CHAPTER - VII
CONCLUSION

We have to conclude our study here on the topic THE POETIC COUNTER-POINT IN RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S SHORT STORIES: A CRITICAL STUDY. In this long discussion, we have observed from the western point of view that Tagore developed the technique of writing short stories and then made extensive experimentation in his quest for feeling and form. Tagore started writing short stories in 1877. We have also observed that the form and structure of traditional folk-narratives seem to inform the design of his early stories. From traditional folk-narrative, his work moved towards visionary stories and then towards realistic stories. The present thesis mostly deals with Tagore's visionary stories.

Tagore established Bengali short story in its full and independent being. He started writing short stories while he was leading an isolated life of a zaminder in rural Bengal. Most of Tagore's visionary stories were written against the background of rural Bengal. As a background of these stories we have the seasonal changes of nature, specially the description of the scorching heat of summer, the overcast condition of the sky, the torrential monsoon rains, the rivers of Bengal, the floods, the overflowing cornfields, the moonlit night of Phalgun etc.

All these natural activities play their part significantly in Tagore's stories. The importance of these activities did not lie in their existence as mere facts in Tagore's life. He always tried to know them in their relation to the human world.
Chapter-I serves the purpose of introduction. In this chapter, we have discussed a brief history of the development of short story in the perspective of the world literature and the history of the development of Tagore's short stories. In the process of discussion, we have observed Tagore's genius as a short story writer and his source of images, characters and the leading motives in his stories.

In Chapter - II, we have observed the transformation of poems into stories of Tagore. In this chapter, four stories — Ek Ratri (A Single Night), written in 1892 (B.S.1299), Shasti (Punishment), written in 1893 (B.S. 1300), Man-bhanjan (Fury Appeased), written in 1895 (B.S. 1302) and Mahamaya, written in 1892 (B.S. 1299) — have been analysed in terms of the ideas of Coleridge, G. Wilson Knight, Paul Valéry, Roman Jakobson and American New Critics. Iterative images which serve as 'motifs' in the stories have been traced out. The dominant motive as we notice in Ek Ratri (A Single Night), Shasti (Punishment) and Mahamaya is the country life of Bengal that has been created by using different images. The dominant motive in Man-bhanjan (Fury-Appeased) is to appease Giribala's fury. This has been done by the recurrent image of movement and the sound image. The story also brings to the fore what Jakobson called the 'poetic function' of language.

In Chapter - III, six stories have been analysed, amongst them four stories — Sampatti Samarpan (Wealth Surrendered), written in 1891 (B.S. 1298), Svarna Mriga (Fool's Gold), written in 1892 (B.S. 1299), Anadhikar Prabesh (Tresspass), written in 1894 (B.S. 1301) and Putrayajna (Son Sacrifice), written in 1898 (B.S. 1305) — read in terms of the theories of myths propounded by Freud, Jung, Vico and Herder. Two more stories — Atithi (Guest), written in 1895 (B.S. 1302) and
Malyadan (The Wedding Garland), written in 1902 (B.S. 1309) — have been analysed in this chapter. In both these stories, an attempt has been made to show how Tagore has made recurrent symbols and imagery. What we have found in this chapter is that the motive in 'Atithi (Guest) is the restlessness of a teenaged boy, Tarapada, who never wants to settle down in any place. Tarapada's restlessness has been presented through the recurrent image of movement and the recurrent image of sound. We have also observed in this chapter is that the dominant motive in Malyadan (The Wedding Garland) is the tragic love-affair of Jatin and Kurani. In the beginning of the story, the romantic situation has been created by the season of spring and the bird image. But in the middle and end of the story, the tragic situation has been created by the images of light, sound and motion.

In Chapter-IV, eight stories — Postmaster (The Postmaster), written in 1891 (B.S. 1298), Khokababur Pratyabartan (Little Master's Return), written in 1891 (B.S. 1298), Tyag (The Renunciation), written in 1892 (B.S. 1299), Samapti (The Completion), written in 1893 (B.S. 1300), Kabuliwala, written in 1892 (B.S. 1299), Kankal (Skeleton), written in 1891 (B.S. 1298), Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night), written in 1894 (B.S. 1301) and Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones), written in 1895 (B.S. 1302) — have been analysed. The purpose of this analysis is to examine Tagore's use of sense-images in his stories. It has been found that all effective sense-images — visual, auditory, tactual, olfactory, gustatory, organic and kinesthetic — have been used by Tagore extensively in his stories. The use of imagery thus reveals Tagore's feeling, emotion, thought and observation of things and incidents.
In Chapter-V, four stories — *Chuti (Holiday)*, written in 1892 (B.S. 1299), *Subha*, written in 1892 (B.S. 1299), *Dena-paona (Profit and Loss)*, written in 1891 (B.S. 1298), and *Apad (The Castaway)*, written in 1894 (B.S. 1301) — have been analysed. We have observed that both in *Chuti (Holiday)*, and *Subha* the dominant motive is the suffering of the children of Nature, while they are compelled to settle away from Nature. It has also been found that the story *Dena-paona (Profit and Loss)* too projects the same motif of human suffering. Again, it has been found that the dominant motive in *Apad (The Castaway)* is the universal battle between good and evil.

In Chapter-VI, it has been observed that many more stories and poems of Tagore are similar in nature. The similarity has been traced out in terms of the underlying ideas of the stories and the poems. Eight stories and eight poems have been analysed to show the thematic similarity of these stories and poems.

The perusal of Rabindranath Tagore's short stories in the preceding chapters reveals that Tagore's short stores are enriched by his use of various images and symbols. Tagore has used the imagery in his short stories to probe deeper into the inner ponderings and passions of his characters. Using the imagery in his short stories Tagore has given a new meaning to them and direction to the contemporary Indian short stories. Tagore has used myths and symbols in his stories to focus on the modern man's dilemma encompassing, the social, philosophical, religious and poetic perspectives of man's existing reality. In his stories he has tried to revitalize the old myth in order to give them a new interpretation and in that process he has established its relevance in the modern times.
In some of Tagore's stories, we have observed that Tagore has created a kind of language using the 'esemplastic imagination' (as advocated by Coleridge) and a system of connotative and emotive symbols. He has used expressionistic devices such as sound, music, dance, light, colour, action etc. evolving a new poetic language. The study of Tagore's short stories reveals Tagore's artistic endowment of transforming images and symbols, adapting them and making them viable to the contemporary context. In his stories, Tagore has used a variety of symbols (visual, auditory, olfactory etc.) to express the otherwise inexpressible feelings and emotions and in that process he has tried to enrich his stories with multiplicity of meanings. Some of the themes as well as the deeply sensitive aspects of life that are too delicate and tricky to be expressed in simple words are revealed through his use of evocative and emotive symbols. His poetic vision and symbolic language have helped him to express such subtle and painful emotions which otherwise would have remained unexpressed for want of words. Through this study we have observed here that Tagore has used concrete symbols in his stories to enhance the significance of the poetic language. We have also observed here that Tagore's aim is to create a synthetic poetic image and a new poetic language.

Tagore's short stories thus lend themselves to a mode of critical interpretation appropriate to poetry. Contrary to the centrifugal drive of a traditional narrative, they evoke visions of life in terms of images and symbols that cohere into a unity, using a language extraordinarily sensitive to the pressures of feelings and exploring horizons of meaning beyond the pale of traditional narratives structured in terms of a beginning, a middle and an end.
We have come to the end of our discussion. We hope that this work must provide a new method of approach to Tagore and his short stories. It appears to us that the study will throw new light on Tagore's imaginative and pictorial vision, on his own ideas about his short stories and the character in them.