PREFACE

Mulk Raj Anand, one of India's foremost writers in English, has won international recognition for upholding proletarian and humanitarian causes. Two of his novels, Untouchable (1935) and Coolie (1936), have been translated into over forty languages. A prolific and versatile genius, he has to his credit fifteen novels, several collections of short stories and numerous other works on various subjects, such as literary criticism, art, civilization, cosmetics, cookery, sex etc. Though a septuagenarian, he is still actively engaged in creative writing; his latest publication is: Conversations in Bloomsbury (1981). He has undertaken to write a seven-part autobiographical novel, Seven Ages of Man, three volumes of which have already come out and the fourth in the series, i.e. Bubble, "will go to press this month," as the author informed me in his letter dated 1st December, 1981.

There have appeared quite a few critical studies on Anand. It may, however, be pointed out that his novels have hitherto been evaluated mainly in respect of themes and little attention has been paid to his narrative technique by means of which the themes are expounded. To illustrate, Margaret Berry's book Mulk Raj Anand: The Man and the Novelist (1971) deals chiefly with the question of Anand's eagerness to change India's degenerating social institutions. Likewise, Krishna Nandan Sinha's Mulk Raj Anand (1972) examines, in the writer's own words, "the

The existing criticism on Anand is thus lop-sided; it emphasizes the thematic aspect of his novels and overlooks the technical side. To regard him merely as a great thinker and exponent of Indian sensibility, and to ignore him as an artist, is to misconstrue his genius. The present study is an attempt at assessing his novels afresh from the angle of narration with a view to ascertaining whether the narrative technique employed in each novel is conducive to the communication of its theme and subject-matter. This thesis proposes that the appropriateness of 'point of view' in most of his novels contributes to their success and appeal to the reader. In his letter dated March 11, 1981, Anand commends the topic chosen by me:

I think the theme you have chosen for your thesis is a good one.
Besides correspondence with the distinguished novelist, I had an opportunity of meeting him in New Delhi on September 7, 1981. We had a useful exchange of views on the different narrative techniques employed by him in his novels. I am glad to say that he unequivocally appreciated my classification of his novels into the following four categories:


(b) prose epics, each having, by and large, the hero as a centre of consciousness, such as Munoo in *Coojie* (1936) and Lal Singh alias Lalu in the trilogy comprising *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940), and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942).

(c) the first-person narratives, viz. *Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953) and the autobiographical novels — *Seven Summers* (1951), *Morning Face* (1968) and *Confession of a Lover* (1976).

(d) novels projecting multiple points of view, viz. *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Old Woman and the Cow* (1960), republished as *Gauri* (1981), and *Death of a Hero* (1963).

As the content of fiction dictates its forms, Anand has experimented with different narrative techniques in his novels, and "the experiments," in his own words, "were intentional." After going through the abstract of my thesis, he wrote to me in his letter dated 1st October 1981:

One use of your thesis may be to indicate to my critics that I did have deep concern about finding the kind of form necessary for each novel.
The present study does not include any discussion about Anand's prose-style, chiefly because his critics have written a great deal about his elaborate use of Punjabi/Hindustani words and phrases in original as well as in translation. Other Indian novelists in English -- Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh (to name only a few) -- also adapt the English language to bring out the local flavour of conversation. It may be mentioned here that, while writing about India, even English writers of the stature of Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster use Hindustani words, though in a limited context only. Raja Rao, in his famous "Foreword" to his first novel, Kanthaoura (1938), enunciates that the main problem before an Indian writer in English is "to convey in a language not one's own the spirit that is one's own." Anand, too, expresses similar sentiments in The King-Emperor's English (1948), "Pigeon-Indian: Some Notes on Indian-English Writing" (1971) and "Pigeon Irish and Pigeon Indian" (1979). He asserts that he always translates dialogue from the original Punjabi into English. In his letter to me, dated 1st December, 1981, he observes in this regard:

There is much hostility to Indian English fiction of all the three writers, myself, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, for not writing in Standard English English, and for not evolving Standard Indian English.

Since the language aspect of Anand's technique has been debated enough, this dissertation is devoted to examining closely the effectiveness of the novelist's narrative technique.
I express my deep gratitude to my Supervisor, Dr. Suresh Nath, Head, Department of Studies and Research in English, J.S. College, Sikandrabad, for his valuable guidance and supervision. I am grateful to Dr. Mulk Raj Anand who, despite his numerous engagements, was kind enough to grant me an appointment and answer my letters too. I am greatly indebted to Dr. T.R. Sharma, Prof. and Head, Department of English, Meerut University, Meerut, for his kind advice and encouragement and to Dr. K.K. Sharma, Reader, Department of English, Allahabad University, Allahabad, for his constant inspiration and help. I am beholden to Shri K. Sahaya, Principal, J.S. College, Sikandrabad, for providing me library facilities and to Dr. S.M.L. Mathur, Principal, Swami Shraddhanand College, Delhi for granting me study leave to accomplish my work. Thanks are also due to Dr. R.K. Dhawan of Bhagat Singh College and Dr. Ved Vrat of Swami Shraddhanand College, Delhi, for their practical suggestions from time to time. I take this opportunity to thank my friend, Shri Anand Prakash Mahal, who urged me to take up research work, Shri Kewal Anand, who arranged my meeting with Dr. Mulk Raj Anand, my wife, Mrs. Avinash Gulati, M.A., B.Ed. and my daughter, Vibha, who helped me in a number of ways.

Last but not least, I express my indebtedness to the staff of various libraries I had recourse to. In this context, I should like to mention the following libraries in particular: J.S. College Library, Sikandarabad; Swami Shraddhanand College Library, Delhi University Library, Sahitya Akademi Library, J.N.U. Library, the British Council and the U.S.I.S. Library, Delhi, the Meerut University Library and B.H.U. Library, Varanasi.