4.01. Story and Plot in Novel:

Novel, a fictitious prose narrative is one of the important genres of literature. Art is a combination of some basic elements. As an indispensable form of art, novel also has some certain essential elements. Story is one of those elements. It is said that, novel is originated from the romance literature of the earlier times. But as the time progresses, the miraculous stories of the earlier romance literature lost its influence on readers as the readers found the real life events more interesting.

Though there are many ingredients in a novel, yet it is not possible to say definitely about the number of elements of a novel. Right from Aristotle to the present day critics have identified some common elements of novel and these are– story, plot, characterization, background, theme, language etc. The great philosopher and critic Aristotle, in his The Poetics, mentions some elements of tragedy and epic which can also be found in the novels also. Aristotle considers plot as an element for the narrative literature of his time. (However, as per the definition of plot of Aristotle it is not easy to differentiate between plot and story). According to Aristotle, plot is the combination of incidents of things done in the story. Till the 17th century, when novels were written in Europe, plot and story were used to mean the same thing in prose literature. However, in the 18th Century, novelists like Lawrence Stern wrote novels without story. This type of novels shows the difference between plot and story.

Story of a novel acts as the foundation of all out of many elements. It is the main element centering round which the plot of the novel develops. The
interest or eagerness of the readers to read a novel depends mainly on the story of that novel. While reading a story anxiousness always develops in the minds of the readers. The readers always want to know what is going to happen next. For this kind of anxiousness, a novel becomes favourite for the readers. Without story a novel cannot with its other elements. In support of story E.M. Forster, in his book *Aspects of the Novel* has opined thus –

*Yes – oh dear yes – the novel tells a story. Having discussed the story-the simple and fundamental aspect of the novel-we can turn to more interesting topic: the actors.*

To determine the difference between story and plot, E.M. Forster says –

*We have defined a story as a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on casualty.*

There are some events which are required in a novel to create a story. These events must be described in order of time and the description of the events made in order of time creates a narrative. This narrative is called the story. In story, the events are related only with time. But why and how the events that take place in the novel are matter of concern for the plot. To show the minute difference between stories and plot clearly E.M. Forster gives an example – “the king died and then the queen died” is a story. But ‘the king died and then the queen died out of grief’ is a plot.

The story of a novel is based on some events or feelings and emotions of the life of the human beings. All the events that take place in life do not have equal value. The events which create a new stream in the path of life, and the events which remain in the minds of human beings forever, the artistic and creative structure of those events create a story. Introduction of story in novel is an age-old tradition. But in the modern and post modern age of the 20th century, it is observed that the importance of story in novel has been decreasing.
Virginia Woolf is one of those critic-writers who avoid the necessity of story. Although the story is being neglected in the novels of this age yet some novels which are having a very good story have been appreciated or praised even today. Writers or critics like Virginia Woolf made extreme publicity against story in novel. Some critics believe that a novel which centered round a story should have the ability to entertain the readers through its narrative. Moreover, this type of novels must contribute a great deal to the ideological value. Tolstoy’s War and Peace is a story based novel which is full of events. But this novel has been recognized in the world literature as a valuable work of art. In the novels of 19th century novelists like Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy and 20th century novelists E.M. Forster, Graham Green, V.S. Naipaul, etc. story plays a vital role and it is highly praised by the readers. According to the age old traditions, the importance of story in the Assamese novel is quite noticeable right from its inception. However, in the middle of the 20th century, this trend got few exceptions when the Assamese novelists also made efforts to write novel without story. Prafulla Dutta Goswami’s Sesh Kot (1948), Kesa Pator Kaponi (1952), Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s Raj Pathe Ringiai (1955), Pratipad (1970), Debendra Nath Acharya’s Ainya Yug Ainya Purush (1979)’, Mamoni Roisom Goswami’s Nilakanthi Braza (1976), Bhupendra Narayan Bhattacharya’s Marundyan, Shilabhadra’s Madhupur, Agmanir Ghat, Ahatguri etc. are some suitable examples of novels without story. But the Assamese novels of the last part of the 20th century are mainly story based novels.

In the story of novel two types of trends of life can be observed. The first one is external stream and the second one is internal. The life having external stream is called ‘life of time’ and the life without having internal stream is called ‘life of values’.
On the other hand plot is an intimate course of the story of novel. It is like a soul of a novel. Prahlad Kumar Baruah has rightly opined--

As the work of the story is to narrate the events that are arranged in a sequence of time, like that the work of the plot is to narrate the diversity of the events.⁵ (Trans.)

Story and plot depend upon each other. Without story plot is meaningless and vice versa. The relationship between these two is the relationship of cause and action. Whatever plot creates, story narrates it. Plot binds the body of the story and supplies the necessary ingredients to develop the story. In novel, plot creates some new problems, takes the problems to its complexity and finally finds out the solution of those problems. Plot leads the story to its end. On the other hand story highlights the characters only, while plot helps in creating and developing the characters. In the words of Prahlad Kumar Baruah--

Plot confines the body of the story by inner stream and plot also fuels to the development of the story.⁶ (Trans.)

In fact, plot in its course makes the characters of novel lively, diverge and meaningful.

William Henry Hudson, in his book, An Introduction to the Study of Literature has divided the plot of novel into two types – ‘loose plot’ and ‘organic plot’. In a novel having loose plot, a series of events is knitted. Here, in this type of novel the hero or the heroine gets entangled with the trivial events and helps in establishing the unity between the events. So in this type of novel, the characters become weak along with the story. The characters of the novels with loose plot do not face complex psychological conflict and so the readers cannot see the multicoloured shape of the inner world of the characters. In the novels having loose plot, characters are introduced but they do not develop, it lacks the brevity of thoughts and feelings and the entire life is not being expressed. Rashna Baruah’s Seuji Pator Kahini, Nabakanta Baruah’s Kapili Paria Sadhu,
Birenda Kumar Bhattacharyya’s *Yiaruingam* etc. are some novels having loose plot.

On the other hand, in the novels having organic plot, the story is very strong. W.H. Hudson remarks on it---

> Here the separate incidents are no longer treated episodically; they are dovetailed together as integral components of a definite plot pattern.   

In this type of novels the story is well composed and the characters are dynamic. Generally, the characters become much more active, dynamic and lively and hence characters become bright than its story. Through the novels of well structured plot, the vastness of the story, the diversity of the characters, the philosophy of life of the novelists etc. are beautifully highlighted. The novels with organic plot have the dramatic qualities and this gives the novels epical qualities. Bina Baruah’s *Jiwanar Batat*, Syed Abdul Mallik’s *Suruj Mukhir Swapna*, Jogesh Das’ *Aboidhya* etc. are some examples of novels with organic plot.

Jeremy Hawthorn, in his book *Studying the Novel*, analyses the nature of humanistic activities and determines the types of plot. These are -conflicting, mysterious, investigative, travelling etc. In the novels having the plot of conflict, it is seen that conflict is always there in the story. This conflict is sometimes external and sometimes inner.

On the other hand, the plot of the novel which is written keeping in mind the mystery of human relationship and finding out the mystery are called novels with mysterious plot. Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectation*, David Copperfield, Oliver Twist’s *Bleak House* are some novels with mysterious plot.

It is seen again that the stories of some novels are written on the basis of investigation or reflection. So the plot of the story of this type of novel is called investigative or reflective.
Moreover, some novels are written on the experience of travelling. The novels of this kind of plot is called ‘travelogue.’

4. 02. Story and Plot Construction in the Novels of Hemingway and Bhattacharyya:

The 20th century’s American novelist Ernest Hemingway and Assamese novelist Birendra Kumar Bhattcharyya have produced enough evidences of similarity in respect to story and plot construction. Both of these novelists were attracted by the same kind of things in the selection of story or plot. The novels of both the novelists selected for this research work have the description of war or war like unstable situation. Elements of love are also seen in the midst of war. Some characters of their novels fall in love even during war time and this love is the source of inspiration for the characters to live in. Apart from war and love, elements of humanism, religion, and struggle etc. are also found in their novels. Here, in this chapter an attempt has been made to compare the story and plot construction of the novels of these two novelists which are based on the concept of love, war, struggle, religion, humanism etc.

4.02.1. Story and Plot in Hemingway’s Novels:

A Farewell To Arms:

Hemingway has varied types of plots and stories in his novels. The novel A Farewell To Arms is basically a war novel. This novel also witnesses Hemingway’s favourite story of war. This has been observed by noted critic N. Rao--

Like much of Hemingway’s fiction of the twenties, it is based on the author’s personal experiences and observations during World War I.8

The story of this novel sets in Italy. The events take place in the middle of the war. Lieutenant Frederic Henry, a young American ambulance driver, is serving in the Italian army during World War I. In the introductory part of the novel, the
war is winding down with the onset of winter, and Frederic Henry spends an extended leave. In the next spring when Frederic returns to the battle field, his roommate Rinaldi, an army surgeon, introduces him to a British voluntary Aid detachment Nurse, Catherine Barkley, who is working in the Red Cross Hospital. Rinaldi says him that he loves Catherine and might marry her. But it is found that very soon Catherine and Frederic become involved in an elaborate game of seduction and hence Rinaldi escapes from his love. Meanwhile, Catherine’s fiancé has recently been killed in the Battle of Someone which makes her depressed. Gradually Frederic moves closer to Catherine as well as to the war. The war takes place between the Austrians and the Italians. Frederic keeps himself away for the next two days attending to his duties at the posts near the war front. After returning to Gorizia, he again meets Catherine. They make further progress now. But it seems that Henry is not serious about his love for Catherine. He does not have any deep feeling for her. He even frankly admits that—

This was a game, like bridge, in which you said things instead of playing cards.  

Catherine also knows it that Henry is playing a game with her. Still she has a great love for him.

One afternoon, Frederic Henry with his fellow ambulance drivers goes into a dugout across the river from the enemy troops, as an offensive is going to be there. In the battle field a shell explodes which kills one of his drivers, Passini, and wounds three drivers severely. Henry is also seriously wounded on his knee, for which he is sent to American hospital in Milan to get further treatment. Here, in Milan, Henry again meets Catherine Barkley as she is also transferred to this hospital. This time they fell in true love. They often involve in physical relation in these days in hospital. Very soon Henry is informed by Catherine that she is three months pregnant. He wishes to marry her. But she
refuses to get married as marriage would make them separated from each other as per regulations. Henry, after having done a leg operation by the surgeon Valentini, recovers quickly. After the completion of ‘three weeks convalescence leave’, Henry returns to the front. In the front Henry finds that the Italian forces are losing ground and man power daily. A bombardment begins, soon after his arrival. In the front a message comes and it says that German troops are breaking through the Italian lines. The Allied forces prepare to retreat. Frederic Henry rides with his team of ambulance drivers to the great column of evacuating troops. His two drivers Bonello and Aymo pick up two frightened young girls on their way. Henry and his drivers then decide to leave the column and attempt to reach Udine via back roads, which they assume will be faster. When Aymo’s ambulance bogs down in the mud, Henry orders the two engineer-sergeants to help them to get free the vehicle. But the sergeants say they cannot stay and help them. Henry then begins shooting at them. One is hit and the other escapes. The drivers leave the ambulance and try to drive the other two across a field to another road, but these too get stuck. They send off the girls towards the nearest civilians and then continue on foot towards Udine. As they march, they are fired on by the easily frightened rear guard of the Italian army, and Amyo is shot dead. Another driver Bonello marches off to surrender a farm house. When they rejoin the retreat the following day, they are caught by the Italian battle army. They are suspected to be German spy in Italian uniform. Henry sees that the battle police shoot the suspected man one by one. When the battle police come towards him, he picks an opportunity to dive into the river. After by swimming, covering a safe distance downstream, Henry manages to board a train bound for Milan.

Henry goes to Milan to meet his lady love Catherine. But he does not find her there in Milan as she has gone to the town of Stressa. Immediately, he goes to Stressa and gets reunited there with Catherine. They are happy now. But
on a stormy night Henry comes to know that he will be arrested in the morning for deserting his troops. Immediately, both Henry and Catherine prepare to escape for their safety to Switzerland, rowing all night in a tiny borrowed boat. They stay happily in a lovely alpine town called Montreux and agree to put the war behind them forever. Their life is quite peaceful in that place. There is nothing to disturb them. In fact, they spend a very nice time. The baby in Catherine is getting bigger and bigger. When the baby is about a month away, they decide to move to Lausanne so that they can be closer to the hospital. They stay at a nice hotel in Lausanne. One day in the early morning, Catherine goes into labour and hence they go to a hospital. The delivery is exceptionally painful and complicated. Finally, she delivers a dead boy child. Catherine also suffers from hemorrhages which lead to her death. After her death, Henry goes out and returns back to the hotel alone in the rain. Thus the story ends with a tragic tone.

Most of the novels of Ernest Hemingway are based on his real-life experiences. A new trend exists in American society in twentieth century and Hemingway has written his novels in that trend. It is observed that Hemingway’s novels are the representation of new events and their result on the individual characters. He works on some factors like war, violence, love, sex etc. Jeffrey Meyers comments--

Hemingway expresses his characteristic themes of violence, stoicism, war and death in perfectly controlled prose; and seems to excise all emotion from his work while allowing it to move powerfully beneath the surface.10

The Story and plot of almost all the novels of Hemingway are based on war and love. The story and plot of A Farewell To Arms are described on two themes—love and war. War and love are presented together in many novels, but the novelists cannot make a single story by combining the two themes. In this regard, Hemingway’s A Farewell To Arms is quite exceptional. These two themes are
elaborately juxtaposed by the novelist and narrated it like a single story. In the words of N.G. Meshram — *A Farewell to Arms combines the two themes — those of love and war effectively together.* In this novel, both the themes are given equal importance and parallel development. According to Philip Young—

The courses of love and war in the novel run exactly parallel so that in the end we feel we have read one story, not two. In this affair with the war Henry goes through six phases: desultory participation, serious action, wound, recuperation in Milan, and retreat leading to desertion. His relationship with Catherine undergoes six precisely corresponding stages: trifling sexual affair, actual love conception, confinement death.

Henry is a major character of this novel and his war related activities can be divided into six phases. Each and every phase develops like this –

i) Casual participation in war,

ii) Serious action done by him,

iii) A wound he gets,

iv) His recovery in a hospital in Milan,

v) Retreat

vi) Desertion.

Like this, the story of love between Henry and Catherine can also be divided into six phases – i) A trifling flirtation, (ii) Actual love, (iii) Catherine’s pregnancy, (iv) The stay in a mountain Villa in Switzerland, (v) A trip to hospital for the child birth, (vi) Catherine’s death.

Apart from these two major themes, *A Farewell To Arms* has some other themes like friendship, peace, death etc. and these are also narrated beautifully.

Hemingway’s *A Farewell To Arms* is a combination of a lot of characters. Though all the characters are not equally developed, yet each and every character helps in the development of the story and plot of the novel by their words and
deeds. The love affair between Henry and Catherine starts in the midst of war like environment. This affair moves forward with a lot of complexities. They flee from Italy to Switzerland only because of their love. They consider Switzerland as a safer place to live in happily. After the tragic death of Catherine Henry becomes a man of solitariness with the reminiscence of love. The story and plot of the novel are well structured. The events in the novel are having a very beautiful logical sequence. In book I the novelist introduces to the readers to all the major characters. Here the general war is setting and a statement of the problem is involved. The love between Henry and Catherine is only incidental. This book deals with war and ends with Henry’s injury and hospitalization. In the second book, the romance between Henry and Catherine develops into a major theme, and war is only in the distant background. In the third book war reappears as the major theme again, the Caporetto retreat occurs here. Henry takes part in the Caporetto retreat, he takes decision to escape from the chaos of war. In the fourth book, the escapade Henry and Catherine are rowing across the lake to Switzerland, where war recedes to distant background. In the fifth and last book, Henry’s hope of peaceful life which comes to a climax in the ironic scene of Catherine’s death in childbirth is dealt with.

Like the other novels in his *A Farewell To Arms* also plot narrates a lot of outward action. In Book I of this novel, reader find vivid accounts on what are happenings in the war front. An offensive is going to be launched and Henry and his men go there. An enemy shell explodes close to the dugout which takes the life of one of the Henry’s drivers. Henry too is wounded on his knee; one of the men dies on a stretcher in the ambulance. Henry is admitted in the field hospital, and from here he is sent to Milan for better treatment.

In book III, Henry goes to Bainsizza and there occurs the stirring account of the retreat. Here he is caught by Italian police who suspect him to be a German
in Italian uniform. Trying to get rid of the Italian police, he jumps into the flooded Tagliamento. The book IV of *A Farewell to Arms* contains a suspenseful account of Henry’s boat rowing across the lake into Switzerland with Catherine, the cross examination by the Swiss police and their journey to Montreux.

The plot also analyses the inner actions and reactions of the various characters. Apart from the external activities done by the characters plot lets the readers to know about the psychological actions and reactions of the characters. The dialogues and the passages consisting psychological analysis express the thoughts and feelings of the characters. The inner reactions often shown by Frederic Henry are quite noticeable. After saving own self from the Italian soldiers by diving in to the Tagliamento river Henry reacts—

*Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation.*
*Although that ceased when the carabiniere put his hands on my collar.*
*I would like to have had the uniform off although I did not care much about the outward forms. I had taken off the stars, but that was for convenience. It was no point of honour. I was not against them. I was through.*

Henry only thinks to escape from that country to another place along with Catherine. In another part of the novel Henry reveals his psychological reaction when he says: *I was not made to think. I was made to eat. My God, yes. Eat and drink and sleep with Catherine.* The final chapter of this novel is a fine example of inner reaction, where Henry’s state of mind is expressed clearly. Here Henry suffers a lot as he sees Catherine on the bed of death.

Though the entire events of *A Farewell To Arms* are narrated in a comprehensive time frame yet its plot is well structured.
For Whom the Bell Tolls:

*For Whom the Bell Tolls* is another famous novel by Hemingway which is based on his personal experience during the Spanish Civil War. *For Whom the Bell Tolls is the most serious and politically motivated novel that Hemingway wrote.*

The story and the plot are purely political in its actual sense. The novel contains the theme of war and love. Both the themes move parallely throughout the novel.

The story of this novel is narrated primarily through Robert Jordan’s thought and experience. Robert Jordan has left his job as an American University instructor of Spanish language to volunteer for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. He travels to Spain to oppose the Fascist’s forces of Francisco Franco. As an experienced dynamiter he is ordered to blow up a bridge behind the fascists lines. In this task he is aided by a band of local antifascist guerrillas to prevent the Fascists’ upcoming offensive.

A peasant named Anselmo guides Robert Jordan to reach the guerrilla camp hidden in a cave. On the way to the camp he confronts Pablo, the leader of the guerrillas, who greets Jordan with enmity. Pablo opposes Jordan’s plan of blowing up the bridge as he believes that it would endanger the safety of the guerrillas. On the other hand Robert Jordan does not take Pablo in trust. He suspects that Pablo may betray or sabotage the mission. In the camp Jordan meets Pilar, the wife of Pablo and six other guerrillas namely Rafael, Agustin, Fernando, Old-Primitivo, and brothers Andro and Eladio. Jordan also introduces to a young Spanish girl named Maria whom a band of fascists raped recently. Very soon Robert Jordan and Maria fall in love. There is Pilar who tries to get Maria and Jordan united. She seems to be the real leader to the band of guerrillas. A good relationship quickly develops between Jordan and Pilar quickly. In fact Pilar tries to get the members of guerilla fighters into a united family.

Robert Jordan along with Anselmo goes to scout out the bridge. When they return to the camp Pablo announces publicly that he or his party will not
co operate Jordan to execute his plan. But Pilar and some other guerrillas do not agree with Pablo. Even a guerrilla, Rafael urges Jordan to kill Pablo. But Pilar insists Jordan not to do so as Pablo is not dangerous as they consider. In the next morning Jordan, Maria and Pilar meet El Sordo, the leader of another band of guerrillas in the forest and they talk about the bridge operation. El Sordo agrees to help them to make the mission successful. On the way back to Pablo’s camp, in the forest, Pilar catches the lovers Maria and Jordan while they are engaging in love making.

Robert Jordan is rebuked very badly by Pablo in the camp. Jordan and the other guerrillas want to kill Pablo considering him a dangerous one for their mission. Meanwhile Pablo declares that he has changed his mind and is getting ready to assist them. Even in such an environment Maria and Robert Jordan continue their love-making constantly. Their love reaches to such an extent that they find themselves in each other.

In the next morning El Sordo and his group are attacked by a group of fascists and killed all of them. Having heard the pathetic news of El Sordo’s band, Pablo’s guerrillas feel dejected. A dispatch is sent to the Republican commander by Jordan. The dispatch brings the news that the plan of blowing the bridge and the larger offensive should be cancelled as the Fascists are well aware of the plan. Even Jordan is also informed by Karkov, a Russian journalist that the fascists know about the plan of the Republicans.

On that night Pablo steals Jordan’s detonators which are kept for blowing up the bridge and flees from the camp. But Jordan is determined to carry out the mission by any means. Surprisingly Pablo returns back to the camp just before dawn. He tries to persuade that he left the camp in a moment of weakness and now he is ready to cooperate in the operation.

Even after many hurdles on the way Jordan and his party have successfully blown up the bridge. But unfortunately in order to make their mission
accomplished a few guerrillas of Jordan’s group are seriously wounded and a few are killed. Though the mission is a successful one, they have to retreat. On the way back Jordan is severely wounded as he gets fractured one of his legs. He knows that he would not survive long and so he compels Maria and others to leave him there. He assures Maria that he is always with her. After their departure Jordan feels a strong passion for this world. He is eager to kill his enemies before being captured by them. But before launching the sudden attack by Jordan the story of the novel comes to an end.

The plot of the novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is based on the Spanish Civil War which took place in the later part of the third decade of the 20th century. *The book is engaged with the great political events and issues of the time in Spanish Republic.* A few Republicans get together in a secret camp situated in a hilly region of Spain. They discuss about the movement to move forward against the fascists. Even in the midst of their movement they involve in joy and delightful activities, love, hatred and even in quarrel also. Through these activities the revolutionary story develops and the determined deed is done by the characters. The plot has the perfect arrangement of beginning, middle or ending. The plot steps forward towards the climax through actions, dialogues etc. of different characters present in the story. Like the plot of the *A Farewell To Arms* the plot of this novel has also two main themes – ‘love’ and ‘war’. *There is a parallel movement of themes of war and love here.* Robert Jordan is busy in discussion with a peasant guerrilla group to make a minor operation successful in Spanish Civil War. Though the story of the novel centers round an event of blowing up a bridge controlled by the Fascists yet, this novel reveals the whole Spanish Civil War. In this regard Jeffrey Meyers rightly says-

*He (Hemingway) tells of an exceedingly minor operation in the war; his central characters are few in numbers; and we see them during only seventy two hours of their lives. But it seems to me that he tells*
the whole story of what was behind the Spanish tragedy, and what
was to come of it for Spain and Europe and the rest of us.\textsuperscript{18}

This novel is like a document of Spanish Civil War. For this kind
of story the novel is considered as a notable political novel. In this context
Meyers comments—

\textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls is a political novel both in that it deals with
a great political event, the Spanish Civil War and that its author
takes a definite (though largely unconscious) political attitude
towards this event.}\textsuperscript{19}

Apart from this political event, there is a very beautiful love story in the plot of
this novel. This story is based on the love affairs between Maria and Robert
Jordan. Robert Jordan gets introduced to Maria in Pablo’s guerilla camp. Within
three days this acquaintance moves forward to platonic and physical love. They
promise to marry each other. Their affair in the guerrilla camp is sudden but
spontaneous. Sincerity and honesty exist in their affair. They wish to lead a
simple and peaceful life. Scenes which narrate the deep love between Maria
and Jordan even in the chaotic environment of war are quite rare in Western
literature. In the words of Meyers—

\textit{The love scenes between Robert Jordan and the girl Maria, to whom
the Fascists had done bad things, are complete love scenes. Complete
love scenes are rare in modern literature. Any writer with knowledge
of his craft can write skillfully about sex, but it takes an artist to rite
thus beautifully and truly about love.}\textsuperscript{20}

Fate plays a vital role in their lives. It does not allow them to go in the
right direction. They cannot get united only because of fate, though they try
their best. But like a true lover and a dutiful leader Jordan takes every possible
measure to save his beloved and the guerrillas.
For Whom the Bell Tolls is similar to A Farewell to Arms in the context of the development of the plot. In this regard the structure of both the novel has resemblance. According to P. G. Rama Rao—

Based on the Spanish Civil War and Hemingway’s knowledge of Spain and its people, this novel has the same basic structure as A Farewell to Arms in that there is a parallel movement of the themes of war and love here.21

There are a considerable number of characters in this novel. Though these characters are not equally developed, yet each and every character plays a vital role in the development of plot. The characters face some complex problems. They show their mental actions and reactions at different times. In this regard Jordan’s psychological actions and reactions showed at various times are noteworthy.

In For Whom the Bell Tolls Hemingway uses more interior monologues than his other novels. By using interior monologues he illuminates the characters. Interior monologues present the thinking process of the characters. The novelist uses a number of interior monologues. Robert Jordan’s interior monologue found in the last chapter of the novel is mentioned here—

And if you wait and hold them up even a little while or just get the officer that may make all the difference. One thing well done can make—22

Here Jordan’s psychological tension is expressed in clear way.

A number of different characters through their actions and dialogues reflect the story of the novel which is based on the theme of war and love. But the plot of this novel is not simple like that of other novels of Hemingway. The canvas is wide here and the plot complex, which is rare in Hemingway.23 This novel of Hemingway, is highly appreciated by the readers than his other novels.
The Old Man and the Sea:

The plot and story of *The Old Man and the Sea* are different from those of his other novels. Like the other stories of the novels of Hemingway, it does not have story related to war, love and sex. Even Hemingway himself feels that this novel has been written in a different trend than his other novels. Sanjukta Dasgupta remarks—-

*Throughout the writing of this novel, Hemingway was aware that this would be a novel with a difference.*

The story of this novel forms depending upon the endless struggle between nature and human being. The Cuban fisherman Santiago used to fish in a skiff in the Gulf Stream. He is not able to catch even a single fish in a period of eighty four days. The first forty days he is accompanied by a boy, Manolin. But Manolin is taken away by his parents as they think that Santiago is definitely a ‘Salao’, an extremely unlucky person. Though Santiago cannot achieve success for eighty four days, yet he does not stop his mission. Again on the eighty fifth day he, with his rare patience outrageous, courage, indomitable spirit and with infinite tolerance, sails on the sea in search of a big fish. When Manolin was with him, Santiago talks to him about his glorious past and the game of base ball. But after Manolin’s departure, now he feels alone. On that day Santiago sails far away from the beach of the sea in search of fish. This time he is fortunate enough that he is able to hook a huge Marlin. The fish starts pulling Santiago’s boat. To keep his mental strength intact Santiago remembers the winning moment of the hand game played with a Negro. After fighting with the fish for two days relentlessly he is able to kill the fish in the last half of the second night. This time he ties up the fish with the boat and sails his boat in the direction of his home.

On the way back to the beach a herd of sharks attack the Marlin. The old man tries his best to save the Marlin from the attack of sharks and for this he
fights with the sharks by using his entire power of mind and body. But it is not possible for him to save the Marlin from the sharks. After a long struggle Santiago reaches the beach but except the skeleton of the Marlin there is nothing with him. Though he is defeated externally yet he feels proud like victorious army and steps towards his hut. Santiago again plans some mission with Manolin for the forth coming days and sleeps in his cottage. He dreams about lion while he asleep. Thus the story ends.

The plot of the novel is a simple one. Of course, despite being a simple novel at its apparent level the novel brings a bright ray to the reader as the story of the novel is very exceptional. In the words of a critic--

It is about courage. It tells of a fisher man who fights old age and the loss of his strength, poverty and the loss of his luck, loneliness and gigantic sea in which he hunts, almost completely solitary except for the birds, the flying –fish, and the friendly dolphins. It tells how he caught a huge fish; how the fish fought him, pulling him many miles out to sea; how he killed it; how the sharks attacked his magnificent prize before he could get it home; and how bravely and hopelessly he fought them – even the sharks are brave, in their way. Like Robert Jordan of For Whom the Bell Tolls, Santiago too believes in his own deeds and discipline. He accepts that one can enjoy the moment of victory even after being defeated in the struggle. Unlike Hemingway’s other novels this novel ends with an optimistic note.

The Old Man and the Sea is written within a limited periphery. The plot of the novel moves forward through the words, deeds and thoughts of the two main characters– the old fisher man Santiago and the boy Manolin. Santiago, the protagonist of this novel is a dynamic character. Santiago’s philosophy of life ‘Man can be destroyed but not defeated’ is in fact Hemingway’s own philosophy of life. The plot of this novel is an organic one.
All good stories start with a fundamental list of ingredients. These ingredients are – the initial situation, denouement and conclusion. In the initial stage of *The Old Man and the Sea*, it is found that the old fisherman is not able to catch even a single fish in eighty four days. The conflict of the novel starts when, on the eighty fifth day Santiago hooks a big Marlin. After catching the fish Santiago faces a lot of problem. Santiago could not pull the marlin but it is the marlin that pulls the boat. Santiago has to labour hard, he suffers a lot, declaration of war with the marlin is made these are the essence of conflict.

The fish fights against Santiago continuously for three days. Santiago, the old man, gets tired, but the Marlin does not. This is the complication of the novel. Finally, the old man harpoons the Marlin to death. It is the climax of this story.

Now the suspense starts. Sharks appear and attack the Marlin. The readers are very anxious to know whether the Sharks would eat the Marlin or if Santiago would kill the Sharks etc. etc. Then the old man realizes that the Marlin is eaten by the Sharks and he is also harmed. This is the denouement of the story. Finally the old fisherman discusses with Manolin about the future life. Thus the story ends with a new hope.

Because of the well planned structure of the plot this novel is considered as the novel of organic plot.

There are a few characters apart from the characters of Santiago and Manolin, but these characters are not developed. There is no inner conflict seen in these characters. However inner conflict exists in the character of Santiago. After killing the Marlin Santiago is in an unstable state of mind thinking that whether he has committed sin by doing so. He thinks— *Perhaps it was a sin to kill the fish.* At the same time he consoles himself—
But even then he cannot refrain his mind from thinking about the sin. This type of psychological actions and reactions enhance the brightness of his character and the plot as well.

The plot of this novel may be classified as a plot full of conflict. The external conflicts seen in this novel are the conflicts between Santiago and the Marlin and Santiago and the Sharks.

*The Old Man and the Sea* has been appreciated by the readers as it has a simple but organic plot. The story of the novel is a moral of struggling life. In the history of World classical literature the *Old Man and the Sea* is considered as one of the best works in English.

4.02. 2. Story and Plot in Bhattacharyya’s Novels:

Like Ernest Miller Hemingway, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novels are also based on the plot and story of love and war like situation. In fact, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novels reflect some peculiar aspects which do not exist in Hemingway’s novels. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novels always bear the stamp of social change and dynamics of life which is also a peculiar feature of his novels. In his novels, he presents his story and plot with enough thinking, pre-planning and artistic attitude. Most of his plots are political. He is very conscious about political, social, economic problems of his native land. In his personal life he was related to indirect politics too. Even he was a strong supporter of socialism. But, in this respect Hemingway was different. Though Hemingway wrote novels based on his real experiences gathered from the First World War, Second World War, Spanish Civil War, Turkish War etc. but he was not interested in any particular party in the field of politics. So, personal political idealism of Hemingway can never be seen in his novels. But, in most of the
political novels by Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, a certain political idealism is reflected. Hence apart from the similarities between Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, dissimilarities are also there in some respects.

Yiaruingam:

Like the basis of Hemingway’s novels, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s Yiaruingam, Pratipad, Mityunjay are also based on the plot and story of war or war-like situation. One of the causes of war-like situations or wars that took place in various parts of the world in different times is the unstable political environment. It is often seen that the plots and stories of the novels of Ernest Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya are based on such kind of unstable political situation. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s Yiaruingam is not an exception of this. Here in this novel conflict between Indian Nationalism and Naga Nationalism can be witnessed. The story narrates the horrible environment created by the Second World War in India as well as in Nagaland, a district of then Assam. In A Farewell To Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls Hemingway narrates the devastating environment created by the First World War and Spanish Civil War respectively. Like these two novels, in Yiaruingam also, Bhattacharya narrates the unstable political situation in Naga Hills created right from the end of Second World War to a few years after India become independent.

The narrative and the development of the events of this novel are conventional. During the Second World War the Tankhul Nagaland was under the control of Japan for some days. After being defeated by the British and American force the Japanese retreated from that area. The terrifying war and its cruel nature shattered the lives of the people of Naga Hills. Therefore, the mass want to get compensation for the destruction of war along with a peaceful
life. The Naga youths Rishang, Phanitphang, Khating etc. help the Alliance Force only hoping that the United Force would help in rebuilding their locality, would give compensation to those who lost a lot and would establish schools, hospitals, etc. In the very initial stage of this novel a Naga girl Sharengla appears who is cheated by a Japanese soldier Ishewara. Rishang and two other villagers help this woman to return to her own village. Though there is an affair between Rishang and Sharengla from childhood, yet she could not gain Rishang only because of her indelible stain. Trying to forget everything happened to her in the past she gets ready to adjust herself with the present condition. Meanwhile Rishang develops a new relationship with Khutingla. According to Satyendranath Sarma—

*Their attraction becomes firm through physical relationship, but the family conflict and the regional difference stand as an obstacle in their marriage*  

(Trans.)

On the issue of establishing a Church in their place, there creates a conflict between the Christian Yengmash and non-Christian Nyathingkhuin. Under their leadership there exist two opposite party. The two parties get involved in quarrel. This quarrel makes an uncertainty in the marriage of Khutingla and Richang, as Khuntigla is the daughter of Nyathingkhuin and Rishang is the son of Yengmash. Taking this uncertainty in front Rishang has gone to Calcutta for further study and Khutingla has gone to Guwahati for weaving training. Nyathingkhuin who has given shelter to Sharengla tries to assault her sexually. Therefore Sharengla leaves his home and starts living in Phanitphang’s isolated home. Phanitphang, who has been rejected by Khutingla in love, joins the Videshelly’s Party. The revolutionary Naga leader Videshelly wants to live neither under British nor to establish a Naga state as an inseparable state of independent India. He wants such a separate sovereign Naga state where the freedom and ethnic
characteristics of Nagas can be saved. Therefore, an ideological difference between Richang and Videshelly grows immediately there. In this regards Satyendranath Sarma says-

*There are basic differences of attitude noticed in Rishang and Videshelly in regards to rehabilitation and reconstruction of war devastated Naga Hills. One seeks love and peace. The other one organizes violent war.*

(Trans.)

Thus a political conflict starts there between Richang and Videshelly. Rishang has to face Videshelly’s party as he comes from Calcutta to Naga Hills. Meanwhile he starts motivating a section of Naga people, who supports Videshelly, to the stream of peace. At the same time, he faces another problem. His relatives, as their traditional custom urge him to take revenge by killing Nyathingkhuin, the murderer of his father. But he knows it that, if he does so he would loss his beloved Khutingla forever. Therefore he does not take any revenge on Nyathingkhuin and tries to forgive him. Being influenced by Christ’s Noble Speech and Gandhi’s ideals of non-violence, he forgives Nyathingkhuin. Now Rishang along with Jivan Master starts to preach word of peace in the villages in order to prevent Videshelly. But they are kidnapped by Videshelly’s party. After being freed Richang gets married to Khutingla. When for the second time he and Jiban Master go to the villages for spreading message of peace Jiban master is killed and Rishang is seriously wounded by the opposite party. Phanitphang is killed by his party as he betrays his own party by providing information to the police to rescue Rishang. The injured Rishang is admitted to a hospital and Sarengla takes care of him. He dreams that his coming child would rule the people one day. Thus the story of the novel ends.

In this novel, apart from the main political events, love story can also be found like Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* or *A Farewell to Arms*. However, the love story seen in the novel *Yiaruingam* is a triangular love story.
The situation of the love triangle is being created by Khutingla, Rishang and Phanitphang. In *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *A Farewell to Arms*, it is seen that the lovers make their love even in the midst of horrible environment of war and their love develops in the midst of various problems and complexity. Here, in *Yiaruingam* too, the love of Rishang and Khutingla has to overcome various complexities in order to reach their ultimate goal i.e. ‘marriage’. The contemporary political situation has influenced their love a lot. Satyendranath Sarma remarks—

> Some influence of political environment is noticed in the development and consequence of the love triangle of Khutingla, Rishang and Phanitphang. (Trans.)

Like Hemingway’s novels, one or two sub-stories are here in *Yiaruingam* also. The sub-stories of Sharengla and Jiban Master have made this novel more attractive.

The story of Sharengla enlightens the main event. But it seems that the story of Jiban Masters does not succeed in elaborating the novel politically. Gobinda Prasad Sarma remarks on it—

> Jiban Master’s sub story is not necessary like that of Sharengla’s sub-story which is necessary from the political theme of the novel. It only helps in introducing the education related side of the contemporary society of the Naga Hills. (Trans.)

On the other hand the love story between Rishang and Khutingla is not only a mere expression of their youthful love, but it also relates to the political theme of the novel.

The plot of the novel is entirely political. This novel is —

> What the back ground, what the story, what the theme is, primarily a novel written on the Nagaland and politics of that…It, at the same time, apart from being a Naga political novel, is written on the politics of the independent movement of India. (Trans.)
The problem of the plot is created by the conflict between Rishang and Videshelly and this problem further develops the plot. As per Jeremy Hawthorn’s division of plot this plot can be called the plot of conflict. But the conflict here in this novel is seen externally. In this regard the novel is similar to those of Hemingway. In Hemingway’s novels such as *A Farewell To Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls* etc. the external conflict is observed more than the inner conflict. There exists a lot of conflict in *Yiaruingam* such as the conflict between Richang and Videshelly, Ngathingkhui and Yengmash etc.

The conflict between Yengmash and Ngathingkhui leads to another conflict between two families, two groups and two religions namely Christian and Non-Christian. Through these conflicts the plot runs to the climax. By creating problems like war and peace, rehabilitation and revolution, the plot makes the story more complex but finally it shows the way of solution too. Plot narrates why and how the incidents take place. The story of the novel is narrative and wide spread. This plot cannot be called as an organic one. According to S. N. Sarma—

*The structure of the story is not inflexible for the widespread description. As a result of this scatterings though the body of the novel gets bigger the story cannot assume the tight and firm form.*

(Trans.)

The plot of this novel is not simple. *This novel thus is not just a one dimensional simple novel.* (Trans.) Here, in this novel, the novelist portrays two political events, picture of individual love, picture of social life etc. at the same time. These elements make the plot of the novel complex. Like Hemingway’s novels though there are a number of characters in this novel, yet the characters have not developed equally. Hemingway’s characters do not suffer from complex psychological conflict. In this novel also the complex psychological conflict can never be seen in the characters. However sometimes
heartiest feelings, action and reaction are seen in some characters like Rishang, Khutingla, Sharengla. One example of the mental reaction of a character is given here—

_The strict disciplined rules and regulations of the Naga life stained her for the whole life because of that mistake she did from which she might not get rid of by getting remarried. But in this state of impregnation, does any man come forward to accept her as the dearest wife? Is there such a man who by giving up the self respect and social status will dare to destroy the life for the sake of a whore only?_35 (Trans.)

After getting the news of kidnapping of lover Rishang, Khutingla reacts like this—

“If they had killed him already”, Khutingla thought while cleaning her own hair. On that day while bathing on the bank of the river full of past memories she felt burning sensation, the heart cries loudly. She has so much expectation that after her arrival she would meet and talk to him openly about the coming reconciliation of Christmas. But the very next day of her arrival such an incident took place as a result of which there might ——36(Trans.)

Such type of psychological reaction of the characters enhances the brightness of the story. The earlier political novels of Assamese literature do not have mental actions and reactions in the characters. Observing such patterns of characterization the plot of the novel can be said well-constructed. _The plot of the novel is well constructed and the story which is based on reality has no unconvincing episodes or incidents._37 The narration of the plot is beautifully done with the help of characters.

_Yiaruingam_ is a powerful writing of Bhattacharyya where plots like political, social, individual love etc. have developed equally. In Hemingway’s _A Farewell to Arms_ and _For Whom the Bell Tolls_ there are two plots ‘love’ and
‘war’ and these plots develop in equal proportion. Yiariungam also contains two plots of ‘love’ and ‘war’ and both the plots step forward and reach the zenith. Bhattacharyya’s Rishang and Khutingla, of course, are not separate from each other at the end like Hemingway’s Frederic Henry—Catherine Barkley and Robert Jordan-Maria. But here, in Yiariungam, the lovers get united and through their expected boy child Rishang dreams the rule of people. This optimistic end turns the novel into a very interesting one and it differentiates itself from those of Hemingway’s novel.

**Mrityunjay:**

_Mrityunjay_ is one of the important and notable political novels by Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya. While going through this novel it is observed that the story of this novel is based upon the background of India’s Freedom Movement. The impact of the ’42 movement on Assamese society is reflected here in this story. In the preface of _Mrityunjay_ Bhattacharyya says—

_The time of the events that narrated in this novel is 1942. Characters are fictitious. Of course, here in this novel, glimpses and picturization of the memorable incidents that took place in the last phase of the freedom movement can be observed. It’s not a history. A story written on the basis of the events happened in my time._ 38

The story of this novel highlights that period of Indian history, when the wave of the Indian independence movement touched everywhere of our country including Assam. During the time of non-violence movement, led by Gandhiji, a group of native people deviated from the main stream of the movement and undertook the way of violence in order to achieve freedom. This section under the leadership of Subhash Chandra Bose, started to fight against British by taking many violent ways. Jayprakash Narayan and Rammanohar Lohia also inspired them to continue the attempts to drive away the Britishers with guerilla tactics.
Here in the novel *Mrityunjay*, an event unfolds, where to derail a military train, the revolutionists like Rupnarayan, Dhanpur, Aahina Konwar, Bhibhiram, etc. have made a secret plan under the leadership of Mohoda Gossain. Apart from these characters, some other men and women such as Dimi, Dadhi Master, Madhu Keot, Koli Baideu, Gossani, Anupama, Rupnarayan, Tikou etc. assist the main story in its development. To complete their determined task successfully the revolutionists collect arms and ammunition and then have gone carefully and secretly to their selected places. After facing a lot of hurdles, the revolutionists have succeeded in removing the railway track. Finally the train in which the army boarded is derailed and devastated. While doing this unlawful activity, Dhanpur is severely wounded and Gossain is killed, the train in which the army boarded is derailed and devastated, the freedom fighters try to escape along with wounded Dhanpur but Dhanpur is not fit enough to flee and finally dies. After these events the story develops along with the following events—the narration of the condition of Mohoda Gossain’s wife, the depiction of the act of arrest of Gossain’s followers by the police, the picture of Rupnarayan’s love, the expression of Anupama’s disgust for the Congress activist, the change of Anupama’s mind set for the congress workers, the elaboration of Tikou’s self concealment, the depiction of Rupnarayan’s beloved Arati’s marriage with another youth, the discourse between Anupama and Gossani about getting liberty etc. etc.

The novelist in this novel narrates the love story of Dhanpur and Dimi along with the main political event of the story. Dimi is depicted here in this novel as a beautiful Mikir girl and Dhanpur is an orphan who belongs to a very poor Kachari family of an Assamese village. He met Dimi in Bhibhiram’s home for the first time. Having seen the beauty and simplicity of the girl he feels attracted to her. Dimi also loves Dhanpur very much. But the caste system that
The story and plot of *Mrityunjay* are entirely political. The story and plot construction of this novel is quite similar to Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. The entire story of *Mrityunjay* resembles to the story of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Both the novels are story based. The events of both these two novels are expressed in limited space and time rather than expressing in a widespread setting. The events of both these two novels have not taken more than 4 to 5 days to take place. So far as the backgrounds of both these two novels are concerned, it is quite similar. In the words of Gobinda Prasad Sarma—

> The backgrounds of the main events of both the novels is almost same- the hilly wood. However the entire story of For Whom the Bell Tolls takes place in this wood; but it can be said that the background of the story of Mrityunjay is the entire Nagaon district though Mayong is its background mainly.39 (Trans.)

While reading the story of *Mrityunjay* there can be noticed a large number of events. But it seems that most of the narrated events of this novel
are not necessary. Right from the secret discussion about derailing the army train, under the leadership of Mohoda Gossain, to the death of Dhanpur and Gossain—these events can be considered necessary. The later episodes like the condition of Mohoda Gossain’s wife, the consequence of Rupnarayan’s affair, the changing attitude of Arati in regards to the National movement, are seen to be additional events. The chapters right from thirteenth to sixteenth of this novel are supposed to be additional.\textsuperscript{40} (Trans.)

The plot of \textit{Mrityunjay} is centered round on the description of an event of derailing a military train near Mayong by a group of freedom fighter under the leadership of Doiparia Gossain. In regard to the central task, both the novels are similar—

\begin{quote}
Like the certain activity which is a violent act done by the guerrilla party in Hemingway’s novel, thus the certain work in Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novel is also a violent act.\textsuperscript{41} (Trans.)
\end{quote}

Certain activities seemed as violent are accomplished by the guerrillas in Hemingway’s novel, same may attributed in Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s. However, dissimilarities have also been seen in the plots of both the novels. So far as the ideology of guerrillas is concerned, both the plots are different. Gobinda Prasad Sarma remarks--

\begin{quote}
In \textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls} the guerrilla party is ordered by the main Republican Party to execute the act of breaking bridge. Though the members of the guerilla party in Mrityunjay are of Congress, the ideals of violence of this party are quite different from that of Congress’s ideals of non-violence. So, this party engages in violent activities without any order from the Congress.\textsuperscript{42} (Trans.)
\end{quote}

The plot of \textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls} is based on the true event namely the Spanish Civil War. Like this, \textit{Mrityunjay}’s plot has also been written on some true events related to India’s Freedom Movement. Here, many historical facts
have been focused. In fact, the main event of derailing a train actually happened at Mayong near the then Nagaon.

It has already been mentioned that apart from the main political story, there exist a number of events which depict the picture of individual love, social life, religious tradition etc. etc. But the events are not narrated in a sequence. Those events have been expressed in limited time and space through the characters. The characters have also faced complex psychological conflict. Mohoda Gossain, Rupnarayan, etc. are noticeable in this regard. While reading the story of this novel it is also observed that though the revolutionists are successful in their task, yet they are not happy. They felt restless. Even Gossain, the leader of this mission repenting for this unlawful act says that it would be very agreeable if they could have fought without doing violent acts. But at the same time, he also consoles his own mind by justifying his own act of killing people. His justification is that he along with his guerrilla group has accomplished such a mission only for the sake of their native land. Even in order to get relieve from the inner conflict he memorizing that Lord Krishna also forced to wield the ‘Sudarshan – chakra’ for killing demons. Still, he could not make himself free from that guiltiness because of the question of value judgment. Like Mohoda Gossain Rupnarayan too feels unhappy after killing the English soldiers by derailing the train. Like the leader Gossain, Rupnarayan also tries to convince his mind by arguing that the British soldiers have also done a severe crime by killing the innocent Indian people. Even the history of the world also reveals the fact that in France, Russia, China, Yugoslavia, Barma-everywhere people have resorted to violent revolution, because it is quite impossible to chase the exploiting class from its position by the non-violent struggle. Still Rupnarayan is unable to free his mind from guiltiness. Through the story it is clearly highlighted that despite succeeded in their aim of derailing the army train, later on, Rupnarayan, Gossain etc. feel that they would have very
satisfied if they could achieve their goal by the nonviolent way. Here in the story the question of violence and non-violence as instrument of political struggle is raised. In this novel the novelist Bhattacharyya has not only portrayed a violent event of train derailment, which killed hundreds of British soldiers but also attempts to highlight the mental conflict of the characters who are engaged with that event.

After a close observation it is noticed that though the central story, the background of the story, the skill of presentation, characterization, different kinds of micro-stories etc. of Mrityunjay are formed in the model of Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, yet it is not an out and out imitation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It is also noticed that there are many dissimilarities in regards of time, expression of thought etc. between the novels of Hemingway and Bhattacharyya—*In regard to expression of different feelings and time the scope of Mrityunjay is wider than that of ‘For Whom’*43 (Trans.) *For Whom the Bell Tolls* ends with Robert Jordan’s certain death and his aspiration of killing a fascist by shooting. On the other hand the story of Mrityunjay does not have the same ending as *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Even after the death of some major characters like Dhanpur and Gossain, the story of Mrityunjay continues. However, the additional events narrated in the later part of the novel are not well structured. In the words of a critic,

*In the later part of the novel the previous rigid structure and dramatic quality become much less.*44

Whatever the events of Mrityunjay, it is based on the theme of contemporary, political, social, economic, regional issues and hence it is considered as one of the most remarkable novel in the history of Assamese literature.
Pratipad:

Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s *Pratipad* is a novel of purely political theme. There is no conventional story in *Pratipad*. But it is centered round a comprehensive story. In the preface of this novel Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya has opined—

*This is an imaginary novel; picturisation of the story is not conventional as well. The plot proceeds through these motions. There are higher and lower, increasing and decreasing motions of the plot. Those are taken as the part of motions. It’s a reflection of will of a class of an era; but universal humanistic thought is distinctly visualized.*  

The novel *Pratipad* centres round a famous political event that takes place at Digboi in Assam during the pre-independence time. How a group of labourers and employees stand against the economic exploitation and social injustice done by the colonial masters at that time is reflected here in *Pratipad* very beautifully. The plot of the novel narrates how the conflict takes place between the authority of the refinery and the agitating employees; how the authority tries to prevent this political Trade Union Movement of the employees; and the aftermath of this movement etc. In regards to the plot of *Pratipad*, Gobinda Prasad Sarma says,

*Here some people of same ideology proceed forward with a certain objective by getting together; face the obstruction from the opposition; execute the purpose and face instantaneous consequences—this is the plot of the novel.*  

The story of the novel is narrated in the following way—the labourers and the other employees, who are economically very poor, are dominated by the employers or administrators with some rigid and firm rules and regulation. The ‘Sahibs” are not concerned about the minimum needs and
necessity of the labourers. Even the authority does not give much importance to the legal demands of the union. For these types of reasons, conflict takes place between the employers and the employees. After making a lot of effort, people like Giasuddin, Chatterjee, Baruah, Ismail, Nasiruddin, Bodhan etc. form a union. The union submits a memorandum of their legal demands to the higher authority. But the authority turns down their demands. Instead they have been minutely observed by the administrators. On the other hand, the union has started their strike as their demands are not paid importance. ‘Khad’, field, bunglow and kitchens of the ‘Sahibs’—everywhere the strike continues in full swing. But the authority is also adamant to continue the refinery works. So they try to hire labourers from outside so that they can have the production swiftly and smoothly without any interruption. Even then the strikers are not in the mood of calling off their strike. In protest against hiring outside labourers, the members of the union standup in front of the trucks carry the labourers. But to discard the strikers the refinery authority orders the Assam rifles to fire at them. One of the foremost leaders Chatterjee and four other members including Baruah, Chandi etc. have been killed. Meanwhile, taking the opportunity of Second World War, Digboi has been declared as a ‘protected area’. Strikers are arrested soon. At that time, the British emperors, without taking any consent of Indian citizen, declare that India will help them in the World War. Considering this declaration as a shameful one for the nation and in protest against this, the congress government of Shillong resigns. In this movement thousands of volunteers are arrested and some are getting imprisoned. The labourers and the employees have been forced to leave Digboi as they debarred themselves from their works even at the time of war. Seeing such a pitiful condition of the union characters like Giasuddin thinks that without dethroning the colonial emperor the dream of independent India and the success of labour movement would never come true. The possibility of starting a strong movement for attaining
independence is expressed in a letter sent to Baruani by her father. The story of the novel comes to an end with this possibility.

Apart from this main political story the novel has a few sub-stories also. These sub-stories with humanistic emotion help to focus the main theme of the novel. The sub-stories like the love stories of Pannu-Chatterjee, Durga-Nayanmoni, Giasuddin-Pannu; the story of Jebunnissa, the humanistic love story between Mrs. Fleming and Nayanmoni, the story of Giasuddin-Madhuri-Jahanara etc. reflect the personal and humanistic love in a dignified way.

In regard to story and plot construction Pratipad is very much similar to Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls. In For Whom the Bell Tolls, a few revolutionist of Republican Party of Spain gets together in a secret camp in a hilly wood and taking oath to give motion to their movement against the fascists. Like that, in Pratipad too, the labourers and employees of Digboi Oil Refinery get united and proceed their movement forward against the refinery authority for standardizing of their service. Here, the story of the novel also moves forward and the discussed matter has been presented through the depiction of the revolutionists’ gossip, joy, delight, sorrow, envy, quarrel, love, hatred, etc. etc. Like For Whom the Bell Tolls, its story is—

_Not a well stated story of integration where exist the beginning, middle and ending; that’s a braided wisp of story which is formed with the help of the scenes of the dialogues, actions, of the united revolutionary laboures._47(Trans.)

Like Mrityunjay and Yiaruingam, conflict and struggle can also be found here in Pratipad also. This conflict is not of psychological conflict, indeed. It is the conflict between the authority of the Digboi refinery who supports British imperial government and the union of the labours and employees. The struggle between these two powers expresses the main theme of the story. In the words of Jogesh Das—
On one side the inflexible attitude of the English Officers of the Assam Oil Company, the mentality of exploiting and oppressing with the help of Shillong based English Government by throwing away all the rules and regulations, humanity, and on the other side the workers’ pray for justice, the struggle made through the organization; the humanity based united consciousness which is the result of that struggle- the conflict of this two powers is the narration of the story.\textsuperscript{48}

(Trans.)

The plot of \textit{Pratipad} is not narrated by any character of this novel or the novelist himself, which is usually seen in traditional novel. Through the dialogues, actions and the consciousness of the characters, the plot of \textit{Pratipad} develops. In regards to its structure Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya follows Hemingway. \textit{This structure is the structure of Ernest Hemingway’s For Whom the Bell Tolls.}\textsuperscript{49} (Trans.)

So far as the story and plot construction of \textit{Pratipad} are concerned, Hemingway’s influence is seen clearly. Yet it can not be said that Bhattacharyya is a blind imitator of Hemingway. In this regard Gobinda Prasad Sarma remarks-

\begin{quote}
The writer’s efficiency is evident in the expression of the nature and significance of an event, a situation and a special society of Assam in a frame of a foreign model.\textsuperscript{50}(Trans.)
\end{quote}

\textit{Pratipad} is undoubtedly, a significant contribution to the history of Assamese literature.

It is found that all the discussed novels of Ernest Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya have the theme of war and love. Apart from these discussed themes there are some other themes which are often focused in their novels. The most remarkable among these are religion, humanism, struggle etc. Here an attempt has been made to discuss these similarities and dissimilarities.
4. 03. The Role of Religion:

Religion plays a vital role in the novels of both these two novelists. Though Ernest Hemingway was religious, he never shows his personal religious views. Yet in his novels religious theme has played a significant role. In his A Farewell To Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls and The Old Man and the Sea, religion plays a very significant role. Though he is not so interested to a particular religion, even then Christian sensibility is reflected in his novels. Hemingway does not believe much in the outward Christianity, but accepts the values of Christianity like love, forgiveness etc. Such values of Christianity exist in his novels. In his A Farewell To Arms, the priest is the embodiment of Christian value. In this novel, the priest is presented as a man of God. He is that person who taught Henry the meaning of true love. He also urges Henry to believe in or to love god. This character has contributed a great deal to this novel in respect to religious elements. Two other characters of this novel namely Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley are not called the devotee and pragmatic Christians. But they also follow the priest. Frederic Henry declares that he does not have faith in God. He is an atheist. Even then, he prays to God for Catherine when she is in a crucial condition at the hospital. In his prayer Henry says-

Oh, God please don’ t let her die. I’ll do anything for you if you won’t let her die,........God please make her not die. I’ll do anything you say if you don’t let her die.51

catherine is not also a devoted Christian. But she has also some traditional religious beliefs. It is one of her religious beliefs for which she has given a Saint Anthony medal to Frederic Henry when he goes to war front. Catherine herself admits that she does not like to belong to any religion. Yet, the sense of religion can be seen in her mind when she tells Frederick Henry— You’re my religion.52 Catherine addresses her loved one as ‘religion’ and this proves that she has faith in religion. In A Farewell to Arms, though some major characters
avoid religious matter, yet existence of religious thinking is noticed in those characters.

Like *A Farewell To Arms*, a religious aspect is witnessed in the story and plot of *The Old Man and the Sea* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. In these two novels, the novelist uses a considerable amount of religious symbols, references etc. as both the novels are having Biblical reference. This kind of reference is used by Hemingway to show how the characters perform their duty with full religious devotion. In the chapter 27 of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, there is a significant Biblical reference. El Sordo was described as the Christ in the scene in which he and his band were attacked by the fascists. Hemingway says about the hill a few times on which El Sordo dies. The scene of El Sordo’s death reminds the readers about the Calvary’s hill where Christ was crucified. The novelist says—

*if he had known how many men in history have had to use a hill to die on it would have cheered him any for, in the moment he was passing through*......

Like Jesus who was doing his duty even after knowing about his certain death, El Sordo also comes to know that he leads his life to death for his deeds like a martyr.

In chapter 43, Robert Jordan says to Maria—*I go always with thou wherever thou goest.* This also reminds about a story from the Bible. In Bible, Ruth says to her mother-in-law this type of comment. Ruth, in Bible, loves Naomi, her mother-in-law a lot and she cannot part from her. Like that, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Jordan loves Maria very much. Though Hemingway presents Jordan, the hero of this novel, as an atheist, even then it is seen that Jordan recalls God. Moreover, his question- *Who do you suppose straight?* reveals his faith in religion. Jordan’s sister Conche is a religious character of this novel. Her letter written to her brother Jordan reveals that she has full faith on God. In his words:
She prayed to Saint Anthony, to the
Blessed virgin of Pilar, and to other virgins
To protect him and she wanted him never
To forget that he was also protected by
The Sacred Heart of Jesus that he wore
Still…………………… 56

Therefore, it is seen that though Hemingway wants to keep himself away from religion, but which he has failed to do so. He relies upon on religion to some extent in writing his novel.

Religious aspects can also be found in the story of *The Old Man and the Sea*. Here, in this novel, reflection of the deepest devotion to a universal God cannot be seen. But it is seen that facing the harsh reality Santiago prays to God. He himself declares he is not a religious person. Yet he is not free from the clutches of religion. Even in some moments in traditional meaning, it is supposed that Santiago believes in religious culture. In this context following words by Santiago are noteworthy—

*I am not religious .......But I will Say ten our fathers and hail Marys that should catch this fish, and I promise to Make pilgrimage to the Virgin de Cobreif I catch him. That is a promise.* 57

Like the common people’s desire to offer something or prayer in the name of God after having been successful at some works, Santiago also does the same thing which can be understood from the quoted words. Even he alters the name of God to get rid of some kind of danger or disaster. He says- *If sharks come, God pity him and me.* 58

Another significant aspect of the novel to be noticed is his inner conflict and fear in regards to killing the fish. Santiago thinks that the act of killing the fish will lead to sin. However, he consoles himself and says that he loved the fish before it was killed and his love for the fish will continue even after the
death of it. So, the act of killing the fish can never be a sin. Even then he was depressed. All these happen only for his faith on religion. This inner conflict that developed in his mind can make any person confused, who believes the religious belief. Like the other two novels, Hemingway uses a lot of Biblical reference here in this novel. The numbers, the words like Santiago, the Marlin etc. that are used in this novel are having the Christological elements. Santiago’s suffering is quite similar with that of Christ.

It noticed that though Hemingway’s characters declare themselves as atheist, but in reality they have also some kind of weakness to religion. They also follow the traditional religious belief in many times. So it can be said that religion plays a significant role in the novels of Hemingway.

Religious aspect can also be found in the story and plot construction of the novels of Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, in fact, has given much importance on religion than Ernest Hemingway. The novels of Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya reflect the political situation very realistically on one side and like that on the other side he portrays the social life and situation fitted to represent the Assamese community. While depicting the contemporary Assamese society through his novels, he highlights the aspects of politics, economic, religion etc. of the society. The Assamese society is a society where exists the religious tradition all around. Religious aspects have been introduced in almost all the novels and the short-stories by Bhattacharyya. In this regard mention may be made to Mrityunjay first. The society which is depicted in Mrityunjay believes in the religious tradition. Apart from the Vaishnavite religion, here in this novel, the novelist reflects a lot of sub-streams of Hindu religion or religious folk beliefs. In the conversation among the men and women of his novel, the influence of the immortal writings of Mahapurusha
Srimanta Shankardeva is noticeable. For example, a pada sung by Manik Borah is quoted here:

At the hour of his death the mishappen one
Took the name of Narayana.
And thus was penance done
For the sins of a million births.59 (Trans.)

Most of the characters of this novel are religious who in the greater interest of having an independent motherland have to take part in violent activities in the freedom movement. They have been suffering from inner conflict for the violence they did. One of the strong and firm characters of this novel is Mahoda Gossain and this character has been presented here as the main devotee of religious culture. Through this character the novelist reflects a particular kind of liberal religious attitude. A few sentences spoken by him while some of his companions argue on religion are notable—

Arguments about religion are pointless. I may be a follower of Chaitanya, but I accept Sankardeva as well…Religion is personal.60 (Trans.)

In these words his faith and belief towards all the religion is reflected. The novelist himself is very liberal to religion, indeed. He also gives respect to all the religion. He believes that there is no religion for the nation which is ruled by others. This type of thoughts and feelings are reflected in the words of Mahoda Gossain. Here Mahoda Gossain says—

What religion can a subject nation have? ...God cannot be propitiated unless the country is independent.61 (Trans.)

He deals with religion for a great purpose in this novel.

In this novel, the novelist mentions many other religious things, tradition that exists in the Assamese social structure. He uses the name “Namghar”, a religious institution of the Assamese community, the “pujas” and “mantras” of that time, the system of sacrifice etc. in this novel. In regards to religious belief,
resemblance between *Mrityunjay* and *The Old Man and the Sea* is noticed. In *The Old Man and the Sea*, Santiago prays to God and Mary; promises to go to the Virgin de Cobre. Like that, in *Mrityunjay* it is found that Dhanpur promises to offer a black goat to the Burha-Burhi (Hindu God-Goddess) if he gets Dimi, a young Mikir girl. The similarity between these two persons from two different countries and societies is really noticeable.

The religious matters make their appearance in the novels *Pratipad* and *Yiaruingam* too at different times. But these are not like those seen in *Mrityunjay*. In *Pratipad* people of different religions such as Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain etc. are seen. In this novel the custom and traditions of Hindu religion are portrayed very beautifully. The characters which represent the common men follow the traditional religious beliefs. One of these kinds of beliefs is seen in the prayer of Chandi’s wife to God at the time of her death. She says- *Let me call the God ones.*

In *Pratipad* the funeral ceremonies are performed according to the religious traditions and rituals of the society. Apart from the religious customs of the deceased persons rituals of other faiths are also incorporated in the novels. Hindu’s Doul Jatra, Pujas, Nanak’s birth day, Buddha’s birth day, Muslim’s Id, Christian’s Christmas day etc. of different religion have been mentioned. It is also seen that in some religion, to get rid of the evil powers people offer Pujas by sacrificing some animate or inanimate things. One of the examples of this type of people is Chandi. To keep them away from the epidemic cholera, Chandi performs Kali Puja by sacrificing goat. This is a reflection of religious belief. In this novel the novelist expresses particular religious idealism. His character Giasuddin is a secular one. He does not believe even in a single religion. In his words –

*I am neither Hindu, nor Muslim or Christian. But I think all the religion is same. I can change religion like the people change coats year after years.*

(Trans.)
The novelist himself believes this type of idealism in his personal life. In this regard his words to his wife can be noted—*I have faith on human beings rather than lagoon.*\(^{64}\) (Trans.) In fact, he keeps himself away from the narrowness of community; religion etc. and this can be seen in his novels.

In *Yiaruingam* also, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya narrates about the religious beliefs, tradition etc. through his characters. In this novel, the novelist portrays the Christian and non-Christian Nagas who follow their respective religions along with the traditional religious beliefs, rules and regulations, customs etc. Religious characters like Sharengla, Nazek, Rishang, Dr. Brook etc. are seen here. Sharengla is seen praying to God to regain the peace of mind, turns over the pages of the Bible to read out the Christ's words of love; Dr. Brook says to Rishang about Jesus Christ, Christian religion etc. the reflection of God's mercy and kindness also indicate the religious side. Dr. Brook admits—*The earth needs Jesus Christ's love and peace today.*\(^{65}\) (Trans.)

God helps the people in getting relief from all kind of sufferings. This is a religious belief and this belief is beautifully highlighted in this novel. Even sin or sacred religious matters are also found in this novel.

Religious orthodoxy is also seen in this novel. So far as religion is concerned the old man Nazek is so orthodox that he gives up his own son Khating as he gets married to a Khasi young girl. During the time of epidemic he does not take vaccine as he considers it as the Christian commodity. This religious conflict establishes the religious orthodoxy. In this novel Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, by creating character like Rishang, tries to prove that religion is not discrimination or segregation, it is for the sake of people. All these aspects such as religious belief, tradition, orthodoxy etc. are beautifully reflected in this novel.

Ernest Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya both have introduced the aspect of religion in their novels by following their own way or
technique. Both of them consider religion as an essential aspect for the construction of story and plot for their novels. The religious faith and belief, tradition, orthodoxy that exist among the common men are expressed through the works of both the novelists. Like Hemingway’s Christian reference that are used in his novels, Bhattacharyya also uses reference of Lord Krishna, Bishnu, Rama, Hari etc. in his novels. In his novel, Bhattacharyya uses the term “Daridra Narayan” (Poor God) which is referred to Mahatma Gandhi. However as far as their religious faith is concerned, Hemingway was a firm believer in the Christianity, and this is reflected in his fictional works. On the other hand, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya uses his religious elements in order to show the reality of his stories and characters. As he was social democrat, he seems to be a practical man. In Christian religion, the religious activities are the part and parcel of daily life. This can be seen in the novels, of Hemingway. In his novels, the characters involve in their activities of daily life very sincerely. Hemingway’s own religiosity is expressed through his characters. But he was quite exceptional that he never expresses his religious views in his writings. Even he did not deny the fact of the existence of God. Like that his characters also do not deny the existence of God and they believe that people do their activities by following the order of God.

But, in this regard, Bhattacharyya is quite different from Hemingway. Bhattacharyya was born in a Brahmin family. But like many others he was not an orthodox Brahmin. He was a very practical man who even did not believe in his ‘lagoon’ the sacred thread too. In its true sense he was quite secular. Like a true social democrat (socialist) he tries his best to highlight the scientific analysis of the social custom and traditions and religious rites in his novels. He wishes from the core of his heart that the religious pretentions should be erased from the society. So his character also says—
All the religions are pretentious……..I have not done any sin, whatever I do that is the way of truth, the way of science.66 (Trans.)

Mohoda Gossain, another important character of Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya, in Mrityunjay also speaks about religious reforms. Mohoda Gossain, the Vaishnavite Satradhikar, who has occupied a place in the forefront of the religious culture of Assam, also acknowledges that the debate on religion is vain.67 (Trans.) He tries to get his other followers understood that the aim and objective of all the religions is same. Again, by creating the character like Dhanpur, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya tries to eradicate the religious pretentions.

Though Bhattacharyya creates a religious society in his novels, expresses about the religious traditions and beliefs in his plot and stories, these are used only for the sake of making the plot or events realistic. He did not believe in any religion so much in his own life. In this regard, he was always an inert.

Both Hemingway and Bhattacharyya use religious aspects in their novels. But the importance of religion in there is quite different. In Hemingway’s novels religion is used as an integral part in which his religious belief exists. But Bhattacharyya does not have full faith in religion. He uses the religious aspects which are traditionally exist in our society, culture etc, in his novels for the sole purpose of making his novels more realistic.

It is noticed that a few atheist characters are there in Hemingway’s novels. Like that in Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novels characters like Giassuddin, Dhanpur etc. are seen who are not concerned about religion. Apart from these similarities they have other some similarities in the same context. Though the selected novels of Ernest Miller Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya narrate different kind of religious aspects, but their main motive is not to establish religious philosophy. Both of them introduce different kind of
religious symbols or different matters in their novels. But they give importance on the supremacy of works or deeds rather than the supremacy of religion.

In regards to presenting the religious aspect in the story of the novel some dissimilarity are noticed in between Ernest Miller Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya. In Hemingway’s novels, it is observed that the heroes do not think deeply about the God or religious matters. Though Santiago, Robert Jordan, Frederic Henry pray to God to bless upon them on the demand of the situation, but at the same time they admit that they are not religious. These characters can be called neither atheist nor blindly loyal to God. They first believe in their own power, strength, and capability. They try to get humanness through the acts they do. But in Bhattacharyya’s novels, almost all the characters are devotional. Their thinking about God or religion is not so complex. They proceed forward keeping faith on God. Here the characters pray to God too, but not on the demand of the situation. They often say the name of God, Gods faith is in the core of their heart. But Hemingway’s characters like Santiago, Robert Jordan, etc. who are not interested in religion, but interested on their deeds can also be seen in Bhattacharya’s novels also. Dhanpur, Rupnarayan, Gossani, Giasuddin, Rishang etc. are such characters.

It is noticed that the religion plays a vital role in creating the story and plot of the novels of both Ernest Miller Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya.

4.04. Aspects of Humanism:

Another important similarity that is seen between Ernest Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya is the element of humanism. Both the novelists feel that humanism is the real religion. These two compassionate novelists could hear the cry of the human soul that echoed in the midst of the horribleness of war. So they advocate for the human values and qualities. In the
novels of Hemingway, the readers can often see patience, fortitude, dignity, brotherhood, compassion, pity, honor, pride, friendship etc. which reflect his humanistic side. In his novels *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway presents a war devastated inhuman world. But he does not leave out the human values such as love, friendship, brotherhood in the presentation of this inhuman world. The friendship between Rinaldi and Frederic Henry, the love or well-wishes of Nurse Fergusen to Henry Catherine, Count Greffi’s good advice given to Henry; the proprietor of the bar and Simmons help provided to Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* reflect Hemingway’s humanistic approach. Humanistic values such as love, sympathy, friendship etc. are present there in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* also. The love and friendship between the Guerrilla members; Anselmo, Rafael, Pilar, El Sordo etc. helping hand towards Robert Jordan, the Guerrilla’s sympathy and love shown to Maria, the act of rescuing her from the hands of fascists, sacrifice of Jordan’s own life for the sake of his party etc. highlight the humanistic side of this novel. Even in *The Old Man and the Sea*, this kind of affection, love, brotherhood etc can be seen. However, the world of this novel is quite different from that of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *A Farewell to Arms*. It is totally a natural world. Here, the novelist not only shows the man’s love for man, brotherhood, friendly behaviour but narrates about the human being’s love for animals, brotherhood, and friendliness etc. also. Here, the novelist expresses the love and friendship between Santiago and Manolin, the love and brotherly hood between Santiago and the fish Marlin, feelings of love for the sea creatures like flying fish, etc. reflect his sympathetic nature. Santiago feels that the fish Marlin is his brother. Even he wishes to feed the fish. In his own words—*I wish I could feed the fish, he thought. He is my brother.* 68 Like the novels of Hemingway, humanistic approach is seen in Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s novels also. In all his political and non-political novels the novelist advocates for humanistic values. Like Hemingway, he too is
a realist. The novels discussed here are based on some kind of unstable political situation like war. Despite the unstable situation the human values are kept intact. Humanistic elements like love, friendship, sympathy, brotherhood etc. exist there in the novels of Birenda Kumar Bhattacharyya also. In Yiaruingam, the service provided by Rishang, Sarengla etc. to the people of the villages by giving vaccine at the time of epidemic, the effort made by Rishang, Jiban Master to bring back peace to Nagaland, the sympathy shown to Phanitphang by Khutinglela on the death of Phanitphang’s mother, Sharengla’s act of accepting Konchewing which Sharengla was eagerly waiting for, etc. show the humanistic values. In Pratipad too, it is seen that even after the ideological difference between the laborers and employees, they are not lacking of love and affection, sympathy, friendliness etc. Humanism is reflected when Shandi Ahir’s fellow labourers and employees help and cooperate him during his bad days, in the funeral rite done by Nasiruddin, Giasuddin etc. at the death of the deceased bagger Ramchandra, in the works done by Giasuddin who feels that service to man is the real religion. In this regard Sri Ram Goswami’s comment given on the novel Pratipad is noteworthy—

Pratipad is one of the brightest histories of Indian humanism.

…………Bhattacharyya has created this novel to find out all the truth of the life of the Dalits, the neglected and the ordinary human beings with utmost care very minutely.69 (Trans.)

Like Pratipad and Yiaruinggam, Bhattacharyya’s the most appreciated novel Mrityunjay also highlights the aspects of humanism. Here, the novelist successfully reflects love, friendship, brotherly hood, sense of responsibility through the characters like Dhanpur Laskar, Mahadananda Gossami, Bhibhiran, Madhu, Manik Borah, Ahina Kunwar, Dadhi, Kali Baideu, Dimi etc. The affection, love and sympathy shown by Kali Baideu, Gossani, Dhanpur, Phukan for Subhadra; the act of sacrifice done by Dhanpur, Gossain, Gossani for the sake...
of their country and party reflect humanism. Robert Jordan of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* quite conscious about political and moral problems of Spain and thought for the welfare of the people of the world as well. He was ready to sacrifice his life *for all the poor in the world, and fought against all tyranny.*

Saving the country and its people was a challenge for Dhanpur, and Gossain and to fulfill this great purpose they even get ready to sacrifice their lives. Like the activists seen in the story of the novels of Hemingway, Bhattacharyya’s activists such as Dhanpur, Gossain, Rupnarayan, Rishang, Phanitphang, Jiban Master, Giasuddin, Chatterjee, Baruah etc. have also performed their determined tasks and thus they follow their religion of work. For the sake of the nation or the entire world the activists of both Hemingway and Bhattacharyya sacrifice even their lives. Both the novelists advocate for the humanistic approach even in the midst of war or war like situation. Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya have given much importance on humanism while constructing the story or plot of their novels. However, in some certain areas the scope of humanism is much more in the novels of Bhattacharyya than that of Ernest Hemingway’s.

Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s faith in humanism is so deep that he places human beings and humanism at the top than those of God, Church, Mandir (Naamghar), Masque etc. So his character shouts—

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............From the church should have emanated the message of brotherhood, but instead it has become the cause of conflict. It would be Christian to demolish such churches which inflict wounds on Jesus’ body.71 (Trans.)
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Race, religion, caste, community, regionalism etc. destroy the humanism and this depresses Bhattacharyya. These are very trifle concepts which convey narrow thinking. Therefore, to save humanism, he tries his best through his writings.
4. 05. Struggle in Life:

So far as story and plot construction is concerned, Ernest Hemingway and Birenda Kumar Bhattacharyya are similar in another notable aspect. Both these novelists pay importance on the struggle for life in the story of their novels. People have to fight with or against the opposite forces for their own survival. This war or fight may be of man against man, or nature or any other creature of the nature. In the novels of Hemingway and Bhattacharyya, the characters take part in such type of war. They struggle a lot to win the war. Santiago, Robert Jordan, Henry, Dhanpur, Gossain, Rishang, Giasuddin all these characters struggle a lot in their life. In fact, life is a war and struggle is the main weapon in this war. In this struggle, even the concept of wrong or right, sin or virtue etc. is considered as secondary things.

In Ernest Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan joins a guerrilla band and struggles a lot in order to prevent the fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War. Frederic Henry fights against his opponents along with his fellow ambulance drivers. Even he had to struggle much for winning love in his personal life. Among all the characters created by Hemingway, Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* records the degree of struggle more than the others. The struggle of Santiago with that of the Marlin in the vastness of the sea; and to save his hunt, the marlin from the sharks all his struggles symbolically look like same with the struggle of the entire human race to survive in life. Through the struggle of Santiago, Hemingway conveys his respect to the whole human race. Santiago continues his struggle with the help of qualities like courage, privilege, respect, patience, tolerance etc. Even after his defeat, he feels as if he has won. In the novel we see, *A man can be destroyed but not defeated.*

The expression of the will power and the internal power is the nature of human being. This is proved through Santiago by Hemingway. The real identity of the human being is that they never acknowledge defeat even after the pressure
or obstruction made by the opponents, never go backward, they always go forward with new hope and enthusiasm. This kind of humanistic value is reflected in the character of Santiago.

Like the characters of Ernest Hemingway, Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya’s characters have also exhibited the instances of struggle to achieve many great objectives in their lives. In *Mrityunjay*, it is seen that characters like Dhanpur, Rupnarayan, Bhibhiram, Madhu, and many others have struggled in order to make their motherland free. Even they are ready to sacrifice their life for the sake of their motherland. In *Yiaruingam*, characters like Rishang, Jiban Master etc. has struggled to establish brotherhood among the Nagas, for all round development of the Nagaland by retaining it as an integral part of India etc. Like that in *Pratipad*, Giasuddin, Chatterjee, Baruah etc. struggle for the rights of the labourers. So it is seen that struggle is there in the story and plot of both Ernest Miller Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya.

After a close observation of the novels of Ernest Hemingway and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharyya it is found that both the novelists have shared many similarities in respect to the story and plot construction in their novels. Basically both the novelists are humanists in its true sense who are always concerned with the sorrows, miseries, needs, fears, hopes and aspirations of the common people of their own countries. Though their novels are based upon war devastated areas still the themes of religion, humanism, love etc. have got importance in their novels. Both the novelists have used in their novels two contradictory ideas love and war very elaborately. Not only in the thematic concern, the skill and technique of employing story and plot is also similar of these two novelists. Therefore, it can be concluded that in respect to story and plot construction these two novelists are resembled to each other very much.
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6. loc-cit.
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14. ibid. p.204
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25. Jeffrey Meyers. op-cit. 413.
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41. Gobinda Prasad Sarma. op-cit., p100.
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54. ibid. p.481.
55. ibid. p.487.
56. ibid. p. 313.
58. ibid. p.51.
60. ibid. p. 36.
61. ibid. pp.36-37.
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69. Ram Goswami. ‘Bhattacharyar Upanyas Pratipad’ in *Birendra Bhattachayyar Sahitya-Kriti*. ed. Hemanta Kumar Sarma, Rajendra Mohan Sarma & Achyut Sarma. p.120.

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