voices “except on the day of the holi” (TLB 198). Their necessities were not fulfilled as they had promised.

Dr. Havre felt that it would be criminal not to do anything for purification of water since he knew the water supply was infected. The company earned “millions of pounds every year on their labour, it wouldn’t be such a terrible loss for it to spend a lakh to save the coolies from perishing through gnats and pests” (TLB 31). They wanted to list their needs to the Manager; but were considered as mutiny.

They were under suspicion. They were watched even at night. Narain narrated his experiences in the plantation to Gangu as: “The chowkidars keep guard over the plantation, and they bring you back if you should go. The other day the chowkidar beat Balkrishnan, the boy who fled to
the Santal village in Oudh. The chowkidars go round at night with a lamp and open every door to see if we are all at home” (TLB 38). There used to be a roll call every night. Daily, they must be reported. They could not escape from the misery.

Narain told Gangu that Reggie Hunt had no consideration for anyone’s mother or sister and he was openly living with three coolie women. Narain warned Gangu when Reggie inquired about Leila. Gangu overlooked his warning as he thought his daughter was a child. However, Narain warned Gangu that nobody knew what may or may not happen in the tea plantation. Narain said Leila was not safe in the plantation. “Nobody’s mother or sister safe in this place” (TLB 42). They lived in fear. “The coolie women shuffled like hens at the arrival of a much-dreaded cock” (TLB 49). They could not pluck tea leaves freely and fearlessly. “The coolie women bent to their plucking with fear in their hearts and the queer confusion in their heads” (TLB 50).

Neogi Gurka had got another five acres. Narain explained to Gangu the reasons for getting the land as: “the Ashashtant planter Sahib likes his wife” (TLB 171). Hearing his answer Gangu felt embarrassed at the possible reasons. Narain might have had in mind about how he had recently acquired his strip of land. He was conscious that he had a lovely daughter. The conversation between Narain and Gangu revealed the pathetic condition of women. They were exploited sexually.

I don’t say that everyone gets land by giving his wife, mother or daughter away to the sahibs,’ said Narain dividing Gangu’s nervousness, But the Regi Sahib is a budmash and Neogi had no choice. He would have lost his job and been lashed as Ranbir, the coolie from Ranchi was lashed, because he refused to give his wife to the Ashastant planter. The sahib had Ranbir imprisoned, and
took his wife. That bitch was living at the bungalow for months, till
the sahib turned her out and sent her back to the lines a few days
ago. (TLB 171)

The Indian coolies in the British Tea plantation were exploited
sexually. With their power they imprisoned and shot the men who intervened
in this matter. They had to submit. Leila, a solitary young girl was engaged in
plucking tea leaves late. At that time, Reggie Hunt jumped across a ditch into
the allotment where the girl was bending over the tea bushes with her back
towards him. The seething flame of wild lust made him tense. “He advanced
soul wracked, storm tossed, his temples drumming, his head swimming, his
body limp with the lurid flow of sweat” (TLB 270) and an insane hope of
getting her.

Knowing there was no other way of contact, Reggie ordered her to
come there. She waved her head in negation without looking up. But he found
fault with her work that she had not pruned the bush. She was mortally afraid.
She lifted her gaze towards the bush which was not well plucked, though she
knew there was no such bush. Reggie could not control his desire for her.
“He steeped to her and tried to put his arm round her waist once more” (TLB
272). He lured her to come to his bungalow and there he would give her a
nose ring and bangles. He thought that he would exploit her by offering the
jewels to the poor girl Leila. But, Leila refused and shrieked. She answered
him boldly. “Go away. I will call my father. I don’t care who you are,
whether you are a sahib or… Go away and let me work! My father will be
angry if I don’t get back home before the sun sets….” (TLB 272). But,
Reggie chased her.

Before he turned round, he saw Buddhu, Leila’s brother who was
eight years old. Reggie requested him to ask his sister to come out and he
would give him a rupee. He thought that he could exploit the Indians by
giving money for which they suffered a lot. But it was not happened as he thought. Suddenly Buddhu began to cry and ran towards Narain’s hut and called his father.

Buddhu shrieked again and Reggie lost his head completely with the fear that the coolies would come and find him prowling about the barracks suspiciously. He was full of fear. He shot at the dark sky with his revolver twice. He wanted to run away, but he was face to face with Gangu at a distance of two yards. Gangu shouted with anger. Reggie Hunt shot Gangu. Reggie turned on his feet and ran.

After a trial lasting for three days, Reggie Hunt, Assistant planter in the Macpherson tea estate, was brought for judgment on the charge of murder or culpable homicide before Mr. Justice Mowberley and a jury of seven European and two Indian members. They said to Reggie, “An impartial jury has found you ‘not guilty” on the charge of murder or culpable homicide” (TLB 278). Through this partial judgment, Anand depicted the justice exploitation of the Britishers. Anand focused the problems of the labourers in this novel. The low class Indians had no other way to exist other than to suffer. Along with the sexual exploitation Anand depicted the justice exploitation.

Anand portrayed the problem of the low middle class characters in the autobiographical novels. British government usurped all the facilities to the Indians to keep them under control. To have the economic security some Indians accepted the job from the British Government though they disliked it. “War is fought by armies and suffered by individual” (Niven 170). Some people rejected the job from the align government and fought against the British rule. Education system of the British Government affected the life of Indians.
The responsibility of upbringing the children and giving education to them was tough task. Krishan’s mother, Sundari had to take care of her children as her husband was a loyal servant to the British government. Krishan’s patriotic fervour was supported by his mother. Krishan’s father condemned his wife for his son’s misdeeds.

Harish had to change schools every time the regiment was transferred from one cantonment to the other. “Ganesh’s loss of a year would have to be considered as a sacrifice at the altar of his father’s service to the Angrezi Sarkar. The Army gave no chance to the family to settle down in one place” (MF 32). Ganesh had to spend one year more in the fourth primary class, because he did not learn English in that class in Nowshera cantonment. Dev Dutt and Bhagwan Dutt were members of the Arya Samaj and they were learned people. They were superior to all other coppersmiths brotherhood, because, though originally wine-sellers by caste, they had become scholars with their learning in the Arya Samaj. So, Ganesh’s mother arranged tuition with Dev Dutt. The economic exploitation of the Britishers was narrated to Krishan by Dev Dutt to arouse the national consciousness. Britishers usurped the source of income in all the possible ways.

Dev Dutt consoled Ganesh by his experience. In spite of his hard work, he had failed twice in M.A. There was a vicious English Professor of Mathematics at Government College. He knew that they were Arya Samajists. Britishers were suspicious about the Arya Samajists. So he said, “I shall never pass M.A. (Mathematics) because the English examiner knows that I am an Arya Samajist, and the Arya Samaj of Punjab is opposed to British rule’ (MF 72). He explained about the freedom fighter who “wanted freedom for India from the British and was against Indian troops going to fight in the war against Germany.” (MF 120) Lalla Haridayal was one of the leaders of Arya Samaj and unlike Krishan’s father, who was serving the Angrezi Sarkar, was
fighting against the British for India’s freedom. He refused the job of a Professor in Government College Lahore, which the Sarkar offered him and joined Lalla Lajpat Rai. British government was occupying India against the will of Indians. With the help of traitors they exploited the Indian people.

Women were indirectly affected by the war. Due to war, Krishan’s family was disintegrated. “Uncle, when will the war finish so that we can all go to stay with father?” (MF 133). Dev Dutt described the pathetic condition of Indians under British rule. The officers of the British Government, drunken with power and whiskey have conquered half of the world. The Sahibs were addicted to the life of leeches, the selfish blood suckers. They were greedy for power over the spaces of the earth, over men. They wished to loot as much wealth from their empire as possible. The rich Indians survived under white patronage but the poor had to work hard. So he insists, “Other people’s rights should also be considered not only one’s own” (MF 133).

Krishan’s mother paid reverence to Gandhiji. She encouraged her son to fight against the Britishers. So, Krishan’s father condemned his wife for his son’s behaviour. “Chup—you have spoilt this foolish son of yours! Encouraging him to defy the Sarkar and to go to jail for that Gandhi!” (COL 376). For Krishan’s participation in the freedom movement his father criticised his mother. She encouraged the spirit of national freedom. Krishan’s mother supported her son. “Even a sheep will defend its young!” mother whispered. Whereupon father got up, and kicked mother, slapping her head and torso” (COL 376). Krishan’s active participation in the freedom movement was considered by his father as a disgrace. “What was most hurtful was the fact that my innocent mother had been penalized for my crimes. That was the last insult that I could bear. I would leave home” (COL 376). It was unbearable for Krishan. Sangeeta Das, in the article, The Search for Identity in the Novels of Mulk Raj Anand asserts: “His characters though revolt
against the outrageousness of the society from different platforms they finally reconcile to their circumstances” (Das 25).

Krishan and Noor were close friends in the novel, *Confession of a Lover*. So Krishan’s aunt Devaki, Noor’s wife, Naseem, his stepmother Nargis and his sister-in-law Yasmin have cordial relationship beyond the racial clutches. Of these women Devaki and Yasmin (sister-in-law of Noor and Krishan’s lover) suffered a lot.

Devaki, a childless widow, wanted to see her husband’s spirit with the help of Nargis. Though they belonged to different races, they treated each other as sisters. On the contrary, the society imposed the racial authority to control over them. Devaki and Krishan were excommunicated by the head of the Panchayat, Lalla Acharja Mal. Nobody was there to share her feelings. So economically, racially and socially exploited Devaki committed suicide. She was butchered slowly by her community people by leaving her alone. Having no other way to live, she chose to leave the world.

Yasmin, a young Muslim woman fell in love with Krishan who often appreciated her intelligence. But, according to the betrothal, she married her relative, a railway guard who had already two other wives. She was tortured by her drunken husband. Krishan’s love for Yasmin failed due to racial clutches. Knowing the truth that Hindu-Muslim union was not possible, the lovers departed. Through her arranged marriage she neither had physical satisfaction nor mental content. She wanted to reunite with her lover Krishan. So, Naseem and Noor tried to help the lovers for their reunion. The mental agony of Yasmin is inexplicable. As a mother she could not leave her daughter. Further she had doubt whether Krishan would accept her daughter and a child in the womb or not. At last, Naseem received the telegram that Yasmin passed away.
Both Devaki and Yasmin were the victims of racial discrimination on women in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand. These innocent women who were victimized by the racial exploitation are minutely portrayed by Anand. If Devaki and Yasmin had remained submissive they might have lived though not happily. Unfortunately, these two women were victims of society. So their mental agony is analysed elaborately in the following section.

Anand portrays his women characters with modern revolutionary ideas. But in real life their revolt against the tradition of their races is not fruitful to them in those days. Hence, they were not successful and had to end their life in vain. C.J.George also insists this:

Anand’s novels depict the wretched condition and ordeals of the oppressed people and their struggle for a better life. Almost all his novels that followed are variations on the same theme and are intended to bring home to the reader the abject condition of the overburdened peasant who is powerless to fight superstition and social convention and is hindered at every step in his search for a better life. (6)

The milieu from which Noor came was “mostly of illiterate, fanatical Muhammadans, who had suffered at the hands of Hindus” (COL 178). So the hatred between the two races Hindu and Muslim affected the innocent individuals. The close friends Krishan and Noor knew the problem that would be raised due to their friendship yet they continued. Noor questioned Krishan, “Won’t your Hindu caste brotherhood ostracise you for eating with us?” (COL 27). Krishan was bold enough to rebel. So, he did not care for the old ideas that hampered the freedom of the individuals.

Krishan had acquired the spur of freedom from his mother and aunt with different aspects. “We must learn to rebel- I tell you, my mother knows I
eat in the houses of sweepers. She is a peasant woman and does not mind, though she pretends to chastise me. She knows that Gandhi is asking us all to interdine with the outcastes. The important thing is to be to become rebellion itself! Free! Free! Utterly free!” (COL 27-28) On the another aspect, her negligence was source of protest and for the desire of caste-ridden and race-ridden society. Krishan’s mother kindled the spirit of national consciousness by following Mahatma Gandhi though not all in all matters.

Mulk Raj Anand identifies with women the means to transcend the confusion, violence and hypocrisy. His women, with their sympathetic intuition, their emphasis on value and responsibility of human relationships, emotional warmth and responsiveness, enable Krishan to discover fountains of creative mysteries and treasures lying hidden within him. (Inamdar 125)

Lalla Acharja Mal advised Krishan: “But avoid consorting with those Muslas! Otherwise, people will accuse your father of going back to the Aga Khan Ismaili faith” (COL 52). Krishan was bored with the words spoken on the eternal theme which occupied their households in those days whether Aga Khan was a true God or not. Then he had heard that

Aga Khan had issued a fiat, saying: those who wanted to remain his followers should now become Musallmans and those who wanted to leave him should revert back to the Hindu faith. But the issue was that most of our brotherhood wanted to remain what they were, Ismaili-Hindus, the special tribe who honoured the Aga Khan as an incarnation of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, as well as the Hindu God, Krishna- after whom I myself was named. (MF 8-9)
Draupadi, sister-in-law of Krishan, also suffered. Her parents followed Aga Khan as their spiritual leader, like Krishan’s family at the time of marriage. But, her husband’s family was converted to Hindu religion and they did not follow Aga Khan as their spiritual leader and they became the followers of Arya Samaj. Harish’s friends in the town were inclined towards the Arya Samaj, which was reforming the Hindu faith. The whole brotherhood of Krishan decided to take the decision that they should leave the Aga Khan and revert back to the Hindu faith. So, Draupadi laments, “I can’t even go back to my parents, because your father has chosen to leave the fold of religion of the Aga Khan and joined the Arya Samaj, while my family have chosen to follow our old God” (MF 182).

Draupadi’s father Lalla Bhagat Ram came to see his daughter and asked the permission of Harish to take her to his house where she was born and brought up. At that time, Harish was busy. So he said, “Tomorrow I shall speak about the things which have brought you here. Now I have to go to the office” (MF 202). But, her father insisted that he had to catch the evening’s train.

Harish declined his father-in-law’s wish since the brotherhood of Harish had renounced the old God and they were the followers of Arya Samaj. So his society would condemn her. So, he said, “if they got to know that Draupadi has gone to a family which has still not given up the Aga Khan” (MF 202) they would be excommunicated. Aga Khan was the god of both the Hindu and the Muslim. He suggested the followers of Aga Khan, those were converted from Hindu religion, could go back to the Hindu religion. Others could follow the Muslim religion. They were allowed to follow any religion as they liked.

On hearing Harish’s reply Draupadi intervened with rage. “They” have no shame.”(MF 202). Further she criticized the mocking behavior of her
husband before her father thus: “‘They’ can go to Mussalmam prostitutes, eat and drink with them, but I am not allowed to go home to my parents because we retain our faith in the Aga Khan.” (MF 202) She boldly attacked her husband’s mistakes. On hearing the accusation about Mussalman prostitutes the father-in-law of Harish said, “I know your mother’s plan to marry you off to someone else, and will think that our daughter has become a widow!” (MF 202). Draupadi cried. At last Harish got up and said, “If you take her away, the responsibility will be yours. I cannot let her go without the permission of father” (MF 202). The dual role played by men has become the target of discussion by the author. Men’s actions were not questioned or discussed, but only of women.

Through Draupadi, he points out that Harish was not taking permission from his parents, his wife, or his father-in-law to go the prostitutes. He could commit the mistakes secretly. He was not loyal to his wife. But he pretended to be loyal to his father and his community. Loyalty to the wife or her relatives was not considered as important as loyalty to the society. Wife seeking permission from her husband and a father-in-law asking permission from his son-in-law to visit their house was unnecessary but it was followed as a tradition. It must be her choice to go whenever and wherever she wanted. She condemned her husband as a “fiend”. (MF 203) He was ruining her life. He had insulted her father and sent him away.

Krishan’s mother worshipped all deities. Aga Khan is also one of the deities to be worshipped. At that time, Arya Samaj influenced the people to follow the Vedas and to analyse the values of Hinduism. The head of the Panchayat, Lalla Acharja Mal again threatened Krishan by his tactics that his family had remained faithful to the Hindu dharma. But, his aunt’s attitude towards the friendship with the Muslim was turned to be a problem to the family and to the community. So, he warned “coming and going of these
Muhammadans will begin to cause doubts whether your family has given up the Aga Khan as your family Guru or not” (COL 81).

Without any personal loss and gain “every Hindu hating every Muslim and every Muslim hating every Hindu!” (COL 57). Elders imposed the prejudiced ideas on the young generation regarding their social history. As “there was no education for girls” (COL 116) they did not have the chance to get knowledge, share their ideas, express their own feelings freely and fully. Hence, they became the victims of the social and racial history. On the contrary, Krishan’s education gave him courage, fortitude and endurance to fight against the society.

Devaki and Nargis wanted to escape from the harsh realities of life and have the desire to understand life beyond mundane things. Devaki’s spirit of learning enabled her thought to invite Nargis to her house. Krishan says, “If the spirit of Mian Mir would lead to the emancipation of Noor’s stepmother from purdah and if it would make Devaki happy (…) I am all for the séance” (COL 75). Though Krishan is a rationalist, he did not interfere with activities regarding the spirit. On the contrary, he finds that it is an escape from their misery. Krishan, in a spirit of compromise, said: “I sensed that these women wanted to escape from the man-made world” (COL 75). But, they were unable to escape from the misery.

Though Krishan was educated, he did not question them about the séance. “Then how could you, literate persons, allow the Pakhand of the séance of Pir Mian Mir by a Mussalmann woman prostitute, in your aunt’s house!” asked Lalla Acharja Mal. His authority as a patriarch seemed to have filled him with hate” (COL 81). Krishan reminded Acharja Mal that the members of Acharja’s family “came to see the séance of Aunt Aqui, in his house, a few years ago” (COL 81). At that time he did not criticize the attitudes of women regarding seance. Séance from another race was
condemned. Further, Lalla Acharja Mal accused Nargis “a Mussalman prostitute woman!” (COL 81). But according to Krishan those two women looked so beautiful and gentle, “when they invoked their spirits. They were perhaps playacting as an escape from their misery” (COL 81).

Krishan did not believe either in Hindu or Mussalman superstitions. As Noor and Krishan were college friends Noor’s stepmother came to Devaki’s house with the permission of Chaudhri Din Muhammad. Similarly, Devaki had been going to her house also. This was a great issue for Lalla Acharja Mal.

To avoid the friendship with the Muslim, Hari, who was prejudiced and advised thus:

Boys we have suffered shame for fifty years or more because of our connection with Aga Khani Ismaili faith! The Hindus would not accept us back, when we wanted to return to the caste order. The Brahmins had to be appeased and a special ceremony had to be performed. We are on probation. Our caste status is lower than that of the other Khatris. We cannot treat the interdining and the intimacy of Devaki with this Mussalmann woman singing-dancing girl lightly. (COL 82)

Non violence is one of the main principles of Hindus. So, they considered taking non vegetarian food was considered as an offence. Muslims usually take non vegetarian food which was disliked by the people like Lalla Acharja Mal. So he criticized Krishan and Devaki. Krishan said defiantly: “I have eaten beef at the Officer’s Mess in father’s regiment in the rooms of a sahib! And so has father! I prefer the Christian religion though I don’t believe in God!.. and I find Mussalmanns more loyal in friendship than Hindus” (COL 82). Krishan’s father also had eaten non vegetarian food in his regiment
and so there was nothing wrong in having their friendship and interdining with them openly.

Krishan’s father said to his family, “The Panchayat has excommunicated you both, because of your mixing with Muhammadans! They had a meeting this morning and it was proved that you had stayed the night in a Mussalman household and eaten there” (COL 86). Krishan argued with his father as he ate with Muslims and Christians in the cantonment. Similarly they ate in the house of a Muslim friend. So, Krishan boldly asked his father: “But Ba-ji you have been eating with Muhammadans, Christians in the cantonment! I protested. ‘Han, but the ignorant thathiar brotherhood does not know that,’ father said. ‘And don’t you blurt this out!’ We have to keep within the Hindu fold!” (COL 87). Krishan’s mother knew that her husband was taking food with Muslims and Christians. Hindus consider water from the Ganges river is holy and it could redeem human being from their sin. So she used to give Ganga water which could purify Krishan’s father. So she asserts, “Besides I always give your father Ganga water from the Hardwar to purify him, whenever he comes home after eating or drinking with people of other religions” (COL 87). According to Krishan, if Ganga water can purify Krishan’s father it could also purify Devaki. So, Krishan insisted his mother to “give Devaki the same Ganga water from Hardwar!” (COL 87). But there was no response from his mother.

The Panchayat “insisted on excommunicating Devaki and Krishan for interdining with Muhammadan” (COL 88). After her excommunication, she could not continue her diary business. Krishan’s mother persisted as she was expelled from the brotherhood, no one would buy the milk from her anyhow.

Krishan also was excommunicated along with her aunt Devaki but not injured as much as Devaki. Krishan’s father and brother also mingled with
the Muslims and Christians but they were not tortured by the head of the Panchayat. They concealed their mingling with other races. Krishan’s friendship with Noor was everlasting. They continued their friendship even after his departure. Krishan had an outlet to go abroad to continue his studies. On the contrary, there was no outlet for Yasmin. Devaki remained silent bearing all her misfortunes. So, for the sake of her aunt, he protested against his family though it was vain.

The head of the Panchayat had written a post card to Krishan’s father telling that they (Krishan and Devaki) were mixing with the notorious Mussalmann families. But Krishan passed comments on his father and brother to support their innocent gentle aunt Devaki. “Then you will behave like father – keep one compartment in your heart for eating good Mughali food, another for eating Christmas cake with Mr.Jones, the bandmaster, and the other two ventricles for the pure Hindu faith!” (COL 94). Krishan’s speech clearly reveals that his father himself mingle with Muslims or Christians in his work place.

Krishan was obsessed by the contrast of man’s fanaticism with the gentleness of two females. Man’s fanaticism forbids the feminine feelings to be free. Their tender feelings were not understood by the narrow minded people. Krishan’s brother got the chance to study in college where 50% students were Muhammadans. Though boys were warned for mingling with their friends belonging to other community they were not tortured. If their friendship continued outside the college like eating and visiting the house, their family members especially women were the victims.

Though men and women were the subjects of racial exploitation its impact on women is more acute. Women were exploited sexually and socially. Hence, Krishan shouted: “Injustice to woman! Injustice to Devaki! Injustice to Naseem! Injustice to Yasmin! They murder the souls of women”
As Nargis belonged to another race, he could not punish her; but only blame her as Mussalman prostitute to show his aversion. Krishan was recoiling with an inner fury against the partiality and injustice. The impact of racial discrimination is based on the sexual exploitation of men. Further, men interfered even in eating, dressing, singing and dancing. Lalla Acharja Mal asserted: “We can not treat the interdining and intimacy of Devaki with this Mussalman woman singing and dancing girl lightly!” (COL 82). Existing social conventions are the hindrances for women in practicing the arts like singing and dancing. These are also one of the arts that give mental relief. Finally, their singing and dancing gave Devaki contradictory mental torture. Dance of Shiva and the Goddess Saraswathi in Hindu religion reveal the value of dancing and singing.

Instead of following the ideal principles of Dharma, men follow the practices superficially without having the deep knowledge of Hindu Dharma. So Anand insists to relearn Sanskrit and the values of Hinduism. The purpose of any religion is to facilitate every creature to live happily. Tulasidas in his book *Ramacharitamanas* insists: Devotion “requires neither Yoga (mind-control), nor sacrifice, nor Japa (muttering of prayers), nor penance, nor fasting. A guileless disposition, a mind free from perversity and absolute contentment with whatever may be got – this is all that is needed” (788). Prestige and shame is based on one’s attitude to his fellow beings. To keep women under control men aroused the fear of rape between the two races. Hence, women became the victims.

Unnecessarily, the fear of rape is imposed on women. To protect women from sexual harassment, they followed certain rules in those days. Though it had happened in the past, people could not forget. So, the people from the two races - Hindu and Muslim - started to hate each other. “They are rogues and scoundrels! Opening their techmats to display their circumcised
tools to our Hindu women. For generations they have murdered and looted Hindus and raped our women” (COL 82).

Jane Freedman one of the feminist critics who analysed the cause and the threat of rape and sexual violence on women: “.. all women suffer from this, even if they are not victims of actual rape – because they are all victims of the threat of rape. It is this fear generated by the threat of men subordinated” (Freedman 66). Out of the fear of rape, women were not allowed to come out freely.

Gandhiji is one of the greatest leaders to struggle for the union of Hindu and Muslim. So, Anand expressed his intention by delivering Gandhiji’s ideas on Islam. “Gandhi had drawn attention to the fact that the very word Islam means peace or non-violence. The sword is not the emblem of Islam.” (COL 206). Anand analysed the cause and effect of Hindu-Muslim dispute on women. “Because Islam conquered India with the sword. And the cowardly Hindus have never forgotten it. Our caste brotherhood excommunicated the Muslim stepmother of my friend. And my aunt committed suicide. (COL 206)

Krishan and Yasmin fell in love at Noor’s house. They were thinking of “how to overcome the Hindu-Muslim question which would be raised by the parents on both sides” (COL 121). Then, the lovers had to depart as it was the time that Yasmin was sent back to her parents in Lahore.

Noor understood the real love of Krishan and Yasmin; at the same time he knew the problems of Hindu Muslim union. “Childling it is no one’s fault. Not even the Chaudhri’s. He is afraid of a scandal. Her betrothal has already been arranged. And this Hindu-Muslim union cannot be. But she loves you” (COL 129). So, Noor told that he would send Naseem to break her betrothal. But it was impossible. She was afraid of the scandal. She
accepted the punishment, which her family, like all others, gave those who dared to fall in love. Being a Muslim woman she must have accepted the guilt especially because she was betrothed. Krishan saw the injustice done to Devaki. So he assured himself: “In the primal forest one thing was clear. Yasmin would never be allowed to be mine. why, if the Hindu caste brotherhood had excommunicated my aunt for asking Noor’s stepmother home, then the “Muhammadan family of Noor’s father-in-law, as also his father, would never approve of Yasmin marrying me” (COL 177).

The arranged married life of Yasmin was not so good. Naseem had received a letter from her sister, suggesting that she was not quite happy with her husband. She had not explained the reasons. “Only she had hinted that she suspected he had two other wives, one old wife through his early marriage in Sialcot and a keep in Peshawar” (COL 231). That old railway guard, with his other older wife, was not the man to fulfill the poetry in Yasmin. He, a drunkard and whoremonger, had no sympathy for her delicate feelings. Her present miserable life recalled her past love for Krishan. Having a child through her husband was described as “second miscarriage” (COL 280).

Birth of a child shows the union of love between husband and wife. So, Krishan was furious with her husband for imposing another child on her. She was very unhappy. She could not write much in the letter. So, she expressed her anxiety to meet him to burst out her feelings. It was Yasmin’s pink envelope:

Everything in the past and everything in the present only serves to tear me and my heart open. I feel shaky like a new planted tree in a storm. The slightest breeze hurts me. I tried hard to overcome my weakness. But I cry myself to sleep every night. I began to say prayers five times a day. Then I realized that, like you, I don’t believe in Allah Mian. So what is the use of saying prayers? Often I
think of your courage in facing the lathis of the police. And I ask why I cannot accept the beating from him with fortitude. If only for the sake of the little girl (I suppose you know that she was born last year) I try to tell myself: Rely on yourself!” (COL 283)

This made her restless and she could not sleep. As a Muslim woman, she prayed five times a day; but she could not find solace in the prayer. In a vexed mood, she lost her faith in Allah Mian. She compared herself to Krishan. As the police had the power to control the Indians under the British rule, Yasmin’s husband had the power to control his wife. From Krishan’s experience, she learned lesson to rely on herself.

Considering Krishan as her only refuge, she said: “I must try to make my spirit accept which I can’t change, until you change it for me” (COL 283). She trusted him entirely. She could not bear the torture of her drunken husband. At the same time she could not come out of that miserable life. So, she decided to live alone. But in that social milieu a woman would never be allowed to live alone as her mother-in-law said. She reveals her condition thus:

But what I am to do? The people that one cannot give oneself to in body and soul are the ones to whom one is given in marriage. I know far greater loneliness now than before I was married off. The terrible loneliness of spirit that possesses me is killing me. He comes and takes me whenever he likes. His mouth stinks of drink. I have neither physical satisfaction nor spiritual calm. (COL 283)

Usually, after marriage the life of couples should be complementary and supplementary. In some cases the couples united physically but not spiritually like Yasmin. Her spirit yearned for the love of Krishan who was a Hindu. As an ordinary woman, she was with her husband
but far off mentally. Further, she mentioned the philosophy of the poet Iqbal who said, “Completeness is like a tree that matures as its branches spread out into the world, absorbing light and air. Why is our love hindered? Why is it like barren tree? I am withering away” (COL 283). Yasmin beautifully analysed these lines and compared her life to a tree. Scientifically, for the growth of the plant sun light and air are important. Without air and light the branches of the tree would never be spread out. Her existential predicament was compared to a barren tree as her love was hindered by racial clutches. Like a tree, her life was withering away.

Yasmin was longing to see Krishan. So she said, “when love is there, and one has to suppress it all the time, it nearly kills one. What depth of bitterness and sorrow must my heart endure?” (COL 283). Even Krishan felt unequal to her sincere and devoted love, as he “had done all kinds of things besides remembering her” (COL 284).

She had left her baby behind, with her mother and met Krishan with the help of Noor. She poured out her feelings. As a mother she felt: “Should I die who will mother her?” (COL 304). So, she assured Krishan that he must love her baby. Krishan realized that the existence of that child would be the greatest hindrance to his love for Yasmin. At the same time, he understood her problems. So, he said, “I realized her predicament. I could imagine the shame that would be heaped on her if it got known, that she had come to me” (COL 304). Her fear for racial clutches seems disappeared out of her love for Krishan that time. So, she expressed her feelings. “But-I love you, Krishan,.. Our love is different… from my marriage with him” (COL 304).

The lovers after their reunion, ate together like newly–weds, from the same spread of food, putting a morsel into the mouth of each other alternately. She wanted to remarry her lover. She asked him:
“‘When I come to you, Krishan, finally and forever, will you marry me according to Muslim rites as well Hindu rites?’ She ventured after giving me a chicken leg to eat.

‘Neither: I am not a Hindu. Nor are you Mussalman. We will marry according to the poetical Gandharva Marriage: We will ask Dr. Iqbal to celebrate our wedding.’” (COL 306)

First time, they could not marry. So, he said he was not a Hindu and she was not a Muslim. They were human beings. So there was no place for racial discrimination. Gandharva marriage is one of the types of marriages. In this type the lovers fall in love at first sight and marry. She remained silent, with her head down, as though she was absorbing the shock of this new unconventional idea. Then “she paused breathed deeply, sighed and then whispered” “Will you let me bring my child to you?” (COL 306). As a mother she had to take care of her child and could not neglect her. Hence, she requested the permission of Krishan.

Naseem told Krishan that Yasmin’s husband had a suspicion that she had come to Amristar without the child, not to see her relatives but to meet her lover. He came back drunk at night and forced himself on her. When she refused, he hit her and the child was hurt. She was so frightened. To protect her sister, Naseem fell at his feet and begged him to stop the madness. But “She was my wife?” he said. “And I will do what I like to her. I will destroy anyone who looks at her. I have seen some poems in her jewellery box. They are not in her handwriting. They are poems written by a lover. I will murder the man!” (COL 331).

After marriage, husband has the right to possess, control and command his wife. Even the parents or siblings did not have the right as her husband. When a girl was tortured by her husband nobody could prevent him.
So, he tortured her. Through Krishan, Anand analysed the miseries of a woman who had to marry against her wish due to racial clutches. “Why can’t we marry for love? Why must marriage be arranged? Without being consulted? As for the girls -- they are goats given away to the highest bidder, who can cut them up at will! We are not to think our own thoughts, feel our own feelings. We have to obey. To accept” (COL 371). Otherwise women could not exist. The same existential predicament is continued in some places even in this century. An article “Witness to a Kidnapping” (Annexure - 2) by Meera Nanda from The Hindu Paper revealed the pathetic condition of a Sikh woman who fell in love with a man belonging to Muslim religion. Even after a century the conditions prevailed the same.

Anand did not fail to depict the modern ideas of women who were bound with the racial clutches. Noor’s aunt, Nargis came down with a cup of tea for him. “Come soon,. You must have suffered in jail. And we couldn’t even come to see you. Noor’s father listens to Master Ishaq and says you boys are reckless, to go against the mighty sarkar” (COL 284). She loved Krishan as her son. She sympathized for Krishan’s miseries. So, she says, “If only Devaki was alive, I would have no fear for you – but her kismet was bad” (COL 284). Like Naseem and Nargis, the grandmother of Noor also loved Krishan. Though she was old she was not spoilt by the prejudiced ideas of racial issues. She loved Krishan as her grandson Noor. Noor’s wrinkled old grandmother came down and said: “Son, light of my eyes, your coming is blessed indeed won’t live very long. And I wanted so to fill my eyes with your shining face!” (COL 284). Krishan was imprisoned in jail for participating in freedom movement.

At the time of imprisonment though they liked to meet and console him it was not possible. On seeing Krishan, after the release, they could not control their emotion. The old lady had tears in her eyes as she came and
kissed his head. Noor commented the attitudes of women’s “weeping, bleating, and shrieking” (COL 284). Women could not tolerate to see their progeny suffer. They invited Krishan when Noor’s father had gone. Only in his absence they greeted him. They loved Krishan as their family member. Racial issues did not influence them. “Noor brought the women of his family forward in their veils” (COL 403). But, they had to follow the customs in their race. So Nargis told him to come when Noor’s father was not in the house. They did not pretend. They did what they felt good.

Out of his real affection for the Muslim family, Krishan detached himself from mother and embraced Noor. Naseem came forward to put her arms around him kissing him on his forehead. Naseem sobbed at the time of his departure and she wished that Yasmin was alive and going with Krishan, as his bride. But that did not happen. As Yasmin was not alive, she felt sad. But she did not dislike Krishan. Though Krishan was the main reason for the misery of Yasmin she loved him. She only sympathized for them. Nargis came forward, her veil thrown away and said Devaki would have given him some gold. Considering herself as his aunt Devaki she presented him a gold ring. Nargis gave him the gold ring which would be helpful for him to continue his higher study in abroad. The racial clutches did not affect the true love of these Muslim women for Krishan.

Religious education is to facilitate the human beings irrespective of race, gender, class and caste. Hence, the purpose any religion, race or caste is to attain liberation and not suppression. Knowing the value of human lives is necessary. Then only, there will be equality to enjoy bliss. While analyzing the humanism of Anand, Agarwal says, “Anand’s humanism has been derived from the humanistic values in Gautama Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi, Marx, Lenin, G.B.Shaw, the medieval saints, Islam, Guru Nanak, Ram Mohan Roy, M.N.Roy and Jawaharlal Nehru” (Agarwal 30).
From these two cases of women, Anand wants to insist to give respect to the individuality of women. The main concern of the fanatical society is ‘what people will think’. So their individuality and desires are frustrated and crushed by the customs of the patriarchal society. The frustrated women did not fight against or expose their ideas freely. Their inhibition forced them to taste the fruit of freedom. They tasted it but not survived. In that social milieu they could exist as slaves but not as rebels. The predicament of these two women is neither they could exist as slaves of customs in their race nor did they have the courage to protest against the racial clutches.

Anand introduced Annie Besant’s speech in his novel to arouse their country men from the bondages. “I believe that we can only live together, if our people do not oppress another exploit them, and deny their culture and make them fight each other in the name of religion, by the Imperial method of “Divide and Rule” (COL 250). She created awareness among Indians on Divide and Rule policy by the imperialists on the Indians. She asserts that both Hindu and Muslim cultures are “part of Indian culture” (COL 250). Hence, the dispute on Hindu-Muslim culture is unnecessary.

Anand repeatedly emphasized the harmonious relationship between the Hindu and Muslim in many of his novels. Hoor Banu and her husband are the true well wishers of Panchi and Gauri in the novel *Old Woman and the Cow*. They helped them by providing shelter and food when they needed. Similarly, Hoor Banu had not forgotten the help of the Hindus during their troubles. She recollected as: “We were nearly killed…If Chaudhri Achru Ram had not given us asylum in his own home we would not be here today. All our Muslim brothers left for Lahore. And some, I don’t know if it is true!—but I here that some were murdered!...” (OWC 55). So, she considered that it was her duty to protect them.
Mulk Raj Anand insists the view of Kabir and Nanak. “I am neither a Hindu nor Mussalmaan, I want to be a man” (COL 63). He emphasizes Hindu Muslim union for the development of our country. Further, Krishan’s Professor, Henry quotes Sri Aurobindo’s summary of *Gita*: “Know thyself! Help man! Protect the Right! Do without fear or weakness or faltering, thy work of battle in the work. Thou art eternal and imperishable spirit” (COL 64). All these maxims are common to all human races. Good hearted Englishmen make the Indian realize the greatness of Indians irrespective of caste and race.

Humanitarian values must be considered as essential and important irrespective of the race, as it is based either on caste, religion, language, place or traditions. Syed Muzaffar-Ud-Din Nadvi in his book *A Comparative Study of Islam and Other Religions* says: “The Aryan invasion of India took place in about 2000 B.C. Thus the Hindus, like the Muslims, are not the original inhabitants of India. Both of them came here from foreign countries and permanently settled here” (10). Hence, the origin of the race is unnecessary. The aim of knowing the history is to boost each and every individual and not to boast of his own religion or race.