Several decades have passed since the death of Rabindranath Tagore, and it is amazing that we have not been able to appreciate his achievement as a short story writer in its totality. He created this new literary genre in Bengali literature. As he had no predecessor in this regard, and no models to emulate either, he had to bank entirely on his own creative intuition and give shape to this genre almost single handedly. It is a fact that in the field of short story, Tagore's contribution to Bengali literature is unique and still unequalled. Tagore started writing short stories during his stay at Shelaidah, Shazadpur, and Potisar. He lived with his family there an entirely different life away from the aristocratic society of urban Bengal. It was an opportunity for him to mix with the common people of rural Bengal. The beautiful natural sights of rural Bengal and the life style of the ordinary people living there attracted him most. In this context we may quote his elder son Rathindranath Tagore's comment:

Father's output of writing was perhaps at its maximum during the years spent at Shelaidah. He composed poems and songs, wrote short stories, essays and lectures, working hard all day and often till late into the night. The surroundings of Shelaidah, a country of mellow green fields, with clusters of bamboo swaying gently over sleepy villages basking in the sun of early winter, majestic rivers with their stretches of gleaming white sand, the haunt of myriad wild ducks, as well as homely rivulets with sweet-sounding names, meandering in and out through the peaceful
villages hugging their banks, were congenial to his literary work and often provided him with both theme and inspiration.¹

These influences shaped his poetic spirit that manifested itself in his poems and songs and short stories simultaneously. Therefore, we can say that these influences made his writings very rich indeed.

Since time immemorial, the birth of new poets and the birth of new poetry have been observed by the people in different parts of the world. People have become well acquainted with the new ideas, feelings, thoughts, emotions and the new technique or style of different poets. Therefore defining poetry is a difficult task. Even Aristotle failed to give us a very clear cut definition of poetry. According to Wimsatt and Brooks:

... The Poetics is a work of the type which Aristotelians have called "acromatic" — to be interpreted only with the help of other and larger works. ...²

Poetry is a great art. The basis of poetry cannot be a sentence of a word with a meaning that can satisfy us. It is more than that:

... Comparative theorists of the day considered poetry to be the highest art, because it could say things. Painting was second. Music, third. ...³

Poetry has a close relation with the world of concrete reality and its experiences. Therefore, our primary work must be to seek and find out some of the characteristics of poetry and also the connotations of the word poetical.

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), a poet of the modern time and a critic, considers emotion as the main element of poetry. In his famous and widely influential theory of the 'objective correlative', he expresses his views strongly. In his essay on Hamlet, he observes:
The only way expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula for that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.  

The real test of a poet lies in shaping and modifying 'synthetic and magical power' and concretisation of abstract thoughts in poetry. In order to achieve this creative power, a poet should concentrate on surcharging of imagery emotionally and with feelings. To be evocative, the images used by the poet must be emotive. Imagination helps the poet to constitute these images. According to Coleridge, poetry is 'the expression of the imagination.' Coleridge observes imagination as a reconciling and meditative power which 'incorporating the reason in the images of the senses, and organizing the flux of the senses by the permanent and self-circling energies of reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves and consubstantial with the truths of which they are conductors.'

By the term 'sense' Coleridge means the faculty which allows men to perceive their environment and which makes them aware of the material things:

Under the term sense I comprise whatever is passive in our being ... it is the recipient property of the soul, from the original constitution of which we perceive all things under the forms of space and time.

So 'sense' has got a very special power of creating visual image. To Coleridge, 'sense' is a kind of 'Esemplastic' power that creates experience in constituting the essential principle of unification in human consciousness. His
theory of imagination influenced many more critics like I.A. Richards, William Empson, F. R. Leavis, and particularly the American New Critics.

I. A. Richards (1893-1979) reinterprets Coleridge's idea of imagination including his theory of value, theory of inclusion, and theory of metaphor. In his Principles of Literary Criticism (Chapter XXXII), Richards points to six senses of the word imagination:

I. Producing visual image.

II. Figurative language.

III. Sympathetic reproduction of another's emotional states.

IV. Inventiveness.

V. Scientific imagination.

VI. Coleridge's theory of imagination as the reconciliation of opposites of discordant qualities into a unity.

In fact, he is so greatly influenced by Coleridge's theory of imagination that he divides poetry into two groups according to sets of impulses — the poetry of exclusion embodies the impulses of the first group and the poetry of inclusion those of the second group:

A poem of the first group is built out of sets of impulses which run parallel, which have the same direction. In a poem of the second group the most obvious feature is the extraordinary heterogeneity of the distinguishable impulses. But they are more than heterogeneous, they are opposed. They are such that in ordinary, non-poetic, non-imaginative experience, one or other set would be suppressed to give as it might appear freer development to the others.8
Richards' first group of poetry corresponds to Coleridge's fancy and the second group to Secondary Imagination which reconciles opposites or discordant qualities into a unity.

William Empson's (b.1906) analysis of the language of poetry reminds us of Coleridge's thought on poetry. Empson observes that poetic experience and ordinary modes of knowledge have a close relationship. And they work together as a medium through which poetic and non-poetic experiences find expression. He has propounded a theory of 'ambiguity' with the expression that intent to go beyond the visual conception of metaphor as the means of finding similarities in dissimilarities. In his *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), he tries to establish a relationship between sound and sense in a language expressed by a poet. According to him, 'sound must be an echo of the sense' and 'sounds are valuable because they suggest incidental connections of meaning.' This 'ambiguity' of Empson reminds us of T. S. Eliot's famous 'auditory imagination'.

These ideas facilitated the emergence of American New Criticism. While analysing poetry, the 'new critics' consider poetry as a unique mode of discourse. According to them, discourses are of two types in relation to two different modes of the linguistic medium — the scientific discourse which is 'denotative' while the poetic discourse is 'connotative'. American New Criticism is considered to be one of the most influential critical movements of the twentieth century. The American New Critics' concern was with Coleridge's theory of imagination as 'reconciliation of opposites'. John Crowe Ransom considers Coleridge as probably the best practitioner of criticism in the classics of their language and believes that the formulation of metaphor is the characteristic act of the creative imagination propounded by Coleridge. Cleanth Brooks is also impressed by the Coleridgean theory of 'reconciliation
of opposites' and in his theory of 'paradox' he considers paradox as the 'reconciliation of active and passive, more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order.' Ransom's 'structure-texture oscillation' influences other New Critics who favour a highly organized kind of poetry, expressing the density of texture or form.

Paul Valéry (1871-1945) defines poetry as an art of language having certain combinations of words with which the writers can produce emotion. 

... all possible objects of the ordinary world, external or internal, beings, events, feelings, and actions, while keeping their usual appearance, are suddenly placed in an indefinable but wonderfully fitting relationship with the modes of our general sensibility. That is to say that these well-known things and beings — or rather the ideas that represent them — somehow change in value. They attract one another, they are connected in ways quite different from the ordinary; they become (if you will permit the expression) musicalized, resonant, and, as it were, harmonically related. The poetic universe, thus defined, offers extensive analogies with what we can postulate of the dream world.

The language which enables a poet to enter into the 'poetic universe' is what clearly involves a special feeling for the connections of words in sound and meaning.

Poetic language has been identified as a special language by the Russian Formalists. The basic function of the whole formalist method revolves round the theory of poetic language. But there is a methodological confusion over the concept of the theory of poetic language formulated by them. All the members of OPOYAZ were not aware enough of the methodological difficulties and ambiguities of the concept. They failed to differentiate
practical and poetic language. OPOYAZ was one of the two groups of Russian Formalism. OPOYAZ was an acronym for Russian words meaning Society for the Study of Poetic Language. It was founded in 1916 at St. Petersburg (Later Leningrad). This group had been led by Victor Shklovsky.\(^{12}\)

Roman Jakobson's (1896-1982) contribution towards the development of Russian formalism deserves special mention. His definition of poetics in linguistic terms shows his command over the concept and in this regard he is different from other Russian Formalists. According to him, linguistics is regarded the science of verbal structure and the problem of verbal structure is the main concern of the structure of poetry. There is thus a close correspondence between linguistics and poetics. But other than the poetic function, language has various other functions of its own. Before defining the poetic function, we should have to find out the relationship between the poetic function and the other functions of language. Six factors are there to determine various functions of language. These factors are essential for verbal communication too. All these factors may be presented in a systematic order as follows:

\[
\text{CONTEXT} \\
\text{ADDRESSER} \quad \text{MESSAGE} \quad \text{ADDRESSEE} \\
\text{CONTACT} \\
\text{CODE}^{13}
\]

In any verbal communication a message is sent by the addresser to the addressee. A referential context and a code are required to operate a message. With the help of these component factors, a contact is made between the addresser and the addressee. The tone of the message depends primarily on the feelings of the addresser. The emotive function of a language is focused on
the addresser's aim to produce a kind of emotional effect in the minds of the addressee. The emotive function of a language in any verbal communication clearly shows the addresser's attitude towards addressee or to the thing he is talking about. The purpose of such function is to produce a kind of emotion towards the conative function of a language i.e. the addressee. K. Buhler suggest that there are three functions of language mainly — emotive, conative, and referential. But he has been silent about the other three factors of language — poetic, phatic and metalingual. All these six functions of verbal communication may be presented in the following order:

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REFERENTIAL

EMOTIVE            POETIC        CONATIVE

PHATIC

METALINGUAL
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The phatic function of a language deals with the speech used for communication of feelings rather than ideas. Metalingual function of language is mainly centred round day to day use of our language. When both the addresser and the addressee examine whether they are using the same code, the function of a language becomes metalingual.

Our concern is now with the poetic function of language. The linguistic study of the poetic function of language cannot be confined to the field of poetry alone; similarly, the linguistic analysis of poetry cannot be reduced to the sphere of the poetic function alone. All the six factors responsible for verbal communication enter into poetic language in the same fashion as they enter into 'casual' speech. In poetic language they are differently organized. This happens because of the message itself. If the set towards the message tries to focus on the message for its own sake, it becomes the poetic function
of language. One or two examples of such a message may be quoted from the essay, *Linguistics and Poetics*, written by Roman Jakobson:

A girl used to talk about 'the horrible Harry.' 'Why horrible?'
'Because I hate him.' 'But why not dreadful terrible, frightful, disgusting?' 'I don't know why, but horrible fits him better.'
Without realizing it, she clung to the poetic device of paronomasia.16

Again:

The political slogan 'I like Ike'/ay layk ayk/, succinctly structured, consists of three monosyllables and counts three diphthongs/ay/, each of them symmetrically followed by one consonantal phoneme,/.. l..k..k/. The make-up of the three words presents a variation: no consonantal phonemes in the first words, two around the diphthong in the second, and one final consonant in the third. A similar dominant nucleus/ay/ was noticed by Hymes in some of the sonnets of Keats. Both cola of the trisyllabic formula 'I like/Ike' rhyme with each other, and the second of the two rhyming words is fully included in the first one (echo rhyme),/layk—/ayk/, a paronomastic image of a feeling which totally envelops its object. Both cola alliterate with each other, and the first of the two alliterating words is included in the second:/ay/—/ayk/, a paronomastic image of the loving subject enveloped by the beloved object. The secondary, poetic function of this electional catch phrase reinforces its impressiveness and efficacy.17

These examples indicate how the addresser first selects the words and then combines them according to the topic of the message. Selection of words
is made on the basis of certain criteria like equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymity and antonymity. Combination, on the other hand, is made on the basis of contiguity only. Jakobson says: '... The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. ...'

While discussing Tagore's short story *Ek Ratri (A Single Night)*, a critic has mentioned that the language of the story has the "quality of the poetic function" (*Kavyadharmi*). But he has not put forward the analysis in support of his comment. In an another book the same critic, during discussion, has again mentioned in *his essay Chotogalper Monobhumi (The realm of short story)*:

(It is clear today that both the poet and the short story writer are in the same mental equilibrium. They take their inspiration from the materialistic world but as the poets derive hints from the said world, extract imagination from the same source, so to the short story writers the source of their feelings (বিভাব) is the surroundings which give them shelter (আলমন) and encouragement (উদ্দীপন). Poetry is the imagination of life, short story is the symbolic expression of life). In an another book the same critic has again said:

... कब्रि मतेहग पल्लेकहके मन बक्समय जीवन थेके छिद-छिद सामग्री आहरन करनेया — येगुल्ल स्त्रीके डांपर्ख द्रस्तित हये, खेलनेको, खिले खेड़ियाँढो लाब्ड करने।
(.....Like the poet, the short story writer too gathers various experiences of life from the materials belonging to the day to day life and these materials acquire purvasive glow in the work of art after being extended into symbolic significance.)

The critic here actually trying to show an interpolation of the ‘poetic function of a language’ (Kavyadharmita) as a whole from the angle of oriental point of view. Therefore, we can say that the poetic function of a language has not been discussed in detail while making the appraisal of the short stories of Rabindranath Tagore. It is worth mentioning here that the critic has not felt the necessity to clarify his point of view taking into account of the western theories.

In this context, while discussing Tagore's Shasti (Punishment), another critic has remarked, ‘শাস্তি’ গল্পের অবিশ্বাসীয় বেশি আমাদের মনে গভীর দাগ কেটে যায়। ('The picture of agony of Shasti touches our heart deeply.')-> Though he has put forward sufficient elaboration in favor of his remark, yet he has not thought of discussing the poetic function of the 'picture of agony' ('বেশি আমাদের মনে গভীর দাগ কেটে যায়').

The same critic again has discussed Tagore's Man-bhanjan (Fury Appeased). In the course of the discussion the critic has discussed the expectation, dejection, affliction and disgrace of womanhood of Giribala but he has not felt the necessity to put forward the analysis in favour of the poetic function of the language.

Critic Bhudeb Choudhury has put forward his own analysis in favour of the stories like, Shasti (Punishment), Mahamaya and Man-bhanjan (Fury-Appeased). In the course of the discussion, the critic has also discussed the dramatic appeal of the stories but never mentioned about the poetic organization of the language of the said stories. It has been an established fact
now-a-days that the drama and poem have some relationship while symbolic expression is concerned. Therefore, systematic analysis is required to establish the remark of the critic like Bhudeb Choudhury and others.

Taking all these ideas into account, we have now to look at the structure and the texture of Tagore's stories that foreground above everything else the 'poetic function' of language.

In the story, *Ek Ratri (A Single Night)*, the first person narrator, a late nineteenth century youth, thinks of becoming Mazzini or Garibaldi and so he surrenders his boyhood dream of life i.e. to marry Surabala. Surabala is married to a lawyer and the narrator becomes a school teacher in a village where Surabala resides with her husband. He wants to meet Surabala once again. He gets an opportunity one night. The events occur in water, in a rainy and stormy dark night, in a world where they are alone:
We stood alone on an island nine feet long, everything around us submerged in water. It was like the end of the world — no stars in the sky, all earthly lamps extinguished. There would have been no harm in saying something, but no word was spoken. I didn't even ask if she was all right, nor did she ask me. We just stood, staring into the darkness. At our feet, deep, black, deadly waters roared and surged.

Surabala had abandoned the world to be with me now. She had no one but me. The Surabala of my childhood had floated into my life from some previous existence, from some ancient mysterious darkness; she had entered the sunlight and moonlight of this crowded world to join me at my side. Now, years later,
she had left the light and the crowds to be with me alone in this terrifying, deserted, apocalyptic darkness. As a young budding flower, she had been thrown near me on to the stream of life; now, as a full-bloomed flower, she had again been thrown near me, on the stream of death. If but one more wave had come, we would have been shed from our slender, separate stems of existence and become one. But better that the wave did not come. Better that Surabala should live in happiness with her husband, home and children. Enough that I stood for a single night on the shore of the apocalypse, and tasted eternal joy.

The night was nearly over. The wind died down; the waters receded. Surabala, without saying a word, returned home, and I also went silently to my room. I reflected: I did not become a collector's chief clerk; I did not become Court Clerk; I did not become Garibaldi; I became an assistant master in a run-down school. In my entire life, only once — for a brief single night — did I touch Eternity. Only on that one night, out of all my days and nights, was my trivial existence fulfilled.)

The narrator is closely related to nature. All the events occur in a natural atmosphere. The narrator himself describes his joys and sorrows, his feelings, his emotions, his aching love for Surabala and his sense of responsibility through images. There are two chief strains, one is atmosphere, and the other is thought, that have been brought out in imagery. The atmosphere of the night has been presented here in a brilliant fashion to restrict the entry of other people and to create a complete silence. 'Everything around us submerged in water', 'no stars in the sky' and 'all earthly lamps extinguished' serve a symbolic purpose here. The use of light image here is noteworthy, 'the sunlight and
moonlight of this crowded world' and 'left the light and the crowds' have been presented by contrast with 'night', 'darkness', 'clouds' and 'rains'. The 'flower' image has been used here to evoke the feelings of love of the narrator. 'The stream of life' and 'the stream of death' suggest the responsibility of him. He is satisfied at the end because on one single night his 'trivial existence was fulfilled'. He is satisfied because meeting Surabala on that night, he touches 'Eternity'. 'Eternity' has been personified here. 'Eternity' has taught him the exact meaning of love in his life. The symbol of 'eternal night' for death has been used by Tagore every now and then as one of his favourite poetic idioms. In this context, Tapobrata Ghosh says:

Two examples may be given. On 5 Vaisakh 1301 (17 April 1894), just before the tenth anniversary of Kadambari's death, Rabindranath wrote in the poem *Mrityur Pare* (After Death) : 'In the boundless, silent land/She has found eternal night/And endless consolation' (*Chitra* : RR 4:46). And in 1935, at the age of seventy-four, he wrote some poems recalling Kadambari during a stay in Chandan Nagar. One of them, *Natyashesh* (Drama's End), contains the lines 'she suddenly went away in the night/That never sees dawn' (*Bithika* : RR 19:33).

The special moment of the life of the hero presented in this story has been set against such an 'eternal night'.

In Browning's *The Last Ride Together*, the lover meets his beloved knowing their marriage will not take place. Then the hero of the poem thinks, 'Who knows but the world may end to-night?' The hero of *Ek Ratri (A Single Night)* also thought much in the same vein earlier but later he learns the lesson of love from 'Eternity' and so he wishes Surabala silently that 'Surabala should live in happiness with her husband, home and children.'
The hero becomes a school teacher in a village where Surabala resides with her husband and at the end their meeting in water, in a rainy and stormy dark night where they are alone obviously exhibit Coleridge's theory of imagination as 'the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities'. The meaning of 'discordant qualities' has been given by Coleridge himself as 'a sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects'; 'a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order'; 'to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought and thought nature'; 'sameness with difference'; 'truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the object observed'; 'reducing multitude to unity' or 'succession to an instant'. These modes of the fundamental activity dissolve in order to create, struggle in order to idealize and unify 'dead' objects.

The keyword in the quoted passage here is 'water'. Everything is connected with the flow of the water. The line, '... The Surabala of my childhood had floated into my life from some previous existence, from some ancient mysterious darkness; She had entered the sunlight and moonlight of this crowded world to join me at my side' exemplifies Coleridge's 'a sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects' and 'sameness with difference'. Again, '...As a young budding flower, she had been thrown near me on to the stream of life; now, as a full-bloomed flower, she had again been thrown near me, on the stream of death' exemplifies 'truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the object observed' and also 'sameness with difference'.

The poetic idiom 'তথন প্রলয়কাল' ('It was the time of universal dissolution'), missing in the translation, has been used significantly to exemplify the discordant quality 'to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought and thought nature'.

The colours dark and black ('dark night', 'black' and 'deadly waters') used by Tagore here indicate disorder, mystery, unfamiliarity, evil and death.

The theme of the story *Shasti (Punishment)* projects the crime happens in the village often. The peasant brothers Dukhiram and Chhidam are subtenants. They have no direct liability to the landlord. But the landlord asks them to work in his field neglecting their own crop. They are not given money or food. They are the victims of the *Zamindary* system. Being cheated by the *Zaminder*, they become angry. They return home at dusk with exhaustion and anger. The narrator starts the main story giving entry to Dukhiram and Chhidam to their house. They find their house 'eerily quiet'. He uses the word 'eerily' in a symbolic manner. The word indicates unnaturalness. The outside natural atmosphere is also an indication to the same effect:

Outside, too, it was extremely sultry. There had been a sharp shower in the afternoon, and clouds were still massing. There was not a breath of wind. Weeds and scrub round the house had shot up after the rain: the heavy scent of damp vegetation, from
these and from the waterlogged jute-fields, formed a solid wall all around. Frogs croaked from the pond behind the cowshed, and the buzz of crickets filled the leaden sky.

Not far off the swollen Padma looked flat and sinister under the mounting clouds. It had flooded most of the grain-fields, and had come close to the houses. Here and there, roots of mango and jackfruit trees on the slipping bank stuck up out of the water, like helpless hands clawing at the void for a last fingerhold.34

The description of the country side during rainy season has been presented here in a superb fashion. The dominant motive as we notice here is the country life of Bengal that has been created through imagery. The outdoor image during rainy season is to me olfactory, visual and auditory as well. 'The shower in the afternoon', 'clouds in the sky', 'the growth of weeds and scrub round the house', 'the scent of damp vegetation and waterlogged jute fields', 'croaking sound of the frogs and the buzzing sound of cricket'—all of which stimulate our consciousness of the background of outdoor country life during rainy season. The atmosphere projects the impending danger for Dukhiram, Chhidam and their families. The river Padma has been personified here. She knows that something evil is going to happen and so she 'looked flat and sinister under the mounting clouds.' The roots of mango and jackfruit indicate the roots of the family which will be in a helpless condition like them. As the roots are struggling for their existence like 'helpless hands clawing at the void for a last fingerhold', so they will have to fight against the danger for their existence.

Again, the movement of the river Padma 'had come close to the houses' symbolizes death and the act of bringing down banks indicates the disunion of the family in future. The typical mention of mango and jackfruit trees calls up country pictures as well.
The outdoor atmosphere is full of evil thoughts. Entering the house in that atmosphere, both the brothers find out their wives sitting separately. Hungry Dukhiram out of anger asks for food and is refused badly by his wife, Radha. Without thinking much, Dukhiram at once plunges his knife into her head. Radha died in her sister-in-law's lap keeping the signs of her blood in her clothes.

In the meantime, Ramlochan Khura, of the Ckakraborty family, comes to the house to collect Dukhiram's rent. Entering the house, he felt uneasy:

...(There was no lamp alight. On the dark verandah, the dim shapes of three or four people could be seen. In a corner of the verandah there were fitful, muffled sobs: the little boy was trying to cry for his mother, but was stopped each time by Chidam).36

What strikes one first is the unusual indoor atmosphere of the family. The grim picture is so vivid and piercing that it gives one a shocking blow. The atmosphere of the house has been presented here in such a fashion that to exhibit a criminal act. 'No lamp alight', 'the dark verandah', 'dim shapes of three or four people', 'fitful, muffled sobbs' and 'stopped each time by Chhidam' serve a symbolic purpose here.

Chidam is totally bewildered in the whole affair. He tries to hide his brother's mistake and tells a lie that his wife, Chandara, has murdered Radha when they were quarrelling between themselves as usual. Ramlochan understands the situation. He is the chief advisor of the village on legal
matters. In him they find their saviour. Chidam even asks him clinging to his feet, ‘দাদাঠাকুড়ে, এখন আমার বউকে বীচাইবার কী উপায় করি?’37 (‘Thakur, how can I save my wife?’).38 But when Ramlochan advises Chidam to run to the police station to say that his elder brother has murdered his sister-in-law out of anger, he feels dryness in his throat. He then argues, ‘ঠাকুর, বউ গেলে বউ পাইব, কিন্তু আমার ভাই ফাঁসি গেলে আর তো ভাই পাইব না’39 (‘Thakur, if I lose my wife, I can get another, but if my brother is hanged, how can I replace him?’).40 When Chidam asks Chandara to take the blame on to herself, she is dumbfounded:

চন্দ্রাকে যখন তাহার স্বামী ফুল চৈকার করিয়া লইতে কহিল সে ভক্তিত হইয়া চাহিয়া রহিল; তাহার কালে দুই চন্দ্র কালে অর্থির ন্যায় নীরবে তাহার স্বামীকে দখ করিতে লাগিল।...41

(Chandara stared at him, stunned; her black eyes burnt him like fire.)42

Her fire like look exhibits nothing but a silent protest. She is shocked by her husband's request. Her husband, on the other hand, assures her saying that she has nothing to fear. Moreover, he instruct her to say to the court, ‘হঁই বলিয়া, বড়ো আমাকে বীট লইয়া মারিতে আসিয়াছিল, আমি তাহাকে দা লইয়া ঠেকাইতে গিয়া হঠাৎ কেকন করিয়া লাগিয়া গিয়াছে’43 (‘The elder wife was about to attack me with the vegetable-slicer. I picked up a farm-knife to stop her, and it somehow cut into her.’).44 But sensitive without self-defence Chandara confesses her guilt in the court. Each of the brothers tries to save Chandara saying each one of them is the murderer. But Ramlochan's witness proves Chandara's confession correct. Chandara is sentenced to death.

Just before the hanging, when she is asked by the doctor if he will call her husband. Chandara replies 'Maran' (Death)!

The ending of Stasti (Punishment) reflects that the silent protest of a woman has huge impact on the society. The story ends with that Bengali word
'Maran' (Death)! uttered by Chandara. The word literally means death but here it hints at a common ironic expression, uses particularly by a village woman in order to reject somebody or something. Through this word she rejects her husband, Chhidam, who cheated her to save his brother.

The issue is not the cheating or the tragedy of the family only. What is involved here are atmospheric suggestion and direct poetic symbolism as advocated by G. Wilson Knight. The atmosphere of the house 'eerily quiet' controls the whole events of the story.

The story Man-bhanjan (Fury Appeased) has characters, (Gopinath, Giribala, Labanga and Sudhamukhi) who interact to create events. The situation is created by Gopinath's frequent visit to theatre and his attraction for Labanga, who acted at the theatre. When Gopinath married to Giribala, she was a mere girl and Gopinath even had not finished his school education. She was very beautiful to look at. At that premature stage, she received both attention and affection from her husband. Gopinath even came to flirt with his young bride escaping from school. His parents were not aware of that. Living in the same house, he wrote letters to his young bride on fancy notepapers and showed them to his school-friends proudly. Their post marriage love-affair continued in that way. They grew older. Giribala became sixteen year old and looked attractive too:

'গিরিবালা সৌন্দর্য অক্স্যাং অলাকঋষির ন্যায়, বিশয়ের ন্যায়, নিদর্শনে চেতনার ন্যায়, একেবারে চক্ষিতে আদিত্যা আদর্শ করে এবং এক আদর্শ অভিভূত করিয়া দিতে পারে। তাহাকে দেখিলে মনে হয়, ‘ইহাকে দেখিবার জন্য প্রস্তুত ছিলাম না। চারি দিকে এবং চিরকাল যে কোন দেশীয় আসিতেছিল এ একেবারে হ্রাস তাহা হইতে অনেক স্বত্ত্ব।’

'গিরিবালাও আপন লব্ধ্য্যস্বরূপ আপনি আদর্শাত তরবিত হইযা উঠিয়াছে।
মদের ফেনা যেমন পাত্র এবং পাত্রিয়া যায়, নবজীবন এবং নবজীবন সৌন্দর্য তাহার
Giribala's beauty was like a sudden ray of light, a surprise, an awakening, a shock. It could be quite overwhelming. One felt on seeing her, 'I was not prepared for this. She is absolutely different from what I see around me all the time.' And she herself was thrilled by her own beauty. Her body seemed brimful of youth, like foaming wine in a beaker — overflowing in her dress and ornaments, movements, gestures, the tilt of her neck, the dance of her steps, the jingle of her bracelets and anklets, her laugh, her sharp retorts, her brilliant glances.

What attracts here most is the use of the image of movement and the sound image. The dominant image in this story in fact is the sound image which can be noticed from the beginning to the end. Giribala's beauty, parts of her body and particular actions have been made vivid through the image of movement and the sound image. Her beauty has been compared with the movement of the 'ray of light' which is surprising, awakening and shocking as well. Then, again, the beauty of her body at her youth has been compared with the 'foaming wine in a beaker' indicates her life force which has been exposed through her 'dress and ornaments', 'movements', 'gestures', 'the tilt of her neck', 'sharp retorts' and 'brilliant glances'. The recurrent image of sound has been used here through' the dance of her step' and 'the jingle of her bracelets and anklets' to bring contrast with the movement.

Giribala had everything but her husband had no attraction for her. She had no children. After his father's death, Gopinath became the master of the house.
His attraction for the outer world grew more and more. He did not have time to look at his wife and praise her beauty. Giribala had a maid-servant named Sudhamukhi who could sing, dance, compose verses, praise Giribala's beauty and express her grievances saying that her beauty had been wasted in the hands of such a rude person who lacked power of appreciation. She liked to hear Sudhamukhi's praise of her face, figure, and complexion; sometimes she raised objection and took pleasure to rebuke her for flattery. But she was aware of her beauty. Sudho's song ‘দাসবত দিলাম লিখে শীর্ষাপ্রে’ (<I>I have signed myself in bondage at your feet.</I>) evoked her imagination that her lover would come to enslave himself to her feet. But, alas! her lover did not come to her that way.

Gopinath, in the meantime, felt attracted for actress Labanga during his frequent visit to the theatre. Giribala heard of Labanga's astonishing talent from her husband when he occasionally visited her. She felt jealous of her. She asked her husband to take her to the theatre but he refused. One day she sent Sudho to the theatre. When she returned, she made some disgusting remarks about all the actresses. Giribala was satisfied. But her husband's attraction for Labanga worried her.

The main events occur in spaces: In the theatre and in the house. The events do not take much time. The events have been created and composed in an order by the writer. The order constitutes the narrative of the plot:
In the end one evening she secretly went to the theatre with Sudho. Forbidden acts are thrilling! The soft throbbing in her arteries made the brightly lit, crowded stage — filled with music, surrounded by spectators — all the more wondrous to behold. Instead of her lonely, cheerless room, here was a festive world, gorgeous, beautiful. It was like a dream.

The musical play 'Fury Appeased' was being performed that day. The warning bell rang, the band stopped playing, the eager spectators fell silent for a moment, the footlights brightened, the curtain rose, a troupe of girls beautifully dressed as the milkmaids of Vraj danced to musical accompaniment, the theatre resounded with bursts of clapping and roars of approval from the audience — and Giribala's youthful blood surged. The rhythm of the music, the lights, the brilliant costumes and the bursts of applause made her forget for a moment her whole domestic world. She had found a place of beautiful, unfettered liberty.
What is involved here is the recurrent image of sound. It has been created by the music of the play, the noise of the spectators, the ringing of the warning bell, the dance of the girls in the role of the milkmaids of Vraj, the clapping sound and the roaring of approval from the audience. The sound created a hypnotic effect in her mind so that she forgot her domestic world for the moment.

At intervals Sudho whispered to her nervously to go home because, if Gopinath found them in that place, they would not be saved. But Giribala had not been frightened. She waited to see the climax:

(The performance neared its climax. Radha was in an almighty huff: Krishna was thrashing hopelessly — his moans and appeals were getting him nowhere. Giribala seethed with outrage, felt as exultant as Radha herself at Krishna's discomfiture. No one ever assailed her like this. — neglected, deserted wife that she was; but how thrilling it was to realize that she too could make a lover groan! She had heard that beauty could be ruthless, had guessed how it might be so: now, in the light and music of the stage, she saw its power in action. It set her brain on fire.)
The passage here does not project the sensuous appeal of things alone; it also brings to the fore what Jakobson called the poetic function of language. Here we find the elements of emotive language still maintain their emotive tinge and, therefore, Giribala compared herself with Radha and realised that she had the ability to make her 'Krishna' groan like that.

The emotive function of language continues till the end of the story. After her first visit to the theatre, Giribala developed a kind of addiction to the theatre. She went there every week. She could find out the lack of real beauty in the make up of the actors and actresses. Even she could understand the artificial presentation of their acting but she could not stay at home:

... Like a warrior thrilling to the sound of martial music, her heart leapt each time the curtain went up. For an Empress of Beauty, what throne was more magical than this high, enchanting stage, separate from the world, lettered in gold, adorned with scene-paintings, strung with a fabulous web of music and poetry, pressed by enraptured spectators, pregnant with off-stage mysteries, revealed to all by garlands of brilliant lights?

What we find out here is the presence of organic image. The rhythm of the music created a hypnotic effect in her mind. The hypnotic quality of these lines is the result of a close combination of sound and meaning. The concentration of the intense words 'warrior', 'thrilling', and 'the sound of material
music', the suggestive power of 'heart leapt' join with the visual image of 'enchanting stage' and 'enraptured spectators' to overpower the reader.

The effect of the enchanting stage was so much on her that on the night when she first saw her husband inside the theatre appreciating the performance of one actress, she felt despise for him. She decided with a grief stricken heart that if the day came when her husband fell at her feet like a burnt insect attracted by her beauty and if she could walk away dispersing contempt of her toenails, her wasted beauty and youth would get significance.

But the day did not come to her easily. In one moonlit night of *Chaitra* (March-April), Giribala wore light-orange coloured *sari* and ornaments like armlets, a necklace of rubies and pearls, and a sapphire ring on her left little finger. She sat on the roof, the end of her *sari* had been floating in the breeze. Sudho as usual was appreciating her beauty sitting by her side. Suddenly Gopinath appeared there. Giribala thought that her day had come. Giribala did not look up. She sat still like Radha with pride and dignity. But the curtain did not rise, a tuft of hair adorned with peacock's tail did not roll at her feet. Nobody sang for her, 'কেন পূর্ব্বিকা আধ্যাত্মিক কর লুকায় বদন্তব্যা' ('why made dark the full moon hiding your moon like face.')57 In a tuneless and rough voice Gopinath said, 'একবার চারিং দাও দেখি।'58 ('Give me the key once.')59 She forgot her pride and stood up. She took her husband's hand and said, 'চাতি দিব এখন, তুমি ঘরে চলো।'60 ('Please come into the bedroom, I shall give you the key right now.')61 She was sure that she could win her husband's heart. But, alas! Gopinath did not agree to her proposal. He only repeated asked for the key Giribala did not give it to him. He searched the key in every possible place but could not find it. Giribala holding the door and looking out at the door, stood there like a statue made of stone. Ultimately, Gopinath came near her and said to give him the key or their would be trouble. Giribala did not respond. So he grabbed hold of her and snatched her armlets,
necklace and ring and then kicking her, he left. She felt insulted and went to her parents' house long way from Calcutta. Gopinath, too, went to an unknown place on a boat-trip with his friends and followers.

At the end of the story the day really came to Giribala to appease her fury. Labanga was playing the title role in *Manorama* at the Gandharva Theatre. Sitting in the front row with his followers, Gopinath cheered and threw bundle of notes on to the stage. They created noisy atmosphere but the manager did not have the courage to stop them. One day, in a slightly drunken condition, Gopinath entered into the Green Room and made a huge uproar. Imagining that one of the actresses insulted him, he assaulted her. The managers called the police to throw him out.

Before the *puja*-holidays the managers advertised the further performances of *Manorama*. To take the revenge of his insult, Gopinath disappeared with Labanga on a boat-trip. The managers waited for some days for Labanga and ultimately had to rehearse a new actress in the role of Manorama. Giribala had been sought for acting in the title-role of *Manorama*. It was a dream came true in her life. The new actress was appreciated by everyone. Gopinath heard it and out of curiosity returned to Calcutta to see the performance. *Manorama*’s character had been presented in two different ways — Manorama dressed as a servant and as a princess. This has been done to show how the fury of Giribala had been appeased.

So long Manorama had been there on the stage wearing dirty attire of a servant hiding her face by a veil, Gopinath saw the acting sitting quietly. But suddenly a huge uproar started in the audience:

...ফিক্ত যখন সে আঘাতে কলম্বল করিয়া, রক্তাত্মক পরিপ্রেক্ষিত, মায়ার ঘোষিত যুড়াইয়া, 

রূপের তরকারি তুলিয়া বাসরবান দাঁড়াইলে এবং এক অনির্বচনীয় গর্বে গৌরবে ধীর 

বক্তি করিয়া সমস্ত দর্শকমন্ডলীর প্রতি এবং বিশেষ করিয়া সময়কালী গোপীনাথের
(... But when she stood up in the bridal chamber, in all her beauty, unveiled, dressed in red, glittering with jewels, inclining her head with indescribable *hauteur*, directing at all, but especially at Gopinath, a fiercely contemptuous stare, sharp as lightning, so that all the hearts of the audience leapt and the whole theatre rocked with a barrage of applause: it was then that Gopinath jumped up and yelled, 'Giribala, Giribala!' He ran and tried to leap on to the stage — but the musicians restrained him.)

It is worth while to note that the way Giribala performed on the stage was the outcome of her deepest feeling. She received from her husband so long the contemptuous treatment and desired for revenge. She got the opportunity and took the revenge on her husband with 'a fiercely contemptuous stare, sharp as lightning'. Her whole action has been presented through the imagery of movement. It has been created by 'she stood up in the bridal chamber', 'unveiled', 'inclining her head with indescribable *hauteur*' and 'a fiercely contemptuous stare'. The reaction of the audience and especially of Gopinath has been presented through the image of sound which has been created by 'the whole theatre rocked with a barrage of applause' and Gopinath's yell 'Giribala! Giribala!' Giribala's wish had been fulfilled. Her sense of pride had been restored.

The Bengali name of the story *Man-bhanjan* is a significant one. The name has been taken from the dramatic version of the Radha-Krishna story the
Man-bhanjan which is present in the *Vaisnava Padabali*. The story revolves round appeasement (*bhanjan*) of Radha's huff (*man*) caused by Krishna's neglectful behaviour. Radha's love for Krishna is incomparable. But Krishna's sporting with milkmaids (*gopis*) of Vrindaban really hurts her. In Tagore's story we have seen the similar situation which has been created by using the symbolic name of the hero, Gopinath. Gopinath actually means Krishna. Therefore, in the story, the words Radha, Krishna, Vrindaban have been used recurrently.

The story *Mahamaya* centres round the love affair and the tragic end of the affair of Mahamaya, a *Kulin* Brahmin girl of a village and Rajiblochan, an outsider and not an uppercaste Brahmin. Mahamaya had elder brother named Bhabanicharan Chattopadhyay as her guardian. Both Mahamaya and her brother were of silent nature. People of the village were afraid of them. Rajib loved Mahamaya but he could not express that. In the meantime, Mahamaya grew older but her brother could not find a match for her of the same status.

Rajib was trying to get an opportunity to propose Mahamaya. At last he got it. Both of them met in a dilapidated temple stood by the side of the river. He thought that he could tell her everything. At the crucial moment he could tell her only: 'চলো, তবে বিয়ে করা যাউক!' ('Let us go and marry.') Mahamaya did not expect that Rajib could propose like that. She remained silent for a long time:
There are so many indefinite sad sounds of midday. The sounds, as if, became audible in that silent hour. The half attached broken door of the temple is slowly opening and closing with an outcry of grief lightly but sharply. The pigeon is cooing repeatedly sitting in the ventilator of the temple, the woodpecker is making a monotonous rapping noise outside sitting on the branch of a silk-cotton tree, the chameleon is gliding quickly on the dried leaves, the warm breeze is blowing suddenly from the fields to refresh the leaves. All of a sudden the river waters wake into ripple and make a dashing sound on the landing stair of the bank. Amongst these sudden, lazy sounds a folk-musical note is being played in the flute of a cowherd sitting in the long distance under a tree. Rajib does not have the courage to look at Mahamaya's face and so he looks at the river leaning against the plinth of the temple fatigued and deeply dreaming.

The images here have been used to give atmosphere and background of the story. The dominant motive here is the country life of Bengal. It is a setting of active outdoor work created indirectly through the images of 'sound of the birds', 'the movement of the chameleon', 'the river and the wind and the folk-musical note played by a cowherd on his flute'. But the issue here is not the use of imagery of sensation only. What is involved here are what Paul Valéry
has called 'musicalized' language and what Roman Jakobson has suggested about the 'poetic function' of a language. The emotive function of language has been focused on the well-ordered shape of the message, 'Let us go and marry.' The orientation of the emotive function is very much towards the conative function and, therefore, we can hear 'musicalized' language through 'the sad sounds of midday', 'the opening and closing of the door', 'the cooing of the pigeon', 'the raping noise made by the woodpecker on the tree', 'the gliding movement of the chameleon on the dried leaves', 'the dashing sound of the water of the river', and above all 'the folk-musical note on the cowherd's flute'. The emotion of both the addresser and the addressee has been reciprocated by the atmosphere itself. The poetic device of paronomasia has been used here to express their feelings, too: ‘পায়রার বকুল বকুল’, ‘কঠঠাউক্রার ঠক ঠক’, ‘পিরিসিটির সরু সরু’, ‘পাতার বরু বরু’, ‘ফলের ফুলা ফুলা’.

Mahamaya at first said, 'না, সে হইতে পারে না'68 ('No, it can not happen.') But when she saw her elder brother coming towards the temple and Rajib tried to escape jumping over the broken plinth of the temple, she tightly held Rajib's hand to prevent him from going. Bhabanicharan entered into the temple and looked at them silently. But words came out from Mahamaya's mouth. She looked at Rajib and steadily said, 'রাজীব, তোমার ঘরেই আমি থাইব। তুমি আমার জন্য অপেক্ষা করি।'70 ('Rajib, I will come to your house. Please, wait for me.') In this way her emotion came out at last.

She kept her words coming to Rajib's house from the funeral pyre of her husband. When she entered into the house of Rajib, her face had been covered by a veil. She told him that if he promised not to open her veil, or not to see her face, she would stay otherwise she would return to the funeral pyre. Rajib promised so.
But the promise had been broken one day. It was the tenth day of a lunar
fortnight. The motionless moonlit night had been awakening by the side of the
sleepy world. From the hot-fatigued forest the sound of the tired crickets and
a smell had been entered into Rajib's room. Rajib saw the calmed pond at the
end of the dark coloured trees dazzling like polished silver foil. In that
atmosphere, he thought that all the pre-conditions had been withdrawn. The
cloud had withdrawn her cover and the night looked like the motionless,
beautiful, and very solemn Mahamaya of the ancient time. He lost her self-
control and entered into the bedroom of Mahamaya where she was sleeping.
He discovered the truth that the beauty of a portion of her left cheek have
been no more. It was burnt by the fire. A shocking sound came out from his
mouth. Mahamaya awoke and left the house at once.

The presentation of the woodland beauty of the dreaming moonlit night
is brilliant here. The moonlit background supplies the dreaming and enchanted
quality, which is reinforced by the woodland beauty. Rajib had been bewitched
by the sound of the tired crickets and a smell coming from the hot-fatigued
forest. The calmed pond is personified here. Her dazzling like polished silver
foil is evocative of uncontrollable emotion. The withdrawal of the cloud cover
serves as a symbolic purpose here. Therefore, Rajib lost his self-control and
entered into the bedroom of Mahamaya forgetting all the pre-conditions.
Mahamaya actually here means illusion, really she is an illusion in Rajib's life.
Rajib's motif of love for illusion made him mad.

In this chapter the systematic analysis of four stories like *EK Ratri (A
Single Night)*, *Shasti (Punishment)*, *Man-bhanjan (Fury Appeased)* and
*Mahamaya* has been done taking into account of the western method of
criticism. Stories of Tagore here have been studies what G. Wilson Knight has
stated regarding his views on 'expanded metaphors'. We have also discussed
here the views of T.S Eliot, Paul Valery, Roman Jakobson and American New Critics and tried to show accordingly how Tagore's stories appropriate these theories. What we have observed here in this long discussion that 'the poetic function' of the language of some short stories of Tagore has not been prominent in the discussion of several oriental critics but it has become prominent in the light of the western method of criticism. In this way many more stories of Tagore may be discussed under this light of western method of criticism.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


3. Ibid., p. 275.


5. A.H.Tak: *Coleridge And Modern Criticism*, p. 5.

6. Ibid., p. 12.

7. Ibid., p. 63.

8. Ibid., p. 63.

9. Ibid., p. 106.

10. Ibid., p. 106.


13. Roman Jakobson: *Linguistics and poetics*, David Lodge (Ed.): *Modern Criticism and Theory A Reader*, p. 34.

14. Ibid, p. 34.


16. Ibid., p. 37.

17. Ibid., p. 37.

18. Ibid., p. 38.


21. Translation, mine.


23. Translation, mine.


25. Translation, mine.


27. Ibid, P. 82.


31. The reference has been taken from the footnote given by Tapobrata Ghosh, *Introduction*, translated by Sukanta Chaudhuri. This has been quoted from Sukanta Chaudhuri (Ed.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 17


34. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 125.


40. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 128.

42. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 130.


44. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 130.


46. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 181.

47. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 293.


51. *Vraja* is a place mentioned in the Vaishnava Literature.


55. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 185.


57. Translation, mine.


59. Translation, mine.

60. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 296.

61. Translation, mine.


63. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 188.

64. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 149.

65. Translation, mine.

67. Translation, mine.

68. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 149.

69. Translation, mine.

70. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 150.

71. Translation, mine.