

## Where the Mind Is Without Fear: Tracing Elements of Psychological Realism in Selected Works of Tagore

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### Abstract

An eminent literary figure who reshaped the Bengali literature, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was probably the first literary persona to have used the psychological realism in his works in a most fascinating yet intellectual way. The products of such an experiment were some of the most beautiful and memorable characters such as Fatik from *The Homecoming* (*Chooti*), Uma from *The Exercise Book* (*Khaata*), Charulata from his novella *The Broken Nest* (*Nashtanirh*) and most notably, Binodini, from *Eyesore* (*Chokher Bali*). Be it that of children's psychology or the complexities of a woman's mind, Tagore has been successful in recognizing, analyzing and portraying them in the most apt yet subtle manner. Consequently, what is conceived is a beautiful array of characters that stand with fearless mind and with their head held high. The paper seeks to analyze such a journey in Tagore's works where psychological realism has been used in a most naive yet concrete manner thus giving a new meaning to the term altogether. Four characters from Tagore's selected works: Fatik from *Chooti*, Uma from *Khaata*, Charulata from *Nashtanirh* and Binodini from *Chokher Bali*, will be analyzed in this context tracing the significance of their individual psyche in the respective stories.

**Keywords:** psychological realism, Renaissance, Indian literature, realism, individuality, psyche

### 1. Introduction

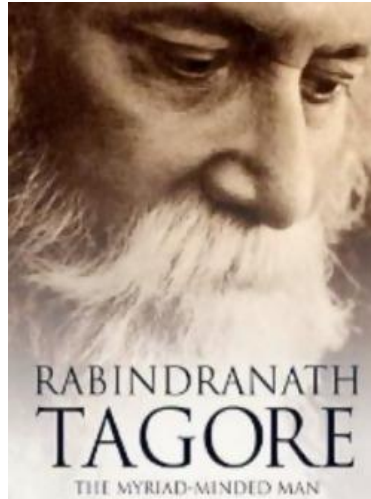
Psychological realism in simple terms can be put as literature of inward human thoughts, emotions, feelings and personality. Starting arbitrarily somewhere in late 19<sup>th</sup> century the first use of psychological realism is credited to the works of Henry James (1843-1946). Considered as a faithful and consistent depiction of human thoughts and feelings, psychological realism is mainly concerned with the analysis and characterization of the

psyche of the characters in the story rather than the development of plot. Known as psychological novels, texts having elements of psychological realism often have less or no plot development at all; rather all the focus is bestowed upon what is going on within - within the mind of the characters. Since it is a departure from the previous traits of a story or a novel psychological realism is widely associated with the era of Modernism with a number of texts coming up during the time having elements of or completely dealing with the theme. Seeking deep and precise truths about human condition writers from Henry James to Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) reflected the extensive use of psychological realism in their works.

*Henry James is considered the father of the realistic psychological novel. His characters are defined by the world in which they live and the social requirements of their society. James's brand of realism explores the psyches of characters grappling with complex social and ethical situations (Realism and Henry James).*

While James's characters were portrayed in all their glories and flaws in real life including their psychological and moral flaws, it is Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway (1925) that stands as one of the pioneering texts in psychological novels defining all the traits of James's works in a more contemporary manner. While with these works of 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe was digressing from the romantic overtones, a digression was also taking place here in India that opened up new dimensions to the depiction of realism in Indian literary arena. Realism was gaining its momentum as a pioneering theme in literature with an eagle-eye focus on social realism. Yet the element of psychological realism was also initiating its journey at the same time around with its small but steady steps holding the fingers of an emerging shining star of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Bengal who was to change the history of Indian literature and the perspective from which it was to be seen.

## **2. Tagore and Psychological Realism**



Capturing an entire era all by himself Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) had an extremely spellbound influence on his readers even though he has always been subject to criticism for being a way too elite in his writings. Tagore was a departure in lot many ways from his predecessors. Usually written in *sadhubhasha* the Bengali literary texts of prior Tagore were filled with subtle use of literary words and phrases that complimented the impeccability of the literary texts of the times. It was Tagore, who for the first time dared to use colloquial speech in his writing which was indeed a stark departure. His works are more of a conversation between the author and his avid audience hindered by nothing. His songs were pleasing to the ears of both the minstrel and the elite, his stories appealing to the youth of all class of then Bengal for a more rationalistic approach to the freedom movement. Tagore's writings were like the flames of rebel igniting the fuel of vibrancy of the ongoing freedom movement; at the same time it was like a balm awaiting its application to free the nation of not only foreign rule but also of societal malice that has engulfed it within its clutches.

Tagore's short stories or even the novels may not be the ideal examples of psychological novels yet Tagore stand out in the context in the regard as he was probably the first to use the elements of psychological realism into his works. His stories and novels are all filled with man, nature, mysteries of supernatural bizarre, and the mystery of life in general which reflects the mysterious wanderings of the mind. Having a lot of rural backgrounds as the setting of the story, especially the short stories, Tagore may not have the actual experience of it yet it was his imagination of such backgrounds/situations which are practical yet create an escapade for the reader and thus making him successful in his writings.

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Compared to pioneers such as Tolstoy and Maupassant, Bandopadhyay says about Tagore and the psychological elements in his works,

*“Tolstoy is didactic; Maupassant is erotic. Rabindranath combines the good qualities of both without their excesses. He delved deep into the psychology of man and riddle of existence in his short stories which are universal in their appeal”* (Bandopadhyay, 2004).

Dominick K V says *“as a short fiction writer, Tagore was a practitioner of psychological and social realism. His stories depict poignant human relationships within a simple, relatively uneventful plot”* (Dominic, *The Magic Charm of Rabindranath Tagore’s Short Stories: An Evaluation*).

The same can be said for the novels of Tagore which definitely cannot be categorized as psychological novels yet carry ample elements of the same. Tagore in this regard has primarily used the psychological realism as a tool to penetrate into the mind of the characters bringing out so many different pictures of one single individual; it is like a platter of psyches residing within one single mind. Another aspect of modernism that Tagore highly reflects in his writings is the Renaissance ideology of man as the center of everything. The characters in his stories were devoid of any exaggeration, they prefer to raise voice, sometimes aggressively sometimes mutely, yet they are not ready to succumb to their fate even if that leads to their ruin, as Dominick puts it *“no character depends too much on God and there is no divine miracle narrated in the stories”* (Dominic, *The Magic Charm of Rabindranath Tagore’s Short Stories: An Evaluation*).

Instead of making a character either good or bad, Tagore skillfully plays upon the shaded areas or emotional flaws of his characters and draws his canvas of words on the passions of his characters. What emerges appearing on the canvas is then a single character with various layers to him/her like various shades of one single color. His characters stand out as eventful in their own existence as they always find themselves in a conflicting point of goodness and evil, depth and shallowness, hope and despair reflecting innumerable meanings about themselves. They are cruel yet at the same time they are kind, they are opportunist yet realistic.

Another element that highlights the psychological wanderings of Tagore's characters is the indispensable presence of Mother Nature in almost all of his writings. The descriptions of lush greens are not just the saga of natural beauty that Tagore narrates but is reflective of the natures of his characters as well. "*Unlike Wordsworth, Tagore never tries to make nature poetic or takes it as a shelter from worldly ailments*" (Dominic, *The Magic Charm of Rebindranath Tagore's Short Stories: An Evaluation*) Rather he presents her in all her unpredictable glory which is fierce yet therapeutic. He creates nature and (man) his characters as the mirror reflection of one another - strong yet vulnerable, kind yet evil. His characters are filled with love, hope, despair, vulnerability, excitement, agony, anxiety - all the abstracts of life collectively representing the essential void of life as well as life at its fullest. The elements of psychological realism are best captured in Tagore's women and children who reserve a special and significant space in most of his works.

The paper from here on will discuss the female and child characters in Tagore's works and try to trace the elements of psychological realism therein.

### 3. Women's Psychology in Tagore

*"From the day when man, refusing to recognize the efflorescence of life and establishing ideals to his own convenience instead, and following those ideals tried to create the woman, seeds of rebellion were sown in the heart of woman since the... since that day when she is denied true potential of woman hood she has also been denying man his complete manhood, as a form of revenge."*  
(Roy, 2015)

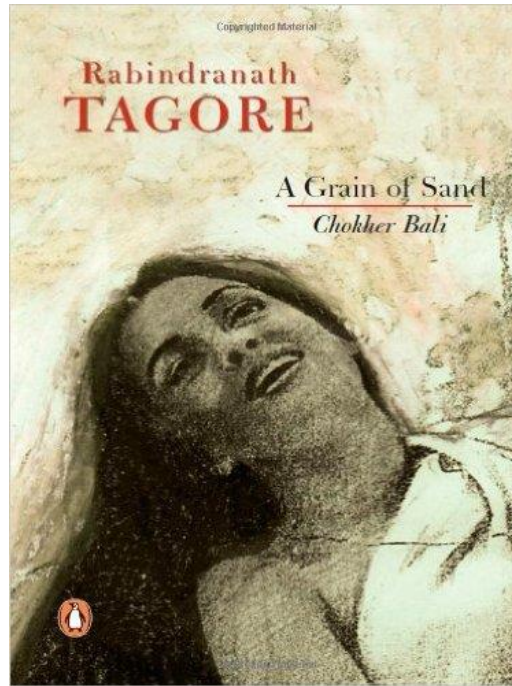
Women have served a great deal in almost all of Tagore's works. Be it the role of that of a wife, daughter, mother, sister or in-laws, women has always been captured in all their domesticity in Tagore's works. Yet, what emerges as the most fascinating fact that Tagore, though confining his women within a societal identity, explores their individual psyche thus successfully bringing the individual identity of his women to the surface.



Representation of widows is probably the most explored and discussed area of Tagore's work in terms of gender. Yet the portrayal of married women is also equally exquisite in their own way. Perhaps Charulata in *Nashtanirh* (1901) serves as the best example of Tagore's understanding of a woman's mind that is trapped within the societal conditions of marriage and duties as a wife. In *Nashtanirh*, Tagore places Charulata at the heart of all the possible happiness that a woman can ask for - she has a loving husband, Bhupati, with a liberal attitude and an open mind, and absence of any in-laws member to play cruel domestic tricks on her. Yet Churalata's portrayal seems to show a woman trapped in an unhappy marriage. As Satyajit Ray subtitled his film Charulata - The Lonely Wife (1964), Tagore skillfully captured the loneliness of a woman's mind within the conditioned framework of marriage. Here Tagore emerges as humanist visionary who is capable of identifying the errors of a mismatched marriage and how severely it can damage the relationship between individuals. The elements of psychological realism can be traced in the entire novel altogether though scattered in bits and pieces. With *Nashtanirh*, Tagore exposes the need of individual recognition in a conjugal bond which is often overshadowed. Though a loving husband, Bhupati seriously lacks the companionship that Charu craves for. With Amal's arrival Charulata's life seems to blossom to its fullest only to end on a note of despair and betrayal. It's not only the man-woman relationship that Tagore's explores in *Nashtanirh* but also the need of love and nothing but absolute love for the sustenance of any relationship that Tagore strongly emphasizes upon.

*“In this affluent household, Charu did not have to do anything for anyone, barring Amal, who never rested without making her do something for him. The small labours of love kept her alive and fulfilled”.* (Sinha, 2010)

Conceived in alienation, Charu’s love for Amal flounders with the arrival of public space in between them with Amal becoming more engaged with his public life as singer and songwriter. “Their romance is doomed - not, as one would expect, because of its impossibility, but because neither can accommodate the other’s passion for a world outside the one they have created (Anam, 2011).” Though a love triangle, *Nashtanirh* majorly and primarily focuses on Charulata and her emotions. It is a tale of Charu, *bouthan* of an affluent house and of her emotions that reside within the psyche of her mind - something that Tagore captures in the entire novella. *Nashtanirh* comes across a journey of an individual who is “*jubilant, disco-ball of emotions as she passes from infatuation*” (Sinha, 2010), to love and finally arrives at the path of renunciation. Not only her helplessness but Tagore successfully captures Charu’s strength of mind with her denial of togetherness after *anagnorsis* at the end of the tale. She refuses Bhupati’s offer of togetherness with one simple word “*thak*” essentially emphasizing her absence of any guilt or regret in loving a person other than her husband. This one step emerges as bold and revolutionary in a society standing somewhere in between the bygone era and the upcoming era of modernity. Tagore not only captures the psyche but also recognizes every minute details of what goes on within the mind of such an individual who belongs to the rather repressed gender of the society but craves for a just recognition of her existence. By the end of the tale Charulata becomes an individual persona to her readers instead of Charulata, the wife of Bhupati confined within the four walls of an affluent household. Tagore provides Charu with a stand of her own; despite being dependent on either of her two male counterparts Tagore provides Charu with a voice of her own. Charu is not dependent on her husband’s love. Rather she feels the self-reliance on the discovery the true love within herself for her *moner manush*. Though that love is unrecognized yet it gives her the recognition that she could never achieve and realize within the conjugal bond with Bhupati. Unlike a typical wife’s role and duty Tagore’s Charu does not crave for Bhupati’s forgiveness as she does not feel any regret to have fallen for another man, though she definitely feels betrayal from Amal. Rather, she finds strength in her own love for Amal despite rejection.



Same is with Binodini, Tagore's one of the most celebrated, bold, forward and complex character from *Chokher Bali* (1903). A young widow, Tagore's Binodini emerges as an epitome of rebel and unusual courage in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Bengal unwilling to succumb to any societal stigma prepared for her and many others like her. What strikes a chord of fascination and intrigues the reader's interest is the depiction of Binodini's character, is not only in physical terms but also what is going on within her mind. It is through such depiction itself Binodini comes across as quite a manipulative woman who manipulates the societal norms in her own way to avenge the grave injustice that she feels is done to her. An educated girl Binodini was chosen by her distant relative Rajlakshmi for her son, Mahendra, who rejects her even without seeing her. Consequently, Binodini is married off to an ailing man which all culminates into Binodini achieving the status of a young widow in the society, thus, subjected to the treatment of less than human being and more of a curse. On the other hand, Mahendra is married to Ashalata, the naïve young bride and a contrast to Binodini. Behari, Mahendra's friend, was actually to get married to Asha but steps aside when Mahendra takes a liking towards her. Responding to an invitation by Rajlakshmi, Binodini enters the same house where she was supposed to be married off only to discover her own lone identity as an individual within the marital bliss and companionship of Mahendra and Asha. From here on Tagore moves the plot completely around Binodini filling her with the mixed feelings of hatred and jealousy as she pins Mahendra as the sole responsible person for her own



deplorable condition in the society. This latent anguish makes its way within her igniting the feelings of deprivation, denial and consequently an unquenched thirst for avenging the unjust done to her.

*“this happiness, this passionate ardour of the husband was my due and should have been mine. I could have ruled this house like a queen, could have made the husband into a slave and transformed both the husband and the household into something wonderful from the present shabby, silly state. What I was denied and deprived of now belongs to this slip of a girl, this little playdoll.”*

(Rabindranath Tagore, 2003)

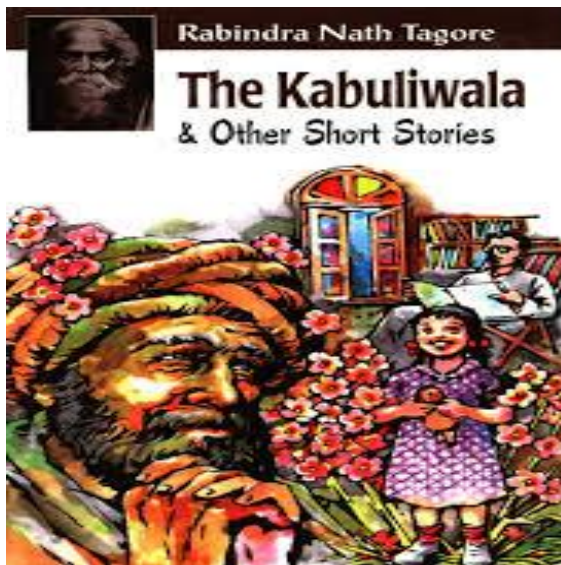
Unaware of the real emotions within her Binodini sways herself to the tides of hatred and jealousy towards Mahendra and Asha’s conjugal bliss. She deliberately manipulates and meddle with their affairs flooding Mahendra and Asha away from the shore, thus away from each other, with her sharp mind, tender feminine skills, and above all, her appropriate display of sensuality. But soon she discovers her own self yearning for not Mahendra’s love but a true dignified recognition of her existence as an individual and not as a widow of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Bengal society. Her mastery of manipulation and shrewdness goes hand in hand with her search for own identity amidst the socio-cultural complications of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Bengal society. Though Tagore leaves his Binodini on a note of uncertainty at the end of the novel yet he succeeds in echoing the voice of Binodini loud and clear into the conscience of others societal beings of not only 20<sup>th</sup> century Bengal but also for the ages to come. With *Chokher Bali*, Tagore sets the stage for the first psychological novel; for the most fascinating performance of complexities of human mind, the portrayal of which is largely depicted through Binodini, partially by Behari and Mahendra as well. Within the socio-cultural dilemma coupled with Binodini’s own struggle with her anguish and passion, Tagore retains Binodini with her dignity as she conceives a true and respectful love towards Behari which is reciprocated, though not in the understandable societal manner but expressed and blossoms on a transcendental level altogether. With her mind at the centre, Tagore draws *Chokher Bali* around the activities going on within the Binodini’s psyche and its impact on the surroundings within which Binodini lies. Yet Tagore does not let Binodini get lost in the whirlpool of psychological complexities, rather glorifies her on a metaphysical level beyond the mere understandings of the society standing on the verge of a transition from modern to new, thus confuse what to leave behind in order to what new to accept.

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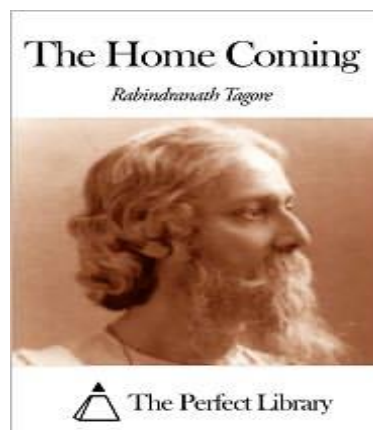
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#### 4. Child Psychology in Tagore



Apart from women, children occupy a great deal in Tagore's writings, most notably, in his short stories. As a child Tagore himself felt trapped within the world created for him by the adults. Therefore, he preferred creating a world of his own as a child as depicted in *Chelebela* (Tagore, *Chelebela*, 1940) where the portrayal of the surrounding world is realistic but the colorful imaginative power of a child's fantasy is beautifully juxtaposed in the narration. Tagore's perception of children gets reflected in his works where he would often create child characters with an ever active and ever enthusiastic mind and soul. All the child characters in Tagore's works have been supported with a clear mind which deviates sharply from that of the world of adults. Fatik from *The Homecoming* (*Chooti*, 1892), Uma from *The Exercise Book* (*Khaata*, 1894), Mini from *Kabuliwallah* (1892) are some of the most memorable child characters of Tagore.



Tagore's expertise and exquisite ability to penetrate deep into the psyche of the child is truly remarkable and provides for a different journey altogether through the story. Tagore is always credited with voicing gender issues and the need for woman emancipation. Yet the issues related to children, their world, their joy and their sorrow are the issues which Tagore is equally concerned about and reflects in his writings. The psychology of the child emerges as a crystal clear glass in his works along with deeper meanings of life in general penetrating into the readers' minds. In *Chooti*, Tagore creates Fatik as the central figure who loves to live the life in its free and wild spirited ways. Having a younger brother Makhan, the entire attention that the mother has is towards the youngest child of the house, thus providing Fatik an escapades from both the love and rigidity of parental guidance. This comes as quite normal in an Indian family setup where the youngest child of the house is showered with all the affections and attention of the family while the elder child is bestowed upon with the role of responsibility bearer.

*"Parents are expecting an adult's maturity from a three year old child because he is elder. This story could not have been a tragedy if Fatik's mother hadn't been prejudiced."* (Naik, 2015)

With the father figure absent from the scene Fatik is thus the male guardian of the family despite having a mother as she being a female is not fit to take decisions. Rather, Fatik, though after a considerable age of guidance received from the woman of the house itself, is supposed to be and will be the *karta* of the house. This societal setup demands the elder sibling to be more responsible in terms of following the rigidity of the conventions wholeheartedly from a young age. It is sort of a practice that a child is supposed to undertake in order to be the responsible *karta* of the house in future. But what gets missed in the atmosphere is the essence of childish innocence that children like Fatik harbors naturally and find it difficult to abandon them.

Fatik is more of a lively child who takes pride in and loves to bully his younger brother Makhan, along with many other village boys, to pebble down mangoes from trees and spend long hours in the village pond while bathing. Though his intentions are never wrong yet he always ends up being the "responsible" person for Makhan's wailings and neighbors' loss of valuable assets like mangoes and other fruits from the gardens. The scene witnesses a shift when Fatik's uncle from Kolkata pays a visit and proposes to take Fatik to Kolkata with

him for his better upbringing and education. Though hesitant at first because of motherly affection Fatik is finally allowed by his mother to arrive at Kolkata with his uncle only to receive a cold welcome from his aunt and his cousins.

But Fatik remains aloof with all these as his eyes were then shining with a vibrancy of knowing the world outside his village. For him the entire world and presently the city, Kolkata, its people and the hustle-bustle on the roads all of which are so different from his village life was wrapped in a sheet of wonder, which he felt excited about and brims with joy whenever he lays his eyes upon. Yet the fate of Fatik meets with a tragic end as he could not find the love and affection that he everyday was welcomed with in his village. Even those scolding of his mother seemed to be wrapped with a blanket of warmth which was substituted by the cold and harsh behavior of his aunt, who is the mother figure of the city house.

The trace of psychological realism is found in its most apt way in the diary or rather the letter that Fatik sits to write to his mother expressing the wish of home-coming away from this loveless life of Calcutta. It is in this letter that we as readers witness the psyche of Fatik opening up in its true self revealing the deep admiration and devotion that he harbors for his mother, for Makhan, for his home, and for his village. It also reveals the innocence of a child confessing the guilt in bullying the younger brother and promising not to do so or any other exuberated activities which troubles others, only at the condition that he is allowed to return back to his home, his own abode where life is as free as the free spirit of nature.

The home coming of Fatik does takes place but only through his death as he falls ill in the course of isolation, alienation and everyday ruthless behavior of his aunt and cousins. Though Tagore presents the agony of the mother in a well-mannered way but the contrast that he draws upon between the aunt and the mother is well suggested. Child is normal to commit mischief and the adults should be able to tolerate that; else one has to pay a price like Fatik's mother did by losing her child probably to a world of eternal liberty and peace.

Every child is equal to the parents and should be bestowed upon with equal affection. Every child is unique and inclined towards the free spirit that they usually and should always have. Burdening one child with societal responsibility to save another for the same is something that is bound to be a meddling affair ending on a tragic note. The portrayal of Fatik and his surroundings are well suggested and represented in the sense that Fatik's

simplicity and innocence are the essentialities that was getting reflected on the simple village life but is what lacked in the complex life of the city.

Till the point his own nature and the Mother Nature was correlated Fatik was lively and vibrant as a child should be but was reduced to ashes when this correlation was broken down with all the mechanical and materialistic life of the city. This presence and absence of life itself is what Tagore beautifully suggests in the character of Fatik who with his death leaves a hollow space in the lives of others around him, which is quite similar to that of the hollowness of city lives. Another feature that Tagore marks in *The Homecoming* is the fact that a child needs to essentially set free of all the bindings of society in order to ensure his/her fullest bloom; else it cuts short in the middle as the life of Fatik does with so many societal interventions into it.

*“Children are living beings, more living than the grown-up people who have built shells of habit around themselves. Therefore it is absolutely necessary for their mental health and development that they should not have mere schools for their lessons but a world whose guiding spirit is personal love.”*  
(Tagore, 1933)

Exactly for this belief, Tagore places Fatik at the heart of Mother Nature bereft of any scolding or spanking. Whenever he was being thrashed by his own mother he took solace in the laps of Mother Nature where he was gladly welcomed and embraced with wide arms. On the other hand, in Kolkata, he is literally trapped within the boundary walls of “schools” promising fine and quality education which gives a claustrophobic picture of Fatik. The same can be said for the bathroom in his uncle’s home which stands in a complete contrast to the open air bathing in the village pond that he rejoices and longs for. Here he lacks that “guiding spirit of personal love” which chokes him from within resulting in his death which is more psychological than physical.

*The Exercise Book* is yet another short story by Tagore where he finely sketches the psychology of Uma, a child bride, with equal and appropriate fine lines of innocence and childish gestures. The story explores the impact of a prejudiced patriarchal society on the little girl Uma and how it burdens her innocent childhood. Captivating the element of psychological realism with an utterly simple third person narration with appropriate mix of childish innocence Tagore successfully exhibits Uma’s joys, sorrows, innocence and

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justifiable aspirations. Apart from the patriarchal overtones and women subjugation, The Exercise Book echoes the very definite psychological picture of a child more than a woman. A way of reading this story is from the children's perspective for whom Tagore's heart overflowed with pity and affection. *"These children are sketched in outline: they gather color with maturity; but the sympathy they evoke in their helplessness and dependence they forfeit in later life"* (Sidhanta, 1961). Uma here strike the cord of pathos in readers' mind with her childish innocence and justifications for the entire nuisance she created once she learned to write. Gifted with an exercise book by her brother Gobindlal after storms of scolding and punishment Uma found an actual companion to herself in the exercise book. All the scribbling was now done upon its pages instead on the walls which was a great relief to her family.

*"At her in-laws house the exercise book becomes the sole witness to her fundamental desire to return to her mother. It becomes an intensely personal space outside social gaze where she can inscribe her purest desires in singular expression"*. (Chattopadhyay, 2014)

*The Exercise book* became more of a mirror to her character rather than a mere inanimate object. It became the medium of all requests that she craved for in her husband's house but which remained within the covers of the exercise book; it was like a river which embraced all the outpouring of Uma when she received humiliations at the hands of her husband and in-laws: *"Pathos of a little girl is well portrayed in this story. Tagore brings out the agonies of a little girl who is prey to the evil practice of child marriage"* (Dominic, Conflict between Innocence and Evil: Child Protagonists in Rabindranath Tagore's Short Stories).

Most of the interpretations and studies so far of this story has focused heavily upon the social criticism that Tagore makes through Uma and her consequent suffering. But it is the glimpses of the psyche of a child rather than a girl peeping through the narration time and again what catches the attention. This psyche is as childish as the character itself and is filled with innocence. Here the central character is robbed of her freedom not only as a girl but as a child whose ever active mind is capsized within the societal rigidity and conditions of adult world. Uma is always at a loss of her naïve understanding of why her fond of writing is considered a nuisance in the house or why her in-laws or even for her husband humiliates her

for her love of writing. An eager student from the core of her heart Uma finds her exercise book as the only companion amidst the muzzled affairs of her surroundings. She was a trouble in her maiden home and no less in her in-laws house – Uma here emerges as not only as a girl but also a child who is denied the freedom of self-expression by pushed within the shackles of social prejudices. Throughout the story the psychology of Uma reflects itself via the voice of an unknown narrator who simply narrates the events yet the pain and anguish of the girl child clearly gets reflected itself time and again.

*“The Exercise Book highlights emotions, thoughts, feelings, hurts and pains of a child caught in the shackles of social prejudices. The exercise book became a source of expression of the little girl’s individual views and freedom of writing. As Tagore traces the longings, fears, disappointments and anguish of a girl-child less than the age of ten, he eloquently portrays a situation that he deplors, even though he has not personally suffered it”.*

(English)

The storm of nuisance that Uma creates outside herself is parallel to the turmoil of agony that she herself goes through when her rendezvous with the consequences takes place, which is, a way beyond the understanding of the little Uma. In this story the pathos is heightened by the fact that the sufferer is not only a girl who is finely clutched within the rigidity of a conditioned society but also a child who is deprived of her natural self-expression. Neither Uma nor her surroundings are able to understand each other standing awestruck with each other’s reactions.

## **Conclusion**

Psychological realism may still be a new dimension in Indian literature considering the pinnacle that the West achieved in it yet it was with Tagore that Indian literary texts witnessed the first glimpses of psychological realism in its sphere. While social realism was pretty common as a feature in literary texts with works such as Premchand’s *Godan* (1936) and Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay’s *Pather Panchali* (1929), literary texts surely lacked in the psychological portrayal of the characters in the story. Though it can surely be said that social realism was constructed by the consciousness itself but it was more of a collective consciousness of the characters that shaped the social realism in literature than individual

psychology. Yet the psychological realism was in a way a singular product of renaissance idealism that was awaiting its response from the Indian literature.

While novels like *Gora* by Tagore explored the social realism in its truest form, his other works such as *Chokher Bali*, novella *Nashtanirh* and short stories such as *The Homecoming*, *Guest*, *The Exercise Book*, all were more focused on the individual characters and their psychological development in the course of action. And what seems magnificent is the fact that the issues related to gender, patriarchy et al goes hand in hand with the psychological development of individual characters. It is as if the overtones are channelized in single stream through which the character gains its shape though his/her psyche remains open ended till the end. With the introduction of colloquial speech Tagore marked a lot new impressions that have influenced in lot many ways the society of not only his times but the society of the upcoming generations with a global yet a universal approach.

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