J.C. Ransom (1888-1974), in his essay, *Poetry: A Note on Ontology*, mentions about two types of poetry: poetry of things and poetry of ideas. In this context he also says that the recent trend in the world of criticism is to appreciate the poetry of things and to condemn the poetry of ideas.\(^1\) The movement of the Imagists, who were both poets and critics, paved the way for the preference for the poetry of things. The reading public had the preference for the poetry of ideas. But the imagists showed preference for the poetry of things in their theories as well as in their practice.\(^2\) Those who looked into poetry for ideas had always searched for their pet values in poetry and in that process they killed the image or the thing to extract the idea. In this essay J.C. Ransom has clarified how the poetry of things (the imagist movement is the latest) is born.\(^3\) In this context, J.C. Ransom says:

> The poetry of things is not devoid of ideas, but it is the result of being disgusted with ideas.\(^4\)

J.C. Ransom again talks about the concept of 'Pure Poetry'. In talking about such concept he says:

> Imagism gives birth to Imaginism, and not very much later comes the concept of 'Pure Poetry' which must bring to the forefront an image or set of images and not an idea. The art of poetry depends on 'the faculty of present images so whole and clear that they resist the *catalysis* of thought. But 'Pure Poetry' is not as pure as it claims to be, perhaps imagist poetry is purer
from that point of view. All true poetry is a phase of physical poetry.\textsuperscript{5}

By physical poetry Ransom means the poetry of things. From this statement it is clear that the concept of 'Pure Poetry' always discards the poetry of ideas and accepts an image or set of images.

Tagore's use of imagery in his writings shows his acceptance and delight in the world of phenomena; his perception of the relationship between this world and its reflection towards the imaginative world of Art. His use of humour and irony, the close union of thought and sensation have been generated by the transcription of his perceptions of the natural world. These are typical of him and all are expressed in a peculiarly spontaneous and concrete symbolism which comes to him naturally.

Now, to define poetic imagery we may quote Richard Harter Fogle's view:

In attempting to define poetic imagery we are faced at the outset with difficulties of terminology 'Imagery' is sometimes used as a synonym for 'metaphor' in poetry; often, on the other hand, the two are considered as entirely distinct. To the psychologist and to many critics imagery in poetry is the expression of sense-experience, channeled through sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, through these channels impressed upon the mind and set forth in verse in such fashion as to recall as vividly and faithfully as possible the original sensation. In these terms, a poetic image is the record of a single sensation.\textsuperscript{6}

Taking this view into account we should have to find out the presence of metaphors and different sense-experiences in Tagore's short stories.
The language he used in his stories is soil-rooted, nature-rooted. Flowers, trees, birds, animals specially kind one, rivers, seas, winds and weather in all moods, moon, sun, stars shadowed and shining have been presented page after page and image after image. The elements of earth, water, and air have been personified and they have played a significant role in his stories. The use of seasons in Tagore's stories is noteworthy. Seasons have played their part according to the emotions and actions of the characters. All these images are drawn mainly from the countryside and not from the city. His use of natural images tends to show first-hand experience and power of observation. Therefore, these are all fresh in nature. The freshness of natural images appeal to all the senses in turn and can provide the sense of vitality without its sight. Therefore, we can say that Tagore's language is a microcosm of both his own poetic world and his own creative world.

In the letter written on 5th September, 1894, Shazadpur, Tagore himself describe his fascination with Nature dates from his visit to the countryside:

I realise how hungry for space I have become, and take my fill of it in these rooms where I hold my state as sole monarch, with all doors and windows thrown open. Here the desire and power to write are mine as they are nowhere else. The stir of outside life comes into me in waves of verdure, and with its light and scent and sound stimulated my fancy into story-writing.

The afternoons have a special enchantment of their own. The glare of the sun, the silence, the solitude, the bird cries, especially the cawings of crows, and the delightful, restful leisure — these conspire to carry me away altogether.

Just such noondays seem to have gone to the making of the Arabian Nights, — in Damascus, Bokhara, or Samarkhand, with
their desert road-ways, files of camels, wandering horse-men, crystal springs, welling up under the shade of feathery date groves; their wilderness of roses, songs of nightingales, wines of Shiraz; their narrow bazaar paths with bright overhanging canopies, the men, in loose robes and multi-coloured turbans, selling dates and nuts and melons; their palaces, fragrant with incense, luxurious with kincob-covered divans and bolsters by the window-side; their Zobedia or Amina or Sufia with gaily decorated jacket, wide trousers, and gold-embroidered slippers, a long narghilah pipe curled up at her feet, with gorgeously liveried eunuchs on guard, — and all the possible and impossible tales of human deeds and desires, and the laughter and wailing, of that distant mysterious region.8

The stimulation has been provided by the mysterious and elusive atmosphere of Nature. His feelings for active beauty and dynamic beauty is noteworthy. Tagore's short stories written during his stay in rural Bengal, therefore, reveal his observations and association of thoughts through the images.

In the previous chapters, it has been noticed that how some of Tagore's short stories have been transformed into poetry depending on the nature of their organization, the value attached to its language and the transmutation of experience into words. One aspect we have to look at in this chapter is the poetic organization and the symbolic landscape of some of Tagore's short stories.

In the story, Postmaster (The Postmaster), the narrator presents the postmaster, the hero of the story, as a selfish individual who comes from Calcutta to a very humble village called Ulapur. There is nothing but an indigo-
factory near-by. According to the narrator, 'he was a fish out of water in a village like this.' The word 'fish' is used as a metaphor. The narrator metaphorically projects the postmaster as 'the fish out of water'. Being a Calcuttaian, he has the ego that he cannot even think of the village life and to mix up with the villagers. At first he cannot adapt himself to a village like this. He looks at the natural phenomena, tries to write poems on them but feels lonely again. He tries to establish a relationship with nature. Then he gets the company of Ratan, the twelve or thirteen year orphaned village girl, and tries to get over his restlessness. He looks at nature in a different manner:

It was a fine afternoon in the rainy season. The breeze was softly warm; there was a smell of sunshine on wet grass and leaves. Earth's breath — hot with fatigue — seemed to brush against the skin. A persistent bird cried out monotonously somewhere, making repeated and pathetic appeals at Nature's midday durbar. The postmaster had hardly any work: truly the only things to look at were the smooth, shiny, rain-washed leaves quivering the layers of sun-whitened, broken-up clouds left over from the rain. He watched,
and felt how it would be to have a close companion here, a human object for the heart's most intimate affections. ...\(^1\)

The dominant motive\(^1\) here is the life of rural Bengal. The moving description of the sky, the season, the breeze, sunshine, the breath of the earth, the sound of the bird, clouds and quivering leaves all point to the perception, observation and delight of the story-teller. The keyword here is 'the breeze'. The 'softly warm' breeze brings joy to the postmaster. 'A smell of sunshine' and hot-fatigued 'earth's breath' make him forget his sorrow. The bird's 'repeated and pathetic appeals' touch his inmost feelings. He looks at nature from a changed angle of vision. The afternoon image is olfactory but it is visual as well, nature being personified here—nature playing the role of a teacher. The postmaster learns something from nature. That's why, 'he watched, and felt how it would be to have a close companion here, a human object, for the heart's most intimate affections'. He at once decides to teach Ratan how to read because she is the only human object nearest to his heart in this village.

In the middle of the story, Ratan plays the role of a mother when the postmaster catches fever. She gives her service in the best possible manner for the quick recovery of the postmaster. Through her service she also expresses her loyalty to her master. But, after his recovery from fever, he decides to leave the place and at once applies for a transfer. He thus unreveals his selfish nature to the poor, innocent girl of the village. He even tells her that he cannot take her home with him.

At the end, he insults the poor girl by offering her money and also by telling her that the new postmaster will look after her. Ratan is shocked. She has never dreamed of a separation from her Dadababu. She does not want money. She wants her Dadababu. So she runs away out of sentiment. The
postmaster sighs deeply and sets out on his journey. He sits on the boat and it starts sailing. Suddenly he remembers the face of the girl and begins toying with the idea of going back:

(When he was on the boat and it had set sail, when the swollen flood-waters of the river started to heave like the Earth's brimming tears, the postmaster felt a huge anguish: the image of a simple young village-girl's grief-stricken face seemed to speak a great inarticulate universal sorrow. He felt a sharp desire to go back: should he not fetch the orphaned girl, whom the world had abandoned?...)

The river is personified here, the 'anguish' of the postmaster created by the images of 'The swollen flood-waters of the river' and 'the Earth's brimming tears'.

The image of 'the swollen flood-waters of the river' has touched the postmaster so much that he can visualize the 'village-girl's grief-stricken face'. But he changes his mind with the movement of the boat:

... কিন্তু তখন পালে বাতাস পাইয়াছে, বর্ষা গেছে বর্ষা দেবা বহিতেছে, প্রায় অতিক্রম করিয়া নদীর শ্রোত দেখা দিয়াছে—এবং নদী-প্রান্তে ভাসমান পাথরের উদয় হয়েছে এই তুষ্টের উদয় হইল, জীবনে এমন কত বিচ্ছেদ, কত মৃত্যু আছে, ফিরিয়া ফল কী। পৃথিবীতে কে কাহার।
(... But the wind was filling the sails by then, the swollen river was flowing fiercely, the village had been left behind, the riverside burning-ground was in view. Detached by the current of the river, he reflected philosophically that in life there are many separations, many deaths. What point was there in going back? Who belonged to whom in this world?)

The kinesthetic image has been used here superbly. The river serves a symbolic purpose here. Human cruelty is also sought to be reflected through the image of the river. 'The current of the river' separates the postmaster from Ratan and from his earlier emotions. 'The current of the river' symbolizes the inexorable flow of life hostile to human feelings.

The use of the rainy-season setting in the story is noteworthy. The season has been used here recurrently. The season itself clearly brings out the image of separation.

Another story Khokabur Pratyabartan (Little Master's Return) also evokes the rainy-season atmosphere. The story centres round the loyalty of a servant to his master. It has characters (Raicharan, Anukul, Anukul's wife, the little master etc.) that interact with one another to create events. The situation is created by little master's missing in the river Padma. The influence and the presence of the river Padma are felt throughout the story. Human feelings and emotions are represented here through the imagery of river Padma. Padma is a metaphor for the human soul in the stories of Tagore. In her he had seen the true picture of human life, its joys and sorrows, the motif of love for illusion, anger and greed, the sense of guilt or remorse and the like. In Khokabur Pratyabartan (Little Master's Return), these qualities have been presented through images.
The main events in this story occur in the riverside of Padma, the rain, the dark clouds, the house of Anukul etc. And the events take time. The events have been created and composed in an order by the story-teller. The order constitutes the narrative of the plot:

(The rainy season came. The Padma began to swallow up gardens, villages and fields in great hungry gulps. Thickets and bushes disappeared from the sandbanks. The menacing gurgle of water was all around, and the splashing of crumbling banks; and swirling, rushing foam showed how fierce the river's current had become.)

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The dominant motive here is again the life of rural Bengal. The season, the weather, the river, the gardens, the villages, the fields, thickets and bushes all conjure up an alarming situation. The keyword here is the 'hungry gulps'. The 'great hungry gulps' of the river evoke its ferocity. The image of Padma here is predominantly auditory, but it is visual too. The Padma is personified here, swallowing up just about everything 'in great hungry gulps'— and image of human greed at the same time. Also, 'the menacing gurgle of water', 'the splashing of crumbling banks', and her 'swirling, rushing foam' evoke human passion, anger in particular. The use of the verbs of movement, like 'swallow up', 'disappeared' and 'crumbling' gives life to the whole passage.

Now greed is a dangerous thing. A greedy man can do anything in this world for the fulfilment of his desire. The story-teller projects this emotion through the image of the river taking away Raicharan's little master:
(... He saw it gurgling and swirling along, as if a thousand wavelets were naughtily, merrily escaping to a forbidden place beyond the reach of some mighty Raicharan. The boy was thrilled by their mischievous example. He gently stepped down from his chair, and edged his way to the water. Picking a long reed, he leant forward, pretending the reed was a fishing-rod: the romping gurgling wavelets seemed to be murmuring an invitation to the boy to come and join their game.¹⁹

Padma here symbolizes the greed of men which is so powerful an evil that nobody in this world can control it. Her 'gurgling' and 'swirling' are evocative of uncontrollable greed. The sound of the river 'gurgling', 'swirling' and 'romping' —creates a hypnotic effect on the boy who now forgets Raicharan's warning not to go near the water. The effect is such that he imagines Padma as his playmate. The use of the image of movement is also noteworthy here. It has been created by the phrases 'a thousand wavelets were naughtily, merrily escaping to a forbidden entry' and 'the romping gurgling wavelets'. The boy is thrilled by this behaviour of the river. The word 'forbidden' has been used here as an enticing and provocative word. The river shows her mischievous behaviour like a child as a provocation to the little boy.
The events changes Raicharan's innocent world:

...Looking all around, he saw no sign of him anywhere. His blood froze: the universe was suddenly unreal — pale and murky as smoke. ...

A vivid simile, 'the universe was suddenly unreal — pale and murky as smoke', has been used here to evoke Raicharan's sense of shock. He is tense and he wants to get back his little master, his tension presented here through a kinesthetic image. It has been created by the phrase 'his blood froze'. After the incident Padma shows her selfish behaviour to Raicharan thus:

...The Padma went on rushing and swirling and gurgling as before, as if it knew nothing and had no time to attend to the world's minor occurrences.

The word 'rushing' symbolizes the self-centred and selfish nature of human being. The river overlooks, and remains indifferent to, Raicharan's grief. She is not inclined to show her sympathy to Raicharan at such a great loss.

Everyone in the village suspects the little master's death by water but Anukul's wife suspects Raicharan's role in stealing the boy for gold ornaments. He returns to his village and before the year has ended, his wife died after giving birth to a boy. At first he hates his son but later the mischievous nature of the boy reminds him of his late little master and he thinks that his little master has returned, this time as his son.
Raicharan looks after the boy and rears him up as a rich man's son. He does not allow the child to mix-up with the local children. Later he takes him to Calcutta and sends him to a high-class school. His sense of guilt compels him to do so. When he runs short of money, he takes the boy to Anukul's house and returns the boy as their son. He shows his loyalty to his master in this fashion.

The story *Tyag (The Renunciation)* shows the dominant influence of spring, the season of love. The story starts with the relationship between a newly married couple with the following image of spring:

(It was a night of full moon early in the month of *Phalgun*.

The youthful spring was everywhere sending forth its breeze laden with the fragrance of mango-blossoms. The melodious notes of an untiring *papiya*, concealed within the thick foliage of an old *lichí* tree by the side of a tank, penetrated a sleepless bedroom of the Muckerji family. There Hemanta now restlessly twisted a lock of his wife's hair round his finger, now beat her *churi* against her wristlet until it tinkled, now pulled at the chaplet of flowers about her head, and left it hanging over her...
face. His mood was that of an evening breeze which played about a favourite flowering shrub, gently shaking her now this side, now that, in the hope of rousing her to animation.\textsuperscript{25}

The atmosphere of the full moon night contributes to the romantic mood of the story. The season of spring, the full moon, and specially the song of \textit{papiya} — bring out the intoxicating power of youth. The imagery of night here is olfactory, visual and auditory at the same time. Phrases, like 'the fragrance of mango-blooms', 'the thick foliage of an old litchi tree', 'twisted a lock of his wife's hair round his finger', 'pulled at the chaplet of flowers about her head', 'the melodious notes of an untiring \textit{papiya}' and 'beat her \textit{churi} against her wristlet until it tinkled' create an atmosphere necessary for the story. The metaphoric use of Hemanta's mood in the last line of the passage significantly sets the very tone of the story. Hemanta loves Kusum but feels that his love is not being reciprocated. She is benumbed with the apprehension of the future:

\begin{quote}
কিছু কুসুম সমুদ্রের চন্দ্রালোকগ্রাসিত অনুশীল শুনের মধ্যে দুই নেজকে নিমগ্ন করিয়া নিয় তির ইহোয়া বলিয়া আছে। স্বামীর চাঁদন্ত আহারকে স্পর্শ করিয়া প্রতিতপ ইহোয়া ফিরিয়া যাইতেছে। অর্থতে হেসে কিছু অধীনভাবে কুসুমের দুই হাত নাড়া দিয়া বলিল, “কুসুম, তুমি আচ্ছা কেথায়। তোমাকে যেন একটা মন্ত দূরবীন কথিয়া বিতর ঠাঁচর করিয়া বিদ্যমান দেখা যাহিয়া, এমনি দুরে সিয়া পড়িয়াছ। আমার ইচ্ছা, তুমি আচ্ছা একটু কাজকাজ এসে। দেখা দেখি, কেননা চমৎকার রাহি।”

কুসুম শূন্য হইতে মুখ ফিরাইয়া লইয়া স্বামীর মুখের দিকে রাযিয়া কহিল, “এই জ্যোৎসারাজি, এই বসন্তকাল, সময় এই মুন্যন্তে নিখ্যা ইহোয়া অভিনয়া যাহিতে পারে এমন একটা মন্ত আমি জানি।”\textsuperscript{26}

(But Kusum sat motionless, looking out of the open window, with eyes immersed in the moonlit depth of never-ending space beyond. Her husband's caresses were lost on her.)
At last Hemanta clasped both the hands of his wife, and, shaking them gently, said: "Kusum, where are you? A patient search through a big telescope would reveal you only as a small speck — you seem to have receded so far away. O, do come closer to me dear. See how beautiful the night is."

Kusum turned her eyes from the void of space towards her husband, and said slowly: "I know a mantra which could in one moment shatter this spring night and the moon into pieces."\(^{27}\)

The background of the moonlit night creates an enchanting atmosphere here.\(^{28}\) Hemanta has been bewitched by the light of the moon outside and, therefore, he shakes his wife's hands inviting her to come closer to him. But something is missing between them. The passage indicates a certain problem in their relationship. The word mantra certainly has played a key role in their relationship. The main events of the story occur in the bedroom of the couple, the house of Pyarishankar Ghosal. And the events take time.

The conversation between the husband and the wife is not suggestive of the possibility of a happy and romantic association. But the romantic mood is still there in the atmosphere and serves as a counterpoint to all that unfolds here in the story.

Meanwhile, Hemanta's father from outside shouts angrily and asks Hemanta to turn his wife out of the house. He comes out of the room and then again enters into the room. He asks his wife whether the information is correct. Kusum replies in the affirmative.

The next morning he goes to Pyarishankar's house to know the truth. He hears from Pyarishankar that Kusum became a widow at her early childhood and she had been an orphan and Kayastha by caste. She took shelter
in the house of Bipradas Chatterjee who was a neighbour of Hemanta when he had been a college student. Knowing nothing about Kusum, he fell in love with her. The affair between them continued. And Pyarishankar took the initiative so that their marriage could take place. He did so to take revenge on his father for doing wrong in his family. The story then ends one night:

(It was the fifth night of the waning of the moon — and the night was dark. No birds were singing. The lichi tree by the tank looked like a smudge of ink on a background a shade less deep. The south wind was blindly roaming about in the darkness like a sleep-walker. The stars in the sky with vigilant unblinking eyes were trying to penetrate the darkness, in their effort to fathom some profound mystery.

No light shone in the bedroom. Hemanta was sitting on the side of the bed next the open window, gazing at the darkness in front of him. Kusum lay on the floor, clasping her husband's feet with both her arms, and her face resting on them. Time
stood like an ocean hushed into stillness. On the background of eternal night, Fate seemed to have painted this one single picture for all time — annihilation on every side, the judge in the centre of it, and the guilty one at his feet.)

What we have seen in the passage is the presentation of the image of darkness. The image has been used here recurrently in various forms, like 'the fifth night of the waning of the moon', 'the night was dark', 'no light shone in the bedroom' and the litchi tree looked like 'a smudge of ink'. 'The stars' have been personified here. The stars 'with unblinking eyes' are trying 'to fathom some profound mystery'. Time has been personified here. It stands 'like an ocean hushed into stillness' between the couple and the eternal night to prevent any hasty decision. Ultimately time wins the battle. When the father again asks his son to turn the bride out of the house, Hemanta takes a firm decision under the influence of the 'ocean hushed into stillness' not to forsake his wife because he does not believe in caste. 'Annihilation' has been there on every side but he gives a nice judgement to 'the guilty one at his feet' sacrificing the age old belief.

The best love story of Tagore is the *Samapti (The Completion)*. The story centres round Apurba and Mrinmayi's pain-stricken love-affair after their marriage and the story ends in a romance. Of course, there is a digression in this story, particularly, when the third person narrator gives entry to Mrinmayi's father. But the characters, the events and the atmosphere cover this digression very well. Love and nature are closely related to each other in this story.

The story starts with Apurba's returning to his village by a boat when the river is full to its brim during *Sraban*. In addition to that there is a girl in the village named Mrinmayi — 'the lands where there is no hunter, no danger but, a courageous girl, like a deer — a curious girl.'
The animal image (‘like a deer’) has been used here to suggest Mrinmayi’s innocence. The story reflects Tagore’s attitude that has been expressed in his famous poem — *Barsa-Yapan (Passing Time in the Rain)* from *Sonar Tori (The Golden Boat)*, written in 1894:

Small lives, humble distress,

Tales of humdrum grief and pain,

Simple, clear straight forwardness;\(^{32}\)

Apurba marries Mrinmayi against her mother’s will. He tries to win Mrinmayi’s heart by several means. The events occur in the riverside, Apurba’s bedroom etc. In the story, there is no attempt whatsoever at representing the problems of village life; nor is there any scope for analysing the nature of Apurba’s inner conflict — but the flow of simple, clear, straight forwardness of life what is sought to be projected here above everything else:

(The boatman started his boat. There was dark clouds in the sky and the incessant rain had been started. The whole body of Mrinmayi felt comatose and sleepy as the swelling river of *Bhadra* started to swing the boat; the unmanageably restless girl spreading out the marginal portion of her *sari* on the boat fell asleep like an affectionate, quiet child of nature by the swinging of the river.)\(^{34}\)
The river and nature have been personified here as mother. Their affection towards Mrinmayi is also a motherly affection in the true sense of the term. The image of movement has been used here to reflect affection only. It has been created by 'the swelling river of Bhadra' swinging the boat. Mrinmayi falls asleep with 'the swing of the boat'. 'The swinging of the river' brings out the image of a mother who tries to lull her restless child to sleep.

Then, again:

(The boat started at that night. In spite of agitated joy, Mrinmayi fell asleep on the boat very soon. Next day, she felt what a freedom, what a joy there would be in the world. She looked at the village market, the cornfields, the jungles, and the coming and going of the boats by the both sides of the river. ...)  

The words 'joy' and 'freedom' have been personified here. At first Mrinmayi's joy reflects her agitated mind but later the meaning has been changed through her realisation of freedom. The visual image has been presented here to reflect her realisation of freedom. The image has been used in various forms, like 'the village market', 'the cornfields', 'the jungles' and 'the coming and going of the boat'. The freedom here points to Mrinmayi's freedom from girlhood — because *Samapti (The Completion)* is the story of the transformation of a girl named Mrinmayi into a woman.

The transformation reaches its height:
The whole passage clearly brings out the picture of happy union of the couple. The 'tinkling sound of bangles' evokes human emotions. The keyword in this passage is 'sweet'. 'A sweet and soft arm' and 'sweet-firm ties' project the image of sensuous contact of the young couple. The contact has been made with two vivid similes — 'a flower like lips' and 'kisses him like a robber'. Thus, the pain-stricken love-affair ends in a romance.

The story Kabuliwala projects a universal theme — a father's love for his daughter. The author himself is the narrator of the story. Rahamat, the man from Kabul, is a pedlar of clothes and dried fruits. One day, he meets Mini, the five year old girl of the narrator. The events take place in the house of the narrator. In Mini, Rahamat finds out his daughter whom he has left out in Kabul. Kabuliwala comes to the house every now and then with dried fruits for Mini as a form of gift. Mini's mother does not like this, but Mini's father likes him very much because:

... দুই অসময়ীলী বন্ধুর মধ্যে পুরুত্ব সরল পরিহাস চলিতে থাকে, তখন সমস্ত হাস্য প্রসার হইয়া উঠে।
(...it gave me pleasure to see, on an autumn morning, a young child and a grown man laughing so heartily.)

The use of the autumn setting in the story is noteworthy. The season, mentioned recurrently in the body of the story, clearly brings out the picture of the *Durga Puja*. The *Durga Puja* is a great festival in Bengal. This is the season of the home-coming of *Durga*, goddess of power and energy. The Bengali parents also look at her as their daughter. In the autumn season, she comes to her father's house every year. So, to a Bengali father, autumn is not only a season important in itself; it is also a season when the daughter comes back to her home.

The relationship continues for some days. But, one day, Rahamat is arrested and sent to jail for killing somebody. Many years have passed. Mini reaches her marriageable age. It is autumn again, Mini's marriage has been fixed. The wedding is fixed for the *puja*-holiday. Rahamat is released from the jail a day before Mini's marriage. On that day he reaches the house of Mini's father with dried fruits as a gift for Mini thinking her to be the same little girl as before. He wants to meet Mini but is denied at first by her father. He requests her father to give the box full of dried fruits to her. He goes to pay him for them but his words now startle Mini's father:

"...आपनार बृहत दरम्यान, आमार गटकाळ स्वरूप थाकिबे—आमाके पत्रका दिलेन ना।—बाबू, तेरी मेलेन एक लड़की आहे, ते मन्द देशे आमारू एक लड़की आहेच। आमी तांवांवेळा मुख्यांशी स्वरूप करिरा तेरी शेखावत काँड्यात किंतु किंतु मेडेया हातून लहिया आसी, आमी ते संधे करिते आसी नाचे।"

("...Please, don't give me any money — I shall always be grateful, Babu. Just as you have a daughter, so do I have one, in my own country. It is with her in mind that I came with a few raisins for your daughter : I did not come to trade with you.")
After that he shows the proof:

Then he put a hand inside his big loose shirt and took out from somewhere close to his heart a crumpled piece of paper. Unfolding it very carefully, he spread it out on my table. There was a small hand-print on the paper: not a photograph, not a painting—the hand had been rubbed with some soot and pressed down on to the paper.

But the issue here is not the projection of the universal fatherly affection alone. What is involved here is what Roman Jakobson has called 'the poetic function' of language. The emotive function of language has been focussed on the well-ordered shape of the message, '... just as you have a daughter, so do I have one, in my own country. It is with her in mind that I came with a few raisins for your daughter: I did not come to trade with you.' The visual image is also used here to evoke human emotions. It has been created by 'a crumpled piece of paper', 'spread ... out on [the] table', 'a small hand-print on the paper' and 'the hand had been rubbed with some soot and pressed down on to the paper'. The orientation of the emotive function is very much towards the conative function, and, therefore, Mini's educated father and the uneducated Afghan pedlar become a father only. The story-teller at once summons Mini with her wedding dress to meet the Kabuliwala. He then offers him some money for his return to his homeland. In the end, Kabuliwala's
anticipated reunion with his daughter raises our hope that all parted father and daughters in the world will be reunited in the long run.

Some of Tagore's stories reflect Tagore's love for illusion. Sometimes it is a supernatural illusion and sometimes it is a ghastly illusion. *Kankal (Skeleton), Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night) and Ksudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones)* reflect the motif of love for illusion.

'Skeleton' is written in the first person narrative. There are two narrators in the story. The first one is the young boy and the second one is the ghost-woman whom the young boy introduces to us as a skeleton.

The young narrator is well acquainted with the skeleton because long time ago he was taught anatomy by a student from the Campbell Medical School. One night he felt the presence of a ghost-woman circling round his mosquito-net in search of her skeleton. He talks to her. With due permission, the ghost takes her seat beside him with a desire to tell the story of her life.

The ghost tells him that she was a beautiful young widow. She came to her father's house after her husband's death. She loved a young doctor named Shashishekhar who was his brother's friend. But the doctor decided to marry another girl. On the wedding-day of the doctor she mixed a small part of a poison into the doctor's glass and the doctor unknowingly swallowed the drink. She does not give any clue to the first narrator what happened to the doctor after that or whether she had swallowed the poisonous drink. But she describes her death-bed in a minutely detailed fashion:

"বাঁশি বাজিতে লাগিল। আমি একটি বারটিসী শাড়ি পরিলাম; ফতুগুলি গহনা সিন্দুরে তোলা ফিল সরগুলি বাঁধির করিয়া পরিলাম; সীমিতে বড়ো করিয়া সিন্দুর দিলাম। আমার সেই বকুলতলায় বিষুনা পাতিলাম।"
Flute-music began to play. I put on a Benares Sari, and all the ornaments from my jewellery-chest, and I smeared vermilion liberally into my parting. Then I spread out my bedding under my favourite bakul tree. It was a beautiful night. Full, pure moonlight. A south wind blew away the tiredness of a sleeping world. The whole garden was fragrant with bel-blossoms and jasmine. When the sound of the flute had faded into the distance; when the moonlight had begun to fade, and the whole world around me — trees, sky, my life-long home — seemed unreal, I closed my eyes and smiled.)

Auditory, visual, and olfactory images are fused here as one sensation. The images have been created by the sound of the 'flute-machine', 'Benares Sari', 'ornaments', 'vermilion', 'bakul tree', 'full, pure moonlight' and fragrance of 'bel-blossoms and jasmine'. The music of the flute has merged with the pure moonlight to create the dreamy and enchanting atmosphere reinforced by the fragrance of 'bel' and 'jasmine' flowers. The 'south wind' has been personified here, blowing away 'the tiredness of a sleeping world' points to self-abnegation. The image of movement has been used here for the symbolic representation of death. The image has been created by 'the sound of the flute' fading into the distance, 'the moonlight' began to fade and 'the whole world around [her] — trees, sky, [her] lifelong home — seemed unreal'. The
paragraph reminds us of Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*. Keats has used same images in one stanza of the poem: pure moonlight, the night, the fragrance and the like.

At the end, she tells the first narrator that she smiled at that moment because she wished to enter her 'bridal-chamber of Eternal Night' with the smile. 'Eternal Night' has been personified here. She accepted 'Eternal Night' as her husband and so she entered into the 'bridal-chamber' of 'Eternal Night' with a smile. She fulfilled her wish with an illusion and in a similar fashion our first narrator, the young man, fulfills his wish too with the illusion of the ghost-woman because in his youth he had experienced such illusion at night.

The story ends on an indication that the 'Dawn-light' enters into the room. So there is no more illusion.

The same ghastly atmosphere is present in the story, *Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night)*. After the second marriage, the hero of the story Dakshinacharan Babu becomes anxious and stupefied because he realises that he cheated his first wife. Today, he thinks that his first wife knew about his cheating. The story revolves round his repentance and mortification. In this story, Tagore has created the supernatural and ghastly atmosphere in an artistic manner.

The story begins with Dakshinacharan Babu's knocking at the door of the doctor's house in the middle of the night shouting 'Doctor! Doctor!' Like the story *Kankal (Skeleton)*, there are two narrators in this story. One is the doctor and the other is Dakshinacharan Babu. Both of them have used the first person narrative technique here too.

As the story reflects Tagore's motif of love for illusion, so, like *Kankal (Skeleton)* this story also starts in the middle of the night. The second narrator
tells his story with minutely detailed pictures of the various scenes of his life. His language is not the language of a common man but the language of a poet: the pure white moonlight, the darkness, the night sound, the fragrance and the sighs create an atmosphere necessary for the story. Whenever he starts an amorous conversation with his second wife, he hears the heart-rending laughter splitting the sky.

He met his would be second wife when his first wife was lying on the death-bed. One dark night, looking at the girl Dakshinacharan's dying wife asked him three times in a frightening voice:

"Who's she? Who's she? Who's she?"

Sometimes, he says to his second wife:

"Manorama, you don't believe me, but I do love you. I shall never be able to forget you"

Now, whenever, The narrator Dakshinacharan Babu says the above words he gets startle. He gets startle at his own words remembering:

"... I had once spoken in the above the bakul tree, over the tops of the jhau bushes, under the yellow slice of the moon,
right from the eastern to the far western bank of the Ganges, a laugh sped swiftly, a rolling laugh....") 53

The visual image exemplifies an uncanny sensation. The image has been created by 'the bakul tree', 'the jhau bushes' and 'the yellow slice of the moon'. The narrator tries to forget this disturbing laugh, but he cannot. He hears the ghastly laugh everywhere even on the boat trip with his second wife. This ghastly laugh makes him mad. Even at night he cannot sleep because he feels the presence of the ghost circling round his mosquito-net and asking the same question:

অবশেষে যখন একাত্ত অস্থি হইয়া আশিল তখন অবিলম, আলো নির্বিহা না দিলে যুক্তিতে পারিত না। মেন আলো নির্বিহা গুইলাম অমন আমার মশারির পাশে, আমার কানের কাছে, অধ্যক্ষের আবার সেই অবরূপ স্বর বলিয়া উঠিল, "ও কে, ও কে, ও কে গো!" আমার বুকের রক্তের ঠিক সমান তালে ক্রমাগতই ফাঁটনি হইতে লাগিল, "ও কে, ও কে, ও কে গো। ও কে, ও কে, ও কে গো!" সেই গতীর রাতে নিশ্চল সোস্টের মধ্যে আমার পোলাকর ঘড়িটাও সজীব হইয়া উঠিয়া তাহার ঘটার কাটা মনোরম দিকে প্রস্রিত করিয়া শেলফের উপর হইতে তালে তালে বলিতে লাগিল, "ও কে, ও কে, ও কে গো। ও কে, ও কে, ও কে গো!"54

(... I decided I'd have to turn out the light or I'd never sleep — but as soon as I did so and lay down again, immediately that strangulated voice returned to the darkness next to my mosquito-net, close to my ear: "Who's she? Who's she? Who's she?" To the same rhythm as the blood in my heart continued: "Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? ... Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? Who's she?" In the depth of the night, on that silent boat, my round clock seemed to come to life too, its hands pointing from the shelf at Manorama, and saying with its tick-tock, "Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? Who's she? Who's she?"")55
The rhythmic sound corresponds to what Valéry has called 'musicalized' language. The continuation of the rhythm has been presented through a vivid simile: 'to the same rhythm as the blood in [his] heart continued'. The rhythmic sound produces a sudden shock in the mind of the narrator as well as in the minds of the readers.

The main story ends the way it begins. It indicates that a human being's love for illusion is nothing but an expression of his mental agony or wish fulfilments.

*Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones)* also reflects Tagore's ability to probe the nature of illusions. Tagore was a young man when he wrote the story. In *Christabel*, Coleridge has conjured up an enchanting image of the mysterious palace of the middle-ages and in the same fashion Tagore has also created the ancient palace of Shahi Bag of the Mughals. In *Christabel*, both Christabel and Geraldine enter into the mysterious palace. As they pass through the hall, the old mastiff makes an angry sound and the low-burnt fire suddenly leaps into a flame. These happenings produce an uncanny sensation in us. *Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones)* also produces suspense and excitement in the minds of the readers.

The story is characterised by a double structure. In the outer frame of the structure, there are two listeners, an 'I' and the Theosophist cousin of an 'T. Also, there are two narrators in the story, one is the broad-daylight narrator and the other is the narrator of the night. In broad-daylight, he is a normal young boy of the nineteenth century but at night he returns to the seventeenth century, to the days of Shah Mahmud II. The events of the story move around the past and the present. The language of the broad-daylight narrator differs from the musical language used by the narrator of the night. The woman he meets every night is not a queen or an empress of the past.
but an ordinary woman enslaved in the palace for ages. He feels her presence at night. One night he even heard her crying and requesting him to release her:

The mysterious sound image has been used here to produce suspense and an uncanny sensation. The image has been created by 'groaning and wailing' and the cries of 'release me'. Both the young boy and the girl want to come out of the illusion but they cannot. Because the narrator cannot enter into the past physically and the heroine cannot enter into the present breaking the shackle of the past. So the release is literally impossible. But they cannot meet each other through the 'cruel illusion'. The illusion moves around three powerful sense-perceptions — hearing, viewing and smelling. These three activities, so dominant in the narration, are realised in a language which is profoundly sensitive to the pressure of experience:
... As I pushed open the door and entered that vast room, I felt a tremendous upheaval, like a court breaking up — people dispersing through doors, windows, rooms, passages, verandahs. I stood astonished; there was nothing I could see. I shuddered, went gooseflesh all over. A lingering scent of age-old shampoo and *atar* caught my nostrils. I stood in the gloom between the pillars, and heard all round me the gush of fountains on stone, the sound of a sitar (but what the tune was I did not know), the tinkle of gold ornaments, the jingle of anklets, the noise of a gong striking the hour, a distant *alap* on a *sanai*, the chinking of chandeliers swinging the breeze, the song of a caged nightingale on the verandah, the cry of tame cranes in the gardens: all combining to create the music of the dead. ...
Sound, sight and scents mingle with one another to create a single impression. The perception of hearing has been produced by 'a tremendous upheaval', 'the gush of fountains', 'the sound of a sitar', 'the tinkle of gold ornaments', 'the jingle of anklets', 'the noise of a gong', 'alap on a sanai', 'the chinking of chandeliers', 'the song of a caged nightingale' and 'the cry of tame cranes'. The perception of viewing has been created by 'people dispersing through doors, windows, rooms, passages, verandahs' and 'I stood in the gloom between the pillars'. And the perception of smell has been produced by 'age-old shampoo and atar'.

But the issue is not one of sensuous apprehension of things alone. What is involved here is a profounder response entailing the aid of what Eliot would call the 'auditory imagination':

"....the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end." It is also the fusion of "the old and obliterated and the trite, the current, and the new and surprising, the most ancient and the most civilised."

While discussing Tagore's short stories, critic Bhudeb Choudhury has remarked:

(... But I am repeatedly saying that the oozing out of emotion [রস-মোক্ষন] is successfully possible if the narration of the short
story is shortened enough and also full of suggestions. By the word suggestions I do not want to think of any poetic manifestation. It is my observation that the compactness and limitation of words can create suggestions.)

In the same book the critic has again mentioned:

(It is observed that Tagore's narration of stories has created a musical atmosphere and this atmosphere has moistened the short stories with the suggestions and even with the delicate flavour of symbol.)

These two observations are quite contradictory in our opinion. On the one hand he is not thinking of any poetic manifestation and on the other hand he is talking of the symbolic expression. For this reason probably image or set of images have not been come out through his analysis of the short stories of Tagore that have been discussed in this chapter. In his criticism he has considered Postmaster (The Postmaster) as a successful short story. The loneliness of the postmaster and the relationship between Ratan and the postmaster have been analysed beautifully by the critic.

The image of the grief-stricken face of Ratan has been mentioned by the critic in his analysis but sufficient elaboration has not been put forward by him in favour of his remark. Again, he has remarked that the stories like, Kankal (Skeleton), Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night) and Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones) are dominated by the atmosphere. But in his analysis we have not observed any clear-cut clarification in favour of his remark.
Another critic has said about the orderly arrangement of nature's elements which are present in Tagore's short stories. But he has not put forward sufficient elaboration in favour of his comment. He has even remarked about the recurrent image of river in the story of the *Postmaster (The Postmaster)* But the analysis has not been observed in detail in favour of his remark. The critic has repeatedly talked about the moonlit night of the story *Tyag (The Renunciation)* But the detailed analysis has not been observed. While analysing the story *Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night)*, the critic has mentioned about the image of the evening or the night which are there at the background of the story but the image or set of images of the night or the evening have not been distinctly come out through his analysis. At the end of the story *Nisithe (In the Middle of the Night)*, the frightening voice of Dakshinacharan Babu's first wife- "Who's she? Who's she? Who's she?" has been mentioned repeatedly. But sufficient elaboration has not been put forward to establish this as a sound image. Again, any image or set of images have not been come out through his analysis of the stories like *Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones)*, *Samapti (The Completion)* and other stories.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


5. Ibid, p. 271.


7. Ideas have been taken from the *Introduction, Gitanjali*, by W.B. Yeats, p. 12 and also from the book written by Gopikanath Raychoudhury: *Rabindranath: Chotogalper Prakaran-Shilpa*, p. 68.


10. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 43-44.

11. The phrase has been taken from Caroline F.E. Spurgeon: *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells us*, p. 264.


15. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 23.


22. Rabindranath Tagore : *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 43.


28. Idea has been taken from Caroline F.E. Spurgeon : *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells us*, p. 264.


31. Translation, mine.


34. Translation, mine.

36. Translation, mine.


38. Translation, mine.


40. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 115.

41. Tapobrata Ghosh: *Introduction*, it has been quoted from Sukanta Chaudhuri (Ed.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 21.

42. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 134.

43. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 119.


45. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 119.

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

47. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 89-90.


49. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 156.


51. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 158.

52. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 270.

53. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 158.


56. Tapobrata Ghosh: *Introduction*, it has been quoted from Sukanta Chaudhuri (Ed.): *Rabindranath Tagore-Selected Short Stories*, p. 19.

57. Rabindranath Tagore: *Galpaguccha Akhanda*, p. 325.

58. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 240.


60. William Radice (Tr.): *Rabindranath Tagore Selected Short Stories*, p. 236.


63. Translation, mine.

64. Bhudeb Choudhury: *Bangla Sahityer Chotogalpa O Galpakar*, p. 117.

65. Translation, mine.


67. Ibid, p. 35.

68. Gopikanath Raychoudhury: *Rabindranath : Chotogalper Prakaran-Shilpa*, p. 68:

69. Ibid, p. 68.

70. Ibid, p. 73.

71. Ibid, p.62.

72. Ibid, p. 75-76.