In the annals of world culture and literature, one of the basic contributions of the Indian rhetoricians is *Alamkara Sastra* or the art of rhetorics written in Sanskrit. Right from the time of Bharatacarya to that of Panditaraja Jagannatha of the 17th century, many rhetoricians have enriched this very branch of knowledge by virtue of their intellectual and intuitive thoughts and analysis about poetics. Since the dawn of the modern era classified into two stages in consideration of the changing centuries, the first part entails the nineteenth, chiefly based on Sanskrit works inspired by Western literary criticism and is confined to the theories about *Dhvani* and *Rasa*. The second one includes a thoughtful and rich discussion in twentieth century, which attempts at synthesis between the traditional and the new, an endeavour at acceptance or rejection. The venture made in the twentieth century has been divided into four divisions by some literary critics: the first includes the translation form, Sanskrit works; the second consists of the chronology judgment; the third reveals new discussion on Indian literary estimation on the background of psychology, sociology, etc. to determine the values of the tales and legends and the fourth is the new dimension of discussion.

So far as the translation of Sanskrit poetics is concerned, Bengali is lagging behind Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi; nonetheless, the achievements of Bengali top in all other respects. The geniuses of Bengal have left behind the proof of excellence of the highest form in the flourishing of modern literature based especially on Sanskrit poetics. There have so far been no systemic research works with reference to the continuity, skill and evaluation of the
discussion of Sanskrit poetics in the Bengali language. With this aim in view we have taken up the topic *An Interpretation of Sanskrit Poetics in Bengali Literature* in the present work. We did not only dwell at length on all the 'translations' of Sanskrit poetics in Bengali but also endeavour to evaluate and analyse the new and newer processes and aphorisms that have originated form the deliberation or interpretation of art and literature in the light of Sanskrit poetics. The books that deal with the new aphorism or source based on different translation works in Bengali and commentaries thereof in the light of Sanskrit rhetoric have been taken as the primary source of discussion in an attempt to give an immaculate or smooth interpretation to the ongoing research work. In this context, the core books in Sanskrit have definitely and unequivocally given equal importance in course of pointing out the justification of the translation of Sanskrit rhetoric into Bengali. For the convenience of discourse, the research work, as a whole, has been divided into seven chapters.

Chapter - I serves the purpose of introduction. A brief history of ontology of Sanskrit literature has been discussed in this chapter. Here the doctrines that had been established postulating upon *Rasavada, Dhvanivada*, and in addition to these, *riti, alamkara, guna, vakrokti* and *aucitya* etc. of literature have been included. Apart from this, here we have focused on the process of evolution that has taken place, during the periods between the ancient and the modern age, in the poetical thoughts of the Bengali poets in the realm of poetry composed in Bengali, one of the Neo-Indo Aryan Languages.

The Bengali translation of the original Sanskrit *alamkara sastras* and its appropriateness, the extent of success on the part of the translators of these work etc. are the topics that have found place in the second chapter of this research paper. This chapter has been titled as *Translation of Sanskrit Poetics in Bengali: History and Evaluation*. The series of discussions in this chapter
have been arranged in chronological order of the works of translation. Of course, no stone has been left unturned to array the versatile talent of the Bengali translators.

The elaborate studies of the books composed with the sole objective of evaluating, interpreting and analyzing Sanskrit poetics in the Bengali language have been taken up as the core subject matter of our dissertation. *Commentaries on Sanskrit Poetics in Bengali: An Evaluation* is the heading preferred and offered to this chapter. The assessment of the Bengali scholars and its veracity concerning the controversies which prevail relating to the biographical details, the time and place of appearance of the Sanskrit rhetoricians etc. have been discussed in this chapter. The scholastic deliberation in the Bengali language about the views and opinions of the Sanskrit rhetoricians have also been evaluated in this chapter. On most occasions, dependence on the lengthy introductions which Bengali scholars had provided to their translated versions of Sanskrit *alamkara sastras* may not escape one’s notice.

*Creative Application of Sanskrit Poetics in Bengali* is the ‘title’ given to the fourth chapter. The poetical thought which had its inception in course of the profound discussion about the various viewpoints of Sanskrit poetics and which opened up newer and newer angles of poetic evaluation of art and literature form the theme of this chapter in view of its evaluation. The new theories which were postulated as a result of the assessment and analysis of Sanskrit rhetoric in the light of Western poetics, psychology and physiology etc. have here been dealt with. Besides, the evaluation of the new commentaries, which were written in Bengali on the basis of the Sanskrit terms, namely, *pratibha, dhvani, karunarasa, kavyapurusa, silpa* etc. has been included in this chapter. In this context no pains have been spared to discuss
the essays of literary art written by Rabindranath, Abanindranath, Nalini Kanta Gupta etc. The justification and success of this kind of discussion has aptly been evaluated in this chapter.

The Vaisnava rhetoricians, such as Srirupa Goswami, Kavikarnapura, Madhusudan Saraswati and the like, being influenced by the Bhakti movement of Caitanyadev, introduced a new rasasasstra by presenting bhakti as a new and reparate rasa in the spiritual world. The title added to this section is Vaisnava Poetics in Bengali: An Evaluation. Though these rhetoricians were the leading writers of Sanskrit literature in particular, yet in the middle age of Bengali literature, from the days of Krishnadas Kaviraj, many distinguished poets had introduced Vaisnava poetics in Bengali literature. In this chapter the achievements of the translators in the translation of bhakti-centric alamkara sasstra in the Bengali language along with the brief history of the Bhaktirasa have been evaluated. In the modern Bengali language, literary stalwarts like Harekrishna Mukhopadhyay, Radhagovinda Nath etc. have initiated philosophical discussion on bhakti based on relevant information. In this chapter the usefulness of the aforesaid discussion has been specially considered.

There is no dearth of the use of verities of rhetoric's in the Sanskrit literature and language and following them series of invaluable analytical discourses have also come up. The discussion of the sort in keeping with their acquaintance, their definitions, illustrations and annotations in the Bengali language, and especially the comparative examination of and judgment about the Western rhetoric, has been presented in the sixth chapter. The title to this chapter is Sanskrit Rhetorics in Bengali: An Evaluation.
Chapter VII forms the conclusion of the whole paper in which the ongoing discussion detailing the interpretation of Sanskrit Rhetoric in Bengali literature has been comprehensively highlighted.

The chapter-wise introduction in conformity with the matter has been given, and at the end of each chapter the whole of the 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 the Western methods of criticism in our evaluation of the topic of research. Detailed reference to the facts in support of the discussion and comments has been mentioned in the back-notes and an extensive bibliography has also been incorporated at the end.

It was not possible to find out the time and date of the first publications of some of the works from any source. Therefore, these could not be arranged chronologically. But this, I think, does not do any harm to the evaluation. The extracts from the Bengali writings used in the body of the paper have been rendered into English. The Sanskrit quotations as referred to in this chapter have not been allowed to lose their original pronunciation, and the examples from Bengali literature, or tatsama words used in Bengali have been written in keeping with Bengali pronunciation. The lists of transliteration and abbreviations have been appended at the very beginning of the dissertation. The names of books, the terms and the quotations other than English have also been inserted and used respectively in bold italics, and italics. This has been done in view of the uninterrupted reading of the paper as well as of the bulk of it. The same fear has led us to simplify the word-for-word translation of some parts and to use such words carrying real ideas. The titles of Bengali poems and essays are also kept as they are. Certain terminological words for which no
appropriate English synonyms have been found are kept intact without changing the language.

We have desisted from discussing some rare books, which could not be procured in spite of best efforts. The names of these books have been mentioned in Appendix – I.

The places of publications, the dates and the names of the publishing agencies of the books that are mentioned in the back-notes have not been given in order to avoid repetition. However, it is there in the bibliography. The name of the place of publication of the Bengali books brought out from Kolkata has not been used; but the names of places of those published from elsewhere are duly mentioned.

In the process of collecting materials, I had to visit the National Library, Kolkata; Sanskrit College Library, Kolkata, during the summer vacation, 2002. Besides, I had had frequent visits to K.K. Handique Central Library, Gauhati University; Cotton College Library and Handique Girls’ College Library, both located in Guwahati, I extend my gratitude to all the Librarians because they granted me liberty to make use of the library books as I like and also helped me in many other ways. I am indebted to the respected Prof. Sri Tarit Ranjan Sengupta, M.A., Ex. Head, Department of English, Pragjyotish College, Guwahati, for the invaluable help he has rendered to me. Further, I owe a lot to my father Sri Bimal Chandra Mallik, a Retd. Higher Secondary School teacher, to my mother Smt. Lila Mallik, a working Higher Secondary teacher and to my husband Sri Ankur Jyoti Bhuyan and my brother Dr. Saikat Mallik but for whose loving care and inspiration, mental support and active co-operation this much-coveted venture might have been an absurdity. Also, it would simply be a denial of the truth on my part if I forget to make the mention of Sri Hemangan Kumar and Sri Debanga Kumar, Jalukbari, Guwahati who took pains to prepare
the typed copies of the thesis. In the dissertation I have drawn materials at large from various books and I duly acknowledge herein my indebtedness by mentioning the titles of the books and the names of their authors as well in the back notes.

Last but not the least in the course is my research guide and respected teacher, Dr. Amalendu Chakrabarty, M.A. (Double); Ph.D., Reader, Department of Bengali, Gauhati University, whose most valuable advice, proper guidance, magnanimous help, never-to-be-forgotten sympathy and untiring suggestions have, above all, ensured this project to see the light of the day.

(SANTASREE MALLIK)
Research Scholar
Department of Bengali,
Gauhati University