CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
The novel, as we know it today, is the most popular form of story-telling and essentially a Western art form which has its roots in the Western culture and world view. It is usually about a group of human beings or a single man — man in society and man in the universe. In the earlier phases of civilization man was a lone creature and his subjective thoughts, his sorrows, his anger, his love as also his frustrations and his achievements alone could provide the material for a story. As human life grew more complex and various kinds of human relationships developed, the story ceased to be a simple narrative or unfolding of events and took on more complex forms. From its genesis in the eighteenth century periodical essays, the novel has travelled a long way adapting both its content and structure to the changing conditions of life, taking on a variety of new forms and presentation of new modes and styles. In fact, the novel in the twentieth century is very much different from what it was in the nineteenth century or the eighteenth century in its length, themes and motifs, in its narrative strategies, in its focus and in its style of writing. Still we can say that James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Virginia Wolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*
belong to the same genre as Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Fielding's *Tom Jones* or again Scott's *Ivanhoe*, though they show a great deal of diversity in content, form and narrative strategy.

The basic fact about these works is that all of them are novels and exemplify the basic features and traits of the novel considered as an art form. They are novels in the sense that they are extended fictional varieties in prose, that they are realistic but not real stories and that they have elements of plot, characterization, setting and point of view which are basic to the very structure of this art form. Since the novel is the most flexible of all literary forms, it is least amenable to formal definition. It is difficult to define, particularly, because it has taken the characteristics of many other forms of art such as essays, letters, memoirs and histories as well as sketches and travel books. Therefore the novel has to be discussed from two major points of view: -

(1) the novel as art and (2) the novel as a social document with a fictional interest. Though the novel seems to be the most modern of literary types, it is, in fact, linked historically with other forms of literature, such as the epic and the drama, which reach back to the beginnings of the literary consciousness of the Western world and hence shares with those
literary forms many common characteristics relating to theme, structure and world view. At the same time it has characteristics which make it very, distinctive and different from all other literary forms.

The rise of the novel in England in the eighteenth century was closely associated with the growth of democracy, the rise of the middle class, the rise of journalism and the development of a rational and scientific temper which made people turn away from dreams, romances and fantasies. Its main focus was on individualism. The very birth of the novel was associated with the break up of the old feudal order and the emergence of the individualistic social order.

The novel in the beginning of the eighteenth century emerged in the form of a fictional imitation of diaries, autobiographies, traveller's tales and biographies of criminals which were common forms of prose literature in earlier years. But the eighteenth century opened up tremendous possibilities for the novel as a significant art form. The nineteenth century carried the process further afield and made the novel a successful art. In this connection it should be noted that there was a tremendous growth in the reading public. As a result, the scope of the novel, which during the eighteenth century dealt mainly with contemporary life
and manners was considerably enlarged. Also, a number of novelists showed that it was possible to adapt the novel to specific purposes to suit to the needs of the changing world. Towards the later part of the Georgian period the novel began to come under the influence of the psychologists and new techniques were developed in the narrative modes which eventually culminated in the emergence of the lyrical novel and 'the stream of consciousness' novel.

Thus the novel starting merely as a device for telling a story and teaching a moral passed through long phases of experimentation. Ian Milligan points out, how novels have been used by writers down the ages:

- The novel has been used to report on people and places, to introduce readers to new environments and conditions of life.
- It has been used to make an interpretation or assessment of contemporary ways of life and the manners and customs of currently dominant social classes.
- It has been used to create new modes of feeling, new fashions, new interests and tastes.
- It has been used to offer symbolic accounts of the destiny of mankind and affirmations of what are the most significant experiences as most laudable pursuits in human life. Novels have made the most minutely particular assertions about how things are, and have given the most grandly prophetic accounts of how things might be.

As the novel evolved in course of time as a distinct
art form, the novelist became increasingly conscious of his responsibilities to society and to his art. Wellek and Warren rightly state that 'literature occurs only in a social context, as part of a culture, in a milieu'.

Though the novel in the course of its long history of growth and development has passed many stages from the simple straightforward story of personal exploits into an area of human psychology and undergone many structural changes, its basic concern remains the same. It is a study of man, man in society which very often broadens into a humanistic document with a reformistic motivation. This reformistic motivation in some cases leads to a vision of the future, to utopian dreams of a better world to live in. In other words, one has to study a novelist not only as a story-teller, social critic, satirist and reformer but also a visionary, a dreamer or a futurist. It should also be seen how a novelist's vision controls, determines and influences his themes, narrative modes, technique and style. According to Michael Zeraffa, the novel is the first art to represent man explicitly as defined historically and socially. He observes:

In myth, manifestly, man is a social being but his story is only developed by obscure means, by the intervention of gods, heroes or magical events. With the novel, society enters history and history enters into society.
The emergence of the novel as an art form affirms that society and history are interlinked. In the words of Lukacs, the novel is the only literary genre in which 'the novelist's ethic becomes an aesthetic problem of the work'. Thus the novel as a literary genre and as an art form developed continuously and became the most influential vehicle of literary expression.

The origin and growth of the novel in India is generally attributed to the Western literary impact. Though fiction as a literary genre was not new to India, it was only at the end of the nineteenth century that the novel made its appearance on the country's literary scene. With the introduction of English education, Indians came into contact with European literature and were influenced by it.

Foremost among the Indian writers was Bankim Chandra Chatterji who set a pattern for the novel in India by adopting European forms and techniques, but using essentially Indian characters, themes and settings. The growth of national consciousness and the search for national identity made Indian writers writing in English give expression in their literary works to multitudinous vibrations of the Indian soul during the transition. According to Dr K.S. Ramamurti, the emergence of the Indian novel in English was not the outcome of imitative and derivative exercises.
generated by the impact of Western education and culture but part of a larger creative surge which swept the country in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It manifested itself in the appearance of the all the major Indian languages, including English with a simultaneity which is striking and significant. At the same time most of the novels are rooted in the European novelistic tradition in the sense that they contain many of the basic elements of the Western novel. Like the Western novels they seek to be realistic and there is always an unmistakable dimension of social realism in them. They not only create the place spirit and the time spirit, follow some of the Western modes of narration, description and dialogue and use many of the devices used by the Western novelists like the first person narration, flash back technique, the epistolary method and the use of a point of view but also show a concern for social realism. Some of the novels have a satirical and a reformistic motivation too and make for the literature of social realism. There are novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar and Kamala Markandaya who have produced novels with a purpose, with a strong ideological commitment. In other words, their basic concern is man, the social man who is caught in a world of age-old social evils
from which they struggle to liberate themselves. It is this aspect of Anand's novels which is most striking and it is this which places him on a level with novelists like Dickens and Balzac. These are writers who are basically committed to lofty principles of social justice and write with a crusading spirit hoping to usher in a revolution which might metamorphose the existing social order. They write with a strong historical awareness and social purpose, inspired by visions of a better world. Their novels are novels of protest and their protests are born out of convictions and attitudes which demand creative expression. The exploitation and the repression inflicted upon the down-trodden are the most alarming concern of these writers. A whole stratum of society which is mutely suffering for ages often finds a voice in their works. The suffering of the proletariat, the poor, the outcasts and the down-trodden is extraordinary and has a universal significance. Their suffering is at times worse than the suffering of animals. It is natural that the freedom denied by the social structure finds its way in the world of art. The predominant feature worth noticing in their art is the writer's concern for humanity, genuine fellow-feeling, recognition of the dignity of man, sympathy for the poor and the suffering and an earnest attempt to depict characters in a manner which
will evoke the intended responses.

Instances of writers using literature as a powerful weapon to voice their protest against the social disorder are numerous. Langland and Wycliffe raised their voices against the corrupt clergy in the fourteenth century England. In France the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau constituted protest of a sort. Dickens, Ruskin and Carlyle in Victorian England and D.H. Lawrence in the twentieth century protested against social injustice and philistinism. The Indian writers in English have also taken up the theme of protest and reacted against the forces of conformity and obscurantism. Novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, Abbas, Kamala Markandaya and Bhabani Bhattacharya, deal mainly with class exploitation, capitalistic injustice, and caste discrimination, economic inequality and superstition in their novels to awaken social consciousness. The study attempted in this dissertation relates, however to one novelist of this group namely Mulk Raj Anand who strikes us as an Eastern Counterpart of another novelist of this class in the West namely Charles Dickens. There are a number of significant similarities between these two writers which warrant a full length study of the novelists in a mutually illuminating context.

Both Dickens and Anand are eminent personalities
and popular writers, each in his own right. They have local as well as national characteristics but still they have risen above their geographical boundaries and acquired dimensions which make for universality in appeal. They may have their own political and religious convictions but their larger concerns are with Man and his place in society, the freedom of the individual and the social control and with a number of social problems peculiar to their countries. The theme of exploitation is recurrent in their novels. Each writer uses a different narrative strategy which is conditioned by his social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Their fictional worlds are, therefore, characteristic of their own respective countries, their landscapes, their ways of life and their national and cultural characteristics as also the social visions and world views of the writers themselves.

Both Dickens and Anand have had more or less similar experiences which aroused them to raise the banner of revolt against injustices and social evils. A comparative study of their lives and character, the influences that worked on them and the ideas and experiences which shaped their outlook help one understand their social philosophy and art in a mutually illuminating context.
In a study of Dickens and Anand it is also necessary to understand some of the specific features of the socio-political development of the period in which both lived and wrote. A comparative study of the sociological factors in the two countries will be of help in studying how the socio-political experiences of these two writers, very much different as they were, have been transformed into fiction. This is because 'the social mentality of an age is conditioned by the social relations' of that age and therefore the literary work is a form of perception and a particular way of seeing the world which is the 'social mentality' or the 'ideology of the age'. This ideology signifies the way men live in society, their values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and a literary work transforms this ideological structure into art.

The Victorian age in which Dickens lived was an age of peace, prosperity and progress on the one hand, and on the other, an age of flux and baffling complexity. It was a period of growth and change and the changes were taking place in so many different aspects of life and were affecting each other so deeply. An interesting characteristic of the age was the Victorian compromise, particularly, in three spheres of life. In the field of political life there was a compromise between democracy
and aristocracy. While accepting the claims of the rising masses, they also defended the rights of aristocracy. While reposing their faith in progress in the political sphere, they were not ready for any revolutionary upsurge. Instead, change was accepted as natural and inevitable and progressive ideas were reconciled with the conservative ideas which related to a stable social order. Darwin's *Origin of Species* revolutionised the religious thoughts of the age. In the field of religion and science the advances made by the new science were accepted but the claims of religion were not ignored. The peculiar feature of the age was that it evoked feelings of warm appreciation and commendation as well as strong resentment. While Macaulay was proud of the progress that the Victorians had achieved in politics, Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold and Lytton Strachey were the severest critics of the age and denounced the material affluence and mechanical progress. The biggest influence on the period, and the one which brought the greatest change, was the Industrial Revolution. As Raymond Chapman remarks,

The Industrial Revolution had raised men of ability and insight, as well as men of dishonesty and cruelty, from poverty to riches.

Expanding industry made society more mobile and people could work their way up the social and economic ladder.
according to merit or hard work. This obviously changed the class structure, for a vast middle class which had made its money in trade and industry grew up alongside the nobility and the landed gentry. The Capitalist class was a new force in the national life of England. The working class got a poor deal. They were often suppressed by the capitalists. Conditions in factories were appalling; employers often preferred female and child labour because they were cheap. The gross exploitation of little boys as sweeps by masters who found it cheaper to drive them through the soot-choked chimneys was a common phenomenon in Victorian England. Trade Unionism was particularly strong among the working classes who were demanding better wages and better living. G. M. Trevelyan points out that Marxian doctrines relating to the inevitability of the class-struggle were rife at the end of the century and that the collectivism preached by the Fabian society was more influential. The Victorian England was also an age of reforms and laws. As a consequence, the literature of that age was affected by the new ideas in the realm of science, religion and politics. The literature of the Victorian period reflected all that had taken place at that time. Frederick R. Karl and Marvin Magalaner remark:

Tennyson was society's spokesman, Thackeray its wit, Dickens its social conscience, George Eliot its 'fast' woman and Browning its intellectual.
An interesting characteristic of Victorian literature is that both in prose and in poetry it seems to depart from the standard of art for art's sake and to be actuated by a definite moral purpose. This moralising tendency of the age can be noticed in the works of Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle and Ruskin, Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot. It was in this age again that literature seems to have moved closer to the social life. The novel in particular was coming to grips with the problems of the contemporary society with increased fervour interpreting its social and moral dilemmas. The novelists especially of the early Victorian period such as Dickens and Thackeray identified themselves with their age and became its spokesmen. This sense of identity with their age is of vital importance in any consideration of the early Victorian novelists. The most striking characteristic of Victorian literature was that both the poets and the novelists were conscious of their social responsibilities. Generally, the tendency of the writers was to concentrate on the social and political life of the times and to condemn the social evils. As, G.D.Klingopoulos has observed,

The Victorian novel helped to people the imagination, to exercise the moral sympathies and strengthen the feeling of human solidarity
at a time of disruptive social change. The growth of a considerate, unhysterical, liberal, and responsible humanism in the course of the century was certainly helped by the works of the novelists. At its best the novel presented, with wonderful inwardness, different kinds of moral possibility and the actuality of choice; it formed an extension of consciousness, and gave life to life.10

Also, the Victorian novelists discarded writing stories about the knights, ladies and tournaments and turned their attention to the society in which they lived. The demand for social justice led them to concentrate on agricultural labourers, factory workers, miners, destitutes, neglected children and paupers. The deplorable conditions of labourers, the miserable plight of debtors in the prison, the abuse of the Poor Law and the apathy of the government and the law courts and the sufferings of the poor owing to various forces of exploitation produced a zest for reform among the social reformers as well as literary artists. In no other age do we find such humanitarian upsurge and reformative zeal as we come across during this age. There developed a humanist attitude to life among the literary men of the age and this was stirred by the hideous social and economic consequences of the Industrial Revolution. The 'Humanitarian Movement' which came to the forefront in England in the eighteenth century influenced the novelists of the nineteenth century
It kindled the imagination of Dickens who brought in the humanitarianistic dimension to his novels.

Though parallels cannot be drawn between the socio-political conditions of the nineteenth century England and the Twentieth Century India, the socio-political conditions do show some striking similarities and differences. While there was a rapid progress in the field of agriculture and industry in the nineteenth century England owing to the Industrial and Agricultural revolutions, India was lagging far behind in these fields in the beginning of the twentieth century. Politically, Indians were not free, for India had already become a colony of the British empire. Just as the socio-political conditions of the Victorian England motivated writers like Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot to express themselves in their novels, the socio-political and economic problems of India motivated writers like Anand, Abbas, Bhattacharya and Kamala Markandaya to deal with the Indian social scene and to focus their attention on the social evils for the purpose of eradicating them. The impact of Western culture on India revolutionized the entire outlook of the Indian intellectuals. The Western education brought not only new scientific and social ideas but also helped open the eyes of the Indian people to the glory of their own culture. Ancient Indian classics were translated
into English by Indian writers. The Western education brought about national awareness which gradually grew into militant nationalism of the novelists of the 'thirties' and 'forties' of our century. The growing nationalism stirred the spirit of India. Nationalism gave rise to the literature of protest, the literature of the Gandhian era and as G.P. Sarma has said,

The first expressions of Indian discontent and the assertion of nationalism was not mainly political. It was cultural, in so far as it manifested itself as the search for national identity. 11

At the social level the battle was fought against blind orthodoxy and superstition. It was also aimed at liberating the weaker sections of the people from their age-long slavery. As a result of the widespread education, many social injustices were deeply felt at all levels. The caste-ridden society in India was shaken to its very foundations when untouchability and other horrid practices and superstitions were subjected to the relentless gaze of reason. Reformers and philosophers like Raj Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Mahathma Gandhi started an era of social reform and pleaded for the abolition of 'Sati', removal of untouchability and for the remarriage of widows. Mahathma Gandhi had already started his campaign against untouchability and
turned his attention to the Hindu-Muslim unity. Vinoba Bhave’s 'Bhoodhan movement' had its impact on the rural society though the 'Zamindars' or the land-lords continued to exploit the landless poor peasants. Machines were introduced in India and factories and mills came into existence. It created a class difference and a class conflict. The capitalistic forces exploited the workers. As a result, Trade Union movements started gathering momentum and the British administration leashed out its attacks on Trade Unions and Communists. On the political level, the battle was with the British Government for India's freedom.

Indian struggle for Independence was a heroic one covering nearly half a century. The Indian National Congress emerged as a mighty force and Gandhi inspired all Indians with his sense of high moral values and patriotism. The emergent nationalism thus created conditions for the development of prose and with it of the novel and the short story, the introduction of social and psychological issues as literary themes, and the emergence of realism in all literary forms. All the Indian writers came under the spell of the freedom movement and did great deal in rousing the national consciousness of the people. Novels like Inquilab by K.A. Abbas, Waiting For The Mahatma by
R.K. Narayan, *Kanthapura* by Raja Rao, *The House at Adampur* by Anand Lall and *Into the Sun* by Frieda Pas illustrate the point. Writers like Mulk Raj Anand began writing novels with the purpose of purging society of its anti-social practices. This attempt at reformation is not merely aimed at bringing happiness to individuals in the society but also an endeavour to make society strong. This endeavour is for consolidation and integration of various peoples into one nation, especially, in a country like India which is ridden by castes and religious differences. Dr. K.S. Ramamurti is of the opinion that the rise of the novel in India is not purely a literary phenomenon.

It was a social phenomenon as much, rather the fulfilment of a social creed. It was associated with social, political and economic conditions which were comparable to those which favoured its rise in England. The appearance of the novel as a literary form in nineteenth century India as it did in eighteenth century England synchronized with the rise of individualism and with all the consequent political and social reorientations which followed. 12

Among the contemporary writers, Anand shows a serious concern for the redemption of the poor and the oppressed from the clutches of the rich and the 'high-born'. The backdrop of all his novels is India and the problems he deals with are always Indian. As a social reformer, he draws his inspiration from
European political ideologies, especially those of Marx and Lenin but as an artist, he reveals the impact of the Western Progressive Movement. Like Dickens, Anand is a writer with a social conscience who emerges in his novels as the most powerful and effective spokesman of the poor and the underprivileged. As a staunch critic of social inequalities, he shows total identity with and a firm commitment to the exploited proletariat and the other weaker sections of society. In this respect both Dickens and Anand are committed to the Society and have sought to herald a revolt, a creative struggle to bring about a new society. As a result of their commitment, conviction and courage, their protests are born out of their genuine feelings and find artistic expression in their works. If Dickens felt the dissolution of 'real' life with the introduction of a new mechanised civilization, Anand is perturbed by the emergence of various forces like class, caste, religion and colonial domination.

Again, their earlier adventures in the field of journalism made them socially conscious and sensitive to many public issues. In the case of Dickens, his experience as a newspaper reporter and then as a reporter of parliamentary proceedings were of great help to him in much that he wrote. His contempt for
the complexities and drawn-out proceedings of law and for the uncaring nature of many of parliament's doings had its genesis in this period. However, he turned out to be a successful journalist and as was perhaps to be expected, a committed one too leading his colleagues in one of the newspapers in a strike. Then, he began writing literary pieces for the 'Morning Chronicle'. The publication of *Pickwick Papers* ensured him a wide, regular readership. This work brought him to the literary limelight and public gaze and there he stayed until he died. In the year 1850, Dickens embarked upon 'Household Words', a weekly paper providing both entertainment and comments on all kinds of social problems crime, poverty, education and reform. His most general preoccupation, the one which he was at great pains to illustrate, was the unfairness of the society of the day, the way that the class structure and the inequalities that went with it were still being reinforced in the new-born industrial world. His psychological suffering at the blacking factory gave him the first-hand experience of the lot of the lowest rank of workers and although, it was unpleasant at the time, it was ultimately productive in terms of material and ideas. Also, he could not erase from his memory the humiliations he had suffered when his father was lodged in the debtor's prison.
Parallels can also be drawn from the life of Anand. He also witnessed the cruel treatment meted out to Indians at the hands of the British. He was also a victim. He was once taken to a police station and beaten up for walking in the street when there was a curfew ordered by the British Government. Even as a boy he had known the sufferings of the outcasts at the hands of the Caste-Hindus. The element of protest was found in him even as a boy. He wrote a letter of protest to God for taking away the life of his cousin Kausalya. He went to England to carry out his research in philosophy where he came into contact with eminent philosophers. Once he was manhandled in England for supporting a strike there. He was attracted by Gandhi's battle against untouchability and stayed with him in his 'ashram' for a few days. While Dickens did not seem to have any problem in publishing any of his novels, Anand had to face enormous problems in finding a publisher for his Untouchable. But the novel, certainly got him fame and name as the first Indian novelist who dared to treat sympathetically the life of the outcast, arousing social consciousness. Anand's spirit rose in revolt against the political domination of the British. His novel Two Leaves and a Bud was banned
by the British for sometime as they could not tolerate
his criticism about the white tea planters of Assam.
He states this in his Preface to Two Leaves and a Bud:

The British Government in India had
paid me the compliment of banning all
my books, and considered me a dangerous
enough Fellow to be given a C.I.D.,
escort every time I came home. Those
were the halcyon days of Imperial
grandeur and anyone who was so
impertinent as to hint at the sores was
not only suspect as a seditionist
but a 'Bolshevik fellah' nurtured on
'Moscow Gold'. In Two Leaves and a Bud,
however, I dared openly to characterise
in English tea planters of Assam. And
then the storm broke on my head.13

In one of his short stories Anand describes the
tyrranny under which the intellectuals in India had
to labour. A young man was trying to read a book by
Marxim Gorky and was afraid of being arrested for
possessing forbidden literature. Anand has shown
in his works how the dark shadow of the British Raj
was gradually crushing the poor all over the country
directly through taxes and indirectly through the
parasites of the Raj. Further, Anand's hatred against
the British rulers in India is also a fight against
a particular form of class privileges.

Anand closely associated himself with 'thirties'
movement in Europe which began to see political, social
and human causes as genuine impulses for the novel and poetry. Like many European writers, he was also motivated by political events: not by the necessity to resist the existence of Fascism in Europe, but by the necessity to resist the existence of imperialism in India. His two immediate concerns were to defend his lower class countrymen and to defend his own freedom of expression as a writer. He decided to write fiction in order to discover 'the causes of the mental and material chaos in India, and the world and of my own failure as well as of my generation in the face of it.' He shared many of his assumptions about literature with the contemporary English Marxist writers. Also, he believed that the best novels had always sought to change man and society. He emphasised the 'revolutionary aspect of art' and stressed the role of the writer in helping man take part in 'the drama of revolt' from which emerged the new society. In this regard, Anand's Marxism lies within the humane Marxist tradition. When he is discussed with reference to the English literary tradition in which he began writing, he must be grouped with the Marxist writers of 'the nineteen thirties.' His work shows a concern with social reality with a spirit of optimism and a faith in the individual. Also, he illustrates the economic and social changes taking place in India under the colonial
rule and the gradual transformation of machine-increased production but it gave birth to the problems of unemployment, slum areas, lust for wealth, colonial domination, imperialism and racial discrimination and, above all, the conflicts between the working classes and the capitalists, followed by strikes, lock-outs and trade unionism. H.M. Williams considers Anand as the most important writer in the new wave of realism that swept over Indian Literature in the nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties. 16

Anand enjoys a distinction among the socially committed writers for his passionate love for the outcasts and the oppressed. K.R.S. Iyengar rightly observes:

He (Anand) wrote of the people, for the people, and as a man of the people.17

Though the problems which confronted Dickens and Anand were different, their reactions to the problems were almost similar; for their approach was basically that of humanists. They believed in the progress and prosperity of humanity and valued human dignity. They were opposed to every kind of exploitation and oppression. While Dickens did not speak of any form of revolution, he was dissatisfied with the society, particularly its class discrimination. Rather, he believed in private benevolence and individual charity for the better functioning of society. On the other hand, Anand foresaw social
transformation through revolution and establishment of a democracy combined with the principles of socialism. That is why in the works of Anand this ideology of social transformation is reflected in clearer and stronger terms than in the works of Dickens. But both of them have a class approach towards the social reality and their views are predominantly humanitarian. They also believe in the utilitarian theory of art. For them, art has a social purpose and responsibility. Above all, they are typical and outstanding representatives of the realistic tradition. This realistic touch is to be seen in their themes and techniques and it permeates the very fabric of their works. Like Dickens, Anand too, is a writer who emerges in his novels as the most powerful and effective spokesman and champion of the down-trodden and the underprivileged. Anand is one great crusader against injustice of every type. He is against all kinds of exploiters including the British masters, the village money-lenders, the traders, the native rulers, priests, the 'high-born' and the capitalists.

A careful study of the two novelists reveals that they are not passive onlookers but sensitive critics of their respective societies, who register their protests on the strength of their own convictions. They are
opposed to the existing order of the society and demand changes for its betterment. Also, they make a scathing attack on snobbery, selfishness, pride and hypocrisy. This is most central to the writings of Dickens and Anand. In fact, there can be no study of Dickens or Anand which can ignore this important aspect of their novels and all criticism relating to their works has ultimately to focus on this aspect of their art. While Dickens aims laughingly as well as sternly at every glaring abuse of the day, Anand appears to be stern and he shows complete identity with a total commitment to the proletariat.

The problem Anand highlights in Untouchable is the age old evil of the segregation of the individual on the basis of his birth and hereditary profession. Dickens, while satirising the Utilitarian economy and the capitalistic exploitation of the working class in Hard Times, digs also at the caste system. The caste system finds satiric emphasis through the story of Mrs. Sparsit. The proletarian misery and wretchedness are presented in Coolie and the communal disharmony and the ill-treatment of the Harijans by the caste Hindus are portrayed in The Road by Anand. The inhuman treatment of the working class by the capitalistic society is the central theme of Two Leaves and a Bud. In Across the Black Waters Anand moves further and takes up another
form of exploitation by the Imperial powers.

Both Dickens and Anand have genuine concern for the suffering humanity. Dickens's whole life was a crusade for better homes, better hospitals, better schools and better sanitation for the poor and his novels bear testimony to it. Like Dickens, Anand demands a better deal for the outcasts. He wants to put an end to untouchability. Both Dickens and Anand succeed in arousing the conscience of the reading public against the social evils. Dickens attacks the workhouse system and the 'New Poor Law' in Oliver Twist. The corrupt parliamentary system is satirised in Pick-Wick Papers. In Nicholas Nickleby and David Copperfield Dickens criticises the neglect of education in England and the total disregard of it by the State. His attack is directed against society in Bleak House. Parliamentary ineptitude comes in for special satire in the selections in which Dickens criticises the 'Boodle Coodle Doodle Clan', the ruling class which runs the country with total inefficiency except for keeping in office. This attack finds in the Barnacle-Merdle episodes which heighten the satire of Little Dorrit; in Bleak House, it underlines Dickens's feeling that the disease of the social structure of England goes from the slums to the law-courts, to the churches,
the manor houses, to the houses of Parliament.

Another important similarity in the novels of Dickens and Anand is that they constantly draw attention to the pathos of suffering childhood, to the woes and agonies of the poor, innocent, helpless children whom fate and chance often throw into a selfish, cruel and unscrupulous adult world. The sufferings and afflictions of children always have a special appeal for the reading public. The source of their concern for children and childhood can be traced to their own unhappy childhood days. A close study of the novels of Anand and Dickens reveals a certain common pattern of satire which is recurrent in them.

The comparative study attempted here derives its basis from the fact that there are many common themes and motifs running through the novels of Dickens and Anand which give rise to narrative strategies and modes of writing which are again similar. There are indeed differences and contrasts but these differences and contrasts are significant enough to warrant a comparative study and give rise to a significant pattern of similarities and dissimilarities. The differences in the art of characterization, narrative techniques and the use of language can again be explained in terms of cultural
backgrounds and individual sensibilities. What is particularly significant is that the novels of both Dickens and Anand are informed by a common 'Point of view', namely the point of view of a social commentator and critic. Both Dickens and Anand form an interesting pair who prove that literary affinities and typological similarities manifest themselves irrespective of time and space, though they often have historical implications and do not always appear in the same guise but take various forms depending on the historical milieu in question. These affinities and similarities manifest at different times, separated by several decades at different levels depending on the state and maturity of social and literary development in their countries.

Since the present dissertation seeks to fulfil some of the basic aims of comparative literature, a brief note on the nature of comparative literature as a discipline should be of help. As a study of literature, of literatures in comparison, comparative literature is essentially a critical activity capable of taking place at various levels, namely the generic level, the level of cross-cultural interactions and manifestations, the level of the mythical, archetypal or folklorish or again the level of interlingual movements. In its scope it covers four distinct branches of study, a study
of movements and trends, a study of genres and forms and finally a study of themes, motifs, and types.

Comparative literature aims at a systematic study of two literatures using comparison as its main tool. It is also a systematic interpretation and evaluation of works, comparable because of their affinities in themes and problems. Also, comparative literature is 'the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge' on the other.  

John B. Alphonso Karkala pleads for forging 'a global outlook' to examine 'literature of the world not from a particular culture's or region's point of view, but as an independent discipline in itself, with global scope'.

In the Indian academic world, comparative literature as a discipline, is a recent development. Attempts have been made to study the interrelations between the Western and Indian literatures. Many interesting studies have been made tracing the influences, similarities and essential differences, personal and racial, in matter, method and aims, between English and Tamil and Tamil and American literatures. A comparative approach to literature in this direction offers us new
angles of perception. Again, the comparability or universality of literatures can also be an evaluative criterion. All great literatures are concerned with the exploration of human nature and the human predicament in general and this enables them to transcend their own respective milieus. Though the central concerns of human thought may take on different forms in different periods, their basic concern is mankind. It is this view of life and art which is stressed by Wellek and Warren when they say, 'literature is one, as art and humanity are one'.

Comparative studies of this kind are also valuable from a cultural point of view. While the study attempted here helps us see in a comparative perspective two diverse cultures, namely Eastern and Western, it also makes us understand the essential oneness of all cultures. Looked at from this point of view, 'great literature always attains a muteness and a mythic simplicity which has vast reverberations and which again speaks straight to all humanity'. This mythic dimension retains the common core of humanity in situations of cultural diversity.

It is on the strength of these basic assumptions that an attempt is made in this dissertation to study
the novels of Dickens and Anand in a comparative framework. A comparative study of the novels of both these writers, while it makes for an exercise in comparative criticism, enables one to understand the mind and art of each of these writers in new perspectives. Though a great deal of work has been done on Anand and Dickens as individual writers, very little attempt has so far been made to compare the two writers especially from the point of view of social consciousness, reformative zeal and humanism. The present study which seeks to fill the gap, calls for certain specific approaches like the biographical approach and the sociological approach, not to speak of a psychological approach, in explaining and interpreting the novels of both the writers individually as well as collectively. While the sociological approach will be helpful in studying the novels in the social context, in discussing and analysing the works in relation to the social setting against which they have been written, in relation to social status, the social attitudes and the social vision of the writers, the biographical approach becomes necessary in view of the fact that both these writers have drawn heavily from their own experiences in life. Also a formalistic approach becomes necessary in studying the form or the structure of each novel, for the
form of the novel is not always a matter of arbitrary choice but something which is determined by the writer's vision. A committed writer cannot choose narrative modes and forms of telling which suited, for instance, the writers of old romances and legends. He will be more interested in projecting a view of life which is rational, pragmatic and bound by rules of cause and effect. He will be interested in rousing healthy legitimate sympathies and not false sentiments. He will be also interested in making such psychological probings in the delineation of characters so as to bring out in full the nature and magnitude of the mental agonies and sufferings of the characters concerned as well as the darker areas of human nature which account for many social evils. In the final analysis, their narrative techniques, the modes of telling, characters, dialogue, setting and style are determined by the nature of the themes, motifs and the social vision of the writer.

Hence a judicious combination of the sociological the biographical, the formal and the psychological approaches becomes necessary in the comparative study of their novels and every effort has been made to bring to bear on this study all these approaches in a greater or smaller measure. In addition to this, brief comparative
references have been made to the styles of the two writers to their use of the English language though the scope of the dissertation does not warrant a full length stylistic examination of the writings of the two novelists. Whatever the approach or approaches the principal focus of this study has been on the themes, motifs and the humanistic concerns of the two writers which provide the main basis for the comparative study attempted and in addition to these an earnest attempt has been made to examine the works of these two writers in a critical framework which is in keeping with the basic principles of comparative literature.

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NOTES


15 Ibid., pp. 131-135.


20 Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature p. 50.

21 K. Chellappan, Shakespeare And Ilango As Tragedians (Thanjavur: Tamil University, 1985), p. 3.