CONCLUSION

Having discussed the various aspects of the retellings in the previous chapters, it could be concluded that the modern novels based on the epic mirror the authors' world-view. The writers have different aims while re-narrating the epic. Some writers use the Mahabharata material as a metaphor to describe contemporary issues and situations. Some other writers choose to re-narrate the story for the story's sake alone. Yet some other writers take the Mahabharata material as raw material and add newer material to reconstruct the epic events and recreate the epic characters.

When a writer uses the Mahabharata material metaphorically, the story of the epic becomes an instrument to describe present conditions of the society in which he lives. Thus reflections of present issues are expressed through the use of the Mahabharata story. Pratibha Ray, Shashi Tharoor and V.S.Khandekar make use of the epic as a metaphor while narrating their stories. Thus Pratibha Ray is able to discuss the sufferings of a woman in a patriarchal society through the image of Draupadi. Khandekar drives in a moral through the image of the unsatisfied man in Yayati. Yayati, in the epic, is the symbol to convey the philosophy expounded by Indian scriptures that man should be able to fulfill the four purusharthas—dharma, artha kama and moksa—in life on earth in order to achieve nirvana in his life after death. King Yayati becomes a representative of the modern man, who craves for physical indulgences to the extent of spiritual degradation forgetting the true goal of life. Shashi Tharoor uses the epic theme as a medium to narrate the story of the power struggle in democratic India.

P.K.Balakrishnan and Shivaji Sawant narrate the story for story's sake alone. P.K.Balakrishnan endeavours to recreate the tragic situations of the aftermath of the Mahabharata war, narrated in the Sauptika Parva and Stri Parva. The author renarrates the story, glorifying the characters and
adhering close to the epic narrative. Shivaji Sawant renarrates the story of Karna, glorifying him and offering new explanations to his actions.

M.T.Vasudevan Nair takes the epic material as raw material and adds to it to reconstruct the epic events and characters. Thus he purges the epic of its element of fantasy and allows the rational to completely dominate the narration. Shivaji Sawant too attributes new explanations to Karna's actions and words and glorifies him. Though Shivaji Sawant retains the fantastic element in the epic, he uses it to explain Karna's misfortunes.

The fact that ancient epic material is still used to explain the present shows the strength and grandeur of the epic. The modern Mahabharata retellings are brilliant examples to this.