



Coolie: A Rigmarole of Marginalization

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ABSTRACT :

Anand has provided a voice to society's underprivileged and voiceless through his literary works. He writes about those who are socially, politically, economically, and culturally marginalised, repressed, suppressed, and exploited. There are many ways someone can be marginalised; it need not be based on race, religion, or caste. Other elements, such as animosity, behaviour, and character, are as crucial in mentally repressing a person. We can see how Munoo, the protagonist, is mistreated in Coolie despite the cultural variations. Marginalised people frequently suffer brutal treatment from social forces and lack personal identity. Anand tries to highlight the miserable state of the impoverished through Coolie. Despite being published in 1936, Coolie still holds to today's reality, marked by a widening disparity and a failure to reduce that gap. This paper is a discernible attempt to explain how Anand's Coolie portrays cultural marginalisation.

KEYWORDS: Marginalisation, marginalised, rigmarole, exploitation, caste system, class hierarchies, downtrodden.

INTRODUCTION:

Anand uses a realistic depiction of the people in his art to arouse sympathy among India's poor. Anand is the first Indian to depict an oppressed Indian's real-life struggles. Anand became recognised as the voice of the marginalised and voiceless. His primary books include characters that are marginalised by caste or class individuals. In Anand's imagined universe, the untouchable sweepers, oppressed coolies, indebted farmers, pitiful labour, and mistreated women play significant roles. The heroes he chose are those he knew as a child, and they experience some form of marginalisation. He talks about their daily struggles for survival and identity, as well as their issues and pains. To him, a work of art is, first and foremost, a social occasion, and a novelist's responsibility is to create, not to predetermine.

In Coolie he dealt with the tragic life of the marginalised class, i.e. poor. Munoo is hardworking and imaginative but starved of affection and harassed by society. Munoo belongs to the poor class of society. The poor are marginalised by the rich, and so is Munoo. He feels that the cause of his trouble is poverty.

Voice of the Marginalised:

When Munoo comes to Bombay and requests a fresh drink, which he pays for, the owner urges him to sit on the floor rather than on a chair as soon as he identifies as a Collie. When Nathoo Ram employed us in Shampur, his

wife, Bibiji, mistreated him. Munoo could enter no room unless he was explicitly invited. When Munoo finished that task, Bibiji told him to hurry up since he already had the following task prepared for him. She only serves him in his hand to eat because she is an orthodox Hindu after he has finished his work. He was fed with the leftovers by her. He must complete all tasks around the house. Sometimes he is beaten up and abused by her. She abused her by saying, 'you are an eater of your master', 'shameless brute', 'son of bitch', 'monkey', 'owl' and so on.

Class Conflict:

Those on the lower rungs may experience crushing impacts from class consciousness resulting from wealth or social rank. Coolie serves as an example of how the evils of poverty may restrict the young before they can fully blossom. Dayaram and Gujiri sent Munoo to work in Shampur because they were struggling financially and could no longer afford to support him. Munoo is despised by Daya Ram, Mr and Mrs Nathoo Ram, Ganpat, Chinta Shahib, and Mrs Mainwaring. He is slapped, kicked, and verbally abused. He seldom encounters anything but suffering and brutality, which adds to the suffering and pain of life. We can infer from the example mentioned above that Munoo, the main character of the novel, suffers as a result of being a coolie and a poor person. Because industrialists and other wealthy Indians take advantage of them physically and economically, all other coolies also suffer. In his novel *Coolie*, Anand introduces the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of society. Munoo is an orphan child mistreated by his masters, despised by society, and shunned by his family. He attempts to progress, but his unfortunate circumstances do not help him. Anand explores many ideologies, including imperialism, industrialism, capitalism, and communism, to demonstrate how they impact the socially and economically underprivileged.

Sufferings:

He accompanies his uncle to work as a domestic servant in Nathoo Ram's home in Shampur, driven by the need for a self-sufficient means of subsistence. Though the Babu mistreats him, he unintentionally degrades the master's home by relieving himself in front of it and mistakenly injuring their daughter while playing. Unable to take the abuse and beatings, he flees and boards a train without knowing where he is going. He met an orphaned former Coolie named Prabha Dayal aboard the train. However, he and Ganesh are now the owners of a pickle factory. Munoo travels with Prabha to Daultapur, where he finds work in the Pickle Factory.

Indian society-culture of the Rich and the Poor:

The 1930s were a time of great upheaval in Indian history, and "*Coolie*" provides a complete account of Indian society. It was at this period that the Indian Independence Movement reached its pinnacle. Anand compares the wealthy merchants wearing starched Muslim clothing to the dusky Coolies wearing rags. The Sir George White Cottons Mills, which has taken the place of the pickle plant in Daultapur, has even worse working conditions with a foreman named Jimmie Thomas, who is more abusive and despotic than Ganpat. The world of the underprivileged is one of companionship among unpleasant odours, maltreatment, misery, torment, exploitation, dust, heat, and sweat. Munoo and Babu are compared as two poles by Anand. Babu, who is both his master and affluent, Munoo cannot be Babu when Munoo is destitute.

Munoo flees the harsh city life and returns to the hills to reclaim his identity, where he eventually perishes while struggling to pull his memsahib's rickshaw. The boy from the hills sees the world and returns to the hills to die, establishing a circular narrative in the novel. Anand explores the miserable condition between the enslaver and the enslaved person in this novel. Misery and exploitation go hand in hand. The tragic denial of Munoo is the cause of poverty which is the sole reason for his death. The novel is marginalised from his uncle's house, Nathoo Ram, Prabha Dayal, cotton mill to Shimla, pulling rickshaw for Mrs Mainwaring. He feels inferior when he sees people in Shimla live in Bungalows and wear Angrezi clothes.

Conclusion:

Anand depicts the genuine representation of underprivileged Indians in *Coolie*, where the people suffer from exploitation. Anand believes the caste structure will not go quickly, even with industrialisation. There are sub-classes within the middle and lower classes depending on culture and income; within these sub-classes, there are caste and religion divisions. Bombay Textile Mill mill workers are from the working class, yet there are Hindus and Muslims among them. His works depict the lives of outcasts, labourers, and discouraged and persecuted members of society. Anand paints an image of a society that treats the underprivileged inhumanely through *Coolie*. It reveals their wretched, pathetic life, suffering, sorrows, and agonies.

This research paper attempted to explore how cultural marginalisation is portrayed in Anand's *Coolie* and the factual setting in an Indian society where racial and class hierarchies imposed by British colonialism have intersected with the current system making life impossible for *Coolie* and how the protagonist Munoo's life is ill-treated despite cultural differences. It also shows the prevailing condition in our country despite gaining Independence.

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