

An Archetypal Reading of the Antihero in Tagore's *The Home and the World* and Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*

By

R. Sreedevi

(13PEN015)

A thesis submitted to

Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education

for Women, Coimbatore – 641 043

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

Master's Degree in English

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God loves me when I sing. God respects me when I work,

- *Rabindranath Tagore*

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Chapter I

Introduction

The very words we use are a product of collective history.

- Ngugi WaThiong'o (qtd. in Kumar 86)

Literature is a gateway to the mirror image of the world, providing replica of every human being. The literary creations are a matchless combination of memoirs and human imagination. They are known for their subjectivity and have arrested human emotions which are being retained all throughout these years across various cultures and languages of the world. The stories and the characters keep the readers entertained, thrilled, instructed, refined and well informed about all the probable circumstances.

For instance, the most enjoyable story that has retained its reputation is the fairytale of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, which is of Russian origin. It lacks contemporary relevance, however, conveys messages which are scattered throughout the narrative. John Middleton Murry in his essay, "Literature and Science", refers a letter from his friend, who says, "that 'the sceptre has passed from literature to science.'" On the contrary, Murry, as a man of letters himself, observes that "he should use such a very literary phrase to express his triumph" (91).

The human images, which readers come across in literary arena, could be related to people whom they come across in their everyday life. The literary specimens teach the readers how to think vivaciously and at the same time, progressively. For instance, no man would likely consider the words of a person who acts sheepishly and foolishly. On the contrary, who must have already felt the significance of clown characters in literature, and have been amused by it, would think over the statements of everyone whom they

come across, instead of deliberately annoying at them. In the play, *King Lear*, it is Fool who envisions the perils that would occur in future, followed by the absurd decisions of King Lear and advocates him:

Mark it, nuncle:—
 Have more than thou showest,
 Speak less than thou knowest,
 Lend less than thou owest,
 Ride more than thou goest,
 Learn more than thou trowest,
 Set less than thou throwest;
 Leave thy drink and thy whore,
 And keep in-a-door,
 And thou shalt have more
 Than two tens to a score. (1.4.129-30)

If the above context serves as the best advice for fathers, then for sons, who are yet to establish themselves as budding generation, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* renders all the cues. In the play, Hamlet's father King Polonius counsels his son, who is about to travel abroad:

Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
 Be thou familiar but by no means vulgar.
 Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
 Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel,
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
 Bear 't that th' opposèd may beware of thee.
 Give every man thy ear but few thy voice.
 Take each man's censure but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 ...
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all: to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. (1.3.109-10)

The above counsel is not only for the son of King Polonius, neither confined to the subjects of his kingdom, nor ends up with the boundary of continental Europe, but for the every son of earth. Literature, thus, like the Principles of Newton, is versatile and universal in every aspect.

The first disobedience in literature followed by the practise of plain verse is the adoption of fictional writings. It follows no principle and inculcates other genres whenever necessary that can be even dramatic or poetic or a mixture of both. It can be either subjective or objective. Excluding all deliberate principles, fiction is the most convenient form to express trivial aspects, for G. K. Chesterton comments suitably,

“Literature is a luxury; fiction is a necessity” (Goodreads.com). The trivialities, in turn, are minute details to furnish the beauty of long narratives.

Unlike the fictional world of the English language, Indian Writing in English dates back nearly one and a half centuries, for the first novel written by an Indian was published in the year 1864. Indian Writings in English, however, do not hold the collective conscience of native ancestors. Indian fictions records the period when India Struggle for Independence began to unite the nation with patriotism and with hatred towards the imperial rule of the British. However, the English had to make their way out of the sub-continent; they have already sown the seeds of their language that had the efficiency to survive by all means.

The historical compilations of the happenings and the objective expressions of news dailies do not narrate the incidents in a convulsive manner. On the contrary, the recordings of Indian fictions in English enable the readers to comprehend the nature of problems in contemporary India. The fictions narrate what was a particular problem in India, how it had been in the years succeeded, and its nature in the current scenario.

For instance, Tagore discusses about Hindu-Muslim riot, from which the readers can trace the unaltered backdrop of the then society. Kushwanth Singh’s Partition Novels represent the innocent victims of the political scene, for he puts the naked truth in an expressive manner in his novel, *Train to Pakistan*, “The fact is, both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped” (*Train to Pakistan*) It was published in the year 1956, and Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* set in the partition backdrop, in which he brings about significant events to embody the state of struggle – “Every word I write about those events of 1964 is the product of a struggle

with silence” (240). Followed by these iconic writers of Indian Fiction in English, the same problem of Hindu-Muslim riot, which has now become entirely politics, and is dealt in Chetan Bhagat’s *The Three Mistakes of My Life*. From these instances, it is obvious that literature is a storehouse of history and emotive expressions – that makes two extreme ends meet at one point.

The consolidation of the features of Indian Fiction written in English would be incomplete if it does not include the names of the iconic writers and their works. Ranging from Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s pioneering work *Rajmohan’s Wife* to the very recently published novel, *Last Man in Tower* by Aravind Adiga are a collection and reflection of various social upheavals as well as its equanimities. R. K. Narayan is one among the great iconic writers in India, writing in English. His novels explore the private world of individuals and depict the lives of common men and women.

Feminist writings have a crucial portion, not only in literature but also in the society. Its significance is elevated by M. P. Khatri in his essay, “Modern Indian Feminism: Transformation Yet on the Offing”, in which he observes, “Modern Indian feminist ideology covers a wide range of variety. It displays the acute understanding of Indian social, cultural and economic hurdles faced by the female world. It also pinpoints their search for self-fulfilment” (239). Feminist writers like Anita Desai, Arunthathi Roy, Shashi Deshpande, are notable personalities in contemporary writing. They have been presenting the status of Indian women in a compact frame in different dimensions. Not mentioning Kamala Dass here would be an injustice, as she has given a handful of works a generation before, if not novels, her autobiography, *My Story*, remains as a source to explore women’s psyche.

K. Sachidanandan in “Relocating *My Story*” comments on Kamala Dass’ expressions as, “I cannot think of any other Indian autobiography that so honestly captures a woman’s inner life in all its sad solitude, its desperate longing for real love and its desire for transcendence, its tumult of colours and its turbulent poetry” (xviii). It is not only about a particular woman belonging to a confined space and time, but also embodying the psychology of any woman, aching for love and care. Writers who wish to comment upon the transition of society and its effects on women take up the stand, similar to that of Bharati Mukherjee’s, which depict ‘the unresolved dilemmas of a modern woman.’ Nayantara Sahgal is yet another significant novelist, whose works are daringly political, especially, *A Situation in Delhi*.

The literature of Diasporas, since the last two decades of Twentieth century has been an attracting factor for its “cultural theories of nation, race and identity” (9), as mentioned by the editorial team P. Shailaja and T. Vinotha of *The Expatriate Indian Writing in English*. The ‘Expatriate Indian writing in English’ has attracted readers across the world, for it replicates the actualities of human lives out of the native soil. Indians living in various countries across the world is the major reason for the expatriate writings’ show on international stage. A wide variety of themes are dealt in these writings: “National Identity and Belonging”, “Heteroglossia”, “The Image of contemporary India”, “Representation of Childhood”, and “Gender Spaces” are some of them.

Rabindranath Tagore was an outstanding multifaceted personality, who had also been a Social Samaritan. Dr. J. Manjula gives the most suitable definition for a, “Social Samaritan,” in her work *The Dawn*. She says that a Social Samaritan is one who

“commits himself before God and works for the welfare of his fellow beings, such social reform done, without expecting anything in return will make him emerge as a selfless worker of humanity” (11). There is a saying and perception that “Jack of all trades” could be “master of none”, but Tagore is someone who had proved it wrong. He was a musician has produced many musical dramas on his own. Tagore was also a crucial essayist who had written on nation’s sensibility during his time; his “Nationalism in India” is a significant contribution. He is the major critic who had contributed to *Modern Indian Aesthetics* like Sri Aurobindo.

Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta (now Kolkatta) in the year 1861. The multilingual writer wrote widely in his native tongue Bengali and in English. The Brahmo community in which he had born had taught him the principle of oneness and remained as the significant contribution to his ways of being. The experiences chiselled his thoughts that he gained when he had been to study in East Sussex, located at south-east England. Tagore is one among the men who had maintained delicate balance in acquiring the worldly ideals, meanwhile neglecting the atrocity of traditional conventions and conclusive in retaining the absolute goodness of Indian humanitarian aspects.

Tagore was both, a rationalist and a spiritual person. His ambivalent nature could be witnessed in many of his works that instructed the masses of Bengal through his noble spiritual qualities, his synthesis of East and West and so on. He had his first drama-opera, *Valmiki Pratibha* (1881), written in the age of twenty. It was translated from Bengali into English which was entitled as, *The Genius of Valmiki*. He wrote several plays across various years, they are: *The Sacrifice*, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Post Office*, *The Immovable*, *The Waterfall* and *Red Oleanders*.

Rabindranath Tagore was a great poet of his times. He had the vision of future India, and so, he is rightly called as sage rather than simply poet. Tagore is more popular as a poet than as a writer of other genres. It was perhaps evident in his achievement in receiving the prestigious Nobel Prize award for *Gitanjali*, a collection of song offerings to the Lord Almighty. All of Tagore's ideas and idealistic principles are embedded in his works. They are not scattered but converge in a consistent manner to represent his ambivalent attitude towards traditional and modern aspects, spiritual tendencies and nationalistic principles – with which he brought synthesis between the East and the West. His works present significant episodes to portray the lives of the *sudras* (the outcastes) and peasants who have always been poor. In other words, his greatest song offerings are not only for the God but also to the poor children of Bengal. Tagore reflects in *Gitanjali*:

HERE is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and
lowliest, and lost.

...

My heart can never find its way to where thou keepest company
with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost. (21-
22)

Tagore has written eight novels and four novellas. The process of developing them into novels is clearly visible in Tagore's stream of producing fictional works. His short stories were transformed into serials and then consolidated into novels. Almost, each one of his novels follows the same pattern. All of his novels were written originally in Bengali and were translated into English across various years. The most prominent

translators of his novels and novellas were: Krishna Kripalini, W. W. Pearson, Surendranath Tagore and Ashok Mitra.

Binodini was the first major novel written by Rabindranath Tagore and its translated version in English was published in the year 1959. The novel is as significant as his *The Home and the World* to explore the psyche and position of womanhood in 20th century Bengal, for the novel's plot has been woven around the title character, a young widow. G. V. Raj embellishes his critical essay on Tagore's second novel *The Wreck* – “*The Wreck: Hermeneutics of Marital Sanctity*” – by quoting other influential critics of Tagore's times, “Edward Thompson makes the perceptive comment that *The Wreck* ‘shows how the Hindu family relationships are based not on human feelings but on conventional respect and worship’” (64). *Gora, Chaturanga, Farewell My Friend, Two Sisters, The Garden, Four Chapters* are the other novels that collectively embody Rabindranath's dualistic approach towards various aspects of life.

The novelist effortlessly brings the difference between his writing styles on writing poetry and prose. He tunes his expressions by taking the audience in account. The prose style used by Tagore is appropriate to present the everyday chores of his characters. Anita Desai reflects the observation in her terms, “Whenever Tagore writes of the common people of his beloved land, the Bengal countryside, the prose takes on a simplicity and directness absent from his account of the aristocratic protagonists” (59). Similarly, Sisir Kumar Ghose in his work on Tagore's writings, *Makers of Indian Literature: Rabindranath Tagore*, says:

The romantic touches, never wholly absent from Rabindranath, come from his rapport with the beauty and mystery in Nature as well as a subtle

psychological reality deeply rooted in social, family and individual life. It is possible, even desirable, to see the novels as part of changing social history, roughly from the 19th century to the 20th century, an individual straining at bourgeois ethics. (70)

Tagore as a writer did not only record the changes that had been occurring in the society, but also denoted a lingering strain of individual(s) voice(s). This altogether resembles the process in recording the ‘developmental psychology’ in responding to things that one comes across and against various experiences. The writings of Tagore which were considered as modern then are now a chronology of classical expressions. As years advance, the thought processes of individuals eventually change. Literary works reflect social changes and enable the future generation to trace out the transitions. This openly contributes to realize the state of individuals’ condition in the current scenario and identify whether their thought process is really a progressive one or regressive one.

The remarks of Ashis Nandy on Tagore’s *The Home and the World* in his essay “The Fear of Nationalism”, contribute to a better understanding of the author’s intensions. He says, “Tagore provides a slightly more nuanced approach to the interconnected problems of violence, anti-imperialism and nationalism (16).” Some critics, while estimating *The Home and the World*, have asserted that it could not acclaim a worthy critical reception for the novel itself is an insignificant one. Anita Desai brings Georg Lukacs’ condemnation towards the novel in her introduction to Rabindranath Tagore’s *The Home and the World*. He asserts that the novel to be a mere replica of a middle class society that consider money, work and social position are important; and it is also loosely constructed by its author. He further comments on Tagore, “He survives

by drawing the scraps from *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgita* into his works amid the sluggish flow of his own tediousness” (qtd. In Desai 54).

The perceptions of Indian critics vary on different scale from that of George Lukacs. Many critics, who have understood the context in a better manner, assert that one should understand *Upanishads* in order to understand Tagore. The novel is not a mere replica of middle class society but an image that pictures the collective conscious of the whole lot of people in India, who were living the dream of Nationalism. It is reflected in Jawaharlal Nehru’s autobiography, through which the readers can see him as an individual, rather than perceiving him as a national leader or the first and former Prime Minister of India:

As I grew up and became engaged in activities which I promised to lead to India’s freedom, I became obsessed with the thought of India. What was this India that possessed me and beckoned to me continually urging me to action so that we might realize some vague but deeply-felt desire of our hearts? The initial urge came to me, I suppose, through pride, both individual and national, and the desire, common to all men, to resist another’s domination and have freedom to live the life of our choice. It seemed monstrous to me that a great country like India with a rich and immemorial past, should be bound hand and foot to a far-away island which imposed its will upon her. It was still more monstrous that this forcible union had resulted in poverty and degradation beyond measure. That was the reason enough for me and for others to act (Nehru 40).

P. C. Pradhan in his essay “The Pilgrimage of Siddhartha: A Quest for Truth, Vision and Wisdom”, remarks, “It is really very difficult on our part to comprehend the basic objectives of such an immanent universe which seems to be incomprehensible and mysterious (57).” Any research cannot address the basic problem and trace for a solution. There are innumerable problems as similar to that of nature’s vast design. The studies done systematically and scholarly are not alone considered to be researches. On the whole, any sort of an outcome that speaks about a current issue could be considered as researches and the person who throws light to the issues are not merely writers but researchers.

Chetan Bhagat is one among the research writers, whose writings speak about the problems of current scenario. However, the critics could not function as critics for they could not apply the dogma of scattered literary theories against his works that are very light reads. Shakespeare’s works were once called out to be light reads, but even up to this day there have been innumerable studies done on his works and his ways of writing. On the whole, his literary productions are significant for documenting the collective conscious of the contemporary society.

Chetan Bhagat was born in Delhi in the year 1974 into a typical Indian family that considers only education can be the salvation. His father was an officer in Indian Army and his mother was a government employee. His wife has been his moral support whenever he had to strive on working towards his aspirations. He quitted his banking career to take up fulltime writing. He delivers speeches to the audience of corporate sectors, educational institutions. He is also a popular figure among media houses. His speeches keep covering the topics those he discusses in his non-fictional work – *What*

Young India Wants. The book is the compilation of the selected essays and columns, for he has been a columnist in the reputed newspapers of India: The Times of India and Hindustan Times. His novels have been made into films and he has also been working as a screenplay writer.

Bhagat's life, until he became a writer, is itself an archetype to learn about the life of a typical Indian who has fallen for the expectations of the society that concentrate on the materialistic aspects of modern world. He is the author of six nation's bestselling novels. His first novel is *Five Point Someone* in which he speaks about *What Not To Do At IIT*. This novel brought a new spectrum of expressions which are secluded under a simple narrative and honest assertions. His novels, *One Night @ the Call Center*; *The 3 Mistakes of my life*; *2 States: The Story of My Marriage*; *Revolution 2020: Love. Corruption. Ambition*; and *Half Girlfriend*, also takes up the same form of structure and diction. Commercially his novels have acquired a great success and evidently, *The New York Times* credited him to be "The Biggest-selling English-language novelist in India's history" (*Revolution 2020*). He has attracted a whole lot of youngsters in India because of the same reason.

Chetan Bhagat not only presents the stance of younger generation but also the negative aspects of what they do. The author yet remains as the young readers' favourite because he does not present the adversities merely as complaints and corner them but genuinely honest. The author adopting genuine confessions, as Kamala Das once did, and arriving at the point to give a message to his society makes the readers to realize where they stand. However, fears over such expressions are certainly associated with the

positive influences about to be created which are dual in nature. Thus, there is a lot of reliability in terms of readers' point of view rather than that of the author's.

Revolution 2020 shares some of the pursuits in its vision, "What is good for the nation, for now?" (*What Young India Wants*). The story also embodies a triangular love story woven among the characters Aarti, Gopal and Raghav. As in his other novels he reflects the state of young generation of India more appropriately than any other author has done so far. In a nutshell, in the words of the author, the story is all about "Gopal, Raghav and Aarti who struggle to find success, love and happiness in Varanasi. However, it is not easy to attain these in an unfair society that rewards the corrupt. As Gopal gives in to the system; and Raghav fights it, who will win?" (R2020). Thus the author embodies the quests of the individuals in this society for whom the centre of attraction is a combination of success, love and happiness.

The Home and the World gives rise to diverging thoughts and proclamations about human society that was in existence during the initial score of twentieth century Bengal. Tagore gives meticulous details about human psychologies that are the representations of different realms. Santosh Chakrabarthy brings the author's insight in various aspects that are scattered but merge to form a societal basis. In discussing Tagore and his *The Home and the World*, he frames his essay, "Patriarchy, Feminist Thought and Tagore's Heroines", with the images of women figures represented Tagore's novels. Bimala's character in Tagore's society was unwelcomed even by his women readers, claiming that she stands nowhere near the ideal women of Indian society. However, her character is designed as a tool to instruct and warn the womanhood against the perils of hedonistic society that tries to exploit the homeward bound individuals like Bimala.

The Imperial attitude of British against Indians and the Nationalistic attitude against it, form the backdrop of *The Home and the World*. The proclamation of the Partition of Bengal (1905), under the governorship of Lord Curzon smashed Hindu-Muslim unity. The novel is not only a warning to the innocent women of his society but also carried the message of harmony to his fellowmen who were stirred with political usurpations. Santosh Chakrabarthy traces the political documentation in the novel, for Tagore's, "*The Home and the World* is an important document enshrining his warning against the danger of communalism" (41). Tapan Kumar Ghosh, with respect to social views, represents "*The Home and the World*" as "A Voice of Sanity against Fanaticism and Violence". He substantiates in his study that, "Much before Gandhi, Tagore realized the importance of society in Indian politics..." (188).

JaspalKaur Singh makes a comparative study between E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* and Tagore's *The Home and the World*. He concentrates on "Homoeroticism and the Construction of Alterity", in which he brings his stance to explain Tagore's anglophilia and Forster's indophilia. Kaur also throws light upon, "How Forster's and Tagore's politics function to exploit and resist colonial desire and ideologies of hypermasculinity in Britain's territorial expansion is read variously by Western critics according to their own agendas..." (117). It is the most essential aspect to study Tagore that renders insight to further "interrogate the limits and boundaries of our assumptions" (qtd. In Kaur 117).

There are numerous objective studies made by applying the scattered critical theories of literature and beyond them all, the motives of the author in compiling his thoughts to produce a literary product are essential. Mohit K. Ray's translation of

Tagore's reply to a lady, who questioned on the purpose of *The Home and the World*, renders a clear critical view on the work in his, "Tagore on *GhareBaire*: Aesthetics in Command". The letter was published in *Sabujpatra*, which carries Tagore's answer-cum-defence. He explains about his sole purpose in writing the novel, his "Literary Judgement" (95), and his "Patriotism" (98). The answers of Tagore falsify the presuppositions of the readers that such unconventional instances explained in the novel are not a part of everyday happenings in a conservative Hindu family. Ray patronises Tagore's controversial literary product by saying:

If some highly educated critic could say, either in verse or prose, that it is not proper for Ravana to kidnap Sita, that it is unreasonable for Manthara to be jealous of Rama or it is impossible for Surpanakha to fall in love with Lakshmana then the great poet (Valmiki), even if he were present in the court of justice would have kept silent, because these are literary topics worth discussing in literary circles. (100)

The novel *Revolution 2020* by Chetan Bhagat does not trace back to any historical significance. However, critically, the influences of these writings shall be examined to analyse the contemporary relevance. Beena Agarwal in her study, "Shifting Paradigms of Human Condition in InfoTech Society: Examining *Revolution 2020*", discusses about "the risk society, the global era, the information society and the post-industrial hyper-modernity" (205). Meanwhile, his novels are also crucial to explore familial relationships in the current scenario.

Gorantla Charles interrogates the "Ethics of Sex, Marriage and Morality" in one of his novels *Revolution 2020*. The literary form of Bhagat's writings is comparatively

very light, including the diction and so on. Similar perceptions on the subject matter conceived by his works, proves that his work is entirely against conventionalism. He makes not only the genre very simple but also the image of the hero, who need not strive to be the best, unlike the conventional heroes carrying the burden of ethics on their shoulders.

The aim of the present study is to scrutinise the antiheroes in two widely read novels which represent two different times. The works selected for the analysis of the archetypal antihero are: *The Home and the world* (1916) by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), and *Revolution 2020: Love. Corruption. Ambition.* (2011) by ChetanBhagat (c1974). This scrutiny of antiheroes is done in the light of archetypal criticism. This criticism amalgamates human sciences, social sciences and humanities and enables critique to enter the arena with practical approach. The same notion is illustrated by Bruce W. Young in his article, “Mythic and Archetypal Criticism”:

Rather than dividing the world into subject and object, human and non-human, and trying to impose a rigid set of rational concepts on reality (as the more sterile, incomplete modern view supposedly does), the mythic view respects reality’s primal unity. Even if they do not accept this view of myth wholesale, most modern literary critics are willing to acknowledge that non-rational elements – myth, archetype, and symbol – play an important role in endowing literature with meaning and power.
(*Weebly.com*)

Francis Bacon in his essay, “Of Truth”, recommends the requirement of two contradictory elements to make a perfect mixture, “And that Mixture of Falsehood, is like

Allay in Coyne of Gold and Silver; which make the Metall worke the better” (3). If the mixture is required for best results, then it should be in ideal proportion. Likewise, this inevitable mixture of good and evil has to be in right proportion to bring the best in a human being. At present, the need of the hour is to become conscious of the imbalance and set the right ratio which will bring a better change.

The present study titled, “An Archetypal Reading of Antihero in Tagore’s *The Home and the World* and Chetan Bhagat’s *Revolution 2020*” is divided into 5 chapters. The first chapter includes a very brief survey of Indian novelists with special and elaborate reference to Tagore and Chetan Bhagat. It also supplies with a comprehensive review of literature on Tagore’s *The Home and the World* and Bhagat’s *Revolution 2020* alongside thesis statement and objective of the study. The second chapter deals with the epitome of antihero, whose characteristic crux is explained with archetypal basis. As K. Panjagam rightly quotes Sigmund Freud in the analytical text, “An Archetypal Approach to Sirpi’s Poems”, that “Myths are ancient human race’s dreams” (224).

In the following chapters – third and fourth – the characteristic traits those embody Sandip and Gopal as antiheroes are analysed. The concepts of various disciplines, whose functions are seen significant in archetypal approach, project them as archetypal figures of collective human consciousness. The fifth chapter draws conclusions in conjunction with recommendations and suggestions with contemporary relevance. The dislocation of man’s centrifugal actions forms the major concern of the study, which is the core of an antihero’s self.

Chapter II

The Antiheroic Image through Archetypal Lens

Cleanth Brooks in his introduction to *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* by Northrop Frye observes, “The ultimate difficulty of archetypal criticism is that it cannot tell us the difference between a good work and a bad, since an inferior novel, for example, may on occasion make use of the richest archetypal material and yet remain an inferior piece of art” (173).

Brooks’ vision, in turn, is a positive aspect that helps critics to focus only on the literary products irrespective of their success or reputation. The archetypal criticism had been at its peak from 1940s to mid-1960s. Several new thoughts and theories to analyse literature and other disciplines of human sciences have sprouted during “the naughtynineties” of nineteenth century (Prasad 226). Innovations made in the course of time have thrown light upon the existed mysteries revolving around human existence. Rick Wallach in his essay, “On the limits of Archetypal Criticism” palpably traces the origin of the archetypal theory and practise, “Archetypal theory is one of several neoplatonic doctrines born of late nineteenth-century science’s mounting by European scholars interested in their Indo-Aryan mythological inheritance” (133).

Many critics adopt archetypal approach in order to explore literary genres widely. Man’s intense curiosity to know and wonder about himself has brought archetypal analysis and antihero as the centre of attractions. This adds weight to human’s anthropocentric attitude. Archetypal approach to literature is one among the practices that feed man’s curiosity in exploring the varieties of human personalities. These personalities

which are identical or contradictory or ambivalent inspire the critics to explore the common self of someone who ranks as the hero.

For instance, *Sons and Lovers* by D. H. Lawrence is the most repeatedly analysed work of literature next to *Oedipus Rex*, which has been cited to bring out the antiheroic aspects of the male protagonist, Paul Morel. The work certainly paves way for such explorations because of Lawrence's representation of a common man as a hero, who stands far away from the doctrinal ideal hero of early epics.

The term, 'Archetypal Criticism' has entered into literature for the first time with Swiss Psychologist, Carl Jung. Although, he initiated the practice of criticism with archetypal approach as a tool, the idea was already in existence among the former critics of literature. Lauriat Lane Jr. in his essay, "The Literary Archetype: Some Reconsiderations," explains the existing view on archetypal criticism since the time of Samuel Johnson. He also gives the essential applications in the field of criticism in terms of archetypal approach. The reconsiderations are made in order to present the appropriate view point and as an attempt to resolve the possible misconceptions revolving around archetypal criticism.

Lauriat ascertains that in the process of extracting an archetypal image, Carl Jung's advocacy on human psychologies plays a prominent role in almost every critical conception. He remarks, "Jung's psychology is continually on the point of becoming philosophy..." (228). Lauriat's study on the influential perceptions and applications of other critics – Samuel Johnson, Charles Lamb, Gilbert Murray, Carl Jung, Maud Bodkin and Northrop Frye – which makes his presentation rich and informative. After reassessing the above prominent inputs to archetypal criticism, in the concluding part of

his article, Lauriat states five significant aspects. According to him, the five aspects should be fulfilled in the final step of exploring a literary work with archetypal approach. The obtained archetype must satisfy the following requirements, which estimate the quality of the critique's product: "relative universality in time and space", "a traditional basis in literature and / or pre-literature", "innate significance of form and content", "subconscious elements in author, work, and reader", "an emotional intensity at the moment of awareness" (231, 232).

The set of vicious as well as virtuous component is left as "psychic residue" which is explained in the article, "Archetypal Criticism" as "a permanent deposit in the mind of an experience that has been constantly repeated for many generations" (Weebly.com). This shows that any specific characteristic trait that has occurred in the past, as well as that are yet to occur in the future would not be a novel creation. The fictional characters are either inspired consciously or unconsciously by the existing 'psychic residues' in plethora across various cultures and societies. In order to trace out the universal recurring characters, archetypal critics appropriately focus on the characters that are being depicted in folklores. Jane Garry and Hasan El-Shamy gather patterns of recurring characters in folklore and literature, from which all basic human traits can be extracted.

The recurring characters range from creators, gods, demigods, mythical animals, dreadful creatures, and men who are varied in their characteristic traits: cleverness, foolishness, wistfulness, deceptiveness, courageousness, generosity, and so on. The literary roles are generally created with one or collective characteristic traits that are observed in the patterns. With respect to the specific feature the characters are known for their major functions in the literary products, such as, 'valour for hero', 'cowardice for

common man', 'cunningness for villain', 'generosity for good old wise men', etc. The literary products are given much importance for the fact that these hold the mirror against the societal and cultural epithets.

Accordingly, the archetypal criticism is appropriate to analyse the antihero in literature for it traces out the existence of epitomes in the real world. Although, this criticism penetrates the world of literature in the mid of twentieth century, the archetypes have been existing from time immemorial. For instance, Lord Rama, in *Ramayana*, kills Vali, the despotic brother of Sukreevan, by hiding in an orchard. It was then considered to be vicious and this attitude is out of a hero's streamline. On the other hand, Vali is himself a hero who is gifted with supreme power. Likewise, Ravana can also be considered as an ideal person and as a hero. He has been the staunchest devotee of Lord Shiva and he has received boons from Lord Brahma. Further, he has been an excellent musician. Music had then been considered as not an art form or an element of entertainment, but considered to be a medium to connect with divine existence. A person with all his masculinity with which he attained great heights in his life meets his fatal end brought by his flaw. If he had been not an antagonist in *Ramayana*, he would have been a protagonist and with his flaw he would have been an antihero in his unwritten epic.

The image of an antihero is not ideal but represents the psyche of a common man. Man has had always dual nature in perceiving things and reacting to them. An individual who lacks idealism of hero is antihero. The essence of ambivalence of modern antihero can be contradictorily understood by considering against a consistent heroic character from preceding ancient epics. Karna, similar to Arjuna, is a significant character in the great Hindu epic of *Mahabharata*. However, both Karna and Arjuna are known for their

matchless innate heroic tendencies, specifically the former is known for his noble quality of charity and the latter for his archery. Karna, as a part of his charity, not only gives alms but even his *kavasam* (a covering over his chest with which he has born and remained as a protection until he has willingly removed it), even being aware of that he can be killed easily without the protection. Karna resists all the ups and downs throughout his life and Emerson in his essay, “Heroism”, puts such malleable heroic trait in the most appropriate manner, “The characteristic of heroism is its persistency.”

The genesis of the archetypal antihero in Indian Literature is crucial to be examined at this point of time in order to justify the fact that the epitome of the antiheroic traits exist even from primordial ages. Although, the novels are written in English language, these speak about the psyches of men who are natives to the Indian Subcontinent. It is observed that in *Bhagavadgita* (the Holy Scripture for those who follow Hinduism), ‘Lord Sri Krishna’ helps Arjuna to win over the battle between Pandavas and Kauravas held in ‘Kurukshetra’, the war field. Arjuna is one among the five sons of King Pandu who ruled Hastinapura. Arjuna is the leading character for Sri Krishna’s concern falls on him and his every move. Although, Arjuna is the most influential heroes of all times in Hindu Epics and literature, he also possesses the basic tenets of a human by being jealous. Anuja Chandramouli speaks about the complex self of Arjuna in narrating *Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince*, “Arjuna’s single-minded determination to master the warlike arts has been seen on many occasions. But in his pursuit of excellence he could also display a ruthlessness that was dangerous as it spurred him to destroy any obstacle that stood in his way, even if it was made of flesh, blood, and has feelings” (41).

An antihero is unreliable for he is ambivalent in nature. His actions are not confined to any doctrines. Above all, he is restless. His necessities are unfulfilled, his quench for something is furious. He yearns for something that would do to satisfy him. The reason that an antihero is highly essential for the writers is that readers can easily associate themselves with the leading role. The increased moral complexity and rejection of traditional values by the individuals across various cultures is the major concept behind the wide acceptance of antihero, the imperfect hero. Man wants to establish himself as individualistic, yet his inner self searches for recognition; recognition for every trivial thing. He neglects the support of his surroundings but in order to bring his visionary and creation onto the real world. His ways grow drastically bold when he and his ways are appreciated and recognised by society.

Examples can be cited across world literatures for individuals, who try to justify their actions with reliable reasons. This behaviour of mankind has sought asylum in rationalism. In modern and postmodern times, men do not merely justify their errors attributing to their ignorance and innocence, instead, they dare to acknowledge even for the greatest sin they commit. The actions of heroes had to be justified because they were never wanted to be recognised themselves gross, moreover, noble intrapersonal acceptance was given much importance in early literature. Man becomes an antihero when he turns against his self. In due course of time, his inner transition is explicitly witnessed by his surroundings.

The survivors of the era of modernism and aftermath modernism serve as archetypes for typical antiheroes. This is revealed through anti-humanist movements evolved that are tinged with socio-cultural and political affairs aftermath times of World

Wars. The movement of existentialism that portrays man at a helpless situation, and the beliefs like the death of hope and the death of God are well stated illustrations for antiheroism.

According to Christian myth, the God Himself descends to human race as a Supreme Power in the image of a Noble Hero. The Supreme Hero, when he comes to know about Lucifer's coveted self and about his army, He does not tend to abolish them, instead, He throws Lucifer and his followers out of the Heaven. This shows that good exists because there is evil on the other side.

In terms of antihero, who falters from all the ideal foundations of ancient mythologies, across various cultures, nevertheless, dissatisfies the epithet of a hero in taking things for granted. He does not strike a chord between good and evil but either abolishes evil to stabilise the good or remains passive against the evil. In carrying out such an act, an antihero cannot create the ideal image for having destroying the evil entirely, which is uncertain according to the oddities of human existence.

The psychological ventures explained by Northrop Frye give a clear vision on the evolution of antihero. Rita Gurung in her introduction to *The Archetypal Antihero in Postmodern Fiction* appropriately quotes from Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, who classifies the hero into the following categories:

- If superior in kind both to other men and to the environment of other men, the hero is a divine being.
- If superior in degree to other men and to his environment, he is a typical hero of the romance.

- If superior in degree to the other men but not to his natural environment, the hero is a leader.
- If superior neither to other men nor to his environment, the hero is one of us. This is the hero of the low mimetic mode, of most comedies and realistic fiction.
- If inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves, so that we have a sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration and absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode. (7)

The above classification does not merely distinguish the types of heroes that literature has witnessed so far, but shows the shift from idealized heroism to ironic antiheroism. Scientific determinism of late nineteenth century demystified the origin of species, especially of the human species, around which innumerable beliefs revolve from the time immemorial. It was the time when man has to count upon him as a true descendent of nature itself. The age has witnessed influential writers and interpreters like George Bernard Shaw, of whom the author of *An Introduction to English Criticism*, Prasad quotes aptly from A. C. Wards' *Twentieth Century Literature*, "Question! Examine! Test! These were the watch words of his creed" (227). Eurocentric view, in turn, ascribes to the superiority of white complexion and paved way for racial discrimination. Man's biased views do not end with his consideration of having himself as the most superior being, he also creates variation among his species, and this discrepancy is the crux of antiheroism.

Another major trait of an antihero is human's attitude to remain sophisticated without being bothered by any other object. This tendency is termed as the principle of

hedonism and it forms the core of human beings' basic attitude from time to time, especially, in the postmodern society. Terry Eagleton encompasses the definition for hedonism in his work. He elaborates on Freudian psychoanalytic principles in his essay *Psychoanalysis*, "Rightly or wrongly, Freudian theory regards the fundamental motivation of all human behaviour as the avoidance of pain and the gaining of pleasure; it is a form of what is philosophically known as hedonism" (166). If hedonism is a common trait of a common man in the postmodern era, whose image is similar to that of literary antihero, then he contrasts the self-sacrificing quality of an ideal hero.

The portrayal of a hero is up to the author and his ideas about heroic tendencies. Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, "Heroism" points out that author's "natural taste for what is manly and daring in character" plays a significant role in shaping a hero. The ideas are confined to the age and society to which the writers belong. Similarly, the critical theories have much to lay at the socio-cultural circumstances. During the period, when new thoughts and theories began to overflow, scientists and thinkers tried to bring everything in unison. Many attempts were made in same line and archetypal theory is one among such innovations.

The examples for antiheroic traits are found in abundance in *Mahabharata* which is a reservoir of archetypes. Nirmala Devi in her doctoral thesis, *Fiction as Confluence of Myth, History and Culture: A critical Study of the Creative World of ShashiTharoor*, says, *Mahabharata* "is the fountainhead storehouse of all knowledge and what is not in the *Mahabharata* is nowhere to be found" (69). Karna embodies heroic traits comparatively higher than that of Arjuna's. However, he is not considered to be an apt equivalent to compete with Arjuna for Karnais brought up as the son of a charioteer.

It is palpable that the character of a valorous warrior was then measured suitable quality of a hero. Yet, there were many other features accompanied the quality of a hero, some of them were determined right from the birth. This suggests that the epic hero was then chosen out of estimating the sociological, anthropological, historical, and religious backgrounds which altogether determines the psychological being. On the contrary, an antihero is someone for whom “we do not limit the term hero to its epic connotation. Instead, we use the term to mean a male protagonist—the male lead in a dramatic work,” as Tami D Cowden perceives in his work, *The Complete Writer’s Guide to Heroes and Heroines: Sixteen Master Archetypes*.

The nature of the heroic figure receives a difference nuance in different ages and in different cultures. For instance, no common man is allowed to carry even a small piece of weapon even for defensive purpose due to security reasons dictated in democratic doctrines and is considered to be an offence according to the universal law. However, a *Sikh* (a member of a religion called *Sikhism* that developed in Punjab in the late fifteenth century and is based on a belief that there is only one God) must carry a small sword everywhere he goes. For this act of having the sword all the time, his own sect consider him as a common man among them, the other sects in India looked upon him as a courageous warrior, whereas the British perceived him as a savage and such perceptions change with due course of time and people.

The demarcation of an idealistic hero should be understood in order to understand an antihero in an appropriate manner. It has to be understood that the term ‘antihero’ refers to the modern hero, a way far from that of the ideal heroes of ancient literatures; however, it is not utterly a negative connotation. Thus, critics who believe in

the existence of archetypes from the time immemorial also believe that archetypal approach is an interdisciplinary that links anthropology, psychology, sociology, and religion.

The contribution of postmodern literature widely differs from that of the conventional one. The transition is rightly traced by Simon Maplas, who defines the crux of the demarcations of modernist and postmodernist fictions from McHale's *Postmodern Fiction* (1987), "the move from modern to postmodern fiction is marked by a change from a focus on epistemological issues to an exploration of ontological questions" (24). The continual production of antihero image is one among the most significant liberations of artists' creativity. Rationalistic views and approaches have paved ways to make this image widely welcome by the society of creative artist and by the society of new generation readers.

Charles Darwin opinionated his concern that is common to all societies, in his *The Origin of Species*, "...we are always slow in admitting any great change of which we do not see the intermediate steps" (393). The wide acceptance of antiheroic image in the current society is not an overnight process, but a gradual change. It is evident that in admitting the great and gradual change of the heroic image, the society of readers has failed to see the intermediate steps that accumulated the vicious tenets of man in heroic tendencies. Therefore, the antihero is the product of intoxication and the archetypal approach helps in tracing the relative antihero in postmodernist fiction.

The most distinctive aspect that ascertains the depiction of an antihero is the loss of people's faith in supreme beings. As a result, writers keep representing contradictions especially in the postmodernist era during when human psychology has been growing

extremely delicate. Men have lost faith in the supreme existence and further, in human existence itself. The illustration of the transition of human attitude and his beliefs those were broken into fragments, the poem “Church Going” by Philip Larkin serves as a perfect example to represent the postmodern human image:

...

A shape less recognisable each week,
A purpose more obscure. I wonder who
Will be the last, the very last, to seek
This place for what it was; one of the crew
That tap and jot and know what rood-lofts were?
Some ruin-bibber, randy for antique,
Or Christmas-addict, counting on a whiff
Of gown-and-bands and organ-pipes and myrrh?
Or will he be my representative,

...

A serious house on serious earth it is,
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
Are recognized, and robed as destinies.
And that much never can be obsolete,
Since someone will forever be surprising
A hunger in himself to be more serious,
And gravitating with it to this ground,
Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,

If only that so many dead lie round. (37-45, 55-63)

It is obvious that the idealistic representation of a man in the form of a hero is absent followed by such inevitable loss of faith in God and in man himself. While the writers try to exhibit the contemporary world, they cannot possibly present the ideal form and the ideal person those are not in existence. The contemporary readership, on the whole, has a significant part to play as the authorship does. Readers, instead of expecting only the best or any ideal form, find it amusing when they relate themselves to the characters they come across in literature.

‘Psychic residue’ has been prevailing from the time of primordial existence of human nature and even beyond it, in which the evil behaviour remains as a part of man and his conscience. The image of antihero which would also embrace hero worship is an antisocial element. Man has been inflicting misery on others with his own beliefs and practises. This includes the tenets of man’s patriotism with which one suppress and oppresses others. The act of overpowering others with respect to individual belief or opinion can be termed as ‘fascism.’

Michel Foucault explains three major adversaries of heroism, representing varying degrees of danger in his “Preface to Anti-Oedipus”, among which “the major enemy, the strategic adversary is fascism....” He further adds, “And not only historical fascism, the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini – which was able to mobilize and use the desire of the masses so effectively – but also the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behaviour, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us” (381-82).

Men pass through the age of modernism with an inevitable loss of conscience. A man's knowledge is build up with essential supplements of facts and varied experiences of culture, society and their history. Colonial experience has a strong effect on the age of modernism, which made the colonizers pass through an age that is devoid of the knowledge of segregated history of the colonies. This decentred the ideal images and thoughts; and as a consequence, men have been driven with a set of abstract ideas that are shallow. A major trait of the consequence is the state of remaining static.

Similar idea is shared by G. N. Devy in his essay *After Amnesia*. The process without any progression brings in monotony in everything. The monotony is a tempting factor that stimulates one to escape it, which intention would obviously yields to blasphemy at a point of time. As the activities of intentional blasphemies are already under the light, it would lead to no point of realisation. Man can never trace back to his roots where once he had been an ideal human with humane tendencies, without such realisation.

The term 'antihero' in literature generally refers to a character with flaws. In modern context, the hero himself is an 'antihero'. A person becomes an antihero when he could not strike a balance between good and evil. The argument is that, man is potent of doing both good and bad. Antihero is someone who appreciates the bad in him. It is because he has no definite model to follow upon. His self-consciousness, the anthropocentric attitude that is already prominent in him, his society that is impartial to his needs, altogether makes him self-absorbed. Accordingly, an antihero is aperson who loves himself. His self-love is a by-product of his "self-consciousness," which is capable

of “bringing about the loss of innocence, of wholeness, and spontaneity, leading to infected will” (Gurung 16).

An antihero is not covetous by nature; he is sometimes vicious because of his ignorance. He has the capacity to change one’s fate by means of his vicious or ignorant means. His ignorance sprouts from various aspects owing to his race, community and roles of individuals whom he come across and gets influenced by. Shakespeare’s Othello, who is an antihero, though meets his tragic fall, he instructs the readers how to balance love over disbelief. It is brought out by the tragic plot, in which the protagonist is a valiant soldier and capable of winning over the forces of navy and army but by no means accomplished to analyse the shrewd ways of the world.

The employment of the ‘art of bewitching’ is one among the significant traits of an antihero. The tool is now, not widely in vogue for it has turned scientific everywhere around. Yet, many movies in the modern era conceive the fairy tale concept and exactly imitate it. The literary works, whenever had to attribute to the cultural and social influences that vary with respect to time, reworking of myths take place. Reworking of myths, while taken into consideration, the act of bewitching in the modern context has been moderated and achieved contemporary trait. One may also assume that in those days people’s conscience was so strong and in order to bewitch them they had to fetch the help of some superhuman powers.

Men have grown weak in psychological constitutions that do not possess a stable conscience which has to delegate their personality, as much assimilar to the antihero’s conscience discussed. He has become self-centred and that eventually has stolen the liberty of his mind. This has made it easy for the villainy to enter into the modern man’s

conscience, which can be easily diverted by means of provoking his fancy and his rebellious nature. Consequently, there is no need for hymns or the aids of black magic to enchant a typical modern survivor.

The trickster refers to more than simply a deceptive character. In the study, *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature*, edited by Garry and El-Shamy, it is ascertained that “some tricksters have animal aspects” (473). Territorial aggression and sexual behaviour are the two distinct and prominent animalistic instincts seen in human beings. Animalistic instincts are retained by man. It is to be understood that humane is not entirely the rejection of animalistic instincts but a combination of animal features and the relative traits of human species in a refined manner. Animalistic instincts are required for the sustainability of mankind in the vast design of nature without inflicting his environment. The human traits that are exclusive for the species help him to exist in community. Harmony persists when there is balance between animalistic instincts and human traits. A hero becomes an antihero when the harmony is disturbed in a negative way.

The nature of places, where the persons belong to, plays a crucial role in constructing the psychological systems. There are various reasons oriented with the place of resident, which are also biologically associated that can affect the psychic way being of a person. The environment which is selected as a dramatic object as supplementary to depict a hero's fable is always ideal. If not ideal, the hero tries to restore the messed environment, like Samson in *Samson Agonists* pleads for the one last chance to save his race. On the contrary, the place where an antihero resides is either undesirable or

unpleasant. If at all he lives in a pleasant environment, he would deliberately take it for granted or would remain as a cue to demolish the ideal setting.

Dramatists and poets have been representing the image of a hero from time immemorial on the basis of his accordance with nature. The one who is capable of using nature or for whom the nature serves as a tool always held in high accord because on the whole the hero employs nature for a good purpose. He explores the nature whenever he had to fight against evil forces. He uses his weapon only when he had to act as a saviour to save his race, his place and sometimes the other world. He never defies anything because he is efficient. An antihero works in the contradictory manner.

The relationship between man and nature plays a significant role in describing the inner beauty of man. Nature is the benefactor for man; yet, he cannot take it for granted. A hero is someone who strike balance between what he has to be acquired and the nature cycle, but on the contrary, antihero looks after only his necessities. In celebrating the nature, everyone needs not be a 'pantheist' (one who worships nature), but as a mere survivor amidst nature and its phenomena a person should know that he/she has to surrender to nothing but love and nature. Expressions of poets like Wordsworth give a clear picture that nature is the source of life and human beings' energy radiates by means of it. A stanza from the poem, 'Tintern Abbey', that he has written after his return to nature from his exhausting city life and social commitments, serves as a specimen:

In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul,
Of all my moral being. (107-10)

Thiruvalluvar in his small yet powerful couplet shares more or less a similar vision, perceiving rain that refreshes nature as the sole source for human existence on earth – “Even as life on earth cannot sustain without water, / Virtue too depends ultimately on rain” (Diaz 77).

The twentieth century dramatists and novelists have begun to sketch a character in the lead role who is trapped not only by the ordeals of society but one who finds no harmony between the self and his environment. The role of the protagonist designed by Arthur Miller in his play, *Death of a Salesman* gives a clear picture of the unsatisfied life lived by a man who has been driven through materialism. The protagonist, Willy Loman lives his last years between illusions and reality, who better likes to be enwrapped by illusions that hail from his past years, rather than facing the bitter reality. The act of representing such a character in the position of a hero is itself a vague feature of a writer.

Jonathan Witt reflects similar idea in his critical analysis, “Song of The Unsung Antihero: How Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* Flatters Us,” in the following manner, “Many nineteenth and twentieth century writers seek to convey the experience of a lowly character chafing against his obscurity” (205). The point of using similar characters is to flatter the audience/readers and not an appropriate manner to instruct them. This notion is reflected in “In Praise of Antiheroes: Figures and Themes in Modern European Literature, 1830-1980”, a review by Gaetano DeLeonibus, illustrates Victor Brombert’s studies on Antihero. Although, he delineates inculcation of antihero representation, he brings contradictory views to justify his views on antiheroes of literature:

After sketching a brief history of the "denunciation of the heroic code," Brombert proposes to examine the various ways the heroic model was subverted, as well as the underlying causes of the trend to portray modern protagonists as "failures" who manage to address the needs of our age and captivate the reader's imagination. Thus while critics such as Primo Levi praise the antihero's "allegiance to the strictly human dimension," but denounce hero worship for "fostering illusions, dishonesty, and moral inertia that come from relying on ideal and inimitable models".... (436)

All these established ideas and motifs provide hints and directions to understand how an antihero has evolved with wide acceptance and various factors. As Sigmund Freud and other psychologists suggest, man and his conscience cannot be individualistic in thinking and acting. His conscience relies upon the various aspects of familial, socio-cultural backgrounds and the memory of the individual. This rudimentary component of the psychic process of an individual makes dispersed ends meet at a point in the character studies. Consequently, it fixes the same practice in analysing the self of an antihero.

Chapter III

The Modern Survival – Sandip

“I am gross, because I am true. I am flesh. I am passion. I am hunger, unashamed and cruel” (HW 76). This is the far cry of an individual in modern era. The characters in *The Home and the World* are the representatives of modern era, nevertheless, they are also designed out of the existing archetypes in early literature. Nikhil and Sandip are the kings or subjects of the realms of truth and untruth; good and evil; unselfish and self-centred; harmless and destructive, respectively. Triumph of good over evil has been usually depicted by means of acquiring victory through war in the early literary aspects. In *The Home and the World* war exists between the two mythological characters not on the grounds of marvel with no bloodshed, but between the two distinct psyches of men.

SantoshChakrabarti in his article, “Patriarchy, Feminist Thought and Tagore’s Heroines” mentions about Tagore’s views on women, “mind was exercised over the question of women’s emancipation since quite a few years...” 2). Bimala’s character is a daring creation and unique product of Tagore’s times. Her character is used as a tool of metaphor in order to make the men realise what they are. She deludes the two men, who admire her but on different scales – Nikhil wishes to submit to her but Sandip wishes to exploit her. In displaying such indefinite contrasts of mind, Tagore substantiates whose is the best way to take up. It is notable that the author does not suggest or promote any one manner. Instead, he gives an abrupt end by leaving the readers to brood and choose between the two ways of survival.

The expressions in the novel fall under two distinct categories. The philosophical expressions that are embedded in the novel are balanced out of the metanarrative factor.

These philosophical ideas are adorned with symbols. The symbols exemplify the nature of the psyche of the individuals through whom the symbols are brought out to the readers. Tagore gives importance to the role of individuals in the society. Santosh Chakrabarti observes, “Ever since the beginning of the 20th century in Bengal, especially in the middle-class society of urban Bengal, individualism became a strong force in life” (2). Therefore, in the novel, symbols along with the narratives of the individuals, recite the story.

Nikhil and Sandip, in their narratives, express their feelings towards Bimala. They draw poetical instances from two ancient Vaishnava poets, Vidyapati and Jayadeva. Nikhil’s sensations for Bimala reflect the lamentation of Vidyapati, a Twelfth Century Vaishnava poet, who ascertains that life is not certain like nature’s cycle. Nikhil makes his narrative efficient by quoting Vidyapati’s poetry, “It is August, the sky breaks into a passionate rain; / Alas, empty is my house” (HW 129). Sandip, on the contrary, wipes away his shyness to discuss about the Jayadeva’s poetry that highlights the physical unity of a man and a woman. Although, both the poets have had composed “love-lyrics” that express all the shades of human passion, the perceptions of Nikhil and Sandip varies on the grounds of love and sex, respectively.

The imperial policy of the West was once held high and was masked by their fake intension to make the savages civilized in their terms. Similarly, Sandip wears the mask of patriotism to exploit and explore what he wishes. Sandip adopts the treachery and dominating attitude of the colonisers in conquering and creating his own domain. He claims that the world has taught him to be covetous, “...the lesson of the whole world is:

That is really mine which I can snatch away” or it is the lesson that he has taken from the world (HW 58).

Sandip’s disposition shows how one’s “Nation, race, and culture may powerfully mark identity, provoking terror and desire when threatened or promised,” – as appropriately mentioned by L. H. M. Ling in his article, “The Monster Within: What Fu Manchu and Hannibal Lecter Can Tell Us about Terror and Desire in a Post-9/11 World”. He further says that this is the quintessence of “suicide bombers and other guerrilla radicals throughout the world sacrifice their lives – and those of others – precisely for these reasons” (378).

A common myth prevails among women across various countries of the world that being boisterous is an impressive manly trait. Sandip retains this romantic quality. Women’s love has been for the boisterous men, and such traces are visible in ancient Tamil literature, *Aganaanooru*, which deals with the private lives of men and women. There are many instances across the various songs of *Aganaanooru*, where women fall for men, whose ways are forceful in dealing with the worldly affairs. Sandip exhibits forcefulness in order to attract women towards him, as Nikhil asserts that Bimala’s ‘love is for boisterous’ men.

The role of SandipBabu in the novel is a direct antagonist, who functions as a metaphor to embody the vicious part of man’s conscience. The image of an antagonist has currently turned into a heroic image. The modern man is affected with the malady of “machoism,” about which Rita Gurung states as it “compounds fantasy with rebellion,” in her introduction to *Archetypal Antihero in Postmodern Fiction* (32). These two characteristics of machoism are exhibited not only by Sandip but also by Bimala. She has

a prejudice that “The light in his eyes somehow did not shine true,” yet, she begins to yield to him without further enquiry or contemplation (HW 32).

Sandip inhibits fanciful thoughts by praising her deliberately; he gives her wings coated of wax. Bimala with ‘bashful pride’ feels light with the wings and being unaware of that she would melt along with the wax; she, like “Icarus” (Grant, Hazel 159), flies in a direction that is not meant for her and would kill her. According to Sandip, “Woman was created out of God’s own fancy” (HW 68), and yet, man can easily desert her. Sandip is aware of the fact that woman’s “passion,” when “roused she loses her sensibility for all that is outside it”(HW 69).

In the modern context where man is incapable of extraordinary powers, he embellishes himself through his appearance and the way he presents himself. Sandip is someone who is “but foppish all over” (HW32). The ultra-motive of an antihero is seen in Sandip. Tagore pictures the ideology of Sandip through an appropriate reflection made by Nikhil in one of his narratives, “Sandip’s love for the country is but a different phase of his covetous self-love” (HW 55).

A noteworthy consequence of being self-conscious is embodied in the novel. Nikhil claims that he had never been self-conscious. It is, perhaps, he is self-contented. He feels that it is necessary to be self-conscious to examine himself when he finds his wife has fallen for Sandip. His character is designed in the image of a man, who believes in the eternity of man’s soul as portrayed in Tagore’s *Gitanjali*. According to Nikhil, desire “is unholy,” and he is not ready to take but he is the one who accepts “only what is offered by sacred love” (*Gitanjali* ix).

A weaker conscience is the host of an antihero. Sandip's character is designed in the contradictory manner for he is relentlessly desirous. The antagonist's character is not only learned through his own psychological statements and musings but also through his counterpart's expressions and opinions. Nikhil states that when he has been trying to be self-conscious, in order to look himself through Bimala's vision, he feels that he makes a dismal picture.

The major female character, around which the entire plot revolves, also seems self-conscious. She has been a devoted wife and the lady of Rajah's house. The spirit of nationalism, what Sandip preaches, brings in the element of awareness. The nation's cause is not only indicated by him, but also accompanies the elevation of role of the self. The cause was then perceived as a threat to the society, for Ashis Nandy explains in his essay and appropriately entitles it with the phrase, 'The Fear of Nationalism.' However, the cause was then purely for the country's sake. Sandip's pseudo cause, which he has taken as a tool to screen himself, misleads Bimala. She has first become aware of the individual power and later been diverted by means of various thoughts. Bimala, at an instance, states, "For sometime all talk of the country's cause has been dropped. Our conversation nowadays has become full of modern sex-problems, and various other matters"(HW101).

All these instances do not collectively mean – being self-conscious is a threat. Problems arise when one recognises himself/herself small or inferior by being, it leads the person to be acquired by sense of guilt. As a consequence, either the person is motivated by the attitude of self-destruction or the construction of pseudo image takes place. The pseudo image is entirely fake, unstable and would not withstand the entities of

life. The instability affects one's conscience gradually and the identity in the realm of truth is entirely lost. This is seen in Sandip's manners and ways of being.

Bewitching is a device used for pursuing others. Sandip takes the tool of exhibiting pseudo-admiration towards Bimala in order to bewitch her. However, he admires her beauty and his approbation is harmful to Bimala and her home. In order to win Bimala's attention, Sandip exaggerates his emotions towards her. This way of developing pseudo-admiration is more or less similar to that of the crooked way adopted by Satan to pollute Eve's conscience, as depicted in *Paradise Lost*.

An antihero succeeds in having others believe that his claims are true. Bimala traces the loss of her identity with all the thoughts born out of Sandip's sermons regarding the representation of her image in the reality. He praises her, he celebrates her and she seems proud in the beginning. She, with due course, begins to feel small. Sandip also notices her doe-like fear and calls her to be his "poor little Queen Bee" (HW76). Bimala had to overcome her fear in order to leave her homeward bound and enter his domain. According to Sandip's plan, Bimala had to be surrounded by fearful thoughts and circumstances, in the initial stage. Sandip is certain that she would overcome the domestic obstacles within a short span of time. He is utterly sure about the "fright," that, "she has got will only fan her passion" (HW88).

Sandip has been playing the role of a deceptive character throughout the novel. He does not prepare himself to practise peace that has been taught by his nation and its history, including the principles of Buddhism, the Brahmo-Samaj of Bengal and so on. Instead, he embellishes himself with all the covetous nature of ideals that he has derived from the world's history. It is evident from Jaspal Kaur Singh's study, "Homoeroticism

and the Construction of Alterity: On Reading *A Passage to India* and *The Home and the World*, in which he states, “Political instability, social reforms, cultural and social upheavals,” which, “were the order of the day” (111).

Sandip claims that there are only two significant motives in his accord. He wants his country to be free and the human relations to be free. The two accords meet different ends; however, Sandip ties them together by his knot of desire. By meaning that he wants his country to be free, he needs a secured territory. Similarly, by denoting the freedom of individual relations, he wishes his relations with women to be free. The combination of his ideas is reflected through his expression, “...I have been constantly moving about... You are the Queen Bee of our hive, and we the workers shall rally around you” (HW57).

A significant archetypal trait of an antihero is playing any tricky game to satisfy his wishes and Sandip in *The Home and the World* is a “trickster,” whose characteristic traits are explained in Garry, El-Shamy’s *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature* (472). The tool adopted by Sandip is to flatter, he ardently patronises whatever Bimala says. He evidently calls her ‘Queen Bee’ and labels his own gender as disgraceful in order to elevate the opposite gender to which Bimala belongs. For instance, in one of his appraisals, he says, “...in the heart of a woman Truth takes flesh and blood. Woman knows how to be cruel: her virulence is like a blind storm. It is beautifully fearful. In man it is ugly, because it harbours in its centre the gnawing worms of reason and thought” (HW 47).

Animal nature of man is another attribute of an antihero. There are instances in the novel that represents him as a man with animalistic aspects. He says, “We are the flesheaters of the world; we have teeth and nails; we pursue and grab and tear,” (HW 62)

for which expression he is not ashamed at all. Sandip is seen ardently a man with the two typical animalistic instincts.

The first accord of his territorial aggression is born out of two factors: inherited animalistic instincts and his developed inspiration towards 'the world-conquerors'. As he claims to be the flesheater of the world, he exhibits the height of cruelty. He gives lessons of cruelty to his followers. Sandip cuts a leg from a goat alive. He does this act in order to show that his power is "above all human weaknesses." The episode of the impertinent act forms a crucial part in Sandip's narration:

From time to time I try my followers in their lesson of cruelty. One day we went on a picnic. A goat was grazing by. I asked them: 'Who is there among you that can cut off a leg of that goat, alive, with this knife, and bring it to me?' While they all hesitated, I went myself and did it. One of them fainted at the sight. But when they saw me unmoved they took the dust of my feet, saying that I was above all human weaknesses. (HW 118)

Sandip, in his narrative that follows, contradicts his own idea of cruelty against his inner motives. This contradiction represents him as a man, who practises something which he does not really intend to. The animalistic instinct that he has inherited as a human assists him in acquiring the desirable things, but the inner core of him that is purely humane yearns for a peaceful existence. He confesses in the following manner, "they saw that day the vapours envelope which was my idea, but failed to perceive the inner me, which by a curious freak of fate has been created tender and merciful" (HW 118).

Secondly, Sandip's sexual behaviour falls under the category of animalistic inhibition. Sandip, himself, labels his notion on his sexual behaviour with the term – "affinity." The affinity between Bimala and Sandip is woven with the myth of what people claim to be 'natural', 'purely biological' and so on. Yet, it still remains a mystery when it comes to oneself – "the fact is that man is as much a mystery to woman as woman is to man" (HW172). Sandip claims that special pairs are created by God Himself. Sandip perceives that "the union of such is the only legitimate union..." (HW64). The vision is on the positive terminus, though he alters it in terms of crooked nature by saying that there may be thousands of affinities and he could not turn a blind eye towards those for the sake of one. He has discovered many in his life and it is Bimala's episode that comes to the readers. This aspect of Sandip represents him to be a man of crooked nature who is not ashamed of deceiving his friend's wife, instead, he makes Nikhil feel small through his unabashed and flagrant manners.

The greedy nature of Sandip accompanies his desire in finding affinities. He personifies his nation with that of Bimala's image; he claims that he would worship her. These intensions are certainly falsified when it is found that he wishes also to exploit her by means of sexual manners and monetary resources that she possesses:

A thousand or two would have the air of petty theft. Fifty thousand has all the expense of romantic brigandage.

Ah, but riches should really have been mine! So many of my desires have had to halt, again and again, on the road to accomplishment simply for want of money. This does not become me! Had my fate been merely unjust, it could be forgiven, – but its bad taste is unpardonable. (HW 184)

Sandip, being aware of the fact that Bimala holds high esteem for him, he makes use of her to quench his thirst for sexual pleasure and wealth. He pays no heed to the ways through which his desirable things come handy. As he is covetous and looks after his pleasures all the time he traps others and indeed makes sure of the loopholes through which he only can escape. This act makes his false intentions to be displayed as he is foppish and his covetous desires quilted under the exhibited lies.

An antihero lacks integrity and consistency in character. An ideal hero may give in to the uncertainties of life but he retains moral values throughout. His nature is like that of gold's malleability, whereas, the antihero is someone who withdraws easily. For instance, Sandip claims that one must be brutal enough to save his race because "God manifests Himself... in man" (HW43). However, he contradicts his opinion when Nikhil fetches the same line, "If that is what you really believe, there should be no difference for you between man and man, and so between country and country," in order to make him understand that he has been wrong. Sandip then replies, "Quite true. But my powers are limited, so my worship of Humanity is continued in the worship of my country" (43).

The quintessence of an antihero is his traitorous nature. Sandip is a humbug who is faithful to nobody. Finding affinity between him and Bimala, he does not only prepare to deceive her but also to desert her husband. Nikhil has not been just a friend. Sandip has been the beneficiary of Nikhil's charities for a long period of time. Sandip and Nikhil are like two extreme poles that are against each other. There are so many instances where they keep arguing for things ranging from crucial to trivial. Yet, Nikhil by no means finds it necessary to stop helping him with monetary assistance and so on. At no moment either

Sandip or Nikhil gives way to situations where they could agree with each other's notions or even way to pretend like agreeing.

Sandip speaks of the Westerners' manner in winning over by force, by means of inflicting others with pain to look after self-prosperity. But Sandip's attitude is a way beyond the wrath of "Alexander down to the American millionaires," that yearns to loot one's own country. It is evident that Sandip intends to ruin his friend's life and fortune, whereas, Nikhil always has been tenderly looking after Sandip's necessities. Variation in attitudes distinguishes Sandip from Nikhil, as typical antihero and hero, respectively.

A Common characteristic trait of an antihero is to keep himself away from being empathetic. Sandip is aware of the fact that Nikhil feels bitter about Bimala's transition and his interruption in their life, but he cares not for his friend, even for a moment. Nikhil, who has not been so melancholic all the time, has been now displaying a turned down spirit, and moreover he explains plainly to Sandip and Bimala at an instance, the reason behind his outraged feelings, "...man may be wounded unto death, but he will not die. This is the reason why I am ready to suffer all, knowing all, with eyes open" (HW87). The above expression of Nikhil expresses all his bitter experiences in a nutshell.

Nevertheless, Sandip neither feels sorry, nor pity; instead, he wants Nikhil to be hurt further. He wants Bimala to disclose plainly that their mating has been a misfit. Sandip also ascertains in a mocking fashion that Nikhil would accept that as his mistake too. He wants every other person to exhibit the same kind of aggression. He claims that "to acknowledge a mistake is the greatest of all mistakes" (HW 88).

Nikhil has been sharing a faithful relationship with his wife Bimala, though, he claims no way of authority on Bimala. He tries to be genuine for he does not perceive

Bimala merely as an object. On the contrary, Sandip claims her to be his 'own Bimala' by all means. One might view Sandip's claim to be logical and a way realistic as Bimala has also found 'her own affinity' towards him. Bimala's transition is not ascertained in a natural way but is well planned by Sandip. He tricks and traps her; he makes her yielding to her illusions or psychological musings. It is also to be noticed that Sandip, at an instance feels guilty for having his friend deceived by him, but all of a sudden he overcomes his sense of guilt with his aggressiveness and he never withdraws. The withdrawal does actually happen when Bimala could not let go her sense of guilt just like the way Sandip does.

Antiheroic nature of Sandip is revealed not only through his actions but also through his claims that are anti-humanistic. For instance, reason and thoughts are considered to be the strength because the combination gives anybody the soul of wit, knowledge. Whereas, Sandip admires a woman whose virulence is like a blind storm but he defines man's virulence to be "ugly, because it harbours in its centre the gnawing worms of reason and thought" (HW 47). He worships the goddess of anger, *Durga*. Anger is something which obstructs vision and sets a path towards a goal that is not true but assumed to be true by the person with wrath. The path that he chooses to travel is devoid of reason. He comments further on the persons who reason out for everything as gnawing worms.

Teachers are regarded as noble messengers of God. However, Sandip rebukes and despises teachers. He generalises his opinion and put it in a riled up manner, "The world would have been not half a bad place to live in but for these schoolmasters, who make one want it quit it in disgust" (HW 81). Nikhil furiously speaks and accuses Sandip for the

first time when he comes across Sandip having insulted his master, Chandranath Babu. This indicates the beautiful in Nikhil and the ugly in Sandip.

The desire to exhibit as a conqueror or a leader is ingrained in Sandip's consciousness. He wishes to be the fiery source of light to the people around him. This attitude, at once represents Sandip's conquering nature and his wrath to be a leader all the time. He desires to be a leader, however, he cannot befit the task of leading because a leader's function is not isolated but it exists with a community. He speaks for nation's independence as well as on individual's liberation, though the idea of equality is not ingrained in him. It can be witnessed at an instance, when he was touched by a guard that makes him burst with a rage and exclaims, "What! To be touched by a flunkey!" (HW71). Humility is the basic trait of a leader. Sandip, instead, mocks at Nikhil's modesty till he is hurt. He exclaims at Nikhil in a very sardonic passion, "...so whimsical a product of nature" (HW 188).

Sandip's followers find toiling for the cause of the nation as a noble deed. However, their motives sway when they had to inflict pain on others for their cause. It is like Wordsworth's return to nature and Mahatma Gandhi's return to his native attire. Sandip holds his torch to work for people's welfare, but he does care only about his success and not about the strife of those who fall as victims for it. For instance, when Sandip was informed about the danger that tend to cost innocent people's livestock as fines, he prepares himself and his crew not to set back and retorts, "The penalty is intended to fall on them, not on us." He further reminds, "...this is War. If you are afraid of causing suffering, go in for love-making, you will never do for this work" (HW177).

Marlow, in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* claims, at various instances, Jim to be 'one of us.' There are critical receptions against the expression indicating Marlow to be a racist. Similarly, Sandip has prejudices on caste and religion. He expresses his aversion towards 'Mussalmans,' "we must know their place and and keeps them there, otherwise they will constantly be giving trouble" (HW 189). It is evident from the sudden turn of events – Sandip fleeing from Sandip's home, breaking of Hindu-Mussulman riots – due to Sandip's vigorous speeches that trigger hatred between the two communities.

The significant trait in analysing an archetype takes place with the consideration of the character's personal relationships and their stands, motives, etc. Tagore, however has dealt with the embellishment of the characters' psyche, he has denied the dimensional entry to trace out the archetype with respect to relationship motives; especially in the case of Sandip. Bimala's transition is traced obviously through her expressions before and after the entry of Sandip in her life. Nikhil's attitude is crystal clear for he is the only person in the novel to stamp his personality with comparatively less ambiguity. Nikhil's and Bimala's childhood are not mentioned but their way bringing throughout all these years can be drawn from their expressions and attitudes. Considering the aspects while analysing, details about Sandip's past history, his personal or blood relationships are nowhere mentioned. The only mention about his liaisons signifies how he perceives women.

The modernist survivors are aware of the fact that they can win over the hearts of women by raising their passions, and so Sandip is. He derives the above idea from his real time experience. At an instance, he states, "Women find in my features, my manner, my gait, my speech, a masterful passion... a full-blooded passion" (HW 63). At another

instance, he admits that he screens himself with veil of lies. These citations suggest that he wears on make up to rise above. His preparations are obviously reflected through his expression:

The other day I pressed Bimala's hand, and that touch still stirs her mind, as it vibrates in mine. Its thrill must not be deadened by repetition, for then what is now music will descend to were argument. There is at present no room in her mind for the question 'why?' So I must not deprive Bimala, who is one of those creatures for whom illusion is necessary, of her full supply of it. (HW 188)

Sandip deceits women by intoxicating their minds with what he believes. Meanwhile, it is to be understood that he does not consider women as weaker sex to take liberty in deceiving them.

Sandip considers women powerful but on the contrary, he confesses that he is treacherous, "You use your power: I use my craft" (HW 60). Thus, SandipBabu is a craftsman whenever he ought to face the 'power'. Along with this facade, Sandip's desire to achieve success is revealed. His antiheroic consciousness celebrates himself whenever he has won over the powerful and mighty. If at all he has not won, he feels that he is a coward as he asserts, "Then, if I do not win I am a coward"(HW 64). This trait adds further to his superiority complex and his covetous nature. The element of bewitching or enchanting others in order to satisfy one's menial worldly pleasures combines here with the trait of deception. This indicates the interrelationship that exists between the vicious traits of an antihero.

Bimala learns how to be cruel from every move of Sandip. She moulds herself in the ways he aspires her to be. In accordance with the title and very idea of the novel, *The Home and the World*, Sandip teaches her the ways of the world, whereas the ways of the home are already inbuilt not only in Bimala but also in every woman's conscience, confined to the societies to which she belongs. Metaphorically, it serves the author's purpose whose intension is to comment upon that the ways of the modern world are extremely cruel. Sandip worships the "Deity of Desecration" and admires the "beautifully fearful" (HW 47). She unconsciously develops the particular trait of being cruel, given in to his admiration. It shows that she embraces with a meaningless and unnecessary wrath of what Nikhil terms as "exaggerations" (HW 41).

Sandip's success as an antihero can be traced out from Bimala's transition phase. Initially, she feels that she is the incarnation of *Mother Kali* and meanwhile, she feels powerful as much as a saviour. The sense of such enthusiasm for the cause of country gradually descends to a ruthless passion for Sandip, then to her own numbness of her spirit that makes her feel so small by brooding over her past. Her life "felt utterly tasteless" (HW 102), given into illusions blossomed in the world that she has exposed to. Finally, the woman who has held herself in heights suddenly trembles all over when Sandip happens to be at her side and like a typical helpless woman. She had to sob and cry out, "What is the end of all this, what is the end?" (HW 115).

An antihero is not reliable, somehow, his activities are always predictable. He is like the fluid that takes the shape of a container but easily exhausted. Initially, it seems to entice and be attractive which goes out of place on the continual exhibition of aspects that are not true. Bimala adopts the ways of Sandip gradually, which makes her

undesirable. For instance, Bimala's features that were once attracting to Nikhil began to grow pale in the light of imitation, "...her adornment... appear a mere decoration that which before had the mystery of her personality about it, and was priceless to me, was now out to sell itself cheap" (HW 170).

The type of places which the characters prefer plays a significant part in analysing their intentions. The practice still prevails to this day while having a movie directed. Places of marvel are suggestively selected for screening a romance of platonic love. Palaces with towers are of gothic settings that portray the picture of dark romance. A realistic setting on the whole pictures the variety of places that had been an entirely a novel practise. Attributing to the novel's theme and title, Tagore sets up a home relevantly of which the readers could obviously draw a clear picture of his intentions.

There are three worlds metaphorically depicted through the major characters. The characters inform the readers how they perceive the world and their perceptions and in turn, they reflect their psychological way beings. Nikhil lives in the realm of truth and also he is keen on the fact that he does not invade others' territory to inflict his own ideas. His love for ideals is born out of his philosophies. The act of drawing one's philosophies which are also true on the due course is not possible, unless he has a close accordance with nature and its cycle.

The difference in attitudes of Nikhil and Sandip can be very well understood from a view point on where the two wish their beloved to be placed at. Nikhil is aware of the fact that man had been one with nature and so he wishes to come back to nature at least once in a year with Bimala to tune their love, "anew to the first pure note of the meeting of hearts" (HW 129). Sandip wants to see Bimala to be seated "on her altar of Destruction"

(HW127). Furthermore, he perceives her similar to that of the earth's surface lost in wilderness conceiving all the treasures of diamond and other precious gems.

Bimala has been only to places which have provided her shelter and security. When she comes across the world's uncertainties, she is stirred her from head to toe. She keeps herself to the portion of house where she belongs. She decorates her bedroom and works on embroidery. Sometimes she fancies at her own image reflected by her dressing table mirror, or she admires the image celebrated by Sandip. Whenever she comes across the place where Bara-Rani sits, she feels irritated; and in the study room, she feels tempted in the presence of Sandip. She had to spend her time lonely when her husband, Nikhil had been staying out of the home to take up his M. A. Degree. Henceforth, it is home to which Bimala is closely associated with.

A person, no matter whatever sin he commits, he becomes as a real sinister only when he tries to justify it. Sandip, in the novel, gives endless justifications for all his covetous acts by which he not only lets people know that he has committed something vicious but also informs them that he is aware of it. Modern man perceives reality is far from morality, because of this vision he conveniently justifies his faults and claims his justifications to be genuine. This notion takes him further away from being ethical. In this modern context one cannot speak for divinity to the common audience because only very few are certain about the divine presence. Divinity descends to modern man in the name of morality and it is generally considered to be idealistic. It is not that only divinity and morality loses hold in the modern context but also philosophy, for "one must not look for a 'philosophy' amid the extraordinary profusion of new notions and surprise concepts" as mentioned by Michel Foucault in his "Preface to Anti-Oedipus" (381). As being idealistic

is practically no longer possible, man descends to be pragmatic, who sets his own principles and codes that are not stable and they are hypothetical by all means and at every situation. Sandip admires “women, who are the creatures of this world of reality” (HW 62).

The cause for which Sandip fights is untrue because he kills the nation’s soul in order to fetch her victory. A nation’s soul lies not only in her health and wealth but also in conceiving the greatest thoughts given ever by wise men. His admiration towards the Western concept of dominating others by one’s highhanded behaviour kills the concept of *Bhagavadgita* which has been rendered by his nation. In spite of fighting for his nation, he inflicts her with his own ideals and terminologies.

It is similar to that of Indian concept in criticising Indian Writing in English written in Indian sociological context using literary tools borrowed from Western literary theories and criticism without considering the sociological and political background. G. N. Devy in his *After Amnesia* theory proposes that Indian critics have to think of the writers’ nativity while criticising. If not, the readers would be immersed into cultural amnesia as the followers of Lucifer lost their soul of knowledge into Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. When referred to the survivors of modern society, the condition has still worsened, as such the soul in the man has not only yielded to the loss of memory but also the death of soul has occurred eventually. The death of soul can be perceived similar to that of ‘the death of God and Man concept’ that has been in vogue under the ‘Existential Theatre,’ which is even more dangerous. Like the communion of two distinct cells that gives birth to a new living being, it is history combined with the vision that sees the current world build the psychological constitution of a human being.

Man goes against conventional aspects whichever do not suit his desires and he comfortably seeks asylum in the shelter of 'modernity'. Sandip practises the same kind of modern ritual of questioning unnecessarily, simply because he can, in order to justify all his immoral deeds. Bimala, being a typical Indian woman finds the task of neglecting her spouse for a better one is highly impossible. Sandip realises her reluctance and perceives her as a "snared deer" (HW 122). He wants Bimala to overcome the fear of going against things that are ethical. He is confident that she would overcome the obstacles if "she finds shelter in some such word as 'modern,' she will find strength" (HW89).

The moment of realisation that occurs to everyone in the novel shares the same psychological pattern. It occurs to them when they lose something crucial in their life. Nikhil realises that there are so many things to brood over beyond the presence of woman in a man's life when he was about to meet the loss of his wife. Bimala realises that her opinion on Sandip is nothing but an illusion when she comes across the death of Amulya, with whom she has been sharing a tender relationship. Amulya who is about to die realises that the cause for which he has devoted his life is not that worth when he learns that it would harm Bimala, whom he had been revering as his mother. However, Sandip on the whole never confesses for anything whole heartedly, even if he does, he draws justification and tries to represent himself as a man of intelligence and power.

A man's aggressiveness is invalid till it is thrust upon somebody. Inflicting others with aggression is not only an antihero's trait but also reacting either positively or rebelliously to the aggression is also equally adulterous against human's conscience. Beyond Sandip's role as an antihero, Bimala also reflects the aspects of antiheroism. Her passiveness to analyse things falls under the submissive phenomena. This further

intoxicates her mind in adopting rebellious nature through which she tends to be aggressive by all means.

Consequently, the antiheroic traits are not only confined to an individual but keep extending, taking further modifications in others like chain reactions. All the negative prospects and because of those, Tagore had to claim psyches of such men are a collective threat to humankind. Relatively, the author's expressions in the novel are perceived to be a crucial warning. Sandip, devoid of the attitude of gratitude, aware of his negative facade and not admitting but justifying it, wanting to be a despot, a trickster playing enough to sleep with women who give him the feeling of affinity, remains as a ceaseless antihero of the greatest wit of modern India – Rabindranath Tagore.

Chapter IV

The Postmodern Great Expectations - Gopal

“Do you think I am a good person,” Gopal Mishra, the protagonist of the novel, *Revolution 2020* wants assurance from the person whom he has been known only for few hours (R2020 6). The only aim of a postmodern survivor is to emerge victorious over others by yielding to their self about which they are uncertain. Man is defiant in this juncture because his rationality and individuality do not reconcile with each other. Jeff Q Bostic and others observe, “The stage personas of antiheroes champion rejection of the mainstream, assail adult constraints and expectations, explore frightening topics, and ultimately fulfil the adolescent fantasy of surviving alienation and emerging victorious over parents and peers” (55). Certainty in having an uncertain self is the facet of a contemporary man, who dwells in the postmodern society. Gopal is the prominent character of the novel and his story is told in first person narrative. The protagonist of the novel is introduced to the readers as “Young director of Ganga Tech College, Gopal Mishra” (R2020 1).

A substantial part of the novel concentrates on how the Ganga Tech College has been built. The process of constructing the college is demonstrated through sequential steps, which is a daring attempt to bring in the realistic political issues. It is known that corruption has penetrated the entire nation. The sense of being dutiful has been stained or almost lost when corruption’s tempting factor begin to grow in man’s conscience. Corruption held its roots so strong, when people found those who are in service sectors yielding to extra and easy money. Gopal, in the novel yields to corruption, in order to get his cravings fulfilled by any means.

The prologue and the first chapter of the novel render a glimpse of Gopal's character in a convulsive manner. Gopal is highly alcoholic. Further, he keeps on mentioning about the money he makes and grows impatient on any kind of disagreement. His temper is not only effected by the temporary sedation of alcohol that he has consumed, but also of the bitter experiences effected by the persons whom he had come across so far in his life. However, these circumstances can also be perceived as mere justifications given for his current stature of being addicted to alcohol and money. The author observes the hangover of Gopal similar to that of what he had experienced along with his friends during his college days. The only difference he observes is, "here the director had binged on alcohol, not a student" (R2020 6).

The above expression of the author makes it clear that everybody is now familiar to the habit of taking alcohol. Rita Gurung rightly points out the current stature of man, who says, "Rather than being the centre which binds all the loose threads of society together, the postmodern antihero is himself a victim of alienation, cultural and spiritual sterility, seeking solace and refuge in alcohol, self-deception, power, social withdrawal and anonymity" (8-9). Moral codes and perceptions do not stand against those who question, "What is the point if I don't enjoy it?" The term 'enjoy' is not a negative one because there are so many ways to enjoy life.

The modern day fulfilment is attained by giving anything expensive and getting on to the essence of it. Youngsters call it to be the pleasure yielding factor. "It's Glenfiddich, four thousand a bottle. Should I open Blue Label? That's ten thousand a bottle.... Live life. Start having fine whisky. You will develop a taste," says Gopal as he forces his companion to consume alcohol. Money becomes the crucial exponent to live a life to its

core. The author in his own words puts it in the most relevant manner to the story lead, “In most parts of the world, speaking about your income is taboo. In India, you share the figures like your zodiac sign, especially if you have lots” (R2020 4).

Several instances from the novel, *Revolution 2020* portray the images of persons who take advantage of others’ helpless condition. Gopal’s paternal uncle, Ghanshyam, wants to confiscate his brother’s property. He is not even ready to offer a genuine share of what he would get on selling the property. Dubey, Gopal’s lawyer, asks him to accept a very less sum after his father’s death in order to settle the dispute. The lawyer has been paid for almost ten years by Gopal’s father; his greediness for more money makes him to support Ghanshyam. Gopal is unable to reconcile with the injustice pronounced on him and unjust experiences. His spirit is restored with a sense of avenge by the sudden turn of events. He makes use of the opportunity to hurt the person who has tried to finish his life and career off. Therefore, his society has played a significant part by teaching him to act merciless, precisely, how to be a villain.

Bhagat’s practice of attaching importance to places is revealed in this novel as well. Further, he has combined education with places. Students who crack the engineering or professional course entrance exams, like Raghav, make choices in life. Gopal represents the group of students who stay away from home in order to pursue their academic dreams. Coaching institutes and engineering colleges loom over the beautiful dreams of aspirants who wish to create a prospect.

Gopal is dragged into the education business for his family property, which is only ten kilometres away from the city limits. Prateek, who has been entertaining Gopal for sometime in Kota also shares the same line of thinking. They aspire simply to get a

degree from any college or to become engineering graduates if they can pay a lakh per year. On the other extreme, students like Gopal strive without enough knowledge and also without money to buy a degree. However, these unfulfilled dreams prove to be a great inspiration to start engineering colleges.

Myth transcends through ages and it still prevails. It is undeniable that the environment plays a vital role in shaping up an individual's personality. The author gives importance to the setting of the novel, for the novel opens on highlighting the place where the story hails from, "the land of billion sparks" (R2020 1). Gopal holds high values for the place he resides. The name of the female protagonist, Aarti, also serves as a symbol to reinforce the ideal choice of the setting, Varanasi, which is known for its morning and evening *aarti* (a ritual of lighting lamps on the shores of the river, Ganges).

The attitude of escapism is the most significant trait of a postmodern survivor. Gopal resides in a place that is so noisy; and so, he finds an alternative which is calm, amidst waters of the Ghats of Ganges. The place where he has been staying for some time at Kota is portrayed like a pit, into which there is only a strand of rope is let for the escape. One can fetch it and survive out of the pit if at all he can clear his entrance examinations, at the same time holding a rank. It is again an extreme threat to persons like Gopal who can fulfil neither of these expectations.

Gopal speaks of the regions of Varanasi during crucial times in his life in the novel. In the positive speculation of Gopal towards the place where he lives, he does not think that his "city is dirty. It is the people who make it dirty" (R2020 13). Further, in his narrative, he elaborates on the names of the places and their history. Dashashwamedh is believed to be the place where Brahma performed ten horse sacrifices (R2020 35), and

Manikarnika Ghat is named after Shiva's earring that he dropped during a dance which is considered to be the holiest place for cremation (R2020 45). All such beliefs do not make any impact on Gopal, they simply remain as myths that has nothing to do with his life.

There are two scenes from the shores of Vaaranasi which influence Gopal's emotional aspects. They are: the usual *aarti* on the shores of Ganges during the twilights of dawn and dusk; and the dead bodies that are being cremated every minute. He compares the scene of *aarti* to Aarti herself, "No matter how many times you see it, the *aarti* on the Ghats of Vaaranasi manages to mesmerise each time" (R2020 46). When he had to undergo a time of worse experience, he attributes to the dreadful scenes that the city gives, "I could take death. I'm from Varanasi, where the world comes to die" (R2020 53).

There are other factors which draw Gopal to his home town. He loves his hometown and a homeward bound journey, which make him remember his days of past that are filled with sweet memories. Gopal owes them to two persons on the entire earth – Aarti and his father. These personal ties draw him close to bygone times and place.

The conditions and circumstances in childhood help in shaping one's life. Gopal's family possession of agricultural land and the legal cases that revolve around it influence his childhood. His maternal uncle forges the property's document in order to acquire a bank loan and that it also affects the share to be inherited by Gopal's father. He sees his father fighting his tears who has been very much hurt and deceived by his own brother.

Gopal witnesses the only person whom he has in the entire world feels bad at his ailing condition and this eventually makes him an avenger. He retaliates for this when he acquires the power by means of Shukla, a corrupted politician who enters later on the

scene. His mother's illness also has caused economical afflictions, owing to which, his father's savings were lost. Further, as a consequence of his own sickness, he loses his job, and they run without money eventually. This poverty of Gopal, his failure in education, the fury rose about being ditched by the one whom he loves sincerely – altogether upset his conscious and intoxicate his mind.

Gopal's father represents the intermediate generation that showed interest in acquiring an ideal urban life. He is a farmer's son and reflects the idealism of a farmer by saying that he would not sell his land at any cost. On the contrary, he wishes his son to make through AIEEE– All India Engineering Entrance Examination. This wish reflects the dream of any common Indian parent belonging to a middle class society in the current scenario. He perceives that procuring an engineering seat followed by getting placed through campus drives held by the reputed organisations would fetch his son a decent life.

The following discussion between his father and Gopal is notable to denote the ideals that make the preceding generation and the current generation distinct, “A farmer doesn't insult his land. He doesn't sell it either,” says Gopal's father. Gopal replies, “We are not farmers anymore, Baba...” and his father ends the conversation abruptly, laying stress that his son should get through AIEEE examination, “Go. Go and study, you have your exams coming up” (R2020 27).

India is a place where people tend to believe in illusions rather than trusting invisible truths. Education in India is another religion which is common to all communities, especially to those who live in urbanized areas. The acquisition of belief that education and intellectualism are one and the same is similar to the process of

acquiring superstitious beliefs along with a religion. Irrational thoughts are exhibited by the characters in the novel whose subconscious ardently believes that all educationalists are intellectuals.

Raghav's father also acts similar to Gopal's father in expecting his son to get through the entrance examinations. The environment provided by Raghav's father to his son is cosy. The major reason behind Gopal's failure is his fear about future and his poor family background. Raghav without fears or worries about his future, clears the entrance examinations and meanwhile develops a passion towards his interests.

Consequently, Raghav thinks beyond his stature and wishes to do something for his society. He cracks both AIEEE and JEE, further finishes his engineering, yet takes up journalism as his career. He has options, whereas, Gopal has no such alternatives but to run along with the crowd, who imagines himself "in a sea, along with lakhs of other low-rankers, kicking and screaming to breathe" (R2020 24).

Gopal's stay at Kota in order to clear AIEEE to acquire an engineering seat is the crucial period, for it traces his psychological way being that is driven with the aspects of antiheroic tendencies. During his stay at Kota, he gets stimulated by adversary aspects of contemporary life and society. He is left alone in an undesirable place that taunts him every moment. A typical middle class parent like Gopal's father may think Kota, a temple of learning, but once when Gopal lands there, he realises the place is nothing but a commercial hub. Everybody outsources a business out of the well-established education business in the city. There are brokers, who arrange rooms for rents; people who own houses make a part of their home as paying guest sections; people find business in supplying food to the students arrive at Kota all by themselves.

Nonetheless, even in the detrimental surrounding, Gopal is self-motivated by the source of love that he possesses for Aarti, for "... the myth of woman, sublimating an immutable aspect of the human condition" (Beauvoir 1265). However, the source of motivation turns to be a threat when he finds her arm in arm with Raghav. The importance of Aarti's episode in Gopal's life is reflected from his narrative that begins with her entry in Gopal's life and ends where she leaves him to be Raghav's better half. Otherwise Gopal's childhood is ignored altogether except mentioning a very few crucial incidents to denote his plights such as losing his mother at the age of four and the quarrel between his father and his maternal uncle regarding their family inheritance.

In Kota, Gopal comes across witty students as well as quitters. He associates himself with a quitter, named Prateek. Prateek's sermons followed by Gopal's learning that Aarti is no more for him and has fallen for his friend Raghav, ruin his conscious to clear AIEEE and JEE. He takes advantage of the money sent to him by his father. He has already been convicted guilty in his own court of conscience for having not secured a rank in the previous entrance examinations. His convictions grow one by one awaiting either for the moment of realisation or aggression to break through. However, he is not able to correct or reform instead fall further deeper.

In the story of an antihero, typically, aggression breaks in when power accompanies the sense of guilt. Likewise, Gopal's failure and unhappiness give way to aggression and retribution. He finds ways to avenge his maternal uncle who has stolen their land from his father; and to make Raghav, a failure who has stolen Aarti from him.

Internal conflict is an important psychological aspect of an antihero. More than ever, it has become an integral quality of a postmodern individual. This conflict occurs

often between sense of right and sense of wrong. However, the wrong normally gains over the right in case of an antihero. The argument between Mr Optimist and Mr Pessimist is a significant part, because it lets the readers to justify Gopal as an antihero:

She couldn't be dating him. She said she is not ready for a relationship. If she is, she will go out with me, Mr Optimist Gopal said.

However, Mr Pessimist Gopal did not buy it.

Okay, so Raghav has better looks. But Aarti is not so shallow. I have known her for a decade, Mr Optimist-me argued. (R2020 72-73)

It is evident that there are good as well as evil counterparts in Gopal and, "...it is widely thought that the resolution of internal conflicts promotes good psychological health" (Todey 8), but it depends on the individual's choice between positive and negative. Instead of adding manure to his good natured roots, he feeds the pests over his conscience. This nurtures senious and poisonous roots of self-destruction get strong hold in and over him. After this he sets himself at the altar of 'self-destruction' – consuming alcohol, smoking cigarettes and paying no heed to his career building for which purpose he has arrived at Kota.

Aarti's abrupt ending of her contact with Gopal followed by his abusive accusation of her being with Raghavhurts him even more. Mr Pessimist with zeal begins to conquer Gopal, which is reflected through his activities followed by the incident, "The day Aarti cut off contact with me was the day I stopped doing my daily practice sheets.... Instead, I hung out every night at the roadside Chaman chai shop near my house.... I sat there, killing hours, watching the crowd and nursing cups of tea" (R2020 78).

The antithesis of a hero involves a synchronised process that features society and the common beliefs associated with it. The common practices and beliefs contribute significantly to the making of an individual. This is the case with Gopal as well. His anxiety due to pressure also appears to be a significant part in destroying the hero in him. The expressions about Kota made by Gopal in his narrative are neither satiric nor sarcastic but an open accusation of the study centres, which feed on people's frenzy towards engineering.

Individuals console themselves to strive hard for few years, so that they can make money with ease throughout their lifetime. Students' passions are killed and they are treated like machines by their parents at home as well as by their trainers at the coaching centres. This rekindles a type of aversion in them, especially those who fail to get through the examination. Since the period when they undergo this kind of experience is at the crucial stage of their adolescence, they tend to grow with a narrow vision – most significantly, their only focus on money making process.

Students those who have made through the examination are almost celebrated and their faces appear in the brochures and pamphlets of the respective training centres from where they learnt how to crack AIEEE for a year. Gopal's aversion is rekindled by the photographs of those students, which is reflected through the statements he makes: "...the cover had photographs of some of the ugliest people on earth" (56); Students and teachers strode about in a purposeful manner, as if they were going to launch satellites in space" (R2020 59); ...stamp-sized pictures of successful JEE candidates, resembling wanted terrorists" (R2020 60); I took a blade from my shaving kit, cut out the cover pictures of

the IIT – selected students, and ripped them to shreds” (R2020 59). These expressions represent the various stages of psychic aggression.

In order to estimate a character, it is necessary to view from the positions of other characters in relation to it. For instance, personal bonds are usually analysed in order to deconstruct the psychological way being of a person. In *Revolution 2020*, the psychological reflections brought under the light are limited to mono speculation. The other major characters as well as minor ones are to be seen through the narrator’s eyes. The readers perceive those who related to Gopal as he does.

Gopal descends to the rank of an antihero in the perspective of readers because others’ motives are hidden. Gopal feels guilty out of his hideous actions those enabled him to get Aarti’s consent to marry him and made Raghav to fall from his passionate job. He finally restores things by displaying himself almost as a villain and takes the pain voluntarily because he considers himself as a stealer. He wants Aarti to get back to Raghav as he realises that he had acted covetous in attracting her towards him. It has to be taken into consideration that Raghav might also been acting in order to draw Aarti towards him. This view point can also be applied to examine Aarti’s character. There are a lot of probable qualities that could portray other characters in the novel, almost equivalent to that of Gopal’s ordain features and even comparatively more covetous than his true self.

Aarti possesses a weak conscience that could be explored with less effort. Aarti pays no heed to her education. Given to her pleasing appearance and her family background having her father, a magistrate, and her grandfather, a successful ex-politician, others set their expectations high. Those who are in association with Aarti and

her family expect that she would become an actress or she could win over the Miss India contest, but she never becomes one.

It is evident that Aarti is also unable even to satisfy her quench to become an airhostess. She falls for Raghav when she finds him equally funny. When he is required to focus on his career and finds no time to entertain Aarti, she eventually falls for Gopal. This characteristic trait of Aarti embodies that love in postmodern age has nothing to do with Platonic ideas but is applicable with the assurance of minimal security of future.

Emerson highlights one of the significant aspects of a hero in his essay "Heroism", "A great man scarcely knows how he dines, how he dresses...." Gopal, essentially as an antihero, contradicts the very ideal quality of a hero. As soon as he attains all the necessities, his search starts to live a luxurious life. He wants to show off to Raghav that he is the richest man now, or at least, far richer than him. He purposely wears a branded outfit; he rehearses visually how he had to place his keys of the costliest Mercedes Benz that he possesses, while meeting Raghav.

However, Gopal is confident enough to say to Raghav that he and Aarti would make the best pair and finds him "without railing or precision, his living is natural and poetic" which according to Emerson is one among the definite tendencies of a hero. Gopal's inferiority complex again sprouts like a winter weed that seemed no more when he felt sufficient enough with his life.

The search for luxury in Gopal's life starts at an early stage, even at his childhood. At the age of ten, Gopal hunts for lunch boxes when his co-students were attending the usual morning assembly in their school. He almost does the act of stealing, though his action has been justified by his reason, "It will mean extra work" for his father (R2020

10), he is not ready to accept Raghav's offer on bringing him lunch every day for him. He denies by saying, "Forget it, your mom cooks boring stuff. Puri everyday" (R2020 10) and picks a lunch box from a bag that looks expensive.

Gopal wants everything better in his hands but with less effort. He desires more than he wants. This triggers antihero in him. This reluctance in man to accept what he has and yearning for gratuitous things has brought in all the deformities in him. The thought is reflected in Anton Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, which articulated by one of the characters, Trofimoff:

Humanity goes forward, perfecting its powers. Everything that's unattainable now will someday become familiar, understandable; it is only that one must work and must help with all one's might those who seek the truth. With us in Russia so far only a very few work. The great majority of the intelligentsia that I know are looking for nothing, doing nothing, and as yet have no capacity for work. They call themselves intelligentsia, are free and easy with the servants, treat the peasants like animals, educate themselves poorly, read nothing seriously, do absolutely nothing.... There is only filth, vulgarity, orientalism.... (259)

The above expression, however, harmonises with Russian context and the Age of Revolution, the idea also relates to the nature of entire humanity across the world. It is also a principle objective of 'hedonism'. The reluctance to toil and desire to remain undisturbed by any force, either naturally or unnaturally, has brought deformities in man's physical and psychological conditions. Health issues have become part of human lives in the postmodern era which is evidently explicated by Heather Schell in "The

Sexist Gene: Science Fiction and the Germ Theory of History”. “Though viruses have had a place in origin-of-life theorizing since the early decade of the twentieth century,” he says by substantiating Scott Podolsky and further justifies by asserting, “diseases were never specifically integrated into the story of human evolution or history” (808).

Gopal realises his foul attitude to take up things focussing only on his personal needs and gives up his ‘not to care about others’ attitude. He paves way to Raghav’s progress, for the latter’s intensions to work for his nation is highly commendable. Since the story is set as flashback being recalled by the narrator after the moment of realisation, the entire narrative holds a sense of self-confession. Gopal’s admittance is reflected through instances and expressions that make him distinct from Raghav and Aarti.

There are three significant incidents in the novel to elevate the perception on Gopal’s self-confession. During their childhood, when Gopal is busy stealing food from other lunch boxes, Raghav stands for National Anthem as a sign of patriotism and makes Gopal to stand along with him. Raghav also asks him to confess for the stealing Aarti’s eatable. They enter into a serious argument after the launching of “BHUKamp,” a college magazine edited by Raghav. It is an exclusive part of Gopal’s narration to indicate how they impertinently vary:

‘You don’t come to a professional engineering college to edit magazines.

People work... to get a good job,’ I said.

‘That’s such a narrow minded view. And what about the things around us?

The food being cooked in an unhygienic manner. Labs with outdated machines.

Look at our city. Why is Varanasi so dirty? Who is going to clean our rivers?’

Raghav’s black eyes were feverish.

‘Not us,’ I retorted. ‘Sorting out our own life is hard enough.’

Raghav picked up his spoon and pointed it at me. ‘That’s the attitude,’ he said, ‘that I’m here to change.’

... ‘Nobody can change anything. Hostel workers are not going to cook like your mother. And Varanasi has been the world’s dumping ground for thousands of years....’ (100-01)

Love in *Revolution 2020* comes under light tinged with a tether of politics. It sprouts out of innocence, attraction, and with all other common characteristic features of tender love. Finally, politics dominates human emotions and determines the lives of individuals. Love is unconditional but in the current scenario, people have to consider all the other things those accompany it. Money and status play a significant role, which together forms a combination that assures a better life in the current scenario.

Gopal’s love for Aarti can be distinguished into three phases. Throughout all the phases Gopal’s passion remains the same. However, the various aspects of society influence Gopal and tend to change his motives towards Aarti. The friendship they share reaches another stage when they enter into adolescence. Followed by the early stages of adulthood, when Aarti’s eventual separation from Raghav occurs, Gopal gives up all the tenets of being loyal to his friend makes physical contact with Aarti.

Politics enters this stage where Aarti, the heir of a family with influential political background, shows Gopal, a way to make money more than he does now. He also comes to know that someone to be contested from Aarti’s family has the probability to win the upcoming elections. Gopal dreams big, for MLA Shukla also motivates him regarding the two-in-one task to win a ticket to parliament and to have Aarti’s hand in marriage.

Aarti's presence in Gopal's life is a boon to him, because he has been yearning for years to have her beside him during all times of his life. Instead of sacrificing the money that he has earned in a covetous manner, he sacrifices his love. The sacrifice episode of Gopal is a thrust area for dramatic purpose to embellish the story and to give effect to the message, which the author wishes to convey to his readers. Here, Gopal's actions sympathise with readers and the sacrificial entity is used as a tool to answer his question asked in the opening of the novel, "You are a good person" (R2020 296). If the sacrifice proves him to be a hero, then the self-destructive acts that he keeps on committing prove him again to be an antihero.

The closure of epilogue depicts Gopal to be a perfect hero with his eyes opened towards his society, for he is a product clearly meant for hero-worship. Gopal, all throughout the narrative is a representative of common men, for, "The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic" as Emerson asserts in his essay, "Heroism". Gopal hails from corrupted, self-centred and soulless society of the postmodern world. Gopal has also failed to recall that he has not born a bad man and the society has taught him to be so. His decision in the end also is uncertain for he fails to overview the positive side of his self and the negative aspect of society that might grease Raghav's mind in future.

The major twist occurs in the climax of the story, where Gopal realises that he is not worthy enough to acquire desirable positions – as a life partner to Aarti and as a political leader. He witnesses that Raghav has sacrificed a lavish life that an engineering degree would offer. Gopal feels that he has to contribute something for the society. As a result, he makes no new offer but wishes to set things right, which he messed up earlier

using his influence that is aided by money and power. Gopal gives up his love not because he finds Raghav can love Aarti more than he does but the latter could be a better politician than his corrupted self.

Gopal descends to the readers as an object of sympathy because of having himself enwrapped with self-sacrifice and accepting pain voluntarily. In the climax of Gopal's narration, he is found lonely in his apartment holding the scrapbook presented by Aarti. This symbolises that Gopal has to live always with nothing but memories. Even in this stage, his weaker conscience is delivered. All throughout his life, he had been considering himself inferior to others. At the time of AIEEE results, he feels "like a beggar hanging out with kings" (*R2020* 110); he finds his uncle's "two sons and two daughters, all dressed in rich clothes," for which he feels that he "didn't look like their relative at all," during the time of his father's cremation (*R2020* 110). The narrative, embodying such instances, highlights that the society only has made him feel so small. The society has to be blamed; however, Gopal's failure in realising his self also has to be highlighted – his failure in contributing to his existence.

An ideal hero is an individual who can sense the perils approaching beforehand, if not, he practically resolves the clouded hazards over him and his fellow men. Therefore, a hero has always been a leader. Gopal, in *Revolution 2020*, has been threshed with the management works of the college for he owns the land on which the college is built in. Despite of the situational demands, Gopal remains passive throughout all the significant happenings of his life. Any remarkable change in the society would not occur without a collective effort of individuals.

It is necessary for an initiative that should be upheld by individuals or by one extraordinary among the commons. Gopal realises that he is corrupted and finds an alternative. He finds Raghav as an appropriate person to be the leader and he is not ready to take the initiative himself. He awaits a change to be brought by someone and wishes not to function for it. He is a chairperson by chance and possesses mere traits of a hanger-on by nature.

Gopal's passiveness is not only a loss to his society, but also he suffers with it in his life. He remains inexpressive that allows him to see the things working beyond his force, which he could not take it. As a consequence, his failure provokes him to work underneath the vision of others, similar to a shrewder. For instance, he always wanted to express how much Aarti means to him but he never does it. The expressions those he fails to exhibit are impressive and display the measureless love for her.

Gopal's submissive character wins token for Raghav to enter the scene that takes away Aarti far away from Gopal. These instances, collectively, makes him feel inferior, out of which feeling, he wants to steal Aarti from Raghav. Eventually, he feels guilty and that completes the construction process of an antihero in the postmodern context – a failure. Gopal's complex seems to revolve “around social status, power, ego, and dominance” in his early stages of his life (“Inferiority Complex and The Self-Image”). At this period of adulthood, his inferiority complex gains strength from his self-consciousness.

In *The Home and the World*, Sandip's character serves as a typical role model to extract the essence of antiheroism. It is because he is, almost, the only one who posed the vicious characteristic traits in the story. But when the postmodern output, *Revolution*

2020 is taken into consideration, ranging from a small kid to an old man, everyone serves to be an archetype of an antihero. Although, the characters exhibit neutralized manners in their activities, the bad in men seems ruling the good in them. A man cheating his younger brother for the sake of owning a property; a corrupted politician poisoning others' mind; an old man defending for his property even at the ailing stage; a young man drifts his sail to get what he wants, who starts his story as "a ten-year-old thief" (R2020 12), are notable specimens of postmodern era.

Finally, when the moment of realisation is yet to arrive, Gopal depicts what sort of people they both are dealing with, in their everyday life. Shukla functions as a guide and almost as a godfather to Gopal, whom he has to meet him very often for personal and official reasons. Shukla is the person who intoxicates Gopal's mind and introduces him to big money. He rekindles the bad in Gopal, "Politician, businessman and educationalist – power, money and respect – perfect combination. You are destined for big things" (R2020 256).

On the contrary, Gopal sees a farmer who has come to meet Raghav all the way from a remote village, in order to voice about his ailing community affected by a scam. Raghav has already published a huge story relating to the issue and people related to the scam had broken his newspaper office, of which sorts are very common in India. For instance, a real time incident happened in the southern part of India, where a Tamil newspaper office was attacked in the year 2009 and three staff members were burnt alive in a mid-of-night. The farmer has come to plead Raghav to do stories further on the scam which might draw public attention. He believes in Raghav that he could save his ailing community. Even at the stage of closing down of his 'Revolution 2020', he agrees to do a

story on the scam, of which he had suffered a lot already. Gopal sees his spirit has not broken up unlike his office has been smashed by external forces.

Gopal supports nothing because he has his own difficulties to overcome. If at all had he managed to devote some time to think about something else regarding the society except for having a narrowed vision reserved for his Aarti, his father and brooding over the pressure that he holds for his entrance examinations, he might have traced out the weaker him. It is certain that Gopal's psychological framework has to attribute every minute impact of his surroundings and society that has been chiselling his conscience from time to time. Yet, he has failed to design his own pattern of his future plans.

Gopal yields to the ordeals of society by paving way for corruption in order to get his jobs done. In this regard, Gopal's character serves to draw a picture perfect image of an archetype, who has been pushed up by various societal factors that constitute the unwritten doctrines of Indian sub-continent.

The attitude of filtering essential things is one among the major concepts of postmodernity. Essence of the filtered substance is purely individualistic and can either be a distinct good or a bad or a mixture. The residue left behind by the filtration process would also be similar to that of the filtered substance. Thus, the quintessence of an antihero is a combination of both good and bad, as Randa Abou-bakr reflects the same thought in his article, "The Political Prisoner as Antihero: The Prison Poetry of Wole Soyinka and 'Ahmaad Fu'ad Nigm", in the following manner, "... the antihero is not the opposite of the hero, but that the two are embedded within one another..." (265). The combination is a weird one like the existence of North Pole and South Pole at a same place.

One can also contradict that good exists wherever bad features and vice versa. A person's conscience could not accommodate both good and bad for each of these try to dominate one another. There are chances for the original image to get blurred in front of the illumined unreality. It can be illustrated that a postmodern man lives between chances and not between choices. Gopal is a well-constructed character with disintegrated conscience that serves as an archetype to represent an antihero in the postmodern context.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Life is the shattering of form. The inscribed character claims for itself eternity,
but time reads it as caricature.

- Davide Stimilli

The present study explores the weak conscience of modern and postmodern generations. It closely reads the arithmetic's of life where everything after equals to 'survival' and fulfilment of 'great expectations.' The rehabilitation centers overflow with a section of population who have drowned their scruples in alcohol and hedon practices.

The embodiment of the fragmented self of the survivors has become the significant trait of postmodernistic expressions. A search on the integrated image of a hero takes the critics or interpreters of literature an expedition to find the fragments those have fallen apart. Each discipline that associates with human advancement has dismantled the integration of an ideal man, who is termed as hero in literary aspects. In *Life is What You Make It*, similar 'proto-feminist hero' is traced out, who loses self-control; and it depicts how her over brooding nature has given way to a psychic disorder.

An attempt to define the archetype of an antihero is subjective, for the process of extracting an archetype embarks not only on abstract theories but also on the disciplines of human sciences. 'Antihero', as it contradicts the term 'hero', one should not consider him as 'the villain'. Accrediting the underprivileged qualities mentioned in the preceding chapters, conclusions cannot be drawn that an antihero should be entirely eradicated from society or literature. The basic difference associate with an antihero is that his functions are determined by his society and not entirely driven by his conscience. An antihero is

essential in order to magnify the ordeals and influences of changing society; however, the writers must know where an antihero must be placed in literature and society as well.

The art of using the voices of individuals is a typical characteristic feature of romantic era, and Tagore being the unconventional artist has embodied his work with possible emerging trends but not wholly varying from the conventional aspects. The characteristics of an antihero are presented in Tagore's *The Home and the World* through the psychological framework, verbalised through Sandip's solitary musings. One such representation of the character provides hints for the readers as well as critics to trace out the motives of an archetypal figure. Tagore's writings serve appropriately for the purpose of tracing out the definite archetypal characters of modernistic age because, "In rejecting Tagore, one rejects an important part of the modern consciousness in India," as Ashis Nandy rightly comments in his essay, "The Fear of Nationalism" (7).

The degraded man's self is the utmost crucial evidence for the loss of innocence and health which are the characteristic features of an antihero. As per Biblical and Quranic accounts, man lost innocence and inflicted with the loss of paradise. At this instance, man is a "Situational Archetype," who is inflicted with an "Unhealable Wound," that is described in the article, "Archetypes" as, "Either a physical or psychological wound that cannot be fully healed. The wound symbolizes a loss of innocence" (Hccfl.edu). The cues in the current era which relate to the negative visions of various writers across various ethnicities prove that degradation has occurred. For instance, the threats of spywares are high in this technologically advanced world which was then alarmed by George Orwell in his novel, *1984*.

It is witnessed that Tagore has employed Sandip's role with typical villainous qualities. Sandip's resonance disturbs the harmony that exists between Nikhil and Bimala. Tagore's motive in creating Sandip's character can be understood by his spiritual principle that it is unholy to take anything by force. It is obvious that the literary output – Sandip's character is a personification of unholyest creation, which is revealed through his expressions. The idea is also revealed through Nikhil's statements that he has to accept what life offers to him. It lays parallel to what Tagore has embellished in *Gitanjali*. The uncouth nature of Sandip is not only revealed through self-expressions given in the novel, but also exhibited by the Nikhil's and Bimala's narration.

Gopal in *Revolution 2020* is clearly an ironic hero, whose common characteristics such as inconsistency, ambiguity, un-reliable self and so on, are in contradiction to the uncommon self of a noble hero. As Tagore has absorbed all the bad out of the common self and given him a definite shape by figuring out Sandip's character. Bhagat, on the other hand, being a postmodern writer presents the character without any segregation and the counterparts function within Gopal – because of which aspect, he appears both as a hero and a villain. He traps Raghav, his rival; he plays tricks to draw Aarti towards him; he is corrupted. On contrary to these actions, he also restores Aarti to Raghav; clears all the possible obstacles in Raghav's way; he expects that corruption has to be eradicated. However, all the changes occur because of his realisation, he does not play the role of a real hero by taking the lead. He remains passive and expects someone else to play the role, by which act, Gopal defiantly becomes an antihero.

Wars were waged and fought endlessly between nations for three main reasons: for territories, wealth and for women. The cities of Greece are widely familiar about the

war fought between the kingdoms of Sparta and Troy, quarrelling against each other for territories. When the quarrel does come to an end there is again an initiation of war with a woman, Helen, behind it. The problems then and now are, more or less, share the same line, however, the approaches of men to those issues have changed. Gopal speaks mercilessly to his uncle when he has to get his share of land back and he pushes Raghav to a helpless position to avenge him for stealing Aarti away from him. This shows the ‘psychic residue’ retains territorial aggression and inter-sexual affinities.

The valorous warrior is absent in the antihero, for whom Sandip and Gopal serve as perfect specimens. Perseus, according to Greek Mythology, saves both Andromeda and her father’s kingdom that was in danger by killing a dangerous sea monster and fighting courageously against Phineus to whom she had been already promised in marriage. Nevertheless, in the words of Kevin Osborn and Dana L. Burgess, “With Phineus out of the way, Perseus married Andromeda and—unlike most of the gods and heroes of classical mythology—remained faithful to her throughout his life” (130). The antiheroes in modern and postmodern context, on the contrary, earn the token of woman’s love either by sympathy or by a tricky manner. Then, they find ways to defeat their rivals in a covetous manner, which characteristic trait is seen in Sandip and Gopal.

The transformation from an ideal setting to uncouth setting can be obviously marked in *Revolution 2020*. The archetypal settings that have been chosen to represent an ideal hero remains the same in both the novels, but the nature of the settings have been deformed or degraded. For instance, blissful human civilization on land is determined by the presence of water bodies like streams, rivers and so on. According to Hindu Myth, water is being worshipped as Lord Varuna, who is responsible to cause rain – one among

the five sources of all lives on Earth. Further, River Ganges flowing across Indian Subcontinent has also voracious history in Indian Myth and is believed as the wife of Lord Shiva. In Chetan Bhagat's modern India, River Ganges, beyond the conception of it as a holy river, the banks and almost the entire water body that flows across Varanaasi is described as the river of dead and Varanaasi itself the city of dead.

Every individual's conscience subconsciously functions for self-satisfaction and it remains as the motivating force of the entire human race. The nature of self-fulfilment varies from one person to another, and the variations serve as significant samples to trace the archetypal figures. It is observed from Sandip's and Gopal's motives behind their deeds that they want to establish themselves as influential persons. From this attitude, it is evident that they possess the crux of the Hitler phenomenon, to act upon his/her own ideals within.

There is equally good in a man for what is naturally bad in him. The archetype of an antihero, as discussed, is not entirely uncertain; for there are so many archetypal analysts have defined patterns for the antiheroic self. In postmodern context, not only the antihero, but every other character has indeterminate self. The nature of an antihero is not determined only by the persona of the character but also with respect to the uncertain background that he hails from. It can be understood by allocating the difference between an ideal character and an un-ideal one, similarly tracing differences between the backdrops.

For instance, if a hero could be portrayed with the images of health like strength, vitality, potency, fertility, images of sleep and rest which indicate peace of mind; happy dreams, and so on, then an antihero is surrounded by un-ideal health issues. It is

understood from the instances mentioned in the novels that Sandip (HW) and Gopal (R2020) are not of good physiques – Sandip has been facing the effects of dyspepsia and Gopal envies about the Raghav's physical fitness, whose health also found to be in a deteriorate phase given to his alcoholism.

The two novels share similar background on account of political unrest. It is generally believed that “a resurgence of interest in myth... result in part from the growing awareness of non-Western cultures, many of which retain strong affinities with a mythic understanding of the world,” as illustrated by Bruce Young in his article, “Myth and Archetypal Criticism”. However, the growing demarcation between the myth and the succeeding generation nullifies the mythical elements and objects. For instance, the arguments that occur between Sandip and Nikhil in Tagore's novel are based upon the strong historical facts. On the other hand, in the postmodernistic novel, *Revolution 2020*, beyond the myth of a few places those are related to the superstitions and religious beliefs of the people, there are no other things that rely on foundational evidence.

The role of Sandip and Gopal in *The Home and the World* and *Revolution 2020* varies from one another, respectively. Sandip's antiheroic traits gain significance as similar qualities are found in characters of several postmodern contemporary fictions. The image that Tagore wished to be expelled from the society is now in vogue as heroes with high reception among readers. The character of Gopal exactly pin points the image of a common man in current society. Realistic images render ideas and awareness on the evolving society, however, in terms of hero worship they provide nothing but the undesirable quality of human beings.

An antihero is a hero, who has lost qualities which are ideal. How can he be restored with the lost typical features of being a man? To find an answer is to quote from the former President of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's speech (2007), which he had articulated during the Golden Jubilee Year of the European Union. He quotes from influential people the world has ever witnessed that enrich his speech:

Where there is righteousness in the heart,

There is beauty in the character.

Where there is beauty in the character,

There is harmony in the home.

When there is harmony in the home,

There is order in the Nation.

When there is order in the Nation,

There is peace in the World. (Youtube.com)

Though, people have now become rational, hero-worship still prevails. Thus, an antihero whose characteristic traits are very similar to that of a common man in current society must turn to be a hero with "righteousness in heart... beauty in character," which together would bring "harmony in the home... order in the Nation... peace in the World," for what the degrading humanity is ailing for.

Rabindranath Tagore, whom the Indian Sub-continent celebrates as a seer and sage, definitely stand beyond the heights of Chetan Bhagat. However, both writers contribute their own share in delineating antiheroic facet of humanity. The ideal personifications vary not only from place to place and from time to time, but also with respect to individuals. Human beings are always seekers, who keep searching for

something or the other in their lifetime. The role of ‘man of letters’ amidst other communities is to inspire and initiate the quest.

There is wide scope for further research in the same line of archetypal reading of antihero. Archetypal reading of antihero from different literature, like British, American, Russian will also prove constructive. Further studies can be done in various aspects like gender studies regarding the antiheroine perspectives. In addition, cultural and traditional shifts can be dealt in detail.

Tagore’s novel deals with some of the fundamental aspects of modernity that satisfy the basic tenets explained by Mary Klages in her work essay “Postmodernism”, “They serve, . . . to justify and explain virtually all of our social structures and institutions, including democracy, law, science, ethics and aesthetics” (168), one can easily venture the modernist society. Further, Tagore’s “significance extended far behind the range of his creative work: as a thinker, philosopher, educationalist, artist and nationalist. That is why, he has been hailed as ‘The Great Sentinel,’ ‘The Ascetic,’ ‘The Reformer,’ ‘The Bulbul,’ ‘The Gurudev,’ ‘The Mystic,’ ‘The Complete Man,’ ‘The Visionary,’ ‘The Humanist,’ etc.,” as Gauri Shankar Jha celebrates Tagore in his essay, “Tagore Minus Gitanjali”.

Similarly, Bhagat, being a contemporary writer and is politically aware, gives the new generation readers the essence of essential complications in lives, those are necessary beyond the everyday pleasures. Henceforth, Rabindranath Tagore and Chetan Bhagat, though on different scales, their writings remain as mediums to explore and gain a better understanding of the respective societies.

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