CHAPTER – IV

FOUR CHAPTERS AND OTHER NOVELS

Part - I

This chapter has been divided into two parts – I and II, Part – I discussed Nationalism in *Four Chapters* and Part – II deals with other novels of Tagore.

Tagore who presents a criticism of terrorist violence waged against the colonialism and colonizers in India. This novel is written against the backdrop of the pre-independence revolutionary terrorist movement in Bengal. It denounced terrorism when revolutionary terrorism was a symbol of courage, dedication, sacrifice and heroism. It asserts that the good of man, cannot be attained by the ruine of another. Ela, the heroine, makes others aware of the value of love and individuality and voices her moral anxieties against violence. The novel justifies Tagore's claim that it is not a political novel but a love story. Here Tagore gives us one of the most impressive accounts of primitive
irresistible, passionate and erotic moments of star-crossed young lovers who are crushed under a false ideology.

The novel *Four Chapters* raised a cloud of protest and controversy since the background of the story is "vividly coloured by the passions aroused by the political struggle and turmoil in modern Bengal"¹.

Humayun Kabir rightly comments:

Four chapters deals with revolutionary movement which sought to achieve Indian independence through individual acts of terror².

In the same vein Dr. K.R.S. Iyengar comments that "in Four Chapters the indictment of political fanaticism is as pointed and incisive as the glorification of human love, is almost apocalyptic"³.

Tagore made his views clear on political terrorism and fanaticism. The novel narrates how a group of Bengali revolutionaries begin to disintegrate under pressure from colonial police.
Tagore is of the view that nationalism is another name of the occupation of the wealth and raw materials of other countries even by brute force if necessary.

Nationalism breeds isolation and violates the highest ideals of humanity. the fear and wide-spread violence and hatred arising from nationalism is effectively portrayed in his novels. *Four Chapters* is a narrative of such violence. Tagore's critique of terrorist violence in this novel is unfolded through the characters and their inner-struggle. The story is woven through these characters. Indranath is a revolutionary leader trained in Europe. He is a brilliant student of science with a dispassionate and ruthless temperament. He is competent in both armed and unarmed combat. In the words of Tagore:

Indranath was handsome, would be leave much unsaid. From him radiated a tense, inflexible attraction. It was as if there was a thunderbolt in the depths of his being of which the rumbling could not be heard, but only the cruel flashes sometimes seen. In
his look there was a polished urbanity like a sharpened knife. Marsh words were not difficult for him to speak, but he spoke them with a smile. Anger never raised his voice, but only changed the quality of his laugh. He took just so much care of his appearance as was necessary for his dignity and no more ..... He could make the most impossible claims without the qualm, secure in the conviction that they could not be lightly disregarded. Some believed that his intelligence was unusual, others that his power was supernatural; so that some had limitless veneration for him, others an accountable dread. Students all over the country looked on him as an uncrowned King\(^4\).

Indranath recruits young men and women to his group of Revolutionaries. Ela is a smart, young attractive recruit while Atindra or Atin, of aristocratic lineage, joins the
group attracted by Ela. For his it is his love for Ela, that provides him with inspiration and motivation to support the nationalist cause. Indranath's main aim is to plump up his will and assert his manhood. The boys are but wax in his hands, to be melted and moulded, to be burnt, or to be just cost away on a rubbish heap. Indranath, the revolutionary leader, cites the injunctions of Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the Gita to assert his purpose. He tells Ela:

Had it been a tiger coming after you would, you have hesitated to shoot to kill? It's because I can clearly visualize the tiger that I have ceased to have any use for pity or compunction. The advice given by Sri Krishna to Arjuna, in the Gita, to fight, did not mean that he was to be cruel, but simply to be undeterred by softer sentiments in carrying out his high purpose. You see the point? 

Tagore is deeply moved by the futile martyrdom of young idealistic patriots at the altar of terrorism. He
dramatizes the tragic impact of terrorism on human lives through the roles of Ela and Atindra, particularly when there is an inbuilt flaw in revolutionary leadership as exemplified by Indranath. Indranath's proud inflated ego places himself in the position of Krishna of Mahabharat. Indranath boasts to Kanai;

You can see for yourself, Kanai, how these followers have come round me at my call, recking nothing of life or death why? Because I know how to call. That's what I want to make clear to myself and to others; and after that, I don't care what happens ..... For the curtailed manhood of this slave-ridden country, isn't the greatest of opportunities to be able to die the death of a hero?6

Atindra or Atin is the son of an aristocratic family. He is basically a poet and a lover. He is a young recruit of the revolutionary case. The simple plot of the novel Four Chapters is woven round the course of Ela and Atin's
relationship. Attracted by Ela, Atin joins the revolutionary group led by Indranath. But Indranath's tutelage, Atin becomes competent at his revolutionary talk but also begins to lose his humanity. Indranath is also knowing it well that Atin has joined his group only because of his love to Ela and nothing else. He makes it clear to Ela in a very frank manner. To quote Indranath:

He remains bound by his own resolve. I know he'll never be rid of his doubts. At every step his finer feelings will be hurt. And yet his self-respect will keep him on till the end."

_Four Chapters_ is rather a controversial novel of R.N. Tagore. Mainly the tragic story of Ela and Atindra, set against the bloody background of revolutionary politics, as it affects the lives of countless young men and women in gruesome circumstances. Pleading artistic immunity. Tagore explains the theme of the book novel. The only theme of the book is the love of Ela and Atindra. The nature and course of love between men and woman is determined not only by
the individual characters of the lovers, it is influenced also by the impact of circumstances on them. This inner feeling is in the conflict with the outward circumstances. The novel *Four Chapters* is a portrayal of the poignance and pain of Ela and Atindra's love against the stormy background of the revolution and to that extent, of course, this brief and moving story of the doomed lovers in completely satisfying manner.

Indranath, the disgruntled leader of the revolutionary group, is a ruthless organizer of terrorist activities to whom individuals do not count. And hence arises the tragedy of Atin and Ela who have implicit faith in him as their leader. Atin, in fact realizes the error of his judgement too late to retrace his footsteps and Ela, a spirited young lady, has to accept the final tragic twist with destiny when her own lover is commissioned to kill her for the advancement of the revolution.

There is an incident in the novel which presents the violation of highest ideals of humanity in the real sense when a band of the robbers, a group of so-called nationalists
robes an old widow. Atindra is shaken after the act of robbery.

Is there anything I'm incapable of doing? I've come down to the last rung of my degradation. The other day our band robbed a helpless old widow of all she had. Our Manmath belonged to the same village and was on friendly terms with her. It was he who told of her, heard and showed the way. She made him out through his mask and tried to plead with him, "Manu, my son, how could you have the heart?" They didn't let her live to say any more. For the purpose of what we call the country's need – the need for murdering our own souls! that widow's money passed through my hands to headquarters. Part of that money helped to break my recent fast. I end my career branded as a thief – receiver and user of stolen property. Batu has got the charge
laid against robber Atindra. He has made it practically certain that I'll be arrested tomorrow. Meanwhile, fear me, for I myself fear that fainted ghost of my dead self. There's no one with you to-day.

The novel exposes the psychological and moral acts of living the life of a terrorist and ultimately the cultural rootedness of the terrorist movement. The murder of the old widow by the group of nationalists is an example of moral degradation of the so-called nationalists. It shows how violent struggle for freedom in reality changes into a new form of bondage. In the novel *Four Chapters* Atindra is bound to follow the commands of Indranath blindly, through Ela, even when he does not favour his ideas:

Independent thinking was knocked on the head from the very start and the boys come strutting up, ready and proud to be moulded into puppets. When they all began to dance to the same tune at the wire-pulling of the Master, they were struck with
admiration at their own performance, 'verily the dance of Shakti (Power) ! ..... But whenever the Master slackens his pull, thousands of the puppet boys fall out of the dance ..... They should have known from the first that live men cannot play the puppet for long. To ignore man's nature by trying to make him a puppet is folly$^9$.

Atin represents the effects of Indranath's theology of violence. He, not only becomes disillusioned with the entire project of nationalism but, more devastatingly, experiences the loss of the self:

I've slain my soul, the biggest sin of all. Not a single evil have I been able to uproot from our country – I've only uproot myself. For that sin I'm condemned not to take you even when you're giving yourself. Accept your hand? With this hand ! All stains will be washed away by the waters of Lethe, on whose brink we now stand ...$^{10}$
Atin acknowledges and obeys Indranath's commands implicitly even when he is ordered to cut off his relations with Ela, for whose sake he had thrown himself into the vortex of terrorism. Atin expresses his feelings to Ela at a place;

I had been from my childhood spell bound within conventional barriers, but at the very first sight of you my heart said, "Let all barriers be broken" .... You are the hero, I your captive.

I also have owned defeat at the hands of my captive, a defeat not yet come to an end. At every moment there is my struggle and my defeat\textsuperscript{11}.

The frequent meetings of Atindra and Ela afford them an opportunity to discuss over subject of revolutionaries, headed by Indranath. They come to know the purpose and role of Indranath. Atin commends over the group of revolutionaries and their patriotism:
The patriotism of those who have no faith in that which is like a crocodile's back used as a ferry to cross the river. Meanness, unfaithfulness, mutual mistrust, secret machination, plotting for leadership-sooner or later these drag them into the mud at the bottom. That the life of the country can be saved by killing its soul; is monstrously ugly false doctrine that nationalists all over the world are bellowing forth stridently, my heart groans to give it effective contradiction\textsuperscript{12}.

Tagore is equally skeptical of the non-violent nationalism represented by Gandhi's non-cooperation movement which he describes as narrow nationalism presenting an isolated view of the country. Tagore is presenting it in his novel \textit{Home and the World} when a group of the nationalists set fire to the foreign clothes of the small traders, who were completely dependent on the business of cheap clothes for their livelihood. Though
Gandhi and Tagore used different language, there is less substantial difference between their views of nationalism. Indian nationalism is all inclusive insists as humanitarian like Gandhi.

Atin's love for Ela provides him a partial escape from this dehumanization, but the situation is complicated by the fact that though Ela takes an initiative in establishing relations with him, she refuses to marry him because of her vow to remain a celibate in the service of the country. Ela says:

I refuses to live in a false paradise, I know you Ontu, better than you do yourself. Pent in the narrow cage to my love, you'd soon have begun to beat your wings. The little of satisfaction I have in me to offer, you'd have found out my outer destitution. That's why I gave up all my personal claims on you and surrendered you completely at the Shrine of our country.

To it Atin replies:
What right have you let me ask, to deliver me up to the country, or to any one else?"13.

Atindra is very much disturbed with the realization of the true meaning of the band of nationalists under the leadership of Indranath. He feels disgusted with the country which function as a cage. It does not provide opportunity for national self expression. His natural powers are blocked:

I'm saying that the realm of sweetness and light which has woman, for its centre may appear small on outward view but within its depth is immeasurable. It's by no means a cage. But the place you've assigned me, calling it country – which after all is nothing but a country of your band's own make – whatever it may mean to others it's nothing but a cage for me. ..... I had the responsibility, as well as the capacity, to take my own true place in my country's service. You made me forget it14.
Atin and Ela both are discussing the hopelessness of their situation. Atin is surprised in his place of retreat, first by Kanai, and again by Ela, who has come in defiance of Indranath’s orders. Atin particularly questions the very philosophy of terrorism. He explains to Ela:

One who openly fights a more powerful foe, even if his be a hopeless struggle, is in the same class as his opponent; his honour remains unsullied. It was for as before we were knocked out, before we met our death to prove ourselves the greater, as men-why-else this play of putting ourselves against immeasurably superior forces? ..... One thing had become clear to me. To oppose overwhelming strength by brute force can but brutalise in the end of one’s very soul\textsuperscript{15}.

Atin and Ela both are deeply enmeshed in the movement to escape and Atin does not wish to desert his comrades who are as much in peril as he. So Atin significantly remarks:
There is no way out now. The arrow can miss the mark, but it cannot return to the quiver\textsuperscript{16}.

Though disillusionment and the moment of awareness come to Atin very early, but he retains his loyalty to the cause. Atin is working for Indranath only because of Ela. He accepts it:

*What I was doing for the country, I was doing for you. The opportunity came to me to brave death for your sake\textsuperscript{17}.*

Further in the novel when Atin realizes his downfall in the hands of the revolutionaries and feels a kind of threat from the police. He is disillusioned and utters:

*Defeat has its value, but not the defeat of soul that brings in its train ghastly doing underground; unmeaning, unending ....*\textsuperscript{18}

When Ela realizes Atin's love for her, she feels sorry and accepts that it is she who has uprooted Atin from his normal life to present time of crisis:
I'll never be able to forgive myself from drawing you away from your own way of living, uprooting you from your normal life. Why were you led to make your mistake, merely because I had made mine? Why did you risk the degradation of ceasing to earn your own living? ...... 'Had our country nothing to do with it, Ontu?'

Ela is very sorry after sharing Atin's disillusionment because of herself. Ela, a attractive girl who belongs to Indranath's group, is in love with Atin. She confesses:

I must confess, Ontu, that lately the terrible tragedy of it has been revealed to me also. I had entered the lists at the call of glory, but the shame of it is enveloping me more and more. Tell me what we can do now?

To it Atin replies:
We must now reap to the end, the fruits of our past karma, our past deeds\textsuperscript{21}.

Ela also becomes disillusioned with the awareness of the fall of Atin because of her own role. She feels guilty in her that an innocent youth like Atin is caught in the trape of the revolutionaries. Ela surrenders her fate in Atin's hand but that is not out of the commitment to the organization but for more personal reason. Her sacrifice is almost in vain and any organization that seeks to eliminate its members to safeguard it from disintegrating cannot thrive. She feels her guilt in respect to Atin and says:

I'll never be able to forgive myself for drawing you away from your own way of living uprooting you from your normal life\textsuperscript{22}.

Tagore is thus critical of such violent aspects of nationalism that dehumanizes the human soul and breeds only contempt and hatred. For him the project of nation – building that involves the negation of the 'moral' individual would be of limited purpose, xenophobic and selfish in its aims.
The novel has four chapters. In *Four Chapters* the indictment of political fanaticism is as pointed and incisive as the glorification of human love is almost apocalyptic. The story opens in Kanai’s tea-shop at Calcutta where Ela, aged 26, meets Indranath, the leader of the revolutionary group. Sandip of *Home and the World* is here reincarnated as Indranath, but it is a more ruthless Sandip, a Sandip that is all blood and iron (and no poetry), whose main aim is to plume up his will and assert his manhood. The 'boys' are but wax in his hands, to be melted and moulded, to be burnt, or to be just cast away on a rubbish heap Ela's role is to play the catalic agent to the group, to attract the 'boys' by her beauty, and to inspire them to deeds of sacrifice. Ela has by accident struck the fire of true love in young Atin, and has drawn him also into the group, where he clashes with another of her admirers Batu.

In the second chapter of the *Four Chapters*, Atin and Ela discuss the hopelessness of their situation. They are together, yet there is barrier between them, they strain to
come close, to break the bars of the cage – but they find they are quite powerless Atin expresses it to Ela:

I desired union with you – a very simple desire a most ungovernable desire. I found the usual way closed. I desperately entrusted my life to the crooked way. I have now come to know that it will lead me to my death\textsuperscript{23}.

Atin is very much disillusioned in this chapter. In the third chapter, Atin is surprised in his place of retreat, first by Kanai, and presently by Ela, who has come in defiance of Indranath's orders. Atin and Ela realize the bitter truth that revolution is a corrupting and rotting process. The most high-minded boys begin losing their manhood once they are caught in the coils of the revolution, the power and the glory of the Revolution lure the youthful idealists, but what they find is only defeat and shame, a good who has failed them and perhaps really the devil. One caught in the trap of Revolution,
can Atin turn back now? He is realist enough to know that the way of love and life and freedom is barred for ever to him: "the arrow can mis the mark, but it cannot return to the quiver". No way now for them, except to reap without wailing the fruits of their past Karma. A whistle blows, and he abruptly leaves Ela. Indranath now comes in and sternly rebukes her and orders her back to her own house.

In the last chapter, we see Atin and Ela again – now once more in her rooms. The birds are finally trapped at last, and all their fury of longing is in vain. Batu's sinister shadow crosses their path once again, and they know that they are a doomed pair. Like Atin, Ela too doesn't flinch –

I've not to this day been able to show you how much I love you. By this love I charge you – kill me, kill me!

The thin sound of the whistle tells them that the sands have run out indeed. Thus **Four Chapters** is Tagoe's great gesture of protest, but it is also a benediction, born of compassion.
Atin is eventually disillusioned. He feels sad that he has been a mere puppet in the hands of a nationalist movement fed on impersonal violence and hatred. He regards that he has been stripped of his humanity and fallen from his self and from his own swadharma. Atin says:

How tremendous was the attraction which impelled me to accept the insult of my fall from grace, even as I reviled myself at every step. I have read of such a thing happening, but in the pride of my keen intellect I never thought it could happen to me. Now that the time has come to rend the net of illusion, I am telling you the truth so relentlessly. 

Ela's death is symbolic of Atin's fall from selfhood along with the final defeat of Indranath and his terrorist group. Tagore stresses the ultimate failure of nationalist revolution with reference to the confession of Brahmbandhav Upadhyay, an eminent Vendatist as well as a nationalist and as well as a nationalist revolutionary in the Preface of Char Adhyay.
Four Chapters powerfully projects Tagore's view of nationalism. He points out that political violence or violence in the name of nationalism is blind, impersonal and dehumanizing. It is callous about the dignity and individuality of man who is just a lifeless robot for furthering its own cause. The revolutionary band of leaders who are striving for the liberation of the country give up their lofty ideals and turn into a band of robbers and murderers who unscrupulously rob and murder a helpless widow in the novel.
Part – II

_The Wreck (1921)_ is based on the dilemma of mistaken identity resulting in an exchange of wives. Delightfully told and interspersed with descriptions of nature of extraordinary loveliness, it is full of action and powerful human interest. Through this novel Tagore suggests the rift between the reformist and progressive Brahmosamaj and traditional conservatism of Hinduism. Its popularity can be judged from the fact that after _Gitanjali_, it is one of his most widely translated novels. According to Krishna Kripalani, a perceptive critic, _The Wreck_ has an ingeniously constructed story, unburdened with philosophy and no ending on a tragic note. The novel has to be viewed not as a mere episodic romance but as a sensitive study of the complex problems and dilemmas which the central characters Ramesh and Kamala, face after the Wreck against the background of the Hindu ideal of marriage. And this sensitive study of the complex problems and dilemmas facing the central
characters involves Tagore's humanism which places human problems and sympathy at the centre.

In relation to the presence of coincidence and chance in the novel, one has to accept the interplay of the inexplicable factors in human life. Ramesh's inability to extricate himself from the compulsive situation, he is placed in and Kamala's failure to appreciate his exemplary conduct create an impression that they are fitted to a pattern of predetermined incidents as they do not appear to assert either their individuality or self identity.

The first mischance – the mistaking of Kamala for his bride – is brought about by Ramesh's own naivety and lack of resolution. Though deeply in love with Hemnalini, he has neither declared his love to her nor given a thought to any likely impediment for their marriage – he, being the son of an orthodox Hindu and her family being Brahmo Samajists. When his father fixes his marriage with a girl from a far-off village, he makes a feeble protest and hopes that some accident might still prevent the marriage. Suddenly a storm strikes the wedding party during their
return journey by boat, killing all except Ramesh. On regaining consciousness, he looks around for his people and find only a maiden in crimson dress, she, in fact, belonging to another wedding group, wrecked nearabouts. Mistaking her to be his bride, he takes her home. This mistaking of Kamala for his real bride Susila is the result of Ramesh's negligence of the ritual performance of the marriage. He had closed his eyes during the moments of the auspicious look otherwise he would easily recognize Kamala and not mistaken her as Susila. After the lapse of three months, Ramesh is shocked to learn that her name is not Susila, his own bride, but Kamala.

Though he knows the truth, in the prevailing social milieu she can not be sent back to her husband, even if he were alive and if he were to tell her the truth, she would not accept his protection. Hoping that he cannot discover a solution in the anonymity of Calcutta. Ramesh takes her there and as a temporary solution puts her as a boarder in girls' school, declaring her as his wife which is another example of his slow – witted miscalculation. Thrown back
into the company of Hemnalini Ramesh becomes engaged to her and gives his consent to an immediate wedding. But Akshay Babu upsets his plan by prematurely revealing Kamala's existence to Hemnalini's family. He puts off the marriage by a weak hope and is confronted with the demand for an explanation of relationship with Kamala.

Ramesh is in dilemma and he is not comfortable to explain it. So he comes back to his uncle in Gazipur and has written a letter to Hemnalini, explaining everything to her about his relation with Kamala, but he could not give that letter to Hemnalini and unfortunately Kamala gets that one. She knew all the things related to her and Ramesh. She starts searching her husband Nalinaksha and finds him out ultimately when she has been inducted meanwhile into Nalinaksha's house as Haridari and wins his mother's heart entirely. Nalinaksha himself is deeply impressed by her silent devotion to him and they are united. Though Tagore accomplishes the happy reunion of Kamala and Nalinaksha as a Vindication of the Hindu marital sanctity, he pinpoints through the disappointed love of Ramesh and Hemnalini
the sad consequences of the system of arranged marriages. Among the characters, Kamala is the most interesting, lively and full-blooded. As the heroine, she dominates the whole action with her natural charm, grace and modesty.

**Binodini (Chokher Bali)** is first major novel of Rabindranath Tagore which has attracted much attention from various critics. The novel carries Tagore's suggestion that the amelioration of the lot of wives i.e. disposition, dispensonalisation and dehumanization, does not lie merely in remarriage but also in creating conditions for the harmonious realization of their personality or self-hood. Binodini's character is portrayed as possessing an extraordinary will of rejecting remarriage as a possible solution to her predicament. Rather than consenting to a socially unacceptable marriage, she seeks, through the dynamics of self-affirmation, a more meaningful role of her rich personality, acquiring thus a grandeur even in her defeat.

Binodini is a young widow left to her own devices when her husband dies soon after they are married. She returns to her village and lives there for a couple of months
until she accepts the invitation of Rajlakshmi to live with her and her son Mahendra (who had rejected a former marriage proposal with Binodini). He is newly married to Ashalata (a naive, gentle girl), but soon begins to feel a strong sexual attraction for Binodini. The story details the relationships of these three and Mahendra’s best friend Bihari as they deal with issues like distrust, adultery, lies and numerous fallings-out between them.

Binodini is a convent educated girl who has been widowed and hence reduced to living very badly (like all widows of that period). Her husband had died soon after their marriage. When Rajlakshmi – a wealthy widow living in Calcutta where thanks to philosophers – widows are much better off (this is in the late 1800s – the era of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar) … invites Binodini to stay with them, Binodini accepts.

Meanwhile Rajlakshmi’s son Mahendra claims to have no interest in marriage (he rejected Binadini’s marriage proposal once) and accompanies his close friend ‘Bihari’ when
Bihari goes to see a girl for himself. Mahendra falls for the girl – Ashalata and marries her.

Initially Mahendra is besotted with his wife and forgets the world for her – but after Binodini arrives – Mahendra and Binodini begins to have an affair. Binodini is delighted to be sexually active again – being able to enjoy passions of a young woman.

Tagore elaborately records early 20th century Bengali society, through his central character, the rebellious widow, who wants to live a life of her own. In writing this novel he exposes the custom of perpetual mourning on the part of widows, who were not allowed to remarry and were condemned to a life of seclusion and loneliness. It is a melancholy, stirring tale of the deceit and sorrow that arise from dissatisfaction and sorrow.

*Chaturanga* is another important novel by Rabindranath Tagore. In this novel, Tagore has dealt with lots of philosophical questions regarding atheism and religion. *Chatguranga* has four main characters, Sachis,
Sribilas, Damini and Sachis's uncle Jagmohan. Among the four principal characters, Jagmohan, Sachis, Damini and Sribilas identified in that order with the four parts – the Chaturange of the novel – Sachis alone manifests an intense concern with the self, a concern which leads to a dissociation from worldly bonds and a search for the meaning of life within himself. It is in relation to him that the other characters in the novel need to be analysed and assessed so that their role in his spiritual growth and fulfilment can be appreciated.

The lead protagonist Sachis fleets from radical positivism to religious mysticism in his quest for life's meaning. However, his search ultimately yields nothing but crushing disillusionment. This is because he cannot square his abstract ideals with the powerful presence of two women in his life. One of them is Damini, a young Hindu widow, and the other is Nanibala, the abandoned mistress of Sachis's own brother.

Sachis tries to convince himself that Nanibala is simply a helpless woman who needs to be 'rescued' by him.
Similarly, during his later religious phase, he pretends that the widow Damini is merely an enticement of Nature that must be avoided at all costs for spiritual salvation.

Chaturanga thus becomes, after a point, a psychodrama of unbelievable cruelty. Nanibala becomes a victim of it because as a 'fallen woman' she can only be 'saved'; but her humanity cannot be recognized.

Damini is first given away her dying husband, along with all her property, to a religious guru. She then falls in love with Sachis who can accept her only without her sexuality. This novel is set in colonial Bengal at the turn of the twentieth century. The character of Damini is sharply individualized. She is the symbol of the social change and advancement of women that had started taking place in the early decades of this century. Since Tagore has made human feelings the main material of the novel, it is really a novel based on humanism. His humanism is born of his belief in spiritualism. He is a staunch humanist because he is a profound spiritualist.
Jogajog (relationships) is a novel by Rabindranath Tagore. It was published in book form in 1929 (Asharh 1336). It was first serialized in the magazine *Bichitra* from Ashwin 1334 to Choitro 1335. In the first two issues the novel was titled *Tin Purush*. In the third issue in Ogrohayon 1334, Rabindranath changed the name to Jogajog.

The story revolves around the underlying rivalry between two families – the Chatterjees, aristocrats now on the decline (Biprodas) and the Ghosals (Madhusudan), representing new money and arrogance. Kumudini, Biprodas' sister is caught between the two as she is married off to Madhusudan. She was brought up in a sheltered home where she had followed the traditional way of life and observed all the religious rituals like all the other womenfolk in the family. Her mental image of the husband is as someone who embodies all the qualities of the God she worships. Now she is rudely shaken by the crude display of wealth and power by Madhusudan. Even if brought up to be a good, submissive wife, she balks at the idea of sharing the
conjugal bed. Her pain at having to adjust to values she did not corroborate, tutored as she was by her sophisticated brother, and the rebellion, is central to the dramatic conflict of the novel. The novel ends when she has to go back to Madhusudan because she is pregnant with his child. But instead of reveling at this coming together, like the Ghosal household, it leaves the reader with a strange sense of sadness, as if witnessing a tragic event.

_Shesher Kabita (Forewell, My Friend)_ is a novel based on Tagore's humanism which is visible in his awareness of life and problems of the people around him and his appraisal and criticism of those problems in the context of the wide humanity and mankind. His assertion of the importance of man and human values above everything else is reflected in this novel through the farewell of Amit and Labanya. It is a social romance with ironical undertones and an obvious dip at the new generation of social snobs. The title is reminiscent of the sentimental romances like the ones popularized by Mills and Boon, redolent of a romantic idealism which is rarely realizable in the every day world of
harsh realities. Tagore seems to be parodying this class of literature which has such unfailing fascination for adolescent minds as well as those given to romanticizing life itself. Such a view of the novel appears justified from the playful mocking tone of Tagore in the description of incident and character. The principal characters Amit, Labanya, Ketaki and Shobhanlal, when judged from their responses, seem to be enacting roles as in a romance rather than being propelled by any deeply felt emotions and this is the reason why there is no in consolation of spirit or disintegration of personality even when their experience of love is marked by disappointments and even despair.

This novel *Farewell, my Friend* is a novel based on Tagore's humanism which lays emphasis on the life and problems of the people around him and the importance of man and human values above everything else as seen through the fond farewell of Amit and Labanya making rooms for his own marriage with Ketaki and Labanya's marriage with Sobhanlal.
Rabindranath Tagore's short novel, *Two Sisters* (Dui Bon) is premised on the traditional and universal postulate of the duel image of woman as mother and beloved – a premise already projected by him in symbolic form in his poem entitled *Two Women*. This novel seeks to perspectives the seeming dualism through the two sisters, Sarmila and Urmimala assigned respectively the roles of wife and beloved. Krishna Kripalani also remarks that the novel is "mainly psychological in interest, dealing with the usual triangle, in this case, two sisters in love with the same man". Tagore dwells on the theme of illicit love in this novella. As human problem – human interest, is the core of the theme, the novella represents Tagore's humanism based on his awareness of life and problems of the people around him and his love for earth and humanity.

The theme of *Two Sisters* is very simple. It deals with the problems of psychological maladjustment in married life. Sarmila marries Sasanka an engineer. After a period of happy married life, her husband loses interest in her. He is vexed at her motherly affection and solitude for
him. Just then, Sarmila falls sick and her sister Urmimala comes to attend on her. Sasanka falls in love with his sister-in-law, neglects his business and incurs heavy losses. Sarmila whose interest in life is the happiness of her husband, proposed that Sasanka should marry her sister as she feels that her husband cannot be happy without Urmia. But this situation is averted by Urmia’s decision to go to Europe for further studies. This novella therefore ends with a weak attempt at reconciliation between husband and wife. Sarmila’s love is of an assuaging kind and she has all the attributes traditionally associated with Hindu womanhood; befitting modesty, selfless devotion, sacrificial spirit and self-effacement. But Urmimala’s cases the contours of tradition are blurred by the changes brought about by Western education which has led to a loosening however sight, of the norms of conduct of the Indian woman. The two sisters represent aptly the two factors of female-psyche-one homely, restrained, bountiful, comforting and other outgoing, glamorous, scintillating and provocative. The novella seems to demonstrate the possibility of the
embodiment of the two love-modes in the same person on
the idealistic rather than the empirical level. Their triangular
relationship gains in social significance by being enacted
unchangeable family structure of Hindu society.

The elder sister Sarmila, who is married to Sasanka, a Government Engineer, is completely devoted to
her husband. Being childless and with no hope of one, she
transfers all her repressed affections to her husband who
finds her fussing over him nearly unbearable. Being the
motherkind, this role comes naturally to her. There is no
aspect of his existence, whether at home or in office, which
escapes her attention and solicitude.

To sum up, the novella seems to suggest that the
two love modes are basically different and unbridgeable at
least in the world of everyday realities. Further, it also
points out that the combination of the two aspects of
"mother" and "sweetheart" in one woman is an unattainable
ideal. Thus human problem of love forms the core of theme
and as such the novella represents Tagore's humanism.
**Malancha** or **The Garden** is another novel of Tagore – a tragedy of psychological maladjustment. It has neither the elaborate plot of a social fantasy like **The Wreck**, nor the satirical slant of a romantic narrative like the **Farewell, My Friend**. It is a penetrating study of the human mind in an invalid body. Niraja's jealous and possessive love for her husband, a florist, warps her mind with increasing intensity as she realizes that Sarala is to fill her place in her husband's life. She finally nervously breaks down, destroying the garden, the symbol of her own life. Her spiritual death as it were, quickly and inevitably leads to her own tragedy.

The novel is a study in the obsessive and neurotic psychology of a sick woman nursing the nightmares of loneliness and lovelessness. There is calamity when one grows too possessive of any dear object to suffer even the thought of deprivation from it. Tagore uses the flashback technique in recalling Niraja's idyllic life with her florist husband, Aditya. So long as she is engaged in the garden work, the seeds of Jealousy in her lie dormant but startling
changes appear in her as she is separated from the garden by sudden illness. The garden was a source of emotional sustenance to her and alienation from it spells for her emotional impoverishment and spiritual sterility. Her physical separation from the garden due to her illness occasions the induction of Sarala a young, relation of Aditya. Niraja looks upon this new entry as a Satanic intervention to blast her Edenic existence with her husband. Now her innate possessive instincts have gradually eroded her capacity for love and generosity.

Apart from the overtones of the Christian concept of Eden, the emblem of the garden traditionally connotes harmony of spirit and innocence of mind. As long as Niraja is healthy and active, she basked in the love of Aditya, whose name signifies the sun, the source of all life and light. Separation from the garden which would mean separation from active association with him, would make Niraja (meaning flower) wither away like a plant which is denied sunlight to die. Here lies the symbolic significance of the title of the novelette. This novelette may be viewed in
humanistic perspective on the basis of its theme centering round human problems, human behaviour and human nature.

The other novels by Tagore are mainly social and psychological in nature. In these novels Tagore has tried to study the problems of the people around him. 'The wreck' has the institution of marriage for its theme; 'Chokher Bali' takes up the issue of widow re-marriage; Chaturanga takes up the issues of religion and atheism; the two roles of a woman – that of wife and of beloved in a man's life, is the subject of 'Two Sisters'; 'The Garden' deals with the psychological male – adjustment and neurotic that of Sarla due to excess loveliness and a life of devoid of love? Tagore is mainly allowing with the social condition of India of his times and the changes witnessed by it as it endeavours to more towards political freedom. These novels are humanistic in tone and feature hence are social psychological studies of human mind and life. As Tagore does not suppress his ideas of nationalism explicitly in these values, they have not been taken up for detail analysis in my research thesis.
REFERENCES

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