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A Critical Study of the Stream of Consciousness Technique in the Novel Untouchable by Mulk Raj Anand

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Abstract

This article discusses the stream of consciousness approach used by Anand in 'Untouchable' to highlight social issues and racial oppression. Virginia Woolf, a 20th-century writer and founder in the use of the stream of consciousness as a narrative device on a wide scale, used the stream of consciousness technique. Some of the major strengths of this technique include its concern with time, subjectivity, interiority, lack of action against exploitation, plot, and tragedy, and characterization of the subconscious. Mulk Raj Anand uses this method to portray the tribal picture of Indian society in Untouchable people. Anand has focused on the plight of lower caste peoples.

Keywords: Stream of Conscious Technique, Bakha, Lakha, Social Problems, Orthodox, Plight, Humiliation

Introduction

The phrase ‘Stream of consciousness’ was initially employed by a critic, Sinclair in 1918, whereas reviewing Dorothy Richardson’s novel. With the stream of consciousness technique novel, the reader is taken straight into the Character's mind. The writer as mediator, reporter, or historiographer is nearly disappeared. Mulk raj Anand has used the Stream of Consciousness technique in his first novel untouchable. however, in contrast, the author of James Joyce and Anand has used this method partly and selectively. Stream of Consciousness may be a fictional technique in which the novelist doesn't narrate the story himself as all-knowing or omnipresent, but places the reader inside the mind of the most character. The writer as Mediator, reporter, or historian is nowhere. The reader will see the functioning of the mind of a personality as a clock-maker can see the functioning of the clock. Anand justifies his call of adopting the technique of stream of consciousness by saying:

"When I started to write down novels, regarding India, although I took Joyce's Streams of Consciousness' as my method. I had to use a distinct situation, (Rock Pebbles / January - March 2013 /P. 47) disclosed to me by an upbringing in a province of the British Empire. In my county wherever the position of man had not emerged beyond the speak of the dirt of Maya, to the potential humanity of the individual with democracy planned against long suppression of feudalism, conservative associated institutionalized religion, I felt that novel shouldn't press the "inner monologue" beyond a particular point, so that humanness could stay a variable consider the situation. (Anand, 2) The more adds:

"In London, when I worked as an assistant within the rare book-shop of Jacob Schwartz, I scan Joyce's portrait of the creator as Young Man Ulysses and Part of add progress. The ‘Stream of consciousness technique of James Augustine Aloysius Joyce swept me off my feet. I felt that the appliance of this method to the labyrinths and substrata of the Indian mind may alone metamorphose the inn realities of our soul. Count Lev Nikolayevitch Tolstoy and Feodor Dostoevski had already shown me that it had been vital to root oneself within the inner causalities of human conflict. Joyce had taken the novel from outside incidents to

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ethical and psychological motivation. during this way, characters could become quite themselves, deeper, perhaps, Universal". (Anand, 3) In this way, Anand has tried to induce influences from all the books.

Bakha's inner mind

In 'Untouchable,' Anand depicted the suffering and grief of the untouchable group, which is the result of injustice and exploitation. Anand has used it in a greatly modified and simplified version to achieve his goal of conveying a vivid picture of Bakha's thinking and surroundings. The grief and anguish of society's outcasts, and our desire to sympathize with them. As a result, there is a seamless combination of topic, technique, form, and content.

Bakha is a real individual, loving, thwarted, sometimes grand, sometimes weak, and thoroughly Indian, writes E. M. Foster in the foreword of Untouchable. Even his physical appearance is unusual; we know his broad, intelligent face, and graceful torso... as he does his voice. When he does his awful job or stumps out in artillery boots, expecting a pleasant trip through the city with a paper of cheap chocolates in his hands Bakha's terrible experience is presented using the stream of consciousness technique every time he is subjected to one humiliation or another. Thus, after mistakenly touching a Hindu caste at the Bazaar, he is abused, humiliated, and beaten, and Bakha's Sequence of Thoughts is revealed "But his soul was filled with a burning rage. When he recalled some insult or rebuke, his feelings would arise like bursts of smoke from a half-smothered fire, in sad unbalanced jerks." (Anand51) and a dim ghost appeared in the smoking atmosphere of his thoughts. The image of the affected man stood in the background among several indistinct features, his red eyes, his excessively agitated way, his abuse, and there was the circle of the crowd, taunting, scoffing, abusing, while he stood in the center with linked hands. Why was all of this occurring? He asked himself, inside the soundless discourse of cells getting and sending feelings, how he usually communicated with himself.

Mulk Raj Anand represented Bakha's inner self while cleaning the courtyards of the village shrine. His desire to see the inside of the temple made him anxious. He climbs the steps and sits discreetly in a place from which he can see the innermost sanctum's recourses. But then a loud cry of 'polluted polluted' (Anand, 67) rends the air. Bakha's heart stops beating as his blood starts to coagulate. "Get off the stairs, scavengers, off with you, you have polluted our entire program," the priest and worshipper screamed from the courtyards. (Anand, 69) Bakha's heart grieved for his situation, and he thought, "The temple seemed to advance towards him like a monster, enveloping him" (Anand, 82). Anand portrays Bakha's suffering in his inn side of mind and how he was struggling with this conservative upper-class society and dealing with pain and agony, which Anand describes in these words: "My purpose is not negative, only to shock, but to activate consciousness at all levels" (Cowasjee 1973:115-116). Anand presented a humane approach toward Bakha and his oppressed class in this work.

When Bakha's sister, Sohini, is molested by the Priest, Bakha rushes to Sohini, who tells him how the Priest pandit kali tried to physically assault her. Bakha became furious and rushed towards the crowd to fight the mean Brahmin, his teeth grinding and hands tightened. Anand used the stream of consciousness technique brilliantly in the novel, without the negative impacts of incoherence, confusion, and unintelligibility.

Lakha

Using the stream of consciousness technique, Anand introduces his reader to the mind of another important character, Lakha. Lakha plays an important role in Untouchable. In Mulk Raj Anand's novel 'Untouchable,' Lakha is the father of sweepers Bakha and Jamadar. He is

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the typical untouchable who accepts his miserable conditions quietly and does not feel embarrassed like his son Bakha. He vividly portrays the downtrodden and untouchable. He's dirty, old, and ill. His old age has made him selfish and angry. He is always focused on himself and his pleasure. He never concerns his children, who, like him, maybe starving. He appointed Bakha to work for him, and he hates working. Additionally, they abuse Bakha and other children for small matters.

Lakha's ill and temper

Anand illustrates Lakha's scornful and short-tempered temperament on the occasion when Bakha gets back home from playing hockey. "You son of a pig, you son of a dog, you ran away, you have been away all afternoon and now you come back, you were wrongheaded, you have become a 'Nabob,'" he shouts to Bakha. You do not even care about your father. "If you go out in the morning and come at night, who will complete the work at the latrine?" ((Anand, 96). Then, furious, he ordered his son to leave his house and never return, and Bakha does leave and goes away.

Tame and Passive

Centuries of servility and domination of Hindu communities have made him submissive and passive, incapable of wrath or resistance. He regards caste Hindus as his authorities and rulers, and he is always eager to humble himself before them. On the second hand, he lacks self-respect and dignity. Bakha, as opposed to his father, possesses the fire that burns in his spirit. Anand illustrates Lakha's attitude when Bakha tells him about Kalinath's abusive behavior with Sohini. Lakha is just interested in knowing if Bakha attacked kalinath. He symbolizes objective, heartlessness, and suffering. Bakha is better to him in this respect.

Conclusion

Mulk Raj Anand should modify his stream of consciousness technique so that it does not degrade into simple fiction or subjectivity detachment from orthodox society. Anand portrayed the downtrodden of society and exposes the ugly face and painful suffering of untouchable people through the stream of consciousness technique, not as he is in himself, but as he becomes a victim of our Hindu society and exploitation. Anand's purpose is also to emphasize that India has never been free from caste and class system and that it is a caterpillar for our humanities and society, which is slowly swollen to kindness and human values.

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