

I. Introduction

Mulk Raj Anand occupies a prominent place in the tradition of Indian writing in English. In his novels, he has depicted the lives of the poorer caste in the traditional Indian society. His first major novel *Untouchable* was published in 1935. It is a chilling expose of the day-to-day life of a member of India's untouchable caste. The story narrates a single day in the life of Bakha, a latrine cleaner, who accidentally bumps into a member of high caste Hindu. He is abused by the high caste, which makes him miserable. The incident forces Bakha to search for the solution to be free from the chain of caste system into which he is born.

Anand was born in Peshawar of India on December 12, 1905. His father, Lal Chand, was a coppersmith in Amritsar but later joined the British Indian Army. His mother Ishwar Kaur came from peasant family. They had five sons of whom four survived, Mulk Raj Anand himself being the third. He studied at Khalsa College in Amritsar. In 1925, he went to London on scholarship to obtain a Doctorate degree. In 1933, he returned to India and studied ancient monuments. He lived in Sabarmati Ashram with Mahatma Gandhi and wrote first draft of *Untouchable*.

Untouchable has received a wide range of criticism from different critics. Upendra Baxi comments that "the rules in Anand's *Untouchable* were an amalgam of local custom, caste convention and a rough and ready (. . .) reading of shastras"(250). Concept of touchable and untouchable arises only due to the mixture of different castes with the rough reading of shastras.

Likewise, Saroj Cowasjee remarks, "so strong indeed is the identification with his hero that for best part of the novel we forget the presence of the novelist".(29)

Anand and Indian Writing in English

Mulk Raj Anand was born in the time when British were ruling in India. The British first came to India in 1600. They brought the tools of trade, implements of war as well as their language and literature. Indian literatures and civilizations were pushed back by British. There were few people who took their interest in their own culture and literature. Most of the Indian sought the English language to read and enjoy the literature. Many English schools were established throughout India and the arrival of Christian missionaries in India gave the force to new movement. There had been a debate between the Sanskrit and English language. As Iyengar states:

That since the indigenous languages were inadequate and chaotic, the Indigenous system of medicine were disgrace, indigenous astronomy, science, history and geography were but things to laugh at , and indigenous arts and literature were just pretty futile things, only ‘Western’ education with English as the sole medium would deliver the goods. (459)

This is a dominating, stereotypical argument put forward by Macaulay. However, scheme of modern education through English medium and English became the official language. English medium schools and colleges increased. European literature and cultures were introduced in India. Indians learned to read, write and speak in English with growing success.

Indian writing in English is less than two centuries old. M.K.Naik says, “Indian English literature really came of age after 1857, when India’s discovery of her identity became a vigorous, all-observing quest and she had learned enough from the west to progress from imitation and assimilation to creation”(35).

During the periods from 1857 to 1920, the Indian ethos gradually changed; the shock of defeat, frustration and trauma of inferiority into new awareness and confidence. And

Indian literature slowly began to steeping its pace, M.K. Naik describing the origin of Indian English literature states:

Indian English literature began as an interesting by-product of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between a vigorous and enterprising Britain and a stagnant and chaotic India. As a result of this encounter, as F.W. Bain puts it, India withered trunk (. . .) suddenly shot out with foreign foliage. One form of this foliage took was that of original writing in English by Indians, thus partially fulfilling Samuel Daniel's 16th century prophecy concerning English language 'treasures of our tongue'.(1)

Indian writers were producing a great number of literatures in English. The power of language and the question of power structure had been also the determining factor to choose the English medium to write the literature in India.

At present, Indian writing itself is little more than two centuries old. And the most significant feature of the modern Indian literature is a respect of emergence of the underdogs as a major literary force. It is the movement for the upliftment of untouchables. This movement criticizes the Brahminical orthodoxies in its robustness. It gained the momentum around 1920 with the leadership of Ambedkar. This new literature has introduced a new world of expression and potentiality of the language of down-trodden people.

Among all forms of literature, fiction is the most flexible and popular form of literary expression and it occupies the pride in Indian writing in English literature. As Iyengar says, "Indian writing in English has been acknowledged abroad with the novels of R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Desai, Mulk Raj Anand, Khuswant Singh, Bhawani Bhattaracharya and Malgaonkar"(25). Among them, Anand, Narayan and Rao are the most important novelists.

Writing on twentieth century novels in India, Shreedhar Gautam in his book *Essay on Nepali, Indian and American Literature* writes, “The Indian English novels is a twentieth century literary phenomenon as the major pioneering novelists acclaimed in India and abroad are the products of this century. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao are regarded as the founding fathers of Indian novelists in English”(44).

Anand’s *Untouchable* (1935) and Rao’s *Kanthapura* (1938) are the recordings of social and political turmoil and transition. They are the finest writings of century highlighting deeply felt experience of Indian people. R.K. Narayan created the town of Malgudi in his novel full of Swami and Friends. These three writers Anand, Narayan and Rao gave the novel in Indian English its true Indian character in style, structure and content. Comparing Anand with Narayan and Rao, Iyengar in his book *Indian Writing in English* writes:

A prolific writer than either of the Mulk Raj Anand is engrossed in many ‘underdogs’ of Indian society, and his *Two Leaves and a Bud*, *The Coolie*, *The Untouchable* and *The village* (1939) treat them, not patronizingly, but with the sympathy and even the respect due to them as human beings. The sweeper, the peasant, the plantation labours, the city drudge, the syppy, all emerge alive from his novels anguished and hungry, yet human, superstitious and self-divided, vividly realized in spite of their thwarted purposings.(45-46)

Thus with the emergence of Anand in English literature in India, novel gains a wide currency. Anand’s burning anger at all the ills of man made class and caste and his deep sympathy for the underdogs have been subjected in a series of brilliant novels. In his well-known novels, the vitality of his creation can be traced. Variegated richness of his total

comprehension and the purposive energy of his narratives carry all before them. R.K.Narayan has been steadily active as a writer in Indian literature in English. Comparing Anand with Narayan, Iyengar in his book *Indian Writing in English* states:

Like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan too has somehow managed
(with what difficulties and trails we do not know) to remain a writer.
Anand at least has, it would appear, some political axes to grind,
though these do not offensively intrude into his creative writing. But
Narayan has no less axes of any kind he is that rare thing in India
today, a man of letters pure and simple. (358)

Narayan has published nine full length novels, the latest being *The Vendor of Sweets*. He is not a revolutionary like Mulk Raj Anand but there is gentle power in his writings in the limited environments of the small town of his creation Malgudi, Narayan brings to life the South-Indian way of living. Comparing R.K.Narayan with Mulk Raj Anand, Iyengar in *Indian Writing in English* further writes:

Anand and Narayan also challenge a comparative study of their
aims, methods and achievements. Roughly contemporaneous,
Anand hails from India's North-West Frontier and Narayan from
almost the Southern end of Peninsula. Between them they comprise
as it were the North and the South, extension and concentration,
vigour and urbanity, vitality and artistic reticence. (331)

The Hindu Caste System

Indian society is under the grip of caste system. Caste has been the indicator of social system. There are many castes and sub-castes in India. Each of the castes is related to special occupation. All these caste are grouped into four main *Varnas*. *Brahimns* are the

superior castes and they perform religious ceremony. It is their allocated occupation. They are regarded as the spiritual leaders holding the highest position in the society. *Kshatriyas* are warriors and are less superior than Brahmins in social rank. They are the defender against any possible danger to the society and thus have a marital role. *Vaishyas* fall into the third *Varna* and they are merchants, the traders, and the shopkeepers who look after the commercial interest of the community and who aid its wealth. And the last *Varna* is *Shudra*. *Shudras* are the labors, the washer man, the leather workers, the barber and the sweepers. The *Shudras* are at the lowest rung of the ladder.

Caste dictates one's occupation and dietary habits and interaction with members of other caste. Brahmins are not only prohibited to drink the alcohol but even to touch the low caste people. The members of a high caste people enjoy more wealth and opportunities while the members of low caste perform low jobs. Outside the caste system are the untouchables. Toilet cleaners and garbage removal are some of the jobs allocated to the untouchables, which require being in contact with bodily fluids. They are therefore, considered polluted and not to be touched. Brahmins and even the other classes of Hindu believe that they are polluted if they are touched by the sweepers and scavengers.

Untouchables are not allowed to enter into the house of touchables. They are supposed to drink from separated wells. Therefore, upward mobility is very rare in the caste system. Inter-caste relations such as marriage and emotional relations are not allowed and supposed to be crime against the god. Untouchability and the prejudice of the caste Hindus against the sweepers and scavengers have been continued for ages till the present.

The beginning of the twentieth century is seen as the beginning of the realization of suffering of low caste people. They were embarrassed because the outcaste people have been located in the hierarchical structure fixed forever. They found it extremely difficult to

reconcile the untouchables to Hindu organizations with the ideas of equality. Many reformatory writers began to write on the subject of underprivileged and untouchability. Such writers have written with the perspectives of Marxisms rather than with any concrete ideas to bring a real change in the caste hierarchy. These writers have argued that the caste system in its original form was based on different occupational groups. Some writers argued that the lower case should get chance for vertical mobility because that would be justice for them. Thus writing on caste theme emerged from all sides and has reached into a new zeal. In this regard, Sisir Kumar Das writes, “The inequality generated by the caste system is a recurring theme in Indian literature to which almost all major writers have been responding seriously. We cannot think any writers defending the system though a very few could actually visualize the caste free society”. (301)

But all the writings on caste inequality failed to create any significant impact until the movement against the system emerged from the oppressed themselves. And the movement against the caste system started by the low caste people. The voice that arose was undoubtedly the voice of minority. This movement highlighted the sufferings of the people belonging to the lower castes and untouchables. From this movement writers became more aware of the inhumanity of the ancient social tradition of the caste system. Sisir Kumar Das, writing the reason of the movement, further states:

The display of the Brahminical authority prompted by a well-nourished fear for pollution, the denial of basic human right to lower caste (even the conversion does not effectively change a man’s social position), the engagement of one member of lower caste against another in humiliating and assaulting one, all are components of a tortured narrative of suffering .(302)

Caste system has been deeply rotted in the Hindu society. Though the system has been formed according to the respective occupations, it has been fixed forever. Higher caste

have made the stereotype images of the lower caste people, Untouchables have been oppressed and ruled by caste Hindus. Thus, the society has been divided into the two main classes. Writing on the historical reality of the caste prejudices, Gail Omvedt argues, “Caste is ‘a material reality with a material base’, it is ‘not only form but also concrete material content’, and it has ‘historical shaped’ the very basis of Indian economy and society and continues to have crucial economic implications today”(qtd. In Chatterjee 176). Such a pattern of the historical impact on the existing society can not be easily removed. M.V.R. Sastry realizes that the removal of the caste system is not an easy task. Continuous struggle is needed to remove it. He states:

Casteism is the major evil afflicting all religious communities in India. This evil must be fought continuously till it disappears from the Indian society. Caste based discrimination against Haryans (scheduled castes) and Vanavasis (tribals) has been mitigated to a great extent in the last few decades through legislation, social and religious reformed education, affirmative actions, industrialization and Urbanization. (35)

However much more needs to remove the social evils of caste system. But the problems remain at the same extent. Anand himself is not satisfied with the problem of caste biasness of the contemporary society. Though some of the outcastes are alleviated, most of them remain in the same miserable condition. In his book *Is there a Contemporary Indian Civilization?* Anand states:

First of all, it is an ugly fact that since the liberation of India from foreign rule, the unity achieved in our country, through the struggle against Imperialism, seems to have given place to much disruption, based on Casteism, Parochialism, Communalism and Linguism. Therefore, grave doubts have arisen about the possibility of achieving the 'social pattern',

because the concept of political unity and a secular democratic state themselves seems to be at stake. And many people have begun to ask: 'Is there a fundamental unity in India?' (174)

II. Class and Social protest

Drawn from the Latin word 'classis', the English term 'class', suggests particular category as group that can be identifiable within the classification system. The word is used to refer a social group considered as located within a hierarchical order primarily determined by their economic considerations such as character of occupation, income, the prevailing form of property and wealth etc. In its more simplified form, the term 'class' denotes 'social class' though it has been approximately to various term like: rank and order, estate and degree etc. indicating to the inequality that exists in a society. It suggests the different socio-economic structure or social contractedness in terms of economy. Social class, at the time, tends to suggest social stratification. In general, class in society is a group of people that have similar economic structure, common way to do, similar social values and conditions, a homogenous social status. On top of these, they have force that unites them by overriding the variety among them.

Even though a common thread regarding to the suggestion of 'class' can be drawn roughly, it has been a lengthy way round on the go-about of its variable meaning to the scholars of different generations. Major synthesis and devotion to this class theory was given by Karl Marx, even though the concept of class had been practiced by the ancient philosophers as Plato, Aristotle as well as by Late Romans and early modern writers. For Marx, it is the mode of production in any society that produces the features and characteristics forms of class inequality. He defines mode of production as the dynamic combination of two major component; the relations of production and productive forces. 'The relations of production' implies the economic relations between groups of people that is forms of class structure whereas 'The production forces' means the technique and technology in production. He categories two social classes: one exploited or productive class and exploiting or non-productive class the other.

He presents two major classes in each society either the exploiter and exploited or the ruling and the ruled, the slaves and the slave owners or the proletarians and bourgeoisies. For the existence of production relations in a society, in Marx's view, the productive forces establish material preconditions. Similarly, the evolution of the productive forces is well-dependent on the growth and development of the relation of production. In the view of Marx, thus one mode of production produces the situation of transforming into the other. In his *Early writings*, Marx argues:

The material production forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production (. . .) forms of development of productive forces these relations turns into fetter. Then beings an era of social relation [...]. No social order is ever destroyed before all the productive forces for which it is sufficient have been developed, the new superior relations of productive never replace older ones . . . (425-26)

Though Marx and Engels explain in their *The Communist Manifesto* that the society is splitting into two great hostile camps, the standpoint of them has been argued by Marx himself in the unfinished chapter of capital which he was writing when he was fighting death. That explains three big classes of modern society "as wage – earners, capitalists and land owners" (885). Moreover he claims the existence of other middle and intermediate class too so as to analyze contemporary political situation and events. Hence, he agrees with the multi-class model with a noticeable flexibility. Marx's concept of the progressive simplification of the class structure is central to his account of the future transition to socialism. He believes in the connection between the social structure and social belief that is social class-consciousness. In his notion that consciousness is a root of conflict and struggle in a society, which leads to a progressive revolution. The major idea in Marx, regarding to class-consciousness, is that of ideology. In the most general form, the theory of

ideology simply states that, "life is not determined by conscious by life" (Marx and Engel's 47). This notion proposed in Marx's own formulation in the 1859 "Preface":

The totality of [...] relations of production constitutes the economy structure of society the real foundation on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life.(425)

These above assertions pave a way to more specific idea that the thought of ruling class is the ruling thought. So, the culturally dominant ideas became, for Marx, the expression of the dominant material relations. *In The German Ideology*, Marx affirms that the different classes have different rival forms of consciousness. As ruling class is the dominant class in a society, the ruling ideas no longer remain uncontested.

For Marx, Ideology is a belief system, that is, a product of cultural conditioning. For e.g., capitalism, communism, Marxism, patriotism, religion, ethical system, humanism, environmentalism, astrology etc are all ideologies. Our assumption that nature behaves according to the laws of science is an ideology.

From a Marxist perspective, the role of ideology in maintaining those in power is so important that we should briefly examine a few more examples so that we can see how it works. Classicism, for example, is an ideology that equates one's value as a human being with the social class the better one is assumed to be because quality is "in the blood," that is in born from a classicist perspective, people at the top of the social scale are naturally superior, responsible, more trustworthy, more ethical and so on. People at the bottom of the social scale, it follows, are naturally shiftless, lazy and irresponsible. Therefore, it is only right and natural that those from the highest social class, should hold all the position of

power and leadership because, they are naturally suited to such roles and are the only ones who can be trusted to perform them properly.

Patriotism is an ideology that keeps poor people fighting wars against poor people from other countries (one way or another, sufficient money can generally keep one out of the armed forces during war or at least, out of the combat units) while the rich on both sides rake in the profits of war-time economy.

Religion, which Karl Marx called "the opiate of the masses," is an ideology that helps to keep the faithful poor satisfied with their lot in life, or at least tolerant of it, much as a tranquilizer might do. The question of god's existence is not the fundamental issue for Marxist analysis; rather, what human beings do in God's name – organized religion – is the focus.

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of productions constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or what is but a legal expression for the same thing – with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters, then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of economic

foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations, a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic- in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. Just as our opinions of an individual is not based on what he thinks of himself, so can we not judge of such a period of transformation by its own consciousness must be explained rather from the contradictions of material life from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production.

Class Theory: Marxism after Marx

The other scholars of Marxist theory define social classes in the term subjectivity. They are called "subjectivist" since they pay a high stress to the core from the determining and distinguishing a class from the other in a society. In their notions, common interests and consciousness of kind are basic and essential factors if one studies the varying classes in society. They claim that possession of common attitudes and interests are the mental attributes. Just as Marx assumed a set of values and desires, attitudes and interests characterizing the middle class or the bourgeoisie as conservative and the working class or the proletarians they link with the mental consciousness. In the subjective perspective "a social class [is] a group which, by its way of thinking stands for a particular system of economic organization" (Mombert 3).

Various other theorists exist to deviate more or less from Marx but they conceive that together with the objective and subjective factors there remain political aspects too for determination of a certain class. Sorokin and Zimmerman say "By social class, as the term is used here, is understood the totality of individuals whose occupation, economics and

socio-political status (rights and privileges duties and disfranchisements) are closely similar" (61).

It needs no assertion that social coordinates are important factors for shaping the manners, behaviours and relationships of an individuals or a group. The economic status, wealth or property of human being exert crucial role to derive the body and soul, to influence the behaviour and psychology of him they stand as crucial agents. The occupation of a man, or other so named objective factors are the causes that produce an effect of constructing the consciousness, formatting psychological characteristics in a way in him.

On the other hand, Marxism tends to theorize the relationship between culture and society through one or another version of the base-super structure model. For George Lukacs, as for Lenin, class consciousness is by no means coextensive with the empirical consciousness of real working-class people. By relating consciousness to the society he writes:

[...] On the whole structure of society [...] class consciousness consists in facts of the appropriate and rational relations 'inputted' to a particular typical position in the process of production. This consciousness is therefore, neither the sum nor the average of what thought or felt by the single individual who makeup the class. (51)

It can be the logical stand that a political party or a group of individuals or even one individual, might at some moment achieve a truly representative consciousness of the kind Lukacs postulates. The special social conditions of social polarization and class conflict that Lukacs had experienced during the immediate aftermath of the World War 1 made him to stress on the model of the relationship between a political party and social class. In his model the conflict in society is because of the existing party-political consciousness influenced by the party – political institutions.

For Jean Paul Sartre, class theory stood to be prioritization of agency and 'praxis'. Althusser insisted on Marx's analytical distinction between the mode of the legal and political superstructure and the forms of consciousness as a theory of three relatively distinct levels within the social formation: the economics, the political and the ideological. In his view ideology was itself material that it was necessarily embedded in institutions "an ideology always exists in an apparatus and its practice or practices" (166). In his theory thus distinction between classes in a society is nothing but the exercise of the differing set of ideas (ideology) always representing an individual's real condition of existence.

A system of domination and another that of dominated are introduced by Theodore Adorno and M. Horkheimer as classes in the society of modern technology. In their view, modern capitalism has become a fully rationalized system of domination by the technology of the mass media or in other terms the culture industries. Technologically society as a system of domination is keeping the working class into the capture. As Marcuse says, "If the worker and his boss enjoy the same television, programme and visit the same resort place. (. . .)this (. . .)indicates not the disappearance of classes, but the extent to which the needs and satisfactions are shared by the underlying population" (21).

Class: Middle and Working

Generally, the working class is defined to be a team of the workers in the commercial work who earn their living by working manually. They have no modern technological instruments to use in their profession. They sell their labour in the market. They have no ownership and management over the economic and social institutions. The natural and physical inequality of man by age, strength, sharpness of man makes a difference in man doubtfully but in society there exists systems since the distribution of property through inheritance is different. So, are the opportunities and possibilities of

making high or low income? Beside that whatever the cause may be, they have varying ways of running their occupations. As quoted in Milner:

As to [the middle class], most reports recorded widespread middle-class perception of social inequality as hierarchical and based on prestige rather than power. By contrast, traditional forms of working class (. . .) were found to be either dichotomous and based on power or deferential and based on prestige. (78)

Not only in the ways they do something, two classes differ in the ways they think, they work, they opine and so on.

Of the "middle-class" values Joseph Lopreato and Lionel S. Lewis write:

Only a very brief (. . .) examination of "middle-class" values is possible at this point. One important point is the presumably greater concern with "self-help" and independence within the middle class as opposed to "collective" solution like those implied by the so called Welfare states" (204).

Regarding the leveling of income in society, Lopreato and Lewis claim that it is not the skilled workers who are paid higher but the "traditional" middle-class employees only because they are from the middle-class background. They write, "the working-class identifiers are ones' who prove to be on the margin, the difference between the subgroup medians being more than one thousand dollars. This puts the "traditional" middle-class well ahead of the skilled [working-class] workers" (205).

To be a member of "middle-class" group it was usual not only for the individual on the basis (. . .) values to himself to be so, but likewise to be felt so by others" (Mishra 4).

As the definition of class theory suggests the social, economic and subjective factors are the determiners of certain class in society; it is the range of income, nature of occupation, governing or being governed, social conditions and values that locate the

middle-class distinct from the working class. The middle-class has a higher rank economically in community that holds the non-manual means of profession, the workers in this class have a control over the working-class. Hierarchically, this class is superior to the working class since the psycho-being of the individuals of this class is somehow self-dependent. On the other hand the working class people seem to be more or less dependent on the upper class men in the society or else where. They have a prior consciousness that they belong to the lower status, values and conditions because they are the manual workers intragenerationally or intergenerationally.

Class Consciousness and Clash

The structure of materialistic property and distribution of wealth in a community does not get equality. In certain time being, the socio-economic structure meets revolution. Such dynamic quality of physical entity in the community does much to bear consciousness in man. Class consciousness is not any natural matter but culture-produced in the specific society itself. William argues:

The essential history of the introduction of class (. . .) relates to the increasing consciousness that social position is made rather than merely inherited. All the older words (. . .) belong to the society in which position was determined by birth (. . .). What was changing consciousness was (. . .) the new sense of a (. . .) particular social system which actually created social divisions, including new kinds of division. (52)

The basic zone of class concern, thus is the phenomenon closely related to socio-economic mobility; transporting people from one class to the other observed with social and economic implements. Fundamentally, this culture concept of class formation stresses on the making of inequality of advantages and opportunities in the social space. The unequal distribution of opportunities makes a clear area of generating consciousness, in one's psyche, of the

other the 'one' is discontent with the 'other'. There is formed class consciousness and class hostility or clash out of that. This is the foundation of class conflict in a society. Turning to the other corner of exploring foundation of such clash, it remains quarter-done if the hegemonial concept is kept aside for it is the life of an individual that shapes the mental territory and the mental shape discharges behaviours. The conflict in a society based on class is the conflict between the dissimilar thoughts, behaviours and values.

Theories of class consciousness argue that under certain circumstances a common class situation produces a state of being awake to perceive the world around so as to know what is going around and that is expressed in conflict towards one or more out-classes. Joseph Loperato has paved a sociological way from 'class perceptivity' to 'class awareness', 'dimensional awareness' and 'class identification' in five stages. The first ingredient necessary for class consciousness in individual is some sort of perception of differences in hierarchy or inequality in society. Rare enough situation can be found in the society where individuals have no perception of hierarchy as such. The status difference once perceived, they construct a range of grading the prestige high to low or vice-versa. On that course they might not have any noticeable vivid scale of division classes still they categorized. They affiliate themselves and others to the hierarchy in their own perception that is called their 'class awareness. They take the tools of existing economic criteria to locate the self and others in that scale. Objectively described economic strata, the positional location of the individual in his social and occupational sphere are called classes. The conscious state of them based on a certain economic criteria, remaining distinct from the other is class consciousness. They introduce the economic-position, source of earning, structure of wealth and property of the self and other. These entities get bold enough to stand as determinants of types of subjective dispositions. In the view of H.D. Anderson and Percy E. Davidson:

[A conscious class] means a social group distinguishable from all other groups by (. . .) relationships, aware of its distinctions (. . .) of its position in the social scale, resisting instruction from below, fearful of intrusion from above (. . .). When this class becomes aware of its distinct character (. . .) as a distinct entity in the community, then it may be said to have acquired 'class consciousness.' (211-12)

In more narrowed terms, class consciousness accumulates its stuff from status consciousness, structure consciousness and interest consciousness subjective and objective both in nature. It implies that on construction of class ego, only the psychological drive of an individual does much less rather other physical components and factors too are inseparable compliments. The status consciousness of a person marks the position of him/her in a class system and relationship to others who share this position. This type of consciousness include a person's self-identification with a particular class. If (s)he is inquired which class(s) he belongs to, the answer might be in a vivid name of class: the self-rating of class affiliation. The person's awareness gets firm that beliefs of matching with the certain class cause much to create boundaries so as to distinguish from the other group-status.

Along the other lane, 'class structure consciousness adds more contribution to the formation of class consciousness. The beliefs that there exist class barriers which keep someone personally able from getting ahead, knowing the location of boundary lines. To be concerned about the formation of a class relying on the professional, occupational, or other structural social systems is giving life to the structure consciousness. It distinguishes one's occupational being from that of the others and creates a line of separation so as to perceive diversity in its structure. More objective perception exercise here in compared to the interest consciousness which implies a series of beliefs, ranges from an identification of

personal interests with class interests and a distinction between the interest of different classes: the belief that the class affiliation of a person has much to do with the ways he does. The desires a person has and the interest one keeps relating to a class are contradictory to that of other classes. The persons affiliated to a certain class have a strong sense and knowledge that they do always find a ground of differentiating the values, institutions, concepts, desires, choices and interests of them from that of the other class. Converging to a station, the above mentioned threefold consciousness makes a product of general class consciousness; the "consciousness" of locating one to a class or group; the sense of carrying out who I am or how I am or how I do etc.

Class-consciousness holds control over the activities of an individual or group. A creature can be imagined amid a thorny bush close, it has enough knowledge of existence of the hereabout, the possible risks and dangers as well, it produces a level of thoughts and notions at the moment because of the situation consciousness. The situational consciousness guides the way it moves right and left or to and fro. Parallel to that an individual or group bears consciousness amid the social classes, that form a shape of their thought and activities of the concerned ones are highly directed by the existing consciousness residing inside. Thus, it remains no longer unexplained that the outside of an individual is directly directed by the inside whereas a group or class is collective structure of similar individuals. The action of the whole class is based on the economic status: the wealth and property they possess, the earning they make and their social being in crisis-cross. People working and walking together are not necessarily from the same social background to represent the same class because they have varying thoughts and ideas as Bloom agrees, "people sup together, travel together but do not think together" (57).

Mind, Matter and Conflict

Each individual in a society has both objective and subjective influence on the course of existence. A one-to-one correspondence between these two facets do a great deal in the life of him or her. Man gets into a society with no by-birth shape of ideas unlike the dated theories stress on the inherited affiliation to a class, rather the present socio-structural circumstances play a crucial part in developing homogenous set of ideas and values that determine him confining into a group. A lump of soil picked up from earth, as it is worked out by a bricker (one who makes bricks) has no specific shape and structure. On filling it into a tool that cuts to a definite shape, it outlines its structure. The size and shape is homogenous to the all that are produced to organize a group since they have their base harmonious. An individual in a society is nothing but a lump of the picked up soil by bricker. The economic and material base is the tool that formats a shape and size of subjective world of him. The locality he gets brought up, the system of education he involves into, the cultural values and institutions he bears and carries out, the way he perceives the things and means them are all some of the factors that assist high to compose the cultural and ideological superstructure. Here emerges spontaneous question whether or not the bricker's brick has and concrete impression of the tool with which it was cut. The response issue is that of the possible question, which doubts over impression of material base of an society. Antonio Gramsci ensure that the economic base is such agent that helps to produce the culture superstructure in disguised "reflection" of the former one above that both the factors have interactive influence. Abrams states:

Gramsci's most widely echoed concept of hegemony; that a social class achieves a predominant influence and power, not by direct and evert means but by succeeding in making its ideological view of society so pervasive that

the subordinate classes unwittingly accept and participate in their oppression.

(151)

Thus, the structure of the class is a monolithic whole of ideological state apparatuses that include religious, political, behavioral and other institutions.

Life of an individual creates its own world which is unique and different from the world of the others for the life brings great possible abundance of the objective conditions. Life, in all, is reflection of the greatest concreteness of the constitution of an individual's background that is social, economic familial etc. Drawing a comparison between a person from well-to-do background and a hard-to-do one this stance gets more crystallized. The former is on the plain of life where the possibilities and opportunities of life-activities are hopeful around. The challenges arriving forth are not from the level that threatens the daily survival. The aspirations climb up and soar high simply because the economic backbone is not fragile. The objective criteria of the well-to-do person are higher compared to the latter one, for instance the level of income, the structures and weight of property, the nature of profession or occupation, the scale of expenditure etc. In the social circle too wider touch with the social being is possible since that class of people need not have to be clinging to any occupation daily survival. They have leisure enough to see and see off many social personalities, they have more chance to know about the world outside.

Generally, those who have a sharp problem of managing hand-to-mouth, should be devoting to their work right from dawn to the dusk or more. The well-to-do class people have more opportunity of joining schools and colleges at the cost of handsome fee-structure. They feel the universe, know the abroad and concern the higher. All these aspects nourish the psycho-socio-functional zone so as to bear a wider sense of the world, live a more comfortable life with more physical or material facilities, speak a more advanced language etc. The people of such level generate their material base. The religious norms

and values, the cultural do's and do not, social beliefs, institution, in general the psychological structure is different from that of the deprived class or the upper class. They are well conscious of the material being they consume, of the life style they follow and else. That sense of consciousness is a process of ego-formation. They define, locate and formulate a position in the society not only in abstract level but even in the objective and physical.

To the other edge, a predominant influence of the materialistic means falls on the persons who have seen before nothing but an effort of earning for life that is hard-to-do. The persons of such working class have low opportunities of being in touch with the society outsides, the world abroad and others. They are compelled to be concentrated to their profession because a moment ceased to do so invites a huge question of meeting the radical needs of life. Grown amid poorer economic background, they find it tough to afford education or skill-enhancing trainings etc. That is a reason why they can't have chance to earn more by working in a higher level of profession-a double way traffic. Poor economic status offers barriers on the way to get to education or training whereas the deprivation of such skill-developing means one should be clinging to a profession of low income so as to introduce weak economic background.

Thus, the life style, social values, interests, choices are distant different from that of the other class. This class of people have less contact with the upper class ones due to the lack of leisure, so their language gets different from that of the others. The materialistic facilities they exercise have good amount to do with the shape of their inside. They have grown a type of consciousness in them: one of the 'self' and the other of the 'others'. They recognize the others gone ahead in every step of life-struggle; the occupational nature and structure, social dignity and so on. They feel occupation a complex to run since they lack

skill and their own occupation is below that level. There from begins a sense of being dominated in society, they make a consensus of locating themselves at lower class. The complete psychological structure, then, gets circulated with this sense. Even they try not to feel dominated, but as they doubt their outside and inside there is found an answer.

In manipulated terms, the materialistic structure they have been involving in and the territory of thoughts, concepts or ideas is felt to be of lower level compared to the others. Each society has this sort of mechanism because of the unequal distribution of opportunities and property. The prevailing inequality is something that is studied by an individual and associated with one-another, as Bernard Barber claims, "men in society express their evaluations of themselves and one another not only in what they say but in what they do" (121). In his view an indicator of social position is an international one with which people's imitation of their inside in the form of expression can be studied.

Various forms of indicators come to perception in society that do much to separate one from the other class. The indicators are directly proportional to the socio-economic structure of the certain class. In the opinion of Barber, the indicators are like "social intimacy, social preference, symbolic activities". He further adds that "the basic difficulty is that actual behaviour, like verbal expression, is usually the concrete manifestation of several different social variables" (130). Similarly, symbolic activities of the people can be related with the "style of life". Life style is a closely interwoven set of activities and possessions that are correlated with material at base and become symbol of social class membership. As it is quoted in Barber:

Every office and aspect of life was ordered for the gentleman by the fundamental assumption that he was the example, the leader, the governor of the common people and must therefore be distinguished from them. To fill

his place in the hierarchy of this world, he must be better born and better educated, have better manners, wear better clothes (. . .) in short, never forget his essential superiority to the rabble. (138)

The personalities structure of a lower class people differ from that of upper class: their behaviours, attitudes and opinions on a variety of matters. It is not the ultimate truth one perceives in this world but the psychological motif of him or her makes the reality disguise as an object of certain colour looks multi-coloured provided that the lens used to look at through has many colours. Eyes of a man can behold something but the essence or the real image reaches the nerves is well interfered by the attitudes, concepts and consciousness. It requires no argument that single type of world vision looks no longer same to the people who have varying socio-economic and cultural base. Image of one's physical and materialistic life sets in the consciousness on top of that the consciousness of him or hers works a lot to shape concept towards the universe. Hence, the things one feels outside are merely the reflectional pollution of the society or life features into which one got brought up.

To the socio-linguistic aspect of social studies, linguists claim in variety of language in terms of the varying social classes, region, ethnicity and others like that. They stress that people speak differently because they speak the way they do. Traugott and Pratt opine:

(. . .) the adoption of a variety typical of a socio-economic class lower than that into which the speaker was born). This cultural attitude depends for its existence on the knowledge that language varies, and that language varieties can have social meaning. That is they can function as indicators of social identity. (310)

In the view of socio-linguists, language is a part of the various indicators that are conceivable for recognizing the social structure and classes. Classifying the socio-economic

being of the people living in rural and urban area there comes a distinction between them. Traugott and Pratt agree with the condition of varying language because of the rural-urban regional variation. They further write:

Studies have repeatedly shown gradation from one group to another, emphasized by speaker's abilities to switch to varieties used by people in neighbouring communities. It appears that virtually nobody has a range over the whole spectrum, but most people master a continuous part of the spectrum. [...] Even if there is gradation, there is also distinct clustering of features according to class. (319)

These linguists present such linguistic variation especially in the middle-class and working-class people in English community which is much more relevant to this study. They reinforce that the middle class people are more formal and prestige conscious in the case of pronouncing words, they pay well attention to use the sound /r/ whereas the working class people sound informal they "r-fullness" almost rare.

Society is a mass of individuals where stand necessarily the probabilities of varying in linguistic, cultural, attitudinal and behavioural manners. A class of people posses a distinct set of cultural values and beliefs, religious concepts, institutional notions, mental and emotions traits. They have a harmony in the formation of subjectivity and consciousness. There exists a type of ideology when two classes have a contact, such ways of life raise in form of ideological inadequacy. Landing down to the individual practical life, when two persons representing two different socio-economic classes find a state of intersection, that type of ideological inadequacy produces conflict at that level. They bear quite distinct consciousness. The reorganization of the fact of social inequality, rank and socio-cultural constructedness creates a state of lacking mutual understanding. Conflict there grows is nothing but that of a tussel between the contradictory beliefs and manners

the class representatives carry on. The journey of conflict runs past class awareness, class identity and class consciousness.

It can be argued that it is not merely the concept one feels that he or she is affiliated to a certain class so the clash in the way of life starts but every part of the whole life-activities deserve ill-matching relation between the activities of the persons from two mechanisms. Here exists no doubt to conceive that subjective derive of the inter-class members is a cause of inviting conflict in a family, society or state but it is not the only factor that generates conflict. The objective range of social practices root into the subjectivity, the way one does has much conjunctive connection with the psychological mechanism. The inter-class clash is always getting nourishment somewhere from the ego or consciousness or mental zone. All of dos and donts one's issues are nothing beyond the consciousness of the related class or group.

III. Social Protest in *Untouchable*

Untouchables and Social Discrimination

Anand's *Untouchable* is an excellent example of protest literature. His concept of protest can be taken as an example of modern protest which includes scientific consciousness, social philosophy, class struggle and political vision. The spirit of protest in *Untouchable* seems to have been influenced by Marx, Freud and Gandhi. He believes that literary protest comes out of the domain of sentimentality. From the domain of sentimentality, comes the thought process and becomes valid and robust in its range, temper and meaning.

Bakha is the child of modern India. He represents modern world whereas his father, Lakha, represents traditional world. Lakha has a submissive nature towards the caste Hindus but Bakha wants to revolt against them. Bakha disagrees with the view of his father and reacts, "The woman of the big house in the silversmith's gulley threw the bread at me from the fourth storey. I won't go down to the town again. I have done with this job" (70).

This is certainly the voice of vital protest passed by Bakha towards high caste Hindus. The Hindu law of caste system is imposed on untouchables. Bakha feels that the Untouchables themselves have to make their voice audible.

Untouchable opens quietly on an autumn morning and by the time the evening approaches, the author has been able to build round his hero a spiritual crisis of such breadth that it seems to embrace the whole of India. When Bakha is slapped, he is full of despair. Anand writes about his strength and rage in his soul. Anand writes, "The accumulated strength of his giant body glistened in him with the desire for revenge with horror, rage indignation swept over his frame" (55).

The narrator in *Untouchable* describes Bakha's reactions on the priest's misbehaviour to Sohini:

His fist was clenched. His eyes flared wild and red, and his teeth ground between them the challenge: "I could show you what that Brahmin dog has done!" He felt he could kill them all. He looked ruthless, a deadly pale and livid with anger and rage. (54)

The power holder sets the various rules and norms for the smooth holding of their system without any resistance from the oppressed. The worshippers make the rule that a temple can be polluted by a low-caste man coming within sixty-nine yards of it. They make the barriers of superiors and inferiors, touchables and untouchables, and high castes and low castes to protect their weakness against them. Justice for untouchable becomes vain in the world of caste system. Bakha wants to break the conventional mode of his life under which he is born where there would be no discrimination between high and low.

The whole story of the novel revolves round the experiences of Bakha and his work during the day. Bakha tries to show that he is also civilized. He has a habit of sleeping his day clothes on. He tries to copy the British and Indian soldiers:

(. . .) the sharp, bitter wind that blew from the brook at dawn had penetrated to his skin, past the inadequate blanket, through the regulation overcoat, breeches, puttees and ammunition boots of the military uniform that clothed him (. . .). But he didn't mind the cold very much, suffering it willingly because he could sacrifice a good many comforts for the sake of what he called 'fashun', by which he understood the art of wearing trousers, breeches, coat, puttees, boots etc, as worn by the British and Indian soldiers in India.

(2)

Untouchable is a revolutionary novel of protest against the pervading social evil in India. Anand's commitment to reveal the deep-rooted social malice in the Indian society made him to create Bakha. He had shown the youth's unique sensitiveness against the people of the upper caste who thought merely touching him is a degradation.

Untouchability is the strongest racist phenomenon in the world. In Indian society, people who work in ignominious, polluting and unclean occupations, are seen as polluting people, and therefore considered as untouchable. The untouchables have almost no rights in the society. Untouchables have been exploited by the high caste Hindus. They have to live under the rules and laws imposed by the high caste Hindu, Brahmins and temple priests. They are segregated from rural community, treated as lepers, most contemptuously. Untouchable people are so much dominated in the society that even they can't take water from well, rivers and streams. They have no chances to drink water from these sources until high caste or touchables people provide them. If they bring out water from the well and ponds, high caste people believe it as polluted water. So-called high caste people don't like to drink that water which is used by the low caste people. Anand presents these great problems in *Untouchable* as follows:

The outcastes were not allowed to mount the platform surrounding the well, because if they were ever to draw water from it, the Hindus of the three upper castes would consider the water polluted. Nor were they allowed access to the near-by brooks as their use of it would contaminate the stream. They had no well. (14)

These lines clarify that untouchables are dominated so badly that they can't even use stream, ponds, and river to drink and bring the water. It is the crucial social problem.

Bakha, an untouchable boy and a member of a low caste family, proceeds to his task of cleaning the public latrines and then to sweep the market road and temple courtyard.

Near the gates of the town, he buys an anna's worth of cigarettes from the betel-leaf-seller to gratify his desire for smoking:

He halted suddenly, and facing the shopkeeper with great humility, joined his hands and begged to know where he could put a coin to pay for a pocket of 'Red-Lamp'. The shopkeeper pointed to a spot on the board near him. Bakha put his anna there. The betel-leaf-seller dashed some water over it from the jug with which he sprinkled the betel leaves now and then. Having thus purified it he picked up the nickel piece and threw it into counter. Then he flung a packet of 'Red-Lamp' cigarettes at Bakha, as a butcher might throw a bone to an insistent dog sniffing round the corner of his shop. (33-34)

There cannot be contact between an untouchable and a touchable, a member of the high caste. High caste become defiled and has to immerse or wash themselves with water to be purified in strict societies if they have direct contact with untouchables. If an untouchable enters a house and touches things of the upper class people, they wash or clean the places where the untouchables touch and step. The untouchables who touch the high caste people are either beaten or scolded severely:

(. . .) 'You eater of your masters', she shouted, 'may the vessel of your life never float in the sea of existence! May you perish and die! You have defiled my house! Go! Get up, get up! You eater of your masters! Why didn't you shout if you wanted food? Is this your father's house that you come and rest here?' (63)

These above lines clarify that low caste people have no chance to stay and even to touch the house. Some higher hierarchical jats also have servants whose job is to go or walk before

the high jats' members and announce their coming in the streets and clear the street not letting untouchable people come.

The orthodox Hindus treat anyone who works in any kind of polluting job as untouchable and do not have any contact with them. According to orthodox rules, any one who does not belong to Brahamans, Kshyatriya and Vaisya are untouchables. According to religion, Brahman is favourable to god. The killing of a Brahamana is regarded as one of the vilest crimes. In the Indian society, people protect the Brahamans by performing four duties by showing respect, liberality, and acknowledgement and by granting him security against capital punishment.

The Brahamana is a divine caste. The mouth of a Brahamana is regarded as holy as the sacred sacrificial fire where oblations are offered to Gods. Brahamana advises the king in important social, political and religious issues and shows the monarch the way to make the policy of government. The priest surrounds and protects the king with his powers just as the ocean girdles the earth, the subjects of the king live in perfect harmony and devote to him who is guided by a wise priest.

The existing socio-cultural milieu of the Dalits is bound to reflect on their poor overall economic well-being. The plights of Dalit over the year resulted in poor social, demographic and health indicators. Household economy was mostly dependent on others, which hampered their access to education, better opportunities and suitable employment etc. Moreover, the livelihoods of Dalits for a substantially longer period of time in the history depended upon the job performed in hygienically sub-standard environments. Therefore, their poor living conditions were again contributing them to be in discriminatory cultural and religious states.

Most of the social communities are suffering from caste system. Indian society still believes that the sweeper is worse than a slave, for the slave may change his master and his

duties and may even become free but the sweeper is bound for ever, born into a state from which he cannot escape and where he is excluded from social intercourse himself, he pollutes others when he touches them. The upper caste purify themselves, rearrange their plans for day. Thus he is a disquieting as well as disgusting object to the orthodox as he walks along the public roads and it is his duty to call out and warn them that he is coming.

One day, Bakha, the sweeper, touches a Brahmana in a village and the great catastrophe occurs:

“Keep away, keep away”, said the Babu, “don't come riding on at me. Do you want to have another bath this morning? The Hakim Sahib has to attend to us people who go to offices first, and there are so many of us waiting. You have nothing to do all day. Come another time or wait.” (71)

People are divided according to their functions. Bakha is a handsome, physically fit boy but according to his work, high caste people don't like to touch him. If untouchable touch the high caste people, they have to take bath to purify themselves. Untouchable feel inferior in the society only because of the caste and their work. So, the cause of social injustice, corruption, loss of self identity of lower caste people in Indian society is caused by caste system. These downtrodden people have no chance to enter the temple although they are also human beings. Socially they are hated by high caste people, reflecting social injustice and corruption of humanity. The following lines show these ideas:

‘There is no chance of seeing anything if I stand here’, he mused ‘I should go and look’. But he had not the courage to go. He felt weak. He realized that an untouchable going into a temple polluted its past purification. His father would be angry if he knew that he had not done any work this morning. Somebody might come and see him roaming about and think he was thief. (49)

Caste system doesn't give opportunity to the lower caste people to enter a temple. People think that high caste people do good things, and as such they have right to worship but low caste people do bad things so they are not allowed to enter the temple:

A temple can be polluted according to the holy book by a low-caste man coming within sixty-nine yards of it, and here he was actually on the steps, at the door. We are ruined. we will need to have a sacrificial fire in order to purify ourselves and our shrines. (35)

These ideas are sufficient to clarify the caste backwardness and how one suffers from it. The hero of the novel faces different problems. He can't get anything to eat therefore he goes to ask for food, works in different houses, but he always gets abuses. They are not allowed to stay even outside of the house. High caste people feel that the house is defiled by them. They can't get love and affection in society, and they develop bad habits like, smoking, drinking, this means that they lose their self identity gradually.

They always abuse us because we are sweepers, because we touch dung. They hate dung, I hate it too. That's why I came here. I was tired of working on the latrines everyday. That's why they don't touch us, the high castes (. . .) They don't mind touching us, the Mohammedans and the Sahibs. It is only the Hindus, and the outcastes who are not sweepers. For them I am a sweeper, sweeper- untouchable! Untouchable! Untouchable! That's the word! Untouchable! I am an untouchable! (43)

The high caste people call Bakha as swine dog of son, son of bitch. A crowd is gathered there and treats Bakha badly with warning. And Bakha begs for the Hindu's forgiveness and promises to be more careful in the future but they do resent while the crowd merely stare and frighten Bakha. They kick Bakha one by one. It is after all a good deal of fuss that Bakha is allowed to go. Tears roll in Bakha's eyes and he feels most

miserable at this time. He is regarded as an untouchable and now in his mind he repeats the word "Untouchable" several times because he knows about the bad aspects of low caste.

Untouchables versus Caste Hindus

The caste discrimination divides the society into two classes; the caste Hindus and the outcaste untouchables. And the protest of subordinate class arises in a conflicting manner. The novel *Untouchable* depicts a conflict between these classes. Though the conflict here is not directly between proletariats and their masters, it arises between the outcastes and the caste Hindus as they represent two classes in the society. The conflict arises because of the caste system of Hindu society.

The movement of the outcaste people towards modernity is vividly noticed throughout the novel. Untouchables are compared with caste Hindus. Even though some of the high caste people are dirty, they are supposed to be cleaned and civilized. If an untouchable has made a mistake, he is regarded to be irrational and punished for it. Bakha, an untouchable boy, is punished because he happens to touch a high caste Hindu. On the other hand, Pundit Kali Nath, one of the priests in the Hindu temple in the town, tries to molest Sohini, an untouchable girl, but he is highly respected in the society. And surprisingly, he blames Sohini that she has polluted him:

'But I . . . I . . . shouted the lanky priest historically and never finished his sentence. The crowd on the temple steps believed that he had suffered most terribly and sympathised, for it had seen sweeper boy rush past him. They didn't ask about the way he had been polluted. They didn't know the story that Sohini told Bakha at the door of the courtyard with sobs and tears. (53)

Nobody would know that a priest can fall into such low behaviour. But more of it, nobody would believe it. Even Lakha, Bakha's father, would not believe it. Lakha could not believe that a priest, any priest could seduce a girl who belongs to the low caste family.

This is how a high caste Hindu is evaluated. But the Untouchables are always regarded to be dirt in the eyes of caste Hindus. Even the untouchables themselves think that caste Hindus are superiors to them.

The Narrator shows the high caste Hindus' nature and the Untouchables' reactions to it. The high caste Hindu scholars have corrupted the minds of outcastes in such a limit that an untouchable could hardly think a caste Hindu as a savage and unkind. Lakha is an example of it. The conversation between Bakha and Lakha proves it:

'He might have killed me,' Bakha commented. 'No, no,' said Lakha. 'They are really kind. We must realize that it is religion which prevents them from touching us.' He had never throughout his narrative renounced his deep rooted sense of inferiority and the docile acceptance of the laws of fate. (74)

The narrator puts the strong opinion that such rigid system imposed on the low caste people should be dismantled. The attitude of the high caste people towards the outcastes is the very cause of the breakdown of the relationship between them. For example, Bakha carries Babu's little son who is wounded with the cricket ball to the Babu's house. Bakha does good deed but he receives the reward of abusive words from the Babu's wife:

Bakha handed over the child, and afraid, humble, silent as a ghost, withdrew. [...] Of course, I polluted the child. I couldn't help doing so. I knew my touch would pollute him. But it was impossible not to pick him up. He was dazed, the poor little thing. And she abused me. I only get abused and derision wherever I go. (106-07)

The influences of the caste system are still working upon them. The memory of the rigid caste system is still haunting India. Bakha represents the whole class of his people.

Hindu caste system does not allow untouchables to read and write. Bakha is an untouchable. Bakha wants to study but the education system is not for him. Bakha thinks,

"How nice it must be to be able to read and write! One could read papers after having been to school" (30). Bakha has understood the importance of education. He further thinks, "One could talk to the Sahibs. One wouldn't have to run to the scribe every time a letter comes. And one wouldn't have to pay him to have one's letters written" (30).

Bakha could not go to school. Masters would not teach the outcaste children. But he does not agree with the view that outcastes should not touch the books. This concept is imposed upon them by the caste Hindus. But Bakha is eager to feel to be educated and a sudden impulse comes on him to ask the Babu's son to teach him:

'Babu Ji,' he said, addressing the elder boy, 'In what class are you now?' 'In the fifth class,' the boy answered. 'Surely now you know enough to teach'.
'Yes,' the boy replied. 'Then, do you think it will be too much trouble for you to give me a lesson a day?' Seeing the boy hesitate, he added: 'I shall pay you of it.' (31)

Outcastes are deprived of education in the caste system. Ilaiah highly says that "Hinduism with its Brahmins hold prohibited education to the untouchables. The babu's sons do not get much pocket money. Their parents were thrifty and considered, perhaps rightly, that a child should not eat irregularly, as the low caste boy did," buying things in the bazaar" (31).

What outcaste children learn about themselves is nothing new. The sources of knowledge are nothing except their own experiences in the life. They are deprived of formal education. The knowledge they learn by hearing is too constructed knowledge from the high caste Hindus. Bakha tries to show that he is civilized. We can take an example of his style of drinking tea. Bakha drinks tea with a small sip because the English does so. He does not, as his father does, blow on the tea to cool it. "This was another of the things he had learnt at the British barracks from the Tummies" (24). Bakha tells his father that Sahibs

don't drink like that. The Indians were heavily influenced by the Britishers. These examples show Bakha's will to be like Sahibs and the high class people. The outcastes children are grown in such an environment that they are forced to compare their behaviour with that of British and high class people.

The high caste people think they are clean and pure in comparison with the outcaste people. Anand in *Untouchable* perfectly sketches the scene when Bakha happens to touch a caste Hindu in the market place:

'Keep to the side of the road, you, low-caste Vermin!' he suddenly heard someone shouting at him. 'Why don't you call, you swine, and announce your approach! Do you know you have touched me and defiled me, you cockeyed son of bow-legged scorpion! Now I will have to go and take a bath to purify myself. And it was a new dhoti and shirt I put on this morning!' (. . .) 'You swine, you dog, why didn't you shout and warn me of your approach!' He shouted as he met Bakha's eyes. 'Don't you know, you brute, that you must not touch me!' (38).

This is the Brahminical notion. Caste Hindus neglect the vast number of untouchables. The high caste people themselves are innocent about their own respect of 'touching' the dirty bull. The narrator in *Untouchable* further describes:

A huge, big-humped, small horned, spotted old Brahaminee bull was ruminating with half- closed eyes near him. The stink from its mouth as it belched, strangely unlike any odour which had assaulted Bakha's nostrils that day, was nauseating. And the liquid dung which the bull had exerted and which Bakha knew it was his duty to sweep off sickened him. But presently he saw a well- dressed wrinkled old Hindu, wearing, like a rich man, a Muslim scarf over his left shoulder, advance to the place where the bull was

enjoying its siesta and touch the animal with his forefingers. That was a Hindu custom, Bakha knew. (44-45)

The consideration of caste Hindus as superiors is further questioned through the contrast of a Brahmin who was doing a scavenger's work in order to teach the Gandhi's ashram scavenger cleanliness. Gandhi in his speech says:

I love scavenging. In my ashram an eighteen-year-old Brahmin lad is doing scavenger's work, in order to teach the ashram scavenger cleanliness. The lad is no reformer. He was born and bred in orthodoxy. He is a regular reader of the Gita and faithfully says his prayers. (138)

The narrator, thus, highlights the fact that the relationship between the untouchables and the caste Hindus is conflicting, mainly because of the high caste Hindus' concept of themselves as being the 'superiors'. In the notion of writers and critiques, the hierarchical words for mapping the division of the untouchables must be subverted.

The division of the society in the name of touchable and untouchable should be recorded mainly in the words of history. All are equal in this world. Poet Iqbal Nath Sarahar is right who says,

Some of us are born with big heads, some with small, some with more potential physical strength, some with less. (. . .) But essentially, that is to say humanly, all men are equal "Take a ploughman from the plough, wash off his dirt, and he is fit to rule a kingdom" is an Indian proverb. (145)

A Proletariat Rebellion

The protest arises because of the two opposite groups in the society. Elites try to dominate and exploit oppressed groups. The writers of pre-and post-independent India have vigorously attempted for making the autonomous identity of the oppressed and exploited class. Mulk Raj Anand, among his contemporaries, sets out to subvert the barriers and

boundaries created by the high class people. Anand in *Untouchable* makes his character protest against the fixed and pre-determined values and patterns existing in the society. Anand believes that significant values emerge when protest conflicts with actual circumstances prevailing in a period. It is in that sense that protest is an anti-dogma. If protest is used for propagating a dogma, it is rendered useless for society as well as literature. Thus, it is against the very nature of protest if anyone supports dogmatism.

Anand's *Untouchable* is written with the purpose to arouse the social conscience to create in the affluent and powerful people's sense of responsibility towards the victims of injustice and exploitation. Anand has seen the misery, the wretchedness and the squalor of the lower classes of Hindu society. And his conscience was rebelled against the injustice being done to them. This novel protests against the conditions of low caste people, which prevailed in the days when it was written. And of course, the condition of untouchables has greatly impressed in India since then. *Untouchable* must have a share in bringing about the improvement. A strong belief in the dignity of man and equality of all men, Anand is naturally shocked by the inhuman way the untouchable are treated by those that belong to superior castes specially the Brahmins or so called "twice-born". He suggested that they can be freed from shackles of killing orthodoxy and tradition.

An evaluation of Anand's *Untouchable* shows that it is one of the best written works of protest literature. The novelist shows passionate concern to the plight of untouchables whose poverty, squalor and backwardness are coupled with gross ignorance and the cruelties of social caste system. This novel makes him a forerunner of protest literature. He has portrayed the true picture of the caste discrimination in Hindu dominated Indian society, especially of the untouchables and low-caste people. He has shown a great need to reform and revitalize the traditional Hindu caste system with the growing values of modern age. Finally, it can be said that he has tried his best in sensitizing the horror of caste

discrimination and sufferings of untouchables which is the most poisonous disease of Hindu society. He has really displayed the penetrating insights into the grim picture of Indian life within the rigid caste system.

Bakha is a leading character of protest through the novel *Untouchable*. Anand in *Untouchable* describes the rebellious nature of Bakha as:

He resolved to tighten himself. He gnashed his teeth. A warmth rose to his ears. He felt a quickening in his blood. Then came the sweep of his ever-recurring emotions. He boiled with rage. 'horrible, horrible', his soul seemed to cry out within him. He felt the most excruciating mental pain he had ever felt in his body. He shivered. His broad, impassive face was pale with hostility. (89)

Bakha happens to break the laws of the ancient Indian caste system by touching a caste Hindu named Lallaji and is punished for the sin he has done unknowingly. Lallaji says that he has been defiled by the nearness of the sweeper boy, Bakha, and rebukes sternly for not announcing his approach. Lallaji abuses Bakha calling him 'swine' and 'a cockeyed son of a bow-legged scorpion'. Lallaji says that he has to go and take a bath to purify himself. Bakha is overcome by a sense of humility and servility. Now Bakha feels a smouldering rage in his soul. The narrator in *Untouchable* further writes:

His feelings would rise like spurts of smoke of a half-smothered fire, in fitful, unbalanced jerks when the recollection of some abuse or rebuke he had suffered kindled a spark in the ashes of remorse inside him. And in the smoky atmosphere of his mind arose dim ghosts of forms peopling the scene he had been through [...] why was all this?' He asked himself in the soundless speech of cells receiving and transmitting emotions, which was his

usual way of communicating with himself. Why was all this fuss? Why was I so humble? I could have struck him.' (42)

There is always struggle in the society- the struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed. The oppressed always try to cross the boundaries imposed on them and the oppressor punish them for the breaking of the rules and laws which in fact lacks legality. Organizational patterns are used to articulate rebellion against the power of state, or the justice of the caste or tribal *panchayat* to reject an illegitimate legality by Anand.

Bakha again breaks the laws of caste system when he is overcome with the desire to see the temple gods and goddess. He moves towards the step of the temple but is stopped to move forward with the cries of 'polluted, polluted' rung through the air. But Bakha is not only the person who breaks the laws of caste system. One of the priests in the temple also breaks the Hindu laws of caste system created by himself. Sohini tells her brother, Bakha, pointing to the priest, "that man, that man, [...] that man made suggestions to me. When I was cleaning the lavatory of his house there. And when I screamed, he came out shouting that he had been defiled" (53).

Untouchables are treated unjustly by caste Hindus, Anand gives an impression that within the present social structure, the problems can be solved with the active help of the high caste people. It can be done by changing people's attitude and hearts as all men are not created equal in a society ordered in a hierarchy of castes. Bakha at first, seems to believe the view that their problems could be solved by changing high caste people's hearts. But Bakha feels insulted time and again. The narrator in *Untouchable* further describes:

He felt dejected, utterly miserable. Was the pleasure of Charat Singh's generosity only to be enjoyed for half an hour? [...] He loved the child. He had been very sorry when Chota refused to let him join the game. Then why

should the boy's mother abuse him when he had tried to be kind? She hadn't even let him tell her how it all happened. (106-07)

Bakha is sensitive about the problem he is facing and makes efforts for solution. He listens to Gandhi's speech in Golbagh where Gandhi puts forth the solution of untouchability:

They should now cease to accept leavings from the plates of high-caste Hindus, however clean they may be represented to be. They should receive grain only-good, sound grain, not rotten grain, -and that too, only if it is courteously offered. If they are able to do all that I have asked them to do, they will secure their emancipation. (139)

This method of protest is somehow related with non-violence struggle. And that is more to Bakha's liking.

Anand becomes passionate for justice against the old fixtures of non-human discrimination against untouchables. And his passion becomes protest in his novel, *Untouchable*, which has been called proto-type of the protest in the new world. It has emerged from the caste system, supposedly ordained by the supreme god. But god is created by Brahmin who creates, control, and operates caste laws. It is the low caste people that suffer. The high caste never think of the low caste. In the eyes of subaltern, this structure must be subverted. If there is god, he cannot be as harsh as a caste Hindu. Instead, he would be the symbol of equality for all human being. He could not impose the evils such as untouchability upon his subjects:

The fact that we address God as "the purifier of the polluted souls" makes it a sin to regard anyone born in Hinduism as polluted- it is satanic to do so. I have never been tired of repeating that it is a great sin. I do not say that this

thing crystallized in me at the age of twelve, but I do say that I did then regard untouchability as a sin. (37)

The protest of the principal character with his hopeful venture in freedom is presented in the novel. It is realistic and expressionist drama of struggle between the fictional ambitions of hero to emerge from the depths of degradation. The new hero, the anti-hero is deliberately uplifted into a classical world and presented in allegory in modern fiction. Bakha is kept within the framework of personal experience in a time bound world. He may become a symbol of struggle and may later appear as a new mythical figure representing new generation and urging for freedom. Bakha is a new hero struggling at the dawn. The narrator states:

Before now, Bakha had often borne the brunt of his misery with a resigned air of fatalism. He had quietly suffered his father's abuse and satire, and even occasional beatings with a calm that betokened his intense docility and gentleness. He would never lift his head, or his hand, to defend himself against anyone. Today, however, he had more than enough. The spirit of fire which lay buried in the mass of his flesh had ignited this morning and lay smouldering. A little more fuel and it flared up like a wild flame. (109)

Bakha vehemently protests the injustice imposed upon untouchables. However, the protest is always internal and uttered with a silent voice. The narrator further describes:

All the accumulated fury of the morning was Bakha's soul and the rage of his fresh insult. [...] A subtle heart was mounting from his spine, drying the blood in his body and shrinking his face. 'I wish that hadn't happened at the temple, 'he said to himself. 'Then Sohini would have come for the bread. Why did I come to the lane?' he moved in a sort of trance. Black and filthy, yet orderly with that dignity and decorum which his exotic dress gave him,

he was possessed by a curious free. 'I shouldn't have picked up that bread from the pavement,' he said, and sighed. That seemed to relax him. (65)

Thus, the reactions of the protagonist against the dominating and humiliating behaviours of caste Hindus are presented in the form of emotions. Thus protagonist in *Untouchable* protests caste Hindus' misbehaviours from the inner level of his mind that is related with sentimentality. Sentimentality is the initial process of philosophy that scratches the road to the emancipation and freedom. Thus, the protest of the protagonist is hidden in the domain of his emotion.

Besides all pricks and pinches, the novel ends hopefully when Bakha is delighted to know the introduction of machine, which clears dung and brings a lot of changes in Bakha and his life. Both the Mahatma and the young poet create in Bakha a new desire to know more about the path to his salvation. Anand concludes the novel *Untouchable* with a note of faith and idealism. As Bakha returns home his mind is raised with the hope that soon the flush system would come then the sweepers can be free from the stigma of untouchability and assume the dignity of status that is their right as useful members of a casteless and classless society. The manifest plea in the novel is for the total abolition of untouchability. Bakha fervently hopes for the dawn to the nature of his work and his revelence in the society without the label of 'untouchable'.

IV. Conclusion

The Brahmins and the priests have filled their discourse with the ethos of religious power. They have developed the heterogeneous images of the low caste untouchables and outcaste people. The untouchables have been pictured as dirt, squalor, unclean; hence unable to sustain their own lives by themselves. The need of caste system and the subjectivity of religious books putting the brahimincal values always on the centre have marginalized the untouchables. There has been no existence of the outcastes people in the society of the caste Hindus. The superiority of the Brahmins and priests has been the central motif of the religious books and writings.

The Indian writers in English writing from the socialist perspective have tried to subvert this notion of superiority of the high caste Hindus. They have tried to dismantle all types of stereotypical images of the untouchables that have been generated by the high caste Hindus and the temple priests in the traditional Hindu society. The Indian writers are making various efforts to re-study and re-write the history of marginalized people. The reverse discourses to the high caste Hindus' images have been produced to project the autonomous identity of the outcaste people. The subjectivity of writing for the Indian writers has been the lower class people, their misery, exploitation and the protest. The writers have been creating a place of their discourses in the world of literature. The efforts of Indian writers have been significant in making the reality of untouchables known to the world. The Indian writers focus their writings on the contradictions and complexities faced by untouchables.

Mulk Raj Anand attacks the fossilized systems of society with the hostility of a modern rebellion hero and modernity as an alternative to the traditional ways of life. The narrator in *Untouchable* states:

Well, we must destroy caste, we must destroy the inequalities of birth and unalterable vocations. We must recognize an equality of rights, privileges and opportunities for everyone. The Mahatma didn't say so, but the legal and sociological basis of caste giving been broken down by the British-Indian penal code, which recognizes the rights of every man before a court, caste is now mainly governed by profession. When the sweepers change their profession, they will no longer remain Untouchables. And they can do that soon, for the first thing we will do when we accept the machine, will be to introduce the machine which clears dung without anyone having to handle it- the flush system. Then the sweepers can be free from the stigma of untouchability and assume the dignity of status that is their right as useful members of a casteless and classless society. (145-46)

Untouchable emerges as the authentic fictional voice of the mute sufferers and a powerful indicator of rebellion against of all forms of exploitation.

Untouchable is an attempt to examine the Indian society in the light of caste discrimination. Caste discrimination is the central point of the novel through which the protest arises. And the Marxist perspective is a distinctive trait of protest literature of the colonial world of which Anand is distinguished pioneer.

Untouchability, exploitation, caste discrimination, protest and the question of emancipation are the themes of the novel. Bakha's heroism reveals an internal conflict within him between two parallel attitudes: devotion to a cause and readiness for action. Broadly speaking, Bakha wants the Indian untouchables to shake off the slavery off the untouchables and achieve the emancipation.

At first, the protagonist has been depicted as a simple, innocent, direct in his responses, and he is engaged in a straight conformation with society. He is a victim and

accepts sufferings with meek submission. He does not take a conscious and creative role in changing his destiny. Pessimism envelops his life in the middle of the novel, after the complex, profound and the man of destiny. The vivid drama of his inner feelings shows human mind in all its contradictions. The mature hero always has been engaged in an inner struggle to sort out right and wrong. Again, in the third and final phase the hero has been developed into a symbolic figure. He becomes a viable symbol of India's New Age. This development of character is an indication of the process of maturing as a vital protester. Thus Anand's *Untouchable* shows the hero's gradual growth from the simplicity and directness to the depth and complexity and a rebellion.

The novel is an excellent example of protest literature. The spirit of protest can be taken as an example of modern protest which includes the caste consciousness. Anand takes protest as something as an emotional outburst. Anand makes his character to protest against the fixed patterns of caste system existing in the society. Bakha, the protagonist in *Untouchable*, seeks to explore new values rooted in realities. Bakha always tries to cross the boundaries imposed on him. He happens to break the laws of ancient caste system by touching caste Hindus. He asks the question to himself through interior monologue that does not remain within himself but is put forth towards the Hindu society. He challenges the society to seek the answer of his questions of the exploitation and caste discrimination being done to the untouchables.

Bakha breaks the caste laws frequently. He tries to enter into the temple where the untouchables are prohibited to enter. He defies the Hindu rules made by caste Hindus. He wants to revolt by breaking traditional mode of caste system and wants to create a society where there would be no caste barrier.

Bakha's journey from the morning to the end of the day is a journey for the solution of the problems being faced by his kind. He becomes the leading figure to rebel against the

old Hindu caste system. He tries to convince his father about the injustice of caste system. Bakha tells it to his friend Ram Charan and Chota. Then Bakha takes part in the speech by Gandhi in Golbagh. Thus the development of the story in the novel shows Bakha as an active hero and his wish to create a new classless, casteless society.

Untouchable shows the sufferings of downtrodden class imposed by the elite class cruelty. The novel shows a firm belief that by observing human values and creating awareness among all, many of the problems faced by the untouchables in existing social system can be solved. Bakha is forced to visit the town which is full of evils of caste discrimination and which needs immediate social reformations and the cause of these evils are the Brahminical orthodoxies. What strikes the reader of this novel is Anand's ability to see the world through the untouchables' eyes by exposing its cruel face.

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