CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminaries

The main purpose of this chapter is to throw light on the significance and utility of the comparative study of the major and minor characters in the selected novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Philip Roth. It postulates the objectives of comparative study, states the research problems and its scope and limitations. It also deals with the methods of data collection and the critical analysis of the characters in Anand’s novels *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and Philip Roth’s novels *The Plot Against America* (2004) and *Everyman* (2008).

Mulk Raj Anand occupies not only a prominent place in Indian English Literature but also plays a pivotal role to introduce the Dalit heroes through his novels. The novels have been selected mainly due to their social setting, the presentation of the downtrodden and the Dalit community during the time of World War II in India. On the other hand, Philip Roth has contributed to Jewish-American Literature and his novels play an important role in exposing the sufferings of the Jews. The novels are selected mainly due to the presentation of the Jewish characters, their day–to-day life and the socio-cultural aspects. The chief objective of the study is the comparison of the characters of Anand and Roth. It fully expounds the underlying meanings and varieties of the characters against their social, cultural, economic and psychological backgrounds. Therefore, the present study is an attempt
to carefully analyze the selected novels, the characters and their roles, and similar and dissimilar aspects. Comparative study of the characters helps to categorize, analyze and interpret them against the Indian and American social milieu and cultural contexts respectively.

Both the writers attempt to present the contemporary society and their social views with the help of major and minor characters in their novels. The novels *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) by Mulk Raj Anand and *The Plot Against America* (2004), *Everyman* (2008) by Philip Roth have presented various types of characters and various methods of characterization. These novels are replete with the pieces of conversations and descriptions which supply cues and materials to explore the interpretative potentials of the universal meaning from the point of view of both the writers and their individual opinions. These novels, further, contain different types of behavior of the characters as contrived by the writers in the structural design of the selected novels. All these things are bound to create an overall impact where one can notice different types of characters, their roles and relations with other characters. Towards the end of the chapter, an effort is made to substantiate the importance of the comparative literature for analyzing the characters in the novels, *Untouchable, The Plot Against America, Coolie* and *Everyman* in a proper perspective.

**1.2 Rationale and Significance of the Study**

Comparison is considered to be one of the most authentic ways to interpret the roles, bring out the similar and dissimilar qualities of the characters in a novel. Comparative study is a kind of technique that
takes into account the overall context of novels, the presentation of characters and reflection of political and social events. The characters are presented by the writers in their novels against the socio-cultural background as literature is the reflection of the society which includes political, economic, social and cultural aspects. Therefore, the novels under study are to be examined from these perspectives. The roles of the protagonists in the selected four novels, their relations with other characters belonging to different races, castes, political ideology and economic class are some of the important aspects which need to be analyzed in a proper perspective. All these and many other contextual factors are relevant for analyzing the novels. Moreover, this kind of exercise not only helps the readers to put the characters, events and themes in proper perspective, but also enable them to understand the social, political and economic issues. One can understand the qualifications and disqualifications of the characters, their virtues and vices by juxtaposing the characters.

A comparative study of the characters in the novels of Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable* and *Coolie* and Philip Roth’s *The Plot Against America* and *Everyman* help the readers to compare and contrast the social, political and economic milieu in which the characters move. It also helps to understand the similarities and differences between the Jewish characters and the Dalit characters. Both the writers have depicted the social, economic and political situations in their respective novels with the help of the characters. The main purpose of the study is to bring out how these writers attempt to depict the social, racial, caste issues in their respective novels. Mulk Raj Anand tries to
present a realistic picture of the downtrodden in his novels. He describes the issue of caste-based discrimination and considers it as one of the major problems in India. With the help of his two novels - *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, he draws the stark picture of caste-ridden Indian society. He presents the real as well as fictional characters in his novels. Similarly, in the novels *The Plot Against America* and *Everyman*, Philip Roth attempts to focus on the problems of the Jews in America and other parts of the world during World War II. He tries to depict the exploitation and harassment of the Jews and how the Nazis and their followers try to eliminate the Jews all over the world. Such types of real as well as fictional characterization occur in the novels of Roth and Anand. Roth carefully presents the racial issues in his novels with the help of various characters. Anand also tries to bring forth the issues of caste and class in his novels. Both the writers try to present the racial and caste problems of their respective societies through their novels. Though the geographical locales of their novels are different i.e. India and America, these novelists emphasize dehumanization, ostracism and degeneration of the characters poignantly. They attempt to present the universal issues of racial segregation and caste discrimination in their novels. Therefore, the main purpose of the study is to compare and contrast the most celebrated novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Philip Roth with respect to character study. All the above-mentioned factors influence personal and social development of the characters in the novels under consideration.
As a novelist, Mulk Raj Anand occupies a central place in Indian English literature. He himself had the first hand experience of cleaning the latrines during his stay in Gandhiji’s Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat. Even in his school-days, he experienced untouchability while playing with his school-mates. Therefore, most of his novels depict the pains and pangs of the downtrodden. Similarly, Philip Roth occupies the central place in American Jewish literature. Being Jew, most of his novels deal with Jewish issues at the core. He mainly focuses on the social reality, suffering and agony of the Jews during World War II. His novels reflect the living style, social and racial problems of the Jews in America and around the world. Therefore, an attempt is made in this research to compare and contrast the attitudes, behavioral aspects and identity crisis of the characters presented in the selected novels.

Most of the Indian English writers and the Jewish writers have tried to emphasize the different layers of society and humanity with the help of characterization in their novels. Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K Narayan and Khuswant Singh have made significant contributions in the depiction of a variety of characters. This study is full of experiments at different levels, including comparative levels and analytical levels of the characters in these selected novels. Both the writers, Mulk Raj Anand and Philip Roth focus on social reality, religious hypocrisy and humanity in their novels. Most of their novels convey messages of equality, brotherhood and friendship. The protagonists of their novels always fight against evil powers like prejudices due to caste, superstitions, anti-social, anti-religious and
immoral aspects in the society. Similarly, in Jewish American literature, the writers such as Bellow, Malamud and others have attempted to portray the sufferings and the worst conditions of the Jews during World War II in their novels. They have depicted anti-social, racial and immoral aspects with the help of characterization. In *The Plot Against America*, Philip Roth describes some socio-political issues like riots, massacres and bloodshed of the Jews in America during World War II. He tries to create a real picture of modern American society in his novel. At the same time, he presents burning issues like racism and anti-social activities with the help of his writing. The two novels *The Plot Again America* and *Everyman* are fine examples of the socio-political, racial upheavals and domestic sufferings respectively.

In his novels, Roth gives us the message of humanity, morality and universal brotherhood. He also tries to draw the real pictures of Jews in America and around the world. He focuses on the struggle of the Jewish people against adverse circumstances. The process of assimilation that led to the progress of Jewish people is one of the vital components of this literature. Another aspect of Roth’s writing is that he depicts the young Jewish intellectuals who are career-oriented. Roth and Anand both depict social evils in the world. Anand tries to focus on the struggle of Dalits and the backward people against adverse circumstances.

In fact, the last decade saw a paradigm shift from the thematic interpretation of the novels written in Indian English literature and in Jewish-American literature to the comparative analysis of the novels.
Hence, Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable, Coolie* and Philip Roth’s *The Plot Against America* and *Everyman* have been chosen for the comparative study.

Mulk Raj Anand is considered the pioneer in writing sociological novels. His main focus is on the social evils like untouchability and poverty that prevailed on a large scale in the pre-independent India. His themes and characters create a special identity for themselves in the Indian social and cultural fields. A writer with social commitment and compassion, Anand is deeply influenced by great humanists Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi whose trajectory could be seen in his two greatly admired novels *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936). In these two novels, Anand portrays exploitation and humiliation of the poor and downtrodden in the Indian society. The protagonists of the novels, Bakha and Munoo go through a series of harrowing and heart-melting experiences braving through untouchability and poverty respectively. The central characters in these novels are, in fact, the socially disadvantaged people of the caste and class-ridden society. The selected novels offer a variety of characters and incidents where there is a tremendous scope for studying, interpreting and analyzing the types of characters.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Following are the aims and objectives of the present study:

1. To find out the similar and dissimilar aspects of Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand writings.
2. To highlight the common or universal characterization in the selected novels.
3. To investigate the effects of social and regional aspects in selected novels.
4. To throw light on Dalit and Jewish societies as reflected in the selected novels.
5. To examine and analyze the major characters of the selected novels of Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand.
6. To critically analyze the main characters against their socio-cultural background.
7. To examine and emphasize the role of male and female characters in general.
8. To study critically the sociolects and idiolects of the characters taking into account the socio-cultural factors.
9. To study the class, caste and race struggle of the characters in the selected novels of Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand.
10. To explicate the characters’ address terms, blessings, curses, honorific terms and greetings in the Indian and American context.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

It is remarkable to note that comparative study is the best way to study and understand not only the fictional discourse but also to unfold different layers of the minds of the characters. The characters of Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand are brought in common comparison because they have the common thread of exploitation, malnutrition, and dehumanization. The American novelist Philip Roth exposes the ills in the American society during the World War II. On the other
hand, Mulk Raj Anand, the Indian novelist in English, directly assaults the practices of untouchability and poverty that existed in the Indian society before Indian Independence. Both the writers are sociological novelists. Therefore, bringing them together would be very revealing and thought provoking. Both the novelists have portrayed the real and the fictional characters in their unique way bringing out the dark side of human life. The novels selected for the purpose of the study have the universal appeal.

The present research is limited to the following novels with respect to comparative study of the characters.

1. *Untouchable* (1935)
2. *Coolie* (1936)

The comparative study of the characters in these novels definitely helps the readers to explicate the various dimensions and implications of the caste, class, race and gender in American and Indian Society. Therefore, there is a tremendous scope to study the characters by juxtaposing them in the light of the prevailing political, economic and social situations.

1.5 Making of Philip Roth

Like Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and other Jewish writers of America, Philip Roth’s literary concern too is the identity crisis of the Jewish Americans. His writing, both fictional and nonfictional, is a
variation on the themes of identity, which is inextricably tied with the question of personal identity of the writer himself. Roth has written his fiction in the light of his personal experiences and in the shadow of his past; therefore, one should know the past to understand his work in its thematic and aesthetic aspects. Roth is a Jew, and therefore, he inevitably shares the predicament to which his race has been relentlessly condemned for the last four centuries in the land of Liberty. The social environment and the family background in which he was born and brought up were significantly different.

Philip Roth was born in Newark, New Jersey on March 9, 1933 to Herman and Bess. Roth’s father however looms large on his son’s writing in both fiction and memoirs. His father was an owner of a family shoe store but unfortunately that went bankrupt. He, then, became an insurance salesman for Metropolitan life and was a devoted employee who went door to door in the poor black neighborhoods of Newark extracting premium from his policy holders. They scarcely had the means to pay. Herman Roth was not easy to love in return and in portraying his father, Philip Roth does not soften all that was spiky and stiff necked in him. From 1946 to 1950, Roth attended high school in a largely Jewish section of Newark at a time when for the most Americans, a booming economy and rising expectations did much to soothe the tensions of the emerging cold war. In America, anti-Semitism still impacted the society and the Jews were under pressure and lived in a fearful atmosphere.

After high school education Roth attended Bucknell University, where he received his B.A. of the University of Chicago, where he
completed his M.A and taught English. It was at Bucknell that Roth did his apprenticeship in scandal. As an editor of the literary magazine, he wrote a satirical essay on the send-off of the school in the weekly newspaper. Roth enrolled in a Ph.D. program in English at the University of Chicago where he began to work on his career as a writer. His march towards success was unusually swift. His story *The Contest Foreran Gold* was published in Epoch in 1955 and *Martha is Folly* was chosen for best American short stories of 1956. Roth got married in 1959 to Margaret Williams, a divorcée with a daughter, who proved to be a major watershed in his life. Margaret and Roth legally separated and the marriage was only dissolved by Margaret’s death in car crash in 1968. Roth married again to British actress Claire Bloom with whom he had already been sharing a life and that relationship broke up in 1995.

Roth’s contribution to Jewish literature is invaluable because he handles the burning issues of the Jewish society. Roth is one of the most significant contemporary American novelists who received many awards and titles because of his famous novels. He has published twenty one books that have clarified Roth to be typical product of the Jewish-American synthesis, the struggle to negotiate the competing claims of the individual imperative (the American theme) with the group imperative (the Jewish theme). The most important and interesting aspect of Roth’s fiction is his preoccupation with manners and morals of contemporary society. In other words, his novels contain the business of living in this postmodern world. Franz Kafka and Anne Frank, all mark Roth as the most resolutely bookish
of the then major contemporary writers, the writer for whom the major area of risk and reward is the written word.

Roth’s central male characters are more unremittingly introspective and more persistently tormented than any other in American literature. Roth’s first three books, Goodbye Columbus and Five Short Stories (1959) Letting Go (1962) and When She was Good (1967). Roth began his literary career with Goodbye Columbus and Five Short Stories To his credit are more than twenty novels besides his autobiography, short stories and critical essays. Roth has been a controversial writer ever since he had published his first books, which evoked a mixed response. Some critics praised the novella Goodbye Columbus and Other Short Stories for their freshness, originality, energy and hailed Roth as a promising young writer. Nevertheless, the book won the 1960 National Book Award for fiction.

Irving has praised him for his insight and imitation but later, changed his opinion by saying that he is a minor writer who has derided himself, programmatically the vision of major possibilities. Philip Roth, Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud have a distinct voice in the contemporary American fiction in as much as they analyze ethical aspect of the predicament of modern man in the context of his family and society. Letting Go (1962) is one of the famous novels of Roth where he attempts to present the realistic and naturalistic fiction in the American society. The protagonist is found to be engaged in a heroic struggle to achieve selfhood and identity in the middle of unmanning and dehumanizing forces. Roth’s third novel Portnoy’s Complaint marked a turning point in his career in 1967. Roth published When
She was Good, which narrates the tale of an American mid-western girl driver who has more made single-minded adherence to her self-righteous notions of right and wrong than any other characters in American literature. In this novel, the author presents the clash between the ethical values of the individual and those of his community. In the case of Portnoy’s Complaint (1969), the inspiration behind this novel has been variously attributed to Lenny Bruce’s Night Club Act.

Roth has focused on the metropolitan life of the human beings. Our Gang (1971), The Breast (1972) and The Great American Novel (1973) all these works of fiction convey the social and political issues of the American society. Roth depicts the psychological and racial problems of the Jews in these novels.

1.6 Making of Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the prominent novelists in Indian English literature. His father was a coppersmith who served the army for a living, while his mother came from a small village. He was born in 1905 in Peshawar, now in Pakistan. His father matriculated and rose to the position of the Head Clerk in the Dogra Regiment of the British Army. The starting point of his life reveals the various strands that go into the shaping of his mind and the influences that later bear upon his writing. The second part of his life is important. It is the time that focuses Anand’s struggle to become a novelist. When he was imprisoned during non-violence movement, he met Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, the great poet. This meeting influenced Anand’s life. He studied
at Khalsa College in Amritsar and graduated from it. He received an Award - International Peace Prize of the World Peace Council University (1962). He went to England for higher studies at University College, London, under the guidance of Professor G. Dawes Hicks. In 1928, he was awarded Ph.D. degree in Philosophy. He wrote a number of articles for Criterion and for other journals also.

In 1929, he returned to India and lived in Sabarmati Ashram with Mahatma Gandhi and prepared the first draft of the novel *Untouchable*. When he sailed back to Europe, he wrote *The Hindu View of Art; The Golden Breath* at the same time *Untouchable* was rejected by nineteen British publishers. In the end, *Untouchable* was published in 1935 with a preface by E.M Forster. He joined the International Bridge in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. In 1937, he published *Two Leaves and a Bud*. In 1938 he married Kathleen Van Gelder, an actress. It was the time of Anand’s youth, and during these days, the Indian fight for independence was at its peak. As a young man, Anand participated in the freedom movement. At the time of the Jalianwala Bagh massacre, he was given seven lashes of cane for breaking the curfew and was imprisoned for a day during the civil disobedience campaign of 1921. This made him hate imperialism, and his hatred of imperialism was bound also with his disgust for the cruelty and hypocrisy of Indian feudal life with its castes, creeds, habits and customs and its restrictive religious rites and practices. The General Strike (1926) in Britain had made a powerful impact on him. This event modified Anand’s thinking. He started to look from the labour’s point of view on humanity. When Anand came across the
letters of Marx in the *New York Herald Tribune* under the title of *Letters on India in 1853*, he was greatly influenced by them. These letters helped him understand the rights of the labours and their roles in the present world. Later, Anand tried to present the Struggle of Labour, about their poverty and suffering in his novels. Anand’s life was greatly influenced by the spirit of Gandhi. He considered that Gandhi’s thoughts would save India and Indians would gain freedom very soon. Anand uses the spirit of Gandhi in his novels. Lalaji Misra had taken an interview of Mulk Raj Anand which reveals the views of the novelist on Mahatma Gandhi. The following is the piece of interview, which appeared in Bhatnagar (1999):

*LM:* Gandhi has been a spirit of time, a national experience and reservoir of ideas to country. As a novelist, how do you use the spirit of Gandhi in your novels?

*MR:* Gandhi was simply a catalyst of action. He made ideas into action. If any things he didn’t believe, he did fast. He didn’t refuse truth. Please don’t use the words like ‘reservoir’. He was a simple human being (Dr. Anand puts forth in a witty way). If somebody goes on fast onside Chief Minister’s house, demonstrates dharna, he can’t catch the spirit of truth as he has a purpose, a motto. There is no answer to Gandhi. He believed in truth.” (p. 52)

From this interview, one notices that Gandhi is the catalyst for Anand. He had spent three months in Gandhi’s Ashram. He had cleaned latrines. Gandhi allowed him to experience the life of an untouchable,
he had to follow the three principles, not to drink, not to see a woman with desire and to clean latrines once a week.

The novels of the early period of Anand’s are *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) which deal with the plight of the people who have been dubbed as untouchable. *Untouchable* highlights the social wrongs done to the untouchables. The scene of this novel is laid in a remote village named Bulashah somewhere in the interior of Punjab. The novel reveals the major events taking place in the life of Bakha, the protagonist of the novel. The second novel *Coolie* (1936) portrays the plight of Munoo before Indian independence. The novel includes characters from colonial India: the ruling and the ruled. The division of Indian society into numerous sections by the British is vividly depicted in this novel. Anand’s projection of the class system indicates the exploitation of the poor by the rich normally called the capitalists. *Coolie* portrays the tribulations of coolies in a class-ridden society. *Two Leaves and a Bud* has a unified and well-developed structure. It opens with Gangu’s arrival at the tea-estate with the thought, “Life is like a journey” in his mind; at the end, Gangu’s journey is finally over. In spite of its wealth of characters and episodes, the novel maintains its unity, as every detail is woven around the central theme of Gangu’s exploitation. *The Village Trilogy* consists of three novels: *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942). All these novels come in the middle period of Anand’s life. *The Village* clearly portrays the life in a typical Punjab village named Nandpur during the early decades of the twentieth century. Lalu Singh, the
protagonist, is a young lad influenced by modern thoughts, whose free and ardent spirit is crushed by the typical features of the village life like landlords, sahukars, rigid and age-old traditions and customs, mass conformity and cruelty.

All his rebellious actions and thoughts are harshly criticized by the orthodox and hypocritical society. *Across the Black Waters* (1940) opens with Lal Singh’s regiment disembarking at Marseilles and concludes with the hero getting wounded and taken prisoner by the Germans at Festubert. This novel is based on Anand’s knowledge of trench warfare in Spain and on what he came to know about those who fought in Flanders during World War - I. *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), two months before its publication, was announced as All Men Are Brothers in *The Times Literary Supplement*. The original title comes from a slogan that appears in the novel. It was George Orwell who suggested the present title, which is adapted from a stanza by William Blake in poem from *A Note Book* (1773). An important aspect, which is found in *The Village Trilogy*, is the texture of education, an education that enlightens the path throughout the life of man. We come across a corrupt teacher, Master Hukum Chand, who beats students for wearing English clothes. Anand’s next novel *The Big Heart* (1945) presents the realistic picture and problems of the poor that is community vis-à-vis capitalist coppersmiths of Amritsar. *The Road* (1961) is related to snobbishness. It reflects in the rejoicing of the members of Murli Dhar’s family that regards themselves as having already risen to “Superior heights of splendor” because of the
irrevocable contract they have entered into with Gokul Chand of a slightly more pretentious caste.

His next novel *Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953) is the story of Victor Edward George Ashok Kumar, the Maharaja of Shampur and the narrative covers the last days of his state before its merger into the Indian Union. In the novel, *The Old Woman and the Cow* (1960), Anand introduces us to the most memorable woman Gauri; the whole novel is a study of the helpless condition of a Hindu woman in early childhood. She is dependent on her parents, and after marriage, she becomes the property of her husband to be ill-treated or exiled by him for no fault of her own. The tale of her sufferings does not end here. The submissive girl Gauri, after her marriage, is sold to a Seth by her husband who is under severe economic duress. The novel is nothing but sufferings of the Indian women and their exploitation. Anand’s next novel *The Road* (1961) highlights the distress and the disabilities to which the cobbler youths are subjected in Indian villages. They can perhaps hope for an end of their suffering, if and when they leave their village and disappear in the crowd of the cities. In 1963, Anand published *Death of a Hero* in which he treats a contemporary event. The scene is laid in the valley of Kashmir. The novel is about the story of Maqbool Sherwani. The protagonist of this small novel flees to Srinagar when raiders from Pakistan advance. He is asked to go back to Baramula and organize a resistance, but he is captured, tried and killed. The novel is about the burning issues in India and Pakistan. *The Death of a Master of Arts* (1967) shows the misery and despair of a post-graduate student who spends a lot of money and number of
years on his education for a white-collar job. He becomes a victim of disappointment and frustration. Mulk Raj Anand’s world of fiction is veritable gallery of characters that cuts across the boundaries of time and space. The first three novels Untouchable, Coolie and Two Leaves and a Bud are the little pockets of dynamite which have enraged the orthodox and discrimination on the grounds of caste, class, gender are fiercely exposed in these novels which present the trilogy of the miserable like Bakha, Munoo and Gangu. The Village trilogy of Lal Singh is the most ambitious epic-like structure of Anand creates that presents the moral war or lawless revolt as futile and loves as the only sublime force that can establish universal harmony, in the village and Across the Black Waters amidst the banners of Sword and the Sickle. The three novels of reform are The Big Heart, The Old Women and the Cow, Gauri and The Road. The big hearted Ananta struggles against the impending unemployment of the craftsmen, the cow Gauri reforms herself through self-realization and The Road shows that strong will and clear vision make change and reform possible. In addition to these twelve novels, Mulk Raj Anand wanted to publish a subjectively objective novel of new consciousness entitled Seven Ages of Man in seven volumes of these, four novels Seven Summers, Morning Face, Confessions of a Lover and The Bubble came out by 1984. The fifth volume was out in three different works The Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi( 1991), Of Parer and Pity (2001) and Reflection on a White Elephant (2002) giving the autobiographical accounts of Mulk Raj Anand’s visits to Sabarmati Ashram and the caves of Ajanta and Ellora. In addition to these his volumes of short story collections, his Apology for Heroism and other works of
nonfiction show how Mulk Raj Anand’s creative works substantiate his multi-faceted genius.

The short stories from old books like *Panchatantra* and *Buddhist Jatak Tales* show the short story as an art of ancient India. Many writers have attempted to write short stories. Among these, Mulk Raj Anand is one of the most outstanding, by virtue of his fecundity and the great variety of theme and mood, tone and technique, which characterize his short stories. Mulk Raj Anand is one of the greatest and the most prolific of the Indian writers who have written short stories in English. He has about seventy short stories to his credit published in more than half a dozen collections from time to time all through his career.

The collections are *The Lost Child and Other Stories* (1934); *The Barber’s Trade Union and Other Stories* (1944); *The Tractor- the Corn Goddess* and *Other Stories* (1953); *The Power of Darkness and Other Stories* (1959); *Lajwanti and Other Stories* (1966); and *Between Tears and Laughter* (1973) In addition to these, he has also retold traditional Indian tales in two collections *Indian Fairy Tales* (1946) and *More Indian Fairy Tales* (1961). Anand’s short stories deal with other themes too, such as strong social satire, uproarious laughter and acute psychological perception. His art of short stories is entirely his own. The chief characteristic of Anand’s short stories is its infinite variety, which can be found in their mood, tone and spirit.
1.7 Selection of the Novels

The selected novels of Mulk Raj Anand written in Indian English potentially vary in the characters such as male, female, children and adults and the selected novels of Philip Roth written in American English are potentially full of varieties of the characters, who are worth considering for the purpose of the present study. The selected novels of both the writers contain dialogues and speeches which are culture-specific and context bound. The writers recurrently make use of conversations and develop their themes for the most part with the help of interpersonal and social relationship. There is a tremendous possibility to thoroughly study and systematically analyze the characters, which appeal to the readers in particular. The second important reason is that both the writers try to present the agony, pain and miserable conditions of the particular society. Anand tries to show the pain of the Dalits and Roth tries to present the Jews’ agony. The present study is an attempt to compare and contrast the social views and social aspects with the help of characterization. Both the writers are committed to write about social ills and try to present the dark side of their respective societies. The nature of the characters presented by Anand is quite the same as the nature of characters presented by Roth. Both the writers have given us a comprehensive view of their societies.

Thirdly, the comparison of Indo-Anglican and American-Jewish novels shed light on the emerging issues in the society. Both the writers give grandeur to their writing skills and the structural point of view in their novels. The most important thing is that *Untouchable*
(1935) and Coolie (1936) are Anand’s first and second novels respectively. While The Plot Against America (2004) and Everyman (2006) are also the major novels of Philip Roth. Both the writers use their special skills in building the story of their novels and creating their characters with the sense of social awareness by using typical society and its characters. The characterizations of both the writers are remarkable for they bring out ground realities of social, economic and political life of Indian as well as American society. The varieties of characters used by both the authors are so powerful that the readers discover the implications of their utterances in the context of the situations in which they occur. In the end, the novels Untouchable, Coolie, The Plot Against America and Everyman are the most popular novels of Anand and Roth. They have been appreciated by the critics, scholars and the readers alike. In Untouchable, the reader always finds the best combination of the East-West characters, their style and personal views of the society. Coolie is deemed a panoramic novel, its action moves from the North to South of India and back up again to the North. Similarly, Roth’s The Plot Against America is one of the best creations in the Jewish American literature. The novelist is awarded the American Pulitzer Prize for American Pastoral in 1997. He presents the political as well as social views of the Jewish society. Roth’s Everyman is about the pain and agony of the human beings during old age. The authors delineate the characters symbolically and focus on the reality of their times. All these four novels are remarkable in their presentation of themes and characterization. The novels for a variety of reasons have become unique in the Indian and American-Jewish literature.
1.8 Hypothesis

A comparative study of the characters in the novels of Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand helps the readers to understand the socio-cultural differences and the treatment given to the Jews in America and the untouchables in India. Moreover, a comparative study of the characters makes the readers aware of the dehumanizing practice of untouchability, racism and inequality expressed through the peculiar Indian and American characters. In addition to social, religious and racial discrimination, Mulk Raj Anand and Philip Roth expose the real picture of society with the help of characters. Since the comparative approach is an effective tool to reveal the social nature of the characters, the present study highlights the similar and dissimilar ideals, characters, social taboos used by the two novelists. Mulk Raj Anand has introduced the Indian society with its drawbacks and evil aspects. On the other hand, Philip Roth has introduced the American Society, the Jewish Society with its effects of racial discrimination and conflicts arising out of family disputes in his two novels under consideration.

1.9 Methodology of the Study

Since the present study is comparative in nature, the primary sources are utilized for the thorough understanding of the nature of the selected American as well as Indian novels with the view to analyze the characters. The secondary sources are tapped to give the different views of the critics and the creative writers. The present study analyses the characters and their various roles in the novels. It also
gives the idea about types of characters, their style and other things. The writer, while depicting the reality, considers socio-cultural aspects. It is interesting to juxtapose the characters of these great writers since both of them project their characters in relation to society. The study of the characters in relation to society has been the focus of the present research. Therefore, highly marked literary pieces and conservations are categorically selected and analyzed to keep in view the socio-political reality existing at that time. As the characters come from different backgrounds of the society, the novelists very skillfully depict them using the power of imagination. The two works-the fictional and the real are presented by Philip Roth and Mulk Raj Anand.

An attempt is made to analyze the characters from the selected novels of the writers within the framework of a comparative study. In addition, E. M. Forster’s concept of flat and round characters is fully explored. The concept of protagonist is applied to the selected novels and analyzed fully keeping in mind the intended effects to be achieved. After a careful scrutiny of the collected data, types of characters are analyzed from the selected novels. The selected characters are classified into particular types according to their roles in the novels. The classified and appropriately grouped characters are analyzed at length. Different tools and insights gained from the theory of comparative study in chapter II are utilized while analyzing the characters in chapters III and IV respectively contributing to the enhancing of understanding of both the authors’ points of view.
1.10 Conclusion