

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 7. Issue.2. 2020 (Apr-June)

ISSN
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

PARADOXICAL PORTRAYAL OF DALIT SENSITIVITY: FICTION VS. NON-FICTION

ANSH SHARMA

Research Scholar, Department of English and Modern European Languages,
University of Lucknow



ANSH SHARMA

ABSTRACT

The present papers aims to undertake a comparative analysis of the differences that arise in a third person fictional narrative by an upper caste author like Mulk Raj Anand and the first person autobiographical rendering of the life's challenges by a Dalit writer Om Prakash Valmiki of the existential conditions of life as a Dalit. For this purpose Anand's work *Untouchable*- which has been considered a manifesto avant-garde work in Indian literature for Dalit empowerment has been compared and contrasted with *Jhoothan: A Dalit's Life* by Om Prakash Valmiki. As the dismantling of the very patronizing tone of Anand's tone takes place, the fact that Dalit writing is not merely another tale of wrongs and woes is brought forth. The paper attempts to elucidate the idea that Dalit writing is more than fiction- it is a fruitless searching yet a powerful assertion of identity.

Keywords: Dalit Literature. Fiction versus Faction, *Untouchable*, *Jhoothan: A Dalit's Life*

Article information

Received:27/05/2020

Accepted: 28/06/2020

Published online: 30/06/2020

doi: [10.33329/ijelr.7.2.255](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.7.2.255)

Manavadharmashastra, the Hindu Law Book, a work of encyclopedic scope, is in sum, an encompassing representation of life in the world- how it is, and how it should be lived. It is about *dharma*, which subsumes the English concepts of religion, duty, law, right, justice, practice and principle, it is a pivotal text of the dominant form of Hinduism as it emerged historically. No modern study of Hindu family life, psychology, physique, sex, relationships between humans and animals, attitudes to money and material possessions, politics, law, caste, purification and pollution, ritual, social practice and ideals, and the world-renunciation and worldly goals, can ignore Manu, the creator of *Manavdharmashastra or Manusmriti*. Manu is the Adam and Jesus Christ of Hinduism, for he is the first man to be born on earth, the father of all humanity and also the son of the creator Brahma. Hailed by many as *Maharishi Manu* he was a sage who revealed the secrets of the creation of universe and how life came about in this world. Nietzsche was deeply impressed with Manu and in praise of his work says, "To set up a law- book of the kind of Manu means to concede to a people the right henceforth to become masterly, to become perfect- to be ambitious for the highest art of living. To that end, the law must be made unconscious: this is the purpose of every holy lie." (*The Antichrist* 177)

Till date, Manu and his laws hold primal importance in the social setup, for it being the first law book ever given on societal rules and regulations, is considered to be undisputable, it continues to be an important text of reference to deliberate and solve issues that are raised , despite having been written centuries earlier. It is in this text only that we find any kind of division of society on the basis of *Varnas* with the aim of proper and organized working of the society, in order to avoid anarchy. The very word Varna is derived from root

word “Vrinja” means “Choice”, in this case the choice of the occupation adapted by a person in his life time became his Varna, however this was not strictly hereditary, that is, it was not mandatory for the sons to follow in the footsteps of his father’s occupations and he could adopt the occupation of his own choice, thus mobility among the Varna’s was allowed, and is evidenced by many examples in the Hindu mythology. It was more like the kind of arrangement we have in the government setups, ranging from fourth class employees to first class employees. In *Gita*, Lord Krishna says to Arjun: *cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ /tasya kartāramapi māṃ vidhyakartāramavyayam ... (Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, Canto:IV,13)* which may be elucidated as ,the four-fold order was created by Me according to the divisions of quality and work. Though I am its creator, know Me to be incapable of action or change.

There is no mention of caste or *jati* anywhere in *Manusmriti* , *Gita* or any authorized text in Hinduism. Hinduism has two sects, vaishnavites and shaivites, the latter of whom do not recognize any caste system. After knowing all these facts, the poignant question that arises is ‘from where does the caste system come?’ The most plausible answer to this question lies in the common Awadhi orature – ‘*jitney kaam jagat ke heena, ouu sab hain viprahan ke keenha*,’ which means all repugnant jobs that are done in the world, are done by the priests, one of the many being the popularization and enforcement of caste system. Brahmins have been always looked up to and revered as the learned sons of god, and they have made sure that this perception becomes a dominant hegemonic belief and they have used it to exploit and persecute ‘others’, instead of using their knowledge for the upliftment and betterment of the society. People of the other upper castes have been equal connivers in spreading and observing this discriminating mental construct.

In “On the relationship between caste and hinduism” Declan Quigely elucidates the mechanisms of casteism in the Hindu society as:

Caste ideology is an expression of the conflicting demands of two different principles of social organization. On the one hand, there is the hierarchical principle of monarchy, a form of centralization which, of itself, is always very tenuous because it is dependent on personal patronage. On the other hand, there is relatively egalitarian principle of lineage organization which simultaneously stresses kinship (sameness) and marriageability (difference, but bridgeable difference).... (501).

Hocart brings together these principles of organization in caste society by arguing that castes are “families” which hereditarily transfer ritual functions in order to ensure that the king and the nobles remain in a pure state. In contrast to the idea that caste is orientated to a pure- impure axis with Brahmans and Untouchables at polar ends, Hocart argues that what is at stake is the integrity of kinship, the institution to which everyone is connected. By implication, it is a very fragile integrity which can only be maintained by the repeated performances of rituals (sacrifices).

While there is a great deal of variation among theorists regarding the underlying mechanisms that generate this phenomenon whereby a multiplicity of groups all fastidiously distinguish themselves from each other, most people would agree that certain features stand out when caste is compared to other forms of social organization. Of these perhaps the most striking is the institution of untouchability whereby members of certain castes are so excluded that they appear on occasion to be beyond the scale of normal society. One very common, and perfectly acceptable, way to approach caste is thus by explaining untouchability.

Crudely, though not inaccurately, there are two main explanations for untouchability, both of which present untouchables as the opposites of Brahmans. Both of these approaches envisage caste organization as “hierarchal”, in the commonly accepted sense of this term : a ladder- like system of statuses. According to one approach this is so because Brahmans are priests and priests are pure while Untouchables are polluted because they perform degrading tasks which deal with the inauspicious facets of life and death. According to the other approach, the superiority of Brahmans is fundamentally based on landed wealth and the power which derives from it, while the wretched condition of untouchables results from the fact that they are typically landless and dispossessed.

Caste system is the most abominable stain that Hinduism has on its otherwise intellectual and glorious past. Hinduism is no religion, but a way of life, a culture, the religion is *Sanathan dharma* which means the religion of saints, sages and good human beings. The basic philosophy of Sanathan dharma can be distilled in just two words *Aham Brahmaasi*, meaning the Brahma is in me. Brahma is the supreme reality without form, qualities or attributes. Thus, the religion concludes that the Brahma of a person is determined by how much he or she is spiritually enlightened, the stock of the good and positive 'gunas' in him, rather than the family he is born into or the occupation he adopts. Sanathan dharma focuses on the person's self- improvement and spiritual growth, rather on suppressing and exploiting others in the name of religion itself. Like all other religions , it preaches love, respect, brotherhood and equality for one and all. But , unfortunately like everything else religion too has been misinterpreted and used as a tool of suppressing and victimizing a certain set of people known as the *Achoot, Asparshiya, nirvarna*, untouchables, outcastes or the Dalits.

The practice of untouchability with a certain class of people goes around us unceasing, unhampered, unobserved and unstopped. The only crime of the people who are treated worse than animals, is that they happened to be born in a certain family, to certain parents who were doing the jobs of skinning, cleaning lavatories etc. If it were not for the trump card of sheer luck the Brahman abusing the man as untouchable would have had the role reversal with his victim himself. Literature serves as a tool for exposing the evils in the society, and if possible suggesting measures for doing away with those evils. Producing literature is a subjective process, any human whatsoever cannot confirm unflinchingly to the norm of cent percent objectivity as proposed by Thomas Stearns Eliot. The present paper seeks to compare the problem of untouchability, absurdity of caste system and with the portrayals of Dalits in two writings- Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable (1935)* and Om Prakash Valmiki's evocative autobiography *Jhoothan*. Valmiki, himself a dalit, in his narrative unconsciously highlights marked distinctions from that of Anand's. The title of both the works strikes the keynote of the vast gulf amidst the angles from which the authors have conceptualized and formulated both the works.

Firstly, the intention of both the writer's is on two completely different planes. Valmiki writes to expose his wounds, cite his grievances and create an awareness of the dehumanizing practices leveled against his community. Anand, mentions that he writes his fiction just to "evoke the *karuna rasa*" amongst his readers, for no more than a philanthropic cause. While Anand calls for sympathy and mercy for the Dalits, Valmiki's is a clarion call and an example to his brethren for emancipating and empowering themselves. He interrogates:

Why is caste my identity? My friends point out my loudness and arrogance in my creations. They suggest that I am a prisoner of my own narrow-minded shackles. For them, creative meanings should have broad meanings. One should not confine oneself to narrow dimensions. Its means my being Dalit and to have my own individual point-of-view about my environment, social-economic situation makes me arrogant. That is because I am still an S.C in their view- a mere outsider. (Valmiki 96)

The aforementioned passage vividly illustrates the pathos of a victim of casteism who even after being educated, a creative artist and a respectable and responsible citizen is not able to break free of the prejudices which others hold against him, only because he does what has been unheard of- a dalit voicing his grievances. Valmiki's is a firsthand account while Anand is just an observer from the outside. At best he can envisage and concoct a tale, while Valmiki narrates experiences and all that he had to undergo with real names of people existing in flesh and blood. The dissimilarities that can be observed in fictional and non-fictional narratives, the differences that have arisen with the passage of time, the biased and prejudiced point of view as well as the contrasting ideologies can be plainly discerned.

Anand's novel *Untouchable* is hailed as the creative manifesto of Dalits in India . The story has an untouchable Bakha as the protagonist, who is a sweeper. This tale entails that this is the kind of life that he leads almost every day with, but little variation, Valmiki on the other hand leads us on a tour with himself as the guide, describing and narrating every landmark that came in his way as he grew up. The very first two words sum up the differences of the narrative. Anand begins as "The outcastes colony ..." while Valmiki commences as "Our house" , such differences continue appearing throughout the narratives of the two texts,

though the object of description is often same. For instance, while describing the surroundings of Bakha, Anand says :

...the outcastes' colony was a group of mud-walled houses that clustered together in two rows, under the shadow both of the town and the cantonment, but outside their boundaries and separate, from them...and altogether the ramparts of human and animal refuse that lay on the outskirts of this little colony, and the ugliness, the squalor and the misery which lay within it, made it an 'uncongenial' place to live in (Anand 1).

On the other hand Valmiki's object is same, i.e. the description of the place he grew up in and he enumerates it as :

Our house was adjacent to... the stench was so overpowering that one would choke within a minute. The pigs wandering in narrow lanes, naked children, dogs daily fights, this was the environment of my childhood. If people who call the caste system an ideal social arrangement had to live in this environment for a day or two, they would change their mind (Valmiki 1).

While Anand brings forth the superficial observances of the Dalits not being allowed to touch the common well and others such places, lest they contaminate them, Valmiki reveals the insiders story. Valmiki's memoirs do conform what Anand has seen as an outsider, but the narrative unfolds in a manner so as to be indicative of the critical depths to which they are exploited, while Anand at best superficially addresses those malpractices. For example, Anand's story entails that Bakha does receive wages, but Valmiki differs on the economic grounds. He posits that the Dalit workers are generally not paid in cash, they may be bestowed with the leftovers or some food as the fruit of their hard long day labor. But more often than not if they dared to ask for even the jhoothan, they were kicked, abused and beaten without any consideration for age, sex or condition.

Anand unconsciously and unintentionally slights what is home to the people, though 'untouchables', while Valmiki just points out the hypocrisy of the upper castes. Throughout the narrative , it feels as if, Anand derives sadistic pleasure by using outrageous expletives which he makes the outcastes use in their mutual conversations as "you illegally begotten" , " you son of a pig" , " you lover of your mother" , while Valmiki makes a slighting reference to this practice. The former implies that Bakha is aloof and alienated from the family, his father and brother do not share strong filial bonds with him, and thus do not understand him. Valmiki on the other hand seems to be deeply attached to all his family members. The spirit of sacrifice, love and concern that his family members have for each other indicate very strong and affectionate family ties. His father unlike Bakha's, calls him Munshiji, and encourages him to study at all costs, to rise above his caste.

One very poignant point of criticism leveled against Anand's description and caricature that he draws of the outcastes is the tempting and alluring sketch of Bakha's sister, Sohini. Anand seems to lend words as Bakha envisages her :

She had a sylph-like form, not thin but full-bodied within the limits of her graceful frame, well rounded on the hips, with an arched narrow waist from which descended the folds of her trousers and above which were her full, round, globular breasts, jerking slightly, for lack of a bodice, under the transparent muslin shirt. Bakha observed her as she walked along swaying. She was beautiful. He was proud of her with a pride not altogether that of a brother for a sister. (14)

Valmiki always shows respect for women of his and other castes and even sympathy for the woman who is devoured nightlong in the bus station episode, while Anand gives a demeaning image and portrays them as objects of consummation as in Sohini and Gulabo's case. This is similar to the sort of negative criticism leveled against the male writers of the partition fiction, whereby their description is observed to be more loquacious when describing the instances or scenes of the crimes against women . On the other hand these instances are but slightly mentioned in a very off-hand manner by the female writers of the partition fiction.

In his essay ““ Eklavyas with Thumbs”: Animadversions on Dalit Literature and Aesthetics” Dr. S.Z.H. Abidi mentions :

The leitmotif of rape and the master plot of exploitation are common... In the Indian context this issue becomes a twin foci of literary representation in Dalit literature. On the one hand it becomes a paradigm of victimhood. On the other hand it is instrumental in exposing the hypocrisy of high caste people. “The upper caste people forget caste or untouchability while imposing corporal punishment or in committing rapes on Dalit women”. A Dalit woman no longer remains untouchable if she accepts the advances of upper caste men but if she does not yield, she becomes a source of pollution. Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable* has Sohini-Pandit Kali Nath episode which exposes the hypocrisy of the upper class.”(16)

Bakha’s father Lakha does not allow his son to attend school despite Bakha’s strong desire to study:

...he had wept and cried to be allowed to go to school. But then his father had told him that schools were meant for babus , not for the lowly sweepers...he was a sweeper’s son and could never be a babu. Later he realized that there was no school which would admit him because the parents of the other children would not allow their sons to be contaminated by the touch of the low-caste man’s sons....These old Hindus were cruel. He was a sweeper he knew but he could not consciously accept that fact. (Anand 56)

Valmiki’s father makes sure that his son receives proper education, and keeps encouraging him. Valmiki reminisces how his father lived under the notion that education could improve the caste: “He constantly said that I should improve my ‘caste’ by getting an education. He did not know that ‘caste’ cannot be improved by education. It can only be improved by taking birth in the right caste”(58).

Valmiki also highlights the shortcomings and consequences of the Dalits who like him have got an education and reside in urban cities. They are in a limbo like state where they roam like Trishankhu , in between two worlds , one which is of their origin and which had never accepted them and the other which is the space of their hope but which remains impervious to them. Valmiki raises this issue of identity crisis when he says:

The Dalits who have become educated face a terrible crisis – the crisis of identity – and they trying to find an easy and their instantaneous way to get out of this crisis. They have started to use their family gotra as their surname after just a little bit of fine tuning... . Behind all such acts is the anguish of identity crisis, which has come about as a reaction to the blatant inhumanity of casteism. Dalits want to join the mainstream of society after getting an education but the Savarna prevents them from doing so, discriminates against Dalits. Thinks of them as inferior beings. Doubts are cast on their intelligence, their ability, their performance.... Only he whose skin has suffered the knife of wounds of this terrorizing can recognize the pain. These knife wounds haven’t just injured the skin, but also scarred the inner being (Valmiki 126-127).

Anand’s veiled prejudice and bias for the untouchables, comes to the fore in his account of Bakha’s feeling which he has for his sister. It feels as if Anand indirectly hints that Bakha has this feeling of incestuous love towards his sister because he is an outcaste and thus corrupted to the core.

Bakha is shown to be curious towards religion thereby suggesting that he is not disillusioned with it, the silent and mute acceptance of the behavior meted out to him and his meek and submissive attitude and the struggle which he undergoes to suppress the ire of revenge against his oppressors, seems Anand’s way of signifying that the position of outcastes has always been on the lowest rung, and any retaliation would be useless. But Valmiki presents the flip side of the story:

Although the basti people were hindu in name, they did not worship any Hindu gods or goddesses. At Janamashtami, it is not Lord Krishna but Jaharpir, another god, whom they worshipped. Or they worshipped the spirits. And not on the eighth day , the ashtami, but on the morning of the ninth day of

worship, the navami. In the same way, during Deepawali it is not the goddess Lakshmi but Mai Madaran who is worshipped and offered a piglet (Valmiki 40).

On the other hand, Valmiki tells of his disillusionment with the religion, the different religious practices of his people and also the strong family ties that stand the tests of time.

The manner and note on which the novel ends goes towards confirming this pretence of sympathizing for the cause of untouchables. After all, Anand may be a philanthropist in his own right, but he is not an 'untouchable'. To quote Dr. Abidi :

Omprakash Valmiki's *Jhoothan* , Bama's *Karukku* , and Joseph Macwan's *Angaliyat* present a detailed exposition of the kind of Dalit culture which is missing in Anand's *Untouchable* or Premchand's Dalitcentric novels and short stories. It is not enough to write literature on Dalits . That literature should have the inner dynamics of dalit's life and culture which sustain them even after their harrowing experiences (36)

Valmiki's narrative is imbued with the full force of his feelings, he does not glorify or insult anyone even the perpetrators of crime against him, and he just doles out the facts appended with what he feels on those particular occasions. He does not praise or glorify even himself, all he does is tell his tale along with revealing how his personality and thoughts were impacted by them. He encourages all the way the members of his community by exemplifying himself, who was in similar conditions as themselves, but by his hard work, sincerity and not denying the support he received from his family, helped him rise up from the circumstances and create a niche for himself. He does not preaches acceptance nor does he advocate retaliation, he only inspires self-improvement and self-assertion as the path of liberation and acceptance of the Dalits in the community of India. He talks of the amputation of the root causes due to which they are considered to be untouchables. Valmiki's success story tolls the bell of change that is spreading rapidly, and what can be the contribution of the masses in speeding it.

Anand's novel is set during the colonial times when India was still under the rule of British. Bakha is more comfortable with the sepoys who are also caste Hindus than with the civilians for he receives better treatment at the hands of the former. As, R.T. Robertson mentions in his essay "*Untouchable* as an Archetypal Novel," that "Bakha is both isolated from and bound to his culture; it will not allow him fully to participate in the society and cannot release him from it because of the essential service he performs for it."(Robertson 101). Moreover, Anand's ideological leanings to Marxist approach and his being an active member of the Progressive Group of Writer's movement is evident in the novel. That he was just trying to be true to his association and writing a work providing a peep into the hegemony of the caste – system prevalent in the entire country of his origin.

The mode of narration in Valmiki's narrative is direct and devoid of politically correct moderations. For example, he clearly mentions that it is holy and auspicious to touch and worship animals and plants. It is a ritual to worship goddesses made of cow dung even, but as Valmiki highlights that it is improper and polluting to touch fellow human beings. The hypocrisy and shallowness of the people of the "upper castes" is presented threadbare sans any bitterness. It is more as if one is viewing a documentary wherein Valmiki is the narrator as well as the narrated.

On reading Anand's work one is bound to commit the error of intentional fallacy, for the novel seems more of a propaganda work interwoven with a tale to declare Anand's political and ideological leanings. The novel presents what an upper caste thinks that an untouchable must think when he is meted out with demeaning and insulting behavior. The autobiography of Valmiki on the other hand affects its readers, thereby one commits the affective fallacy. The narrative in *Jhoothan* has analapses and prolepses, while that of the *Untouchable* is linear. Furthermore, *Jhoothan* gives a panoramic view of all the factors surrounding an untouchable, and how one is not born but made an untouchable, while Anand's tale tells the story of an untouchable uneasy to rise above his lot. Valmiki is the 'Othered' and he accepts, appreciates as well as

celebrates his 'Otherness', while Anand's Bakha shuns his Otherness and is desperate to acclimatize in order to be assimilated with the agents responsible for his 'Othering'.

Anand is all set to elucidate his sympathy with the lower strata of society and in its wake he leaves no buffering zone. He denounces every upper caste Hindu as he makes the whole upper caste community the villains in the lives of the untouchables. While Valmiki is different. He praises and shows great respect for some upper caste Hindus like Chamanlal Tyagi, who encourage and aid him in his studies. Valmiki has had face to face encounters with what an untouchable's life really is, and thus he realizes that in such a stringent and unrelenting social order the social ascent of an untouchable is well near impossible without the patronage, assistance or protection from upper caste people.

Anand's voluminous work of the original version of *Untouchable* was cut short into a thin novel on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi and that the work is an 'epic-poem in prose' in praise of Gandhi is manifested towards the end of the novel. Bakha goes to Mahatma's rally and hears Mahatma speak. Although he does not really and completely comprehend the meaning and implication of the euphemism 'Harijan' employed by Gandhi for the untouchables, he somehow gets a whiff of change that is in the air. He comes home with his head full of all that he has heard, and also with the possible paths of the redemption of the likes who share his fate. But Valmiki is completely disillusioned with Gandhi and his seemingly philanthropic and benign attitude towards the untouchables. He recalls:

From textbooks to the media of communication, they were all beating the drum about Gandhi. I had heard many Savarnas, upper caste people, abuse Gandhi in day-to-day conversations that this old man turned the heads of the Bhangis and the Chamars by naming them and all untouchables Harijans, the children of God. How wrong was their anger about Gandhi. After reading Ambedkar, I had realized that by naming the untouchables Harijans, Gandhi had not helped them to join the mainstream, but had saved the Hindus from becoming a minority. Guarded their interests, in fact. And yet, these upper castes were angry with because he had turned Harijan's heads. (72)

Valmiki seems to identify and have more belief in the connotations for the term 'Dalit' than "harijan". He elucidates this dichotomy as:

A new word 'Dalit' entered my vocabulary, a word that is not a substitute for 'Harijan', but an expression of rage of millions of untouchables. A new direction was opening for me and I was beginning to realize that the education imparted in schools and colleges did not make us secular but turned us into narrow-minded fundamentalist Hindus (Valmiki 96)

Valmiki's autobiography is set in post-colonial times, but there is but little change. In many an aspects, the position has worsened. Bakha feels he shall be respected if he becomes a "gentereman" he shall find respected and thus imitates the dressing and living style of the sepoy, but Valmiki lives under no such notion, for he meets discrimination in the urban society even after he is well- educated. He continuously ignores his wife's demands to change his surname which is an open and public signifier of his identity. He states matter-of-factly:

My wife, Chanda has never managed to get used to this surname of mine. Nor does she use it herself. This name is an item on her list of my shortcomings, and once in a while she comments on it. She prefers using our family's gotra name, 'Khairwal' (Valmiki 66).

Valmiki feels that the culture and whole heritage of the Dalits is in danger at the pace at which they are changing their surnames and denouncing their customs and adopting those of the upper castes so as to avoid the humiliation of their humble backgrounds and to be included in the mainstream. M.N. Srinivas terms this kind of behavior as the process of *Sanskritization*, in his book *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs of South India* (1952). However, Valmiki is opposed to this and becomes the flag bearer of his community. He remains adamant and unmoved when he says "this surname is now an indispensable part of my name. 'Omprakash' has no identity without it." 'Identity' and 'recognition', the two words say a lot by themselves.

Valmiki's tale evokes sympathy and twinge for the people who despite being humans like us are maltreated in such a heinous and dehumanized manner. His narrative seems sincere and thought provoking, while Anand's story seems patronizing, superfluous and a half-hearted attempt at becoming the champion for the cause of the downtrodden. No wonder, Valmiki emerges as the hero of his strife, while Anand's Bakha another compromise on the part of the poor, down-trodden, helpless, miserable and spineless insect-like creatures, whose lot is to live lifting the dirt, live like that dirt they lift and die like the dirt in that very dirt. For them the proverb "Dust thou art, to dust returnest" is revised as "dirt thou art, to dirt returnest". This is the acme and sublime pinnacle on which the glories and fame of the humanity rests. Omprakash Valmiki's *Jhoothan* is an eye-opener and inspires the dormant humanity in its readers to affect a change. While Bakha is a modern day Sisyphus, and "One must imagine Sisyphus [Bakha] happy".

Works Cited

- Abidi, S.Z.H. "" Eklavyas with Thumbs": Animadversions on Dalit Literature and Aesthetics." *Indian English Fiction- A Critical Study*. Ed. M.k Naik and Shayamala A. Narayan. New Delhi: Prakash Publishing House, 2009. Print.
- Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*. Maharashtra: Mehta Publishing House, 2012. Print.
- Hocart, A. M.. *Caste: A Comparative Study*. London: Methuen, 1950. Print.
- Menon, Ramesh. *Srimad Bhagvad Gita*. New Delhi: Rupa Co, 2009. Print.
- Qigley, D. *The Interpretation of Caste*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. Print.
- Robertson, R.T.. "Untouchable as an Archetypal Novel." *The Novels Of Mulk Raj Anand*. Ed. R.K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1992. Print.
- The Laws of Manu*. Noida: Anubha Printers, 2000. Print.
- Valmiki, Omprakash . *Joothan : A Dalit's Life*. Kolkatta : Webimpressions Pvt. Ltd, 2010. Print.