



ANAND'S TWO LEAVES AND A BUD: "THE MASALA OF SUFFERINGS" MIRRORED IN DALIT'S LIFE: AN APPRAISAL

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Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the major novelists of Indo-Anglican fiction today. He has been influenced by writers such as Tagore, Gandhi etc. His themes are the socio-economic problems of contemporary India. *Two Leaves and a Bud* is a Dramatic novel, and it describes the pathetic plight of the labourers in Assam tea-plantations. The harshness and the injustice of India's white rulers on the labourers is clearly portrayed by Anand. Mulk Raj Anand's third novel *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), is a classic novel gives a realistic picture of capitalist society through a journey of a poor underclass man Gangu. In his journey from Punjab to Assam, the protagonist suffers a lot in the world of the capitalists. He lost his life without fulfilling his dreams. He faced discriminations as a reward for his honest, sincerity and hard work. Anand highlighted the sufferings and pathetic condition of an under class Gangu. He was already exploited in his native place through landlords and later in the tea estate through capitalists. Now Gangu is a victim of capitalism.

Keywords: Capitalist, Discrimination, Green Hell, Casteism, Sufferings, Suppression. Poor, Marginalization, Dalit Consciousness.

"Life is like a journey" -Mulk Raj Anand.

"Life is a beautiful journey and really we all are enjoying. It differs from person to person depending upon their way of life. Here, Mulk Raj Anand tries to give us the "Masala of suffering" in which the marginalised people face all throughout their life. His thoughts related to them were very admirable, and we can see shocking moments. Mulk Raj Anand is a pioneer writer during the 19th Century. He is the most prolific writer among all the living Indian writers in England. He is a Socialist and Humanist. For this social reformist attitude, Anand has been called "the Veritable Dickens of the East" (Iyenger, p. 130). Anand always hates Caste, Class, Superstition, Capitalism, Colonialism etc., Mulk Raj Anand is considered as a Humanist because he rightly thinks that, since most of our problems were created by man and they can be only solve those problem. At the age of eleven itself Anand started questioning the meaning of life and its sufferings. Goronwy Ree appreciated Anand that "I have no doubt that Dr. Anand's account of the tea planters is true." (Ree, p.832)

Dalit writing is a post-independence literary phenomenon. Much historical significance were involved in the emergence of Dalit literature. Everybody in the world faces "Caste discrimination" as it has its own name depending upon their class or division. The Dalits were commonly considered as "others" in the society. "Discrimination" and "Marginalisation" prevails in every nook and corner of the world.

Alienation is the things were an individual faces the uttermost frustrated feelings. In Mulk Raj Anand third novel *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) we can see the alienated feelings and sufferings of the coolie men and women, even children face pressure and solitude throughout their life journey. They were in a critical condition under the rule of British man Reggie Hunt. He is a lust and, his concern towards men and women, and children differs. This novel really gives us the realistic picture of "Class society" through the journey of a poor underclass man Gangu Singh. The real situation of Gangu is shown through his own words in the novel: - "A journey into the unknown" (Anand, p.1).

Before arriving to the Macpherson tea estate, Gangu's family were totally filled with dreams. They thought that they were going to the new world, where they can get all welfare in relation to their life, but after facing many troubles, hardships in getting money, later the family understood the real condition which prevailed there. Gangu



describes the place as “Green Hell”. The coolies in the tea estate were suppressed, cheated and tortured. The coolies didn’t able to express their inner feelings, sufferings and they can’t get their basic needs. Basically, they are considered as “Voiceless peoples”.

Buta the Indian subordinate had already told about many offers that the English man would give them. A land for their own cultivation of rice crops, cemented house and good wages. As the words and promises by Buta towards the coolies were vanished, Gangu is very much upset in thinking about his own situation and he has no way in leading both his life and family. The dream of coolies now totally smashed by the fake-man Buta.

The coolies in the tea estate didn’t have any peaceful atmosphere, always they have to work and even they had forgotten the word “Enjoyment”. The coolies from various places has appeared to work in the estate. The place where the coolies survive is not in a hygienic condition. The whole place is totally filled with odd smell. A gust of breeze bearing the smell of urine from the foot of a coolie’s latrine by the road assailed the nostrils of the Doctor De la Havre. He is a Marxist British doctor, who works in the estate. He had been working all day in his primitive laboratory. In a sudden, he lifted his head towards the mountains, as if by so doing he could inhale the pure, clear air. But the ruinous smell persisted. This shows the complete survival condition and their psychic traumas. The coolies are surviving in an untidy atmosphere.

“No septic tank latrines, he muttered to himself with contorted face, and hastened his steps....” (Anand, p.16)

The picture of hook-worm among the puddles of urine formed itself in Havre’s mind. There must be thousands of them hatching under such favourite conditions. And we can see millions of mosquitoes which make the coolies to an unhygienic state and causes many epidemic diseases. The doctor was a kind and humourous man. He always likes the coolies and he has pity and a soft-corner over them. He also thinks about their welfare and this was not liked by the “master” Hunt.

The south was the endemic area from which cholera spread regularly every year. The coolies have inner fear among them. The fear of death by cholera had scared some of the coolies of the low-lying plantations. The water supply was at fault, and it was the main source from which the disease spread.

Doctor John de la Havre approaches Mr& Mrs. Croft-Cooke and Hunt to explain the conditions that moves around the places where the coolies survive. Except Barbara, the daughter of Mr and Mrs. Croft-Cooke, nobody is ready to listen the demands given by Havre. They were enjoying that he is making such a non-sense joke. The critical condition of the coolies was not considered by the British managers and Hunt. The doctor started to talk about a serum, in-order to give a very flattery reply to Mrs. Croft-Cooke,

“A French scientist” said de la Havre, Historically affecting an air of mischief which took its cue from the hilarity of Barbara, has invented a serum, which is said to abolish fatigue.... (Anand, p.25).

A serum was invented by a French scientist and it is said that it abolishes fatigue. Dogs injected with this serum worked on a thread-mill for sixteen hours without undue weariness, and it is believed that the serum will add ten years to the life of a man. And he will be able to spend those ten years on the thread-mill, just like a dog. He told this towards Mrs. Croft-Cooke, It will be a good thing for your husband to order some. He also adds that this serum will be useful for the coolies. But all his plans and offers were not accepted by Mr. Charles- Croft. He said; -

“You and your bloody coolies ought to shot dead against a wall” (Anand, p.25).



The coolies were not in a safe place and they can't get their daily survival needs properly. They were considered as, 'hillmen', 'liars', 'lazy', 'stealers', 'thieves', 'underclass'. They were not even considered as "Human beings" by the English people. The coolies left their own native land of 'Paradise' and now they are suffering a lot in the 'Hell'. The coolies also face famine, and wages vanish due to the rude and heartless behaviour of the English man.

Women were considered as they were equal to God, because she gives birth to a new life of every human. She is praised everywhere, but the life of women in the estate is very much miserable. The Sardar on visiting the coolies, noticed a girl who ran towards Gangu. He enquired about the girl to Gangu Singh, from his reply the Sardar Hunt came to know that it is his daughter and a very little girl.

"Bless your fate brother,said
Narain to Gangu. He is a very
bud mash Sahib..." (Anand, p.42).

Narain, the neighbour coolie is very much conscious about the character, behaviour, and the attitude of the sahib, but Gangu is a new coolie in the plantation and he is unaware about the inner qualities about the Sahib. Narain says that the Sahib is always drunk and he has no consideration for anyone's mother, sister or children. He is openly living with three coolie women. He also adds nobody knows what may or may not happen here. Nobody's mother or sister is safe in this place.

This was the critical condition of women, children and even for little girls. They are just considered as the "medium of pleasure". Even the Sahib's pony is a female named Tipoo. Through this external behaviour one can easily understand the mental condition of the Sahib. He also beats the Indian coolies mercilessly. He always used to think himself to be "Napoleon Bonaparte" in relation to the Indian coolies. Hunt considers the women coolies to be more efficient than the men and favours them involuntarily, but he does so only to establish a relationship of informal with them which may facilitate his sexual union with one of them.

The master spends his most of the time in club and playing polo. Everyone had joined the meeting. Barbara is very much happy to see De la Havre coming there with his assistant Chuni Lal, and he is an Indian assistant. But Reggie Hunt didn't like the arrival of Chuni Lal, because he is an Indian. Havre tells Croft-Cooke that the malaria infected houses have been segregated for a few days and disinfectants have been sprinkled all over the lines, Croft-Cooke and Macara, the clerk of the estate point it out that the Indian coolies neither maintain cleanliness nor use preventive medicine. In between that Reggie Hunt walks up to Chuni Lal and says; - "I am afraid niggers aren't allowed in this club" (Anand, p.104)

The doctor said that he is my guest in-order to do favour to Chuni Lal, because he is a very innocent and kind assistant to him. Macara stood up and he shared Reggie's sentiments as indeed did all orthodox Anglo-Indians. For as a general rule Indians were not allowed to be members of English club. But the doctor couldn't find the words and he got up. The other men were dumb and started into nothingness. This brings out the pathetic condition of the Indian workers in the plantation.

Mulk Raj Anand's humanistic attitude for the living condition of the coolies provoked him to write *Two Leaves and a Bud* in a great way than other writers. H. C. Harrex comments, "Anand's characterisations within the proletarian campus are strong varied and challenging." (Harrex, p.144). Throughout the novel one can find the difference in class, religion and the coolies didn't face any kind of normal life situation in their working place throughout their journey.

Normally every human being after the end of their life move towards Hell or Heaven. But in the condition of the coolies in the beginning itself they all have been moved to Hell from Heaven. The heaven here indicates the native place of the different coolies. God created everyone equally with all sorts of hurdles, happiness, sorrows, feelings, emotions and also with depressions to face in everyone's life. But in many situations the human beings using this



to dominate the people in whom they consider as very “low” to them. This opinion should be completely changed and the situation of equality should prevail among everyone.

“We all have one life to live,
Let us follow equality in all aspects”

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