Study of Customs and Social Ways of the Hindu Society of the Thirties in Mulk Raj Anand's *The Big Heart*

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Abstract- Mulk Raj Anand is considered social reformist and humanist. His work of art is not at art for art's sake. In his work Anand has tried to focus on the untouched parts of our society and exposed the ills and evil of it with that he has also tried provide solution for it and also raised such social problems to the world and compel them to think about social economical and political condition of such suffering caste and class.

INTRODUCTION
Here, in the novel *The Big Heart*, Anand has presented social condition of a particular caste and class with this he has also focused on the impact of industrial revolution on society. As a researcher my special attention here is to discover social realism in the novel based on caste and class consciousness. *The Big Heart* is Anand's seventh novel and first time Anand has presented his protagonist as of factory worker as he wants to focus on the class, caste and industrial revolution's impact on Indian society with special fervor of social realism.

Again realism is the main layer in *The Big Heart*. The novel starts with the description of Billimaran Lane in center of Amritsar. This is what Anand's peculiar style of starting a novel But here it is the real description of the place as it is Anand has taken the picture of the place as it is because he wants to present the real subject in the novel so realism is here from very beginning of the novel. It is an experimental novel like Untouchable. In this novel, Anand has used the stream-of-consciousness technique. This novel is about the coppersmiths. According to K.R.S.Iyenger; "A single day's events are chronicled in the novel, but the tempo increases steadily hours by hours and sparks in the air and there is rumbling thunder in the confabulations and speeches."

The novel is a record of events of a single day in the life of Ananta, the coppersmith, the man with *The Big Heart* like Ratan in *Coolie*. With the realistic narration of Billimar the novel begins as Anand writes; “Outwardly there nothing to show that Kuchabillimar in the center of Amritsar has changed very much since the 'age of truth', expect that the shadow of the all tall Clock tower built by the British, falls across it from two hundred yard away, and an electric bulb glows flinty from a post fix by the municipality in the middle of the lane. But of courses, a lot of water has trickled through its open drains since the 'age of truth', : the pure holy water (if it ever was pure!) of the ceremonies of the 'age of truth' ; the dirty water of the 'Middle Ages'; the slimy, asafetida water of the 'iron age' and many other waters besides. The fact about water, like time, is that it will flow: it may get choked up with the rubbish and debris of broken banks; it may be arrested in stagnant pools for long years; but it will begin to flow again as soon as the sky pours down its blessing to make up for what the other elements have sucked up; and it will keep flowing, now slowly, now like a rushing stream".

Anand has selected his starting point of the novel with special intension of case and class consciousness. Ananta returns home to his ancestral city in Amritsar fresh from his exploits in Bombay where he had taken part in the national struggle for independence. The setting of the novel - Billimaran or the Cat-Killer's Lane exposes the conflict between the East and the West, traditions and modernity, industrialization and the conventional way of life: “It must be remembered; however that Billimar is not a blind alley. Apart from the usual mouth, which even a 'cul-de-sac' keeps open, it has another which makes it really like a two-headed snake. With one head, it looks towards the ancient market, where the beautiful copper, brass, silver and bronze utensils made in the lane are sold by dealers called Kaseras, hence called the Bazar Kaserial. With the other it wriggles out towards the new Iron-mogers' Bazar, where screws and bolts and nails and locks are sold and which merges into the Book-seller's mart, the cigarette shops and the Post Office replete with the spirit of modern times.”

In the traditional market - Bazar Kaserial, tradition and modern items available which shows the reality of our time and social needs. The items available in the Bazar Kaserial - copper, brass, silver and bronze utensils - are made by...
Ananta signsifying the omnipresence of exploitation and the incessant struggle for liberation. He is not a 
type but a prototype symbolizing the turbulent human spirit which seeks freedom braking down all barriers unlike the earlier 
Anand protagonists, Anand is a man of action. He is revolutionary urging change both in his personal and public life. 
In Amritsar, Ananta resume his hereditary trade, but like most people of his brotherhood, he has difficulty making a 
They are mainly meant for utensils - made by village artisans. They are mainly meant for use in 
A living, heart-to-heart appropriation of "Vilayati fashions' is what is wanted. The coming of the machine in 
This is the machine age.

Just as Ananta wants the victims of industrialization in The Big Heart, Anand wants the Indian proletariat, to learn 
lessons from their counterpart in England, lessons which are sure to yield comfort and happiness.

Ananta brings with him Janki - a young widow, whom he loves and who is now slowly dying of tuberculosis. At 
personal level, he chooses to live with Janki, a young widow, breaking the conventional norms of caste and religion. 
He looks after her with tender care even as she is dying of consumption. The Ananta-Janki relationship meets with 
serious social disapproval of the caste brotherhood; but it exemplifies the self-sustaining love that needs no social or 
institutional scaffolding.

The protagonist here is neither an "untouchable" nor a "cooler" representing a particular caste or community, but 
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This is the machine age, sons,
This is the machine age.
We are the men, who will master it,
We are the new man of the earth of all the evil old ages! (BH. 19)
“When the that hiars begin to handle the machine, we shall soon show them!... we need not to become slaves to the profiteers or the machine. We are men. We will make a Revolution”. (BH. 85)

He repeats the idea more than once:

“I tell you the machine is in our midst already, there! And we have got to decide to go and work it rather than sulk... .” (BH. 84)

Ananta's message to his brotherhood to have a right approach to the machine is not pleasing to the reactionaries. If one machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men, rejecting it is sign of madness. If Japan and Germany were to have only people of the mental disposition of Ralia and the Arya Samajist Mahasha Hans Raj, could they become economic super-powers? The martyrdom of Ananta, the machineman, for the cause of the machine and modernization comes as an eye-opener to his community to realize the immense utility of the machine in ending their poverty.

Industrialization played almost a revolutionary role in the life of Indian People. It made the Indian economy more unified, cohesive and organic. It raised the tone of the economic life in India. Further, it gave birth to modern cities which became the centers of modern culture and increasing democratic social life and from which all progressive movements, social, political and cultural emanated. The establishment classes of the contemporary society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Ananta fights a two pronged battle; first against the age old notions of his own fraternity; second, against the owner of machines; Lalla Murlidhar and Gokul chand, who seek to exploit their brothers but Ananta organises the jobless coppersmiths in order to compel the factory owners into giving them jobs. He urges the workers to form a union to bargain collectively with the factory owners for jobs and keep the old brotherhood alive.

He gets the supporter Puran Singh Bhagat, the poet, and is consistently cheered by Janki. But he is unable to muster sufficient enthusiasm among the job less who are carried away by the demagogy of the student leader, Satyapal. It is true about Ananta that there are two kinds of people who either can be friend of Ananta or enemy;

“There is a something about you.’ She said with serious concern in her voice, ‘which makes people either your worst enemies or your best friend.” (BH. 40)

The social critic in Mulk Raj Anand is seen in his spokesman Poet Puran Singh Bhagat, with something positive which can make our social life a source of happiness. The poet wants people to practice the true religion which would re-assert:

“Man's dignity, weakness, a limitless compassion for man, an unbounded love especially for the poor and the own trodden so that those who have been left to rot on the dusty roads can be raised from their dreaded position and given the 'izzat' which is theirs by the miracle of theirs birth in this world”. (BH. 149)

Though the central theme of The Big Heart is the need for selective industrialization which will not prove disadvantageous to any section of society, the author also devotes some space in the novel to the evil of caste-system. The novelist efficiently knits together the theme of casteism with the main theme of the novel. The criticism of casteism in The Big Heart is mainly concerned with its evil effect on human relationship. While Untouchable and The Road, draw our attention on the relations between the untouchables and the high castes, The Big Heart points up the tensions within the high castes themselves whose sense of caste superiority spoils their interpersonal relations on the basis of equality. As the influence of machine products has penetrated into Indian life (as stated in the beginning of this chapter), Lala Murli Dhar, the headman of the thathiars coppersmith brotherhood and Kasera Gokul Chand, the Chandri of utensil sellers' community of Amritsar undertake a joint venture. The relation between these managing partners, expected to be cordial on account of pecuniary considerations, is strained because of caste feelings. Kaseras and thathiars are sub-castes of the Kshatriya Community - the second highest in the hierarchy of castes. The orthodox Kaseras ossified by megalomania look down upon the "lower orders" by the belief: "To Ram was given an arrow, to Sita a bow, and from them which makes them think that their 'purity' would be defiled by coming into contact with the sub-castes. To assert their superiority they refer to the thathiars with the epithet 'low'.

REFERENCES:
1. Mulk Raj Anand, Two Leaves And A Bud. (New Delhi: Arnold Associates (India) Pvt. Ltd 1998.) 6. Hereafter it is cited as TLB parenthetically and page numbers have also been given).