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**The Death of the Destitute in Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud***

**The Death of the Destitute in Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud***

**A thesis submitted to the Central Department of English  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English**

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This thesis entitled "The Death of the Destitute in *Two Leaves and a Bud*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Churamani Aryal has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

*Two Leaves and a Bud* by Mulk Raj Anand reflects how the British capitalists and their Indian sycophants dehumanize, exploit, manhandle and victimize the weak and helpless Indian working class, especially, the coolies during colonialism. Gangu, the protagonist in the novel, is the representative of the whole proletariats of the Indian society who is dehumanized, manhandled, exploited and even killed without any cause. Through Gangu, Anand makes the people conscious about the excessive exploitation of the proletariats and demands to protest until and unless the proletariats get their true existence in the society.

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## I. General Introduction

### Introduction

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the most distinguished, committed and prolific writers of Indo-Anglican literature. Today, he is widely known in India as well as abroad as a great essayist, short-story writer, novelist and thinker. He is also respected as a great humanist in the Indian sub-continent as well as abroad. He thinks only about the upliftment of human beings.

Many critics have praised him but a few critics have tried to label him as a propagandist. They claim that Anand uses the artistic medium just to express his ideological commitment. However, a large number of readers have regarded him as a genius and true artist. K.N. Sinha says, "Anand has never been above battle; rather he has fought bravely against wrongs and injustices. Even though he engaged in fray, he has composed the theme song of love and has made his voice echo in clamorous notes to arouse the conscience of humanity" (17).

Anand as a humanist writer portrays the picture of human suffering, poverty, misery, exploitation and injustice in his novels. His novels very clearly trace how people especially poor and down trodden, are victimized in the name of politics, caste, religion, class, etc. by the oppressor. As a humanist writer, his main objective is to portray human problems: exploitation, disease, suffering, starvation, social hierarchies prevailing still today in Indian society. P.C. Bhattacharya, a great commentator of Anand says, "Anand is a progressive, with all the letters in block capital and his main concern is man" (134).

Anand, always, considers literature as the instrument of humanism through which he expresses sorrow, misery, suffering, hardship of the people especially Indian

working class. Dr. Shreedhar Gautam also writes about Anand's contribution to literature as:

[. . .] Anand's main contribution to literature has been his realistic depiction of Indian life in his major novels as it was done by Premchand in Hindi novels. His novels acted as a bridge between the national independence movement and the literary movement of the time. They reveal his heartfelt compassion and sympathy for the oppressed like the untouchable and working class people in India.  
(Gautam 1)

Anand is also a voracious reader of western literature beside being a voluminous writer of novels. G.S. Balram Gupta, a great commentator of Anand writes:

He (Anand) is a loyal friend, tireless worker, an enthusiastic organizer, a prolific writer, an unceasing champion of the cause of the poor and the lowly, a relentless crusader against inequality and injustice, and above all, a staunch humanist with limitless trust in man and creative arts on which he pans his hopes, as made evident by one of his recent letters to the present writer. (12)

His keen interest towards the poor and the lowly people of India made him a world famous writer. Most of his works have been translated into more than a score of languages of the world. This also shows Anand is a famous writer of the world. Beside these, his friendship with T.S. Eliot, E.M. Forster, Herbert Reader, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, Dylan Thomas etc. shows that certainly Anand is a writer of world wide spectrum.

Mulk Raj Anand's writings are marked by his fine perception of the Indian ethos, the sinister forces that operate in the Indian society, his humanitarian outlook and profound sympathy for the down-trodden and the underprivileged. His novels are, thus, faithful transcripts and serious comments on the contemporary social reality.

Mulk Raj Anand was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1905 in Peshawar Punjab in the north western province of India. His father Lal Chand was a Coppersmith by profession but later he joined in the British Indian army. His mother, Ishwar Kaur came from the peasant family. She was "typically Indian and yet nearly a mythic figure, specially in her love, piety and innocence, lived her daily round of rituals, prayers and songs" (Sinha 18). She nourished him with the songs, myths, ancient stories from epics and shastras – which is a foundation of his literary career. The first five years of Anand's life were an infant paradise. Similarly, he was also influenced by his cousin Kaushalya who was also the playmate in his childhood. Anand grew up as a very superficial and ill educated young man without any bearings. As a child, he had mixed freely, with the children of the sweepers attached to his regiment, and such association cutting across caste and class had continued during his boyhood and youth. Anand treated these early playmates and friends as the heroes of his initial novels.

Anand began his school education in the Nowshera Government Primary School. The school education as implemented by British rulers was not satisfactory because for Indians both language and culture were strange. That's why, Anand states, "the education imported in these schools was imitative, giving very little idea of Indian tradition but mainly bastardized version of English curricula . . ." (Apology 33).



Anand, after school education, went to Amritsar and studied at the Khalsa college up to graduation. During his college life, he had read the works of great writers like Karl Marx, Gorky, Keats, Hardy etc. Moreover he was highly influenced by poet Mahammed Iqbal.

After graduation from Khalsa College, Anand won a fellowship to study at the university of London. He went to London and obtained a Ph.D. in philosophy on the philosophies of John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume, and Bertand Russell from the University College of London under the supervision of G.D. Hicks. After his doctoral degree in England, he did not return promptly to his native country, India. He remained in England and got opportunities to take knowledge about the scholars like Johann Wolfgang, Von Goethe, Honore de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Rabindranath Tagore and many other celebrities. While in England, he took part in several political and social activities because it was a period of political havoc and turmoil. After that, he began to lecture as an Asst. Professor of Philosophy and literature at the London Country Council Adult Education School in 1939. He continued his job there till 1942. Beside this, he worked for B.B.C. Eastern Service from 1941-1944. During the period when he was in the London, he was influenced by Marxism or the progressive movements. He was deeply influenced by Marx's *Letter on India* published in 'New York Herald Tribune' in 1853. After being influenced, Anand participated in several meetings and conferences held by progressive writers. Though he was interested in progressive writing, he never became a member of any communist parties. He had visited Spain in 1935 to express his commitment and support against the Spanish civil war.

Anand had already participated in many political activities led by many great political leaders when he was in India. He worked for the Indian National Congress

and the Kishan Sabha upon his return to India. His role in organizing the second "All India Progressive Writers' Conference" in Kolkata was important. Besides these, he worked at the world peace council Sahitya Academy of letters, the Lalit Kala Academy of art, the National Book Trust, and several university seminars and conferences in India as well as abroad.

Anand is a man of multifaceted personality. As a veteran of literature, he received a number of academic awareness. He served his country and the whole world till the last of his days. Anand left this world on 2004 making a great contribution in the field of art and literature. The whole world will remember him as a spokesperson of the poor, suffering, down trodden and suppressed people.

### **Anand as a Novelist**

When Mulk Raj Anand was advised to go with Gandhi and join his battle against caste system and imperialism, he lived with Gandhi at Sarbmati Ashram. Then he wrote the first draft of *Untouchable* in 1935. He wrote again and only Gandhi approved the draft. Nineteen publishers in London had rejected the script, but with E.M. Froster's preface, it was accepted by a publisher. Later on, the book went on as a modern classic and was translated into twenty languages. This was the birth of Mulk Raj Anand as a celebrated novelist.

After *Untouchable*(1935), he wrote *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts* (1938) etc. His novels are classed chronically under the three phases on the basis of their thematic preoccupation. The novels written from 1933 to 1939 fall under the first phase which are labeled thematically as the Hesitant Radical in terms of protagonist's lack of consciousness. The novels of this phase are *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts* (1938). In these novels, the

heroes, drawn from the oppressed classes, are simple, innocent, intellectually undeveloped though faintly aware of the nature of the social forces working against them. These novels trace the lives of the disinherited, the untouchable, and show the writer's anger and anguish at the cruelties of caste, social hierarchy and capitalism. Anand's chief characters in these novels confront constructive environment, but they accept the given situation without any significant protest.

The years between 1939 to 1945 which witnessed in quick succession the publication of the four novels *The Village*, *Across the Black Waters*, *The Sword and the Sickle* and *The Big Heart* constitute the second phase of Anand's creative life. The period also saw the publication of the *Private Life of an Indian Prince* in which the elements of protest constitute the core. The novels of the first phase portray the tragic stories of the victims, explore the nature of the social system found in the conventional values of caste or money. For example Bakha, Munoo, and Gangu perish, suffer and indignities and humiliations heaped on them by a cruel capitalist society. The novels written between 1939 to 1945 grouped in the middle phases are termed as the Redemption Through Rebellion. This is the period widely acknowledged as the most important phase of Anand's writing in view of the novelist's explicit inclination towards the ideals of radical social transformation.

The novels of Anand written from 1946 onwards are enlisted under the third or the last phase which has been defined as the phase of the Perennial Springs. The novels of this phase, namely *Gauri*, *The Road* and *Death of a Hero* are the most important novels which show novelist's growing concern with the human heart and clearly display his desire of achieving a healthy synthesis between society and individuals. It is owing to this desire on the part of the novelist that the protagonists of

this phase seem emotionally absorbed and seeking their salvation within the Gandhian scheme of things.

Beside the novels, Anand wrote many other literary works-stories, magazines etc. He has written several books of non-fiction and hundred of articles on diverse subject matter.

Indian writing in English has been acknowledged, abroad with the novels of R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, Kushwant Singh, Bhawani Bhattacharya etc. Among them Anand, Narayan and Rao are the most important novelists who come together in Anglo-Indian literature. Writing on Twentieth century Indian novels, Dr. Shreedhar Gautam in his book *Essays on Nepali, India and American Literature* writes, "The Indian English novel is twentieth century literary phenomenon as the major pioneering novelists acclaimed in India and abroad are the products of this century. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao are regarded as the founding fathers of Indian novels in English" (44).

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

A more prolific writer than either of the above Mulk Raj Anand is engrossed in the many 'underdogs' of Indian society, and his *Two Leaves and a Bud*, *Coolie*, *Untouchable* and *The Village* treat them, not patronizingly, but with the sympathy and even the respect due to their

as human beings. The sweeper, peasant, the plantation labourer, the city drudge, the sypoy, all emerge alive from his novels anguished and hungry, yet human superstitious, and self-divided, vividly realized in spite of their thwarted purposing. (45-46)

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

### **Review of Literature**

Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud* has drawn the attention of many critics since its publication. The novel has been interpreted from different perspectives. P.K. Rajan, a great commentator of Anand, shows the tragic disintegration of Gangu, the protagonist in the novel, is because of the brutal exploitation of capitalism. He claims, "*Two Leaves and a Bud* dramatizes the tragic disintegration of Gangu family confronted with the brutal forces of capitalist exploitation" (59). Rajan again portrays the ruin of the hero, the working class Indian peasant, due to the sharp exploitation of British capitalists.

During colonialism, all government official systems including the law were under the control of British capitalists though they were minor in numbers. Indian people, especially, the working class were the major victims of such rude justice. Although, Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter, kills Gangu, he no more gets any punishment from the British jury. The judgement is passed in favour of him and he is discharged. It shows during colonialism, the judiciary system of India was quite

ruthless and exploitative. Further, Rajan claims, "[. . .] Gangu in protecting his daughter falls victim of Reggie's bullet meets his doom, and finally Reggie Hunt is acquitted by a predominantly British Jury" (74).

Another critic Saros Cowasjee analyses the novel in detail and tells that Gangu, who goes to the Macpherson Tea Estate for the betterment of his life is brutally exploited by the British capitalists and their Indian sycophants on the plantation. They not only exploit the coolies paying the low wages but they manhandle, abuse, deceit, and even kill without even a single harm.

Saros claims:

*Two Leaves and a Bud* is the story of the peasant Gangu and his family who are inveigled into indentured labour on the Macpherson Tea Estate. Fleeing from drought and starvation of their village in the Punjab plains, they arrive in the lush greenery of the Assam hills to slave for their English masters who beat, abuse and exploit them. (82)

Again Saros comments on the character of Gangu as passive, and loyal. He also claims that Gangu's suffering is not only due to cruel and inhuman capitalists but also due to fate. As Saros states:

Gangu, instead of drawing attention of himself, makes us think of the millions of his suffering brethren. In his passivity, his tender loyalties, his compassion and depth of suffering, he symbolizes the Indian peasantry. Fate has done its worst to him and now its little gifts are only anxious burden of life. (92)

D. Riemenschneider also analyses the life and characteristics of Gangu and comments that Gangu is very static, having no vitality because of the sharp exploitation of colonialism, capitalism and feudalism from his house, Punjab to the

Assam Tea Estate. Beside these factors, he is controlled by the religious superstition fatalism. He claims, "Gangu is an old man, whose life consists of failures, humiliations and a constant confrontation with hunger. What we see in him is an absolutely static character who has lost all his vitality and is almost solely controlled by distrust and fatalism" (35).

K.R. Srinivasa Iyenger proceeds that it is a dramatic novel that shows a conflict between the interests and the destinies of the hero – Gangu. He says that the brutality of the capitalists i.e. dark which gets victory over the helpless and weak coolies. In this regard Iyengar states, "*Two Leaves and a Bud* may be said to be essentially a dramatic novel, and certainly it culminates in a tragic clash of interests and destinies, and what is fine is put out, and what is dark is triumphant" (343).

T.M.J. Indra Mohan comments on the theme of the novel and also says that Gangu is not only the victim of man but also of God and civilization. In this regard he states, "*Two Leaves and a Bud* also discusses the theme of exploitation of coolies working in the tea garden at the hands of British officials. Gangu, the protagonist of the novel is an old and a beaten man. He is a victim of man, God and civilization" (89).

Many critics have interpreted this novel in different perspectives, however, Marxist perspective can not bear those interpretations of the novel. Therefore, it is important to analyze the novel through Marxist lens.

## **II. Marxist Criticism**

### **Emergence and General Development of Marxist Criticism**

Twentieth century has been a revolutionary era from the point of view of development of new critical trends. These new critical trends include Marxism, feminism, existentialism, psychoanalytic, linguistics and stylistics, formalism etc. As this dissertation is concerned with Marxist approach, it would be relevant to examine its emergence and historical development.

Towards the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Karl Marx, in association with Frederick Engels, invented radical economic, social and political theories which spread with amazing effect throughout the heralding the dawn of new era. The same theories are known as Marxism today. Karl Marx formulated the most revolutionary and scientific theories in the time of tremendous socio-economic changes resulting from the scientific discoveries and large-scale production. His theories clearly disprove the bourgeois economic, social and political system establishing the philosophy of proletariat-the lowest stratum of the society. Marx initiated the movement of those who do not furnish material things but work, against those who possess abounding amount of wealth without labour. The emancipatory movement initiated by Marxism aims at abolishing the concentration of wealth in the hands of tiny minority by seizing political and legal power from the hands of bourgeoisie class. Thus, Marxism as a political theory advocates class struggle of the proletariat against the ruling class until the political power is seized, and socialist emancipatory society is established.

Karl Marx was an extraordinary influential political thinker in the whole history. Marxist theories of social and historical development had lasting effect in all social, economic, and political activities. Marxism brought significant change in



bourgeoisie ideology. It challenged the traditional view point of philosophy . Marx himself clearly stated, "Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it" (qtd. in Selden 24) and explained life and world from quite a different perspective. His theories brought considerable change in the concept of art and literature as well.

Marxism treats literature as an expression of socio-economic life and judges it on the basis of how far it has fulfilled this function. Marxism primarily deals with social, economic, political and revolutionary aspects. It also treats art and literature with special care as it reflects social realities, and stresses that literature should be for the betterment of life. Challenging the early concept of philosophers, Marxist theoreticians have developed their own theories which are known as Marxist theories of art and literature. Most of these theoreticians believe that literature has social as well as political implications, and it must be committed to the cause of people. It should be used for the advancement of the society.

Although Marx and Engels did not propound any systematic works concerned with art and literature, they raised some basic questions about art and literature in relation to their discussion about 'base' and 'super-structure'. According to Marxism, base affects the superstructure and with the change in base, superstructure also automatically gets changed, especially, to say the change in socio-economic relations bring change in ideology, politics, religions, art and literature as well. They believe that each economic structure e.g. feudalism, capitalism or socialism of society leads to its own type of social organization and production of its own literature, art, culture, and religion. So, the basic characteristics of art and literature are determined by the socio-economic factors. Some Marxists view that fame or defame and success or

failure of a work of art and author has to be judged according to the extent of its relation and portrayal of socio-economic life of the contemporary society.

The distinction between Marxist and non-Marxist sociological realistic criticism is not so sharp. Till nineteenth century, all criticism was sociological, therefore, Marxist criticism is often said to have originated from quite earlier. Of course, it is closely associated to biographical, sociological and historical criticism. The fundamental difference between them is non-Marxist criticisms that emphasize only on interpretive function whether work of art is successful in interpreting life and world or not but Marxist criticism examines how far literary work embodies ability in altering human existence and lead human beings in a progressive path and emancipation. Marxism aims to revolutionize the whole socio-economic life establishing a new system of politics governed by proletariats. It demands authors to portray socio-economic situation of an epoch and produce reality with special attention centered to class division and the exploitation of the working class people by upper class. Authors should have profound understanding of wretched human condition rather than subjective experience and aestheticism. Thus, literature for Marxist critics should be a device to spread the ideology at working class. Thus, O, Yakhot agrees:

That root of Marxist philosophy extend into life, reality and practice. It is a well tried compass, a guide in everyday life and activity. Bound up with the study of Marxist philosophy, with mastery of the scientific world outlook, is the optimism of the working people, their unshakable confidence in a happy life for all people through out the world and this faith is not thoughtless or passive. ( 223)

Rene Welleck, one of the most influential twentieth century critics, refuses to recognize any of the new trends in criticism as original. In his essay *The Main Trends of Twentieth Century Criticism*, Welleck observes that much of the criticism written today cannot be accepted as entirely new. As he writes, "we are surrounded by survivals, leftovers, throwbacks to older stages in the history of criticism [...] the new trends of criticism, of course, have also roots in the past, are not absolute original" (115). Welleck states Franz Mehring (1846-1916) and Georgi Plekhanov (1856-1918) from Germany and Russia respectively were early less orthodox Marxist critics who recognized the autonomy of artistic creation to certain extent.

Welleck discusses about the development of Marxist theories and states that even in Soviet Russia literature was given certain autonomy till the "socialist realism" was imposed in 1932. There the authors were demanded to reproduce reality objectively.

Raman Seldon, on his discussion about "Soviet Socialist Realism" states "the doctrine expounded by the Union of Soviet writers (1932-34) were a condensation of Lenin's pre-revolutionary statements as interpreted during the 1920s" (27).

Russian Formalism has a tremendous impact over the Russian intellectual world slightly before and after the Bolshevik revolution. After the success of Bolshevik revolution in Russia, Marxism became the central stream of thought not only in political but in literary area too throughout the world. Later, especially after the second world war's victory of capitalist countries, the Marxist political, intellectual as well as literary aspects were gradually discouraged.

### **George Lukacs : Reflection Theory of Literature**

Born on 13 April 1885 to a well-to-do family in Budapest, Hungary, George Lukacs, was an influential Marxist literary critic of 20<sup>th</sup> century. His involvement as a student in a club named 'Revolutionary Socialist Students of Budapest' opened him Marxist intellectual and political career. Lukacs read several books of Karl Marx and Engles and was deeply impressed by the economic and political principles of Marxism. He studied the Marxist ideology. He read Marx's *Das capital* and *The Communist Manifesto* which aroused in him an unquenchable thirst of economic and political principles. When Lukacs read those volumes of Marx and Engles, he strongly disliked capitalism and devoted to communism. His rejection of his father's appeal to continue his business shows his strong tendency to involve himself in political and intellectual world.

The successful Bolshevik revolution in October 1917 in Russia and the establishment of proletariat for the first time in the world, inspired Lukacs towards communism and joined the 'Communist Party of Hungary' established in November 16, 1919. He devoted himself to the revolutionary activities. The unification of 'communist party of Hungary' representing revolutionaries and 'social democratic party' gave birth to 'Hungarian Socialist Party'. Because of the prohibition on the communist party in 1919 due to their revolutionary activities, he left Hungary for Vienna where he worked as the editor of 'Kommunismus'. After the second world war (1944), he returned and served nation as the Professor of aesthetics and philosophy of culture at the university of Budapest. He also involved in the political arena, being a member of presidium of Hungarian Academy and the member of Hungarian national assembly.

Lukacs is best known as Marxist literary theoretician despite his active contribution in politics. Lukacs' central idea in literary criticism is that literature reflects reality outside it. He believed in 'reflection theory'. Art for him is socio-historical context, therefore, art and literature must reflect the dialect of historical but the reality in literary works and the reality in actual world need not to have mutual correspondence. Artistic representation is not photographic as the artist is not a machine. A photographic machine presents everything indifferently as it cannot react whereas an artist is a sensitive creature, he feels and reacts. So, a picture presented in a literary work like novels, dramas, poems etc. ultimately passes through the active and sensitive mind of the author.

Lukacs, however, accepts the failure of the expression of actual reality because an artistic emotion and experience may lose something in reality while penetrating through artistic sensitive mind unlike the photographic representation. For Lukacs, the world is chaos from where an artist picks up the required materials. During this process of selection, he may give priority to one aspect of reality neglecting the others. Similarly, the objective external reality is mingled with the artists' feelings and emotions which are purely subjective. In the process of creating work of art, the objective reality which lies in the chaotic state is given form and arranged in sequence. David Forgacs in his brilliant essay *Marxist Literary Theories* observes that according to Lukacs:

To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through the creative form giving work of the writer. The result, in case of correctly formed work, will be that the form, will be that the form of the literary work reflects the form of the real world. (117)

Thus, for Lukacs, literary creation is a process of putting selected matters together. This process of selection and combination imposes bound to the chaos of objective reality. Furgacs in Lukacs' view form is "the aesthetic shape given to content a shape manifested through technical features such as time and interrelationship of characters and situation in work" (171).

Lukacs is not the first critic to discuss literature as reflection of objective reality. This idea of reflection began in the primitive age with Plato, classical Greek philosopher. In his book *The Republic* he denounces the notion that art can reflect reality. He states that this world in which we live is not itself, but only an illusion of the ideal world. Therefore, art created on the worldly subject matter is thrice removed from the actual reality, the imitation of illusion. This theory has been foundation for all kinds of critical discussions about art and literature. The critics to follow have only supported, negated or modified the foundation. Aristotle, the disciple of Plato, refuted Plato's notion in his *The Poetics* and argued that all the fine arts are found on the principle of imitation although they differ in manner, mode and medium. They successfully imitate the original. Reflection theory of Lukacs remained dominant until the emergence of structuralism.

Lukacs denounces the romantic concept of art that separates it from social realities and its utility. For romanticists, art has no more scope and aim than expressing the purest feeling of the creator. For Shalley, a poet is a nightingale who sits in darkness and says to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds. For Wordsworth, the creation of poetry is no more than "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and emotions recollected in tranquility" (qtd. in Daiches 879). Poetry for him is "primarily the record of a certain kind of state of mind, and the value of poetry for him lay his in the value of state of mind which the poem recorded" (qtd.

in Daiches 879). So, romantic poetry is less about mankind, more about nature such as landscape, lakes, birds and flowers etc.

Lukacs not only denounces romanticism but also criticizes naturalism, since the naturalism attempts to reproduce photographic picture of life, with equal vigor. For him, Naturalism which appears to be more realistic in its depiction of life is unmediated. In this view, naturalist writers are alienated from comprehensive social problems. They possess superficial vision of life and dismiss the inner and constant antagonism between the classes. They are unable to depict social and historical reality objectively. Similarly, Lukacs disproves the modernist writers as Joyce, Beckett, Woolf etc. for going too far in the direction of subjectivity.

For Lukacs, an artist is he who successfully depicts social and historical reality objectively in his literary works as they are inseparable phenomenon. Therefore, art always reflects socio-historical realities.

Time and again Lukacs stresses the fact that art directly corresponds to outside reality though it is closely related to reality. The socio-historical situation of a specific period; it is not a complete reality but only the knowledge of reality. Lukacs states that, "the novel must be faithful to history despite its invented hero and imagined plot" (252). Here, he emphasizes the thematic reality whatever the description is. Lukacs further states, "the novel's aim is to represent a particular social reality at a particular time, with all the colour and specific atmosphere of that time" (150). Lukacs intends an artist to portray reality in his work and at the same he draws an attention to the fact that it is not possible to portray reality as it exists. According to Lukacs:

Reality as a whole is always richer and more varied than even the richest work of art, no detail, episode etc., however, exactly copied,

however, biographically authentic, however, factual can possibly complete with reality. (302)

While concluding Lukacs' 'Reflection Theory of Literature'; Lukacs has scaled art from Marxist realistic perspective in radical way. He denounces Wordsworthian romantic principle that "The materials of poetry can be found in every subject which can interest the human mind" (Daiches 877) and opines that every interesting thing can not be subject of art or art itself. Literature must be straight forward in its imitation of immediate truth along the characteristics of literature. He does not list literature as a work of art if it does not have a 'touch of reality' no matter whatever the language, style, images, plot etc be. Literature as art belongs to the superstructure as political, religion and philosophy which are based on socio-economic reality. Therefore, there should be a formal correspondence between literary work and dialectical totality. Thus, through Marxist point of view an artist has to have social significance as it is organized in society.

### **Raymond Williams**

Remond Williams, distinguished with Marxist literary theoreticians, responds positively to the development and trends of the 20<sup>th</sup> century literature. He doesn't believe that literature has digressed from reality and the realist novels have ceased to exist. In his penetrating work *The Long Revolution*, he examines various aspects of literature.

Williams states to explore the question of autonomocity of the creativity. The artists trace back the discussion made by their predecessors of ancient time like how Plato and Aristotle had treated art as imitation. According to Williams, all the critical existing hitherto are either development, modification or tranvaluation and interpretation of the theories set forth by the classical philosophers. Different theories



of imitation and creation have brought forward to examine the relationship of art with the reality. Different critics have different opinions on relationship of art with reality. Some critics have denounced art as false, fictitious, romantic, illusion, emotional, irrational and expressions of raw emotions whereas some claim art as superior reality. The formers take it as fantasy that inspires art whereas the latter take that material for art is ordinary everyday reality.

Williams, while interpreting literature from Marxist perspective, sees art and experience as inseparable because experience is subject matter of the art in a particular 'dialectical' contest, and that there lies similarity between art and literature. Everyone turns by perceiving and interpreting experience but the artist needs efforts to describe the new experiences after the procession of internalized sensory information with his previous knowledge in his mind

His remark "the arts are certain intense forms of general communication" (Williams 25) shows how closely general communication and literature are associated. According to Williams, art is powerful expression of human experience and creative imagination is "the capacity to find and organize new description of experience" (26). Thus, an artist's work becomes creative only by his extra-ordinary skills in transmission of his experience. Williams states, "the creative act of any artist is in any case the process of marking a meaning active, by communicating an organized experience to others" (32). He further agrees that it is wrong to:

Assume that political institutions and conventions are of different and separate order from realistic institutions and conventions. Politics and art together with science, religion, family life and the other categories we speak of an absolute, belong in a whole world of active and interacting relationships which is our common associative life (39).

Williams demarcates the phases of whole literary tradition in his book *The Long Revolution*. In the first phase of his literary tradition there comes literature with concentration on heroic, romantic and legendary subjects related to invisible supernatural power developed with upper class. In the second phase, it shifts to ordinary and everyday activities with the rise of middle class. Finally in the third phases the attention shifts to the ugly and poor aspects of 'simple reality' which gave birth to naturalism.

There has been another shift to technique and subject in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is generally thought that realist novels have ceased to appear, however, Williams doesn't agree with it. He insists that the contemporary novels hold to reality. He says, "it is not only that there is still a concentration on contemporary themes; in any ways, elements of every day experience are more evident in the modern novel than in the 19<sup>th</sup> century novel through the disappearance of certain taboos" (277). Illustrating the features of contemporary novels, he opines that realistic novels are replaced by psychological novels and the apprehension erosion of psychological states, the consciousness of characters, it has rather established the psychological association to reality. Williams observes, "Realism as an intention in the description of these states (i.e. psychological states) has not been widely abandoned" (277).

For Williams, realistic tradition of modern fiction has not disappeared rather the integration between individuals and society has disappeared. There has been polarization of styles. The earlier novels were object realistic and the modern are subject-impressionist i.e., the personal and social novel. According to him, modern novel portrays the accurate observation and description of the general life, the aggregation and in contrary to that personal novel offers the "accurate observation and description of personal units. However, none of them is the perfect portrayal of reality

i.e. life as the way of life is neither aggregation nor unit but a whole invisible" (280). According to Williams, the traditional society comprising genuine relations of people in communities have ceased to exist. Contemporary society has turned into tiny units of individuals. The holy relations are violated and are often discontinued. Twentieth century is marked by the characteristic of personal freedom and individualism. This change in socio-economic life has resulted change both in literary technique and content.

The new trend has powerfully threatened the old and it is impossible to be glued to the old and dismiss the emergence of new. Therefore, it is the time to "explore the new definition of realism" in order to "break out of the dead lock and find a creative direction" (287). Thus, Remond Williams positively responds to the change and observes "the contemporary novel has both reflected and illuminated the crisis of our society [ . . . ]." (287).

### **Theodore Adorno**

Theodore Adorno, Marx Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse belong to the 'Frankfurt school' who directly oppose to the realistic theorist like George Lukacs. Adorno developed negative knowledge model which criticizes Lukacs' reflection theory of literature. Adorno, regards literature as negative knowledge of the real world, and gives definite value of the modernist writers.

Lukacs criticizes the work of modern writers like James Joyce, Samuel Beckett etc. and their technique of interior monologue or stream of consciousness. Adorno, however, emphasizes "the interior monologue far from cutting the literary work off from reality, can expose the way reality actually is" (Forgacs 188). But, for Adorno this reality is not photographic as for Lukacs. That's why "art is the negative knowledge of the actual world" (Forgacs 189) for Adorno. However, according to

David Forgacs, Adorno by negative knowledge, "doesn't mean non-knowledge, it means knowledge which can undermine and negate a false or reified condition" (189).

Thus, Adorno emphasizes the negative and critical role played by the works of modern writers like Beckett, Proust, Joyce, Kafka etc. As stated by Forgacs, Adorno "opens up modernist writing to Marxist theory by showing that a different kind of relationship between the text and reality is possible" (190).

Raman Seldon, observing the *Contemporary Literary Theory*, states that for Adorno "literature unlike the mind doesn't have a direct contact with reality" (34). Adorno is of the opinion that art and reality are not alike. Inverting the reflection theory of Lukacs he claims, "art is set apart from reality; its detachment gives its special significance and power" (34).

### **Walter Benjamin**

Walter Benjamin, a German scholar, was not pre-occupied by Marxist political philosophy, social and economic theories, he was rather a literary critic of Marxist trend. However, according to Cliff Slaughter Walter Benjamin "Convinced that the proletarian revolution was the only solution to humanity's crisis, and yet he found the communist parties' prescriptions to writers and artists to be the very opposite of revolutionary and thus destructive of any development to literature and art" (70). Because of such radical views, Benjamin was treated with hostility by the communist as well as by Nazis, and he lived a melancholic and isolated life until he committed suicide in September 1940.

After discussing the literary theory of Walter Benjamin, Slaughter keeps an appropriate title of Benjamin as "Against the stream: Walter Benjamin". In his *Marxism, Ideology and Literature* Slaughter states:

Benjamin directed his polemical writings against all those who drew from Marx's prognoses only the conclusion that the writers should 'take the side' of working class in conceiving their subject matter, demonstration some automatic progressiveness of the productive forces which must be victorious against production relations[... ] To imagine that a common sense adoption of "progressive" themes within existing literary forms constitute a revolutionary line in art and literature was considered by Benjamin to be pure nonsense (174).

Benjamin also argues that in order to resist the influence of bourgeoisie art such as cinema, telephone, radio, television etc, revolutionaries have "become producers in their own artistic spheres"(qtd. in Seldan 37). According to Selden, Benjamin "rejects the idea that revolutionary art is achieved by attending to the correct subject matters" ( 37). Benjamin is of the opinion that revolution in art can be achieved by revolutionizing the technique itself. On Benjamin Selden states:

The artist needs to revolutionize the artistic forces of production of his time, and this is the matter of technique. Nevertheless, the correct technique will arise in response to complex historical combination of social and technical charges. (37)

### **Lucien Goldmann**

Lucien Goldmann was born in Romania and lived in France. Goldmann is best recognized as a sociologist and an influential critic. He seems to be closer to George Lukacs than any of his contemporary writer, and theoreticians as both concentrate on 'social contents'. However, Goldmann tries to co-relate literary works not to an ideology of an individual author but to the "mental structure of the author's social group" (Forgacs 183) which marks the originality of his theory. For him, the social

group may be both revolutionary or reactionary and by mental structure he means the pattern of ideas and concepts possessed by certain social group.

Cliff slaughters *Marxism, Ideology and Literature* is quite a valuable work of art for those wishing to study Marxist literary theories. The book presents Goldmann's literary theory vividly. Slaughter argues in his essay *The Hidden Structure* "Goldmann shares nearly similar ideas to Lukacs on certain fundamental questions about literature. According to him, they came to the same conclusion about the questions of the social, economic and political characterization of the post 1945 capitalistic world" ( 151). Slaughter further states that in Goldmann's opinion:

[. . .] the structure of the world vision of a social group was postulated as homologues with the structure of the universe of given literary works. The social groups whose life-situation and historical role necessitated a comprehensive vision would normally be found to be social classes. The form of the literary work would be structured in a manner congruent with the relations between whole and part, history and function etc. in the world vision of the class. However, the structure at world vision of classes were not conceived as fixed but rather in a constant process of destruction and restructuration as the social group found it necessary to confront and adopt or overcome the new problem constantly thrown up by social life (154).

According to Goldmann's view, the creator of a work is the social class itself. In *The Hidden God*, Goldman, observed that "[. . .] in the modern world from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards artistic, literary and philosophical works have been associated with social classes and closely linked with the consciousness which each class has of itself" (133). Therefore, for Goldmann, a clear understanding of the class and class

consciousness is highly essential for the interpretation of literary works written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and then after.

Goldmann builds up his theoretical promise on the ground that a society comprises different classes of people, ranging all having their own world out-look. David Forgacs discusses Goldmann's theory under genetic model as "it is centered on the origins, causes and determinants" (183) of literary production. According to the Frogacs, Goldmann is of the opinion that "literary works arise out of social consciousness and behaviour and it is the way they are linked to society that he sought to establish" (184).

Goldmann no more goes dogmatically regarding the fundamental problems of modern capitalistic bourgeoisie society. Marx and Engles opine that the economic discrimination i.e. centralization of means of production in the hands of tiny minority of capitalists and destitution of the majority of people is the principal question to be solved in the modern capitalist world where as Goldmann thinks:

The fundamental problematic of modern capitalist societies is no longer located of the level of poverty- although I repeat poverty remains even in the most advanced industrial countries or even at the level of freedom directly limited by law or external constraint. Instead it lies entirely in the contradiction of the level of consciousness and in the concomitant tendency to reduce the fundamental human dimension of the possible. (Slaughter 151)

### III. The Death of the Destitute

#### Introduction

*Two Leaves and a Bud* is crucially an important novel in the first trilogy, which deals with the theme of exploitation as a part of the larger colonial experience. The entire tragedy is unfolded against the dark backdrop of the tea plantation which symbolizes the might and inhumanity of the British Empire. The capitalists' forces are represented in this novel by the Britishers and their Indian sycophants.

*Two Leaves and a Bud* describes the true picture of coolies and the labourers of the tea plantation who had to work under the dehumanizing and appalling condition during the colonial period. It portrays the predicament of the labourers working in different tea estates under the representation of Gangu, the protagonist in the novel. Gangu, the husband of Sajani, and the father of two children, is a typical Indian peasant who wants to live a free social life but his three acres of land and hut are mortgaged due to his brother who had taken a loan from the greedy feudal lords. In the very beginning of the novel, we see that Gangu is compelled to leave his own motherland because of the inhumanity of the capitalists. As a farmer, he wants to get a piece of a land of his own by selling his labour. But he no longer gets any opportunities for a piece of land of his own. Because of the inhuman cruelty of the feudalists, he is tempted and transported from Hosiarpur to Assam Tea plantation to work as a labourer for the betterment of his life. The better prospects of life are assured by the false paradise of Butta Sardar, a coolie catcher. But his exploitation begins before reaching the plantation. In the plantation, he has a very degradable life. He is not provided any hygienic and healthy food and a good place to live in. De la Havre, an idealistic doctor of the plantation, describes the living condition of coolies, which is very pathetic and miserable. In this regard Havre states, "A gust of breeze



bearing the smell from the foot of a coolie's latrine by the road assailed his nostrils. He lifted his head towards the mountains as if by so doing he could inhale the pure, clear air of the distant vistas. But the ruinous smell persisted" (15-16).

As the wage in the plantation is very low, Gangu goes on becoming poorer and poorer day by day despite his labour from morning to evening, everyday. In spite of his everyday work with his family members, his economic and social life becomes worse. When Gangu gets a very low wage after a whole week's work, he questions himself as, "[. . .] what had the family got almost a whole week's work? It did not even work out at eight annas a day for the whole family: three annas for him, two annas for his wife and daughter, and three pice for his child" (64).

Soon, Sajani, the wife of Gangu, dies of Malaria. Due to the lack of money, he suffers for the funeral procession of his wife. He has been dislocated from his land due to the landlord, so he is compelled to ask for money with others. He has a great faith upon Croft-Cooke, the British capitalist, whom Buta called very kind and helpful. But Croft-Cooke no more believes Gangu to provide any money at such distress. Instead of helping, Croft-Cooke abuses and beats Gangu very badly when he comes to know about his segregation in spite of his polite requests:

'Yes, Huzoor, I had fever, and then she had fever and she had died',  
said Gangu.

Get out! Get out! Exclaimed Croft-Cooke, turning purple with rage and staring and the coolie. 'You bloody fool, get out! Get out! You have been spreading infection all over the place! Didn't you know that you were under segregation? By whose orders did you come here? (114)

Gangu, finally, performs the last rites of his wife with the loan given by *Bania*, the money lender, from whom he has determined not to take a loan since he has been dislocated by them.

The women and girls who labour in the plantation are the means of entertainment for the British capitalists. Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter, represents their respective class. He openly and threat fully rubs the chastity of the coolie women. If they deny, they have to get punishment as per the wish of Reggie. Narain, a coolie, tells Gangu, "He is a very *budmash* Sahib. He is always drunk. And he has no consideration for anyone's mother or sister. He is openly living with three coolie women" (42). To fulfill his desire, he can sacrifice everything. Gangu, though helpless and innocent, becomes the victim of his sexual desire. Reggie shoots him dead in his attempt to rape his daughter Leila. A trial follows and in the judgment Hunt is declared not guilty.

Thus, Gangu , the destitute, who had come to the plantation to start a new life, ultimately gets death by the ruthless system of capitalism. Like Gangu, the labourers who work in the plantation, face hunger, disease, starvation and suffering due to the malpractice of capitalism.

We analyze Anand's novel *Two Leaves and Bud* from Marxist perspective on the economic, social and political ground of the contemporary India. However, the analysis of the novel will involve with reference to the social and economic realities that are traced artistically in the novel. It refers to Marxist reflection theory of literature and examines the text from the Marxist perspective. The Marxist philosophy claims that it is social existence that determines man's consciousness, and it is that consciousness which determines his/her literary works. Further it also claims that art and literature are part of the 'superstructure' and it should serve the 'base' on which it

rests. Similarly, Marxist theory of art insists that the primary function of art is to serve the working class people representing their feelings, problems and heightening the class struggle.

Anand, as a humanist writer, is very conscious about the problems, misery and suffering of the people, especially that of the working class people. His main aim is to provoke pity for the Indian poor and to denounce the evils of the British rule and capitalist exploitation.

### **Gangu: Victim of Capitalist Economy**

During colonialism in India a small handful British capitalists dominated the overwhelming majority of workers. Economy was the crux which was essentially controlled by the capitalists. All working class people were the major victims of such economy as it was sucking the blood and sweat. They were given a very low wage even if they were the major productive factors of economy. As a result of their limited income they were not only the victims of brutal capitalists but also the victims of poverty, disease, starvation etc. Quoting Marx George Ritzer Writes:

Capitalism is an inverted world, in which those who rightfully should be on top are relegated to the bottom, and those who deserve to be on the bottom rise to the pinnacle of society. Thus, the people who Marx believed should be most important to society – the producers – are near the bottom, scraping by a subsistence wage and dominated by the capitalists. The capitalists, who produce nothing of their own but simply live off the labour of the others, are dominant force in the society. Also inverted in the sense of what is real in society. For example, it is people who set prices, but they fail to see their essential role in this process. Rather, it appears as if it is unreal "market" that

sets prices. Finally, the reality of life in capitalism is hidden while illusion is seen as fact. For example from Marx's perspective, the capitalists exploit the proletariat, but the dominant believe is that the abilities of the of the capitalists lead to success for the workers. (60)

The protagonist Gangu, in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, lives in such a society where economy is under the full domain of capitalists—money lenders, landlords, and the Britishers. Each of these runs after the economical profit, so the economy is not in favour of the workers but in favour of capitalists. Gangu is a typical Indian peasant without even a small piece of land in his own native place due to his brother. His brother has mortgaged the home and the land from being confiscated. So, Gangu becomes landless in the very beginning of the novel. He is made landless by such exploitative capitalist economy which is under the hold of the landlord, the money lenders, the lawyers and the British colonizers. There is a good network among the landlords, the money lenders and the British capitalists, so they have been highly successful to victimize the Indian coolies and make them insignificant.

Land, a good means of production plays a vital role in bettering one's economic status. But Gangu is dislocated from it by the exploitative economic and political system. Gangu, who is dislocated from his three acres of land in Hoshiyarpur, depicts his dislocation during his journey to Assam to obtain livelihood under the false paradise of Buta, a puppet under the British tea planters:

And he (Gangu) wishes his brother had not mortgaged it with the land. But what could he have done to avert its being confiscated, since the hut as well as his three acres were part of the joint family property, and Lalla Beli Ram, the Vakil, had told him that, as the law of Angrezi Sarkar stood the debt incurred by one brother of a family was blinding

on another? 'Strange', Gangu, thought, 'how the interest on my younger brother's mortgage piled up, so that all my three acres and my hut as well went just as a free gift to Seth Badri Dass. (3)

Gangu, due to the lack of wealth and land, goes to Macpherson Tea Estate with his wife, Sajani and two children; Leila, his daughter and Buddhu, his son to earn both land and wealth for living prosperous life as a social human being. He is innocent and humble. Buta, the coolie catcher, shows him a false paradise by stating, "if anyone needs money for something special such as the purchase of a cow, for marriage or of the propitiation of the ancestor's ceremony, the sahibs advance it free of interest, and recover it only gradually" (4). Buta further victimizes Gangu, mentioning that the Sahibs care for all their people and want to keep the coolies happy and contented.

Gangu, comes to realize, very soon, that he is being deceived. The coolies like him are treated as sub-human creatures. For the planters, the coolies can survive even if their barest necessities are not fulfilled. At De la Havre's insistence on the need of provision of certain precautions against epidemics, Croft Cooke, the chief planter, remarks, "[. . .] these collies are sub-human, and do not altogether value the benefits of hygiene [. . .]" (29). The innocent coolies like Gangu are not only the victims of the English masters but also of their Indian sycophants. Although Shashi Bhsuan Bhattachara is an Indian, he treats Gangu in a degradable manner as, "what hour is this to arrive on the plantation? Jungali folk !" (12). Soon, Gangu finds himself entrapped in the prison like tea plantation when he gets Narain's, words. The words of Narain, "This prison has no bars but nevertheless it is a prison" (38) give a jolt to his dream and bring him back to the stark realities.

In short time, Gangu gets no more any realities by the planters which Buta spoke previously. He gets corruption, cheating, exploitation and inhumanity everywhere in the plantation. Therefore, he feels as if he is really victimized by them and he questions himself:

Did all the Sahibs who come to own this land get their labourers by letting lies pass for truth, did they make deceit a virtue and exalt the worst to the best, make every pushful talker like Buta, into a Sardar, and liberate all the selfishness that any Shaitan could use for the own purpose? Do all good men die here, and others live on? (65)

Despite having been made fool by Buta, Gangu now realizes his real situation and becomes completely disappointed. Anand in this regard states, "all his hopes had fallen to pieces" (72). Gangu is victimized by the plantation management, their officials and even by the Indian businessmen who are also under the network of capitalism. When Gangu, with his family, goes to the bazaar to buy some food, Dhanu Mal, the shopkeeper, treats him as an unwanted thing and a degradable beast while bargaining about the price of things. Dhanu Mal, the vampire, openly victimizes Gangu when the latter buys the things. This is obvious in the following dialogue that takes place between them:

What is the rate of the flour, then Seth? Gangu asked.

The same rate as at the shop on the plantation. There is no difference. I know exactly why you all come here. You thought that you would find a shop which would undersell my firm. You are cunning men, you coolies?

'We have just come here', retorted Gangu. 'How did I know that you owned all the shops? Of course, I want to pay the cheapest rates. I can because I am poor.

'And I want to charge the highest price', said Dhanu Mal. (76)

The shopkeepers, of course, are exploiters who exploit whoever comes for purchasing things. Though the buyers are as important as the sellers, the former are treated in an arrogant manner due to their lower economic status. It is the same market where there are some Tibetans for purchasing cloths. They are also highly victimized by the same business man. Dhanu Mal's plunder and disgrace upon them is clearly depicted when they come to accept his terms:

'Eat, vomit', said Dhanu Mal, you do not know what is good for you.

Now you have come back to eat your own dung. I should really refuse to bargain with you, but I forgive you this time. Next time, if you want to do business, accept the terms I offer you as you will not get such fair treatment anywhere else. (77)

The coolies are bound to live under unhygienic food, and environmental conditions. They are not provided pure drinking water. The impure water becomes the source of spreading disease in the plantation. However, the masters have made arrangements to get ice from other places. Consequently, Gangu's wife Sajani catches Malaria and dies soon after they stay in the plantation. The sudden death of his wife comes as bolt from the blue in the life of Gangu. He becomes dumb and blind. His lips tremble and his head hangs down over his hands. In this regard, Anand states Gangu's shock as, "For a time he moved in a trance, beckoning the despair of bereavement to come and take possession of him. But only his lips trembled and his

head hung down over his hands, in the muffled indifference of the twilight in his brain" (107).

Gangu thinks of the cremation in time for his dead wife but he cannot collect money in the inferno like plantation. He does not want to borrow money from *Sahukar* as they had been the cause of his ruin in his native village. Though he has a great faith upon Croft-Cooke for money, the latter does not believe him, though working in his own plantation. Even the Indian peon Hamir Singh and clerk Shashi Bhusan are not far to victimize the coolies like Gangu. They won't get a coolie audience with the manager of the estate unless he greases their palm. Consequently, when Gangu approaches them to get an audience with the manager to raise a loan for his wife's cremation, they beg bribe from him. From this instance the Indian capitalists are also equally responsible for the sorry plight of the labourers. The coolies are orphaned by the Indian society itself. Shashi Bhusan, the corrupted clerk, remains adamant and unfeeling despite how pitifully Gangu implores, "Babuji, I promise to give you some of the money which the Sahib may give if you talk to him in Angrezi and get me to loan I want [...] my wife died last night. And I have been ill, take pity on me (112-13).

However, Gangu manages to visit the manager but he receives abuses and beating instead of getting a loan. So, due to the lack of wealth and in absence of it he is victimized and treated as a sub-human creature. When Gangu gets strong beating, he thinks it is one more reward for the misdeeds of his past time. He, after sometimes, goes to Buta and tells him about the death of Sajani. He requests Buta, "can you – can you give a loan of money for the cremation. I have not a pice and the body has been lying in the house for two days" (118). But Buta's stone heart no more melts to provide any loan for the cremation. Now, Gangu regrets for coming in the plantation



with Buta. He gets no more help even in such distress except abusing and beating whom he thought as his father and mother. So, he weeps in the presence of Buta, to pour his sorrow as :

'The Sahib will not give me a loan', Gangu said. 'I have just been . He beat me for coming out of quarantine. Oh, friend Buta Ram, if only I had known things were going to turn out this way, I wouldn't have come here.' And he took his hand to his eyes to wipe the tears that the welled up in them with the reproach against the Sardar that he had suppressed into self-pity. (118)

The capitalists are no more kind, liberal and human towards the problems of the proletariats. Here, Croft-Cooke, the chief planter and his sycophant Buta Sardar are cruel, rude and inhuman at such distress of Gangu.

Gangu, despite his continuous suffering, is not without zeal and zest for life. When he gets a piece of land in the plantation, he does very hard work for the betterment of his life. To show his zeal and zest Anand states, "He gripped the handle of his spade with an wavering faith and dug his foot into the sod made by a furrow and sensed the warm freshness of the earth that would yield fruit" (146). But when the torrential rains wash away the tender shoots of rice, Gangu feels that he is victimized both by man and God. In the mean time, two coolie women start a quarrel and then the crowd becomes uncontrollable. Reggie Hunt and his Sardars show their ruthless power over the proletariats, and one of them is killed in the process. In such a miserable and pitiable condition Gangu feels very much frightened and utters a polite request to the God, as "lord, God, deliver me, save me from the wrath of my enemies. My wife is dead ! My children young ! And my heart is weeping" (247).

At the end of the novel, Gangu realizes that 'money is every thing' when *Bania* comes to ask for his money. Now he seems to understand the root cause of his victimization i.e. capitalist economy when he tells his friend Narain about role played by money in society. As Anand states:

But for days he was upset. 'Money is everything', he kept on saying.

'Money is everything', as if the phrase were loaded with all the suffering he had endured.

'Money is everything, he said to Narain apropos of nothing, as they sat smoking under the tree outside their hut of an afternoon. 'Money is everything in this world'. And he did not seem to know what to say further. And repeated the phrase as if he were blindly groping for light. in a dark world, struggling to emerge from the fear in which he lay imprisoned to his habitual carelessness. (265)

This awareness comes in Gangu from his perpetual ordeal which leads him to believe that poor people do not have any place in the capitalist society where money becomes a symbol of power.

Finally, Gangu, dies because of the bestiality of Reggie Hunt the British capitalist. Gangu, who had come to the plantation side to start a new life, ultimately goes out losing his own life. It is here we feel Anand's deliberate intention to present such a weak character who is the victim of capitalist norms. Since Gangu is the representative of the whole working class, like him the whole working class people are truly victimized by the capitalist system. They are beaten from pillar to post, over worked and insulted, and treated as beasts of burden, till they meet hunger, suffering and disease prematurely.

Like Gangu, the protagonist in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Munoo in *Coolie*, and Bakha in *Untouchable* are also the victims of capitalist system. In this regard H.M. Williams rightly observes, "First three novels; *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) form a natural trio; all three have the victim hero of the oppressed and doomed outcaste proletarian whose fate is symbolic of India enslaved by the capitalist system" (18-19).

### **Exploitation of the Underprivileged**

Mulk Raj Anand's reputation rests chiefly upon his being a writer of sociological novels which deal with some of the most glaring evils in Indian life including untouchability and the exploitation of labourer. The time Anand lived was the time of tremendous economic and social turmoil and upheavals in India. The British capitalist had already been deep rooted from the past and it was living upon the sweat and toil of the shrivelled workers. The workers were socially, economically, politically and sexually exploited by the British capitalists and their Indian sycophants.

The British masters who rule from the past in the foreign land are no more kind, human and liberal towards the Indian people, especially the coolies. They are arrogant, proud, selfish and corrupted. They beat, abuse, exploit and quit them from jobs with out any mistake. So, the coolies, who are ruled by them, are afraid of them. They can't express even a single word of their misery and suffering to their masters and their officials. In the Macpherson Tea Estate, the coolies are treated like animals by the British masters. They are exploited by both British masters and their sycophants. In the plantation side the greed of the grocer and money lenders, the selfish motives of the people like Buta and Neogi, and the money mindedness of Shashi Bhusan and others like him make the life of coolies still worse and vulnerable.

They are all bent upon fleecing the innocent and helpless coolies. The world of tea plantation is, therefore, a veritable inferno. Gangu is able to confirm it within a few hours of his arrival in the Tea Estate from his neighbour Narain, a coolie. In this regard Narain states:

I suppose it was in our Kismet. But at home it was like a prison and here it is slightly worse [ . . . ] 'well you can't escape from here now, anyhow, commented Narain. You can never go back [ . . . ] 'you will soon know, brother', said Narain. 'First water, afterwards mire! This prison has no bars, but it is nevertheless an unbreakable jail. The chowkidars keep guard over the plantation, and they bring you back if you should go. The other day the chowkidar beat Balkrishna, the boy who fled to the Santal village, because he thought he could escape to his mother in Oudh. The chowkidars go round at night with a lamp and open every door to see if we are all at home. There used to be a roll call every night before I came. (38)

The world of plantation is like that of inferno but their living condition on the plantation is still worse than the plantation itself. As De la Havre states, "A gust of breeze bearing the smell from the foot of a coolie's latrine by the road assailed his nostrils. He lifted his head towards the mountains as if by so doing he could inhale the pure, clear air of the distant vistas. But the urinous smell persisted" (15-16).

Anand is awakening to the contrast which social life under bourgeoisie system of production presents: the oppressors standing at the top and the oppressed at the bottom. As already mentioned, the living condition of the workers is quite dirty, pitiable and miserable while the oppressors have their bungalows well guarded against any interference by the Indian coolies. It truly reveals that the British

capitalists are ruthless who think the labourers are sub-human creatures and they can survive even if their barest necessities are not fulfilled.

The living condition of the oppressed in the plantation is worse, however, the capitalistic treatment is far worse. The oppressed coolies are severely abused and beaten. The oppressor Croft-Cooke treats Gangu severely when Gangu goes to ask a loan for the cremation of his wife Sajani, who dies of Malaria. He abuses and beats Gangu very badly when he comes to know about Gangu's segregation in spite of his polite requests:

'Yes, Huzoor, I had fever, and then she had fever and she had died,'  
said Gangu.

Get out ! Get out ! exclaimed Croft-Cooke, turning purple with rage and staring at the coolie. 'You bloody fool, get out! Get out ! You have been spreading infection all over the place ! Didn't you know that you were under segregation? By whose orders did you come here? (114)

According to the nature of bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the former tries to get a worker to work at a very low wage whereas the latter attempts its best to acquire more from those who possess the means of production. But in the tea plantation, the proletariats want no more to possess the high wages for their existence.

The coolies suffer from poverty, starvation and different kinds of disease due to their low wages. G.S. Gautam writes about the very low wage system of plantation from which Gangu remains half-starved. As Gautam states, "The wage of his family, including his wife Sajani, daughter Leila and Son Buddhu, despite they put in hard toil, work out eight annas a day. The wages are cut if slightest damage occurs to leaves in picking them up" (170).

Anand further proceeds the pathos of Gangu when he gets a very low wage after a whole week's work in the plantation as, "[. . .] what had the family got almost a whole week's work? It did not even work out at eight annas a day for the whole family: three annas for him, two annas for his wife and daughter, and three pice for his child" (64).

Anand clearly depicts how the bourgeoisie capitalists exploit the helpless coolies by deducting their wages even if they have done a slight mistake while picking the tea leaves in the plantation. Reggie tells Tweetie to deduct the payment when Tweetie tells Reggie that he had once found a woman's baby at the bottom of the basket. As Reggie in a rough language for the labourer orders Tweetie:

‘Dock her pay altogether!’ [...] And cut three annas off the pay of each one of the trends. Dirty cheats, the whole bag of them. And not only here, too, the deceitful bitches. They try the same game in bed, leaving you high and dry at the critical moment. (57)

Anand, again, portrays how the bourgeoisie capitalists have committed monstrous crimes against humanity from the past in India. So, millions of Indian people are suffering from poverty, starvation and different kinds of disease. In this regard, Anand states:

‘The present system of plantation of labour’, the writer continued, ‘is a curse and crime. It is monstrous crime against humanity. All that was said, generations ago, by the Wiberforces and Cannings and Garrisons and Lincolns again the hideous shame of slavery, could be repeated and added to, in respect to what is transpiring to-day on the tea, coffee, rubber and other plantations in India.

‘75% of the coolies on the Assam plantations suffer from caratomalasia (bad eyesight) for lack of proper nourishment, fats and greases.’

‘50% of the population of India suffers from dental diseases for lack of any milk in the diet.’

*Two Million Women* die in child birth in India as a result of malnutrition.’

‘20% Anglo-Indians and members of the upper classes of India die of gluttony, overeating-another form of malnutrition.’

The economic condition of the Indian coolies, of course, is similar to that of the cotton plantation slaves of the southern states of North America, of whom H.B. Stowe wrote in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In this regard, Anand states "if there be any difference, I think that actual inquiry would prove that the present economic condition of the Indian coolies is worse than was that of the Negro slaves in America" (124).

On the one hand, the coolies have such pitiable economic conditions even if they are the actual life givers to the capitalist, on the other hand, the soulless bourgeoisie are enjoying upon the sweat and blood of the labourers. In this regard Anand states:

[. . .] the simple, obvious thing that people don't need to read Marx to realize here. The black coolies clear the forests, plant the fields, toil and garner the harvest, while all the money-grubbing, slave-driving soulless managers and directors draw their salaries and dividends and build up monopolies. (124)

Like economic exploitation, sexual exploitation is also everywhere in the plantation. None of the coolie women saves her chastity if the planters want them. At

any cost they rub their chastity by giving land, money and ornaments. Reggie Hunt, who represents their respective class, rubs the chastity of every coolie woman. Indeed, he is very brutal and ruthless. He is called a 'human python' by many critics.

Regarding his characteristics, Narain tells Gangu:

'Bless your fate, brother', said Narain to Gangu. He (Reggie) is a very *budmash* Sahib. He is always drunk. And he has no consideration for anyone's mother or sister. He is openly living with three coolie women ! [ . . . ] Nobody knows what may or may not happen here', said Narain. 'Nobody's mother or sister is safe in this place.' (42)

To depict the true nature of bourgeoisie, Anand brings how Reggie succeeds to have sex with Neogi's wife. Reggie, after finishing polo, directly approaches the door of Neogi's wife. When she opens the door for him, the following conversation takes place. It truly exposes his nature. In this regard, Anand states:

He passed her hand round her and said:

'Come and take the banana.'

'Nose-ring, bakhshish'. She said, moving her head. 'I will give you money to buy a nose-ring', he said. And he squeezed her between the iron girders of his thighs, the solid blocks of his shoulders, till the pyramid of his passion was contiguous to her parting.

'Oai, she cried, pain-marred, and afraid of being mutilated.

Don't wriggle and writhe like that', he whispered, tearing at the string of her trousers and throwing her down on the charpai where she had lain.

She yielded to him, her body limp and contorted into a silent despair, her eyes gaze at the wild sensual heat in his face, her heart turned



inwards at the cold virginity that seemed to freeze her at the contact with him. He made a sudden upcharge, as if it were dealing a deathblow to himself and to her and he swung her body hard, hard, harder, tearing, the flesh of her breasts, biting her cheeks and striking her buttocks till she was red and purple like a mangled corpse, ossified into a complete obedience by the volcanic eruption of his lust. (186)

No coolie woman from the young to the old could be safe in the plantation. If they sacrificed their chastity, they could get land, money and ornaments and if they denied they would get punishment as per the wish of the planters. Gangu, while protecting his daughter Leila, was killed by Reggie Hunt.

In this way, Anand exposes and describes the exploitation of the workers by the cruel, and soulless bourgeoisie and their exploitative social system. The Marxist creed, here, appeared to Anand and it offered an explanation to the suffering of the poor and unemployed people. Here Anand's deliberate intention is to make the people conscious about the cruelty and inhumanity of the capitalists.

### **Social Protest**

The protest always arises because of the two groups the exploiter and exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed, the haves and the have not, the ruler and the ruled in the society. The writers of pre and post-independent India have vigorously attempted for making the autonomous identity of the oppressed and exploited class. Mulk Raj Anand is regarded as a leading figure of the novels of protest. He, among his contemporaries, sets out to subvert the barriers created by the upper class. His humanitarian protest and his desire to uplift the life of downtrodden from the degradation, he felt that it was his mission in life. Anand's early novels *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* are primarily the novels of protest. Anand, in these

novels, shows a deep sympathy for the working class and an aggressive attack or anger for the brutal capitalists who are proud and arrogant towards the working class. Anger and compassion are utmost in Anand as the author of these novels of protest against such social evils as the brutal capitalism which controls all the economy and caste system of the society.

*Two Leaves and a Bud* is also a novel of protest. Here, Anand is protesting against the capitalist exploitation of the poor and the underprivileged people in the country. The novel also explores human motives from a more ironical and complex point of view. H.M. William rightly observes:

[. . .] in *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand attempts (presumably under the literary influence of D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Foster) another novel of social protest which also explores human motives from a more ironical and complex point of view [. . .] Anand's thesis is again: the Indian poor, ruined and destroyed by the combined tyranny of capitalism and imperialism. (qtd. in G.S. Gautam 168)

Anand, in this novel, through the medium of Indian coolies, protests against the brutality and bestiality of the British capitalists and their Indian sycophants though the coolies can no more produce a single loud sound against the ruthless power of the capitalists. The Macpherson Tea Estate is like a prison because there from the peon Hamir Singh to the chief planter Croft-Cooke are corrupted, inhuman and cruel. The living condition of the coolies in it is not better than the living condition of the prison. There is no more right to voice against the exploitation and bestiality of the planters and their officials. There is not allowed the representatives of the Trade Union come and develop any class consciousness among the workers. But when there is too much

physical suffering and economic exploitation due to the plantation management and their officials, the labourers feel united against their common enemy.

When, in the plantation, a quarrel occurs between two coolie women, the coolies are gathered, and the mass becomes uncontrollable. Reggie uses his ruthless power and the warders go on, "striking with frenzied energy until driven away by this fresh lathi charge, the bedraggled men and women drifted towards the road while the wounded lay helpless" (169). One coolie is killed in the process. It is too unbearable to the helpless coolies, therefore, they run to De la Havre. Though they can't utter even a single loud sound, they protest silently. In making the protest, "some rolled their eyeballs at each other, furtively, with significant glances, some waved their arms with understanding gestures, and some whispered monosyllables of protest and derision "(197). Here, it is clear that though the coolies are unable to protest outwardly against the brutalities and bestiality of the bourgeoisie, they inwardly protest in a very powerful way.

However, Anand, as a conscious writer, shows how seriously the coolies take the issue of violence even if they are unable to protest outwardly. In this regard, Anand states:

'Brothers', said Gangu, 'we must go to the hospital, and tell the Dakdar Sahib about it'.

'Yes', cried a Bhutia coolie. 'The wounded will be taken there. We must see who has been hurt.'

'I think one coolie has died', said a coolie from Gorakhpur. 'By the oath of God, they will have to answer for it'.

'Go your way quietly: came a Sardar's voice.

The Gorakhpuri stood and flashed his eyes back at the warder. And then he winced, as if he were surprised at his own bravery.

'Leave him alone, brother, leave him', said Narain, pulling at his shoulder. We will go to the Dakdar Sahib, as Gangu says'.

'Yes', said Gangu. 'We cannot let this pass'. (197)

Then after, the coolies, with the behest of De la Havre, decide to go over to the Manager to register their protest against the brutal beating by the warder and Reggie Hunt. The English masters, who have been guarding the interests of imperialism and capitalism by ruthless exploitation, mete out the brutish treatment to dirty coolies. The heartless beasts get into action for driving back the coolies marching towards the bungalow of the Manager.

The bourgeoisie, who brutally exploit the proletariats, are also inwardly frightened by the proletariats as they assume the proletariats will revolt against their high exploitation. Similarly, the British capitalists who exploit ruthlessly are frightened by the Indian coolies as Croft-Cooke remarks, "Do you know what it would mean if that crowd of coolies attacked us here? Massacre-and worse still, our prestige would go to hell" (218).

On the one hand, the coolies are passing their worst life and on the other, the British planters and their officials are enjoying by capturing the economy and rubbing the chastity of the innocent coolie women. The wife of Neogi Sardar is a victim to the carnal desires of Reggie who is lust incarnate. When a coolie dared to utter a sound of protest from the back against their bestiality in quarrel of two coolie women, "Because Sahib none of our wives, sisters and mothers are safe" (194) Reggie Hunt threatens "dare to utter a sound, and I will shoot you dead" (194) very rudely giving the words of shooting.

When Reggie gets no more success from Leila to have sex, he tries to persuade her by giving the permission of nose-ring and bangles, as "come to my bungalow"[...] 'I will give you a nose-ring and bangles'" (272). But Leila straightly protests against the bestiality of the planters. Indeed, her protest is the symbol of revolutionary message for all the proletariats. Here, Anand states about Leila's protest:

'Nahin !' the girl shrieked. 'Go away I will call my father. I don't care who you are, whether you are a Sahib or[ . . .] Go away and let me work ! My father will be angry if I don't get back home before the sun sets [ . . .]' And, crying a weird half moan, half sob, she cast a round glance at the bare sky that stood still and white against the hills. (272)

Reggie, the hunger for lust, to fulfill his desires, again tries to catch Leila but she runs to her hut. Then he also approaches in Gangu's hut, and once again tries to persuade her to have sex. To protest him, Leila sends her brother to call Gangu who vigorously protests this act. While protesting against the bestiality of the vandal, Gangu, the protagonist of the novel, is shot dead by Reggie. As Anand states Gangu's protest:

He (Reggie) wanted to run away, but he was face to face with Gangu at a distance of two yards.

'To hell with you', he shouted, mad with anger.

And he shot again, once, twice, thrice.

The man [Gangu] fell back with a groan. (274)

Thus, the protest against the bourgeoisie society for the sake of working class peoples' right and their life is vigorously reflected in Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud*. It proves that it is a novel which demands the unity of all the coolies to fight against the bourgeoisie for establishing themselves as the species of human beings for the true existence.

#### IV. Conclusion

*Two Leaves and a Bud* by Mulk Raj Anand reflects the glaring disparities between the rich capitalists and the poor working class people who work in the Assam tea plantation. During the British rule in India, all working class people were the major victims of capitalist economy as it was sucking the sweat and blood of the weak and helpless coolies. Gangu, the protagonist of the novel, is the major victim of such economy which is under the network of both British capitalists and their Indian sycophants. His life is full of pain, misery and suffering due to his lower socio-economic status.

Gangu, a poor peasant, represents the whole working class people who are excessively victimized by the capitalist economy. Gangu, as a social human being, wants no more than to live a free and prestigious life but due to the inhuman, ruthless and brutal treatment, he is compelled to live a sordid life. From Punjab Hosiarpur to the Assam Tea Estate he gets similar beast like a treatment by the moneylenders, the Indian Sardars, the shopkeepers and the British planters who have close network to victimize the weak and helpless coolies like Gangu. One after another, turn by turn, they exploit, deceive, abuse and even kill without any cause. Gangu dies a miserable death for nothing.

In the very beginning of the novel, Gangu is compelled to leave his motherland because of the excessive exploitation of the moneylenders, the vampires, since his brother has mortgaged the three acres of land and home who had taken a loan from them. Like moneylenders, the Indian Sardars are also equally responsible for the sorry plight of the labourers. Gangu is assured by the false paradise of Buta, the puppet of the British capitalists. So, he is tempted and transported to the Assam

Tea Estate with his family. Soon, he comes to know that he is deceived by Buta Sardar.

Likewise, the British planters are far more exploiters who treat coolies like Gangu as sub-human creature. They are motivated with the old notion of the colonizers the 'Britons shall never be slaves' but make the coolies slaves. Gangu, time and again, is treated as a sub-human and beast due to his lower social status. Even from the Indian shopkeeper he achieves the similar treatment.

As Gangu is dislocated by the moneylenders, he first determines not to take any loan from them but when his wife Sajani dies of malaria he is compelled to break his vows. He first, approaches to Croft – Cooke, the chief planter, for the cremation of his dead wife but he gets abuse and beatings instead of getting a loan. Here, by the planter also he is treated as a sub-human creature to whom he thought as his father.

Gangu, despite his continuous suffering is not without zeal and zest for the betterment of his life. When he gets a piece of land in the plantation he does very hard work. But, as ill luck, when torrential rains wash away the tender shoots of rice, he feels as if he is victimized by both man and God.

The living condition of the oppressed in the plantation is worse, however, the capitalistic treatment is far worse. Like economic exploitation, sexual exploitation, which is also part of the social exploitation, is everywhere in the plantation. There is no more consideration for anyone's mother, daughter or sister. Reggie, the assistant planter, represents their respective class who rubs the chastity of coolie women without any consideration. When he tries to rub the chastity of Leila, the daughter of Gangu, Gangu vigorously protests his bestiality. While protesting against the bestiality Gangu becomes the victim of Reggie and dies for nothing.

Thus, Gangu who comes to start a new life in the plantation ultimately goes out by losing his life without even a single harm. He is the victim of all; the money lenders, the Indian Sardars, the shopkeepers and the British planters who are under the network of capitalism.

Marxism as a theory demands the authors to portray the socio-economic reality on the basis of social, economic and political ground of an epoch. It also demands the authors to depict the exploitation of the working class people by the upper class. To do so, the authors should have the profound understanding of wretched human condition rather than subjective experience. Thus, literature for the Marxist critics should be a device to spread the ideology of working class.

Mulk Raj Anand, as a conscious humanist writer, portrays the wretched condition of the Indian coolies during the British rule in India. He truly portrays how capitalist bourgeoisie exploit, deceive, abuse, beat and even kill the weak and helpless coolies. Gangu is the representative of the whole Indian proletariats who gets death unnecessarily. Here, Anand's major objective is to make the Indian people aware to protest against bourgeoisie society for the sake of down-troddens' right and their life by depicting the plight of the down-trodden.

To conclude, Gangu, the protagonist, represents the whole proletariats of Indian society who are worthlessly victimized and even killed by the capitalists bourgeoisie. Through Gangu, Anand makes the people conscious about the exploitation and also demands to protest against their brutality and cruelty until and unless the proletariats get their true existence in the society.



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