In the foregoing chapters we have sought to discover the liberationist outlook or impulse as manifested by both Anand and Achebe in their fictional works. For this purpose we selected six novels of Anand and all the five novels written by Achebe till date. The study has followed a logic and dynamic of its own. After stating the hypothesis or the problem in the first chapter, the study proceeds to examine the different contours of the problem by examining the artistic merits of the novelists and by analysing the techniques and methods by which they strive to achieve a perfect marriage between their political or social creed and literary aims. There is no pretension however that a satisfactory solution to the problem posed is found. But certainly both these writers provide space and scope for a liberationist interpretation and extrapolation in terms of the type of fiction, novelistic techniques and themes. In other words, we are trying to define "litterature engagé" or political or protest novel in the context of today's third world situation. "Commitment" or "Committed Writers" are terms used to connote writers or writings with a social justice thrust. Liberation, being a more comprehensive term, implies commitment. As a consequence, the question of the relationship of art to commitment in the works of Anand and Achebe assumes great
importance. The classical pitfall of propagandism and didacticism is to be consciously avoided by a committed writer if he has to be credible as an artist.

Therefore we have examined both Anand and Achebe and their works of art from these criteria. To start with, we have provided a comprehensive review of almost all the literature available on these writers in the introductory chapter. Scholars both Indian and foreign have written critical commentaries on Anand's novels and merits as a writer. The foreign critics in general are more positive and constructive, although they boldly point out his weaknesses and limitations as a writer. Some Indian scholars and critics display sharper insight into Anand's personality and cultural background and therefore their analyses of individual novels are more revealing, enlightening and enhancing. On the other hand, there are Indian critics who have taken it upon themselves to castigate and lambast Anand by exposing and exaggerating his stylistic deviations and in particular his propagandist slant. However, there have been quite a few champions of Anand who have striven to exculpate Anand of such gross or deliberate propagandism and to defend him against captious critics or overcensorious scholars who have passed strictures on Anand's flaws as a writer. All said and done, Anand's fluency and range as a powerful wielder of the English language, his consistent and earnest pleas for eradication of glaring inequalities, injustices and other social evils in India,
and his all-pervasive commitment stand out. And thus his narrow canvas of characters specially the heroes and even the limited conceptual framework and occasional propagandist forays are liable to be overlooked. His humanism has not degenerated into corny sentimentalism or melodrama, thanks to his intellectual and philosophic formation and convictions. The novels sigled out for compact structure and well-knit plot are Untouchable, Coolie, The Big Heart and Gauri. The last one has been hailed as a fore-runner of feminist fiction in India.

Achebe has had a more favourable and constructive review as compared with Anand. Achebe has been complimented for his range of the English language, the creative variation he is capable of and the manner in which he is able to innovate techniques. He has been hailed as a committed writer who has never sacrificed his art for the sake of his convictions. His dominant theme has been variously described as reconstruction of the Igbo past, as the glorification of the tribe's traditions, conventions and beliefs, as a critique of the misdeeds or the failure of the present day elite leaders to deliver the goods, as an open-ended examination of the tragic consequences of the rapid change of power equations in Africa and as a study of the moral conflict that surfaced in the wake of modernization and westernization. Some critics have been quick to point out that Achebe's attack, albeit subtle, on the white colonialists and their alleged oppression and chicanery is not quite justifiable. It must be
borne in mind that Achebe has time and again affirmed that the colonial past is not one of unrelieved gloom or series of misdeeds. Almost all the critics seem to agree that Achebe’s nostalgic retrospection into the Igbo history, is not prompted by a tendency to romanticize the past but by a desire to transform the present in the light of the past. Achebe’s latest novel Anthills of the Savannah is acclaimed as a pioneering and trail blazing novel that underscores Achebe’s predilection for the subject or theme of power and its various manifestations and constitutes an excellent demonstration of the power of stories and story-telling and their interpretation.

The purpose of this thesis is spelt out at this juncture. It emerges from the various critical studies that Anand advocates, as a remedy to the social and economic ills and evils that afflict Indian society, personal self-awareness, compassion and bhakti and yoga. On the other hand Achebe’s answer to the tragic consequences of colonial intrusion or the catastrophic misrule of the native intelligentsia, is ongoing struggle, self-sacrificing and people-centred leadership of the educated elite.

The specific purpose of this study is stated to be to probe the liberationist interpretation of the themes and stories of the novels of both Anand and Achebe. Both are committed to the cause
of freedom of their countrymen. In other words, they have a political vision. As enlightened thinkers with a well-thought-out Weltanschauung, they are aware of the futility of any reformist approach to transform society. Therefore they hint at a liberationist approach to transform structures. Achebe in his insistence on struggles of the masses animated by an enlightened and committed leadership and Anand in his impassioned plea for sustained impatience, anger and discontent with the status quo on the part of the victims of oppressions, and compassion and love on the part of all.

The abstract of the chapters is furnished at this stage. It is a very brief statement of what is going to be discussed in the proceeding chapters.

Having stated the scope and purpose of the thesis, we go on to furnish the conceptual framework necessary for this study in the second chapter. The key concept of liberation is sought to be contextualized and defined in this chapter. The term liberation, has come to be used largely in the context of social injustice and unjust and oppressive social and political structures. While social justice was, for long, a term that adequately expressed the massive injustice that marked society, it has been found lately in the context of third world, Latin American, African and Asian countries, that liberation is a more comprehensive term that adequately captures the oppressive nature of society and the aspirations for emancipation of the victims.
The term "liberation" posits man as the subject of his own destiny and history.

Liberation as a universal aspiration of all oppressed peoples, has found cultural and literary expression in all third world countries, including India. Indian models of liberation of old were culture specific and confined to particular groups or sections of society such as the higher echelons in caste-hierarchy. Withdrawals to solitude for pursuit of philosophic or religious studies and renunciation of mundane or worldly attachments or pleasures were two such expressions. Today it is the religiousness or the divinely invested messianic power of the poor that holds the key for human liberation. The Marxist theory of societal transformation through class war and the dialectics of historical materialism that trigger it, was a historic landmark that brought under scientific scrutiny earlier models of liberation. "Praxis" as a combination of action for liberation and a relentless criticism of social conditions was defined by Marx. It has found its way into the theology of liberation as propounded by the Latin American thinkers.

Gandhi's concept of non-violence and non-cooperation is another approach to liberation. Nevertheless it suffers from a lack of a global or scientific and realistic analysis of society or understanding of human nature. He had implicit faith in the goodness of individuals and hoped social transformation to emerge from a moral or spiritual conversion. The African liberation
movement is more a cultural reality than a political or economic one. Neo-colonialism or psychological subjugation that the Africans are victims of today, are indicative of how the erstwhile colonial powers try to secure their grip over ex-colonies indirectly. The liberation movement is a reality in different forms in the various African states. The one overriding and dominant mark of these movements is that they are firmly rooted in the African culture and history and aim at restoring pride, respect and dignity to the race, its culture history and heritage.

Attempt is made in the next chapter to situate Mulk Raj Anand and Achebe among the contemporaries of their respective lands. Anand is stated to be one of the pioneers in the world of English fiction in India. Together with R.K.Narayan and Raj Rao, he constitutes the formidable trio who revolutionized Indian writing in English and earned for India a lasting and impregnable place in the domain of English literature, specially of the English novel. Anand however, has the distinction of publishing one of the earliest modern English novels which proved an instant success. His Untouchable was published in the year 1935. While the fictive matrix of Raja Rao is the Indian view of reality as perceived metaphysically, Anand makes the humdrum and prosaic lives and struggles of the rank and file of India's masses the stuff of his plots. R.K. Naryana's fictional interest centres round the psychology and manners of the South Indian middle class gentry as contrasted with the deep compassion exuded by
Anand for the underdogs. While Anand is not a consistent artist Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan are meticulous about details of style, language, structure, plot and characterization.

Mulk Raj Anand is a prolific writer having authored sixteen novels and more than half a dozen volumes of short stories and other non-fictional writings of merit. Although he grew up in Punjab and had his schooling and college studies in India, it should be mentioned that he spent several years in Europe and England mastering the classical works of Western thought, philosophy and history. Thus while he derived his power of observation, desire for novelty and adventure and his compassion for the poor and marginalised from his parents and the Indian cultural milieu, he owed his intellectual sophistication, cosmopolitan outlook and the streak of religious scepticism to his Western academic formation and pursuits.

Anand has moreover been a contemporary of several generations of Indian writers in English. The more popular novelists of the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties have all been his contemporaries and have benefited from his pioneering and experimental novels. Anand has outlasted all of them in a sense and still holds his own as an artist with a definite ideological bias in favour of "the Wretched of the Earth", to use the title of the terrific book of Frantz Fanon.

The high regard which the African writers and readers have for Chinua Achebe is an irrefutable testimony to the almost
unparalleled reputation he enjoys as a novelist. Although he has to his credit only five novels, and some collections of short stories, his impact and extent of influence as a frontline African writer are incredible. After a brilliant career in the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation and as a teacher in American universities, Achebe served a stint as editor of some journals including *Okike*, a Nigerian journal of New Writing. His experiences as the son of a Christian convert with all the privileges and patronage that it implied and conferred and his fairly long stint as an editor and teacher at Universities, eminently fitted and equipped him to be a writer steeped in his culture and passionately attached to his people and their history. He regarded the role of a writer as that of teaching and educating not only the African readers but also the Europeans, to appreciate the wealth of civilization, philosophy, poetry and above all, dignity that their race possessed even before the white men appeared on the scene.

Achebe proceeded to achieve his fictive purpose by evoking in his novels the glorious past, traditions, beliefs, joys and sorrows of his tribe, called the Igbo. However, Achebe has a keen sense of the havoc wrought by the colonial regime and its political, administrative, economic and religious organisation of society oblivious of the people’s traditional system of governing and time-honoured religious practices. The colonizers overran the local cultural manifestations and imposed alien forms of administration, education and religion. This sowed the seed of dislocation, division, dissension and even ultimate collapse.
The novel of disillusionment came into being with Achebe’s and Soyinka’s novels. The rather stereo-typed inward-looking exercise of the earlier novelists or contemporaries was abandoned by Achebe. He was a realist. He did not hesitate to boldly indicate the failures, the mistakes and misrule of the indigenous leaders of independent Nigeria. Achebe’s artistic recreation of the past is not aimed at a nostalgic glorification of all that was old but at proposing an affirmative action for transforming the present. Achebe’s penchant for myths, proverbs and stories, making his presentation more authentic and meaningful is his way of conveying the message that the novel, although a western genre, can and should be effectively transformed by creatively infusing and introducing the local or native cultural flavour. Achebe has certainly created a unique model for a contextualised third world fiction. In his latest novel Anthills of the Savannah he has demonstrated the possibility of new fictional strategies and of widening the scope of the subject matter of novels issuing from African countries.

Both Anand and Achebe have broken new grounds with the art form. The creativity and originality of each of the writers are tremendous. The same can be said of their unflinching commitment to the cause of liberation of the downtrodden. Both have pioneered a new brand of fiction, which takes the poor masses and their struggles seriously and conveys the hope that through conscientization and education of the oppressed masses, societal
transformation could be achieved. The writers become the prophetic voice of change.

From this point we proceed to investigate the presence of liberation motif in Anand's delineation of the protagonists in the third chapter. A fundamental postulate of liberation thinkers is that man, specially the dispossessed and dispossessed man, is the subject of his destiny, history and emancipation. If the poor of the third world are invested with the messianic power, it follows that in novels that claim to mirror the life and struggles of the disadvantaged masses of the third world countries, the protagonists should be projected as champions who spearhead the protest movement. In the case of Anand and Achebe this becomes ineluctable given their avowed social and political persuasion and literary creed. Herein lies a challenge as both these writers have opted to portray, by and large, the simple folks and others destined to be forerunners of the revolution or catalysts of social change.

In this crucial test, both Anand and Achebe have established their credibility and craftsmanship beyond doubt. Anand has created a host of characters full of flesh and blood manifesting scars of the psychological wounds inflicted by centuries of subjugation, subordination and starvation. Bakha, the sweeper-boy-hero of Untouchable, is not just another untouchable scavenger of Punjab. He is drawn on a rather flamboyant scale. He has an insatiable thirst for the joys and
pleasures of life. He likes to dress like the sahibs and smoke a cigarette, the symbol of a higher status according to his fancy. There are occasions when Bakha abandons himself to such flights of fancy. The author obviously juxtaposes such scenes and the most pathetic and profoundly sorrowful experiences of Bakha, the untouchable. In a short span of twenty four hours, Anand has masterfully handled these scenes and explored most adroitly the inner reactions of anger, revulsion and loathing that Bakha experiences. Anand builds up the crescendo of Bakha’s deep-felt-resentment upto the point when he launches into a meditative and discursive interospection. He is determined to discover the reason for his inferiority or his being treated like dirt. It dawns on him that for no fault of his he was born an untouchable. The caste is the ultimate villain. Now it is for him to search for a solution, a viable alternative, be it in Gandhism or in mechanisation or socialism. He is thus presented as a messenger, an ambassador, shall we say, a prophet of a new social order built on equality of castes and races.

The central character of Coolie Munoo, belongs to the Kshatryia caste, but still is hounded by society as he hails from a poverty-stricken family. He is at the mercy of a heartless world. He is presented by Anand as a picaresque hero, of course with a difference. Munoo is no roguish hero, but a victim of circumstances, a waif of a hero whose fortunes fluctuate as he swims along the current. There is a certain streak of fatalism
in the treatment of Munoo’s character, specially as we watch Munoo die of tuberculosis. Nevertheless the satiric pen of Anand has not spared the perpetrators of such kinds of exploitation and subjection. He exposes the basic insecurity, cunning, egotism and inhumanity of all the other characters of this novel, with the only exception of characters such as, Prabha in the Daulatpur phase and Ratan in the Bombay phase. Before Munoo could bring himself to achieve something concrete in his life, his life is being terminated, as if to convey the message of his role as a martyr for the cause of the exploited coolies and labourers.

The protagonist of The Big Heart is Ananta, who is cast by Anand in the role of an evangelist, a man with a mission, a messianic hero. Of course, there are certain contradictions in his life. His liaison with Janki his mistress is a perennial stigma attaching to Ananta. He summons his thathiar brethren to sink their differences and unite in the cause of facing the challenge of mechanisation of the factory. His rhetoric is of no avail as the coppersmiths are divided and are far too immersed in orthodoxy and antiquated beliefs, and superstitions. The paradox of such a hero’s life is poignantly underlined when he dies a violent death assailed by Ralia, in the very act of preventing mindless violence and vandalism. Ananta’s death is a triumph of faith in ongoing struggle for freedom. And the first convert he
makes is Janki who becomes a symbol of new Indian womanhood. She resolves to carry on the fight started by Ananta. The thathiars are stricken by a remorse and guilt that is an expression of their willingness to further promote the cause of liberation.

Achebe’s protagonists are authentic and realistic. They are drawn from real life situations. In fact heroes like Okonkwo of Things Fall Apart, Ezeulu of Arrow of God and Obi of No Longer at Ease bring out the symbiotic relationship of the individuals with the tribal community or clan. The eventual downfall of any one of these characters signals or symbolises the disintegration of the clan. Okonkwo’s characterization is quite complex and rich, making it difficult for us to go to the root of his tragic flaw. Okonkwo’s death is an assertion of some absolute values when relativising values became the hallmark of the clan. The irony in this depiction is unmistakable that the same attitude is a denial of the basic tenet of Igbo reality which finds stability in flexibility and relatedness.

Obi Okonkwo is the grandson of Okonkwo and is the protagonist in NLAE. Achebe presents him as an idealist whose moral determination is no match for his moral consciousness. He fails when the chips are down and is framed for taking bribe and declared guilty. Achebe, while not absolving Obi of his moral culpability, does, however, attenuate his guilt by pointing a
finger at his village leaders, his parents, who prevented him from marrying an "Osu" and the whole political system transplanted by the colonial masters that engendered corruption and moral depravity.

Ezeulu of AOG is also an interesting character. Achebe has bestowed on him a dual personality as the priest of Ulu, the god of the clan. He is human and divine. Therefore his role and functions, though monotonous, become quite involved and problematic in the context of the clan's tie up with its religious rituals and practices. The god Ulu's hold over the clan as much as over the high priest, is unparalleled. The conflict in the life of Ezeulu consists in his loyalty to Ulu and his commitment to his clan. He commits several mistakes as he becomes overtly conscious of his power and position. Thus he becomes a victim of his own excessive power-consciousness. The power of the people in liberative praxis is effectively brought out. The people's power or the grassroot struggle holds, in the final analysis, the key to success of all liberation struggles.

In Anthills of the Savannah Achebe has no single hero but a number of them. He has tried out a new technique in characterization and narrative pattern. The ruling trio of Sam, Ikem and Chris holds the centre stage in the first half of the novel. Even so, it is difficult to pinpoint one of them as
the principal character. Achebe has employed multiple narrative technique, thus not allowing any one person to hold the reins of power for too long. In the second phase of the novel, it is the women who hold the fort. Achebe has turned this novel into a vehicle for defining and clarifying his political ideology, specially for spelling out his perceptions of the functions of power. Decentrering and pluralism seem to be Achebe’s two dominant impulses in the novel. Similarly Beatrice and the women take on the mantle of leadership and the role of narrators. The naming ceremony of Elewa’s daughter is a modern christening ritual shorn of all the conventions surrounding it. It is the beginning of a new order. It is a recreation and regeneration. The role played by Beatrice in the story and plot is crucial. She seems to tie up all the different strands and kinds of approaches and link the new synthesis to the lives of the struggling masses. Beatrice becomes the sign of the new African woman and signifies the beginning of a new era of women’s liberation. Ikem and Chris, in their own way, are forerunners of the movement or new alliance for a people-centred and culturally-rooted politics.

Both Anand and Achebe use the main characters as their spokespersons. Sometimes this degenerates into preaching or sermonising. But it should be added that the didactic vein is more in evidence in Anand than in Achebe. The latter uses subtle devices to communicate his strong views and critiques. His satiric or ironic mode of writing veils his authorial voice or
presence in most novels. While Anand's characters get stunted or truncated in growth as a consequence of his frequent intrusions, Achebe's protagonists are allowed to grow organically. Thus Anand's treatment of protagonists and other characters is marred by ideological biases. Achebe's treatment is realistic and within limits of authorial intervention or presence.

In chapter five, an attempt is made to examine the novels of Anand and Achebe from the perspective of tradition versus modernity. This question has exercised the minds of sociologists ever since modernity became a reality with the advent of industrialisation, science and technology. As far as India and Nigeria are concerned, it was the colonial encounter that firmly planted modernity in the native soil. Thus modern outlook, views, attitudes, approaches associated with science and technology and western civilization have become a challenge to native traditions and local culture. The dichotomy in this way of thinking is obvious. Nevertheless the problem is real and needs to be faced squarely.

The novel as a literary genre came to India and Nigeria as a byproduct of colonialism. And it is a proven fact that colonial writers have evinced an extraordinary interest in exposing and depicting the vast disparities between the two opposite cultures and systems and the sad consequences of this historic confrontation. The novels of Anand and Achebe closely resemble the social process that they seek to describe. And in
fact the novel assumes greater vigour and verve as it becomes, in the hands of the novelists, an instrument for expressing the inner dynamics and contradictions apparent or hidden in social structures or social relationships. We are reminded of Goldmann's concept of "homology of structures".

Anand and Achebe present the conflict that took place when the alien cultural, political, economic and religious structures came face to face with their native counterpart. The term tradition signifies the latter and the term modernity is used to denote the former. While this is a recurring theme or motif in most of the novels of Anand and Achebe, they have addressed this problem more explicitly and powerfully in some novels than in the others. This motif is seen to be part of the liberation dynamics of any colonised country. The post-colonial reality of any third world country is marked by the consequences of this conflict. Thus the resolution of this conflict becomes a must for such countries. Anand treats this in a convincing manner in his The Big Heart. Ananta the protagonist is Anand's own alter ego in so far as the former professes a pragmatic approach to mechanisation and modernity and virtually lays down his life in the cause of promoting the spirit of modernism. Through Ananta's frequent harangues and the rhetorical exercises of Puran Singh Bhagat, Anand has powerfully projected the importance and inevitability of the machines and exposed the shortsightedness and myopic approach of those who blindly adhere to time-honoured and
outmoded beliefs. The Iron Mongers bazar and bazar Kaserian are certain symbols of the new and old world views respectively. Moreover Anand has meticulously painted the Billimaran Lane where most of the action of the novel is set. The choice of symbols of ancient times and modern spirit that dot the lane at both ends is evidently Anand's strategy to underline the conflictual but ineluctable nature of such a situation. Anand has not extolled everything that is old or obsolete, but has advised moderation while following the path of modernity and progressivism. His philosophy as verbalised by Ananta is that machines are necessary, but we must master the machines and above all we need a big heart. Ananta's violent death is, in fact, turned into a martyr's sacrificial offering on the altar of human solidarity. Notwithstanding Ananta's "scandalous" cohabitation with janki, he is elevated as a model of such heroic living. In otherwords, Anand's apotheosis of Ananta and Janki is his fictive tribute paid to all forms of struggle based on self-effacement and self-giving without counting the cost or minding the wounds.

As a strategy for struggle geared to liberation Anand perceptively points out a few indispensable ingredients. While a radical structural approach to social injustice and disparities is ideal it must go hand in hand with a practical down-to-earth concern for the immediate material needs of the underprivileged. He condemns the attitude that compartmentalises these two related aspects of the liberationist struggle. Ananta fails as he is
unable to concretely translate his high ideals and good intentions in terms of actions here and now. High sounding radical rhetoric alone cannot satisfy the hunger of the masses. The hunger for ultimate freedom cannot be satisfied without feeding their physical hunger. The second ingredient of a liberation struggle according to Anand is the need for complementarity. The presence of the poet Puran Singh Bhagat is Anand’s assertion of the need for an ideologue, a visionary, a prophet in a programme for liberation. Ananta stands for grit and determination, conviction and action. The poet articulates, clarifies and encourages. Both the types of people are necessary if a struggle has to succeed in India. The role of the enlightened and educated individuals in a democratic country like ours cannot be overemphasised.

In Gauri Anand has highlighted this problem, albeit in an indirect or, implicit manner. Although the protagonist Gauri is cast in the mould of a conformist, tradition-bound, self-effacing rural girl and wife, there is a dramatic change towards the end of the novel. Her sufferings and humiliations have mellowed her and facilitated her maturation. But the real exposure to modern values and habits occurs in the hospital of Dr. Mahindra and thanks to his example and efforts. There is a sharp contrast between the Gauri that meekly accepts her unhappy married life with Panchi and her being sold to a rich merchant and the Gauri of the last pages who stages a walk out on her
husband who refuses to acknowledge her fidelity or regard her changed modes of thinking and behaving as indicative of her personal growth as a working woman. Anand condemns the habit of mudslinging and character assassination so rampant in Indian society, as detrimental to the cause of liberation. In this novel Dr. Mahindra becomes the spokesperson of Anand for expounding his humanistic philosophy. Mahindra proposes the antidote to fear and recommends a fearless and indomitable spirit. Gauri carves out for herself a path and follows it with devotion and conviction, whatever the maligning tongues of her kith and kin may pronounce. She becomes the subject of her destiny. She is the model of the new woman as perceived and represented by Anand. Gauri is as much a creature of traditions as a product of modern ethos and values. She is a symbol of the integration of the traditional spirit and the modern scientific or rational temper. For Anand, adherence to truth, sincerity and human values is as important as scientific and rational outlook, if Indian society should march towards progress and emancipation.

Achebe's fictional matrix is the colourful and glorious Igbo past and culture. His first novels depict the tribal society in its pristine beauty and simplicity, thus setting the stage for the eventual catastrophe brought about by the onset of the values, administration, political, economic and religious structures of the British. Nevertheless more than in his *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, Achebe addresses the problem
of tradition versus modernity in his *No Longer at Ease*. The central character Obi Okonkwo has the stuff in him for a modern tragic hero. In fact his discomfiture is announced at the beginning of the novel as he is convicted of corruption. It is a severe blow to the ego not only of Obi but of the entire village community that expects much from him. But Obi’s failure or tragedy is the result of the convergence of many extraneous factors and his own lack of will. His indebtedness as a result of his yielding to pressures and demands both real and imaginary, becomes unbearable and therefore he resorts to the unethical practice of accepting bribes. Obi’s perversion is only the symbol of the general moral corruption and decadence that rocks the whole of Nigeria. Achebe reproves the moral depravity of the people of Umuofia and in a subtle manner attributes the responsibility for Obi’s failure to the corrupt ethos and decadent milieu and his parent for repudiating Clara just because she belongs to the outcast group known as Osu. Achebe exposes the hypocrisy and double-standard of Obi’s parents and village people and the lack of grit on the part of Obi.

Obi’s tragedy underlines the uneasy situation that prevails in Nigeria in the wake of colonial confrontation. On the other hand Achebe doesn’t fail to point out the woeful lack of awareness on the part of the Nigerians who still cling to some
traditional beliefs, practices and prejudices. While blaming the present moral crisis on the white man's subterfuges and imperialist arrogance, Achebe finds the acquisitiveness and greed of the people quite reprehensible and unacceptable. While not approving of Obi's moral deviations, Achebe provides hints to show that he sympathises with the young, educated, elite leaders like Obi who are caught in a bind, a dilemma wrought by the historic clash of two opposite cultures and societies. While Anand becomes on occasions didactic and preachy in achieving his artistic end, Achebe does it by means of subtle devices of characterization, plot and structures and narrative techniques. Achebe maintains a rational and emotional distance from the story and action of the novel that makes its message credible.

From an examination of how the theme of "tradition versus modernity" is expressed in the novels of Anand and Achebe, we proceeded to investigate in the next chapter another important issue in the whole gamut of liberation, and that is, "Class War and Caste Politics". Class war obviously recalls the Marxian dialectics of how class war will eventually yield or lead to a classless society, the withering of the state, and stateless socialism. Thus we are faced with the most serious modern problem of exploitation that make the poor poorer and the rich richer. It is peculiarly capitalistic problem and one that has
been sharpened and made more contentious in the third world countries after the imposition of colonial rules. The gap already existing between the haves and the havenots began to widen as the British introduced commerce and trade based on mere profit-seeking and cut-throat competition.

It is this aspect of Indian economy that Anand explores in his novels specially in Coolie, The Big Heart and Two Leaves and a Bud. Munoo the central character of Coolie and Gangu the main character of Two Leaves and a Bud are both kshatriyas the second highest in caste hierarchy and still are exploited because they come from an indigent background. They both are coolies who sell their labour for making a livelihood. Money is the main objective or goal of all their hard labour and inhuman sufferings at the hands of their employers.

Munoo is barely past his childhood and the experience he goes through in order to eke out an existence are beyond, the pale of even an adult labourer. He is driven from place to place, ill-treated, poorly paid and finally becomes a victim of a wasting disease and dies. Exploitation is written large in his life and predicament as the system he is trapped in, mercilessly saps his life, energy, enthusiasm and idealism. He is a mere puppet in the capitalist system and is buffeted by all anti-worker and anti-human forces. Nevertheless Munoo cherishes an unquenchable thirst for the good things of life, for love and friendship. In the last stages of his life he desires to rejoin Ratan in Bombay to work for his trade union.
Anand's Gangu in *Two Leaves and a Bud* is another exploited hero, a victim of circumstances and the glib talk and fraudulent promises of brokers. He is drafted like thousands of other labourers into the Assam tea-gardens. He like his other fellow-labourers, is a classic case of bonded labourers whose chances of liberation are remote and virtually nil. Anand's sympathies are quite obvious as he portrays the inhumanity of the British overlords who are out to fleece the workers and enhance the profit for the empire. The portrayal of some of the British characters, specially the one of Reggie Hunt, the assistant planter, is, though exaggerated, Anand's perception of the cruelty and inhumanity of the system. Gangu nearly lost his daughter as a victim of Reggie Hunt's lust, watched his wife succumb to cholera and fell victim to Reggie Hunt's rage. Anand's portrayal which is grim, is also a vehement plea for the subverting of the system so that the working class will not only get adequate wages but will eventually come in possession of the means of production.

The *Big Heart* is another novel where Anand has addressed the question of class struggle and its subtle relationship to caste. The thathiars are traditional coppersmiths. The starting of a large scale factory hits their business badly. Ananta stands for a rational approach to the machines while a bulk of the thathiars oppose the move. Murli Dhar, who has joined the
factory management as a partner, tries to form a new alliance with the upper class kinsmen and ignores his poor kinsfolks and treats them with contempt. The latter however teach him a lesson by boycotting his sons's betrothal and thus causing him embarrassment in front of his business partners. Class may eventually triumph over caste. Nevertheless Anand seems to assert that caste as a reality has come to stay and may not be easily obliterated. Anand, however, advocates a moderate and rational approach to mechanisation and industrialisation without trampling, in the process, human values of unity, solidarity, compassion, equality, brotherhood and justice. The title of the novel "The Big Heart" is Ananta’s oft-repeated refrain and encapsulates Anand’s version of humanness and humanism.

Achebe’s fictional world does not allow of treatment pertaining to class or caste. The tribal society was a cohesive one and the problem that is directly addressed by Achebe is the unsettling effect of the colonial presence and domination on the traditional society. In this process, very seldom does Achebe dwell on class reality and obviously never on caste, as it is not a reality in African society. Nevertheless he does allude to the emergence of trade and business based on cash in Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God. He does not develop this idea at length except in No Longer at Ease and A Man of the People. In a slightly varied manner he treats class conflict in Anthills of
the Savannah. In these three novels the class character of the relationships prevailing between the principal characters is clearly brought out. The conflict between them is more often than not reducible to money competition and profit making. One common denominator of the presence of capitalist form of economy is the ubiquitous presence of corruption. In No Longer at Ease, it is corruption of Obi that spells his disaster and throws up questions regarding the system whose product and victim Obi happens to be. Corruption in high places is being studied in A Man of the People, where the chief Nanga is a personification of corruption. The powerful influence of corruption is projected by Achebe as he points out that even Odili's father or his great comrade Max is not free from this virus. Achebe effectively presents the moral degradation and erosion of values that are the logical corollary of the capitalistic mode of production and business centred on profit-making and self-seeking. The ruling triumvirate of Kangan in Anthills of the Savannah gets divided on account of warring perceptions on the nature of the state and of governance. The radical element and protest spearheaded by Chris and Ikem cost them their lives, but not before igniting the revolutionary spark in Beatrice, a well-placed and educated woman. She and her other companions vow to continue the struggle. Achebe subtly points to the dictator's subservience to foreign manipulations and neocolonial mentality.
Achebe's analysis of the tragic consequences of the introduction of the capitalist mode of production and trade is a perspicacious commentary on the ethical crisis and political instability that are the order of the day in independent Nigeria. He regrets that values of sharing, giving, equality and brotherhood that were part of their heritage have been lost in the aftermath of colonization.

Anand has dwelt on the problem or the social evil of caste in a profound manner in his Untouchable, The Road and The Big Heart. Bakha the protagonist of Untouchable and Bhikhu the central character of The Road are both sweeper boys, the lowest among the untouchables. Casteism and untouchability are depicted in their worst and most despicable forms in Untouchable. Bakha is a type of the sweeper caste but is possessed of a keen sense of his own lowliness and the impossibility of his breaking out of this rut. The conflict is portrayed powerfully as Bakha goes through the motions of his daily chores of sweeping and cleaning and begging his food. The climax occurs when he touches a Brahmin unwittingly and he is made a laughing stock of all. This incident however, opens his eyes to the injustice and sinfulness of the system of caste hierarchy and untouchability. Bakha's spark of revolt is smothered by the futility of his rage and protest. Nevertheless Anand offers him three different alternatives, that of Gandhi, that of Jesus and that of the poet proposing a scientific and
modern solution to this vexatious question. Anand’s own solution probably lies in a combination of all the three alternatives. Of course his scientific, historical and comprehensive humanism is his answer to the social evil of casteism and untouchability.

Anand probes the psychological hang-ups and fears that operate in the minds of the high caste Hindus and the untouchables in their inter-relationships in his novel *The Road*. As the title implies there are government-sponsored programmes and activities that help the low caste or the so-called scheduled caste people to ameliorate their lot economically. Now they can work and earn money. This has given them independence. Economic freedom from their traditional caste masters is a boon to them if they are prepared to work out their own course of action. Anand uncovers the hypocrisy and double standards involved in the high caste Hindu’s attitude to Bhikhu the central character who leads the road-building operation and the other untouchables. He asserts the so-called caste dharma often proclaimed by Pandit Suraj Mani and Thakur Singh. Anand also takes up the cudgel against the chamars who wilt under pressure from the high caste leaders. They are defeated by their own sense of inadequacy and inferiority. Dhooli Singh is a very credible creation of Anand and represents Anand’s vision of transforming the caste-ridden society into an egalitarian one.

Anand completes his analysis of caste and casteism by exposing in *The Big Heart* yet another aspect of the class-caste
equation. The richer thathiars represented by Murlidhar and his coterie are trying to dissociate themselves from their caste by forming a new class alliance with Gokul Chand, a kasera. Economic prosperity enables some to move upwardly and in the process to declass themselves and join the ranks of a rich dominant class. Anand might be putting forth his hope that class formation and flexibility may be one way of liquidating the caste hierarchy or at least casteism in Indian society. But it will be a long and arduous road for the untouchables to shake off the stigma and enter the heaven of equality and brotherhood built on human dignity and personhood.

Achebe has not addressed himself explicitly to caste or casteism in any of his novels simply because caste is non-existent in Africa in the form or in the virulent degree that it is present in India. The only instance of discrimination that we find is in *No Longer at Ease* where the parents and village people stoutly object to Obi marrying Clara, as she is an Osu which signifies her belonging to a slave community or an outcaste group among the Igbos. Achebe is highly critical of this discriminator attitude and tradition among the Igbos and disapproves Obi's repudiation of the girl.

Both Anand and Achebe are not obscurantists. They believe in the full and regulated spread of the scientific and technological culture. Education as a means of widespread
conscientization is advocated by them. What is essential is the right mixture of the modern spirit or modern scientific values and the old human values. Person should be at the heart of any programme of liberation.

If liberation has, as its objective, the installation of the human person at the centre of world reality and as the subject of his own destiny, it follows that the woman, as his equal partner cannot be ignored. In fact women's liberation or feminism has today won tremendous prestige amidst social scientists, educationists, social reformers and literary artists. Hence, it becomes imperative to examine Anand and Achebe and their writings from the feminist perspective.

Anand has created a number of women characters. But most of them are cast in the conventional mould of housewife-mother. Only in Gauri we come across a woman known by the same name, who flouts all conventional female roles and norms and commences a life of her own. She determines her own future and courageously walks out on her husband who is a personification of feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and fear of blame. Panchi, the husband of Gauri fails to resonate with an awakened Gauri. Hence, Gauri decides to leave him and shape her life and that of her child whom she is carrying. This novel is a powerful indictment of the heartlessness and lack of understanding of menfolk while dealing with women.
Achebe examines this question in *Anthills of the Savannah*, while laying bare the different nuances and contours of power and power relationships in the polity. Achebe makes women, the successors to the legacy of liberative struggles. Beatrice is the lone survivor, having imbibed the spirit and daring of Ikem and Chris who have died as martyrs of the cause. The feminine element so essential and intrinsic a part of all human activities is being emphasised by Achebe once the men quit the scene. Beatrice, Elewa and other men and women enact the christening ceremony of the child of Elewa, a traditionally male prerogative in the tribal dispensation. The stage is set in a mythical and apocalyptic fashion for the liberation struggle to be carried on. Here is the biblical remnant seized with a profound sense of the urgency of the cause and deeply linked to the past in the living memories of Chris and Ikem. Achebe has masterfully interwoven myriad strands drawn from history, mythology, culture, language, literature, politics and society to fashion this novel which both expresses an ideology and is its product and ends on a certain note of hope, wiping out all the sorrowful and gloomy events of the story.

While Anand’s humanistic concern for the woman stops at revolt and defiance at the personal and domestic levels Achebe’s perspective on women prefers a larger stage or arena wherein the main actors will be women spearheading the struggle, possessed of
a clear-cut agenda for liberation. While women like Gauri are not easy to come by, the fire that is kindled in them can catch and ignite more women in a similar travail or predicament. Probably Anand sustains such a hope for womankind and society as a whole. Achebe leaves no doubt about his intention and objective of making women play a crucial role in the drama of human liberation.

Having examined the perspective of liberation from various angles in the works of Anand and Achebe, we proceeded in the penultimate chapter to tackle the very problematic question of the relationship between art and commitment. It is quite appropriate and in a way essential that this question was faced, as "commitment" can justifiably and meaningfully be applied to the writings of both Anand and Achebe. From a critical analysis of selected novels of Achebe and Anand, it emerges that they both are committed writers with a definite purpose and goal, working within a well thought-out ideological framework. While affirming that there is no doubt at all about the commitment of Anand and Achebe, it, however, remains to be established that their commitment to a cause, in this case, the cause of liberation of the peoples, does not in any way mar their artistic integrity. In other words, it has to be shown that both Anand and Achebe remain faithful to the logic, inner dynamics and basic principles of the art they are working with. As novelists, they are bound
by certain laws of the art or genre they are engaged upon. Hence it is expected that they strike a balance or the golden mean between their ideological convictions or ideas or felt-experiences and the form through which these are expressed.

Art-commitment controversy is as old as literature. From Horace, Plato and Aristotle down to many British writers including Spenser and Johnson have all spelt out the aim of literature in terms of effecting a moral or intellectual or behavioural change in the human person. The Romantics and the Victorians wrote with a passionate attachment to a vision, political or social or spiritual. Dickens was certainly a trend-setter in realistic portrayal of social realities. The political novel of the Victorian Age was probably an offshoot of this trend. The aesthetic doctrine of art for art’s sake was also a product of this age.

The Marxian approach to literature was based on mode of production which in turn conditions the social, political and intellectual life. Marx averred that it was necessary to change the world and therefore proposed a critical framework with which to analyse reality. Jean-Paul Sartre made a vehement plea for engaged or committed literature (litterature engage’). For Sartre, freedom is the only subject of writing for any writer and this freedom or liberation has to be specific, appropriate to a particular context or situation.
There has been a controversy as to whether a committed writer or a political writer is, by the very fact, a propagandist. This confusion has to be clarified or else it will have far-reaching consequences in respect of writers like Anand and Achebe. The criticism that a committed writer always has an ideological viewpoint which he tries to impose on an uninitiated or unwary reader, is false and seems to be politically motivated. Instead, one needs to frame the question this way. "Is not a wholly uncommitted art a contradiction in terms?". Thus commitment is viewed as a moral need, not to be equated with propaganda. If this is propaganda, then we are going to have it always and in all committed or engaged writing. Nevertheless it is possible and important that a good artist avoids the impression of being propagandist.

As an artificial separation of politics from human life is at the bottom of this dichotomy, it may be useful to trace the historical evolution of this relationship from Aristotle down. Neither the ancient Greeks nor even Marx propounded any dichotomy between politics or society and literature. And still they upheld the autonomy of a work of art.

I.A. Richards has written extensively on this question. He has asserted that the manner of saying the truth is crucial in any art form. T.S. Eliot has expressed a profound insight when he suggested that the content of a work of art and its form are closely related to each other and that this relationship is
mutually enriching and transforming. Hence, Eliot saw no disjunction and much less contradiction between art and commitment.

Thus it becomes intelligible to us that any third world writer worth his name should be a committed writer. And this commitment, to be real and meaningful, we may infer, has to reflect the reality of poverty, illiteracy the gap between the rich and the poor, exploitation and oppression, both colonial and neocolonial. The works of Anand and Achebe need to be investigated against this background. Of course, Anand has come under heavy flak from critics within the country and occasionally from abroad for being overtly propagandist. There are however more objective scholars and critics who have held a brief for Anand and exonerated him by pointing out that Anand is genuinely searching for fictional forms that will suit his social impulses or desire images. He has succeeded in finding the right form to a large extent. Nevertheless it should be conceded that by and large in Anand the form is always subservient to the content.

It should however be said in Anand's favour that out of the works that we have examined in this study, Untouchable, Coolie and The Big Heart are superb creations of his artistic pen, fired by a creative mind and powerful imagination of a rare quality. His novelistic techniques are quite variegated. He tries the stream of consciousness and psychological probing of the
minds of characters in *Untouchable* and *Coolie*. It should be conceded that Anand, more than any Indian novelist, has successfully employed this technique and in a sense has improved upon it by adapting it to the peculiar cultural variables of India. He has moreover made use of the interior monologue rather effectively in order to circumvent the much too obvious aberration of the authorial intrusion, a defect commonly found in Anand’s novels.

Anand’s technique of expressing the general or the universal through the experiences or reflections of a single character like Munoo in *Coolie*, Bakha in *Untouchable* or even Ananta in *The Big Heart*, Gauri in *The Old Woman and the Cow* speaks volumes for his artistic temper and commitment. Anand is capable of adapting his language and style to suit the mode and tone of the narrative or story. His artistic detachment from the story or plot or the characters in some of his novels is worthy of commendation. His objectivity in these novels is praiseworthy. It is true that the endings of *Coolie* and *Untouchable* are not in keeping with the tenor of the action and plot of the novel and perhaps it is Anand’s artistic faux pas. Nevertheless, it has a legitimacy of its own, viewed within the larger reality of helplessness and hopelessness that the present situation of mass poverty and exploitation consistently projects. The prophetic dimension underpinning such situations could have been effectively tapped by Anand for rallying and mobilising all liberationist forces of the world.
Achebe has time and again proclaimed his commitment to the cause of exposing the tragic consequences of the colonial encounter and of educating the masses of his people and the colonial countries to perceive the beauty and grandeur of the tribal society and culture. He has styled himself as a protest writer, a teacher and an educationist. His technique of doing this is by reconstructing the Igbo past and analysing the present colonial and postcolonial reality in the light of the past. He is neither a blind romanticizer of the past nor a jaundiced critic of the activities of the colonizers. He is able to command a respectable distance from the events portrayed or action or the characters of his novels. While one senses the author’s pervasive presence in his novels, it is the greatest merit of Achebe that his characters are life-like and credible, his situations realistic and plots extremely well constructed and architectonic.

His use of the folklore and folk-traditions, stories, tales, songs and proverbs, is a marvellous achievement on the part of Achebe the masterful artist. These provide a framework to Achebe for expressing reality. They in fact afford answers to certain practical questions. These stories or tales invariably convey a moral. Achebe has pioneered the skilful use of the folk song in the narrative, that heightens the evocative power and sometimes the suspense and pathos of the action. Achebe's range
of language, variation of style, adaption of different modes suited to the particular theme, his characterization and craftmanship are all points that go to make up his profile as an artist and a novelist. His early novels Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God and No Longer at Ease show forth his power for nostalgic reconstruction of the past in an effort to contrast it with the havoc wrought by the colonial intrusion. A man of the People is a fictional presentation of the disillusionment that gripped the people after the native elite took over the reins of government in the aftermath of independence. His latest novel Anthills of the Savannah is an artistic landmark in Achebe’s career as a novelist in that he has successfully experimented with new techniques and a new novel form. While maintaining his realistic tenor and the satirical mode, Achebe introduces a mythical mode in order to show the need for multilateral power. He has discovered a multiple narrative scheme that shifts the focus of action on different individual leaders. Change of leadership or multiple leadership style is in other words a decenring of power. Achebe’s form in this novel enhances the power of the narrative and transforms the content even as the content provides shape and thrust to the form. In other words, there is a dialectical relationship between the form of the novel and the content emphasising the dialectics that should underlie the
relationship between the leaders among themselves and the leaders and the masses. It is an absorbing novel that brings out the power struggle and the tussle between power equations and power centres in the new Nigerian political dispensation. The unique feature of this novel is Achebe's portrayal of the crucial role women have to or can play in liberation struggles. He has moreover underscored the vital and indispensable relationship between story-telling and people.

In short, Achebe believes in the distinction of art into pure art and applied art and qualifies his as applied art. While being quite clear that there is no dichotomy between art and political commitment, he insists on the educative and regenerative values of any art, specially of writing. Nevertheless it is meritorious on Achebe's part to have achieved a near total correlation between form and content, a perfect unison between art and commitment.

While the same cannot be said of Anand's record as a novelist, he has certainly been a trail-blazer and pioneer with the teething problems associated with such a task. While some of his novels are perfect pieces of art, he has not been consistent in this commitment to the novel as an art form. His social, political and moral convictions get the better of his aesthetic or artistic impulse on occasions. This tendency has flawed or vitiated not only his language and style but also the action, plot and characterization of some of his otherwise well-conceived novels.
POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The foregoing study had the burden of examining the liberationist potential or thrust in Anand and Achebe as novelists of the third world. The underlying assumption in this study was that the perspective of liberation should permeate the stories and themes of a third world novelist who professes commitment to the people whose lives and struggles, he claims to portray. It was therefore a search or investigation based on the hypothesis that liberation or people's perspective should colour the approaches, content, texture and message of such novels. As a result of a deep study, analysis and interpretation of select novels of Anand and Achebe, it has been possible for us to discover elements of liberative urge, sentiments, themes, vision, approaches, outlook and pedagogy in both the authors. In other words, the commitment of these two writers as novelists has redoubtably established their works as pertaining to the realm of liberation of people as a whole, from subjugation, slavery and oppression of all kinds. Now the onus is on us to make projections for future research possibilities. We shall examine this possibility keeping the paradigms created by Anand and Achebe in mind.

In Anand the subject matter or the fictional matrix is almost always the life and fortunes of the under-privileged working classes, the untouchables or women. These people make up
the fictional world of Anand. He hardly ever describes the reality of an alien or foreign world. He has carried on, with a crusader's zeal, the fight for making the underdog in society, the eccentrics and the marginalised, the central characters and subject matter of his stories. He has succeeded after a game and relentless struggle to give legitimacy to the admission of such characters into the elite society of the fictional world. Thus the problems, concerns, aspirations, alienations and disabilities at all levels experienced by the under-privileged masses become the very substance of his novels. Anand makes even children heroes of his novels. Thus the stigma attached to such people in the world of letters specially in the novel, has been removed. They have been, in one sense, liberated by Anand from the alienation or marginalisation committed on them by novelists with a bourgeois bent or class orientation.

Achebe too has emphatically established the relevance and importance of making the African society, African people's cultural, social and political reality the subject matter of fiction in Africa. He has not only proclaimed it as an ineluctable option for all writers, but has also created successful models in his novels.

The objection of sameness, staleness or monotony can be obviated by the fact the both Achebe and Anand have created a whole gamut of stories and themes and have not suffered from a
dearth of material. It should be remembered that there are numerous writers in various Indian languages, who, like Premchand in Hindi, Jeyakantan in Tamil, and Thakazhi Sivasankaran in Malayalam, have espoused the cause of the downtrodden and have used the lives and problems of these people as the raw material for their novels with unprecedented successes and readers' response.

Given the fact that there are quite a few novelists in various Indian languages who are "Committed" in the sense Anand and Achebe are, it should be fascinating to make a comparative study of Anand and any other Indian novelist writing in an Indian language. Such an investigation is bound to yield rare and precious insights that will enrich reading of such novelists and provide new avenues and areas to critics and comparatists.

Both Anand and Achebe have demonstrated not only the possibility, but the inevitability and necessity of depicting or portraying characters who represent the larger reality of suffering, deprivation and alienation as it exists in one's country. The novelists should however guard against the pitfall of becoming stereotypical or monotonous in characterization. Novelistic techniques have to be adapted or innovated according to the demands of the existential situation enacted and the plot of the novel. Anand and Achebe have quite successfully done it.
If there is a specific area for further research, it is the novelist's ability to make an absorbing story out of the humdrum existential struggle of the oppressed masses. The works of Achebe and Anand could be further explored from this perspective. In other words the relative innovative and creative potential of these writers could be assessed and compared with the novelists of other Indian languages. Moreover it may be legitimate to expect that any relevant third world fiction should reflect realistically the existential angst and struggles of the marginalised sections. To judge the relevance of a novel or a novelist from this critical standpoint becomes necessary in the context of the universal phenomenon of liberation movements in the countries of the third world.

In Achebe the folk elements, particularly folktales, proverbs and myths find a place in the story quite naturally performing a specific function in the narrative and in the structure of the novel. A special mention should be made of Achebe's use of folktales in TFA and AOG as paradigmatic. Sometimes these tales serve a multiple purpose of revealing the hidden conflict of a character, of teaching a universal moral principle to one and all and of throwing light on the central conflict or message or theme of the novel.

Anand has established a unique novelistic technique of investing a novel with the qualities of a fable, of a folktale. His Untouchable and Coolie read like tales and their structure
has all the ingredients of a fairy tale. This explains why these novels have perennial appeal, to both young and old, to Indians and foreigners.

A critical study of Achebe’s and Anand’s use of national cultural symbols such as folk tales, stories, songs, rituals, beliefs, myths or puranas in their novels can by itself constitute a veritable research subject. There is a difference in the manner both Achebe and Anand exploit this rich cultural heritage for making their novels more rooted and appealing as liberative tools. Achebe’s model in this regard is highly original and variegated. Indian or African novels can become at once charming and educative if the cultural aspect is enriched by incorporation of elements from national or racial repertoire of folklore and myths or puranas and proverbs. This cultural dimension of a novel should be interwoven into the very structure and fabric of the work.

It may be appropriate to note here that the folk character of the form of the novel or in other words, the mass cultural forms or techniques are different from the transmuted or imitated western form or techniques. Such a practice will be in itself an affirmation of the culture and traditions of the masses. It is by means of the magnificent array of oral traditions that Achebe has infused a special quality into the texture and fabric of his
narrative. As a result of this a blurring of all cultural, racial and geographic dividing lines occurs and the message is driven home powerfully.

The novel is a popular and powerful medium with a universal appeal. Depending on the personal vision and creed of the third world novelist, it can either become a vehicle for conveying personal experiences or for communication of knowledge to a western audience. It should be conceded that in the masterly hands of Achebe the novel has become a potent vehicle of self-expression, that is, for expressing his perception and his people's perception of their collective identity, consciousness, aspirations, frustrations, past glories, traditions, successes and failures. Anand too has demonstrated this dimension of fiction with his relentless portrayals of the underprivileged masses of our country. In other words Achebe’s ideal of a writer being a teacher or Anand's objective of a writer being the fiery voice of the people becomes a critical yardstick for assessing the worth of "committed" third world writers. The committed artists are fearless in voicing the injustice and inequity of the contemporary reality, be it colonial or neocolonial. The writers, who have the western readers in view, may find it legitimate to temporize or compromise.

Another fruitful area of further investigation may be a comparative study of Anand and Achebe using Marxism or Gandhism as the focal point. In as much as these two historical
phenomena have influenced and shaped Indian and African thought-patterns, attitudes and practices, in one way or another, it will be a valid starting point for a fruitful research work. Needless to say that Gandhi and his teachings played a crucial role in reorienting Anand’s ideology in favour of the poor of India. And it is not difficult to discover Marxist overtones in Anand’s fury and fulmination against exploitation and inequalities. Explicit references to his knowledge of Marxian approaches, pedagogy and categories abound in his non-fictional writings. Achebe, like many other African writers, should have come under the influence of Gandhi at some time in his life. It may be more difficult to discern Marxian influence in Achebe’s passionate plea for change of socio-political and economic structures and his vehement outcry against colonial plunder and inhuman attitudes towards the Africans.

The novel as the most flexible literary genre lends itself to multiple manipulations, as demonstrated by Anand and Achebe each in his own peculiar, personal and typical fashion. Such a novel has a dual role of entertaining and instructing at the same time. The novelist has the unenviable task of combining the role of a committed pedagogue and that of an artist. In other words he is faced with the paradox of producing a fictional work that constitutes a veritable photograph of the social dynamics and structural mechanics that form the human drama that will determine the ultimate shape of human civilization and the destiny of the nations.