

TWO LADY RAMS: MULK RAJ ANAND

MULK RAJ ANAND- 12 DECEMBER 1905- 28 SEPTEMBER 2004

ADMIRER FOR HIS NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES. HE IS KNOWN FOR HIS REALISTIC PORTRAYS OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS SUFFERED BY THE INDIANS BCOZ OF CASTE SYSTEM AND BRITISH COLONIAL RULE. . HIS NOVELS ARE PROTEST NOVELS. KNOWN AS THE DICKENS OF INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

IMPORTANT WORKS- UNTOUCHABLE(1935), COOLIE(1936), TWO LEAVES AND A BUD (1937)

POSTMODERN TREND-NOTED FOR BEING AMONG THE FIRST WRITERS TO INCORPORATE PUNJABI AND HINDUSTANI IDIOMS INTO ENGLISH.

SAHITYA AKADEMI-1971

CHARACTER LIST:

LALLA JHINDA RAM- A CONTRACTOR BY PROFESSION. FIVE FOOT TALL WITH AN OBESE. MASTER OF THE HOUSEHOLD AND AN AUTHORITARIAN FIGURE.

SUKHI- 50 YEARS OLD WOMAN

SHAKUNTALA- 25 YEAR OLD WOMAN. FROM A STATEMENT OF SUKHI, IT WAS CLEAR THAT SHAKUNTALA DID NOT BRING ANYTHING FROM HER HOME IN THE NAME OF DOWRY WHEREAS SUKHI BROUGHT A LAKH OF RUPEES. THIS IN TURN SHOWS THE DEPENDENCE OF WOMEN.

PLOT OVERVIEW OF TWO LADY RAMS

IN TWO LADY RAMS ANAND PRESENTS WITTY NARRATIVE OF LALLA JHINDA RAM'S HOUSEHOLD WHICH IS AT A CONSTANT STATE OF COLD WAR BETWEEN THE TWO LADY OF THE HOUSE SUKHI, THE ELDER WIFE AND SHAKUNTALA, THE YOUNGER. THE PLOT REVOLVES ROUND THE TWO WIVES

OF LALLA JHINDA RAM WHO ARE AT TUG OF WAR WITH EACH OTHER FOR THEIR HUSBAND,S ATTENTION. AS BECAUSE THEY WERE QUARRELLING CONSTANTLY, LALLA JHINDA RAM DIVIDED THE HOUSE INTO TWO PARTS SO AS TO RESTORE PEACE OF LIVING.

THE FIST WIFE SUKHI CONSIDERS SHAKUNTALA ONLY AS A SUBSTITUTE SINCE SUKHI TURNED OUT TO BE INFERTILE. GRADUALLY, ALONG WITH THE DIVISION OF THE HOUSEHOLD, THE CHAOS CAME UNDER CONTROL. AN UNSAID ROUTINE WAS FOLLOWED BY LALLA JHINDA RAM. HE USED TO SLEEP WITH EACH OF HIS WIVES ON ALTERNATE DAYS AND PAID EQUAL ATTENTION. BUT THE MAYHEM STARTED UPRISING ONCE AGAIN WHEN LALLA JHINDA RAM WAS AWARDED KNIGHTHOOD AND WAS INVITED TO THE GARDEN PARTY ALONG WITH LADY RAM.

SINCE THE INVITATION CARD READ LADY RAM ONLY AND NOT TWO LADY RAMS, LALLA JHINDA RAM HAD TO CHOOSE ONE OF THE TWO TO TAKE TO THE GARDEN PARTY. LALLAGI FIRST ASKED HIS YOUNGER WIFE TO BUY A NEW SAREE TO GET READY FOR THE PARTY. IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE HOUSEHOLD WAS FILLED WITH GOSSIP ABOUT LALLAJI CHOOSING HIS SECOND WIFE FOR THE PARTY. SUKHI WAS FILLED WITH RAGE AT THIS.THIS MADE HER FEEL DESERTED. TO STOP THIS FROM HAPPENING SUKHI, EARLY IN THE MORNING, STEPPED INTO THE ROOM WHERE SIR JHINDA AND SHAKUNTAAALLA HAD BEEN SLEEPING. SHE ABUSED HER THUS-

“EATER OF HER MASTERS” SHE ALSO ADDED, “I WILL PULL EVERY HAIR ON YOUR HEAD AND BLACKEN YOUR FACE.”

TO CONTROL UNSTOPPABLE SUKHI, JHINDA FINALLY EXERTED HIS AUTHORITY BY TAKING SUKHI BY THE HAIR TO HER PART OF THE HOUSE. SUKHI RESISTED LIKE A TIGRESS AND RAISED A HUE AND CRY IN THE HOUSE.

LALLAGI WAS IN A STATE OF CONFUSION. HE FIRST TELEPHONED THE A.D.C. FOR AN APPOINTMENT, BUT THE LATTER WAS BUSY WITH THE PREPARATION FOR THE PARTY AND SVOIDED PRESUMING THAT SIR JHINDA HAD SOME USUAL DEAL.

AFTER THE REJECTION HE THOUGHT OF VISITING THE GOVERNOR. AT THE GATE OF THE GOVERNOR’S HOUSE , THE SEPOY REFUSED TO ALLOW HIM AS IT WAS THE TIFFIN HOUR AND THERE WAS STRICT ORDER NOT TO ALLOW ANYBODY. SIR JHINDA WAS HUMILIATED BEFORE THE DRIVER AND WITH A BROKEN HEART HE TURNED HOMEWARDS.

WHEN HE REACHED HIS BUNGLOW, THE DRIVER GAVE HIM AN ADVICE AND SUGGESTED HIM TO TAKE BOTH HIS WIVES TO THE PARTY. RAM AT FIRST DISMISSED THE IDEA ADMONISHING HIM TO MIND HIS OWN BUSINESS. LATER HE FELT THAT IT COULD BE A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO THE COMPLICATED ISSUE.

THE ONLY DIFFICULTY WAS THE INVITATION CARD WHICH WAS ADDRESSED ONLY TO SIR JHINDA AND LADY RAM AND TWO TWO LADY RAMS. THEN IT DAWNED UPON HIM THAT SINCE HE IS A PERSON OF HIGH REGARD, HE CAN EASILY ALTER THE INVITATION CARD. ACCORDINGLY HE DID SO AND HE ORDERED THE STAFF TO INFORM BOTH HIS WIVES TO GET READY FOR THE PARTY. IN THE EVENING LALLA JHINDA RAM WAS INTRODUCED WITH TWO LADY RAMS AND BOTH WERE EQUALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AND PRAISED FOR THEIR BEAUTIFUL SAREES.

ASPECTS OF THE STORY

1. POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY. THEIR EXISTENTIAL AS WELL AS IDENTITY CRISIS. GENDER DISCRIMINATION.

SUKHI ACCEPTS THE HARSH TRUTH ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S SECOND MARRIAGE WITHOUT ANY VOICE OF PROTEST AGAINST THE INJUSTICE DONE TOWARDS HER. SHE NUMBLY ACCEPTED THE TRUTH SINCE SHE WAS DISCOVERED TO BE BARREN. THE STORY, THEREFORE, PORTRAYS THE DOUBLE STANDARDS THAT EXISTED WITHIN THE INDIAN SOCIETY.

AT ONE POINT THE READERS WITNESS THE INJUSTICE DONE TOWARDS THE FIRST WIFE. HOWEVER, THE READERS MISS TO NOTICE THAT THE SECOND WIFE TOO HAS BEEN DEPRIVED IN CERTAIN WAYS. IT IS ASTONISHING THAT A WOMAN WOULD BE WILLING TO MARRY AN ALREADY MARRIED MAN WHO IS MUCH OLDER THAN HER. **COMMODIFICATION OF WOMAN.**

2. POLYGAMY PRACTISED IN THE SOCIETY.

3. MISUSE OF POWER- ANOTHER THING TO BE NOTICED IS THAT LALLA JHINDA CAN EASILY ALTER THE LETTER AND THE RULE ACCORDING TO HIS WILL BCOZ HE HAS THE POWER AND MONEY TO DO SO. THIS FACTOR POINTS OUT THAT IRRESPECTIVE OF ERA OR TIME POWER ALWAYS HOLDS THE HIGHEST POSITION.

4. CLASS CONFLICT- WE CAN ALSO NOTICE THE CLASS CONFLICT OPERATIVE IN THE SOCIETY FROM JHINDA LAL'S RELATION WITH HIS SERVANTS. HIS RELATION WITH HIS SERVANTS IS TYPICAL TO THAT OF MASTER SERVANT. WHEN HIS DRIVER PROPOSED HIM THE SOLUTION TO HIS DILEMMA, HE COULD NOT OPENLY APPRECIATE HIM FOR HIS EGO. INSTEAD HE WARNED HIM NOT TO INTERVENE IN HIS FAMILY MATTER.

5. DOWRY SYSTEM.

THE END (COMPILED BY A.R.)