

Tribhuvan University

Disruption of Power Relation in Anand's *The Road*

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the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English**

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Approval Sheet

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Abstract

The dissertation discusses the treatment of power relation in Anand's *The Road*. This is an effort to show the disruption of power relation in Hindu Society in post-independent India. In this novel, Anand presents upper caste people and untouchables in antagonistic relation. Here, Anand wants to impart the message that even after the decolonization by the British Imperialists, not much has changed so far as the exploitation of the weak is concerned. But the place to hope is that the upper level people's values are in crisis on the one hand and on the other hand lower class people are struggling to get rise in their status. He says that mere legislating the law against the social evil is not a solution for social change, but that the main concern is to stop inhuman practices and conventions by some people who are still clinging to these practices and conventions. He shows necessity of equality of all human being irrespective of class and caste for a happy and a just society.

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I. Introduction

Mulk Raj Anand, born on 12th Dec. 1905 in Peshawar, is one of the most distinguished and social realist writers of Indian English literature. He has earned name and fame all over the world through his first grade novels, essays, innumerable short stories, and articles on Art and Literature and other allied areas like Arts and Cookery. His novels belong to a kind of social realism, with an overlaid emphasis on the inviolacy of human suffering and unrelieved social tensions, which are a part of their abject existence.

Anand has contributed much to the Indian writing in English. It has been developed through four phases of evolution. The early phase, from 1830-1880, is the phase of Imitation. In this phase the writers sowed the seed which was to grow, flourish and bear fruit in the year to come.

The second stage is that of Indianisation, and it may be said to begin with the works of Toru Dutta in the last quarter of the 19th century. The third phase may be said to begin with the opening of the new century. It is the phase of increasing Indianisation, when the Indian writing in English acquires a 'national consciousness' and the Indian writers write to interpret the mind and heart of India to the west. Fourthly, experimentation and individual talent mark the works of writers in post-independent India; Indian writers have acquired confidence and new lines of their own.

Indian writing in English has established itself as a separate genre, distinguished from Anglo-Indian writing and 'Indo-English Writing'. This way of writing has been enriched by such internationally recognized figures as Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Jawahar Lal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Mahatma Gandhi. After them, also, a number of eminent Indians such as R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, and

Raja Rao continued to write in English. Even today, Indo- Anglian literature continues to grow and flourish, and attain higher and higher peaks of excellence.

In Indian writing in English, there are some writers including Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan who wrote few works and left their literary field. However, Anand is different who continuously wrote many novels and short stories. He never changed his mind in course of writing. He is known as a committed and devoted writer who never creates the gap in his literary field. Anand's place in Indian writing in English is prominent. He belongs to that class of writers who have made a powerful impact on the consciousness of the educated class of India. He is a famous writer not only in India but also all over the world.

Mulk Raj Anand as a writer belongs to the tradition of the Indian Renaissance. He belongs to the long line of writers in Indian literature such as Tagore, Iqbal, Bankim Chandra, Sarat Chandra and Prem Chand, and seems to embody the characteristic dualism of the Renaissance age.

Anand's place among other Indo–Anglian novelists is unique. He is entirely a different kind of writer from R. K. Narayan, whose urbanity of style, "experience of life, clarifying triple vision of man in relation to himself, his environment, and his Gods, widening, deepening sense of comedy –all give new dimensions to his art as a novelist. "Anand is also very different from Raja Rao, whose sensitive, rhythmic style and exploratory, confessional, vision lead him, Dante-like, to a kind of *Paradiso*. Anand has his own power and glory. With feet firmly fixed on the earth and mind set toward the dream of the millennium, he has sung the choric song of love and fellow feeling. He has been the most authentic interpreter of responsible human experience here and now. His vision of the vast human concourse, his serene contemplation of characters and situations, his control of words and sentences, and, above all, his

choice between alternatives make him perhaps the foremost and most significant novelist of today's India (Qtd in K. N. Sinha 134).

All this success has been achieved despite the overwhelming difficulties which the Indian writers in English have always faced, and which they continue to face even today. First, there has been the difficulty of the medium of expression. The Indian writer in English must be able to use his chosen medium with a fair degree of accuracy both of grammar and idiom. As Raja Rao in his *Preface* to his novel *Kanthapura* says, English is not a 'foreign tongue' in India, but it is only the language of our intellectual make-up not of our "emotional make-up". He rightly suggests that the Indian writer in English must express 'Indian sensibility' and with this end in view he should learn to write 'Indian English' and not Babu English, i.e., the English of Oxford and Cambridge educated Englishmen.

Indian writers in English have had to face certain other difficulties as well. There has been the indifference even unwillingness, of publishers to publish their works. The Indian publisher is traditionally conservative and unadventurous, and Indo-English works are accepted with greater caution, and often after much persuasion, as they are supposed to be risky investments.

Today, The Indian writer in English is faced with the problem of a shrinking English environment. In the name of Patriotism, there has been constant propaganda, since independence, against the teaching of English, called a 'foreign tongue'.

Contrasting Anand with R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao, S. Menon Marath writes: The 'sweep of Anand's vision, maintains Marath, is wider and deeper than Narayan's, seeing the deepest sources of the peasant's makeup, the complex elements that shape his character. 'Where, in *Kanthapura*, Raja Rao failed according to Marath, Anand succeeds: in the depiction of the collective emotions of the peasants and the use of

minor characters to represent the various forces pulling at their lives (Qtd in Margaret Berry 83).

In his effort to wrench words into meaning, Anand is tempted to use them in various ways—delicately and beautifully, roughly and shabbily. But he always displays a fine sense of rhythm, texture, and tone color. He modulates his pitch between the high and the low, the exalted and the common, and rarely writes in the middle style. A few arbitrarily chosen extracts from his novels will clearly demonstrate the quality and compass of his style.

Anand has inherited many of the equalities from his parents, particularly from his mother, Ishwar Kaur, whose influence remains on him permanently. It is partly from his mother's deep-seated affection and her unbuyable generosity that Anand develops an abiding interest in the broad-based humanism that largely assumes a powerful cogency and centrality in his fiction.

The activities of his father and mother along with the changing social political idea of the time made him feel in a state of utter confusion. Parents play vital role in shaping the children's mind during their seminal years. But his father could not leave any inspiring mark on Anand because of his dualistic nature towards the values of life. Anand's unhappy relation with his father is clearly reflected in his own account:

No, I do not think that my father was particularly troubled by the necessary to discover a way of life. In fact, so great a portion his time was spent in reading the clauses, sub-clauses and paras of orders from Headquarters, that the Army Code seemed to have become his Bible and interpretation of it his means of livelihood (32-33).

Anand become committed to his writing when he faced many difficulties and humiliation for the publication of his first novel, *Untouchable*, because it was rejected

by 19 prospective publishers. But when it was published in 1935, with a preface by E. M. Forster, it got immense popularity and pushed Anand in the mainstream of famous novelists. In this novel, the depiction of a sweeper boy called Bakha represents the tragedy of the untouchables in India of 20s and 30s. About this Dr. Mrs. Farhana Khan writes as: "His first novel *Untouchable* is a faithful recordation and a transcription of the pathetic plight of the untouchables who are subjected to immitigable social indignities, "only because of their lowly birth"(60).

A series of influences, both parental and those influences of humanists like Premchand, Yashpal and Iqbal, have also transformed Anand into a "committed writer", which made him what he now stands for. Thus his life story reveals not only the formative influences which have shaped his "emotional" and "intellectual make-up" but also indicate the ways in which Anand has lived up to his avowed goals and socialist ideals.

Western philosophers like Locke, Hume and Berkeley, have largely shaped his intellectual make-up. Another fundamental impact in making his mind was the encouragement and help of the poet, Mohammed Iqbal and the college principal Lala Man Mohan. Likewise, the coal Miners' Strike of 1926 had a far-reaching impact in Anand's life. Besides these, many national and international political movements, his unsuccessful love affairs, numerous participation in literary activities and Gandhian philosophy had also played a crucial role in shaping his literary career.

His two critical illnesses in the early years of his life have left him with an ample time for reading and he became a voracious reader of literature, art and philosophy. His reading included some of the most important writers like Aristotle, Rousseau, Locke, Ruskin, Russell, Tagore, Iqbal, Gandhi, Buddha and Bhai Vir Singh who seemed to have whetted his sensibility.

Anand's adult life constitutes yet another chapter in his development as a humanist. The death of his cousin Kaushalya, the forced death of his aunt Devaki and his own arrest during the Jallinwalal Bagh massacre had firstly played an important role in his literary career. He had joined Khalsa College in Amritsar and participated in the Indian struggle for freedom. He witnessed the General Strike in 1926, and started admiring social equality that fostered friendliness and affability. The miners in England revolted against the Government to fight for their genuine rights which left an everlasting impression on Anand's mind, who was toying with the idea of a perfect, democratic society.

Another major influence was that of Irene's in making Anand as a committed writer to a large extent. He was further influenced by a number of writers like Charles Dickens and E.M. Forster whose views were strangely astringent to his own. Eric Gill was another major influence on him since he shared the same views on the canker of capitalism and inviolable human dignity and equality. He was in fact obsessed by the sufferings and poverty of the Indian masses and wanted to help them out, to liberate and restore them to human dignity. During the period of Khalsa College, he read the works of great writers like Mazzini, Gorky, Marx, Victor Hugo, Thomas Hardy, Shelly, Keats and Goethe. Besides these literary personalities, he read the poems of the Great poet Mohammed Iqbal. The revolutionary poems of Mohammed Iqbal caught the imagination of young Anand and further pushed him towards the nationalistic currents. Anand frequently met Mohammed Iqbal to discuss various literary issues. He also read the Das Capital of Karl Marx. At the same time he read Karl Marx's article castigating the British imperialism in India. And he wrote: "He became fully aware of the pangs of slavery and the need for breaking the cycle of

exploitation. Sensitive to the sorrows of the common man, and possessed of a sense of mission, he set out to redeem reality through art" (21).

Anand was heavily influenced by the thirties Movement in England, in which the "collective" is replaced by the individual and all the problems besetting the individual in the society were taken care of. Thus, it became a fashion to be on the left to be an amateur Marxist espousing the individual's cause which assures him of social equality. Karl Marx's "Letter on India" seemed to have altered the whole perspective of Anand as he was immensely fascinated by the Marxian solutions to all the social problems comforting the traditional Indian society. Anand describes the impact of Marxism on him, thus:

...a whole new world was opened to me. All the threads of my past reading, which had got tied up into knots seemed suddenly to straighten out and I began to see not only the history of India but the whole history of human society in some sort of inter-connection ... a hypothesis which was leading to new discoveries. (105)

Mulk Raj Anand has given an account of the various books that influenced him and conditioned his art. He tells us that it was the reading of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, during a short term in jail that awakened him to the possibilities of the epic novel. Later he read Dostoevsky's *The Possessed* and was overwhelmed. More than that, James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses* and parts of *Work in Progress* taught him the application of this technique. Moreover, Anand's nature was very much shaped by the Buddha's Advocacy of Karuna; the rejection of caste – barriers and avowal of the brotherhood of men preached by saints like Kabir and Nanak; Gandhi's championship of the untouchables repudiated by society; Nehru's affirmation of peaceful co-existence and M. N. Roy's creed of Radical Humanism.

Such are the various influences that have gone into the making of Anand's literary personality. As M. K. Naik has beautifully summarized it, "His upbringing and his intellectual development, have led him, to place greater emphasis on the need to revolt against the decayed aspects of the Indian tradition than on the acceptance and upholding of the finer elements in it.

Anand's main contribution to literature has been realistic depiction of Indian life through gentle and balance writing. For him literature is not merely a mode of personal expression but an instrument of social change. So, he considers literature, on the one hand, as a weapon for attacking social, political and economic institutions injurious to human freedom and equality of opportunity. On the other hand, he takes it as the purveyor of a new vision of society. Anand's early novels are mainly a literature of protest. Like many books of this period, they describe the daily life of the oppressed and offer glimpses of the oppressors. He is a distinctive writer whose sympathy lies with the poor and the downtrodden. Being a humanist from the core of his heart, Anand is full of blind rage. His outbursts are against the bourgeois which enjoys the privileged position. He wanted to purge the Indian society of all these social evils so that there could be "a world without caste, class, and a world without social regimentation". By reading his novels, we know his heart-felt compassion and sympathy for oppressed like untouchables and working class people in India. He depicts social reality of India in *The Road*, *The Big Heart*, *Untouchable* etc. He has invited diverse critical responses, about his work. Permila Paul has rightly observed:

...Mulk Raj Anand has freed the Indo-Anglican novel from the narrow confines of romance within which it has come to be posited by the earlier exponents, although he is a much prone to romanticizing as any of them. His novels undoubtedly project a lively image of India, the

details of which both reflect and imply his passionate concern with its social reality. They exemplify a realistic sensibility which is capable of plumbing the very depths of human personality and of social structure.

(Qtd. in Gautam1-2)

Along with untouchability, Brahmanism is a major target of Anand's attack on the Indian social order. They are typically portrayed as grasping, hypocritical, lascivious bullies, temple priest. His most of the novels show how common people are being exploited in different forms like in the name of caste, class, color, religion, gender etc. So, he strongly criticizes the exploitations and wanted to find human solutions to the congeries of hardships undergone by the underprivileged in India.

He is also blamed as a communist. But he says that he is not a communist in the sense of a blind supporter of the leftist ideologies. Anand felt: "...Marx could not explain the irrational instinctive and intuitive actions of man"(Gautam 198). He does not see Marxism as solving all types of problems of society. Rather than labeling him as communist or Marxist, we can call him a progressive writer who wants to bring change in the society. P.C. Bhattacharya rightly comments in this connection:

...He is a progressive, with all the letters in block capital and his main concern is man. He leaves severely alone, does not, believes in the Hindu doctrine of Karma, and has no laborious psychological pre-occupation. He is not really committed to Marxism and does not preach class antagonism. (Qtd. in Gautam 197)

Through his novels, he wants to make a man truly human being. "His novels act as bridge between the rational independence movement and the literary movement of the time. His message for the poor and downtrodden is so broad that it can be

equally applicable to the suffering peoples the world over" (Qtd. in Gautam 1).

Talking about his uniqueness in writing novels, Anand himself asserts:

My novels were intended to be different from others, departure from the upper and middle section fictions of Tagore. I wished to recreate the folk, whom I knew intimately, from the lower depths, the lumpens, and the suppressed, oppressed, repressed, those who had seldom appeared in our literature, except in Sarat Chatterji, Prem Chand and Bhibuti. (2)

Here, Anand himself claims that he is a unique writer of Indo-Anglican literature because he has his own kind of religion i.e. a religion of love for people.

Anand is concerned with the evils of untouchability and the need for radical empathy. He describes the pathetic conditions of the untouchables, their immitigable hardships, and physical and mental agonies, almost with the meticulous skill of a historical raconteur.

Anand's novel *The Road* deals with the caste system, a social evil. In this novel, Anand again draws character from low caste and shows the problem of untouchability of mid-century. In the novel he shows a shift from earlier novel *Untouchable*, because the time itself has brought changing perspectives during 1960 and thereafter. As D. Reimenschneider writes: "Untouchability has been abolished by law after India has become independent. Bhikhu, a young outcaste boy, is thus given better chances than Bhakha to overcome the exploitation by the higher castes" (81).

Bhikhu, the protagonist of this novel is not passive like the sweeper boy, Bhakha, in *Untouchable*, but an active rebel in the novel. He is a dynamic young man who enlists the cooperation of his fellow in building the road to connect the village to

town in order to make easier transport of milk which will help the untouchables to be economically sound.

A champion of the poor classes in India, Mulk Raj Anand attacks religious bigotry and established institutions in his numerous novels and short stories. He does not believe in men-made religion which is projected only to suppress and dominate the common people in the society. Anand remains one of the most powerful novelists of our time, revealing his revolutionary idealism and working with an unflinching loyalty for the betterment of the India's "dispossessed"; his works certainly produce the much needed 'shock of self-recognition' .

II. Review of Literature

This chapter, Review of Literature, gives us basic idea about various themes of the novel. It presents how the previous critics have commented on the current novel from different perspectives. It tries to present the view of admirers as well as the view of the detractors. Review of Literature tries to fulfill the gap in knowledge by presenting a different view from the previous views. It tries to analyze the issue which has not been elaborated perfectly.

Mulk Raj Anand's novel, *The Road*, besides various themes, deals with the theme of conflict between individual and existing social system. Since its first publication in 1961, various critics have invested their time in commenting this novel from different perspectives. Among them some have interpreted this novel as a success one while others have interpreted it as a failure. Some of Anand's admirers go to the extent of taking it as a landmark work, which expresses the writer's humanistic vision and zeal for social reform. Some of the detractors on the other hand comments adversely. For example:

Prof. Saros Cowasjee comments that the plot is feeble rehash of *Untouchable*, and Anand has no new insight to offer. The outcasts are not allowed to enter the temples or come in physical contact with the "twice born" in both of the novels. Like Bakha, in *Untouchable*, Bhikhu for a moment thinks of retaliating, but his hereditary subservience toward the privileged class reasserts itself, and he takes to the road. Moreover, he points that though Anand wrote a first rate novel on untouchability twenty five years ago, the subject still offered possibilities which he failed to explore in *The Road*. So, *The Road* is a timid work, and one cannot help suspecting that Anand's concern for the outcastes is somewhat eclipsed by his fear of embarrassment in what he calls "the human empire of Jawaharlal Nehru" (161-163).

Another critic, Margaret Berry, agreeing with the view of Prof. Saros Cowasjee, says: "The cast against untouchability, presented so directly in the first novel reappears in the short tale, *The Road*, almost thirty years later"(47). She further says that, here the effort of an enlightened landlord, a rare creation for Anand, to unite caste groups and untouchables in building the road indispensable for modernism results successively in tragedy, collaboration, and reversion to separatism, but not without permanently affecting the untouchable boy, Bhikhu.

Margaret Berry again says that Anand attacks the social evils notably, idol-worship, ritualism, caste, Brahman veneration, *karma* and *dharma* through the novel, *The Road*.

Dr. Mrs. Farhana Khan, another critic of Anand novels, comments that *The Road* is a further extension of the theme of *Untouchable*, now presented from a different angularity of vision. She views that Anand is still obsessed with the theme of rigid-caste system in Indian society, which finds its compulsive expression in the short novel, which, however, lacks the fineness of his first novel. She writes:

Anand's short novel *The Road*, which was published in 1961, is a variation on the theme of his first novel, *Untouchable*, where the caste recriminations in the typical Indian society become the focal-point of reference; but in the present novel there is neither the vehemence of social protest nor the urgency of social transformation as contained in his earlier novel. Anand fails to recapture its "first fervour and its finesse of perfection. (164)

S.A. Khan, another critic, agrees with the view of Mrs. Khan and comments that "*The Road*, Published in 1961 is a variation on the theme of *Untouchable* where, the caste-element is blown out of proportion. There is neither the stylistic maturity and

fineness of the earlier novel nor the thematic gravity"(98). Khan remains happy neither with its style nor with its theme but he also finds the artistic fineness decreasing in comparison to the other novels of Anand. But for Rama Jha, *The Road* is a more successful novel than the previous ones. While comparing its protagonist Bhikhu to the character, Bhakha of *Untouchable*, she takes the protagonist of the *The Road*, Bhikhu, as an activist

In this novel, *The Road*, Anand in fact takes up more directly both the theme and character of the *Untouchable* once again; in the context of politically free India. That is why Bhikhu the hero of *The Road* despite being an untouchable is not exactly a replica of Bhakha the hero of *Untouchable*. While Bhakha is more a passive sufferer, Bhikhu tends to be a crusader conscious of his own rights. (82)

Likewise, Dr. Krishna Nandan Sinha, emphasizing the humanistic aspects of the novel, views that the core of the novel lays elsewhere- in dramatization of the social conflict. There is endless oscillation between servile acceptance and the spirit of rebellion that shapes the soul.

Moreover, Sinha has taken road as a pathway to salvation. Bhikhu walks out of the cramped village and moves toward the road which will not only take him to Delhi, the capital of India, but also to the sunlit avenues of the future where there would be not castes or classes:

Bhikhu stretched out to his full height again, till the landlord's son cowered back. He wiped the smear of blood from his torn lip, turned round deliberately, swallowed his spittle, and waked out of the hall. He did not go toward home. Instinctively, he went in the direction of the road he had helped to build. And in his soul he took the direction, out

of the village, toward Gurgaon, which was the way to Delhi town, capital of Hindustan, where no one knew who he was and where there would be no caste or out caste. (96)

K.N. Sinha finds symbolism of the novel as encapsulating a positive social message: he takes the road as symbolizing a way out of the hell that the society has built for Bhikhu: "*The Road*, then, is a brilliant piece of symbolic construction. It stands out as a fresh land mark in the art of Mulk Raj Anand considering the distance it has traversed since the creation of *Untouchable*, especially with respect to its artistry and symbolism"(76).

Another critic, who emphasized on the symbol used in this novel, is Jack Lindsay. He says "Instead, we have a natural dynamic relation between the actual situation and its total meaning, all canalized in the image of the road." The symbolic configuration in the novel is far too obvious, but moral contours of characters get blurred in the outline. *The Road* is a brilliant piece of symbolic construction"(76).

Dr. Shreedhar Gautam, a critic of Anand, has also somehow negative view about the novel. He, here, finds a change occurring in Anand's social perspective from the previous novels. In his previous works Anand has expressed himself as social realist but here Gautam finds Anand as bourgeoisie humanist:

The social realist of the earlier novels becomes in *The Road* a bourgeoisie humanist. It is due to this fundamental change in his perceptions that at the end of the novel Bhikhu leaves to Delhi indicating his desire to attain the individual freedom from the hell of untouchability instead to seeking freedom for the entire community of untouchables. (222)

In the same way, D. Remenschneider also expresses: "*The Road* in fact does not show Anand at his best, it seems the problem, which has engaged his attention so far as does not offer him any new substance" (48).

There are some more critics who comment positively and takes this novel as a successful one. Parmila Paul comments the novelist for the need to change the higher castes' attitude toward lower castes. "*The Road* stresses the need for shacking the high caste out of their complacency in order that they might reorder their attitudes toward the untouchables"(22).

Another critic, P. K. Rajan, while being positive in his assessment of *The Road*, singles out the main point of the novel when he says "...The mode of liberation of the untouchables becomes the central point of dramatization in the novel"(46). In the same way, G. S. Balaram Gupta finds this novel as successful one, which reveals some of the most significant doctrines of Anand's humanism:

...Both *Untouchables* and *The Road* are significant novels in so far as they reveal some of the most significant tenets of Anand's humanism. They are social documents no doubt. But they are much more than this which reveals the optimistic humanism of Anand. They suggest that the untouchables kept slavish and condemned for centuries deserves a better deal and this is possible only if men give up the old belief in caste and karma and spread the massage of love and tenderness and of course practice, this value conscientiously. (36)

Balaram finds Anand spreading the massage of love and tenderness by forsaking the belief in caste and Karma. For Balaram, Anand pleads for a better treatment of untouchables who have been condemned for centuries.

About *The Road*, K. R. Srinivas Lyenger is neither negative nor positive. He wishes that Anand should have been a little more relentless in his criticism of the disgusting reality of untouchability in the Indian society. Lyenger, however, commends *The Road* as: "...revealing more of his humanity and compassion and less of his disgust and anger with current reality"(352).

These critics have studied the conflict between society and individuals from different perspectives. However, this researcher finds closer to the admirers rather than the detractors. The detractors themselves have failed to see the novel in the context of India's passage from colonial days to freedom, especially of the feudal system starting to crumble at the advent of new politics. Those who analyze this novel as success are right but they have also failed to analyze the novel from the perspective of the power relations. Thus, this research tries to explore the disruption of the existing power relationship in the social system. The issue has not yet been elaborately analyzed by these critics. So, the major approach relies on the assumption that disruption of the power relations is the main issue in this novel.

III. Power Relations: A Methodological tool

As being a political thinker Foucault needs to have put forward a manifesto of political ideas where some of his works contain a powerful, original and coherent body of political ideas. Especially, in his theory of apparently neutral and politically invisible techniques of power, Foucault is concerned with politics of a society. Foucault's ideas of 'subject', 'knowledge' 'truth' and 'power relations' make him at least a political philosopher. This is because, his main interest lies not merely in power and its manifestation but also in techniques which produce truth so as to lead an individual to subjection.

According to Foucault, Power is nothing more and nothing less than the multiplicity of force relations within the social body. Power's conditions of possibility actually consist of this moving substance of force relation: the struggles, confrontation, contradictions, inequalities, transformations and integrations of these force relations. Thus we are 'positioned' within any struggle only as a consequence of the existence of a struggle for power.

Foucault's 'radical' thesis on power has to be seen from three angles; its deviation from that of the concept of thinkers of his time, its productive but dangerous nature and constitution of subjectivity through power relations. Firstly, unlike the main trend of postmodernism which questions the 'Truth ' so as to argue for 'truths', Foucault's main project is not to devaluate and discredit the truth or science in general but to question the historical conditions necessary for the emergence of such truths. For this purpose he demonstrates the historicity of different disciplines and the concepts of objects related to such disciplines along with power relations and their strategies.

In developing this new idea of power, Foucault is less concerned with power as an entity or process than with an interrogation of the material conditions which promote specific power relations. He calls this project of evaluating one's own historical epoch or presents 'ontology' of the present. Writing on this idea of Foucault, McHoul and Grace say "ontology of the present would aspire to unearth the particular historical conditions which produced the types of 'scientific' truth peculiar to our society" (60). It becomes clear that these two critics see as we do. Foucault is setting himself apart from all other contemporary social theorists. This is because of his interest lays not on the status of the truths but on the conditions necessary for the production of such truths.

Secondly, Foucault's turning away from the repressive hypothesis of power so as to attribute the productivity and creative potential to it bears much weight in his 'radical thesis of power. For Foucault, power is very different from traditional socio-political conception of it. Discourse is not a mere effect or end –product of pre-existing power, (with a capital 'P'). Nor is power 'owned' by some privileged person or group and exercised 'simply' as an obligation or a prohibition on those who do not have it. Power, for Foucault, is not just the ruthless domination of the weaker by the stronger (to paraphrase Nietzsche): in fact it is not to be 'had' at all. Foucault says that we have a traditional accepted notion of power within our society. In the traditional notion, power is monolithic, hierarchical and clearly visible. This type of power is embodied in the law, is written down and is wholly negative. But in the last two centuries, new methods of power are ensured not by right but by control. This new form of power is much more subtle than our traditional notion. It is much easier to overlook and much harder to resist.

Power, according to Michael Foucault, is a creative source for positive value, and is practiced hegemonically. He says that the power is generated in society by producing the discourses, and by constructing the truths. Foucault takes every historical event as an exercise in the exchange of power. In the society, much of the power tends to be concentrated toward the higher echelons. Power follows simultaneously in different directions and different volumes according to the various forms of power relations. He says that the subjects, individual and selves are constituted by power.

Foucault says that along with power there is resistance. It is, inherently part of the relation. So, power works in relationship. Because, if there is no one in charge of power and no one to blame then there will be no any way to resist power and this relations of power produces the truth. If there is not resistance there would be no power relations, because it would be simply a matter of obedience. So, resistance comes first and resistance remains superior to the forces of the process. Power relations are obliged to change with the resistance. Power relations are exercised, to an exceedingly important extent, through the production and exchange of signs; and they are scarcely separable from goal directed activities that permit the exercise of a power.

He believes that Power exists only as exercised by some on others, only when it is put into action, even though, of course, it is inscribed in a field of sparse available possibilities underpinned by permanent structures. This also means that power is not a matter of consent. In itself, it is not the renunciation of freedom, a transfer of rights, or power of each and all delegated to a few; the relationship of power may be an effect of a prior or permanent consent, but it is not by nature the manifestation of a consensus.

In Foucault's view, what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action that does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions. A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys. Or it closes off all possibilities. Its opposite pole can only be passivity; and if it comes up against any resistance it has no other option but to try to break it down. Obviously the establishing of power relations does not exclude the use of violence any more than it does the obtaining of consent.

Foucault says that there is equality in terms of power distributions. It is not hierarchical flowing from top to bottom and is not used vertically to dominate the 'other'. Foucault's power doesn't adhere to the repressive hypothesis that sees power functioning in the form of chain which localizes it in a few hands. Power, for him, is not just the ruthless domination of the weak by the stronger. This idea is akin to Nietzsche who says that power is not to be 'had' at all. In *History of Sexuality* (vol. one), Foucault writes about the all-pervasive nature of power:

"Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere. [. . .] power comes from below; that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix-no such duality extending from the top down and reacting on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body". (93-94)

From this it becomes clear that Foucault's main project was to turn the negative conception of power upside down. (By 'negative conception' we mean the vertical and hierarchical notion of power). In doing this, he owed more to Nietzsche than to Karl Marx who, like Foucault, saw history in terms of power but defined power as

something to be wielded by somebody upon the 'other'. On the contrary, Foucault saw power not simply as a repressive force or tool of conspiracy but as a complex of forces that produce what happens in a society. It is not wielded by somebody because he himself is caught and empowered by certain discourses and practices that constitute power.

In short, Foucault suggests that power is intelligible in terms of the techniques through which it is exercised. Many different forms of power exist in our society: legal, administrative, economic, military, and so forth. What they have in common is a shared reliance of certain techniques of methods of application, and all draw some authority by referring to scientific 'truths'. Later, we will see that these techniques, like any other form of applied knowledge, have a history-and this is what allows for the differentiation of system of power relations. Foucault's point is to stress that there are no necessary or universal forms for the exercise of power to take place: our society bears witness to the production of quite specific practices which characterize the ways in which power relations function within it.

Foucault's concern with the productivity of power is all pervasive and deserves equal weight. Power, seen in this light is about two parties who are involved in its exercise. And such exercise in power relations produces effects on the objects, concepts and the structures of institutions which play vital role in the circulation of power in its modern forms. Practices with such power relations generate knowledge regarding various components including human beings of the social structure. He strongly defends this point in *Discipline and Punish* as he says: We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it abstracts', it masks' it conceals'. In fact, power produces reality, it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth (194).

Now the question is: if power only produces and generates something, what is wrong in its exercise? Is it always useful? The answer is that the use of power and knowledge in the productive way doesn't mean that it is always 'safe'. It is so not because false knowledge is used in the practice of power, but because it can be 'essentialist'. For Foucault, such essentialist notion and compulsive quest for certainties is not 'safe'. The idea (to put it in simple words) is what James B. Faubion states in his *Introduction to Power: Essential Works of Foucault Vol. III* 'Nothing including the exercise of power is evil in itself but everything dangerous' (XIX).

Thirdly, parallel to this 'danger' lying behind the exercise of power, there lies an attachment of constitution of subjectivity to power relations. Because discourse of a discipline positions an individual within certain limits, the individual thinks, speaks and tries to act accordingly. The knowledge of him and that of other objects, therefore, can't escape the boundary set by the discourses. The knowledge prescribed by discourses is what determines power relations; an individual is 'subjected' to be identified according to this demarcation. Cited below is the Foucaultian notion of the 'all encompassing' nature of power in the modern state:

I don't think we should consider the 'modern state' as an entity that was developed above individuals, ignoring what they are and even their very existence but on the contrary, as a very sophisticated structure in which individuals can be integrated, under one condition that [their] individuality would be shaped in a new form, and submitted to a set of very specific patterns. (*Subject and Power* 334)

This is the description of how power categorizes the individual, attaches him to his own identity and imposes a law of truth on him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. To put the matter as simply as possible, Foucault doesn't say that

all power is evil of all government unacceptable but he thinks that the theorems claiming to confer legitimacy on power of government are fictions. And social contract based on such legitimacy is nothing but a fairy tale.

As discussed above, power marks an individual and imposes the law in him but it is knowledge that makes it possible. That is to say that power attempts to subject an individual and becomes successful with the help of knowledge. To subject an individual means to compel someone else to be under control or dependent and to tie a conscience or self knowledge to his own identity. The subject, therefore, is always placed in a nit like organization of power, knowledge and representation. It becomes something around which power circulates and produces its effects.

A subject can't but be submissive to a discipline which being aided by and institution becomes the foundation of knowledge and truths. Foucault's observations about the regulatory mechanisms of knowledge and their assistance to the 'techniques' of power are expressed in his hypothesis about dominant knowledge systems that are the products of the disciplines. He sees such a system "as double repression: in terms of those whom it excluded from the process and in terms of the model and the standard (the bars) it imposes on those receiving this knowledge" (*Discipline and Punish* 219). In this way, the subject can't line in the network of power, knowledge and the techniques to power, all of which produce and revolve around the subject.

A grave issue arises now, if all social contracts and governments are 'fairy tales' designed to exercise power, why can't the 'subject' resist that power? If knowledge is the part of a social practice of subjecting individuals by mechanisms of power that lay claim to truth, why can't the subjects question the truth on its effects of power and power on its effects of truth? Foucault doesn't say that the 'governed' have no rights. He is of the opinion that a subject can possess a critical attitude of not being

'governed thus'. A subject can always raise question about the systems he lives in. He also includes the 'consent' with which the power works on the two parties involved. Supporting such a revolt of the subject, Foucault writes in his essay *Subject and Power*: May be target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political double kind' which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures (336).

On this basis, we can't say that Foucault talks about the liberation of 'embodied' individuals. No doubt the writings of Foucault's latter career pay much heed to human rights, the revolutions, and the resistance of the 'subject', but he, unlike Kant, an Enlightenment philosopher, doesn't see an individual breaking open from inside the 'tutelage'. This means, he doesn't say that subjects can be liberated from the kind of subjectivity they are 'bound' to live with, because, according to him, subjects also try to resist from a certain location in the power structure. They resist from 'within'. So, they only try to alter the power relations by rising from another discourse. Revolting against these kinds will also be nothing more than simply an attempt to create another 'essentialist' discourse. The subjects, because of already being components of the power structure, can't get rid of the subjectivity imposed on them but only try to alter prevailing power relations.

Is it useless to revolt then? Of course not. Although the subjects can't liberate themselves from the state and the state's institutions, they can, according to Foucault, "promote new forms of subjectivity through refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on [them] for several centuries" ('Subject and power' 336).

This can be done, he seems to suggest, not by going beyond the limits set by the discourses but by thinking from 'within'. But the subjects are sure to fail if they

attempt to create the 'next' essentialist notion by opposing the prevailing one. So, only to develop to 'critical attitude ' as the 'will' not to be governed , without trying to develop the new essence, is the best revolution of subjects against a system that imposes order on them.

Foucault, thus challenging the conditions of the production of certain truths which for him are the effects of power, deviates in his concept of power and truth from his contemporary thinkers. He doesn't say that power is evil in itself rather his idea of power is related to productivity. But, he seems to suggest in his latter works, that productive power limits an individual and subjects him to certain conditions. This subjection of an individual is possible with the help of 'techniques' of power that are aided by truth/knowledge. But the subject can resist his position and conditions that are set for him by the ideological framework of the discourse.

Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in any body's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

For Foucault, resistance is more effective when it is directed at 'techniques' of power rather than at 'power' in general. It is techniques which allow for the exercise of power and the production of knowledge. So the best way for the subject, Foucault says, is to develop a critical attitude as the will not to be governed 'thus' and to deny the 'essentialist' notion by locating oneself at the 'frontiers'. But in doing so, the subject should never attempt to establish the 'essence' on his own.

IV. Textual Analysis

Anand's disgusting attitude toward casteism and religion becomes transparent in the novel *The Road*. He presents resistance and protest as a means to change or to disrupt the existing power relation in the society. The sense of disruption through protest and resistance prevails throughout the novel. The untouchable characters are shown as disrupting the existing power relation in the society.

In this novel, *The Road*, disruption of power relation is the central theme. Mainly, the construction of the road which is totally against the will of the twice-born of the village is related to the topic. Anand represents resistance as a way to get rid of social evils. The resistance prevails throughout the novel. The characters, in favour of the construction of the road, have resisted the power of the superior castes' people.

The Road opens with the decision of government to construct the road, which joins the village Govardhan with city. In this village, we find two types of people: one of higher caste and another of lower caste. There we find utter domination of lower caste people by higher caste in the name of caste. They show such inhuman behavior that they believe to see the lower caste people, while going to perform some daily chores, as inauspicious and think that everything which they touch becomes polluted.

In the beginning of the novel, there is the sense of protest in the voice of Bhikhu, the untouchable protagonist. As Foucault says there is resistance along with power, Bhikhu has resisted against the upper caste people when they hinder his way to the temple with his mother Laxmi:

'Ma,' Bhikhu whispered, 'I will see you to the door of the temple. Don't talk of good deeds and bad deeds. ... We have done plenty good deeds. No merit has accrued. ... I have not seen God around these parts for a long time. ... We threw the stones from the quarry. Only I and Babu and

Shiva-Ram and old Bapu and the other Chamars did it! To serve Sarpancha Thakur Singh and his brotherhood! So that the road could be built! (4)

This refrain of Bhikhu shows that power is every where and it comes from below; that is there is no binary opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations. Bhikhu, though he is an untouchable, is a new man with hot blood and wants change in the society and in the behaviour of the twice-born people. He possesses a critical attitude of not being 'governed thus'. He always raises a question about the system he lives in. He thinks that all are equal claimant to enter to the public places whether that is temple or the well. He should not be prohibited from going to those places only due to his lower social status and being an untouchable. He is against his mother's stand that they are lower caste people and so, they should serve the upper castes unquestionably. He is of the opinion that they are chamars- leather worker, by their profession and not by their birth:

'Son we are at fault" Laxmi said "Join hands to them. Don't fight..."

And she turned to the superior ones saying "Have pity on Bhikhu. He is a hot-headed boy. And we will not get to the temple if you think he will pollute it"

"Ma what are you saying!" Bhikhu protested.

"Son we are chamars," she tried to persuade him "And they are twice born".

"One is a leather worker by profession and not by birth, Bhikhu shouted ...why should he suffer this humiliation... and why should his mother suffer because he has quarried the stone for the road. (6-7)

He takes road as a means to get rid of every kind of domination, exploitation and suppression from the twice born people. The only hope for him is to work more and more, which he thinks will liberate him from discrimination and exploitation.

Landlord Thakur Singh, his son Sanju, Pandit Suraj Mani, Daya Ram, etc. are some of the names from the twice born people, who do not help in the construction work simply because the stones are touched by the untouchables. They are totally against the construction of the road:

They objected to the handling and breaking of stones for road making, not only because they did not want to touch the stones quarried by the untouchables, but because they resented the untouchables getting money by working on Government jobs, like installation of pylons for electric wires. The superior ones did not want to put their labour with the low caste ones. (9)

They want that at any cost the road should not be built. The root cause behind not supporting the construction of the road is that they are afraid to see the rise in the status of the untouchables for they are getting good income from the construction work. Thakur Singh, along with all the twice-born people, badly abuses the untouchables for accepting the construction work and vows to punish them:

Carrion! Carriers of dung! Skinner of dead animals! Chamars! We will break their bones! I swear! Into the sewer all! But Pandit you must invoke the God Yama to come and take away the traitor Dhooli Singh, to his doots in hell! Let the vultures feast on his cursed body! He has no Atma! And no Parmatama! (3)

Bhikhu becomes very angry towards them. But, his mother, Laxmi, a woman with great faith on God and religion, has a soft heart, full of love for God like,

Vishnu, Krishna etc. She tries to persuade her son to believe in human beings as such, irrespective of factors like caste, religion and wealth:

Bhikhu, son,' she said, turning round with mellow watery eyes, 'I want to take the anger out of your heart. Love all God's children and you will get love back... If not now, in the next life. ... Look how Lambardar Dhooli Singh favours you... And he is of the same caste as the landlord. Look at me! Have I not suffered all my life...? First your drunken father. ...Then widowhood. And is my love growing less...? God's love is in my heart. ... (5)

Her respect towards the upper caste is high but her son does not want to follow her. Her words are: 'Son, we are at fault, 'Laxmi said, join hands to them all and obey them. Don't fight' (6). Her intention to join hand is to show their fault in front of untouchables. 'Bhikhu son, if you join hands to them', said, Laxmi, 'they will see wrong they are. . .' (8). But, Bhikhu is not mentally distracted by the pressures of his mother and insults done towards the untouchables by the twice born people. As Foucault says that power relation is a mode of action which acts upon other's actions, Anand does not present Bhikhu directly revolting against their power but its techniques. Bhikhu takes road as a means to get rid of every kind of exploitation and domination. So, he becomes more resolute and firm in his decision to construct the road:

Now he was determined to build stone for the road whether they should help or not. The bard in him, who felt equal to life inside him, if not from his status in the world, summoned up a strange foolhardy courage into his limbs. He kept pressing on with his torso, although they were all raising their hands. (7)

Bhikhu, a devoted worker, does not believe in God and any kind of dogmatism. He trusts his own counsel and seeks self-expression through his labour: "But trusting his own counsel, brushing the thought of God away from his mind, he mumbled another exhortation of the weaver-saint: ' "Work, work, devoted ones, for through work, all sins are washed away, by the earth and the sweat!" (9-10).

He is proud of his physical strength and devoted toward the works. He is presented as the admirer of the saint poet Kabir. Bhikhu frequently invokes the poet who sings the glory of hard work in his poem. He is confident about the construction of the road. It does not matter for him whether the upper caste people help them or not: "Now, he was determined to build the road whether they should help or not" (7). He opines that the road will be built anyway. He tells other untouchables also to continue their works pronouncing the name of Jawaharlal Nehru. He says: "Take the name of Jawaharlal and carry on" (92). Mentioning of the name of Jawaharlal has also some importance because he has also raised voice against the domination, discrimination, and exploitation of the untouchables in the name of caste and creed.

Commitment of untouchables for the construction of road becomes the major cause of headache for the Landlord Thakur Singh. The untouchables are trying to snatch the bread out of the twiceborn's pocket. It becomes clear that the Landlord Thakur Singh has lost the power. So, he cannot exercise his will freely and more than that his boldness has been lost. His psychic fear rise to the highest level. So, he is afraid of the untouchables for they will not work in their field and they can challenge them even in status quo after earning more money:

I too have lived in the same cocoon,' said Landlord Thakur Singh.

'Today, they are taking the bread out of our mouths. By breaking the stones with the help of Dhooli Singh, they hope to ingratiate

themselves with the Sarkar and earn money so that they can buy the status of the twice born. Already they have more money than is good for them. And we have less and less. ... (18)

Here, it is clear that the landlord who used to give orders to the untouchables now gets threatening from them. The twice-born becomes compelled to think about their position and status quo after the completion of the road.

When Thakur Singh comes to know that Dhooli Singh is a real booster behind the untouchables for the construction of the road, he exercises his power hegemonically by producing the discourse and creating the truth. He tries to distract him by threatening to outcaste him from his brotherhood of Jats and also warns Dhooli Singh showing the future scenario of difficulty in marrying his children to divert him from his course of supporting the truth. The landlord is not actually sad because the untouchables have violated the religious norms but because they have started to earn wage which means going away from the fieldwork of landlords, where the higher castes used to exploit them severely. In the following words of Thakur Singh we find his cause for concern:

And these Chamars worked for us! And now these Chamar boys are earning wages and walking of the heart of our whole caste brotherhood... Do you realize that you will have to marry your daughter to a Chamar and your son to a sweeper woman-if you persist in this course? (22)

From the above lines it is clear how power categorizes the individual, attaches him to his own identity and imposes a law of truth on him. The superior caste people are raising voices against the construction of the road by linking it with the violation of the religion and convention not because they want to preserve religious norms and

convention but because they want to limit them to the field work. The landlords' fear and jealousy of the new situation is directly expressed in the following words of Landlord Thakur Singh: "Already they have more money than is good for them. And we have less and less..." (18).

Dhooli Singh is committed to help those untouchables, without caring for the landlord's remarks and its consequences, for the construction of the road: "Brother Thakur Singh, this work has to be done,' answered Lambardar Dhooli Singh, deliberately restraining himself from answering back by chewing one end of his moustache. "The road has to be built ... And these boys will do the job..." (22).

Thakur Singh frequently threatens Dhooli Singh and abuses, sometimes in the name of abusing caste brotherhood and sometimes in the name of defying Dharma and creating discord in the village. He wants to distract Dhooli Singh from his path so that he could continue his domination. As Prakash Sharma writes:

Dhooli Singh also belongs to the upper caste but when Thakur finds him going away from the boundary or his domination getting the support of Sarkar, he tries to use religion to bring Dhooli Singh to his side. When there comes any type of threat to the position of the upper caste people, the power holders use all hooks and crooks to protect their position and continues their domination. (22)

Landlord Thakur Singh, at any cost, wants to distract Dhooli Singh from the company of the untouchables so that the construction of the road will not be completed. But, Dhooli Singh is not the person who will pull his leg behind from his commitment. He is ready to accept any kind of challenge and consequences. He fights for the welfare of the untouchables and tries to resist the power every time. He does not care for whatever the Panchayat do: "I am already condemned by our Panchayat,

said Dhooli Singh, roused inside him as he realized the finality of Thakur Singh's words. But I know that while the men of our brotherhood eat a little, many of these Chamars don't even have bread with pickle twice a day" (23).

From this statement of Dhooli Singh, we can see that instead of thinking about his own position and consequences of defying the norms of his caste brotherhood and religion, he is more concerned over the plight of the untouchables. He does not change his mind due to threatening of the twice-born people. Rather, he works as a saviour of the untouchables.

When all his strategies to deviate Dhooli Singh fail, Thakur Singh realizes that Lambardar Dhooli Singh with the untouchables have cowed him down. He feels nervous, and is confused, but tries to keep his balance and strength anyhow:

This violence unnerved him and clouded his head. Almost blinded by the fumes of impatience, he stumbled by the halter of a goat near the lane which faced his own house. His turban was shaken and he quickly adjusted it, lest he should be seen in this undignified state by anyone. In the attempt to preserve his respectability, he now forgot where he was going and, as from habit, nearly entered the doors of his own house. (26)

Landlord Thakur Singh is in confusion and in the state of great problem. He is not in the position to control himself nicely.

In the beginning part of the novel Landlord Thakur Singh seems busy in suppressing all low caste people in the name of religion and rank. But towards the ending part of the novel, liberal ideology of change through reordering of upper caste blues are presented not only through Lambardar Dhooli Singh who always sides low caste, poor people but also through his bitter opponent, Landlord Thakur Singh, who

experiences a change of heart towards the end. Balram Gupta opined: "Even the stubbornly orthodox Thakur Singh eventually relents when he finds that Dhooli Singh has succeeded in building the road in spite of him and his pride"(36).

For Balram Gupta, the pride of upper level people Thakur Singh has crumbled down after knowing the success of road making movement. It shows the power of feudal lords in the declining position.

Power relation is once more disrupted in the case of Pandit Suraj Mani, a Brahmin priest, who has been invoked as a character that engineers the religious indoctrination. He always preaches about Dharma and Karma. He believes that temple teaches Dharma and the untouchables are condemned by their Karma. As Power marks on individual and imposes the law in him and attempts to subject an individual and becomes successful with the help of knowledge, he wants to keep untouchables under the strict rule of Karma so that he can keep them all humble and devoted to God and the God's men- the Brahmin. So, at first, he does not let the untouchables enter the temple nor accepts the offerings of the untouchables. But when he sees that the untouchables have nearly completed the road, he changes his ideology and easily accepts the offerings given by the untouchables forgetting all the norms of Karma:

The priest was constrained to accept the fruit from the Lambardar's hands, even though he refrained from diving in . . . At any rate, the taboo of touching seemed to be broken, in so far as the Brahmin was compromised into accepting mangoes handled by the untouchable woman, Lachmi. (73)

It is clear that he is a hypocrite and religious norms matter nothing to him when it concerns material gains. He accepts the offerings when he realizes that he cannot distract them from their path.

Anand presents Pandit Suraj Mani as a hypocrite and a cheater who looks at the girls and women of the society with the lustful eyes and in a vulgar way. Being a Brahmin, he always sides with Thakur Singh and plots against Dhooli Singh. But when he knew that the twice born are compelled to kneel down he tries to make compromise between the landlord Thakur Singh and Lambardar Dhooli Singh:

He knew that Lachaman and Sanju had repented and gone to work there with the untouchable boys after the visit of Diwan Roop Krishan, and that the Lambardar had won as against the Landlord Thakur Singh, whom he, Suraj Mani, had backed. And now it was necessary for somehow to bring about a compromise between the two factions in the village. (70)

Anand has presented Dhooli Singh with humanistic feelings who helps the untouchables to fight against atrocities of the twice-born people. He stands by the untouchables in the hour of their need and shelter them in his house when the "twice-born" burn the huts of the outcastes, unleashing a reign of terror: "Come then,' he said, suddenly, impetuously, 'Come into the house... come. The woman of God is gone to her proper place, the temple! And I shall be an out caster forever.... So the house is yours. Come, my sons and daughters' "(47). He oscillates between family ties and the public zeal. He could stay conveniently with his family and his class but his deep passion for justice and truth not let him. So, without caring for the family ties he decides in the favor of public zeal, alienating himself from his wife and children also. This is the decision which makes not only his own life rewarding but also the lives of others. Ultimately it also brings his family back to him.

Disruption of power relation is again seen in the case of Sanju. Sanju, the son of Landlord Thakur Singh and Lachhman, the son of Dhooli Sing, is a very close

friend. Both of them are very amiable in nature. But Sanju worries thinking about Dhooli Singh, Lachaman's father. Sanju plans to bring back Dhooli Singh back from untouchability: "And I am going if you think that you cannot go and convert him back from untouchability to Dharm (31-32).

Landlord Thakur Singh and his wife are deeply rooted to the casteism in the society. They are conservative and traditional. They do not want their daughter to be married to the people whose family has been foiled by untouchables; they do not even want to hear this type of message. But later they are compelled to accept Dhooli Singh's son for their daughter and Dhooli Singh's daughter for their son:

We do not know what sins of our past have prospered against our ruin that we had to accept Dhooli Singh's son for you, and his daughter for your brother! ... To think that we never bent our heads before the Sarkar, and now we have to demean ourselves before this Dhooli Singh, who is almost an untouchable! (33)

As power relations are obliged to change with the resistance, this remark of Bhagbanti, landlord Thakur Singh's wife, shows that the existing power relation is disrupted again in the novel because the people who never bent their heads before the Sarkar have become helpless in front of Dhooli Singh who is continuously resisting the power exercised by the twice born peoples. So, they are compelled to accept Dhooli Singh's son for Rukmini, Thakur Singh's daughter and Dhooli Singh's daughter for Sanju, Thakur Singh's son.

Dhooli Singh develops a critical attitude as the 'will' not to be governed, thinking from 'within'. He tries to alter the power relations by rising from another discourse. He works as a real disrupter of power relation existing in the society. He once again, stands as a true lover of the untouchables who are labouring for the construction of

the road. He also abuses his son for joining the hands with the twice born and helping them who are working against the outcaste people and are trying to make them compelled to leave the house:

And he stood, growing redder. Then he reeled and shook his fist at the sky, saying : 'Come, come all my sons, to my field, We will all live there, And work ... Come and fetch what we have in my home. And we will sleep on straw for the night. . . And, tomorrow, I will go to Gurgaon and get enough money from the Sarkar for building new huts. ... (45-46)

Unlike another twice born, Dhooli Singh does not believe in Dharma and does not want to be entangled in any kind of dogmatism. Rather, he defines Dharm in his own way and believes in the labour of the people. He also believes that through hard labour we can purify ourselves and through our Karma we can bend down the God also:

What are you saying: "theirs and ours" as though "they" don't want the road, and "we" want it! They wanted to build it also, but they do not want you to work and earn money. And all the other things are lies. ... I am of them, as much or as little as you. When it comes to money we have to earn enough cash to survive against the drought. That is the new Dharm as I understand it. Not prayers! "God must come down incarnate as bread in our country. (50-51)

Here, it is clear that Dhooli Singh thinks in some different way from that of Thakur Singh. He revolt against the technique of power which allows for the exercise of power and the production of knowledge.

The love affair between Bhikhu and Rukmini has something to do with Bhikhu's resistance against the conventional caste-dominated old view that untouchables should not look at the face of the upper caste girl. He himself knows that the deep-rooted half conscious love should not come out but he cannot suppress it. In this regard too, he shows his resistance. One side of his mentality tells him he should not but another side of his mentality-tells him why not. For, he would have to suffer if the half conscious affection for his bardic love for her were ever to flow over the rim of his eyes: "How could he dare to think such a thought". And yet at the ultimate point of excitement in him he asked: why not? (Anand 10)

The disruption of power relation is seen frequently in this novel also through the characters. Laxman, son of Lambardar Dhooli Singh, always worked for the landlord Thakur Singh. He used to hate untouchables and create problems in the way of the construction work. He even joined Sanju while setting fire in the huts of the untouchables. But the disruption of power is seen when he feels disgusted and all his evil deeds haunt his mind. Sweating on the forehead and feeling agitated, he is afraid of his own shadow. He is repenting for his past deeds and tries to get rid of it by committing suicide. But when he fails to commit suicide he murmurs the name of the God and repents for the bitter past. He curses himself:

He lowered himself into the steps of the well which were under water and sat splashing himself, murmuring the name of God: 'Ishwar! Ishwar!' ... He felt a snake might be about in the water to come and bite him and punish him with death for his misdeeds. ... And then he covered his face with both hands. 'If Bhikhu should come and murder me here and now', he felt, 'that would be the only way to wash off my guilt –in blood not in water! (57-58)

From this refrain of Laxman, it becomes clear that he is broken inwardly and wants redemption from all his sins through the hands of Bhikhu. He has to accept Bhikhu and his work as an appreciable one. Now, he has realized the reality. So, he does not hear Thakur's words also and goes to join the untouchables:

You can't widow my daughter even before she had been married, son!' said the landlord to Lachaman, with a creaking voice. 'Our caste is that of the twice-born and we cannot mix with the untouchables!'

The boy did not heed the landlord's words but got up and, hiding the liquid in his eyes from the children, he rushed away.

I am going where my family is,' he mumbled as he went. (62)

From this refrain, it becomes clear that Lachaman who used to obey Thakur Singh more than his father now does not hear the words of landlord Thakur Singh. Now he is going to reside with his father Dhooli Singh. So, the power relation is again disrupted in the novel.

Although Thakur Singh is the Sarpancha of the village, he becomes powerless and obeys when Diwan Roop Krishan threateningly suggests him to be kind and to die with the praise of the people of the society rather than dying without hut and hearth. He suggests Thakur Singh to help kindly for the construction of the road and demonstrate himself as having a merciful heart: "Protector of the poor" answered the landlord his instinct for hospitality touches to the quick "to be sure the hookah is being got ready..."(59). These lines show how Sarpancha does nothing more than obeying the order of Diwan as a child. Under the power of Sarkar his power remains inoperative.

Though, in the beginning, Sanju is presented as a bold hearted boy and hater of untouchables, now his mind has been changed and feels distracted. After getting

badly scolded from his father, Sanju feels alone and divided from everyone in the village. He repents for all his deeds and seeks for redemption: "As soon as the sense of desolation of his aloneness overpowered him, he realized that, short of death, he was involved in the fate of the village" (67).

He tries to control himself but at last he cannot resist it and goes with Lachaman to join those untouchables in the construction work. He yields himself to the untouchables and work with them continuously. He has to accept those untouchables as a brave one. Sanju feels himself defeated because he had been made to eat dust by Dhooli Singh and the untouchables. So, he feels himself humiliated living with untouchables:

As he drove along the course of his feelings, the doubt crossed his mind: life has made me hard, because, as the son of the landlord of the village, I have to command. And to do that is to be hard. ... Specially to command these people, who may be stupid but can work and earn a living on their own. (77)

Sanju realizes that though he is a son of the Sarpancha of the village he cannot now command these untouchables who have established their own living. So he feels that his life has become hard.

The disruption of power relation becomes very important in the case of Landlord Thakur Singh. Though, he is a very stubborn person, his psychic fear has made him suspicious about everything. When Sanju leaves the house and goes to join the untouchables and his daughter, Rukmini, becomes indifferent towards him, he began to sweat. He knows that he is left alone to fight them all: "Then he lay back, embroiled in the heat and sweat of his body, mumbling to himself more abuse and the

incoherent words: 'I am left alone to fight them all! ... I am left alone! Hey Ishwar Parmeshwar! Alone! ...' (83).

Landlord Thakur Singh becomes very happy when Sanju returns from the untouchables to join his family. But at last he realized that the untouchables have succeeded in his planned work, the construction of the road. So, he sent a message to Bhikhu through his mother to come and visit: "After all the road was nearly built, and Sarpancha Thakur Singh had perhaps realized that the untouchables could do the job as well as the caste Hindus. ... The landlord knew he was beaten. That is why he had sent a message to him through his mother to come and see him" (93).

When the road was nearly built, landlord Thakur Singh knew he was beaten and his power is now no more effective. So he sent message to Bhikhu to come and see him. But when Bhikhu goes to his house, Sanju, the son of Thakur Singh, treats him bitterly and humiliates him for touching the brass cup while drinking water. Sanju kicks the brass cup of Bhikhu's hand sending it flying in to the hall and wounding Bhikhu's lips. As power relation as a mode of action, acts upon other's action, Bhikhu raises his hands to retaliate but controls himself and walks away through the road as the king walks... "Bhikhu stretched out to his full height again, till the landlord's son cowered back. He wiped out his smear of blood from his torn lip, turned round deliberately, swallowed his spittle, and walked out of the hall" (96).

At the end of the novel, after the completion of the road, Bhikhu leaves his village. He sets out on a journey toward Gurgaon on his way to Delhi, the capital of India. After the humiliation and cruel behavior, which he gets from Sanju in Thakur Singh's house, he does not go towards his home but towards the city:

Instinctively he went in the direction out of the road he had helped to build. And in his soul he took the direction out of the village, toward

Gurgaon, which was the way to Delhi town, capital of Hindustan, where no one knew who he was and where there would be no caste or out caste. (96)

So, the construction of the road has shown him the sunlit avenues of the town where there would be no social inequities. Rather, he will get there classless society, socially and morally integrated, a new brotherhood, social and racial equality. He leaves the village not because he had no power and confidence but because, he is hopeful and confident in his heart of the attainment of the emancipation from the suppression and domination.

So many critics have supported this point. In this regard Riemeschneider finds the ending as containing the philosophical solution of Bhikhu's story and thinks that Bhikhu's dream of being emancipated from caste suppression and discrimination has the power of potential realization (Qtd. in Rajan 52). Those critics, who consider the road as a symbol of liberation and hope for Bhikhu and regard the ending of the novel as appropriate, hold the view that what is likely to be happen to him in Delhi is of no importance, the only point of importance for them is that so long as the road is there, there is hope for him. Thus Jagadish Shivapuri writes:

He walks away as a king walks from his kingdom, but he walks away to fresh field and pasture new. For he is sure of hand and confidence in the heart he is a man who has seen the dawn from the top of the mountain while the jackal as he leaves behind are still in the darkness of the valley of habitual custom. This is the great Victory of the novelist and he transforms a failure into a victory. (Qtd. in Rajan 53)

For Shivapuri, Bhikhu is leaving the village not because he has no power and confidence but because, he is hopeful and confident in his heart of the attainment of the emancipation from the suppression and domination. Critic, M. K. Naik comments that "The road to Delhi which Bhikhu takes at the end of the "*The Road*" is indeed the road to destiny" (38).

In the same way, Parmila Paul regards the ending of the novel as an optimistic one: "He (Bhikhu) voluntarily leaves home and goes along the nearly built road toward Delhi, the capital city with its Cosmopolitan atmosphere will not take as a Chamar but merely as a human being. So, that is the hope that the modern Delhi offers" (146). As we know the deepest desire of Bhikhu is to get liberation from the domination and discrimination in the name of caste, he hopes, will be fulfilled in cosmopolitan atmosphere of Delhi. So ending is flushed with optimism. Similarly K. N. Sinha observes about the denouement of the novel as positive one. He writes in this regards as:

Bhikhu is not the alone figure on the road to freedom. He has behind and with him the whole tribe of outcastes, in fact the whole insurgent humanity. The road is essentially a pathway to salvation. Bhikhu attains the ideal in a wholesome way emerging as the mentor of his class. (74)

For Sinha, Bhikhu, who is on the way to salvation, is not a lone figure but the whole community as well as humanity is with and behind him. The road, which Bhikhu takes at last, is a pathway to salvation but not an escape from struggle. Sinha regards Bhikhu not an escapist but a mentor of his class as well as mythical figure.

The Road, thus, textualizes the resistance against an old system not yet dead and the gestation of a new system yet to be born. Bhikhu's resistance, though looking

feeble at the end, is geared towards achieving a better life. Bhikhu epitomizes the changed character of the new reality which is struggling to break free from the fetters to the caste system that has undermined the life of the untouchable. In this sense Bhikhu marks a complete departure from the passive Bakha in *Untouchable*. Unlike Bakha, Bhikhu, shows greater political activism and comes to the fore as a devoted citizen of the changing Indian society-a society slowly but surely veering away from the modes of feudalism.

The disruption of power relation is seen in the different facets of the novel and it becomes the central theme of the novel *The Road*.

V. Conclusion

The textual analysis leads to the conclusion that Mulk Raj Anand, while dealing with the caste system, reveals how this man made system has become a medium to exploit, dominate and segregate human beings belonging to the lower castes. He also shows how this system has become an obstacle to the path of human progress and dignity of man.

Casteism as a system creates suffering and agony in society. This caste based discrimination brings disunity, diversity and antagonism among the member of the same society. It never allows happiness to the lower class people. In such a situation lower class people cannot go for direct revolt although they develop a spirit of resistance. Thus, it is clear that construction of law in favour of untouchables can do no better but what is essential is the increase of awareness of the people, which prepare them mentally to go for revolt against such evils of society.

Although, the construction of law preserves the right of every one and grants every human being as equal one, the untouchables are discriminated and exploited by upper caste people. In this novel, the superior caste people want to continue exploitation and suppression of the lower caste people limiting them in the works of their own fields. They create several hindrances before untouchables, who are involved in constructing the road. When they find lower caste people trying to earn wage by working on the road construction project, they first use religious concept to stop this and later on do not hesitate to burn their huts.

This novel presents his hero, who is from a lower caste, against the system which prevents the lower class people from all their alienable rights. for example: in his search of freedom and social justice, Bhikhu, the protagonist of Anand's novel *The*

Road, disrupts the existing power relations in the social system, first by constructing the road and then by leaving the village.

Construction of the road is totally against the twice born's will. They want to stop the construction of the road at any cost. But it is the firm commitment of untouchables that motivates them to finish the project work. Because, Bhikhu takes the road as only means to get rid of every kind of domination, exploitation and suppression from twice born people.

At last, Bhikhu, the hero of the novel, who is from untouchable group, leaves the village and takes the road to Delhi town. This leaving of village is also a disruption of power relations because the upper caste people must not have thought that Bhikhu will leave the village and they have also not wanted that. But Bhikhu leaves the village and takes the road which will lead him to Delhi town, where there will be classless and casteless society, free from every kind of distinctions and discrimination. He will find there new brotherhood, harmony and unity among people and freedom to enjoy.

In Hindu society caste system plays vital role for the construction of people's consciousness. It provides the dominant of exploiters authenticity with the reference of religion and other worldly doctrines. In the present Hindu society they are suppressed and exploited with the support of religion.

Untouchability is regarded as legal offence but in practice it is still alive and lower caste people are still being exploited and dominated in the name of caste and religion. So, for the emancipation of the untouchables, their own awareness should be increased. They should be prepared psychologically for their emancipation. Until and unless they themselves are prepared for their emancipation and raise their voice against the domination and exploitation, the law will not be of much help. A social

evil like untouchability is not an inherent feature of society but is the result of the failure of the dominated or exploited people to end this unsavory practice. Trying to change the system is not easy but it is also not an impossible task. For them, effort should be made to awaken the consciousness of the people by educating them. People should be made aware that casteism is a system that must be changed for further progress and dignity of man.

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