

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Tragedy of Ananta due to a Cultural Paradox in Anand's *The Big Heart*.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Tribhuvan University, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree of Master of Arts in English

by

Shankar Hamal

Central Department of English

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The thesis entitled Tragedy of Ananta due to a Cultural Paradox in Anand's *The Big Heart* by Mr. Shankar Hamal has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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ABSTRACT

The present research work is a cultural study. It mainly focuses upon the cultural conflict caused by the clash between traditional and progressive impulses of culture which are inherent within the fictional universe of the novel. It analyses how people like the thathiar brotherhood are guided by traditional impulse of culture to assert native tradition and convention as their way of life while simultaneously resisting change. But people like Ananta, guided by the progressive impulse, strive for reformation and change. This conflict in the name of culture creates contradiction and confusion about the meaning of the term culture itself, leading to a cultural paradox. This very conflict or cultural paradox is the main reason that leads to the death of Ananta, the main protagonist of the novel. He is killed not because of anything else but because of thathiar brotherhood's resistance to change and development that he strives for.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the distinguished, humanist, progressive and prolific writers of Indian English literature. He has established his reputation as a great essayist, short-story writer, novelist and thinker not only in India but also all over the world. While talking about Indian English literature or fiction the name of the three writers, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand, comes together. Though they belong to the same period, their writing differs because R.K. Narayan writes about middle class people living in a fictional place called 'Malgudi' with a light irony and humor, and Raja Rao mostly depicts the spiritual life of Indian people. As opposed to these representations, Anand writes of poverty and misery faced, oftenly the lower class subjects. Anand, through his writing, plays the role of a catalyst for changes in Indian society swallowed by restraints, conservatism and traditions.

As a writer, his motto is to free human being from all types of boundaries by delineating the real problems of society, instructing people and awakening them from the quagmire of evils. Here, R.K. Dhawan's views concerning Anand seem to be quite right. "Anand like Lawrence, Gorky and Eric Gill believes that the work of a genuine creative writer is inspired by a mission. He seems to be in full agreement with Arnold's dictum that literature at bottom is the criticism of life" (9). Anand, a writer of common and down-trodden people, writes about the common people's suffering, poverty, miseries and injustice perpetuated on them by the so called rich and civilized people. From this perspective, Saroj Cowasjee's claim "Anand wrote of the people, for the people as a man of the people" (33) remains a significant one. Anand, through his writing, wants to disrupt the age-old blind superstitious beliefs, orthodoxy dogmas and conservative value system prevailing in the society; ideas and

beliefs which the traditionalists consider as the values of past. He shows utter disgust towards all sorts of social evils and disapproves of them.

Anand's disapproval of the social dogmatism and the status quo expresses his zeal for social change and progress. His novels often portray the major characters as protesting and rebelling against the worn-out social stratifications, socio-cultural values and dogmatic beliefs prevailing in the society. Munoo in *Coolie*, Bakha in *Untouchable*, Gauri in *The Old Woman and the Cow*, Lalu in *The Trilogy* are fighting for justice, equality, reformation and change; characters who aim to uproot the narrowly confined paradigm of tradition. Ananta, a protagonist of *The Big Heart*, is portrayed as an ardent supporter of the modernity, a man who is struggling against the staticity of culture which the traditionalists believe as its prime value. He has immense faith upon the value of revolution as can also be seen in the following self assertions, "I want to emphasize the revolutionary aspect of art, I mean the way in which it can change life" (Apology 131). His vision of social change, however get chocked under the grip of the conventions and laws of so called tradition. The tradition remains as a main barrier to the change and freedom and the traditionalists are so conservative that they reject his ideas and vision of social reformation, and hinder and trouble him: "I was disturbed by the mendacity, the ignorance and superstition of our traditionally bounded coppersmith brotherhood" (Apology 42).

Anand, depicting the real picture of society, arises the social consciousness among the people, which helps them to be involved in a struggle, and the struggle as such liberates a society and human being crumbling the foundation of parochial tradition. He emphasizes upon struggle for the renewal of dead socio-cultural values and the establishment of a new society with prosperity, peace, love, justice and freedom. His vision of social change through struggle can be noted in the claim he

makes in *Apology for Heroism*, "I believe in the struggle-the struggle of men to free themselves and to extend freedom to others to sustain the ever expanding areas of consciousness, to make man truly human" (23). He is of the opinion that people in society should be made aware about their social being and social malpractices that oppress them. It is only then that they will be ready to kindle the fire of social revolution and become truly human.

Anand is a multidimensional personality. He combines in himself the virtues of a humanist, rebel, leader of men, patriot, social worker, and active organizer. Because of this, some critics have charged Anand as being a propagandist due to his inclination towards the socialism, and his view that literature should be written with a social aim rather than just for arts sake. He believes further that literature should not be guided with the sole purpose of giving pleasure to the people, and asserts writer's cardinal responsibility in the process of changing society. The responsibility of the writer should be, he argues, "to help men take part in the drama of revolt from which emerges the new society, and to communicate his unique and original vision of life to other people, to intensify their awareness by way of confirming and heightening their own observation"(135). For such reasons, he is also blamed sometimes as being a communist. However, rather than labeling him as a communist or Marxist, in my view, he should be called a progressive writer who wants to bring positive changes in the society. P.C. Bhattacharya appropriately comments in this regard:

He is a progressive, with all the letters in block capital and his main concern is man. He lives severely alone, does not believe in the Hindu doctrine of Karma, and has no laborious psychological preoccupation. He is also not really committed to Marxism and does not perch class antagonism. (qtd. in Gautam 197)

P.C. Bhattacharya has touched upon Anand's disregard towards Hindu doctrines as well as religious norms. Anand, as a progressive writer, is against all religious notions and ideologies, which thrive on blind faith and orthodox values of the conservative society. Concerning of his subject matters, Sunaina Singh argues, "Anand's choice of subjects and mode of treatment mark him off as an anti-status quo writer profoundly involved with the urge for dethroning false Gods, and envision the lowliest and the lost as the future heroes of nascent India" (131). Thus, he is compared with Zola, and Balzac, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, Yaspal and Premchand because of his progressive views.

Anand's vision as a writer is mainly shaped and influenced by the phases that he spent at various locations: the early years in India, 1905-1925, the years abroad, 1925-1945; and the later years in India. He was born in 1905 in a middle class, North Indian, Hindu family of hereditary coppersmiths— a Kshatriya sub-caste. He was brought up till five years of age by a superficial 'modern' father and a traditional mother on the ancient stories from the epics and the Shastras. His father Lal Chand was a traditional coppersmith who later, opposing a 'strong willed' mother, left his hereditary occupation to attend school, learn English, take a British Military examination, and join 38 Dogra Regiment of the British Indian Army, where he became a head clerk. Then he (Anand) was expelled from the charmed circle of his family into the cold atmosphere of the school.

At that time western education was considered an 'open sesame' for respectable government jobs, and was therefore held as the standard of achievement in Indian middle class culture. Lal Chand, who dreamt of his son one day becoming a member of the Indian civil service, pursued his dream by sending his son to a British Indian school where Anand was exposed to an alien language, thought and alien

culture. British Indian Schools were considered by the middle class parent's as prestigious, and yet the western language and cultural values were not accepted whole heartedly at home. Similarly, school authorities often showed ambivalences towards the native culture. Lal Chand, for his part, wanted to mould Anand in his own vision somewhat disregarding his own cultural norms because "security and status: defined by new standards of achievement, were his sole commitment". (Bald 99). He was literate and used to read English novels.

In contrast to Lal Chand, Anand's mother, Ishwar Kaur, was an illiterate woman who came from a peasant family background. Anand's mother deeply believed in every type of legend, mythology and folk tale and was a woman of religious tolerance. Premila Paul writes, "she had a deep, though incongruous, faith in such diverse gods and goddess as Krishna, Christ, Guru Nanak and Aga Khan. . ." (2) Besides, she was well versed in traditional song and when Anand was young, she fed him while singing sweet songs. Anand was, thus, brought up in a family living in contradictions because he, on the one hand, was inspired by his father who wanted him pass the exam and secure a government job, on the other hand he was fed conventional and traditional thought by mother. Such type of upbringing in contradictory and confusing world had a profound impact in nourishing anand's literary career.

Anand got his early education in cantonment school. He was unsatisfied with the education provided by the British rulers. In his own words "the education imported in these schools was imitative, giving very little idea of Indian tradition, but mainly bastardized version of English curricula in English with particular emphasis on English history, ideas, forms and institutions. . ." (Apology 33) A latter perspective shows Anand as reflecting that he was also not satisfied with the situation

of his childhood because of an absence of an appropriate environment that might have helped him prepare towards his future

However, by the time he was fourteen, he was delving into Shakespeare, Dickens and Thackeray. Then, in 1921 he entered university where he had a much wider choice of books. Though, like most students in Indian Universities, he read the Romantic poets, from the start he showed a predilection for continental writers such as Goethe, Mazzini, Proudhon, Gorki and Marx. After three years, he completed his B.A. degree from Khalsa college, Amritsar. Then, he went to England for his further education with his mother's support. When he reached England, he found it difficult to understand the courses of the University because of the lack of appropriate base for the higher education in India. As time went, however, his studies progressed and he felt more confident. In the fall of 1925, Anand started his research on the thought of Locke, Hume, Berkeley and Russell at University College, London under the supervision of the Kantian Scholar and realist G. Dawes Hicks. He attended lectures of professors G.E. Moore, C.D. Broad and S. Kadhakrishnan with full of enthusiasm. After getting his doctoral degree, he did not return to India immediately but remained in England for some years.

During his long period of stay in England, he read James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Arthur Rimband's *Les Illuminations* and D.H. Lawrence's novels. He met T.S. Eliot and began writing short notes on books for Eliot's *Criterion*. Besides all this, he was also associated with the writers of his period like Virginia Wolf, George Orwell, Edward Thompson, Dylan Thomas, Jack Lindsay, Dorothy Richardson and among others. His company with such writers, gave him opportunities of learning and understanding western ideas, thought, literature and philosophy. Apart from these endeavors, he also worked in other sectors. He lectured from 1939 to 1942 as assistant

Professor of philosophy and literature at the London Country Council Adult Education School and the worker's Education of Association. He also worked for B.B.C. Eastern Service from 1941 to 1944. During the same period he was very much influenced by the Marxist progressive movement. He was deeply galvanized by the Marx's "Letter on India", published in New York Tribune in 1853. Apart from these, he participated in several political activities. He had already taken part in 1926 cool miner's strike.

When he came back India in 1946, he got involved in different acts and activities. He worked for India National Congress and Kishan Shava. He played a significant role in organizing the second 'All India Progressive Writer's Conference' in Calcutta. Besides this, he worked at the world peace council, Academy of Writer's Association, Sahitya Academy of Letters, The Lalit Kala Academy of Art, The National Book Trust, The Indian Council of Cultural Relations, The UNESCO Dialogues of East and West, and attended several university seminars and conferences in India and abroad. He has also received several academic awards for his contribution to the field of literature. After a long, successful career, Anand died in 2004, leaving behind him a present of marvelous artistic creations.

Anand is a man of multifaceted personality. Apart from being a voracious reader he is also a man of voluminous works. His career began with his first novel, *Untouchable* published in 1935 with a preface by E.M. Forster. As a novel it acquired ample popularity and pushed Anand to the peak of fame. This novel deals with the story of suffering of an untouchable in Indian society. His second novel *Coolie*, published in 1936, deals with the plight and miserable life of a coolie, while at the same time depicting the exploitation of the workers in capitalistic society. *Two Leaves and a Bud*, published in 1937, was his third novel which shows the misery of Indian

workers under the hands of imperialist rulers. There after, he continuously published other his novels such as: *Lament on the Death of a Master of Art* (1938), *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Water* (1940), *The Sword and Sickle* (1942), *The Big Heart* (1945), *Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953), *The Old Woman, and the Cow* (1960), *The Road* (1961), *Death of a Hero* (1963), *Morning Face* (1976), *Confession of a Lover* (1976), *The Babble* (1984), and *Autobiography Part I* (1981). Apart from these, he has written several works of non-fiction, essays and hundreds of articles in diverse subject matters.

The Big Heart (1945) is Anand's well known novel. Since the publication of this novel, many critics have given their due attention and argued differently as they seek to interpret his texts.

One of the critics, Saroj Cowasjee, has pointed out that the basic conflict in *The Big Heart* is between the tradition and modernity. Another critic Margaret Berry states that Anand has attempted to organize an entire social, economic and political picture in this novel; an attempt supported by the realistic techniques used in the text. He also claims that *The Big Heart* depicts the situation of India in transition.

Similarly, P.K. Rajan approaches *The Big Heart* with ambivalent humanistic perspective. He claims that Anand presents the pattern of contraries such as a deep humanistic yearning for revolutionary social change, but at the same time a constant hesitation about positive revolutionary action, a didactically motivated affirmation of revolutionary struggle, but a continual retreat from all purposeful action. It marks the development of his revolutionary hero, Lal Singh, and reaches its consummation in Ananta, the protagonist of *The Big Heart*. "Ananta marks the culmination of Anand's fictional representations of the revolutionary hero, and interestingly, he too becomes a typical Anand's creation by embodying the novelist's own ambivalent attitude to

revolution" (119). Rajan further points to the ambivalent humanism of this novel because this novel, he argues, "seems to show that the revolutionary humanist in Anand makes a powerful advocacy for modern industrialism where as his own 'thathiar conscience' makes him paint industrial culture as a horror that spells doom for mankind" (126). In addition, he claims that this novel can be considered as a tragedy i.e. a tragedy of character as well as a tragedy of destiny. Shreedhar Gautam, regarding this book, has drawn Anand's liberal humanistic perspective to argue that Ananta, a protagonist, displays his unflinching zeal and firmness to the cause of revolutionary social ideas. He argues further that Ananta suffers for the noble cause and ultimately sacrifices his life in order to redeem the society from falling into the abyss of ignorance and inertia.

Likewise, Krishna Nandan Sinha forwards his views that *The Big Heart* is a moving and powerful delineation of passion in its labyrinth, a human drama enacted within the limits of probability" (57). He claims that Anand presents a somber vision of futurity which unfolds a doom more terrifying and unrelenting than the one which engulfs Munoo in *Coolie*. Regarding the death of Ananta, he argues that "Ananta emerges a perfect hero who is also a perfect victim, crushed at the hand of destiny. He must die so that others may live. He is also a Christ figure, an innocent victim, excluded from human society" (55). Another critic Sunaina Singh in *Critical Responses* claims this novel as Anand's novel of protest against socio-economic and political domination and injustices. In a different critical view, D. Rumenschnueider, in *Indian Literature* claims that the problem of Anand is essentially the problem of individual's self-realization "Man, or to be more correct, the Indian man is confronted with this task within the framework of his own society, which determines the dramatic conflict of Anand's novel's" (29).

Other critics suggest that *The Big Heart* deals with the theme of caste system, a social evils. It appears to me, however, that the problem in this novel is that of a cultural paradox, or cultural clash caused because of the conflict between the traditional impulse and progressive impulses that are simultaneously inherent within culture. For this reason, I claim that the tragic death of the central character Ananta in Mulk Raj Anand's *The Big Heart* symbolizes the destruction of an emerging new culture; a destruction caused by a paradoxical resistance to change and development in the name of tradition seen as embodying the values of the past. To prove it, I will discuss relevant cultural theories in the second chapter and on the basis of it, textual analysis in my third chapter will focus on exploring and explicating the cultural conflict that causes the tragic death of a central character. This will lead to the fourth and the concluding chapter.

II. THEORETICAL MODALITY: CULTURE

The term 'culture' is an indispensable but multi-accented term with a complex and still open history which in itself expresses the complexity of general human history. The word culture in English is derived from the Latin 'cultura' which means the act of cultivating the soil. Later the term has been applied to any custom, art, social institution, literature, music etc., which is cultivated and practiced in society. Culture, therefore, belongs to the realm of border human consciousness that is both developed and shaped by society, religion, history and geography. This system of inherited conceptions is expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life. Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their actions. Such action then takes the forms of social structure, the actually existing network of social relations. Culture and social structure are therefore different abstractions from the same phenomena.

By 'culture' anthropology means the very part of the environment that is the creation of man. In ordinary speech a man of culture is a man who can speak languages other than his own, who is familiar with history, literature, philosophy, fine art or whose actions and behaviours are controlled and guided by wisdom and judgment. To the anthropologist, however, to be human is to be cultured. There are different and numerous cultures in the world such as Russian, Indian, Nepali, American, British, Chinese, and Mexican and so on because there are plural and multiple lifestyles and ways of living. Clyde Kluckhohn in his *Mirror for Man* opines:

A good deal of human behaviour can be understood, and indeed predicted, if we know a people's design for living. We can not explain

acts solely in terms of people's biological properties, their individual past experience and the immediate situation. The experience of other men in the form of cultural entries into almost every event. Each specific culture constitutes a kind of blueprint for all of life's activities. (qtd. in Ramji Gautam 13)

Similarly, Sir Edward Tylor, as early in 1871 defined culture as taken in its wide ethnographic sense, "is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (13).

The twentieth century has witnessed the emergence of more precise definitions on culture and theories on culturalism and literature. Matthew Arnold, one of the prominent theorists of the twentieth century, argues, "Culture is a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said" (1). For Arnold, culture seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas. Arnold having stood in the conservative stance, separates high and low culture and he has a deep reverence to the tradition. He opines that to impair the sacredness, to dislocate the customs inherited from the tradition is to take a step backwards into darkness and anarchy. F.R. Leavis, taking these Arnoldian assumptions, develops them in actual accounts of, and encounters with, popular culture. Like Arnold, the Leavisites believe that culture has always been a minority keeping.

The idea of culture as people's 'whole way of life' first came in the late 19th century. With the publication of works on culture and culturalism by Richard

Hoggart, Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson, and Stuart Hall, the scope and function of culture has achieved extension. Eventually culturalism has become an approach that insists analyzing the culture of a society, the textual forms and documented practices of a culture, it is possible to reconstitute the patterned behaviour and constellation of ideas shared by the men and women who produce and consume the texts and practices of that society. William defines culture by distinguishing between three ways of thinking about it:

First there is the 'ideal' in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values. Second, there is the 'documentary record'; the recorded texts and practices of culture. Third, there is the social definition of culture, in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meaning and values not only in art and learning but also in institution and ordinary behaviour. (58)

Williams' first definition of culture as 'Ideal' is essentially the discovery and description, in lives and works, of those values which can be seen to compose a timeless order, or to have permanent reference to the universal human condition. In addressing the 'complex organization' of culture as a particular way of life, the purpose of cultural analysis, Williams argues, is "to understand what a culture is saying, what a culture is expressing: 'the actual experience through which a culture was lived'; the important common element'; 'a particular community of experience'" (Storey, 41). This cultural analysis as a method of reconstituting a particular way of life-establishes both the general perspective and the basic procedures of culturalism.

This perspective and this set of procedure are evident in E.P. Thompson's monumental 'The Making of the English Working Class; but differs from Williams

and other writers in his insistence that culture always exists in conflict and struggle to establish particular ways of life rather than evolve to form a particular way of life.

By mid 20th century, the definition/concept of culture has undergone massive change. Raymond Williams normative meaning of culture as people's whole way of life contrast the ethnographic concept of culture as the complex whole which accommodates knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, custom, and any other capabilities and behaviours acquired by man. In normative usage, culture still claims to represent the organic voice of people. Out of this conflict between culture in the ethnographical sense and culture in the normative sense, there arose a third way of using the term as that refers neither to a people's organic way of life nor to the normative values indoctrinated by leading intellectuals but to a battle ground of social conflicts and contradiction. This view of culture also emerged because of the conflict between the traditional impulse and progressive impulse. Conservative perspective regards culture as static and fixed but modern perspective emphasizes on culture as an ongoing process of formation and reformation. From the theoretical perspective one can not assume a single, central culture that renders individual experience coherent and meaningful, for it is inescapably different, divisive and dissonant.

Culture now has been most contested space because of the emergence and dissemination of postcolonial criticism and the postcolonial theory of discourse. Interpreters of culture have borrowed the terminologies of other fields of criticism to make their critique. Often cited terminologies used in the study of culture are Foucauldian notion of 'power' and 'discourse' and Gramsci's concept of 'Hegemony'. Postcolonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of third world countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geographical divisions of east and west, north and south. "They create their critical revisions around issues of

cultural difference, social authority, and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the rationalization of modernity" (Ghimire 23). Postcolonial criticism bears witness to these unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. It focuses us to "engage with culture as an uneven, incomplete production of value and meaning often composed of incommensurable demands and practices produced in the act of social survival" (23). In this regard, Bhabha rightly observes:

Cultural as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translation. It is transnational because contemporary post colonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of displacement ... It is translation because such spatial histories of displacement ... make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by culture, a rather complex issue. (qtd. in Ghimire 23)

The transnational dimension of cultural transformation - migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation - makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification. It is from this hybrid location of cultural value-the transnational as the translation - that the postcolonial intellectual attempts to elaborate a historical and literary project.

Edward W. Said is interested in studying the relationship between the east and west having stood in a position of a cultural critic rather than a radical political theorist. On the one hand, he sees the 'scope of orientalism' as matching with the scope of empire, on the other hand, he focuses on culture representing as well as functioning as a form of hegemony. In this connection, Said finds Mathew Arnold as using culture as a powerful means of differentiation. Culture is an ideal construct for

Arnold but Said argues "culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, denote, interdict and validate: in short i.e. the power of culture to be an agent of and perhaps, the main agency of powerful differentiation within its domain and beyond it too" (qtd. in Ghimire 24). In other words, culture, for Said, is not only the positive doctrine of the best that is thought and known but also a differentially negative doctrine of all that is not best. This double faceted view of culture makes one aspects of culture more powerful than the other. Culture, thus, becomes the powerful means of domination and appropriation.

Thus, it can be argued that culture is such a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought, as Mathew Arnold put it in the 1960s. In time culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with the nation or the state, which differentiate 'us' from 'them'. Culture, having engaged with various political and ideological causes, has no definite concept so it has therefore been the very contested space in cultural studies.

Cultural studies is too difficult to define because it has no referent to which we can point. It is a set of practices constituted by the 'language game' of cultural studies. It is not a tightly coherent, unified movement with certain agenda but a loosely linked group of tendencies, issues, and questions. Arising amidst the turmoil of 1960s, cultural studies is formed of elements of marxism, new historicism, feminism, gender studies, anthropology, studies of race and ethnicity popular cultural studies, and postcolonial studies: those fields that focus on social and cultural forces that either create community or cause division and alienation.

Cultural studies means a rejection to the 'universals' of culture and at the same time challenges the belief that group 'particularism' like blackness, femaleness or

Africaness are essential unchanging qualities. Like texts, culture is seen as indeterminate site of conflict that cannot be pinned to a single totalized meaning. Cultural studies is a multi or post-disciplinary field of inquiry which blurs the demarcations between itself and other subjects. As intellectuals emphasized that the intellectual promise of cultural studies lies in its attempt to cut across diverse social and political interests and address many of the struggles within the current scene. Richard Johnson describes cultural studies as "a process, a kind of alchemy for producing useful knowledge and codify it" (qtd. in Grossberg et. al. 2).

In terms of defining cultural studies, Marxism informs it in two basic ways. First to understand the meaning of culture we must analyze it in relation to the social structure and its history. Although it is constituted by a particular social structure with a specific history, it is not studied as a reflection of this structure and history. On the contrary, "cultural studies argues that culture's importance derives from the fact that it helps to constitute the structure and shape the history" (Storey xi). Second, cultural studies assumes that capitalist societies are societies divided unequally along, for example, ethnic, gender and class lines. It is argued that culture is one of the principal sites where these divisions are established and contested; "Culture is a terrain on which there takes place a continual struggle over meaning (s) in which subordinate groups attempt to resist the imposition of meaning which bear the interests of dominant groups" (xii). As Tony Bennett explains, cultural studies is committed "to examining cultural practices from the point of view of their intrication with, and within, relations of power" (qtd. in Storey xii).

It is this which makes culture ideological. Ideology is the central concept in cultural studies because it means the mental frameworks - the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery of thought, and the system of representation—which different

classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense, define, figure out, and render intelligible the way society works. While looking culture from this perspective, Karl Marx's opinion "we make culture and we are made by culture: there is agency and there is structure" (qtd. in Storey xiv) is significant. Similarly John Fiske maintains, "culture in cultural studies is neither aesthetic nor humanistic in emphasis, but political" (115). What he means by this is that the object of study in cultural studies is not culture defined in a parochial sense, as the object of supposed aesthetic excellence, nor as a particular way of life, whether of people a period or a group. Stuart Hall defines cultural studies as "a project that is always open to that which it does not yet know, to that which it can't yet name" (278). Again he argues, "it can't be just any old thing which chooses to March under a particular banner. It is a serious enterprise, or project and that is inscribed in what is sometimes called the 'political' aspect of cultural studies" (278). And he defines culture as the actual, grounded terrain of practices, representations, languages and customs of any specific historical society as well as the contradictory forms of 'common sense' which have taken root in and helped to shape popular life.

Cultural studies transcends the confinements of a particular discipline such as literary criticism. It is rather politically engaged and at the same time denies the separation of 'high' and 'low' or elite and popular culture. Cultural studies is a 'discursive formation' i.e. a cluster of ideas, images and practices which provide ways of talking about the forms of knowledge and conduct associated with a particular topic, social activity, or institutional site in society. Thus, a good deal of cultural studies is centered on question of 'representation', that is on how the world is socially constructed and represented to and by us. The central strand on cultural studies can be understood as the study of culture as the signifying practices of representation

which requires us look for the textual generation of meaning. It also demands investigation of the modes by which meaning is produced in a variety of contexts. Cultural representation and meaning have certain materiality since they are produced, enacted, used, and understood in specific social contexts. Culture is articulated with moments production but not determined necessarily by that moment. The meaning of a text (a culture or set of practices) is produced in the interplay between text and reader so that the moment of consumption is also a moment of meaningful production.

Thus, in due course of time, many perspectives and theories regarding culture have emerged assimilating and disrupting the previous cultural modality or the concept of culture, and heralding the new concept and foundation of culture in cultural studies. But, it still remains difficult to pin down the boundaries of cultural studies as a coherent, unified, academic discipline with 'clear cut' substantive topics, concepts and methods which differentiate it from other disciplines. As such, contradiction lies in culture since it is defined and interpreted differently by different scholars in different context. Some cultural theorists and scholars like Mathew Arnold, E.P. Thompson, F.R. Leavis define and theorize culture having the parochial sense of tradition. They treat culture as the preservation of the past customs and beliefs. Raymond Williams also, through the definition of culture as an 'Ideal state or process' holds the conservative stance, that is, he tries to create cultural values which can be seen to compose a timeless order, or to have permanent reference to the universal human condition. He has asserted dogmatism in the name of culture, however, he, somehow, believes that "culture is a signifying system through which necessarily a social order is communicated, reproduced, and explored" (55). The people guided by the 'traditional impulse' regard that the meaning of cultural form or cultural practice is inscribed inside its form. They conceive culture as static and fixed

like the water of some pond and consider that this staticity and immobility is the cardinal value of culture.

In opposition of this conventional or traditional belief or meaning of culture, other cultural theorists and scholar argue that culture is an ongoing process of formation and reformation. Stuart Hall, for example, claims that culture can not be one thing. He argues "cultural texts and practices are not inscribed with meaning, guaranteed once and for all by the intention of production; meaning is always the result of an act of 'articulation'; because meaning has to be expressed, but it is always expressed in a specific context, a specific historical moment, within a specific discourses" (Storey, xii) as stated in introduction of *The Study of Popular Culture and Cultural Studies*.

Other such cultural definition, given by Rosanund Billington et al, quoting Rock and Swingewood respectively, are, "culture is not a structure, but a continual process of becoming" (29), and "It is not a neutral concept; it is historical, specific and ideological" (21). These cultural definitions provoke the cultural zeal for the incorporation of new emerging ideas and changes in order to resist the worn-out cultural values. It is because culture is a terrain of incorporation and resistance as claimed by Hall.

The claim, for the incorporation of new emerging ideas and changed socio-economic situations and resistance to it favouring the tradition in the name of culture, creates cultural paradox or cultural clash which rises the questions such as - is culture only going back to the past ? or is it moving forward incorporating new ideas and beliefs ? Is it fixed and unchangeable ? or a developing entity ? The cultural paradox caused because of the clash between vested 'traditional impulse' and 'progressive

impulse' inherent within culture that leads towards anarchy and destruction of progress.

On the basis of general theoretical perspective outlined above, the tragic death of Ananta in Anand's novel *The Big Heart* will be explored on the following chapter.

III. Of THE NOVEL

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Big Heart was written during the forties, and was published in 1945. The time of the forties in India as well as abroad was quite tumultuous. It was the period full of havoc and turmoil. The people of the world had not only witnessed the destructive World War II and its consequences, but also suffered from the destruction of the Second World War as well.

At home, in India too, the situation was similar. Socially, economically and politically, the situation of India was quite bad and miserable. Indian people were socially and culturally victimized from different sorts of age-old blind beliefs, superstition, orthodox and exploitation. At the same time, however a new spirit of change towards modernity was blowing across, it was encouraging the people to resist victimizations caused in the name of tradition. They were eager to assert and incorporate western science and technology in culture so as to revolutionize the tradition and make it able to cope with the demand of time. But Sanatanists and conservative people of the time contrarily opposed it regarding it as a threat to their culture.

During the 1940s, India was teeming with political havoc and awaiting change. There was chaos and anarchy all around. Indian people were fighting against British government for independence. Resistances in the form of Gandhi's 'Satyagraha' 'civil march', 'Swaraj Movement' among other such protests were going on; movements that were aimed at making the British abdicate their rule over India. In order to fight against British regime, Indian freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi used culture as a reliable means of resistances. During 'Swaraj Movement' every European things including science and technology was boycotted, and Indian people

were motivated and provoked to use home spun clothes. Gandhi says, "Our Swaraj must be real Swaraj, which can not be attained by either violence or industrialization. . . We will certainly not use their (English) machine made goods, nor use their English language nor many of their Industries" (qtd. in Kaushik 43). Regarding this movement and programme lunched against British rule, the leaders of National Congress have contradictory ideologies. Kaushik claims:

To Gandhi, modern civilization was a 'disease' and machinery represented 'a great sin'. But Nehru has no conflict with machinery 'provided that machinery is used primarily for absorbing labour and not for creating fresh unemployment. Gandhi denounced industrialization as 'a curse for mankind and wanted every village of India to be 'a self supporting and self contained unit', exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages where they are not locally produceable. (52)

Bose considered Gandhi's programme to be 'bourgeois' and wanted the Congress to adopt a radical economic programme including land Lordism. He is for "the extension of co-operative movement. . . a comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state ownership and state control" (qtd. in Kaushik 52). Gandhi's idea of non-cooperation and 'Swaraj' movement was aimed to unite the Indian people against British rule by inculcating the sense of preserving their culture and tradition to resist against the threat from 'bideshi' culture. Whereas British government was introducing machine and machineries to influence Indian people to adopt their culture and strengthen their power and authority. This sorts of political dimensions of freedom movement germinated contradiction and culturally paradoxical situation. It is possible that it was precisely because of such circumstances, that Anand, in this novel,

depicts "the torment of living between two worlds-one not quite dead and other refusing to be born" (14).

SYNOPSIS

Ananta, the son of a coppersmith, returns home to his ancestral city in Amritsar after having worked in factories in Bombay and Ahmedabad where he had also taken part in the national struggle for independence. He brings with him his sweetheart, Janaki, a young widow who is slowly drifting towards death because of Tuberculosis. In Amritsar, Ananta resumes his hereditary trade, but like most people of his brotherhood, he finds it difficult to make a living. The situation in trade is none too good. The introduction of modern machinery has already pushed the traditional handicraft into the background. Though Ananta suffers from the introduction of the machines, he can still see their usefulness. Himself an ardent supporter of machines, Ananta fights a two-pronged battle; first against the age old notions of his own brotherhood; second against the owners of machines, Lala Murali Dhar and Gokul Chand, who seek to exploit their brethren. He urges his brotherhood and workers to form a union in order to bargain for jobs and in this he wins the support of the poet Puran Bhagat Singh. But he is unable to win the support of his brotherhood who are torn in suspicion, anxiety and superstition. Instead, they are carried away by the demagogy of student leader, Satyapal who hates machines and wants them to be destroyed immediately. Despite his attempt to persuade people and form a union, events take a dramatic turn when some of the disgruntled coppersmiths became violent. Ralia, Ananta's close friend, works himself into a terrible rage and starts wrecking the machine. Ananta tries to stop him and even overpowers him, but Ralia takes advantage of a temporary lapse on the part of Ananta. In a demonic anger, he batters Ananta's head against a broken machine, causing his instant death.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The novel *The Big Heart* begins with the description of its setting where author has attempted to mirror Billimoran not as a blind alley but as a place entangled under the grip of two distinct forces: tradition and modernity, or orthodoxy and change. The description of Billimaran as:

. . . a two headed snake. With one head it looks towards the ancient markets, where the beautiful copper, brass, silver and bronze utensil made in the lane are sold by dealers called Kaseras, hence called Bazar Kaserian. With the other it wringgle out towards the new Ironmonger's Bazar where screws and bolts and nails and locks are sold and which merges into the book sellers mart, the cigarette shop and the post office replete with the spirit of modern times (16-17),

shows that the spirit of change and modernity is at hand which is suggested by Ironmonger's Bazar, but still people in Billimaran continue to favour their traditional profession; profession of moldering and shaping the copper, brass, and bronze utensils by hands. 'Bazar Kaserian' implicitly depicts the rootedness of people in their traditional values and conservation. The depiction of the Goddess Kali, shrine of Vishnu, and clock tower also represent the tradition and modernity respectively. So "It is in this setting that the conflict between the old and new takes place" (Rajan 121).

The novel is set in Kucha Billimaran in Amritsar Town which the author has depicted as an unchanged lane since the age of truth. It is because the inhabitants of Billimaran are engulfed with a parochial sense of tradition, superstition and their past values and norms since they consider culture as static and fixed. Overpowered by such feelings, they remain blind and deaf towards emerging new socio-historical context and the inevitability of change.

The fact about water, like time, is that it will flow; it may get chocked up with rubbish and debris of broken banks; it may be arrested in stagnant pools for long years; but it will begin to flow again as soon as the sky pours down its blessings to make up for what the other elements have sucked up; and it will keep flowing, now slowly, now like a rushing stream. (15)

These lines suggest that nothing can be stagnant and fixed, and that in due course of time everything, even culture, will keep on changing in opposition to the dogmas of traditional orthodox people.

With such a setting in the novel, Mulk Raj Anand has attempted to intensify and elucidate the issue of cultural clash: the class between the one that is not quite dead and the other that is refusing to be born. This contestation reaches its apex when the machine is introduced in Billimaran lane. It further aggravates the situation because thatiar brotherhood's assertion of past cultural values and their rigid rejection of machine stand in a stark contrast to Ananta's views concerning machine as a means of uplifting the society from the staticity and immobility of cultural paradigm.

Ananta, a central character, fights against an unbounding shackle of social evils, social injustice, superstition and suffering of people perpetuated by the conservative and traditional dogmas so as to sow the seed of progress and change in society by asserting and incorporating the western science and technology in culture. He has an unending zeal for the liberation of people from the trample of evil practices, evil customs and norms which dominate and differentiate the people on the basis of casteism, religion, untouchability and such other cultural evil practices as a whole. He wants to revolutionize the existing evil socio-cultural practices and introduce a

new era elevated and embraced by the feeling of universal brotherhood, spirit of change and modernity. He also knows that the revolution that he aspires for will be a far cry unless the coppersmiths learn to unite. So he constantly endeavors to form a union, fight together for change and against evils. For this he tells them plainly; "Men are the makers of their own deeds, the makers of their own characters, good or bad, and they are the shapers of their own destiny ! So come and make your own fate" (210). But the change is indigestible to conventional thathiar brotherhood. They, instead of coping with the flow of time, always regard past as their value of life, worn-out socio-cultural practices as their guideline and to continue their parental profession as their dignity and duty. They, having been engaged under the veil of orthodox dogmas of 'no change culture', deny assimilating into the changed socio-cultural situation and progress. Thus they, as Anant remarks, are:

Caught in the mousetraps where they are born, most of them are engaged in a bigger cage of fate and the various indiscernible shadows that hang over their heads. And they don't know the meridians beyond the length and breadth of Billimaran until the day when they are carried out. (17)

They believe in fate, which in turn, creates in them the fear of avenging gods, devotion to chosen deities, and notion of dharma Karma as providing an explanation of present suffering, motivation for present action and hope for future good. It is explicitly exposed in the thinking and activities of Karmo and Bhagu who moan over their misfortunes, resuscitating their belief in Karma, recognizing and accepting their role on earth as due to faults they and theirs' had committed in their past lives and overcome by self pity. Their cry, "this life is not worth living ! All we can do is to do some good deeds and prepare for the next" (23), shows how they passively accept the

present evils as somehow divinely ordained and best endured without revolt. Such notion of the people in Amritsar town always produces obstacles on the way to Ananta who aspires to crumble the foundation of parochial culture and bring them out so that they can reciprocate the change.

The more Ananta tries to convince them that the change and reformation is the need of time, the more his brotherhood hate and criticize him. They consider him as someone who has crossed their cultural paradigm because of his negation to customs and disregard to God and Goddess. In regard to god and goddess, he takes up the theme of futility which is clearly stated in his expression, "God won't help us because as far as I have known him, he has always preserved a discrete silence in the affairs of men" (38). More specifically, he is severally criticized because of the fact of his living together with the widow, Janaki. According to Hindu cultural scriptures, the widow is not supposed to be married again. She is regarded as a sin or curse. In a society which is as hypocritical as it is orthodox, his liaison with Janaki is frowned upon. Ralia, who beats and starves his wife, is more acceptable to the thatthiar than Ananta, who genuinely loves his mistress and has given her a new lease of life. Ananta's perception of widow marriage is different than his brotherhood. He challenges the conventional belief and custom by living together with the widow Janaki whom he loves. He argues:

There was nothing wrong in putting the head-cloth on a widow's head, especially as her life would have remained a long series of insult. If she had been condemned to mourn the death of an elderly husband to whom she had been married by arrangement. (36)

It shows that he is all for a new culture that could accommodate humanity and other emerging modern ideas. He has an opinion that present culture, instead of being a

mere reflection of the past, should be open ended and flexible. His disinterest towards the marriage proposal that his stepmother brought for him clearly shows his determination to accept and marry Janaki; an action aimed to dismantle the conventional practice. His stepmother's effort of getting him married by manipulation and motivation exposes her awareness of her family prestige and hypocrisy with which she has been brought up. "How happy I should be to look at the face of your bride with the last little light left in my eyes. Son you don't know how happily I shall go if I can see your wife before I die" (24-25). This perspective of Karmo shows her keen interest in maintaining her family tradition and morality on the one hand, and her desire to divert Anant from Janaki because she is also unsatisfied with their relation, on the other.

Similarly, Thathiar brotherhood and Kaseras regard false morality and dead past as their way of life. Culture for them is static, to imitate the past is to preserve the culture. To keep alive their dead morality and rotted cultural norms, they consider, is their highest duty. If there occurs a change or someone denies their belief, they label him/her as a culprit and the world as devilish. It is clearly stated in the expression of Gokul Chand as he says:

I don't know what the world is coming to; it is all a muddle.

Everything is so uncertain now-a-days. People have forgotten the highest duty they owe to themselves and their religion. The young don't listen to the old, brotherhood are breaking up, and no one can keep out ancient customs alive. (135)

His expression shows that Gokul Chand has gitters for the preservation of the past value system. But still, he has a reformative zeal. His belief in flexibility and transformation in accordance with time is reflected in his speech to Sadananda, a

deeply conservative man, "I am not orthodox, mind you, because orthodoxy-well, now-a-days. I suppose I believe we should be like rubber which can be stretched when required but. . ." (136).

Moreover, Murali, the Chaudhary of Thathiar brotherhood, wallows in the sewage of snobbery and conservation. He always differentiates himself from others, and discriminates his people on the basis of his wealth, and also because of his partnership in factory with Gokul Chand. He thinks that money, caste, and protection of ancestral tradition form and support the dignity of his family. In order to assert his superiority in the society, he establishes factory with Gokul Chand and disregards his lower Thathiar brotherhood. Regarding his family status, he, in the betrothal party of his grandson, invites only those responsible persons of his brotherhood and higher caste people like Kaseras, while at the same time neglecting lower class people and Ananta who voices for change. He does so because he considers that the presence of lower people might destroy his prestige and family status. It is explicitly expressed in the following speech of Murali:

We have asked the more responsible members of our brotherhood as well as our Kasera brothers, because we can't break age-old bonds. Certainly, never in my life time shall I renounce my position as Chaudhary of the thathiar brotherhood sometimes I think that these boys go too far !. (162)

Ghanshyam Das has similar dogmatic stance. He ruthlessly opposes the idea of flexibility in culture, and advocates for the preservation of tradition. The expression, "I would rather drink urine than smoke hookah with one who has soiled his mouth with the food and water of Murali !" (183) shows his utter disgust and disregard towards change. In this connection Hans Raj has also same conviction.

Believing in the ancient spiritual splendour of the vedic age, Raj argues that the most of the revivalist Arya Samaj and the political parties like Congress are hastening the industrial revolution in India for the purpose of making profit which is against the ideals of the true Samajists. He needs them "to purify life giving charity and honouring the duty they owe to their Dharma" (115). It is actually a regression in the name of culture.

Because of such retrogressive stance, the orthodoxy people consider the spread of science and technology as a threat to their civilization ignoring the fact of globalization, modernization, urbanization and other as such phenomenon, which come in due course of cultural process because "culture is not a structure but a continual process of becoming" (Billington et al. 29). Culture can not be stagnate and it does have permanent reference in changing human society. It changes in accordance to the changed socio historical context. And their retrogressive nature is exposed by the following lines as Ralia, orthodoxy thatthiar, comments ironically to Puran Singh's advocacy for change and scientific invention,

Ah, what to say, electricity is such a boon ! The whole world was dark before it was discovered. There was no sun, no moon, and no stars.

You could not see the 'hills from the mounds; or the copper under your nose until electricity came to the city of Amritsar. (59)

Likewise Ananta's comment on Viroo, "oh no, Sardarji, he would rather light a fire by striking one stone against another" (59) suggests that they are not ready for the introduction of science and machines rather they are inclined to their past ways of conventions, beliefs and systems. This really aggravates the situation. The society consumed by traditional impulses of the culture stands at one pole, and Ananta, inspired by progressive impulses, is located at an opposing cultural pole.

Ananta, as an ardent supporter of modernity, warmly welcomes the science and machineries as a reliable means of revolution. He believes that progress and civilization can stem only when people are released from the quagmire of anarchy, injustice, social evils imposed and prolonged by orthodoxy beliefs. He therefore grants the introduction of factory in Kucha Billimaran as a way towards progress. But the thathiar brotherhood get hurt and tormented by the introduction of the factory. They are out of job and their joblessness, they believe, has been resulted by the establishment of factory. The very clue is found in Viroo's expression like "if the factory catches fire by chance, then, we can at least get piece-work from Kaseras" (157). They lose their job not because of factory, but because of their ignorance to reciprocate and adjust with the process of change. Before the establishment of the factory, they have their conventional profession of artisans. They regard their job as their dignity and cultural identity. To hold the job of artisan for the coppersmith is to keep alive their family tradition. As they do their professional work, they feel proud considering their job as the will of god. It can be noted in Sadanand's saying, "Our progenitor, the god Visva Karma, only bequeathed a hammer and a pair of tongs to us, apart from our rough hand, . . . by Ishowar, we are proud to have broken metal into shape and earned our living by the sweat of our brown" (136).

This attitude, governed by traditional impulse of culture, symbolizes their inclination towards their past way of life instead of assimilating into the present situation brought by industrialization. Rather, they repeatedly show contempt for the machine and industrialization. "This is the machine age, the machine. . . . I will rape the mother of this machine age !" (35), says Ralia and this view symbolizes the indignation of the entire community of conservative people against the machine. They believe it as an evil thing which has turned the world into an unrelieved hell.

Besides machines, they also abhor the Angreji Sarkar because science and technology was introduced in India by the government of the British during their regime. Industrialization and urbanization mostly took place during their ruling period; modern process of which Indian people like thatiar brotherhood took as threat to their aboriginal, native culture. Their criticism and contempt is directed against the machines introduced by the Angreji Sarkar, and they consider these instruments as the instruments of destruction. This sense is depicted in the following lines expressing the views of Satyapal: "Don't you see; that they are flooding the country with the instruments of destruction ? At first they brought railways, telephones and telegrams; no they are bringing that engine of death, the aeroplane" (113). They realize that these engines have deteriorated the traditional culture swayed away the people with the spirit of modernity. Specially Ananta, they believe, has gone too far from their conventional belief, lifestyle, and culture and accuse him of standing for a new life, because he is the advocator of modernity and progress. It is clear in the claim made by Rajan, "he stands for the new life, for modernity and progress" (121). It's not that Ananta ignores all the established values and norms under the prevailing cultural practices; rather he intends to uphold newly emerged trends of socio-cultural progress and advancement in order to refute and extinguish conservative and stereotypical attitudes. Ananta believes that conservative and stereotypical social attitudes institutionalize the social evils and vices that are practically detrimental to social change and progress. He favours change, progress and advancement in social and cultural paradigms by institutionalizing them in scientific manner. Therefore, in order to inaugurate new era and convince his brotherhood about the change, he states:

This is the machine age, sons

This is the machine age

We are the new men of earth of all the evil old ages ! (19)

It seems that Ananta is the spokesperson of Anand. The writer himself appears to be reflected in the spiritual image of Ananta's scientific zeal to sweep out all the evils of the old ages.

Though the concept of change and progress through industrial revolution ignites radicals, the predominant socio-economic and cultural stereotypes still continue to function as the major obstacles. Due to this reason, there is a tussle between the staticity of historical archetypes and the dynamics of cultural confluence. Here, Ananta strives for changeability and newness in cultural practices whereas the thathiar brotherhood does resist him with orthodoxal vehemence in the name of the culture. So it bears the notion of cultural paradox. To illustrate with clarity, his dilemma in distinguishing his position sandwiched between the exegetical orthodoxies, and the mutable horizon of civilization, it would be relevant to quote the following passage:

A long pilgrimage that to oneself and others ! Ananta muttered to himself, in the midst of the dishonesty, falsepride, cruelty, selfishness, and the injustice of the world. Difficult to know what to do and what not to do ! To know the good and the evil ! . . . Especially with the world against one because one did not act according to its customs.
(69)

Here, Ananta's desire to salvage the society from dishonesty, falsepride, cruelty, selfishness, and the injustice of the world is identical with his resistance to the dominant orthodoxies in society. In this sense, Ananta magnifies an individual always being dominated by the conventional customs and values of the society. So, he seems

to argue that the marginality of an individual's voice for change and progress triggers the notion of subliminal invasion in social taboos.

In addition to this sense of cultural paradox, a fruitful conflict between bilateral polarities is also identical with the feud caused in the name of culture and its significance between Ananta and the thatiar brotherhood. However, victory of the majority over the minority is always the result of the two polarizing axis. If majority is considered to be the centre, needless to say that minority will be pushed towards the margin. In such a case, the margin as such becomes a challenging task for the so called centre. Which is what actually happens in *The Big Heart*.

Speaking for myself; said Ananta with the impetuosity of the Punjab extremist, 'I would take the plunge into the ocean. After all men have gone to their deaths with a song on their lips, and here is the promise of an abounding life containing of struggle. Let the storm rage. I say.

(85)

Obviously, Ananta's revolutionary spirit of change and progress for civilizational need becomes more radical to resist the immutable consistencies of the prevailing culture. It's because of this reason that the notion of cultural paradox gets interestingly triggered.

Ananta, who embodies preferential aptitudes to embark upon mutability, has been guided more by his rational conscience. He is neither egotistical nor picky like his opponents. Instead, he is a realist who deserves our sympathy. Before engaging in a blatant insurgency against all the opposing forces, that try to obliterate his spirit, he wishes to witness the change and progress undergoing the metamorphosis of cultural enhancement in the developed countries like Britain and Russia.

I should like to go vilayat one day and see what conditions are like these. Ananta says lifting his eyes dreamily under the thick eyebrows. I should like to see those steps which walk, and the railways which run in the bowels of the earth. I should also like to go and see the giants of Roos. Comrade Khan told me that there they have learnt to grow wheat in the snow-fields and to extract power from coal in the earth without anyone having to go into the mine. In all those things the earth is coming to be more and more like heaven. (86)

It shows that he has been influenced by the scientific and technological advancement in the western civilization. Therefore, his passionate zeal to adopt newness and change in the society glows significantly.

Apart from it, Ananta foresees the betterment of his culture and society through industrial revolution. Ananta wishes to have the same progress and reformation in his society through the implementation of machinery projects and plans in scientific way, because "he firmly believes that a new life has to be created, a life in which the machines will not be objects of terror but harbingers of plenty, prosperity and loves (Sinha, 55). To illustrate this fact, he says,

I know there will be no more happiness in this darkening world for anyone for a long time to come. . . And I feel I oughto do something good before I die, so that the others who come after can be a little happiers.. . the truth is that devotion and sacrifice are the twin brothers of courage and will have nothing to do with cousin cowardice ! (143)

His idea of change and progress stands against the prevailing customs, values and norms of the society. He believes that the prevailing customs, values and norms of the society can lead to a dark future in which the forthcoming generation will suffer

much more whereas the matter of happiness and prosperous life will just be like a block of ice that will melt away. Therefore, he ventures to break the ice with his devotion and sacrifice in such a way that the future will be illuminated with the light of progress and prosperity. This prophetic remarks is a just challenge to the blindly held stereotypes of a conservative society.

In addition, Ananta is bold enough to argue that the old life will no more exist in the society. The reason is that the world is full of anarchy and unrest which means that while the new spirit of industrial revolution is emerging in the society to uproot the blind and fake institutional dogmas, the latter still continue to mislead the future generations. This is the reason why he says, "There is anarchy and unrest in the world today, but there is every sign that the old life is enough ending and another, new life, is on the way" (202). The contestation between the new way of life and the way of the old one triggers the meaning of cultural paradox in this novel.

Besides, the opposing forces of change and progress are also very active in hindering the industrial and scientific systems, procurers and world views that shape the happy and prosperous modes of civilization. Such opposing forces are guided by blind and superstitious faith upon traditional myths and legends. For instance, the thatthiar brotherhood never likes to divert from their stereotypical attitudes towards the established customs, values and norms in the society. Their rigidity, in contrast to Ananta's ideology, manifests the issue of cultural paradox. It is possible to illustrate their conspicuous hatred towards scientific and industrial change and progress by quoting following lines from the text. "This is the Kaliyug, they say, Han, the Kaliyug ! . . . Ache, there , I am the destroyer of this madarchod age, Shiva ! — come brothers, I am Shiva" (214) says Ralia. It clearly exposes the tension and hatred of thatthiar brotherhood against the machine; the very tension "generated by the clash of

interests in which ancestral memories, customs and prejudices play an important part" (Sinha, 55). This sort of opposing cultural force that comes into conflict with Ananta's ideology of modernity generates the major drama of the novel.

Moreover, the rage burning against machines in the society gears up to yield the notion of cultural paradox. This rage is that of the fire of blind and superstitious penchant based on illogical tradition guided by dark aspects of myths and legends. The thatthiar brotherhood epitomizes this side of contestation. To clarify, the sarcastic bite of the thatthiar brotherhood on machines and their function is quite identical. "I shall show you who is the master, those machines or I. . . I will spit at these engines, I will destroy them, I shall wipe them off the face of the earth" (218). This sort of coarse remark of Ralia against the machines is really a big challenge for Ananta, because this notion is the notion of whole conservative thatthiar brotherhood who assert their rigidity in regressive stance in the name of culture. So his (Anand's) constant effort of convincing his thatthiar brotherhood about the adaptation of new way of life by accepting machine goes in vain. Despite his advice, they become more rigid on their stance and, with one thing leading to another, matters come to such a head on collision that Ralia, in an act of vengeance, starts wrecking the machine. As Ananta tries to stop him, he gets killed.

He is killed not because of anything else but because of his assertion of new way of life and his zeal for change which the conservative and retrogressive thatthiar brotherhood see as threat to their traditional values and culture. He sacrifices his life in order to herald the prelude of scientific and revolutionary era of civilization and "to redeem the society from falling into the abyss of ignorance and inertia" (Gautam, 177). Regarding his death, Puran Singh tells Janaki that his death will play as a role of catalyst for change among the traditionally bounded thatthiar brotherhood. His

views suggest that culture can never be static as thought by thathair brotherhood but is rather a process of change and becoming, a view also taken by Ananta, the novel's protagonist.

IV. CONCLUSION

Thus Mulk Raj Anand in *The Big Heart* depicts a catastrophe caused by the contestation between traditional impulse and progressive impulse of culture. Culture as defined by different cultural theorists and scholars including the forces of resistance and incorporation, parochialism and flexibility. Some confine cultural paradigm within traditional boundaries and other claim culture as a product of articulation. Such notions concerning culture create confusion and contradiction, which in turn initiates the cultural clash germinating the embryo of cultural paradox.

Presenting the same paradox, Anand on the one hand, presents that the brotherhood and some of the Kaseras as totally bounded by the parochial sense of tradition, under which they assert their traditional way of life and static cultural values. Because of their deep attachment with conventions and orthodox belief system, they are portrayed as totally blind towards the process of change and progress which shape the society. They, therefore, can not grant or accept the change; instead they label it as a destroyer of culture. Their rejection and Ralia's wrecking of the machine is the prime textual evidence of it. Their affirmation of conventional hereditary job of artisan, and their support of the irrelevant social practices and norms with an utter disregard of the changed socio-historical context prove their retrospective stance in the name of culture and tradition.

On the other hand, Ananta, a protagonist, is portrayed as a man of revolutionary zeal. He ventures to uplift the society from the parochialism of tradition which, he believes, has been the barrier to change and progress. His negligence of established social values, and norms of his society, and his acceptance of machine as a demand of time represent his progressive impulses. He insists that science and technology should be incorporated into culture, and is inspired by a vision that the

advancement of science and technology necessarily leads to the enhancement of culture and civilization. Culture as a way of life can never be one, permanent thing that is timeless and fixed, but is a rather continual process of becoming through which the identities, both personal and social, acquire new shapes and reality. His living with Janaki, a widow whom society rejects, and his revolt against the casteism and other social evils reveal his yearning to modify and change outdated beliefs that must be rejected for social advancement. It is also a reflection of his progressive vision. He hence truly represents the progressive impulse of culture.

Thus, the contestation between Ananta and thatiar brotherhood represents the clash of two distinct forces i.e. the clash of staticity and mobility; a conflict which also symbolizes the clash between regression and progress. Thus, the death of Ananta by Ralia at the end of this novel is the consequence of this very conflict. He is killed by Ralia, a sanatanist who along with his brotherhood, feel that their culture is threatened by Ananta's ideology and activities. In this way, Ananta is victimized because of the cultural paradox within which he lives. And his death is the death of modernity, at least temporarily, of change and progress. In particular, it signifies the death of a new culture which Ananta wants to transplant in Indian soil.

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