Buddhadeva Bose on Modern Bengali Literature:

Modern is an uncomfortable word, a cause of confusion and a brewer of battles. It is a word liable to excite passions, some it scares right away, and some simply gloss over it. Quite a considerable section of literary thought is inclined to give it a qualitative connotation: one often comes across phrases and sentences where 'modern' is intended to mean a new quality which is the exclusive possession of recent literature.

Buddhadeva Bose, himself is content to use it in a more modest and restricted sense: that of the chronologically recent. In critical jargon 'modern' is used indiscriminately in at least three distinct senses: firstly, the broadly historical, as when we say that Kalidas is an ancient and Rabindranath a modern, secondly as denoting contemporaneity; and lastly in that abstract, qualitative sense which permits the use of such uneasy nouns as 'modernity' or 'modernism'.

According to the critic, Buddhadeva Bose, modern times on a qualitative connotation only by identifying itself with the eternity.

Buddhadeva Bose has discussed about the modern prose writers and poets.

Buddhadeva Bose mainly criticised Michael Madhusudan Datta (1824 – 73) in his book 'Sahityacharcha'. Bose remarked that Michael's dramas are unreadable, and it is not fit for acting in a theatre stage and excluding three to four of his
'Chaturdash padabali', are verbous and even in his great writing 'Birangana Kabya' a little sign of liveliness is seen only in the dialogue of Tara.  

Bose said that there is sufficient liveliness in his English letters but his farces are full of vitality, but they are not full-fledged dramas in all respects. It is a skeleton sketch of raw hand and it is to some extent childish.

Rabindra criticism on the 'Meghnad badh' in his youth was appreciated by the critic.

This poem had been severely criticised by Bose. In our literature, the influence of Michael is nil and even his 'amitrakshar' (blank verse) is like a specimen of a museum.

It cannot be agreed because he was after all a great poet and even his influence is noticeable in later poets directly or indirectly.

Actually according to the critic, Michael could not bring the feeling of western literature in ours. It is Tagore who had instilled the blood of western literature through the veins of Bengali literature.

"In our literature the rebirth of myth was done not by Michael but by Rabindranath".

Bose remarked justly that the poetic writing is successful if the tale of the myth is associated with the present life and in the writings of pre-Rabindra poets, it is not available.

2. Ibid. P-31
Bose said that although Michael declared, "I despise Ram and his rabble", but practically Michael could not prove it in writings. Michael's fascination with the greatness of Ram and Sita are noticeable in the lines of the 'Meghnad badh'.

Bose opined that the heroism of Ravan was not lively even for once from the first to the last of the poem.

In modern sense, Ravan loved Sita. But in Michael's imagination not even a hint of this inference is noticeable. On the other hand, Ravan's purpose in stealing of Sita and getting killed by Ram, in consequence was a means to earn his own salvation.

Bose said that Michael neglected the possibility of the greatness of Ravan blindly. "The unmanly behaviour of Lakshman, the killing of Bali, the defeat of Ravan by Ram, the great in polotics - these weapons against the beggar 'Raghava' were not utilised by Michael. Even the cruel injustice of the killing of Meghnad was wiped out from our mind by expressing the love of Ram by the gods of heaven".

Bose ultimately remarked,"although Bengali is his mother tongue, Michael from his boyhood despised Bengali language and could not enter into its depth".

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3. Buddhadeva Bose - Sahityacharcha (1954) P-34
karechhen, kakhano tar marme prabesh karenni). Bose remarked, "Michael's very short literary life passed with the study of the body of Bengali language, he could not get glimpse of its soul". (bangla bhashar abayaber adhyanei katlo tar atithrasna sahityik jiban, tar praner sandhan pelen na).

According to the critic, Michael's promise was to follow Milton but he fell on the clutches of Pope. What Wordsworth said about Pope that he (Pope) did not write with his eyes on the subject, - is appropriate in the case of Michael also.

Michael could not only understand the nature of Bengali language but he also blundered in selecting the idea of literature. He wanted to write an epic, although it was beyond his capacity.

Bose said that being a great pandit in western language, it was out of his realisation that in modern times, the place of epic was occupied by prose novels.

Young Tagore called the 'Meghnad badh' as a poem-novel justly according to the critic.

Michael could neither follow the Indian tradition nor the western and that marred the 'Meghnad Badh'.

"Yet Bose said ultimately it must be admitted that Michael is one of the powerful figures of Bengali literature".

(tabu ekatha mantei habe ye michael shaktidhar purus)

5. Ibid. P-35, 36
6. Ibid. P-36
Bose found Michael, a poet of artificial style and out of the tradition of Bengali poetry.

Michael's 'amitrakshar' is the introducer of the new birth of Bengali metre but the real 'amitrakshar', he find in the 'Nishphal Kamana' of Tagore according to the critic.

Of course Bose admitted that "Michael is a fully conscious artist and he was not only the discoverer of the mystery of compound consonant (yuktabarna), but he was aware of the fruitful use of vowel and consonant".

Bose appreciated justly the gravity of the prose of 'Hector badh' and remarked that if Michael would write it in prose, probably he would be the creator of Bengali novels.

Bose's criticism of Michael reminds us of Tolstoy's attack on Shakespeare. The genius of Michael was not whole heartedly supported by Bose. Another point we may note, is that Bose did not get much interest in Michael because Michael's lyrical genius was less than expected.

However literatures of the different ages cannot be evaluated on the same basis though the demerits noticed by the critic are powerfully presented.

Powerful critics may sometimes enliven obsolete or

8. Ibid. P-42
neglected literature as much they can reject established ideas about important literature and create new value judgement.

Bose then criticised Pramatha Chowdhury (1870-1946) as famous in the Bengali literature for his prose work. "Among the younger writers it is only Pramatha Chowdhury who has directly influenced Rabindranath". (bayokanishtha lekhakder madhye rabindranather upar pratya-kshabhbabe prabhab bistar karte perechhen ekmeta pramatha chaudhury)

But Pramatha himself was not influenced by Tagore. Bose gave importance to 'Sabujpatra' as Rabindranath enthroned its 'chalitbhasha' the place of Pramatha Chowdhury was established in Bengali prose.

"Pramatha Chowdhury has established this language, which is our heart's language, in which we find dispersion of new lustre daily, the possibility of which is still un-ending, this is his great achievement".

(ei bhasha ya amader praner bhasa, yate naba naba aher bichchhuran amara pratidin dekhte pachchhi yar sumbate na ekhano atirikta mane hay, take pramatha chaudhuri bengla sahitye pratishthita karlen, e tnr ek mahath kirti).

Bose said that the quantity and quality of recent 'chalitbhasha' prose indicate that though Pramatha broke the ice, Tagore set the stream flowing.

In his 'Galpa Sangraha' (collected stories), we

10. Ibid. P-28
meet the delightful liars and rogues, eminently companionable ghosts, women of rare beauty, youths carved out of animated bronze, cranks, parasites, charlatans etc.

Bose notices, though provokingly modern in his essays, his stories are of old world romance of dangerous living and abounding animal spirits.

Two cities, Calcutta and London figure in his stories, the latter more vividly than the former, but the world of his fiction is really that of Bengal’s literate gentry, decadent, yet retaining some traces of court culture.

Again Bose remarked refuting his original remark, "Although the establishment of 'chalitbhasha' is a great achievement, it is not the main achievement, the important thing about him is that he is an unblamable artist in prose".

(chalitbhashar pratishtha mahatā kirti haleo ekmatra, emanki pradhan kirtio nay. tna Samparke bara katha et ye gadye tini anindya samilpi)11.

Pramatha is really the owner of a style. His prose is economical, cultured and jolly.

Bose sympathised with the writer as he did not get the proper reception from the general readers. In a sense he is an author for authors. Pramatha never sang a song of revolt, never drew a picture of imaginative heavenly world. Hence though canonised in select circle he could not be popular in Bengal.

In respect of both character and setting, he is attracted by the out of the way; the scene is often laid in odd corners, in railway trains, in hotels and along the road.

Bose remarked that in Bengali his fore-runner was Bharatchandra. Kaliprasanna Singha and Ishwar Gupt also helped him a little. Due to luck, he was attracted with French prose. The romantic English could not move him nor he was influenced by Tagore. 

Bose has also evaluated his short story. In his short stories there is no artificial classification of human nature: there the heroines of dream are lunatic, liars are loveable, the intellectuals are mere orators and warriors, singers and bidushakas are the real actors and actresses of the epic and in their world no difference is visible between the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, conservative and progressive, and the partiality is only expressed towards the basic humanity which is not a partiality at all.

This estimation of Pramatha Chowdhury's literature is very brilliant though the critic seldom substantiates his views with details. It appears from this sort of writing by the critic that his commentaries are meant for those readers who have already grasped literature in its proper form.

*The establishment of Bengali modern 'challabhati', which was started by Pramatha Chowdhury, was improved by Tagore.

12. a) Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-21  
b) Cf Buddhadeva Bose - An Acre of Green Glass (1948)P-36
Buddhadeva Bose gave importance to Abanindranath Thakur (1871-1951) as a writer of stories meant for the children. His books 'Kshirer Putul', 'Alor Phulki etc. are appreciated by the critic. The experience of adult hatred, jealousy, love etc. have been instilled into the stories meant for the children are also enjoyable by the adults. In his stories universal feeling has been brought.

The critic has compared Abanindranath with Anderson. The conspiracy of the Asuras against the Suras, the strength of the demons against light, the spirit of the man, the hypocrisy of the woman and the sacrifice of the woman etc. are found in the 'Alor Phulki'.

But the critic did not give much importance to Abanindranath Thakur as a writer of prose. But other Bengali critics gave importance to him as a prose writer.

Bose then criticised Rajshekhar Bose (1880-1960), who first appeared in the literary world under pseudonym of Parshuram. Rajshekhar effected the rare combination of the savant and the artist; he was as much interested in word-science as in the word-art. He was the translator of the 'Ramayan', 'Meghdut' and 'Mahabharat'.

The critic gave importance to his prose and said "The establishment of Bengali modern 'chalitbhasa' which was started by Rabindranath and Pramatha Chowdhury, was complete in the hands of this modern-minded old man".

(adhunik chalit banglar pratishtho - ye-kaj arambha kare-chhilen pramatha chaudhuri o rabindranath - ta sampurna

Bose opined that Rajshekhar's comic sketches are firmly built on satire, but that satire is gentle. Buddhadeva appreciated his 'Ramayan' and 'Kanakacharita'. These two books are important in Bengali literature.

In humorous sketch, Bose said that until now there has not been a writer like him to emerge the horizon of the Bengali literature. His style is superbly plain, with just a hint of the mock-heroic, just the shadow of an occasional wink, and knowing that dramatic exaggeration is inseparable in satire.

Bose remarked that Sukumar Roy (1887-1923) had a more matured mind than Satyendranath. His stories have now more or less passed into oblivion. His stories meant for children are enjoyable by the adults also. Sukumar Roy was indebted to two foreign writers - one is Lewis Carrol and the other is Edward Lear.

"In the world of Sukumar Roy there is also a hint of revolution".

The 'Abol Tabol' is a systematic volume of poetry.

15. Buddhadeva Bose - Sanga Nihsangata - Rabindranath (2nd Ptd. 1977) P-95
16. a) Ibid. P-96
   b) Cf Buddhadeva Bose - An Acre of Green Grass (1954) P-101
in which through funniness and pictures, he drew the child
and at the same time some pure poetic flavour is insti-
lied in the writings for the adult also. His writings
are all poems - best poems but in times he exceeds the
limit of poems and touches the poetry according to the
critic.\textsuperscript{18}

The critic said that Sukumar has the craft
in using metre and rhyme. 'Khai Khai' although written in
verse, it is really an essay or detached leaves of a dic-
tionary and at the same time full of colour and beauty.

Bose remarked that in technique, Sukumar Roy is
more matured, and his child literature is enjoyable by
the adult where-as most of the poems of Satyendranath are
readable by the adolescent.

Bose remarked, "The two poems 'Abol Tabol' (first
and last) faultless in metre and thought, always are
sparkling like jewels.
('abol tabol' duti ohhandeo bhave nikhmut, nitol duti
manir mato jhalmal karchhe)\textsuperscript{19}

Bose said that in 'Nature'and 'Rijnan Shiksha'.
Sukumar is mocking at the doctors and the scientists but
his mockery is not fatal.

"In 'Satpatra', the poet lashed the institution
of Kulinism".
(satpatre amader desher prachalita kaulinya prathar upar
besh ekta misti chabuk chaliyechhen)\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Buddhadeva Bose - Sahityacharcha, (1954) P-56
\textsuperscript{19} Buddhadeva Bose - Buddhadeva Basur Rachana Sangraha
1st volume (1975) P-586
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid. P-583
Buddhadeva Bose then remarked about Nazrul Islam (1899- ). "Nazrul is the greatest poetic energy in Bengali literature after Satyendranath Datta".

(bangla kabyer itihase satyendranath datter pare subchey bara kabitwa shakti nazruler) 21.

Bose said that his distinct individuality, he had proved and at once Bangladesh accepted him. Hot impetuous, extravagant, his verses careered through Bengal reaching remote corners with winged speed.

Bose remarked that what is remarkable about Nazrul is that he combined the qualities of fervid lyric poet and exciting verse pamphleteer.

Bose compared Nazrul with Sarat Chandra as both of them were immediately acclaimed by the common reader. Nazrul was not whole heartedly appreciated by the critic. In Nazrul's celebrated 'Bidrohi', he said, 'the moment I think, I am a child' - this has come to true in his life's work. For twenty five years, he wrote like a boy or youth without growing up of maturity. What Goethe told about Byron is true to the case of Nazrul also. 22

According to the critic, his songs as poems are on the whole more satisfactory than his poems. Many a lovely lyric has been marred by only one vulgar word.

Bose hesitated whether Nazrul would be occupying a permanent place in the history of Bengali literature. But Bose remarked that he was prepared to meet the posterity.

22. Ibid. P-130
with a garland of songs. 

Nazrul was hailed by other critics, not always on the literary ground and naturally a trend of adoration and exaggeration is noticeable in many writings. But Buddhadeva's remarks are quite matured and well-measured.

It was Buddhadeva Bose, who first discovered Jibanananda Das (1899-1954). The critic made him popular in the history of modern Bengali literature. He has elaborately discussed about the first volume of matured poems 'Dhusar Pandulipi' (Grey Manuscript) and the poem 'Banalata Sen'.

To make us acquainted with Jibanananda's love for Nature, he has brought in the criticism of 'Dhusar Pandulipi', Shelly, Rabindranath and Wordsworth - they are all in a sense the poet of nature. But the poet who can receive and express the whole life through Nature is a real poet of Nature according to the critic.

"Jibanananda Das among the modern poets is a poet of Nature in this special sense".

(adhunik kabider madhye ekjanke ei bishesh orthe jibanananda das)

In his earlier poem 'Jhara Palak', the critic observed the influence of Satyendranath Datta. In the poems of 'Dhusar Pandulipi' the critic noticed a primitive uniqueness. Angular in form, eccentric in diction, Jibanananda is so obstinately himself that he left the homeland

23. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) F-131
24. Ibid. P-27
of tradition in favour of a gnome-land of his own. The critic observed that there is a style in these poems which is particularly his own. There is not a real love poem in this volume. In the poems 'Nirjan Sakshar', '1333', 'Sahaj', 'Kaekti Line', it is the surrounding nature that has become greater and more lively in the poets imagination than the objects of love.

It is remarkable as the critic observed that Jibanananda was free from the direct influence of Rabindranath. He was bathed in the nineteenth century current of English poetry.

In the longer poems, 'Jiban' (Life) and 'Prem' (Love), the influence of Shelley and Keats and of Swinburne and Pre-Raphaelites are noticed by the critic.

Then the critic explained the range of his poetry. Jibanananda's world is one of tangled shadows and crooked waters, of the mouse, the owl and the bat, of deer playing in moonlit forests, of dawn and darkness, of icy sea-nymphs and the great sweet sea.

All things hidden, forlorn, furtive, all things wanton and non-human are favourite to him; and in the poem, 'Banalata Sen', when he (Jibanananda) praises a woman whose eyes are like birds' nests and who is seen in the dark 'as mariners, lost in far seas, glimpse the dim greenness of cinnamon islands'.

Rabindranath noticed the pictorial quality in his poetry. The critic remarked that Jibanananda is less

spiritual and more physical, and his work less intellectual but more sensous.

Then the critic tells about some technique and style of the poems of this volume. All the poems are written in payar-type metre i.e. like 'Balaka', but the tone is different.

Buddhadeva then in another essay 'Banalata Sen' discussed the characteristics of the poems of Jibanananda Das. "I think the most important characteristic of the poetry of Jibanananda is its tone and nothing more".

(jibanananda kepitar yet sabcheye baro baishishtye. hele amar mane hay seti - ekta sur, ar-kichhu na)²⁶.

He is most important because he has brought a new note to our poetry, a new tone of feeling and has turned our ears to a subtle melody. He has confined himself from first to last to a single metrical norm, and that is the oldest. He has yielded to the prose poem and made it as haunting as his verse.

The critic then noticed that 'Hay Chil' (O Kite), 'Banalata Sen' are the faultless lyric poems in recent Bengali poetry.

The tone which pervades throughout his poetry may, in the language of an English critic, be called 'renascence of wonder'.

He composed the poems with only native words avoiding Sanskrit words as per as possible. In the poetry of deepest feeling, before him no other poet has used native

and foreign words so efficiently and consistently.

The two poems 'Campe' and 'At Bachhar Ager Ekdin' are vivid and beautiful in the whole of Jibanananda's poetry, as the critic observed.

"As he is primarily a sensuous poet, so image is a main support to him, in his hand many times an adjective is also active like an image".

(yehetu tini mukhyata indriyabodher kabi, tai upama tnr pakshe ekta pradhan abalamban, tnr hate bisheshan o nek samay upamar mato karmishtha)\(^{27}\).

Bose said that in his 'Dhusar Pandulipi' "most of his songs and poems are related directly to seasons and over and above this, he could realise the 'Jiban Devata' mainly through Nature".

(yata kabita o gan likhechhen, tar beshirbahi to sojasoji hritu sangkranta. ta chhara, tnr jiban debatar upalatdhio mukhyata prakritir bhitar diye)\(^{28}\).

Bose said about chhanda of Jibanananda. Although the movement of the verse is not even, yet the difference with 'Balaka' becomes evident to the ear. Here we do not find the restlessness and the force of a strong and frenzied water current. It is like a slow-moving stream flowing over pebbles, slowly with occasional stops forced by dashes and commas resulting in a slow and lazy movement.

There is no hurry of too much enthusiasm but a feeling of weariness caused by pleasant exhaustion, as if

the tune of it has been coming and entering into our ears from a long distance.29

Bose said that he was thinking of the wonderful structure of 'Nagna Nirjan Hat'. The poem begins in darkness, for its background itself is darkness of 'Falgun' but yet the expressions like 'the transmitted sweet of the ruddy sunlight', and 'sweet wine in a blood red glass' etc. in the last part of the poem leave behind an impression of such bright richness that we do not feel that the poem contains everything but light and brightness.30

Bose then said that in the poem 'Campe', Jibanananda has brought in terrible images by following the story of hunting. He has presented various images of human love and sexual love, which have been spread out through such expressions as 'somewhere insect in the hearts of men' under the pressure of whose power the hearts of the mighty carnivores hunters, become pale like 'the deer killed by the vernal moonlight'.

Buddhadeva Bose nicely criticised the poems of Jibanananda.

Buddhadeva Bose then discussed about Sudhindranath Datta in his three essays - Sudhindranath: the poet, 'Orchestra' and 'Krandsi'. Sudhindranath Datta (1901-1961).

The critic first noticed the profound unity in all his poems; each is a part of a larger whole.

The strength of Sudhindranath's technique and style is also his weakness. He like Bishnu Dey, has been blamed

29. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-43
30. Ibid. P-49
for his obscurity. The difficulty we generally face with him is his highly Sanskritised vocabulary, again he often used some words in its original Sanskrit sense, a sense lost to Bengali.

Buddhadeva Bose then opined that if his (Sudhindranath's) aim is to charge words with maximum meaning and reduce their number, he is not to be blamed if the present Bengali vocabulary does not suffice him. The critic once gave importance to his technique than to his poetry:— "He is more a craftsman than a poet, the proof of his extraordinary credit has been expressed on each page of 'Orchestra'".

(karigarite tnar asamanya krititwer praman 'orkestra'r prati patay prakash peyechhe)31.

Another aspect which the critic noticed is that Sudhindranath Datta has used the 'payar' twisting it at his sweet will like Michael.

Then the critic has not overlooked to mention that the critical writings of Sudhindranath are illuminating.

Another aspect of S. Datta, which Bose has observed is that although the poet declared him to be a follower of Mallarme, yet in reality, he (S. Datta) was a devotee of Proust, the disciple of Mallarme.

Sudhindranath's creative writings came from his pen from 1930 to 1940. He translated seven Shakespeare's sonnets in one day also.

Bose said, "Poetry was in his (S. Datta's) nerves,

31. Buddhadeva Bose - Kale* Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-64
attraction to the word and metre was in the tissues of his body, there was no other way to go."

(tnar naritei kabita chhilo, deher tantute chhilo rak o chhander prati akarshan, tai anya kono yatho jabar tnr upay chhilena) 32.

The critic opined that it was due to this reason, he dame to the literary world. Though essentially a poet he is endowed with versatile genius.

Bose said that in the last twenty years of his life S. Datta did not write much.

The style of Datta in some particular sense may be classical, but he was a great romantic poet from the core of his heart.

Bose said as a proof he refered to two things - firstly intensity of emotion and abashed and personal cry of desire and pain in his love poems, the comparison of which we would not get in the ever - continuing Bengali literature, neither in Baishnab poetry nor in Rabindranath's.

Secondly, a feeling of pain without being able to realise God. It is also a pure romantic sign. Bose said that he does not want to compensate for the absence of realisation either of God or with man or history but his poetry tells us that he was thirsty for the age-old sweetness or amrita.

Bose further said that Datta's poetry is associated closely with the contemporary world and life but as

32. Buddhadeva Bose - Prabandha Sangkalan (1966) P. 15
his god is dead in his time he did not admit any false god.

Another thing has drawn the attention of the critic, that if we go through his poetry and find an obstacle but this may be removed if we go through the dictionary and our labour for this will be rewarded many times when we enjoy and discover that the unknown words have been properly utilised and utilisation of any other words in their place is out of imagination.

The structure of the poetry is so logical and arrangement of sentences so apt and the use of words so accurate that he would remain as an example of lucidity.

Bose said, "If he would not use obscure words in times, his poetry would not be so well-measured and logical, so densed and orderly, the his character would not be expressed".

Bose then discussed another aspects of S. Datta as critical writer. In the history of literature, some translations changed the flow of literature to a new direction.

Sometimes the translation has become a creation, it is not only the copy of foreign poem, but it enlarged the range of mother tongue and there are atleast two creative poet translators among us, Bishnu Dey and Budhadeva Bose.

33. Buddhadeva Bose - Sanga Nihsangata - Rabindranath (2nd Ptd. 1977) P-88
Sudhindranath Datta. And recently one book of translation, entitled Sudhindranath Datta's 'Pratiddhwani' (echo) has enriched Bengali poetry".

(srishtishil kabi anubadak amader madhye dujan antata achhen; Bishnu dey o sudhindranath datta; e ang samprati ekkhani anubad granthe o bangla kabyer samriddhi hatlo: sudhindranath datter 'pratiddhani')

Bose noticed that 'Faner'Dibawpna' (day dream) and vallery's 'Adinag' (first snake), the translation of this two famous and difficult poems is a great work in the Bengali language.

'Dibasawpna' is a poem of more than hundred rhyme ending lines and 'Adinag' has thirty one stanzas and in each stanza there are ten lines of equal size.

But one poem, in 'Pratiddhani' has been attacked by Bose seriously. The poem is 'Kaltari', the translation of D.H. Lawrence's 'On The Balcony'. In the language of Bose, it was a protest instead of translation of the original. Excessive use of Sanskrit words has robbed the poem of its real beauty and it has destroyed the original flavour of Lawrence's poem.

Bose said that Sudhindranath has made Holderlin, Rilke and Tomas Manne memorable for the Bengali in a line of his poem 'Sangbarta'.

Bose's textual criticism of Sudhindranath's poem

34. Buddhadeva Bose - Swadesh O Sangskriti (2nd Ed. 1960) P-166
'Naukadubi' appeared in the year 1966.

This analysis is very illuminating. He has analysed the underlying relation among the words, image and symbols. He has discussed general characteristics of Sudhindranath's poetry as for example - "A reply to a proposal, then a reply to the earlier reply and finally a resolution - this geometrical structure of his poetry is familiar to us".

(ekti prastab tar uttar,- sei uttarer pratyuttar abasheshe mimangsa, tar kabitar ei jyamitik gathan amader suparichita).

Although the progressive group admired the book 'Krandasi' (wailing woman), Buddhadeva Bose preferred 'Orchestra'. To him it is a wonderful book and in some respects it is without any comparison in Bengali literature. In respect of subject matter the critic opined that 'Krandaasi' is more matured. But 'Orchestra' is a unique book.

In the language of the critic:

It is a book of love poems, not the mystical love of the Baishnavas, nor the idyllic love of Rabindranath's 'Kshanika', but a blind, violent and terrible love, torn and bound in the body without relief, release or hope of release.

The setting of the poems, is unprecedented; because the lover is blase and past his prime and the mistress a young foreigner, and her country is the place of action. In these poems, Sudhindranath Datta has joined the passion of the youth to the contemplation of maturity.

36. Amarendra Chakraberty - Kavita Parichay (4th Ed.) (Ed.) Anthology (Shraban, 1373 B.S.
37. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-72
Cf Buddhadeva Bose - An Acre of Green Grass (1948) P-65
Separation in Indian poetry is traditionally sweet and serene but to this poet according to the critic, separation is infernal and serenity death. To this critic, 'Orchestra' is breathless with pain, pain of memory which the poet can neither bear nor bear to think that time will deaden: it is heavy with the burden of Fate.

Sudhindranath Datta boldly collected the words, even the lines from Rabindranath Tagore and used the same in his poetry without any hesitation. This sincerity of the poet is admired by the critic.

The critic further observed that the poet Sudhindranath Datta has expressed very clearly in his poetry that Tagore lives in him.

The critic said that the 'Orchestra' is a poem of love but it has no courtship, no voyage, no happiness, no sweet sadness. The beloved has nothing but the body to give and the lover has nothing but the remembrance of the body.

Here the critic reminds us of the physical love of Yaksha of the 'Meghdut' justly.

Buddhadeva Bose then discussed about Annada Shankar Roy (1904— ). Annada Shankar Roy is a novelist as well as a poet. Bose said that he (A. Roy) adds to his essays a dramatic vividness, and a sensuous rhythm.

For these qualities, rare in combination, Annada Shankar, whether in essay or fiction, is one of the best
prose writers in the whole of our literature. He adopts full advantage of the brook like, dancer like qualities of the language. He avoids both Sanskrit and circumlocution, but free with metaphor.

The only fault, Bose noticed that at times his prose glistens too much and dances to a rhythm too quick for lyric verse.

Bose is trying to find the lyric quality of Annada Shankar's poetry here.

Bose opined that though not of 'Sabujpatra' group, Annadashankar is the only deciple of Pramatha Chowdhury and he represents the logical development of Pramathean prose.

Bose said, "Annadashankar's place as a writer of prose in modern Bengali literature is in the first raw".

Buddhadeva said that Annadashankar is the first of our modern Bengali poets who has published his collection of poems before he has reached forty.

He (A. Roy) is the owner of a Lucid, bright and beautiful prose style. In his prose there is a magic by which one can enjoy it as a work of art, although his view differs about the sayings of the writer.

'Pratham Sakshar' (First Signature) and 'Nakhi' (Piece of Coloured Thread Round The Wrist) are two parts

38. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-114
of 'NatanaRadha' (New Radha).

Buddhadeva said that the poems of this volume, are composed out of emotion of new youth. The poet will enjoy fully this universe, is expressed in these poems in various metre and rhyme. The hint of maturity is found since his composition of the third volume 'Ekti Basanta' (One Spring).

Annadashankar is urbane, highly sophisticated European. One of the most important 'influences' in him is England, where he spent a part of his student life. He wrote his first book travel-diary of Europe. In his fiction, the scene often is laid in England and the characters oftener women than men, are European.

Bose said that this European inclination has been balanced by a number of other interests - his more than academic pre-occupation with Vaishnavism and the Benachian way, his deep absorption in Rabindranath and passion for the jonglears of old Bengal.

Bose noticed that his vision is large and work varied than those of his other contemporary novelists. Annadashankar, knowing that merely being alive is not enough, and life means only what one can make it to, has sought mastery over his material instead of remaining its passive agent.

Bose found in him no waste or blasted hopes, but a complete course, at least an autumnal fruition of Spring flowers, which is by no means in evitable with Bengali authors.
Bose noticed that his fiction falls in two divisions: his one novel in six thick volumes, and his novelettes and short-stories and in the whole there is not a single page which lacks quality of fine prose.

Bose then noticed that Annadashankar's witty and even naughty passages are more memorable than his pensive ones.

Bose observed that his short novels and short-stories admirably illustrate that light-heartedness can be consistent with seriousness of purpose, and lightness of structure does not indispensably mean slightness of texture. The gift of laughter is his but he is moderate in his use and able, in some at least of his beautifully proportioned short-stories to consummate it in tears.

Bose further noticed that throughout in his fiction as in his verse, there is a most happy blending of wit and poetry.39

Bose also discussed about his child literature.

According to the critic, Annadashankar discovered riddle rhymes (chhara) at the time of writing 'Urki Dhaner Murki' and thence forth he discovered himself in riddle rhymes. His literature meant for children are also enjoyable by the adults.

The critic also referred to the abstruseness of his poetry. The critic of course appreciated Annadashankar as his both a prose writer and poet and this is very rare in literature40.

40. Ibid. P-118
Novel attacked by poetry, is a particular sign of modern western literature. This is clearly noticed by Buddhadeva Bose in Manik Bandopadhyay (1908-1956).

Manik's first novel is 'Dibaratir Kabya' (poetry of day and night). Bose said that, "Really there is no exaggeration if it is called a long prose poem".

This is Manik's most immature work according to the critic. Manik with his four out of five volumes of novels proved that he was the most completely equipped writer in fiction.

We saw in him as Bose observed, the froth subside, the passion of youth controlled by a marvellous maturity, the boldness of a rebel balanced by an artist's sense of proportion. We found in him both the rhythm and the impulsion of energy; a dramatic, impersonal, almost intangible style; in his novel of East Bengal Boat-man, the most beautiful use of dialect in our literature.

Bose said that we found him (Manik) at home in all sections of the society and with a great variety of psychological types, his range equalled by his intensity and both given significance by a thought pattern.

Bose remarked that Manik's East Bengal rivers were much more than a novel setting, they were another horizon of the mind, his villages, described in universal terms, were yet clear in every local feature, he had both virtuosity and vision, he was both logical and magical.

41. Buddhadeva Bose - Swadesh O Sangakriti (2nd Ed. 1960) P-186
Here Bose explained befittingly the characteristics of the novels of Manik.

Bose said that Manik's more recent work reads like little manuals of sex-psychology. Manik's sex-stories are illustrations of psycho-pathological cases, rendered of course with great skill.

Bose further noticed that Manik's episodes are coarse and brutal in the reading, but more fundamental: they lack life and humanity, what he is talking about is the sex in the raw, not the real, but a hypothetical sex, not the complex.

Bose observed that Manik came to literary field of Bengal in a critical moment for a slight margin he could not be a writer of 'Kallol Era'. But his proper place was there.

Buddhadeva Bose found Manik's affinity with Premendra Mitra, Sailajananda Mukhopadhyay and Hubanashwa but the difference is that there was no conscious revolt in his writings.

Bose said, "Manik Bandopadhyay was great by his natural power". (Manik bandopadhyay swabhabik shaktite asamanya) 42.

Manik transcends from realism to naturalism and in his 'Padda Nadir Majhi' (Boat-man of the Padda River) and 'Putul Nacher Itikatha' (Legend of Doll Dance) there is faultless realistic pictures but we can easily perceive that some unnatural sign, the described men are, as if the

42. Buddhadeva Bose - Swadesh O Sangkriti (2nd Ed. 1960) P-186
representative of some others and due to this feeling they are getting some new dimension which are not factual but ideal.

Bose said, "Manik Bandopadhyay in his later life has placed his social conception above human valuation." (manik bandopadhyay uttar jibane tnar samajik chetanake manabik mulyabodher urdhe sthan diyechilen)⁴³.

Buddhadeva Bose then took up Bishnu Dey (1909-1982) in his criticism. Bishnu Dey, Samar Sen's elder and much more gifted and versatile a poet, was immediately pursuaded by this young poet to adopt the prose poem and begin to take interest in Marxian thought.

Bose remarked that these two poets admired and influenced one another, has yielded happier results to the elder than the younger.

Bishnu Dey's poetry is a record of development. With a keen sense of form and feeling for the texture of words, he started with triolets, ballads and light verse, soon transformed him as an exponent of contemporary life and became a serious and difficult poet.

Bose said about his poetic qualities, Bishnu Dey is polished, accomplished, dazzling, a fearless innovator of technique; self conscious and laborious.

He (B. Dey) is constantly revising his work, re-arranging earlier verses, adding fragments of occasional pieces in broader significance.

Bose then appreciated that in Bishnu Dey's
excellent translations and adaptations of foreign poets, from whom his borrowings are well-chosen and praiseworthy. Bishnu Dey is quoting lines from Tagore, changing them slightly and whimsically and placing them in inconsistent contexts are noticed by the critic.

Bishnu Dey is praised by many and many have defamed him. The difficulty to enjoy his poetry is his obscurity by which is meant his elliptical manner, his literary allusiveness and his use of obsolete Sanskrit and weird English words.

Bose felt that in truth, Bishnu Dey has no more obscurity than the very nature of poetry demands. The critic showed the same outlook in his criticism of the poetry of Sudhindranath Datta.

Bose observed that the weakness of Bishnu Dey's poems is that, his grammar is careless and sometimes though not always, he indulges in an incoherence in orderless placing of lines and stanzas. Here Bose explained the demerits of Bishnu Dey's poetry.

Yet, Bose appreciated that the lines of his (B. Dey) poems are luminous and stanzas echoing. The great virtue of Bishnu Dey's poetry to Bose is a haunting music of the poet. Bishnu Dey's poem "Ghor Saoar' (horse man) is a first class poem, it is one of the great poems in Bengali of the present age".

(ghor-saoar' ekti pratham shrenir kabita, bartaman yuger bangla bhashar anyatama shrestha kabita)⁴⁴.

⁴⁴. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-76
Bose opined that this poem may be a glorious one in any language. In the poem the rise and fall of the sound is so accurate, blending of drama and lyric is so faultless that the poem is haunting in the mind of the reader like a complex and grave song.

The critic admitted that he is feeling uneasiness when going through the difficult explanations of the poems of 'Ophelia' and 'Cressida'. But yet the critic found joy to have the beautiful images, technique of metre etc.

Bose appreciated the poem for its sound due to which Bishnu Dey may be lasting in Bengali literature.

In the above poem Bose admitted that he could not enter into the depth of Bishnu Dey's poetry due to obscurity and the sound of the poems and the lyrical qualities appreciated by the critic.

Buddhadeva Bose was an admirer of the poetry of 'Nishikanta' (1909-1970). The critic thought that Nishikanta's (field of 'Ishar' direction of Pandichery) 'Pandicherir Sahan Koner Prantar' is an important writing. The poet's renunciation due to practice of yoga and profound devotion to Sri Ramakrishna and Sreemata have been expressed in the poems of Nishikanta with the help of different types of metre and allegory.

The critic admitted, he is ignorant about the spiritual subject i.e. he was in favour of enjoying the poetry only.

Bose said, "Most of the writings of 'Alakananda' will be loved by even an irreligious reader".

(alakanandar teshirbhag rachanai nitanta adharmik pathakero)
bhalo lagbe)\(^45\).

His mastery over metre particularly in three-syllable metre drew the attention of the critic.

Bose said, "He is a craftsman to draw picture with words".

(katha diye chhabi ankte tini ostad)\(^46\).

The chief characteristic of Nishikanta among the modern Bengali poets, is the power to draw a wonderful supernatural pictures which are not known to the everyday world but the truth of which cannot be denied. In technique and style, he has followed all along the tradition but his imagination is wandering from the streets to the nook and corner.

Bose said that his individuality is very much distinct in the two poems, 'Garur Gari' (Bullock Cart) and 'Mahamaya'.

Bose observed that the materials by which a great poet might be made are available in Nishikanta.

Bose said, "He can see and can show also".

(tini dekhte janen - ebang dekhateo janen)\(^47\).

He finds joy with sensuous images and jingling words in his poetry. Then the critic remarked that there is possibility of 'Alakananda' being sectarian and unsuitable for the uninuntiated readers. Bose found the spirit of poetry in the poems of 'Alakananda'. Bose did not look after the spiritual side of this poetry.

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45. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-111
46. Ibid. P-110
47. Ibid. P-112
Buddhadeva Bose then remarked about Samar Sen (1916-1987) in his essay 'Samar Sen: Kayekti Kabita'. Bose said that Samar Sen who in his teens gave us his lovely poems, seems to be completely spent out with the first flush of youth. In his poetry the critic noticed the revolt and the youth is the time of revolt. In his poems of Samar Sen, the critic watched that the revolt against what is ugly, bad, or cruel in the surrounding life and society, religion, literature etc. was in his (S. Sen's) poetry.

At the same time Samar's poetry was composed in prose breaking the traditional system of composing poetry. Bose said that his prose-prosody was entirely a new one in the Bengali language. This young poet was never under the influence of Rabindranath's poetry, although in some poems, he consciously quoted the Rabindranath's poetry.

Then the critic opined that there are shortage of practical young men in our country and the poet like Samar Sen is the representative of the new youth whose revolt is against the current social and financial arrangement.

Then the critic observed that the tone is also new as the subject-matter of his poetry. The poems of the first part are lyrical. The way in which, Samar Sen used the prose-metre it was entirely his own. He discovered the tone of his prose-prosody. The poems are composed more or less on the same style.

Bose has noticed a hint of maturity in the poems of 'Kayekti Kabita' (some poems) although they are small in
size. Modern city life was actually represented in his poetry.

Bose then discussed about the poet, Subhash Mukhopadhyay (1919– ). According to the critic, Subhash has quite succeeded in suffocating the poet in him with the gas of political propaganda. He has proved to be a powerful writer writing only few poems in his 'Padatik', his first collection of poems. The critic observed that for two reasons he is famous in our modern literature.

Firstly he is the only poet in Bengal who does not start his poetic career with love poems, even there is no poem in his store which is related to nature and secondly his technique and style are of a great poet.

The critic noticed that it is a social characteristic that a modern poet in youth has not written poems of love and of nature.

According to the critic, the atmosphere of the Bengali literature of 'Kallol Era' was changed by certain poems and poets. This question may be argued.

Subhas Mukhopadhyay's desire for freedom was not for one but for the whole human society. There is no any other definition of his freedom except equality and close union.

The powerful modern writers have sung the songs of social revolution. Subhash has shown this vivid example in each page of 'Padatik'.

48. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-81
Bose wrote a criticism on the poems of 'Padatik' in seventeen pages in the 'Kabita' Paush sangkhya in 1347 B.S. 49

Bose then discussed about the poetical qualities of 'Padatik'.

Satyendranath once kept us charmed with his graceful metre. But in such type of writings of Subhash there is a lilt and which is entirely his own.

The loud voice and speech-like or oratory lines are heard in many poems of 'Padatik' according to the critic. His sayings directly reaches to the heart of the reader. 50

The credit of the poet is that although he speaks loudly, his tone is not perverted or deformed.

The two poems 'Badhu' (Bride) and 'Prastab' (Proposal) drew the admiration of the critic.

Bose said, "Subhash Mukhopadhyay is a craftsman in both the metres - three-syllable and payar".

(tin matra o payar, du-rakam chhandei subhash mukhopadhyay ostad) 51.

It is difficult to play on a three-syllable metre, but Subhash has joined a new tone in that. In the two poems 'Badhu' and 'Prastab', satirical lightness is concealed but the emotion is not out of limit. In 'Badhu' there is a comparison of simple village life and modern city life. To ore's 'Badhu' has not been ridiculed here, she has been extended to the twentieth century life.

50. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-85
51. Ibid. P-85
Amiya Chakraborty is the most widely travelled Bengali poet. Rabindranath, a tireless traveller in the body, was in spirit, inalienably Bengali; his works, of the world in spirit, is in body entirely Bengali.

In this respect, as the critic observes, Amiya Chakraborty offers a perfect contrast to his Master. In the words of the critic:

He has quite an un-Tagorian habit of using his mind as a camera which he clicks on ports and plains and cities: but the pictures he brings out are coloured and motionless.

The expression is illuminating and true to the nature of Amiya Chakraborty's poetry.

Then the critic observed that when one will read Amiya Chakraborty for the first time, he (reader) will be astonished by his strange landscape, strange language, strange faces. One will be compelled to tell him cosmopolitan, even an accustomed wanderer, but the critic further notices that his hunger for the world is, at the bottom, balanced by a consciousness of ancestral traditions. Amiya Chakraborty speaks our tongue but with a slightly foreign accent, is too much attractive.

"Among the contemporary Bengali poets Amiya Chakraborty is the most spiritual poet" according to the critic. (samakalin bangladesher sabcheye adhyatmik kabi amiya chakrabarti)\textsuperscript{52}.

According to the critic, Amiya is definitely a modern poet. There is a new prose rhythm in most of his poems. It

\textsuperscript{52} Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-99
is half verse and half prose, with rhymes meant to be heard rather than seen and effects an inquisitive blending of everyday speech and archaic words.

The critic said that Amiya has a technique of dropping verse and leaving phrases unconnected and this often gives an intriguing charm to his lines.

The critic appreciated the picture of foreign atmosphere of the ship going towards Europe and some pictures of Lahore and Calcutta are also vivid in suggestion. Amiya's images and allegories of his poetry are associated with the life of modern man. The poem 'Samudra' is an example.

"The greatest virtue of Amiya is that he is a modernist".

(tini ye adhunik, eitei thar sabcheye baro gun)53.

Amiya was busy on the experiment of creating new language and metre and his speciality also lies there.

On the background of the poems of 'Parapar', there are Bengal, India, Europe and America. The critic said that in his writings, the flesh and blood is less and in this respect, his writings are more pure than Rabindranath's according to the critic.

The critic said that Amiya is the only poet, in whose writings the women could not enter with their body. This may be argued.

Amiya is spreading over poetic rhetorics through prose. Bose appreciated Amiya's poetry on the whole.

In Yatindranath Sengupta (1294-1361 B.S.), the critic observed that the will to come out of the influence of Tagore was clearly perceived in his poems. The new thing Bose discovered in him is that he was the most brilliant bridge between Tagore and the modern poets. His (Sengupta's) 'Marichika' and 'Marushikha', are two important poems.

Bose said that Yatindranath proved, "The poems would not lose their identity even if they come out of the realm of organised metre and sophisticated diction". (parishilitha bhasha o subinysa chhander baire chale eleo kabitar jat sayna)54.

In 'Marichika', the three syllable-metre in somewhat the technique of prose was adopted unevenly. The definite and well-formed style of this poem, we find in the poems of 'Amabasya' of Achintya Kumar. Yatindranath has a different outlook atleast different from Rabindranath according to the critic.

Among the contemporary Bengali poets, Yatindranath has some influence in regard to the form of poetry and not the idea of poetry55. Buddhadeva remarked here justly.

The pessimism brought by Yatindranath was new but at the same time artificial.

Buddhadeva's opinion about Yatindranath is quite balanced because other critics have over-valued Yatindranath.

54. Buddhadeva Bose - Kaler Putul (New Ed. 1959) P-132
55. Ibid. P-133