At once a poet, a novelist and a prose writer, Annadasankar Roy (1904-2002) is an outstanding illustration of literary versatility in the 20th century Bengali literature. The enduring charm in his prose writings rests on his varied interests and experimental vigour. A prose corpus which explores both the common place and wider human sympathics, the familiar and the exotic undoubtedly deserves a special niche in modern Bengali literature.

Annadasankar's prose observes issues so vital in capturing the moods of our time. These issues spring to a fresh energy as the writer explores modern consciousness, often in a relation to historical conditions and events that he thinks significant. His prose writings include critical understanding of eastern and western literature, art, literary theory, sociology, economics, polity, theology, culture, nationalism, sub-nationalism, language, India's division, communalism, education, the Bengal Renaissance, humanism, Gandhism etc. Such a wide corpus reflects Annadasankar's critical sensibility, which redefines, on occasions, the conventional perspectives on several issues he explores.

Besides stray evaluations being made in a scattered way in a few short essays, and books, no systematic research has been done on him even after hundred years of his birth. So the purpose of the dissertation is to make a comprehensive evaluation of this great
genious and his contribution to Bengali literature. The title of the dissertation is given as "LITERARY ESSAYS OF ANNADASANKAR ROY: A CRITICAL STUDY." This for the convenience of discussion the dissertation has been divided into seven chapters.

Chapter- I serves the purpose of introduction. In this chapter a detailed discussion of the life of this rare genius almost unknown to the common people has been made. A short bio-data of Annadasankar Roy has been added to reflect his literary and socio-cultural surroundings. The influence of the cultural heritage of India, the Indian Renaissance, the western education, the internationalism, the Nationalist Movement, the Independence Movement, Rabindranath, Pramatha Choudhury and others on him has been duly considered. His general qualities as writer, chiefly as essayist and literary critic, has also determined. Where necessary, he has been compared with his eminent colleagues in Bengali literature.

Chapter- II has been named as Annadasankar Roy on literature. It deals with the evaluation of the essays of Annadasankar on literary theory and literary discussions. Annadasankar, having acquired mastery over the oriental and western literary theories has given new dimensions to the Bengali literary theory. We have endeavoured to evaluate Annadasankar's essays on literary principles and theories in this chapter. We have observed that alongside his essay writing, he also gave deep thought to various aspects of literary principles and gave expression to those concepts which were nourished by his intellect. Further, we shed light on various aspects of literatures of our country and foreign lands. In this respect he was, on
one hand influenced by rhetoric and phonetics of the Sanskrit literature and, on the other hand, the literary principles of the western literature helped enrich his mental world. There is no denying the fact that although he often deliberated on literary theories and principles in many of his essays he could not add anything new or original to this deliberation. The impression of priginality that Jibanananda Das, Buddhadev Bose, Sudhindranath Dutta, Nalinikanta Gupta and others among his contemporaries left in their deliberations on principles of literature was not shown by Annadasankar, and hence he has not been able to secure a permanent place alongside them. In matters of contribution to deliberation on principles of literature in the context of the 20th century, Annadasankar's efforts lack luster.

In Chapter- III We have attempted an evalution of Annadasankar's essays on western literature. The title of the chapter is Annadasankar Roy on Western Literature. Annadasankar, through his discussion on the great writers of world literature and their works has created his mental attitude. Among these discussion many figure merely as subjects of introduction or acquaintance. Discussion like these do not allow us to enter into the explore undiscovered and unknown areas in their works. Of course, discussion on Goethe is an exception. Annadasankar here has become successful in bringing to light the sublime intellect of the great German poet. Again in his discussion on Tolstoy, Annadasankar is second to none. In fact, influence of Tolstoy in developing the mental sphere of Annadasankar is the greatest. It is for this very reason that his thought, contemplation and deliberation on Tolstoy are marked by a wonderful vision as his manner of discussions on Gandhi and Rabindranath was marked. No
other writer in Bengali has popularised Tolstoy as Annadasankar has done, and in this respect his contribution is undeniable.

Chapter- IV has been captioned as Annadasankar Roy on Tagore Literature. This chapter deals with the essays of Annadasankar written in evaluation of Tagore literature. His views on Tagore literature has been compared with the principal views on Tagore literature, that are prevalent else where and his originality has been estimated. His contribution in historical, philosophical, rhetorical aesthetic and comparative criticism of Tagore literature has been verified.

Annadasankar was one of the intellectuals who, nourished in Tagorean concept and milieu in Bengal accepted the philosophy of Rabindranath and endeavoured to express it from the beginning to the end. He, everywhere during his entire literary life, referred to Rabindranath and while discussing the great poet became very articulate and eloquent. As a matter of fact, Annadasankar was a votary of Rabindranath. His mental sphere was filled with the ideas and the concepts of Rabindranath. Added to it were the ideals of Gandhi, Tolstoy, Romain Rolland etc. Annadasankar wrote a number of essays on topics covering Tagore's personality, his literary works, his philosophy, the essayist's personal meetings with him and his exchange of letters with the great man etc., but we have observed in our dissertation that Annadasankar, more often that not, shed light on oft-repeated, hackneyed and conventional topics concerning Rabindranath. Annadasankar almost forgot that many aspects of Tagore, still remained unexplored.
Chapter V is entitled *Annadasankar Roy on Bengali Literature*, where the essayist discussed his criticism on Bengali literature. With great sincerity and respect he has evaluated the famous as well as relatively less famous poets and writers of Bengal. He made forays into works of other Bengali litterateurs including his distinguished contemporaries and initiated discussion on them. It is also true that historical value of the essays written by him on these distinguished personalities of Bengal will certainly be acknowledged in days to come, but it is a fact that major portions of these discussions and reflections are confined only to the essayist’s mention of his personal acquaintances, meetings, exchanges of letters with them.

The Sixth Chapter is entitled *The Prose Style of Annadasankar Roy*. In this chapter, a discussion of the writer’s prose style, his narrative power, his skill in the use of works, his skill in creating an inseparable combination of word and meaning has been considered. Apart from this, this chapter discussed the writer’s language in relation to his thoughts, analytical mode and moods, set in the comparative context of Bengali prose literature. The lion’s share of Annadasankar near hundred years long life was devoted to the service of Bengali language. Till his death his facile pen was engaged at creating a prose literature which helped greatly enriching Bengali prose literature. As a matter of fact, in the evolution of Bengali prose style Annadasankar’s role was wonderful. His effort was to resolve difficult issues in his discussions with the help of argumentation and easily intelligible sentences. His voice, though sharp, was not aggressive. He would speak from his conviction and with a sense of certainty. His essays are characterised by a wonderful searching light which comes from
his perspicacity and clearsightedness. In short, one does not fail to feel the presence of a life marked by intellect and scholarship behind all his creations.

It is with an alert mind that Annadasankar made his entry into the vast world of creating Bengali prose. We have noticed his success in ever new experiment of using words and construction of sentences. It is Annadasankar who is the successor of Pramatha Choudhury in matters of creating colloquial and current prose. He is second to none in the use of prose as vehicle of appropriate emotion. In fact, Annadasankar's contribution to the evolution and history of the Bengali prose art is great.

Chapter- VII forms the conclusion of the whole paper. Annadasankar's Bengali essays written on literature, western literature, Rabindranath Tagore, Bengali literature and his prose style as depicted in his essays have been comprehensively highlighted from the critical point of view.

Thereafter we have enlisted some of those essays of Annadasankar Roy which have not been referred to research work or subjects which do not come under pervue of the present topic.

Amader Madhyayug, Janasankhya, Hindu-Musalman, Chenashona, Bastabbadi, Paneroi August, Swadhinata Dibaser Prasna, Bichhinna Habar Dabi, Barnabidvesh, Dharma O Rajniti, Shikh Prasanga, Adhunik Lankakanda, Pandit Barjita Desh, Kashmir Prasangay, Confederation, Khrishtanusaran, Lalon Smaran, Sat Kahan,
Shaktir Katha, Naribarsa, Hiroshima, Purba Pakistan, Joy Bangla, Bharat, Bangladesh O Pakistan, Natun Rastrayer Kathamo, etc.

We have chosen Annadasankar's creative works in terms of literature only. But those subjects which are not directly associated with literature or which we have eschewed as unnecessary have been carefully kept aside.

We have adopted both the oriental and western methods of criticism in our evaluation of Annadasankar's works. At the same time the Bengalee writers and at places western writers have also been taken into consideration. A comparative estimate is attempted to determine Annadasankar's distinction. We have given the chapterwise introduction to the beginning of the chapter in conformity to the matter and at the end of each chapter the whole of the discussion has been appropriately summed up and then considered Annadasankar's contributions to that matter from literary and historical point of view.

The chapter-wise introduction in conformity with the subject has been given, and at the end of each chapter the whole discussion has been appropriately summed up.

The methodology followed in the investigation is a combination of inductive, deductive, historical and comparative methods. We have adopted both The Oriental and Western methods of criticism in the treatment of the subject. Detailed notes have been incorporated in the chapter-end references where necessary and an extensive bibliography has been provided in the end.
It was not possible to find reference to the publication dates of some of the works cited. Therefore, these could not be arranged chronologically. But this distracts little from the formulations in the work. The excerpts from the original Bengali texts and criticism have been presented in Bengali so as to retain the original resonance and spirit. Some Sanskrit quotations have also been used in Bengali transliteration. Titles of Bengali works have been retained as they are.

Places of the publications, publication dates and names of the publishers of the books have been consistently used in the chapter-end Notes and References.

In course of collecting primary and secondary materials, I cited quite a few libraries such as the National Library, Little Magazine Centre, Kolkata, K.K. Handique Central Library and Bengali Departmental Library, Gauhati University, the Cotton College Library and the District Library, Guwahati. I also liberally used the Bongaigaon College Library. I am indebted to all these librarians and extend my gratitude to them without whose assistance my paper might not have been as it stands now. I would like to make special mention of Sri Parag Dasgupta, ex-HOD, English of Pandu College, Guwahati, for his invaluable guidance as and when I required. I shall fail the duty if I do not mention my colleagues of the English and Bengali departments, Bongaigaon College. Extended their support in different forms to further my research work. Mention must be maid of my family- my husband and my only daughter Sharmistha- whose inspiration made my work appear all too easy. I would also like to gratefully acknowledge typographical
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