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THE IDEA OF HUMANISM IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S COOLIE

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Abstract : Coolie(1936) is one of the excellent works of Mulk Raj Anand .It has been called an "epic of misery" the epic of modern India and the "odyssey of Munoo , the Coolie". As a humanist he believes that man is potentially Capable of rising from these lower passions to magnificent heights of the rewards of human existence. His humanitarian approach and altruistic attitude have always impelled him to use his thought, word and deed for the save of 'still sad music of human misery and social welfare. Coolie is based upon the aspects of class struggle, inhuman and vicious grip with psychological conflict of the rich and the poor. The purpose of appropriate appreciation in writing has been to focus attention on the suffering humanity , misery wretchedness of the poor and torments of the downtrodden of Indian society caused by the exploitation of capitalist or feudal lords by the traditional way of life. His aim is to highlight the disparity between the poor and the powerful, and the apathy or antipathy of the have against have-nots.

Key Words: Apathy , Fever and fret , Moribund , Warm-heartedness , Have-nots

The reverence of humanism suggests to a perspective of some inherent, innate notion of a "human nature ". It is a secular, religious ,democratic and ethical life significance which affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to provide meaning and feature to their own perfect performance on the world stage. It stands for giving shape of more human society through an ethic based on human and inherent moral values and ideals in the spirit of logical inquiry through human circumstances.

Consistent with it, secular humanism is a concerning and comprehensive life diagnosis which entreats human reason, metaphysical essence, altruistic faith and moral discipline with justice of on going journey in the span of time and performance. It rejects supernatural clarity, theistic 'morality and religiosity, pseudoscience and perceived supernaturalism away from naturalism and idealism. The true essence of religious humanism is an evaluation of ethical philosophy with religious faith, beliefs that centre of human needs, passions, interests, deeds and dreams.

Though practice of religious humanism of early 20th centuries did not socially organise under the name of humanism, non-theistic rituals paired with human-centred ethical philosophy have a long literacy history, The idea of concerning essence of thought, word and deed by all the novels, Mulk Raj Anand deals with some inherent problem of human nature, science, art , literature and religion because he asserts that a creative writer can always find multitudes of objects in the happening of the day. He says that an immediate and acute circumstances of the time does bring forth a spontaneous protest in the creative artist and this

may outcome in an excellent realistic piece of fiction writing, emanating from inner contrast of mind. As Bhabani Bhattacharya is one of those humanists who has accepted the innovation and delineated successfully unscathed. He observes:

It is not often that a novelist is fortunate enough to live at a turning point of national life will not some of India's novelists accept the challenge?

In all his novels Mulk Raj Anand takes for granted the need for humanistic approach to life. Like most Indian English novelists, he is concerned with existence of every human being and its place in "man made society in his integrated system". He is a humanist saturated with a proper study of innate power.

Coolie is a humanistic work depicting class system is no less inhuman to humanity as it makes rich, richer and the poor and poorer in Indian society a mere 'brother to an underdog'. It segregates thousands of people into suffering 'fever and fret' with joyless daylight renown to all. This is obvious from the fact that the rich low caste is better have sweet felicity in society than the poor high-caste. The caste victims can at least treat humanly and support from members of their own caste where as the class victims have no such sympathy and have to suffer perpetual degradation. A critic observes well, "The magic of the book is in Munoo's innocence, in his native warm-heartedness, his love and comradeship, his irrepressible curiosity and zest for life". The root cause of Munoo's heart-rending tragedy is poverty. He realizes in his first episode at village;

"I am a kshatriya and I am poor and varma, a Brahmin is a servant boy, a menial, because he is poor, No, caste does not matter. The Babus are like the sahib-logs and all servants look alike: there must only be two kind of people in the world, the rich and the poor."

"The art of literature, according to Anand, may indeed must have an humanistic purpose but art and human ideology are similar entities. Going beyond progressive crusader and social reform thus, Anand's commitment to society eventually developed into his creed of new humanism as he asserts it in Apology for Heroism and in his essay "Prolegomena to a new Humanism when he declares this new humanism as "enlightenment in the interests of man, true to his highest nature and his noblest vision."

The novel presents a chain of inhuman treatment in a picaresque manner. His search for happy life in a world where poor man's flesh and blood is treated cheaper than bread, makes him. The tragic denial of life to Munoo is caused by his poverty which is the sole cause of his tragedy. Class-consciousness and stream of consciousness are the main theme of the novel. It emerges the miserable plight of coolies in India. The novelist has a keen sense of observation and psychological insight.

Coolie presents the essence of an orphan boy Munoo who tries to avail chances of resolution but his low spirit proves obstacles in his way. It strives with him and feeble laugh with him. Poverty compels him to practice to life but his expectations are extremely modest and submissive.

Saga of suffering, misery and exploitation go hand in hand at the moments of positive attitudes towards life with embodiment of joy and happiness. He has studied at the beginning of learning his first lessons in his harsh school of modern village life. It is the first decent in the tragic drama of suffering and exploitation. As John Keats says in "ode to a Nightingale" "where but to think is to be full of sorrow and laden-eyed despairs", what we concern in Sham Nagar episode; -

"the factory is huge octopus with its numerous tentacles clutching the labourers in its deadly grasp slowly paralysing tenure and effects retrenchment summarily;

the British foreman is at cottages at exorbitant rent and also a money-lender -all rolled into methods;.....

The manifesto focused all on the degradation and dehumanizing character of the traditional Indian village life and its moral and ethical values which advocated a radical change and liberation form of moribund integrated institutions. The tenets of the manifesto were undergirded by a humanistic view of time applied to India. The applied concern gives stream from the negotiation that "radical changes are taking place in the Indian society. The traditional and spiritual reaction, however,----is still making desperate efforts to prolong itself. It is the duty of Indian writers to give expression to the changes taking place in Indian life and assist the spirit of progress in the country "(coppola,6). As in humanistic societies and like the "progressive writers" elsewhere in the world, the Indian progressive writers' movement thus linked its aesthetic to a Humanistic-Existential ideology.

The novelist has felt the pulse of degradation of dehumanising Indian society. He goes deep into the core of the heart of the poor and the down-trodden. He selects the poor classes to focus them in his novels. The results of his fiction is absolutely humanistic picture of Indian society. He pleads for the story of dispossessed and defeated, humble and disinherited man in society. The novelist asserts how an orphan, poor, helpless and rustic boy makes struggle for a better life, but poverty inflicts sea of troubles in his progress in his life. He shows his wide observing power of humanity in shaping his characters.

Mulk Raj Anand is a proletarian humanist. He has committed to present the cause of common man in common language. He delineates sympathy towards poor and humble people who are respected by no one,

and they do not respect themselves. Coolie is the best manifestation of his compassion for the simple man in his society. He is deeply influenced by the stream of consciousness technique in which the character's inherent feelings and thoughts are coloured as really happening to him. With the embodiment of goodness and the repository of virtue he shares elementary passions of common man in his writings. His novels serve useful figure of arousing the stream of consciousness of the people for the betterment. It is an epic of human misery, a true picture of toiling, suffering of joyless, unprofitable and miserable plight of the millions in India. The poor who are exploited of outrageous fortune, are made to day labour, hardly get bellyful of food twice a day sick hurry and exhausted and die prematurely. It is an integrated humanistic novel from the pen of the greatest Indian writing in English.

The humanistic concern as depicted in the novel is united by a common feeling of misery and hunger. It makes the sophistication of institutionalised religion, man made system of caste and creed, helps to live in inevitable fraternity in it. We propose not only the panorama of the diagnosis to physical features of India, but also of her society in all its varied nuances.

We come to know the people who have home plenty of appetite but no surfeiting as well as the people who have plenty of food but no appetite. The reach who are restless on their luxurious bed as well as the poor who enjoy with sweet dreams and quite blessings on the straw bed and pillow of elbow; bare body, bare footed, the long-robed priests with beard as white as a diary, attending the dancing party as at the land lord's residence as well as Yogies lifting their hands with a praiseworthy saintliness and spiritual grace uttering 'shanti! Shanti! And shamelessly working for the paragon of 'sons of god' to the wives of working class causing shock to innocents like Munoo in Coolie.

Coolie is remarkable in its proper study of humanism in different ways. It emerges the poverty and exploitations, of oppressive trends in naturalism and the contemporary traditional ideas. It is a sequence of incidents, of slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Mulk Raj Anand brings forth the real feelings of his characters and brings out of their virtue and its vicious grip. He has compassion and sympathy with the poor and down-trodden. His novels deal with the everyday existence in its panorama of actual happening. His life like characters act and speak as true person without taking any influence of humanistic concerning of the novelist. M.K. Naik observes; "The author's compassion for the exploited and down-trodden is pure and intense but does not degenerate into blind hysterics or dull preaching, one aspect of exploitation of the Indian by the white man and poor by the reach".

Mulk Raj Anand has propounded to general the cause of trials and tribulation of suffering humanity by instinct and passion. A typical character Mrs Mainwaring an Anglo-Indian who suffers from a strong inferiority complex about her origin. Her passionate life is a series of descent of moral laxity and immovable relations after her husband's demise. In the later course of novel we find that she stimulates Munoo's passions and desires to enjoy physical pleasure with him. She makes herself kind-hearted toward him. She has a fascination for sensual enjoyment to what Munoo does not come to know how to live. The novelist has given of her passionate essence in the following words: "her warmth, her ardour, her intense capacity for desire must have been due to the blood of her pagan Indian grand mother in her, her curious coldness of mind, the frigidity which had once made her jump into a bath of ice water in order to quell the passion on her body, was conditioned by the idea of sin".

Mulk Raj Anand firmly believes that a novelist should not merely be a social imitator but a creator because creative writing is essentially universal in its appeal. The greatness of justice lies in its humanizing power and his novel emphasizes the existence of man in the universe. As an artist, only after transcending appearance can perceive and study the reality behind it and even beyond because a novelist is continuously in touch with the external pattern of things that underlie all reality. His novels are not to ridicule and satire at humanity but they have a formative purpose and therein lies the constructive facet of his creative writing. His progressive concept of mind is denoted through its experience of early life. His novel Coolie is a quest for identity, commitment and harmony in suffering humanity and an emotional treatment and involvement in life with a sense perception of the definite and specific world and a passion for the present and a hankering for beyond. It is remarkable for its humanism. It proceeds line and under current and saves the novel from being dark features of contemporary India. There is a certain philosophical touch and depth. The novelist portrays dark side of life and heart-rending story of workers and labourers in day break and day life routine. Hence as the author tells us:-

they worked from day to day in the dark underworld, full of intense heat of blazing furnaces and the dense molodorous smells of brewing essence, spices treacle, of dust and ashes and mud, which became kneaded into

a sticky layer on the earth of the passage with the overflow of water from the barrels of soaking fruit, and plastered the bare toes of the labourers. They ran about bare-foot and naked except for loin-clothes, emptying the boiling water which hummed ceaselessly in the cauldrons, refilling them, joining the receptacles to tin tubes with smears of sticky clay and rags: cooling the flasks; transporting them; then coming back to wash the fruit; doling it out to the women and helping them to peel it, till the next flasks of essences were ready, drawing water out of the well or helping the bosses in the intricate business of making jams and pickles. They worked long hours, from dawn to passed midnight, so mechanically that they

never noticed the movements of their own or each other's hands. Only the sweat trickled down their bodies and irritated them into an awareness that they were engaged in a strenuous physical occupation.

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