



Mulk Raj Anand: A Champion of the under-dog of Indian Society

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Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand who is the first Indo-Anglian novelist to depict the tragic plight of the underdogs of Indian Society, writes realistically in his fiction about the doomed lives of the down-trodden & oppressed such as a sweeper, a coolie, a peasant, a tea-plantation labourer; who are all agonised victims & inhuman cruelty. Mulk Raj Anand suspects all institutions, temples, charity houses, government offices, laws & even religion. He advocates prominently the philosophy of humanism. The present article glorifies Anand's humanism, its sources & his philosophy of life. Finally the author touches the need of humanity for this technosavy world

Key Words: Indian society, underdog, humanism, untouchables.

Introduction

It is rightly said that Dickens's novels saved England from a horrible revolution. In his novels he realistically depicted the hungry forties & London poor with the comic gestures of a Santa Claus. Mulk Raj Anand who is pioneer novelist of India is the angry man of literature. He did in Indian fiction what Dickens did in English fiction. K.R.S Iyengar says "As a novelist, Anand has been as effective almost as Dickens's himself". Dickens's scarified arts for art's sake of his zeal for reformation. Anand believes in art for the sake of life. He wants "to change this sorry scheme of things entire" and to rebuild a world nearer to the heart's desire. The desire has at all levels governed his 15 novels, many stories & the art involved in them. In Anand's fiction, Anand, the man dominates Anand the novelist. His novels have a philosophical depth. In them he reveals his basic preoccupation with humanity. According to S. Lakshman Shastry "Dr. Mulk Raj Anand is a unique type of optimistic humanist who is capable to move the most pessimistic man to action'. At the same time he is a ruthless critic of all that is worn out & decaying dehumanising social & degrading customs, manners, out-dated social & political institutions, reactionary thoughts & ideologies. He was a disciple of Tagore & Nehru. Anand took efforts to understand the soul of land. Through his work he expresses Indian thoughts & culture. One hand we see a profound knowledge of an Indian mind & on the other hand a critic who criticized & assessed the various outdated social systems & institution that has made Anand an uncompromising agitator.

A Champion of the under-dog of Indian Society

Humanism means love of Man, the whole Man with all his weaknesses, instincts & impulses. Historically, humanism is a renaissance doctrine, which stresses the essential, worth, dignity & greatness of man as contrasted with an older view that man was wicked, worthless & doomed to destruction both in this life & that come. He admits that his humanism derives from European Hellenism. For, the traditional attitude of India in this regard is essentially non-human, superhuman. In fairness to India, he however, adds, 'Nor is humanism entirely new to Asia, if we