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## THE HUMANISM OF MULKRAJ ANAND

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**Abstract:** MulkRaj Anand is a great humanist. His insistence on the dignity of man irrespective of caste, creed, and wealth, his plea for the practice of compassion as a living value, his conception of the whole man, his crusade against superstition, feudalism, and imperialism are some of the chief characteristics of his humanism. Like a true humanist, he rejects God, Fate, Religion, Past and Future. His behaviour in the supremacy of man is noteworthy.

**Keywords:** Dignity of man, rejection of fate, god and religion.

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**Introduction:** The Indo-Anglian or Indo- English literature is different from the Anglo-Indian literature. The former is the genre written by the Indians through the English language; the latter is written by the English men on themes and subjects related to India. The Indo-Anglian literature, therefore, is very much associated with Indian English. The evolution of a distinct standard a standard the body of which is correct English usage, but whose soul is Indian in thought, colour and imagery.

It is true to say that MulkRaj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K, Narayan and Nirad Chaudhuri are known as the four wheels of the contemporary Indo-Anglian fiction. The Indo- Anglian writers of fiction write with an eye and hope on the western readers. This influences their choice of the subject- matter. That is why in Indo- Anglian novels there are sadhus, Fakirs, caves, temples, Vedanta, Gandhi, Rajas and Nawabs etc. That interests the western audience. But at the same time there are elements of Indianness; Nationalism and patriotism, glorification of India's past and sympathy for the teeming millions of the country, etc speak of the eastern orientation. MulkRaj Anand is a great humanist. His insistence on the dignity of man irrespective of caste, creed and wealth, his plea for the practice of compassion as a living value, his conception of the whole man, the profound importance he attaches to art and poetry as instruments for developing whole men, his crusade against superstition, feudalism and imperialism. These are some of the chief characteristics of his humanism. Like a true humanist, he rejects God, fate, religion, past and future. He believes in the supremacy of man. MulkRaj Anand believes that man is the master of his destiny; he refuses to believe in fatalism, fatalism weakens man's faith in him-self and persuades him to become a passive dependent on unseen and non-existent forces. So, naturally fatalism is an essentially non-humanistic concept. Anand's humanistic approach recognizes the fact that pain and cruelty are two maladies of the world. These are unavoidable; he says that with an aid of advancing

science and technology and with the practice of love and compassion for the weak and low, it is impossible to remove misery and unhappiness. In his opinion, the conquest of pain should be the supreme goal of all individuals and nations.

Anand's philosophy of humanism is indeed notable. He is an inveterate enemy of fatalism, feudalism and imperialism. He believes in Democracy, socialism and the peaceful co- existence of all nations. He further says that all people must have freedom; social, economic, political, intellectual and emotional without any encroachment upon each other's freedom. According to Anand, Art is as much a tool in the service of mankind as science is. It is very important to note that woman in Anand's humanism deserves to be treated on an equal footing with man. In literature, the personality of the traditional woman and the woman with the modern outlook has been presented in an exclusively male-oriented culture. The traditional woman has been left with no personality of her own. She even glorified the suffering that was inflicted upon her by the wanton male, whereas woman with modern outlook endeavor to come out of the suppression and begin to view her independent existence. The over changing reality of life reflects itself in contemporary literature. The position of woman in society is no exception to his fact. The status of women throughout the world has been undergoing a rapid change during recent times.

**The plea for social change:** Often woman are shown to be defined as the centre of culture but in reality they are still imprisoned within the walls of her family and shackled by tradition. MulkRaj Anand is a celebrated Indian novelist with global recognition while going to the very root of the degraded social and political system. Anand found that his country men still were governed by medieval thoughts and were reluctant to welcome new way of life. In one of his novels like GOURI, Anand shows that women should also learn to master their destiny. The novel presents its heroine who fights the age-old traditions and strives to get her due in society. In GOURI the novelist gives a realistic picture of the inevitable

struggle of woman against the degradation of the female by male chauvinists. It not only voices a strong protest against the ill-treatment of women; but also explores through the examples of GOURI as to how women in India can work for their emancipation. Gouri is the victim of the dichotomy where woman is worshipped as a goddess as well as whipped as a slave. Gouri's mother had advised her to be like Sita of the Ramayana. The Indian woman is not only married into a family but also into her community. She has to find her fulfillment in her family only. The joint family system is an archaic form of social organization in which women are controlled through different roles, she has to play. Anand's Gouri combines in herself the traces of divine figures from Indian mythology, she is shakti, kali, sita, mohini; woman in the modality of kali is annihilator; woman as shakti shows her prowess. In her fury, she becomes kali. These are archetypal experiences of which the Indian woman is constantly reminded. Within the frame work of the traditional society lies the reality of a woman's life. Gouri has to stand the acid-test [agni-pareeksha] to prove her purity. Historically, the feminine mystique trains a woman is imbibed, the spirit of subservience and to find the salvation by serving her man till the end of her life. Gouri is such a woman who is born and brought up in a traditional set up. She accepts self-effacement as her destiny. Gouri is an embodiment of the Indian womanhood; she is the facsimile of an Indian woman symbolizing the value of silent suffering. Her devotion and ardent love of her husband Panchi makes her mind oscillate between two extremes she suffers becomes her husband is highly egoistic and superstitious. She gives importance to love, faith and mutual trust. And gradually she gains a new awareness and so rejects the world of narrow orthodox beliefs and accepts the modern way of life.

Anand as a novelist is the champion of truth and the champion of the under-dog. He is a crusader against social distinctions and manmade barriers. He is intolerant of social injustice and inequality. His chief aim is to expose the follies and affectations of the privileged class, priests, money-lenders, businessmen, tea-planters and British rulers. Anand is a great master. Many of his characters can be compared with the immortal characters of Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy and Munshi Premchand. His characters fall neatly into three types: The Sufferers, the oppressors and the good men. There is a great variety of characters in his novels. He covers practically the entire social gamut, from the Maharaja to the mendicant, from the Anglo-Indian to the untouchable. In his pages we meet Nawabs, landlords and their minions, the entire army hierarchy

and different types of soldiers, policemen, lawyers, politicians, revolutionaries, priests, teachers, merchants, contractors, money-lenders, clerks, factory workers, coolies, farmers, coppersmiths, circuswallahs, and what not.

**The Main Characteristics Of Anand's Humanism:**

1. The highest potential of man is his own sanction, not God.
2. Man is the master of his destiny, so fatalism is rejected.
3. Casteism is a heinous crime and a severe blow to the concept of the dignity of man; so it must be rejected.
4. Pain is a fundamental evil of the universe; it should be rooted out through the practice of exercising tenderness and compassion for the failings of the less-privileged.
5. All people must have liberty and equality. International disputes must be settled through peaceful negotiations.
6. War is a deadly evil. It must be avoided if mankind is to survive at all.
7. Women must have equal rights with men. They are not merely child breeding machines. A nation which keeps its women enslaved is not a free nation.
8. All nations must get together for the creation of world-Government and promotion of peaceful co-existence.
9. Capitalism, imperialism, feudalism and fascism are forces, which divide men into factions and classes, so they must be eschewed.
10. Belief in the brotherhood of men is a great virtue which needs to be sincerely practiced by all.
11. Education is a powerful instrument for social reconstruction.
12. There is no God and there is nothing supernatural.
13. Theories of heaven and hell and the life in the world of the hereafter are myths, for there is no conscious survival.
14. Art and science are complementary faculties; they should together endeavor to make man happier and nobler.
15. Religion is a matter which needs to be left to the private of the individual, and should not be ossified into empty rituals and meaningless customs.

The humanistic approach of MulkRaj Anand is indeed admirable. His heroes are young men. While the older people sit mourning their fate, speaking nostalgically of the good old days and the debased state of affairs at present. Anand's young people-village adolescents like Bakha, Munoo, Lalu, Bikhu as well as city labour leaders like Anant in the Big Heart, Ratan in the Coolie, and patriotic poets, doctors, or wise men like Iqbalnath, Purvansingh Bhagath and

Dr Mahindra all look towards the future to a more perfectible world. Anand has drawn his heroes and heroines from the outcastes and pariahs and under-dogs of the society. They are down-trodden sweepers, coolies, the unemployed coppersmiths, the debt-ridden farmers and poor simple soldiers who are his favorites. They live and die unwept, un-honored and un-using. His heroes are small men common men pursued by inexorable economic forces. Like the heroes of Thomas Hardy they try to fight against inexorable destiny and thus stand unbowed beneath the blows of fate.

Anand's short stories are the incarnation of humanism, which illustrate his sympathy for the under-dog, his criticism of the caste system, his denunciation of poverty, his reproval of dehumanizing foibles, such as greedy and vanity, corruption and selfishness, his censure of feudal values and practices, his admiration for woman and her courage and power of endurance, his love of the machine and his deep insight into the psychology of children are noteworthy.

Pro.P.P. Mehta says "Dr Mulk Raj Anand in all his novels emphasizes the fact that nobility and dignity are not monopoly of the rich. The poor have their greatness, honour as well as the rich".

K.R. Srinivas Iyengar says, 'In untouchable the evil is isolated as caste; in Coolie the evil is more widespread and appears as more greed, selfishness and inhumanity in their hundred different forms, yet the root of the matter is poverty, as Munoo realizes all servants look alike, there must be only kinds of people in the world: The rich and the poor'.

**Conclusion:** As a humanist and realist of life Mulk Raj Anand rejects fate or God. Munoo suffers not because of fate or chance; he is a victim of circumstances of the cruelty of man. Anand is a humanist, because he rightly thinks that since most of our problems have been created by man; they can also be solved by man himself. Since man is the reason for the miseries of mankind; he should now become the power-house for processing his own salvation, superstition, bigotry, caste, class, capitalism, exploitation, over- population, tyranny, colonialism, fascism, war etc. Since man is responsible for all these; he can fight them. Thus Anand has focused his attention to reconstruct the humanity in India in particular and the world in general. Hence his literary works hold a true mirror to live beautifully in the beautiful world.

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