Mulk Raj Anand - The People- centric Writer

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Abstract:

Mulk Raj Anand’s concern for the poor and downtrodden derives from his experience in the rural life in India. He has seen the poor peasants suffering under the extreme poverty, and insulted and exploited. His sympathy for such poor and oppressed people is so deep and sincere in his works. He almost cries with anguish against the injustice and cruelties inflicted upon them.

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Social consciousness is the awareness of a nation to its everyday hardships from people’s perspective. While great many privileges and rights are on the books and other sources, whether the people exercise them is doubtful. People are unaware of these and prevented from knowing and utilizing. Also, the problems that have existed from ages past are still lurking around and it has become a menace to the forward momentum of the
nation. Some authors have taken up the task of laying bare the starkest realities of the country and have not minced words in the process.

Mulk Raj Anand is a writer who through his realistic portrayal of various problems has sent a strong signal to the nation about its reality. Mulk Raj Anand was notable in the international arena. He is significant for the people centric writing, especially the underprivileged. While much talk and writing are about progressive India, he endeavored to shed light on the underdeveloped areas. He spared no pains to go down to the lowest of levels and explore the psyche of the downtrodden, impoverished, and outlawed people.

Anand exhibits social consciousness in his works, which is not a refined presentation of fact in fiction, but is forthright and naked. They immediately evoke two opposing responses of denial and sympathy. The author in all likelihood intended not just a response but also a reaction to the situation, which is happening right in front of the eyes but invisible because of the internal blindness of the people.

His prominent fictional works include Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), the trilogy The Village (1939), Across the Black Waters (1940), and The Sword and the Sickle (1942), Private Life of an Indian Prince (1949), Seven Summers: The Story of an Indian Childhood (1951), The Old Woman and the Cow (1960), The Road (1961) and Death of a Hero (1963), Morning Face (1968), and Confession of a Lover (1976) among a voluminous output of books. His works also include a large number of short stories, poetry, plays and essays. Apart from various fictional works, Anand also published books on diversified subjects such as Marx and Engels in India, Tagore, Nehru, Aesop's fables, the Kama Sutra, erotic sculpture, and Indian ivories.

The works of Anand lay bare the issues close to the heart of an average Indian, irrespective of the fact who ruled him. The social consciousness represented in his works is full of unmistakable human pathos and is sure to break the façade of development and growth India prides in itself. His works proposes to drive home the need for a truly
independent India – in spirit and mind and most importantly in the everyday lives of every human being.

Anand presents the problems of the poor and the downtrodden with sympathy in his novels. His allegiance to the cause of suffering humanity is obvious. He agrees that life on earth is full of suffering and struggle for the poor and the downtrodden. He takes up the cudgel against this cruel society.

Changing or change is not an overnight process. It is a small effort by someone, which grows by leaps and bounds after continued struggle and revolt. It is ironical that many of the things that we take for granted today are in fact a hard-earned commodity of people many years ago or many generations ago. Questioning an existing rule or regulation is at first looked as blasphemous, and often negated and extinguished. This attitude cannot be criticized since what has been ingrained for ages and accepted as the way of life cannot be contradicted all of a sudden. Any contradicting views are at first met with strong opposition.

According to Mulk Raj Anand society has to be revamped and reconstructed. He advises the victims to stand themselves and fight against the oppressors with education as their key and strong weapon.

References
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