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Studying Society and Social Issues through Untouchable by Mulk Raj Anand

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ABSTRACT: This project aims to discover about the social issues that has been taking place in India since many years. Talking about Social Issues that societies are still facing or some issues that is finished or is practiced in very small scale. The project has shown the struggle of lower class people through 'Untouchable' by MULK RAJ ANAND. It has shown the discrimination among people on the basis of caste. Anand has shown the life of all poor people very clearly to make people understand their situation.

All the situation faced by lower cast people which use to be considered as Untouchable were unwavering about the rights of the people for being the citizen of the country and which is why they were I'll treated by upper caste people.

MULK RAJ ANAND brought this idea of letting people know about the life of poor people and what they are going through by portraying it through the character in his book as he thought that it may bring the changes in the society.

INTRODUCTION

Mulk Raj Anand (MRA), is an Indian writer who was born in 1905, in Peshawar, India which is now in Pakistan. He has written many novels and short stories, in which his greatest work is known as "UNTOUCHABLE".

This project is all about the social issues of the country and how Mulk Raj Anand has shown it in his book Untouchable.

MRA was a socialist and was concerned and determined for the poor people, his writings easily tells us that he was so connected with human bonding including 'coolie'.

MRA also participated in world war and gave his best to make India get freedom.

Untouchable by MRA tells the situation and condition of poor people in early 19th century and what were the struggles they had to face at that time.

How, why and what were the social issues in India, and how it became so large in the country.

MRA in Untouchable has shown the life of a boy who is seeking for his identity in the world where he is getting hate for no reason.

How caste system use to play a major role, and people were divided into many castes and were discriminated on the basis of the same.

People of lower cast were treated very badly and Mulk Raj Anand wanted justice for them because he didn't like the way they were treated back then, so he wrote a book thinking that, people who will read his book will change their mind and the actions will be taken in the favor of lower cast people.



ABOUT MULK RAJ ANAND

MULK RAJ ANAND was born in 1905, Peshawar, India which is now in Pakistan. He is a great known writer of India who wrote many short stories and novels on Humanism.

He completed his education from Khalsa College, Amritsar, India and Cambridge University in Abroad, and actively participated for freedom of India and meanwhile wrote many short stories, he was great novelist, socialist. When he use to study in University college London, he also worked in restaurant to support himself.

He wrote books like 'Coolie' and 'Untouchable', which shows the condition of poor people who were considered as lower class as per their cast and income and were ill treated.

Anand started his writing career at the early age, in 1920 in England, by writing short notes on the books by T.S Eliot. He is known as the father of Indo-English literature.

His writings use tell that he is so connected for Humanism and human bonding which he showed when he wrote his first prose as response to the suicide of an aunt who had been excommunicated for dinning with Muslim woman, but it became more clearer to the people about his writing style and his major theme of his writings when he wrote Untouchable and Coolie, when he wrote about the condition and the struggles of artisans of Amritsar after the industrialization and discrimination of people on the basis of their work and cast.

He use to write about the people who were outcasted, depressed, peasants and oppressed in the society in his novels and use to show the life of Indian people.

Anand's novel Untouchable was a great success because it showed his capability of seeing the society and also he told the deep and emotional side of the people at that time in the novel. He showed the feelings and emotions of the character and how he wanted to find his identity in the world and wanted justice for himself for the way he was being treated by upper class people.

Anand also wrote other books in which he told us that how the poor people were tortured when they use to talk of getting a position and become something in upper class society. There was a barber boy in his book (The Barber's Trade Union) who wanted to become doctor and he faced a lot of criticism because of that, but at last he fought for his community and even got justice.

He has written many books like:

Two Leaves and a Bud

The Village

Across the Black Waters

The Sword and the Sickel

The Big Heart

He has written many short stories, letter, books like children literature, books on art.

He received some Notable Awards like:

International Peace Prize in 1953

Padma Bhushan in 1967

Sahitya Akademi Award in 1971 (for MORNING FACE).



MULK RAJ ANAND is known for his talent for showing the feelings, emotions and situations of people facing in real through the character in his novel is just amazing. People can really feel and relate to it because it seems so natural and real even his fictions are also very famous amazing to read to understand the society.

SOCIAL ISSUES OF INDIA

Indian people have faced many social issues like untouchability, child labor, child marriage since many years. Before independence it was practiced a lot, like British people use to discriminate Indian poor people on the basis of their cast and income and use to behave very badly with them and use to treat them as **untouchable**.

Child labor was practiced because people at that was not capable of affording a proper meal even which is why everyone use to work to earn income, and this was also happening because of the torture of British people who use to get all their work done by Indian people, but refuses to give the sufficient amount of money and people were ill treated.

Child marriage was done because whenever, the girl was born in the family, people use to think that now they will get a lot of expenses because of her and the British people use to misbehave with the girls and also girl child at that time was considered as liability that was also the reason why girls were not allowed to study because they were trained to get married so if a girl will study it will not benefit her parents so the girls were not allowed to study and get married as soon as possible so that parents should get relief from her responsibility.

Sati Pratha was the another issue at that time in which women whose husbands use to die, they were forced to kill herself also by putting herself into the fire along with her husband because it was said that now there is no reason for her to live without her husband in this world and many other issues like this were there and are still existing somehow.

Many policies have been made to abolish untouchability but it can somehow be seen in some places, sati pratha is banned now which is very good thing but child labor is also almost finished but not completely and other issues are also there somehow in some parts of the country which needs to be banned but it is been neglected now because now it can not be seen at large scale.

MULK RAJ ANAND was so concerned about all these problems and issues and that is why he started writing about all these issues in his novels which was appealing to the people at that time and which is why his work was so famous and he was known as writer of reality which was depicted in his writings.

Untouchability is still there because people nowadays also, make poor people who work at their houses sit on the floor, give them anything to eat and drink in completely different or sometime broken container just because they are poor and misbehaves with them by not letting them enter at big places and these things still happens but very rarely, at least they are not getting hate now for being lower class.

Untouchable by MULK RAJ ANAND depicts his thinking towards poor people that he wanted to see them getting their rights and living their life freely as we can see that in the novel, there is the one day story of the character of Bakha who is sweeper and faces some injustice and struggle for belonging from lower cast and he doesn't know that why is it happening with him and he starts his struggle for finding his position and identity and getting his rights for being the citizen of the country. He had to face a lot of problems because upper class were not accepting and liking this thing that any lower class want his right and wants to come equal to them but after so many problems and struggle, he succeeded and today, in reality, untouchability is almost finished and many rights have been made for them also. In the novel, the life of poor people, health hazards and their daily life problem has been shown, the whole family is living in one room, they don't even had water to drink because of lack of money and even they were not allowed to take water on their own from well and had to wait for any upper class person to give them water and which is they had to wait for so long sometime just to enough water to drink after coming far away from the home. For the job of Bakha who was sweeper, he had to get up early in the morning to clean the public toilets before people start coming and for this much hard work, he only received abuses and humiliations from most of his customers. He was humiliated and beaten by the crowd in market because he touched any upper class person by mistake and people use to think that if any lower class person touches any upper class person then they become dirty and he was insulted for that, he was also insulted for stepping in the temple. After facing all these, he understands that he is been treated like this because of the work he does, that he



cleans the public toilets, so he decided to make a way out of this, so he took many steps to have justice and to get free from this work and this ill treatment.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In India, poor people have facing the violation of their rights and more worst part was, that people didn't know about their rights and they had accepted their situation the way it was that is why, people were more in the problem and not only at that time in fact today also, people are not aware of their rights and the policies made for their betterment which is why they face problems related to lack of money, and people who know about the policies, they also don't get it easily and have to work hard for getting the help from government policies.

MULK RAJ ANAND has talked about the feelings of out casted people and human rights violation in 'Untouchable'.

Human rights are essence of ancient Hindu philosophy. Everyone individual has right to get appreciation and the large part of our country is the people who earn in less amount is getting insulted and not getting their rights. These people are very important part of our life because they are one who do all those work without getting disgusted which we don't even think to do it. They clean our house, roads, offices and even bathrooms so we can at least respect their job and respect them. Discrimination on the basis of casts is still there in India, and this system in which it is said that lower cast will do the work for upper class is also the major reason for their backwardness today also.

MULK RAJ ANAND has seen the clear differentiation between upper class people and the peasants and untouchables and coolies, that is why he use to connect with them and their problem more properly than others and use to write in brief about them in his writings.

MRA has experienced all the exploitations happened with the low cast people and has shown his feeling of sympathy towards them in his short stories. He is known as the man of people.

So its very important that every person should get their right and MRA was so in favor of this and that is why wrote many books in favor of poor people in the hope that his books will change the society for the better.

CONCLUSION

MULK RAJ ANAND used his creativity and talent to describe the condition of untouchables at that time in his books which showed his concern and sympathy towards them. His keen observation of the lives of people made him such a great writer of all time.

Many social issues were there in the country which is somehow left in very rare areas because of the steps taken by government, but still present.

MRA's books have given people a different way to think, to bring change, because its been said that if you want change in the country then you should start it from your own house.

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