EARLY BENGALI PROSE

CAREY TO VIDYĀSAGER

By

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A B S T R A C T

The present thesis examines the growth of Bengali prose from its experimental beginnings with Carey to its growth into full literary stature in the hands of Vidyāsāgar. The subject is presented chronologically and covers roughly the first half of the 19th century. Prior to the 19th century there was no literary prose in Bengali.

The period falls into certain clearly definable phases, the first phase begins in 1801. It seeds the cultivation of prose for the purpose of writing text-books and translations including the Biblical translations. This phase is associated with Serampore which was the headquarter of the Bapist Missionaries at the time and Fort William College where Carey worked as a teacher of Bengali and Sanskrit. The third and fourth phases belong to the newspaper which came into being in 1818 but there is an intervening phase which overlaps with the first and third and deals with the work of only one author, Rāmmohan Rāẏ. The newspaper phases are divided into two because the first phase concerns the journalistic activities of many writers who are today unknown. Whereas the second phase of newspaper treats of journalists who are also writers of quality in their own right. The

whole period from 1800 to roughly 1856 is the period of text
books and of newspaper writing.   Some authors wrote text
books only, others were journalists but a number including
the last and greatest Vidyāsāgar was both.

The divisions into Chapters follows the phase framework
outlined above.   The first chapter sketches the history of
Bengali literature prior to 1757, the social and literary
conditions prevailing in Bengal during the 18th century,
and the linguistic situation in Calcutta at the time the
first experiments were being made in literary prose.   It
also presents a few specimens of the rudimentary prose prior
to 19th century.   The second chapter outlines the linguistic
problems which confronted Carey and his colleagues.   This
chapter introduces the method of analysis which is applied to
the work of individual authors in the later part of the thesis.
The third, fourth and fifth chapters contain an analysis of
the prose works produced by Carey, Rāmrām Basu, Mṛityuñjay
respectively.   The sixth chapter is devoted to Rāmmohan's
contribution to the development of Bengali prose.   The
chapter seven treats of the beginnings of the newspaper and
examines journalistic prose produced up to about 1830.   The
eighth chapter is devoted to the Saṃbād Prabhākar (1830) and
treats particularly of the work of its editor Īśvarcandra

Gupta. The ninth chapter deals with the _Tattvabodhinī_ _Patrikā_ (1843). The works of its editor Akṣaý kumār Datta and of Debendranāth, father of Rabīndranāth Tagore are examined in details. The final Chapter deals with the works of Īśvarcandra Bandyopādhyāý (popularly known as Vidyāsāgar) only. Contemporaries of Vidyāsāgar whose works belong to a later phase in the history of Bengali prose are omitted from the present examination.

The analysis of prose presented in Chapters II to X treats of both their linguistic form and literary quality. The criteria adopted in the analysis are defined chapter by chapter as their application becomes relevant.

Acknowledgements

I prepared this thesis while working in the School of Oriental and African Studies and I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the authorities of the School for their help and encouragement. I wish to record my debt of gratitude to Mr. T.W. Clark who supervised my work with never-failing patience, generosity and keen personal interest. I must say how sincerely grateful I am to my friend Mr. J.V. Boulton, for all the help he so willingly gave me. I should also like to thank Mr. T.F. Mitchell, who answered many queries and checked some chapters on points of linguistic analysis, and to Mr. J.G. Burton-Page who has kindly transliterated the Persian phrases used in the Chapter II and I must also thank Mrs. E. Garland and Miss P. Currie for so carefully typing the manuscript.

Transliteration

The following system of transliteration of the Bengali and Devanāgarī scripts has been adopted in this thesis.

Bengali	Devanāgarī	Roman
অ	अ	a
আ	आ	ā
ই	इ	i
ঈ	ई	ī
উ	उ	u
ঊ	ऊ	ū
ঋ	ऋ	ṛi
এ	ए	e
ঐ	ऐ	ai
ও	ओ	o
ঔ	औ	au
ক	क	k
খ	ख	kh
গ	ग	g
ঘ	घ	gh
ঙ	ङ	ṅ
চ	च	c
ছ	छ	ch
জ	ज	j
ঝ	झ	jh
ঞ	ञ	ñ
ট	ट	ṭ
ঠ	ठ	ṭh
ড	ड	ḍ
ঢ	ढ	ḍh
ণ	ण	ṇ

Bengali	Devanāgarī	Roman
ত	त	t
থ	थ	th
দ	द	d
ধ	ध	dh
ন	न	n
প	प	p
ফ	फ	ph
ব	ब	b
ভ	भ	bh
ম	म	m
য	य	y
র	र	r
ল	ल	l
ব	व	b (for Bengali), v (for Devanāgarī)
শ	श	ś
ষ	ष	ṣ
স	स	s
হ	ह	h
ড়		ṛ
ঢ়		ṛh
৹	·	ṃ
৺	◦	ḥ
ঁ	ँ	~

Both the bargīya and the antastha ব of Bengali have been transliterated as "b" except in the case of a few proper names, where anthastha ব has been transliterated as 'v' e.g. বিদ্যাসাগর- has been transliterated as Vidyāsāgar, owing to its familiarity

to English readings in this form. The <u>baphalā</u> of both
Bengali and Sanskrit is transliterated as 'v' throughout,
e.g. বিশ্ব / বিশ্ব   becomes biśva/Viśva. The same
system has been maintained with slight modifications for
Hindustani e.g. the gutterals ख and घ as <u>kh</u> and
<u>gh</u> respectively. As regards phonetic transcriptions, the
system followed throughout is that of the <u>International
Phonetic Alphabet</u> (Revised to 1951).

Abbreviations used

Adj.	Adjective.
Adv.	Adverb.
Adv. Adj.	Adverbial Adjunct.
Bengali Literature	Bengali Literature in the 19th Century by S.K. De.
B.S.O.A.S.	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
M.C.	Main Clause.
O.	Object.
O.D.B.L.	The Origin and Development of the Bengali language by S.K. Chatterji.
P.C.	Pratāpāditya Caritra by Rāmrām Basu.
S.	Subject.
S.A.C.	Subordinate Adverbial Clause.
S.N.C.	Subordinate Noun Clause.
S.S.C.	Sāhitya Sādhak Caritmālā.by Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāy.
S.S.K.	Saṃbād Patre Sekāler Kathā by Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāy.
Tattvabodhinī	Tattvabodhinī Patrikā.
Tb.	Tadbhava.
Ts.	Tatsama.
V.	Verb.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

On the evidence of the many manuscripts still extant
in the various libraries of Bengal, it is clear that Bengali
literature has had a continuous history since the 15th
century.   It is true that the _Caryā pada_ manuscripts which
was discovered by Haraprasād Śāstrī in Nepal belongs to an
earlier period, possibly the 11th or 12th century, but
interesting as its text is from the linguistic and religious
points of view, its language must be regarded as proto-
Bengali, and its poems stand as isolated examples of an
early tradition which is but little reflected in later
authors.   From the date of the composition of the Rāmāẏaṇ
by Kr̥ittibās Ojhā in the 15th century there has been no
lengthy hiatus in literary creation.   For that it is
necessary to make a brief review of the content and form of
the earlier literature before taking up the examination of
the prose literature of the early 19th century, which is the
subject of this thesis.   It is difficult to show what was
new in the 19th century without taking note of the literature
of the preceding centuries.

Literary composition before 1800 can be conveniently
described as falling into three streams, definable in terms

of the subject matter of the poems they comprise.   With
the exception of certain works by two Muslim poets, Daulat
Qazi and Ālāol, who lived at the court of Arakan in the 17th
century, it can be maintained with reasonable justification
that medieval Bengali literature consists of works on but
three topics.

The first of these is the epic or mahākāvya topic,
which treated of the traditional stories of the Rāmāyaṇ and
the Mahābhārat.   Though the Bengali poems on these subjects
fall within the same tradition as that of the great sanskrit
epic poems, they are not translations from the Sanskrit, but
entirely original works which enrich the corpus of Indian
epic literature with local innovations and interpretations,
and in some cases with episodic material which is not found
in the works associated with the names of Vālmīki and Vyās.
Bengali epic poems, from Kṛittibās' work on, were composed
to be sung, and were popularised and preserved by successive
generations of bards who sang them at various festivals
within the traditional religious calendar.   They were not,
so far as we know, committed to writing until the 18th
century.   The principal metrical mode of this type of
literature was a riming couplet known as the payār, varied
occasionally by a lengthened form of couplet, known as
tripadī, because each verse of the couplet is divisible into

three parts, marked off by terminal rime and two caesura.
The greatest poems of this class, that of Kṛittibās and a
version of Mahābhārat, by the 17th century poet Kāśirām
Dās, were and still are almost universally current throughout
the Bengali-speaking area.   They are distinguished by a
simplicity of language and sentence structure.   One notices
the great preponderance of short words and of sentences which
seldom overrun the limits of the line, and which are often
coterminous with the half line.   The vocalic quality of
medieval Bengali and the great richness of its riming
possibilities make the poems very musical easy moving, and
highly suited to oral transmission.   In the hands of greater
poets there is much vivid and authentic description.   The
stories have considerable dramatic quality, the episodes
move with fluent ease, and the human characters are well
drawn and are very Bengali.   The poems fall into cantos
of irregular length, some long, others very short, according
to the requirements of the particular episodes.

Similar features of language, metrical form and literary
presentation are shared by the long poems which form the
second category of medieval Bengali poetry, the mangal kābya.
The term mangal kābya is applied to long narrative poems
which draw their subject matter from the stories that form
part of the cult of local and popular deities, many of them

female.   The legends of Behulā, Kālketu, Śrīmanta and
Lāusen, to mention but a few, together with those of Ram
and the brothers of the Mahābhārat, are as vital a part of
the cultural inheritence of the Bengali, educated and un-
educated alike, as were once the Bible stories in that of
the English-speaking world.   These stories, which are a
mine of information about contemporary life, are told and
re-told by a host of poets whose lives cover the period
from roughly 1500 to 1760, when Bhāratcandra Rāy, the last
great poet of mangal kābya died.   As a type of poetry,
mangal kābya together with the stories and dramatis personae
it embodies, appears to be unique to Bengal.

The third category of medieval Bengali literature is
that associated with the līlā, i.e. the amorous sport, of
Kṛiṣṇa and Rādhā.   This type of composition falls in the
main into two classes, lyrics and hymns which sing the various
moods and actions of the divine lovers, and biograp hical and
theological works on the teachers and the tenets of the faith
which holds them in especial reverence.   The earliest known
work in Bengali on this theme is the Śrīkṛiṣṇa kīrtan,   a
long lyric sequence in 13 cantos, usually attributed to Baṛu
Caṇḍī Dās, and assumed to have been composed in the 14th
century.   This long work chronicles the changing moods and

feelings of Kṛiṣṇa and Rādhā from their first knowledge of
one another, to their ultimate union and final separation.
The narrative content is slight, and as each lyric is a
complete unit it is comparatively unimportant. Though the
poem deals with divine characters the pervading spirit of
it is secular rather than religious. Kṛiṣṇa and Rādhā
tend to be more human than spiritual. In the 16th century
the theme became the centre of the religious teaching and
mystical experiences of the sage Caitanya, and his disciples
and their successors sang thousands of hymns on the general
theme of the spiritual līlā of Kṛiṣṇa and Rādhā and on that
of Caitanya himself who was very shortly apotheosised as the
divine mediator of the Vaisnava faith. Some of these lyrics
were composed in Bengali, but many are preserved in the
poetic language Brajabuli, which is in the main a mixture of
Bengali and Maithili. The effective creative life of this
school extended until about 1670 and though after that date
many poets wrote on the same theme there is little originality
in their work, and their poems have a stereotyped quality,
marked even in the best of them by verbal ingenuity rather
than by any spirit of freshness or creative power. These
poems were committed to writing in the many anthologies which
were compiled in the 18th century. The biographical and

theological works were written by scholars for scholars,
and never obtained the wide popularity that the Vaisnava
lyrics had had from the outset.

One feature above all others which these three streams
of literary composition share is that their medium was verse.
This is hardly surprising in an age when literary composition
was entirely oral, and a knowledge of reading and writing was
confined to a few scholars whose concern was almost entirely
with the Sanskrit language. The literary potentialities
of prose were not comprehended, and there is no evidence of
any attempt to use prose as a literary medium. What prose
there was apart from a few letters and legal documents, was
in Sanskrit. The prose writing which came into being in
the 19th century, and which it is the purpose of this thesis
to examine, had no antecedents in the long history of Bengali
literature. It was a new birth.

II

The eighteenth century, an age of decadence, saw the
fall of the Mughal Empire, which was already obsolescent, and
it also witnessed the rise and settlement of English power on
the soil of Bengal. The Battle of Plassey in 1757 established
the military supremacy of the English in Bengal and the victory

was completed in the Battle of Buxer in 1764 which was

fought between the English and Mīrkāsim, the last of the

independent Nawabs.

After the Battle of Plassey, a slow and imperceptible

change began to be felt in all spheres of activity, political

social and economic.   Politically, the country was passing

through a crisis.   The European rivals of the English had

been crushed: the French at Chandannagar, the Dutch at

Chinsura and the English "had become the most potent political

force in India".[1]   Mirjaffar, who had become the nawab after

the Battle of Plassey, was a puppet at the hands of Clive,

who initiated the system of dual government "in which the

English enjoyed the substance and the nawab the shadow of

power".[2]   It was difficult for the people to know where

their obedience was due. Verelst writes that "such a divided

and complicated authority gave rise to oppressions and in-

trigues unknown at any other periods;   the officers of

government caught the infection and being removed from any

immediate control, proceeded with still greater audacity".[3]

Clive left India for good in 1767 and was succeeded by

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1. Marriott Sir J.A.R.: The English in India, Oxford, 1932, p.53.
2. Majumdar, Raichaudhuri and Dutta: An Advanced History of
   India, London, 1950, p.672.
3. Verelst, Harry: View of the rise and present state of the
   English Government in Bengal, London, 1772, Appendix, p.122.

Verelst who in turn was succeeded by Cartier (1769). During this period the evils of the Dual Government were clearly manifested. The economic life of the country greatly suffered. Many of the servants of the company became thoroughly demoralised. Bribery and corruption reigned supreme. Though servants of the company received only a nominal salary, they used to go back so fabulously rich that the term "Indian Nabob" became a scandal as well as a proverb.

The company had the lion's share in the Nawab's revenue and the Nawab was often harassed for money. Consequently he demanded money from the land-lords. To meet these demands the land-lords in turn oppressed the cultivators who were already impoverished. Verelst gives us a full account of this situation in his book where he pleads that Company should try to safeguard the poor cultivator. He writes, "the violence of Meer Cossim in accumulating treasure and the relaxation of Government in the hands of Meer Jaffier equally contributed to confound all order, and by removing every idea of right, sanctified in some sort the depredations of hungry collectors".[1]

The agony of the country was further aggravated by a terrible famine which took place in 1770. Richard Becher,

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1. _Ibid_, p.66.

a servant of the Company, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on the 24th May, 1769, "This fine country, which flourished under the most despotic and arbitary governments, is verging towards ruin".[1] About one third of the population of Bengal perished as a result of this dreadful famine. Hunter gives a pathetic picture, "All through the stifling summer of 1770 the people went on dying. The husbandmen sold their cattle; they sold their implements of agriculture; they devoured their seedgrain, they sold their sons and daughters till at length no buyer of children could be found, they ate the leaves of trees and the grass of the field; and in June 1770 the Resident at the Durbar affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead".[2] A vivid picture of this unforgettable human tragedy is presented by Baṅkim Candra, the Bengali novelist, in his novel _Ānanda Maṭh_ which was written a century later. The following passage gives an impression of that horrible famine.[3]

> One of the robbers said, "What shall we do with gold and silver? Take one of these ornaments and give me a handful of rice instead. I am almost dying of hunger. I have had nothing to eat today but the leaves of trees." When he said this every one else began to clamour, "Give us rice, rice. We are dying of hunger. We do not want gold or silver."

1. Majumdar etc. Op. Cit. p.675.
2. Hunter, W.W.: The Annals of Rural Bengal, London, 1872, p.24.
3. Ananda Maṭh: Chapter III. (1882)

People left their homes just for a handful of rice
and began to flock to the cities. Within a couple of years
a third of the villages in Bengal were overrun by vegetation
and inhabitated only by beasts of prey.   In the meantime
groups of people driven to extremes by hunger formed robber
bands.   Bankim Candra reveals this fact in a conversation
in the novel referred to above: "Every peasant of the
villages has turned robber nowadays because of hunger. Who
is not a robber now?"[1]   The unstable political administra-
tion combined with this great famine so degraded the social
system that dacoity became a common occurrence.

The political disorder, the great loss of population
and the huge areas of deserted land along with other factors
shattered the economic life of Bengal. Bengal's economy
had been mainly agriculture but she had some cottage in-
dustries, e.g. silk and cotton.   On account of the oppression
of the rulers of the land these industries began to disappear.[2]
Furthermore two laws were passed in the British Parliament in
1700 and 1720 prohibiting the use of silk and cottom imported
by the company into England and in 1780 the Court of Directors
completely stopped the importation.   In addition there was
the distress caused by the flow of money from Bengal to

1. Ānanda Math: Chapter VI.
2. Dutt, Romesh: The Economic History of India, pp. 256-269.

England.[1]

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 made a marked impact on Bengali society. The sovereign had been the supreme landowner, but the land had been leased to cultivators who used to pay three-fifths of the produce to the government; and this rent was collected by officials known as zamindars, who received a commission on the amount of collected. The office of zamindars became hereditary and the incumbents were charged with the administration of the areas they operated in. Warren Hastings had made a quinquennial settlement of the land revenue granting farming leases to the highest bidders. On instructions from the Directors, Hastings had replaced this system in 1777 by annual leases but this also had not proved satisfactory. In 1793 Lord Cornwallis abandoned this system in favour of a permanent settlement. Under the terms of this settlement, the zamindars, who had been collectors of revenue, became landed

1. It is hard to ascertain the precise amount which was taken out of India during this period but estimates suggest that between 1750-1780 a total of 30 to 40 million pounds may have left the country. Thus Bengal which was already predominantly agricultural, became entirely dependent on the land, such indigeneous industries as it had had in the past, having by this time virtually disappeared. Dr. J.C. Sinha has calculated the drain between 1757 and 1780 as £38,400,000 European Manuscript Department. 281 (p.34) calculates the drain between 1767 and 91 as £35,433,484 by way of trade and £250,000 per year to subordinate Presidencies. Sir P.J. Griffiths calculates the drain between 1780 and 1813 as £30,000,000 or less than £1 million per year. See Tripathi, A., Trade and Finance in Bengal Presidency 1793-1833, Calcutta, 1956, p.256. (footn.

proprietors and the amount of revenue payable by them was
fixed in perpetuity. Thus the old system of zamindari was
abolished. The old zamindars had, it is true, drawn their
revenue from the lands and labours of their tenants but the
better of them gave in return protection and patronage. Some
of the more enlightened of them, maintained in their courts
scholars and poets whom they encouraged and supported. Much
of the literature of medieval Bengal was created under and
on account of the patronage of local zamindars. With the
disappearance of these old zamindars and their replacement
by a new type of zamindars who was in effect little more than
tax-collector, the traditional system of patronage came to
an end.

The moral and cultural life of the indigenous population
of the country was also affected by the political uncertainty
and the drain on the economy. It must, not be assumed however
that this decline in morality and culture came solely as a
result of the changes which took place in the 18th century.
Even before the Battle of Plassey the administration had been
bad and the rich aristocrats morally depraved. Sir Jadunāth
Sarkār writes:, "The country's administration had become
hopelessly dishonest and inefficient and the mass of the
people had been reduced to the deepest poverty, ignorance

and moral degradation by a small, selfish, proud and unworthy ruling class. Imbecile lechers filled the throne, the family of Alivardy did not produce a single son worthy to be called a man, and women were worse than men. Sadists like Siraj and Miran made even their highest subjects live in constant terror. The army was rotten and honeycombed with treason. The purity of domestic life was threatened by the debauchery fashionable in the court ... Religion had become the handmaid of vice and folly."[1]

Neither was the moral life of the official of the Company such as would stand as an example to the depraved people who at the time attended most of the local courts. The picture which Hickey portrays in his Gazette may be somewhat exaggerated but it reflects little credit on the life of Europeans in Bengal in the late 18th century. The following is a quotation from The Good Old Days of Honorable John Company.[2]

> Drunkenness, gambling and profane swearing were
> almost universally practised. The public journals
> testify to the absence of "decency and propriety of
> behaviour" in social life. In December, 1780, one
> of them complains that "Europeans of all ranks"
> ordinarily made Christmas festivities a "plea for
> absolute drunkenness and obscenity of conversation,
> etc. that is, while they were able to articulate at
> all," and urged that respectable men ought not to
> subject their wives to such impure and injurious
> associations.....

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1. Sarkār, J.N., <u>History of Bengal</u>, vol. II., Dacca University, 1948, p.497.
2. Carey, W.H., <u>The Good old days of Honorable John Company</u>, Vol. 1., Calcutta, 1906. pp. 455-6.

Nearly all the unmarried Europeans – and few were
married in those days – lived in acknowledge con-
cubinnage with native women.

The religious life of the indigenous population was
equally polluted. Most of the people were illiterate and
steeped in ignorance. In the name of religion they
practiced human sacrifice, infanticide and <u>sati</u>. A group
of poets dealt with the <u>radha-krisna</u> theme but the divine
love which had been portrayed by the 16th and 17th century
poets now became little more than a sensual and immoral
intrigue. The brahmins were no longer accomplished in
even classical Sanskrit literature, not to speak of the
Vedas or the Upaniṣads.[1] Dr De rightly observes, "The
mass of superstitions had always existed and still every-
where exists but from this time onwards, there was a deliberate
rejection of the spiritual side of the old faith and a corre-
sponding identification with the semi-aboriginal superstitions
of the masses".[2]

It was dark period indeed. But the night is darkest
just before the dawn. This age might well be described in
the words of Charles Dickens as 'the best of times, the worst
of times'. The worst part has already been discussed, the

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1. Sibanāth Śāstri: Rāmtanu lāhirī o tatkālīn banga samāj,
   Calcutta, 1903. p.58-59; and also Haraprasād Śastri:
   Bāngār Sāhitya (1880) Harapradād Racanābali, Vol. I. Calcutta
   1956, p.176.
2. De, S.K.: Bengali literature in the 19th Century, Calcutta University, 1919, p.35

best was slowly beginning to emerge.   One thing was
certain, namely that the medieval age of Bengali culture
had come to an end and a new age was dawning.   The internal
peace of the country was restored and law and order were
beginning to be established.   From the economic point of
view there was a "remarkable growth of trade in raw
materials."[1]   Dr. Tripathi has countered the arguments
put forward by Brooks Adam, Digby and R.C. Dutta about the
economic drain and has argued that the drain by the Company
during 1793-1833 was mostly in the form of goods and these
were paid for in cash in the markets of Bengal.   "Was it
not, then, returning some direct equivalent to the land in
the shape of prices?   Was it not assisting to that extent
in the development of, or at least in maintaining the quantum
of, industry and agriculture with a part of the state revenue".[2]
This statement though it is supported by statistics may as
it stand seem to be exaggerated.   It is important, however,
to note that certain features in the improvement of Bengali
economy had by this time begun to emerge.

With the growth of administrative stability and
proper judicial authority, social life became more and more
secure.   Towards the end of the 18th century the English
had conquered much of India and were beginning to unite the

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1. Tripathi, A.:   op.cit., p.253.
2. Ibid: p.256.

scattered states in an order of government which had never existed before. A few European scholars had discovered the ancient heritage of India which had been totally forgotten by the Indians themselves. Within fifty years English education had opened the flood-gates to European culture.

The centre of this new awakening was Calcutta. It was a comparatively modern town. In 1596 it was mentioned as a rent-paying village in the <u>Ain-i-Akbari</u> and there is a reference to it in the <u>Manasā Bijay</u> of <u>Bipradās</u> (1495-96 A.D.) and Kālighāṭ, a sacred place of the Hindus is an old name. The city itself was actually founded by Job Charnock in 1690. The original Fort William was built in 1696 and three villages <u>Sutānuṭi</u>, <u>Gobindapur</u> and <u>Kalikāṭā</u> were formally purchased from Prince Azim in the same year. Its growth to importance commenced with the arrival of the European traders in Bengal.

Most of the area had been covered in dense, swampy jungle, inhabited by wild beasts and infested with robbers. Once founded, the town grew rapidly but it can hardly be claimed that it grew in the Indian tradition. Compared with other Indian towns it has few temples or mosques; its principal buildings were built by Europeans in their own style.

It is a town which has drawn its lineage more from London,
than from the cities of the Hindu or Muslim periods.

This new city which had a good natural harbour and
very wide hinterland grew rapidly as a trade centre.
People from other parts of Bengal as well as from outside
came there in search of money, food and work. Many had
been driven to Calcutta in search of food, during the famine
of 1770. Many poor people were attracted there by its
glamour and the hope of becoming rich. But not only the
poor were attracted. Many rich families also settled in
Calcutta including the Tagores, who were to play such an
important role in the revitalisation of Bengali life.[1] For
many of the people who migrated to Calcutta their life there
was new. It had a present and promised a future, but the
past was left behind and soon forgotten. The new citizens
of Charnock's city lost any sense of cultural connection with
the districts they had so recently left. Their children
knew nothing of the homes of their ancestors or of the literary
greatness of Bengal's past. In becoming citizens of Calcutta
they ceased, in a very real way, though only temporarily to
be Bengalis. They turned with fervour to an alien culture,
and attempted to order their lives according to the manners

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1. <u>Haraprasād racānabalī</u>, <u>op. cit.</u> p.178.

and customs of their new rulers.   The success of the
Hindu College which was founded in 1817, was due to the
fact that it satisfied the aspirations and needs of the new
townsmen.   The past was dead in Calcutta at the end of the
18th century.   The slate was wiped clean, and when it came
to be written in in the first decade of the 19th century,
the hands that held the chalk were hands trained in a new
culture.

Thus Rudyard Kipling describes the growth of Calcutta
in the following lines:-

"Thus from the mid-day halt of Charnock

grew a city

As the fungus chaotic from its

bed

So it spread

Chance directed, chance erected, laid and

built

On the silt

Palace, byre, hovel, poverty and pride

Side by side."

This city within 100 years had become a thriving industrial
centre, promising hitherto unknown opportunities to its citizens
and stirring in them a new vitality, from which a small group of
men drew the inspiration to write a new literature in a new mode,
that of prose.

Certain scholars have suggested that there was a tradition of prose before 1800.[1]   Some draw attention to a statement by a Vaisnava poet that Caṇḍīdās wrote prose. The validity of the statement has not been tested because even the identity of Caṇḍīdās has not yet been established. Another scholar considers a few lines in the śūnya purāṇ to be written in prose.[2]   This contention is hard to accept as the lines in question are very few in number and further- more it is not certain that they are written in prose. Dr. Sukumar Sen describes them as being written in a broken payār metre.[3]   A further point which should be mentioned in this connection is that the manuscript of the śūnya purāṇ is late, probably dating from the late 17th or 18th century.   So even if the passage were prose, it would hardly constitute proof that there was prose writing in Bengali in the early mediaeval period which is the notional date of the composition of the śūnya purāṇ.   It is true that a number of letters and legal documents have survived.   But though these are written in prose, it is not sufficient to confirm a hypothesis that there was a tradition of literary prose

1. S.K.De:History of Bengali literature (1919), D.C.Sen:Bengali
   Prose style(1921),S.Sen:Bangla sahitye gadya(1934),Jaharlāl
   Basu:Bangla gadya-sāhityer itihas(1936),Sajanikānta Dās:Bāṅglā
   sāhityer itihās(vol.1)(1946),Asit kumār Bandyopādhāy:Unabimśa
   śatābdir bangāli o bāṅglā sāhitya(1956) & Syāmal Kumār Caṭṭop-
   adhyaȳ: Baṅgla gadyer krama bikaś (1960).
2. D.C.Sen: Bengali Prose Style, pp. 7-8.
3. S.Sen: Bāṅgla sāhitye gadya, (3rd edition) p.10.

before 1800 A.D.   Mention may be made of a few pieces of

prose writing which are known to have been written before

1800.

(a)   A letter written by Maharaja Narayan in 1555 A.D.

This letter was first published in Assam Banti of 27th June,

1901 and reprinted in the Rangpur sahitya parisad Patrika

(vol. IV) and in Vaṅgabhāṣā Paricay (vol. II) by D.C. Sen.

This letter contains no more than 20 lines and has no more

than an antiquarian interest.   The language is Bengali and

it is written in prose.   It cannot however claim any

literary importance.

(b)   In his book "Types of Early Bengali Prose",[1] S.R.

Mitra has produced a number of examples of Bengali prose

which are assigned to the 17th and 18th centuries.   The

first part of the book consists of a collection of prose

passages written by Vaisnava scholars.   Dr. S. Sen seems

to agree with the dating of these passages.   Little literary

distinction can be found in any of these writings though

they are not without importance to students of linguistics

or theology.   One writer comments as follows:

> These prose specimens have no connection with the
> popular Bengali of that time.   These are the mystic
> suggestions for the seekers.   And the later sahajiya
> manuscripts were also written in this very style.[2]

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1. Types of Early Bengali Prose Calcutta University, 1922.
2. Sajani kanta Das: opcit. p.11.

It is true that they are written in simple prose but some
are difficult to read, the syntax of long sentences is
confused and the meaning very obscure.

(c) The second part of the book is given up to letters
and legal documents belonging to the 18th century. Other
documents and letters have been preserved in <u>Pracīn bāṅglā
patra saṃkalan</u> by Dr. Surendranath Sen.[1] The language of
these documents is straightforward. One notices a larger
Persian element in the vocabulary. Some of them contain
descriptions which could be of interest in a study of the
contemporary social and political life of Bengal. The
following is typical of the content of many of the business
letters.[2]

> bornerḍ mekālam sāheber kuṭhite āmi labaner
> pāikāri kari laban karja laiyā āsāme bikri kariyā
> jiniṣ badlāi o nagad je āmdāni kari tāhā mekālam
> sāheber kuṭhite dei, amār meyād khilap hoyāte
> sāheb āmār ṭhāi jāmin talab karilen āmi āpan
> khuśite śriyukta kamalnārāyaṇ baṇuyāke jāmin diyā
> mekālam sāheber kuṭhir laban laiyā āsām giyāchilām
> āsāme laban bikri kariyā jiniṣ mugādhuti mugāsuti
> hātir dāt kaṛi sakal laiyā āsāmer couki kauḍāre
> bojhāi noukā samet pouchilām.

> (I work as an agent of Mr. Bernard MacCallam. I
> take salt on loan from him and sell it in Assam.
> Things obtained by barter and cash received by
> payment I pay into Mr. MacCallum's factory. Because

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1. <u>Pracīn bāṅglā patra saṃkalan</u> Calcutta University, 1942.
   This is a well edited and neatly arranged collection of
   Bengali letters preserved in the National Archives. All these
   letters were written to the officers of the East India Company.
2. <u>Ibid</u>: Letter No.79.

> I failed to make payment in time Mr. MacCallam
> required me to give a security. With his consent
> I gave Mr. Kamalnarayan Baruya as security and
> taking salt from Mr. MacCallam's factory I went
> to Assam. When I had finished selling I went by
> cargo boat to Couki Kaudar in Assam with all the
> goods I had acquired, namely, muga cloths, muga
> threads, tusk and shells).

The vocabulary of this passage is simple and the narrative

clear. It is to be noted that apart from one _dāri_ which

can be accepted as the equivalent of the full-stop and the

division of the whole into two paragraphs, there are no

marks of punctuation. This is a common feature of the

epistolary and legal prose of the period.

(d) Portuguese settlers arrived in Bengal about the

middle of the 16th century. Later as their numbers and

the extent of their influence increased, Portuguese became

the lingua franca of the sea-borde area from Bengal to as far

south as Madras.[1]

Later Portuguese missionaries arrived in Bengal and

began the work of translating Christian scriptures into

Bengali. In addition original works in Bengali were

attempted by the missionaries and by at least one of their

converts.[2] Only three works are extant at present, Crepar-

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1. Marshman, John Clark: _The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward_, Vol. 1. ~~Serampore,~~ London, 1859, pp. 21-22.
2. Father Hosten: _Bengal Past and Present_, vol. XI, 1914, pp. 40-63 and S.K. De: _op.cit._, pp. 65-78.

xatrer orth, bhed;   Brāhman-romān-kyāthalik sambād;   Bāng'lā
Byākaran.[1]   S.K. Chatterjee has a favourable comment for
the first of these.   "It is much creditable", he writes,
"for a foreigner to write such Bengali in a period when
there was almost no Bengali prose".[2]   Dom Antonio, wrote
a pleasant Bengali style.   These two writers, however,
had no successor and what they wrote can hardly be considered
to belong to the tradition of Bengali prose writing which
dates from the year 1801.

(e)   The only specimen of prose writing belonging to
the 18th century which can claim any sort of literary status
is to be found in a manuscript held in the British Museum.
The text has been reproduced in the Bangīya Sāhitya Pariṣat
Patrikā.[3]   It is a simply told story based upon an episode
in the life of the legendary emperor Vikramāditya.   A passage
is quoted below:

> kanyā paṇ kariyāche rātrer madhye je kathā kahāite
> pāribek tāhāke āmi bibhā kariba. e kathābhojrāja
> sune baṛa baṛa rājār putrake nimantran kariyā ānilek

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1. Brāhman-romān-kyāthalik sambād was written by Dom Antonio in
   1735 but was never published. Dr. Surendranath Sen copied the
   first 85 pages of the manuscript now in Evora in Portugal,
   and published it from the Calcutta University in 1937. Other
   books were written by Manoel de Assumpcam. The first one was
   written and printed in roman types and was published in 1743
   from Lisbon. The third book, the first Bengali grammar written
   in the same year, has been edited jointly by S.K.Chatterjee
   and P.R. Sen, in 1931 and published by the University of Cal-
   cutta.
2. S.K. Chatterjee and P.R. Sen: op.cit. Introduction, p. xviii.
3. Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrika, 29th part, pp. 121-24.

ek ek rājār putrake ek ek din rātrer madhye ek
ekjanke śayan ghare laiẏā śaẏan karāẏ se ghare
ār keho thākenā kebal kanyā ār rājputra ek khāṭe
kanyā soẏe ek khāṭe rājputra soẏe je rājputra
jeman jnānabān haẏ se seirūp kathā sārarātra
kahe. kanyāke kathā kahāite pārilknā katamat
prakār karilek tabu kanyāke kathā kahāite pārileknā.
eirūpe anek din gela pare rājā Vikramāditya kanyār
rūp guṇe śune baṟai tuṣṭa hailen kāhākeo kahilennā
saṅge ekjan manusya lailennā kebal āpﬁuni ekā baṟa
ghoṟaẏ ārohan haiẏā sikārer nām kariẏā dui cāri
rojer pare mokām bhojpur śriyut bhojrājār bāṭīte
upasthit hailen.

The princess vowed that she would marry only the man
who could induce her to talk during the night. Hearing
this, King Bhoj, sent out invitation to the sons of
famous kings. One by one each prince was accomodated
for one night in the princess's bed-chamber. The
bed-chamber was deserted except for the prince and
princess, who each slept in a separate bed. The
princes talked the whole night though each according
to his ability. Many means were tried, but all
attempts to induce the princess to speak failed.
Thus after many days had elapsed, King Vikramaditya
heard to his great delight of the maiden's beauty
and qualities. Without a word to any one or a man-
servant for company, he set off alone astride a great
horse, pretending to be on a hunting expedition.
After a few days he arrived at the place of his
majesty King Bhoj, in Bhojpur.

IV

In the final section of this chapter we propose to
discuss the relative status of the Bengali language as
only one of the several languages current in Calcutta
during the last decades of the 18th century. This is an
extremely important question, because the status of Bengali
in relation to its many linguistic competitors in Calcutta

naturally affected the growth and development of Bengali
prose.   Only one systematic survey of the languages of
Calcutta during this period has yet been made.[1]   We must
once more briefly survey the subject here, because it was
in Calcutta that Bengali prose came into being. By 1757
Calcutta had grown from a group of 3 villages, into a
polyglot city.   During the period 1757-1800 this growth
accelerated.

Portuguese was the earliest European language spoken
in Bengal. It was "the language that most Europeans learn,
to qualify themselves for general converse with one another,
as well as with the different inhabitants of India."[2]
Marshman has also written that "it was the ordinary medium
of communication between Europeans and their domestics."[3]
But in the first decade of the 19th century the language
had ceased to be used by the people and by the second decade
it was almost extinct in Bengal, though vestiges of Portuguese
can still be traced at the level of vocabulary.[4]

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1. Clark, T.W.: <u>The languages of Calcutta</u>, 1760-1840, B.S.O.A.S.
   pp. 453-474.
2. <u>Calcutta in the olden time</u>, Calcutta Review, 1852, No.xxxvi,
   pp. 312.
3. Marshman: <u>op.cit.</u>, pp.21-22.
4. Campos, J.J.A.: <u>History of the Portuguese in Bengal</u>, Calcutta
   1919. Chapter xvii, pp. 204-227.

In the preface to his grammar Halhed analyses the language situation as follows: "Exclusive of the Shanscrit, there are three different dialects applied (tho' not with equal currency) in the kingdom of Bengal: viz, the Persian, the Hindostanic and the proper Bengalese, each of which has its own peculiar department in the business of the country and consequently neither of them can be universally adopted to the exclusion of the other."[1] Halhed noticed two different forms of Hindustanic which, as is evident from his description, are Hindi and Urdu. Persian had been the court language and it was learnt by the people of high status. Bharatcandra was scolded by his brothers because he wanted to learn Sanskrit, which he was told had no relevance to the practical world.[2] Sanskrit, however, enjoyed a special privilege as the religious language of the Hindus Scholars had a deep respect for this venerable old language, though few of them at that time were proficient in it. Arabic was also current in Calcutta. It was taught in a Madrasa founded by Warren Hastings.

When the East India Company came to power, it had to take cognizance of the language situation in the country,

1. Halhed, Nathaniel Brassey: A Grammar of the Bengali Language, Hoogly 1778 Introduction: vii.
2. Mukherji, Harimohan (ed.) Bangabhāṣār lekhak: Calcutta, 1904, p.203.

especially in the domain of law and order. "The recognition of the ancient laws and customs of major communities was designed to provide safeguards against improper and hasty enactments. With the same object in view, codes of Hindu and Muslim laws were translated into English for the guidance of European judges ... The judicial code of 1781 was translated into Persian and Bengali for the general information of the people."[1] Nevertheless the course of a trial was often delayed because of the long and elaborate process of translating into English from Persian or Bengali and vice versa. Sometimes the results would have been more fatal because the judge's ignorance of languages, "in which disputed accounts existed, made their situation all the more difficult".[2] As an inevitable result judicial reforms were accepted in 1793 which emphasised the importance of the native languages, Persian and Bengali.[3]

It was a time when Bengali had wide currency as a spoken language in domestic circles but little prestige in the world of affairs. Clark rightly observes, "The status

1. Misra, B.B.: <u>The Central Administration of the East India Company 1773-1834</u>, Manchester, 1959. p.25.
2. Misra, B.B.: <u>The Judicial Administration of the East India Company in Bengal 1765-1782</u>, Unpublished thesis (1947) London University, pp. 519-20.
3. Misra, B.B.: <u>Central Administration</u> etc. op.cit. p.248.

of Bengali in Calcutta in 1760 and for many years after-
wards was very low though it was the mother tongue of the
majority of the population.   The languages of the superior
civil and commercial stations were English, Portuguese and
Persian and ambitious Hindus made certain that of these they
know at least Persian.   The pandits engrossed in Sanskrit
still regarded Bengali as a 'barbaric' dialect, as they
had done for centuries.   With the leaders of the Hindu
community thus despising Bengali, there was no one to give
the lead in pressing its claim, or even to admit that it
had any."[1]   While the sanskritists despised Bengali,
young people newly educated in English refused to learn it,
and continued to do so even until the later part of the 19th
century;   They were attacked by Madhusūdan and Baṅkimcandra
in their satirical writings.   Rājnārāẏaṇ Basu has also
recalled the early days of Hindu College (1817) in his
"sekāl ār ekāl" (1874).   In it he describes the craze for
English learning and the poverty of the knowledge of Bengali.[2]

English became the most important language of the
country, though Persian remained the court language till
1835.   English was the language of the ruling class and
people began to learn it for economic reasons because it was

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1. Clark, T.W.: op.cit. p.457.
2. Basu, R.N.: Sekāl ār ekāl (1874), pp. 26-7, 53, 64.

easy for a man to get a job even with a smattering of
English.   Basu has given a few humorous instances of the
attitude of people in the early 19th century.   A man could
be proud of being able to spell 'Nebuchadnezzar' or 'Xerxes'
in the first decade of the 19th century.   Even in the middle
of the 19th century "respectable natives do not read Bengali
books".[1]   One writer compares this situation with the status
of German in Germany before Lessing and eloquently states
that, "Bengal sadly stands in need of a Lessing to develop
the resources of her noble language and to clothe in it the
creations of his genius".[2]   No less a man than Rāmmohan Rāy
sneered at Bengali poetry and said it had neither beauty nor
art.[3]   Haraprasād Śāstrī said in the last decade of the 19th
century that even the elite of Calcutta did not know that
Bengali had a great literature.[4]

   At a time when Bengali was despised by Sanskrit scholars,
ignored by the educated people and not seriously patronised
by the East India Company, Halhed pleaded its case and "ended
with what must be the first word in praise of the Bengali
language ever written from Calcutta".[5]   He wrote that, "It

1.Calcutta Review (1850) xiii, Popular literature of Bengal,p.257.
2.Ibid.
3.Rāy: Gauṛīya bhāṣār Byākaraṇ Calcutta, 1833, p.97.
4.Śāstrī: Bauddha gān o dōhā, Sāhitya pariṣat Granthābalī, 1916.
   Preface, p.1.
5.Clark: op.cit. p.458.

is much better calculated both for public and private
affairs by its plainness, its precision and regularity
of construction, than the flowery sentences and modulated
periods of Persian."[1] He published his grammar in 1778,
a memorable year in the history of Bengali literature.
It was printed in Bengali type, and for the first time in
that year by Charles Wilkins.   Historians of Bengali prose
have gratefully remembered the Europeans, who contributed
to the cause of Bengali, Halhed, Duncan, Edmonston, Forster,
Upjohn and Miller.

The most important contribution to the development of
Bengali prose in the early period was made by William Carey
who came to Bengal in 1793 and became a devoted student of
Bengali.   It is a significant indication of trends of
thought at the time that Bengali prose owes its inspiration
to a British missionary.   He was a man of deep wisdom and
great perseverance.   It was a time when people "Scarcely
believed that Bengal ever possessed a native and peculiar
dialect of its own, distinct from that idiom which under the
name of Moors has been supposed to prevail over India.   And
to the perpetuation of this error the influence and untiring
advocacy of the Urdu language by Gilchrist greatly contributed.

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1. Halhed: op.cit. Introduction xv.

He published his Urdu dictionary in 1787 and by editing a
series of useful works, he gave the impression that Bengali
was a mere patois, and that Urdu was to be the only medium
of literary and social intercourse between natives and
Europeans."[1]

Still the time was ripe for a change in the status of
Bengali.   Hastings, a great champion of oriental learning,
took the initiative in urging the administrative and moral
necessity of learning Indian languages.[2]   It was beginning
to be felt that "a real knowledge of the speech of another
thirty millions of people should not be an object of in-
difference to their rulers;   nor should the materials for
its acquirement be suffered to remain imperfect".[3]   Halhed
had already pleaded logically and eloquently in the cause
of Bengali, and the missionaries in Serampore had started
making translations into Bengali.   All these scattered
forces combined to initiate a movement which was given shape
by the farsighted Lord Wellesly, when he opened the college
in Fort William and appointed Carey as professor of Bengali.
Thus the birth of Bengali prose was quickened.   During this
long period of fifty years Bengali had been struggling with

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1. Calcutta Review (1850); op.cit. p.143.
2. Misra, B.B.: Central Administration, op.cit. p.393.
3. Wilson, H.H.: A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms,
   Calcutta, 1855. Introduction xxi.

other languages to win a place of honour in the land of

its origin.   While Bengali was neglected by its speakers,

its importance began to be felt by the rulers of the

country, but it owes most to the zeal and farsightedness

of a handful of British scholars, at least one of whom

believed "were it properly cultivated, it would be deserving

a place among those which are accounted the most elegant

and expressive."[1]

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1. Carey: <u>A Grammar of the Bengali Language</u>, Serampore, 1801
   preface, p.iv.

CHAPTER II

The Beginnings of Bengali Prose

The first intellectual contacts between Europeans and educated Bengalis started towards the close of the 18th century and mutual relations were strengthened by the establishment of Fort William College on the 4th May, 1800. Lord Wellesley opened the college for the general education of the young civilians of the East India Company, whose standard of education was very poor and whose moral values were deplorably low.[1] One of the functions of the college was to train the young civilians in the language and culture of India as well as to provide a background of liberal education.

William Carey was appointed teacher of Sanskrit and Bengali in April 1801 and eventually in 1807 he became professor of these languages.[2] Carey was confronted with the necessity of providing text books for his students. As it was the first time that Bengali had been enforced on members of the civil service, Carey had to pioneer the production of

1. Marshman, Vol.cit. p.145.
2. Mrityuñjay Bidyalamkar, Rajiblocan Mukhopadhyay, Ramram Basu, Haraprasad Ray, Tarinicaran Mitra and Candicaran Munsi assisted Carey in writing books. See Sahitya Sadhak Carit Mala, Vol. I. 14, pp.5-7.

text books. The problem was rendered more acute by the
fact that "not a single prose work was found to exist when
he delivered his first lecture in May, 1801".[1] It would
have been a difficult situation for a native to cope with
but for a foreigner it was even more so. Carey had three
problems to solve (i) to write text books, (ii) to develop
a prose style in which to write them and (iii) to awaken
in Bengali's an interest in their own language.

The tradition of writing text books was not a new
one to Bengal but it had never been continuous. "In many
thānās even manuscript text books were unknown. All that
scholars learned, was acquired from the master by oral dic-
tation. The literary texts mostly consisted of hymns,
addressed to different gods and goddesses and stories, based
on the epics, like Dātākarna."[2]

So Carey drew around him a band of enthusiasts bent on
removing the poverty of Bengali. He tried with the help of
his pandits to develop a style of Bengali prose which could
be generally accepted. He himself did much of the linguistic
spade-work. He did not disdain the drudgery of grammar and
lexicography. He was no mere advisor or organiser, but a

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1. Marshman, Op.cit. p.147.
2. Majumdar, R.C., Glimpses of Bengal in the 19th century
   Calcutta, 1960, p.13.

living inspiration to literary creation. He asked Rāmrām Basu, his most intimate colleague, to write a history of a Bengali king; inspired Mṛityuñjay and Rājīblocan to write historical treatises and to collect some of the legends of India. Within twenty years at least twenty books had been published, stories, fables, histories and a dictionary.

While he was in Serampore Carey was actively engaged in spreading Christianity amongst Bengalis. In February, 1801 he published the New Testament. The linguistic features of this Bengali New Testament will be discussed later. When, he joined Fort William College, however, he became more eager to know the language and culture of Bengal. He extended his field of activity. He badly needed a grammar of Bengali and he himself compiled one in 1801. A Bengali grammar had been written earlier by another Englishman, Halhed, in 1778. It was quite a good grammar and as a pioneer work deserves praise, but it had drawbacks. Its material and analysis were in-adequate. It was handicapped by its use of citations from verse literature. The only prose passage used was a letter. So Halhed could not present any complete description of syntax, though what he has done is valuable. The following quotation from Halhed's grammar shows the irregularity of the Bengali writing system of the period, with

which Carey had to contend.

> Their (modern Bengali) forms of letters, their
> modes of spelling and their choice of words are
> all equally erroneous and absurd. They can neither
> decline a word nor construct a sentence and their
> writings are filled with Persian, Arabic and Hindo-
> stanic terms, promiscously thrown together without
> order or meaning: often embarrassing and obscure ...
> They seldom separate the several words of sentence
> from each other, or conclude the period with a stop.[1]

Carey wrote his grammar with a view to giving a fuller

description of the language than that given by Halhed and as

a first step in raising its status which was very low as he

indicates in the following words;

> The study of Bengalee has been much neglected from an
> idea that its use is very confined. I believe however,
> that it is the universal medium of conversation and
> business throughout the whole of Bengal, except among
> the servants of Europeans; and even they use it con-
> stantly in their own families.[2]

In the fourth edition of this book he concludes his praise

for Bengali saying that "it may be esteemed one of the most

expressive and elegant language of the East."

Carey's grammar was the only important work in the field

of linguistic description of Bengali till the publication of

Rāmmohan's work. It is important for historical reasons,

as it gives an idea of the written language at that time.

Special attention is, however, drawn to the chapters of syntax,

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1. Halhed: op.cit. p.178.
2. Carey: op.cit. preface (w)

because syntax was the primary difficulty among the writers
of Fort William College. Some syntactic principles with
examples are quoted below, because these principles must
have served the purpose of guiding the writing of prose
at that time. It will be interesting to note how later
prose writing differed in practice from the theory formu-
lated by Carey, with the help of his pandits.

(a) "The present participle in iyā precedes a verb
when one action has a dependence upon another and
when there is but one agent to both the actions, as
āmi yāiyā baliba, I going will speak or I will go
and speak, āmi khāiyā basibā I will come after I
have eaten".

(b) "When the verb, the object of which is not ex-
pressed, is governed by the participle in yā the
verb must immediately follow the participle, as
āmi yāiyā dekhiba I will go and see or I going
will see".

(c) "That part of a sentence governed by the pronoun
antecedent is generally put before the member
governed by the relative, as ye pathe tumi giyāchilā
se pathe āmi yāba I will go in the same path that
you did".

(d) "In negative sentences, the negative particle
follows the verb, except in the perfect tense.
When the verb is expressed the particle nā is
generally used, as āmi karinā, when the verb is
implied nāhi or nāi is used for the first person
naha for the second nahe or nahen for the third,
as āmi eman lok nahi I am not such a person, tāhā
nahe not that. ni is very commonly used after the
verb, especially when an enclitic particle is
joined to it."

Thus Carey plodded his difficult way. The first original
Bengali prose work ever written by a Bengali followed the

publication of his grammar.

II

Early Bengali writers were pioneers. They were con-
fronted by many difficulties in their experimental efforts
to shape Bengali prose into a suitable medium of literary
expression. They were not conscious of course that they
were trying to shape Bengali prose. That came as the outcome
of their unconscious efforts. One critic has rightly remarked
of Carey that, "he had in fact to pioneer his own way; and
Bengali then lay before him ... shapeless".[1] It should be
noted that it was only in prose writing that Bengali was
shapeless. The language was spoken and there is no reason
to suppose that it was inadequate for this purpose. The
position was that Bengali writers had not realised that
there could be any link between what they spoke and what they
were to write. When they started to write they attempted
to use a language which differed in vocabulary, syntax and
style from that of everyday speech.

The Bengali writers who were associated with Carey had
to solve many problems. From their various solutions
different styles of prose emerged. The first problem they

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1. <u>Calcutta Review</u>, 1850, page 132.

faced was the provision of text-book materials written
in prose. Since they had no model of Bengali prose to guide
them, they indulged in experimentation of various kinds,
imitating grammatical features from languages other than
Bengali. Some of the writers were Sanskrit scholars;
others were proficient in Persian but all of them through
their association with Carey knew English. Thus when the
styles of these writers are scrutinised, the influences of
these languages are perceived in varying degrees. It has
been customary to classify the styles of the writers of
Fort William College into two categories, the _pandit_ style
and the _munshi_ style. Like all generalisations, these
classifications are over-simplified and contain only a part
of the truth. Nobody, has ever defined these two terms.
Unquestionably these terms imply a preponderance of Sanskrit
words in the former and of Persian words in the latter. It
is not difficult to know fairly precisely what was meant by
the term _munshi_ style as words of Perso-Arabic origin can be
counted and in each case statistics of the use of these words
definitely stated. The term _pandit_ style, however, is diffi-
cult to define with precision, because it is not easy to be
sure what is meant by Sanskrit words in this context. Not
all words of Sanskritic origin can be accepted as "Sanskrit"
words in this sense as the greater part of vocabulary of

Bengali is derived either directly or indirectly from Sanskrit.
From the very inception of Bengali literature Sanskrit has
acted as the paramount source of vigour for Bengali.   The
borrowing of the Sanskrit words was and still is a common
practice among the Bengali writers.   In order to understand
what is meant by "Sanskrit" words and their preponderance,
a classification of Bengali words is necessary.

The Prakrit grammarians, as well as the Dravidian
grammarians used the terms tatsama, tadbhava and deśī in
lexicography.   These terms have been accepted by the earlier
Bengali grammarians.   Dr. S.K. Chatterjee also adopted this
terminology with slight modifications.   Chatterjee classified
Bengali vocabulary into four elements (a) tatsama (b) tadbhava
(c) deśī (d) Videśī.[1]

Deśī words are defined as words of unknown origin.
Neither the Prakrit nor the Dravidian grammarians, have
clearly defined them.   According to the Prakrit grammarians
"words which have no connection with Sanskrit are Desi."[2]
Hemacandra, the compiler of the deśīnāmamālā, gave a wider
definition to this category: "words which are not derived

1. Chatterjee, S.K., The Origin and Development of the Bengali
   Language, University of Calcutta, 1926, p.189.
2. Deśīnāmamālā of Hemacandra, ed. with critical notes by R.
   Pischel.   2nd edition with introduction by P.V. Ramanujaswami,
   Poona, 1938, pp. 7-9.

from Sanskrit, (words) which though derived from Sanskrit,
are not found in that sense in the Sanskrit lexicons, (words)
which have changed their meaning in Prakrit, the change not
being due to the secondary or metaphorical use of words are
Deśī".[1]   He, himself, does not consistently adhere to the
definition he has given however.   He labels as Deśī, words
which seem to conflict with the terms of his definition.
Chatterjee defines deśī words as words which "cannot be
traced to Aryan roots and ... obviously were derived from
the pre-Aryan languages of the country Dravidian and Kòl".[2]
Since, however, Deśī words are comparatively few in number
and play no part in the present analysis, no further discussion
of them is necessary.   On the other hand Videśī words are
easy to recognize, since by definition they are of foreign
origin i.e. non-Sanskritic and non- Indian.   They include
Perso-Arabic words which will be considered later when _munshi_
style is discussed.

The two remaining categories, tatsama and tadbhava, must
now be considered.   They are, however, difficult to define.
Chatterjee summarises earlier definitions of tatsama and

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1. Deśīnāmamālā: op.cit.
        je lakkhaṇe ṇa siddhā ṇa pasiddhāsakkayāhihāṇesu
        ṇa ya gauṇa lakkhaṇāsattisaṃbhabā te ihā ṇibaddhā
     p.2.I.3.
2. Chatterjee: op.cit., pp. 191-2.

comments on them as follows: "By _tatsama_ the Indian grammarians (of Prakrit) meant only those words, in Prakrit, which were identical in form with Sanskrit e.g. "hari, sundara, kusuma, dēva, manda, cintā" etc. ...   In the modern employment of the term, _tatsama_ also includes the learned words introduced from classical Sanskrit into the Prakritic speech, after the latter became characterised as NIA.[1] The word tatsama has thus come to cover in NIA both the un-modified words exactly similar to Sanskrit, which formed a part of the speech from its birth, plus later arrivals from Sanskrit, as loan words (literary and other borrowings)".[2] He cites as examples,[3] _śmasāna_, _Lakṣmī_, _Vatsara_, _Matsya_, _āhvāna_ etc.

"The _tadbhava_ element", writes Chatterjee, "is the genuine folk or native element of MIA[4] and NIA.   It represents the bulk of words and forms derived from OIA[5] which underwent a natural modification through wear and tear of centuries, it forms the living and ever-moving stream of speech - its original waters, so to say, derived from its very source, to which the other elements are mere accretions".[6]   He cites

1. NIA means New Indo-Aryan.
2. Chatterjee: _op.cit._ p.189.
3. _Ibid._, p.200.
4. MIA = Middle Indo-aryan.
5. OIA = Old Indo-aryan.
6. Chatterjee _op.cit._ p.191.

examples as follows:[1]

Abhimanyu > *abhimannu > ahivanna> *ahianna> aihana> *aiana> āyānḍ
duhitā > *dihitā> dhitā > dhidā > *dhidā > *dhiā > dhia> jhia> jhī
upādhyāya> *ojjahāa> ōjhā

A further category has been added by Sir G.A. Grierson.
These are "the tatsamas which had become distorted in the
mouths of the Prakrit-speaking population, but which were
still unmistakably borrowed words. These are usually known
to European scholars as <u>Semi-tatsamas</u>. It is evident that,
in the natural course of events, the tendency must have been
for all Tatsamas to become semi-tatsamas, and for the latter
ultimately to become so degraded as to be indistinguishable
from <u>Tadbhavas</u>".[2] Chatterjee and other Bengali grammarians
have accepted this term translating it as <u>arddha-tatsama</u>.
Grierson cites an example of <u>āggā</u>⟨<u>ajmā</u>. Chatterjee gives
another example <u>cherādda</u>⟨<u>śrāddha</u>.

It is clear that if Chatterjee's definition of the tad-
bhava given above is accepted semi-tatsamas must be included
in the general category of <u>tadbhava</u> to the extent that they
have undergone "a natural modification through wear and tear
of centuries". Semi-tatsamas will therefore not be regarded
as a separate category from that of <u>tadbhava</u>.

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1. <u>Ibid</u>. pp. 198-99
2. Grierson, G.A., <u>Linguistic Survey of India</u>, Vol. I. Part I.
   Calcutta, 1927, p.127.

It is clear from what has already been said that tatsama words though derived from Sanskrit originals have undergone changes of form. These changes are not revealed by their orthography. It is very difficult to speak with any certainty about phonetic modification in MIA period to which Chatterjee refers,[1] as no first-hand reference is available of the phonetic situation in the earlier phases of the Bengali language. It is true, however, that the orthography can be used as a basis for limited phonological statements, provided we bear in mind that we are to some extent proceeding by speculation. Phonological change there must have been but it can not be reconstructed with certainty. There is some evidence with regard to the phonology of certain tatsama and tadbhava words which may be derived from early Bengali grammars.

The first known Bengali grammar was written in 1743 by a Portuguese missionary, Manoel Da Assumpçam. This book is important because it gives a Roman transcription of a large number of Bengali words.[2] Reference to certain examples and the phonological conclusions drawn from them must suffice

1. Chatterjee, op.cit. p.189.
2. Dr. S.K. Chatterjee has written an introduction to a modern edition of this book and has discussed the problems of pronunciation in the late 18th century. Vide Manoel's grammar, op.cit. pp.28-40.

for the present.

(i) The vowel a whether graphically represented by the character অ or inherent is transliterated by o in most cases, e.g. debota (devatā), xotontro (svatantra). The vowel a in the initial position has also been transliterated in o, e.g. odibax (adhivāsa).

This system of transliteration is not sufficient grounds for the formation of a precise phonetic statement about the pronunciation of the vowel a but it would appear that the sound change which in modern Bengali is represented in the pronunciation of this vowel as ɔ/o had either already taken place or was beginning to take place by Manoel's time. The use of vowel o indicates a close back rounded pronunciation as against an open central pronunciation which is a feature of the other north Indian languages, e.g. Hindi.

(ii) Specimens such as xocol (sakala), xex (śeṣa), nazon (nācana) suggest that the final vowel which was pronounced in Sanskrit was no longer pronounced in Bengali in words of this type.[1] Halhed's transcriptions of maanoosh

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1. "According to the Hindu mode of dividing syllables, each syllable must end in a vowel, or visarga or anusvāra, except at the end of a word; and as ordinary Hindu usage does not divide the words of a sentence in writing, a final consonant is combined into one syllable with the initial vowel or consonant of the following word, so that a syllable ends in a consonant only at the end of the sentence." Perry, E.D., A Sanskrit Primer, (1855) This quotation is from the edition 1950 p.2.

(mānuṣa), <u>joogal</u> (yugala), <u>aashash</u> (āśvāsa) confirm this feature too.

(iii) Manoel's transcription does not differentiate between long and short i and long and short u. He writes axi for both āsi (I come) and āśī (eighty) and putro for putra and purno for pūrṇa. It clearly suggests that there was no distinction of long and short i and u in pronunciation at the time of Manoel. This is also true for modern Bengali pronunciation.

(iv) Manoel does not distinguish in his transcription between ṇ and n but writes n for both. Similarly all three sibilant characters s, ś, ṣ are transliterated x. This confusion suggests that to his ear there was no difference in pronunciation between n and ṇ and s, ś, ṣ. It is probable that Manuel's failure to distinguish these nasals and sibilants was not due to any defect in his hearing,[1] since in fact his observations correspond with modern Bengali pronunciation.

(v) The consonants j and y are both transcribed z which allowing for the dialect use of z as against j corresponds with modern pronunciation.

The examples given above include both <u>tatsama</u> and <u>tadbhava</u>

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1. Halhed, <u>op.cit.</u> p.13. Halhed also noticed that the use of ṇ "is confined to the Sanskrit, and it is never distinguished from ন <u>no</u> by the Bengaleese".

words. Manoel's transcription which is consistently maintained throughout the book suggests that phonological change had taken place in words in both categories.

There is evidence, therefore, to justify the conclusion that tatsama words had undergone some measure of phonetic change though the changes are not apparent from the orthography of these words. Further light on such phonological changes which are not revealed in the orthography is shed by certain comments made by Sir W. Jones on the pronunciation of Sanskrit in Bengal at the end of the 18th century.[1]

Jones writes that the "Nágari letter is called Acár (a kār) but is pronounced in Bengal like our fourth short vowel (i.e. 0)".[2] This corresponds with the conclusions drawn from Manoel's transcriptions. Jones also noticed that Bengalis do not distinguish the unvoiced unaspirated palatal and the high-front vowel (J and Y). "Yug or junction in Bánáres, is Jug in Bengal." The bilabial plosive "b" and the bilabial semivowel "v" are noted by him as being the same in Bengali pronunciation." It (v) cannot easily be pronounced in this manner by the inhabitants of Bengal and some other

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1. Sir William Jones, A Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatic words in Roman letters. The Works of Sir W. Jones in 13 volumes. Vol. iii. London 1807, pp. 253-318.
2. Ibid. p.291.

provinces, who confounded it with ba, from which it ought carefully to be distinguished ...".[1]   He also noticed that the Bengalis do often, "very inaccurately" confound the first sibilant "with the second and even with the third".[2]

These comments of Jones make it clear that even Sanskrit suffered phonological change in Bengal and clearly such change cannot be deduced from the orthography which apart from the use of Bengali as against the Devanāgarī character is the same in Calcutta as in Banaras.   The position then with regard to phonological change which by conclusion from Manoel's system of transcription is known to have taken place in Bengali words is therefore the same in respect of Sanskrit word proper and tatsama words in Bengali.   The distinction therefore between tatsama words and tadbhava words must rest solely on orthography.   Reference to phonological change cannot in the circumstances be regarded as relevant.   In spite of the fact that the graphic changes observable in tadbhava words are due to spelling adaptation following on phonological change, such phonological change is not observable in the orthography of tatsama words.

This conclusion with regard to tatsama words confirms

1. Ibid. p.290.
2, Ibid. p.291.

the definition made by the grammarian Beames who states
that "Tatsamas are those words which are used in the modern
languages in exactly the same form as they were in Sanskrit
such as दर्शन , राजा , कवि , The only change
which the words have undergone is that in pronunciation;
the final <u>ah</u>, <u>am</u> of the Sanskrit masculine and neuter are
rejected, and we have <u>darshan</u>, <u>nimantran</u> for darśanam,
nimantranam".[1]

The disappearance of terminal inflections in <u>tatsama</u>
words is important as the presence or absence of such in-
flection is the only orthographic means we have for dis-
tinguishing between a Sanskrit word proper and a Bengali
tatsama derived from it.

It is now possible to define what is meant by Sanskrit
words in written Bengali. They include (a) all <u>tatsama</u>
words and (b) Sanskrit loan words which may have the same
form as the <u>tatsama</u> but which had not at the time of writing
been accepted as part of the Bengali lexicons. It may be
said that category (a) are Sanskrit words which a Bengali
feels to be Bengali and category (b) are Sanskrit words which
a Bengali feels to be still Sanskrit and not Bengali. In
many cases it is impossible to know what a Bengali scholar in

1. Beames, John., <u>A Comparative Grammar of Modern Aryan Lang-
uages of India</u>, Vol. I. London, 1872, pp. 11-12.

1800 A.D. felt about whether certain words are Sanskrit
or Bengali.   One's conclusions must rest on what the modern
Bengali scholar feels about them.   It is safe to conclude,
however, that since the modern Bengali feels a difference
between the two categories, a similar difference must have
been felt 150 years ago.   Whether or not the Sanskrit vocabulary
can be divided into categories (a) and (b) with certainty in
all individual cases, is immaterial, since both categories
fall under the general heading of Sanskrit and therefore
are to be regarded as contribuory to what was once known
as the pandit style.

The distinction therefore between categories (a) and (b)
will only be made in the case of certain category (b) words
to which attention is particularly to be drawn, otherwise
the term tatsama may be regarded as covering both.   It will
be noted that tadbhava words are not be regarded as Sanskritic
in this analysis of vocabulary.

<p style="text-align:center">III</p>

In order to understand clearly what is meant by the
pandit style two passages will be analysed in detail.   The
"Hitopadeśa" was translated by Goloknāth Śarmā in 1801 and
also by Mrityuñjay Bidyālaṃkār in 1808.   The language of both

these writers will be composed with the original Sanskrit.
The first passage is from the Sanskrit text, the second is
from Goloknāth and the last is from Mṛityuñjaý.

Passage I. (i) asti bhāgīrathī tīre paṭaliputra nāmadheyaṃ
nagaraṃ tatra sarvasvāmiguṇopetaś sudaraśonāma
narapatirāsīt sa bhūpatirekadā kenāpi paṭhya-
mānaṃ ślokadvayaṃ śuśrāba.[1]

(ii) kona nadīr tīrete pātaṇiputra nāmadheýa ek
nagar āche se sthāne sarbasvāmiguṇopeta
sudarśana nāme rājā chila. sei rājā ek kāle
kono kāhār mukhe dui śloka sunilen.

(iii) bhāgīrathītīre pāṭaliputra nāme ek nagar
āche sekhāne sakal rājaguṇ biśiṣṭa sudarśan
nāme rājā chilen se bhūpati ek samaýe kāhāro
kartṛik paṭhyamān ślokadvaý śrabaṇ karilen.

The second and third passages are analysed in numerical
order by reference to the Sanskrit original.
(a) asti bhāgīrathītīre. Kono nadīr tīre. Bhāgīrathītīre.
Goloknath paraphrases in Bengali. He resolves the Sanskrit

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1. Hitopadeśa by Francis Johnson, London, 1868.
> There was a city called Pataliputra on the bank of the
> Bhagirathi. There was a king Sudarsana by name, who was
> endowed with all lordly qualities. One day that king
> heard two slokas recited by somebody.

compound, which is a 6th tatpuruṣa, by using a genitive case
form nadīr, "of river". His phrase means on the bank of a
river. He omits the name of the river. Mṛityuñjaý re-
produces this phrase in Bengali. The use of such compounds
is very common in certain Bengali styles but they are never-
theless felt to be Sanskritic. In colloquial Bengali the
compound would have been resolved into a two word phrase
bhāgīrathīr tīre the former word having a genitive inflection.

(b) pāṭaliputranāmadheyam. pāṭaṇiputra nāmadheya.pāṭaliputra
nāme.

Goloknāth reproduces the Sanskrit phrase. The spelling
pāṭaṇiputra is not necessarily a spelling error as l and n
are frequently interchangeable in Bengali and Goloknāth's
pronunciation of pāṭali might quite easily have been pāṭani too.
Mṛityuñjaýa translates it into Bengali as pāṭaliputra nāme.

(c) tatra. sesthāne. sekhāne.

Goloknāth uses a Bengali phrase. The noun sthāne has the
Bengali locative inflection. The word sthān however, is a
tatsama i.e. it has the same ortho-graphic form as the Sanskrit
word sthāna, "place". Mṛityuñjaý uses the common Bengali
adverb sekhāne, "there".

(d) sudarśano nāmā. sudarśana nāme. sudarśana nāme.

Goloknāth resolves this bahubrīhi compound by using a common
Bengali form nāme, "by name". It is interesting that in this

instance he was able to translate from Sanskrit to Bengali
but had not chosen to do so in the case of pātali putra
nāmadheyam. Mrityuñjay translates it in the same way as
Goloknāth.

(e) sarvasvāmīguṇopeta. sarbasvāmīguṇopeta. sakala rājaguṇ
biśiṣṭa.

Goloknāth transliterates this phrase, meaning "endowed with
all lordly qualities". Mrityuñjay translates it but his
translation is not so very different from the original.
sarva and sakala are both Sanskrit words meaning "all",
instead of svāmīguṇa he has rājaguṇa, instead of upeta he has
biśiṣṭa. The Sanskrit compound is written as one word,
however, Mrityuñjay divides his compound into three words,
using no case inflections to indicate the syntactic relation
between them. Nevertheless the three words are incomprehensi-
ble unless construed as members of a single compound. Modern
colloquial Bengali would have devoted a whole sentence to
the translation of this epithet. All that can be said here
is that biśiṣṭa, a tatsama word, was probably more widely
understood in Mrityuñjay's time than upeta.

(f) bhūpatirekadā rājā ekkāle bhūpati ek samaye.
Goloknāth replaces bhūpati by rājā, "king", though it also is
a tatsama. Mrityuñjay retains bhūpati which has an undoubted
Sanskrit flavour. He translates ekadā as ek samaye. Both

these words are tatsama but they have been naturalised
in Bengali.   Goloknāth translates <u>ekadā</u> into Bengali <u>ek kāle</u>,
also tatsama.

(g) <u>kenāpi pathyamānam</u>.   <u>kono kāhāro mukhe</u>. <u>kāhāro kartr̥ik</u>
<u>pathyamān</u>.

Though Goloknāth's phrase seems to be Bengali, it is clearly
influenced by the Sanskrit. <u>kono kāhār</u> would not be admissible
in modern Bengali and would not probably have been in general
use in Goloknāth's time either.   It seems to be an attempt
to reproduce in Bengali an equivalent of <u>kena api</u>.   Mr̥ityuñjaẏ
uses <u>kāhāro</u>, a common Bengali form, meaning "anybody".   He
uses <u>kartr̥k</u>, which is a Sanskrit word, used in certain literary
styles of written Bengali, as a post-position only.   It has
a definite Sanskrit flavour.   Mr̥ityuñjaẏ retains <u>pathyamān</u>,
a Sanskrit passive participle while Goloknāth replaced it by
a common usage, <u>mukhe</u>.

(h) <u>ślokadvayam śuśrāva dui śloka śunilen ślokadvaẏ śraban</u>
<u>karilen</u>.

Goloknāth translates <u>ślokadvayam</u> into Bengali by <u>dui śloka</u>.
Modern Bengali would not have used the numeral without a
classifier.   It is probable that in ordinary speech Goloknāth
would have said <u>duiṭi ślok</u> as in modern Bengali.   Mr̥ityūñjaẏ
retains the whole phrase except for the accusative case suffix.
In ordinary simple Bengali the word <u>śunilen</u>, used by Goloknāth,

would be preferred to the verbal phrase <u>śraban</u> <u>karilen</u> (made
a hearing) used by Mṛityuñjaý.

Passage II.

(i) asti godāvarītīre biśālaḥ śālmalītaruḥ tatra
nānādigdeśādāgatya rātrau pakṣiṇaḥ nivasanti atha
kadācidvasannayāṃ rajanyāmastācalacūḍhāvalambini
bhagavati kumudinīnāyake candramasi laghupatanaka
nāmā vāyasaḥ prabudhaḥ san kṛitāntamiva dvitīyaṃ
nāyantaṃ pāśahastaṃ vyādham opaśyat.[1]

(ii) godābarī nāmete nadītīre ek prakāṇḍa śālmalī bṛikṣa
āche sei gācher upar nānādig haite pakṣirā āsiýā
rajanīte bās kare tārpar kadācit ek din rātri
abaśeṣete candra asta haitechen emata kālete ek
byādh yamer sadṛiśa jāl daṛi haste kariýā āsiteche.

(iii) godābarīr tīre ek baṛa śālmalī bṛikṣa thāke.
nānādigdiś haite pakṣirā āsiýā ei bṛikṣe rātrikāle
bās kare. anantar konadin rātri abasannā haile
kumudinī nāýak candra astācalacuṛābalambīni haile
arthāt asta gele laghupatanak nāme kāk jagrat
haiýā dekhila ek byādh dvitīýa yamer nyāý bhramaṇ
kariteche.

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1. There was a big tree on the bank of the Godavari. Birds used
to come from various quarters and stay there during the night.
Once, when the night was on the wane, and the lotus-loving moon
hung over Mount Asta (setting mountain), a crow, called Lag-
hupatanaka, awoke and saw a hunter with nets in his hands.
He (that hunter) looked like a second king of Death.

(a) <u>asti</u> <u>āche</u> <u>thāke</u>

Goloknāth's translation of <u>asti</u> by <u>āche</u> is gramatically correct, though stylistically not good Bengali. The verb <u>āche</u> is generally dropped in the context of story-telling. Mṛityuñjaý has wrongly translated it by <u>thāke</u> which means "lives".

(b) <u>godāvarītīre godābarī māmete nadītīre godābarīr tīre</u>.

Goloknāth inserts the word <u>nāmete</u>, "by name", and uses a compound <u>nadītīre</u>. Mṛityuñjaý translates the Sanskrit compound, using a genitive inflection on <u>godābarī</u>.

(c) <u>Biśāla śālmalī taruḥ prakāṇḍa śālmalī bṛikṣa baṛa śālmalī</u> <u>bṛikṣa</u>

Goloknāth substitutes <u>prakāṇḍa</u>, big and <u>bṛikṣa</u>, tree for <u>biśāla</u> and <u>taruḥ</u> respectively. Mṛityuñjaý uses the common Bengali word <u>baṛa</u> for <u>biśāla</u> and like Goloknāth uses <u>bṛikṣa</u> for <u>taruḥ</u>.

(d) <u>nānādigdeśādāgatya</u>. <u>nānādig haite āsiẏ́ā</u>. <u>nānā dig diś</u> <u>haite āsiẏ́ā</u>.

Goloknāth resolves this compound with a common Bengali phrase. Mṛityuñjaý retains <u>nānādig</u> and substitutes <u>diś</u> for <u>deś</u> and like Goloknāth resolves the compound with a post-positional phrase <u>haite āsiẏ́ā</u>.

(e) <u>Rātrau pakṣiṇoḥ nivasanti. pakṣīrā ... rajanīte bās kare</u>. <u>pakṣīrā ... rātrikāle bās kare</u>.

Goloknāth substitutes <u>rātri</u> by another tatsama word <u>rajanī</u>, night. Mṛityuñjaý uses <u>rātrikāl</u> with locative case-ending. Both of them retain <u>pakṣinah</u> except for the substititution of the Bengali for the Sanskrit nominative plural inflection. Both of them translate <u>nivasanti</u> by a verbal phrase, <u>bās kare</u>.

(f) <u>atha kadācit</u>. <u>tārpar kadācit</u>. <u>anantar kona din</u>.

Goloknāth transliterates <u>kadācit</u> and uses <u>tārpar</u>, "then",

for <u>atha</u>. Mrityuñjay uses <u>anantar</u>, followed later by another

Sanskrit word for <u>atha</u>. Thus he adds a more Sanskritic

flavour to his construction. Unlike Goloknāth however he

replaces <u>kadācit</u> by a simple Bengali phrase <u>kona din</u>, "once".

(g) <u>avasannāyām rajanyām</u>. <u>rātri abaśeṣete</u>. <u>rātri abasannā haile</u>.

Goloknāth retains <u>rātri</u>, "night", and substitutes <u>abaśeṣa</u>, "end",

for <u>avasannā</u>, meaning literally "tired". Thus he avoids the

original Sanskrit metaphor. Mrityuñjay, however, keeps the

metaphor, retaining the <u>abasannā</u> and <u>rātri</u> of the original.

(h) <u>astācalacurāvalambī</u>. <u>asta haitechen</u>. <u>astācalacurābalambī</u>.

Goloknāth omits the whole metaphorical phrase, meaning, "on

the crest of the Setting mountain," rendering its sense only

by simple Bengali phrase, <u>asta haitechen</u>, "was setting".

Mrityuñjay transliterates the whole phrase and then adds the

explanatory simple verbal phrase <u>asta gele</u>, "when it had set".

(i) <u>bhagavatikumudinināyakacandram</u>. <u>candra</u>. <u>kumudinī nāyak</u>

<u>candra</u>.

Goloknāth retains only the last word without inflection.

Mrityuñjay retains the whole expression with the exception of

the first word.

(j) <u>laghupatanakanāma vāyasaḥ prabuddhaḥ</u>. x. <u>laghupatanaka</u>

<u>jāgrat haiyā</u>.

Goloknāth does not translate this phrase.   Thus his trans-
lation of the whole passage becomes abrupt and ambigious.
Mrityuñjay replaces vāyasa, "crow", by the common Bengali
word, kāk, and uses the verbal phrase, jāgrat haiyā, "having
awakened", to translate the participle prabuddha, "awakened".
(k) kritāntamivadvitīyam. yamer sadriśa. dvitīya yamer nyāya.
Goloknāth substitutes the well-known Sanskrit proper name
of the god of Death, Yama, for Kritānta, "Death", and the
Sanskrit word sadriśa for iva, "like", and retains dvitīyam,
"second".   Mrityuñjay uses yama and translates iva with a
common Sanskrit expression nyāy.   He retains dvitīya, which
in this context has no tadbhava equivalent.
(1) āyāntampāśahastam. jāl dari haste kariyā āsiteche. bhraman
kariteche.
Goloknāth replaces pāśa, "net", by jāl, itself a tatsama word
though more common than pāśa. He uses hasta and āsiteche, a
common Bengali verb, for āyantam. Mrityuñjay translates
āyantam as bhraman kariteche, literally, "making a walk", which
is Sanskritic and not very appropriate.
(m) vyādham apaśyat. byādha. dekhila ek byādh.
Goloknāth retains byādha, "hunter", but does not translate
the verb apaśyat, "saw", owing to the omission of its subject
laghupatanaka etc. referred to earlier.   Mrityuñjay retains
vyādha and translates apaśyat by dekhila, "saw".

It is clear from the above analysis that some words
are retained by Goloknāth which are rejected by Mṛityuñjaý
and the latter accepts words which are translated into tadbhava
Bengali by the former.   They were both uncertain about the
correct Bengali equivalents of Sanskrit words or if they
knew them, they hesitated to use them, with the result that
Sanskrit words and conjuncts were transliterated in Bengali,
with the mere ommission of final inflections.   A count of
the total number of words, used in each passage, both original
and translation, and of the tatsama and tadbhava words used
yield the following statistics.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">Passage I</td><td colspan="3" align="center">Passage II</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Origi-
nal</td><td>Golok-
nāth</td><td>Mṛityuñ-
jaý</td><td>Origi-
nal</td><td>Golok-
nāth</td><td>Mṛityuñ-
jaý</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total no.
words</td><td>16</td><td>25</td><td>24</td><td>24</td><td>37</td><td>44</td></tr>
<tr><td>No. of Ts.
words</td><td>16</td><td>16</td><td>18</td><td>24</td><td>24</td><td>31</td></tr>
<tr><td>No. of Tb.
words</td><td>0</td><td>9</td><td>6</td><td>0</td><td>13</td><td>13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Percentage
of Ts.
words</td><td>100</td><td>64</td><td>75</td><td>100</td><td>64</td><td>70</td></tr>
<tr><td>Percentage
of Tb.
words</td><td>0</td><td>36</td><td>25</td><td>0</td><td>36</td><td>30</td></tr>
</table>

A further analysis has been made of longer extracts from the translations of the Hitopadeśa (The introductory story) of Goloknāth and Mṛityuñjay and from the Pratāpāditya Caritra of Rāmrām Basu and the Dialogues of Carey. The number of Proper names occurring is stated but ignored in computing the percentages. Goloknāth's passage will be referred to as Book A, Mṛityuñjay's as Book B, Rāmrām Basu's passage (first seven pages of Pratāpāditya Caritra) as Book C and Carey's passage (first two dialogues) as Book D.

	Book A	Book B	Book C	Book D
Total no. of words	539	788	346	131
No. of different words used.	265	364	192	71
Total no. of Proper names	5	6	40	2
No. of Perso-Arabic words	0	0	30	50
No. of Tadbhava words	214	302	133	54
No. of Tatsama words	320	480	143	25
Percentage of Ts. words	59.36	60.91	41.32	19.07
Percentage of Tb. words	37.82	37.86	38.43	41.22
Percentage of Perso-Arabic words	0	0	8.67	38.16

It is interesting to note that of all the writers listed
Carey uses more _tadbhava_ and less _tatsama_ words than any of
the Bengali writers. Higher currency of Perso-Arabic words
is due to some extent to the fact that the Dialogue includes
one muslim speaker. The percentage of Perso-Arabic words
is not significant for comparative purposes as the works of
Goloknāth and Mṛityuñjaý, which have been selected for analysis,
are translations from Sanskrit and therefore unlikely to contain
any Perso-Arabic words. It is interesting to note, however,
that in the case of Rāmrām Basu the ratio of Perso-Arabic
words to _tatsama_ words is 1 : 5. More is said on this point
later but the facts as they stand here seem to lend a little
support to the argument put forward by H.P. Sastri and other
critics that Rāmrām Basu wrote a Persianised Bengali.

From all these facts it becomes clear that the percentage
of _tatsama_ words were very high in certain styles of Fort
William College and these are popularly called the pandit style.
In actual fact these terms, pandit style, and, munshi style,
do not necessarily refer to any linguistic features of style,
rather they imply the profession of the writer of a particular
book, whether he is a pandit i.e. a teacher of Sanskrit or a
munshi, i.e. a teacher of Persian. The writers of Fort

William College, however, were all influenced either by
Sanskrit, Persian or English. It is not therefore right
to classify the styles of Fort William College writers into
two simple categories. It is proposed here to analyse the
influences of Sanskrit, Persian and English at the levels
of vocabulary and syntax.

IV

It was noticed in the above analysis that the influence
of Sanskrit at the level of vocabulary was very strong.
The writers of this period merely often transliterated the
Sanskrit words or compounds when they failed to discover
suitable Bengali equivalents. But sometimes they went
further and used Sanskrit words even in their inflected forms.
Examples are given below:-

(a) Goloknāth uses bipadi dhairya, "patience in danger."
bipadi is not a Bengali form because i as a locative case is
unknown to Bengali. It is a verbatim transliteration of
the Sanskrit phrase, bipadi dhairya.

(b) Goloknāth also used the form kumārā, "princes", which
is the plural form of kumārāḥ in Sanskrit but not a Bengali form.

(c) Goloknāth uses conjunctive particles in the Sanskrit
manner, i.e. sei pāpe āmār anekgulin putra mariyāche ebam jāẏāo.
Due to that sin I have lost my many sons and wife.

The underlined part of the sentence is a verbatim translation
of "putra anekaśo mritadāraśca". Goloknāth uses o enclitically
like Sanskrit ca. In Bengali the word o in the meaning 'and'
is not used enclitically.

(d) Included amongst words, borrowed from Sanskrit, are
a number which contain gender suffixes. In modern Bengali
there is no formal gender-concord between adjective and noun,
even when the noun denotes a female but certain words have
been taken over from Sanskrit with the retention of their
feminine suffixes e.g. kumārī as against kumāra.

It is probable that gender concord was unknown to
colloquial Bengali at the beginning of the 19th century.
Mrityuñjaý, the best Sanskrit scholar of all the writers of
this period, is in doubt as to the treatment of words which
have feminine suffixes. The occurrence of both prathama
puttalikā and prathamā puttalikā (both meaning, "the first
doll") karuṇa svar and karunā svar (both meaning "a pathetic
tone") is proof of his uncertainty. It seems reasonable to
suppose that in phrases like rātri abasannā and mahatī pūjā
are borrowed whole from Sanskrit and therefore constitute
Sanskrit loan-words. It is unlikely that the presence of
feminine suffixes ī and ā can be instanced as examples of
gender concord in Bengali.

Sanskrit influence is also perceptible at the level of

syntax.   The Bengali writers were in difficulty with re-
gard to the translation of compounds and word-order.   They
often transliterated compounds, merely separating the com-
pounds in their version e.g. Sanskrit compound kumudinīnāyaka-
candram (Moon, the lover of Lotus) is transliterated by
Mṛityuñjaý as kumudinī nāýak candra.   The components are
written separately but the meaning is not clear unless the
three components are taken as one syntactic whole.   Another
method of translating compounds was to resolve the compounds
into their vyāsavākya, which is the traditional Indian method
of analysing compounds.   This method is very common in the
styles of the pandits, as the following examples reveal:

(i) nītiśāstrete biśārad ye muṣikarāj (Goloknāth)

In philosophy scholar which king of rats

The king of rats who is well-versed in philosophy.

(ii) āmāke naṣṭa karite udyata ye prabhu (Haraprasād)

me   kill   to do ready which lord

The lord who is about to kill me.

(iii) bidyāhīn ye manuṣya se paśu (Mṛityuñjaý)

illiterate which man he beast.

The man who is illiterate is a beast.

The structure of these constructions is

Noun / noun-phrase + relative pronoun ye + noun

In actual fact, ye, the Bengali relative pronoun, should be

used in the initial position of a construction.   The ante-
cedent relative pronoun construction is not permissible in
Bengali.   These constructions smack strongly of Sanskrit in-
fluence and are not preferred in modern Bengali.

Experimentation towards the realisation of a literary
prose-style was still uncertain in respect to vocabulary as
well as sentence-structure and word-order.   Blind imitation
of Sanskrit word order resulted in confusion and ambiguity.
The following example illustrates this point clearly.   Goloknāth
writes,

ṛiṇakartā pitā śatruḥ mātā apriyabādinī bhāryā rūpabatī
putra apaṇḍita

It is extremely difficult to understand the meaning of this
Bengali sentence unless one knows the following Sanskrit
couplet.

ṛiṇkartā pitāśatrurmātāca vyābhicārinī
bhāryā rupavatī śatruḥ putraḥ śatrurapaṇḍitaḥ
(A father who incurs debt is an enemy and (so is) a
mother who has a bad character.   A beautiful wife is
an enemy and (so is) a son who is uneducated)

One more Sanskrit passage and its Bengali translation is con-
sidered below.

tasyām candanadāso nāma banig mahādhano nivasaṇti. teṇa

ca paścime vayasi vartamāneṇa kāmādhiṣṭhitacetasā
dhanadarpāllīlāvatī nāmā banikputrī parinītā. sā
ca makarketonvrcvai jayantiva/yauvanvatī babhuva.[1]
$\overset{nava}{}$

    tāhāte candanadās nāmete ek banik mahā dhanabān tini
bās karen tini śeṣ daśāy kamātur haiȳā dhanadarpe ek
banikputrī lilābatī nāmete tāhāke bibāha karilen. sā
nabayaubanā bijaȳ baijaȳanti hailā.

tāhāte is the translation of tasyām, "there", but it is a wrong
use here. The imitation of Sanskrit word-order becomes per-
ceptible in the Bengali construction ek banik mahādhanabān,
"a very rich merchant". In Bengali the adjective stands
before the noun but the present writer has not followed this
common practice because he was imitating the Sanskrit word-
order. The most interesting constructions in this passage
are the following:

    ek banik ... tini bās karen

    one merchant he lives. (He who is merchant lives)

    lilābati nāmete tāhāke bibāha karilen

    Lilābati by name her married (He married her whose name

    was Lilābati)

_____

1. There lived a very wealthy merchant, Candandasa by name. Being
   full of lust and proud of wealth he married Lilabati, a girl
   of the merchant class, in his old age. (By and by) she be-
   came full of youthful charm like the triumph of the Cupid.

This type of construction is called <u>Cross-reference</u> by the linguists.[1] "A substantive may be first named and then referred to by a pronoun pleonastically: <u>The Queen she is about to speak</u>." But in Bengali this process of cross-reference is not permissible.

The last sentence of the passage does not contain a single Bengali word except the last word which is a verbal form. The first word <u>sā</u>, she, is a Sanskrit form and never occurs in Bengali.

These examples must suffice to illustrate the depth of Sanskrit influence during this period. The Pandit style is the direct result of this influence which "induced a fashion" writes Grierson, "of using Tatsamas with which the wildest Johnsonese may almost be compared as a specimen of Saxon English".[2]

V

Persian, the court language of the period, had considerable, stylistic influence on certain writers of Fort William College. Its influence on the vocabulary is universally acknowledged but its influence on the structure of

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1. Potter, S., <u>Modern Linguistics</u>, Andre Deutsch, 1957, p.121.
2. Grierson, <u>op.cit.</u> p.129.

Bengali has been little discussed, if indeed noticed at all. The most interesting effect of this influence is the use of the conjunctive particles <u>O</u> and <u>ebaṃ</u>. Tagore thought that the profusion of these two particles in the Bengali writings of the Fort William period was due to the influence of English.[1] But it is more probable that the influence came from Persian. In English one writes, "ministers, scholars and teachers" but in Persian one writes, "ministers and scholars and teachers". In <u>Totāitihās</u>, a book written by Munshi Caṇḍīcaran, the latter pattern has been followed. The following example from Ann K.S. Lambton's Persian Grammar explains this pattern.[2]

If a noun is qualified by several adjectives these may be united by <u>va</u>'and' e.g.

"<u>adame huʃyar va layeq va sabburi bud,</u>

He was an intelligent and worthy and patient man, instead of

adame huʃyare layeqe va sabburi bud."

Caṇḍīcaraṇ writes as follows:

1. <u>pracur dhan o aiśvarya ebaṃ bistar sainya</u>

(enough money and wealth and numerous soldiers)

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1. Tagore, R.N., <u>Śabda Tattva</u>, (1935) pp.160-64.
2. Lambton: <u>Persian Grammar</u>, Cambridge 1953, p.139.

2. pradhān lokar mantrī o paṇḍit ebaṃ śikṣāguru ār
   phakir

   (respectable citizens and ministers and scholars
   and teachers and faqirs)

3. dibā rātri o prāte o Sandhyāte (in day, night and
   morning and evening)

Fortunately these sentences can be compared with the original
Persian text, Tooti Nameh.[1]   The phrases are as follows:

1. dāšt basyār māl va mātaʿ va basā laškar va ʾasākar
   va fauj[2]

   [(he) has good condition and wealth and men and
   troops and soldiers.]

2. amīrān va vazīrān va dānāyān va fāzlān va ustādān[3]

   (Omrahs and Viziers and wise men and learned men and
   teachers).

3. rūz va šab va subh va šām[4]

   (day and night, morning and evening)

It is clear from the above examples that these sentence struc-
tures are influenced by Persian. Persian va (and) has been
translated into Bengali by o, ebaṃ and ār. Caṇḍīcaraṇ uses
ebaṃ as copulative also e.g. laiyā yāo ebaṃ chedan kara, (take

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1. The Tooti Nameh with an English translation, 1801, Calcutta,
   printed London.
2. Ibid. p.10.
3. Ibid. p.11.
4. Ibid. p.10.

away and kill).   In a normal modern Bengali construction a
participle is used instead of a conjunction.   But this type
of construction as found in Caṇḍicaraṇ is quite common in the
writings of this period.   This might have been due to English
influence, but it is equally probable that it is due to
Persian.   Lambton has given the following examples:[1]

 "amad va aẕ ma xoda haf eẕi kard, he came and said

 goodbye to us."

Caṇḍicaraṇ has translated the Persian phrase <u>marā zūd babarī va</u>
<u>bakuśī</u>[2] into <u>laiỹā ỹāo ebaṃ chedan kara</u>.

VI

It has been pointed out that Carey took the lead in
translating the Bible into Bengali and that he was helped by
Rāmrām Basu and other scholars.   It is not surprising that
Carey's Bengali has an English flavour in respect of both its
word-collocations and sentence-structures.   It must be
remembered that there was no prose at that time and it is
therefore not to be wondered at that Rāmrām Basu and the
others tended to take Carey's Bengali translation as their
own model.   The only Bengali they knew was the poetry of the
medieval period and the Bengali of everyday speech which at

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1. Lambton: <u>op.cit.</u> p.139.
2. The Tooti Nameh: <u>op.cit.</u> p.31.

that time was considered unsuitable for literary and
scholarly purposes.   The influence of English is very strong
in the Bengali writings of this period.

The following features are frequent and important.

(I) <u>Sentence-structure</u>:

The typical English sentence-structure is Subject+Verb+
Object/Adverbial Adjunct.   The corresponding model in
Bengali is Subject+Object+Verb.   The following examples show
how Carey and Rāmrām Basu adopted the English rather than the
Bengali model.

(a) <u>Carey</u>:

(i) īśvar   sṛijan karilen   svarga o pṛithibī
     God   created   heaven and earth

(ii) tini   trān kariben   tāhār lokerdigake
     He   will save   his people

(iii) tumi   rākhibā   tāhār nām yeśu
     You   will make   his name   Jesus.

(b) <u>Rāmrām Basu</u>:

(i) rājārā   pāti likhilen   tāhārdigake
     Kings   letter wrote   to them

(ii) rājā   gati karilen   sesthāne
     King   proceded   to that place.

It will also be noticed that these writers accepted the
English sentence-structure of subject+verb+prepositional
phrase e.g. He went into the room. The English phrase struc-
ture of preposition + noun is replaced however by the corre-
sponding Bengali structure noun + post-position. The follow-
ing are examples:

    (a) Carey:

        (i) tini   tran kariben   tāhār lokerdigake

            He   will save   his   people

            tāhārder pāp haite

            from their sins.

        (ii) Herod rājā ei kathā śuniñā udbignita chila ebaṃ

            Herod, the king knowing the news was troubled and

            sakal yirosālem tāhār sahit

            all Jerusalem with him.

    (b) Rāmrām Basu:

        (i) nāmila   parbat haite

            came down from the hill

        (ii) ānilen   tāhār gaŕer madhye

            brought   into his fort.

(II) Antecedent and Relative pronoun:

A typical English usage in the case of Relative clauses
is that the subordinate relative clause following its ante-

cedent e.g. The man who came yesterday. Bengali usage is quite different. The subordinate relative clause precedes the main clause e.g. ye lok kāl esechila se (which man yesterday came he). Carey and his associates followed the English pattern.

(a) Carey:

(i) saharer ek nārī   ye   haila pāpinī

     town's one woman   who   was a sinner

     one woman of the town who was a sinner

(ii) śiṣyerā anuyog karila se lokke yāhārā ānila tāhārdigake

     disciples scolding made that man who brought them

     The disciples scolded those who brought them.

(b) Rāmrām Basu:

(i) rājā pratāpāditya   yini   bās karilen ... dhumghāṭe

     King Pratapaditya   who   live   in Dhumghat

(ii) cākar lokerā   yāhārā e subājāter biṣay jñāta

     servants   who of this province informed

     servants who are informed of this province.

(c) Caṇḍīcaraṇ

(i) bandhu tāhāke bali ye duḥsamaye upakār kare

     friend him   I call who in bad time helps

     I call him a friend who helps in bad times.

(d) Mrityuñjay

(i) oi rāṇīr putra jāhaṅgīr yini ihār par bādśāh haiben

     that queen's son Jahangir who after him will be the king.

(III) <u>Use of "and"</u>

The English use of <u>and</u> as a coordinative clause conjunction is very common particularly in Biblical English. Such use of "and" is alien to modern Bengali either written or spoken, for instance, the English "<u>come here and sit down</u>" is in Bengali <u>ekhāne ese basa</u>, "having come here sit down." The words <u>ebaṃ</u> and <u>o</u> are frequently used in the writings of Carey and his assistants as Bengali equivalents of "and".

(a) <u>Carey</u>:

(i) cule mochāila tāhā   ebaṃ   cumban karila

    with hair wiped it   and   kiss   made

    (she) wiped out with hair and kissed it.

(ii) tomārā āmāke prem karile o pratyay karile

    you have loved me and believed me.

(b) <u>Rāmrām Basu</u>

(i) se cilla dekhāilen ebaṃ kahilen

    that kite showed   and said

    He showed (him) the kite and said

(ii) nibhṛiti sthāne gati karilen ebaṃ kahilen

    to lonely place proceeded   and said

    he went to a lonely place and said.

(IV) <u>Use of copula</u>

Though infrequent, the use of the verb copula, can be traced in the writings of this period.   This is another effect

of the influence of the English sentence structure.   The

corresponding Bengali structure of an English sentence like

"The sky is blue" is "sky blue".   The following examples

sound non-idiomatic.

(a) Carey

(i) āmi bekār āchi (I am out of job)

(b) Rāmrām Basu

(i) keṭā haẏ ati mahārājā (who is the great king)

(ii) se haẏ uttam dātā (he is very generous)

These underlined verb copulas are generally omitted in both

written and spoken Bengali.

(V) Clause-order

As in the case of relative adjective clauses, Bengali

also tends to place subordinate adverbial clauses before the

main clauses.   Ordinary English usage is the reverse i.e.

main clause + noun /adv. clause.   The following examples

show that the building of sentences on the English model

was common during the Fort William College period.

(a) Carey

(i) Īśvar emata prem karilen e jagatke   God so loved the world

tini dilen tāhār ekjanmita putra   He gave His only be-

gotten son

pratijaner sarbanāśer nibāran   to protect from di-

aster

o ananta paramāyu pāoner janyo

and to bestow everlasting life

ye pratyaý kare tāhāke

on everyone who believeth in Him.

(b) Rāmrām Basu

(i) adhyāpak o ār ār lokerdigake niyukta karāiya dilen

He appointed teachers and other persons

... bālakder bidyābhyāser kāran

For the sake of the education of the children.

CHAPTER III

William Carey.

Carey's work as a writer of Bengali prose can be divided into two phases, that as a missionary and that as a teacher and scholar at Fort William College. Carey, a devoted missionary, came to Bengal in 1793 to preach Christianity. The first task which he undertook after learning Bengali was a translation of the Bible into that language. Carey had commenced his study of Bengali on the journey to India and by the middle of 1795 he had begun translating the Bible with the assistance of Rāmrām Basu. He writes, in a letter, "I have .... for the purpose of exercising myself in the language, begun translating the gospel by John; which Moonshi afterwards corrects."[1] He completed the translation of the New Testament before the end of 1796 but had to wait till 1801 for its publication. The whole Bible was translated and published by 1809.

Carey translated the Bible from the English version though he frequently consulted the Hebrew and the Greek

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1. S.S.C., vol.I, 15, p.14.

versions. The Bible, apart from its religious importance, has great literary importance in English literature. The English translation of the Bible in the 16th century helped to introduce into the heritage of the English language a wealth of allusions, metaphors and idiomatic expressions. An Englishman can rightly be proud like Professor Higgins (of Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw) that "his native language is the language of Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible". The Bengali Bible, however, failed to exert any considerable influence on Bengalis, firstly because of its linguistic distinctiveness and secondly because Christianity was a new religion to the Bengalis who were either Hindus or Muslims. The word-order in the sentences of the Bengali Bible is of an English pattern; words are used in collocations which are foreign to Bengali and in consequence the language as a whole presents an unidiomatic appearance. The reasons why some linguistic distinctiveness was inevitable in the Bengali Bible are not far to seek. Carey was creating Bengali prose and had no model before him. These first difficulties were those faced by any pioneer in any field. Carey's knowledge of

Bengali was undoubtedly poor when he started trans-
lating the Bible but this could have been compensated for
if Rāmrām Basu had known English well.   Rāmrām Basu,
however, had acquired only a smattering of English and
therefore it was difficult for them to help one another.
There are many wrong usages in their translation which
clearly indicate either that Carey could not explain the
meaning or that Rāmrām Basu failed to understand the
English.   A few examples are cited:

ebam rājā ati byākul chila:[1]   is an attempt to translate
the English sentence 'And the king was much moved'.   The
word <u>moved</u> here means moved by the emotions of grief.
The Bengali <u>byākul</u> does not convey this idea.   <u>byākul</u>
means <u>eager</u> in Bengali.

Carey translated "he came apace and drew near" as
<u>se bege āsiyā nikate āila.</u>[1]   This is a bad translation
because it is a bad Bengali sentence.   The English
sentence has two different verbs while the Bengali sentence
uses a single verb once as participle and then in a finite
form (<u>āsiyā</u> and <u>āila</u>).   It is quite clear that Carey could
not produce the effect of the English sentence in Bengali

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1.   King James version of the Holy Bible, 2 Samuel, 18.

because of his inadequate knowledge of the language and Basu on his part, failed to appreciate the beauty of the English sentence.

The Bengali language is structurally different from the English. It was extremely difficult for Carey to translate English sentences into Bengali and to get the right equivalent in the proper context, because translation is not merely a transference of equivalent words from one language to another, even when these are known, which was not always the case, it is also a transference of the spirit of the content from one language to another. Literal translations generally fail to convey the spirit of the original and often lead to complete meaninglessness. Carey, like many Christians, believed in the literary inerrancy of the Biblical text. Christians believe that the words of the Bible are inspired by God, and that they should be preserved as they are. This idea of the divine inspiration behind the words is very similar to the Hindu belief in the sacredness of the words of the Vedas. Carey, therefore, wanted to be faithful to the words of the original text and his strict adherence to the exact text crippled his style and eventually failed in many

cases to convey the spirit of the Bible in Bengali.
The following sentences are analysed to show the
strangeness and obscurity of the language on account
of his attempt at a verbatim translation.

se mukhete bhūmispṛk haoẏā paryanta.[1] This sentence
is completely obscure. No Bengali reading it can be sure
of its meaning. Even when it is realised that it is
translation of the English sentence "He fell down to the
earth upon his face", it is difficult to see how the Bengali
was arrived at.

yihudā tomār pakṣe pratiphal diẏāchen.[1] This sentence
is also incomprehensible unless one knows it is translated
from the English sentence "Jehovah hath avenged thee".

yadi āmi tomār pratinidhi marit̃am.[1] This is the trans-
lation of the English sentence "would I had died for thee".
Carey correctly interprets 'for' as meaning 'instead of'.
To translate it he chose a Sanskrit word 'pratinidhi'
meaning, literally, "substitute". The resultant rendering
has, however, no meaning in Bengali. The word-order too
is faulty. yadi āmi corresponds to English word-order
'if I'. The Bengali required inversion 'āmi yadi.'

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1. Carey, W., Dharmapustak, 2 Samuel, 18.

Another problem of translation is that of the
context of situation. This subject has been discussed
by Malinowski,[1] who introduced the concept of the
context of situation into language studies, and proved
that in order to understand the meaning of a verbal
text in a given language "the situation in which those
words were spoken" and a "proper setting of native culture
are necessary".[2] Otherwise any verbatim translation of
certain texts is no more than a meaningless jumble of
words. As has been stated above, Carey's knowledge of
Bengali was very poor at the time of the translation of
the Bible and his Bengali assistant had only a smatter-
ing of English at that time. It was therefore very
difficult for them to help one another. Carey translated
some Biblical sentences without thinking whether the
translation would mean anything to Bengalis.

The English phrase 'my Lord, the King' in the
sentence "Tidings, my Lord, the King", has been translated
into Bengali as āmār prabhu mahārāj.[3] Though the
Bengali sentence is grammatically correct, the whole phrase

1. Malinowski, B., Supplement I to Ogden and Richards,
   The Meaning of Meaning, pp. 296-336.
2. ibid., p.301.
3. Dharmapustak, op.cit., 2 Samuel 18, 30.

seems entirely foreign.   In Biblical English, however,

this has been accepted as an address and the "utterance is

an act serving the direct aim of binding hearer to speaker

by a tie of some social sentiment or other".[1]   In Bengali

society no Bengali would ever address anybody as āmār prabhu,

"my Lord."   It is interesting to note that Bengali-speaking

lawyers of the small courts address the judge in English

as mīlud, though they speak Bengali while pleading.

Two more examples are cited here to emphasise the

problem of the context of situation in translation.

(i)   And he commanded the multitude to sit down on

the grass, and took the five loaves, and the

two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he

blessed and brake ....[2]

Carey has translated the sentence quite competently but

the phrase "ruti bhāngilen," "bread brake", sounds

strange to a Bengali because it describes an action which

a Bengali does not perform.   Malinowski pointed out that

context "must burst the bonds of mere linguistics and be

carried over into the analysis of the general conditions

under which a language is spoken".[3]   This Bengali phrase

1. Malinowski, op.cit.,p.315   .
2. The Bible. 14, Matthew, 19.
3. Malinowski, op.cit., p.306 .

ruṭi bhāṅgilen is strange to a Bengali, because this
act of <u>breaking</u> bread is alien to Bengali society.
From a linguistic standpoint, <u>ruṭi</u>, "bread", never
collocates with <u>bhāṅgilen</u>, "broke." It is indeed
difficult here to separate the situational and
collocational levels of statement.

    (ii) He came to Jesus and said, Hail master, and
                              1
      kissed him.

Carey has translated 'Hail' by the Bengali word <u>namaskār</u>.
This Bengali word relates to both verbal and non-verbal
actions. The usual way of Bengali greeting involves
the folding of one's hands and touching of one's forehead
with them, simultaneously uttering the word, <u>namaskār</u>.
Though this is the common form of greeting there is
another kind of greeting called <u>praṇām</u> which is reserved
for special occasions and only used by the inferiors
greeting superiors. In a religious context (as is
the case here, when Judas is coming to see his master
and greeting him) <u>praṇām</u> would be appropriate.

    Carey has made some serious errors of collocation
in his translation. In every language there are certain

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1. The Bible. 26, Matthew, 49.

collocations which resemble meaningless jumbles of words when translated literally into another language. "In English, for instance," writes Firth, "typical collocations for the words Sunday, Monday, Saturday, furnish interesting material and would certainly separate them from corresponding words in Chinese, Hebrew, Arabic or Hindi. The English words for the months are characteristically collocated: March Hare, August Bank Holiday, May Week, May Day, April Showers, April Fool, etc."[1] So in Bengali there are certain typical collocations which do not convey the same meaning if translated literally into another language. A typical example is cād mukh (lit.moon-face) which in Bengali signifies an extremely lovely face but which if translated into English as Moon-face would simply imply a foolish face.

The Bengali Bible is unhappily full of wrong collocations. Carey used a phrase caksu uthāiyā (eyes having-lifted) to translate the English lifted up eyes, but caksu (eyes) collocates with tuliyā (having lifted), never with uthāiyā, though both these verbs are given as the meaning of the English verb to lift in any

1. Firth, J.R.: A synopsis of linguistic theory, 1930-1955, Studies in Linguistic Analysis, Oxford, 1957, p.12.

English-Bengali dictionary.   The Bengali Bible
frequently uses a verbal phrase, prem karā, "to love".
This is one of the most serious errors in the whole of
the translation and is frequently quoted as an example
of "Missionary Bengali" as it is popularly called even
today.   The noun prem, "Love", itself is used in con-
texts of divine love and human love, but when it is
associated with the verb karā, "to do", it suggests
either sexual passion or a love considered as immoral
by the society.   There are a few uses of this phrase
in the Vaiṣṇava lyrics but the theme of these lyrics
is the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa which contravenes the
moral code of their society.   The phrase, therefore,
is quite unsuitable for Carey's purpose.   The serious
high tone of the Bible suffers much because of its use.
A Bengali writer would either use the noun prem, "love",
or the verb bhālobāsā "to love", in any serious writing.

Carey made frequent use of Sanskrit words and
compounds.   It must be assumed that he did so deliberately
because in his view, the dignity of such words and compounds
accorded with the dignity of the Biblical language.   He
was not consistent, however, and frequently lapsed into

into colloquialisms.   This confusion of vocabularies
constitutes a serious fault.   "And they brought young
children to him" has been translated as <u>tāhārā ānila</u>
<u>choṭa śiśurdigake tāhār ṭhāi</u>.[1]   The word <u>ṭhāi</u> "place",
is a very colloquial tadbhava word and hardly suitable
in this context.   "He was much displeased", is trans-
lated as <u>bejār hailen</u>.[2]   <u>bejār</u>, "displeased", is a
very colloquial word and therefore inappropriate in a
Biblical context.   The situation in which Carey found
himself is clear.   He did the best he could at the
level of his own knowledge but he did not realise that
the use of mixed vocabulary of this sort was bound to
be displeasing to a native reader.   It is a little
surprising, however, that his assistants let pass this
sort of impropriety of diction.

The measure of Carey's achievement can best be under-
stood by a critical examination of a longer passage from
his Bengali Bible.   The passage selected is from 2 Samuel
18: 24-33.

And David sat between the two gates: and the
watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto

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1.   Carey, <u>Dharmapustak</u>, St. Mark. 10. 13.
2.   <u>ibid</u>., St. Mark., 10.14.

the wall, and lifted up his eyes and looked,

and behold a man running alone.

And the watchman cried, and told the king.   And

the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings

in his mouth.   And came he apace, and drew near.

And the watchman saw another man running; and the

watchman called unto the porter and said, Behold

another man running alone.   And the king said, He

also bringeth tidings.

And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of

the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son

of Zadok.   And the king said, He is a good man,

and cometh with good tidings.

And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king.   All

is well.   And he fell down to earth upon his face

before the king, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy

God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up

their hand against my lord the king.

And the king said, Is the youngman Absalom safe?   And

Ahimaaz answered when Jacob sent the King's servant,

and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew

not what it was.

And, behold, Cushi came, and Cushi said, Tidings,
my Lord the king: for the Lord hath avenged thee
this day of all them that rose up against thee.
And the King said unto Cushi, Is the youngman
Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies
of my Lord the king, and all that rise against thee
to do thee hurt, be as that youngman is.
And the king was much moved, and went up to the
chamber over the gate, and wept: and went, thus he
said, O my son Absalom, my son Absolom, would God I
had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son.

dāud nagarer dui dvārer madhye basila tatkāle
caukidār dvārer uparistha chāter upare caṛhiiȳā deoȳāler
nikaṭe gela ebaṃ cakṣu uṭhāiȳā abalokan karila ebaṃ
dekhila ekjan ekā dauṛiȳā āsiteche.
pare caukidār ḍākiȳa rājāke kahila rājā kahila se yadi
ekā haȳ tabe tāhār mukhe samācār āche abaṃ se bege
āsiȳā nikaṭe āila.
ebaṃ chaukidār dauṛite ār ekjanke dekhila pare
caukidār dvārpale kahiȳā balila ye dekha ār ekjan ekā
dauṛiteche rājā kahila seo samācār āniteche.

Caukidar kahila agratara byaktir dauran ami mane
kari sadoker putra akhimaser dauraner mata ache raja
kahila se uttam lok o mangal samacar laiya asiteche.
pare akhimas dakiya rajake kahila ye sakale bhala
ache pare se mukhete bhumisprik haoya paryanta rajar
saksate parila o balila ye lokera amar prabhu
maharajer biparite apanader hat uthaiyachila
tahardigake hastabas kariyachen ye yihuda tomar
Isvar tini dhanya.
raja kahila yuba purus absolom sustha ki na akhimas
patyuttar karila yakhan yaob maharajer daske o apanar
daske pathaila takhan ami bala hurahuri dekhilam kintu
se ki iha ami janilamna.
pare raja tahake kahila ek parsve hao ekhane darao
tahate se parsve yaiya daraila.
pare dekha khusi aila ebam khusi kahila he amar
prabhu maharaj samacar kenana yahara tomar biparite
uthila se sakaler upare yihuda tomar pakse pratiphal
diyachen.
anantare raja khusike kahila yubapurus absalom ki
sustha ache pare khusi uttar dila amar prabhu maharajer
satrura o tomake himsa karibar karan ye sakale tomar

pratikule uṭhe se sakale se yubāpuruṣer mata hauk.

ebaṃ rājā ati byākul chila ebaṃ dvārer uparistha

kuṭhrite giẏā krandan karila ebaṃ ẏāite 2 kathā

kahila he āmār putra ābsālom hāẏ āmār putra āmār putrau

ābsālom hāẏ ābsālom āmār putra āmār putra āhā yadi

āmi tomār pratinidhi maritām.[1]

The vocabulary of the passage quoted above is markedly

Sanskritic.   It has been already observed that Carey used

colloquial words in his translation but it is probable

that he did so inadvertently or in ignorance.   He used

Sanskrit words as much as possible and tried to avoid

colloquialisms.   He used Sanskrit words where tadbhava

words are preferred in speech e.g. uparishta chāt (roof

over), abalokan karilen (beheld), mangal samācār (good

news).   Nevertheless Carey's vocabulary was less

Sanskritic than that of his associates, in Fort William

college.   In this passage, containing 273 words, only 94

words are tatsama, 162 words are tadbhavas and the rest

are proper names.

The following are examples of the influence of English

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1. In the Bengali Bible this passage is not divided into
    different paragraphs.

on the Bengali of Carey's Bible.   They are not
exhaustive and do not cover all levels of analysis.
They have been chosen according to the degree of foreignness
in them, that is to say they are such as would strike a
Bengali as foreign.   They include such different types
of examples as phrase and clause structure, word-order,
the problem of translating the English pronoun 'it',
and the use of the verb copula.

1. <u>Translation words for "and"</u>:   Bengali prefers a
participle where English uses <u>and</u>.   In a sentence like
'go and tell him', the normal Bengali translation would
be '<u>giẏe balo</u>' (having-gone tell) and not <u>ẏāo ebam̐ balo</u>
(go and tell).   Carey understood this difference between
the two languages[1] but his practice was not consistent.
It may be that on occasions Carey used one of the equiva-
lents to <u>and</u> to communicate what he felt to be a distinc-
tive feature of the English Bible to his Bengali translation.
In the original English passage <u>and</u> occurs 37 times and its
Bengali equivalents occur 12 times in the Bengali passage,
and at least 10 uses of the latter are unidiomatic.   Carey

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1. <u>Supra</u>., Chap. II., Sect. VI, p.74   .

has eliminated a large number of _ands_ by the use of participles in accordance with Bengali idiom e.g. 'went up to the chamber ... and wept' has been translated as kuthrite giyā krandan karila.   Though he has eliminated 25 _ands,_ there are quite sufficient in so short a passage, to give an English flavour to the whole.

2.   Relative clauses + Antecedents: In an English sentence the relative clauses usually follows the antecedent e.g.   The man who came yesterday.[1]   In Bengali, however, the relative pronoun stands before the noun which corresponds to the antecedent in English e.g. ye lok kāl esechila, se (which man yesterday came, he).   Carey frequently followed the English order in translating English relative clauses into Bengali e.g.

se   brikṣer phal khāiyācha   yahā   āmi khāite mānā karilām[2]
that tree's fruit have-you-eaten which I to-eat forbidding made[3]

Hast thou eaten of the tree where of I commanded that thou shouldest not eat.

3.   Word-order: (a)   In a number of cases Carey has

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1.   Ibid. pp. 72-73
2.   Genesis, 3,6.
3.   Word by word translation.

followed the English rather than the Bengali syntactical practice.   In English a common pattern in respect of word-order is Subject-Verb-Object (S.V.O).   The corresponding pattern in Bengali sentences is different, namely S.O.V.   Carey in many cases has followed the English pattern e.g.

(i)   Īsvarer dūt   svapne   dekhādila tāhāke[1]

God's   messenger in-dream appeared   to-him

(ii)   tini   lailennā   tāhā[2]

he   received   not it

(iii) paritrān kara āmārdigake[3]

Deliver   us

(iv)   diyo āmāder nityabhakṣa[4]

give   us   dailybread

(b)   A two piece verbal phrase is common in Bengali. The type of verbal phrase consists of a participle and a finite verb e.g., ḍākiyā balila literally, having called said.   The idiomatic English translation is of course 'called and said'.[5]   The order of the two pieces, namely participle and verb, is regularly maintained and it is

1.   St. Matthew, 1.20.
2.   St. Mark. 15.23.
3.   St. Matthew. 6.13.
4.   Ibid., 6.12.
5.   Supra., Chapter II.,Sect. VI., and Translation words for 'and' in this chapter. p.92

unusual for any other word to intervene between the
two constituents.   In Carey's usage it is not uncommon
to find words or phrases interposed between the participle
and the finite verb.   Thus he translates 'called and
said unto the king' ḍākiyā rājāke kahīla (having-called
to the king said), the more idiomatic Bengali order would
have been rājāke ḍākiyā kahila (to the king having-called
said).

4.   Translation of the pronoun 'It':   A feature of
English usage which caused Carey considerable difficulty
was the idiomatic use of the pronoun 'it' e.g., 'I can
see it', which is perfectly unambiguous in English once
it has been established what object is being talked about.
An English sentence requires the use of _it_ in this type
of context.   In Bengali, however, once the object under
discussion has been established no pronoun is necessary.
There is therefore no Bengali equivalent of _it_ in this
type of sentence.   Carey, however, seemed unaware that
a Bengali sentence of this type was complete without the
pronoun and he frequently uses the pronoun ihā, tāhā
as equivalent of the English _it_, e.g.

(i)   ihā āmi jānilāmnā[1]

         it   I   knew   not

1.   2. Samuel, 18, 29.

(ii)   cule   mochāila tāhā[1]

with-hair   wiped it.

This practice sounds particularly unidiomatic to a
Bengali.   It is interesting to note that Bengalis
learning English meet a similar difficulty though in
reverse.   Smith Pearse has given the following examples
of common errors, 'Here is my cup, fill', 'I asked for
my pencil, but he did not give me'.[2]

5.   <u>The use of verb copula</u>:   A very marked difference
between English and Bengali usage lies in the occurences
of the verb copula.   In English its use is frequent but
in Bengali rare.   Carey has used the verb copula, āche,
in many sentences where in idiomatic Bengali usage it
would not have been used.   "the running of the foremost
is like the running of Ahimaaz", has been translated as
"agratara byaktir dauṛhan ... ākhimāser dauṛhaner mata āche".
A Bengali would not use āche (is) here.

The above analysis indicates that the language of the
Bengali Bible is in many respects unidiomatic.   Neverthe-
less the translation of the Bible into Bengali was an
important event in the history of Bengali prose.   Carey's

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1.   St. John., 12.3.
2.   Smith Pearse, T.L.H., <u>English Errors in Indian Schools</u>,
     Oxford, 1959, p.5.

Bible became the parent of a specialised and restricted type of the language which may be called Christian Bengali. Though this restricted language had little connection with the total linguistic activities of the non-Christian Bengali, it has become the language of worship and specialised reading of the growing Christian community. It underwent change in the hands of later writers, but its essential character was stamped on it by Carey. Yates' translation of the Bible in 1839 replaced Carey's. It avoids many of the palpable errors of Carey's Bengali and is a much more "readable book",[1] but it had the advantage of the pioneering work which Carey had done. The Bible was followed in time by prayer books, hymn books and many tracts and articles, all of which look back to and are built on the prose style and vocabulary of the first Christian translation. Christian Bengali has never become established as a definite style of Bengali but is nevertheless different from the other styles of Bengali Bengali. Within its own linguistic limits, it is consistent in respect of both vocabulary and grammar; and what is

1. Sen, S. Bāngla sāhitye gadya: (3rd edition), op.cit., p.20.

perhaps most important, Bengali Christians are used
to it and proud of it.   A proposal to translate the
Bible into a more modern and idiomatic Bengali was
received with the same doubts and suspicions that have
been voiced in England on the appearance of a recent
modern version of the Bible in English.   Bengali
Christians are bilingual.   They used standard Bengali
both spoken and written in domestic, occupational and
non-religious situations; but the language they hear
in sermons and use in religious discourse is in the
idiom we have called Christian Bengali, the father of
which was Carey.   Christian Bengali literature is little
read outside the religious community in which it was born,
but it must be noted that except where comprehension fails
because of its sectarian content non-Christian Bengalis
are able to understand it.   Its peculiar style, however,
has had little influence on other streams of prose
literature, beyond the initial impulse that Carey's
Bible gave to prose writing in the Bengali language.

II

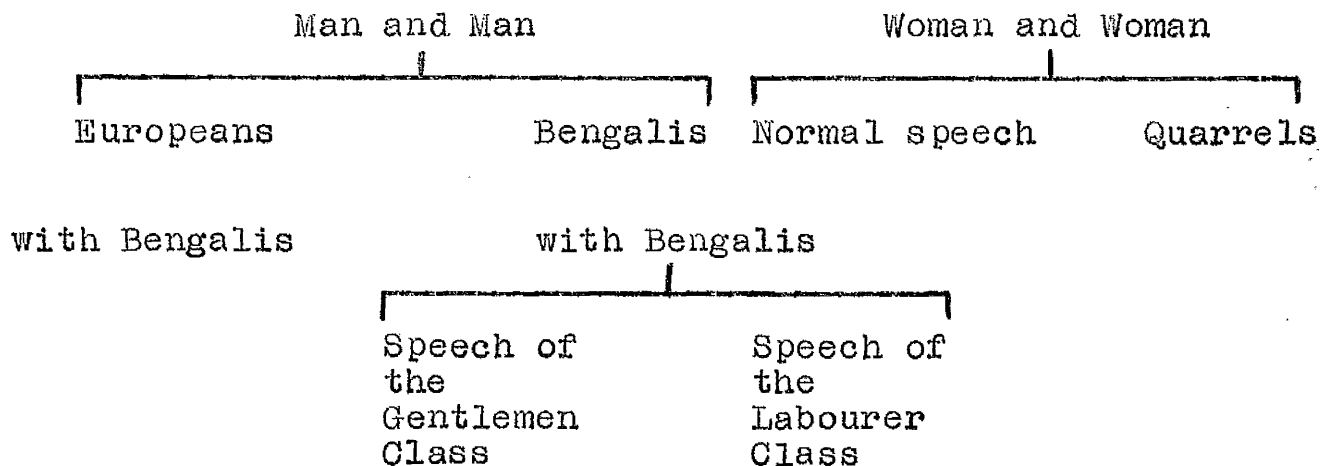Among other writings usually attributed to Carey are

Dialogues (1801) and Itihās mālā (1812). Itihās
mālā is a collection of 150 stories and anecdotes current
in different parts of India. It was for a long time
regarded as Carey's work but though it still passes under
his name it was probably not written by him. At most
he is now regarded only as the compiler of the stories
which were collected and written by his Bengali colleagues.
For this reason Itihās mālā must be regarded as falling
outside the scope of this present discussion which is
concerned with Bengali prose actually written by Carey.

Dialogues contains 31 conversations. They were,in
the words of the title page, intended "to facilitate the
acquiring of the Bengalee Language" by Europeans. The
book is bilingual, the left hand pages carrying the
Bengali text and right hand pages an English translation.
It was published under the name of Carey though it was
not entirely written by him. He himself admits in the
introduction[1] that "I have employed some sensible natives
to compose Dialogues upon subjects of a domestic nature
and to give them precisely in the natural stile of the
persons supposed to be speakers". It is not impossible,

1. Carey, Dialogues, Introduction, p. vii.

however, to discover the passages written by Carey himself.

The dialogues can be classified according to participants and language, as follows:

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          Man and Man                    Woman and Woman
   ┌─────────────┴──────────┐    ┌───────────────┴─────────────┐
 Europeans           Bengalis   Normal speech         Quarrels

with Bengalis        with Bengalis
                ┌──────────┴──────────┐
             Speech of           Speech of
             the                 the
             Gentlemen           Labourer
             Class               Class
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The main subdivision into conversation between Man and Woman is helpful and can be justified on linguistic grounds, that is to say that whether or not we know from the headings that women were speaking, it would be possible to recognize from the language that such was the case. A simple and regular criterion is the occurrence of the particles lo and te in the Women's dialogues and their absence in the Men's. Women's dialogues are divided into those which are based on quarrels and those which are not. The quarrel dialogues contain abusive and pejorative elements and certain vocabulary items

which are lacking in the others.   The division and
sub-division of the dialogues between men can also be
justified on linguistic grounds.   Briefly, the
distinguishing vocabulary criteria are that the dialogues
between Europeans and Bengalis tend to contain a higher
percentage of Persian words than those between Bengalis.
In the next subdivision the speech of members of the
gentleman class contains a larger proportion of Sanskrit
words and a smaller proportion of Persian words than do
the dialogues between members of the labourer class.

The dialogues of the women are so faithfully recorded
and vividly presented that it seems improbable that a
foreigner could have written them.   The idioms, the
words used by uneducated village women show the natural-
ness of the conversations.   It may be presumed that these
imaginary conversations were written by "some sensible
natives".   The best of them seem to have been taken live
out of Bengali situations.   The language is colloquial
and often vulgar.   The vocabulary is apt to the situations
and there is no sign of literary affectation which marks
the language of some of the other dialogues and continues
to mark the writings of many authors throughout the century.

The passage quoted below is realistic and faithful.

> tor ye bala galāre bhāi khākī āji tor ahaṃkār
>
> bhāṅgite habek.   tāhā nahile tui nirasta habinā.
>
> āji tui āmāre nirasta nā kariyā yadi bhāt khāis tabe
>
> tor puter māthā khāis.
>
> śunite pāogo rakṣasī khāṅkir kathā emata rākṣasīr
>
> mukhe āgun deoyā ucit.
>
> tui mukh sāmlāiyā ra lo. āji tor bhāla rāti pohāy
>
> nāi.   balitechi tore.
>
> āmār bhāla rāti pohāy nāi ki tor dekhis ekhan
>
> nāthiyā tor mukh thethuyā kariba.   takhan jānibi.

Carey has translated the passages as follows:

> "You make a pretty noise, you devourer of your
>
> brother.   Your pride shall be broken to-day.   You
>
> will never be quiet till then.
>
> If you quiet me to-day, then may your eating of rice
>
> be the eating of your son's head.
>
> You neighbours.   Do you hear this cannibal strumpet's
>
> talk?   It would be right to put fire in the face of
>
> such a cannibal.
>
> Shut your mouth, woman.   Your day-light did not come
>
> on well this morning, I tell you.

Did my day-light come on badly or yours?   Do

you see?   I'll give you a kick and bruise your

face;   then you'll know."

Carey's translation unfortunately has failed to

convey the spirit of the dialogues.   In some places it

is inaccurate.   A comparison of the English and the

Bengali suggests that Carey's Bengali was not sufficiently

advanced for him to understand the extremely colloquial

language of the dialogues and that his colleagues did

not know enough English to advise him how the translation

should be phrased.   The translation given below though

by no means conveying in full the flavour of the original

does retain more of its natural quality than does Carey's.

What a foul mouthed wretch you are, you'd eat your own

brother if it suited you.   We've got to put an end

to your insolence here and now, otherwise there'll

be no holding you.

What a hope you've got.   You just try and see what

happens.   Whatever you do will turn sour on you.

You'll think you are eating your own son.

You hear what she says.   She is talking like the

bitch she is.   A horrible blood-sucking witch like

you should be burnt alive.

You shut your gob.   You must have had a foul dream
last night and got out of the wrong side of your bed.
I got out of the wrong side of my bed, did I.   You
just wait.   I'll kick your teeth down your throat
and then you'll know.

This is a typical example of several pieces of
similarly realistic writing.   As one reads one can hear
the women talking, their voices mounting up to scream out
characteristic pieces of abuse which are without parallel
in English.   bhāi-khāki (brother-devourer) and puter
māthā (son's head) though common enough in Bengali
situation of this kind are quite untranslatable.   It is
curious that no known attempt to set on paper the natural
language of speech, as has been done here, was again
attempted until round about 1860 when Nīl Darpan and Hutom
pyācār naksā were written.   Even these two works, however,
do not surpass the convincing realistic quality of those
dialogues and we have to wait until the time of Śarat
Candra before we can say of writer that he wrote as people
spoke.   It is doubtful, however, whether dialogues of
this nature would have been helpful to a foreigner who was

beginning a study of the language. Clearly the content of the book has gone beyond the pedagogical material it was originally intended to contain.

Most of the dialogues except those under the sub-divisions European with Bengalis are similarly realistic and natural. It seems from Carey's translation that they were first written in Bengali and then translated into English. The English translation is often inaccurate and sometimes unidiomatic. Occasionally the English is so phrased that its meaning is doubtful. The dialogues between Europeans and Bengalis, however, are far less natural to Bengali ears, and it must be presumed that they were written in English first and then translated into Bengali. These dialogues were provided for the use of civilians newly arrived from England and the topics of conversations they needed were supplied by Carey who could have selected them from his own experience. The language in these dialogues is affected possibly because they were translated from English. That Carey wrote the dialogues in this sub-division is confirmed by the fact that the language of his translation of the Bible and those dialogues have a number of linguistic

features in common. The following examples may be
compared with those quoted from the Bible.[1]

(I) Translations of words for "and":

    a) <u>garu o bheṛa o chāgal o śukarer māṃsa</u>

       beef and mutton and kid and pork

    b) <u>sāheb loker darkāri kaÿjan cākar ebaṃ</u>

       <u>tahārder paḍbi ki ki.</u>

       how many servants are necessary for a

       gentle man and what are their titles?

(II) <u>Relative clause + Antecedent</u>:

    <u>eman lok āniba ye dui tinṭi bhāṣā jāne</u>

    such man bring that two three language

    know. Bring a man who knows two-three

    languages.

(III) <u>Word-order</u>:

    (a) <u>S.V.O. construction</u>: <u>sāheb jijñāsā karilen tāhāke</u>

                   S   V   O

       the gentleman asked him

    (b) <u>Finite verb + participle</u>: <u>āmi ekhan śui yāiyā</u>

       I am going to lie down.

This sentence in later Bengali would have been translated
as <u>ami ekhan śuite yai</u>. Carey's version (literally, I

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1. Supra, pp.92-96 .

now lie having gone) is unidiomatic.   The word-order

is contrary to established usage in 19th century Bengali.

(IV) Translation of the pronoun 'it':

<div align="center">

tāhār nikaṭ paryanta yāo

go   up   to   it.
</div>

The meaning of this sentence in the Bengali translation

is unclear, even when one knows the situation and the

English version.   tāhār nikaṭ can only mean 'to or near

him'.   The situation requires that tāhār should be

translated of it, i.e., 'of the road' but this is not a

possible meaning of the Bengali word used in such a phrase.

(V) Verb Copula

<div align="center">

a) Positive: tumi ke hao

who are you?
</div>

Bengali idiom requires no verb copula.   tumi ke

is the correct translation.   (b) Negative: mejer upar

nun nahe (it is) "not salt on the table."   The sentence

as it stands is meaningless.   Carey has confused one form

of the verb copula nahe, "not" with another nāi, "no".

The English sentence is 'there is no salt on the table'.

The Bengali translation should be mejer upar nun nāi.

The language of these conversations is marred by non-

Bengali features but the conversations themselves are not without interest though they have little literary value. They convey interesting information about the social life and attitudes of the Englishmen who lived in Bengal in the first part of the last century. The first 28 pages are devoted to a description of encounters between a 'saheb' and his cook, barbar, coachman and other servants. The primary intention of Carey was to write a text book for language students yet a sensible reader can discern character in these dialogues. Here is an Englishman, quite well-to-do and living a comfortable life. Some times he gets angry with his servants but often he is kind and pays them well. He realises one day that it is essential for him to learn the language of the country. It is suggested to him by his cook that he should employ a good Moonshi. He does so and starts learning his lessons.

The dialogues differ in quality but the book as a whole is not altogether without literary merit, though this can be overstated. The style in places is pleasant enough; and for the first time in the history of Bengali prose people from different classes are made to speak

their own typical language. Some of the characters are real, and life-like and their speech is sufficiently individualised as to be distinguished one from another. S. Pearce Carey has said that, "The picture is too 'lively' for some, who criticize Carey's inclusion of quarrelling women's rough 'Billingsgate', especially considering his missionary calling. But, as Professor De says, 'had Carey listened to his missionary scruples, his picture would have been unnatural or imperfect'".[1] In these dialogues Carey anticipated the realism and the colloquialism of future Bengali writers. He should be given the honour of being the pioneer of Bengali fiction to the extent that he was the first man to create fictitious characters in a prose work in Bengali. These characters represent different classes of people in Bengali society. The Brahmins, the poor labourers, the merchants and debtors, fishermen and the quarrelsome women - all of them are typical of their respective social classes. Carey believed that these dialogues would "furnish a considerable idea of the domestic economy of the country".

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1. Carey, S.P. William Carey, London, 1923, p.207.

This book, indeed, gives a pen picture of some of
the aspects of the social life of Bengal. The
following extract from the dialogues has a certain
vividness and realistic quality.

ohe bhāi ār calenā upārjan kichui nāhi prati hāṭe kaṟi
cāhi kothā haite habe. ei samprati āji taila nāi laban
nāi cāul nāi ki kariba bhābici. pūji āche kebal ek ṭākā.
cala to yāi nā hay dokāne deni ṭeni kari āniba. [1]

(O brother, I can't go on like this any longer. I've
got no money coming in. I can't go to the market without
money, but where am I to get it from? As things are now
I've neither oil nor salt nor rice, and I don't know what
to do. There's only one rupee in the house. I suppose
I shall have to try and shop on tick. Come on, let's go
and see.)

_____

1. Carey. Dialogues, Introduction, p.vii.

CHAPTER IV

Rāmrām Basu.

No discussion of the beginnings of Bengali prose
can be complete without a consideration of Rāmrām Basu's
Pratāpāditya Caritra, which was written at the instigation
of William Carey and published in 1801. Before passing
on to a detailed examination of its style, it may be of
interest to summarise the narrative and attempt to classify
it as a work of literature.

Rāmcandra, a kāyastha of east Bengal, left his ancestral
home in search of fortune and settled in Saptagrām. He
found work there in the tax-collector's office. He had
three sons, Bhabānanda, Guṇānanda and Śibānanda of whom
Śibānanda was the most promising. They lived together
happily as a family for some time but when Śibānanda had
a difference of opinion with a higher officer they had to
move to Gauṛh. There they were kindly received by king
Cholemān, who allowed them to settle. Śibānanda being
the cleverest of all outshone his brothers and won particular
favour from the king. Śibānanda's two nephews became very
friendly with Bājid and Dāud, the two nephews of Choleman;
and Dāud promised to make them his ministers if he became

king.

Bājid ascended to the throne after his father's death but he was assassinated by the son-in-law of Choleman. The murderer in turn was killed by a faithful friend of Dāud and Dāud became king. He kept his promise and conferred the titles of Mahārajā Vikramāditya and Rāja Basanta Rāy on Śrīhari and Jānakīballabha, the nephews of Śibānanda. Dāud, however, soon began to give himself up to sensual pleasures. He refused to pay taxes to the emperor. The brothers were intelligent enough to realise that the emperor would take punitive action and concluded that it would be dangerous to stay in Gaurh. So they built a permanent house for themselves in what was then the maritime wilderness of Jessore.

Akabar sent Todarmal to tame Dāud, who was terrified and tried to escape but he was arrested finally and executed. The Mughal general entrusted the two brothers with the government of the country. Dāud, fearing invasion had sent all his wealth to Jessore and a large amount of food-stuff was stored there too. So at his death the two brothers became very rich and powerful. They were crowned with pomp and splendour. They invited

all their relatives, gave them lands and settled them
there.   This, according to Basu was the origin of the
organisation known as <u>Baṅgaja Kāyastha</u>, kāyasthas of
eastern Bengal.   Both these brothers were good men.
They spent much on charity, built inns and temples,
opened schools, treated their subjects with care and
compassion;   and also maintained cordial relations with
the Delhi court.

   Śrīhari had a son called Pratāpāditya, who at an early
age, showed signs of becoming cruel and power-loving.
Śrīhari sent him to Delhi to be trained in the discipline
of state affairs.   Pratāpāditya went to Delhi and im-
pressed the emperor with his ability in extempore poetic
composition.   He intrigued against his father and so
misrepresented facts against him that the emperor vested
in him the authority to govern the state.   In spite of
this unfilial conduct, his father and uncle welcomed him
back and apparently did not resent the humiliation he had
caused them in the eyes of the emperor.

   After a few months Pratāpāditya transferred his new
capital to Dhumghāṭ, which he built up into a large town

adorned with magnificent mansions, a gigantic fort and
beautiful shops. His own palace, we are told, beggered
all description. When his father died, he performed the
last rites with honour and his own coronation was observed
with great rejoicing.

Pratāpāditya had many good qualities but his vices
were also many. He was renowned for his bounty and
generosity, but he was power-loving and rapacious, proud
and bigotted. He built a strong army and refused to
pay taxes to the emperor. He conspired against his
relatives and also decided to suppress the kings who had
estates in the province. He tried to kill his own son-
in-law, who was a powerful land-lord in lower Bengal.
He murdered the good old Basanta Rāy, his loving uncle,
while he was saying his evening prayers. The news reached
Delhi and the emperor was roused to anger. After a long
desultory series of battles Pratāpāditya surrendered and
died at Banaras on his way to Delhi.

Rāghab Rāy, the eldest son of Basanta Rāy, who had
barely escaped death at the hands of Pratāpāditya was asked
by the emperor to take the throne. When he reached Jessore
from Delhi he saw the beautiful city lying devasted and
desolate.

The book ends with a catalogue of the names of
the descendants of Rāghab Rāy, some of whom were still
living as leading east Bengali Kāyasthas, at the time
of Basu.

II.

Carey had requested Basu to write a "history".[1]
Basu chose as his subject a historical personage,
Pratāpāditya, a feudal chieftain in Bengal in the reign
of Akbar.   Basu may have been swayed in his choice
by a desire to publicise the exploits of one of his
ancestors.   He claims direct descent from Pratāpāditya
and states that he collected some of his materials for
Pratāpāditya Caritra from older, living relatives.   His
other sources include traditional tales about Pratāpāditya,
then current, and Persian chronicles of the Mughal courts.
Basu, then, was certainly under the impression that he
had written a history.

Some modern critics have agreed that the work is
historical.   De writes, "To Ramram we must give the credit

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1.   "I got Ram Bashu to compose a history of one of their
     kings".   Carey, E., Memoirs of William Carey, p.453.

of being the first Bengali prose writer who attempted
to write history in the sense in which it is taken today."[1]
The 'History of Bengal' edited by Sir Jadunāth Sarkār corro-
borates that Pratāpāditja Caritra's first part is entirely
historical.   The editor writes: "On the fall of Daud, Srihari
fled away with his own wealth and government treasure in
his custody, and set up for himself in the extreme south
of Khulna district, to which the sea was very much closer
then than now.   In this marshy land intersected by a
maze of channels he built a home for his family and safe
refuge for fugitives from the advancing tide of invasion."[2]
A contributor to the above book considers Pratāpāditja
Caritra to be a history source book, and has checked it
with Bahāristān, a Persian historical text.[3]

       The historian Nikhilnāth Rāy[4] in 1906 published an
edition of Pratāpāditya Caritra, in which he surveyed all
the sources which contain information about the king.[5]

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1. De, S.K., op.cit., p.163.
2. Sarkār, J.N., op.cit., pp. 225-6.
3. Ibid., p. 267.
4. Ray, N., Pratāpāditya, Calcutta, 1315, Bengali Era.
5. Ghaṭaka karika, Kṣitiśavaṃśa Caritāvalī, Dāudi and
   Rajanama.

He has considered the hisoricity of the book in detail
and in general is inclined to accept it as historical.
He agrees with Sárkār that the first part of the book is
entirely factual and states that Basu has probably drawn
some of his materials from Rājanāmā.[1]   He has also
checked the book with historical writing and reports
written in European languages.[2]   One important Persian
text he used for comparative purposes is a book named
Dāudi written by Abdulla.   The account of Dāud in this
text is very similar to that given by Basu.   There are
some incidents, however, which he has not been able to
corroborate, for instance the name of Omrao Singha which
appears in Pratāpāditÿa Caritra has not been so far dis-
covered in any other source.   Certain statements in
Basu's work he has found to be either unhistorical or
fanciful.   He doubts for instance Basu's statement that
the head of Dāud was sent to his wives on the grounds that
Dāud was killed in Rajmahal and his family at that time

1. Pratāpāditya's name does not occur in any extant Persian
    text. Basu, however, says that he has collected some
    materials from Persian texts. Rāÿ thinks he has taken
    some help from Dāudi and from Rājanāmā. This text is not
    extant anywhere, so far as we know. A Bengali verse des-
    cribing Pratāpāditya's family and some events of his period
    refers to a Persian text called Rājanāmā. Rāÿ has not seen
    Rājanāmā himself. The mss. must be presumed lost. This
    verse 'saratattvatarangini' was written by Rāmgopal Rāÿ
    in the middle of the 19th century.
2. Histoire des Indes Orientales: Pierre Du Jarrie. Historica
    Relatio de India Orientali: Nicalao Primenta. Report of
    District of Jessore: J. Westland.

was at Saptagram not in Rajmahal as Basu states. Rāy
also differs from Basu with regard to the time of birth
of Pratāpāditya. Basu states that he was born in Jessore
after the fall of Dāud. There are several other instances
in which Rāy questions the strict historicity of Basu's
account.

Rāy's testimony seems sufficient to establish the
fact that the framework of Basu's narrative is historical.
There was a king of the name Pratāpāditya and in general
the account of the events of his life given by Basu can be
accepted as factual. There is, however, more to the book
than the historical framework. Some of the episodes in
Pratāpāditya Caritra are part fact and part fiction. It
is true, for instance, that Pratāpāditya went to Delhi and
won the favour of the emperor, but there is no evidence
to support the story that he first made an impression
on Akbar by his ability to compose extempore verse. Basu
in his introduction states that he collected a number of
details from his ancestors and from legends which were
current at the time. A number of these legends are
mythological in character. There is the story of the
benevolence of the goddess Kālī to Pratāpāditya. According
to Basu's story she warned him that she should no longer

remain in his house if he became a tyrant and that she would cause the temple which he had built facing west to move from its present position and to face south. The story continued that after the defeat of Pratāpāditya Mansingha, the Mughal general, removed the image of Kālī to Ambar in Rajputana. In connection with this episode Rāý states that songs and stories about Kālī and Pratāpāditya are still current in the Mārwari language. He has quoted the full text of one such narrative story and a folk song on the same subject.

Other stories included are obviously of the fairy tale type. One example may be cited.

"One day the king (Pratāpāditya) and his queen were resting in their palace. A beggarmaid came and asked the king for alms. The king commanded the queen to give her a handful of gold-coins from a bag which was full of such coins. While the queen was giving the money one coin chanced to slip from her hand and fall back into the bag. The queen tried to recover the coin from the bag. The king asked her saying, "Do you remember which coin it was which slipped from your hand?" The queen replied, "No, I don't remember. "Then the king told her to give

the whole bag of coins to the beggar maid. The

bag contained one thousand coins in all."[1]

In absence of information to the contrary it is

probably fair to assume that some of the descriptive

passages in the book are of Basu's own invention. Some

of them are realistic and well done. One example may be

cited.

> In each of the four quarters lay a pool, fragrant
> with flowers in bloom. Birds without number
> crowded the sweet waters. Beside the pools were
> gardens, resplendent with myriad flowers and meoya
> trees, placed in the care of numerous gardeners.
> These beauteous gardens resound to the humming of
> bees, the singing of cuckoos, and the fluttering of
> birds from branch to branch. Peacocks spread their
> tails, khanjanas dance, a thousand and one birds
> chirp. Such lovely gardens are they.[2]

Though Basu has unquestionably included in his book

much material which can be substantiated as historical,

nevertheless the book as a whole is a combination of

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1. Basu, R., P.C., p.122.
2. Basu, R., P.C.,pp. 80]81.

historical, mythological and fairy tale matters which
he handles without distinction or discrimination.   This
is not necessarily adverse criticism.   He has assembled
material from whatever source was available and put it
together as a coherent narrative - part history and part
fiction.   For this reason Pratāpāditya Caritra may be
classified as an embryonic form of the historical novel.
The measure of historical as against fictional matter which
makes a novel a historical novel is difficult to assess
but it is probable that Basu has included more history
in his work than many so called historical novels either
in Bengali or in any other language.   It would be going
too far to say that Pratāpāditya Caritra is a novel.   It
lacks any form of plot construction, being no more than a
chronological sequence of events and it would be difficult
to show that Basu had attempted to provide for his persons
any characterisation other than that which they were
traditionally held to have had.

In spite of the difficulties of classifying it
pā
Pratāditya Caritra is definitely the first attempt to
write original narrative prose in Bengali.   Though it
did not seem to arouse very great interest when it first

appeared it was not lost sight of and later towards the
middle of the century, when Bengalis were beginning to
show an interest in tales of Indian kings and heroes
Pratāpāditya Caritra was republished.   This is definite
evidence of interest in it.   It can be shown that it
played a part in the development of historical fiction
in Bengali.   Later writers tended to read into the
story much more than Basu had seen.   His Pratāpāditya
was a cruel and despotic chieftain.   One later writer
·at least, Pratāp Candra Ghoṣ in his Baṅgādhipa Parājaẏ
(1869) attempted to make a national hero out of him.
The valour and heroism of Pratāpāditya became a theme also
for some later poets and playwrights notably kṣīrodprasād
Bidyābinod whose play on the subject was immensely
popular at the time.   Even Tagore was aware of the theme
and wrote a novel and a play on the subject.

III

We now come to the main body of this chapter which
consists of a detailed examination of Basu's style.   We
shall proceed systematically from a consideration of his
vocabulary, his phrase-structure, his grammar, word-order
the length and variety of his sentences and finally to the

System of punctuation he evolved.

(A) Vocabulary; Persian

Critics have been and still are unkind to Basu.   In
an article in the Calcutta Review (1854) the style of
Pratāpāditya Caritra was condemned, because it was a
"kind of Mosaic, half Persian, half Bengali".   Rāmgati
Nyāÿratna, who wrote the first known history of Bengali
Literature[1] also condemns its style.   R.C.Dutta, who wrote
"Literature of Bengal" (1895) did not think it even
necessary to mention Basu's name.   H.P. Śāstrī[2] declared
that it was "unreadable" and "ugly".   Śāstrī's criticism
has been repeated by many critics and it has become a
stereotype of literary criticism to regard Basu's style
as heavily Persianised.   It is doubtful whether some
more recent critics who have re-echoed either or both
of the above opinions about Basu's writing have in fact
read the work themselves.   If they have, they do not
appear to have read it with critical attention.

It is true that Basu did use persian words.   There
are few, if any Bengali writers who have not done so.
It is however far from the truth to suggest that what he

1. Nyāÿaratna, R., Bāngla bhāsā o bāngla Sāhitya bisayak
    prastāb, II part, 1874, pp. 203-4.
2. Śāstrī, H.P., op.cit., Bānglār Sāhitya, p.178.

wrote was more Persian than Bengali or that he used
Persian words haphazardly and without reference to
context as some critics have alleged.   One should bear
in mind the linguistic situation of the period and judge
Basu's vocabulary against that back-ground.   Before
1801, Persian had been the language of the courts, and
it continued to be so till 1835. Legalistic terms and
expressions in Bengali were borrowed freely from Persian
or Arabic, and in addition to words of this class a
considerable number of Persian words were and still are
used in everyday Bengali speech and have, as a result,
become phonologically naturalised in the language.   In
any case the proportion of Persian to Bengali words in
any work can only be determined by an actual count.[1]

1.   The following Persian words occur in Pratāpāditya Caritra.
     Figures beside them indicate the number of occurrences
     in the text.
     arbi, amānat, ātar, ākher, āmir (7), ādāb (2), aṇdāj,
     anjam (2), amdāni, aśrupi (3), arji (2), -andāj,
     ṃam, isārā, ujir (12), -jādā (4), ukil (9), usul, emārat,
     ekrām, ektiyār, ettalā ogeraha, ostād, ophāt, omra (2),
     ojir, oyākiph, kāgaj (4), kamar, kāroyān, kānango (2),
     -daptar (4), kellā (6), kabaj, kabar, kabul, kayed (3),
     kaydā, kābu, khelāt (7), khetab (5), khās (3) khājna (3),
     khātir, khayrāt (2), kharid, khānsāma (4), khālisā, khālida,
     khātiridāri (5), khojā, khājnākhānā,kharac (2), -khanā,
     khabar, khun, gālicā, gerd, golā, golām (5), gāphil, garib
     (2), cākar (4), cākari, jilā, jiniṣ, jāma, johari,
     jāhāpanā (4), jamidāri (4), jami, takt, tahakhānā,
     tirandāji (2), toṣakhānā, tobcin, top, tāhut, tahaśil (2),
     tāgādā, tabaki, tākid (4), taraph (4), taphśil, tarabataro,
     tamāsā, tāluk (3), tahphā, tallās (3), tahabil, thānā (2),

That has now been done, and a complete list of all the
Persian words, including words of Arabic, Turki and
Pustu origin, which entered through or along with Persian,
are listed here.   The total is 218 occurring 511 times.
As Pratāpāditya Caritra contains approximately 14,976
words, the percentage of Persian words is 3.4.   This
figure contradicts Nyāyaratna's remark that the style
of Pratāpāditya Caritra is heavily Persianized and the
criticism in the Calcutta Review that it was "half Persian,
half Bengali".

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continued from previous page...

daptar (5), daptarkhānā (3), daphā, dākhil (9), deyān
(2), darpeṣ, delāsā, darkhāst (9), dorast, dostakhat,
darbār (3), -dār, -digar, neṣān (3), nāliṣ (3), najar
(2), namud, nejā, naubat (3), -khanā (4), nabāb (8),
nabābjādā; poddār, pañjā (2), parkhai, pārsi (3),
postā, parganā (10), posāk, pachanda (2), pul, pāthān,
phasād, pharda, phaṇj, pharmāis, phrokt (2), pharmān
(10), bakṣis, barkandāj (3), bādsāha (37), bādsāhi (14)
bāhādur (5), bahāl, barārdha (3), bālākhānā (2), bajār
banduk (5), banduk oyāla, barābar (3), bāg-bāgicā,
beʈoyāris (2), behanda, bedastur, bandobasta (3),
begam (12), bakri (2), mokām, minā, mohar, mochalmān,
meoyā, manchab, manchabdār, murcābandī, mālgujāri,
maktabkhānā, mujarā, mālkhānā, michrikhānā, mahal (2),
mahalā (7), muhari, muharigiri (2), mutchaddhi,
maṣālchi, mahāl, mānā, muhaphel, muluk, majbut, majbuti,
maphsal (3), makhmal (2), mañjur (2), reyāyat, raiyat,
rojgār, rasad, lamai (4), laskar (2), saogāt (5),
sāheb, sarkār, subā (6), subādār (4), subājata (4),
sardār (3), soyāri, sarāsari, sahar (7), sarhard, sumār,
sāl, sāmiyānā, sāmil, sai, selām (3), sāha (3), sipāhi,
śor (2), śikar (2), siristādar, sadar (6), sābek (3),
sataranci, śikkā (2), hājir, himmat, hālaikar, hisā,
hujur, hukum, hājāri, hendostān.

These words will be examined in relation to their
contexts.   The criterion of judgement will be whether
or not these words are inevitable in the contexts where
they are used.[1]   An analysis of Persian words by Basu
is given in the following chart.

| Distribution by Language of Origin				Distribution by Context			
Persian	Arabic	Turki	Pustu	Administra- tive	Military	Names of Object	Miscell- aneous
112	100	5	1	122	59	20	17
Total - 218				Total - 218			

In the category called 'names of objects' are included
words such as nesān (flag), posāk (dress), pul (bridge) etc.,
In the category called 'miscellaneous' are included words
relating to the names of countries, language, profession
etc. such as hendosthān (India), cākar (servant), ārbi
(Arabic) etc.

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1.   "It is essential that they be separately and severally
attested in context of situation.   It is however
necessary to present them in their commonest colloca-
tions." J.R.Firth., A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory:
op.cit., p.11.

The majority of these Persian words were and many
still are regularly used in Bengali.   With few exceptions
they are natural and inevitable in their contexts.   Even
among the few words which are now archaic some are still
in currency in certain contexts, e.g. sumār in the com-
pound ādam-sumāri (census).   The words in the chart
refer mostly to law and revenue and a few to religion
and court manners.   If the choice of vocabulary in
Pratāpāditya Caritra is judged by its distribution by
contexts it becomes quite clear that the choice of
Persian words in this book is governed by the context.
It must be remembered that Basu was writing a history
of a king of the Mughal period and he could not avoid
the use of legalistic and administrative terms.

These arguments together with the figure in the table
above make two things clear.   First, that Basu used
words of Persian and Arabic provenance in certain con-
texts only, which clearly disposes of the statement that
he used them haphazardly;   second, the context in which
these words were used did not, as far as is known, permit
a Sanskritic alternative which disposes of the other
argument that he used Persian words in preference to Sanskrit
words.

To make thispoint clear three passages have been
selected for statistical analysis in respect of words
of Sanskrit as against words of Persian origin.   The
graph below shows the number of Sanskritic words in
the vertical column and Persian words in the horizontal
column.
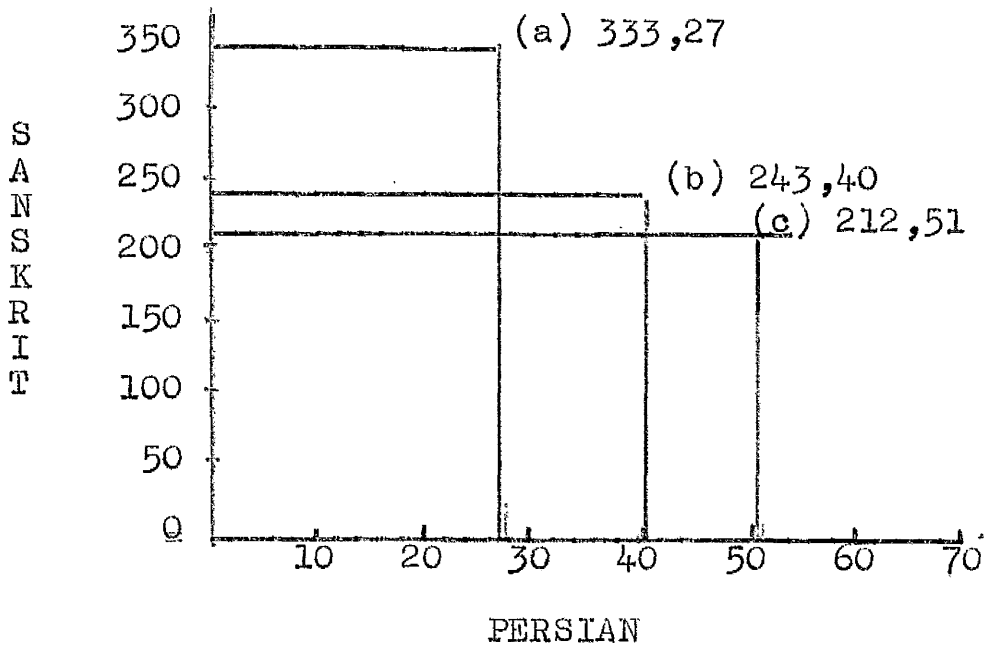
PERSIAN

(a) The subject matter of this passage (pp.74-85)
is a description of a capital of a Hindu king and in it
no reference is made to matters of law revenue or
administration.   The ratio of Sanskrit to Persian words
here is 333:27.   The percentage of Persian words is 7.5.

(b) This passage (pp.3-12) contains references to Rāmcandra's work in a treasury office and his relations with a Muslim king. It goes on to relate the coming to power of Dāud and the violent deeds of Bājid. The ratio of Sanskrit to Persian words is 243:40. The percentage of Persian words is 14.1.

(c) The subject matter of this passage (pp. 28-38) is in the main political. It describes the restoration of Mughal supremacy in Bengal, the execution of Dāud and the handing over of authority to Srīhari. The ratio of Sanskrit to Persian words is 212:51. The percentage of Persian words is 19.4.

The above analysis clearly indicates that Basu has been condemned wrongly by his critics. Basu's use of Persian words was in accordance with current usage. They are inevitable in their contexts. There seem to be very few instances in which Basu could have used a Sanskrit word instead of Persian. It must be concluded that Basu did not try to parade his knowledge of Persian as has been alleged against him. He did not even use Persian words to create a particular stylistic effect, for instance, to create a languid atmosphere as did some

later novelists.   A number of later Bengali writers
have used a larger proportion of Persian words than he
did.

(B) <u>Vocabulary: Sanskrit</u>.

It has been demonstrated that Basu did not reject
Sanskrit words in favour of Persian words, as in the
contexts in which Persian words were used, Sanskrit
words were either not available or would have been un-
suitable.   Basu in fact used Sanskrit words whenever
possible.   He certainly had no anti-Sanskrit bias.
Proof of this can be seen in his tendency to introduce
pseudo-Sanskrit, i.e. words of his own coining which
are not actually Sanskrit words though they bear some
resemblance to them.

It is not necessary to be a Sanskrit scholar in order
to use Sanskrit words in Bengali as to quote Chatterji's
figures, ninety five per cent of Bengali words are of
Sanskrit origin, and at least fortyfour per cent of them
are tatsama words.[1]   Basu used a large number of tatsama

_____

1.   Chatterji, S.K., <u>O.D.B.L</u>, Vol.1., p.218.
                Tatsama   44.00%
                Tadbhava   51.45%
                Persian   3.30%
                English &
                   others   1.25%

words though he himself knew very little Sanskrit.

There was a craze for using Sanskrit words in Bengali

in the early 19th century, due to the low prestige of

Bengali as a literary language and to the fact that

scholars thought Bengali could attain dignity only

by the use of Sanskrit words.   This tendency to use

more and more Sanskrit words gave birth to a feature

which will be called Pseudo Sanskritism.   Pseudo

Sanskritism is a term which covers two important aspects

of the linguistic influence of Sanskrit on Bengali:

wrong word formation by false analogy and use of Sanskrit

words in false collocations.

Basu uses a number of words which have a Sanskrit

appearance but which, in fact, are not Sanskrit.   Many

of them are constructed by false analogy.   For

instance, he wished to form an abstract noun from the

participle prāpta (Obtained) and proceeded by false

analogy to add the suffix -tā, which is a suffix used

in the formation of some abstract nouns.   There is

no such word as prāptatā but there is a noun prāpti,

which Basu could have used if he had known it.   The

following examples show this tendency towards wrong

word-formation:

Noun/Adj.	Use of Basu	Sanskrit forms	English Translation
kātara	kātaryatā	kātaratā	Sorrowfulness
bahul	bāhulyatā	bāhulya	Excess
suhṛid	sauhārdyatā	sauhārdya	Friendship
śatru	śātrabatā	śatrutā	Enmity
śoka	śokita	śokārta	Sorrowful
....	byastita	byāsta	Busy
....	sampatta	sampatti	Wealth

All of these words used by Basu are false forms in Sanskrit and also wrong in Bengali.

Before proceeding to a more general analysis of phrase structure, perhaps we should point out a few instances of the false collocations Basus's zeal for the use of Sanskrit words led to. These false collocations are, in fact, attempts to Sanskritise common Bengali compounds and phrases. The result was obscurity in some places and strangeness in others. A typical example is gātra mocan. Basu has created this phrase by sanskritising the common usage gā mochā (to wipe one's body). He has substituted gātra (body) for gā, the Bengali word for body, and mocan, a Sanskrit word meaning to "release" for mochā, a tadbhaba

form, meaning "to wipe". The resultant phrase has
no meaning in Bengali. It is necessary to mention
that this phrase has no meaning in Sanskrit either.
Some more examples are listed below.

(i) sthal deẏ (refuge gives). This remains nonsense
in Bengali until one realises that the common word
jāẏgā (place) has been replaced by the Sanskrit word
sthal (place). It is interesting to note that Basu
has replaced a Persian word by a Sanskrit one.

(ii) bākya kahite pārenā (cannot speak). bākya (word),
a Sanskrit word, has been substituted for the common word
kathā (word), which is also a tatsama word. Thus the
phrase sounds strange and affected.

(iii) cilla pakṣī (a hawk) is a curious collocation
which is difficult to understand or explain. The word
cilla does not exist either in Sanskrit or Bengali.
There is, however, a Bengali word cil which means "a
hawk." Why Basu has used cilla, instead of cil is not
very clear. In any case cil in Bengali is never
collocated with pakṣi, a tatsama word, meaning "bird"
or even with the corresponding tadbhaba pākhī.

IV

An analysis of Basu's phrase structures produces
examples of curious collocations which are not
necessarily of the same type as those illustrated
above.   For instance, let us take a phrase _aspaṣṭa_
ukil.   _aspaṣṭa_ means 'not clear' and _ukil_, a Persian
word means 'a pleader', both words are common in both
written and spoken Bengali.   The phrase _aspaṣṭa ukil_,
however, is meaningless as it stands.   The context in
which Basu used it suggests that he intended it to
mean "a spy".   Basu used a number of phrases which have
no meaning in Bengali as they stand and which can only
be guessed at from the context sometimes with difficulty.
They tend to fall into two patterns (a) Noun + Verb
and (b) Adjective + Noun.   The colligational[1] structures
in each case are correct, it is only at the collocational
level that the phrases are odd or meaningless.

(a) Noun + Verb patterns

Some of these phrases contain Sanskrit + Bengali forms,

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1.   Colligation is the general order at the syntactic level
     e.g. rām gān gāy is a noun+noun+verb colligation.
     Collocation is an order of mutual expectancy between
     linguistic elements at a more particular level than
     that of syntax. "Mutual accompaniment of grammatical
     categories is termed colligation an accompaniment of
     forms, equally mutual but not generalisable in grammat-
     ical terms is a collocation".T.F.Mitchell,Syntagmatic
     Relations, Transactions in the Philological Society,1958.

some Persian + Bengali forms and others Sanskrit +

Persian forms.

(i) apranaý haiýā (p.5) 'being displeased with him'.
The word pranaý means "love" and assuming that the
prefix a- is privative, the word apranay means "no
love" or "without love". Even assuming this to be
the case, however, the phrase is difficult to translate,
Basu's context seems to require a translation "being
displeased", but it is hard to see how the words used
can be brought to convey such a meaning.

(ii) karatal karilen (p.6) 'usurped'. The word
karatal means literally "palm of the hand" and when
collocated with gata the compound karatalgata means
"under control". Basu has created a new collocation
karatal+karilen (to do). The meaning he attaches to
this new collocation can only be deduced from the con-
text in which it is used. karatal does not collocate
with karā, "to do", in Bengali.

(iii) padārpan hailen (p.8) 'arrived'. The collocation
padārpan karā, "to set foot in", is known in Bengali.
There is, however, no collocation pattern padārpan+haoýā
and the meaning 'arrived' must again be guessed from
the context.

(iv) <u>ādāb bājāiyā</u> (p.62). 'properly greeted'. <u>ādāb</u>, a Persian word, meaning "respectful greeting". The word is used in Bengali but in collocation <u>ādāb kariyā</u>. The verb <u>bājāno</u>, means "to play on a musical instrument" and is here falsely collocated with <u>ādāb</u>.[1]

(b) <u>Adjective + Noun patterns</u>.

(i) <u>mahā māri</u> (p.26) 'great war'. <u>māri</u> is always used in the sense of "epidemic" in Bengali, but Basu uses it with a different connotation.

(ii) <u>lajjita rājā</u> (p.62). 'modest king'. Basu's use of <u>lajjita</u> (literally, "ashamed") in the sense of "modest" was unprecedented in Bengali and nobody has ever so used it after him.

(iii) <u>śūnya bānī</u> (p.121). 'the divine voice'. <u>śūnya</u> means "space" or "void", <u>bānī</u> means "voice", but the two have no meaning together. The phrase seems derived from the Bengali Bible and to be used to mean a voice from heaven. The usual Bengali collocation in this context would be <u>daiba bānī</u>, voice of God.[2]

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1. Other examples, for instance, <u>sādhanā</u> kari (I beseech), <u>īśvar darśaiyā</u> (in the name of God), etc.
2. The influence of the Biblical Bengali can also be seen in this sentence "<u>dusta jagat rājya dusta prem adham</u>" (p.153) literally, "wicked world, wicked kingdom, low love". '<u>dusta jagat</u>' or '<u>prem adham</u>' sounds very strange for their unusual word collocations.

V.

In the previous two sections Basu's vocabulary
and word-collocations have been discussed.   Now we
consider some grammatical features of his style, namely,
a) his confusion of the two systems of conjugation
and declension in Bengali, b) his use of poetic forms
and c), his formation of plurals.

a) There are two systems of declension and con-
jugation of Pronouns and verbs respectively in Bengali,
(i) a system of longer forms and (ii) a system of shorter
forms.   Critics often classify Bengali writing as having
two styles, sādhu bhāṣā (pure language) and calita bhāṣā
(current language).   No attempt has yet been made to
define these terms precisely.   Neither is it necessary
to do so here beyond stating that part of the definition
of the two terms would contain a statement on verbal
conjugation and pronominal declension.   Verbs and pro-
nouns traditionally included as part of sādhu bhāṣā are
morphologically different from those traditionally in-
cluded as part of calita bhāṣā e.g.:

sādhu bhāsā	calita bhāsā	English Translation
karitechi	karchi	I am doing
kariba	karba	I shall do
kariyāchilām	karechilām	I did
tāhārā	tārā	They
kāhārā	kārā	Who
yāhārā	yārā	Those who.

These two sets of forms are still used in modern
Bengali but confusion of the two sets is considered by
critics to be a serious fault of style and is termed
guru-candālī dos (brahmin-outcaste error). The longer
forms predominate in Pratāpāditya Caritra but occasionally
shorter forms are also used, e.g.,

ihār patan habe (his fall is certain) Cf. Corresponding
longer forms   haibe.

majā yābe (will be perished) Cf.Corresponding
longer forms   yaibe.

āpanā hate (from itself)   "   "   "   haite.

sarbanāś habek (there will be
a disaster)   "   "   "   haibek.

balabān tārā (they are strong) "   "   "   tāhārā

These occasional lapses into shorter forms, however,,
are not surprising. It is doubtful whether the authors of

early Bengali prose were very conscious of the exist-
ence of the two styles.   As the verbal and pronominal
forms of calita bhāsā are more closely related to the
forms of everyday speech, it is not surprising that the
pioneers of Bengali prose did borrow the forms of verbs
and pronouns from the language they themselves spoke.

(b) Basu also makes use of verbal forms which as
far as can be checked were used only in poetry e.g.
lotāteche (wallowing), dare (fears).   This tendency
to use poetic forms can be explained, however, if one
remembers, that it is the first attempt to write prose
and that the literary heritage of Bengal was exclusively
poetic at that time.   In one case Basu goes beyond the
use of occasional poetic forms.   He actually gives a
full couplet in the popular riming payār metre.   The
couplet is written out as though it were prose but there
is no doubt that it is a couplet.   It runs as follows:

anek napunīsak sei dvār raksā kare

mahā balabān tārā yame nāhi dare (p.93)

Many eunuchs guard that gate.

They are very strong (and) do not fear

(even) Yama.

(c)   Another difficulty that Basu encountered
without satisfactorily solving was that of plural form
and plural number.   Bengali has a plural inflection
-rā, and several plural suffixes e.g. -guli, -gulā,
-gan).   These plural forms are, however, not used when
the noun is preceded by a plural adjective such as sakal,
sab, anek or any of the plural numerical adjectives e.g.

one man	ekṭi lok
men	lokerā
many men	anek lok

This usage, which is stabilised in modern Bengali
was according to Rāmmohan Rāẏ's grammar also stabilised
by the beginning of the 19th century.   Rāẏ writes,
"A word, which has undergone a morphological change in
order to denote plurality, is termed a plural noun,
e.g. manuṣyerā.   In Bengali only words which denote
human animates or human animate qualities* can undergo
such morphological change to form their plural forms,
e.g., paṇḍit, paṇḍiterā.   Neuter nouns form their
plurals by the addition of plural suffixes, e.g. garu -
garusakal"[1]

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*   Presumably adjectives which collocate only with human
     animates are here referred to. pandit would be just
     such an adjective.
1.   Rāẏ, R., The Grammar of the Bengali Language, p.18.

It is noteworthy that Basu's contemporary Mṛityuñjaý
was aware of established usage in this respect and did
apply it in his writing. Basu on the other hand seemed
in this respect as well as others uncertain as to how
far he should use the spoken language. He tends to be
influenced by Sanskrit and English grammar which have what
may be called double plural, i.e., a plural adjective
or an adjective with plural form is colligated with a
noun which is also of plural form, for example,

English	Sanskrit
one man	naraḥ
all men	sakalāḥ̣narāḥ

We find frequent examples of double plurals of this type
in Pratāpāditya Caritra.

(i) anek paśugan (many animals) instead of

anek paśu.

(ii) anek rājāgan (many kings) instead of anek rājā.

His uncertainty as to the usage to be adopted is further
exemplified by curious structures such as rājāganerā
(kings) where two plural suffixes (-gan, and -rā) are
employed.

VI

In a few languages word-order is fixed, in many others writers enjoy some freedom to diversify established patterns, in the full knowledge that any innovation may convey different stylistic implicity. Bengali stands somewhere between being an inflected and analytical language. Word-order can be changed but only to a limited extent. For example,

> āmār kāche baitā rekhe tār bāŗi yāo
> Leave this book with me and go to his house.

If the positions of āmār (my) and tār (his) are interchanged the meaning of the sentence will be 'leave this book with him and go to my house.' In a sentence like 'bātās jore baiche' (wind/with force/is blowing) there are mathematically six possible orders of arrangement because of the use of the inflected form jore, all six may be deemed comprehensible but in ordinary usage only two are acceptable bātās jore baiche and jore bātās baiche. The difference between the two is stylistic in that in the second greater emphasis is placed upon jore. In Basu, however, it is doubtful whether his

handling of word-order was based upon a consideration of what was stylistically acceptable in Bengali. He lacked the proper syntactic apparatus to ascertain which word-orders were acceptable and which were not.

Basu's word-order shows strong marks of English influence. He first learnt to write Bengali during the period he was collaborating with Carey on the Bengali translation of the Bible, in which English patterns of word-order are frequently imposed on Bengali sentences. In Bengali inversion is a permissible stylistic device but the type of inversion that Basu very frequently uses corresponds to English normal word-order and is not ordinarily permissible in Bengali. The sentence given above bātās jore baiche is an example of the commonest word-order in a Bengali sentence: subject + object/adverbial adjunct + verb. Many of Basu's sentences are based on an order which is typical of English usage: subject + verb + object/adv. adjunct, e.g., I saw him, The wind is blowing hard. Examples of this type are very numerous indeed in Pratāpāditya Caritra. So numerous are they that they are a definite feature of the book's style and tend to give it a somewhat

foreign flavour.

Word-order in Pratāpāditya Caritra is discussed under the following headings:

(a) Position of Adjectives and Appositional

Nouns.

(b) Position of Verbs and Objects/Adv.adjuncts.

(c) Position of Participles.

(a) In modern Bengali Adjectives usually precede the nouns they qualify. Rāmmohan Rāy also states in his grammar that adjectives precede their respective nouns but in Pratāpāditya Caritra there are instances of adjectives following the noun they qualify. For example,

i) rājar .... senāpati kamalkhojā nāme ekjan

mahāparākrānta
(p.11)

king's   general kamalkhoja by name one very

powerful

a very powerful general of the king, Kamalkhoja

by name.

In this example Kamalkhojā is a noun in apposition to senāpati. Normal Bengali word-order for this would be rājar kamalkhojā nāme ekjan mahāparākrānta senāpati. It

should be noticed that in this sentence both the adjective mahaparakranta and the appositional phrase Kamalkhoja name precede the noun senapati.

With regard to words in apposition, the common Bengali word-order is the reverse of that of English. For instance, 'Alexander, son of Philip' is the normal English order whereas the Bengali order would be Philiper putra alekjandar (son of Philip, Alexander). Basu followed the English order, for example,

    (ii) bajid tahar jyestha putra ... (p.11)

        Bajid   his   eldest son

The usual Bengali order, however, would be tahar jyestha putra bajid, (his eldest son Bajid).

(b) In Bengali the main verb usually occupies the final position in an affirmative sentence. In Pratapaditya Caritra, however, there are many instances of the verb preceding the objects or the adverbial adjunct. For example,

(I) Position of Object

    (i) rajara ...likhilen tahardigake (p.31) The kings

                                        wrote to them.

    (ii) biday karila tahardigake (p.32) he bade a farewell

                                    to them.

(iii) tāra jñāta karāy̐ sakalke (p.83) They inform

everybody.

(II) Adverbial Adjuncts

(i) gati karilen sesthāne (p.116)

journey made to that place.

(ii) patākā uṛiteche se dhvajer upare

flags are flying on that staff.

(iii) nāmila parbat haite (p.35)

came down from the hill.

(iv) dekhā kariba ... rājā ganer sahit (p.36)

shall meet with the kings.

It is interesting to note that post-positions occupy the

final position in three of the above sentences (ii, iii, iv).

(c) In many cases Basu used participles after main

verbs. For example,

(i) prabiṣṭa haila āsiyā (p.12)

entered having come

The usual Bengali order is āsiyā prabiṣṭa haila (having

come entered).

(ii) tumi bala yāiyā (p.31)

The expected Bengali order would be "tumi yāiyā bala."

(iii) āmi ...ārohan kari yāiyā (p.27)

I   climb make having gone

Let me go and climb

The above analysis indicate that Basu's Bengali is
in many respects strange and unidiomatic.   His other
colleagues in Fort William College wrote a Bengali,
the word-order of which was very similar to that now
usual in modern Bengali.   Basu did not know how to
write and therefore he started imitating the language
which he and Carey wrote during the translation of the
Bible, but increasing experience taught him much.
Strange word-order is more noticeable in the first part
of his book.   His word-order approximates more closely
to the normal modern Bengali in the later part of his
book.   In his second book Lipimālā (1802) word-order
more frequently follows acceptable Bengali patterns.

VII.

Basu's sentences can be conveniently analysed under
two heads, (i) short sentences and (ii) long sentences.
The short sentences are very short and long sentences
are fairly long.

Pratāpāditya Caritra is written mainly in short
sentences of which many are verbless.   In pp. 51-52 there

are 8 sentences in 7 lines and the total number of words in the whole paragraph is 45. A text in which sentences are all or mostly of one basic type will usually tend to be monotonous. A good writer, therefore, varies the length and structure of his sentences. Short sentences gradually produce an impression of speed "whilst longer sentences give an air of solemnity and deliberation to writing."[1] Basu, however, did not realise that if the same limited number of patterns recur too frequently it will deprive verbless and short sentences of much of their effect. For example, in page 74, where the description of Pratāpāditya's capital is given, not a single verb has been used in the whole page, the sentences are very short, mostly consisting of two words. They produce a staccato effect. An actual count has been made in three representative parts of Pratāpāditya Caritra and the following figures show the proportion of short sentences and long sentences in the book.[2]

1. Read, H., English Prose Style, London, 1946, p.35.
2. By short sentence we mean those sentences which contain less than 10 words. Long sentences mean sentences containing more than 15 words.

pages counted	Total no. sentences	No. of Short sentences	No.of Long sentences	Ratio of long and short sentences
1-11	67	39	28	1 : 1.3
74-84	138	112	26	1 : 4.3
140-150	78	41	37	1 : 1.1

The above statistics are sufficient to show that
Basu employed a large proportion of short sentences
in Pratāpāditya Caritra.　There are 138 sentences in
pp. 74-84, i.e., in 10 pages, which is double the
average number of sentences in other sections.　It
shows that Basu lacked the capacity to build long
sentences.　His long sentences are either clumsy or
obsure.　One example is given here to show the clumsiness
of Basu's long constructions.

Ojirjādār hukume tini tāhār sahit ek maktabe
paŕen ebaṃ ojirjādā baŕai anugraha karen tāhāke
ebaṃ rāghab rāy̆ ātma bibran sakal tāhār sthāne
nibedane ojirjādār baŕai kṣedānvita haiy̆ā esamasta
kara puṭe pitār sthāne nibedan karila (pp.144-45)
By the order of the minister's son he goes to the

same school and the minister's son favours him
very much and Rāghab Rāy described his situation
to him (for which) the minister's son became very
sorry and told everything to his father.
Two uses of _ebaṃ_ (and) and three uses of _Ojirjādā_
without using any pronoun make this sentence tiresome
reading.

In some cases it is noticeable that Basu fails to
complete a long sentence.   He often falters and as a
result the sentence becomes very clumsy if not incom-
prehensible.   For instance,

kumārerā dvai (sic)bhrātā o bṛiddherā tin sahodar
ei parāmarśa sthairya(sic)kariyā deś deśāntare lok
pāṭhāiyā nibhṛiti(sic) sthān anyeṣan (sic)karite
2/dakṣin deśe yaśahar nāme ek sthān beoyāris
jamidāri dakṣin samudra sānnidhya/cād khā machandarir
jamidāri chila/(p.17).

This sentence has no punctuation marks.   The two bars
have been inserted for our present purpose to show that
Basu falters in these places.   The first part of the
whole sentence (i.e. from kumārerā...karite2) can be
translated as:-

"Having made such a council, the two young
brothers and the three old brothers, having sent
people in different places (and) travelling in
search of a lonely spot."

This part has no finite verb.   Then for some strange
reason Basu commences a fresh clause, without concluding
the first. (i.e. daksin ... sannidhya) This part can
be translated as:-

"In the south, an unclaimed land, called Jessore,
very near to the South sea."

The third part of the sentence can be translated as:

"It belonged to Chand Khan."

This long construction contains only one finite verb
chila.   It is clear that Basu started the sentence,
changed his mind in the middle and then started a new
sentence, again faltering and coming to an abrupt stop.
Below is given one more example of a long unhappy sentence.

Yakhan dekhila pracūr(sic)mate sāmanta prastut
bicār karila ekhan ār āmār dillite kar deyoner
ābaśyak ki/ebaṃ bhuiyārdigakeo āpan karatal karite
habek/ebaṃ e pradeśe ek chatrīhaite pāri kintu
khurā mahāśay thākite sāṅga pāṅga rūpe haite
pāritechinā.   (p.129)

The first part may be translated as "when (he) saw that
a big army is ready (he) thought what is the use of
paying taxes at Delhi and (other) land-lords should be
brought his own control".

The second part may be translated as "I can be the
undisputed (ruler) of this province but I can not become
so, while (my) uncle lives."

Basu coordinates these two different complex sentences
with one, ebaṃ (and).   Thus the whole construction
becomes awkward and ponderous.

The above analysis of Basu's sentences leads us to
conclude that his longer sentences are badly constructed
grammatically and stylistically inept.

IX

Basu was faced with the problem of punctuation.
Punctuation marks were totally lacking in Bengali at
Basu's time, with the exception of the traditional
marks, a single down-stroke, written as |, termed dāṛi
and a double down-stroke, written as ||, termed double dāṛi.
They were used to mark the end of the first and second
lines of a couplet respectively.   For example,

<u>mahābhārater kathā amṛita samān</u>

<u>kāśīrām dāś bhane śune punyabān</u>

The tales of the Mahābhārat are as sweet as nectar.
Kāśirām Dāś narrates them and the virtuous

man listens to them.

These marks bear no relation to the English punctua-
tion system, which was the only model Basu had.   The
English punctuation system is determined by grammatical
structure and considerations of respiration and rhythm.

The Bengali dāṛi used to mark the end of a fourteen
syllable line of verse, which may or may not have coincided
with the end of a sentence.   However, the tendency in
Middle Bengali poems was for the ends of the sentence
and the line to be increasingly coterminous.

Basu faced the great difficulty of devising a
punctuation system suitable for prose.   At first he
uses dāṛi to mark the end of a paragraph.   Occasionally
he leaves a space between sentences.   But he was not
happy about this method and from page 9 onwards he
begins to use a dāṛi more frequently, i.e., after one
or two sentences only.   His practice at this stage was
not consistent but the frequency of occurrence of the

punctuation marks increases towards the end of the
narrative.   Gradually he realised the necessity for
a punctuation mark at the end of each sentence.   In
the last four pages of Pratāpāditya Caritra each
sentence is punctuated with a dāṛi.   This development
towards the one-stop one-sentence type of punctuation
was complete by the last four pages of the book.

CHAPTER V

Mrityuñjay̌ Bidyālaṃkār

Mrityuñjay̌ Bidyālaṃkār was an important literary
figure in the Fort William College group of writers. He
was born five years after the Battle of Plassey (1757) in
Midnapore, which was at that time a district in Orissa. He
learnt both Bengali and Oriya. He was educated in Natore,
an important cultural centre in Bengal and spent the rest of
his life in Calcutta. He was an ardent student of Sanskrit
literature and language and had a wide interest in philosophy,
religion and law. "In point of learning", writes Carey,
"very few are his equals, and no one with whom I have any
acquaintance exceeds him."[1] Marshman said about him that he
was a "Colossus of literature" and also that "he bore a strong
resemblance to our great lexicographer (Dr. Johnson) not only
by his stupendous acquirements and the soundness of his
critical judgment but also in his rough feature and unwieldy
figure."[2] In 1801 Carey invited Mrityuñjay̌ to join Fort
William College as head pundit of Bengali.

Mrityuñjay̌ enjoyed a high reputation among his Bengali
colleagues[3] as well as among his British superiors. During

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1. S.S.C. Vol. I, 3, p.16.
2. Marshman: op.cit., p.180.
3. S.S.C. Vol. I, 3, p.35.

his 18 years of association with Fort William College he
wrote five books, one of which was translated into English.
He outstripped his contemporaries in the College in the
quantity as well as in the variety of his writing.   His
first book was <u>Batriś Simhāsan</u> (1802).   It was followed
by <u>Hitopadeś</u> (1808) and <u>Rājābali</u> (1808).   His reputation
as a scholar was not confined to the class room but spread
throughout Calcutta.[1]   The Chief Justice of the Supreme
Court appointed him the pandit of the Court in 1816 and this
news was welcomed by the citizens of Calcutta.[2]   He was
one of the pioneers of the Hindu College and a member of
the School Book Society, both of which were founded in 1817.
He was a devout Hindu with a profound knowledge of the Hindu
religious literature.   His last publication <u>Vedānta Candrikā</u>
(1817) was a religious treatise.   It was directed against
Rājā Rāmmohan Rāy who had denounced the Hindu practice of
image worship.   Mṛityuñjay supported image worship and tried
to justify it by his arguments.   He was, however, not entirely
conservative in his attitude to orthodox Hinduism.   Though he
supported image worship, he condemned the practice of <u>Satī</u>.
He denounced <u>Satī</u> even earlier than Rāmmohan who is generally
claimed as the first to demand its abolition.[3]   With his

1. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 15.
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 15-17.
3. <u>S.S.C.</u> Vol. I, p.8.

deep knowledge of ancient Sanskrit literature and Hinduism,
Mṛityuñjaý stood like a beacon amidst the colossal ignorance
of the Calcutta Brahmins in those days.[1]   He died in 1819
on his way from a pilgrimage.   His book Prabodh Candrikā,
was published in 1833 though it had been written in 1813.

Mṛityuñjaý's writings can be divided into two classes,
translations and original works.   Batriś Siṃhāsan and Hitopadeś
are translations from Sanskrit.   The remaining three books,
Rājābali, Vedānta Candrikā and Prabodh Candrikā are original
compositions.

Batriś Siṃhāsan is a collection of folk-stories, which
had been recast by the later Sanskrit writers.   They are
sometimes ascribed to Kālidāsa[2] but scholars are not sure
of their authorship.   The stories of Batriś Siṃhāsan form
part of the corpus of the Vikramāditya legends.   They were
popular all over India as well as in Bengal.[3]   In form
Batriś Siṃhāsan is a cycle of stories concerning the legendary
king Vikramāditya.   The framework on which the story cycle
hangs is as follows:

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1. "... few of them (the Brahmins of Bengal) ... able to read
   the Dévanágari letters: so far has their indolence prevailed
   over their piety". Works of Sir William Jones, op.cit.,
   p.263.
2. Dasgupta, S.N.: History of Sanskrit Literature, Vol. I,
   Calcutta University, 1947, p.740.
3. See: Carey: Itihās mālā, also MS. preserved in the British
   Museum. Supra; Chap. I. Sec. III.pp.23-24

There was a farmer, who was in the habit of sitting on a certain mound to watch over his fields. Whenever he sat there, he became inspired with profound wisdom. The moment he quitted the mound, his wisdom deserted him and left him as common as any of his illiterate friends. This news spread all over the country and finally reached King Bhoja. He ordered the place to be excavated. The diggers unearthed a throne which was studded with pearls, diamonds, corals and other gems, and which rested on the heads of thirty-two dolls. The throne was brought to the capital, where the king decided to sit on it. After an elaborate ritual when the king went to sit on the throne, the first of the dolls protested. She informed him that the throne had belonged to Vikramāditya and that only a man equal to Vikramāditya in nobility, character and courage might sit on it. She then related a story, illustrating the greatness of Vikramāditya. King Bhoja was ashamed and for the moment abandoned his desire to sit on the throne. After a few days, however, he again attempted to sit on it but was prevented by the second doll. She told him another story about Vikramāditya. Thus King Bhoja tried thirty-two times to sit on the throne and each time was prevented by one of the dolls, who narrated a story about the life of Vikramāditya.

The last doll explained that the throne had originally belonged to Indra, the King of gods.   Indra had given it to Vikramāditya.   The dolls were actually dancing girls from Indra's court, petrified by Indra's curse, for incurring his displeasure.   The period of atonement was now at an end, so they flew away to heaven, carrying the throne off with them.

These thirty-two stories illustrate the hero Vikramāditya's valour, generosity and self-sacrifice.   He figures in all the stories.   The other characters range from kings to beggars, from hermits to thieves.   The action is set variously on earth and in heaven and even in the underworld. The stories are mostly of a mythological and fairy tale character but they are not lacking in human interest.

Mṛityuñjay's next book, <u>Hitopadeś</u> is a translation from the well known Sanskrit text of that name.   The stories chief characters are animals.   Lessons on religion, customs and good manners etc. are imparted allegorically.

These two translations of Mṛityuñjay's are in the main faithful to their originals.   Passages from the <u>Hitopadeś</u> of Mṛityuñjay have already been cited and compared with the original Sanskrit text.[1]   Mṛityuñjay was seen to be striving for a literal translation and using Sanskrit words as far as

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1. Supra. Chap. II. pp. 51-58

possible.   Nevertheless, his translations are not slavish

word for word renderings of the originals.   He takes the

liberty of introducing new phrases in his Bengali rendering

and omitting some phrases from the original Sanskrit one

passage will be sufficient to illustrate his practice.

tasmin nagare brāhmaṇaḥ kaścit <u>sakalaśāstrābhijño</u>
<u>viśeṣato mantraśāstravit paraṃ daridraḥ</u> mantranuṣṭhā-
nena bhuvaneśvarim atoṣayot.   tuṣṭā sā brāhmaṇam
avādīt.   bho brāhmaṇa varaṃ vṛiṇīṣva 'brāhmaṇeṇô'ktam:
devi yadi me prassanā 'si tarhi māṃ jarāmaraṇavarajitaṃ
kuru.   tato devyā divyaṃ ekaṃ phalaṃ dattvā bhaṇitaś ca
bhoḥ putra etat phalaṃ bhakṣaya jarāmaraṇavarajito
bhaviṣyasi.[1]

Sei nagare ek brāhmaṇ bhubaneśvari ārādhanā karen.
ārādhanāte santuṣṭā haiẏā <u>debī pratyakṣa hailen</u> o
kahilen he brāhmaṇ bar prārthanā kara.   brāhmaṇ
<u>anek stab binaẏ kariẏā</u> kahila he debi āmār prati
yadi prasannā haiẏāchen tabe āmāke ajarāmara karun.
ihā śuniẏā debī <u>santuṣṭā haiẏā</u> brāhmaṇke ek phal
dilen o kahilen e phal bhakṣan karile ajar amar haibe.

Mṛityuñjaẏ has left the underlined Sanskrit phrases and

words untranslated, and on the other hand, inserted the under-

lined phrases and words in the Bengali passage.   In some cases,

therefore, Mṛityuñjaẏ has not hesitated to depart from his

original.   Occasionally he leaves phrases out for the sake

brevity, but in some places he adds new material for purposes

of elucidation.   One example of such addition is given below

1. Franklin Edgerton (ed.) Vikrama's Adventure (Harvard University)
   1926, Part II. p.6.   In that city there was a poor brahmin
   who knew all scriptures and particularly the "mantra śāstra".
   He propitiated 'Bhuvaneswari' by performance of incantations.
   She, being pleased, said to the brahmin, "Brahman, choose a
   boon."   The brahmin said, "O goddess, if you are pleased with
   me, then make me immune to old age and death."   Then the god-
   dess gave him a divine fruit, and said, "My son, if you can
   eat this fruit you will be immune to old age and death."

from the "Story of the Fourth Doll".   The original is as
follows:

   tasmin nagare brāhmaṇaḥ kaścit sakalavidyāvicakṣaṇaḥ
samasta guṇālaṅkṛitaḥ param aputraḥ samabhavat.

   [A Brahmin lived in that city, who was learned in all
branches of knowledge and adorned with all virtues, but had
no offspring.]
Mṛityuñjaý has translated the sentence literally but he adds
a long list of the different "branches of knowledge", pre-
sumably for the instruction of his readers.

   Rājābali, is Mṛityuñjaý's first original book.   In it
he attempted to write an account of the Indian kings before
the rise of British power in India.   The introduction deals
with the position of the earth in the solar system and the
distribution of land water.   Mṛityuñjaý's descriptions of
the seas are according to the purāṇas i.e. there are seven
seas, one of water, one of wine, one of curd etc.   He di-
vided time into the traditional ages of the purāṇas, i.e.
satya, tretā, dvāpar and kali.   His geographical information
is also derived from the purāṇas.   The names of neighbouring
countries of India, however, are not always accurate, e.g.
"The countries in the south are Abanti ... Siṃhal, Koṅkan,
Kāberī, ... Laṃkā ... etc."   Siṃhal and Laṅkā are two diff-
erent names for the same country, namely Ceylon;   and Kāberī
is a river, not a country.

The early kings mentioned in Mrityuñjay's book are
those of the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇ e.g. Pāṇḍu,
Yudhiṣthir etc. It is interesting to note that Gautam
Buddha is included as a preacher and a king. His inclusion
gives Mrityuñjay an opportunity to express his opinion of
Buddhism. Of the Buddha he says that he was an atheist and
that Buddhism is a religion of negation. There are long
lists of the kings of the Gautam dynasty, Nanda dynasty, etc.
Some of the kings are historical, but most of them are leg-
endary. Vikramāditya of Ujjaini has been treated at great
length. He is a legendary king and is credited with many
miraculous deeds, many of which Mrityuñjay has narrated.
It is curious however, that Mrityuñjay has not mentioned
the name of Kālidāsa, who is generally believed to have been
óne of the court poets of Vikramāditya.

The accounts of the Muslim kings are also full of tradi-
tional stories. Those of Ākbar, Jāhāngār, Śāhajāhān etc. are
free from mythological elements but the historical part is
not complete or scientifically presented. They contain
traditional stories, the historicity of which is difficult
to prove. One such story is translated below:

"One day the emperor Śāhajāhān was watching an elephant
fight from the second floor. The princes were enjoying the
fun from the first floor. The elephants got excited and began

to fight savagely. The emperor summoned his eldest son
Mahammad Dāra Siko to his presence. Another son Mahiuddīn
was standing on the balcony and watching the fight, when one
elephant became furious and lifted him up with its trunk.
Mahiuddin's only chance of survival lay in the dagger, which
he had at his waist. By plunging it into the animal's
throat, he saved his own life. The emperor was very
pleased with him and conferred on him the title Āorangajeb."[1]

Mṛityuñjay's Rājābali has a number of features in common
with Basu's Pratāpāditya Caritra. Neither differentiated
between fact and fiction but incorporated both indiscriminately
in their narratives. No model for Mṛityuñjay's works has
been discovered and it is difficult therefore to trace the
source of his stories, apart from the fact that it is known
that this mythological account of the Hindu kings is based on
the Purāṇas and Sanskrit narratives. It is not known whence
he derived his information about the Muslim kings but it is
probable that he was advised by friends who knew Persian and
could supply him with the information he sought. Rājābali
has been claimed by Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāy as the
first printed chronological history of India. It certainly
was the first historical book to be printed but it can hardly

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1. Rājābali, pp. 216-17.

be regarded as a "chronological history".   On the other
hand it is not wholly fictional.   Its importance as a work
of literature lies in the fact that it and Pratāpāditya
Caritra were either born of a growing interest in India's
past history or were themselves responsible for that rapid
growth of interest in historical subjects, which took place
in the 19th century.   At all events Basu and Mrityuñjaý
must be regarded as pioneers in that field of writing.
Vedānta Candrikā was published in 1817 together with an
English translation.   It was written for a specialist public
i.e. learned and interested in the Vedic systems of worship.
The book is controversial and, as was pointed out earlier,
was written in response to Rāmmohan Raý's attack on orthodox
Hinduism, and more particularly on image worship.   Mrityuñjaý
attempted to prove that the Vedas do not oppose worship of God
through images.

Prabodh Candrikā is a didactic book.   It is divided
into 4 Stabaks (bunches) and each stabak is subdivided into
5 kusums (flowers) except for the fourth, which contains 6
kusuma.   The structure of the story is similar to that of
Hitopadeś.   A king finds his son neglecting his studies so he
appoints Srīdharācārya to teach him.   Śridharācārya has that
remarkable capacity of Viṣṇuśarmā of Hitopadeś, to beguile
and instruct his pupils with stories.   He starts with grammar,

phonetics and rhetoric and teaches criticism and the different branches of the scriptures.   Mṛityuñjaŷ has drawn his stories from various sources, some of which are old.   Some of the stories may possibly be of Mṛityuñjaŷ's own invention. "The work ... consists chiefly of narrative from the Shastras", writes John Clark Marshman in the preface to the book, "written in the purest Bengalee, of which indeed it may be considered one of the most beautiful specimens.   The writer, anxious to exhibit a variety of style, has in some cases indulged in the use of language current only among the lower orders;   the vulgarity of which, however, he has abundantly redeemed by his vein of original humour.   In other parts of the work he has drawn freely on the Sungskrit, that the uninitiated student may possible find it difficult to comprehend some of the sentences at the first glance.   All words of foreign parentage, however, he has carefully excluded, which adds not a little to the value of this composition ... Any person who can comprehend the present work, and enter into the spirit of its beauties, may justly consider himself master of the language."[1]

II

As shown above, Marshman indicated Mṛityuñjaŷ's anxiety

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1. Marshman, J.C. Preface to Prabodh Candrika (1833).

to exhibit a variety of style in <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u>. Variety

of style is perceptible not only in <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u> but

also in his other books.   It is not necessary to make a

detailed linguistic analysis of Mṛityuñjaý's language.

Considerations of vocabulary are sufficient to indicate that

for practical purposes, his work may be classified in accord-

ance with the three distinct styles, he employed, which may

be termed as follows: (1) Sanskritised Bengali (2) Literary

Bengali and (3) Colloquial Bengali.   These categories overlap

but by and large an analysis of vocabulary differences pro-

vides sufficient justification for this classification.

1. <u>Sanskritised Bengali</u>: The features which mark this style

are: (a) The use of compound words some of them consisting

of as many as four or more components, on the model of the

Sanskrit <u>Samāsa</u>.   This use of compounds is perhaps the most

distinctive feature of this category.   (b) A large pre-

ponderance of Sanskrit loan-words i.e. words of Sanskrit

origin which retain their Sanskrit form except for inflectional

suffixes but which have not been accepted into Bengali as part

of its regular vocabulary.   The difference between loan words

as defined and <u>tasamas</u> has been discussed prèviously.[1]

(c) On the negative side it is noticed that words of Perso-

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1. <u>Supra</u>. Chap II. p.49

Arabic origin are not used in this style of writing.

(d) The absence of <u>tadbhava</u> words except as verbs.

2. <u>Literary Bengali</u>:   The distinctive features of this cate-
gory are (a) the high proportion of <u>tatsama</u> words as against
Sanskrit loan words, (b) the rare occurrence of compound
words of more than two components, (c) the more frequent use
of case inflections and post-positional words (d) the use
in appropriate contexts of words of Perso-Arabic origin.
(e) As compared with category 1 there is in this type of
writing a larger number of <u>tadbhava</u> words though far fewer
than in category, 3.

3. <u>Colloquial Bengali</u>:   The distinctive features of this cate-
gory are (a) the preponderance of <u>tadbhava</u> words and <u>deśī</u>.[1]
(b) and even more frequent use of case inflections and post-
positions (c) occasional use of slang.

It is to be noted in all three styles the longer verbal
and pronominal forms are used.   Not even in the most con-
versational passages does Mrityuñjay use the shorter forms.
It has been noted that Basu did use them occasionally but
without consistency.

<u>Sanskritised Bengali</u>:   Mrityuñjay was not only a Sanskrit
scholar, but also a great admirer of the Sanskrit language.

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1. <u>Supra</u>, Chap. II. pp. 40-41

In his _Prabodh Candrikā_ he extolled Sanskrit as the "best
of all languages and Bengali is the best of all vernaculars
because of the preponderance of Sanskrit words in it."   It
is not surprising therefore that his language should be
highly Sanskritised.   The whole of _Vedānta Candrikā_,
considerable portions of _Prabodh Candrikā_ and the philosophi-
cal passages in _Batriś Siṃhāsan_ are written in Sanskritised
Bengali.   The following example is interesting not only as
an example of the style but also for its content.

... yeman rūpālaṅkārabatī sādhvī strīr hridayārtha-
boddhā sucatur puruṣerā digambarī asatī nārīn sandarśane
parāṅmukha han temani sālaṅkārā śāstrārthabatī sādhubhāṣār
hridayārthaboddhā satpuruṣerā nagnā ucchṛiṅkhalā laukik
bhāṣā śrabaṇ mātretei parāṅmukha han.

Just as clever men, who have known the heart of a beauti-
ful, bejewelled, chaste lady, scorn the sight of a naked, un-
chaste woman, so scholars who appreciate the chaste, ornate
language which encases the heart of the scriptures, refuse to
listen to the naked, undisciplined language of the mob.

It is to be noted that Mṛityuñjay makes use of the phrase
Sādhu bhāṣā (chaste language), which may be the second occurrence
of this phrase[1] which was to be so important later in the ana-

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1. This phrase was first used by Rāmmohan in his _Vedānta Grantha_
   (1815).

lysis of Bengali writing.

The total number of words in this passage is 26, of
which the tatsamas and Sanskrit loan words number 22),
making the percentage of tatsamas and Sanskrit loan words
84.6. There are 4 compounds of more than two components
and 4 compounds of two components. The full Sanskrit
quality of this long sentence cannot be fully conveyed by
statistical analysis. One is forced here to accept as
one's criterion the reactions of a native speaker of Bengali
to this passage, which he would feel to be much more Sanskrit
than Bengali. Another sentence, equally Sanskritised, is
quoted below:

yeman konaha maharājā ācchanna rūpe sva prajābarger
rakṣānuradhe sāmānya loker nyāỳ svarājye bhramaṇ karen
temani Iśvar-o rām kṛiṣnādi manuṣyarūpe ācchanna svarūp
haiỳā svasṛiṣṭa jagater rakṣā karen ihāte yeman ācchanna-
rūper upāsanāte mahārājopāsanā haỳ temani ācchanna līlā
bigrahopāsanāte ai parameśvarer upāsanā haỳ.

Just as a king in disguise roams his kingdom like an
ordinary person in order to protect his subjects, so God
disguises himself in the form of Rām and Kṛiṣṇa and so forth
to protect this world of his creation. Thus the king is
adored through the adoration of his disguised form, and God
is worshipped through the worship of his image.

The total number of words in this passage is 37, of which 25 are _tatsama_ and Sanskrit loan words. Thus the percentage of _tatsama_ words is 67.5. There are 10 compounds in this brief passage.

On occasion Mṛityuñjaẏ uses longer compound words than those contained in these two citations, for example, _śāstratātparyārthābadhāraṇ_ (śāstra + tātparya + abadhāraṇ) "understanding the meaning and implication of scripture", _śāstrabyākhyātṛibhagabat-śaṃkarācāryādi bacanānusāre_ (śāstra + byākhyātṛi + bhagabat + śaṃkarācārya + adi + bacan + anusāre) "according to the words of the interpreters of scriptures like Lord Śaṃkarācārya and others.") His "_Literary Bengali_", contains by definition, a smaller percentage of Sanskrit loan words and compounds. The _tatsama_ words used in this style are mostly those understood by educated Bengali readers. _Rājābali_ and some portions of _Prabodh Candrikā_ are written in this style. One passage is quoted below from _Rājābali_ from the story of Prithu, the last independent Hindu king.[1]

> Kānyakaubja deśer rājā jaẏcandra rāṭhor mahābal parākrānta chilen ebaṃ baṛa dhapī chilen. Kāhāke balete kāhāke prītite eirūpe praẏ kumārikā khaṇḍastha sakal rājāke apan baśibhūta kariẏāchilen. tāhar anaṅgamañjarī

---

1. _Rājābali_, pp. 100-101.

name. apūrba sundarī ek kanyā chilen. tāhār
bibāher nimitte ye 2 bar upasthit haỹ tāhāder madhye
keha tāhār manonīta hailanā. pare rājā ek dibas
udbigna haiỹā kanyāke jijñāsā karilen āmi tomār
bibāher nimitte ye bar upasthit kari se tomār manonīta
haỹnā ihāte tomār manastha ki tāhā āmāke kaha āmi
tadanurūp kari.

[Jaychandra Rathor, king of Kanyakubja, was very
  powerful and wealthy. He controlled most of the
  kings of Kumarika, some by power and some by friend-
  ship. He had an extremely beautiful daughter,
  Anangamanjari by name. She did not like any of the
  suitors who came to propose marriage to her. Thus
  the king became disturbed and one day questioned her
  about it, "None of the suitors I bring for you to
  marry meets with your approval. What is your wish?
  Tell me and I'll act accordingly.]

This passage contains 72 words (excluding 4 proper nouns)

of which 38 are tatsamas. The percentage of tatsamas is

52;7. Another feature of this style is that there is not

a single compound of more than two components and some

of these are in such common use in Bengali (e.g. mahārājā,

mahābal etc.) that they have ceased to be regarded as com-

pounds at all. Another important feature of this style is

the use of Persian words. Basu was observed to use Persian

words in administrative or military contexts. Mṛityuñjaỹ,

too, used Persian words when narrating stories of Muslim

kings.

Three passages are selected from Rājābali each containing

100 words and the following graph is drawn below to show the

proportion of Persian words varies with the context.

Legend:
- Sanskritic
- Persian
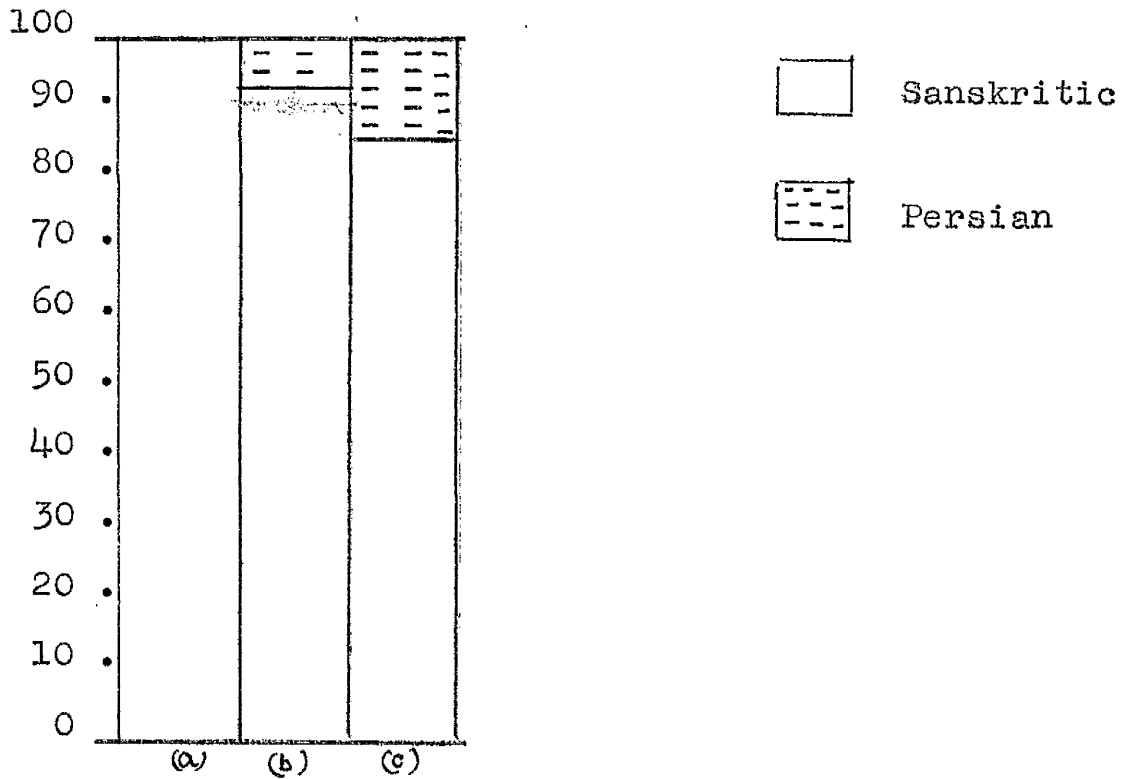
(a) This passage[1] describes ancient kings in the pre-Muslim period. It contains no Persian words.

(b) This passage[2] describes a battle between the Muslim and the last Hindu kings. It contains 7 Persian words.

(c) This passage[3] describes the reign of the emperor Śāhajāhān. It contains 13 Persian words. The graph clearly indicates that Mṛityuñjaý used Persian words in appropriate contexts, i.e. contexts descriptive of Muslim activities,

1. Sūrya candrabhaý baṃśer .. indra, pp. 16-17.
2. ei rūpe śahabuddīn yaban ... tīrandāj, pp. 111-112.
3. ar śahajahã ... garib gorbādar pp. 209-10.

traditional occupation etc.

Mṛityuñjaẏ may be compared with Basu in this respect. It
is important to notice that Basu described military, ad-
ministrative and judicial procedure in greater detail than
did Mṛityuñjaẏ.   And for this reason in a few passages
his percentage of Persian words is higher than that found
in Mṛityuñjaẏ's work.   Nevertheless neither went out of the
way to use Persian words.   They used them only when they
were appropriate and when a <u>tatsama</u> or other word would have
been inappropriate even supposing that one existed.

His "<u>Colloquial Bengali</u>" contains by definition a large
proportion of <u>tadbhava</u> words, and in some case slang.   Some
of the stories of <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u> have been written in this
style.   One passage is quoted as an example:[1]

> Biśvabañcak kahila ore bāchā ṭhak taila laban kotha
> haite gochegāche kichu ān.   ihā śuniẏā ṭhak nāme tat-
> putra kona paṛśīr ek chāliẏake aẏ āmar saṅge toke
> moẏā diba eirūpe bhulāiẏā saṅge laiẏā bājāre giẏā ek
> mudir dokāne ai bālakke bandhak rākhiẏā taila laban
> laiẏā ghare āila.   tatpitā jijñāsila kirūpe taila
> laban anili.   ṭhak kahila ek chōṛake bhulāiẏā bandhak
> diẏā mudi śālāke ṭhakāiẏā ānilām ihā śuniẏā tatpitā
> kahila hā mor bāchā eito baṭe nā habe kena āmar putra
> bhāla anna kariẏā khāite pāribe.   eirūpe putrer dhanyabād
> kariẏā bhāryāke kahila olo māgi yā yā śīghra piṭhā karigā
> kṣudhāte bācinā.

> [Biśvabañcak (lit. World-cheat) said, "Thak (lit. cheat),
>   dear boy, fetch some oil and salt from somewhere." At

_____

1. <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u>, p.64.

which his son Thak inveigled a neighbour's small
boy into going along with him on the promise of
sweets; he took him to a grocer's shop in the
market, pledged his credit and returned home with
oil and salt. His father asked, "How did you manage
to get hold of the oil and salt? Thak replied,"I
got it by enticing a child pledging his credit and
cheating that rascal grocer." Hearing this his
father said, "That's just like my son, well done.
Why should it not be like this, he is my son. He
will easily earn his living." Thus praising his
son he said to his wife, "You damned woman, hurry
up, make the cakes quickly, I am dying of hunger."]

This passage contains 94 words (excluding Proper nouns)
of which only 28 are tatsamas. The percentage of tatsama
words is 29. The distinctive features of this passage are
(a) use of interjections e.g. ore, olo etc. (b) frequent use
of participles (c) occasional uses of slang and (d) absence
of compounds.

The difference between the various styles of Mrityuñjay's
writing as analysed above can graphically be summarised as
follows. All the passages contain about a 100 words.
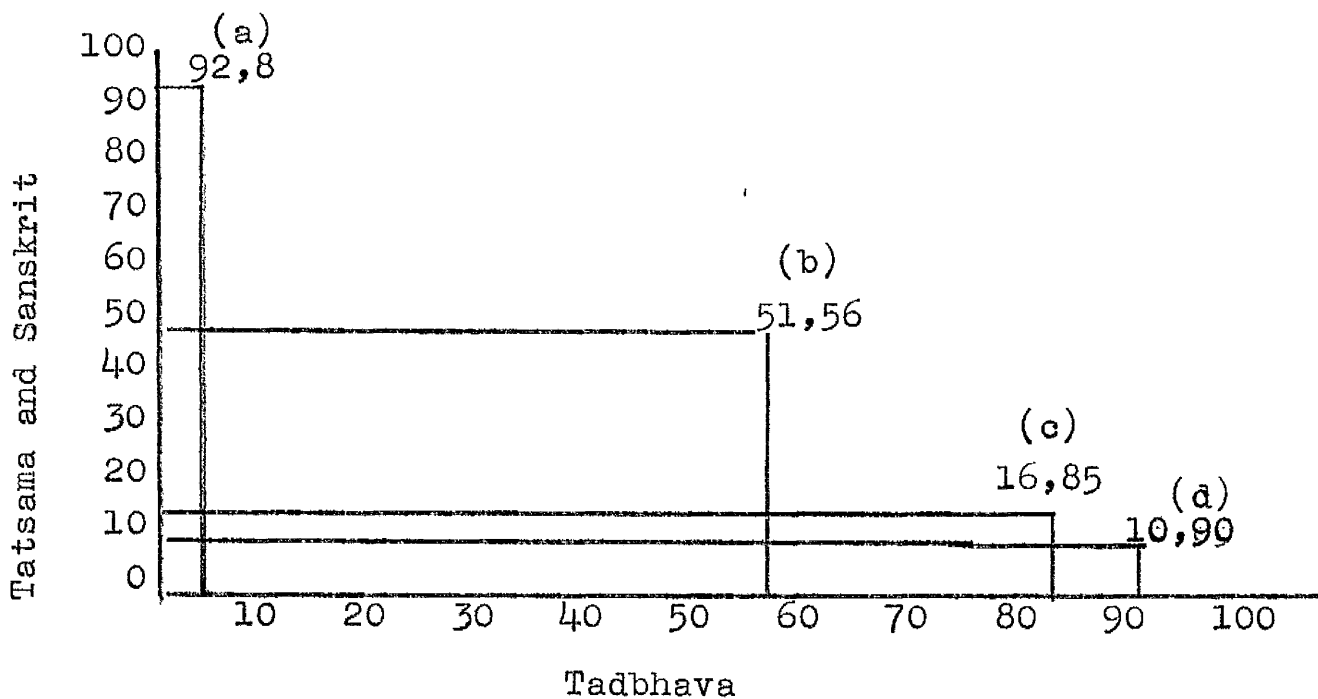
(a) The first passage[1] contains only eight _tadbhava_ words
all of which are verbals and conjunctions. Only one
noun has a Bengali inflection e.g. _kumārder_ (of princes).
This passage would strike a Bengali reader as Sanskritic.
This can obviously be defined as Sanskritised Bengali.

(b) This passage[2] describes the story of an unfaithful wife,
who visited her paramour regularly when her husband
went to work at night. A brahmin ascetic came to their
house one day to stay the night. The woman was worried
because she did not know whether or not the Brahmin had
gone to sleep. The Brahmin became suspicious and
feigned sleep. The percentage of _tatsama_ words in this
passage is 47.6.

(c) and (d) They are written in colloquial Bengali. The
former[3] describes a conversation between a husband, who
is a fraud, his wife, who is quarrelsome, and their son,
a budding cheat. The latter[4] is the speech of a poor
farmer woman. She is describing her poverty-stricken
life.

The above graph demonstrates the range of Mṛityuñjaẏ's

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1. _akārādi... bālakbāṇī_ (Prabodh Candrikā) p.1.
2. _anantar ...haibena_ " p.50.
3. _tatpatnī...aila_ " p.63.
4. _apni maṭe ghaṭe_ ... _dekhite_, Prabodh Candrikā, p.112.

vocabulary usage.   At the one extreme his writing contains
90% of Sanskrit loan words and <u>tatsamas</u> and at the other
extreme 90% of <u>tadbhava</u>, <u>deśī</u> and slang.   The category known
as literary Bengali falls roughly midway between these two
extremes.

III

The foregoing analysis demonstrates Mṛityuñjay's command
over vocabulary.   He unerringly wedded his vocabulary to
his content.   He was equally skilful in his command of word-
order.   As we have seen, Basu was influenced by English
sentence patterns in framing his word-order;   Mṛityuñjay's
word-order betrays no such influence.   His sentence patterns
of S.O.V. echo those of early specimens of Bengali found in
letters, documents, and some <u>Sahajiyā</u> texts.   Thus we may
assume that he adopted the normal word-order of current
Bengali speech, an assumption which Rāmmohan Rāy would tend
to confirm in his preface to <u>Vedānta Grantha</u> (1815)[1] where he
states that in a Bengali sentence the verb should take final
position.   It is interesting to compare Basu's word-order
with that of Mṛityuñjay.

1. Rāmmohan: <u>Vedānta Grantha</u>, preface, p.1.

The chart shows clearly how much in advance of Basu Mṛityuñjaý was as regards word-order.   He may justly be claimed as the first Bengali author of importance to write in a word-order which was to become the basis of modern Bengali sentence-patterns.

Basu			Mṛityuñjaý		
S.	V.	O./Adv.Adj.	S.	O. /Adv.Adj.	V.
Rājārā ... likhilen tāhārdigake			Brahmacārī aśīrbād karilen		
Kings	wrote	to them	The asectic	blessing	made
duṣtamati	prabiṣṭa haila..antare		rogī ... baidyer .. gela nikaṭe		
Evil	entered (into) heart		the patient	near the doctor	went
āmi ... dekhā kariba .. rājāgane sahit			Ākbarer janma nagar-kothāte		haila
I	shall see	king's with	Ākbar's birth	in Nagar Kotha	became

IV

Mṛityuñjaý was not only the first important Bengali writer to write in a word-order which is similar to that of modern Bengali, but also a pioneer in various types of sen-

tence-structure. His principal types of sentence can be
analysed as follows:

1. 'and' sentences : The frequency of the use of trans-
lation equivalents of "and" is very great indeed in the
writings of Carey and Basu. Though their use is far fewer
in Mrityuñjay's work, they do occur and add a foreign flavour
to those parts of his writings in which they are found, e.g.

(i) baidyer nikaṭe ... gela o ... kahila

to the doctor (he) went and said

(ii) āśīrbād karilen o kahilen

blessed and said

There are other examples of use of "o" (and). This usage
may be due to influence of the English "and" or, more probably,
the Persian 'va' (and)[1], e.g.

veda o byākaraṇādi vedānga o dharmaśāstra o

jñānśastra

(The Vedas and grammars (and other) parts of the Veda

and literatures on Dharma and Jñāna)

2. Use of participle : Mrityuñjay, however, obviated
the use of many 'and's by using participles. Many of his
sentences consist of a string of participial phrases, e.g.

sei kriṣak ... parikhā kariȳā ... brikṣa ropan kariȳā

---

1. Supra, Chap. II. pp. 68-70

ek udyān kariyā ... sei udyāner madhye thāken

(That farmer, having dug a trench, having planted

   trees, having made a garden lives inside that garden)

(ii) ihā suniyā ... ek chāliyāke ... bhulāiyā sange laiyā

   bājāre giyā ... dokāne bandhak rākhiyā taila ... laiyā

   ghare āsila.

   (Having heard this, tempting one boy, taking with him,

    going to the market, pledging him (for credit) in the

    shop, bring oil (he) came home.

This use of participles constitutes one of the most
important and conspicuous features of Mṛityuñjay's style.
The above sentences display skill in syntactical structure
which may be demonstrated by presenting the above sentences
in diagrammatic form.

The short horizontal lines underline subordinate clauses
and the long horizontal line main or co-ordinate clauses.

(i)   parikhā kariyā

        brikṣa ... kariyā

        ek ... kariyā   sei udyāner madhye thāken

(ii)   ihā sumiyā

        ek ... bhulāiyā

        sange laiyā

        bājāre giyā

        dokāne ... vākhiyā

        taila ... laiyā   ghare āsila

3. Complex and compound sentences

We noted in the chapter on Basu that his style consisted in the main of a monotonous and at times staccato series of short sentences. He attempted comparatively few longer, more complex sentences and his attempts were seldom well organised syntactically. Mṛityuñjaý, on the other hand, wrote both short and long complex sentences with equal syntactical felicity. Sentence structure depends largely on the development of main and subordinate clauses. An examination of this development enables the critic to determine the degree of complexity and coherence of an author's style. A study of Mṛityuñjaý's complex and compound sentences reveals a variety of structures. The following types are frequent, though they do not exhaust all the sentence structure Mṛityuñjaý uses.

(i) subordinate adverbial clause[1] + main clause

(ii) main clause + subordinate noun clause[2]

(iii) subordinate clause / main clause + co-ordinate + subordinate clause / main clause.

The following sentence exemplifies a combination of (ii) and (iii).

---

1. Abbreviated as <u>S.A.C.</u>
2.   "   as <u>S.N.C.</u>

S.A.C.	S.A.C.	M.C.	
ihā dekhiẏā rāja	camatkṛita haiẏa	bicār karilen	ye

S.N.C.

e śakti mañcernaẏ ebaṃ kṛiṣakero naẏ ebaṃ mantir-o naẏ

M.C.

kintu e sthāner madhye camatkār konaha bastu āche

 (The king was surprised to learn this and concluded

 that this power derived from neither the dais, the

 farmer, nor the minister, but that there was something

 wonderful about that place itself)

Mṛityuñjaẏ also made more extensive use of correlatives than
did Basu or any other writer of Fort William College.
Correlatives are very important syntactic elements in later
Bengali, being in frequent use in both the spoken and written
language.   Clause correlation is operated by a relative pro-
noun or adverb in the subordinate clause and the corresponding
demonstrative pronoun or adverb in the main clause.   Mṛityuñjaẏ
was the first to make extensive use of them in Bengali prose.
Examples of his use of them follow:

(a) ye-se   : yār ye ... dharma se svataḥ prakāśhaẏ

       whose what nature that spontaneous ex-

               prèssion gets.

       What is one's nature that is revealed

              spontaneously

(b) <u>yakhan-takhan</u> : yakhan āsiẏāchilā takhan|tomār abhipraẏ

chila ...

<u>When</u> (you) came <u>then</u> your intention was

(c) <u>yadi-tabe</u> : yadi ... ābaśyak thāke tabe ... dite pāri

<u>if</u>   it is necessary <u>then</u> I can give
(it)

(d) <u>Yeman-teman</u>

<u>Yeman</u> taila ...jaler ekprades sparśa karibāmātra anak

jalke bāype <u>temani</u> ...

<u>As</u> oil spreads over the whole water the moment it

touches one drop of water <u>so</u> ...

(e) Yãhārā-tãhārā

Yãhārā puruṣ siṃha ... tãhārā ...

who are great men, <u>they</u> ...

V

Mrityuñjaẏ's sentences present a wide variety. Some
are short, some fairly long and some very long. He used
short sentences (i.e. less than 10 words) in narrative to
give an impression of speed, as the following example illus-
trates:-

abanti nagarete ek brāhmaṇ thāken tini Vaśiṣṭha gotra

o bidvān o rūpatān chilen ār ek carmakāro thāke se

svitrī o ghor mūrkha chila ei duijan ekatra haiẏā

bāṇijya karite anek ṭākā o mohar laiẏā bideśe yāite

manastha karila.

There lived in the city of Abanti a Brahmin. He was

handsome and learned and belonged to the Vasistha clan.

There was a cobbler living there too. He belonged

to the Svitri clan and was an utter bumpkin. They

resolved to go abroad together taking a large sum in

rupees and gold with them to set up a joint business.

This passage contains 5 sentences and a total of 39

words. The first 4 sentences, are very short, comprising

5, 8, 4, and 6 words respectively. The last sentence, con-

tains 16 words. This change of sentence length breaks the

monotony created by the first four very short sentences

and thus avoids that staccato effect, which is so common to

Basu's style. Moreover, Mrityuñjaẏ often introduces a few

short sentences after a group of longish ones (i.e. containing

11 to 30 words) to produce variety. This is a stylistic

improvement on the Bengali prose of Basu, for Mrityuñjaẏ

clearly realised part of the key to stylistic beauty lies in

the avoidance of monotony by contrasting sentence-lengths.

However, Mrityuñjaẏ's feeling for linguistic beauty

failed him in certain passages in Prabodh Candrikā and in

Vedānta Candrikā where extremely long sentences are employed.
Some sentences in Vedānta Candrikā, in particular contain on
average 50 to 60 words and the longer ones more than 100.[1]
These sentences are clumsy, slow-moving and difficult to
understand.

<div align="center">VI</div>

Our discussion of his vocabulary, word-order and sentence-
structure lead us to conclude that Mṛityuñjay devoted consid-
erable thought to the composition of Bengali prose. Basu
had experimented with syntax; Mṛityuñjay went a step
further: he experimented with style as well. He realised
that no one style could suit all purposes. He, therefore,
evolved at least three distinct styles in his treatment of
various subject-matters.

Vedānta Candrikā was composed in an ornate style of
Sanskritised Bengali. He deliberately used Sanskrit words
because in his view they lent dignity to his prose. He con-
sidered them indispensable to learned discussion. At times,
however, he demonstrably erred in the direction of excess.

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1. See Vedānta Candrikā (Rāmmohan's collected works in Bengali,
   edited by Brajendrnāth Bandyopādhyāy, Vol. I.) p.143.

92% of the words in one passage already cited are Sanskrit. His excessive use of Sanskrit compounds in Vedānta Candrikā has also been noted.

It is difficult to determine the exact point at which a certain tendency may be declared "excessive", but there can be no doubt, as far as Bengali prose is concerned that in the use of Sanskritic vocabulary, that point has been reached, when the Bengali reader begins to suspect he is no longer reading Bengali, but Sanskrit. This is the case with Vedānta Candrikā. Enough has been said by now, however, to make clear that this ornate, over-Sanskritised style evolved not by accident, but by design. A word ought now to be said about another stylistic feature of Vedānta Candrikā, namely the length of sentences employed in it. These are generally long, many running to half a page or more. They are complex constructions of numerous clauses and phrases, linked by conjunctions, correlatives, and participles. Undoubtedly, this use of longer sentences constituted a valuable discipline in prose composition for Mṛityuñjay. To Mṛityuñjay's credit it must be admitted that no such prose had ever before been attempted, but it must also be added that this prose presents difficulty in reading and comprehension and that consequently Vedānta Candrikā remains an

obscure and awkward work.

Rājābali, a narrative, is written in Literary Bengali.
Its language is simple and not marred by the excesses of
Vedānta Candrikā. Many Sanskrit words occur in its vocabu-
lary but they are those generally understood by educated
Bengalis. They are tatsamas not neologisms. There is
variety in the length of sentences. Some are long, others
short. They are alternated so as to avoid the monotony
induced in the style of Vedānta Candrikā. The work as a
whole is interesting and readable. In my view it carries
Mrityuñjay's style to the highest peak of literary excellence
he achieved.

Prabodh Candrikā is a curious work, composed in at least
3 styles, namely, Sanskritised Bengali, in its reflective
passages, Literary Bengali in the narration of traditional
tales, and Colloquial Bengali in occasional anecdotes, pre-
sumably of Mrityuñjay's own invention. The book has been
condemned by De[1] because of the lack of uniform texture pro-
duced by its variety of styles. This hardly seems a just
ground on which to condemn this particular book. Variety of
style is generally considered to be one element conducing to
literary merit. The Sanskritised Bengali and the Literary

1. De, S.K. : op.cit., p.219.

<u>Bengali</u> in this work are much the same as those used in

<u>Vedānta Candrikā</u> and <u>Rājābali</u> respectively.   However, the

use of <u>Colloquial Bengali</u> in <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u> was an innovation.

It so closely resembles the colloquial Bengali of certain of

Carey's <u>Dialogues</u> that one is tempted to conclude that

Mṛityuñjay was the author of those particular dialogues.

Be that as it may, judged from the historical point of view,

Mṛityuñjay's <u>Prabodh Candrika</u> is probably his most important

work, because of the very variety of style imposed on it by

the very wide spectrum of subject matter, ranging from racy

anecdote to philosophical meditation.   Judged ón its intrinsic

literary merit divorced from its extrinsic historical context,

it may not be a great work of literature.   What De had to

say about its confused structure may well be justified.

Nevertheless, the traditional tales are well-told;   they hold

the reader's interest.   Mṛityuñjay's own anecdotes are vivid

and realistic;   his <u>Biśva Bañcak</u> was probably the first

Bengali story in prose to be drawn from life.   It was recently

reprinted.   Though its language has dated, its story has

lost none of the original freshness, humour and realism, that

made it so enjoyable when it first came out.   <u>Prabodh Candrikā's</u>

principal fault lies in its abrupt chopping and changing of

subject and style. .To this extent the strictures of De seem

justified.   But when <u>Prabodh Candrikā</u> is placed within its

historical context and viewed from that perspective, this
abrupt transition from one topic and style to another seems
a minor fault, compared with the many virtues the book un-
doubtedly possessed in its day.

CHAPTER   VI

Rāmmohan Rāy.

The writings of Rāmmohan Rāy mark the beginning
of a new and important phase in the history of Bengali
prose literature.   He seems to have been unaware of the
first essays at prose writing made by the scholars of
Fort William College.   Though their work is historically
valuable, knowledge of it was in the main confined to the
classrooms and students.   It never reached that wider
public of which Rāmmohan Rāy was a part.   Thus Rāmmohan
had to suffer afresh alone and unaided, the birth-pangs
of Bengali prose.   He differs considerably from the
writers we have so far considered.   Their primary con-
cern was the production of text books; his, of works
intended for a religiously enlightened, and reformed
society.   So closely associated are his writings and
his strivings as a religious and social reformer that it
is impossible to appreciate the one without a knowledge
of the other.

Rāmmohan was born in 1774 of a Hindu family residing
in the district of Hugli in west Bengal.   He was one of
the few Bengalis of the period to acquire a scholarly
knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit.   He continued

and extended his linguistic interests in his later life,
mastering Hebrew so as to read the Bible in the original
and also achieving fluency in English for the introduction
of which as the language of administration he pleaded with
sincere conviction.   He was also familiar with Hindusthani
and had some knowledge of French, Latin and Greek.

It is not known exactly when Rāmmohan first felt
himself impelled to attack certain aspects of Hindu social
practice, but it would seem from the evidence adduced by
Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāy that his first challenge to
Hindu idolatry came early in the 19th century.   At that
time Hinduism was being confrontdd by a challenging, new
religion from the West, Christianity.   The Christian code
of ethics held a certain attraction for educated Hindus.
Though this attraction was not sufficient actually to
convert them, it had serious repercussions on the con-
tinued acceptance of certain social practices, which formed
an integral part of the Hindu way of life.   Rāmrām Basu
was the first to be swayed by his intimate association with
Christian missionaries.   Though he did not "possess"
sufficient resolution to renounce his family connections
and avow himself a Christian," writes Marshman, "he regarded
the popular superstitions of the country with philosophical

contempt."[1]   Basu wrote a pamphlet in verse, entitled
Jñānoday, in 1800, in which he attacked idolatry.   Ward
commented on it, "this is the first piece in which
brahmins have been opposed perhaps for thousands of
years."[2]   Hinduism therefore was beginning to be attacked
not only by foreign missionaries, but also by a few
educated Hindus, of whom the most outstanding was Rāmmohan
Rāy.   Though at this time his targets were identical
with those of the missionaries, his motives and the
position from which he attacked them differed.   It was
because of the difference of his position of attack,
namely a position of social prominence within the Hindu
camp itself, that his attack was potentially so dangerous
and had to be taken so seriously by the orthodox.

Rāmmohan's whole life consisted of a series of
battles.   His first opponents were Hindu brahmins and
leading members of other castes.   The contemporary general
public, including the brahmins, were ignorant of the
ancient religious literatures of the Hindus.   In order
to enlighten them Rāmmohan translated the Vedānta and
some of the Upaniṣads.   His first work Vedānta Grantha,
a translation of the Vedānta, appeared in 1815.   Its

1.   Marshman: op.cit., p.132.
2.   Periodical Accounts relative to the Baptist Missionary
     Society,Vol.III.(1804-08) p.271. See Bandyopādhyāy:SSC.,
     Vol. I, 6 p.17.

declared purpose was to establish, "the unity of the Supreme being, and [show] that He is the only object of worship." In 1816 this work was translated into both Hindi and English. The <u>Upaṇisads</u> he translated were <u>Kena</u>, <u>Iśa</u>, <u>Katha</u>, <u>Māṇdukya</u> and <u>Maṇduka</u>. They were brought out between June 1816 and March 1819. His translations of these religious texts and his attacks on image worship antagonised the leaders of Hindu society, who in turn took up their pens against him. Rāmmohan countered their arguments in an attempt to establish the validity of his opinions.

Rāmmohan's doctrine was essentially monotheistic. His deity was Brahma, whom he regarded as the ultimate being and the only possible object of worship. His views on this later crystallised into the formation of a new sect, the Brāhma. In 1814 he founded the <u>Ātmīya Sabhā</u>, (Association of Relatives) a society for the worship of the One Formless God, Brahma. Out of this society evolved the <u>Brāhma Samāj</u>, a sect, which was to play an important role in the religious life of Bengal later. Many prominent Hindus, including the Tagores, joined Rāmmohan and accepted his faith. Though this sect was and continued to be deemed heretical by many

orthodox Hindus, it should be remarked that Rāmmohan still regarded himself as a Hindu and wore the Brahmins thread throughout his whole life.

Rāmmohan was attracted to the teachings of Jesus Christ but he could not bring himself to believe in the miracles, nor in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In 1800 he published, "The Precepts of Jesus", in English, with Sanskrit and Bengali translations. This work offended the missionaries and in his reply to it in the "Friend of India", Marshman called Rāmmohan a "heathen". Rāmmohan took up the challenge and published his first and second Appeals, to which Marshman also replied. But this was the limit to which Marshman was prepared to carry the debate. He flatly refused to publish Rāmmohan Final Appeal to the Christian Public "with its formidable array of Hebrew and Greek quotations."[1] Nothing daunted, Rāmmohan set up his own press and published his appeals independently in 1823. His articles in the Brāhman Sebadhi (1821) and his polemical article Pādrī o Śiṣya Sambād (1823) formed but a part of the continuous sallies against the Christian missionaries, which he constantly

1. Dutt, R.C., The Literature of Bengal, Calcutta, 1895, p.144.

made throughout his life both in India and in England,
where his monotheistic inclinations led him to join the
Unitarian sect.

Outside India Rāmmohan's reputation is more that
of a social reformer than of a religious teacher. He
was deeply concerned at the position and treatment of
women in Hindu society. He championed emancipation and
initiated a campaign in November 1818 to bring an end to
Satī, the cruel practice by which widows were expected
to immolate themselves on their dead husband's funeral
pyres. His activities incensed Orthodox Hindus. "Angry
Pandits indulged in violent attacks and vituperation, and
for a time Rāmmohan's life was in danger."[1] But the in-
domitable spirit of Rāmmohan was not to be intimidated.
He fought back fervently, till ultimate victory was
achieved. i.e., satī was abolished.

Despite the violent opposition he provoked from the
orthodox ranks of militant Hinduism, Rāmmohan was never-
theless greatly respected by many eminent contemporaries.
His dignity and scholarship attracted the attention of
the East India Company. His fame as reformer and thinker
spread throughout India and even beyond to Europe. He

1. Dutt: op.cit., p.143.

was the pioneer of all that was progressive in his
country.   He was a founder of Hindu College (1817) and
a member of its Governing Body, till pressure of ortho-
dox opinion drove him to resign; he desired Western
Scientific education for his fellow-countrymen, setting
out the arguments in favour of it in a letter to the
Governor-General, Lord Amherst, in 1823; he appealed
for freedom of the press to the Supreme Court, the
first step forward, taken with Dvārakānāth Tagore in a
direction which later was to lead to a campaign for
political rights.

The Emperor of Delhi, Akbar II, had certain griev-
ances, which he wished to lay before Parliament in London.
He selected Rāmmohan as his ambassador and despatched him
to England in 1830, bestowing upon him the title of Rājā.
Rāmmohan had reasons of his own for wishing to present
himself to Parliament as a spokesman.   Orthodox Hindus
had appealed to the Privy Council to bārogate the aboli-
tion of Satī.   Rāmmohan wanted an opportunity to state
in person his reasons for the rejection of this appeal.
The appeal was in fact rejected in July,1832, and Rāmmohan
took the opportunity to make some constructive criticism
of the East India Company's administration of India.

Rāmmohan disembarked in Liverpool on the 8th
August, 1831 and arrived in London on the 18th of April.
He made contact with many well-known thinkers and began
to write and publish books in English.   In 1832 he
visited France, where he was received with great honour
by Louis Phillipe.   His last days were spent in Bristol,
where he now lies buried.

II

Classification of Rāmmohan's Writings

Rāmmohan's Bengali writings are little known out-
side a small group of scholars.   Even historians of
Bengali literature have not discussed them in any detail.
It has been noted that he did not write for purely literary
purposes.   He wrote as a means to an end, the end being
religious and social reform.   His writings can conveniently
be considered under two headings: (1) Translations;
(2) Original Works.

As a translator of sacred Hindu texts, Rāmmohan
played an extremely important role in the revival of
Hinduism in the 19th century.   By the second half of the
18th century classical scholarship had virtually come to

an end in Bengal.   The study of Sanskrit, the language

of the sacred texts, was restricted to the brahmins alone.

This privilege they guarded jealously.   They considered

Bengali to be an inelegant language and a totally inadequate

medium for the promulgation of the scriptures.   It was

beyond their wildest dreams that they should translate

the scriptures into so vulgar a vehicle of expression.

Thus Rāmmohan's translation of the <u>Vedānta</u> and five

<u>Upaniṣads</u> came as an immense blow to the vanity and

bigotry of the pandits, shattering, as it did, their long

cherished illusion that theirs alone was the right to

reach the sacred texts.   Nevertheless Rāmmohan's trans-

lations played a marked part in raising the prestige of

Bengali; besides enriching the new prose literature.

Henceforth it was no longer possible to argue that

Bengali was a totally inadequate medium for serious subjects.

Rāmmohan's translations are interspersed with his own

commentaries.   One example is given below from the

<u>Vedānta Grantha</u>.

<u>athāto brahma jijñāsā</u>

citta śuddhi haile par brahma jñāner adhikār

haẏ ei hetu takhan brahma bicārer icchā janme.

brahma lakṣya evaṃ buddhir grāhya nā haẏen tabe.

kirūpe brahma tattver bicār haite pāre ei

sandeha parasūtre dūr karitechen.[1]

The commentaries, as well as the translations, were in-
tended for the edification of readers who did not know
Sanskrit.   This was a new venture in the history of
Hinduism.   There were many commentators of the Vedas
and the Upaniṣads in Sanskrit but this was the first
time that the Bengali language was employed for this
purpose.

The preface to the Vedānta Grantha is important
to students of the Bengali language.   It suggests that
though a number of books had been published before 1815
Rāmmohan did not know of their existence and, therefore,
had himself to formulate rules for Bengali syntax.   The
relevant portion is quoted below:

"Firstly there is in the Bengali language a mere
handful of words fit for the discharge of domestic affairs
alone.   The language's dependence on Sanskrit becomes
apparent the moment one tries to explain things from
another language.

_____

1.   The right to know Brahma comes after the mind is
     purified and therefore the desire to study (the nature
     of) Brahma occurs.   If Brahma cannot be seen or under-
     stood by the intellect, how can the nature of Brahma
     be studied?   This doubt is removed in the following
     sūtra.

Secondly no treatise or epic has yet been
described in prose in this language. Thus for lack of
practice many of my fellow countrymen cannot immediately
construe two or three sentences and make out their mean-
ing. This is perceived when they try to make out the
meaning of the translation of straight-forward laws.
And so I am writing a section on the principlesof the
language of the Vedānta, lest anyone finding it more
difficult to grasp than that of ordinary discourse
should diminish his attention to it. Those with even
a smattering of Sanskrit together with those who speak
the Sādhubhāṣā through associating with scholars, will
master it with very little effort. One should pay
particular attention to the beginnings and endings of
sentences. One should terminate a sentence containing
words like yakhan, yāhā, yeman, etc. by construing them
with their correlatives takhan, tāhā, seirūp, etc. One
should not terminate a sentence and try to make out its
meaning until one comes across its verb. One should
examine especially which verb is construed with which noun,
for there may sometimes be several nouns and verbs in one
sentence. Until one knows which is construed with which,
it is not possible to make out the meaning."

Rammohan's original works may be divided into
two groups, (a) exposition and (b) disputative.   In
the expository works he expounds his own religious views,
in the disputative ones he replies to his detractors,
and attempts to refute their arguments and to establish
the validity of his own.

The following are his expository works.

(i)   Prārthanāpatra (1823)

(ii) Brahmaniṣṭha grihasther lakṣan (1826)

(iii) Brahmapāsanā (1828)

(iv) anuṣthān (1829)

(v)   sahamaraṇ biṣaÿ Prabartak o nirbartak saṁbad (1818)

(vi) sahamaran biṣaÿ (1829)

The first four books outline his religious faith,
which he had already expressed in the commentaries on the
Vedānta and the Upaniṣads   The other two books attack
Satī.   The first book written on Satī (i.e. (v) was
written in the form of a dialogue, a device familiar to
both old eastern and western literature.   His attacks
on Satī are written in such a way that both advocates and
opponents of the practice have equal opportunities to
express their views, thus sustaining the readers' interest
throughout the whole discussion.   A passage is quoted below:

"Question from the advocate.

I am surprised to learn that you oppose the rites of Sahamaran (simultaneous death of husband and wife) and anumaran (a wife following her husband in death) as practised in this country.

Answer of the opponent.

We are trying to prevent suicide which is internationally condemned by every religious text. The only people who will be surprised are those who have no respect for the sacred books and no pity for women committing suicide.

Advocate.

It is not true, as you claim, that the practice of Sahamaran is forbidden by the sacred texts. Listen to what sages like Aṅgirā have to say....

[Quotations from Sanskrit texts and their Bengali translation follow after it.]

The Sahamaran and anumaran are sanctioned by various

sayings in the Smriti. How
can you possibly describe it as
being against the scriptures or
want to oppose it?

Opponent.　　What you say, is of course (in
the) Smriti and (it is true)
according to these sayings that
if a woman dies with her husband
or follows him in death, she
enjoys heaven for countless years.
But listen to what Manu has to say
about the rules for widows...."

Rammohan wrote 9 important disputative books, six of
which were in reply to different scholars who attacked his
condemnation of polytheism and image-worship.[1]　These
debates were conducted in Bengali except for one instance[2]
when he had to reply in Sanskrit, the language used in the

1.　Utsabānanda bidyā bāgiśer sahit bicār, 1816.
　　Bhattacaryer Sahit bicār, 1817.
　　Gosvamir Sahit bicār, 1818.
　　Kabitā karer Sahit bicār, 1820.
　　Cariprasner uttar
　　Pathyapradān
　　Sahamaran bisayak (2nd part)
　　Brāhman Sebadhi
　　Badri śisya sambād
2.　subrahmanya śastrīr sahit bicār, 1820.

attack against him by Subrahmaṇya Śāstrī. Among his
other writings are three comparatively light writings
against opponents who supported idolatry. His second
book on Satī (1819) was a reply to one of the pandits
who attacked him. He wrote two books against the
Christian missionaries. These books read like the
minutes of a debate. Rāmmohan quotes or summarises the
arguments of his opponent first, before proceeding to
criticise them. In this way he refutes each of his
opponents' arguments before reaching his final conclusion.
He always argued dispassionately, maintaining an even
temper even when his opponents attacked unfairly and
personally. There is only one exception to this when
the satire becomes extremely caustic. It is the pādri
śiṣya sambād published in 1823. Marshman had attacked
Hinduism, particularly its theory of incarnations, birth-
cycles, etc. Rāmmohan had taken him up on it and was
not satisfied with Marshman's explanations. Rāmmohan,
though very respectful to Jesus Christ, did not believe
in the doctrine of the Trinity and he had a quarrel with
Marshman on this subject. It seems Rāmmohan was greatly
angered by Marshman. This work is indicative of that
anger.

The piece has four characters, a European missionary, and his three Christian disciples. After delivering his teaching, the missionary asked them, "Brothers, tell me, is God one or many?"

The first disciple replied that there were three Gods, the second disciple that there were two and the third that there was no God. The teacher rebuked them and demanded an explanation of their answers. The first one said, "You said that (there are) God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. According to my counting that is one plus one plus one, making three."

The second one said, "You told us that there were three Gods and that one of them died long ago in a village in a western country. So I concluded that there are two Gods, now living."

The third one said, "You have said again and again that God was one and that there is no other God and that Christ is the real God. But about 1800 years have passed since the Jews, living near the Arabian Sea, crucified him. What else, do you think I can say, Sir, except that, 'there is no God' ".

III.

In 1826 Rāmmohan wrote a Bengali grammar in
English. He later translated it into Bengali. It
was published in 1833 shortly after his death. This
grammar is divided into four parts. The first part
(pp. 1-10) deals with the phonology of the Bengali
language, the second part (pp. 11-23) with word-classes,
number, gender, person and declension, the third part
(pp.32-97) with conjugation (pp. 32-70), more word-
classes (pp. 71-89), syntax (pp. 90-94) and metrics
(pp.95-97).

The most striking feature about Rāmmohan's grammar
is his attempt at an ad hoc analysis and description of
the Bengali language. The approach constituted a
break-away from the vernacular grammarian's customary
practice of imposing the rules of Sanskrit upon Bengali.
Some of his observations were revolutionary in this
respect, since there was, and still is, in some quarters,
a notion that there must be a strong resemblance between
Bengali and Sanskrit grammar, due to the evolution of
Bengali from Sanskrit by way of Prakrit. Rāmmohan did
not share this misconception. He wrote that the Bengali

script contains letters like ṇ, y, ṣ, ṛi ḷ etc., which
are not present in the Bengali sound system.   Thus even
at the phonological level, Rāmmohan's insistence on the
differences between Sanskrit and Bengali is evident.
He classified Bengali words into 8 categories: (1) biśeṣya
(noun); (2) pratisamgñā (pronoun); (3) guṇātmak biśeṣan
(adjectives); (4) kriyātmak biśeṣan (verb); (5) kriyāpekṣā
kriyātmak biśeṣan (participles); (6) sambandhīya biśeṣan
(post position); (7) samuccayārtha biśeṣan (conjunction)
and (8) antarbhāb biśeṣan (interjections).   These categories
are not established on formal but on notional criteria.
Thus it is clear that Rāmmohan followed the English
grammarians in his establishment of word-classes.

      Rāmmohan's description of declension, however, is
perfectly formal.   He establishes four cases:

    (i)   abhihita (nominative) : noun + zero e.g.,

                                         Rām+0 = Rām

    (ii)   karma (accusative)   : noun + ke/re e.g.,

                                             Rām+ke/re = Rāmke/re

    (iii)   adhikaran (locative)   : noun + e/te e.g.,

                                           Rām+e/te = Rāme/te

    (iv)   sambandha (genitive)   : noun + er/r e.g.,

                                           Rām+er = Rāmer

As regards gender Rāmmohan claimed that it could be ignored
in the description of Bengali language, where the declension-
al and conjugational systems exhibit no formal criteria on
which such a classification could be based.   Bengali con-
tains merely a few words denoting difference of sex, e.g.,
dhobā/dhobini (washerman/washerwoman).

In analysing compounds Rāmmohan avoided Sanskrit
rules and examples.   He classified compounds in to four
types for which he gave Bengali examples e.g., hāt bhāṅgā
(hand-broken), sonā morā (gold-wrapped) miṣṭamukho (sweet-
faced) etc.

The most pertinent section to our present purpose is
that concerning syntax.   A sentence, according to Rāmmohan,
consists of at least two words, a noun and verb in that
order e.g., Rām yān (Ram goes).   Adjectives precede the
nouns they qualify e.g., bhāla manuṣya (good man), baṛa
ghar (big room).   The positions of adverbs, participles,
postpositions and conjunctions within the sentence are
not fixed and Rāmmohan urges his readers to follow the
examples in his grammar.   He observes that adverbs often
precede verbs e.g.   se iṃreji bhāla lekhe (He writes
English well).   The positions of other word-classes may
be deduced from the following sentence, given as an example.

ek bṛihat byāghra ban haite grāmer madhye

rātrikāle prabeś kariȳa tathāẏ nānā upadrab

bhurikal byāpiȳa karitechila, pare ek sāhasānvita

manuṣya sei paśur sahit yuddha kariȳa tāhāke naṣṭa

karilek sei abadhi grāmer lok. svacchandantā

pūrbak āpan 2 karma karitechen.

Rāmmohan states that a sentence generally begins with a
noun in the <u>abhihita</u> case i.e., noun + zero ending, but
he cites the following examples as exceptions.

    (i)   tāhāke āmi kadāca tyāg karibanā

           him   I   ever desertion shall do not

           I shall never desert him

    (ii)   manuṣyer caritra manuṣyake mānya....kare

           man's character to man   respected does

           A man's character makes a man respectable.

It is highly probable that Rāmmohan wrote his own
sentence material. (The modern practice is to collect
it from current speech). This would account for the
unnaturalness of much of it, in that it is difficult
to contextualise. He may even have translated some of
his illustrative sentences from English. Despite these
defects Rāmmohan's grammar is important because of the
considerable light it throws on contemporary usage. It
did attempt to generalise the different usages current at

his time and was for long used as a text book in schools.

IV

Let us now consider Rāmmohan's vocabulary. He
had a penchant for what he called Sādhubhāṣā, a term he
does not define, but which on examination of the language
itself would seem to imply a high proportion of tatsamas.
He also made use of Sanskrit loan words, which in other
circumstances might lead us to term his language Sanskritised
Bengali, but in his case we hesitate to do so. He used the
so called Sādhubhāṣā to maintain the dignity and high
serious tone of the Vedānta. The Sanskrit loan words
he used are all religious or philosophical terms, which
have no Bengali equivalent. Some of them indeed are
untranslateable and have of necessity to be used, so to
speak, in verbal quotation marks when discussing Hindu
religion and philosophy in any language other than Sanskrit
itself. For example, the word 'karma' is generally used
in Bengali to mean "work" but in philosophical or religious
contexts it signifies "action consisting in motion as the
third among the seven categories of the Nyāya philosophy",
or "fate" in Sanskrit.[1] Since Rāmmohan was the first to

1. *Monier-* Williams, M: A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Oxford (1899),
    new edition 1956, p.209.

discuss the Vedas and the Upaniṣad in Bengali, he naturally had to introduce into Bengali much of the relevant Sanskrit religious terminology. His Sanskrit loan words must therefore be regarded as inevitable in their contexts and not as part of a design to Sanskritise his language. That this conclusion is correct is substantiated by the marked diminution in the proportion of Sanskrit loan words and tatsamas in his own original writings and in his translations. In the only other Bengali attempt prior to Rāmmohan's to disucss Hindu philosophy, namely Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj's Caitanya Caritāmṛita (17th century) an equal, if not greater, preponderance of Sanskrit religious and philosophical terms is observed, especially in those passages, where the author sets out to establish the superiority of Vaiṣṇavism to the Advaita Vād (Monism) of Śaṅkārācārya.

The original writings of Rāmmohan contain a smaller percentage of Sanskrit words than do his translations and commentaries as the following analysis of three typical passages shows. Of the three selected passages the first is from Rāmmohan's translation of the Vedānta (first 7 sūtras), the second from his original prose compositions (the preface to the Vedānta Grantha) and the third from a piece of his own composed in a lighter vein (a page from his Pādri o Śiṣya Sambād).

	Translation	Original	
		Serious	Light
No. of words	364	348	183
% of ts & Skt. loan words	65.10	57.5	45.0
% of tb.	34.9	41.9	49.7
% of Perso-Arabic & English	00.0	00.6	3.8

There are 3 foreign words in the third passage "pādri",
"saytān" and "Holy Ghost", of which the first occurs three
times and the second two once.

As with Sanskrit loan words and tatsamas, there is a
marked variance between the number of compounds contained
in his original prose writings and in his translations.
Of the selected passages analysed above the first contains
27 compounds, the second 6 and the third 3.

Compounds consisting of two components are relatively
common in Rammohan's writings, compared with those of 3
components, which are uncommon, and those of more than 3,

which are very rare indeed.   In this respect Rāmmohan's style differs from that of Mṛityuñjaẏ, which we termed Sanskritised Bengali and in which the use of compounds composed of 3 and even more components is frequent.

It is interesting to compare the frequency of occurrence of Sanskrit compounds in Mṛityuñjaẏ, Rāmmohan and the later writer Vidyāsāgar.   Three passages have been selected for comparison, the first from Prabodh Candrikā[1] of Mṛityuñjaẏ, the second from the preface to the Vedānta Grantha[2] by Rāmmohan Rāẏ and the third from the Betāl Pacabiṃśati[3] of Vidyāsāgar.

	Mṛityuñjaẏ	Rāmmohan	Vidyāsāgar
Total no. of words	144	144	144
No. of Compounds	24	8	19
No. of 2 word compounds	20	6	14
No. of 3 word compounds	4	2	4
No. of 4 word compounds	0	0	1

1.   śrila śrī Vikramāditya...putra śiśu, Prabodh Candrikā,pp.2-3
2.   First ten sentences of the preface to Vedānta Grantha.
3.   First two paragraphs of Betāl Pañcabiṃśati.

It should be noted that the passage chosen to
represent Rāmmohan is taken from one of his Sanskrit
commentaries and is therefore likely to contain higher
than average proportion of compounds. Nevertheless,
the figures in the above table, which are reasonably
representative of all three authors, show a far smaller
percentage of compounds in Rāmmohan than in the other
two. This is because Rāmmohan deliberately tried to
obviate compounds. He was able to reduce the number
of compounds he used by resolving compounds of the
tatpuruṣ type into their two components, linked in some
cases by a case-inflection, generally the genitive. The
following examples are typical.

(i)   nirbāher yogya   (nirbāha-yogya)

(ii) tattver bicār   (tattva bicār)

(iii) sarper najāy̌   (sarpabat)

(iv) bahukāl byāpiȳā   (bahukālbyāpī)

(v)   hindur dharma   (Hindu-dharma)

The samāsas which are given in brackets are acceptable
in Bengali and are to be found even in modern writings.
The fact that this type of compound still survives in modern
writings.   The fact that this type of compound still sur-
vives in modern Bengali seems to indicate a deliberate
intention on Rāmmohan's part to avoid compounds by the use

of inflected forms, whenever feasible and that his
practice in this respect was not followed by a number
of later writers.   It should be remembered that the
use of compounds is an important feature of modern
Bengali as well as of the Bengali of Rāmmohan's time.
Rāmmohan has himself given examples of Bengali compounds
in his grammar.   It has been pointed out above[1] (n.) that
there are some compounds in Bengali which were inherited
from Sanskrit, and which are no longer regarded as com-
pounds, but as tatsama words naturalised in Bengali e.g.,
mahārāja, rājputra.   Compounds like these cannot be
resolved in Bengali naturally, which explains why
Rāmmohan's deliberate attempts, to do so sometimes re-
sulted in unnaturalness.

Our analysis of Rāmmohan's vocabulary indicates
that he uses a higher proportion of tatsama words, but a
very important fact that the analysis does not disclose
is that the words he uses are fully naturalised in
Bengali and understood by the educated.   Compared with
Mṛityuñjay, he makes little use of Sanskrit loan words.
The few he does use are religious and logical terms for
which there is no Bengali equivalent.   It has been noted
too, that Perso-Arabic elements are virtually absent from
his writings.   The preface to Vedānta Grantha contains
only two words of Persian origin i.e. kānun (law) and

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1. Supra: Chapter II. Sec. II. p. 171

tarjamā (translation), both of which were established in ordinary Bengali usage. One example is quoted below to substantiate these remarks:

Satārddha batsar haite adhikkāl edeśe imrejer adhikār haiỹāche tāhāte pratham triś batsare tāhāder bākyer o byābahārer dvārā ihā sarbatra bikhyāta chila ye tāhāder niỹám eiye kāharo *dharmer sahit* o *āpnār* *bipakṣatā karenvā*dharma sakale karuk ihāi tāhāder yathārtha bāsanā....kintu idānintan biś batsar haila katak byākti imrej yāhārā misanari nāme bikhyāta hindu o mochalmānke byakta rūpe tāhāder dharma haite pracyuta kariỹā khṛiṣṭān karibār yatna nānā prakāre karitechen.

[This country has experienced more than half a century of English soverignty. During the first 30 years, they universally proclaimed by conduct and word of mouth that it was their principle not to oppose the religion of any man but to allow each man to follow the religion of his choice. This was their genuine desire. But during the last twenty years some English persons, known as missionaries, have been trying to get Hindus and Muslims to forsake their faiths and be converted to Christiantiy.]

Of the 69 words in the above passage, 32 are tatsamas, 32 tadbhavas and 5 foreign words. The percentages of tatsama and tadbhava are the same. The passage does not contain

a single <u>tatsama</u> word which may be called alien to
Bengali. It is interesting to note that English words
like "missionary", "Christian" had started to be used in
Bengali. The influence of English at the vocabulary
level had started. There is only one Persian word
<u>mochalmān</u> (muslims). There are only two compounds,
<u>śatārdha</u> (half-century), <u>bipakṣatācaran</u> (opposition).

<div align="center">V.</div>

Like other pioneers of Bengali prose Rāmmohan was
experimenting with new collocations. Many of them were
not accepted by later writers but they constitute a very
interesting and idiosyncratic feature. The following are
the examples of some of Rāmmohan's word-collocations.

I. <u>Noun + Verb patterns</u>

(a) <u>ayogya kahitechila</u> (unworthy speaking) is meaningless
    in modern Bengali. Rāmmohan used it in the sense of
    "speaking unjustly". "ayogya" is a Sanskrit word,
    which means "unfit" or "unworthy" in modern Bengali.

(b) <u>manoyog kara</u> (attention do) in the sense of "be
    attentive" or "pay attention." Though grammatically
    correct, the phrase sounds affected to the modern ear,
    because "manoyog" is generally collocated with verb
    <u>deoyā</u>, "to give".

(c) deśer...tiraskār (country's scolding) is another
     collocation of Rāmmohan's own coinage. By the word
     "tiraskār" Rāmmohan obviously means "insult" or "ill
     fame", making the sense of the whole phrase "ill
     fame of the country". However, tiraskār, never
     collocates with deś. Thus this collocation sounds
     strange to the modern Bengali.

(d) bāṅgāli bhāṣā (Bengali language) is another new
     collocation, and one which has not been accepted
     into Bengali usage. According to modern usage the
     phrase can only mean the language of Bengalis. The
     phrase for the Bengali language is Bāṅglā Bhāṣā. In
     this case Rāmmohan's phrase is a false collocation
     only because it has not been confirmed by subsequent
     acceptance.

(e) dipti-mān kartā (shining-Doer) signifying "God".
     This is a very strange collocation indeed.

     Thus many of Rāmmohan's collocations add to the
effect of strangeness and affectedness produced by his
excessive and at times perverse desire to avoid the use of
Sanskrit compounds. We now consider further strange out-
comes of that same desire.

     We noted in an earlier chapter[1] the difficulty Sanskrit

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1. supra.,Chapter II, p. 64

scholars experienced in translating Sanskrit compounds of
the noun + adjective structure. They resolved them in
the traditional manner by <u>Vyāsa Vākya</u>. Below are given
two unhappy results of Rāmmohan's adoption of this ex-
pedient:

i) <u>patibratā ye kopotikā</u> (husband-devoted which pigeon
i.e., the faithful pigeon)

ii) <u>sarba śāstre nindita ye svarge kāmanā</u> (in all scriptures
condemned which heaven-desire i.e., that desire for
heaven which is condemned in all the scriptures).

What Rāmmohan has in fact done here is to resolve the
original compounds by the insertion of the relevant case-
endings and the relative "ye". This produces awkward,
unhappy phrases and destroys the simplicity of the original
compounds. The awkwardness of two of Rāmmohan's phrases
is contrasted with the original compounds, now preferred
by modern Bengali.

Rāmmohan	Modern Bengali

(i) sarba jātite nişiddha ye
    ātmaghāt
    The suicide which is pro-
    hibited by all
    nations.
	(i) sarba jāti-nişiddha-
	    ātmaghat
	    all nations - condemned
	    suicide

(ii) mahā pātakī ye pati
    great sinner which
    husband
    The husband, who is
    great sinner
	(ii) mahā pātakī-pati
	    great-sinner-husband

Thus paradoxically Rāmmohan's desire to avoid

Sanskrit compounds, though in essence a desire for

naturalness and simplicity, in fact led him in the

opposite direction towards strangeness.   His cumbrous

circumlocutions run counter to modern Bengali taste.

In pursuance of this same desire to avoid compounds

Rāmmohan also used inflections and post-positions in

a manner which was not accepted by later writers.

This tendency is illustrated and discussed below:

(A)   (i) padke prāpta (to get his feet or 'get a post').

        Modern Bengali would here prefer 'pad-prāpta'.

      (ii) cīner deśe (of China country).   Modern Bengali

           would prefer 'cīndeśe'

     The following examples show an inclination to use

the accusative case inflection in contexts where inflect-

ions are not grammatically permissible in modern usage.

Bengali nouns fall into two classes distinguishable by

paradigms.   The first class is stateable in a paradigm

of 4 terms e.g.,

                    chele + o

                    chele + ke

                    chele + r/er

                    chele + te/ý/e

The second class is stateable in a paradigm of 3 terms e.g.,

<div style="text-align:center">

bastu + o

bastu + r/er

bastu + te

</div>

Rāmmohan in the following examples uses a −ke form for nouns which belong to the 2nd class i.e., the class which has no −ke form.

(B) (i) <u>bastuke haste laiẏā</u> (taking one object in hand).

    (ii) <u>prakṛit dharmake svīkār</u> (to accept the true religion).

<div style="text-align:center">

VI

</div>

The question of Rāmmohan's word−order was raised in section III of this chapter, in our general survey of his grammar book. Before proceeding with our discussion his own prescriptions on word−order are recapitulated:

    i)   Subjects precede their verbs.

    ii)   Adjectives precede their nouns.

    iii)   Adverbs generally precede the verbs they qualify.

    iv)   A sentence generally begins with the subject.

    v)   The positions of other word−classes within the sentence are not fixed, but are to be deduced from examples.

Rāmmohan's prose exhibits few examples of word−order,

which modern Bengali would actually regard as irregular. In general his word-order approximates more closely to Modern Bengali than does that of Rāmrām Basu, though not so closely as does that of Mṛityuñjaẏ.

(i) Subject + object/adverbial adjunct + verb

This aspect of word-order is not specifically discussed in Rāmmohan's grammar. He prescribed that the subject begins the sentence and the verb ends it. The position of object/adv. adjunct is not prescribed, but is to be deduced from examples. This deduction from examples presents difficulties, as Rāmmohan's practice is not consistent. Below are given examples of word-order which accord with modern Bengali practice:

> (i) dharma binā jīban bṛithā haẏ
>
> Life is futile without religion
>
> (ii) churi diẏā lekhanī prastut karilen
>
> (He) made a pen by a knife

In the above examples the adverbial phrases "dharma binā" and "churi diyá" both occur initially. This is the modern practice. But Rāmmohan does not always follow it, e.g.,

> (i) bibāha arther nimitte karen
>
> They marry for money

This sentence exhibits two irregularities, (a) the adverbial phrase "arther nimitte" does occur not initially (b) the

compound verb <u>bibāha karen</u> has been split by the insertion

of the adverbial phrase.

(ii)   <u>tāhāder prāý bibāher par aneker sahit</u>

<u>sakṣāt haýnā</u>

Many of them do not meet after marriage.

This sentence is clumsy.   It contains 3 phrases, a noun

phrase, <u>tāhāder sākṣāt prāý</u>, and two adverbial phrases:

<u>bibāher par</u>, and <u>aneker sahit</u>.   But the noun phrase is

broken up, and according to later usage, one of the

adverbial phrases is misplaced.   The accepted order in

modern Bengali would be:-

<u>bibāher par aneker sahit tāhāder prāý sākṣāt haýnā</u>

(iii)   <u>sūpakāyer karma binā betane...kare</u>

They work as unpaid cooks.

The adv. phrase <u>binā betane</u> (without pay) would occur

initially in modern Bengali.

(iv)   <u>hindu barger anyajāti apekṣā bhāi sakal</u>....

<u>ekatra sthiti karen</u>

Unlike other nations amongst Hindus all

brother live together.

The adverbial phrase "anyajāti apekṣā" (unlike other

nations) would occur initially in modern Bengali.

Mṛityuñjaý's prose is free from this kind of

irregularity in word-order.   Since his word-order is identical

with that of modern Bengali in this respect, we may
presume that it reflected current spoken practice and
that consequently Mṛityuñjaý's was more "correct" than
Rāmmohan in this one respect.

VII

As regards sentence structure Rāmmohan's prose
exhibits many of the features common to Rāmrām Basu's.
Both were apparently influenced by English usage. The
effects of this influence will be studied below under
various heads:

a) <u>Use of the Verb Copula</u>

Rāmmohan's grammar prescribes that each sentence
must contain a verb.[1] This prescription is substantiated
by his comments on the <u>Vedānta Gantha</u>.[2] It holds good for
all types of Bengali sentence with one notable exception,
namely that type of sentence, which consists of subject and
complement only. In English the relationship obtaining
between subject and complement in sentences of this type is
expressed by the verb copula. Thus for the purposes of this

1. See Section III of this Chapter. p. 207
2. See Section II of this Chapter. p. 199

discussion we may term this, "the verb copula sentence."
Modern Bengali idiom requires no verb in affirmative
sentences of this type, whereas English does.   The modern
Bengali translation of the sentence, "He is a pundit"
would be "se pandit" (he pundit).   Probably the presence
of the verb in the English verb copula sentence influenced
Rāmmohan, leading him to feel a need for a copula in Bengali,
in sentences such as:

    i)   tumi....adham hao (you degraded become)

        you are~degraded

    ii) se...ati murkha hay (he very stupid is)

        He is very stupid

It is probable that Rāmmohan would not have spoken
sentences of this type.   Uninfluenced by English, Mrityuñjay
on the other hand managed to produce affirmative "verb copula
sentences" in the modern idiom without verbs.   One is tempted
therefore to assume that the absence of a copula in sentences
of this type was the rule in current speech in Rāmmohan's
time, and that in departing from it Rāmmohan was a victim
of his own grammatical prescription.

b) Clause order and Structure

The order of clauses in a Bengali complex sentence
is the reverse of that generally expected in an English

sentence of the same type, in that in Bengali the
subordinate clause usually precedes the main clause.
In some instances Rāmmohan appears to have followed the
English order:-

    i)   āmi āścarya jñān kari ye tomora sahamaraṇ o

          anumaraṇ yāhā edeśe haiyā āsiteche tāhār

          anyathā karite prayās karitecha.

          [I am surprised to learn that you oppose

          the rites of <u>sahamaran</u> and <u>anumaran</u>

          practised in this country.]

    ii)   āmrā jñāta nahi āpani e dharma yāhā āmārdigake.

          upadeś kariyāchen, kothāy pāilen

          [We do not know where you got this religion,

          which you preach to us].

In both these sentences the main clauses (āmi....;āmrā.....)
are followed by subordinate noun clauses.   This order
accords with English but not with Bengali usage.

c) <u>Bengali equivalents of English "and"</u>

      The use of Bengali translation equivalents of the
word "and" has been discussed in earlier chapters and we
put it down to English or Persian influence.[1]   Instances of
the effects of this influences are very rare in Mṛityuñjay,

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1. Supra Chap II,(Section V, pp. 68-70)

but quite common Rāmmohan e.g.,

    i)   upadeś Smaraṇ kara _ebaṃ_ kaha

          remember the advice and tell

    ii)   sādhubāṣā kahen _ār_ śunen

          speak and listen to the Chaste language

d)   <u>Antecedent + Relative Clause.</u>[1]

      Relative clauses are so common a feature of
Rāmmohan's style, that each page of his prose yields at least
one.   Even so short a piece as <u>pādri śiṣya saṃbād,</u> which
contains only 20 complex sentences, contains 4 relative
clauses.   In his relative clauses Rāmmohan favours the
English order in that the relative pronoun follows its
antecedent rather than preceding it, as modern Bengali idiom
prefers.   The following are few examples:

    i)   e dharma <u>yāhā</u> āmārdigake upadeś kariẏāchen

          This religion which you have advised us.

    ii)   paramārther biṣaẏ <u>yāhā</u> sakal haite atyanta

                             upakārī

          Discussion of God which is most beneficial kind

                             of all.

    iii)   Brahma <u>yāhāke</u> sakal Vede gān Karen

           Brahma, whom all the Vedas sing.

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1.   Chap III Section I, pp. ૧૩ .

e) Correlatives

Rāmmohan and Mṛityuñjaý probably used an equal
number of Correlatives in their prose, but their usage
differed.   Mṛityuñjaý's usage approximates to that of
Modern Bengali.   His clauses containing the relative
component of the two correlatives always preceded those
commencing with the demonstrative component.   In some
cases Rāmmohan reversed this order in line with English
usage:

i) <u>tãhārai</u> āścarya bodh karite pāren <u>ÿãhāder</u>

śāstre śraddhā nāi

only they would be surprised who have no

respect for the scriptures.

ii) <u>tābat</u>....svarga bhog kare <u>ÿābat</u>...indrapāt nāhaý.

(She) enjoys heaven as long as Indra does not fall.

VIII.

Short sentences are very few in Rāmmohan's writing.
His polemic <u>Pārdri o śiṣya Sambād</u> (the total length of which
is 697 words), contains only 34 sentences.   The length of
sentences in this work ranges from the very short, consisting
of 3 or 4 words, to the very long, containing as many as 65
or 67 words.   Sentences in his translations tend to be on
the long side.   Their length varies from 20 to 50 words.

His controversial books, however, contain many even
longer sentences: for instance, in his _Sahamaran_ (2nd
book) one sentence has 210 words.   Even so Rāmmohan's
sentences on average are not as long as Mṛityuñjay's.
They tend also to be easier to read because of the nature
of the vocabulary, the avoidance of compound words and
the use of punctuation marks.

Examples have been quoted earlier to show that
Rāmrām Basu in some of his longer sentences lost the
thread of his thought part way through the sentence and
began a second one before the first was completed.   There
are no examples of this lack of control, in Rāmmohan's sent-
ences.   Even the longer sentences are well constructed.
Long sentences are not part of the genius of the Bengali
language, which tends to express itself in a series of
short sentences rather than in long sentences of the com-
pound type.   Many of Rāmmohan's long sentences are of the
compound type with a fairly large number of subordinate
clauses on the English model.   One of the factors that
marks for greater ease of comprehension in reading
Rāmmohan's sentences is this, that they are based on the
English model which has been to a considerable extent now
naturalised in Bengali whereas Mṛityuñjay's long sentences

which tend to be based on the Sanskrit model rather than
the English are difficult to understand for the ordinary
Bengali who has little Sanskrit.

IX.

Basu employed a one-sentence one-stop type of
punctuation in the latter part of his book, Pratāpāditya
Caritra. Mṛityuñjay carried punctuation no futher.
Rāmmohan extended the use of the punctuation on the Western
model. In 1820 a letter was published in Samācār Darpan
in which a plea was made for the acceptance of the English
punctuation system in Bengali. The letter is said to have
been written by an Englishman. The first Bengali book,
in which the comma, semi-colon and question marks were
used is Rāmmohan's second book on Sahamaran, published in
1819. It therefore antedates the Samācār Darpan
by a few months. It is true that Missionary writers of
Bengali had already introduced the use of full-stops but
they had not so far commenced using commas and semicolons.
The plea for the employment of English punctuation marks
in Bengali prose was not, however, accepted by Bengali writers
immediately. It had to wait until sometime later. The
whole apparatus of punctuation, except the full-stop, towards

the adoption of which Rāmmohan had made the first sig-
nificant step, was not finally established until 1850.[1]
Rāmmohan's contemporaries were content to confine them-
selves to the use of the Dāṛi alone as he himself had
been doing in his early writings.

One of the main obstacles in the way of adopting
English punctuation was the location of pauses in reading.
The comma and semicolons require pauses in places where
normally a Bengali would not pause.   We illustrate this
point by an example from Rāmmohan.

> strīloker buddhir parikṣā kon kāle laiẏāchen, ye
> anāẏāsei tāhārdigake alpabuddhi kahen?
> When did you test the intelligence of women, that
> you can so easily label them less intelligent?

The comma after laiẏāchen marks the end of an English type
clause.   If the sentence were spoken naturally by a Bengali
the pause would come not after "laiẏāchen", but after the
conjunction ye, which would be pronounced on a higher pitch
than the preceeding or following syllable.   Acceptance of
English punctuation therefore was not merely a matter of
accepting commas, semicolons etc., but also of substituting

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1.   Infra. Chap XI, Section VII. pp. 361-62

English syntactical patterns for Bengali. It became easier to do this later in the century when more natives of Bengal had a competent knowledge of English, after the inauguration of English classes in the Hindu College in 1817, had had time to take effect. At the time of which we are speaking, however, very few Calcutta Bengalis had more than a smattering of English.

Rāmmohan's use of semicolons is not faultless. He tends to use them in long compound sentences but in some instances a dāri would have been a more usual mark than the semicolon, e.g.,

ami ki tomāke kahiẏachi ye Īśvar diu haẏen; se yāhāi hauk....

Have I told you that there are two Gods; nevertheless..

Rāmmohan used commas very frequently and often he used them to demarcate clause boundaries e.g.

pratham śiṣya uttar kaila, Īśvar tim

The first disciple replied, "There are 3 Gods"

In conversational pieces where the matter is set out in the manner of a play with the name of the speaker on the left hand part of the page and the dialogue on the right, Rāmmohan uses a dash to separate the speaker's name from the dialogue. This case of the dash enabled him to

omit the verb "said", "exclaimed" etc. e.g.,

padri — tomarā nitānta pāsaṇḍa

padri — you are totally heartless

Though Rāmmohan must have given considerable

thought to the subject of punctuation, he does not mention

the subject in his grammar though he uses the comma, semi-

colon and question mark in it.   The omission of an analysis

of punctuation may possibly have been due to the fact that

his grammar was in the first place intended for British

students of Bengali who could be presumed to stand in no

need of lessons in punctuation.

X

For Rāmmohan Rāẏ writing was an extension of his

work as a religious teacher, social reformer and grammarian.

His primary impulse was didactic, not literary.   Neverthe-

less his contribution to the development of Bengali prose

was great.   Accordingly he occupies an important place

in the history of Bengali literature.   He raised the status

of Bengali literature in general and of Bengali prose in

particular.   He did this in two ways: firstly, by freeing

Bengali from the dominance of Sanskrit, and secondly by

employing Bengali for the exposition of serious subjects.

Rāẏ's freeing of Bengali from Sanskrit domin-
ance constitutes an important step-forward in the history
of Bengali prose.   So deep was the respect of Bengali
scholars for Sanskrit, that they deemed Bengali a mere off-
shoot of it, with no independent literary status.   Some
scholars even demanded that all compositions in Bengali
be scrutinised by authorities on Sanskrit before publica-
tion.   Rāmmohan challenged this traditional dogmatism,
as he had challenged other traditional social and religious
institutions and practices.   He was the first to affirm
that Bengali was a language in its own right, that its
grammar differed from that of Sanskrit and therefore required
an ad hoc analysis and description, without reference to
Sanskrit grammar.   He demonstrated that even the ortho-
graphy of Bengali differed from that of Sanskrit, and that
though there was a relationship between the two ortho-
graphies, it was erroneous to assume that they were identical.
Grammarians prior to Rāmmohan used to describe Bengali
nominal declension in terms of the seven-case system of
Sanskrit.   As far as Bengali was concerned, these seven
cases were established on notional rather than formal
criteria.   Rāmmohan pointed out that formal criteria permit
the establishment of four cases only.   Rāmmohan's formal

approach strikes us as surprisingly modern, considering

the state of linguistic science at the time he was

writing.   He drew attention to a further point of differ-

ence between Bengali and Sanskrit, namely gender.   Earlier

grammarians were convinced that Bengali and Sanskrit were

identical in this respect.   Rāy failed to find any formal

grammatical criteria on which to establish gender concord

in Bengali.   A further indication of Rāmmohan's reaction

against the dominance of Sanskrit was the use he made of

his knowledge of English grammar in his analysis and des-

cription of Bengali.   He modelled his classification of

word-classes in Bengali on the English parts of speech.

He also adopted English marks of punctuations.   These

measures were unprecedented and give some indication of

the radical steps he was prepared to take to free Bengali

from Sanskrit dominance.   A further step towards the same

goal was his avoidance of compounds.   Long compounds

abounded in the compositions of contemporary Sanskrit

scholars, writing in Bengali.   Their adjectival compounds

were especially long, some even filling a whole line and

overflowing into the next.   These scholars failed to

appreciate that though compounding formed part of the

genius of Sanskrit, in Bengali compounding could be

unnatural and at times pedantic. However, as we have shown, in the case of Rāmmohan avoidance of compounds by recourse to Vyāsa Vākya, when carried to excess, can lead to even greater unnaturalness. Consequently Rāmmohan's practice has not been followed by modern Bengali writers, who now prefer the simplicity of short compounds to the complexity of Rāmmohan's circumlocutions. As regards vocabulary he refrained as far as possible from borrowing from Sanskrit. But context and subject matter largely determine vocabulary. When discussing Hindu religion and philosophy, he had no alternative but to adopt the relevant Sanskrit terminology, as indeed any writer in any language other than Sanskrit must. The tatsama words he used were those, already accepted as part of the vocabulary of Bengali, not neologisms.

It was the content, however, of Rāmmohan's writing that did most to enhance the status of Bengali as a literary language. Hitherto the Hindu sacred books had been locked away in Sanskrit, like an esoteric treasure, to which none but a few brahmins born into the scholarly tradition possessed the key. Sanskrit, Rāmmohan said, was so difficult a

language that it would take a lifetime to learn it.[1]
Accordingly he broke through the wall of conservatism
by translating the Vedas and the Upaṇiṣads into Bengali,
thus leaving the way to classical scholarship open to
those, who could read Bengali only. His doing so
destroyed forever the contention of orthodox scholars that
Bengali was not a suitable medium for serious communication.
He had taken the very scriptures themselves and put them
into Bengali.

Rāmmohan was a logical thinker, accustomed to re-
ducing the most complex argument to its most simple terms.
This quality of mind is reflected in his writings. The
presentation of his material is logical and its expression
simple. His sentences flow one from the other in logical
sequence. Each point is expounded with the utmost economy
of words. No word is redundant. Much of his writing
is therefore devoid of ornament and literary quality. It
is simple, but not always pleasant to read. On the other
hand it is polished and refined and quite free from the
vulgarities which cloak the writings of his predecessors,

1. "The Sanscrit language, so difficult that almost a life time
   is necessary for its acquision...."Rāmmohan Rāy wrote this
   in his letter to Lord Amherst. English Works of Ram Mohan
   Ray (in 3 vols.) ed.by J.C.Ghose Calcutta,1901,Vol.II.p.324.

even including those of Mrityuñjay. Nevertheless there
were times when the case Rammohan was pleading was put
forward not merely logically but with emotion too. He
had a great respect for woman and was deeply hurt at the
sufferings Bengali society imposed on many of them. His
attack on Satī is much more than an argument against the
practice. It is a heart-rendering appeal to his fellow-
countrymen to abandon it. Such passages ascend far above
the somewhat dry pedestrian content and form much of what
he wrote. These passages reveal the poet in him, liberated
and speaking out with moving eloquence and literary beauty.
An example is cited below:

> parthamata buddhir bisay, strīloker buddhir
> parīksa kon kāle laiyāchen, ye anāyāsei tāhardigake
> alpabuddhi kahen? Karan bidya siksa ebam jñan
> siksa dile pare byakti yadi anubhab o grahan karite
> na pare, takhan tahake alpabuddhi kaha sambhat hay;
> apanāra bidya siksa jñanopades strīlokke pray den
> nai, tabe tahara buddhihin hay iha kirupe niscay
> karen? baranca līlābatī, bhanumatī, karnat rajar
> patnī, kalidaser patnī prabhriti yahake 2 bidyabhyas
> karaiyachilen, tahara sarbbasastrer paragrupe bikhyata
> ache, ye atyanta duruha brahmajñan taha yajñabalkya
> apan strī maitreyī ke upades kariyachen, maiteryīo
> tahar grahan purbbak kritartha hayen.
>
> dvitīyata tahardigake asthirantahkaran kahiya thaken,
> ihate ascarya jñan kari, karan ye deser purus mrityur
> nam sunide mritapray hay, tathakar srīlok antahkaraner
> sthairyadvara svamīr uddese agni prabes karite hay,
> iha pratyaksa dekhen, tathaca kahen, ye taharder
> antahkaraner sthairya nai.

....Caturtha ye sānurāgā kahilen, tāhā ubhaẏer
bibāha gananātei byakta āche, arthāt ek 2 puruṣer
prāẏ dui tīn. daś baranca adhik patnī dekhitechi,
ār srīloker ek pati se byakti marile keha tābat
sukh parityāg kariẏā sange marite bāsanā kare,
keha bā yābajjīban atikaṣṭa ye brahmacarya tāhār
anuṣṭhān kare.

pancam tāhārder dharmmabhaẏ alpa, e ati adharmer
kathā, dekha ki paryanta duḥkha, apamān, tiraskār,
yātanā, tāhārā kebal dharmma bhaẏe sahiṣnutā kare.
anek kulīn brāhman yāhāra daś ponara bibāha arther
nimitte karen, tāhārder prāẏ bibāher par aneker
sahit sākṣāt haẏnā, athabā yābajjībaner madhye
kāhāro sahit dui cāribār sākṣāt karen, tathāpi ei
sakal strīloker madhye anekei dharmma bhaẏe svāmīr
sahit sākṣāt byatirekeo ebaṃ svāmī dvārā kona
upakār bihāo pitrigrihe athābā bhātrigrihe kebal
parādhīn haiẏā nānā duḥkha sahiṣnutāpūrbbak
thākiẏāo yābajjīban dharmma nirbbāha karen; ār
brāhmaner athabā anya barṇer madhye yāhārā āpan 2
strike laiẏā gārhasthya karen, tāhārder bāṭite
prāẏ strīlok ki 2 durgati nā paẏ?

bibāher samaẏ strike arddha anga kariẏā svīkār
karen, kintu bya–bahāver samaẏ paśu haite nīc
janiẏā byabahār karen; yehetu svāmīr grihe prāẏ
sakaler patnī dāsya britti kare, arthāt ati prāte
ki śītkāle ki barsāte sthan mārjjan, bhojanādi
pātra mārjjan, griha lepanādi tābat karmma kariẏā
thāke; ebaṃ sūpakārer karmma binā betane dibase a
rātrite kare.....ai randhane o paribesane yadi kano
amśe truti haẏ, tabe tāhārder svāmī śāśuri debar
prabhriti ki 2 tiraskār nā karen; e sakalkeo
strīlokerā dharmma bhaẏesahiṣnutā kare, ār sakaler
bhojan haile bynjanādi udarpūraner yogya athabā
ayogya yatkincit abaśiṣṭa thāke, tāhā santoṣpūrbbak
āhār kariẏā kāl yāpan kare......

e sakal pratyakṣa siddha, sutarāṃ apalāp karite
pāriben nā. duḥkha ei, ye ei paryanta adhīn o nānā
duḥkhe duḥkhinī, tāhārdigake pratyakṣa dekhiẏāo kincit
daẏā āpankārder upasthit haẏ nā, yāhāte bandhanpūrbbak
dāha karā o haite rakṣā paẏ.

"Firstly as regards intelligence, when did
you ever test the intelligence of women, that you
can so easily say they are of low intelligence?
It is possible to say a person is of low intelligence,
if he fails to grasp or appreciate a subject after
receiving instruction in it.   Since you do not
generally instruct women, how can you conclude that
they are of low intelligence?   On the contrary
the few women such as Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife
of King of Karnat, Kalidasa's wife, etc., who were
accustomed to learning, were famous for their
mastery of all branches of knowledge.   The
Brihadaranyaka Upanisads gives clear evidence that
Yagnavalkya instructed his wife Maitreyi in the
knowledge of Brahma, the most difficult of all
subjects to master, and that Maitreyi was successful
in grasping it.

        Secondly, I am surprised to hear you say that
they have no steadfastness of mind, because the
man of this country almost die even at the sound
of word, Death, whereas the womenfolk are prepared
to follow their husbands steadfastly into the fire.
You have seen it happen with your own eyes, yet you
say they lack steadfastness.......

        Fourthly,you call them passionate. Marriage
statistics for both sexes clarify this point,   I
see some men with two, three, ten and more wives,
whereas a woman has one husband.   When he dies,
some (women) forsake all happiness and choose to
die too, others remain continent for the rest of
their lives, which is not easy.

        Fifthly, they have little fear of God in them.
This is blasphemous.   Look, at the misery, insults,
abuse, and tyranny they suffer for their fear of
God alone.   Kulin brahmins marry ten to fifteen
times for money.   The wives of many never meet
their husbands after the wedding, whilst some meet
them two or three times in a life time.   Nevertheless
because of their fear of God many of these wives
practise religion throughout their lives, despite
the misery in various forms they have to bear, being
a dependent in their father's or brother's house,
receiving no benefit from their husbands and deprived
of meeting them.   What a miserable lot any woman

gets when she marries and settles down with a
brahmin husband, or a husband of any other caste.
At the wedding the husband accepts his wife as
his body's other half, but afterwards he treats
her worse than an animal, for wives act as their
husband's servant in almost all homes, i.e., come
rain or shine, she is up at dawn, doing all the
work, sweeping the house, washing the pots and
pans, and cleaning the walls. Day and night
they do the work of a cook without payment....and
what a severe scolding they get from their in-laws,
if the cooking and the serving is not perfect in
all respects. Women tolerate all this because
of their fear of God. When every one else has
finished eating, they eat what little is left,
whether it be sufficient or not to fill their
stomachs, and are satisfied. And thus they
live......

All these are facts. You cannot deny them.
The pity is this, that despite seeing them with
your own eyes suffering and subjugated you do not
have sufficient compassion to save them from being
bound and burnt."

This passage manifests the power of Rāmmohan to
express his view in simple, straight-forward language with
logic and eloquence. The whole passage is unified in
structure by his deft handling of the thread of argument,
it is an emotional appeal. Rarely has so deep an emotion
been expressed with such economy of words as in the closing
lines.

Rāmmohan's contribution to the development of
Bengali literature was summed up by Tagore in the following

words:

"Deeply versed in Sanskrit, he revived
classical studies, and while he imbued the
Bengali literature and language, with the
rich atmosphere of our classical period, he
opened its doors, wide to the Spirit of the
Age, offering access to new words from other
languages and to new ideas.   To every
sphere of our national existence he brought
the sanguinity of a comprehensive vision, the
spirit of self-manifestation of the unique in
the light of the Universal."[1]

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1.   Tagore, R.N: Bharat pathik Rammohan Ray, Calcutta,
     1933, pp.61-62.

CHAPTER VII

Early Newspapers (1818-
1830).

The second phase in the development of Bengali prose belongs to journalism. Journalism was an innovation in Bengali. The initiative was taken by certain Christian Missionaries. Their first publication was a journal called Dig Darśan, published from Serampore in 1818 under the editorship of Marshman. It was a bold venture since at the time British newspapers in Bengal were subject to censorship.[1] It did not receive unanimous support from the missionaries. Some feared that it would either attract unfavourable Government notice or become a political instrument. Nevertheless Marshman's determination to publish was adamantine. In the event the government raised no objection to the publication.

Dig Darśan was a magazine rather than a newspaper. It contained little that can be called news. The first edition contains the following statement, regarding its aims which were to afford:- "the means of improvement to Native youth of India."[2] The paper had an English sub-

1. Natarajan, S.: A History of the Press in India, Bombay, 1962, pp. 23-26.
2. Preface to Dig Darśan or Indian Youth's Magazine, Serampore 1822.

title, "Indian Youth's Magazine". The journal
continued for 3 years during which time 26 numbers
were issued.[1] Dig Darśan consisted of articles which
varied in number from two to six. These articles were
of three types, (i) Geographical, (ii) Historical and
(iii) Scientific. The first issue, for instance, con-
tained articles on America, The Boundaries of India,
Trades in India, etc. The second issue contained
articles on the Route to India, Going Round the Cape of
Good Hope, Steam Navigation and Trees in England. These
articles were considered valuable for students and in-
consequence copies of Dig Darśan were used as text books
in a number of schools. It is of interest to note that
the School Book society bought most of the copies issued.

The second Bengali journal was the Bengal Gazette.
It was first published in 1818 and edited by Gaṅgākiśor
Bhaṭṭācārya. It was a short-lived, monthly publication,
carrying some illustrations. Only a few copies are now
extant.

The first newspaper of importance was the Samācar
Darpan. It commenced publication in May, 1818 and was

1. It continued from April 1818 to February 1821. 10,676
   copies were printed in all. See Majumdar, K.N.,
   Bangla Sāmayik Sāhitya, Mymensingh, 1917, p.5.

also under the editorship of Marshman.   His colleagues,

including Carey, tried to dissuade him from undertaking

this new venture.   They argued that Dig Darśanhad been

acceptable to the government because it did not contain

news and they were afraid that the new venture would come

under the ban of the censor and jeopardise their position

as missionaries.   But Marshman persisted and succeeded

in launching Samācār Darpan without arousing any adverse

comment from the government.   Marshman's staff consisted

of Bengali writers, who wrote under his general control.

Among those known to have been members of the editorial

board the most important were Jaygopāl Tarkālaṃkār and

Tāriṇī Caraṇ Śiromaṇi.   Samācār Darpan was published

weekly until 1832.   Then for the next two years it

came out fortnightly, after which it reverted to being

a weekly publication.   After Marshman was compelled to

resign his editorial duties in 1841, the paper continued

until April 1853 under a succession of editors including

a Bengali, named Bhagabatī Caraṇ Caṭṭopādhyay.   When first

published on the 23rd of May, 1818, it undertook to report

on the following:

(i)   new government appointments,

(ii)   new notices and laws issued by various officials,

(iii)   recent events in England and Europe

(iv)   trade and commerce

(v)   births, marriages, and deaths

(vi)   new books

(vii)   and to publish articles on ancient India,
        biographies of intellectuals and expositions
        of ancient scriptures.

The final item "expositions of ancient scriptures", meant

in effect the promulgation of Christianity and as its

counterpart the criticism of Hinduism.   This use by the

Christians of their paper as a vehicle for religious

teaching and controversy attracted the attention of others.

In 1821 Rāmmohan published a paper named Brāhman

Sebadhi with a view to publishing his own interpretation

of Hinduism and rebutting criticism of Hindu theology

put forth by Marshman and his colleagues.   This journal

was short-lived, but it was followed in the same year by

a more important publication, the Sambād Kaumudī, which

was also under the editorship of Rāmmohan, assisted by an

orthodox Hindu, named Bhabānīcaran Bandyopādhyāy.   The

policy of the journal is stated in the early numbers.

"In the very first number," writes Bose, "he (Bhabānīcaran)

demanded free primary education for the country....
In the second number he spoke of the advantages of the
Press, and demanded the raising of the age-limit of
minors.   Among other things this well-conducted journal
advocated female education and an improved form of medical
treatment for Indians."[1]

Rāmmohan's commencing to use the paper as a vehicle
for his attacks on orthodox Hindu practices, including
sati alienated Bhabānīcaraṇ.   He parted with Rāmmohan,
and founded another journal, Samācār Candrikā, in 1822
in collaboration with other orthodox Hindus.   This new
journal became the orthodox party platform in opposition
to both Rāmmohan and the Christian missionaries.   Thus
it should be noticed that the first three major journals
represented three distinct religious viewpoints, Samācār
Darpan representing the Christian viewpoint and both
Sambād Kaumudī and Samācār Candrikā the Hindu, the differ-
ence between the latter two being that, whilst Sambād
Kaumudī favoured a measure of reform within Hinduism,
Samācār Candrikā did not, quite the reverse in fact, since
Samācār Candrikā became the forum of the Dharma Sabhā, the
society of orthodox Hindus.   Rev. James Long observed
that, "it (Samācār Candrikā) has ever proved to be the

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1.   Bose, P.N. and Moreno,H.W.B., A Hundred Years of the
     Bengali Press, Calcutta, 1920, p.6.

consistent advocate of thorough going Hindu orthodoxy
and has been the enthusiastic friend of Dharma Sabhā."[1]
Thus Samācār Candrikā was the pioneer of papers advoca-
ting Hindu conservatism. It was followed by Sambād
Timir nāśak (1823) and others of the same school of
thought. Meanwhile Sambād Kaumudī, the seed bed of the
religious movement later to be known as the Brāhma Samāj,
advocated a reformed Hinduism based on the Vedānta and
attacked with equal vigour both the Trinitarian teaching
of the missionaries and the polytheism of orthodox
Hindus.

During the third and fourth decades newspapers, re-
presenting various view points, attempted publication.
Few of them survived the first two or three issues,
however. Mention needs to be made of only two, the
Baṅgadūt, published under the editorship of Nīlratan Haldār
in 1829, and Sambād Prabhākar, published under the editor-
ship of Īśvarcandra Gupta in 1830. The Baṅgadūt is of
interest because at one stage it was published in four
languages, Bengali, Hindi, Persian and English. The
editor of the Sambād Prabhākar was in his time a well-
known poet and his paper is important because of its literary
content.

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1. Ibid., p.16.

No complete investigation into the newspapers of
this period is possible, because copies of many of them
are not available.   For instance, not a single copy of
Sambād Kaumudī is known to exist.   This renders the
recent researches of Brajendranāth Bandyopādhyāȳ particularly
valuable.   He has surveyed the whole field and published
a large number of representative passages from most of
the newspapers of the period, especially the Samācār
Darpan.[1]   Because the extracts in his two volumes are
so representative and copious, the following analysis of
the newspapers is in the main though not entirely, based
on them.

Bandyopādhyāȳ divides his extracts, according to
subject-matter, into the following four categories,-
Education, Literature, Society and Religion.   It will
be noted that news items as such are not represented in
his classification.   Nevertheless his four categories do
include news articles.

His section on Education contains information about
the growth and condition of education in Bengal and partic-
ularly in Calcutta.   Much important information relating
to the Hindu College, the Sanskrit College, the School

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1.   Bandyopādhyāȳ, B.N., Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā in his
     two volumes published by the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad
     Calcutta, 1949.   Abbreviated as S.S.K.

Book Society, a number of new schools etc., is included.
Two important trends can be observed in this section,
one is the growth of the importance of English, in the
Bengali educational system, and the other is the growth
of female education.

The Literature section is important for the light it
throws on what was being written and published at the time.
It may be used as a source book by historians of Bengali
Literature. Its importance for the present study con-
sists in an article it contains, published in 1830, dis-
cussing Bengali prose. It advocates the adoption of
the style known as Sādhu bhāsā. The author justifies
the adoption of Sādhubhāsā on the same grounds as
Mṛityuñjay had done earlier, namely that it contains a
preponderance of Sanskrit words.   "It is wrong for
anyone to think that Bengali cannot now be purified,
because of its indebtedness to other languages (i.e. Persian
Arabic, Hindi and English).   Bengali derives from
Sanskrit which is by no means poor."[1]   The process re-
ferred to as "purifying" is infact Sanskritisation, as
then practised by a number of orthodox writers and
scholars.   The underlying contention of this argument is

1. S.S.K. Vol.I, p.63.

that Sanskritised Bengali i.e., Sādhubhāṣā is the only
form of Bengali acceptable to orthodox scholars.   This
would seem to account for its continued use as a style
of writing even today, when it is still taught in some
schools as "correct" usage.   Sādhubhāṣā tended to be-
come a sort of political and religious standard, employed
against other schools of thought, whether of foreign or
neo-Hindu provenance.   As far as can be ascertained,
this is the sole instance of a newspaper article advocating
any particular style of writing.   However, as will be
shown later, the style advocated in this single instance,
namely Sādhubhāṣā, was not generally used by journalists
at the time.

The Society section has literary as well as social
interest.   Some of the reports read like stories.
They range over many subjects including morality, enter-
tainment, public welfare, economics, health and changing
social customs.   Some of them give a vivid and very
realistic picture of the times.   Note needs to be made
of two sketches known as upākhyān written by an anonymous
writer, whom some consider to be Bhabānīcaraṇ Bandyopādhyāy,
the editor of the Samācār Candrikā.[1]   They are historically

1.   S.S.C.,Vol.I.,4, p.23.

important because they fall within the category of fiction
and because they are the first attempt to use contemporary
social conditions for literary purposes.   Social novels
appeared later in the 6th and 7th decade of the century,
good examples being Ālāder Gharer Dulāl written by
Pyāricād Mitra in 1858 and Hutom Pyācār Naksā written by
Kāliprasanna Siṃha in 1862.   The main characters of
these two works are bābus, ridiculous figures, who ape
the fashions of the West whilst professing the orthodoxy
of the East.   The bābu first appeared in these two
anonymous sketches in 1820.

The section on Religion reports on various Hindu
religious practices, theological debates, proceedings of
various religious organisations, and some incidents of
satī.   Most of the reports are well written.

II.

The newspapers were born at a critical moment in the
history of the languages of Calcutta.   It was pointed
out earlier that at the beginning of the 18th century
seven languages were current in Calcutta.[1]   By 1818

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1.   Supra, Chap I, section IV. pp. 25-26.   .

Portuguese had virtually disappeared, leaving

. 6.   In the main the relative status of these 6 languages,
was not greatly changed.   Though Persian as the language
of government and administration was in some measure
giving way to English, it remained an important language,
because of its use in the law courts.   The prestige of
Bengali remained low.   Thanks to the scholars of Fort
William College and to Rãmmohan Rãy, Bengali had received
a definite introduction into the literary world but its
position was not established or generally accepted.
Sanskrit scholars continued to despise Bengali, despite
the fact that it was the mother tongue of the majority of
them.   They refused to regard it as worthy of use as a
vehicle of literary composition.   The only prestige that
had been conceded Bengali was that it possessed a prepond-
erance of Sanskrit words.   It is true, the Christian
missionaries were using Bengali as the medium of instruc-
tion in their schools and the government in Calcutta
had organised Bengali classes in Fort William College,
but the effect of these innovations on the general public
was slight.

At about this time the Sanskrit scholars began to be
reinforced in their contempt for Bengali, by the middle-

class of Calcutta, who needed English for purposes of
employment in the expanding trading companies. Further-
more students of Hindu College were beginning to be
attracted by English learning for its own sake. They
wished to read English literature and were ignorant of
all other literatures. It never occurred to them to
write in Bengali. A number of them were beginning to
be bilingual, using English in their public life and
Bengali only at home. There is an indication in the
newspapers that these people also preferred to write
in English. Some went so far as to claim that they
could write better in English than in Bengali. That
the problem of language was unresolved is clear from
the situation which faced the newspapers. The Editors
had to sell their papers. They therefore had to be
written in the language or languages most likely to ensure
maximum circulation. Dig Darśan and Samācār Darpan
began as mono-lingual Bengali papers only. Later no
doubt under pressure from the sales department the
Samācār Darpan became bilingual, being written in both
Bengali and Persian. This experiment was not a success.
And a new combination of Bengali and English was tried.
This proved successful. Early in the 3rd decade the

case for Persian as against Bengali was being urged.
A letter published in Samācār Darpan in 1822 stated that,
"those who do not know Persian are happy with the Bengali
edition but those who are proficient in both Persian and
Bengali prefer to have a Persian edition."[1] It was for
this reason that the editor introduced Persian as the
paper's second language.   Later in the same decade, the
case against Persian began to be made and in 1828 the
Samācār Darpan was pleading that the proceedings of the
law courts should be conducted in English and Bengali
rather than Persian.[2]

The orthodox Hindu party strenuously opposed the case
of English, in the press and through other channels.
They bitterly attacked the policy of the Hindu College.
They claimed that English education led inevitably to
atheism.   In this they were supported by no less a
person than H.H.Wilson.   When the Sanskrit College was
opened in 1824 the case for and against Sanskrit was
presented strongly by both sides.   Rāy's letter to Lord
Amherst could hardly have been expressed more bitterly

1. S.S.K. Vol.I.p.99.
2. Ibid.,Vol.I,p.33.

and the protoganists of Sanskrit replied with equal
vigour.   Here the battle was between English and
Sanskrit.   Persian had to be retained for at least
another 10 years, but was slowly receeding from the
centre of the debate.   Bengali was hardly mentioned in
this debate but there is no doubt that at this stage the
currency and prestige of Bengali as against Sanskrit were
connected with the progress of English education.   When
in 1833 the case for English as against Sanskrit was won,
it did not take long for the position of Bengali to
advance in the law courts.   Persian was displaced by
English in 1835 and the use of Bengali in the lower courts
was permitted from that date.

In spite of all these controversies, however, the
position of Bengali was being slowly stabilised.   The
majority of the newspapers were written in part at any
rate in Bengali, some wholly so.   The writing of Bengali
continued and when the language debate was brought to an
end in 1835, Bengali was the established language of the
popular newspapers in Bengal and a language written by
many of its journalists.   It is correct, therefore, to
say that the first phase of Bengali prose writing belonged

to the class room, it is equally correct to say that
the second phase belonged to the newspapers.

III.

The problems of language which faced the early
journalists were the same as those which faced the
Fort William Scholars and Rāmmohan Rāy.   Progress had
been made in the first decade but a prose-style had not
yet been established and newspaper writers had to ex-
periment.   They were, however, working under a type of
pressure which had not been known before, namely, the
judgment of the reading public.   A paper's success
depended then as now on its popularity and one way to
popularity was readability.   Awkwardness of expression,
the use of abstruse vocabulary as well as unwisely chosen
subject-matter were certain to make a newspaper unpopular.
Many papers failed to solve the problem that faced them
and in consequence failed after a short number of publica-
tions.   Others however, such as the Samācār Darpan,
survived the testing period.

Experimentation with vocabulary can be noted in all
the newspapers published during the first ten years.   It

is to be expected that vocabulary will vary according
to subject matter and that certain topics will require a
higher ratio of <u>tatsamas</u> as against the <u>tadbhava</u> words.
At the same time too high a proportion of <u>tatsama</u> words
would probably have been an obstacle to easy reading and
would therefore have been avoided by a careful editor.
The following three passages are instances of experiment-
ation in vocabulary selection, according to subject matter.
The first passage is on a religious subject and will be
noted that its ratioঃ of <u>tatsama</u> words is higher than that
of the other two.   The second passage is a somewhat
formal description of landscape.   It has fewer <u>tatsama</u>
than the first but considerably more than the third which,
though not colloquial, has a more colloquial flavour
because of its high <u>tadbhava</u> ratio.

> (1) Hindurder Śāstramate jīber janma mṛityu karma
>
> baśato bārambār sthābar jaṅgam śarīr hay kecitmate
>
> ei deha tyāg pare akhaṇḍa svarga narak bhog hay
>
> o kecitmate bhogābhāb o bhāratbarṣīya manuṣya
>
> bhinna anya barṣīya manuṣyer karmākarma bhog o
>
> anya jīber karma nāi.[1] (18 July,1821)

1. The Hindu scriptures state that the birth and death of
    the <u>Jība</u> is subject to <u>karma</u>.   It is constantly embodied
    in animate or inanimate form.   Some believe that after
    death there is eternal hell or eternal heaven.   Some
    others believe that there are no such things, that only
    Indians suffer the effects of <u>karma</u>, and that other souls
    have no <u>karma</u>.

(2) tāhār ek pārśve śasya kṣetra sakal anya pārśve

nānā brikṣer ban. ai bartmer sīmānte gaṅgā dekhā

yāý tatsthānīýa gaṅgār ubhaý pārśve diui śreṇī

kṣudra parbat āche ebaṃ upatyakā bhūmi āýatane dui

kroś dīrghe cāripāc kroś tāhār madhyasthāne

bāluka o prastar maý.[1] (16 May,1832)

(3) .pūrbe ei añcale emata cor ḍākātir bhaý chila ye

pathik lok pāc sātjan ekatra nā haiýā pathe calite

pāritanā ebaṃ moṃ kṛiṣṇa nagar jilāte anek

ḍākāti jamā haiýāchila tāhārder sardār biśvanāth

bābu nāme ek duranta ḍākāti chila tāhār hukume

dine o rātre ḍākāti haita[2] (15th May,1819).

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1. On one side lie cornfields and on the other a forest
   of various kinds of trees.   The Ganges is visible
   at the end of the track.   It has a range of small
   hills on both sides.   The Valley between is eight
   to ten miles long and four miles wide.   The central
   part is full of sand and stones.
2. Formerly the fear of robbers in this area was such
   that no traveller could come this way unless accompan-
   ied by several others.   Many bandits had gathered in
   the district of Krishnanager.   Their leader was a
   bold bandit named Biswanath Babu.   On his orders
   robberies were carried out night and day.

The analysis of their vocabulary yields the following
statistics:

	1st passage	2nd passage	3rd passage
% of tatsama	80.49	73.17	34.14
% of tadbhava	17.07	26.82	51.21
% of foreign words	2.43	0.00	14.63

All the passages are roughly of the same length.   The
first passage is far from clear, and probably was of little
interest to any reader other than those directly involved
in the religious controversy.   There is no doubt that the
second passage is written in a style and vocabulary most
likely to appeal to the ordinary reader.   A comparison
of passages selected at random from newspapers with those
selected from a scholarly writer such a Mṛityañjaý reveals
that the newspaper language contains a very small number
of compounds.   Even the learned passage quoted above has
very few and they have only two constituents.   The second
passage has one, a simple compound of two components.   The

third passage has none at all, though technically the word ekatra is by derivation a compound but it is not so regarded in Bengali.

The variety of subjects requiring treatment in the newspapers imposed problems of vocabulary on journalists. They were required to report on political, social and commercial events and proceedings, as well as technical, religious, philosophical and other matters. Bengali vocabulary was inadequate to discuss these subjects. It needed to be expanded rapidly. The journalists were faced with the choice of either borrowing vocabulary from other sources (English, Perso-Arabic, Hindi/Urdu) or coining new words, mainly on Sanskrit models. To some extent, however, the choice was made automatically by the subject in hand. Trade and commerce being conducted in English, naturally, necessitated borrowing a large number of words from English, whereas legal affairs being conducted in Persian, required that much of the Perso-Arabic vocabulary pertaining to legal matters be retained in use. As regards education, printing, and scholarship, deficiencies in vocabulary were made up by borrowing from Sanskrit. The following examples are a small number of those which could have chosen but they are

sufficient to illustrate the increase in Bengali vocabulary

necessitated by the changed circumstances of life.

	English	Persian	Sanskrit	Hindi
I Newspaper & Printing	pres (Press)	khabarer kāgaj (Newspaper)	samācār patra / sambād patra (newspaper) / mudra yantra (printing press)	chāpākhānā (printing press)
II Trade and Commerce	byānk (bank) / primiyam premium / dibident (divid-end) / tyāks (tax)	amdāni (import) / raptani (export) / Saodagari (merchant) / jāhāj (ship) / bilāti (English)	amśi (share holder) / kray-bikray / sthan (exchange)	bīmā (insurance)
III Institutions Offices	tarm (term) / kalej (college) / kamiti (committee) / Haspātal (hospital)	misil (session) / istahar (notice)	sampradāy (society) / sabhapati (President) / puraskar-bitaran (Prize distribution)	
IV Scientific		naksā (map)	baspīya pot (steam vessel) / aram bidyā (medical science) / dipagriha (light-house)	
V.	jaj (judge) / juri (jury) / apil (appeal) / suprimkort (Supreme Court)	ādalat (court) / tarjama-karak (translator) / ain (law)	dhārā (section) / bicar (judgement)	

A modern writer[1] has observed that, "an educated Indian
of these days (modern times) speaks in private, and
naturally, only in a mixed language." What he says is
of course true. Educated Bengalis today use a large
number of English words and phrases in conversation.
The newspapers of the 1820's contain evidence[2] that this
use of a mixed vocabulary i.e., English words being used
as English words in Bengali sentences, had commenced as
early as the period under discussion.

IV.

Sentence-structure in early newspaper Bengali reveals
certain features which have been examined previously.
Perhaps the commonest of these is the use of "and" words
on the Persian and English model. Many examples of "and"
sentences could be quoted but the following will be
sufficient.

(i) rāstā prastut haile śaharer śobhā adhik haibe
     ebaṃ mahājan lokerder naukā o jiniṣ patṟa uṭhāner

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1. Chaudhuri, N.C., The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian
   Macmillan, London, 1951, p.485.
2. S.S.K., Vol.II, p.231.

bhāla haibek o sāheb lokarder bāyu sebanārthe
utham haibek [1]

When the construction of the road will be
complete it will increase the beauty of the
city and it will be good for the traders to moor
their boats to unload them and it will be good
for the Europeans for their morning walk.

(ii) oi dine ... balidān anek hay ebam ...adhyāpakerā
āpan 2 chātra sange kariyā sekhāne yān o adhyāpake 2
o chātre 2 bicār hay. [2]

Lots of sacrifices take place that day and the
teachers go there with their students and debates
are held between teachers and students.

It should be repeated that this type of 'and' sentence is
extremely rare in spoken Bengali. It is not common in
writing either, except in newspapers and other forms of
writing based on translation. The use of this type of
sentence constitute a phase in the development of early
Bengali prose. There are signs, however, that this
type of sentence is beginning to reappear in the very
modern school of writers.

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1. S.S.K.,Vol.I.334-35.
2. Ibid., Vol.I.p.261.

Two new features are noted in newspaper language
which are clearly based upon English usage. There was
at the time no Bengali equivalent for the English con-
junction, "because", and as that conjunction with its
synonyms is common in English, an innovation in Bengali
was necessary. We find many sentences containing the
unusual word 'yehetuk' which is Bengali in origin but
comparatively rare and certainly not a precise equivalent
to the English conjunction.

(i) agradvīpe...ye prakār lok samāgam haiȳāchila emata
prāȳ kakhano haȳ nāi yehetuk....caturdiger lok...
āsiȳāchila.[1]

There had never been such a crowd at Agradirp
as it had this year, because many people came from
different parts of the country.

(ii) yadi ei mata kariȳā...putrer bibāha diten tabe
ati sundar haita yehetuk anek loker upakār haita.[2]
[It would have been wonderful if he had arranged
his son's wedding in this way, for it would have
benefitted many people.]

Another problem confronting Bengali journalists of this

1. S.S.K.Vol.I.,p.264
2. Ibid.,Vol.I,p.267.

period was reported speech.   Modern Bengali can cope
with reported speech.   But whether or not the devices
now used were available then is unknown.   What is
known is that no examples of reported speech, exhibiting
the modern Bengali clause-structure have survived from
this early journalism.   What have survived are direct
translations of the English reported speech, retaining
the English clause-structure, which is the reverse of
that now normal in modern Bengali.   Even if the clause-
structure of modern Bengali reported speech had been in
use then, it still would not have been surprising, if
under the pressure of translating from English at speed
the Bengalis had retained the English clause structure.
For Example:-

    (i)   śunā gela ye...[1]

        It is said that

    (ii) gata saptāhe āmrā...jānāiẏachi ye[2]

        Last week we reported that

    (iii) śrīyut Smaulaṭ sāheb...istāhār diẏāchen ye...[3]

        Mr.Smollet has issued a notice that

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1.   S.S.K., Vol.I, p.208
2.   Ibid., p.242.
3.   Ibid., p.198.

It should be noted that this type of structure is rare
in the descriptive and narrative articles in <u>Samācār</u>
<u>Darpan</u>, though very frequent in government and Company
reports, Banknews etc.

At the same time Bengali was preceeding with the
building up of longer sentences with the aid of
indigenous material particularly the perfect participle
the use of which has already been noted.   English
temporal and causal clauses are frequently matched in
Bengali by clauses ending in this participle.   For
instance

> Snān <u>kariyā</u>   randhan <u>kariyā</u>....kanyāke bhojan <u>karāiyā</u>[1]
> pare āmi kichu <u>khāiyā</u> saru ṭekḍ <u>laiyā</u>...sutā kāṭitām
> Having bathed, having cooked, having fed, my daughter,
> having eaten something,I used to spin thread on a
> slender spindle.

Many Bengali sentences are structurally hybrid.   It is
possible to find sentences which contain both English
clause structure and Bengali participial clause structures.
For example:

> (i)   katak cikitsak..ekatra <u>haiyā</u> sthir <u>kariyāchen ye</u>....[2]
>   Some doctors have assembled together and decided that..

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1.   <u>S.S.K.</u>, Vol.I,p.177.
2.   <u>Ibid.</u>, p.13.

(ii) ek dibas <u>dekhilām ye</u> bālakerā bāṅgāli ṭolār dige

yāiteche[1]

One day I saw that those boys were going towards

the Bengali locality.

(iii) paṇḍit <u>kahilen ye</u> yadi kona byakti garddabher

nikaṭ yāy <u>ebam</u> se garddabh

cāiṭ māre tabe ki garddabher

nāme keha nāliś kariyā thāke.[2]

The scholar enquired whether a person would complain

against a donkey, if he went

up to the donkey and the

donkey kicked him.

In spite of some English influences on sentence structure,
the language of the newspapers was in the main simple and
similar to common speech.   Newspapers did not contain
literary writing as such till 1830 but they prepared the
soil for the future literary growth.

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1. S.S.K.,Vol.I.,p.130.
2. <u>Sambad Kaumudī</u>, quoted from Sen's <u>Baṅglā sāhitye gadya</u>
   (3rd ed.) p.48.

CHAPTER VIII

Sambād Prabhākar : Īśvar Candra Gupta

The appearance of Sambād Prabhākar in 1830, edited
by Īśvar Candra Gupta, and initially financed by the
Tagore family, ushered in a second phase in the history
of the newspaper in Bengal.   This phase was characterised
by the inclusion of articles of increasing literary
quality and importance.   Gupta himself was a poet and
literary critic.   Consequently he drew to his staff a
succession of writers, who were to achieve eminence in
the literature of Bengal.   Among these were Akṣay
Kumār Datta, Dīnabandhu Mitra, and the great Bankim
Candra himself.   Thus from 1830 onwards newspapers
such as Sambād Prabhākar and its successors became the
training ground for the writers who were to create the
literature of the last century.   Many great writers made
their literary débuts in the pages of these newspapers.

Gupta was no Calcutta Bengali.   He was educated in
a village school, and steeped in the traditional village
culture, that Calcutta in its eagerness for Western culture
and education had largely forgotten.   Furthermore he had
no opportunity to acquire English in his youth, and
consequently his acquisition of it later on, after his

arrival in Calcutta, did nothing to weaken his strong allegiance to his native language and culture. His allegiance to the Bengali language and his desire to see it cultivated and respected by the educated Bengalis of Calcutta constitute Gupta's most important contribution to the history of his time. He was one of the first to sing the praises of his mother-tongue in poetry. Though there is no evidence to show that his hymn to his mother-tongue was received with anything like the enthusiasm that greeted Madhusūdan's, a generation later, nevertheless inspired his disciples some whom became famous writers in the second half of the 19th century.

Gupta is better known as a poet than as a prose writer. Bankim called him the "last pure Bengali poet."[1] By "pure" Bankim probably meant "free from Western in-fluence". This is only partially true. He was unin-fluenced by the verseforms of Western poetry, which was then beginning to be read in Calcutta; his poetical modes and mannerisms were those of 18th century Bengal, but, on the other hand, his subject-matter was not. It was often contemporary. He presented various aspects of the 19th

1. Bankim Racanābalī (Sāhitya Samsad) Vol.II [Īśvar Candra gupter jīban carit o kabitva] p. 836.

century life in a satirical manner.   Thus he may be regarded as forming a bridge between the poets of the 18th and those of the 19th century.   He wrote fluently, perhaps too fluently and with too many mannerisms but he was read and the lightness of his satire still assures him of a place in Bengali literature.   Many of his poems were published in Sambād Prabhākar, which constituted an innovation as far as the Bengali newspaper was concerned.

Up to 1830 the main impetus to journalism had come from religious bias.   Newspapers had to a marked extent been platforms for theological discussion and debate. They were edited by scholars, who wrote as scholars and apparently for scholars.   Gupta on the other hand was not a scholar.   He had strong religious convictions. He was a Hindu conservative, who disapproved of female education, widow remarriage, and Christian conversion. But he was not qualified to state the theological case for his convictions.   He wrote of such subjects from a non-scholarly, emotional point of view.   Compared with its scholarly, theological predecessors, Sambād Prabhākar was in many ways edited by an ordinary Bengali for an ordinary Bengali public.

But his paper was by no means ordinary in regard to literature.   Here was a subject on which Gupta was qualified to pass an opinion.   He was a keen scholar of the biography of 18th century poets.   He gathered much information on the subject and first published his biographical essays in the Sambād Prabhākar.   He also published his own and other's poetry.   He can in a very real sense be regarded as the pioneer of the study of Bengali literature.

Some of the features of Gupta's style as a poet tended to be transferred to his prose.   Sen says that his love of versifying "conditioned his main literary activities."[1] Much of his vocabulary was that of verse.   He was fascinated by the sounds of words, particularly by rhyming, assonance and alliteration.   The influence of Bhārat Candra Rāy is seen in much of Gupta's prose, as well as his verse.   He inherited also from Bhārat Candra a love of the pun.   All these features were popular in poetry particularly at the village level, and also in a number of Calcutta houses which were entertained from time to

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1.   Sen.S., History of Bengali Literature, New Delhi,1960, p.206.

time by Kabiwalas i.e., Singer of popular ballads and
lyrics.   The transference of these features of style
to prose was not successful.   Dutt says of Gupta's
prose that it is "not as happy and natural as his poetry,
but is artificial and alliterative, and somewhat
grotesque."[1]   Gupta's main fault in this respect was
a lack of discipline and sense of proportion.   Once he
had committed himself to playing with sounds, he found
it hard to break off.   A few examples will illustrate
the extent to which he carried his rhyming.

(i)   barma nagare dharma namak ekjan carmakār...
    There lived a cobbler, called Dharma in the
                                city of Barma

(ii)   bhāber ki mādhurya, raser ki tātparya. āścarya
                                āścarya.
    What sweetness of thought, what emotional significance!
                                Splendid, splendid!

(iii) sakal dvārei sainyer kolāhal ...yāhākei pāiteche
    tāhākei dhariteche - yāhā dekhiteche tāhāi
    hariteche māriteche sāriteche paurajanerā
    sakalei hāriteche bipakṣarā uṭhiteche chuṭitedhe
    sarbbatrai luṭiteche nirbhaye laṭiteche...

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1.   Dutt: The literature of Bengal, op.cit.,p.159.

konakhāne śvan śvan śvan konakhāne ṭan

ṭan ṭan konakhāne jhan jhan jhan.

In this passage he has made an almost complete sacrifice
of sense to sound.   The passage purports to be a descrip-
tion of battle but Gupta has become so fascinated by rhyme
and onomatepoeia that he seems to have forgotten his sub-
ject altogether.   The onomatopoeic words are completely
inappropriate to the context.

one example of his puns will suffice:

sei sei dhanīr sei sei dhvani..   The rumblings of

the rich.

dhanī means "rich man" and dhvani means "sound" but both
words are pronounced the same in Bengali i.e. /dhoni/

Apart from this tendency to play with words and rhyme,
Gupta's language is on the whole simple and readable.
His vocabulary consists of words with which the ordinary
reader was familiar and there is a marked absence of long
compounds.   An analysis of representative passages would
reveal the presence of a fairly large number of tatsama
words but they were tatsama which had been accepted into
Bengali and which were no longer felt to be Sanskrit.
His sentences are constructed on Bengali modes and one

finds none of the uncertainty which has been noted in
the writings of earlier writers and none of the longer
complicated sentences on Sanskrit models which mark
some of the writings of Mṛityuñjaẏ.   Gupta uses
participles in the manner which is still a feature of
Bengali writing and speech.   He constructs many compound
sentences by means of correlative pronouns and adverbs.
This too is a feature of modern style.   The following
passage is typical of the style of his biographical
essays.   It reveals no sign of English or Sanskrit
influence.

> pañca bimṣati batsar atīta haila āmrā rāmprasādi padya
> samgraha karane prabṛitta haiẏāchi ekāl paryanta prānpan
> kariẏāo tāhāte kṛitakārya haite pārināi ...ei sthale binaẏ
> pūrbak nibedan kari samprati ye ye mahāṣaẏer nikaṭ ei
> mahābastu āche tāhārā yena ār yakṣer nyāẏ bakṣe kariẏā
> rakṣe nā karen.

> We have been engaged in collecting Rāmprasād's songs
> for the last 25 years.   Up till now, despite strenuous
> efforts we have not been successful.   I respectfully
> request any gentlemen who may possess such a treasure,
> not to clutch it to their breast like a yakṣa

This illustrates his complete inability to resist the temp-
tation to rhyme, no matter what the context maybe.   He

uses _yaks̱ər_, _baks̱ə_ and _raks̱e_ all in the same line.   In
order to maintain his rhyme he had no compunction in
using an extremely colloquial form _raks̱e_, where its
more literary form _raks̱ā_ would have been more appropriate
to the tone of the piece.   Gupta's prose had little
influence on later writers.   It was too individualistic.
Here and there however, as we shall see, his tendency to
rhyme crops up in the writings of Datta.   Nevertheless,
Gupta's attempt to introduce musical features into prose
is an innovation.   It does mark a realisation that prose
could be a literary vehicle.   Much of Gupta's prose can
be read aloud and some of it, though possibly not very
much, is capable of giving pleasure to the hearer by reason
of its quality of sound alone.   To Gupta too must be
ascribed the credit for making the newspaper a forum for
the publication of literary works.   The connection that
he established between the informative and cultural
function of newspapers created a vogue in Calcutta and a
large proportion of the literary works of late writers
appeared first in the newspapers.   This is still true of
the Calcutta newspapers of today.   To his credit also goes
the encouragement he personally gave to younger writers.

Whether or not Datta Bankim or Dīnabandhu would have taken
the same way to literary fame had it not been for Gupta,
we cannot know.   It is, however, a historical fact
that they served their apprenticeship in his paper and
under his tutelage.

CHAPTER IX

Tattvabodhinī Patrikā

I

In 1843, when Gupta and his Sambād Prabhākar were at the height of their glory, another Bengali newspaper commenced publication, the Tattvabodhinī Patrikā.[1] It started as the bulletin of the Tattvabodhinī Sabhā (later to become the Brāhma Samāj), which was established in 1839 by a select party of ten-friends led by Debendranāth Tagore, all of whom believed in a God who was "the unknown true being, the Creator, Preservor and Destroyer of the universe, and who maintained this spiritual worship was the only means of obtaining mental felicity here, and eternal beatitude hereafter.[2]

Tattvabodhinī's first editor was Akṣay Kumār Datta, who outlined the paper's purpose and functions in its first issue. It was to publish the transactions of the Tattvabodhinī Sabhā for the benefit of members who were unable to attend its meetings owing either to temporary

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1. Henceforth referred as Tattvabodhinī.
2. Tattvabodhinī, II, 13, pp. 103-4.

indisposition or to distant residence. Its overall
function, however, was as a journal for moral and ethical
enlightment. Such a journal, the editor submitted, was
much needed at that time, when "the newspapers of Bengal
were commercial. They did not publish articles on the
Ultimate Being. Many learned scholars could not there-
fore, publish their articles even if they desired. How-
ever, with the publication of this journal their dis-
satisfaction would come to an end and through this journal
they could enlighten all." Thus initially at least the
Tattvabodhinī was an entirely religious and didactic organ.
However, its concern for Hindu society at large soon led
to its engagement in social problems and consequently to
a widening of its coverage. Tattvabodhinī's writings
fall into three broad categories: (1) religious (ii) social
and (iii) scientific and historical.

The religious writings fall into two sub-categories:
(i) translations and (ii) originals. Rāmmohan's translation
of the Upaniṣads was published in this journal as also were
translations of other Sanskrit works of importance. In-
cluded among the original articles published in its pages
were the sermons of Debendranāth Tagore and Rāmcandra
Bidyābāgīś together with other articles on various religious

topics.   The following is an extract from one such
article, written in the form of a dialogue, and attacking
idolatry.[1]

saṃśay pakṣa.	eiye jagat driṣṭa haiteche, ihā bhinna sarbendriẏer agocar nirākār nirbikār ekjaṅ sarbajña sarba śaktimān puruṣke kalpnā karibār praẏojan ki?
siddhānta pakṣa.	indriẏer apratyakṣa sarbajña sarbaśaktimān sarbabyāpi puruṣke āmrā kalpnā karinā, kintu tumi yeman ei driśyamān jagatke niścaẏrūpe satya padārtha jñan karitecha tada- pekṣāo ihār niẏantā ye jñānsvarūp param kāran bahake āmrā satya padārtha rūpe niścit jānitechā.
saṃśay pakṣa.	ihā atyanta asambhab. indriẏer apratyakṣa ye padārtha ihār astitver prati niścaẏjñan ki prakāre sambhab haẏ?
siddhānta pakṣa.	mrittikā gaṭhita pratimā dekhiẏā tumi ki niścaẏ jñan karahnā, ye pratimā bhinna ek buddhimān āche ye ihāke nirmān kariẏache?
[Sceptical party.	This world is visible. What need is there to imagine beyond it an omniscient, omnipotent, changeless, formless, and imperceptible being?
Convinced party.	We do not imagine an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and im- perceptible being. Rather we acknow- ledge as a reality Him who in the form of Knowledge is the ultimate author and governor of this visible world, which you consider reality?

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1.   Ibid.,Vol.,I,No.3.p.17.

Sceptic   That is absolutely impossible.
How can you acknowledge the
existence of what is imperceptible?

Convinced   When you see a clay image, do you
not acknowledge that beyond that
image there is an intelligence,
which created it?]

Since Debendranāth and his associates were essentially
followers of Rāmmohan Rāy, Tattvabodhinī had tended to become
the organ of the latter's reformed Hinduism.   But Rāmmohan's
attacks on Christianity had been mainly doctrinal and as
such had remained confined more or less to the shpere of
theological controversy.   By the 1830's, however, the
Christian missionaries were achieving some measure of success
in their efforts to convert Hindus to Christianity, and con-
sequently the question of conversion had begun to impress
itself upon Hindu Society as a social problem of considerable
urgency.   In its first issue Tattvabodhinī had diagnosed
the cause of this embracing of the "foreign religion,
Christianity" by young Hindus to be ignorance of the Hindu
scriptures, which were written in Sanskrit.   Thus it had
been to dispel this ignorance and to counteract the influence
of the Christian Missionaries, that Tattvabodhinī had begun
reprinting Rāmmohan's translations of the sacred texts, and
other books of his, together with many other articles on
Hinduism.   However, an important incident in Calcutta in

1844 revealed that Tattvabodhinī's original diagnosis of
the cause of Christian conversion was not entirely correct.
This incident centred around the conversion to Christianity
of Umeścandra Sarkār and his wife.   She was probably the
first lady of Bengali Hindu upper class society to be con-
verted.   Sarkār's father begged Alexander Duff, the chief
missionary, to return his son.   Duff refused.   Hindu
society was mortified.   But mortification was only the
emotional response to this incident, the intellectual
response from Tattvabodhinī was to ponder its deeper sig-
nificance.   Could the blame be laid entirely at the door
of the Christians?   Was not Hindu society itself in part
to blame?   Was not this incident symptomatic of a disease
which threatened to engulf the whole of Hindu society?
Tattvabodhinī had at first attributed conversion to ignor-
ance of the Hindu scriptures, but supposing it were due to
knowledge of Hindu apathy?   What was Hindu society doing
for the welfare and education of its members?

> Do keep your children away from the missionaries,
> if you desire your own good, the welfare of your
> family, progress of your country and love the Truth.
> Don't send your children to the missionary schools.
> You may, of course, argue, that there is nowhere to
> educate the children of the poor except missionary
> schools.   But what a crying shame it is!   The

Christians set at nought the waves of the
bottomless seas; promulgate their faith in
our land; they are establishing schools in
every village and town, yet we have not a
single decent school to educate the poor
children of our native land.[1]

This extract typifies the wave of self-criticism
which surged up in Tattvabodhini from 1844 onwards.
Washed up by this wave of self-criticism came a new emotion
in answer to the alien creed, namely patriotism. An
article[2], published in 1844, burst our eloquently:-

A man's native land is so dear to his heart,
that its very rivers, mountains, and plains
demand his love and grant him pleasure. The
very names of objects, tug at one's emotions,
because of the associations they have with the
motherland, home of all that is dear. How can
one become indifferent and insensitive to the
abode of bliss of one's forefather's since ages
past and one's descendants in ages yet to be?

The author censures Hindu despondency and apathy and praises
Christian enthusiasm and enterprise. "We can not be united
to protect our own religion in our own country"; yet they
cross the seas to preach to us their religion. sHe con-
cludes:-

My countrymen, there is hardly anytime to waste.
Awake, arise, from the slumber of idleness and
serve for the good of your country and spread
the light of knowledge.

Thus in space of a few years Tattvabodhini proceeded from

1. Tattvabodhini, Vol.III,20,pp.173]74.
2. Ibid., IV, 84.

the dissemination of sacred knowledge to passionate
engagement in social problems.   The poverty of the
villagers,[1] the plight of the Indigo planters,[2] these
were the new concerns of _Tattvabodhinī_, which was fast
becoming a platform for the educated Bengali to express
his views on religion and society, and the economy and
administration of the country as well.

The final category of the writings published in
Tattvabodhinī is scientific and historical.   Akṣaý Kumār
Datta, the editor, had personal predilections for the
sciences and antiquities.   Many of his essays were on
scientific subjects such as Zoology,[3] Botany,[4] and
Geology,[5] but his most important and interesting were on
the history of religion.

Numbered amongst _Tattvabodhinī_'s most distinguished
contributors were Akṣaý Kumār Datta, Debendranāth Tagore,
Īśvarcandra Vidyāsāgar, Kāliprasanna Siṃha etc.   But since
Akṣaý Kumār and Debendranath's most important writings
first appeared in _Tattvabodhinī_ and since both of them were
intimately connected with its activities, their writings
may be taken as representative of _Tattvabodhinī_ as a whole.

1.   _Tattvabodhinī_, vol.IV, 84.
2.   _Ibid._, IV, 87.
3.& 4. _Ibid._,VIII,110.
5.   _Ibid._, VIII,110,112.

For that reason we have the selected them for a detailed
analysis of their language and style.

II.

Akṣaȳ Kumār served his apprenticeship in prose-
composition as a contributor to Sambād Prabhākar. One
day Īśvarcandra Gupta had asked him to translate a passage
from The Englishman, an English journal. Akṣaȳ Kumār
confessed himself unable to do so, since he had no con-
ception of what Bengali prose was like.[1] Needless to
say, he soon learnt and became a regular contributor to
Gupta's paper. It was through Gupta that Akṣaȳ Kūmar
first med Debendranāth. Thus when Debendranāth decided
to commence publication of Tattvabodhinī, a test was
devised to select the editor and the successful candidate
was Akṣaȳ Kumār. Akṣaȳ Kumār was a man of varied interests
and accomplishments; he read Sanskrit and English, and
a little French, and had studied Botany and Chemistry,[2] so
naturally he wrote on many subjects: ethical, scientific,
and historical.

1. Majumdār, K.N. Bāṅglā Sāmaȳik Patreritihās, Mymensing.p.241
2. Nyāȳratna Rāmgati: op.cit.p.256.

This was the Victorian age.   Ethics and morality were fashionable preoccupations in England and India.   The most widely read English books in the Bengal of those days were Isaac Watt's Improvement of the Mind, and Samuel Smile's Character and Self-Help., etc.   Consequently it is not surprising that Akṣaẏ Kumār's first book of importance in 1852 should be an adaptation of an English ethical work, George Combe's The Constitution of Man.   Bāhya Bastur Sahit mānab prakritir Sambandha bicār,   Datta's Bengali version of George Combe's book, is no translation. It is a collection of didactic essays on vegetarianism, temperance, etc., based on the original.   Datta followed this up in 1855 with a further collection of essays on moral themes,   Dharmanīti.   It contained essays on Duty towards Parents, Behaviour towards Servants, etc.,

His ethical preoccupations were carried over into his scientific writing.   His first important text book Cārupāth (1st part 1852, 2nd part 1854, 3rd part 1859) contained in addition to scientific and geographical essays, some on ethical themes.   It remained a text book in Bengali for a long time.   In 1856 he published a book on physics, Padārtha Bidyā.

All the books so far mentioned were either translations or adaptations from English.   Even his greatest

work, Bhāratbhasiẏa Upāsak sampradāẏ (The Religions of India) was in part at least an adaptation. It is a history of various Indian religious sects, based on the researches of H.H.Wilson contained in Sketch on the Religious Sects of the Hindus. But Wilson describes only 45 sects. Datta drew on Hindi, Bengali, and Persian sources to describe a further 117 and himself collected material on 20 more. Datta's approach is objective throughout. It is the first objective study of religious sects by a Bengali and is acknowledged even now as one of the most important books on the subject in Bengali.

III

Vocabulary is the most striking feature of Datta's language. He was breaking new ground in Bengali prose composition and Bengali vocabulary was not rich enough to provide the terminology he needed. Scientific themes had been introduced into Bengali as early as 1819, when the School Book Society began to publish text books on astronomy and natural history. The scientific vocabulary had no doubt commenced its growth from that date, but it was far from being in established use. As far as the dictionaries

produced at or about this time, were concerned, (namely

those of Sir Graves C.Haughton published in 1832 and

D'Rozerio, published in 1837) there was scarcely any

scientific vocabulary in existence in Bengali.   English

scientific terms could be defined in Bengali, but there

were no precise equivalents for them.   D'Rozerio explains

Compass for instance, in his dictionary (p.93) as "cumbak

pátharer gunānvita suchíjukta dig bidig nirúpak jantra

bishesh" (a magnetised needle upon a cord whereby mariners

steer") and telegraph as "sanket dwārá sambad dibár uchichí-

krita jantra" (p.474) - "a machine for communicating inform-

ation by signals for letters".   Datta was faced with this

problem of deficiancies in vocabulary.   Where possible,

he utilised terminology coined by predecessors and, where

necessary, he coined his own.   At times he took existing

words and compounds and used them in different senses.   For

instance, he used the word byomyān, which according to

Houghton meant "a vehicle, a carriage of the gods " (p.2123),

in the sense of the English Balloon;   the word arnabyān

compounded from two Sanskrit words, arnab 'sea' and

yān, 'vehicle', to mean "ship"; and the word, bāspīya rath,

a compound meaning literally "steam-chariot" to mean "train".

Further examples of his newly coined, or specially adapted

terminology are given below:

baspīya pot (steam-boat) "steamer",

digdarśan (direction-showing) "compass",

golākriti (round-shape) "spherical",

mānarajju (measure-rope) "nautical gauge",

tāpamān (heat-measure) "thermometer",

śilpayantra (industry-gadget) "machine".

Datta himself provided a glossary of his terminology with
English equivalents in his Bāhya bastur sahit mānaḥ prakritir
sambandha bicār, which indicates his own uncertainty as to
whether or not his terminology would be readily understood
by his Bengali readers.   Some of his glosses are given
below.   Few of them are listed in contemporary dictionaries
and never in the senses given anucikīrsā (imitation),
ākārānubhābakatā (faculty of form) ātmādar (self-esteem),
āsaṅgalipsā (adhesiveness), kāryakāraṇ bhāb (causation),
gomasuṛasādhān (vaccination), jībanī śakti (vital power)
śobhānubhābakatā (ideality).

As the examples already quoted indicate, Datta
borrowed freely from Sanskrit to coin the terminology his
subject-matter demanded.   The following quotations from
his writings will clearly demonstrate the extent of his
borrowing.

dhanya rammohan ray! ye samaye bharatbarṣa andhakāre
ācchanna chila baḷilei haẏ sei samaye tomar satej buddhi
jyoti ye ghoratara ajñānrūp nibiṛ jaladrāśi bidīrṇa kariẏā
etadūr bikīrṇa haiẏāchila ebaṃ tatsahakāre tomar subimal
svaccha citta ye nijadeś o nij samaye pracalita sakal prakār
kusaṃskār nirbācan kariẏā parityāg kariẏāchila ihā sāmānya
āścarya o sāmānya sādhubāder biṣaẏ naẏ. takhan tomar
jñān o dharmatsāhe utsāhita hṛidaẏ jaṅgal maẏ paṅkil bhūmi
paribeṣṭita ekṭi agnimaẏ āgneẏagiri chila tāhā haite
punya pabitra pracur jñānāgni seteje utkṣipta haiẏā
caturdike bikṣipta haite thākita.....tomar upādhi rājā.
jaṛamaẏ bhumi khaṇḍa tomar rājya naẏ. tumi ekṭi subistar
manorājya adhikār kariẏā rākhiẏācha. tomar samakāḷin o
biśeṣata uttarkālīn sumārjita buddhi śikṣita sampradāẏ
tomāke rājmukuṭ pradān kariẏā tomar jaẏadhvani kariẏā
āsiteche. yāhāra ābahamānkāl hindujātir manorājye
nirbibāde rājatva kariẏā āsiẏāchen tumi tāhādigake parājaẏ
kariẏācha ataeb tumi rājar rājā.

Praise be to Rammohan Raẏ. At a time when India lay
swathed in darkness, the light of your brilliant intellect
burst through the dense cloud-masses of ignorance and
spread afar. And with that your mind in its aweful purity

and clarity fixed on all the various evils current in your
age and land and cast them out, an achievement meet for
us no mean praise or astonishment.   Then your heart fired
with religious zeal and knowledge was a fiery volcano
encircled by swampy jungle tracts, disgorging the pure
sacred flame of knowledge to spread all around in profusion.
You are entitled king.   No lifeless stretch of soil is
your kingdom.   Your kingdom you have established in the
wide reaches of the mind.   Your contemporaries and especially
the educated. classes of posterity acclaim you and crown
you king.   Those who reigned in the Hindu mind from time
immemorial as undisputed kings, you have conquered and thus
you are king of kings.

(2)

cumbak duiprakar; akritrim o kritrim.   akar haite ye cumbak
name ek prakar apariskrita lauha prapta haoya yay, tahar
nam akritrim cumbak.   Akritrim cumbake lauha athaba
ispat gharsan karile, sei lauha o ispato cumbaker gun
prapta hay, ihakei kritrim cumbak bale.   kritrim tumbak
(sic) o akritrim cumbaker nyay anya lauha o ispater
akarsan kariya thake.   nikel o kobalt name dui dhatu ache
taha o lauha o ispater nyay cumbaker gunprapta hay.
cumbaker ek asadharan gun ache, ye tahar ek dik niyatai

uttrābhimuke, ebaṃ anyadik sutarāṃ dakṣiṇābhimuke.   ataeb,

ekṭā cumbak śatākā saṅge thākile ki akul samudra, ki gabhīr

araṇya, sakal sthān haitei dik nirūpan karā yāý.

Magnets are of two kinds: natural and artificial.   The

natural magnet is a type of impure iron obtained from ore

called "magnet".   Iron or steel rubbed by a natural

magnet assumes the properties of the magnet.   This we

call an artificial magnet.   Like natural magnets, artificial

magnets attract other pieces of iron and steel.   There

are two metals, called nickel and cobalt, which like iron

and steel, assume the properties of the magnet.   One re-

markable property of the magnet is that one end always

points north, and that consequently the other end points

south.   And so directions can be determined from any place,

whether from the depths of forest or the high seas, provided

one has a magnetic needle.

(3)

ek dibas duḥsah grīṣmātiśaý prayukta atyanta klānta haiýā

sāýaṃkāle yamunā tīre upabeśanpūrbak sulalita lahari līlā

abalokan karitechilām.   tathākār susnigdha mārut hillole

śarīr śītal haitechila.   Kata śata dīpyamān hīrak khaṇḍa

gagan maṇḍale krame krame prakāś pāite lāgila ebaṃ tanmadhye

dibya lābenya pariśobhita pūrnacandra birājamān haiẏā
kakhano āpanār paramramanīẏa anirbacanīẏa sudhāmaẏ kiran
bikiraṇ pūrbak jagat sudhāpūrna karitechilen kakhano
bā alpa alpa meghābṛita haiẏā svakīẏa mandībhūta kiran
bistār dvārā paurṇamāsī rajanīke ūṣānurūp mlān karitechilen.

Tired out by the unbearable summer heat one day I was
resting at evening time on the banks of Yamunā watching the
play of the delightful waves.   I was being soothed by the
gentle blowing of the breezes there.   On the heavens
gradually hundreds of bright diamonds began revealing them-
sevles.   And the full-moon radiant with divine loveliness
shining amongst them was now infusing the world with nectar
with its ineffably beautiful, nectared beams and now with
beams dulled by veils of clouds making the full-moon night
as pale as dawn.

As the above passages show, Datta had a predilection
for Sanskrit words.   The first passage, a formal piece,
contains a high percentage of Sanskrit words.   The second,
on a scientific subject, contains none, except for the
technical term,which of course are loan words.   The third,
a descriptive passage, contains the most Sanskritic elements.

An examination of his compounds reveals a more marked influence of Sanskrit on Datta. The first passage has numerous compounds, for example, tatsahakāre (with that), nijadeś (own country), dharmotsāha (enthusiasm for religion), jñānāgni (flame of knowledge), manorājya, (kingdom of the mind). The second contains a few readily comprehensible ones such as dakṣiṇābhimukhī (southwards), and apariskṛita (impure). The compounds in the third passage are longer and of a more definite Sanskrit flavour, e.g.,

    (i)   grīṣmātiśaýprayukta "resulting from the
                                excessive heat"

    (ii)   laharīlīlā "the play of the waves"

    (iii)   mārut hillole "by the blowing of the breezes".

The adjectives in the first and third passages are long and Sanskritic:

    (i)   subimal svaccha citta (pure clear mind)

    (ii)   punya pabitra pracur jñān (sacred holy vast
                                  knowledge)

    (iii)   param ramanīya anirbacanīýa sudhāmaý kiran
            (utterly beautiful unspeakable nectared beams)

Datta's "verbal phrases" may be adduced as further evidence of his predilection for Sanskrit. One of the

features of <u>Sanskritised Bengali</u> is the use of verbal
phrases (i.e. constructions consisting of Sanskrit verbal
noun or past participle and one of the two Bengali verbs,
<u>karā</u>,"to do" and <u>haoẏā</u> "to become", "to be.") instead of
Bengali verbs, e.g., in <u>Sanskritised Bengali</u> the construction
<u>gamankarā</u> "to do a going" would be preferred to <u>yāoẏā</u> "to
go". Datta probably used this type of "verbal phrase"
more frequently than his predecessors. Even in the second
of our quoted passages, which was the simplest of the three
in style, there are two of these verbal phrases: <u>prāpta</u>
<u>haoẏā</u>"to come into possession of" and <u>gharṣan karā</u> "to
perform a rubbing", used in preference to <u>pāoẏā</u> (to get)
and <u>ghasā</u> (to rub).

Apart from these features in his style Datta
maintains gender concord in many cases e.g.,

    (i)   <u>rajanī</u>......<u>ānandadāẏinī</u>

           Night   delightful

    (ii)   <u>bidvesinī</u>.....<u>ramanī</u>

           jealous   women

    (iii) <u>bidhabā</u>......<u>rorudyamānā</u>

           widow   weeping

Another grammatical feature to be noted in Datta's writing
is that like Rāmmohan he used the accusative case inflection
-<u>ke</u> with a group of nouns which take zero inflection. For

example:—

    (i)   āmārdiger <u>pranayke</u> ākarṣan kare

        (attracts our <u>love</u>)

  (ii) āhlādke janmāy (gives <u>pleasure</u>)

 (iii) <u>buddhike</u> ċālanā karite pārā

        (using one's <u>intelligence</u>)

      Datta used the established word-order of his day
which is similar to that of modern Bengali, i.e.,adjective
precedes noun etc.   His sentences are completely free
from English influence.   They are constructed on the
S.O.V. model.   His clauses are ordered in the normal
Bengali sequence i.e.,sub-ordinate clause first, then main
clause.   Unlike Rāmmohan, he uses no verb-copulas.   His
usage in this respect is very Bengali.   An example from
our second passage illustrates this:

            <u>cumbak dui prakār</u>:   <u>akritrim</u> o <u>kritrim</u>

      Magnets are of two kinds: natural and artificial.
Unlike Mṛityuñjay, however, he makes frequent use of the
postposition <u>pūrbak</u> in preference to participles in –iyā
e.g., <u>kiran bikiran pūrbak</u> "by radiating the rays".   He
also makes frequent use of correlatives.   The passages
quoted above give ample evidence of Datta's proficiency in
sentence construction.   He writes long lucid sentences with

assurance and short ones without producing staccato.

IV

Not content with proficiency in sentence-construction, Datta set out to embellish his writing.   A disciple of Īśvarcandra Gupta, he was enamoured of rhyme and alliteration, and deemed them fitting embellishments of his style. As the passages quoted above illustrate, alliteration became a common feature of his style:

(1)   punya pabitra pracur

(2)   jaṅgalmay paṅkilbhūmi paribeṣṭita

(3)   sulalita laharī līlā abalokan karitechilām

(4)   ek dibas duḥsaha grīṣmātiśay prayukta atyanta

Like alliteration, rhyming is also common in Datta's prose. For example:

(1)   bidīrṇa kariyā bikirṇa haiyāchila

(2)   param ramanīya anirbacanīya

(3)   kiran bikīran

(4)   jaṅgalmay paṅkilbhūmi

Tautology, though not very frequent, is an occasional feature of Datta's, e.g.,

(1)   agnimay āgneya giri (lit.fiery fire-promoting mountain).   The adjective agnimay "fiery" is superflous,

since it is synonymous with āgneẏa "fiery".

(2)   dharmotsāhe utsāhita (lit. enthused with religion - enthusiasm) utsāha is here redundant.

(3)   dibya lābanya pariśobhita puṛnacandra...āpanār param ramanīẏa anirbacanīẏa sudhīmaẏ kiran (lit. The full moon adorned with divine loveliness....its extremely lovely unspeakable, nectar-filled beams....)   The epithets 'diḅya....pariśobhita" and "paramramanīya...kiran" are virtually synonymous.   One or other of them is redundant.

There is one more, final feature of Datta's style to be discussed, his use of imagery: metaphors and similes. This use of imagery distinguished Datta's style from his predecessors'.   Imagery is an essential part of language. There are two kinds of imagery: i) images which have ceased to be regarded as rhetorical through constant usage e.g., "The idea took root in his mind," in English. ii) images used rhetorically with a conscious intent at linguistic embellishment.

Datta's predecessors, Basu, [1] Mrityuñjaẏ, Rāmmohan and Gupta, all used imagery.   Basu and Rāmmohan used little

---

1.   bhaẏākul śibāganer nyaẏ (as afraid as a group of jackals)
     citrer putalir nyaẏ (liked a painted doll)
     kuler kalanka (family's black-spot)

mainly of the first type.   Of Datta's predecessors'
Mṛityuñjaý used most, generally drawn from Sanskrit and
mainly of an amorous nature e.g.,

       (1)   taruṇī stana sundar indībar

           "maiden-breast-beautiful lotus."

       (2)   pīyuṣtulya jal "nectar-like-water."

       (3)   dibākar jalanimagna nyāý astamita

           "The sun set as if immersed in water."

But whilst transferring stereotyped imagery from Sanskrit
prose did nothing to enhance the Bengali prose of Mṛityañjaý,
transposing as he did, much of it from poetry, positively
damaged his prose by its very incongruity.   Datta, on the
other hand, consciously strived to embellish his language
with imagery created for that express purpose.   Only where
his inventive powers failed him, did he borrow from Sanskrit,
and then he borrowed with impeccable taste.   His prose
sparkles with fresh, aptly-chosen images e.g., the extended
metaphor, in the first passage quoted, of the active volcano
encircled by dense swampy jungle;   Rāmmohan is the volcano,
society the entangled boggy surroundings, and his energies
the eruption.   This image is stamped with the originality
and freshness of Datta's imaginative powers.

      A few examples of Datta's use of figures of speech

are quoted below:

        (1)   biṣād-samudra (melancholy+sea)

        (2)   dīpyamān hīrak khaṇḍa (shining-diamond particle)
This whole phrase suggests the stars.   This is a true
metaphor.

        (3)   nidrā...ābirbhuta haiȳā sakal kleś śānti

                karite lāgila.

                Sleep appeared and began to soothe away every

                one's grief.

Personification is very common in Datta's writing. He was
also very fond of allegorical writing. His three essays
called Svapna Darśan "dream Visions" are allegorics. An
extract is quoted below:

        "You have rightly guessed, they are goddesses

           indeed and they live in this Mountain of

           Religion.   One of them is called Charity,

           another Devotion, and the last Compassion...."

    As his scientific writings show, Datta's prose
was in the main simple. It becomes a little more complex
when he passes from science to ethics and philosophy. But
this complexity does nothing to diminish his lucidity, for
he was supremely competent in sentence-construction. His
skill in manipulating sentences of various lengths, avoiding
staccato, yet maintaining a clean line of exposition, is

remarkable. On the whole he preferred figurative to literal expression, which places him above Rammohan. Rammohan had wedded logic to prose and moulded an instrument for logical exposition. Datta went further. He embellished this instrument with "eloquence", which Read defines as "an art of exposition animated by the greatness of the theme."[1] What Datta wrote on moral and patriotic themes, his countrymen received with great respect, and responded with both heart and mind.[2] But Datta's linguistic embellishment was limited. He did not carry alliteration and rhyme to the point of tediousness. The best of his passages ring with the eloquence, which stamp his style and which R.C.Dutt, has compared to "the vehemence and force of the mountain torrent in its wild and rugged beauty."[3]

V.

Though Akṣay Kumār Datta was the editor of _Tattvabodhinī_, the actual control of the journal was in the hands of Debendranāth Tagore, the father of the poet

1. Read,H: _op.cit._,p.186.
2. Dutt,R.C.: Literature of Bengal, _op.cit._,pp.163-64.
3. _Ibid._,p.169.

Rabīndranāth.   Debendranāth supervised the management

of the journal and perused the contributions of Akṣay

Kumār Datta and others, prior to publication.   Debendranāth's

own prose was good, though he wrote with no literary intention.

His contribution to Bengali prose has been little discussed

and more often neglected by the critics.[1]

Debendranāth was the son of Prince Dvārakānāth,

whose fabulous wealth is still related in anecdotes current

even now in Bengal.   Born to such princely riches, Debendranāth's

days passed in luxurious ease till one moonlit night brought

death to his beloved grandmother and to him a mystic exper-

ience of Divine love.   The unfolding of his spiritual life

dates from that first experience which he describes in the

following words:

> "It was a spontaneous delight, to which nobody
>
> can attain by argument or logic.   God Himself
>
> seeks for the opportunity of pouring it out.
>
> He had vouchsaged it unto me in the fulness of
>
> time.   Who says there is no God?   There is
>
> proof enough of His existence.   I was not pre-
>
> pared for it, whence then did I receive this
>
> joy?"[2]

---

1. Only one critic, Ajit Kumār Cakrabartī, has written a book
   on Debendranāth, Maharṣi Debendranāth, Allahabad, 1916.   In
   this book Crakrabartī claims (Appendix III) that Debendranāth
   is the first writer of literary prose in Bengali.
2. Tagore, D.N. Autobiography (translated by S.N. Tagore and Indira
   Debī) Calcutta, 1909, pp3-4.

His mode of life changed almost instantaneously. He became a devoted student of the Upaniṣads, and eventually, after the death of Rāmmohan, leader of the Brāhma Samāj. From this spiritual yearnings stemmed a restlessness which set him travelling far and wide, but mostly to the Himalayas. He loved nature passionately and saw in it the manifestation of God. He had leanings towards poetry and music. His favourite poet was the Persian, Hafiz. Wordsworth also appealed to him strongly. Music he studied at the feet of an expert. But his spiritual and artistic inclinations did not blind him to the practical affairs of life. His affairs were well-ordered, but his spiritual propensities were his strongest and earned for him the title of **Maharṣi** (Great Sage) by which he is still known by his countrymen. These many facets of his nature are reflected in his prose.

Debendranāth's writings are almost entirely on religious topics. He used to deliver sermons in the **Tattvabodhinī Sabhā**, which were subsequently collected and published in his **Brāhma Dharma**/(1852) (**Brāhma Samājer Bakṛitā** (1862) and **Brāhma Dharmer Byākhyān** (1869-72). He wrote an autobiography in 1898. His autobiography was also in the main religious, though interpolated frequently were descriptive passages of remarkable beauty.

We presume that the prose we have so far considered was written with the intention of being read to acquire

information, but we <u>know</u> that Debendranāth wrote his

prose with the intention of delivering it orally to an

audience.   This difference in intention affected the whole

fabric of his prose: the choice and order of his words,

the order and structure of his phrases, clauses, and sen-

tences.   Thus a new quality is added to Bengali prose,

the quality of rhetoric.   But from its addition emerged

still another quality, which does not easily lend itself to

analysis, but which is Debendranāth's greatest single contri-

bution to Bengali prose as literature, namely the quality of

music.   We hope the following illustrations reveal it.

> (i) Īśvar sādhanā nimitte ei tattvabodhinī
> sabhā sthāpita haiyāche.   Īśvar jñān nā
> haile Īśvarādhanā haynā ebaṃ ekākī nirjane
> jñānālocanār upāy birahe jñānoparjano haynā
> ataeb ei sabhā ye upakārinī ihā biśeṣ bodh
> haiteche.   yadio Īśvarādhanā gupta ebaṃ
> prakāsya ubhay sthānei uttamrūpe nirbāha
> haite pāre, yadio yāhār Īśvar bhakti āche ki sajane
> ki nirjane tāhār īśvar bhakti rūp dīpaśikhā
> kakhano nirbān haynā, prakāśye bhajanā karile
> āpanār o anyer ekebāre upakār hay

> This Tattvabodhinī sabhā has been established
> for the realisation of God.   One cannot
> worship God unless one has knowledge of God
> and one cannot acquire knowledge in solititude
> because of the want of serious discussion.
> Therefore, there are strong reasons to suppose
> that this <u>Sabhā</u> is beneficial.   Although the
> worship of God can be carried on just as well
> in private as in public, and although a person's
> flame of devotion to God can never be extinguished
> whether he be alone or in company, nonetheless
> public worship benefits both him and the others.

(ii)   yini bhūmike sarbakāle śyāmbarṇa
trinadvārā ācchādita kariẏā ebaṃ
basanta kāle nabapallabyukta puṣpagucche
alaṁkrita kariẏā darśanendriẏer susthatā
sampādan karitechen, yini ākāśke bicitra
barṇe citrita kariẏā āmārdigake manoramya
kariẏāchen, ẏini dibā rātrir paribartane
sūryer udaẏāsta kāler saundaryer sriṣṭi
kariẏā āmārdigake ānanda pradān karitechen
tāhāke yena āmrā bismṛita nā hai.

He who gives pleasure to our eyes covering
the ground with green grasses in all
seasons and adorning the trees with newly
blossoming flowers and leaves in springs,
He who gives delight to our mind by painting
the sky in various colours, He who gives us
joy by creating the beauty of the dawn and
the dusk and changing the day into night (and
night into day) Him let us not forget.

(iii)   aruṇodaẏe prabhāte āmi yakhan sei bāgāne
beṛāitām yakhan āphimer śvet, pīt, lohit
phul sakal śiśir jaler aśrupāt karita,
yakhan ghāser rajata kāñcan puspadal udyān
bhūmite jarir machalanda bichāiẏādita,
yakhan svarga haite bāẏu āsiẏā bāgāne madhu
bahan karita, yakhan dūr haite pāñjābīder
sumadhur saṅgītsvar udyāne sañcaraṇ karita,
takhan tāhāke āmār ek gandharba purī bodh
haita.

When I used to walk in that garden in the
morning, when the white, yellow and red opium
flowers used to shed tears of dew, when the
golden and silvery flowers of grass used to
spread an embroidered silk on the garden, when
the heavenly breeze used to blow carrying
honey with it, and when the sweet music of the
Panjabis used to float over the garden, then
the garden seemed like a fairyland to me.

The analysis of Debendranāth's language will be
based on the above quoted extracts. The first passage was
written in 1841, the second in 1843 and the third one is taken

from his autobiography which was written in 1898. The
first two passages are from sermons. The last passage is
a description of a garden in Amritsan in the Punjab.

It will be noted that Debendranāth used a large
number of _tatsama_ words, but they are words which are
familiar to a Bengali, many of them being irreplaceable by
tadbhava words. For Instance, in the first passage, the
word _Īśvar_ (God) occurs six times and words like _bhakti_,
jñān, _bhajanā_ etc. also occur. These words cannot be
replaced by any _tadbhava_ forms. They belong to the ter-
minology of religion. Furthermore, his choice of _tatsama_
words in all the passages has, to a considerable extent,
been guided by the requirements of rhetoric and his sense
of music which will be discussed later.

Debendranāth has also used quite a number of
compounds; but they are compounds of simple structure e.g.,
Īśvarārādhanā (God's worship), _dīpaśikhā_ (Lamp's flame).
The interesting thing to notice is Debendranāth's tendency to
break up compounds into separate words without inserting
inflectional terminations. For example _Īśvar sādhanā nimitte_
(God/realisation/for the sake of). Debendranāth's practice
of breaking up compounds was adopted by many later writers,
including his son, Rabīndranāth. In the second and third
passage one notices the compounds are broken up either wholly

or partly into their components.   For example, <u>nabapallab yukta</u>
<u>puṣpaguccha</u> (new-leaves-adorned flower-bunches), śvet, pīt,
lohit phul (white yellow red flowers).

The word-order in the above passages is similar to
that of modern Bengali and also similar to the word-order
of Rāmmohan Rāy[1] and of journalists in Debendranāth's time.
The Adjective-Noun position is the norm.   Sentences follow
the S.O.V. order.   In all Debendranāth's writings I have
not found out a single case of S.O.V.inversion.

Debendranāth is a master of sentence-structure.
His sentences do not reveal any obvious English influence.
Unlike Rāmmohan, he has not used verb copulas where Bengali
speech ordinarily does not use them.   Debendranāth uses both
simple and compound sentences with equal facility.   Many of
his long sentences are well-balanced in construction.   A
number of them are periodic in form.   A period has been
defined by one critic as "a complex sentence of which the
meaning remains in suspense until the completion of the
sentence."[2]   The third sentence in the first extract is
a period.   It is a construction containing 4 clauses, two
sub-ordinate clauses introduced by <u>yadio</u> (although) with
an adjectival clause embodied in the second <u>yadio</u> clause

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1.   <u>supra</u>.,Chap.VI.,p.221
2.   Read,Sir.H; <u>op.cit</u>.,p.35.

(yāhār Īśvar bhakti āche), and the main clause (prakāśye
bhajanā karile.....upakārhaý) at the end.   The embodied
adjectival clause which consists of a sub-ordinate clause
introduced by a relative pronoun and linked to the other
clause by the demonstrative pronoun used correlatively,
belongs to a type now very frequent in Bengali prose.

In the second passage quoted above the whole sen-
tence is a period.   The gradual growth of the idea clause
by clause is well sustained in this construction.   There
are three long relative clauses introduced by yini (He
who) each clause being subdivided into one or more adverbial
clauses, marked by a participle in -iýa.   This alternation
of clauses after almost equal intervals gives balance to
the whole and produces a sense of harmony.

Similarly, the third passage is an example of a
very long period containing 6 long clauses.   The first five
are relative clauses of yakhan (when) type and the last one
is a takhan (then) type sentence.   yakhan and takhan are
very common correlatives in Bengali.   This use of correlatives
gives the whole sentence a rhythmic structure.   One can hear
the voice of the speaker rising with every use of yakhan to
the final climax which falls on takhan.

The most important quality of Debendranāth's writing
is, however, the music of his language.   Somerset Maugham

once wrote about the question of style that one of the main
considerations of style is "a sentence that is good to look
at and good to listen to."[1]   Akṣaykumār Datta constructed
sentences which were "good to look at" but not "good to
listen to."   This second quality was developed in Debendra-
nāth's prose.

Music in prose can be created by use of rhymes,
alliterations and assonances.   Debendranāth's predecessor$,
Gupta, used them excessively thereby making his prose ridi-
culous at times.   Debendranāth, however, used these aids
with discrimination.   It is also probable that Debendranāth's
musical training helped him to create the music with an
economy of rhyming and assonance.   If the second passage is
read aloud, it is noticed that a musical effect is created
by the careful placing of the conjunct consonants which can
be analysed as follows:

(I)   <u>Lengthening of consonants</u>.

(a)   āc<u>ch</u>ādita

(b)   gu<u>cch</u>a

(c)   pa<u>ll</u>ab

(d)   manora<u>my</u>a [monorom:o]

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1.   Maugham,S.W.   <u>The Question of Style</u>   (The Craft of
     Writing) ed. by Derek Colville of J.D.Koerner, New York,
     1961, p.83.

(ii) <u>Homorganic clusters</u>

    (a) ala<u>nk</u>ṛita (ṅ+k)

    (b) sa<u>mp</u>ādan (m+p)

    (c) in<u>dr</u>iẏer (n+d)

(iii) <u>Other clusters</u>

    (a) sa<u>rb</u>a

    (b) ba<u>rṇ</u>a

    (c) <u>tṛ</u>iṇa

A skilful arrangement of open and closed syllables has made
this passage beautiful. In this passage 41 closed syllables
are combined with 106 open syllables. In the third passage
the music is created also by using conjunct consonants in
words like a<u>ś</u>ru, <u>kāñcaṇ</u>, <u>puṣpa</u>, <u>udyān</u>, <u>sañcaraṇ</u>. In both
these passages alliteration plays an important part in creating
the music e.g., in the second passage the repetitions of
/s/, /r/, /n/, /b/, /p/ make the sentence sweet to
a Bengali ear. In the third passage also the repetitions
of /t/ , /l/ , /s/ make the sentence beautiful.

One marked feature of the rhetorical quality of
Debendranāth's writing is his control of pauses. The pauses
are clearly those which would be made by the human voice
speaking what he has written. His skill of control in this
respect is shown by his ability to identify a single rhetorical

unit with a semantic and grammatical unit.   The first
few lines of the first quotation are requoted to illustrate
this feature.   The rhetorical pauses are marked by down
strokes. ,

> Īśvar sādhanā nimitte ❘ ei tattvabodhini sabhā ❘
> sthāpita haiyāche ‖ Īśvar jñān nā haile ❘ Īśvarādhanā
> haynā ❘ ebaṃ ❘ ekākī nirjane ❘ jñānālocanār upāy
> birahe ❘ jñānopārjano haynā ❘ ataeb ❘ ei sabhā ye
> upakāriṇī ❘ ihā biśeṣ bodh haiteche‖

Each rhetorical unit is also a single semantic and grammatical
unit.   Semantic in that it is a meaningful unit, and
grammatical in that the whole unit serves a single grammatical
function as the following analysis discloses.

(a) Īśvar...nimitte   .   adverbial phrase

(b) ei....sabhā   .   noun phrase

(c) sthāpita haiyāche   .   verb phrase and end of sentence

(d) Īśvar...haile   .   adverbial clause.

(e) Īśvarādhanā haynā   .   main clause

(f) ebaṃ   .   continuative conjunction

(g) ekākī nirjane   .   adverbial phrase

(h) jñānālocanār...birahe.   adverbial phrase

(i) jñānopārjano haynā   .   verbal phrase

(j) ataeb   .   continuative conjunction

(k) ei sabhā..upakāriṇī. noun phrase

(1) <u>ihā biśeṣ...haitecha</u> . verbal clause and end of

sentence.

Debendranāth's _{prose} is easy and pleasant to read

aloud because it was composed for precisely that purpose.

Apart from the musical quality of Debendranāth's

writing, his use of figures of speech is interesting. An

important figure of speech which occurs frequently in his

writing is the <u>Metaphor</u>. He uses metaphors quite often

in his sermons. For example:

(i) <u>Iśvar bhakti rūp dīpaśikhā</u>

flame of devotion to God.

(ii) <u>saundaryer sāgar</u>

sea of beauty.

(iii) <u>śiśir jaler aśrupāt</u>

tears of dew.

The second important figure of speech in Debendranāth's writing

is <u>Personification</u>.

(i) <u>tārakāgan...praharī rūpe birāj karite thāke</u>

stars sit like guards

(ii) <u>jagat stabdha pulake candrer kiran pān kariteche</u>

the earth is drinking the moon-beams with deep joy

The next important figure of speech of which he makes frequent

use is the <u>Simile</u>.

(i) <u>nadīr mata nimnagāmī</u>

flowing downwards like a river

(ii)   cātaker nyāý pratikṣā

waiting like a Cātak (It is said that this bird,

the Cātak, does not drink water until the monsoon

comes).

Some of his similes are extended.   For instance,

nābik yeman sudūṇ samudra madhye sthiti
kariýā, āpanār sávdeṣer prati lakṣya rākhiýā,
samudāý jhañjhā taranga atikram kareʔ āmrā
āmāder jīban sahāýke lakṣya rākhiýā seirūp
saṃsārer samudāý bighna bipatti atikram karitechi.

As a sailor overcomes all the tempstuous ocean
fixing his goal towards his own country, when
he is in a distant sea; so we overcome all
difficulties and obstacles of our life by fixing
goal at the Lord of our life.

A passage from a sermon of Debendranāth's delivered in 1861

is quoted below, clearly revealing the euphony of his

vocabulary, his control of sentence structure, and the skill

of his use of limited alliterations and imagery.

tomāke dekhibār janya yakhani tomār nikaṭe
prārthanā kariýāchi takhani tumi śuniýācha.
ucca prabat śikhare tomār darśan pāiýāchi, janaśunya
aranyer madhye tomāke byākul haiýā anveṣan kariý-
āchi – tumi sekhāneo āmār hridaýke śītal kariýācha.
ei pabitra samājmandire yakhani tomāke saral hridaýe
prārthanā karitechi tumi darśan ditecha.   dekhi-
techi ye tumi āmār hridaýke dekhitecha.   tomār
premacakṣu techi tumi darśan ditecha rahiýāche...
karṇa tomārāmār hridaýke dekhitecha. iṅkhalābaddha
bhrāmyamān koṭi koṭi nakṣatra ṅaite nistabdha
rajanīte niḥsārit haý, tāhāi śunibār janya utsuk
haiteche...he paramātman!   tomār nikaṭe ei
prārthanā ye tomāke dekhite dekhite yena āmār
jīban abasān haý ebaṃ jībanānte tomār nūtan rājye
jāgrata haiýā yena ābār tomār mahimā gān karite
pāri....

(Whenever I pray to see you, you respond.
I see you on the high mountain tops.   I
search for you eagerly in the lonely forest.
You heal my heart even there.   Whenever I
pray with sincerity in this holy temple you
appear.   I can see that you are looking at
my heart, your loving eyes are fixed on my
eyes.   My ears anxiously wait for your
majestic call, which is uttered during the
still nights by the stars which rotate
numberlessly in due order.   My Lord!   I
pray you to let my life be ended while I am
looking at you and that I may sing your
praises when I awake in the new kingdom
after this life's end.)

The keynote of this passage is sincerity of

devotion to God.   Any reader can feel in this prayer the

devoted's sincere emotion, which crosses the narrow limits

of sectarianism.   The beauty of the sentences is enhanced

by the arrangement of their attendant clauses.   In each of

the first three sentences, a clause ending in -ýāchi is

balanced by another in -ýācha.   This balanced repetition

produces a musical pattern.   Effective use is made in the

first and second sentences, of the alliteration of   /n/.

The use of conjunct consonants in the second sentence con-

trives to produce more verbal music, for example, ucca

parbat śikhare darśaṇ pāiýāchi, janaśūnya araṇya madhye....etc.

"Your majestic call which is uttered during the still nights

by the stars"   —   this sentence embodies a metaphor of the

stars as creatures and the voice of God, which is particularly

beautiful, containing as it does the lovely metaphor implied

in _niḥsarita_ "flowed."

The content of Debendranāth's prose is religious. His writings were therefore limited in their appeal to members of the _Brāhma Samāj_. Nevertheless even here one finds an occasional passage, whose appeal is universal. _Ātmajībanī_, his autobiography (1898), however, makes extremely pleasant reading. Though a consideration of this book strictly falls beyond our present scope, which is the examination of writings published in the _Tattvabodhinī_, it would not be improper to say that in this book Debendranāth's prose style reaches its final form. The descriptive passages (one has been quoted already) reveal the poet in him released. These are always of great literary beauty. But his sermons nonetheless reveal his technical mastery of prose. Here for the first time we have what may be called a natural Bengali style. It was a great contribution to the writing of prose in particular and to Bengali literature in general. In literature as in life Debendranāth was a nobleman and the worthy father of a great son.

VI.

To sum up, what can be said of _Tattvabodhinī's_ contribution to the language and literature of Bengal?

Critics acclaim it as the best journal to appear, before
it was eclipsed by the publication of Banga Darśan by
Bankimcandra Caṭṭopādhyāý in 1872.   By 'best journal' they
probably mean that it was the first journal to be greeted
with any enthusiasm by the English-educated Bengali, who
scorned to read his mother-tongue, because it had nothing
worth reading written in it, as far as he was concerned.
But Akṣaý Kumār's translations and adaptation's of English
ethical essays changed that.   They were an innovation in
Bengali.   His translations of Combe's The Constitution of
Man was "perused by a large scale of thinking and enlightened
readers." [1]   Previous journals had in the main appealed to
the common man, but Tattvabodhinī was intended for enlightened
and educated readers. [2]   Thus by attracting readers amongst
the educated public, Tattvabodhinī did much to enhance the
prestige of Bengali as a language of literature.   This was
Tattvabodhinī's first notable achievement.

Tattvabodhini's second major contribution to
Bengali literature was the width of its subject-range, re-
flecting as it did Akṣaý Kumār's reading, which ranged from
physics to metaphysics.   Little interest had so far been
excited by the scientific publications of the School Book
Society and Dig Darśan.   Thus Akṣaý Kumār became the first

1.   Dutt: Literature of Bengal, op.cit.,p.163.
2.   Ibid.,p.164.

writer of importance on scientific themes.   His exposition
was lucid and his compass wide.   He wrote on astronomy,
botany, physics, zoology and many other scientific subjects.
Naturally, like all pioneers he had obstacles to overcome,
primarily those of terminology, but on the whole he overcame
them successfully.   Much of the terminology, he coined
partly from English but mainly from Sanskrit, passed into
current usage and found general acceptance by later scientific
authors.   His ethical writings inspired many a young Bengali
and his Bāratbarṣīẏa Upaāsak Sampradāẏ on the different Hindu
sects opened up another branch of Bengali prose literature,
namely historical investigation, as well as raising the
standard of Tattvabodhinī.   It remains a monument of scholar-
ship to this day.

        Another major contribution of Tattvabodhinī's
was to continue the translation of Hindu scriptures from
Sanskrit into Bengali, initiated by Rāmmohan and to reprint
the translations of the latter.   Not content with this
Tattvabodhinī commissioned a prose translation of the
Mahābhārat.   It was commenced by Vidyāsāgar and completed
by Kāliprasanra Siṃha with the help of pandits.   This was
possibly the first time pandits were employed on translation
from Sanskrit to Bengali.   The translation of the Mahābhārat
was an important event in the history of Bengali prose.   The

translation remains a standard work in Bengali.

Apart from didactic writings and translations, the <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> inaugurated a new type of literary production, essays on the social and economic condition of Bengal. The religious controversy between Hindu and Christian had been raging for sometime, when <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> commenced publication. By then Hindu society had become uneasy about the incidence of Hindu conversion to Christianity. <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> had at first attributed this to ignorance of the Hindu scriptures and had set out to remedy this defect by the publication of the scriptures in translation, but with no avail. Pondering afresh, <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> was struck by the immense energy and enthusiasm of the Christians in the promulgation of their faith and in the establishment of schools as opposed to Hindu lethargy in these respects. This awareness of the initiative and drive of the Christian's resulted in a wave of self-criticism in <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> whence, however, there began to emerge a more positive attitude, social consciousness. Thus it was that articles on social and economic themes began to appear in <u>Tattvabodhinī</u>. In their efforts to check the missionary activities of the Christians, Akṣay kumār and Debendranāth tried to kindle a sense of national pride in the hearts of their readers. Flagrant social injustices such as the plight of the Indigo planters began to be taken up in her pages. Later on

<u>Tattvabodhinī</u> began to publish stories of Rajput heroes.
The stage was being set for the entrance of Bankim Candra,
the most important figure in the development of nationalism
in Bengal.

Like its predecessor, the <u>Saṃbād Prabhākar</u>,
the <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> gave a group of writers the opportunity
to produce original work.   Debendranāth and Akṣay Kumār
apart, attached to the staff of the paper at various times
were Ānanda Candra Bidyābāgīś, Kāliprasanna Siṃha, Iśvarcandra
Bandyopādhyāy and Rājnarāyaṇ Basu.   Henceforth, literary
journals became a potent force in the literary world. Much
of Bengali literature in the 19th century and 20th century
first appeared in their pages.   Almost all the great Bengali
writers of this period, Bankim Candra and Tagore included,
made their literary débuts in journals.   It is to the credit
of <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> that it did so much to make such opportunities
available.

The last important contribution of <u>Tattvabodhinī</u>
is that it established the acceptance of prose as a literary
medium.   The <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> produced the first writers of
Bengali prose, whose works can be read with pleasure even
today.   In vocabulary <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> tended to be more
Sanskritic than were some previous papers.   It is also to be
noted that Sanskrit tended to replace Persian words; for

example ksetra, udyān, nagar etc., began to gain currency
at the expense of jami, bāgān, sahar etc.[1]

The writers in the missionary and other earlier
newspapers of the third decade quite frequently wrote in a
style which approached the colloquial but the writers of the
Tattvabodhinī and others writing in the fifth decade of the
century seemed to prefer the Sanskritised style termed by
us, literary Bengali.   Akṣay Kumār and Debendranāth are
typical examples of that style.   They preferred to use
tatsama words, though they did not go out of their way to
import Sanskrit words which the ordinary reader would find
difficult to understand.   But nevertheless on balance their
writing is symptomatic of a move away from the colloquial
style of Bengali.   This lead was followed by the writer,
who is to be considered in the next chapter, Vidyāsāgar.
He developed the vocabulary and style of Bengali prose but
his best writings are in the field of literary Bengali and
it was not until about the 1860's that writers emerged who
renewed the experiment of using the colloquial style for
literary purposes.

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1. The attitude of the Tattvabodhinī towards the Persian
    language was not friendly.   In the first issue of the
    journal, one writer expressed his opinion that, "the
    Persian language does not possess anything which can be
    called scholarly." (p.4).

CHAPTER X

Vidyāsāgar.

Vidyāsāgar (sea of knowledge) is the title by which Īśvar Candra Bandyopādhyāy is better known. It was bestowed on him for his excellent performance in Sanskrit studies, whereby he crowned with vicarious success his father's aspiration's to become a Sanskrit scholar, which had been frustrated by their family poverty. Born in 1820, Vidyāsāgar was thus acquiring Sanskrit at a time when its educational importance had been lost to English. Consequently it is characteristic of the man to find him assiduously studying English in 1841, two years after his appointment as teacher of Bengali and Sanskrit at Fort William College. A man of prodigious energy, he associates at the same time with Akṣay Kumār on the <u>Tattvabodhinī</u> and corrects the articles of contributors, including those of Akṣay Kumār himself. Three years later in 1846, he joins his alma mater, the Sanskrit College; he begins producing text books; a history, a biography, a primer of Bengali, a simplified grammar of Sanskrit, based on Pāṇini, and critical editions of Sanskrit works, including Kālidāsa's <u>Meghadūtam</u>,[1] at the rate of one a year,

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1. His comments in these editions are valuable, eg.he commented that certain ślokas in <u>Meghadūtam</u> were later interpolations. The discovery of the manuscript of the oldest commentator on the <u>Meghadūtam</u>, Vallabhadeva, proved Vidyāsāgar's conjecture to be correct. The ślokas he mentioned are absent from the older version. See, Sen: <u>Bāṅglā Sāhityer Itihās (II)</u>, 1955., p. 12-13

and in 1850 at the age of thirty he becomes principal of
the Sanskrit College. He tightens up the discipline and
punctuality of the staff and students of the college; braves
storms of protest from the orthodox by the admission of non-
brahmin Hindus to this hitherto brahmin preserve; victoriously
champions widow remarriage in the face of even fiercer oppo-
sitions; campaigns for female education; is charged with
the administration of a girl's school by his friend, Drinkwater
Bethune, a British philanthropist; pleads for the teaching
of western philosophy on the grounds that it has greater re-
levance to modern life than the _Vedānta_ and _Sāṅkhya_ systems;
earns much and distributes more to the poor and needy; over-
flows with compassion for his fellowmen, yet retires into
solitude, because of the ingratitude of friends and the in-
sensitivity of people. Such was Vidyāsāgar, whose name is
now a household word throughout Bengal, a pillar of wisdom,
energy, and compassion, described by his friend and contem-
porary, the poet Madhusūdan as possessed of the "genius and
wisdom of an ancient sage, the energy of an Englishman and
the heart of a Bengali mother."

But Vidyāsāgar is best remembered for the compass of
his compassion. Born to poverty, he knew the misery of in-
digence and gave generously to those in distress. But it

was the distress of woman that touched him most, in his
early years.   In 1855 he launched his campaign for widow
remarriage.   The counter-attack from the orthodox was
vicious and various.   Poets like Īśvar Candra Gupta ridi-
culed him in their verses, and novelists like Bankim Candra
in his Biṣabrikṣa (1872) maligned him from the mouths of
their characters, "If Vidyāsāgar's a scholar, who's a dunce?"
But from the fierce fight which ensued, Vidyāsāgar emerged
victorious.   The law permitting widow remarriage was passed.
His second success was the prohibition of polygamy amongst
Kulīn brahmins, who married many and took responsibility
for none.   Once more Vidyāsāgar had exposed himself to vili-
fication from the orthodox out of his compassion for the
sufferings of the women of Bengal.

Most of his last days were spent in the solitude of the
Santal Parganas, in Bihar.   The simple Santals accepted him
as friend and benefactor.   But the attraction of his old
activities in Calcutta was great.   He returned and died
there in 1891.   Dutt writes that his death was "lamented
all over Bengal, as no man has ever been lamented within our
recollection."[1]

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1. Dutt, R.C.   Literature of Bengal, op.cit., p.179

II

Vidyāsāgar's work can be divided into two classes,
(a) translations and (b) original or partly original writings.

Vidyāsāgar's first book Betāl Pañcabiṅśati (1847) is a
translation from the Hindi, Baitāl Pachīsī.   "Like most of
Hindu tales, the Baital Pachīsī was originally composed in
Sanskrit.   The author's name was Shivadāsa, and the title
of the collection was "Vetāla-Pancha-Viṃsati", a work very
common in India ..."[1]   Vidyāsāgar knew the Sanskrit text but
he used the Hindī version for his translation.   A passage
from the Hindī version and its Bengali translation are quoted
below for comparison:

> ek rājā pratāpmukaṭ nām banāras kā thā.   Aur us ke
> beṭe kā nām bajra mukaṭ.   jis kīrānī kā nām mahādevī.
> ek din kuṅvar, apne dīvān ke beṭe ko sāth le, śikār ko
> gayā;   aur bahut dūr jaṅgal meṅ jā niklā;   aur us ke bīc
> ek sundar tālāb dekhā ki us ke kanāre hans, cakvā, cakvī,
> bagle, murghābiyāṅ sab ke sab kalol meṅ the;   cāroṅ
> taraph pukhtah ghāṭ bane huye;   kaṅval tālāp meṅ phule
> huye;   kanāroṅ par tarah ba-tarah ke darakht lage huye
> ki jin kī ghanī ghanī chāṅh meṅ ṭhaṇḍī ṭhaṇḍī havā
> ātī thẽ;   aur panchi pakheru darakhtoṅ par cahcahoṅ meṅ
> thẽ;   aur raṅg baraṅg ke phul ban meṅ phul rahe the;   un

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1. Forbes, Duncan (edited) The Baitāl Pachīsī, London, 1874,
Introduction, vi [English punctuation marks including the
full-stop have been used in this book.]

par bhaunron ke jhuṅḍ ke jhuṅḍ gunj rahe;   ki ye us
tālāb ke kanāre pahunce aur munh hāth dho kar, upar
āye."[1]

[There lived in Banaras a king by the name of Pratāp-
mukaṭ.   His son's name was Bajra mukaṭ and his queen's
Mahādevī.   One day the prince went hunting with the
minister's son.   They came to a forest, far away and
saw in its midst a lake, on which were sporting water-
fowl, swans, cranes, and ruddy geese.   On each of its
four sides there was a flight of steps.   The lake was
filled with lotuses and on its banks stood trees of
various kinds, from the deep shadows of which came cool
breezes;   birds chirped;   flowers of various colours
bloomed;   bees hummed in swarms.   They went down to the
water's edge, washed their hands, and faces, and came
back up the bank.]

Vidyāsāgar's version of the passage is as follows:

bārāṇasī nagarīte, pratāpmukuṭ nāme, ek prabal pratāp
narapati chilen.   tāhār mahādebī nāme preýasī mahiṣī
o bajra mukuṭ nāme hṛidaý nandan nandan chila.   eǎk din
rāj kumār, ek mātra amātyaputrake samabhibyāhāre laiýā,
mṛigaýāý gaman karilen.   tini, nānā bane bhraman kariýā,
pariśeṣe ek nibiṛ aranye prabeś pūrbak, ai aranyer mad-
hyabarti sarobarer nirmal salile haṃsa, bak, cakrabāk
prabhṛiti nānābidha jalacar bihangamagan keli kariteche;
praphulla kamal samūher saurabhe cāridik āmodita haiýā
āche;   madhukarerā, madhugandhe andha haiýā gungun dhvani

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1. Forbes: op.cit., pp. 12-13.

karata, itastataḥ brahmaṇ kariteche; tīrastha
tarugan abhinaba pallab, phal, kusum samūhe suśobhita
rahiẏache; uhāder chāẏā ati snigdha; biśeṣataḥ
śītal sugandha gandhabaher manda manda sañcār dvārā
param ramanīẏa haiẏache ...[1]

The original passage stands bare and virtually unadorned
but for the most stereotyped adjective, "cool" thaṇḍi, and
one onomatopoeic line, bhaṁroṁ ke jhuṇḍ ke jhuṇḍ gunj rahe.
Vidyāsāgar not only translates but also embellishes the bare
lines of the original with the addition of poetic epithets;
e.g. hridaẏ nandan naṇdan (heart-pleasing son) and preẏasī
mahiṣī (beloved queen), and of the alliterative phrasing in
"pratāpmukuṭ nāme ek prabal pratāp narapati" instead of the
stark, ek rājā pratāpmukaṭ nām banāras kā thā, of the original.
He expands thaṇḍī thaṇḍī hāwā ati thi (cool breezes blow)
which he could have translated, thāṇḍā thāṇḍā hāoẏā āsitechila,
into śītal sugandha gandhabaher manda manda sañcār (The gentle
motion of cool, fragrant breezes), which possesses considerable
musical quality in its alliteration, rhyme, and assonance,
and whose manda manda echoes Kālidāsa's mandaṃ mandaṃ nudati
pabana (gently blows the breeze) in Meghadūtam.[2]   The onoma-

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1. Betāl Pañcabiṃśati, p.137.   (The quotations from Vidyā-
   sāgar's writings, unless otherwise stated, have been taken
   from Pramathanāth Biśī's edition (1957)).
2. Meghadūtam (pūnameghaḥ), 9.

topoea of the original is retained, if not improved, in
Vidyāsāgar's <u>madhukarerā</u> <u>madhugandhe</u> <u>andha haiẏā</u> <u>gungun dhvani</u>
(The humming of the bees, befuddled with honey-fragrance),
where the touch of music in the lovely phrase <u>madhugandhe</u>
<u>andha</u> (befuddled with honey-fragrance) is Vidyāsāgar's own
rhetorical addition.

A Sanskrit scholar, Vidyāsāgar introduced to the Bengalis
the great poets of Sanskrit, such as Kālidāsa, whose <u>Abhijñāna</u>
<u>Śakuntalam</u> he translated under the title of <u>Śakuntalā</u>, in 1854.
Vidyāsāgar does not translate the original in its entirety.
Certain passages are omitted, as for example the description
of the panic-stricken deer in the first act, (the passage
beginning in Sanskrit <u>grībābhangābhirāmam</u>).   But in the main
Vidyāsāgar is faithful to the original, or rather does his
utmost to be so.   An example is quoted below for comparison.
Śakuntalā is leaving the hermitage for good and going to her
husband, king Duṣmanta.   Kāśyapa, the foster father of
Śakuntalā addresses the trees of the hermitage:

> bho bhoḥ sannihitāstapavanataravaḥ
> pātuṃ na prathamaṃ vyavasyati jalaṃ yuṣmāsvapīteṣu yā
> nādatte priyamaṇḍanāpi bhavatāṃ snehena yā pallavam
> ādye vaḥ kusuma prasūti samaye yasyā bhavatyutsavaḥ

seyaṃ yāti śakuntalā patigṛihaṃ sarvairanujñāyatām.[1]

Vidyāsāgar translated the passage as follows:

he sannihita tarugaṇ! yini tomāder jalasecaṇ nā
kariẏa, kadāca jalpān karitennā; yini, bhuṣaṇpriẏā
haiẏāo, sneha baśataḥ kadāca tomāder pallab bhaṅga
karitennā; tomāder kusum prasabersamaẏ upasthit haile,
yāhār ānander sīmā thākitanā; adya sei śakuntalā
patigṛihe yāitechen, tomrā sakale anumodan kara.

Though the Bengali rendering is faithful, the beauty of the

original, particularly the phrasal music is missing in the

Bengali. However, the sentence is well-constructed as one

long period and has a beauty of its own. It can be said,

incidentally, that Vidyāsāgar's translation of śakuntalā is

still unsurpassed in Bengali. Tagore translated these few

lines in his article Śakuntalā but his translation is very

poor and fails to convey the music of the original.

Vidyāsāgar was on the whole very faithful to his originals,

but at times he created new situations, nearer to the Bengali

heart. Below a passage is quoted from the third act and

compared with the Bengali rendering).

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1. "Listen! Listen! ye neighbouring trees of the penance-grove.
She who never attempts to drink water first, when you have
not drunk, and who, although fond of ornaments, never plucks
a blossom, out of affection for you, whose greatest-holiday
[highest joy] is at the seasons of the first appearance of
your bloom, even that same Śakuntalā now departs to the house
of her husband. Let her be affectionately dismissed by (you)
all." Monier-Williams: Śakuntalā, Oxford, 1876, Act IV,
p.161.

nepathye: cakkabāka bahue. āmantehi sahaᴗaram. ubaṭṭhidā

raaṇī.

śakuntalā.   sambhramaṃ.   porava. asaṃsaaṃ mama sarīra

buttāntobalambhassa ajjā godamī ido ebbo āacchadi

dāba biḍabantarido hohi.

rājā.   thathā.   ityātmānamabṛitya tiṣṭhati

tataḥpraviśati pātrahastā gautamī sakhyau ca

sakhyau.   ido ido ajjā godamī.

gautamī.   Śakuntalāmupetya.

jāde. abilahusandābāiṃ de aṅgāiṃ

Śakuntalā. ajje.   atthi me biseso

gautamī.   imiṇā dabbhodayeṇa nirābādhaṃ ebba de sarīraṃ

bhavissadi.   śiraśi śakuntalāmbhyukṣya.   bacche.

pariṇado diaho.   ehi.   udajaṃ ebba gacchamha.[1]

Vidyāsāgar has considerably expanded this short encounter.

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1. (Behind the scenes) O female Cakravak, bid they mate fare-
   well, night is at hand.
   Śakuntalā (with diffidence) O Paurava! Mother Gautamī is un-
       doubtedly coming to ascertain the state of my health.
       Meanwhile you conceal yourself amongst the boughs.
   King. All right. (He conceals himself)
   (Gautamī enters with a vessel in her hand, accompanied by
    Śakuntalā's friends.)
   Friends. This way, mother Gautami, this way.
   Gautamī. (approaching to Sakuntala) Is the fever of your body
       abated, my child.
   Śakuntalā. Yes, mother. There is a change for the better in me.
   Gautamī. This water and grass, will relieve your body of pain.
           (Sprinkling it on Śakuntala's head). It is evening
           now, my child. Come, let us go to the cottage.
   My translation based on Monier-William's notes in pp. 128-30.

He makes it a more personal conversation.

> Gautamī asked, "my child, I hear you are not well today.
> How are you now? Are you feeling better?"
> Sakuṇtalā replied, "Yes, auntie, I was very sick today,
> but I am much better now."
> Gautamī took some water from her pot and sprinkled over
> Sakunutalā's body and said, "my child! May you have
> good health and live for ever."
> As she did not see either Anasūyā or Priyaṃbadā near the
> grove, she asked, "You are so ill (but) you are left
> alone, dear, nobody is here (to look after you)."
> "No, auntie", I have not been alone" replied Sakuntalā,
> "Anasūyā and Priyaṃbadā are always with me. They have
> just gone to the Mālinī to fetch water."
> "The sun has set, it's evening", said Gautamī, "let us
> go to our cottage".[1]

There is a Bengali quality about Vidyāsāgar's version. It

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1. gautamī ... kahilen, bāchā! śunilām, ājtomār baṛa asukh
hayechila; ekhan keman ācha, kichu upaśam hayeche? Śakuntalā
kahilen, hā pisi! āj baṛa asukh hayechila; ekhan anek bhāla
āchi. takhan gautamī, kamaṇḍalu haite śāntijal laiyā, śak-
untalār sarba śarīre secan kariyā, kahilen, bāchā! sustha
śarīre cirajībinī haye thāka. anantar, latā maṇḍape, ana-
sūyā athabā priyaṃbadā, kāhākeo sannihita nā dekhiyā, kahi-
len, ei asuk, tumi eklā ācha bāchā, keu kāche nāi. Śakuntalā
kahilen, nā pisi! āmi eklā chitāmmā, anasūyā o priyaṃbadā
barābar āmār nikaṭe chila; ei mātra, mālinīte jal ānite
gela. takhan gautami kahilen, bāchā! ār rod nāi, aparhṇa
hayeche, esa kuṭire yāi.
(III Chapter).

is true that in respect of vocabulary it is written in a
Sanskritised style but it is not excessively Sanskritised
and a Bengali reader would be aware of its natural tone.
For instance, bāchā ār rod nāi, aparāhṇa haỹeche esa kuṭire
ỹāi. No Bengali would speak like this. He would not for
instance, use the words aparāhṇa and kuṭir but the short sen-
tences and he use of the familiar epithet bāchā are very
natural in Bengali.

Another important translation by Vidyāsāgar in his
Bhrānti Bilās a prose translation of Shakespeare's "The Comedy
of Errors". It should be remarked that he was one of the
first Bengalis ever to attempt to translate Shakespeare, and
that he remains the most successful ever to do so. The
reading of Shakespeare in the original was and still is
considered to be a necessary mark of any Bengali with pre-
tensions to culture. Though Shakespeare was avidly read
in Bengal in the last century, few but the mediocre dreamt
of translating him, and these left on their translations all
the marks of their mediocrity. Even the one or two more
accomplished writers who made the attempt scarcely met with
success. Dīnabandhu Mitra's adaptation of the "Merry wives
of Windsor", Nabīn Tapasvinī (1863) was once popular, but is
so no more; Hemcandra Bandyopādhyāỹ's translation of the

"Tempest", <u>Nalinī Basanta</u> (1868) was never popular; and
Giriścandra Ghoṣ's translation of "Macbeth", <u>Myākbeth</u> (1892)
is best forgotten. The young Tagore tried his hand at
"Macbeth" too, but the manuscript is lost, except for a few
pages containing the dialogue of the witches. On the whole
the Bengali-versions of Shakespeare's tragedies are an in-
sult to their originals: exotic books retailing alien sit-
uations in unnatural diction; the loftiness of the original
poetry lost in their poor verse. In the main Bengali writers
consider the task of translating Shakespeare impossible.
Vidyāsāgar therefore did well to choose a comedy rather than
a tragedy. His <u>translations</u> is excellent. Bengalis without
any knowledge of English would find no difficulty in under-
standing and enjoying the story, for that is the form
Vidyāsāgar adopted. One example is given below to show
how he wedded the story to its new Bengali settings.

Dromio of Ephesus is looking for his master Antipholus
of Syracuse.

Dromio. Returned so soon! rather approached too late
         The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit;
         The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;
         My mistress made it one upon my cheek;
         She is so hot, because the meat is cold;
         The meat is cold, because you have no stomach:
         You have no stomach, having broke your fast:

But we, that know what 'tis to fast and pray,
Are penitent for your default to-day.[1]

Vidyāsāgar has rightly changed the lines, "The capon burns ...
the bell" because the whole situation is non-Bengali.   The
rest is a very good translation.

> "beṭā prȳ dui prahar haila, āpani e paryanta gṛihe nā
> yāo yāte katrī ṭhākurāṇi atiśay utkaṇṭhita haiẏāchen.
> Anek kṣan āhārsāmagri prastut haiẏā rahiẏāche ebaṃ
> krame śītal haiẏā yāiteche. āhārsāmagrī yata śītal
> haiteche, kartrī ṭhākurāṇi tata uṣṇa haitechen. āhār
> sāmagrī śītal haiteche, kāran āpani gṛihe yān nāi;
> āpni gṛihe yān nāi, kāraṇ āpankār kṣudhā nāi; āpankār
> kṣudhā nāi, kāran āpanī bilakṣan jalayog kariẏāchen;
> kintu āpankār anupasthitir janya āmrā anāhāre mārā
> paṛitechi.

Translations of "mistress" as "katrīṭhākurānī", "meat" as
"āhārsāmagrī" (lit. food) and "broke your fast" as "jalayog
kariẏāchen" are good and very Bengali.   The whole trans-
lation has been completely naturalised in Bengali.   The Euro-
pean names have been replaced by Bengali names even the place
names by fictitious place names like "Hemakuṭ", "Jaẏasthal",
which give the story a mythological air.   The wit of the
dialogues of the original text has in many cases been retained.
A Bengali reader will enjoy the speech of Dromio (Kinkar in

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1. The Comedy of Errors, Act I, Scene II. Lines 43-52.

Bengali version) as much as an English reader does the
original text.   One more passage is quoted below to show
how Vidyāsāgar combines faithfulness to the original with an
ability to transmit it naturally in Bengali.

> I am an ass, indeed - you may prove it by my long ears.
> I have served him from the hour of my nativity to this
> instant, and have nothing at his hands for my service
> but blows.   When I am cold, he heats me with beating:
> when I am warm, he cools me with beating: I am waked
> with it when I sleep, raised with it when I sit, driven
> out of doors with it when I go from home, welcomed
> home with it when I return.

> āmi ye gardabh, tār sandeha ki; gardabh nā haile
> āmār kān lambā haibek kena. janmābadhi prānpaṇe
> īhār paricaryā karitechi; kintu kakhano prahār bhinna
> anya puraskār pāi nāi. śīt bodh haile prahār kariyā
> garam kariyā den; garam bodh haite prahār kariyā śītal
> kariyā den; nidrābeś haile prahār kariyā sajāgar
> kariyā den; basiyā thākile prahār kariyā uṭhāiyā den;
> kono kāje pāṭhāite haile prahār kariyā bāṭi haite bāhir
> kariyā den; kāryasamādhā kariyā bāṭite āsile prahār
> kariyā saṃbardhanā karen.

On the whole the translation is successful and entertaining.
It follows the English very closely and yet is alive in
Bengali; none of the humour is lost, for despite Vidyāsāgar's
modest disclaimer in his preface to the translation, " 'The

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1. The Comedy of Errors, Act IV, Scene IV, lines 43-52.

Comedy of Errors" may be much inferior to Shakespeare's
other plays, as far as its poetry is concerned, but its story
is most amusing.   The Comedy's humourous situations are
handled with superb skill.   One almost chokes with laughter
reading it.   But that skill was unique to Shakespeare.   It
is lacking in this translation, <u>Bhranti Bilas</u>, which conse-
quently is unlikely to prove so entertaining."   Vidyasagar's
Bengali readers accepted it as one of the most entertaining
books in Bengali.

Vidyasagar must rank high as a translator.   He has a
scholar's care for his original which he reproduces with a
high degree of faithfulness.   His translations, however,
are not literal in the sense that they are word for word
accurate.   Where the words are important, Vidyasagar has
attempted to retain them.   Where sentence-structure is im-
portant, he has attempted to reproduce that too.   But very
frequently he penetrates beyond the word to the reproduction
of the spirit and the inner meaning of the original so that
it can mean as much to a Bengali reader as a reader of the
original language.

It has been implied above that the literary qualities of
Vidyasagar's translation from the Hindi, <u>Betal Paichisi</u>, are
higher than those of the original.   He showed the artistic

possibilities of the story and attempted to develop them.
In doing so, he frequently had recourse to his Sanskrit
reading and one notices passages in which descriptions are
enriched by rhetorical devices he has culled from Sanskrit.
His translation of Sakuntalā naturally falls below the
literary quality of the original but it is not without its
own attractions.   Vidyāsāgar was one of the first to realise
the musical qualities of his own language and to attempt to
reproduce them in prose.   His use of rhyme, assonance, and
alliteration have already been noted.   One feature for which
he deserves credit in Sakuntalā as well as in his translation
of the "Comedy of Errors" is his skill in the control of
conversation.   This was new in Bengali literature.   Artis-
tic conversational passages before Vidyāsāgar are few in num-
ber and unconvincing in their quality.   His translation of
Shakespeare is a meritorious performance.   Its style is mid-
way between the Sanskritic and the colloquial.   In his vocab-
ulary he tends to favour tatsama words but in his sentence
length and structure, one feels a definite flavour of speech.
Perhaps the most striking merit of this translation is that
Vidyāsāgar has understood the Shakespearian humour and succ-
eeded in conveying it through his Bengali translation.

The original writings of Vidyāsāgar can be classified

into three groups (i) narrative (ii) expository and (iii) polemic

Sītār Banabās (1860) is Vidyāsāgar's most important narrative.

He started to write a second book on the Rāmāyaṇ theme,

Rāmer Rājyābhiṣek (The Coronation of Rām) in 1869 but left

it unfinished. Sītār Banabās, as the name implies, is born

of the Rāmāyaṇ tradition. The first two chapters are fairly

closely based on Bhavabhuti's Uttarrāmacaritam. This work

is not a translation however. It is a reconstruction of

the story of sītā after her return from Laṅkā.

Sītār Banabās is probably Vidyāsāgar's most widely read

book. Though the main features of the story are known to

every Bengali reader, Vidyāsāgar's version is a good and

gripping story. He has the capacity of a novelist to keep

the action moving to and to hold the reader's interest, from

chapter to chapter. For this reason the book must be re-

garded as important in the early history of the Bengali novel.

For though Sītār Banabās cannot strictly be called a novel,

it has certain of the qualities which were later developed

by and became so popular in Baṅkim Candra. Perhaps it is

in his characterisation that Vidyāsāgar is at his greatest.

In the presentation of Rām and Sītā he departs from the Bengali

tradition which was first established by Kṛittibās in his

Rāmāyaṇ. Kṛittibās' Rām particularly after the defeat of

Rābaṇ has few commendable qualities. A reader feels that he

has quite unnecessarily subjected Sītā to great hardship.
Vidyāsāgar is unable to change the story or to prevent
Sītā's exile but he creates a conflict in the mind of Rām
in which the love of a man and the duty of a king are in
direct opposition.   By doing this so convincingly, he re-
habiliated Rām to the extent that he as well as Sītā are
objects of the reader's sympathy.   Both of them are caught
in the net of circumstances from which there is no escape.
The pathos of Sītā's situation is well portrayed.   The minor
characters, in particular Lakṣaman and Kauśalyā, are con-
vincingly handled and one cannot but feel that Sītār Banabās
would have been a thrilling story, had the reader not known
in advance, what was going to happen.   In this respect
Vidyāsāgar belongs to the past rather than to the future.
Had his gift of story-telling been used in the creation of a
new story, he might quite easily have been Bengali's first
novelist.   As it is, he must be placed in the old tradition
which drew its story material from Sanskrit literature.

His language and style are examined in detail later
but the outstanding feature of Vidyāsāgar's use of Bengali
as a prose medium is that inspite of its high Sanskritic con-
tent in respect of vocabulary, it is still readable and easily
understood.   He does not attempt to employ Sanskrit words

which are likely to be beyond the comprehension of the
reader who is not a Sanskrit scholar.   A second feature
is his skill in the handling of conversation, a very necessary
asset in novel writing.   The following two extracts illustrate
Vidyāsāgar's power;   one notices his control of that diffi-
cult emotion, pathos, and the variety of his description.

> "lakṣman, bāṣpākul locane o śokākul bacane, ārye!
> āmār aparādh mārjanā kariben, añjalibandha pūrbbak
> ei kathā baliẏā, punarāẏ praṇām o pradakṣin kariẏā
> naukāẏ ārohan karilen. sitā abicalita naẏane nirīkṣan
> kariẏā rahilen.   naukā alpakṣanei bhāgīrathīr aparpāre
> samlagna haila. lakṣman tīre uttirṇa hailen; ebam,
> kiẏat kṣaṇ nispanda naẏane jānakīr nirīkṣan kariẏā,
> aśrubisarjjan karite karite rathe ārohan karilen."

> [Laksmaṇa with streaming eyes, choked voice and joined
> hands said, 'Lady, pardon my offence', then having again
> bowed low, going round her and bowing, he entered the
> boat. Sītā remained with fixed eyes gazing on the boat;
> in a short time it had recrossed the river. Laksamaṇa
> remained a short time on the other aide looking back at
> Sītā, then, dashing the tears from his eyes, he got into
> the chariot.]

> Sītā, nitānta ākulcitte, eicintā karitechen, ehi an
> samaẏe kuś o lab tadīẏa kuṭīre prabiṣṭa haiẏā balila,
> mā! maharṣi balilen, kalya āmādigake rājā rāmcandrer
> yajña daŕsanārthe laiẏā yāiben. ye lok nimantranpatra
> āniẏāchila, āmrā kautūhalābiṣṭa haiẏā, tāhār nikaṭe
> giẏā rājā rāmcandrer biṣaẏe kata kathā jijñāsā karilām.

dekhilām, rāja rāmcandrer sakali alaukik kāṇḍa. kintu
mā! ek biṣaẏe āmrāẏār par nai mohita o camatkṛita
haiẏāchi. kathāẏ kathāẏ suniℓam, rājā prajārañjaner
anurodhe nija preẏasī mahiṣīke nirbāsita kariẏāchen.
takhan āmrā jijñāsā kariℓām, tabe bujhi rājā punarāẏ
dārparigraha kariẏāchen, natubā yajñeranuṣṭhān kāle
sahadharminī ke haibek. se balila, yajña samādhānerjanya
baśiṣṭhadeb punarāẏ dār parigraher nimitte anek anurodh
kariẏāchilen. kintu rājā tāhāte kanaokrame sammata
han nāi; sītār hiraṇmaẏī pratikṛiti nimmita haiẏāche,
se pratikṛiti sahadharmiṇīr kārya nirbbāha karibek.
dekha mā! emam mahāpuruṣ konao kāle bhūmaṇḍale
janmagrahaṇ karen nāi.

[Greatly distressed, Sita was ruminating thus, when Kuś
and Lab entered her cottage and said, "The sage says
he will take us to see King Rāmcandra's ceremony to-
morrow, dear. Out of curiosity we approached the person
who brought the invitations and questioned him avidly
regarding King Rāmcandra. We see the whole extra-
ordinary affair about King Rāmcandra now. But, darling!
we have been most exceedingly astonished by one thing.
It came out in the course of conversation that it was
at his subjects' reCquest that King Rāmcandra banished
his beloved queen. So then we asked, "Then we presume
the king has married again, otherwise who'll take his
wife's part ꜱat the ceremony?" He said, "Basiṣṭhadeb
has beseeched the king to remarry for the ceremony, but
the king flatly refuses. A golden image of Sītā has been
created and that image will perform the wife's part.
Don't you see my dear! never was such a man born into
the woɪld before!]

Dutt rightly said, "whether we consider the grace and elegance of the style, the skilfulness of the narration, or the tenderness and pathos which pervade the work, we must rank it among the noblest productions in Bengali prose."[1]

Vidyāsāgar's reconstruction of the Rām theme and in particular his rehabilatation of Rām's character and avoidance of all miracles were taken up by later writers, in particular by Giriś candra Ghoṣ in his play sītār banabās (1881), Drijendralāl Rāy in his play sīta (1902) and the famous actor Śiśir kumār Bhāduri[2] whose performance in the role of Rām is well known.

Vidyasāgar's second group of narratives are reminiscenses. Prabhābatī Sambhāṣaṇ (1863) is an elegy in prose on the death of a child. Prabhābatī was the daughter of a friend. She died at the age of three. She had been Vidyāsāgar's one consolation in a bleak period of despondency, when he drew back from society in pain at the ingratitude of friends in particular and the selfishness of people in general. Her death extinguished that last candle of consolation and Vidyāsāgar wrote Prabhābati Sambhāṣaṇ in an effort to rekindle the flame of her memory, crowding his page with incident and detail, lest he himself forgets. The whole piece throbs with emotion and provides a valuable insight into the mind of

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1. Dutt, R.C. Literature of Bengal, op.cit. p.177.
2. Śiśirkumār played the role of Rām in a play he himself produced, called Sītā, written by Yogeścandra Caudhurī in 1924. It was an immense stage success in Calcutta, and was the first Bengali play to be produced outside India, in New York.

Vidyāsāgar.   The following extract speaks volumes:

batse! āmi ye tomāy̆ āntarik bhālabāsitām, tāhā
tumi bilakṣan jāna. ār tumi ye āmāy̆ āntarik
bhālabāsite, tāhā āmi bilakṣaṇ jāni. āmi, tomāy̆
adhik kṣan nā dekhile, yārpar nāi asukhī o utkaṇṭhita
haitām.   tumio, āmāy̆ adhik kṣaṇ nā dekhite pāile,
yārparnāi asukhī o utkaṇṭhita haite, ebaṃ, āmi kothāy̆
giy̆āchi, kakhan āsiba, āsite eta bilamba haiteche
kena, anukṣan, ei anusandhān karite. ekṣane, eta
din tomāy̆ dekhite nā pāiy̆ā, āmi ati biṣam asukhe
kālharaṇ karitechi. kintu, tumi etadin āmāy̆ nā
dekhiy̆ā, ki bhābe kālyāpan karitecha, tāhā jānite
pāritechinā. batse! yadio tumi, nitānta nirmam
haiy̆ā, e janᶜmer mata, antarhita haiy̆ācha, ebaṃ
āmār nimitta ākulcitta haitecha kinā, jānite pāri-
techinā, ār hay̆ta, eta dine, āmāy̆ sampurṇa rūpe bis-
mṛita haiy̆ācha; kintu, āmi tomāy̆, kasmin kāleo,
bismṛita haite pāriba nā. tomār adbhut manohar
mūrti, ciradiner nimitta, āmār cittapaṭe citrita thā-
kibek.

[You know very well, that I loved you with all my heart,
my child. And I know very well you loved me the same.
I felt unhappy and anxious in the extremes if I didn't
see you for long. And you felt the same, when you didn't
see me, and you would be constantly inquiring, where had
I gone, when would I be back, why was I late in coming.
I'm terribly unhappy now, at not seeing you for such a
long time. But I can't imagine how you are getting on,
without seeing me.   Though you may have been so cruel
as to disappear forever, and though I don't know, whether

you miss me or not, (after all you may have completely
forgotten me by now), nevertheless I can never forget
you.   You remain painted on my heart forever, a vision
of enchantment and wonder.]

Vidyāsāgar started writing his autobiography, <u>Vidyāsāgar Carit</u>
in 1891 but only two chapters were completed.   These chapters
given an account of Vidyāsāgar's forefathers, his village,
his parents and his own early life.   They read like an
interesting story.

The expository works of Vidyāsāgar include his two
books on widow remarriage,[1] and his two on polygamy.[2]   Apart
from these books, he also wrote a critical essay on Sanskrit
literature.[3]   In the main Vidyāsāgar is guided by facts and
figures to the adoption of an attitude of utter objectivity
in his works on widow remarriage and polygamy.   But his motive
derives not from logic, but emotion, which speaks out in
eloquence in the concluding passage of <u>Bidhabā Bibāha</u> (II part)
thus:

tomarā mane kara, patibiẏog haibei, strīẏātir śarīr
pāṣāṇmaẏ haiẏā yāẏ; duḥkha ār duḥkha baliẏā bodh haẏnā,

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1. <u>bidhabābibāha pracalita haoẏā ucit kinā</u> (Is Widow marriage
   to be admitted or not), 1st part 1855, 2nd part 1855.
2. <u>bahubibāha rahita haoẏā ucit kinā</u> (Is polygamy to be banned
   or not), 1st part 1871, II part 1873.
3. <u>Saṃskrita bhāsā o samskrita sāhitya bisayak prastāb</u>, (An essay
   on the Sanskrit language and Sanskrit literature), 1853.

yantranā ār yantranā baliẏā bodh haẏnā; durjaẏ
ripubargasakal ekkāle nirmul haiẏā yāẏ. kintu, tomāder
ei siddhānta ye nitanta, bhrāntimŭlak, pade pade tāhār
udāharạn prāpta haitecha. bhābiẏā dekha, ei anabadhān
doṣe saṃsār tarur ki biṣaynaẏ phal bhog karitecha.
hāẏ ki partitāper biṣaẏ! ye deśer puruṣ jātir daẏā
nāi, dharmādharma nāi, nyāẏ anyāẏ bodh nāi, hitāhit
bodh nāi, sadsadbibecạnā nāi, kebal laukik rakṣāi
pradhān karma o param dharma ār yena sedeśe hatabhāgya
abalājāti janmagrahan nā kare.

You think, the instant a husband dies, his wife's body
turns to stone and becomes insensitive to pain and
suffering and absolutely free from unsubduable passion.
But on every side you have examples to show that these
conclusions are completely erroneous. Consider the in-
sidious, social consequences this disregard has upon
yourself! How infinitely regrettable! Where men have
no pity, no morality, no sense of right or wróng, of
good or bad, not even an inkling of good or evil, where
the preservation of social appearances is the only re-
ligious reality, into that country heaven forbid, that
any hapless woman ever be born!

Vidyāsāgar wrote five polemical essays![1] Two of them, under
the pseudonym bhāipo (nephew), were directed against Tārānāth
Tarkabācaspati, an opponent of Vidyāsāgar, whom he addressed
as khuṛo (uncle). His vein was amusing in the extreme and

1. ati alpa haila, (1873), ābār ati alpa haila (1873), braja-
   bilās (1884) bidhabābibāha o yaśohar hindu dharmasaṃrakṣiṇī
   sabha (1884) ratnaparikṣa (1886).

his language extremely colloquial and racy, descending

occasionally to slang. Hara prasād Śāstrī writes of his

polemical essays, "The citizens of Calcutta rocked with

laughter, when they read these two books of his ... khuṛo

responded in Sanskrit, which no one understood, but Vidyāsāgar

answered in Bengali, which explains why everybody enjoyed

his books." Vidyāsāgar's polemical writings present a

considerable contrast to those of Rāmmohan. Rāmmohan's

high serious tone and dry theological content were not con-

trived to give enjoyment. His style, too, though admirably

lucid, was monotonous and slow. Rāmmohan was at pains to

present his case with fairness, logic and objectivity. On

the other hand, Vidyāsāgar's tone was light, his style collo-

quial, his attitude mocking. He was out to satirise his

opponents' inconsistencies in thought and deed. This intent

to ridicule with sarcastic humour and caustic satire dis-

tinguishes him most from Rāmmohan, and assures him of a place

as satirist in the literature of Bengal.

III

Vidyāsāgar wrote in both the colloquial and literary

styles of Bengali, the former being confined to his polemical

writings. These two styles can be distinguished by a
statistical analysis of vocabulary, as has already been
pointed out earlier. Colloquial Bengali has fewer tatsama
and more tadbhava words than literary Bengali, makes use of
such Perso-Arabic words as are in current usage, which the
latter rejects, and also makes greater use of case inflections
and post-positions.

On the whole Vidyāsāgar preferred the literary style,
possibly because of his scholarly attachment to Sanskrit,
but, one suspects, more probably because of his keen aware-
ness of that the musical potentialities of the "literary"
vocabulary were greather than the "colloquial". Numerous
examples are available, but let one suffice; the use of
the tatsama rājasva in preference to the Persian word khājnā
in the following sentence:

tapasvīrā rājasva dennā (asetics do not pay taxes)
rājasva is both euphomically and culturally preferable in this
context: it creates a pattern of assonance and blends with
the Hindu setting. The word khājnā, though synonymous, sounds
discordant, both musically and emotionally here. It is a
feature of his style that like Debendranāth and Akṣaykumār
before him wherever possible Vidyāsāgar avoided Perso-Arabic
words, except in his satirical essays, where he sought laughter,

not beauty.

The swing of the pendulam of his preference to and fro between <u>tatsama</u> and <u>tadbhava</u> and Perso-Arabic with the change of his material and mood is clearly seen in the following analysis:[1]

	I				II	
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Total no. of words.[2]	146	125	209	124	142	105
% of ts.	63.6	64.8	53.11	56.45	23.23	15.23
% of tb.	31.5	33.6	41.14	38.7	67.5	55.23
% of Persian	0	0	0	0	7.05	26.66

A similar swing in his preferences between his literary and colloquial style is perceptible in regard to his use of compounds (<u>samāsa</u>) which constitutes a further important feature of his style as a whole, since compounds are more frequent in Vidyasāgar than in any of his predecessors.   In the

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1. The following passages have been analysed here and they will be called A, B, C, D, E, F, respectively.   A. <u>Betāl Pañcabiṃśati</u>, Chap.I, 1st and 2nd paragraphs, p.127; B. <u>Śakuntala</u>, Chap. I, 1st and 2nd paragraphs, p.65; C. <u>sītārbanabās</u>, Chap. IV, 1st and 2nd paragraph, p.21. D. <u>Vidyāsāgar carit</u>, Chap. II, 1st and 2nd paragraph, p.330;   E. <u>Ati alpa haila</u>, Chap. I. 2nd paragraph, p.343;   F. <u>Ābār ati alpa haila</u>, sec. III, p.372.
2. Proper names have been counted but have been excluded in computing the percentage of different kinds of words.

passages analysed in the above chart, the respective

statistical count of compounds is as follows:

16, 13, 14, 8 / 2 and 5

Certain forms, which are historically compounds e.g. <u>cirajībī</u>,

<u>cirasukhī</u>, <u>akāraṇ</u> have not been counted as compounds in the

above analysis, since most Bengalis would regard them not as

<u>Samāsa</u>, but <u>tatsamas</u>.

Vidyāsāgar from time to time and for particular purposes

used long compounds i.e. compounds of three or more components.

But the majority of his compounds are of 2 components only, as

the following chart demonstrates. The passages selected are

typical and representative of the books, from which they were

extracted:[1]

	Betāl[2]	Sakuntalā	Banabās[3]	Bhrāntibilās
No. of compounds	5	7	14	6
No. of 2 word compound	5	7	14	5
No. of 3 word compounds	0	0	0	1

1. 1st paragraph of Chap. I of each of these books has been considered.
2. Abbreviated form of <u>Betāl Pañcabiṃśati</u>.
3. Abbreviated form of <u>Sītar banabās</u>.

It is noticed that the number of compounds in the translations from Hindi and English, Betāl and Bhrānti Bilās respectively, is less than in those from Sanskrit. The following words taken from the Chapter I of Banabās are typical examples of Vidyāsāgar's longer compounds.

(i) prajārañjan kārya (subject-pleasing-work)

(ii) tārakānidhan kāle (Taraka-killing-at the time of)

(iii) Sañcaramānjaladharpaṭal (moving-clouds-colour)

(iv) mānab samāgam śūnya (man-habitation-void of)

It is clear that his use of compounds Vidyāsāgar was largely guided by a consideration for euphony and rhythm. The components of his compounds are frequently linked by assonance or alliteration. For instance, karapallab (palm-leaves), ghana ghaṭā (cloud-decoration), ātapa klānta (heat-tired), nabamālikā kusuma komalā (new-flower-soft), ālabāl jal secan (trees-water-sprinkling). The repetition of /l/ and /k/ in the last two examples has a pleasant musical quality. Some of his longer compounds are also very pleasing to the ear. For instance

(i) janasthān madhyabarti prasraban giri

      Janasthān- inside   Prasraban Mountain

      The mount Prasrabab in the heart of Janasthan

(ii) [ei girir] śikhardeś ākāśpathe satata sañcaramān

jaladharmaṇḍalīr yoge ...

[this mountain's] crest-place sky-way ever-moving

cloud-group's ...

[This mountain's] crest (is by) the touch of the

ever moving clouds in the heaven ...

In some cases it is possible that Vidyāsāgar's prose is in-
formed by a greater consideration for euphony than semantics.
His vocabulary, both of single and of compound words, contrives
to produce music which forms part of the total "meaning". Like
Debendranāth before him, he makes use of the open syllable
more frequently than the closed, to give his sentences ease
of movement.   It is probable that in many cases, the inherent
vowel, which is not pronounced in colloquial Bengali, was
pronounced in some of his compound words, thus facilitating
the flow of his syllables, unobstructed by conjunct characters.

IV

The influence of Sanskrit on Vidyāsāgar's vocabulary
can also be observed in his phrase-structures.   His phrases
may be examined under two heads.   (i) Nominal and (ii) Verbal.
Vidyāsāgar makes a more lavish use of adjectives than
any of his predecessors.   His adjectives are extremely evocative

and add much to his descriptions. Most of his adjective-
noun phrases consist of _tatsama_ words. Many of the collo-
cations are new. The following are a few examples of the
nominal phrases of Vidyāsāgar:

(A) <u>Adjective-Noun patterns</u>

(i) <u>hriday-nandan nandan</u> (heart's delight son). This phrase
means a son who is delight of his father's heart. The
consecutive use of _nandan_ as both a verbal and a common
noun is interesting.

(ii) <u>śītal sugandha gandha baha</u> (cool sweet-scented breeze).
The alliteration of /s/ and repetition of _gandha_ make
this phrase pleasing to the Bengali ear.

(iii) <u>lajjā namra mukh</u> (modesty-gentle face). This adjectival
compound <u>lajjā namra</u> presents a vivid description of a
face, made gentle by modesty.

(iv) <u>lalita mālati mālā</u> (beautiful malati- garland). The
softness and the beauty of the garland of <u>Mālati</u> flowers
are suggested in the alliterations of /l/, /t/, and /m/.

(v) <u>birahakriśā malinbeśā Śakuntalā</u> (separation - thin sad-
appearance Śakuntalā). This phrase describes Śakuntalā
thin with yearning for her husband and careless of her
appearance. The first adjectival compound evoke a vivid
picture of a love-lorn lady. In Indian literature the

very word biraha is so rich in associations that it charges its context with deep emotional connotations.

Vidyāsāgar is the first Bengali prose writer to exploit the values of association in words. His adjectives are very suggestive. His phrases of the noun-noun pattern are also indicative of this quality in his choice of words:

(i) pipāsār śānti (thirst's peace) means 'quenching of the thirst'. It is a new but telling collocation. Tagore used a synonymous phrase, triṣnār śānti in one of his songs.

(ii) kuṭire māṭir mayūr (in cottage/earthen/peacock). This is beautiful phrasing. It is interesting to note that Vidyāsāgar uses a commonplace expression māṭir (of earth) in preference to the Sanskrit expression mṛinmay, because of its rhyming possibility with kuṭir (cottage). In the very next sentence, however, Vidyāsāgar uses the form mṛinmay (of clay).

(iii) aśrujal (tear-water). This expression is very poetic and this particular phrase is often used by Tagore. This construction is wrong according to the prescriptions of grammar; aśru means 'tears', jal (water), is, therefore, superfluous, which Vidyāsāgar of course knew. Nevertheless the poetic quality of the compound appealed to him.

(iv) <u>nayane nayane saṅgati</u> (in eye/in eye/meeting) "meeting
of (the lovers') eyes". <u>nayan</u> (eye) is a very poetic
word. There are many Sanskrit synonyms of this word
but Vidyāsāgar perhaps used particular one for its poetic
quality. His use of the locative case here (<u>nayane</u>
<u>nayane</u>) is idiomatic and in line with modern usage.

(B) <u>Verbal phrase</u>

Sen observes that Vidyāsāgar used more compound than
single verbs. By 'compound verbs' Sen means the now very
familiar combination of a Sanskrit verbal noun or past parti-
ciple with the Bengali verbs <u>karā</u> (to do) and <u>haoyā</u>. (to be,
to become) e.g. <u>gaman karā</u> (to do a going) i.e. to go and
<u>prāpta haoyā</u> (to become possessed of) i.e. "to get". By now
this was an established usage. Examples can be found in the
works of Carey and his colleagues. It is the frequency of the
use of this type of verbal phrase in Vidyāsāgar's writing to
which attention needs to be drawn. The following are a few
examples.

(i) <u>bhraman karite</u> (walking - to do)

(ii) <u>pradān karilen</u> (giving - did)

(iii) <u>yāpan karā</u> (living - to do)

(iv) <u>bakṣan karilen</u> (eating - did)

All these verbal phrases could have been replaced by single verbal forms e.g. beṛāite, dilen, kāṭāno, khāilen respectively. There is no doubt that this practice gives a Sanskrit flavour to Vidyāsāgar's writing, and that it was the result of a deliberate choice. Occasionally, though not very frequently, he uses archaic verbal forms of nāmadhātū type, a practice, which was fairly common in medieval Bengali poetry, but which has been little followed by prose writers e.g. prabeśiẏā (entering) from the noun prabeś (entrance), jijñāsilen (asked) from the noun jijñāsā (asking).

It is interesting to note with reference to the verbal phrase of the type of gaman karā that the structure has been continued, so as to make possible the adoption of new terms, e.g. ṭeliphon karā (to telephone), ṭikiṭ karā (to book tickets) etc., but in these instances the first components are not Sanskrit verbal nouns, but English common nouns.

V

As regards both word-order and sentence-structure, Vidyāsāgar is no innovator. The practices, which he adopted, are found in the better writings of Mṛityuñjaẏ and were re-peated by later writers, including Akṣaẏ kumār Datta and Debendranāth. Vidyāsagar's importance lies in the fact that

what he wrote was accepted as the established norm of both order and structure.

1. <u>Relative position of S & O /Adv. Adj. V.</u>

It has been pointed out that Rāmrām Basu experienced difficulty with regard to this aspect of order but this experience remained virtually unique. The S.O.V. order regularly adopted by Mṛityuñjay became the norm. By the time of Vidyāsāgar two orders had become established.

(a) S. O /ADV. ADJ. V.

(b) O/ Adv. Adj. S.V.

Vidyāsāgar used both. For example

(a) (i) <u>rājkumār</u>   <u>aśva haite</u>   <u>abatīrṇa hailen</u>

      S.   Adv.Adj.   V.

(The prince got down from the horse)

(ii) <u>brāhman</u> ... <u>tapsyā</u> <u>karitechilen</u>

     S.   O.   V.

(The Brahmin was practising penance)

(b) (i) <u>bārānasī nagarīte</u> ... <u>ek... narapati chilen</u>

In the city of Baranasi there lived a king.

(ii) <u>dhārā nagare</u> <u>mahābal nāme</u> ... <u>narapti chilen</u>

    Adv. Adj.   Adv. Adj.   S.   V.

In the city of Dhara, there lived a king called
Mahābal.

It will be noted that though the position of the verb is
fixed, Bengali usage permits a certain alternation in the
position of subject— Object / adverbial adjunct. For
instance example (a) (i) above the order a$\acute{s}$va haite n$\bar{a}$jkum$\bar{a}$r
would have been equally acceptable.

These patterns of word-order are preserved, even when
the adverbial adjunct is an adverbial phrase.   For example,

likhan sam$\bar{a}$pta kari$\acute{y}\bar{a}$ $\acute{s}$akuntal$\bar{a}$ sakh$\bar{i}$digak$\boldsymbol{e}$ kahilen

Having finished the letter Sakuntal$\bar{a}$ to the friends said
Here too, the possibility of alternation persists:-

Ratn$\bar{a}$bat$\bar{i}$ k$\bar{u}$pe patita hai$\acute{y}\bar{a}$ ... rodan karite l$\bar{a}$gila

Ratn$\bar{a}$bat:k$\bar{u}$pe patita hai in a well   began to weep.

2. Vidy$\bar{a}$s$\bar{a}$gar in his placing of clauses does not show
any indication of English influence of the type, noted in
some of the sentences of R$\bar{a}$mr$\bar{a}$m Basu and R$\bar{a}$mmohan R$\bar{a}\acute{y}$.   In
regard to the arrangement of clauses within the sentence, he
follows the practice of Ak$\d{s}$a$\acute{y}$kum$\bar{a}$r and Debendran$\bar{a}$th.

(a) subordinate clause + main clause

yadi tumi bh$\bar{u}$t bhab$\boldsymbol{i}$$\d{s}$yat bartam$\bar{a}$n samud$\bar{a}\acute{y}$ bali$t$e p$\bar{a}$r$\boldsymbol{a}$,
$\bar{a}$m$\bar{a}$r yogya pati koth$\bar{a}\acute{y}$ $\bar{a}$chen bala.

If you can tell about past, present and future, tell
me where is the man worthy to be my husband.

(ii) <u>arddhpath upasthata haile ... Betāl Vikramādityake-</u>

<u>jijñāsila</u>

when they were halfway there, Betal asked Vikramaditya

(b) <u>Correlative and position of relative clause</u>

(i) <u>yāhā kahitecha tāhā sampurṇa yathārtha</u>

What you aay is quite true.

(ii) <u>yini</u> tomāder jalsecan/kariyā kadāca jalpān karitennā

... <u>sei</u> śakuntalā

who never used to drink before watering you, that

Sakumtalā.

(iii) <u>ye</u> bāranārī ... pratijñā kariyāgiyāchilā <u>se</u> ...āsiteche

which harlot promised and went , she is coming.

The use of correlative illustrated above is so frequent

in modern Bengali that one tends not to notice the frequencey

of its use in Vidyāsāgar's work.   There is no doubt, however,

that it is a definite feature of his sentence-structure and

that it gives a modern appearance to much of what he wrote.

3. <u>The use of 'and' words ebam /o /ār</u>

The excessive use of <u>and</u> words in the works of earlier

writers has already been commented on.   Note has also been

made of the excessive use of the participle in -iyā used by

Mrityuñjay to enable him to avoid <u>and</u> words.   Rāmmohan con-

demned the excess use of perticiples.   An examination of

Vidyāsāgar's writing in this respect indicates that he
approached this subject with an open mind. He was prepared
to use and words and participles in addition to other expedients.
The result was that he uses them all with moderation.

The following sentence shows he binds his sentence
together by using both participle and an and word.

(i) kumārī krame krame dṛiṣṭi pather bāhirbhūta haile,
rājkumār biraha bedanāy atiśay asthir hailen ebaṃ
sarbādhikāri kumārer nikaṭe giyā, lajjānamra muhke
kahite lāgilen.

As the princess gradually receded from sight, the
prince became restless with the pangs of separations.
He went to the minister's son and with his bowed
modestly began to tell him.

(ii) ei bākya śraban gocar kariyā rājkumār apār
ānanda sāgore magna hailen ebaṃ byāgra haiyā
bārambār kahite lāgilen ...

Listening to this the prince became overjoyed and he
was very eager and began to say repeatedly ...

This variation in practice made it easier for a writer to con-
struct long sentences without tedious repetition. This type
of compound sentence is fairly frequent in Vidyāsāgar and has
been extentively copied by later writers. Junction of clauses

by the use of <u>and</u> is now more frequent also in spoken Bengali
than it was a geration or two ago.   Thus the clause and word-
junction by <u>and</u> which in the first place was probably taken
over from English and Persian has become fully naturalised
in Bengali and few readers today would criticise the examples
given above as illustrating the influence of foreign syntax.

4. Indirect Speech

The influence of English usage on the language of the
newspaper has already been commented on.[1]   Sentences of the
type "It is reported that "... were frequent in newspaper
Bengali.   It is interesting to note that as far as I have
been able to ascertain not a single example of this usage
occurs in Vidyāsāgar.   He uses a construction which is
common in modern spoken Bengali namely the reporting of
speech by quotations.   His structure may be analysed as
follows:

> subject of main verb + quoted utterance + participle
> from a verb of "saying" (usually bale / baliẏā) + main
> verb.

Two examples will suffice

> (i) <u>Mādhabya</u>, <u>ki kathā bala</u>, <u>baliẏā</u> ... <u>daṇḍāẏamān hailen</u>
>
>   S.   quoted utterance   main verb
>
>   Mādhabya, tell what is the matter, saying   stood
>
>   Madhabya stood and said, "Tell me, what's the matter".

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1. <u>Supra</u> : Chapter VII. Sec. IV. pp. 263-68

(ii) rājā, bhāla āmi calilām, yena punarāy dekhā hay

       ei baliyā ... śakuntalāke nirīkṣan karite lāgilen.

     The king said, "well, goodbye then, see you again"

       and gazed at Śakuntalā.

The existence of this type of sentence-structure in speech

suggests that it might have been the only indigeneous form

of reported speech.   The excigencies of news production have

to large extent popularised the English pattern but they

have not displaced the other.

VI

    Vidyāsāgar's sentences vary in length within fairly

narrow limits. Very short sentences i.e. fewer than 10

words are rare whereas very long sentences of the type used

by Mrityuñjay are seldom, if ever, to be found. First *three* para-

of Betāl Pañcabinśati

graphs have been analysed in the following graph.
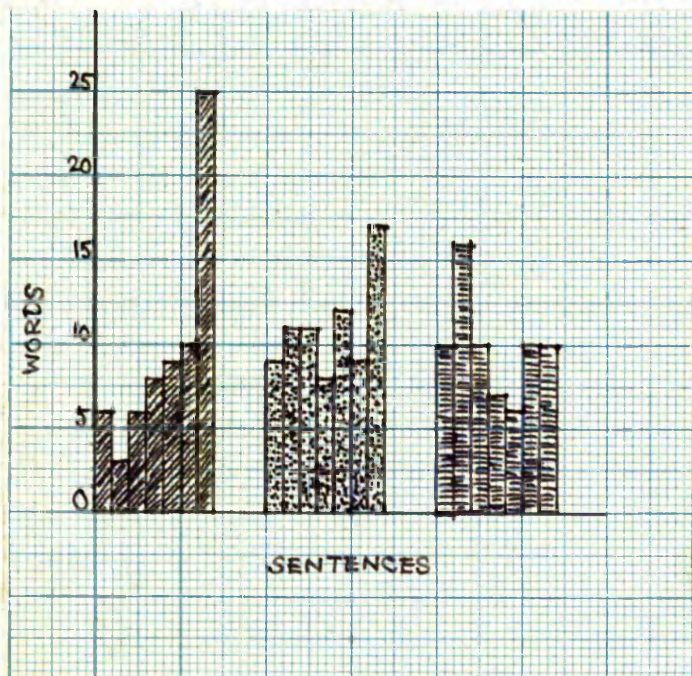
The first paragraph shows a wide range of sentence length than the other two... But even here the longest sentence has only 25 words. Vidyāsāgar is clearly aware of over-all paragraph rhythm and one forms the impression that a sense of a rhythmic pattern in a paragraph has much to do with the length of his sentences. A sentence to him is a rhythmic whole. A repetition of short sentences which can produce a staccato effect is avoided and long cumbersome sentences, in which the rhythm can be lost, are also very rare. The sense of music which dictated Vidyāsāgar's choice of vocabulary also played a part in the structure and the length of his sentences.

VII

Vidyāsāgar is popularly held to be the first Bengali writer to employ successfully the English punctuation system in the composition of Bengali prose. This notion is false. Partial use of the English punctuation system had been made in Bengali prose as early as 1818 and as has been pointed earlier Rāmmohan had also made extensive use of some English punctuation marks: the comma, semicolon, and question-mark. During the period from 1818 to 1850, English missionaries

had been using all the English punctuation marks, the full-
stop included, in their Bengali newspapers, and also in
some books. A few Bengali writers too had adopted the whole
English punctuation system, with the single exception of the
full-stop. Akṣaykumār Datta and Debendranāth Tagore had also
used English punctuation, before Vidyāsāgar. One might
argue, in fact, that Vidyāsāgar was slow to adopt English
punctuation! His two editions of Betāl Pañcabiṃśati for
example, which appeared in 1847 and 1850, are both devoid
of it. Thus it is false to claim him as the first Bengali
to adopt sucessfully western punctuation to Bengali.

Vidyāsāgar seems at first to have been either unware
of the need for elaborate punctuation or indifferent to it.
However, as we shall see, his attitude changed with the passage
of time. Below the same passage will be quoted from the 1st,
2nd and 10th editions of Betal Pañcabiṃaśati.

1st edition 1847

> tini... upasthit hailen ebaṃ dekhilen ai sarasīrtīre
> haṃsa bak cakrabāk sāras prabhṛiti nānābidha jalacar
> pakṣigan kalarab kariteche... madhukarerā madhugandhe
> andha haiyā gun 2 dvani karata itastataḥ bhramaṇ kariteche.
> tīrasthita tarugan abhinaba pallab phal kusum samuhe
> suśobhita āche. tāhādiger chāyā ati snigdha o suśītal
> biśeṣataḥ śītal sugandha gandhabaher manda 2 Sañcar
> dvārā param ramanīya haiyāche. tathāy śrānta o ātap
> tāpita byakti prabeś mātrei gataklam hay. (p.16).

2nd edition 1850   No change

10th edition 1876/77.

> tini upasthit hailen;   dekhilen, ai sarobarer nirmal
> salile haṃsa bak carkrabāk sāras prabhṛiti nānābidha
> jalacar bihaṅgamagan keli kariteche;   madhukarerā, andha
> haiẏā, gun 2 dhvani karata, itastataḥ bhramaṇ kariteche;
> tīrasthita tarugan abhinaba pattab, phal, kusum samūhe
> suśobhita rahiẏāche;   tāhādiger chāẏā ati snigdha;
> biśeṣṭa, śītal sugandha gandhabaher manda 2 sañcār dvārā
> param ramanīẏa haiẏāche;   tathāẏ prabeśmātra, śrānta o
> ātap tāpita byāktir klānti dūr haẏ.   (p.15).

The contrast between the first two editions and the tenth

is striking.   The first two are devoid of English punctuation,

but in the tenth one notices an excessive use of commas and

semicolons.   In the interval between 1847 and 1876, Vidyāsāgar's

sense of rhetoric would appear to have expanded to embrace

one more aspect of composition, rhythm, or more probably one

might conclude that in the intervening time the desire had

arisen in him to impose on his readers to his own sense of

rhythm in the delivery of his sentences, for in his tenth

edition, Vidyāsāgar seems to be almost over-anxious to impress

upon his readers the precise location of the pauses in his

sentences, by pinpointing them to a nicety.   "Punctuation",

writes Read, "should always be subordinate to the general

sense of rhythm, but may also itself determine rhythm.   But

this use of punctuation is artificial and rare; it is the
mark of the conscious artist, of Donne and Browne, of Milton
and Ruskin, and of Pater."[1]   Viewed in this light, Vidyāsāgar
would seem to be one of the first, "Conscious artists" of
Bengali prose, in that he used punctuation "artificially"
to "determine rhythm".

VIII

With regard to Bengali prose style generally, the ele-
ments of litenary prose i.e. prose of literary quality, have
been shown to have been established by the writers of the
Tattvabodhinī.   Vidyāsāgar added little that was new. His
importance lies in this fact that his writing confirmed the
stylistic norms that Akṣay kumār Datta and Debendranāth
Tagore first laid down in their own practice.   Yates writing
about this time stated that there were two styles of Bengali
prose, vulgar and pedantic.[2]   It would seem that he was using
the word vulgar in its older connotation to mean popular and
that by 'vulgar style' he intends what we have called colloquial
style.   The pedantic style of which he speaks appears to be

1. Read, H: op.cit., p.49.
2. Yates, W: Introduction to the Bengali Language, Vol. I,
    Calcutta, 1847.

our <u>Sanskritised</u> style. Yates definition of this style of
prose is that it is a style which is "imperfectly understood
by all those who have not studied Sanskrit: its faults lie
chiefly in the introduction of compound words when they are
not needed and in the choice of such compounds as consist
of words not in common use."[1]   Yates reference to <u>Book style</u>[2]
is interesting.   He says that it is becoming current in
conversation from which statement one must conclude that
certain Bengalis were beginning to model their speech upon a
certain style of writing. Yate's <u>Book style</u>, therefore,
may have a relationship with the intermediate style we have
termed '<u>Literary Bengali</u>'.

Vidyāsāgar's importance lies in that he steered a middle
course. He wrote in <u>Literary Bengali</u> but his ability to
combine the sonorousness of <u>tatsama</u> words with the ease and
fluency of colloquial speech distinguishes him from his pre-
decessors. His prose has two important qualities: (i) clarity,
which explains why certain Sanskrit scholars criticised it, for
being "so easily comprehensible", and (ii) sweetness, which
Bankim Candra extolled in the following words: "Neither be-
fore nor after Vidyāsāgar did anyone write Bengali prose of such

1. Yates, W: <u>op.cit.</u>, p.121.
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.122.

sweetness."[1]   To this fluency, ease, sonorousness, sweetness,
and clarity must be added one more element before our concep-
tion of Vidyāsāgar's prose is complete, namely music. The
addition of this "other harmony of prose" renders him worthy
of the title bestowed upon him by Tagore of "the first artist
of Bengali prose".[2]

One thing Vidyāsāgar failed to do, however, was to bring
fresh themes to a Bengali public which fast growing impatient
with the old ones.   He himself had exploited to the full the
old themes of mythology with the deep, instinctive under-
standing and skill of the consummate artist.   But associated
with the Sanskrit College and from beneath his influence there
grew up a whole group of writers to continue the exploitation
of mythological themes. They trod the beaten track. Their
epic themes and Indian romances left unmoved "the educated
middle class", who were, as one critic writes,[3] "getting tired
of the same old thing so oft repeated.one thinks, not without
sympathy, of the tired sigh of Hippolyta, "I am weary of this
moon, would he would change."

However, even during Vidyāsāgar's life-time a new move-

1. Baṅkim Racanābalī (Bāṅglā Sāhitye Pyārīcād Mitra) op.cit.,
   p.862.
2. Tagore, R.N. Cāritra Pūjā (1904), new edition 1945, Calcutta,
   p.10.
3. Clark, T.W. Bengali Prose Fiction up to Baṁkim Candra (un-
   published).

ment was set in motion by a novel called <u>Alālārer Gharer Dulāl</u>
(1858) written by Pyārīcād Mitra, who was educated at the
Hindu College. This book was welcomed with great exultation
by educated Bengalis, not because it was a great book, or
even because it was a good book, but rather because of its
theme, which was new and drawn fresh from contemporary life.
The book's full significance was clearly appreciated by
Baṅkim Candra; he has indicated how it revealed to Bengal
the needlessness of ransacking the literature of English and
Sanskrit to obtain fresh themes, when contemporary life stood
rich in them, ready for the picking.

Thus Vidyāsāgar had brought Bengali prose to the thre-
shold of a new age, whose beginnings he witnessed, but in
whose acitivites he took no part. He cannot therefore be
deemed to have raised the curtain on a new age of prose, but
only to have brought it down on the close of the old. The
efforts of Fort William's scholar, of Rāmmohan, and of the
journalists culminated in him. With him the first phase of
Bengali prose composition ends. From him begins the second,
when the writers of Bengal discovered "a brave new world"
in the endless unfolding of the new theme, the life of common
man.

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