The last three decades of the 19th Century witnessed the splendid flowering of a new Spiritual Renaissance. A series of creative individuals emerged from the ranks of Hindu Society to respond to the combined challenge of Christian religious ideas and of modern Western rationalist and utilitarian thought. The establishment of law and order under British administration provided the Hindus an unprecedented opportunity to improve their position vis-a-vis their former jealous orthodox and bigoted rulers, the Muslims. While the latter (the Muslims) remained resentful (and to a certain extent distrusted by) the new conquerors, educated Hindus entered the service of the Christian power in growing numbers. Some Hindus became Christians, others clung stubbornly to orthodoxy, while a third group tried to combine the best features of both religions.

Rammohan Roy appeared as a pioneer in the field of religions reawakening of India by waging a war on two points—defending Hinduism against the criticisms of the missionaries and challenging the orthodox to abandon its excrescences. The more deeply the later champions of Hinduism were imbued by English education with a humanitarian outlook, the more keenly sensitive they became when faced with the missionaries' charge that Hinduism was a pagan and idolatrous religion, laden with barbarous customs. Further, the first impact of Western civilization had a telling effect on the educated community of India. The spread of English education and Western way of life made them glibly and thoughtlessly imitate an alien culture and way of life unsuited to Indian soil. Therefore, in order to
defend Hinduism and save Indian community from total conversion to Christianity, the religious thinkers of the country had to reform their religion. The establishment of the Brahmo Samaj, the untiring efforts of Debendranath Tagore, Keshub Chunder Sen and Swami Pavananda, to name only a distinguished few, — all were meant for the purpose.

Amid the hubbub of these self-conscious efforts to check the advance of Christian influence, Hindu Society suddenly discovered in its midst a genuine saint and mystic — Ramakrishna Paramahansa. His simple devotion to the traditional concepts and deities of his faith proved a more effective force than all the oratory of his predecessors. He opened the eyes of Indians, who had for a time been almost blinded by the glare of western civilization. He meant no turning to the west but still paved the way for the Indian intellectual to take the best that the west had to give him, without giving up the spiritual heritage of his forefathers.
Swami Vivekananda was a dynamic counterpart of his master, Ramkrishna Paramahansa. The contact with Ramkrishna had changed the course of his life. His meteoric career as missionary of Vedantic Hinduism to the West began in 1893 when he addressed the First World Parliament of Religions at Chicago. After four years of lecturing in America and England he returned to India a national hero and took up the task of regenerating his fellow-countrymen. He literally burned himself out in their service, dedicating the Ramakrishna Mission to both social work and religious education, and rousing young men with his fiery speeches to devote themselves to uplifting the poor and starving millions of India. He tried to infuse into the new generation a sense of pride in India's past, of faith in India's future.

India's continuous encounter with the West steadily aroused a consciousness of the past and a quest for knowing and realising its proper place in the modern world. The increasing penetration of Western knowledge and way of life posed a challenge to the newly enlightened elite and the response gradually took the form of a passionate consciousness of the distinctness of the motherland. Vivekananda's religious writings are meant to arouse this consciousness among the people of India. He turned to the English Language for the purpose of presenting Vedantic thought and missionary exhortation. To Vivekananda religion was not a matter to believe blindly. "To believe blindly is to degenerate the human soul. Be an atheist if you want, but do not believe in anything unquestioningly. Why degrade the soul to the level of animals? ....... Stand up and reason out, having no blind faith. Religion is a question of being and becoming, not of
believing. This is religion and when you have attained to that you have religion. Before that you are no better than the animals" (1).

Vivekananda always wrote or spoke effortlessly, fired by the circumstances of the moment, and with such intensity of feeling that he could hardly find the time to refine his sentences or to look after the stylistic qualities. The words came in like a flood and carried with them the native energy and impetuosity of his mind and his feeling for the common people. As he writes:

"If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed punya bhumi (holy land), to be the land to which all souls on this earth must come to account for Karma, the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, the land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, towards generosity, towards purity, towards calmness, above all, the land of introspection and spirituality, — it is India. This is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went into any other country, the same India whose influx of spirituality is represented, as it were, on the material plane, by rolling rivers like oceans, where the eternal Himalayas,

(1) Vivekananda's complete works: Vol. 4. (pp. 216).
rising tier above tier with their snow-caps, look as it were into the very mysteries of heaven. Here is the same India whose soil has been trodden by the feet of the greatest sages that ever lived. Here first sprang up inquiries into the nature of man, and into the internal world. Here first arose the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the existence of a supervising God, an immanent God in nature and in man, and here the highest ideals of religion and philosophy have attained their culminating points ..........

The passage shows the glorification of the motherland. The style is plain but not without spontaneity. Sentences are long but not periodic in type. Here religious devotion to the motherland makes the writing passionately forceful.

Again, Vivekananda's article on "The Birth of Religion", written during his first visit to America in answer to questions put by a Western disciple, will show his unsophisticated Indian way of expression of a typically spiritual subject:

"The beautiful flowers of the forest with their many-coloured petals, nodding their heads, jumping, leaping, playing with every breeze, the beautiful birds with their gorgeous plumage,

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(2) The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda: (4th edition)
Advaita Ashrama,
Mayavati. (pp. 105 Vol. III).
their sweet songs echoing through every forest glade — they were there yesterday, my solace, my companions, and today they are gone — Where? My playmates, the companions of my joys and pastime — they also are gone — Where? Those that nursed me when I was a child, who all through their lives had but one thought for me — they also are gone. Everyone, everything is gone, is going, and will go. Where do they go? This was the question that pressed for an answer in the mind of the primitive man. "Why so? You may ask," did he not see everything decomposed, reduced to dust before him? Why should he have troubled his head at all about where they went?"

To the primitive man everything is living in the first place, and to him death in the sense of annihilation has no meaning at all. People come to him, go away, and come again. Sometimes they go away and do not come. Therefore in the most ancient language of the world death is always expressed by some sort of going. This is the beginning of religion. Thus the primitive man was searching everywhere for a solution of his difficulty — where do they all go?

There is the morning sun radiant in his glory, bringing light and warmth and joy to a
sleeping world. Slowly he travels and, alas he also disappears, down, down below! But the next day he appears again—glorious, beautiful! And there is the Lotus—that wonderful flower in the Nile, the Indus, and the Tigris, the birth-places of civilization—opening in the morning as the solar rays strike its closed petals and with the waning sun shutting up again .......... The sun and the Lotus are, therefore, the chief symbols in the most ancient religions. Why these symbols?—because abstract thought, whatever that may be, when expressed, is bound to come clad in visible, tangible, gross garments. This is the law. The idea of the passing out as not out of existence but in it, had to be expressed only as a change, a momentary transformation .......... " (5).

This extract of Vivekananda's article is an example of lucid and simple style. The theme of the article could have been expressed in a flamboyant style yet the noticeable part of it is the writer's deliberate simplicity in style. Besides a religious preacher Vivekananda was a poet and from the beginning up to the end of the article we get his poetically emotional bent of mind working conspicuously with the analytical ,

(3) The Complete works of Swami Vivekananda :
Pub. by: Swami Chidatmananda,
President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora,
Vivekananda's own life was Ramkrishna himself in action. Not only in Swamiji's explicit utterances, but implicitly all through his Complete Work Sri Ramkrishna is present, for the mind of the disciple was not other than that of the Master. The heart and soul of Vivekananda's religious teaching was the message of his beloved master. In his series of lectures entitled Practical Vedanta, delivered in London in 1896, Vivekananda set forth the teachings of his master. The central point of his message was that God is within man, that in his inmost being, man is God:

"......... Do you not remember what the Bible says: "If you cannot love your brother whom you have seen how can you love God whom you have not seen?". If you cannot see God in the human face, how can you see Him in the clouds, or in images made of dull, dead matter, or in mere fictitious stores of your bran? I shall call you religious from the day you begin to see God in men and women and then you will understand what is meant by turning the left cheek to the man who strikes you on the right.

As our human relationships can thus be made divine so our relationship with God may take any of these forms and we can look upon Him as our father or mother or friend or beloved. Calling God Mother is a higher idea than calling Him Father, and to call him Friend is still
higher, but the highest is to regard Him as the beloved. You may remember, perhaps, the old Persian story, of how a lover came and knocked at the door of the beloved and was asked: "Who are you?" He answered: "It is I" and there was no response. A second time he came, and exclaimed: "I am here", but the door was not opened. The third time he came, and the voice asked from inside: "Who is there?" He replied: "I am thyself, my beloved", and the door opened. So is the relation between God and ourselves. He is in everything. He is everything. Every man and woman is the palpable, blissful, living God. Who says God is unknown? Who says he is to be searched after? We have found God eternally. We have been living in Him eternally. He is eternally known, eternally worshipped.

The passage is an example of a palpably homely style, without affectation, and chiefly remarkable for the choice and profusion of common words and expressions.

Again, Vivekananda developed the idea, put forth by Keshub Chunder Sen, that India should take practical knowledge from Europe, and in exchange should teach religious wisdom to the world. As he writes:

"........... what avails it if you have power
over the whole of the world, if you have mastered every atom in the universe? That will not make you happy unless you have the power of happiness in yourself, until you have conquered yourself. Man is born to conquer Nature, it is true, but the Occidental means by 'Nature' only the physical or external Nature. It is true that external Nature is majestic, with its mountains, and oceans, and rivers, and with the infinite powers and varieties. Yet, there is a more majestic internal nature of man, higher than the sun, moon, and the stars, higher than this earth of ours, higher than the physical universe, transcending these little lives of ours; and it affords another field of study. There the Orientals excel, just as the Occidentals excel in the other. Therefore, it is fitting that, whenever there is a spiritual adjustment, it should come from the Orient. It is also fitting that when the Oriental wants to learn about machine-making, he should sit at the feet of the Occidental and learn from him. When the Occident wants to learn about the spirit, about God, about the soul, about the meaning and the mystery of this universe, he must sit at the feet of
The passage is another example of Vivekananda's simple style. He states the religious hollowness of the Occident as plainly as he asserts the claim of Orient's religious superiority. Here he is neither abstruse nor acrobatic in style. Words flow easily creating an air of reality. The passage has something of the 'easy persuasive voice' that Vivekananda aimed at.

Vivekananda's chief merit as a religious prose-writer lies in the simple way of expressing complex Vedantic philosophy; and thus he brought religion from the hereditary control of the Brahmin-class to the open field of Indian as well as European masses. The most palpable manifestation of Vivekananda's teachings in the West is shown in the growing demand for Vedantic literature and the frequent use of Sanskrit terms by people from whom one would least expect to hear them. For example, Atman, Purusha, Prakriti, Moksha and similar expression had acquired full-citizenship and names of Shankaracharya and Ramanuja became as familiar as those of Huxley and Spencer. In fact, he gave a 'special turn' (***) to the English language so that it can be easily understood by the commonest man or woman. As he writes:

"........ This is a world of good and evil. Wherever there is good, evil follows, but

(4) ibid., Vol. iv (pp. 151 - 152).

(***) By 'special turn', I mean, Vivekananda's attention to 'simple style' while writing for or speaking to the people. To him religion meant exposition of truth — highest truth; and highest truths are always simple. His religious preachings were not for the class but for the mass — which brought the necessary democratic approach in his writings and thus made his religious prose-style — simple, forceful, and vigorous.
beyond and behind all these manifestations, all these contradictions, the Vedata finds out that unity. It says, "Give up what is evil and give up what is good" what remains then? Behind good and evil stands something which is yours, the real you, beyond every evil, and beyond every good too, and it is that which is manifesting itself as good and bad. Know that first, and then alone you will be a true optimist, and not before; for then you will be able to control everything. Control these manifestations and you will be at liberty to manifest the real "you". First be master of yourself, stand up and be free, go beyond the pale of these laws, for these laws do not absolutely govern you, they are only part of your being. First find out that you are not the slave of nature, infinite as you may think it, is only finite, a drop in the ocean, and your soul is the ocean; you are beyond the stars, the sun, and the moon. They are like mere bubbles compared to your infinite being. Know that, and you will control both good and evil. Then alone the whole vision will change and you will stand up and say, "How beautiful is good and
how wonderful is evil! ............. " (o). The passage is another example of Vivekananda's clear and simple style. The language as usual with him, is free from ambiguity. A concentrated reading of the passage at once inspires the reader, makes him feel at ease with the manner of expression and a divine contentment pervades his whole mind.

To Vivekananda religion was the inspirer of nationalism, and India's spirituality was the means to conquer the West:

"This is the great ideal before us, and every one must be ready for it — the conquest of the whole world by India — nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it. Let foreigners come and flood the land with their armies, never mind. Up, India, and conquer the world ............. with your spirituality! Aye, as has been declared on this soil first, love must conquer hatred, hatred cannot conquer itself. Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies when they attempt to conquer armies only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the West. Slowly they are finding out that what they want is spirituality to preserve them as nations. They are waiting for it, they are eager for it.

Where is the supply to come from? Where are the men ready to go out to every country in the world with the messages of the great sages of India? Where are the men who are ready to sacrifice everything so that this message shall reach every corner of the World? Such heroic souls are wanted to help the spread of truth. Such heroic workers are wanted to go abroad and help to disseminate the great truths of the Vedanta. The world wants it; without it the world will be destroyed. The soul of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst tomorrow, go to pieces tomorrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite. They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work so that India's spiritual ideas may penetrate deep into the West ............ " (6).

The language of the passage is inspiring and full of verve and action. The sentences follow one another in quick succession creating a spontaneous feeling of self-confidence in the mind of the reader. The interrogative sentences show the writer's effort to inspire the people to embrace the life-giving energy of religious devotion and to become active in establishing India's superior spirituality.

(6) Complete works: Vol. III (pp. 276 - 77).
Scores of passages can be quoted from Vivekananda's writings to show his simple, clear, lucid and vigorous style. For example, (he writes on the Vedanta Philosophy):

"........ It is feeling that is the life, the strength, the vitality, without which no amount of intellectual activity can reach God. Intellect is like limbs without the power of locomotion. It is only when feeling enters and gives them motion that they move and work on others. That is so all over the world; and it is a thing which you must always remember. It is one of the most practical things in vedantic morality, for it is the teaching of the Vedanta that you are all prophets, and all must be prophets. The book is not proof of your conduct, but you are the proof of the book. How do you know that a book teaches truth? Because you are truth and feel it. That is what the Vedanta says. What is the proof of the Christs and Buddhas of the world? That you and I feel like them. That is how you and I understand that they were true. Our prophet-soul is the proof of their prophet-soul your godhead is the proof of God himself. If you are not a prophet, there never has been anything true of God. And if are not God, there never was any God,
and never will be. This, says the Vedanta, is the ideal to follow .......... " (7).

Again,

" ........ All truth is eternal. Truth is nobody's property; no race, no individual can lay any exclusive claim to it. Truth is the nature of all souls. Who can lay any special claim to it? But it has to be made practical, to be made simply (for the highest truths are always simple), so that it may penetrate every core of human society, and become the property of the highest intellects and the commonest minds, of the man, woman, and child at the same time. All these ratiocinations of logic, all these bundles of metaphysics, all these theologies and ceremonies may have been good in their own time, but let us try to make things simpler and bring about the golden days when every man will be a worshipper, and the Reality in everyman will be the object of worship " (8).

The stylistic qualities of these passages are lucid clarity and attractive simplicity.


(8) ibid., (pp. 358).
Here a portion of the letter written by Raja Ajit Singh on 4th March, 1893 will show a reference to the style of Vivekananda. He writes, "............ I do not think the general principles of Hinduism could be expressed more accurately and clearly in English than what you (Vivekananda) have done, with all restrictions imposed by the very natural shortcomings of language itself" (9).

The simplicity of Vivekananda's religious prose-style was the result of his spiritual and humanitarian appeal as well as knowledge and conviction. The spiritual hollowness of the country created such an intensity of feeling that he was forced to care less consciously for stylistic qualities in his religious writings and more for the regeneration of the people. Yet, the simplicity, lucidity, vigour and spontaneity of his unconscious style at once created a 'divine influence' upon his readers and hearers. His prose had an invisible glow which drew the attention of the reader not only to enjoy but also to understand. In fact, his is a prophet's prose-style — which attracts the mind and enlightens the heart.

(9) Swami Vivekananda: A Forgotten Chapter of His Life -
by, Benishanker Sharma.
Cal. 1965. (pp. 103, Ch - VI).
Rabindranath Tagore is known to the world as a great poet. But he was, in fact, a poet-philosopher with the outlook of an internationalist. Born in a highly cultured family in Calcutta in the year 1861, he grew to manhood under the constant care of his philosopher-father Maharshi Debendranath Tagore. A number of his brothers and sisters were artistically inclined — one composed music, another staged amateur theatricals, and several contributed to the literary magazine, edited by their eldest brother, who was also a philosopher. In fact, it was the family background that gave a philosophical bent of mind to the great poet of India (10). Moreover he was always not in favour of chauvinistic nationalism, for it was, according to him, limited and often became misguided due to the overdose of patriotic spirit. He never tolerated violence, extremism, excesses, bloodshed and political mean-mindedness that were rampant in India during his time.

Mankind could only save itself from destruction, he declared, by a return to the spiritual values which permeate all religions. Asia, the home of the world's great faiths, lay under a special obligation to head this religious revival, and to India, the home of both Hinduism and Buddhism, belonged

(10) As he writes in his 'Preface' to Sadhana:
"........ The writer has been brought up in a family where texts of the Upanishads are used in daily worship; and he has had before him example of his father, who lived his long life in the closest communion with God, while not neglecting his duties to the world, or allowing his keen interest in all human affairs to suffer any abatement ...." 

( pp. VII ). Para - I.
the mission of reawakening herself, Asia, and the World. He was almost Vivekanandian in his message as well as in mission with the only exception that the former was a poet and the latter a conferred saint. In fact, Tagore was a poet who was more religious than many priests and a man of religion who was more poetical than many poets.

At a time when many intellectuals of India were satisfied with personal happiness, cosmic despair, stoic detachment, mild, if not militant, atheism, Rabindranath felt convinced about the value and validity of the spiritual ideas set forth in the ancient classics of India. He did never claim to produce an original philosophy. His aim was not to analyse or speculate about the Indian tradition. He only expressed it in his own vivid phrases and homely metaphors and showed its relevance to modern life.

Most of Tagore's writings are in Bengali and I have considered here only those writings which were directly written in English. His original philosophical prose works are — Sadhana (lectures delivered at Harvard University, 1915), Personality (Lectures delivered in America, 1917), Creative Unity (1922) and The Religion of Man (Hibbert lectures at Oxford University, 1930) and some other lectures in China, Japan and India and also some of his letters, written to a friend, C.F. Andrews (written to Andrews during May, 1920 - July, 1921), published by S.Ganesan (1928).

In order to inspire the countrymen, Indian writers in English prose, during the first two decades of the twentieth
century, had to become extra-vaguantly didactic and excessively revolutionary. But Tagore was an exception perhaps because being a poet he was equally concerned both into — what he said and how he said it. In his English prose work, *Nationalism* (1917), he wrote: " ........ " ........... It is the inward culture that gives self-possession in the face of loss and danger, self-sacrifice without counting the cost or hoping for gain, defiance of death, acceptance of countless social obligations that we owe to men as social beings" (11). This sufficiently reflects the nationalism of Tagore which had a philosophical coating.

In fact, Tagore's philosophical prose-style was simple, clear, musical and full of beautiful images and metaphors. For example, he writes in the preface of *Sadhana*:

" ............ For Western scholars the great religious scriptures of India seem to possess merely a retrospective and archaeological interest; but to us they are of living importance, and we cannot help thinking that they lose their significance when exhibited in labelled cases — mummied specimens of human thought and aspiration, preserved for all time in the wrappings of erudition ....... " (12).

It is the prose of a poet — full of beautiful images and metaphors e.g., 'mummied specimen of human thought', and


'wrappings of erudition'. The sentence is long in structure and flowingly graceful. A dignified stamp of the writer's purpose is easily discernible in the style — and the purpose is to glorify the existence of the great religious scriptures of India. Therefore, Tagore wrote in the last sentence of the preface to Sadhana: "........ So, in these papers ......, it may be hoped, Western readers will have an opportunity of coming into touch with the ancient spirit of India as revealed in our sacred texts and manifested in the life of today ..... " (13).

It was Tagore's utmost desire to harmonise the vital ideas of our tradition with the inner forms of the West. For criticism of the Western dry materialism Tagore wrote:

"........ In our mythology we have the legend that the man who performs performances for attaining immortality has to meet with temptations sent by Indra, the Lord of the immortals. If he is lured by them he is lost. The West has been striving for centuries after its goal of immortality. Indra has sent her the temptation to try her. It is the gorgeous temptation of wealth. She has accepted it, and her civilization of humanity has lost its path in the wilderness of machinery ..... " (14).

(13) ibid., Ch - 'Preface' - (Last sentence).
The style of the passage is incantat ingly simple and the language, concrete. The sentences are short but convincingly authoritative. The idea of the passage is made as concrete as possible by the use of Indian imagery, very much homely, from the mythological figure, 'Indra, the Lord of immortals', who has put not only Easterners but Westerners also to test. The poetic flash in the style is also perceptible in the last sentence.

Again, in his article on 'Soul Consciousness' published in Sadhana, Tagore wrote:

"........... We have seen that it was the aspiration of ancient India to live and move and have its joy in Brahma, the all conscious and all-pervading spirit, by extending its field of consciousness over all the world. But that, it may be urged, is an impossible task for man to achieve. If this extension of consciousness be an outward process, then it is endless, it is like attempting to cross the ocean after ladling out its water. By beginning to try to realise all one has to end by realising nothing ..........." (15).

Here the style is simple and impressive. Ideas of the writer are expressed in balanced sentences. The use of the imagery, '........... it is like attempting to cross the ocean after ladling out its water ...........', seems to have been taken from

Indian mythology and here lies the 'Indianness' of the writer's style because the imagery has been used in its proper place (***)

Further, Tagore's conception of Indian philosophy and religion was as clear as it was with Vivekananda. But Tagore's prose-style is characterised not by Vivekanandian vigour and force but its poetic spontaneity and vision-propelled smoothness. For example,

"........My religion essentially is a poet's religion; all that I feel about it is from vision and not from knowledge. I frankly say that cannot satisfactorily answer your questions about evil or about what happens after death. And yet I am sure that there have come moments when my soul has touched the infinite and has become intensely conscious of it through illumination of joy. It has been said in our Upanishads that our mind and our words come away baffled from the supreme truth, but he who knows that, through the immediate joy of his own soul, is saved from all doubts and fears.

In the night we stumble over things and become acutely conscious of their individual separateness, but the day reveals the great unity which embraces them. And the man, whose inner vision is bathed in an illumination of his consciousness, at once realizes the spiritual unity reigning supreme over all differences of

(***) According to Herbert Read: "........It is neither the idioms nor the words (nor even the images) themselves that give character to writing but the use to which they are put. Usage is ultimately the criterion by which any writer of English may be evaluated .........".

(English Prose Style; Herbert Read, pp. 9).
race, and his mind no longer awkwardly stumbles over individual facts of separateness in the human world, accepting them as final; he realizes that peace is in the inner harmony which dwells in truth, and not in any outer adjustments; that beauty carries an eternal assurance of our spiritual relationship to reality, which waits for its perfection in the response of our love" (16).

Again,

"........ I believe in a spiritual world, not as anything separate from this world, but as its innermost truth. With the breath we draw, we must always feel this truth, that we are living in God. Born in this great world, full of the mystery of the infinite, we cannot accept our existence as a momentary outburst of chance, drifting on the current matter towards an eternal nowhere. We cannot look upon our lives as dreams of a dreamer who has no awakening in all time. We have a personality to which matter and force are meaningless unless related to something infinitely personal, whose nature we have discovered, in some measure, in human love, in the greatness of the good,

(16) Lectures & Addresses—by Rabindranath Tagore:
by, Anthony X-Soares.
Macmillan, London. 1962. ( pp. 16-17 ).
(Lecture delivered in China in 1924 — entitled 'My Life').
in the martyrdom of heroic souls, in the ineffable beauty of nature, which can never be a mere physical fact nor anything but an expression of personality ... " (17).

Further,

"... It must be an Ashram where men have gathered for the highest end of life, in the peace of nature; where life is not merely meditative, but fully awake in its activities; where boy's mind are not being perpetually drilled into believing that the ideal of the self-idolatry of the nation is the truest ideal for them to accept, where they are bidden to realize man's world as God's kingdom, to whose citizenship they have to aspire; where the sunrise and sunset and the silent glory of stars are not daily ignored; where nature's festivities of flowers and fruit have their joyous recognition from man; and where the young and the old, the teacher and student, sit at the same table to partake of their daily food and the food of their eternal life ... " (18).

(17) ibid., (pp. 27-28) - (A lecture delivered in America published in 'Personality' - 1917, entitled 'My School').

(18) ibid., (pp. 41).
We feel the withering fierceness of the spirit of modern civilization all the more because it beats directly against our human sensibility; and it is we of the Eastern hemisphere who have the right to say that those who represent this great age of great opportunities are furiously building their doom by their renouncement of the divine ideal of personality; for the ultimate truth in man is not in his intellect or in his material wealth; it is in his imagination of sympathy, in his illumination of heart, in his activities of self-sacrifice, in his capacity for extending love far and wide across all barriers of caste and colour, in his realizing this world not as a storehouse of mechanical power but as a habitation of man's soul with its eternal music of beauty and its inner light of a divine presence ....... " (19). 

In all these passages Tagore reveals his sensitive mind and puts his faith in man's personality, in the brotherhood of mankind and in the divine aspect of love, beauty and truth. The language that he has used in all the passages is not the language of a religious-preacher but rather the language of a

(19) ibid., (pp. 75-76) - (An address delivered at the Gujarati literary conference, Ahmedabad, in 1920 - entitled, 'Construction Versus Creation').
poet-philosopher, who sees clearer than others and feels more sensitively than many philosophers.

'A large part of Tagore's Hibbert lectures was given to the elucidation of this point that in man's highest efforts and achievements it is the Eternal, Ideal or Universal Man that seeks expression or which we seek to express. The universality that we find in the creations of art, in the discovery of truth, in the good life, was, for Tagore, the manifestation of the eternal in man:

""......... When we are intensely aware of reality we are aware of ourselves, and it gives us delight........... But the mysterious fact about it is that though individuals are separately seeking their expression, their success is never individualistic in character. Men must find and feel and represent in all their creative works Man the Eternal, the creator............ Any individualistic madness of men against Man cannot thrive for long" (20).

And,

""......... our life gains what is called 'value' in those of its aspects which represent eternal humanity in knowledge, in sympathy, in deeds, in character and creative works. And from the beginning our history we are seeking,

often at the cost of everything else, value and not mere success; in other words we are trying to realize in ourselves the important Man, so that we may die but not perish " (21).

The style of these passages is straightforward. A concentrated reading of the passages at once reveals the deep philosophical understanding of the writer. Such clear and simple English can only come from clear and honest thinking. Now and then it rises to heights of poetic spontaneity, and we feel that the writer adds the sensibility of the poet to the intellect of a philosopher.

'The mysterious fact about Tagore, the Indo-Anglian Philosophical prose-writer, is this that in spite of having no formal western-style education through the medium of English (which Vivekananda had), he could write such incantatingly simple, clear and straightforward English. It was perhaps because of his extraordinary sensitive mind, perhaps also because of his quick grasping capability that enabled him to write in English in such a manner. In fact, his was the prose of a poet. He had neither the abstruse language of Shri Aurobindo of the later years nor the typical Vivekanandian vigour in his style. But it had its particular appeal. His style of writing was simple and clear with touches of poetic flashes here and there. A Rishi-like serenity, and not the Vivekanandian urgency, was always there behind all his philosophical prose-writings. If

(21) ibid., (pp. 145-46).
the simplicity of Vivekananda's prose-style was the result of his spiritual quest and humanitarian outlook as well as knowledge and conviction of a sense of urgency, Tagore's was result of the poetical and humanitarian approach as well as faith and devotion of a mind, calm in its sensitivity.
Among the Indian writers in English prose (non-fictional) Shri Aurobindo seems to be the most difficult especially in his philosophical and religious writings. His tender boyhood and the impressionable formative period of his adolescence were spent in England (1879-85) with unalloyed western life and culture. But fortunately, his spiritual bent of mind assimilated the virile scientific nourishment of western culture to put forth the traditional beauty and mysterious charm of Indian philosophy and religion. 'East and West are but complements of the Ideal and the Actual in existence. A healthy interchange of cultures in indispensable to save the living organism of the communal life from inanition. It gives a dynamic strength and stately beauty to the social edifice raised upon a spiritual basis' (22). With this fulfilment in view, the supreme will added a sound knowledge of the west to the stupendous inborn, creative, oriental genius in Sri Aurobindo. He learnt Sanskrit, the richest language of India and this enabled him to keep even-balance between the Indian Lore and the profound European culture. Later on, this further enabled him to interpret luminously the mysteries of the Oriental spirit to the Occident. He read the works of Vedic Rishi and the classical poets. Vyasa, Valmiki and Kalidasa were his Dante, Homer and Shakespeare. And the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda had a deep influence upon his spiritual bent of mind.

(22) *Sri Aurobindo - The Divine Master* : Shuddhananda Bharati. (pp. 8).
In fact, whatever he studied was substantiated in his writings, whatever outer spiritual influence penetrated into his mind was sustained in his feelings, and whatever he wrote was symbolised in his life.

The year 1893 is a landmark in the history of India's spiritual evolution — Swami Vivekananda goes out to illuminate the West with the light of East and Aurobindo comes to the East to liberate the Mother and through her to liberate the world. But both of them differ inspite of their apparent resemblances. The former became a monk and renounced the world early in life, but later on established a great organisation for social work and religions education. But Shri Aurobindo began his career as an ardent Nationalist and political worker, and later on retired to the seclusion and completely gave up all mundane activities and eventually established an Ashram at Pondicherry for spiritual exercises and yogic practice.

Apart from being an apostle of Indian nationalism, Sri Aurobindo is famous as a propounder of Indian Philosophy. He taught the countrymen the religion of patriotism and the need to sacrifice everything for the Motherland. He came also to preach Sanatana Dharma, the Universal religion of humanity. Presaging a wider fulfilment of the earliest Vedic vision, he revealed the truth of man's 'inevitable evolution' into a higher-than-mental being, not only for India but for the whole world. "......... In his philosophy and yoga, .......", Sri Aurobindo went further and turned the current of human progress itself towards the goal of supermanhood, and laboured for long years fashioning the means of attaining the goal..." (23).

It was on 4th May, 1908 when he found himself jailed as a suspected member of a bombing plot, he heard the voice of Vivekananda guiding him in his practice of Yoga, and saw all men as incarnations of God. After his release Aurobindo gradually withdrew from political life, and in February, 1910 abandoned Bengal — and his wife — for the French settlement of Pondicherry to start his spiritual life and philosophical writings.

Aurobindo's philosophical works are *The Life Divine*, *Essays on Gita*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Secret of the Veda*, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, *The Human Cycle*, *The Future Poetry*, and *The Foundations of Indian culture*. "....... He did not exactly withdraw from life, he only explored its deeper possibilities; he did not try to establish a new religion, he only strove to mobilize the secret, sustaining power behind all religions" (24). In all his philosophical works we find the spirituality of an Indian that brings into its compass the creative vision of the seer, the imaginative fervour of the poet and the philosophy of the revolutionary nationalist.

"With Sri Aurobindo, Politics and yoga, nationalism and Indian philosophy 'went together'" (25). In fact, all his philosophical prose-writings are, although abstruse in language, marked by rare insight, music of words, poetic flashes, ornateness and

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(24) Sri Aurobindo Circle - Twenty Eight Number, Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, 1972. (pp. 46).

(25) Sri Aurobindo - a brief biography: Prema Nanda Kumar, Publication Division, Ministry of I & B. New Delhi, 1972. (pp. 15).
Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine* has been acclaimed by critics, scholars and philosophers of both India and abroad as the greatest philosophical religious book. It is a 'revealed literature' and the result of a synthesis of the wisdom of the East and the knowledge of the West. Sri Aurobindo himself once commenting on his *The Life Divine* said that it was not the result of his intellectual mind rather it came to him after the so-called human mind was stopped through his yogic method. (Yoga means — chitta britti Nirodha, i.e., complete cessation of all mental activities). At this stage the super-mind functions and words come as new revelation to the writer. Therefore, it is not merely an intellectual attempt to give an analysis of man's evolutionary march in nature to ascend to the super-mind but rather a direct experience of the Supramental consciousness descent of which to the earthmind is inevitable according to Sri Aurobindo; and through which a race of super-mind will be created corresponding to the human species with higher illumined consciousness and developed faculties. *The Life Divine* is an enormous work not easy for all to read through. None has as yet gone so deep into the research of Matter and spirit as Sri Aurobindo. Almost half the volume of the book is devoted to prove that the matter is as true and important as the spirit. The whole book has been written in a style that is quite in conformity with English Grammar and syntax but different in respect of spirit. It is deep and abstruse to the ordinary reader in the sense that its ideas are expressions of high spiritual intuitions and yogic
thoughts. And this style is obviously different from the style of Western philosophical prose literature. Western philosophy is the result of deliberate intellectual analysis of matter and dissection of spirit. It is dry in the sense that it originates from disciplined intellectual efforts, and the style thus becomes formal and elaborate, artificial and stodgy.

But the Eastern philosophy, based on Veda and Upanishadas, is the result of spiritual intuition and yogic exercises which makes its expression or style easy and sensitive, sweeping and rhythmic. In The Life Divine we find Aurobindo as a 'Sophoclean Shakespeare' with the soul of vedic Rishis. And the book is vedic in substance and classically modern in style. For example:

" .......... the solution of the problem which spirituality offers is not a solution by external means, though these also have to be used, but by an inner change, a transformation of the consciousness and nature .......... 

Spirituality cannot be called upon to deal with life by a non-spiritual method or attempt to cure its ills by other panaceas, the political, social or other mechanical remedies which the mind is constantly attempting and which have always failed .......... Only a spiritual change, an evolution of his being from the superficial mental towards deeper spiritual consciousness, can make a real and effective difference " (26).

Again,

" .......... The individual is indeed the key of the evolutionary movement; for it is the individual who finds himself, who becomes conscious of the Reality ....... The individual does not owe his ultimate allegiance either to the State which is a machine or to the community which is a part of life and not the whole of life ....... So long as he is undeveloped, he has to subdue in many ways his undeveloped self to whatever greater than it. As he develops, he moves towards a spiritual freedom, but this freedom is not something entirely separate from all-existence; it has a solidarity with it because that too is the self, the same spirit. As he moves towards spiritual freedom, he moves also towards spiritual oneness" (27).

And further,

" .......... Man, the individual, has to become and to live as a universal being; his limited mental consciousness has to widen to the superconscient unity in which each embraces all; his narrow heart has to learn the infinite embrace and replace its lusts and discords by universal love and his restricted vital being to become equal to the whole shock of the

universe upon it and capable of universal delight; his very physical being has to know itself as no separate entity but as one with and sustaining in itself the whole flow of the indivisible Force that is all things; his whole nature has to reproduce in the individual the unity, the harmony, the oneness-in-all of the supreme Existence—Consciousness—Bliss" (28).

These passages are examples of typical style of Aurobindo's philosophical writings. Here the constant use of "has to subordinate", "has to become", "has to widen", "has to learn", "has to know", etc., are the special links in the analytical elaboration of philosophical thoughts which give the passages a cosmic sweep and rhythm. The prose is calm and serene and the expression, deep and highly philosophical. The sentences are long but develop one after another the abstruse idea to its full conclusion with a quiet flow undisturbed by any cliches.

In fact, what Sri Aurobindo represents in the world's philosophy is not a teaching, not even a revelation; it is decisive action, decisive directive and decisive explanation direct from the supreme. As he writes:

"......... Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, (28) The life Divine: Sri Aurobindo. (Vol. I), 1939.
fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity."

"............. The aim of the religion of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the

(29) The Ideal of Human Unity: Aurobindo. (pp. 363).
Aurobindo Ashram
Pondicherry,
2nd edition (Revised)
1950.
progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so much proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward and mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practiceable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal
And further, "........ A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret spirit, a divine Reality in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of co-operation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded. There must be too a discipline and a way of salvation in accordance with this religion, that is to

(30) off C it., ( pp. 366 - 67 ).
say, a means by which it can be developed by each man within himself, so that it may be developed in the life of the race . . . . . A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence " (31) .

These passages are examples of Aurobindo's 'divinely spontaneous' style — where words come effortlessly to reveal the spiritual understanding. The consistent use of ' is to be ' ( in the first passage ) , ' has been ' ( in the second passage ) , and ' must be ' ( in the third passage ) show the typical Aurobindonian technique of analytical elaboration resulting in sweeping smoothness. The last sentence of the third passage is periodic in pattern and has the touch of " gritty style " (32) . The sentence is gritty not because of any artificial phraseology, though the writer does have a leaning towards long words, e. g. , ' mechanical means of unification ' , ' free inner variation ' ,

(31) ibid., ( pp. 378 - 79 ).

and 'freely varied outer self-expression', but because he is saying too much at once. Therefore, it becomes difficult for ordinary readers to understand Aurobindo's English. But again, Aurobindo's philosophical writings are meant not for ordinary people but for those who have a 'hushed mind' and a special philosophic calmness.

'Spiritual sovereignty lies within, and it is of this that the god-heads of freedom, harmony, brotherhood and creative unity have to make themselves manifest in our terrestrial life' (33). Everywhere in Sri Aurobindo's later philosophical writings — *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Secret of Veda*, *Essays on Gita*, we are hit by the blaze of this revelation expressed in a special 'Indian style' where the union of the emotion of beauty, delicacy, grace and strength, a nameless sweetness, and spirituality pervades all the clear lines and forms of writing. The transformation of the ordinary to the spiritual, the mundane to the divine is the basic spirit of all his philosophical writings. For example:

"........ The divinising of the normal material life of man and of his great secular attempt of mental and moral self-culture in the individual and the race by this integralisation of a widely perfect spiritual existence would thus be the crown alike of our individual and of our common effort. Such a

(33) Sri Aurobindo Circle - 28th Number
Aurobindo Society,
Pondicherry, 1972 (August). (pp. 51).
consummation being no other than the kingdom of heaven within reproduced in the kingdom of heaven without, would be also the true fulfilment of the great dream cherished in different terms by the world's religions" (44).

And, "It is spiritual, an inner freedom that can alone create a perfect human order. It is a spiritual, a greater than the national enlightenment that can alone illumine the vital nature of man and impose harmony on its self-seeking, antagonisms and discords....

.... it means that no machinery invented by the reason can perfect either the individual or the collective man; an inner change is needed in human nature.... if this is not the solution, then there is no solution; if this is not the way, then there is no way for the human kind". (55).

The style of the passages is again concentrated but forceful. The sentences are periodic in structure and require a disciplined mind to understand the inner meaning. But the prose has the heart-warming radiance — which is a speciality of Aurobindonian philosophical style.

Again, there is vitality, vigour, force and a burning intensity of the Divine in his prose-style. For example:

"......... That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion, because it is the Universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and a limited purpose. This is the one religion that can triumph over materialism by including and anticipating the discoveries of science and the speculations of philosophy.

It is the one religion which impresses on mankind the closeness of God to us and embraces in its compass all the possible means by which man can approach God. It is the one religion which insists every moment on the truth which all religions acknowledge that He is in all men and all things and that in Him we move and have our being. It is the one religion which enables us not to understand and believe this truth but to realize it with every part of our being. It is the one religion which shows the world what the world is, that it is the Lila of Vasudeva. It is the one religion which shows us how we can best play our part in that Lila, its
Again,

"............ When we look at the past of India what strikes us ............... is her stupendous vitality, her inexhaustible power of life and joy of life, her almost unimaginably prolific creativeness. For three hundred years at least, it is indeed much longer, she has been creating abundantly and incessantly, lavishly, with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences and creeds and arts and poems and all kinds of monuments, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychic sciences, systems of yoga, system of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts, the list is endless and in each item there is almost a plethora of activity. She creates and creates and is not satisfied and is not tired; she will not have an end of it, seems hardly to need


(Extract from a speech delivered to the 'Society For The Protection Of Religion' — after Aurobindo's release from prison in 1908.)
a space for rest, a time for inertia and lying fallow. She expands too outside her borders; her ships cross the ocean and the fine superfluity of her wealth brims over the Judea and Egypt and Rome; her colonies spread her arts and epics and creeds in Archipelago; her traces are found in the sands of Mesopotamia; her religions conquer China and Japan and spread westward as far as Palestine and Alexandria, and the figures of the Upanishads and the sayings of the Buddhists are re-echoed on the lips of Christ. Everywhere, as on her soil, so in her works there is the teeming of super-abundant energy of life" (37).

These two passages are examples of 'inspired prose' — a prose that moves with the writer's emotional involvement in the interest of the nation as a whole. A typical 'divine intensity' pervades the atmosphere of both the passages — the first passage glorifies the superiority of the Hindu religion, and the second, the unchallengable spiritual and extra-ordinary energy of the life of India.

Again, in order to redress the balance of prose exposition, Sri Aurobindo sometimes purposefully brings poetic symbols and images. For example:

"........ The soul of man, a traveller, wanders in this cycle of Brahman, huge, a

totality of lives, a totality of states, thinking itself different from the Impeller of the journey. Accepted by Him, it attains its goal of Immortality ......... The ascent to the divine life is the human journey, the Work of works, the acceptable sacrifice. This alone is man's real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface a mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe" (38).

All the major philosophical religious works of Shri Aurobindo came out in an age of crisis. On the one side, first world war was going on, and on the other, there was the tense moment of Indian nationalist movement. But the mystic fire and light in Sri Aurobindo crossed the mundane and the ordinary and saw the first world war as a grapple "between two forces, the Divine and the Asuric", and the Indian nationalist movement divorced from religious spirit and realization of God within. In fact, he was a seer, a yogi, and a visionary — all fused into one Sri Aurobindo, the mystic philosopher. And all his philosophical writings show the Seer's capability to

(38) The Life Divine: Aurobindo (pp. 42-43).
Sri Aurobindo Library,
New York, 1951.
glimpse the contours of ultimate Possibility, the Yogi's formulated method and technique, and the Visionary's imaginative power. His was a Guru-personality, spiritually divine and calm and serene that manifested itself in all his philosophical writings. And these writings are results of his mystic-spiritual visions which require the reader to bring the right attitude and the disciplined and honest mind in response, because these are records of seeing, of an experience which are not of the common kind and are often very far from what the general human minds see and experience. Philosophical truth always reveals what ordinary life conceals. The prose of Aurobindo's philosophical writings is the prose of revealed literature — consciously decorative and aims at sublimity of thought and feeling. The style has Vedic and Upanishadic fervour; and the meaning-laden sentences work upon our imagination and sensory perceptions, the vision sinks into our receptive mind, and the symbols and images stand revealed as 'the glory and the good' of art.

In fact, Aurobindo as an Indo-Anglian philosophical prose-writer is a class by himself. He is the acknowledged master of English-prose style in the sense that far from imitating or being influenced by any other writers, he writes, as if, a 'divine power' takes the pen from his hand and writes on his behalf. Words pour into his writing from a nameless spontaneity creating an atmosphere of divine beauty. In Vivekananda, it was a prophet's prose-style, in Tagore, it was a poet's prose-style, and in Aurobindo, it was a seer's — a yogi's prose-style — illumined with the spontaneity, vitality and infinite variety of
a perfect philosopher. All the great philosophical ideas of Aurobindo as well as the style of expression of these ideas create an impression on the mind and a movement in the heart of the reader. And here lies the supreme merit of Sri Aurobindo as a writer of philosophical prose.
Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan’s name stands out in the midst of the galaxy of Indo-Anglian masters of philosophical prose. Born in 1888 and having had a very brilliant academic career, Dr. Radhakrishnan remained engaged in the ‘service of his mind’ till the last day of his life (16th April, 1975). In spite of political and diplomatic diversions in his career, he achieved a grand success in the field of Indian philosophical writing. Srimati Sarojini Naidu once described him as a man of ‘words and wisdom’, and the comment is justified in the sense that the calm and serene personality of Radhakrishnan was well-fed by the adventures of his mind and the pilgrimages of his spirit. Steeped in the life, traditions and philosophical heritage of his native India, he delved deep into the roots of Western philosophy. He devoted his voluminous writings to interpret the great cultural traditions of the East to the West on the one hand, and to make the East realise that not merely in science and technology, but also in philosophical thought and speculation the East can still learn some important lessons from the West (39).

In fact, Dr. Radhakrishnan was an internationally famous philosopher-statesman, and unquestionably resourceful, eloquent, effective and popular speaker, and a prolific writer with a mysteriously selective instinct for clarity, lucidity and epigrammatic strength. In respect of expository brilliance and estimative tact, and in respect of textual correlations and technical elucidations, Dr. Radhakrishnan’s writings on Indian

(39) The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan:
Ed. by, Paul Arthur Schilpp.
Tudor Publishing Co.,
New York, 1962. (pp. xi - xii)
Chapter - ‘Preface’
philosophical thought exhibit a perennial stream of progressive sweetness. Philosophical writings of Sri Aurobindo were the results of his mystic-spiritual visions but Radhakrishnan's, were the results of deep philosophical insight and clear and vigorous thinking. Sri Aurobindo, in his writings, added the sensibility of the yogi to the vision of a 'seer', but Radhakrishnan fused the sensibility of the artist to the intellect of a scholar.

Like Addison, Radhakrishnan brought philosophy from the closets and class rooms to the clubs and coffee houses——(a kind of philosophical journalism) and the contribution of his 'plain-glass' style to bring about this transformation is no less important. The appealing quality of the style of Radhakrishnan's philosophical prose was almost Vivekanandian. In short, his prose style was familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always easy, without glowing words or flamboyant sentences.

The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore was the first book of Radhakrishnan, written in 1918, and then came his more ambitious The Reign of Religion In Contemporary Philosophy (1920). His first book was a tentative study written almost with the first flush of emotion, where he was more an imitator than an original thinker, more concerned with the limited dictate of superfluous study than with the serenity of systematic philosophical approach. But the second book showed his mature thinking and serene and systematic study of the thought of western thinkers like, Bergson, Leibnitz, Ward, Bucken, William James and Bertrand Russell. The work proceeds dialectically, analysing
and criticising the various systems. Although the style often becomes verbose and repetitious, yet the sentences glow with so luminous an insight that we cannot but accept them as meditations on a theme (***) .

His next philosophical work was the monumental two-volume History of Indian Philosophy (1923 and 1927). Brilliant in exposition, realistic in approach, proportionate in presentation, persuasive in argument, brevity and clarity in style, the book succeeded in giving Indian philosophy the quality of living tradition and the philosopher-writer achieved his satisfaction of being able to communicate his insight into the meaning of life. As he writes in an article entitled 'My Search For Truth', published in The Religion In Transition (edited by Vergilious Feria, 1937) — "" .......... Philosophy is produced more by our encounter with reality than by the historical study of such encounters. In my writings I have tried to communicate my insight into the meaning of life. I am not sure, that I have succeeded in conveying my inmost ideas. I tried to show that my general position provides a valid interpretation of the world, which seems to me to be consistent with itself, to accord with the facts as we know them, and to foster the life of spirit". In fact, the book is neither too diffuse and unmanageable nor too compact and uninteresting, and the quality of style makes it intelligible even to the inexpert. It is a work of 'feeling' as well as of lucid thought, and a real worthy contribution to human culture. If

(*** ) " ........ The book was brilliantly polemical and showed Radhakrishnan's complete intimacy with western thought on the one hand and his complete mastery of the English language on the other ........ " .

other available histories of Indian thought are photographs, Radhakrishnan’s this book appears as a life-like painting. Page after page of the book glow with his deep religious conviction and gleam with shining phrases and the clear and plain style makes the righteousness interesting and readable.

His *The Hindu View of Life*, and *An Idealist View of Life*, are collections of his Upton and Hibbert lectures published in book forms in the year 1927 and 1932 respectively. These lecture were addressed in the first instance to Christian audience in the west. Lucid clarity that seems to be almost deceptibly simple, spontaneous ease, and attractive simplicity are the consistent qualities of the prose-style of both the books. For example:

"........ Hinduism is a movement, not a position, a process not a result; a growing tradition, not a fixed revelation. Its past history encourages us to believe that it will be found equal to any emergency that the future may throw up, whether on the field of thought or of history ........ ".

(*The Hindu View of Life*).

And,

"........ The cards in the game are given to us. We do not select them. They are traced to past Karma, but we are free to make any call as we think fit and led any suit. Only we are limited by the rules of the game. We are more free when we start the game than later on when the game has developed and our
choices become restricted. But till the very end there is always a choice... Even though we may not like the way in which the cards are shuffled, we like the game and want to play. (An Idealist View of Life).

Both these two passages are examples of simple, plain-glass style. Sentences are short, clear and easy. The first passage deals with the definition of Hinduism, and to tackle such a delicate subject requires clear and vigorous thinking, and the thinking is well-expressed in the clear, vigorous English. The second passage deals with the Hindu concept theory of Karma and to explain such a theory intelligibly and interestingly to the readers requires a special technique. Radhakrishnan's technique in the passage is the technique of an effective speaker who makes the high-seriousness of philosophy familiar by making it simple in style.

The Hindu View of Life was an attempt on the part of Radhakrishnan to clarify the mystery of the religious superiority of India to the West in the perspective of various problems created by various historical processes. For example:

"If we look into the past history of India, we see how the country has been subjected to one race invasion after another. Even at the beginning of her history India was peopled by various racial groups, the dark aboriginal tribes, the sturdy Dravidians, the yellow-skinned Mongols and the blithe forceful Aryans. Very soon she developed intimate intercourse with the Persian, the Greeks and the Scythians, and some of these
settled down in India. No other country in the world has had such racial problems .......1 (40).

The passage shows the writer's lucid narration of the historical facts. The style is simple and clear.

Again, in *An Idealist View of Life* Radhakrishnan showed the presence of a deep under-current of idealism in the different Indian and European philosophical systems. It is Radhakrishnan's 'most valuable contribution to constructive philosophy', (41) because in it the most scrutinising analysis of the history of the philosophical studies of both East and West meet creatively and achieve a voice of articulation intelligible to all. As he writes (on the theory of Idealism of both East & West):

"The fountain-heads of the Vedas, including the Upanishads in the East and Socrates and Plato in the West, set forth this creed in broad and flexible terms ...... . If we are not carried away by the noise of the controversy among philosophical sects, but watch the deeper-currents which are shaping them, we seem to find a strong tendency to insist on the insights of idealism, though, of course, the language and the style are different ...... . Idealism today has to reckon with our problems.

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(40) The Hindu View of Life; Radhakrishnan,
Unwin Book, 1927. (pp. 94).

(41) Indian Writing in English; K.R.S.Iyengar,
and help us to face them. The stage seems to be set for a fresh statement" (42).

The passage shows the writer's power of expressing his undogmatic faith in the theory of Eastern idealism that runs parallel with the Western philosophical thought. The passage has both an appeal and a message, and an intellectual gravity is easily perceptible in its simple style. The writer's use of alliteration, —— ' ....... to insist on the insights of idealism ', and ' The stage seems to be set for a fresh statement ', —— is also noticeable.

Further, Radhakrishnan's disciplined philosophical intellect is always revealed in a simple, direct and straightforward style. For example:

" ............. Both intellectual and intuitive kinds of knowledge are justified and have their rights. Each is useful and has its own specific purposes. Logical knowledge enables us to know the conditions of the world in which we live and to control them for our ends. We cannot act successfully without knowing properly. But if we want to know things in their uniqueness, in their indefeasible reality, we must transcend discursive thinking. Direct perception or simple and steady looking upon an object is intuition. It is not a mystic process but the

(42) An Idealist View of Life: Radhakrishnan, Unwin Book. 1932. (pp. 16-17).
most direct and penetrating examination possible to the human mind. Intuition stands to intellect in somewhat the relation as intellect stands to sense. Though intuition lies beyond intellect, it is not contrary to it. It is called samyagjana, or perfect knowledge. Reflective knowledge is a preparation for this integral experience" (43).

And,

"Every religion has its Popes and crusades, idolatry and heresy-hunting. The cards and the game are the same, only the names are different. Men are attacked for affirming when men are attacked for denying. Religious piety seems to destroy all moral sanity and sensitive humanism. It is out to destroy other religions, not for the sake of social betterment or world peace, but because such an act is acceptable to one's own zealous god. The more fervent the worship the greater seems to be the tyranny of names...... The view that god has entrusted his exclusive revelation to any one prophet, Buddha, Christ, or Mohammad, expecting all other to borrow from him or else to suffer spiritual destitution, is by no means old-fashioned. Nothing is hostile to religion as other religions......

(45) ibid., (pp. 146).
The world would be a much more religious place if all the religions were removed from it ............ " (44).

Both the passages — the one dealing with important philosophical terms, intellect and intuition; and the other, with narrow religious selfishness — are examples of simple, straightforward style. Both the subjects require adequate knowledge, wide scholarship and disciplined intellect to be tackled with. And the attractive simplicity seems to be the best-suited medium of style to express knowledge, scholarship and intellect of the writer as revealed in the passages.

Radhakrishnan's next book was *Eastern Religion and Western Thought* (1939). It was " ........... intended more for the larger public interested in the higher pursuits of the mind and problems of human culture and living than for the professional student of philosophy ............ " (45). And the basic need of such a book has been stated clearly by Radhakrishnan in the Preface: "Modern civilization with its scientific temper, humanistic spirit, secular view of life is uprooting the world over the customs of long centuries and creating a ferment of restlessness. The world cannot remain a confused mass of needs and impulses, ambitions and activities, without any control or guidance of spirit. The void created by abandoned superstitions and uprooted beliefs calls for a spiritual feeling " (46).

The book shows Radhakrishnan's study of the religions and thoughts of both East and West and this he has done in a historical manner.

(44) ibid., ( pp. 44 ).
(46) ibid., ( pp. ix ).
Spontaneity and honest simplicity are the characteristic qualities of its style. He reveals himself as not only the philosopher of Indian Renaissance but also of a new Renaissance in the West:

"The west is passing through a new renaissance due to the sudden entry into its consciousness of a whole new world of ideas, shapes, and fancies. Even as its consciousness was enlarged in the period of the renaissance by the revelation of the classical culture of Greece and Rome, there is a sudden growth of the spirit today effected by the new inheritance of Asia with which India is linked up. For the first time in the history of mankind, the consciousness of the unity of the world has dawned on us. Whether we like it or not, East and West have come together and can no more part. The spacial nearness is preparing the way for a spiritual approximation and interchange of treasures of mind and imagination. If we are nurtured exclusively on the past of Europe or of Asia we cannot consider ourselves to be cultivated. The thought and experience of one-half of humanity cannot be neglected without peril. If we are to correct the narrowness resulting from a one-sided and exclusive preoccupation with either Eastern or Western thought, if we are to fortify our inner life with the dignity of a more perfect
and universal experience, and understanding of each other's culture is essential .... " (47) .

The passage gives a spontaneous expression of the writer's philosophical feelings completely fused with his international outlook. To Radhakrishnan philosophy means not only logical thought or the discursive views of the intellect, but a wider and more comprehensive view of reality in which thought and emotion, intellect and intuition have their proper place. It is written in a style which is in the line of Radhakrishnan outlook — conveying clearly and with dignified ease the exact purpose of the writer. The perfect fusion of the writer's emotion and intellect can be noticed in the last sentence, where he pleads for an inter-cultural understanding.

Again, the rationalist Radhakrishnan at once becomes indignant and emotionally involved when he observes the unworthiness of political dictatorship and religious dogmatism:

"Political dictatorship and religious dogmatism have no understanding of the profound identity of human beings, their passions and reactions, their ideals and aspirations in all ages and in all places. Religions, by propagating illusions such as the fear of hell, damnation and arrogant assumptions of inviolable authority and exclusive monopolies of the divine word, and politics, by intoxicating whole peoples with . (47) ibid., (pp. 115-16)."
dreams of their messianic missions, by engendering in them false memories, by keeping the old wounds open, by developing in them magalomania or persecution complex, destroy the sense of oneness with the world and divide humanity into narrow groups which are vain and ambitions, bitter and intolerant. By getting mixed up with politics, religion becomes degraded into a species of materialism" (48).

The language of the passage is natural and yet grave. It also presents vividly the materialistic tendency of religion while 'mixed up with politics'. The sentences are cumulative in structure and they flow easily maintaining the high-seriousness of the matter. The solemn and weighty rhythm, that rises to the climax at the end, suits the melancholic grandeur of the thought of the writer.

In the last paragraph of the book *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*, Radhakrishnan writes:

"...... If science and machinery get into other hands than those of warring caesars and despotic Tamerlanes, if enough men and women arise in each community who are free from the fanaticisms of religion and of politics, who will oppose strenuously every kind of mental and moral tyranny, who will develop in place of an angular national spirit a rounded world view, what might not be done?" (49).

(48) ibid., (pp. 40).
(49) ibid., (pp. 385).
The passage is another example of his simple, spontaneous style. It shows the writer's bold approach in the field of international understanding. Here a sense of urgency seems to be the driving force behind this writing.

In fact, the prevalent style of the book is lucid and direct. Sometimes the sentences become cumulative in structure but they do not mar the smooth flow of its style. And in spite of its lack of structural perfection which the importance of the theme demands, the book maintains a certain unity of outlook and is full of mental nourishment and moral stimulus. The lucid clarity and the incantating simplicity of style and the intellectual analysis and philosophical interpretation of themes are mingled in the book in a perfect manner to satisfy the spiritual appetite of the modern reader.

His next book Religion In a Changing World shows a more mature modern philosopher poignantly conscious of the need for a new faith to meet the challenges of the nuclear and space age. He writes in its preface: "........ We are transitional figures involved in a new stage of history, ........", and, "we need courage and discipline now more than brilliance ....", again, "........ Religion has been the great force for the disciplining of man's nature but unfortunately to many people it has lost its value and validity. It is the difficulty of religious beliefs that is responsible for the present distemper of the world. We need a faith that is reasonable, a faith that we can adopt with intellectual integrity and ethical conviction, ........ we need a faith which demands loyalty to the whole of mankind, ........" (50). Therefore, the book

has been written with a purpose to develop the sense of loyalty and a faith in the whole of mankind. The book is a collection of eight essays with a running thread of argument. The running style of the book is simple and direct, surcharged with the typical Indian 'feeling' and 'faith' of the writer.

Radhakrishnan's argument is weighty with his learning and is tuned up to the present crisis in civilization which is the issue between promise and peril:

"Mankind is on trial. In these days of deepening cleavages between different ways of life and growing anxiety for the future, we have to invoke the highest aspiration of mankind for easing tensions, and understanding in each other's ways of life. In spite of the troublous days in which we live, man can raise himself above himself, above the constricting conditions of life. To be mistaken and yet be compelled to go on living, what one's innermost being tells one is wrong, that is the tragedy of man. No external reform will reach the heart of the problem. The spirit of man has to be converted to the truth of our new conditions. We have to labour with the soul of men. Betterment must begin with the individual. We must show our preparedness to live together in confidence and friendship .......... What we need is a change of heart which religion can effect" (51).

(51) ibid., (pp. 29).
The passage has been written in the language of common man and very well serves the purpose for which it was written.

Again,

"The impulse of perfection is innate in man. We naturally seek to raise ourselves to a higher degree of value. We wish to make people up from thoughtlessness to a new spirit of humanity. We are the makers of history. We may be threatened by disaster; yet we should resist. We should stand by the side of those who choose life rather than by those who wish to destroy. We cannot be content with the past. Every morning brings a new day and every pulse beat a new life" (2).

Written in a plain style the passage is refreshingly attractive. The sentences are short but convey the exact 'feeling' of the writer in a systematic way.

Radhakrishnan's philosophical emotion knows no limit when confronted with the present-day crisis. As he writes:

"When we look at the wide-spread poverty, misery and oppression in large parts of the world, the starving millions in the street of African and Asian cities, the squalid slums which litter large parts of the world, the tortured inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the concentration camps, massacres of people who yearn for political freedom and..."

(2) ibid., (pp. 33).
race equality, we see how god is abandoned
religions sneered at, love despised and goodness
defeated. When we see without blinkers, we
realise that our professions are empty, our
intentions are hollow, our religion is only
a mask, a pretence, a make-believe......" (53).

His honest simplicity again becomes clear when he writes:
" .......... Unfortunately the accumulation of
scientific and technological possessions has
deprived man of his inner freedom. We must
seek ways and means to exorcize the demon of
possessions, rescue from his irresponsibility
and make him the vital agent of civilization.
The outward improvements do not touch our
inner nature. Everything ultimately depends
upon whether the man who is now such a great
master of science and technology is also the
master of himself. Our religions have not
penetrated below the surface ......." (54).

Further, Radhakrishnan's appealing tone expresses
an unsophisticated hope for the formulation of a world-community
based on understanding and cooperation. He writes:
"The brotherhood of man is present possibility. New
men with a new instinct to unify, to share, serve and sacrifice are possible. If mankind
is released from the pressure of population, if the waste of warfare is avoided, if the

(53) ibid., (pp. 47).
(54) ibid., (pp. 147).
sources of wealth are organised by the community, people will become free and adventurous and not lead lives of routine and indolence" (66).

In this way scores of paragraphs can be taken from the book to show Radhakrishnan's plain argumentative style necessitated by the urgency of the time.

Besides this book Religion In a Changing World, Radhakrishnan brought out authoritative English renderings of the Bhagavad Gita (1948), The Dhammapada (1961), The Principal Upanishads (1963), and The Brahma sutras (1969). His most recent writings include The Recovery of Faith (The world perspective Services, 1966), and Religion and Culture.

In fact, Radhakrishnan was a sensitive philosopher whose receptive mind got a jolt at the sight of present-day problems and sufferings of humanity. He wrote, "... My one supreme interest has been to try to restore a sense of spiritual values to the millions of religiously displaced persons, who have been struggling to find precarious refuges in the emergency camps of art and science of Fascism and Nazism, or humanism and Communism ......." (66). These are words not of a secluded or isolated philosopher but of a philosopher involved in the life of modern man. And again, in his 'reply to critics', he wrote, "......... A society which is acquisitive in its ideals, .......... is a murderous machine without a conscience ............" (67). It is this 'conscience' that

(66) ibid., (pp. 182).
(66) The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan: Ed. by, - Paul Arthur Schilpp. (pp. 14, Ch. III).
(67) ibid., (pp. 842).
he wanted to inject into the minds of humanity. This practical aspect of philosophical thinking makes his writing lucid and simple, for in style, it is simplicity that penetrates deep into the minds of common readers more than complexity.

Radhakrishnan was a modern philosopher, engrossed in his philosophical observations in order to modify the mode of living in the present day world; a reformer, dedicated to the cause of religious reawakening in a modern way. And all his philosophical writings are marked by simplicity and lucidity only to make the 'high-seriousness' of 'philosophy' familiar. A reformer's task is to present his ideas and observations clearly and plainly so that his writings (or speeches) become easily understandable to all. But the task of a 'Reformist philosopher' becomes more complex and delicate while confronted with philosophical thought, and to express those delicate thoughts into writing requires wide knowledge, deep religious conviction, fine philosophical intellect, superb intellectual integrity and above all, a special expressive technique. Radhakrishnan had all these qualities along with a spirit of the ancient Indian Rishis, which make his writings enchantingly plain, familiar and attractive with the addition of the 'gravity' of Indian philosophical tradition.

The speciality of his philosophical prose lies in the fact that in stead of using highly abstruse religious language, he always uses 'plain English' in order to suit the changing temper of the people. Therefore, his is a special philosophical prose that can be termed as 'Modern prose' — modern in its
being completely functional —— plain, intelligible and lucid but not without elegance, grace and spontaneity. Fluent in speech, as he was pliant in writing, Dr. Radhakrishnan was an integrated personality —— the pundit, the prophet, the scholar-statesman, the man of affairs and the reformist-philosopher being fused together. And it is also this fact that has given such power, grace, ease, and grandeur to his English prose-style. His was the realist's tendency in philosophy which was a reaction against the romantic, mystical movement of 19th century philosophical writings. Therefore, logically he brought a democratically popular plain prose-style in order to examine the traditional philosophy of both East and West on the hand, and the 'void' created by the lack of faith in religion as well as the lack of the sense of loyalty on the other.

In fact, he has not only made abstruse philosophy familiar, but also raised the obvious and the commonplace to the level of philosophical seriousness. And all this he has achieved through a style which is at once simple and elegant, conversational and literary, direct and poetically forceful.