CHAPTER - III

CLASS CONFLICT IN THE NOVELS OF MULK RAJ ANAND AND CHADURANGA

The term ‘class’ does not mean the same thing to different scholars. Marx used the term class in his monumental work ‘Class Struggle’ to signify contradiction, inherent between the principal classes in different historical epochs. In bourgeois societies the principal or determinate classes in contradiction are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In feudal societies, on the other hand, the determinate classes are community by the lords and the serfs and also he writes in his work Capital, Volume Three that the “owners merely of labour-power, owners of capital and landowners, whose respective sources of income are wages, profit and ground rent, in other words, wage-laborers, capitalists and landowners, constitute the three big classes of modern society based on the capitalist means of production”¹. There is a statement by Jean Paul Sartre which says that “classes are not given men make them”².

According to Lenin, “Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and consequently by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy”³.

Many thinkers like Georges Gurvitch, Raymond Aron, Claude Levi – Strauss, George Lukas, Auguste Comte, Max Weber, Jean Paul Sartre, Maxime Rodinson, Bertrand Russel, Plekhanov, Karl Korsch, Gramsci,
Engles, Lenin, Habermas and E.P Thompson have written pertaining to class which were different and improved versions of their predecessors. Even Indians also equally thought on class conflict in India, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar who stands in the fore-front. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Phule, Sahumaharaj, Nalvadi Krishnaraj Wodeyar and Rammonhar Lohia reacted on the class hierarchy in India.

A new occupational system which becomes the basis of a new middle class began to emerge in India in the second half of the nineteenth century. It owed its origin and initial growth to colonial rule. It was at first confined largely to the presidency capitals of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras where the first modern universities, the law colleges, and the medical colleges were established by the British. It consisted of lawyers, doctors, journalists, civil servants and of course, clerks and school teachers who were receiving a new kind of education in the schools and colleges set up by the British. This new middle class spearheaded the modernization of Indian society and gave shape to its modern institutions. Although new schools, colleges and universities began to be added in India since the beginning of the twentieth century when the country became independent, the new middle class remained small in size because the number of the educated was small and recruited largely from relatively well-to-do families belonging mainly to the upper castes. Members of such families and castes were loath to do manual work which in any case was more poorly paid than work in even subordinate non-mutual occupations.

At the time of independence, India provided the most striking example of the separation of land and labour. But this separation was clearly in evidence only at the top where high caste landowners abstained from labour and at the bottom where agricultural labourers from the lowest castes neither owned nor controlled the land on which they laboured.
Between the top and the bottom was middle, often comprising the bulk of the population, in which households combined various forms of the ownership and control of land with varying contributions to the labour process. The kind of divisions one might encounter in rural India and could enumerate six broad layers or grades. At the top were the non-cultivating owners such as zamindars, taluqdars, and Jagirdars. Immediately below them, and often with considerable overlap, were the non-cultivating lessees who varied enormously among themselves in terms of size and type of tenure. Below these came the owner cultivators or peasant proprietors, and immediately below those the cultivating tenants with occupying rights. Somewhere below them were the sharecroppers with little security of tenure and usually operating small holdings with their own labour. At the bottom of heap were the agricultural labourers subject to varying degrees of servitude. One might not find all these divisions and their subdivisions in every single village, but if one looks at a sufficiently large rural district, one would find most, if not all, of them.

The shape of the agrarian hierarchy has changed, but inequalities in the ownership, control and use of land have not by any means disappeared. The class of large, non-cultivating landlords, living on rental income has been significantly reduced if not eliminated from the countryside. But this does not mean that there are no landowners who are equal in wealth or power. Some owners cultivate the land with household labour and others with wage labour. The wages of agricultural labourers have gone up, though not to the same extent everywhere. More important, there is still a large class of landless labourers who are not always able to secure employment on the land. The disparities based on the ownership, control and use of land continue to exist practically everywhere, and hence it would be incorrect to describe rural India as a peasant society. But the
disparities though real and significant, do not lead to a clear division of the rural community into owners of land and owners merely of labour-power. Then there is the class of landless agricultural labourers, which in turn may be divided between local and immigrant workers.

At independence, India inherited a stagnant economic and social order. Poverty, hunger, illiteracy, ill-health and inequality were widespread and conspicuous. Many of the leaders of the nation, most notably Mahatma Gandhi felt that the real India lived in its villages and that political independence would amount to little without their regeneration. But while everyone agreed about the need to change the villages, there were disagreements about the pace and even the direction of change. Some were in favour of rapid and extensive technological advance while others favoured the revival of traditional crafts and modes of subsistence. Nehru was the great modernizer who wanted the village to open itself to change and development. The pressure of population had already begun to make itself felt and there was general agreement that rates of economic growth had to be raised. While a great deal of importance was attached to industrial development, particularly by Nehru, there has also been investment in agriculture. Agricultural production has increased slowly but steadily, new technology has entered the villages and production is now no longer only for subsistence. Prosperity has come to many villages, but the gap between prosperous and impoverished villages, and, indeed, between rich and poor households in the same village is often very large. Rammanohar Lohia gives the picture of national scene as “It consists of a ten centuries old class of hereditary slaves, who are also second-grade rulers, of an even older system of castes, that narrows and stagnates ability, of a people, listless, mangled and morose”. This class bifurcation and dwindle have profoundly influenceed Muluk Raj Anand and Chaduranga.
Mulk Raj Anand’s fiction unfolds his socialist vision and impassioned humanism, largely snapped by the European Socialism as well as by the thoughts and philosophy of Eric Gill, Herbert Read, Bon Forster, T.S. Eliot, Jack Lindsay, George Orwell and H.G. Wells. His contact with these intellectuals contributed to his rational and humanistic outlook on life, which was further broadened by his studies of Karl Marx. In his special preface to the second edition of *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1951), Anand has given a hint of early fire and drive behind his first novels. “In writing of the pariahs and the bottom dogs rather than of the elect and the sophisticated, he had ventured into territory that had been largely ignored till then by Indian writers. For all their nationalistic fervour, Bankim Chandra’s novels were romances distantly imitative of Scott, with a historical or mystical slant; Tagore was chiefly interested in the upper middle classes, and Sarat Chandra in the lower middle classes; and Munshi Premchand chose his themes from the peasantry cared to produce realistic or naturalistic fiction after the manner of a Balzac or a Zola. It was Anand’s aim to stray lower still than even Sarat Chandra or Premchand, to show to the west that there was more in the orient than could be inferred from Omar Khayyam, Li Po, Tagore or Kipling; and so he described a waif like Munoo in *Coolie*, an indentured labourer like Gangu, and set them right at the centre of the scheme of cruelty and exploitation that held India in its vicious grip”

Anand explores the system which cultivates new exploitative devices of class distinctions. There is an unfading picture of grim poverty and exploitation perpetrated not by traditional forces in the machine age. Collision with these new forces crushes the spirited and uninitiated under their mighty wheels. If *Untouchable* reviews the position of an outcaste in the traditional society, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* examine the
place of two types of labourers in the “new caste system on the basis of
cash nexus that the Kaliyug the Iron Age has established. And through
them the whole misery of India speaks”6.

Munoo and Gangu are Kshatriyas by birth, yet their high-caste
status has failed to secure them a prop against misery, for they both belong
to the wealthless class. In Two Leaves and a Bud, Buta Singh is a barber
by birth but the plebeian abjectness traditionally attached to his low caste
is seldom apparent, his position as a sardar makes him rank higher in the
labour force than is warranted by his caste origin. This hierarchical
structure ensured in the capitalist system is a replica of the caste system, in
which money, like a presiding deity, becomes the sole arbiter of dictating
human values and position in society.

Anand’s concern for the workers and their working conditions in
mills or tea estates is projected in the stark description of the seediness of
the life of a labourer in an industrial town and the burdens of a peasant
who lives under the constant threat of annihilation. In his Letters on India
“you can guess the plight of the Indian workers. Like their peasant brothers
they are underfed, ill-housed and heavily burdened with debt. You can
imagine the lot of the weary, lice-eater, ill-nourished millions, a prey to
hunger, pestilence, and cold.” (p-84). This is a description which can easily
fit the frame in which the lives of Munoo and Gangu are enacted.

To understand the conditions in which Anand wrote during the
thirties to appreciate his compulsions and motivations to highlight the
theme of class exploitation, major strikes in Bombay mills in 1919 and in
the 1920’s, and frequent droughts which led to the acute famine of 1942,
easily lend themselves to the picture which Anand intended to draw in his
writings. If the acuteness of the misery of coolies at the plantation site and
in the factories is deplorable and appears intolerable, it is not Anand’s
imagination which was at work. The conditions of mills of Bombay, Calcutta and other industrial centres were remarkably similar. “The overcrowded slums in which the peasant was forced to find shelter: the long and tiring hours which he was required to work in the factories; and finally, the exploitation to which he was subjected, not only by the mill owner, but also the money lender, the ‘baniya’ and the Jobber”.

From the moment a coolie set his foot in Bombay the peasant was drawn into a web of commitments from which there was no escape. Another social concern of child-labour, not amplified, is reflected in Bakha and Munoo’s desire to engage in all the normal activities of a young boy. The child-labour has attracted a great deal of attention today in our country. In spite of the legislation against it, scores of Munoos work as domestic servants and are treated shabbily. Anand wanted a better deal for those who for want of money had to bargain their childhood. M.K. Naik comments that “Coolie has an almost epic quality”.

By the third decade of the last century the Kannada novel committed itself firmly to the path of social realism. The main reason for this development was the influence of the nineteenth century European novel. Modernism had already set in the European novel through works like James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922) but because of the strange ways of colonial education in India writers like Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy were more familiar to readers than Joyce or Lawrence. Even professors of English used to be confused between T.E. Lawrence and D.H Lawrence during as late as the forties. Yet another reason was the impact of the national movement for freedom which had forced people to search for identity through an awareness of cultural roots and a new method of self-criticism had set it. Besides, the tremendous change that the forces of industrialisation and urbanisation had brought about in the
agrarian and feudal society had made its impact on institutions like family and marriage and sensitive writers felt compelled to take note of the changes and record them in their writing. As Lukas has put it, “Every new style is socially and historically determined and is the product of a social development”.

It cannot be purely a coincidence that novels of epic proportions like *Kanuru Heggaditi* (1936), *Marali Mannige* (1946) and *Samarasave Jeevana* (1931–1953) were all written in the realistic mode. “The age of realism produced works of such lasting value as Masti’s *Subbanna*, Kuvempu’s *Kanuru Heggadati*, Shivaram Karanth’s *Marali Mannige*, A.N. Krishna Rao’s *Sandhyaraga*, Niranjana’s *Vimochane*, H.P Kulkarni’s *Mavina Topu*, Mirji Annaraya’s *Nisarga*, Chaduranga’s *Uyyale*, Basavaraj Kattimani’s *Madi Madidavaru*, M.K. Indira’s *Phaniyamma*, to make a random selection”.

These writers had great faith in the power of language to capture reality of the outer world of things and the inner world of feelings and emotions and hence they paid extraordinary attention to detail. The ideology that most of the novelists of the realistic school shared was humanism in a variety of shades.

Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga in their novels have narrated how the landlords have seized the lands of small farmers for the meagre loan they have borrowed with the additional compounding interest rates. The landlords have used the powers of panchayat which was vested with them to exploit poor farmers and coolies. The protagonists in their novels, Munoo in *Coolie*, Lakka in *Vaishaka*, Gangu in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Kalura in *Hejjala*, Lal Singh in *The Village*, and Gangura in *Hejjala* also lose their land to the greedy landlords. Munoo the protagonist of the novel *Coolie* is an orphan boy of fourteen years of age studying in class V in his
village situated on the Kangra Hills. He is ill-treated by his uncle Daya Ram and aunt Gujri, but still remains happy in his native village Bilaspur. His aunt Gujri wants a son of her own and uncle Daya Ram finds him to be old enough to earn his living. Therefore he is asked to get ready to go to town Shampur in search of a job. Munoo remembers how the landlord was responsible for his impending misfortunes. “He had heard of how the landlord had seized his father’s five acres of land because the interest on the mortgage covering the unpaid rent had not been forthcoming when the rains had been scanty and the harvests bad. And he knew how his father had died a slow death of bitterness and disappointment and left his mother a penniless beggar, to support a young brother-in-law and a child in arms. The sight of his mother grinding grain between the scarred surfaces of mill-stones which she gyrated round and round, round and round, by the wooden handle, now with her right hand, now with her left, day and night, had become indelibly imprinted on his mind. Also, the sight of her as she had lain dead on the ground with a horrible yet sad, set expression on her face, had sunk into his subconscious with all its weight of tragic dignity and utter resignation” (Coolie p-2). Munoo has become a landless person and forced to leave the village to earn his own living by working as a domestic servant or a coolie.

In the novel Vaishaka, Lakka’s stream of thoughts flows how his family had lost the land. “We had four acres of dry land. They had borrowed money from Kengannappa at the time of father’s marriage with interest adding to it, the loan amount had shot up to such a huge figure that even if father and elder brother pegged away at their work day and night, they couldn’t have repaid the loan. Part of our land had to be sold. The part on the outer edge of our land with a nerale tree in it was in fact sold. Father had sat at the foot of the tree at the time and, hugging Gejjuganna,
let tears pour down his wan cheeks into the red soil of our land. ‘We are
done for!’ mother blubbered out, crying hot tears and dashing handfuls of
the red earth over her own head. It was a touching sight. I was still a small
boy then, playful and frivolous. I realized if our land was sold, the nerale
tree would no longer remain ours, so wanting to pocket as many berries as
possible, I threw stones at them and stuffed my pockets with the fruit that
fell down” (Vaishaka, p-156). The landlord Kengannappa not only seized
the land and also made them to work as slaves in his house. This
exploitation makes the poor into poorer and the rich into richer which
pushes the poor people to doom and gloom.

Gangu in Two Leaves and a Bud, a Punjabi farmer leaves his
village with his family after loosing his land to landlord Seth Badri Dass,
for better prospects in the Macpherson Tea Estate, Assam. During the
journey in train he remembers the little mud hut in his village. “It seemed a
pleasant home now, In spite of the cracking beams of its ceiling which he
had to support by piling logs of fuel wood, inspite of its crumbling walls,
sodden by the damp of four floods, and in spite of its doorlessness. And he
wished his brothers had not mortgaged it with the land. But what could he
have done to avert its being confiscated, since the huts as well as his three
acres were part of the joint family property, and Lalla Beli Ram, the vakil,
had told him that, as the law of Angrezi Sarkar stood, the debt incurred by
one brother of a family was binding on another? ‘Strange’, Gangu thought,
‘how the interest on my younger brother’s mortgage piled up, so that all
my three acres and my hut as well went just as a free gift to Seth Badri
Dass. But I couldn’t have borne the disgrace on my white hair and lowered
the name of my ancestors by begging like a pauper in the streets of
Amritsar if I had gone there and not been able to get a Chowkidar’s job.
My brother is young and he got work in the Dhariwal Woollen Mills. But
for me this service is better. Buta certainly seems to have money, and he says I shall have land and cattle and become a Sardar like him. It seems almost like becoming a sepoy, going to this plantation with all the splendid prospects. Even better. For the men who recruited as sepoys from my village, only got a free railway pass for themselves, but these sahibs have paid the fares for all the members of my family of course. I am old and couldn’t have gone to the army. I hope that these sahibs won’t object to my age!" (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-3). Gangu after loosing his ancestral property owing to debt is compelled in old age to indenture himself, his wife and his two children as labourers in a British owned tea plantation. “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”.

Kalura in Hejjala had a piece of land in his name which was gifted from Ajjamma in the panchayat. He has flourished by harvesting the crops in his land with the help of his mother and wife, which could not be tolerated by the landlord Rajanna. When Kalura went out of the village to attend a marriage ceremony, Rajanna stole his money and burnt the gift deed of the land, later encroached the land. Kalura went to the panchayat for seeking justice, but the culprit Rajanna himself was the head of the village where justice favoured him. Kalura leaves the village with his wife in search of a job after losing his land and his hut burnt by the landlord Rajanna. Kalura has become a servant throughout his life to work under a landlord in one or the other village, which is common even today pertaining to landless farmers being exploited in agrarian society of India.

Teja Singh, a landlord in the novel The Village acquired ten acres out of twenty five acres which Nihal Singh's family inherited through
thuggery when the British ruled Punjab. His son Harbans has the effrontery to take another five acres by producing a false deed supposed to be signed by Lalu’s grandfather in lieu of debt. Nihal Singh says. “I will fight this suit about my five acres as I have fought it for ten years” (The Village, p-7). He talks to his son Lal Singh with rage that even if he dies before the settlement of the land in dispute in the court, he urges his son to destroy the enemies who have deprived them of their birth right. If the fleecing lawyer Balmukand did the repeated arguments the magistrate would have given verdict in their favour long ago. “And I do wish we could get back that land, because only then can we pay off the debts incurred from Seth Chaman Lal on the marriages of your three sisters, Ishri, Meli, Aqi and your eldest brother, Sharm Singh. But it is all in the hands of Wah Guru” (The Village p-9). Nihal Singh is optimistic about the future of his sons but the lawyer Balmukand’s attitude sinks his aspirations when he met lawyer last time “He talked a lot, that vulture, and said our claim is certain if only we can put some more money into it. But I know the case is in the civil court, and that leper Harbans Singh knows the session’s judge. And I hear that Balmukand and Harbans have become reconciled, and I suspect the Vakil’s intentions” (The Village, p-22). Harnam Singh, the uncle of Lal Singh has mortgaged the whole of his six acres to Chaman Lal, to pay the land rent and to have a little money on hand for the seed. Whatever he grows will go to sahukar as interest and there will never be any paying of the capital for years. This is the fate of almost all peasant farmers in India. As he says that, “I am not the only one, almost the whole village is ruined” (The Village, p-209). This is the reflection of the whole society and status in all the villages, when Sharam Singh, elder brother of Lal Singh murdered Hardit, son of the landlord, three acres of land have been sold to
pay the fee of the lawyer to defend him, but he was hanged at Munabad jail. Lal Singh’s family is further pushed into agony.

In the novel *Hejjala*, Gangura’s land had been snatched by his uncle by taking thumb impression on the deed from his father after inebriating him. The landlords by hook or crook acquired the lands of peasant farmers to convert them into coolies, servants and bonded labourers in their field so that they will not face any shortage of labour and get it cheaply, which is feudalistic in its nature. Protagonists in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga have become labourers permanently after losing land and left their villages in search of job to be exploited again and again.

The suicide of poor farmers in the recent past was a major problem in India because they could not repay the loan they have borrowed from money lenders and banks for purchasing seeds and fertilizers. They got low price for their produces and failure of crop due to drought. Insects were also the cause of their problem and for such reasons even today small farmers are migrating to cities.

The research on India’s changing agrarian structure by Daniel Thorner says that, “In many cases individuals who had made the start as moneylenders were in the best position to buy up or foreclose the ownership and tenancy rights which the British land action had made transferable, and thus to establish themselves as agricultural proprietors. Even where landholdings were not transferred outright to the money lenders, the small tenants and owners felt increasingly under their power. Debts, increasing from year to year at compounded interest rates, were often so high that the petty landholder could not hope to pay them off in his lifetime. The obligation to the moneylender was thus inherited along with the property right”\(^\text{12}\).
The protagonists in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga suffer under their masters. Munoo in the novel *Coolie* has been asked to get ready to go to town in search of a job by his uncle Daya Ram. A quiver shoots through his belly in spite of the fact that his aunt Gujri “beat him more than he beat his cattle, he really did not want to go to the town” (*Coolie*, p-3). His uncle makes him to walk miles and miles barefoot without giving the boy time to rest and even slapping him for getting tired. Soon they reached Shamnagar. Munoo is employed as a domestic servant in the house of Babu Nathoo Ram, Sub Accountant, Imperial bank, at three rupees per month. It had to be paid to his uncle, thus Munoo’s exploitation started.

His uncle advises him that “Don’t forget to do your best for the masters, you are their servant and they are kind people” (*Coolie*, p-14). Tears came rushing to his eyes after listening this, through tears he could see the high rocks, the great granite hills, grey in the blaze of the sun, and the silver line of the Beas, on the banks of which his herds had moved in defiance to the earth and the sky, wandering, wandering freely for miles and miles. But the Babu’s wife Bibiji treats Munoo like an animal, always shouts, curses and beats him. Munoo went to his uncle's room on his off-day and asked for food but he gets abuses and beatings in return, after complaining about Bibiji. Daya Ram picked up the boy and threw him out by saying that he has neither sympathy nor food for him. Life in the Babu’s house soon resolved itself, for Munoo, into the routine of domestic slavery. He did not settle down to it easily. The wild bird is not easily caged. Munoo is pushed back by Nathoo Ram’s daughter Sheila and her friends, when he wishes to join them to perform monkey dance by saying “You are a servant, you must not play with us” (*Coolie*, p-33). This is an echo of the opinion of the adults, a sordid reality, the barrier between the two classes
the high and the low. “His mistress interferes and ruthlessly destroys his happiness”.

“Money is everything” (Coolie, p-55), Munoo’s uncle had said on the day of his journey to town, he agreed upon and thought first time on the difference between himself and his masters, between the rich and poor people of his village. He saw the shriveled-up skeleton of the seventy year old Gangu who worked as a labourer on the fields, recalled the lean face of Bishambar’s mother, who went charring in the house of the landlord. He remembered the hollow eyes of his own father and warmth of his mother’s lap while she moved the mill-stone round and round till she had languished and expired. He feels sad and lonely, he is completely isolated from the happy world of his social superiors and his routine, which is tiresome, consists of doing menial work. He is always in a dilemma because he does not understand what makes his master superior. He had convinced of his inferiority and accepted his position as a slave. He promised himself again that he would be a good servant, a perfect model of a servant but unfortunately the road to perfection is punctuated by pitfalls, he has been abused and slapped by Bibiji when the tea tray fell from his hand which was supposed to be served to the guest Mr. England. Munoo thought there seemed to be only two kinds of people in the world. Caste did not matter. “I am a Kshatriya and I am poor and Varma, a Brahmin is a servant boy, a menial, because he is poor. No, caste does not matter. The Babus are like the Sahib logs, and all servants look alike: there must only be two kinds of people in the world, the rich and the poor” (Coolie, p-55) and as Premila Paul says that “Poverty itself is a caste. The capitalists treat coolie like a cattle”.
The world population is almost seven billions but most of the wealth of the world is in the hands of a few people. Even today the gap between the rich and the poor is increasing day by day.

“The new index of United Nations says that more than 410 million people live in poverty in India which is more than the 26 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. The study’s conclusion claims that distribution of the wealth generated by India’s rapid economic growth recently around 10 percent year on year is deeply unequal. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has repeatedly said he wants to see ‘inclusive’ development" (The Hindu, dated July 15, 2010. p-22). The above report says that the economic development or the raise in GDP is only for haves and not for have nots, which makes the rich, richer and the poor, poorer in the society.

One day after seeing Shiela and her friends playing a classical ballet, Munoo joins them and with his inborn naïve gaiety hopes to amuse and entertain by dancing like a monkey. Sheila wanted him to play with her but her mother’s advice not to play with him has put an artificial barrier. She dragged him by catching his ear, when she pulled hard, he sprang upon her, snarling and gnashing his teeth like a real monkey and unconsciously bites her on the cheek. That led to the culmination of his misery in that house. Bibiji’s tornado of abuse burst “May you never rest in peace, neither you, nor your antecedents! That you should attack the honour of my child! Only a little child, too! You lustful young bull from the hills! How did we know we were taking on a rogue and a scoundrel! Let Babuji come home! You ought to be handed over to the police! Look! Look at my child! Had you no shame! No respect! You spoiler of my salt! Didn’t I ask you to leave my children alone and not to play with them! What is your status that you should mix with the children of your superiors!” (Coolie, p-57). There is an implicit irony which explains the nature of the upper class
people. In abusing Munoo for having violated the honour of her child, she forgets that Munoo is also a child. She calls the starving boy ‘a lustful bull’ and judges the act in the light of her own depraved conscience.

Babu Nathoo Ram “Slapped Munoo on the cheek with his thin, bony hand and kicked him with the shiny black boots, the boots which had been the dream of Munoo’s life” (Coolie, p-58). When Munoo asked to forgive he struck him blow after blow with a thick stick till he exhausted. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar says that, “Usually the coolie is just taken for granted, as if he were but a shadow, a cheap and useful machine, an uncomplaining target for abuses and indignities”15.

“A whipped dog hides in a corner, whipped human seeks escape” (Coolie, p-59). Munoo slips out of the Babu’s house, in the twilight immediately after the family withdraws into the kitchen and leaves him in disgrace. He runs down the hill like a mad and reaches the railway station and sleeps in the floor of a train with no definite place to go. As T.N. Dhar says, “Before he runs away from Shamnagar, Munoo has learnt his first lessons in the harsh school of the modern urban world”16. The episode of Shamnagar is only the first act in the tragic drama of exploitation.

Kalura the protagonist of the novel Hejjala is an illegitimate son of Dyavi, who is a servant. Landlord Nagappa had a secret physical relation with Dyavi resulting in the birth of Kalura. Dyavi had easily succumbed herself to the lust of the landlord, after completing her job in the farm of Nagappa, she washed her clothes in a nearby pond. When she started walking towards her home it was late and most of the coolies had left. By that time Nagappa had called her and asked her to take a papaya in the farm house. She stood in dilemma without looking. But he insisted “I am a Lord, don’t you consider my word, go inside and take papaya as I said” (Hejjala, p-132). When she went to the farm house, he caught her from
behind, she resisted but failed. Kalura accompanies her mother when she goes to work he plays with Rajanna because both of them are children of the same age. Nagappa and his mother Ajjamma love and treat these kids equally, but Madevamma the wife of Nagappa does not like this. She instructs Dyavi not to bring and allow her son to play with Rajanna because both of them are not equal and one should stay where one deserves. She forgets that Kalura is also a child like her son and both of them like to play together. Her upper class mind thinks that the honour of her son is lost by playing with the poor boy, like Bibiji of Coolie who was a tyrant to Munoo and did not allow him to play with her daughter. Rajanna returned to his village after unsuccessful studies in Mysore, with change in his attitude. He forgot his childhood friend and the plays he had played with Kalura, looked him low and treated as a country man. Kalura remembered how they have played together and why Rajanna has become like this, the sorrow gripped him and he wept under a banyan tree. Rajanna does not know the hierarchy when he was a child, he followed after his adulthood and practiced after becoming a landlord, but Kalura has maintained a child like innocence even after the shabby treatment he receives as Munoo did in Coolie. After Rajanna’s marriage with Putteeri, she managed the household well. She was upset whenever Kalura calls Rajanna by name, one day she orders him not to call her husband by name because “He is your master and your are a servant working in his field, keep this in mind” (Hejjala, p-126). The landlords expect faith, work and respect from their servants in return they won't respect them. This degradation of human being is because one is poor. It is true in case of Munoo and Kalura, in fact universally applicable to all poor people.

Kalura loses his land and his hut which was burnt, left his village Aladura with his wife Syavanti and daughter Sivni in search of work.
Munoo in *Coolie* also moved from his village Bilaspur to Shamnagar because he did not possess the land which was seized by a landlord. Gangu in *Two Leaves and a Bud* is from a village in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, lost the land to a landlord and goes to Macpherson Tea Estate in Assam for better life which proved futile for all of them. Lal Singh in *The Village* also leaves his village Nandpur, because the land his family had hardly fed them. But their “Love for the land never subsides” even after they are away from their villages. Kalura after moving from one village to other he got a work as a servant of landlord Kusappa in the village called Bettur. Shyvanti has to work as a housemaid and graze the sheep. Kusappa is also a money lender always busy outside his house, so his widowed sister foul-mouthed Bayamma looks after the house-hold business. Most of the servants escape from her within three or four months as she always abuses them for one or the other reason. Sannamma and her husband Chaluva are bonded labourers in this house for the loan his grandfather had taken. The loan of three hundred rupees which was taken by Chaluva’s grandfather has become so huge through compounded interest that even if they work throughout their life it cannot be repaid. Tears dripped from Sannamma’s eyes while narrating her fate. Bayamma kept her servants always busy besides her abuses. Kalura has to fence the land and axe the firewood, Syavanti has to do menial work with grazing the sheep. After preparing the caster oil she asks a little but she gets abuses in return. Bayamma instructs her not to ask anything, only to take whatever she gives, Syavanti wept and worried about the plight of the coming days. One day when she went to graze the sheep, a lamb has been eaten by a python, enraged by this Bayamma pours the rain of abuses on her and asked to bring a lamb or pay the money for it or work till the money compensated. After this incident she started abusing for all the reasons, inspite of this they have completed
the works of harvesting. Syavanti could not tolerate when the five year old son of the landlord pushed her daughter while playing which hurt and wept till she almost choked to death but survived. She decided not to stay anymore and her family left the village in the early morning before the cawing of the crows awakened others without giving any hint to Bayamma. Munoo and Kalura escaped from the clutches of exploitative, depraved and insane atmosphere in search of a good master to work with and live a simple life by keeping their innocence intact. Bibiji and Bayamma are cruel because they cannot be happy and their house is a sort of mad house. They are similar to the servants with their demon character without feeding and paying properly. Munoo’s wage of rupees three per month was paid to his uncle, which has never reached Munoo’s hand while Kalura does not get wage except few grains to cook, which is exploitation of labour as well as human exploitation.

After escaping from Bayamma, Kalura and his wife went to Bettadapura to work with the Swamy of the math. When he did not get any work there, he moves from one farm to another asking for work but unsuccessfully reaches Ramanathapura, where he meets a shop owner Sanjeeva Shetty, and works in his house till the car festival is over. It was with the entrust of Sanjeeva Shetty, Kalura and his wife go to look after the bulls of Singarigowda of Chapparaduru, where they have to feed, wash massage and rear the bulls well day and night, to compete in the coming cattle fair to win the first prize, as his master won the previous year. When that day came the effort of Kalura and Syavanti yielded the anticipated result. The bulls won the first prize. His master was glad and wanted to continue their services, but they did not like his attitude as he slept and moved publicly with the wife of Singaiah, a poor man. They felt that he would exploit them anytime. The journey of search started again to Kalura
like Munoo in *Coolie*, they move from one exploitative environment to other. Their search is only for work and a good master to live a simple life which was denied in most of the places.

Kalura and his wife went to Srinivasapura to work in the farm of an aged couple Channakesavaiah and Savithramma. They are living with a grand daughter who is mentally retarded and her mother died long back. Their son is working in Mumbai and married to a Christian who visits rarely. Syavanti has to feed and bathe this girl who bites and scratches which is a very big task and Kalura works in the agricultural field. They got a good master at last who appreciates their work. Life was moving like this for some months then their grand daughter died, within a short span. Savithramma also succumbed to fever. Channakesavaiah becomes weak day by day and he wanted to gift a part of his land to Kalura. He sends his friend Shyamanna to bring the paper, by the time he returns Channakesavaiah dies. Ill-luck played with Kalura as it played with Munoo when Prabha Dayal becomes bankrupt. Both of them have got good masters for a brief time. The greedy son of Channakesavaiah sells all the property and gave one hundred rupees to Kalura which made him to move again in search of work.

In the train, Munoo is being pulled out from under the seat along with his luggage by a passenger named Seth Prabha Dayal, who himself was a coolie and an orphan like Munoo, but now he is a owner of a pickle factory at Daultapur in partnership with goat faced Ganpat. He becomes compassionate towards the boy and takes him to Daulatpur to provide employment in his factory. Prabha feels an affinity with poor Munoo, because he was also a hillman from Kangra hills. Munoo came to cat killers lane in Daulatpur where the pickle factory was situated and Prabha lived in an adjoining house. To his surprise Munoo got stomach full of
food and overwhelmed with joy, Anand’s ironical comment on this occasion is penetrating. “It was the most sumptuous meal he had eaten since the feast on the death anniversary of his father and mother, which his aunt had given three months before he left the hills” (Coolie, p-67). In the novel “Vaishaka”, the landlords and rivals of the village Jagalur Sangappa and Rangappa with whom Kalura and Gangura work, share half portion each of a pig killed as decided by the panchayat. During this time Kalura along with all other servants had lavish meal with liquor. They sung and danced while moving to their huts, this occasion is once in a while in their life to have stomach full of food.

In the novel Untouchable Bakha and his family starve, while Pandit Kali Nath abuses the food as he feels his stomach jammed due to over-eating ‘rice’, ‘jalebis and milk’ at the home of Lalla Banarasi Das. He remembers the delicious food which he had last night “How nice and sweet is the Kheer, sticking to the teeth and lingering in the mouth. And Kara parshad, the hot, buttery masses of it melt almost as you put a morsel of it in the mouth. But the hubble-bubble usually keeps my stomach clean. What happened to this morning’s smoke? I smoked for an hour to no effect, strange!” (Untouchable, p-31). Pandit Suraj Mani of the novel The Road is lured by the prospect of mangoes in the grove of Dhooli Singh, he says “Sweet is the fruit of Lambardar Dhooli Singh’s grove” (The Road, p-82). Both these Pandits are gluttons, they remind the reader of the John De La Harve’s notes in Two Leaves and a Bud which he had prepared to define the Indian coolies in the tea plantations of Assam. He writes “75% of the coolies on the Assam plantation suffer from carato malaisia (bad eyesight) for lack of proper nourishment, fats and greases. 50% of the population of India suffers from dental disease for lack of any milk in the diet. Two million women die in childbirth in India as a result of
malnutrition. 20% Anglo-Indians and members of the upper classes of India die of gluttony, overeating – another form of malnutrition” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-125).

Lakka’s sister Sivni in the novel Vaishaka purchases a lamb in the market with the money she saved for long time. “They killed the young animal the very next day, and sold the fleece. The shanty buzzed with the bustle of a festive feast that night” (Vaishaka, p-226). Lakka feels this is the greatest feast in his life. Ananta in the The Big Heart shares his experience, “I have seen children sold for a handful of rice by parents too weak to walk” (The Big Heart, p-20). His mouth watered at the thought of the fried bread, halwa and black carrot pickle. He was ashamed of his enormous appetite, greed for food and drink. Kalura in the novel Hejjala, goes to Swamy math of Bettadapura in search of job and also he heard that food is given at free of cost. He stays for ten days without any job and moves out to seek a job elsewhere. Munoo in Coolie goes to temple because “They give free food at the shrine of Bhagat Har Das. I shall save money that way and also become religious” (Coolie, p-131). These are the pictures which highlight the poverty in the contemporary India but still existing at present. “In the nation's capital alone 42.2% of children under the age of five are stunted and 26.1% are underweight (The Hindu, Magazine August 08, 2010, p-04). “National Advisory Council member Prof. Jean Dreze’s findings of the enquiry are that there is a total collapse of food security related schemes and 80% of the people are deprived of their entitlements. People are living with starvation and hunger due to acute poverty. 90 percent of the children examined suffer from severe malnutrition of Grade IV. This is an enquiry conducted in the village Ganne in the district Allahabad where poor children were eating mud and silica to deal with their hunger” (The Hindu Magazine, July 25, 2010, p-4).
Munoo lives with the family of Prabha and he has found a sympathetic employer and a roof over his head. Soon Munoo is accustomed to life in the pickle factory, he has to work hard from early morning to late in the night, in the dark suffocating atmosphere. Prabha and his wife Parbati are kind to him and Munoo is fed well. He is however, afraid of Ganpat on account of his bad behavior with workers, it is only when Ganpat is away that the workers have a good time, they sing and cut jokes. During such time Munoo dressed up his hair, but as soon as Ganpat arrives, he brushes the parting aside so that Ganpat may not get any chance to abuse him. Munoo has been asked to follow Prabha to show him shops in the city and introduce him to the clients to whom he would have to deliver the goods. As Munoo walked through streets, he was fascinated by the shops full of goods, which he had never seen before. “If the town of Shamnagar, at the foot of the hills, had far exceeded in complexity anything conceived by the imagination of Munoo the hill boy from Bilaspur, the feudal city of Daulatpur was an even more staggering confusion of things. In the face of it he had only one feeling that of holding himself together and in close connection with Prabha, so that he might not get lost” (Coolie, p-70).

Ganpat abuses and beats his servants to wake them up in the morning, “I will break your hard bones for you if you don’t rise early every morning and get down to work” (Coolie, p-77). By this time the fire-places had been lighted and thick smoke was emitting from them. Munoo felt shocked by the pungent smoke. He coughed and spat a mouthful of thick spittle. Forty million children are reported to be working in hazardous forms of child labour in India. Kalura, Lakka, Munoo, Gangu’s children Leila and Buddhu, Hari’s children and other children of coolies are reflected as child labourers. They have worked in hazardous atmosphere
like smoke, bad smell, dust, the areas with pieces of glass, congested without proper ventilation, unhygienic for human to work and live in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga. Munoo hears a shrill, hoarse shout which remembered him the abuses of Bibiji in Shamnagar, but it is wife of Rai Bahadur Sir Todar Mal, a lawyer and member of the City Muncipal Committee who was shouting against Prabha and Ganpat and is abusing them because the smoke had blackened her home. Her son Ramnath beats the rude Ganpat in the quarrel. During the spring Munoo’s heart beats wildly at the sight of the mangoes, but only the unripe ones being fit for pickling, there were no ripe mangoes in the factory. In his childish greed he ate more and more of it, till his eyes were sore, Ganpat saw him rubbing them and “slapped him furiously four times” (Coolie, p-93). Munoo cried with pain. Ganpat shouts “These swines don’t do any work, but laze around eating raw fruit all day. They won’t work unless you goad them with the rod” (Coolie, p-94).

Premila Paul remarks that “the canker of class system has led to another process of segregation and subjugation of thousands of people into perpetual misery and eventual extinction”\(^{18}\). The class structure ensured in the capitalist system is a replica of the caste system, in which money, like a presiding deity, becomes the sole arbiter of dictating human values and position in the society.

Prabha Dayal is a Wordsworthian character in his simplicity and integrity. He is extremely humble, hospitable, modest and steadfast in his life. Though rich he has not forgotten his hard struggle and previous sufferings. He is very kind to the workmen. Ganpat, his partner who had neither skill nor will to work cheated him by spending money on a courtesan which he collected from the customers in Lahore and other cities. The only fault in Prabha’s character is his excessive honesty of
which Ganpat takes full advantage. He slaps Munoo on the right cheek when he was carrying two jars of jam to Lady Todar Mal. “Second slap fell on the hard conic bone at the corner of the joint. His hand was hurt. He was infuriated beyond control. He struck the boy in the ribs with his fist, one, two, three blows, till Munoo fell stumbling on to the mud in the passage sobbing and shrieking hoarsely” (Coolie, p-97).

Prabha rushed to his help and told Ganpat that it was by his orders that he had given the jam to Lady Todar Mal because he owed her five hundred rupees. And when asked for the money he had collected from the customers Ganpat flew into a rage abused Prabha, refused to give money and decided then and there to leave him in the lurch by saying, “you are not my class. You are coolies and belong to the street and there you shall go. I spit on you” (Coolie, p-106).

Ganpat has misused the humility of Prabha with the result Prabha goes bankrupt and his creditors enforce him for money. The scene in which Prabha is summoned by the police, beaten mercilessly by them is one of the heart rendering descriptions of the novel. The police in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga are a ready-made tool in the hands of capitalists, feudalists and imperialists. Nataraja in the novel Sarvamangala was beaten along with other people by the police during the freedom movement of India. Blood poured from the forehead of Nataraja and he fell down unconsciously after saying, “Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai” (Sarvamangala, p-112). In 1931 when Kamala Nehru was arrested the protest spread all over the country. Nataraja has actively involved in the Congress meeting at Mysore and delivered a small lecture, when the Sub-Inspector of police tried to handcuff him, he fought physically. As a result he was beaten and jailed after framing so many charges. In the jail he came in contact with one Mr. Shridhar, a revolutionary Marxist who wants the
freedom from struggle and not from agreement. He praises Gandhiji for his struggle to political freedom, but which will not give economical freedom to the poor people. He says that, "If the coolies fight united, the world can be won" (Sarvamangala, p-200). Nataraja has been attracted towards Communism and he has been released after several months. He gets a job in Railways as underguard in Mysore and he kept contact with Shridhar which made him to become a member of the Communist Party. The beedi workers were on strike against the owners in Mysore by demanding bonus of two months and to revoke the dismissal of eight labourers, who were dismissed from service on the pretext that they were involved in the activities of Beedi Workers Union. Nataraja was one of the leaders of Mysore City Communist Party who held the responsibility to carry the strike to a successful stage. When the owners failed to break the strike in the name of religion, Nataraja was beaten badly by the rowdies hired by them which injured him severely and damaged his lungs. But the strike continued even after his absence with his consultation. The police have arrested and kept him in jail for six months on the false complaints lodged by the owners. It is a clear indication that even the Government used its machinery against the interests of the poor people. Nataraja lost his job and his health deteriorated. Nataraja was a victim of capitalistic exploitation.

The Inspector of Police is more a symbol of British oppression than of British justice. He represents a world of hysteria, one devoid of restraint, human feeling, and self-respect. He arrests Prabha for non-payment of debt. He orders the sergeant to beat him till he confesses that he has money buried in his house. The inspector shouts, abuses and cries but Prabha speaks nothing but the truth he has no money anywhere. Saros Cowasjee points out, “In Anand’s novels (as indeed in the novels of many socialist writers) the police appears as merciless, corrupt and sadistic, a ready tool
in the hands of their masters be the capitalists in *Coolie*, imperialists as in *The Sword and the Sickle* or feudalists as in *Private Life of an Indian Prince*"¹⁹. The writer has described in the scene with a stark realism, "‘Make him confess his crime, Pandey Khan’, ordered the thanedar. ‘Huzoor’, said Prabha, joining his hands. ‘I have no money buried anywhere. But I have stock. I only crave your forgiveness and I will pay up every *pice* that I owe to my creditors.’ ‘You are barking an untruth! You lie! You lover of your mother!’ shouted Pandey Khan. ‘Confess the truth’. And he dealt him with one, two, three sharp stripes with his cane. ‘I have told the truth,’ wailed Prabha. ‘Huzoor, I do not lie!’ ” (*Coolie*, p-111). Munoo, Tulsi, Bonga and Maharaj stood looking at their master being beaten up with tears. The thanedar roared at them to run away and he struck them with his birch on their naked backs and feet, Prabha is also a victim of the capitalist exploitation like Munoo. “Anand’s social criticism here is directed upon the callousness of the police”²⁰. An honest coolie like him had to surrender himself before Ganpath, schemy but a sleeping partner. Ganpath identifies himself with those people in the city whose only business is to usurp other’s property by hook or by crook. Broken completely very much of the fact that human nature be so depraved, Prabha and his wife go back to the hills from where they came as they find the city an unhappy place for them to reside.

Kalura in the novel *Hejjala* decided to leave Srinivasapura after the death of his master Chennakeshavaiah and his son Ramanna gave him rupees one hundred after selling the property. He wanted to work in coffee estate so that he can get work always. He walked towards Arakalagud and ate in a hotel after reaching. When he paid rupees hundred to the owner of the hotel, the owner cheated him by giving change for rupees ten. Kalura protested by sitting in front of the hotel but the owner threatened that he
will call police and they will keep him behind the bar. The owner of the hotel was very confident that the police will believe him even if he tells lie and they will not believe the poor man. Syavanti convinced Kalura to move away from the place. “In the penultimate position of his fury, he bends to the life leading decisions of Syavanti”.

In the novel *The Village*, the police Napoo Singh came with summons to arrest Lal Singh because landlord Sardar Bahadur has lodged a false complaint against him to teach him a lesson for playing with his daughter Maya. When the police feared to catch Lal Singh, “Catch him, Napoo Singh, and handcuff the scoundrel, I tell you! said the Sardar Bahadur!” (*The Village*, p-157). The police have blindly followed the instructions of a landlord without seeing the reality.

The Sub-Inspector Gulappa does not book the case of an unnatural death of Halaga when the village heads have bribed him in the novel *Vaishaka*. Krishnegowda in the novel *Uyyale* was travelling in a train with his friend Sheshagiriraya and his wife Radha. An inspector of police sat beside her and started smoking, he did not listen to the appeal to leave the place. A co-passenger comments that this was the time of Second World War where the police have learnt how to disrespect the public from the American and British soldiers.

The planters in the *Two Leaves and a Bud* have thought that the coolies have marched towards the manager to attack him. They expect more problems and probably a mutiny. So they call R.A.F. bombers to come to their aid. When the steel birds fly over the lines of the coolies, the poor coolies realize that their marching towards the Manager to appeal for a fair economical deal is misunderstood and it is treated as mutiny and they should run to the valley and hide if they valued their lives. They all run in different directions to protect their existence. And then the soldiers march
through the road facing no opposition from any one. The authorities declare that the mutiny had been crushed. “The military imagery in this passage suggests a significant parallel between the attack of the armed Tommies on the unarmed and defenseless coolies which precedes this episode and the storm – thus driving home the point that the coolies are victims of both men and the gods”.

In the novel *Coolie*, the Hindu - Muslim riot took place because of rumour, the Government did not direct the police to act immediately. The police inaction helps the communal violence to reach its crescendo resulting in the loss of property and men. Munoo listens the remarks of a person that with the instigation of mill owners “The Pathans have been kidnapping children and taking them away in motor cars, and the Sarkar is taking no measure to stop it. How can we leave our children about?” (*Coolie*, p-236). In the novel *The Big Heart* there was a commotion in front of the grain shop of Seth Monkam Chand when the people have waited for the flour. The merchant did not open the shop by saying that flour has not come. Anantha, a man with big heart advised the people to form a union to solve this problem but the police threaten him, “Don’t talk so much, and go home if you value your life” (*The Big Heart*, p-178). The police did not mind the poor people who were waiting for a long time and did not sense their hungry bellies. The police which are supposed to preserve and protect the law are often seen siding with the rich and the powerful in their oppression of the poor and the helpless, which is reflected in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga is a strong plea for the change in the social system.

In the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga the relationship between capital and labour is extensively presented. It shows the masses of workers were under severe poverty without work and those who were
working got very low wages which was not sufficient to feed their stomach. They stayed on the pavements and moved from place to place for work and better wages. Munoo moves along the thronging tide of the clamorous crowd going towards the godown of the grain market in Daulatpur for the job of lifting the sacks. There was so wild rush for jobs by the taller and heftier coolies. When the merchant has come on the scene, the coolies have started begging for jobs “Lalla, Lalla, only an anna a sack. I will take only an anna to bear the sack from here to anywhere!” a coolie appealed (Coolie, p-121). Munoo fell in an attempt to lift the grain sack and the merchant abused at him to run away from this job. He goes to vegetable market where he hardly earns two annas a day. Even there were swarms of coolies with a great deal of competition where Munoo uses tricks to get the customer. “He tried to curry favour with the shopkeepers. But they were too concerned with their business, and too selfish, to appreciate his courtesies; especially as all coolies were to them a nuisance – rude, uncouth, dirty people to be rebuked, abused or beaten like the donkeys which brought the weights of vegetables to the market every morning” (Coolie, p-127). After giving a farewell to Prabha in the railway station he gets a wage of two annas for lifting a bag. Lured by this he goes even next day and gets beaten by the police for not having a license. With the help of elephant trainer he goes to Bombay in the goods wagon he warns him that, “The Bigger a city is, the more cruel it is to the sons of Adam, the elephant driver said, crawling under the buffers of a train. You have to pay even for the breath that you breathe. But you are a brave lad” (Coolie, p-152). It is hard to answer the questions that Munoo asks “Why are some men so good and others bad – some like Prabha and the elephant-driver and others like Ganpat and the policemen who beat me at the railway station?” (Coolie, p-147). By posing such questions he
unconsciously seeks himself; for the self he was in his innocence in the hills is disoriented now and off balance. Forced to live by his wits, his charm, his youth, and his willingness to work, Munoo with freshness and naïveté hopes for the best even while feeling pain at the cruelty he sees occurring all around him and even while remaining uncomprehending in the face of man’s inhumanity to man. “Munoo is not the common type of hero or protagonist we expect to find in a novel. In his opposition to society, he is passive, while society is active. Munoo does not build his own life, which on the contrary, is built for him.”

In Bombay he drank a bottle of soda water to quench his thirst. The men in the hotel looked at him as if he were a leper, he felt guilty for having intruded into the rich man’s world. He meets an old man Hari and sleeps with him on the pavement where a person has died last night, like all other coolies who lay sprawled all over the pavements. They have been employed by Jimmie Thomas an agent and supervisor at Sir George White Cotton Mills. After one month Hari gets wages from Jimmie Thomas: “Ten rupees you owe me in cash. A rupee interest on the loan. Three rupees rent for the hut for one month. One rupee for repair of hut. Five rupees cut for damaged cloth. The remainder you receive for you, Munoo, coolie, your wife and children. Hari knew these phrases well from long experience: Loan, interest, rent, damaged cloth. And though he resented them, he had learnt to respect them. He accepted the twenty rupees, Salaamed the foreman, and withdrew. His eyes were full of tears. His face was knotted and pale, and half-told the grim tale” (Coolie, p-204).

Sir George White Cotton Mills in Bombay exposes Munoo to the full force of the modern capitalistic machine. The factory is a huge octopus with its tentacles clutching the labourer in its deadly grasp slowly paralyzing and poisoning him. The British management offers no security
of tenure and effects retrenchment summarily. The British foreman Jimmie Thomas is at once the recruiting authority, a landlord who rents out ramshackle cottages at exorbitant rent, and also a money lender all rolled into one. He tyrannizes the starving factory workers. He picks the worker Ratan and dismissed him on the pretext of defying. The coolies have worked twelve hours a day for mere subsistence allowance. The company’s declaration of short work has a response to the strike plan made by All India Trade Union leaders causes a volcanic eruption in their belly. They rush at the Sahib and beg him with prayers not to declare the factory on short work. “The principal interest of the English factory owners and the British subjects residing in India during the colonial era was not the welfare of the laboring class but the availability of cheap labour of Munoos”24.

The coolies are fully aware of the fact that lack of labour meant starvation or even worse, death by hunger. But Ratan and a group of trade union leaders who analyse the relationship of capital and labour in general and also in the particular situation do not join the work they appeal to the emotions of the masses. The day-to-day suffering must end. This is possible only when they discarded the work till their demands are fully materialized. Meanwhile, the rumour spreads that Muslims have kidnapped Hindu children, and gathering of workers splits up into the religious communities. This is another device through which the workers are misguided and their plans nipped in the bud. “Capitalism and industrialism are not the only force which exploits Munoo and his like, Communalism too lends a hand. 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.
In the whole process the exploited labourer loses his job, his livelihood, sometimes, even life.”

In the novel *Sarvamangala* also efforts have been made to break the strike of Beedi workers by dividing the Beedi Workers Union. As more workers are Muslims the owners have bribed a leader of City Muslim League to break the unity of the workers by dividing the Hindus and the Muslims in the name of religion. This plan failed to yield the result because the union leaders Hussain and Mohammed Peer have believed in the unity of poor people irrespective of their religion, because the owners are same to them whether one is a Hindu or a Muslim. In this presentation one can understand that Chaduranga had a strong belief and wanted the unity among the Hindus and Muslims. Mulk Raj Anand presented Hindu-Muslim riot as it happened in the past, so in this aspect Chaduranga was ideal and Mulk Raj Anand was real.

We come across two strikes in the novel *Sarvamangala*. Both are successful because of unity which is probably the notion of Chaduranga. The first one is the stay-in-strike conducted by the railway employees demanding the enhancement of dearness allowance as all the prices have shot up due to the Second World War. The strike succeeded and Nataraja felt anything is possible through unity, he joins Communist Party. The second one is the strike of Beedi workers, where the owners, Government and the police have tried to thwart the strike. But the workers are strongly united which could not be disrupted by any means and finally met their demands. Nataraja has played a vital role as a true leader to the success of the strike but he himself became a victim in the cruel hands of capitalists.

Gangu in the *Two Leaves and a Bud* came to work in the tea plantation with the false promises of high wages and free land by Buta Sardar, “which is 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”26. Narian, one more coolie who has more experience in this plantation reveals that, “You will soon know brother, said Narian. First water afterwards mire! This prison has no bars, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail. The chowkidars keep guard over the plantation, and they bring you back if you should go. The other day the chowkidars beat Balkrishnan, the boy who fled to the Santal village because he thought he could escape to his mother in Oudh. The chowkidars go round at night with a lamp and open every door to see if we are all at home. There used to be a roll call every night before I came” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-38). It is also said that nobody’s mother or sister is safe there because the assistant manager Reggie Hunt is a very bad person who lives openly with three coolie women. After a week of hard labour in the Estate, the amount given to Gangu’s whole family is less than eight annas: “Three annas for him, two annas for his wife and daughter and three pice for his child. It reminds him that in his village he alone used to earn eight annas a day by working on the landlord’s land” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-64). He remembers the promises of Buta and feels sad for being cheated. He lost his wife to the epidemic malaria. “For Gangu, as for the other coolies, plantation life is but a progression from today’s ‘bad’ to the ‘worse’ of tomorrow”27. He had no money for her funeral, he does not want to borrow money from Sahukar as that had been the cause of his ruin in his native village. He remembers what Buta had told him that the Manager Sahib is a short of father and mother, who lends money when the coolies are in need, so he goes to the manager Croft Cooke asking for loan but he shouts on him by listening the death of his wife by fever. “You bloody fool, Get out! Get out! You have been spreading infection all over the place!Didn’t you know that you were
under segregation? By whose orders did you come here?" (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-114). The manager was afraid that he may spread the infection. He went to Buta Sardar and asked that “I have not a pice and the body has been lying in the house for two days” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-118). The hypocrite Buta was sympathetic only in words. Desperately he goes to the Bania breaking his vow and borrows twenty rupees from him for the cremation. He gets a piece of land with recommendation of the physician John de la Harve who is sympathetic to coolies.

Kalura and Syavanti had been taken to a coffee estate by a supervisor named Phillip from Arakalagudu. He has taken them to the owner for introduction. The owner fixed four annas to Kalura and two annas to Syavanti and asked them to write an agreement to work for a minimum period of three years. They decided to work and save money as much as possible in three years and later to open a shop in Arakalagudu from the savings to lead an independent life. They have been allotted a house in the line of coolies. This fifty acres of coffee estate is among the hundreds of acres belonged to Britishers in the pre-independent India, they have sold it before leaving India. Kalura has become a drunkard with the association of Phillip, in spite of the warnings of Syavanti. He accompanied him during hunting which he liked most. Working in the coffee estate was a new experience for them and Phillip was more considerate towards Syavanti. They lost their daughter Sivni to malaria as Gangu lost his wife. The tea estate of British capitalists in Assam and the coffee estate of Indian capitalists in Arakalagudu, Karnataka have treated their coolies apathetically, without sanitation, water, medical care and giving them poor wages. Kalura started drinking more alcohol to forget the memories of his daughter and most of his wages went this way. One day when he had slept after boozing, Phillip has tried to rape Syavanti. She
fought and chased him out, some one saw when Phillip was going out of the house on that night. The news spread like wild fire and the coolies started talking that Phillip is a paramour of Syavanti. Kalura has become furious and a little short of becoming mad by hearing the talks of coolies. He is hasty, short tempered and he suspects his wife. When Syavanti brought the good news that she has conceived, Kalura says that it has not born to him. He has not understood the nature of his wife. “He behaved like a man moulded by the system”\textsuperscript{28}. The woman who is honest to her husband never tolerates such an allegation especially from her husband. Syavanti who honours the principles of tradition dies by committing suicide. The estate supervisors Reggie Hunt and Phillip have exploited the coolie women. The memories of his wife and daughter haunted him; he left the coffee estate as he wanted to die. He came to estate with a desire of prosperous life like Gangu but returned by losing his wife and daughter.

Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter aged twenty two years, possessed tremendous emotional energy and he has been keeping with him always three coolie women. He gives Neogi Gurkha, the sardar of the women coolies’ five acres of land and many other gifts for his wife’s generosity towards him. This causes jealousy in the coolie woman Chameli, who used to stay before with Reggie Sahib. A quarrel begins, the crowd turns uncontrollable. Neogi “swung his stick and struck whoever and whatever came into his range. His thick set body rushed to and fro like a wild bull or rhinoceros, and as he worked himself up into a self-willed orgy of excitement he towered over the weeping, moaning, shrieking bodies of men, women, children and tea bushes like a veritable Yama, the two-horned, imperishable God of Death” (\textit{Two Leaves and a Bud}, p-192). For defying his authority he said, “I will shoot you all” (\textit{Two Leaves and a Bud}, p-193). Reggie shouts, he orders the warders to strike the coolies. The
warders “Charged backward and forward, thrusting left and right, aimlessly, till their blows had tired their hands” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-195). Reggie orders again not to allow the coolies together. The warders “determined to break up the mob, they redoubled their blows, striking with frenzied energy until, driven away by this fresh lathi charge, the bedraggled men and women drifted towards the road, while the wounded lay helpless” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-196). The coolies march towards the doctor Sahib and request him to talk to the Manager Sahib and save them from the anger of Reggie Hunt. De la Harve treats the injured and asks them to take courage and proceed to meet Burra Sahib (Manager) for demanding justice. The coolies proceeded shouting “Dilawar Sahib ki jai.” ‘Shirrup complaining fool’, Reggie Hunt shouted, rushing forward, “Step back, or I will shoot you dead! Let de la Harve mind his own business. Back you go, swine, back you go to the lines!” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-205). The manager Crooft Cooke roared on coolies to get back. The crowd gets frightened and takes to their heels and immediately John de la Harve is dismissed from service for instigating coolies. Gangu has been fined fifty rupees for being one of the ring leaders of the mob brought before the manager. The intensity of exploitation is more in this novel because the imperialistic force also joined with capitalistic force.

De la Harve, the doctor of the tea plantation has written in the note book about the wages and the living conditions of coolies in the plantation which is the mirror of the capitalistic exploitation. It says, “On the tea plantations of Assam a man gets 8d., for eight hours a day, a woman 6d., and a Child 3d., in the tea factories the worker earns 9d., for an eight hour working. The coolie suffers not only this low level of wages but frequently from indebtedness to his employers in outlandish districts where he is dependent upon the shops provided by the employers for his foodstuffs,
fuel, etc. This indebtedness together with the isolation of the plantation renders it difficult for him to seek employment elsewhere, and this practically reduces him to a life of economic slavery. His treatment often borders on the inhuman and his chances of justice and redress are chimical — Dr. V.H. Rutherford (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-126).

Reggie Hunt, who is habituated to hunting coolie women, is fascinated by looking at Leila. With wild lust he tries to hold her, but she escapes. He asks her to come to his bungalow. Leila refuses and runs towards her hut. He follows her to her house and asks her to come out. When she refuses, he asks Buddu to tell her to come out. Buddu gets frightened and shouts ‘Father, Father’ and rushes towards Narain’s hut where his father is. Maddened by frustration and fear Reggie shoots blindly resulting in the murder of Gangu and runs away. After a trail lasting for three days, Mr. Justice Mowberley and an ‘impartial jury’ of seven Europeans and two Indians, finds Reggie Hunt ‘not guilty’ of the charges of murder or culpable homicide and he is discharged. “Gangu comes to the plantation to start a new life and goes out, losing his life”29. This is the justice that the British were giving to the Indians. He is the victim of British capitalistic exploitation. “Munoo, Bakha, Gangu and de la Harve mainly saw their adversary: the system of society which was evil made them suffer”30. Anand quotes ironically “Impartial Jury” to depict the justice followed by the Britishers. The way the British jury sets Reggie free shows that the coolies in the tea plantation were never secured.

After the release from the jail Nataraja in Sarvamanagala has suffered with lung infection which leads to fever and cough. The union leaders have consulted him to resolve the problems of workers. He always thought about tackling the new problems of the workers. He used to debate with other leaders of employees till he gets tired. When he spat out the
blood with the cough, the doctor has diagnosed him as a tuberculosis patient and he was admitted to tuberculosis hospital. The employees were more among the well wishers who visited him in the hospital and offered fruits. He felt that, “The wealth of kindness, moral and truth is vested with the poor, not with the rich” (Sarvamangala, p-236). His health deteriorated day by day even after the operation and he continues his medication. His body has become reduced to a skeleton and finally it succumbed to consumption. He has done nothing to deserve this fate, he suffers because he fought against the British in the freedom struggle and then he actively involved in the activities of labour movement for the sake of the poor and workers, which resulted in his death, which is a clear indication of the exploitation by the evils of capitalism. Munoo also undergoes in the same trauma, when he ran away from riot hit area, he was knocked down by a car and it ran over his chest. The owner of the car Mrs. Mainwaring is an Anglo-Indian woman who feared that if some one sees her, she will be stoned to death. As she also wanted a servant, who should be young and cheaply available she takes him to Simla in her car. He becomes a domestic servant and a rickshaw coolie along with others which he gladly accepts with “the deep rooted feeling of inferiority to the superior people who lived in bungalows and wore angrezi clothes” (Coolie, p-267). Not accustomed to pulling a rickshaw Munoo finds this work very tough, struggles and gets fever on his first day itself.

Mrs. Mainwaring feels India is a veritable paradise, because here everything was so cheap she can engage a pony for less than a shilling a day, hire rickshaw for four pence an hour, where a dozen of egg costs six pence. “India was the one place in the world where servants still were servants, and one could laze through the morning and sleep through the afternoon, happy in the assurance that the cook and the boy will look after
breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner” (Coolie, p-267). Exploitation of the poverty stricken labourer was an extremely easy task for the British. One Sahib had spent two thousand rupees for his dress and Mrs. Mainwaring has paid three hundred rupees for her frock to attend the Viceroy’s ball where hierarchy is maintained according to the income. On the contrary the Indian coolies suffered without food, cloth and shelter. The task of pulling the rickshaw put a severe strain on Munoo’s lungs, and the mistress over-used his services. Marx in his analysis of the British rule in India maintains that “Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism” where, Munoo, Gangu and Nataraja suffered under its wings. Munoo coughed and spat out blood, his friend Mohan at once carried him home. Major Merchant examined and found that he has developed tuberculosis. By the orders of the Health Officer he was admitted to a segregated hospital on the slopes of Chota Simla. He died by clutching the hands of Mohan at the age of sixteen, freed from the life of wretchedness, abuse and poverty. He is a tragic hero who receives inhuman and repelling treatment from his Indian masters, the foreign mill owners, compatriot coolies and his unborn dream world was permanently buried in the earth.

Coolie is a wide canvas covering all the losses of the society from the landless peasant to the aristocratic Anglo-Indian and the British. M.K Naik says, “Munoo and his fellow coolies are exploited by the forces of industrialism, capitalism, communalism and colonialism”. Munoo, Gangu and Nataraja are victims of the evils of an exploiting economic social system. The blind social forces destroy them. Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga had successfully shown that the sufferings and the death of these protagonists are the results from the combined forces of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism and feudalism. Their death with suffering puts a
bitter question for each and every reader and the whole situation seeks a social change.

Munoo and Gangu are the characters of colonial period who suffered by colonial and capital forces, former being a factory worker and rickshaw puller latter being a tea plantation worker. They were voice less and mute spectators with abject poverty. Nataraja is a post-colonial child in the throbs of independence struggle. He is literate, capable of taking good decisions and fights for the cause of workers; still his life has taken different direction by the capitalistic exploitation leading to his death in the independent India. Kalura is an agrarian labourer exploited by landlords even after five decades of the independence which reflects the scenario of landless labourers.

The strong adherence of the novelists to class system provides universal dimension, therefore their novels cover a wider range passing from group to group, individual to individual, in the complex conflict pattern. They are angry against capitalists, the rulers and the power-possessed Indian characters who exploit the landless labourers like Buta Singh and Phillip, who lures the peasants to work in the plantations or Reggie Hunt and Nagappa, who are sexually starved and hurt the coolie women.

Lal Singh the protagonist of *The Village* has an advantage of schooling which Bakha, Munoo, Gangu, Lakka and Kalura lacked. He is the youngest of the six children of Nihal Singh, an impoverished but proud farmer in the village of Nandpur in Punjab. Lalu reacts sharply to the injustices, follies and hypocrisies rampant in a tradition and caste-bound society. He does remain to the priest’s lechery, the money lender’s dishonesty and the landlord’s greed. Moreover he is angry at the British
Government’s indifference to the lot of the villagers or at the villagers’ own stupidity.

The landlord, the money lender and the lawyer form the vicious trio into which most of the peasants are trapped. They are essentially evils, villains who, in personal appearance are close to being, but ugly, revengeful, greedy and mean. So are priest Mahant Nandgir and Chaman Lal, the money lender. The village landlords who attack the lands of poor peasants on the basis of false deed, the villagers call them ‘hounds’ and their friend lawyers ‘vultures’. Lalu’s mother is all against the village landlord Harbans Singh, she says, “It is a terrible world … in which only thieves and robbers seem to prosper. Look at Harbans Singh in his white clothes, and his good-for-nothing sons. And that Sahukar, who has had a mansion built. The dirty black Bikaneri had nothing to eat when he came here” (*The Village*, p-22). The poor farmers burdened with increased taxes and falling prices of grains visited the money lenders; the latter provide them loan at a fabulous rate. The debts multiply till they are to mortgage their lands and began to work in the lands of the landlords. The rent finally falls into arrears, and lawyers enter the picture. The farmer is evicted and in fear he flees leaving his property behind. This is a pathetic story not only of Punjab but also of a vast majority of Indian peasants. The greedy and religious priests also join hands with the landlords and Sahukars to exploit the poor peasants. Their soul business was to misguide the villagers and to make them fatalists. With the result, while being exploited by the landlords and money lenders, they cursed their own wretched fate. Lalu is against these priests and he warns his orthodox brother Dayal Singh of these religious hypocrites, “beware of a religious teacher who in greed is so gluttonous that he will suck the blood of the poorest” (*The Village*, p-24). The priest Mahant Nandgir is a druggist, smokes charas and drinks
hemp who reminds Kali Nath in *Untouchable*, Suraj Mani in *The Road* and Swami of Kadle Matha in *Vaishaka*. Alastair Niven wrote, “*The Village* is perhaps the most rounded portrait of village and rural life that the Indian novel in English offers us”\(^{33}\). Lalu’s experience of his village life has created in him self-awareness. He sees his family ruined by the money lender and the landlord. He loves Maya, the daughter of the village landlord whose anger brings a charge of theft on him. He escapes from the village and joins the 68\(^{th}\) Rifles at Ferozpur. “Who is an insider turned outsider, as he is a rebel against all the village mores which he finally escapes by running away”\(^{34}\).

After undergoing humiliating experiences in the army, he is back home to witness many more shocking experiences; he finds his parents dead and family property dispersed, his brother Sharam Singh has been hanged for murdering the landlord’s son and the family is in debt. Sauda, a trade union leader in the *Coolie* points out that the world is divided into two classes of people - the rich and the poor. “And between the two there is no connection” (*Coolie*, p-233). This is the notion Anand exposes in *The Village* also. Gopala the younger brother of the protagonist Krishne Gowda in *Uyyale* had promised the poor girl Ningi that he would marry her. He regularly visited her house, lured her through gifts and exploited. When her father Sidde Gowda asked him to marry his daughter, he never turned up. But Krishne Gowda, a cultured man came to know about this and insisted his brother to marry her. The latter denied to marry her because they were not equals and “It is shameful to marry a girl from a poverty ridden family” (*Uyyale*, p-58). He advises his brother to pay them some money so that they would keep quiet, but Krishne Gowda forced him and conducted marriage with the poor girl Ningi with his own expenses. Krishne Gowda
is a character like Prabha Dayal of *Coolie*, who is kind to the poor people, struggles to keep up the morality and social values.

The traditional coppersmith community of Amritsar called thathiars in the novel *The Big Heart* has been uprooted and they were on the blink of starvation due to the industrial revolution. Ananta, the coppersmith, the man with a big heart like Nataraja in *Sarvamangala* and Ratan in *Coolie* was back in Amritsar after having been in the industries of Bombay and Ahmedabad who had glimpse of labour movement. He grasped the plight of his people. They were all jobless, and the new factory that had put them out of work was not likely to employ them. Their sullen bitterness was manifest in every glance and in every ooze of sweat for their hungry bodies. Ananta, whom the factory manager had refused a job, deeply sympathized with these men. He understood their rage and their feelings of helpless frustration. “The issue here is not between the ‘untouchables’ and the ‘higher’ castes, but between the thathiars (the hereditary coppersmiths) and the capitalists (Lalla Murli Dhar and Seth Gokul Chand)”35. Ananta makes it his sole aim in life to help his community out of their predicament. He knows that revolution will be a far cry unless coppersmiths learn to unite. He pleads for organized action and tries to bring together all the jobless coppersmiths into a union so that they can bargain for their rights from the profiteers. He says “I beg you with my joined hands to see that if we want to prosper we must not fight amongst ourselves” (*The Big Heart*, p-54). In this endeavour he wins the support of a poet and scholar by name Puran Singh Bhagat. But his efforts are thrown into disarray by opposition he faces from Satyapal, who preaches violent methods for the emancipation of the coppersmiths and Mahesh Hans Raj an anti-machine campaigner. Many of his own people fail to accept his idea of his living openly with the young widow Janki is not acceptable to
them. His open liaison with her deprives him of the moral hold expected of a leader in a tradition-bound society. “Thus, all his efforts to establish a communication with his fellowmen, prove abortive”\textsuperscript{36}. But the people believe Ralia who beats and starves his wife. After he had delivered a deg he does not receive wages fully, he asks the employer Lal Chand that “You have reduced wages rather than raise them. That is a strange thing to happen in these times when everything is so dear” (\textit{The Big Heart}, p-99).

The employer has exploited the worker by reducing the wages on the pretext of dead stock. Lal Chand has repeated the sum he had already offered, “Five rupees, seven annas! And you will agree that you are lucky to get work, when everyone of your brothers is workless” (\textit{The Big Heart}, p-99). Ananta believed that his people will get justice only through unity, he urges that “we will form a trade union to ensure their right to a proper wage until they are strong enough to displace their exploiters and seize the factory, which by all the rights of humanity is theirs” (\textit{The Big Heart}, p-148). When Satyapal in his flaming speeches talked about fate, Ananta intervened desperately with anger “Come to your senses and let us call all our betterment. Men are the makers of their own deeds, the makers of their own character, good or bad; and they are the shapers of their own Destiny! So come and make your own fate” (\textit{The Big Heart}, p-205).

The coppersmiths are envious that Ananta earned some money while they are without work. They are unwilling to listen to his talk and Ananta himself suffers most from their narrow outlook. “But he finds strength again from Janki, with whom he has achieved that togetherness Lalu and Maya were struggling for”\textsuperscript{37}. Nataraja in \textit{Sarvamangala} could not get this strength of togetherness from Sarvamangala. The hot blooded coppersmith Ralia, whose hatred for the machine due to the fact that he does not get employment in the factory, after hearing the fiery speeches
inviting people to violence breaks open the factory and starts hammering and destroying the machines, with uncontrollable madness and fury when Ananta tries to stop him, Ralia strikes Ananta’s head against a broken machine which kills him. Ananta crushed between the machine and the oppressed craftsman who struggles to help his brethren. The following poet’s speech suggests that Ananta’s death is a capitalistic exploitation “The police are drunk with power, the Kaseras with the lust for money and the thathiars stunned with fear and ignorance” (*The Big Heart*, p-223).

At last Kalura in *Hejjala* came to a village called Jagalur to rear the bull of the landlord Sangappa, where he comes in contact with Gangura and his wife Saki to whom the story has been told. Gangura is also a servant in the house of landlord Rangappa in the same village. Both the landlords are rivals even though they are brothers. The rivalry between them has exploited their servants to an extent that they are forced to act against their rivals which is immoral, inhuman and not acceptable to one's will. Kalura’s mistress Kalamma tells him to leave the bull free when her rival couple Rangappa and Rudramma moving towards their home. When he disagrees, she strikes with her fist on his hand and the bull has been left free, which hurts him too much by thinking that the bull will kill the rivals of his mistress. But luckily they escaped unhurt. Gangura is being exploited by his uncle, by snatching his land and putting him as a bonded labourer by taking money from landlords. His uncle has borrowed money from Rangappa on the pretext of his marriage expenses, which was so huge that Gangura cannot repay even if he works throughout his life, so he became a permanent bonded labourer which reminds Daya Ram in *Coolie* who exploited Munoo. During the fishing festival a fight occurs between Kalura and Manchanayaka, who once tried to molest Saki, the wife of Gangura. Manchanayaka has tried to pierce with the fishing basket (*Kooli*)
on the face of Kalura, he escaped but Gangura who stood behind him gets injured and became blind. Rangappa tells to Saki that Gangura cannot work as he is blind and asked her to pay back his money by keeping him elsewhere on bonded labour. The landlord has forgotten the work he has extracted all these years from Gangura. The landlords feel that labourer is a commodity which can be used when it is satisfactory and thrown out when it is not satisfactory. These are some of the class conflict highlighted in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga. To quote Premila Paul “The class system, a permanent theme in literature, is in a way inseparable from the caste system so far as the Indian context is concerned, since both of them have proved to be exploitative and subversive to human dignity”.

Untouchable though written in early thirties has outlived its vitality in theme. Even today several incidents regarding atrocities on Harijans are a sordid story with no parallel in history to match. They are still burnt alive, killed in cold blood and enforced to over work by the caste Hindus because they are not only untouchables but also poor people. In spite of several efforts made by Indian Constitution to ameliorate their sufferings, millions of untouchables depend on the dirty job of cleaning the latrines for their livelihood. Bakha, the protagonist of the novel, begins his day with abuses of his father (as much in the same way as Munoo in Coolie is scolded by his aunt Gujri who beats him more than he beats his cattle). The novelist’s introduction of the protagonist is reminiscent of the fact that who Bakha is, his life at home and his fate in tradition bound caste-Hindu society.

The protagonists in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga are extraordinary workers in their respective fields of work, they toil very hard which is never compensated with money and honour. They have a high sense of duty, to them work is worship. Bakha bent down to his work, “The steady heave of his body from one latrine to another made the
whispered refrain a fairly audible note. And he went forward, with eager step, from job to job, a marvel of movement, dancing through his work” (Untouchable, p-20). Work, to Bakha is a sort of intoxication that gave him a good health and sound sleep, the novelist points out that with him duty came first although he was a champion of all kinds of games as Bakha says “I must go for work” (Untouchable, p-42). He possessed a distinctive physique, “so he worked on continuously, incessantly, without stopping for breath, even though the violent exertion of his limbs making him gasp” (Untouchable, p-21). It is obvious enough that in Bakha’s case social status and labour define his relationship to caste Hindus and serve him to identify himself. Bakha is often seen in harmony with his work. It is only in his leisure moment that he thinks of the possibility of a better job. “He preferred to imagine himself sweeping the streets in the place of his father. That is easy work, he said to himself, I will only have to lift cow-dung and horse-dung with a shovel and sweep the dust off the road with a broom” (Untouchable, p-22). He values cleanliness as he works without soiling his cleanliness, as he works without soiling his sleeves while “handling the commodes, sweeping and scrubbing them” (Untouchable, p-19). He works with movement of wave “earnestly quickly without loss of efforts” (Untouchable, p-18). The muscle of his body becomes hard as a rock and shines like a glass during the work. After finishing the cleaning of fourth round of the latrines, he went towards the chimney where he shoveled the refuse into it, “the blood in Bakha’s veins tingled with the heat as he stood before it” (Untouchable, p-24). When his father was ill he goes to sweep the streets and the temple yard of the town but he did not get food even after asking.

Munoo wants to be a perfect model of servant, so he was busy in scrubbing the utensils, peeling the vegetables, sweeping the floors, making
the beds, serving food and doing everything that his mistress imposed on him, but he has been beaten severely in this house. In Daulatpur Munoo worked in a pickle factory. “It was a dark, evil life. He rose early at dawn before he had his full sleep out, having gone to bed long after midnight. He descended to work in the factory, tired, heavy-lidded, hot and limp, as if all the strength had gone out of his body and left him a spineless ghost of his former self” (Coolie, p-89). But he has to live with constant fear because Ganpat abuses and beats him.

In Bombay at Sir George Cotton Mills Munoo learnt his job quickly. “By noon time Munoo felt the perspiration running down from the top of his head to his face and down his neck to his body. Being intent on his job, he could not wipe it, and he tried to get used to it, regarding it as a sort of poison which it was good for his body to cast off in a liquid shape. Only it was clammy and exuded a warmth which was becoming unbearable. Besides, the streams were trickling into his eyes and falling across the lines of his body on to the drier surfaces he was irritated” (Coolie, p-186). When there was a strike against the cut off wages of coolies and removal of Ratan, the factory management declared the short work. The coolies who were already suffering from low wages are put into further trouble. Finally Munoo becomes a rickshaw coolie and personal servant to Mrs.Mainwaring in Simla who overused his services which consumed his life through consumption.

Lakka in Vaishaka, who is physically strong, fought with thieves of Ichalagutti to save Rukmini and others during the journey of bullock cart and also he saved Rukmini when she jumped into the well after losing her husband. Rukmini remembers that “when Lakka reached the bottom, I was shulder-deep in water and was about to lose hold of the stone I had fastened on to. Rukmini reminisced. Lakka held me tightly by hugging me
and began to swim in the water. He had unfastened the rope held got down with the help of, and let out a whoop from the bottom: Rukminawwa is alive!” (Vaishaka, p-140). Lakka started working in the farm of Krishna Shastri, he brought manure and shoveled it into the pit and brought two earthen pots filled with water from well and watered the pit. Then pushed earth into the pit after Ayya coiled the creeper stalks of the areca plant into the pit. When he does not work in this farm he used to work with others like Kesavayya, who spoke about Lakka’s hard work “Lakka! the men of Darumanahalli are good-for-nothings, hanging back when it comes to working and lunging forward when it comes to eating! You are by far the most sincere worker I have seen. One wants value for the money one pays and your work is always worth my money. This I like. That’s why I call you for major works like digging plantain pits and cleaning the water-channel!” (Vaishaka, p-191). Also Kesavayya admired the way Lakka had played sidi, “I haven’t to this day seen anyone play sidi the way Lakka used to” (Vaishaka, p-346). He has been lashed publicly and banished from the village for the fault he has not committed and not paid any gratitude to his work.

The coolies in Two Leaves and a Bud worked in the tea plantation with their axes. “Hacked and slashed for all they were worth at the undergrowth of shrubs, saplings, suckers, bushes and creepers” (Two Leaves and a Bud, p-46). Gangu dug the earth with a spade, as he had no bullocks and plough to till with. He thought “I would not have been able to furrow it in an afternoon-with a silly spade that couldn’t scratch a woman’s back if she had the itch. But there are only three more furrows left to make, although, of course, I could certainly have done it in half an hour if the faithless cur had lent me him plough” (Two leaves and a Bud, p-144). The manager of the plantation Charles Croft-Gooke ordered to construct the
kheddah, the trenched stockade for his shikari. The coolies including Gangu and Narain worked eagerly and hard “Only the forest got on their nerves as they worked in it day after day, its damp odours congesting their lungs to suffocation for lack of the slightest movement of air in the simmering heat, its deep undergrowth obstructing the free movements of their hands, tearing their clothes and cutting their feet with its knife-edged roots. And with all this inconvenience was mixed the clammy heat of perspiration” (*Two Leaves and a Bud*, p-253). The coolies were beaten inhumanly, exploited sexually and paid very low wages which put them in starving, finally Gangu was shot dead.

Bhikhu in *The Road* was determined to build the road to his village along with other untouchable boys. He stroked the stones with his hammer and said that, “Call me, if you need two strong arms!” (*The Road*, p-20). Dhooli Singh, who is sympathetic to untouchables feels that physically and mentally strong, like Bhikhu survives, he calls Bhikhu for eating mangoes when he was hammering the stones, “A gleam of light came into Bhikhu’s eyes as he sat down to work, the reflection of a tension which arose from some new anxiety. Between the boys hammering away and himself, there hovered the sense of failure, even though the utter defeat of not getting anything done had been avoided. He did not know exactly what he wanted, because, from his hard knitted brows, there only rose sweat power. He felt exhilarated that he had been able to work with the same passion with which he had frequently got drunk, or wandered in the countryside. But he knew that now the wild abandon of his young life was gone, the vitality was being schooled in the hard school of this village” (*The Village*, p-86). Bhikhu’s dream of road to success is completed, but he is being disrespected hence, he leaves the village.
Kalura in Hejjala is being given work by Madevamma without rest apart from agricultural work he has to graze the cattle whenever the other servant has not come. One day he was in despair because Rajanna treated him badly by contemptuous talk, he went straight to the farm and worked till dark but Rajanna and his mother Madevamma abused and did not give any respect to his work. They were responsible for the departure of Kalura and his family from the village. Kalura has worked in the house of Bayamama who always keeps the servants busy and abuses them. He escaped from that house without taking any wages. Then he works with Singarigowda to rear his bulls but the latter tried to seduce Syavanti which made them to leave the place. Then he went to work in the farm of Chennakesavaiah, an old man who was impressed with the work of Syavanti and Kalura. But he died before giving a reward, his son sold the entire land without giving an inch to Kalura. The Kalura went to coffee estate and involved himself in fencing, cutting the branches of the trees, digging and making seed bed for the coffee plants. He became a drunkard, lost his daughter and wife in the estate. At last he worked with Sangappa to rear the bulls, he was so tired in his life with the corroded values of the society.

Lal Singh in The Village used to bring the cattle-fodder on his head. “He liked walking behind the plough, twisting the tails of his straining bullocks. Ever since his childhood it had been his ambition to grow up quickly and be a man, and learn to plough like his brothers and Harnam Singh, as a master of the land, swinging along with heavy strides, mouthing foul curses to the beasts which were yoked to their scratching ploughs” (The Village, p-60). The youngest son out of six children who was loved most by his mother is in a better position than other protagonists discussed earlier. “Lalu walked behind the wooden plough, goading the
oxen with his right head. Occasionally he pushed them, whistled to them or urged them on by smacking his tongue against his palate. Both Thiba and Rondu seemed to realize that their master was kind to them. For they kept up a steady treat, except now and then when they took the angles and forgot that they were supposed to maintain their speed. Their eyes were goggled and they could not see how much of the field remained to be ploughed. But they were quite willing to work as they could sense that the hand at the back of their bodies was that of the master who fed them. The oxen shivered with pleasure every time he touched them, licked his arms with their long tongues as he prepared the fodder and always looked at him with widely dilated, big, glassy eyes” (The Village, p-100). He loves his land and works but the yield never satisfied his hunger and never finished the loan his father had borrowed.

Nataraja in Sarvamangala is a prompt and hard worker. He studied sincerely and passed lower secondary examination. During the movement of Indian Independence Struggle, he came out of the school and jumped into the cause of the nation actively without fear. He worked as a leader of workers to get them their dues and justice, but he lost his job, his health and Sarvamangala with whom he dreamt to marry.

Ananta in The Big Heart “did not stop to wipe his sweat. He merely struck the hammer in a measured movement as though he did not want to show even to himself that he had been afraid. An artist over and above the craftsman, his hand moved with an easy grace in spite of the disturbance within him, even as he imprinted a pattern of moon-strokes by way of finishing-touches on the vessel before him…” (The Big Heart, p-13). He had a good experience and skill in his job, but he was being denied the job in the new factory. He gets very low and reduced wages for his work.
Krishnegowda in *Uyyale*, a bachelor and cultured person has shouldered the responsibility of running the house-hold after the death of his father by leaving his college studies, sympathetic to poor even though he is from a well to do family, a good singer, reader of literature and respects arts.

The protagonists Munoo, Bakha, Lakka, Gangu, Bhikhu, Kalura, Lal Singh, Nataraja, Ananta, Krishnegowda suffer because they are honest and hard workers which reminds Maxim Gorky’s open letter to some French writers: “We are enemies, and incapable enemies, I am certain. An honest worker is always an enemy of the society and even more an enemy of those who defend and justify greed and envy, these base pillars of modern social organization.”
End Notes


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