CONCLUSION
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The purpose of this chapter is to gather the individual strands, findings and observations of the preceding chapters, binding these into a comprehensive whole in order to arrive at a definite inference of both Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka’s optimistic and progressive vision as writers in the light of Calvino’s observation:

What we ask of writers is that they guarantee the survival of what we call human in a world where everything appears inhuman; guarantee the survival of human discourse to console us for the loss of humanity in every other discourse and relationship. And what do we mean by human? Usually, whatever is temperamental, emotional, ingenuous, and not at all austere.

(The Uses of Literature, 95)

These words of Calvino establish writers’ inspirational and enlightening role in society for moral, idealistic, intellectual and cynical reasons. As analysed in preceding chapters, the ultimate mission of every writer is to liberate the mind of the oppressed and the oppressor in order to cultivate a harmonious society. The vision of a writer shapes the consciousness of a nation. As opined by Joseph Stalin, writers as the “engineers of human soul” depict life truthfully with a purpose of changing the existing reality. Understandably, the struggle which operates at societal level is driven by man, a heroic figure, who being the most sensitive being like the writer himself serves as an alter-ego of the writer.

The hero in different shades and contours in the plays of Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka highlight the vision of two writers who are from diverse socio-political setting but are strongly connected through their strong concern for humanity at large. The present comparative study presents a fresh insight into Indian and Nigerian literature as opined by Descartes that all knowledge which is not obtained through the
simple and pure intuition of an isolated thing is obtained by the comparison of two or more things among themselves. As great humanists and universalists, both Tagore and Soyinka possessed positive and humanitarian outlook which ennobled and endeared them to people cutting across all boundaries of race, religion and nationality. As a staunch believer in the unity of life, Tagore’s plays highlight his acute penetrative vision and proximity to Indian ethos along with his penchant for a new lease of fresh air to invigorate the society, thereby, reflecting the playwright’s inimitable status, as a cultural icon. Likewise Soyinka’s dramatic world rooted in Yoruba mythology simultaneously present his world view which aims at social and political renewal.

It is generally accepted that similar socio-economic and historical factors can promote the development of literatures that may be similar in themes and styles in different regions of the world with or without the benefit of direct or indirect literary influence. In the present comparative discussion, Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka respectively loosely and inclusively represent nineteenth-twentieth century India and twentieth-century Nigeria. The writings of Tagore and Soyinka especially plays can profitably be compared at levels of both direct influence and accidental similarities. Undoubtedly, the plays of Tagore and Soyinka fairly and accurately reflect the general situation in India and Nigeria for two reasons. Firstly, Indian and Nigerian writers have been responsive to socio-political developments. Secondly, with the largest concentration of writers and critics on the Indian subcontinent and the African continent, India and Nigeria as post-colonial societies have exerted considerable influence on the corpus of literature on the whole. Writing has been a mission for writers on both the continents with their active participation in socio-political developments and deep concern to ameliorate their respective societies.

Taking into consideration the epistemological grounds for a comparative study, the thesis has dealt with some philosophical issues viz... the politics of representation; the intra and inter identities thresholds of recognition and validation. Both India and Nigeria underwent the upheavals of colonial oppression resulting in socio-political turmoil and cultural chaos. As pioneers of addressing the challenges posed by colonisation, the writings of Tagore and Soyinka exhibit their fervent desire for renewal and rejuvenation of society which according to them can be achieved through resistance,
rebellion and renewal as is forcefully reflected in their heroes. Ostensibly, a hero like the writer himself cannot be seen in isolation from the socio-cultural and economic environment. He is created out of the complex social situation that needs him for rejuvenation. The hero epitomized as the icon for the redefinition of the society which he represents can be called the very embodiment of the socio-political ideology of the writer himself as can be seen in the plays of Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka.

As analysed in the plays of Tagore and Soyinka, there exist vicarious presence of writer as the hero both in the internal and the external world. Their heroes challenge the tradition of suffering and exploitation and being part of community, they share pains and sufferings of their fellow beings. They sacrifice their individual happiness for the welfare of the nation. Soyinka as a revolutionary writer has always been at loggerheads with the authority questioning the prejudices and atrocities of rulers. That is why he was incarcerated, banished from society and even was forced to go on a self-imposed exile. Similarly, Tagore as a social thinker always protested against social inequalities like retrogressive social customs, narrow-mindedness and superstitious practices. As a result, both these writers find a proper objective correlative for their subjective thought process and ideals in their plays which are their heroes who reflect the true nature of the social reality of their age. Their heroes besides reflecting the true nature of modern society exhibit their creator’s faith in human endeavour or the philosophy of *Karma* as expounded in the *Bhagwat Gita*.

Tagore’s and Soyinka’s heroic resistance to the evils of society is vividly portrayed in the *alazonic, eironic* and *pharmakos* stance of hero in the plays which reflect the social vision of both the writers which is affirmative, liberal and humanistic. Before concluding in an individual as well as a cumulative manner about Tagore’s and Soyinka’s vision it would be pertinent to mention that social realism and socialist realism as progressive genres which aim at representing life truthfully highlighting the injustice of the social and political system and their effect on less well-off members of society as has been propounded and pondered universally by various writers, social realists and writers has been the raison d’être of Tagore’s and Soyinka’s literary sensibilities. Tagore as a social realist delineates his hero’s lives realistically in his plays which portray the dire poverty of his countrymen. However, he makes the suffering of
his heroes go beyond personal and attain a universal level. Concerned with dynamic interpretations of life with the purpose of changing the existing reality, Tagore appears as a messiah of his time. Likewise, Soyinka as a socialist realist portrays reality in its revolutionary development to inculcate the spirit of socialism among masses.

Compared to other literary genre, drama by its nature holds two-fold significance- that of the text and the performance. This multi-dimensional nature of drama connects it to society more closely particularly the Indian and the Nigerian societies which have been constantly undergoing the upheavals of cultural flux. Rabindranath Tagore’s theatre is committed to social transformation particularly from the stifling superstitious practices and Soyinka’s theatre is committed to revolutionary development particularly to achieve a higher revolutionary consciousness. Tagore once said, “Drama has the responsibility of drawing apart the curtain of naturalism and reveals the inner reality of things. If there is too much emphasis on imitative naturalism, the inner view becomes clouded” (A Centenary Volume, 232).

The first chapter made an in-depth analysis of the roles, responsibilities and expectations from a hero who is created by the writer to exhibit his inner and outer conflicts and to convey his vision. A glance at the evolution of hero establishes that mythology, society, economic tensions, inner self and outer self of the man have shaped and re-shaped hero which is applicable universally. Whereas the hero in divine projections is seen as supreme and out of the reach of human mind, a hero with supernatural powers possessed closeness to the divine hero but his confrontation with God brought forth his defeat. The most pervasive form of relationship of the hero is with the society which has resulted in conflict between the hero and the collective order of the society. Tagore’s and Soyinka’s heroes fall in this paradigm. Just as the two great writers had to come to terms with the dilemmas of volatile societies, their heroes too undergo a process of struggle, sacrifice and denial. The unflinching humanistic outlook of Tagore and Soyinka makes them a powerful voice of humanity which has been betrayed and mutilated since time immemorial and the deep concern of these writers is reflected in the portrayal of their heroes who are an embodiment of their own selves.
Both Tagore and Soyinka negated the theory of “White Man’s Burden” and their writings were their strong attempt to re-construct and re-build their respective societies. Their progressive outlook and optimism is visible in their heroes who are an embodiment of their own spirit and vision. Taking a cue from some seminal works like Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1983), Evans Lansing Smith’s *The Hero Journey in Literature* (1997), Thomas Carlyle’s *On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History* (1846), Miller Dean’s *The Epic Hero* (2000), J. Lash’s *The Hero: Manhood and Power* (1995), Ihab Hassan’s *The Pattern of Fictional Experience* (1963), the present study highlights that Tagore’s and Soyinka’s portrayal of hero in an *eironic, alazonic* and *pharmakos* stance has been their response to the social, political and cultural ethos of their respective nations.

The myth of the hero is pervasive in all the cultures of the world. In Greek mythology, a hero is originally a demigod. Heroes like Odysseus, Gilgamesh, the Ancient Mariner, Marlow and many others and their stories have always enlightened the world by narrating their heroic journey. Analysing the mythologies of the different part of the world and reflecting over the sacrificial zeal of mythological heroes, thereby, making them emerge as *eironic* figure, *alazonic* figure or the *pharmakos* who epitomize victimization within a conflict between his inner self and that of the society and by drawing illustrations from heroes like Oedipus, Gautam Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus Christ and many more, the first chapter also made an in depth study of some major works on Social Realism like Abram Tertz’s *On Socialist Realism* (1960), Herman Ermolaev’s *Soviet Literary Theories, 1917-1934: The Genesis of Socialist Realism* (1963), Caradog Vaughan James’s *Soviet Socialist Realism: Origins and Theory* (1973), Ernest J. Simmons’s *Introduction to Russian Realism* (1965), Fredric Jameson’s *Afterword: A Note on Literary Realism* (2010) to highlight Tagore as a social realist and Wole Soyinka as socialist realist.

Ostensibly, no writer has ever written in vacuum and the second chapter focuses on socio-political milieu of India and Nigeria during the times of Rabindranath Tagore and Wole Soyinka and how it shaped and affected their literary sensibilities. Focussing on seminal works of Comparative Studies like Ramakrishnan and Chandra Mohan’s *Interdisciplinary Alternatives in Comparative Literature* (2013), Bijay Kumar Dass’s
Comparative Literature (2000), Susan Bassnett’s *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (1993), Adnan Wassan’s *Essays in Comparative Literature* (1985), R.K. Dhawan’s *Comparative Literature* (1987), Henry Gifford’s *Comparative Literature* (1969) the second chapter juxtaposed the two writers and their social, political and cultural background to evolve the research problem which lies in similarities and contrasts in Tagore’s and Soyinka’s stance vis-a-vis their ideology and nationalism as implicit in their heroes. What emerges out of these analyses is Tagore’s and Soyinka’s like-mindedness as far as their views on myths, rituals, tradition, modernity are concerned. Both possess universal humanistic approach which is evident from their universal appeal as champions of humanity and egalitarianism.

An exhaustive analysis of the individual works of both the writers selected for the development of argument began from chapter three onwards and concluded in chapter five. In the third chapter, the analytical focus vis-a-vis the *eironic* stance of hero rested upon two plays, Tagore’s *Sacrifice* and Soyinka’s *The Strong Breed*. Both these plays highlight the futility of the ritual of sacrifice made to God as part of religious practice. *Sacrifice* resonates Tagore’s unflinching belief in humanism and his strong faith to uproot those rituals which had hitherto been unquestioned and unchallenged. Likewise, *The Strong Breed* echoes Soyinka’s immersion into Yoruba culture and his deep concern for those rituals which are absurd. Both these plays highlight the writers’ humanistic appeal to their respective societies to shun retrogressive ceremonies and rituals which are barbaric, inhuman and exploitative.

As an alter-ego of the writer, Jaising in *Sacrifice* and Eman in *The Strong Breed* is a ‘self-deprecating’ *eironic* figure who represents the iconoclasm and anguish of Tagore and Soyinka respectively. Tagore as a writer and philosopher was critical of age-old Vedantic Brahminism advocated by socially dominant priestly class reducing religion to an instrument in their hands for maintaining their social dominance. Lambasting religious bigotry and social hypocrisy, Jaising’s sacrifice removes the clouds of religious fanaticism from the mind of the priest. Similarly, Soyinka’s protagonist vehemently questions the ritual of self-sacrifice which has been practised since generations to remove evil from the community. In doing so, he sacrifices himself and emerges as the redeemer of society like the great dramatist himself.
From a self-deprecating figure, the fourth chapter highlights the metamorphoses of hero to an *alazon* as analysed in Tagore’s *Red Oleanders* and Soyinka’s *Kongi’s Harvest*. Both the writers make their heroes break open the bindings of their confinements to emerge quite strongly in the socio-political scenario. The plays discussed in this chapter analyse their heroes as the ones who declare their thoughts, speak out and protest against the oppressive regimes in their respective societies. In *Red Oleanders*, Ranjan emerges as the “compulsive rebel” – the *alazon* when he questions “gigantic system”-the oppressive power structure in his war against the dehumanising forces of modern urban civilization. As a representative of society where the relationship between the king and workers was that of the exploiter and exploited, Ranjan championed the cause of the downtrodden by giving voice to the voiceless.

In *Kongi’s Harvest*, Soyinka has made use of the ritual of Yam festival to comment upon the ruler’s perennial lust for power. By presenting a ray of hope through the character of Daodu, the writer expresses his faith in the heroic power of individual to resist tyranny and repression. In *Kongi’s Harvest* Daodu conveys Soyinka’s view that a society can only be reformed if every member of society is aware and responsive to the happenings in that society and is willing to make sacrifices to realize positive changes. Being a politically agile and vociferous critic of his times, Soyinka’s hero is a glimmer of hope in a society which is in a need of salvation. As *alazonic* heroes, Ranjan and Daodu are the ‘men of the future’, who possess potential to awake people from a deep slumber through their rebellious stance. Both these heroes echo the spirit of their respective writer as rebellious figure, re-affirming writers’ faith in the power of revolt as Camus aptly opines, “Today, with all its storm and strife, compels us to say that rebellion is one of the essential dimensions of man. It is our historic reality” (*The Rebel*, 21).

The fifth chapter analyses the *pharmakos* stance of hero in Tagore’s *The King and the Queen* and Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman*. Tagore’s concern for poverty-ridden India and self-centred approach of kings forms the backdrop of *The King and the Queen*. Reacting against the exploitation of the powerless by the powerful, Tagore’s hero like the great writer himself exhibits his commitment to convey a strong message to the Kings of colonial India who were mere pawns in the hands of Britishers.
and were leading a life of megalomania. Similarly Soyinka’s intense inclination towards Yoruba world view forms the basis of *Death and the King’s Horseman*. Resisting the oppressive policies of Britishers, Soyinka’s hero sacrifices his life to uphold his tradition and succeeds in bringing the Britishers to the realization of their arrogance and superiority. Both these plays highlight the sacrifice of heroes amidst the oppressive practices of Britishers in India and Nigeria. As mouthpiece of their respective writer, both Kumarsen and Olunde possess unflinching loyalty to their country.

An analysis of a cross-section of Tagore’s and Soyinka’s plays reveal their faith in the power of sacrifice which is the definite means by which hero can achieve salvation and can bring about redemption. Tagore’s and Soyinka’s heroes are sharply individualized and undergo changes under the pressure of events and other forces of change operating within the milieu. They are never static and do not remain mere products of artistic control or manipulation. For both the writers, sacrifice is the definite means by which cosmic unity is reasserted and rediscovered. The noble, all-redeeming sacrifice is a constant recurring theme of the plays of Tagore and Soyinka’s plays. In Soyinka’s philosophy, death is the bridge between the physical and the divine aspects of this universe, and it is through a ritual death that the unity of the two aspects is collectively achieved. Tagore also highlights death as the theme in his plays through which one can get salvation and liberation from the materialistic world.

Both Tagore and Soyinka as iconic literary figures of India and Nigeria are the champions of egalitarianism in justice, in economic welfare and in the right of each individual to achieve maximum fulfilment. Their heroes like the writers’ themselves possess no faith or belief in self-proclaimed and self-styled revolutionaries and reformists who under the garb of progressive thinking become totally impervious to the welfare of people at large. At this point, it may be concluded that writer as hero and hero as writer is constantly at warfare with himself and with society which makes him an alienated being as an *eiron, alazon* and a *pharmakos*. 