

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

Mulk Raj Anand, an Indian author renowned for his English literary creations, delves into the existence of the underprivileged social strata within the conventional Indian culture in his writings. The peak of Anand's swift recognition as a novelist in his early career arrived with the release of two novels, *Untouchable* (1933) and *The Coolie* (1936). *Untouchable* addresses the sensitive issue of caste discrimination and untouchability in Indian society and features a preface by E. M. Forster. Anand's career can be segmented into two phases: the Anand of the colonial era, who consistently analyzed issues such as class exploitation, the caste system, colonialism, imperialism, fascism, and racism and the Anand of the post-independence period, who diversified his focus in response to India's evolving ambitions as a sovereign nation. This novel made Anand one of the most popular British authors in India. This book is inspired by her aunt's experience when she dined with a Muslim woman and was treated as an outcast by her family. Anand mainly talks about caste discriminations, where Bakha was one of the very lowest caste. The Hindu caste system, one of the few formal systems of social stratification still in existence, is the main subject of *untouchable*. Therefore, he is called "Untouchable" because no one wants or comes into contact with people of very low caste.

In India, the caste system has existed in some form for at least 3,000 years. It is a social hierarchy carried down through families that can affect a person's job as well as parts of their social lives, such as who they can marry. (Sahgal, Evans & Corichi. 2021). The caste system is divided into four varnas, or castes, according to their status in the hierarchy. Their access to wealth, power, and privilege is determined by their occupational classification. Many people believe the caste descended from Brahma, the Hindu God of Creation. The Brahmins, primarily

priests and scholars, are at the top. The Kshatriyas, who are soldiers and political leaders, come next, followed by the Vaishyas, or merchants, and the Shudras, who are mostly laborers, peasants, artisans, and servants, are at the fourth level. Another group at the bottom consists of those who are considered untouchables. These people are regarded as outcasts because they worked in occupations considered dirty and polluting, such as scavenging and skinning dead animals. They were not considered part of the caste system.

Untouchability was a widespread practice in the caste system, which was founded on the concepts of purity and pollution. This concept of purity in the caste system was justified by hygienic societies, which considered Dalits to be unsanitary due to the duties allocated to them. Due to the Dalits could not use the same wells and temples as the upper castes, they were compelled to stay on the outside of the village to avoid polluting the environment. As a result, if any of the upper castes came into contact with Dalits, they would feel 'polluted'.

In the 16th century, the Portuguese used the term caste to describe the division of labor in Indian society during the colonization period. Caste as a constructive structure of endogamous social units; subcaste, hypergamy, exogamous division; varna; castes of the Right and Left Hand. (Velassery, 2005). The other paradigm, crucial in Western sociology, views caste as a specific manifestation arising from transcultural mechanisms that generate social stratification, particularly those linked to power dynamics, economic factors, and competition for resources.

According to Jain (2021), caste may also be viewed as a form of institutionalization. Institutionalization is a process that aims to govern societal behavior inside organizations or even civilizations that are naturally dynamic. Barley (1997). When individuals in society embrace common information, it becomes shared knowledge and becomes institutionalized. It is something outside of the individual. It exists before an individual's birth and continues to exist after his or her death. As a result, the Indian Caste System was an institution. A person's

caste was decided before birth, and the individual took after their father's caste. It survived their deaths and was passed down to their children and grandchildren. The caste system had essentially little mobility since it was a closed system of stratification.

The caste system's central ideology diverges significantly from our own societal framework. Dumont (1988) in *Homo Hierarchicus* states the caste system divides society into a large number of hereditary groups that are distinguished from one another and linked together by three characteristics: separation in marriage and contact, whether direct or indirect (food); division of labor, with each group having, in theory or by tradition, a profession from which their members can depart only within certain limits; and finally hierarchy, which ranks the groups as relatively either higher or lower to one another. The Indian Caste System is a closed system of stratification, which implies that a person's social rank is determined by the caste into which they were born. Interaction and behavior with people of a different social status are restricted. The upper caste was elevated to a position of importance. They developed their own economic and social well-being in society. As a result, the lower castes were marginalized.

This caste system does not just occur or apply in India, but also in Indonesia, specifically in Bali, where the majority of the population is Hindu. Although both have a caste system, there are differences between Indian Hindus and Balinese Hindus, specifically the caste system in Hindu-Bali differs from that in Hindu-India. The caste system is referred to as *Catur wangsa* in Hindu-Bali and *Jatis system* in India. This system classifies people based on their karma (work) and dharma (faith).

The author of this novel focuses mostly on caste discrimination, with Bakha belonging to one of the lowest castes. The main topic of *untouchable* is the Hindu caste system, which is one of the few formal systems of social stratification that is still in use. He is therefore referred to be "untouchable" because nobody wants or interacts with members of the lowest caste. Therefore, the purpose of the author

analyzing this novel for this study is to reveal the caste resistance faced by Bakha with one of the perspectives of literary sociology.

## **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

This Research Proposal attempts to answer following questions:

1. How does Bakha experience caste discrimination in Raj Mulk Anand's *Untouchable*?
2. How does Bakha resist to the Indian caste discrimination in Raj Mulk Anand's *Untouchable*?
3. What are the effects of Bakha's resistance in Raj Mulk Anand's *Untouchable*?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This Research Proposal tries to answer the following questions:

1. To explain Bakha's experience of caste discrimination in Raj Mulk Anand's *Untouchable*.
2. To explain Bakha's fight against caste discrimination in Raj Mulk Anand's *Untouchable*.
3. To find out how the influence of Bakha's resistance in the novel *Untouchable* by Raj Mulk Anand.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to enhance the readers awareness and understanding of the novel's portrayal of caste discrimination and the author also hopes that, after reading this study, readers will realize that many people still face unfair treatment in their societies but choose to remain silent due to the entrenched caste system.

## 1.5 Methodology

The writer uses a narrative qualitative method to analyze the experience of discrimination experienced by the Bakha family in Anand's *Untouchable*. Narrative analysis is a technique for interpreting texts or visual data that convey a story. The data for this study was extracted from the novel *Untouchable* and analyzed using sociology of literature. The writer of this study took several measures. The present writer followed several steps :

First, the present writer chooses *Untouchable* novel by Anand and also sociology of literature as the object of the study. Second, the present writer try to connect the novel with the theory. Third, the present writer included certain quotations from the book that explained resistance. Fourth, the present writer analyzed and explained it from the key words that can be seen as resistance which leads to the result of the statement of the problem.

## 1.6 The Scope and Limitation of The Study

This study analyzes the experience of caste discrimination in Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable*.

## 1.7 Status of The Study

The writer of this paper discovered some papers that analyze resistance and caste discrimination. The first study by Alex Voglewede (2019) with the title *Caste: Dalit human rights violations*, the result from the previous writer is Despite policies to eradicate it, the caste system in India still has an impact on society. Dalits and other members of lower castes are frequently victims of numerous human rights violations that have an impact on all aspects of their lives. As a result, around two hundred and sixty million Dalits live in substandard conditions and experience various forms of discrimination. The Dalit community will gain from increased

awareness of the problem of human rights breaches, which is the main objective of the essay. Next study by Dr. Dhanesh M. Bartwal and Dr. Richa Bijalwan (2013) with the title *Treatment of Subaltern Agony in Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable*, the result from the previous study is a subaltern examination of Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* reveals that the caste system within Hindu society is fundamentally flawed, as it creates divisions among different sections of the population." The subaltern class's low socioeconomic situation is a major source of their difficulties. A democratic approach argues for increased educational and employment possibilities in order to improve their socioeconomic situation. Third study by Nisar Ahmad Dar (2018) with the title *Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable: A Voice Of Subaltern*. the result from the previous study is as a social critic, Mulk Raj Anand effectively communicates a powerful message in his novel *Untouchable*, where he vehemently opposes the segregation of castes within Indian society. He articulates the genuine experiences and thoughts of the subalterns, shedding light on their reality. In the context of Indian culture, subalternity is rooted in the interplay of caste, class, and gender. The caste system has inflicted significant harm on the population of our country. Despite legal measures taken by the Indian government to eradicate untouchability, entrenched societal attitudes and traditional practices persist. Furthermore, India continues to grapple with the challenges posed by the class system.

Despite using the same corpus, the present writer will not use the same theory and will not achieve the same results as the study mentioned above. The present writer will use sociology literature theory to analyze Bakha as the main characters.

### **1.8 Organization of The Study**

The use of organization is to help the reader understand more clearly about the study. The details as follows

A. Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter explains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the research methodology, the scope and limitations of the study, the status of the study, and the organization of the study.

B. Chapter 2 – Review of Related Literature

This chapter explains about the approach and the theory that the writer uses in the study.

C. Chapter 3 – Analysis and Discussion

This chapter explains about the findings and also explanation on why the novel is analyzed with the theory.

D. Chapter 4 – Conclusion

This chapter explains the results of the study and also the suggestion and recommendation from the writer who wants to do a study with the same topic.

