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## **Reinterpretation of Myth in Narrating Indian History: By Shashi Tharoor The Great Indian Novel**

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**Abstract:** *Shashi Tharoor's The Great Indian Novel is veritably fascinating it deals with the Indian myth of Mahabharata and history of freedom struggle. He recites the history of ultramodern India through the grand story. The new passes to make a history of the colonizer and postcolonial India in terms of real events and characters from the twentieth century Indian socio-political gospel. Numbers from Indian history are converted into mythological characters and mythological story of the epic is retold as a history of India. In this exploration paper, I seek to concentrate on the new literal notion that reinterprets myth and history for reconstruction of the once reality. To develop ultramodern sensibility about the great legends and to define value of the history is the alternate major end of this composition. The composition aims at erecting a new nation on rational lines with changed political testaments and altering political script. The exploration paper is divided into three sections, section first puts forth the generality of myth and history in fabrication, alternate analyses of the novel and section third concludes.*

*The paper with exploration finding. This research paper examines Indian Postcolonial history of India and how its politicians are represented through myth in Shashi Tharoor's The Great Indian Novel. Tharoor frames the progress of political events during colonial period and postcolonial period of India. His narrative represents the characters as the figures of The Mahabharat and the incidents of the Mythology take new forms in the contemporary politics of India. Tharoor has so dexterously knitted together the incidents and characters of the novel with that of the mythical characters of The Mahabharata.*

**Keywords:-** Artificial intelligence, Machine learning, Deep learning, Classification, Supervised learning.

### **Study of the Great Indian Novel**

Fictionalizing Constitution lead with Mythology

Shashi Tharoor, an eminent writer of both fiction and non-fiction has reinvented and remolded the stories of the great epic as an account of the political history of the India, in his debut novel called The Great Indian Novel. However, the novel takes its title the Mahabharata as a primary source of inspiration. In Sanskrit Maha means great and Bharata means India and therefore Tharoor calls his novel The Great Indian Novel. The novel is an exhaustive analysis of the influence of the Mahabharata, regarding the Indian freedom struggle, which leads to the partition of the India and correlating the two, Tharoor himself confesses, "Both are stories that at different levels are retold in Indian culture. In my intermixing the two, I was able to cast a perhaps



cynical modern sensibility upon the great legends of the past, but equally was able to cast some of the values of that passed onto the experiences of the more recent present.”

He not only juxtaposes the atmospherics of the Mahabharata with modern history. The organization of the chapters, the novel imitates the organization of the Mahabharata. The novel has eighteen “books,” just as the Mahabharata has eighteen books, corresponding with the war between Pandava’s and Kaurava’s which lasted for eighteen days. In the opening chapter, entitled “The Twice-Born Tale” the narrator declares his intention to have “The Song of Modern India” transcribed in his very own words. Ved Vyas dictates the whole story to Ganapathi similarly imposed by Vyasa to Ganesh in the opening part of the ancient epic. The Great Indian Novel portrays the narrative of the battle for independence of Hastinapur under the administration of Mahaguru Gangaji (Mahatma Gandhi), his acclaimed Mango March (Salt March) and the birth of Indian democracy with a blind nationalist (Jawaharlal Nehru) and a British Vicereine (Lady Mountbatten). Other significant characters are Karna (Md. Ali Jinnah), Pandu, the Pale (Subhas Chandra Bose) and Duryodhani (Indira Gandhi).

In The Great Indian Novel, Bhishma of the Mahabharata and Gandhi of the Indian freedom struggle become Ganga Datta or Gangaji. Tharoor allegorically draws a parallel between these two, one embedded in mythological past and with the recent history, by stressing that the two were equally serious in their principles and both intentionally surrendered their claim to power and administration of the nation. Thus setting up of Gangaji’s character as a sincere, selfless and successful politician, Tharoor discusses his followers and the other members of the Indian freedom struggle.

In the Mahabharata, Dhritrashtra and Pandu had a right to the throne of Hastinapur after Bhishma, in the Indian political history, Nehru and Subhas were the contenders left for leading the Indian polity after Gandhi. Thus Tharoor equals Dhritrashtra with Nehru, and Pandu with Subhas. As the novel proceeds, Gangaji’s bias against Pandu becomes evident, and so does his preference for Dhritrashtra. It was because of Gangaji’s favors towards him that Dhritrashtra was able to create a place for himself in the country’s political arena, while Pandu had to pay heavily for Gangaji’s indifference towards him. The fact that Gangaji supported Dhritrashtra in the Mahabharata in the same way Bhishma’s supported Dhritrashtra and his Kaurava sons, despite his awareness of their falsity. It is also suggestive of Gandhi’s unreasonable and blenders bias in favor of Nehru.

Tharoor underlines how the hunger for power, which was the cause of the battle of Kurukshetra in the Mahabharata. It was equally important theme in the political scene of both pre and post partition of India. In the processes of defining this aspect, he introduces the character of Karna, who stands for Jinnah. Despite belonging to the same clan, he was deprived of his rightful position because of the circumstances of his birth. However, Karna fights courageously for his rights and finally succeeds in setting up a new nation called Karnistan which stands for Pakistan. This division of the India into Pakistan and Hindustan on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1947 was recorded as ‘the partition’ in the Indian history, an event that influenced the future of two nations.

Shashi Tharoor narrates many characters that are influential even today in the India. The novel started with Gangaji’s (Gandhi’s) appearance on the Indian political scene and ends with Priya Duryodhani’s return to power after the fall of the Janta Government. Tharoor narrates Gandhiji’s character as “while he was alive, he was impossible to ignore: once he had gone, he was impossible to imitate.”(47) He established Gangaji as the



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most pious leader of the freedom fighters, who toiled hard to lay the foundation independent India. He imbued with the spirit of truth, ahimsa and Satyagraha. But on the other hand he was responsible for the partition of India.

Tharoor does not suggest directly that Gangaji was responsible for the disaffection between the Hindus and the Muslims. He gives clear indication that Gangaji's ideas and principles were responsible for alienations of political leader like Karna from Kauravas party. He describes Karna's disapproval of Gandhi ji in the following words:

"Karna was not much of Muslim but he found Gangaji too much of Hindu the Mahaguru's traditional attire, his spiritualism, his spouting of the ancient text, his ashram, his constant harking back to an idealized pre-British past that Karna did not believe in.... All this made the young man mistrustful of the Great Teacher.... And Gangaji's mass politics were, to Karna, based on an appeal to the wrong instincts: they embodied an atavism that in his view would never take the country forward". Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* illuminates the sad misfortune of India that could not produce another leader of Gangaji's stature. Dhritrashtra as the leader of Kauravas who betrayed Gangaji's faith and trust as soon as liberated India was born. Thus Tharoor has treated history as a raw material and transformed the characters. He picks up story and moral attitudes of the characters. He mythologized historical notions to transform his art and not hesitate, even violating them if necessary.

#### **Current Historiography of Trendy Incident**

Shashi Tharoor also comments on various popular and critical incidents in Indian history. He depicted colonial incident which focuses the grotesque brutality of the British in the novel is Bibigarh massacre referred to the Jalianwala Bagh tragedy in the Indian history. The description of Jalianwala Bagh massacre by Tharoor shows his agreement with the likes of Samuel P. Huntington, who believe that "the West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion but rather by superiority in applying organized violence." The similar incidents in the novel are 'Chaurasta' event, actually known as the Chauri Chaura incident, Nathu Ram Godse killed Mahatma Gandhi, illegitimate relationship with Viceroy's wife lady Mountbatten, emergency incident and most critical incident of Kashmir's king.

The Maharaja Vyabhichar Sing signed the contract of Kashmir agreement simply on the demand of the women in his bed. Historians generally believe that instead of the Maharaja, as shown by Tharoor in his fictionalized historical story, it was Nehru who caused delay in the signing of the contract. According to them, as soon as the Pakistani forces attacked Kashmir, the Maharaja had sent his wazir to Delhi, requesting the Indian government to give military support to Kashmir, against the Pakistan's, while in return Kashmir would join to India. Nehru, the prime minister of India, kept the wazir waiting in Delhi for three days, while Pakistan's forces moved into Kashmir. Nehru agreed to help Kashmir only after the Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the chief minister of Kashmir. Moreover when the Indian Army was steadily and successfully pushing back the enemy, a ceasefire was announced by the United Nations. Nehru had decided to go to the U. N. O., a decision that earned him the utter disdain of the people of India. In the narrative, Tharoor suggests that Nehru had acted in accordance with the suggestion of the Vicereine, and had taken an absurd decision for which India has to pay to the present day.



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Tharoor's novel emerges as an outstanding exemplification of the persistence of British colonialism, in the liberated and free India. His fiction explicitly reveals that while before August, the country was exploited by aliens, after independence she was forced to suffer at the hands of her own leader. Tharoor's much praised hero Gangaji, who had non-violently shaken mighty British Empire but became weak to use the same weapon to prevent partition of the subcontinent. That's why he was murdered by Nathu Ram Godse, represented as 'Shikhandi' in the novel. Shikhandi, who is actually Amba in epic, changed sex and name killed Gangaji for his mistake to withdraw from political scene of partition. It shows that Nathu Ram killed Gandhiji because he felt that mahatma cheated him and the nation. Tharoor's Shikhandi not only expressed his personal reasons for killing Gangaji but also echoed those of Nathu Ram Godse's Gandhi's assassination. Nathu Ram perceived Gandhi to be unjust in forcing the Indian government to give fifty five crores of rupees to Pakistan at a time of partition which returned with invaded India in Kashmir. Pakistan purchased weapon with that money for fighting Indian forces. Perhaps Gandhi's fast is not accepted by Godse and many Hindus had begun to doubt the wisdom of Gandhi's dabbling of politics. Further, question of Hindu-Muslim not only communal but became international in the period of Nehru and even today we are facing same everlasting problem. Thus Tharoor suggests that Gangaji, who stood for Hindu-Muslim unity throughout his life, ironically became responsible for the augmentation of the communal tensions between Hindu and Muslims. Commenting on Tharoor's comprehension and depiction of Mahatma Gandhi's role in colonial India, Dr. Dhar observes, "It is somewhat ironical that a person who fought all his life for Hindu-Muslim unity has to be made responsible for encouraging Muslim separatism, but this is implicit in Tharoor's understanding of Gangaji and of several historians too." Thus many historical incident he tried to reinterpret with his own imaginative genius. Even today the perception of these incidents is totally fractured and cause of communal turmoil in the society. Through reinterpretation, he tried to less down the tensions based on earlier consumption of the history. He also tried to fetch the people from their imaginative glorious past to the current nude realities of the modern life. Some bitter historical incident should be purified and reconstruct with new perspective for the better health of the society.

### **Reinterpretation of Myth**

The epical, narrative method of the novel is an other noteworthy aspect of the postcolonial writing. While history both as context and as reality is a pervasive presence in postmodern Indian English fiction. Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* weaves both myth and history into the fictional narrative is indeed literary master piece of our time. The novel is generally cast in first person narrative, a series of the narrator's monologues. Ved Vyas dictates his story to Ganapathi and seems to be an embodiment of time. He appears to be timeless in the novel and instead of dying towards the end he merely abandons the scene. He also refers to his legs as "my ageless legs" exemplifying the author's indicative style of writing. Ganapathi is established, not simply by the mention of his name, but also by the description given by Ved Vyas.

Myths are the manifestations of man's basic instincts and conflicts, additionally useful means to link the past with the present. They are used to prove that man in spite of all his progress in science is basically the same being he was thousands of years ago. Since the mythical figures symbolize the aspirations of the community, especially the quest myth figures, writers have imaged them to symbolize their individual aspiration as well as of their community. Mahabharata is a guardian to mankind. In our present life, we cannot get answers of



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many problems and so we take the support of myth to solve these problems. The myth may answer man's longing for beyond any doubt his need-to live in a world cut to the limits of his mental and verbal measuring instruments. His determination for rational reliability may pressure him not exclusively to see the world as a reflection of himself additionally to have belief in it. To ask him to reflect that self-reflection as though it were a moral obligation. Use of mythology is a distinguished aspect of the novel. Myth based not on scientific truth but instead on one's beliefs and faith. It is a part and parcel of Indian culture and tradition. Reinterpretation of myth will certainly widen and transform the horizon of modern life.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* is a mind-blowing text of postmodern Indian English Literature. Myth as interpretive and narrative strategy is a significant aspect of this novel. The novel weaves myth fictional narratives is indeed literary masterpieces of postcolonial fiction. Even today we need to recast the value of Indian freedom struggle because always serious social communal problems disturb the peace of tranquility of India means the new generation is far away from the patriotic movement and that's why need to reevaluate the importance of Indian myth new perspective. The language of the people of the partition sounds different in our context. We, at the present movement experience communal riots which are only a consequence of the partition. Still we are facing Kashmir problem, Hindu-Muslim opposition and separatist's movement in north India. The partition of the past could be called the cause of a communal unrest of the present-day but the reverse does not hold. A communal unrest today can help to brighten the effect of the partition. Hence the partition cannot be lived; it can only be reconstructed through fiction that exerts pressure on the interpretive imagination, a text that is alien to the present since the past is a foreign country and a country of the mind. Through this allegorical amalgamation of the ancient and the modern times, he highlights that the essential nature of man perpetually remains the same. In essence, the nucleus of the novel takes the womb of postmodern sensibility for granted. The answer offered to communal problems is that unless certain material conditions are available, unless the soil of society is furrowed and tilled for certain modern mentalities and not just germination is sufficient. In fact, the very concept of such a possibility might seem absurd, if not unwelcoming. We have to germinate seeds of communal harmony, breed and brought up with great zeal that is possible with only reinterpretation of myth. A fuller, keener and more humanly illuminating historical awareness must modify the generalized, ideology bound reading made by the historians with the reinterpretations made upon them by the writers.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* attractively correlates the story of *The Mahabharata* of Indian freedom struggle. The present research paper tries to explore a history of the colonial and postcolonial India in terms of real events and characters from the twentieth century Indian socio-political philosophy. The narrator of *The Great Indian Novel* is Ved Veyas and lord Ganesha is amanuensis who is described as Ganpati in the novel. From the beginning to the end of the novel Ved Vyas dictates Ganpati the modern history of India by mythologizing the actual events. The novel begins with the story of Indian freedom struggle and the brutality of British Raj which caused havoc on India. Shashi Tharoor directly begins this epic novel by intermingling the story and characters of *The Mahabharat* with Indian modern history. The eighteenth parts of the novel are described as books and Tharoor keeps switching the story of contemporary history of India and the mythology of the epic *The Mahabharat*. A few instances are; 'The Duel with the Crown', 'The Twice-born Tale', 'The Midnight Parents', 'Passage Through India', 'A Raj Quartet' etc. The advent of Mahatma Gandhi is presented through the introduction of Ganga who is known as Bhishma in the





epic. Duryodhan represents Indira Gandhi, the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru who is represented as Dhritarashtra and his younger brother Pandu is associated with Subhash Chandra Bose in the novel. Muhammad Ali Karna is the leader of Muslim league that demands for a separate Kingdom 'Karnistan' (Pakistan). Guru Drona of The Mahabharat is presented as Jaiprakash Dronna who becomes the great name after the JP movement against Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Tharoor explains how Drona teaches five Pandawas and his son Ashwathaman. They are taught the Vedas; classical music, folk dance, rhetoric, oratory and Drona's own special skills. He teaches them nationalism. Arjun becomes his favourite as he is a very sharp learner. Arjun requests Drona to permit him to sleep at his feet so that he may learn all the time like Ashwathaman does. Arjun becomes a proficient bowman and learns all the skills perfectly.

We all know the well known incident of Arjun concentration on his target. Tharoor also discusses the incident of Eklavya, though with a slight variation. In Tharoor's The Great Indian Novel Eklavya doesn't give the thumb of his right hand as demanded by Drona. He firmly rejects Drona's demand on the ground that he may not be able to write anything in the future. He has an old mother to serve so he cannot spoil his life. Mohammed Ali Karna becomes a self-proclaimed leader of Indian Muslims. He is a big equipment of British divisive policies. He is very annoyed when he finds out that Muslims of Kaurva party have won more seats than that of his Muslim League. Mohammad Rafi belongs to Kaurva party and being a Muslim he poses big challenges for Mohammed Ali Karna who is a leader of Muslim League. When Kaurva party discusses on the issue of the coalition with Muslim League, Mohammad Rafi firmly speaks against any coalition with Muslim League. He is of the view that Kaurva party is the only true national party and we respect all groups and good Muslims where as Karna is a radical who talks about only one section. Gangaji declares that there will be no coalition. Gangaji becomes very angry when the British government announces war without consulting the elected representatives of Kaurva party. If they had discussed our leaders the Kaurva Party would have supported the British because even Gangaji didn't not like Fascism. But they have neglected the democracy and it becomes impossible for the Kaurva party to endorse the war. Kaurva party leaves the office of the British and announces not to co-operate with the British war effort. When Vidur is about to resign from the office Dhritrashtra tries to stop him but this time Vidur does not obey his brother and resignation letter is wired to Delhi. The participation in the war on Indian behalf without the consent of Kaurva party's leaders is going to be fatal for the British Raj. The democratic leaders of Karva party (INC) get disillusioned and desire to start a big campaign against British Raj. This time Gangaji give a slogan that is simple clear and direct 'Quit India'. These are the two Magic words that ignite the public of India. This new slogan is on everyone face very soon. This movement can be seen everywhere including the walls of bus stands, railway stations, on notice boards, on theatre walls.

This movement last only 24 hours the British arrest the principal leaders of Kaurva party, the movement is over before it really begins. In modern history of India Mahatma Gandhi announces 'Quit India Movement' on eight August during Second World War. Amba on the other side is preparing herself to kill Ganga Datta. The character of Amba in the novel represents the historical character of Nathuram Godse who killed Mahatma Gandhi. Shikhandi is the mythological counterpart who becomes the cause of Ganga Datta's death in The Mahabharata. Amba goes to a doctor to change her gender and she becomes a man. With the end of the world war there begins another war in India. After the World War the British is no longer as strong as it



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used to be. Now the days of Empire are numbered. They are feeble in their empirical positions throughout the world. They start releasing the prisoners of 'Quit India Movement.' Elections take place Kaurva do well but not as before. Muslim League wins most of Muslim majority areas. At the last hours of the British Empire in India the British Raj strikes its great weapon of 'divide et imperia' for the last time and it destroys Indian unity forever. Mohammed Ali Karna wants karnistan (Pakistan). He announces 'direct action'. "Several thousand cadavers, burning vehicle, gutted homes, looted shops and rivulets of blood, everyone except the Mahaguru began thinking about the unthinkable: the division of the motherland." Gangaji tries his best to stop the bloodshed. But he is no longer a charismatic personality. The foreign media is calling it a civil war. The British send a new viceroy in India for the proper transfer of power. His name is Viscount Drewpad. All possible efforts are made to accommodate Muslims in India but Mohammed Ali Karna does not agree at any point and sticks on his demand for a separate land Karanistan (Pakistan) for Muslims. It is heartbreaking for Gangaji. Gangaji departs from the meeting. Now the committee gets ready for the partition of India and Gangaji's era is over. India could not resolve this matter peacefully as the viceroy Drewpad was in great haste to go back. Tharoor holds Kaurva and the British responsible for the partition. Drewpad has never visited any part of our country and he drew a partition line in India. We can see the clear parallelism between the Name 'Drewpad' and the second form of verb 'drew' in his name. Yudhister is described as Morarji Desai and his connotative meaning is Truth. Amba as Shrikhandi (Godse) and Shishupal as Lal Bahadur Shastri. A large number of characters from The Mahabharata are delineated with a deft handling in modern historical point of view in the novel.

The Great Indian Novel retells the contemporary history of India starting with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi in national struggle against British Raj in India to the end of Indira Gandhi's tenure as prime minister of India. Tharoor engages his readers with the very interesting presentation of the characters of The Mahabharata. The characters in the novel ride in luxury cars instead of chariots and reside in multi storey buildings. Tharoor exposes the caste system, which is a long cherished tradition of Indian society, Vidur who is represented as Sardar Vallabh bhai Patel in the novel, is shown as a low caste man who was born from an attendant of the queen. Vidur must be married to the lady of his caste. The narrator Ved Vyas in The Great Indian Novel exposes the dogma of caste system. "As for you Vidur I have identified a young lady whose circumstances perfectly match yours." Tharoor severely criticizes British policy of annexing Indian states in to British Empire with treachery. Ganga Datta will emancipate mother India from the bondage of British Empire. Bhishma's vow of celibacy finds its counterpart in Mahatma Gandhi's vow of celibacy. When Ganga Datta (Mahatma Gandhi) takes his vow of celibacy there was raining, "stray gust showered petals on to Ganga Datta's proud head." Ganga Datta is a Satyagrahi at Motihari indigo farm for the salvation of the peasants who are oppressed by the planters of indigo. Ganga Datta fights against the injustice of administration to the Indigo farmers. He filed a case in the local court and wins with his determined spirit.

The book 'A Raj Quartet' deals with the most horrible incident of Jallianwala Bagh massacre as Bibigarh massacre in the novel. General Dyer is presented as Colonel Rudyard who orders to open fire at the unarmed crowd of men, women and children. 379 people died and 1,137 lay injured and many maimed. 1600 bullets were fired at the innocent people. The brutality of the British Raj was at its peak during the massacre at Bibigarh which explicitly has its counterpart in the history of Jallianwala Massacre. The figures of cruelty are



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just numbers provided by the then British media, actual toll might have not known to us. Most of the historian blamed General Dyer but here again in *The Great Indian Novel* Shashi Tharoor blames the tendency of blaming individual who caused havoc on humanity during British Raj. “And because he was not evil in himself he came to symbolize the evil of the system on whose behalf and in whose defense, he was acting.” Tharoor holds responsible the British Raj for the destitution, hunger and starvation of India. India was a glorious place before the Britishers came “they killed Indian artisan, they created Indian landless labourers, they exported our full employment and they invented our poverty.” Tharoor criticizes bitterly to those historians who have depicted “the British villain as supremely accomplished-the omniscient, omnipotent, manipulators of the destiny of India.” Tharoor called them nonsense who describes the incapable Britishers as omnipotent, in fact they were sinners who invaded India and at the gunpoint caused havoc on the innocent people of India. Tharoor mythologizes post- independence Indian politics and severely exposes and criticizes the then politicians. The great leaders like Gandhi and Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah receive disregard at the hand of Shashi Tharoor. Muhammad Ali Jinnah who pretends to be the religious protector of Muslim, in fact, his religious attitude is not that of a true Muslim. He does not follow religious tenants of Islam. He is given to drinking, enjoys life and joins Muslims only to lead them. Tharoor points out that Jinnah would never think of Muslim if he were offered leadership of India. The scene of August, 1947 is not celebrated by Ganga Datta. On the occasion of independence when everyone was celebrating in Delhi the Mahatma Ganga Datta was not cherishing the moment. Ganga Datta was very sad in the hours of partition. All through his life Ganga Datta preached fraternity which was murdered by both Hindu and Muslim who were killing each other like animals.

The *Great Indian Novel* mythologizes the annexation of Jammu and Kashmir in a very picturesque way. Jammu and Kashmir is described as Manimir in the novel. Vidur (Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel) goes to Manimir in order to annex it in the territory of independent India. The meeting of Vidur with the Maharaja of Manimir at midnight is described ridiculously. At the airport of Manimir Vidur first meets a colonel whose name is Colonel Bevkuf Jan who escorts Vidur to the palace of Maharaja where the Maharaja was sleeping with a nubile satisfying his carnal desire. The Maharaja Vyabhichar Sing signed the contract of Kashmir agreement simply on the demand of the women in his bed. Historians generally believe that instead of the Maharaja, as shown by Tharoor in his fictionalized historical story, it was Nehru who caused delay in the signing of the contract. According to them, as soon as the Pakistani forces attacked Kashmir, the Maharaja had sent his Wazir to Delhi, requesting the Indian government to give military support to Kashmir, against Pakistan, while in return Kashmir would join to India. Nehru, the prime minister of India, kept the Wazir waiting in Delhi for three days, while Pakistan’s forces moved into Kashmir. Nehru agreed to help Kashmir only after the Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah as the chief minister of Kashmir. Moreover when the Indian Army was steadily and successfully pushing back the enemy, a ceasefire was announced by the United Nations. Nehru had decided to go to the UNO, a decision that earned him the utter disdain of the people of India. Tharoor says in the novel, “partition paid a high prize for Dhritarashtra's Idealism.” Tharoor praises Vidur (Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel) for the annexation of Manimir (Jammu and Kashmir) in India without any bloodshed or criticism but it was made controversial by Dhritrastra, by taking the issue to the UNO.





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From the struggle against British rule Tharoor moves to the struggle against Indian government after independence. Jaiprakash Drona who was separated from Kaurva party (the then Congress Party) and makes public gathering against Dhritarashtra and Priya Duryodhani. “Drona was a post independence convert to the Mahaguru's dogma of non violence.”

Jaiprakash Drona exclaims in public that the machineries and factories are being set up but no care is taken for peasants, the ministers of new India go to inaugurate steel factories or chemical laboratories but the Kaurvas party is not doing what was promised before independence.

“The honest peasant must be rewarded for the sweat on his brow! Land to the tiller” After Dhritarashtra, Tharoor criticizes Priya Duryodhani (Indira Gandhi) is the possible threat to Yudhisthir, Bheem, Arjun, Nakul, and Sahadev who are the representative of Truth, Army, Law, Bureaucracy and Foreign services respectively. Duryodhan was the greatest threat to Dharma in The Mahabharata. As we know in the epic Duryodhan tries to burn Pandavas in the Lakshyagrah with Dropadi and mother Kunti.

In the same way Tharoor describes that during Emergency period Priya Duryodhani (Indira Gandhi) tries to kill, or euphuistically, tries to rule over democracy, truth, law, army, bureaucracy and Indian foreign services. In The Great Indian Novel, Tharoor says: “India could not be India without loud, vibrant, excited and contending opinions that it's free press expresses.” The mythical tropes in the novel describe Nakul and Sahadev as the two great poles of Indian democratic government. They are symbolized as the administrative and diplomatic services. Yudhister is the truth that works in public domain. Bheem is the protecting power of the boundaries of democracy. Morally and ethically unjustified marriage of Dropadi (Democracy of India) with five men in the epic is justified by the author in the novel. The democracy must be protected by Truth, Army, Law, Bureaucracy and Foreign Services all at once. The blending of Myth in the novel exposes and criticizes Dhritrastra (Jawaharlal Nehru) for not taking care of Indian Army after independence. Indian soldiers were ill equipped, no proper infrastructure, no proper weapons or even their uniform was not provided adequately. During India and Chakra (China) war Indian army was defeated very badly due to lack of mall handling of Indian Army by Dhritrasra who could make only great speeches about the fraternity of India and China. But Tharoor says in The Great Indian Novel that Chinese People Liberation Army “slant their jaundice eyes on India”

During the course of the novel Tharoor becomes extremely critical of Priya Duryodhani. He says, “She allowed no one to acquire enough power or influence over her to be able to hurt her one day.” During national emergency Priya Duryodhani caused havoc on the Democracy of India “so India had a new Queen empress”.The leaders of opposition under the leadership of Jai Prakash Drona were put behind the bars. Tharoor describes that Democracy is being suffocated “and Dropadi Mokrasi was diagnosed as asthmatic, breathe coming sometimes in short gasps.” Shashi Tharoor praises Priya Duryodhani only when she divides Pakistan in to two. Pakistan is mythologized as Karnistan and Bangladesh is mythologized as Gelabi Desh in the novel. This was the only time when Priya Duryodhani is referred as Mother Goddess and Duryodhani Amma. Although Krishna played a vital role in the epic The Mahabharata but Tharoor deals with this character as simple as lord Krishna himself was. The author depicts Krishna as the secretary of Kaurva party in Gokaram, a fictional place in the novel. Krishna as secretary always guides Arjuna for choosing right way



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of Karma. At the end of the novel the democracy is restored as Priya Duryodhani revokes the Emergency rule and declares elections. All the leaders of opposition are released and a cool breeze of Democracy starts to blow. Shashi Tharoor has a unique way of mythologizing Indian politics. By using mythical tropes Tharoor writes fiction exactly as if he were writing an epic. In *The Great Indian Novel*, the general reader can easily and very precisely correlates each and every incident with what actually happened during Indian national struggle for freedom. Tharoor's characters recite mythological poetry during the course of the novel in a local language. Jeremy Hawthorn propagates the approach of fictionalizing real life characters and events. A reader can only recognize the characters or the incidents if he/she is acquainted with the real life story and the people.

### **Conclusion**

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* is a mind-blowing text of postmodern Indian English Literature. Myth as interpretive and narrative strategy is a significant aspect of this novel. The novel weaves myth into the fictional narratives is indeed literary masterpieces of postcolonial fiction. Even today we need to recast the value of Indian freedom struggle because always serious social communal problems disturb the peace of tranquility of India means the new generation is far away from the patriotic movement and that's why need to reevaluate the importance of Indian myth with new perspective. The language of the people of the partition sounds different in our context. We, at the present movement experience communal riots which are only a consequence of the partition. Still we are facing Kashmir problem, Hindu-Muslim opposition and separatist's movement in north India. The partition of the past could be called the cause of a communal unrest of the present-day but the reverse does not hold. A communal unrest today can help to brighten the effect of the partition. Hence the partition cannot be lived; it can only be reconstructed through fiction that exerts pressure on the interpretive imagination, a text that is alien to the present since the past is a foreign country and a country of the mind. Through this allegorical amalgamation of the ancient and the modern times, he highlights that the essential nature of man perpetually remains the same. In essence, the nucleus of the novel takes the womb of postmodern sensibility for granted. The answer offered to communal problems is that unless certain material conditions are available, unless the soil of society is furrowed and tilled for certain modern mentalities and not just germination is sufficient. In fact, the very concept of such a possibility might seem absurd, if not unwelcoming. We have to germinate seeds of communal harmony, breed and brought up with great zeal that is possible with only reinterpretation of myth. A fuller, keener and more humanly illuminating historical awareness must modify the generalized, ideology bound reading made by the historians with the reinterpretations made upon them by the writers.

The author depicts Krishna as the secretary of Kaurva party in Gokaram, a fictional place in the novel. Krishna as secretary always guides Arjuna for choosing right way of Karma. At the end of the novel the democracy is restored as Priya Duryodhani revokes the Emergency rule and declares elections. All the leaders of opposition are released and a cool breeze of Democracy starts to blow. Shashi Tharoor has a unique way of mythologizing Indian politics. By using mythical tropes Tharoor writes fiction exactly as if he were writing an epic. In *The Great Indian Novel*, the general reader can easily and very precisely correlates each and every incident with what actually happened during Indian national struggle for freedom. Tharoor's characters recite mythological poetry during the course of the novel in a local language. Jeremy Hawthorn



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