

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Tension between Tradition and Modernity in Rabindra Nath Tagore's  
*The Home and the World***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of  
English in partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Mater of Arts in English**

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## **Abstract**

Rabindra Nath Tagore's famous novel *The Home and the world* has presented the issue of tension between tradition and Modernity in colonial Indian society. Because of tension, there is internal dynamics in Indian society and Indian nation state in general. The tension is primarily seen between the female and male character and male-male characters. As well that represents the tradition and modernity respectively. Moreover, the industrial revolution, colonial mentality and modern hypocrisy has remarkable influence on the characters which further support to add some bricks in the emergence of tension. Tagore also depicted the colonial Indian life.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

### Tagore and His Works: A Brief Introduction

This research studies the Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore's Bangali novel *Ghar Bahire* which was translated by Surendranath Tagore as *The Home and the World*. This research examined through the prospective of modernity. It observes how the Indian people are affected through modern way of life. Modernity affects traditional Indian way of life. They are in a dilemma, either to follow modern way of life or to continue their own tradition and customs. It also focuses how modernity makes man torn between owns and other.

This research also attempts to analyze how Tagore presents the characters who represent the dynamic condition of the people's psychology as well their torn condition due to impact of modernity. *In Religious and the Status of Women* Jyodsana Chatterji says "The people's nation about the proper role of women in the Home and society and the social restrictions on women are all rooted in religious conceptions regarding women" (1)

This research highlights the tension between tradition and modernity. When modernity enters in South Asian Countries there was a kind of change in the activities of Indian people. Even women also try to cross the boundary due to the impact of western education .Women started raising their voice for women's right. Tagore presents Bimala as radical character who tries to cross the traditional Indian role of a housewife. Due to her stupidity and submissiveness she is unable to know the trick of Sandip who is totally selfish man. Nikhil is also a modernist character. Due to his over confidence and rationality he died at the end of the novel.

Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta in 7 May 1861 and is known as *Gurudev*. He was Bangali poet, Brahma religionist, visual artist, playwright, novelist

and composer whose works reshaped Bengali literature and music in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early twentieth centuries. He is the first Nobel Prize winner of Asia in 1913 in literature.

Tagore was the youngest son of Maharishi Debendranath Tagore and Saradha Devi. His father was the religious reformer and scholar. His mother died when he was young. His grandfather prince Dwarkanath Tagore was leading businessman and a man of letters who adopted the Brahmo faith which is taught to worship formless, beneficent, one, alone and absolute Ekamevadyam Param Brahma to promote charity, morality, piety, benevolence virtue and the bounds of union between men of all religions and creeds propagated by his friends, the reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The family followed normal Bangali traditions that make arrangements for the children to be acquainted with both English and Indian Traditions.

Tagore's family contributed large amount of money for the introduction of western education including colleges for the study of science and medicine. This peculiar situation explains the combination of tradition and experiment that came to characterize Rabindranath Tagore's attitude to life. His father, Debendranath Tagore was well versed in European philosophy. Though deeply religious, he did not accept all aspects of Hinduism.

Tagore, a Pirali Brahmin from Calcutta, Bengal, he wrote first poems at the age of eight. At the age of 16 he published his first substantial poetry under the *Pseudonym* wrote his first short stories and dramas in 1877. In later life Tagore protested strongly against the British Raj and gave his support to the Indian Independence Movement.

Tagore's brothers and sisters were poets', musicians, playwright and novelist. His homely environment is full of musical, Literary and dramatic pursuit. His family

becomes the inspiring materials for his writing career later. His family was also involved in different activities at the national level. He was also sent to different English speaking school but he did not like their teaching style. He gradually withdrew from formal schooling when he was around 14 years old. His remaining education was carried out through his own personal efforts and with the help of tutors in various subjects. When he was twelve after his *upanayan*, he and his father left for Shantiniketan in 14 February 1873. There, Tagore read biographies, studied history, astronomy, modern science and Sanskrit, and examined the poetry of Kalidas. This education helps him reform religion, explored mountains and forests where he got close proximity to nature.

Being born in a family that was free from social prejudices and narrowness, he was mainly influenced by the humanistic teachings of Upanishad and the religious reformations of Brahmo Samaj (Kharma). Through the eyes of a humanist, Tagore perceived a symbolic relationship between different worlds religious and tried to project their quintessential meaning through his writings.

### **Tagore and His Writing Style**

Tagore's writing style focuses on revolutionary terrorist movements of Bengal. When he was writing he was more concerned on characters rather than the events. The subject of love is his recurring motif and he often wrote about patriotism. His songs have been chosen as national anthems of two nations; *Jana gana mana* in India and *aamar sonar baangla* in Bangladesh. His novels also deal with socio-political, patriotic and nationalistic issues and his vision of the universal brotherhood of man. Tagore places man above all living beings, nature and sometimes above god too.

Tagore presents the idea of Visvamavata principle in his writing music and art that humanity must offer and receive. This is the basis of his humanism that can clearly be seen in Tagore's writing. Elements of nature can clearly be found in his creations. His verse, short stories and novels often presented rhythmic lyricism, colloquial language, meditative naturalism and philosophical contemplation. He often writes Indians "abnormal caste consciousness" and untouchability and gives voice its evils through his writing of poems and dramas presents with untouchable protagonists. His writing is deeply simple. The subject matter is the lives of ordinary people.

Tagore blends his theme and style, uses simple diction that mirrors the daily life of the middle class people of India. He has projected his world of values juxtaposing tradition and modernity in its different aspects. Even if he studied western culture, he is deeply attached with his Hindu religion and tradition which are clearly visualized in his writings. In that respect, he also mixes certain spiritual and secular ideas with which Indians are normally familiar. William Walsh observes "The religious sense of Indian myth is a part of Tagore's grip of reality and his reticular view of human life and his individual way of placing and ordering human experience" (14).

Tagore's poetry is varied in style from classical formalism to comic visionary and ecstatic which was established by 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Vaisnav poets. Tagore's close friend Romain Rolland states that "he is abdicating his role as moral guide of the independent spirits of Europe and India" (115). John Rothenstein observes that Tagore presents "the life style of Bengali, especially village people and life by using irony and emotional wrights" (13). Similarly W.B. Yeats praises him saying that he always reads his works and forgets his pain and sufferings as he says "I read

Rabindranath every day, to read one line of his is to forget all the troubles of the world"(W.B. Yeats 263). He has given vivid picture of South Indian life style in most of these novels. His presentation of life is realistic.

E.M. Foster and George Lukas comment his novel *The Home and the World* as "tragedy. . . ", 'a roman a trios' with all the situations form which novelists are trying to emancipate themselves the wet.' Lukas is also more vitriolic and he condemned the novels as "libelous pamphlet" and "petty bourgeoisie yarn of the shoddiest kind". Lukas also added that Tagore was an "intellectual agent against the Indian freedom movement".

Tagore is cynical. He is devoted in Upanisadic ideas. He believes in human soul. He never lost believe of Upanisadic human being's divine inheritance. As R.K. Naryan says that the underlying objective of every Indian story is to crate a "distinction between good and evil" and show that "goodness triumphs in the end [...] if not immediately, at least in a thousand years; if not in this world, at least in other worlds". (245)

Some of the post colonial critics comment on the novel *The Home and the World* which presents nationalist sentiments which cultivate irrationality. Earnest Gullne, Benedict Anderson and Tom Nairn have pointed out the nationalism that cultivates prejudice and hatred in people and Leela Gandhi has spoken of its attendant racism and loathing, and the alacrity with which citizens are willing to kill. Another critic Frantz Fanon has explained that although the objective of nationalism is to create a horizontal relationship and fraternity within its people. In reality the nation never speaks of the hopes and aspirations of the entire "imagined community", and hierarchy, factional hegemony, in quality and exploitation remain a daily occurrence

in its body. In Sandip's actions, Tagore has insightfully and shrewdly anticipated all these pitfalls of nationalism pointed out by later literary cultural critics.

Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World*, which is the focus of this research, is one of the most famous novels in Bengali literature. In the novel, he deeply analyzes the twentieth century Indian society. Here he depicts the two modes of life of Indian people – one is traditional and another is modern. The story of the novel mainly revolves around the main characters Bimala, Nikhil and Sandip who are in some way traditional and modern at the same time that is what creates a kind of tension in the novel.

*The Home and the World* mainly revolves around the main characters Nikhil, Sandip and Bimala. Bimala is presented previously as a traditional Hindu woman. Later on she changes as a modern character. Here the minor characters, Nikhil's grandmother, mother and sister-in-law (Bara Rani) represents traditional characters. Nikhil is benevolent, calm, general, forgiving liberal, rational, enlightened and regressive Zamindar who encourages his wife, Bimala to step out of home to better acquaint her with the world and find a new identity for the Indian woman.

Bimla is submissive, obedient, timid, silent, sacrificing wife. She is previously innocent, acts according to the wishes of her husband. She is the epitome of traditional Indian woman who takes her husband as a God. She worships her husband and thinks that this is her duty and responsibility. She also thinks that her home and her husband are the world for her. As she remarks: "I distinctly remember after my marriage, when early in the morning would cautiously and silently get up and take the dust of husband's feet without walking him, how at such moments I could feel the vermilion mark my forehead shining out like the morning star"(11). She is totally traditional only tries to decorate her body rather than to develop her

inner talent. Innocence, submissiveness are some of the qualities of traditional mores which is the obstacles for the development. She is an obedient, loyal and responsible. These are the qualities of traditional woman. She herself says, " After finishing the days work and taking my afternoon bath, I would do up my hair and renew my vermilion mark put my sari carefully crinkled [ . . . ] I would delicate if at this special hour, with special ceremonies, to one individual ’’ (13). Bimla believes in sacrifice, which is the great love towards her husband and her family members. So, she herself remarks "To surrender one's pride in devotion is woman's only salvation’’ (14).

Bimala, in the middle part of the novel is changed into a modern character. She is changing her mental state rather than her physical qualities. She is presented as a modern character in this point. She leaves her qualities of submissiveness, loyalty, obedient behavior. She starts wearing modern dress, jacket, jeans, slippers which are from foreign land. Another important characteristic is that she rejects her sister's advice in going outside in odd ours. She leaves home with Sandip. She is turning towards individualism. So, she participates in *Swadeshi* movements. This happens as a result of modernity.

She is modern which encourages her to reject the restraint. She doesn't hesitate to steal her husband's money, talking about modern sex problem and other extra activities which once was sin. Now, she talks about English poetry, English Literature. She remarks, " The day had come when all cover was gone’’ (85).

Sandip, a leader of national movements is also a modern character. He is, selfish, irrational, oppressive, tyrannical which cultivates an intense sense of patriotism in individuals, threatens to replace their moral sensitivity with national bigotry and blind fanaticism. He is cunning, duplicity and narcissist. He appears as greedy, violence and destructive. His philosophy is similar with Machiavellian's

philosophy; "There is not the time for nice scruples, we must be unreasoningly brutal. We must sin" (39) He admires Nikhil and adds matter of faculty, "everyman has a natural right to possess, and therefore greed is natural [. . .] what my mind converts, my surrounding must supply" (45). Elsewhere he argues, " We are the flesh eaters of the world; we have teeth and nails; we peruse and graph and tear. We are not satisfied with chewing in the evening the cud of grass we have eaten in the morning [. . .] In that case we shall steal or rob, for we must live" (47).

Sandip represents masculinity and Individualism who does not let emotions and feelings in his mind. So, he exploits Bimala without any hesitation, though she is the wife of his friend. He doesn't hesitate even to attempt to have sex with Bimla. He is self centered, focuses on his self freedom in modern society. As he remarks" we, men are knights whose quest is that freedom to which our ideals call us" (144). Modern man rejects others and devotes towards his own individuality. Like modern man he also follows self freedom as he remarks, " I have gained freedom myself; I shall allow freedom to others. In my work I will be my salvation " (144). He represents masculinity that makes Bimala as an object of his desire. He wants to wonder in the world as he says, "I am only wandering round a flower like a bee - not a storm" (103). He reads modern books. He is multi qualities man as he says, "Yes, I am gross, because I am true. I am flesh. I am passion. I am hunger, unashamed and cruel" (64). Sandip is cupid, harbor and tyrannical in his feelings. Tyranny and cupidity are qualities of modern man .AS Nikhil remarks, " His nature is coarse, and so he glorifies his selfish lusts under high sounding names (46)". He does not like to listen to the advice of his friends. So, he involves docile people in national movements being a leader himself. There we can see individualism in him because every where he performs his task in his own decision.

Nikhil is totally modern character seeks freedom for every individual. He does not create boundary for his wife. So Bimala remarks that her husband does not dominate her. As she says “My husband would not give me any opportunity for worship” (13). He also treats all women should have the rights of equality. So he remarks “man and wife are equal in love” (14). Here Bara Rani, Sister-in-law of Nikhil is totally traditional character who rejects modern foreign dress. She sits inside the boundary of home. She is conscious about the family problems and she is over conscious about familial responsibility. Nikhil’s grandmother is also traditional character. She does not like the dresses and ornaments brought from European countries. She used to mock Bimal, for wearing these dress and she mocks as her modern manner.

Nikhil represents individuality. He wants to leave home for Calcutta, far from his house. He wants to enjoy his own life neglecting other members of his family, though his family members love him very much. He wants to change only his wife rather than his other female family members.

He does not believe the national boundary rather favours globalization. The concept of globalization is one of the modern concepts which reject narrow boundary of curtailed and limited areas and it respects broad and unbounded area. He always gets entertained with the modern achievements, like foreign literary books, foreign clothes, machine and foreign education.

Nikhil is modern man. So he does not accept whole heartedly the spirit of *Bande Mataram*. He is modern as Bimala remarks, “My husband is absolutely modern” (11). He uses foreign medicine. He always focuses on reasons where as his sister-in-law, Bara Rani a traditional Hindu woman always rejects modern manner and modern way of life. Nikhil does not accept any advice from his wife, friends, and

family, relatives, Nikhil, who represent modern character in Indian traditional but he dies at the end of the novel because Indian society is quiet changing but not totally changed. So his mental state is aloof from the society. So he declines himself.

Thus the novel, by presenting three major characters in a diary forms presents the internal conflicts and dynamic of Indian society. The aim of the research is to throw some light of how Tagore presents dilemmas of characters. They are in duel position due to modernity.

This thesis is divided into four sections. The first section includes the introduction of the whole research project as well as the introduction of the writer, his social background of that period. The second section is the elaboration about the theoretical tool, the discourse of modernity, gradual development of modernity, different writers and philosophers' definition of modernity. The third section analyzes the textual analysis on the basis of theoretical tool. This section supports the hypothesis of the research with some extracts quoted from the text. The last and fourth section includes the conclusion of this research.

## **Chapter II: Theoretical Modality**

### **Tradition versus Modernity**

Modernity is the condition of being new and innovative which separate from traditional values and norms and which is opposed to tradition in contemporary analyses of social and political change. It is the break from past established social, political, cultural or orthodoxical agendas. It is the consciousness of time and space, and self and others that is shared by all the human beings in the world. Modernity can be realized when tradition has been destroyed and superseded. It is a radical threat to all history and tradition. Modernity can be felt in such an environment that promises as adventures, power, joys, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world, tries to threaten what we have. Modernity can be realized by cutting all the boundaries of geography, ideology. In this sense it tries to unite all mankind. To be modern is to be the part of Universe as Mark says, "all that is solid melts into air "(1).

To understand modernity clearly, we must contrast it with tradition. Tradition is social activities which are practiced for long time. Tradition is based on certain conventions and customs which contained the value in the society. According to oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary, tradition is "a belief, custom or way of doing something that has existed for a long time among a particular group of people." Generally, it is based on religion and superstition that is more rigid and dogmatic. Traditional religious and superstitious world views attempt to keep people in the condition of ignorance. Traditions seek human sacrifice blood of animals, birds etc. which are bad practices. Modernity began as a critic of religion philosophy, morality, law, history, economic and politics. The principle ideas of the modern age progress evolution, revolution, freedom, democracy, science, technology were born from that criticism. On the other hand tradition is believed to be the guidance of Bible

The concept of modernity brought democracy which is separated from church and state, the end of royal privileges, freedom of beliefs, opinions and associations. West's extensions of boundaries are some of the qualities which are shared in this principle. It is characterized as multiplicity of features, losses of sense of tradition, contradiction and paradoxes etc., what may be modern for Hopkins may not be modern for Eliot, and what may be modern for Eliot may not be modern for Berryman Source for every writer is different.

Modern is the new which will be overcome and made absolute through the novelty of the next style. But modernity tries to demolish and replace all unnecessary superstitious social norms and values and encourages all people to be more open and keeps them away from the worthless social practices and impositions since it breaks through the tradition even though it somehow has some kind of traces of tradition. Modernity is the reflection of the recent historical developments. It makes an abstract opposition between tradition and present. According to Marshall Berman:

The maelstrom of modern life has been felt from many sources: great discoveries in the physical sciences, changing our images of the universe and our place in it; the industrialization of production, which transforms scientific knowledge into technology, creates new human environments and destroys old ones, speeds up the whole tempo of life, generates new forms of corporate power and class struggle [ . . . ]

(2)

Due to advancement of science and technology modernity flourished as flying as bird in the sky. Modern science, communication, philosophy, industrialization etc. stimulated the progress of human life, moreover, human consciousness. To be particular, the beginning of modernity can be traced to that intellectual fever that

spread in Europe from the middle of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution of 1789 was a point in the spread of this intellectual, spiritual as well as political-economic social ferment in western society. In this regard, Raghwendra Pratap Singh puts down, "The central and the fundamental thrust of the modernity is the bold and unhesitating affirmation of the autonomy of human individual and society"(13). It is that affirmation that rejects all external authority, outside of human reason, whether of religious or of tradition. According to Marshall Berman, modernity is developed through three phases: first phases roughly started from sixteenth century and the end of the eighteenth century. Meanwhile people were just experiencing about so called modern life; they hardly know what has hit them .Second phase begins with the great revolutionary wave of the 1790s with the French revolution. Meanwhile people come to modern life. For him twentieth century is the third phase. During this period of modernity develops World cultures. During this period art and thought also changed. On the other hand modern public experienced it as shattered and fragmented languages. This idea is conceived through fragments, loses, vividness, resonance, depth and losses its capacity to organize and give meaning to people's life. Jean Jacques Rousseau is the first who uses the word 'moderniste' and he is the source of our most vital modern tradition, from nostalgic reverie to psycho analytic self scrutiny to participatory democracy.

Charles Darwin who is vibrant modern philosopher really challenges the traditional thinking by presenting his works," *The Origin of Species*. Darwinian Theory of evolution threatened Religion and established values which assume that survival of the fittest. He subverts the traditional blind assertion of man as the descendants of God and probes the reality, that is, men are the distant relatives of apes which challenged the superstitious belief that man as the God gifted creature

whereas other creatures were not. By challenging this concept as Charles Darwin equalizes all the creatures, declaring that " all the species had come about through evolution on the basis of natural selection, even man, that was hard to swallow" (Charles Van Doren 280). Especially religious people got great blow upon their beliefs which were not scientific at all, and could not justify using any philosophical reason.

John Lock who is regarded as vibrant modernist, revolutionary and philosopher as well. He contributes for the development of the social movement. By rejecting status quo he plays as a social revolutionary hero. Enlightenment period is also the symbol for the revolutionary change. It emerged from centuries of darkness and ignorance into new age. It represents modern science, reason, and humanity as well. As a result, different thinkers and philosophers came into existence. Among them Karl Marx, a German philosopher, is best regarded as the upholder of modernity. He challenges the Hegelian idea and asserts, "It is the matter that determines consciousness not the idea"(Gaarder 397).He interprets human history in complimentary new way .He attacks the bourgeoisie by blaming them as the exploiters of the proletarians. He redefines the hitherto society and explores the perennial conflict between the 'Haves' and 'Haves not'. That is to say, Karl Marx, as a purveyor of modernity, has contributed a great deal to fill up the consciousness in the proletarians. Similarly, Freud, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard are, among other, the outstanding contributors for the emergence of modernity. Freud breaks the binary between savage and civilization and asserts that all men are guided by the unconscious, which is repeated with sexual instincts. He further claims, "The conscious constitutes only a small part of the human mind. The conscious is like the tip of the iceberg above sea level" (Gaarder 435). Some thinkers believe that

modernity begins from renaissance, the Reformation and the discovery of Americans; others claim that it began with the birth of the nation state and the institution of banking, the rise mercantile capitalism, and the creation of the bourgeoisie; others emphasized the scientific and philosophical revolution of the seventeenth century, without which we would have neither our technology nor our industries.

Likewise, for the advancement of modernity, the credit goes to Nietzsche. He dismantles the blind faith; the western thought has brought up with it, on religion and God. He stands as a modern figure when he advocates the death of God. Meanwhile, Kierkegaard emerges with a new vision of human existence. He undermines the concept of objective knowledge and universal truth, but emphasizes on the multiple truths and subjective knowledge as the need of the day. According to Kierkegaard, 'rather than searching for the Truth with a capital 'T' it is more important to find the kind of truths that are meaningful to individual's life. It is more important to find 'the truth for me'. (Gaarder 379)

Thus, modernity always stands in opposition to tradition, since the former comes up with a deconstructive strategy of status-quo. On the contrary, the latter often clings to, "religious world views, as attempts to keep people in a condition of ignorance and superstition . . ." (Hamilton 35). Commenting on the relation of modernity with tradition Harold Rosenberg writes, "It is a tradition of overthrowing tradition". (Berman 16)

However, Octavio Paz is not happy with the mission of modernity which aims to renew the tradition. He has lamented that modernity is "cut off from the past and continually hurtling forward at such a dizzy pace that it can not take root, that it merely survives from one day to the next" ( Berman 35). That is to say, modernity neither roots itself anywhere permanently nor does it restrict itself to a specified field.

It is a renewed consciousness in social norms, values (culture), life world, ideology; tradition etc., something which is modern in the present turns out to be obsolete in the future. Therefore, I think that the spirit of modernity relies on contingency of renewal or reformation. Modernist literature consists of chaotic situation and cross confusion in its necessary meanings. Modernist art is based on nature. Nature is the main component of subject and setting. Nihilism is one of the central hearts of modernist literature. Modernists represent meaninglessness of life and eternal death of human beings. It is characterized by its emphasis on form rather than its contents. Stream of consciousness technique is used. Modernist literature is always difficult to comprehend to modern cultures which learns respect, even to cherish, science of its division. It hunts for ethical norms through under ground journey, experiments, within sensation and mocking suspension of values. Subjectivity is the focused subject on modern literature.

Modernity is the cultivation of the individuality. It represents the spiritual distresses, terrors, surprise, excitement, suck etc. Some of the modernist poets like T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pounds etc represent the modern complex, uncertain way of life.

Thus, the concept of modernity, though originally dates back to the Enlightenment is not tied up with a particular time, space and realm. Although it is ostensibly a western trend, it is pervasive across the world and the form of modernity varies from one society to another. In this regard, Arjun Appadurai and Carli A.

Breckenridge view:

Modernity is now everywhere, it is simultaneously everywhere, and it is interactively everywhere. But it is not only everywhere, it is also in a series of somewhere, and it is through one such somewhere, India,

that this volume enters the global reality of modernity and for such a localized entry we propose another general category. (2)

Modernity is characterized as multiplicity of features: loss of sense of tradition, contradiction, paradoxes etc. What may be modern for Hopkins may not be modern for Eliot, and what may be modern for Eliot may not be modern for Berryman. Source for every writer is different.

Overall, despite the ostensible differences in the notion of modernity, some of the critics characterize modernity as a deconstructive spirit, which critiques the traditional social orders and a traditional set of beliefs. Modernity adopts empiricism and rationalism as the touchstones to critique or judge the religious beliefs, societal mores and values and the position of man in the universe. With reference to the subversion of tradition, Marshall Berman comments:

All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face . . . the real conditions of their lives and their relation with their fellow men. (21)

In other words, modernity is not such a notion which can be stable; rather it is the time consciousness. It is the, "ephemeral, the fleeting, the contingent" (116), according to Michael Foucault, today's beliefs, ideas and outlook may turn out to be traditional in no time. Therefore, "modernity excludes itself from clinging to the present. Instead, its task is to heroise the present" (Foucault 117). According to him modern attitudes involve in exaggerating the value of the present would be "in

dissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying but by grasping in it what it is" (Foucault 13)

However, regarding modernity, some theorists have different views.

Habermas, though regards modernity as an incomplete project and traces its root to the Renaissance, he attributes the formal development of modernity to the Enlightenment. The term, 'modernity' used to be defined in relation to the past, but Kant uses the 'Enlightenment' and 'modernity' interchangeably, and asserts that enlightenment is the break away with the tradition. Hence, since the Enlightenment, modernity is viewed as an autonomous project and something which is particularly new and distinct. The Enlightenment paves the way for the advancement of science, art and morality. Habermas, albeit contends the newness as the project of modernity, sees lack of the communicative rationality resulted from the autonomous development of science art and morality. Then, Habermas emphasizes on the integrity among them. He further views the aim of modernity as the unifying force of these discrete realms. (284)

Likewise, Lyotard's basic premise rests on the access to modernity. Yet, he talks about the tenets of postmodernism and believes that postmodernism is the nascent state of modernity (Lyotard 245). His idea, the critiquing and experimenting, the spirit of post modernity, gives birth to modernity when it is at apex. Although Habermas and Lyotard argue each other, their ultimate essence orients to modernity. Both of them regard modernity as the consciousness of overall aspects of life, which is only possible via critiquing the tradition.

Similarly, Foucault, regarding modernity brings forth the idea of Baudelaire, "modernity is characterized in terms of consciousness of the discontinuity of time: a break with tradition and a feeling of novelty"(Foucault 261). Foucault further refutes

modernity as a specific epoch, rather opines that it is a set of characteristics of an epoch. Moreover, he coincides with Habermas, Kant and Lyotard when he puts down, "Modernity is an 'attitude' a way of thinking and feeling, a way of acting and behaving . . ." (Foucault 262)

Modernity is defined as elusive and changing its nature is changing, "contemporary" is a quality that vanishes as soon as we name it. Development is prerequisite of modernity-development on science, media, communication that radically changes the human life and makes it more standard and easier than that of earlier; scientific development changes the human life along with human psyche which helps to develop all human creativities. To be modern is transformation of ourselves and the world that threat to destroy "everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (Berman 1).

Due to the scientific development, the universe became a small village where all cultures mix into one in which Marx said, 'all that is solid melts into one' (qtd. in Berman 1). Modernity unites all human beings. Scientific discoveries, transportation, communication etc. make the world small and single. Different kinds of mass media which are the result of science like radio, computer film and television have control of our lives without ordinarily intruding on them. These media can't be avoidable because they are around us. It has made mass more creative, safer, more healthful, and richer in creative possibilities. It is the media that makes the people up to date. They give the hot news to human being so that people can easily mobilize themselves in the complex world.

In the modern world, media (Radio, T.V., computers, newspapers etc.) play significant role in educating the people. Even those people, who can't manage time for going college, are also getting knowledge at home through media. So, it can not

be avoided. Media has contributed to knowledge and education of the people.

Because of the media, we understand the world better than our grandparents were.

Charles Van Doren says, "Because of the media we understand democracy better than almost anyone understood it a century ago. Because of media, we have a deeper distrust of war "(274). It is the media that speaks against the tyranny and all kind of injustices. So it is the advocator of democracy and freedom which helps to change the attitude of the people.

Electricity is another significant marker of modernity. It was discovered by Benjamin Franklin in the 1750s which has had a tremendous impact on the history of mankind because it, as Charles Van Doren argues, "dissolved the difference between night and day and masked the change of the seasons"(270). Moreover, it provided the new source of energy which helped to intensify the industrial revolution that dramatically changes human life. Today, millions of city dwellers never experience a dark night. It reduces the dependence only in fossil fuels for energy. Thousands of scientific modern machines are run by electricity that is more advance and cheaper than fossil fuels. Winter was not just cold but also dark and any evil might lurk in the dark. Electricity brightened the night and made it like the day. Electricity not only lightened the dark but also converted cold into worm and vice versa. In fact, the world is benefited much from the discovery of electricity, which is one of the most important aspects of modern life. It has radically changed the face of the earth.

Similarly, transportation is a milestone of modernity that made the world smaller and easier than that of earlier. Due to the development of different sorts of vehicles, we, modern people can travel throughout the world easily. Various vehicles like aircraft, ships, and land vehicles made human life doubtlessly comfortable. It is the modern science that makes it possible. It has brought revolutionary change in the

traditional concept of human being, for example moon used to be taken as God, especially in Hindu religion, but modern scientists have been thinking about the settlement on the lap of moon. It is one of the greatest challenges to tradition due to scientific development, which is case of modernity.

Despite being facilitator of modern life, media along with electricity has made life artificial. People are interested to leave imaginative life as in the film. Such imagination has lured for a worthless copy which is one of the components of the destruction of civilization and morality. Due to such kind of temptation, people almost forget their duties and responsibilities. They want to live isolated life in imagination.

Because of the Industrial Revolution in the Eighteen century, human beings have been getting into new life. Social and political changes and economic development were the causes of Industrial Revolution. It brought both positive and negative impacts in human life and nature. Before industrial revolution, the life was so hard; people used simple machines to make their works easier. Socio-economic side was very poor. Agro-based economy had not maintained the standard of life. There was no development of transportation and communication. But after the dawn of industrial revolution, great changes emerged as a result; life has become comfortable and smooth. It brought many social changes. The middle class grew and progressed rapidly. They owned most of the factories, they hired the workers in low payment and treated them as objects and handled the big industries, mines, banks and what not. In it, Marx believes, "The bourgeoisie has turned away from the family its sentimental vial, and reduced the family relation to a mere money relation"(23). The power holders treat their family members themselves in terms of money then how can

they treat workers as human beings. So we can say that such kind of modernization has mechanized the modern life.

The owners had the concept of business and also had the capacity to manipulate the workers and the government. Due to this the owner became fatter and fatter but poor workers turned into poorer. Van Doren severely comments on such mistreatment by saying, "human beings had not yet learned how factor-induced specialized labor also destroys the souls of human beings by treating them as the parts of a machine"(216). This is the negative aspect of industrial revolution that gave birth to the capitalism. Often factory workers have to work long hours under unhealthy condition. There was and still is a debate about the beginning and ending of modernity. Critics like Habermas believe that, "modernity is the consciousness of time"(74).

They believe that modernity is just departure from old ideas. Greek time was modern because it was separated from pagan past. Similarly Renaissance was modern because it was new and different from middle age. It means modernity was defined in relation to past. But Kant believes that modernity is a period that "began from eighteenth century and ended in twentieth century"(17). For him there was not or can't be modern before and after Enlightenment period. Unlike Kantian belief, Michael Foucault believes that modernity is "consciousness of discontinuity"(113) that is simply a break from tradition; it could be in Greek period, in Renaissance, in eighteenth century and so on. He believes that modernity is different from other; it means there is plurality of modernity. Galileo a renowned Italian astronomer and physicist, has been often called the founder of modern experimental Science who rejects Aristoflian concept and helps to change the face of society. Likewise discarded traditional and past knowledge and he welcomes new and innovative knowledge. So

he says "I think, therefore I am". This shows that he respects present Knowledge rather than established Knowledge. By presenting the philosophy of "dualism" believes in mind and matter which are fundamental elements of modern man. Voltaire, who is a poet and philosopher, attacks the orthodox cal beliefs of church which is the repository of superstition and religion. Thus society gets intellect to fight against the bad practices of traditional norms similarly, according to Adorn and Horkhaimer Modern Science and technology is the helper of mass society. Media is also one of the modern means which helps to change the face of society. It makes the world smaller and smaller.

Tradition and modernity are the two sides of a same coin. These two are inseparable and inseperated relations. If one says modern he/she is compared each other. Modernity appears when tradition left.

Hence, modernity is impossible without transcending the traditional norms and values, Tradition and modernity are the two sides of a same coin. These two are unseperable and unseperated relations. If one says modern he/she is compared each other. Modernity appears when tradition left. Modernity is impossible. On the other hand, tradition can't remain constant for forever. Once modernity turned into tradition, it with the change of time. It does not mean, modernity stands on entirely new foundation but there are some reformations. So in the society, there is practice of tension between tradition and modernity which the researcher tries to show in the research carried out on Tagore's The Home and the World.

### **Indian Tradition**

Indian society is multi-religious and multi-linguistic in nature. We can easily understand this from Sanskrit, Pali and Tamil literature. Writers descried not only their people and landscape, but also showed a wide interest in the natural

surrounding, and the people of another land. Thus in '*Ramayana*' there is the description of hilly people, the forest dwellers and heaven, the world of God. The writing reflects the traditional Indian belief in God. In ten or eleven centuries, the development of society and its writing was apparent. In Bhakti movement all over India, we found Shiva and Vaishanba, writers of the periods worshipped Krishna and Ram. Furthermore the writings of ancient India also reflected political and literal unity-in-diversity and diversity-in-unity of Indian culture and society.

Traditional Indian society is in the bound of peasant-landlord relationship; it observed the caste system placing Brahmins and Chhetrias at the upper level and Baishya and Shudra at the lower place of social hierarchy. This hierarchy was mainly based on occupation and birth. Each Caste had its own systems, customs, foods and occupation. Charles Van Doren comments, "One is not only born a Shudra; one also becomes a Shudra by the occupation one follows, which Shudra alone must follow and which only Shudra may follow"(7). There were certain occupations that upper-class people simply did not follow. Majorities of people are lower class people. Similarly different classes also used to eat different foods differently and had different customs in family life. The ancient cultures of the Indian subcontinent might have been the first to discover the powerful means of maintaining social order. Doren believes, "Class differentiation is the great foe of the equally great idea of social equality". (7) And also they trade with one another with foreign culture. The society was rural mass stepped in the superstition and victims of privation and penury.

Traditional Indian social economy was based on agriculture that provided food for large population. They had dug ditches and canals to irrigate their farms. Due to the lack of modern system of agriculture, there was the mass poverty in India. Mass poverty is basically prevalent in India. Indian society was divided into two; one

is peasant and another is non peasant –peasant villages the greater part of the country. Torlok Singh closely observes and says, “Mass poverty in India is basically and to an overwhelming degree, a rural problem. It is implicit in the present structure and economic basis of our rural society. Unless removing rural poverty urban poverty is also difficult to remove. We must rebuild our social and economic foundations.”(1)According to him, in Indian society every individual has equal rights but the differences between man to man are not recognized according to inheritance as he says “The rights of all members of the community are equal. Differences between one man and another account of birth or inheritance are not recognized in any manner.

Sanskritisation is one of the important tool which helps for analysis of Indian Society which is greatly limited and complex as well as looseness. Brahmin ,whose status is higher position in society who makes customs but non brahmical caste practices many brahmical customs and rights .Higher caste used physical force for the control of lower caste. Brahmical process is popular\familiar for all Hindus .Lower caste follows Brahmical way of life, customs, rituals, language, cooking, clothing, jewellery and the way of the Brahmin spread among the society.

In Indian societies daughters had to marry before puberty, and parents who had not succeeded in finding husbands for daughters past the age of puberty, were regarded as guilty of a great sin. According to M. N. Srinivas, “Brahmin marriage is in theory, indissoluble, and a Brahmin widow, even if she be a child widow, is required to have her head shaved, and to shed all jewelry, and ostentation in clothes.” (Aiyappan and Ratnam 78). She was regarded as inauspicious. Sex life was denied to her. Among Hindus generally there was a preference for virginity in brides, chastity in wives.

The institutions of the low castes were more liberal in the spheres of marriage and sex than those of the Brahmins. In the case of the low caste marriage and sex are more liberal. As Srinivas comments, "Post puberty marriages do occur among them, widows do not have to shave their heads, and divorce and widow marriage are both permitted and practiced"(Aiyappan and Ratnam 78). Generally speaking, their sex code was not as harsh as among Brahmins.

Brahmin women used to perform a number of religious vows, some of which was to secure a long life for the husband. A woman's hope used to predecease her husband, and thus avoid becoming a widow. They treat their husband as deity. She never eats food before husband. As Srinivas comments, "Women who predecease their husbands are considered both lucky as well as good, while widowhood is attributed to sins committed in a previous incarnation". (Aiyappan and Ratnam 79)

Those wife are regarded as ideal who used to show her devotion to her husband they are also called as a *Pativrata*, that is, one who regarded the devoted service of her husband as her greatest duty. There are many myths describing the devotion and loyalty of some sainted women to their husbands. Not only women but husband also devoted to wife (*eka-patni-vrata*). Both husband and wife must perform several rites together. A bachelor has certain religious activities rather than married have. Furthermore, Indian society was deeply rooted on the religion and superstition. They believed on God, worshipping to God was like daily activities. They used to celebrate different festivals which themselves were based on religion.

Brahmins give importance to son rather than daughter, Sons are the necessities for the religion, and daughters have lower value. Among non Brahmins though a son is preferred, a daughter is not unwelcome. Girls are demanded in society, there is no necessity to get a girls married before puberty. When the Indian society was religious,

superstitious, patriarchal, agro-based social structure, discrimination in terms of caste, deeply affected by poverty, then the writing of that period reflected the same issues.

During the colonial period in India, Indian tradition was slowly affected by British/western culture). Some of them followed western culture and rest of others tries to maintain own culture. Due to the mistreatment of western people they tortured. Though they give torture on the one hand on the other they help to develop Hindu religion among Indian people. Due to the impact of British India got the opportunity to run modern technology. Through Modern technology Indian politics also developed. Thus here arises conflict between two philosophies eastern and western. Indian people are in dilemma. Political leaders are also cut on dilemma. They should look under their masters. M.N. Shrinivas “the British who ate Beef and Pork and drank liquor, passed political and economic power, new technology, scientific knowledge and a great literature ”( 84)

When Indian social tradition was dismantled, the Indian religion was mocked. During this period, Indian ethos gradually underwent a sea change from the stock response of defeat and frustration and the trauma of inferiority feeling to a new found self-awareness and self-confidence. Indian society started to learn from western society and its experiences, and Indian writers experience progress in the form of imitation and assimilation in creation. The ordeal of freedom struggle, the communication problem, plight of untouchables, the landless poor, economically oppressed and exploited people were the exponent of colonized society and the literature it has produced.

Society gradually affected by the multitudinous riches of European literature and culture. People started to think that to be westernized in the language and culture is to command more and more prestige. In short, Indian social life and its literature

during colonial period is nothing but mere imitation of their colonial master, their literature and society. Indian society had been blinded by the glare of western civilization. So they took it as good and prestigious and started to follow it. So they are in confusion either to leave their tradition totally or to adopt modernity totally.

Modernity is far from the condition of the past and reorientation towards the future. So far as the emergence of modernity in India is concerned, we should take into account the scientific and technological development in advance. Modernity in India came to have been recognized as synonymous to westernization. The emphasis on English education in India also played a vital role in changing Indian society and people towards westernization and modernization. However, modernity should not be identified with formal and generic innovation but has to be related with a shift in experience, a change in the relation between the past and the present. Modernity is the consciousness of new age, new sensibility, and sense of the new attitude towards the past as well as future with experiences of life

Due to the modern influence Indian people are quite aware about their condition as a result 'Bandemataram' and 'Home Rule' movement also held before independence. During this period Indian people suffered much. Literature also express the striving and suffering position of the Indian people. Literary writers also advocate reflected tears and laughter together. Cricket is another symbol of modern Indian society. It enters in India in eighteenth century. Today; the extraordinary popularity of cricket in India is clearly tied up with national sentiments. Modern Indian people are almost crazy with the game. But in the early history of the game in India, cricket fostered two other kinds of loyalty. The first was religious identities. The second, rather more abstractly instantiated in the sport, was loyalty to empire. Hindus, Parsis, Muslims, the Europeans, and eventually the rest were organized into

cricket ethnic groupings, some of which included antagonists in which players as well as crowds learned to think of themselves as Hindu, Muslim and Parsis in contrast with the Europeans.

For the colonized, cricket became a matter of dignity. They tried to equalize themselves with the colonizers by competing in the field of it which colonizer used to think as a modern game and only in their access. Psychology of colonizer can not remain indifferent with such matters of dignity. They used to think that playing and watching cricket is to become modern. So they are obsessed with it.

Modernity was a technological advancement which contributed in the development of electricity, transportation, communications in India that made life of Indian people more advance. Indian modernity is also the advancement over the earlier literature and the progress in the different fields in accordance with time. With the influence of modernity in literature, the relationship between the husband and wife; tradition and modernity; cities and the villages; print culture and oral culture; are directly affected. Even the trivial actions, sufferings and protests became the theme. With the influence of the modernity in Indian literature, everything the habitat, the cities, the villages, mundane all are affected. Professions and trivial actions, sufferings and protest became the theme. It tries to change the social nature. All these changes were inevitable. As a result of technological advancement and intervention in the production of literature and also the changes in the social fabric that a new education and new administrative system has brought about Indian anxiety for the west and its dilemma for the modernity has created and un result tension in Indian Social life and literature. The issue of sex and morality became quite controversial and even the indicators of modernity among certain groups of Indian society.

The two centuries of British rule has created tension in the psyche of Indian elite: it wants to assert its own distinctiveness and at the same time is attracted by the power of India. All its side of progress and all its concepts and institutions is borrowed by India. The modernity in literature both as an experience and project comes out of the continuous tensions, rather than the synthesis between these two worlds more or less identified as opposites. Not only the models of literary genre are borrowed from European literature but also the debates relating to social authority and individual freedom are the realms of private and public, myth and history also characterize the colonial Indian culture. As Gayatri Spivak asserts:

The Indian anxiety for the west and its dilemma of the modernity has creates an unresolved tension in Indian social life [. . .] traditional Indian life world and emerging modern literature. The urge of imitation has often overcome Indian writers and the search for modernity has been elusive. In India, society and its literature emerged as an assimilation of the nature of imperial regime. The issue of sex and morality became quite controversial and even the icon of modernity among certain groups of Indian writing. (13)

The Indian writers realized that eroticism was different from the frank portrayal of sex, the former aims at evoking certain emotive effects; the latter is part of exploration of relationship between individual and society. The sexual relationship was related to change in experience, but it had created tension between the social authority and individual freedom. In literature, sex assumed a place of importance not because there was any radical change in social relationship but certainly there was any radical change in artistic consciousness. The treatment of sex became the

indicator of modernity, and changing perceptions of man-women relationship. In modern time, Indian society has become more transparent to sexual matters.

The Indian modernity emerged from Indian society's changing attitude towards west, its transformation from agricultural state to semi-Industrial state, establishment of financial institutions and Banking and society. As Appadurai Says:

The experience of modernity is local, but locality itself has undergone a fundamental set of changes over the past five hundred years. We are in the process of witnessing a fundamental transformation in the very nature of world systems and global process. Various forms of global interactions have always been with us, and so have various forms of world systems. Even before maritime, expansion of the west in the sixteenth century complex global formation did exist, but we are only now beginning to theorize the shift from these early global process to those that constitute global process today (14).

Indian society was divided innumerable tiny compartments they worshipped different Gods and Goddesses. They also practice different religion which came found in Pali, Prakrit and Sanscrit .Indian philosophy is the product of Indian society.

*The Home and the World* by Tagore revolves around the tension between modernity and tradition. Since the novel was written around 1916sand the Indian society was in the transitional period of tradition and decolonization, the novel depicts the dynamics of the Indian society. Indian people developed consciousness about colonialism. As a result, India got independence.

The novel centers on the tension between the male and female, mainly represented by Bimla, Sandip and Nikhil respectively. Sandip, being fascinated by the modern life style, enjoys liaison, modern movies, parties etc. On the other hand,

Bimla's faith on religion, her blind fidelity and the roles prescribed to the women show her inclination to the tradition. In addition, Nikhil's adoption of western system of education further highlights the influence of modernity on the male. On the other hand Nikhil's grandmother and sister-in-law's inclination to the traditional norms and values show that females are still traditional unlike men. Thus this research applies 'Modernity' as a theoretical tool to analyze the text and justify the issue.

### Chapter III: Textual Analysis

#### Tension between Tradition and modernity in *The Home and the world*

The main thrust of Tagore's *The Home and the world* is the tension between tradition and modernity. It is a story of an aristocratic Bangali family. There are main three characters; they are Bimala, Nikhil and Sandip who represent dual mentality in their practical life. Traditional and another is modern. This novel is written in autobiographical form. Nikhil is an idealistic husband, Bimala is his wife who is typical Hindu woman and Sandip is his friend. Bimala is happy in serving her husband as a God and devoting her life in household activities. She is ideal Hindu wife. She looks a typical Indian woman and traditionally dresses in a *sari*. She regards her husband as a p

prince of her world. She says, "I had the prince of my real world enthroned in my heart. I was his queen. I had my seat by his side. But my real job was that my true place was at his feet". (12)

Tagore's writing is the reflection of Indian society where we can find two ways of life that are traditional and modern. Tagore presents the dynamic effects of modernization, progress on the village, caste system, rural poverty, male dominated society, conflict between ancestral orthodox and rebellious individualism, modern hypocrisy, scientific development and its effects in modern society, various exploitation in the modern world especially in Indian society before and after colonial period.

Tagore presents his writing by reflecting Indianness. He wrote many novels and short stories addressing humanity as a central theme. His main concern is representing middle class society and influence on modern way of life. His theme is the juxtaposition of tradition and modernity. He criticizes the colonizer who invaded the local culture and tradition. So we can find the confrontation between Indian tradition and western forms of life. So Tagore presents such kind of dual state of

condition of Indian people through his novel. *The Home and the world* presents the characters like Nikhil, Bimala, Sandip and others to depict such tension between tradition and modernity.

Tagore presents a character named Nikhil who is educated modern man, inspires his wife to come out from the narrow boundary of household duties and involve in the outside world. He wants her to be modern and adjust her in environment not with the help of his name rather her own name. His vision is enlightened, humanitarian and global prospective, based on true equality and harmony of individuals and nations. Nikhil is calm, gentle understanding, forgiving liberal, rational. He never changes in this novel.

Here we find contradiction because on the one hand Tagore presents characters who adopt modernity and on the other hand, they are in diasporic situation of their tradition. Nikhil represents modern characteristics. But he is also in favor of Indian traditions and culture. Nikhil tries to educate his wife and change her state. He wants to be very docile, submissive and obedient. He disregards her when she participates in national movements and her friendship with Sandip. Her leaving home in night is also objectionable for him.

Nikhil is rational which represents modernity. He had enough wealth. So he tries to win the heart of people through his so called teaching the people.

Though Tagore favors Indian culture, he seems to be modern in his concept. So in this novel he wants to take Bimala out of '*pardah*' taking the help of Nikhil. Bimala says, " My husband was very eager to take me out of *pardah*, One day I said to him: What do I want with the outside world? The outside world may want you, he replies" (17).

Bimala, devoted wife of Nikhil is submissive and docile wife. Previously she represents traditional Indian wife. Later on she changes herself as modern by adopting modern dress, reading English books and leaving home by rejecting her previous condition and participates in national movements. She does futile works to maintain good relationship with her husband. She worships her husband daily in the morning. She drinks water of her husband's feet. But Nikhil, being a modern character rejects such kind of behaviors from her side. He does not like to confine her within home.

Bimala wants to maintain social relations. So she rejects the proposal of her husband to leave home after the death of her grandmother. Bimala turned into submissive woman due to the social structure. She is ideal wife without any rejection. She follows patriarchal norms and values of Hindu culture.

As Bimala steps outside of her home, she changes slowly. After reading English books, she disregards her husband's wishes and often she ignores her family members. She also disregards the customs of the society having extra affair with Sandip. She starts wearing foreign dresses like jacket, paint, perfumes, slippers, hair-pins etc rejecting her traditional Hindu dress sari. This dress shows her modern and younger as well. She starts reading English books. Being modern, she started talking frankly about different subjects. She talks about modern sex problems frankly outside the home.

Nikhil and Sandip represent two opposing vision for the nation. Bimala is torn between two. Sandip is greedy, violent and destructive. His philosophy is as simple as Machiavellian. "There is not the time for nice scruples. We must be unswerving brutal we must sin" (39). He is modern, materialist and capitalist. He shows his greed in earning money as he remarks "we are the flesh eaters of the world; we have teeth and nails; we pursue and grab the tears. we are not satisfied with chewing in evening

the cud of grass we have eaten in the morning [...] in that case we shall steal or rob, for we must live” (47).

Sandip, selfish fellow does not hesitate to woo his friends’ wife and he provokes the youths of Nikhil’s village to quarrel with their neighbors in the name of nationalism. Being modern, even he does not hesitate to have a sex with his friend’s wife. His modern thinking makes him extra marital sexual relationship is simple and normal. As Anita Desai rightly comments and points his characteristics. As she says, “his vanity, arrogance, greed and nihilism he resembles nothing so much as the conventional background of the Indian stage of the Bombay cinema, stroking his handlebar moustache as he gloats over a bag of gold and a cowering maiden” (345).

Though Nikhil respects global prospective does not reject the spirit of Indian which does not reject anything, reject any race and culture. It always proclaims the ideal of unity. Nikhil loves his country as much as Sandip. He says, “To serve my country; but my worship I reserve for right which is far greater than my country. To worship my country as god is bringing curse upon it” (29). Even Bimala his wife goes outside with Sandip in night; he does not take it seriously as the traditional husband think. On the one hand he is modern as well as on the other hand he seems traditional. During the time of Bimala’s going outside he feels uneasy as well. As he says, "It was palpable that she had specially dressed herself up to coax that order out of me” (143). Thus, this feeling shows he is in duel situations. Here is the tension between tradition and modernity.

Nikhil is not limited within family boundary, Hindu religion and customs. He wants to go beyond such traditional forms of life. On the one hand he is individuals. Individuality is one of the modern characteristics. And on the other he tries to free all human beings. Here are the two mentalities within same man, traditional and modern.

Sandip is also individual character. He is indifferent to others behaviour and feelings. He is the cause of Bimala's tension in the novels. He does not give opportunity to others feelings and desires in his heart. So he loots Bimala economically as well as physically and also the youngsters of Nikhil's village boy and participate them in national movements being leader himself.

Tagore presents Nikhil and Sandip as the representative of modern character. They are little bit far from tradition where as he also presented Nikhil's grandmother and his sister-in-law are still following the religious and traditional social structure. Somehow Bimala is also the representative of traditional character. Though later on she changes herself, she returns at last. Here we find dynamism in Indian society. Slowly Indian society is changing but in tension between tradition and modernity.

Traditional concept of male superior and female as inferior creature is also threatened by Darwin who challenges this and forwards his theory in his book, *Survival of the fittest*. Through this he says, "it is not the God who makes things happen in the world but it is the nature that is at the centre" (Gaarder 40). This shows traditional concept of worshipping male members as God is how changed. The nature created all human beings as equal. Freud is also the challenger of traditional thinking and he says all human beings are guided by unconscious level of mind" (Gaarder 434). Thus Indian society is slowly and gradually changing which is explicit in Tagore's, *The Home and the world*. Here a female protagonist Bimala is slowly changing and she gradually conscious about her position, her dominated situation and also aware about equality between male and female. So she challenged the traditional society and participates in National Movements, leaving her traditional wife's role. As she says "As I came away from that broken cage of a bedroom, out into the golden

sunlight of the open, there was the avenue of baubiniyas, along the graveled path in front of my verandah, suffering the sky with a rosy flush” (143).

As Nietzsche challenges the God by presenting his *The Death of God*. Here Tagore presented the character Sandip who is secular tries to challenges traditional believes and human action. As he remarks “The divinities which keep them alive are false Gods’ (159). Here the changed knowledge creates tension in the novels. He further says “Ignorant men worship Gods. I Sandip shall create them” (166).

Sandip is secular man who does not care god and others; rather he is concerned only in his physical needs and desires. So he runs after money name and fame rather than God’s. This is the major cause of the tension of the novel. He is self centered, does not understand others plight, needs and even forgets his own responsibility to his society.

Not only Sandip but Nikhil and Bimala are divided into tradition and modernity. We find such distinction in other characters in the novel. Nikhil’s grandmother always mocks Bimala's decked with modern dress. Though she mocks her she is also slightly affected by modernity. So, Bimala remarks, "The influence of modern age feel so strongly upon her, that her evenings refused to pass if I did not tell her stories out of English books” (20).

Bara Rani is the representative of traditional Indian woman. She hates and mocks Bimala as her wearing Jeans (foreign dress). She always mocks her. So she mockingly remarks “I am admiring your get up” (125). It meant that she does not like modern dress. She wants to remain in traditional dress.

Though Sandip is modern but he hates foreign medicine. He likes his own country made medicine like homoeopathic and allopathic medicines. So he remarks,

“They are imposed on us by the rule of the modern age exacting fines and inflicting injuries” (35).

Virginia Woolf speaks for the space of the woman. According to her if women get ‘space in society’ (place in society), they will do everything as man. This is realized by Sandip and praises Bimala. Sandip remarks, “It is our women who will save the country” (40). This shows that Sandip's modern thinking who gives place for participation in national movements not only male members but woman as well. But Nikhil rejects national movements and respects globalization, though he loves his country very much. Thus here arises tension between two knowledges and psychologies.

Bimala totally changed as modern man in the middle part of the novels. She is busy as much as that she does not have time to think herself. So she remarks “I had no time to think myself” (55). She is busy in national movements. On the other hand her sister-in-law complained her activities and she remarks, "Up to now the women of this house have been kept weeping. Here comes the men's turn” (55). Thus, here presents two contrary thinking one is modern and another is traditional arise tension in the novel.

Bimala feels herself as bold as man. She feels her relation should be broadening in the world not only within home. She feels she is bold she can do everything what arises in front of her. She remarks ‘divine strength had come to me’ (57).

On the other hand, Chandranath Babu is master of Nikhil also affected by modern age. He is in favour of Swadeshi. He turned towards individualism which is one of the characteristics of modernity. As he feels modern man should do himself

rather he stays in home. Khema, becomes tired by modern individual world tries to escape from the modern world and wants to return back to her own tradition.

Sandip being a modern character praises western style rather than Indianness. As he remarks "I want western military style to prevail, not the Indian" (135). This shows on the one hand he utter the slogan of Bandematuram, on the other hand he favors western way of life. Thus Sandip is within dilemma. He had modern as well as traditional mentality.

Panchu also follows tradition. After the death of his wife by Consumption he must undergo a purification ceremony to cleanse himself of sin and to propitiate his community. Panchu being poor man affects by modern materials. He brings coca-nut. He is the follower of tradition. On the other hand not only Panchu but all the Bengal affected by modernity and they turned towards individualism. They are conscious of their position due to several awareness program spreads. Thus according to Bimala all the Bengali people started searching and adopting their rights against colonizer. As Bimala remarks, "all the Bengali people, ashes as well talking "Here am I" (115).

Bimala after going far from her traditional role by adopting modernity, she has had no time for herself. She goes forward. At the sometimes she laments her situation. She is at the heart anxious leaving a traditional role. Thus she is in the condition of tension between tradition and modernity. She has left home by forgetting her domestic duties. Further more she laments saying, "I lost my home and also lost my way" (124). Thus she thought herself as modern men who can not have fixity, certainty of life. As modern man rushes forward according to time. They had no hope of destination rather continued to go forwards. Thus the novel presents on the one hand suffering and lamentation for tradition and on the other hand eagerness for modern life. Thus novel presents the tension between tradition and modernity.

Nikhil brought foreign sofa, furniture in his reception room. He is affected by modernity at the same time he also uses his Indian traditional pencil, lamps. This shows Nikhil not only adopting modernity but also following his own tradition. This shows his dual mentality. It meant he is in dilemma either to follow tradition or adopt modernity.

Bara Rani, sister-in-law of Bimala who is affected by modern means. She is using modern machines. But she mocks Bimala being a modern and also scolds her by saying “a woman is not built that way. She is soft and supple, so that she may bend without being crooked” (124). She also says “You are his dissipation, and will be his ruin? (125).

All India and Indian people as well changed due to the knowledge of individuality. All the villagers reject foreign goods and use their own Indian made. Most of the boatmen also refuses to bring foreign goods. Among the boatmen, Mirjan is now not fully changed. He is entangled in tradition. Panchu and Kundu are being traditional believers believe their caste system and untouchability. Whereas Nikhil being modern tries to change the society being, liberal himself.

Modern people are showy nature. They are hypocritical who are called modern Indian they also followed such hypocritical qualities. In this novel, Nikhil being a modern character decorates his home with foreign goods in the guest room.

Panchu is a quiet traditional character believes in untouchability. It means he somehow follows traditional roles because he can't give to touch a cooking food to an old woman. At the same time Nikhil rejects such beliefs. So Nikhil permits to cook food for her. Here arises a conflict between tradition and modernity.

Nikhil believes in modernity and he tries to modernize not only his country's people rather God as well. He remarks, “It is my mission to modernize the ancient

deities. I am born the saviour of the gods, to emancipate them from the thralldom of the past” (216). In contrary Sandip is selfish character who only himself tries to escape from problems without caring others troubles. Every time he creates fallacy and he persuades himself that he has found the truth. But he can't. This shows his hypocrisy. Thus modern man are hypocritical rather more conscious about their own previous liberality. So they turned towards cruelty.

Though Bimala changed herself from her traditional role, she is not far from it. While obstacles and problems arise in front of her, she begs help from God rather taking easily to these obstacles. Here we find that she is not completely modern rather somehow hanging in tradition. Thus the novel presents dilemmic condition of the characters. On the one hand they are affected by modernity on the other hand they had the internal longings of their tradition. During the time of her stealing money from her husband, she challenges the society but later on she confesses as a weak woman in front of her husband and God. Then she remarks, O God, save me this time, (227).

Nikhil being a modern character wants to roam in the world by comparing with others not only wants to remain within him; like self satisfied traditional concept. So he feels himself that one cannot realize ones own existence by remaining within oneself, it has to be sought outside.

Though Bimala tries to cross the traditional roles but modern world can't let her exists because it is the world of selfishness. So at last she knelt at her husbands' feet with her head repeatedly. This shows that due to the selfish nature of modern world she can't able to create her identity herself rather compels to return back her home.

Sandip is selfish fellow tries to earn enough money by hooked and crooked. So he deceives his friends, Nikhil, Bimala and Amulya. They trust him friendly but he

is like modern man he exposes his selfish nature upon them. He wants to live in modern world. As he remarks, “I feel that it is necessary that I should live” (276).

Amulya also tries to exist in modern world. He is slightly affected by modernity. At he struggles to revenge Sandip due to the impact of modern knowledge. Though he struggles to live in modern world, he can't exist. At last he dies with bullet of selfish Sandip who is the representative of modern selfish man. Being in duel condition he met in death. He is in confusion between tradition and modernity.

Traditional concept of power is challenged by Foucault. He says power is pervasive. According to him power is everywhere. Thus this concept applies in this novel, as well. Amulya was minor but slowly and gradually becomes conscious. Later on he starts to challenge Sandip who always tries to dominate others. Thus here arises tension in the novel.

Sandip is showy nature. He hides his realities and tries to prove himself as the civilized. But in reality he is uncivilized. He is individual characters who does not care others problems. He denies his friend's suggestions. Sandip enjoys his life giving torture to others. Thus he shows his characteristics as modern man.

### **Colonial impact in Indian social life**

Due to the scientific development of media transportation, communication, electricity etc made the world smaller and smaller. Different kinds of media like radio, TV, computer etc control the modern man. In this world those who cannot mobilize in by these things, he/she had to suffer much. Though Nikhil, Amulya tries to adopt the modern world they can't totally adopt modernity. So at last they met into death. Sandip is totally accommodated with the modern world. Thus, he exists well in this world. Bimala also suffers in this world because of her double consciousness; one is love for tradition and the other is in interest towards modernity. Other

characters Nikhil's sister-in-law and his grandmother can't suffer much because they were slightly affected by modernity but they are fully devoted in tradition.

Indian life affected by the Industrial Revolution. They started thinking in new way and there comes social and political change. Before it, Indian life was simple people used to work in fields. So their social life was simple and their per capita income was very low. After the Industrial Revolution Indian way of life and knowledge progress they started maintaining their life quite changed and comfortable. Middle class people started running factories by giving low wages to the workers. Ancient landlords change into factory owners. They do not give space to feelings and emotions rather take as an object of production. Sandip is one of the epitome of modern Indian does not count others feelings and emotions rather concerned with only money by exploiting his country's citizens. Bimala also affected by modernity, comes self awareness and knowledge. After being aware tries to search her position in the world. Though being married woman, leaves her responsibility and goes outside world and participate in national movements.

Due to the development of transportation Indian people started traveling from one place to another. Amulya is poor works for Chota Rani. He is devoted with her. He can success to go Calcutta alone for selling her ornaments. Modern world makes people strong himself/ herself. So he makes his heart strong and goes far from his home. This happens as a result of modernity.

Indian life affected by the colonialism. Colonialism is known as cultural exploitation, economic exploitation and educational exploitation. It is related with film, music, sports etc.

Colonialism is the process of exploiting colonized countries. It is the process of restructuring a new society. It controls other people's land. European countries

expand their nation toward third world countries like Asia, Africa and America. They exploit by implicitly in the name of help; giving education economy etc. but their motor was to collect all the raw materials from their colonies.

Colonialist used their English language to exploit the orient. They impose their language culture in academic sector and in institutions. They colonize and dominate the orient. In this novel, though Sandip knows himself as colonized he favors English books to read. He prefers English book for Bimala too for reading. He himself reads English books. Nikhil also reads English books, stories. He likes European dresses. So he brought European ornaments and dresses for the decoration of his wife, Bimala. Bimala also reads English books. After reading these books she tells all stories to his grandmother. It shows that English language and culture is adopting Indian people. They are following western culture language, custom etc knowingly or unknowingly.

In this novel Amulya resists Sandip being aware about his colonized situation. Sandip behaves like colonizer. He tries to absorb all the properties, jewellery and golds like colonizer do. He wants to rule the general villagers in the name of National Movements being a leader. Like colonized people all the people support him. In one sense Bimala is also the colonizer who compels Amulya to do works according to her wishes. Nikhil is also the example of colonizer who gives freedom to Bimala. But inwardly he tries to control her mental and physical activities inside him. Though she tries to be free from domination she comes to meet in double domination of Nikhil's and Sandip's. Thus colonization is clearly seen in Indian life.

Indian people also influenced by colonization. They consume such customs; behaviors manners etc. but all Indian are not following whole heartedly. Sandip learns

to dominate and exploits the same Indian people. This happens as a result of the impact of colonization in India.

Previously Bimala learns devotion who is typical Indian traditional women. She is double dominated. Nikhil only dream only to be a devoted wife. So she is colonized by her society. When Bimala meets Sandip she fascinates by the dynamic quality of Sandip and he also flatters her as queen bee. But Bimala is unknown about his colonizing mentality as BC Chakraworty in Rabindranath Tagore; *His mind and Art* says;

When Bimala meets Sandip for the first time, she is fascinated by the dynamic personality of Sandip. Sandip is absolutely selfish and crafty. He flatters Bimala, as the incarnation of Shakti; who is the source of inspiration to all the sons of Bengal. They come to closer to each other as comrades in the service of the country till Sandip's homage to the goddess is reforms into his love for Bimala. Bimala is hypnotized by the dynamic personality surrenders herself to him (207).

But at last she realized Sandip is fraud and wrong and has misled her. She becomes unable to adjust in the outside world because of her lack of education. Outside world is very difficult to adjust so they should have good education before coming out.

Tagore has implicitly supporter of the traditional values and expectations of the Indian culture. The development of the plot is evidently the means of tension between tradition and modernity and reinforcing the traditional Indian values. In traditional beliefs patriarchal society is existed. A boy does not need any good sign before marriage because he is believed that he is already perfect. So Male got education. As a result male are quite modern than female in comparison.

### Chapter IV: Conclusion

It is calculated that Tagore's novel *The Home and the world* holds the Tension between tradition and modernity in Indian colonial society. Tagore is in favour of Tradition and Indian myths. He was regarded as Indian genius but with the passage of time and degradation of culture, customs also underwent change due to modernity consciousness of women arises tension in society. Thus here, arises tension within the society. Because of tension, there is internal dynamics in Indian society and Indian status, the tradition and modernity respectively. Not only male and female tension rather higher and lower caste and tension between male- male as well. Moreover, the industrial revolution, colonial mentality and modern hypocrisy have remarkable influence on the characters which further support to emergence of tension.

My research in this novel is from modernity. Here all the characters represent the tension between tradition and modernity. Especially female characters represent tradition and male characters represent modernity. Bimala being a female character later on changed as male. She represents tradition and modernity herself. Bimala, first as an epitome of Indian traditional wife believes in worshipping her husband as God, familial responsibility as her duty and responsibility. She refuses to come out of her home. But after Nikhil's supports she comes out of the home and searches her own identity. As she comes out of her traditional home she engages with Sandip.

Tagore's characters represent the Indian society and culture. So he has treated male dominated world where Bimala becomes failure in this modern male dominated world. Not only Bimala, Nikhil as well becomes failure in this world because he is the modernist but not completely modernist. In contrary Sandip is totally modernist selfish who is able to exist in this world, though slightly he is traditional. Amulya who is traditional can not adjust in the selfish modern world.

Thus in the novel Tagore presented the dynamics characteristics of the character. Nikhil is modern educated man likes modern dresses machine, medicine foreign ornaments etc. He tries to take out his wife out of *purdha* and social taboos to construct her own identity. He also rejects her worshipped to him. Sandip is a modern character. He is selfish does not care others problems and suffering. He is self guided, individualist towards his duties and responsibilities. He does not hesitate to make sexual relationship with his best friend's wife, Bimala.

Industrial revolution is the cause to bring change in Indian society which is vividly seen in the novel. Due to the colonial mentality people themselves suffers from each other. Westernization and colonization makes the Indian life dynamics. Due to the westernization and modernization Bimala, Amulya, Sandip changed. Not only they but Nikhil's village boys, Kundu also changes. Musclemans also affected by modernity. They changed as revolutionary so they attempt to cut cows.

Some of the characters want to save their own tradition in this dynamically changing society. They are presented as minor. Their voice is not counted in this dynamics society.

Finally we can say that Tagore's *The Home and the world* visualizes the tension between tradition and modernity which is the cause of dynamics in Indian society. Here the tension arises between high and low castes, high and low class and male and female domination. Here also the tension between friends to friend. One is selfish and another is selfless who wants all human freedom. Thus here arises tension. Thus the novel presents the tension between tradition and modernity in different aspects.

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