



Voices Of The People: Bengali Alāpan-Sāhitya And Anukulchandra

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ABSTRACT

Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya* (conversational literature) represents a distinctive literary tradition rooted in oral expression, everyday speech, and the lived experiences of common people. This research paper explores the development, nature, and cultural significance of Bengali conversational literature with special focus on the role of Anukulchandra as a formative influence in shaping its spiritual, social, and moral dimensions. Unlike classical or elite literary forms, *Alāpan-Sāhitya* gives voice to ordinary individuals, reflecting their struggles, beliefs, social conflicts, and ethical concerns through simple, direct, and emotionally resonant dialogue.

Anukulchandra's teachings and discourses contributed significantly to this tradition by transforming dialogue into a vehicle of spiritual guidance, social reform, and collective consciousness. His emphasis on accessible language, moral responsibility, and human unity enabled spiritual philosophy to reach the masses without the barriers of scholasticism. Through *alāpan* (informal dialogue), profound ideas were communicated in an intimate, persuasive, and culturally rooted style.

This study highlights how Bengali conversational literature functions as both a literary form and a social document, preserving the voices of marginalized communities while promoting ethical awareness. By examining its structural features, thematic concerns, and historical context, the paper demonstrates that *Alāpan-Sāhitya*, enriched by Anukulchandra's influence, occupies a unique space between literature, spirituality, and popular culture, continuing to shape Bengali thought and expression.

Keywords: Bengali Alāpan-Sāhitya, Anukulchandra, Folk Discourse, Popular Spirituality, Oral Tradition, Social Reform, etc.

Introduction

Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya*, or conversational literature, occupies a unique position in the cultural and literary history of Bengal. Rooted in oral traditions, everyday speech, spiritual dialogue, and community interaction, this form of expression reflects the lived experiences, beliefs, and emotional worlds of ordinary people. Unlike classical written literature, *Alāpan-Sāhitya* thrives in spoken exchanges, through sermons, informal dialogues, spiritual discourses, songs, and narrative conversations passed down through generations. It represents the collective voice of the masses and serves as a living archive of social realities, ethical values, and cultural consciousness.

Within this vibrant tradition, Anukulchandra stands as a significant spiritual and cultural figure whose teachings and dialogues profoundly shaped modern Bengali conversational discourse. His philosophy reached the people not through complex textual treatises but through simple, direct speech, everyday metaphors, and emotionally resonant conversations. Anukulchandra's mode of expression transformed spiritual thought into accessible lived wisdom, allowing even the illiterate and marginalized sections of society to engage with deeper existential and ethical questions. Through his spoken words, he bridged the gap between philosophy and daily life, making spirituality an integral part of social practice.

This research paper examines the intersection of Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya* and the thought-world of Anukulchandra, focusing on how conversational literature becomes a vehicle for spiritual instruction, social reform, and cultural continuity. It explores how the oral nature of Anukulchandra's teachings preserved the

essence of folk speech while simultaneously introducing a new philosophical depth rooted in devotion, discipline, self-purification, and collective responsibility. His dialogues function not merely as religious sermons but as living conversations that continuously engage communities across time.

By analysing the structure, language, themes, and social impact of these conversational traditions, this study seeks to highlight the role of *Alāpan-Sāhitya* as a democratizing literary force. It also situates Anukulchandra as a transformative voice within this tradition—one who redefined the role of spiritual discourse in modern Bengali society. Through this exploration, the paper aims to demonstrate how spoken literature continues to shape cultural identity, moral values, and collective memory in Bengal.

Description:

In this paper, we aim to study and analyse the growth of Bengali conversational literature with special emphasis on dialogic or conversational style. Until now, this branch of literature has remained largely unexplored and has not received enough attention from scholars and researchers.

The poetic form known as *alāpan* (informal conversation) may appear simple or ordinary, yet it has not lost its artistic value. Even today, it retains poetic depth, emotional richness, and aesthetic beauty. In this context, the contribution of Anukulchandra is especially significant. He played an important role in expanding and popularizing Bengali conversational literature. This study will mainly focus on his role and influence.

The word *alāp* means an exchange of words, thoughts, or feelings between two or more people. However, when such dialogue goes beyond daily necessity and offers literary pleasure and aesthetic experience, it becomes *alāpan-sāhitya* (conversational literature). The meaning and origin of this term can be traced in several Bengali dictionaries, such as Haricharan Bandyopadhyay's *Bangiya Sabdakosh*, Jogeshchandra Ray's *Bangala Sabdakosh*, Rajshekhar Basu's *Chalantika*, and Asutosh Dev's *Nutan Bangala Avidhan*.

If we trace the history of Bengali literature from its earliest phase, we find that dialogue has always been a vital element. The *Charyapada*, the earliest known Bengali text, already shows traces of conversational expression. During the medieval period, this feature became more prominent. In *Srikrishnakirtan*, one of the most important literary works of that time, the characters Krishna, Radha, and Barai engage in continuous dialogue. Similarly, many *mangal-kavyas* such as *Manasamangal*, *Chandimangal*, *Dharmamangal*, *Annadamangal*, and *Sibayan* also contain rich dialogic elements.

In modern Bengali literature as well, dialogue has remained a powerful literary technique. Works such as Michael Madhusudan Dutta's *Meghnadabadh Kabya*, Swami Vivekananda's *Swami-Sisya Sambad*, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Dharmatattwa*, and Rabindranath Tagore's *Panchabhuta* are structured mainly through dialogue. However, conversational literature achieved its highest refinement in Sri Ramakrishna's teachings. Mahendranath Gupta's *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* stands as a landmark work in the history of Bengali *alāpan-sāhitya*.

Through dialogue, literature gains emotional depth, philosophical clarity, and aesthetic beauty. This tradition is not limited to Bengali alone but is deeply rooted in Indian literature. Ancient texts like the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Tripitaka* all use dialogue to convey profound ideas. To better understand the importance of conversational literature, we shall now refer to selected examples from both Indian and Bengali traditions, beginning with the *Ramayana*, one of the greatest epics of Indian literature, which contains numerous meaningful dialogic passages.

In the *Ramayana*, we find a dialogue between Kaikeyi and Ramachandra regarding King Dasaratha's promises, of which testimony finds as follows:

“Aho dding narhase devi baktung mamidrishan bacha |
Ahang hi bachnad raggya pateyomapi panike ||
Bhakkhya yeng bishang
Tikh nang pateyamapi charnabe |
Nishukta guruna pitra nrupena cha hiten cha ||
Tadh bruhi bachanang devi raggya jadabhikang khaitam |
Karigye pratijane cha ramo shirnavibhasate”¹

“O noble lady, you have spoken boldly and without fear in front of me.
Even I myself may be restrained by those words that rightly express truth and duty.
Though harsh in tone, sound advice must still be accepted.
Whether it comes from a teacher, a father, a king, or even a well-wisher.
So now, O lady, tell me plainly the words you think are most appropriate.
For in every act of judgment and decision, Rāma shines with discernment and wisdom.”)

Again, we find in a specific scene in the Ayodhya Kanda, in the ancient Indian epic, the *Ramayana*, where Sita determines to accompany Rama into exile, though Rama, wanting to safeguard Sita, advises her to remain behind, but Sita refuses, expressing her decision to accompany Rama and share his hardships, and tells Ramachandra in reply as follows:

“Ahang durgang gamishami banang purusbarjitang |

Nanamrigaganakirnang shardul gana shebitang ||
 Shukhang bane nibadshyami jthaeba bhabane pitu |
 Achintayamti trilokshangchintayanti patibratam ||
 Shushrushamana te nityang niota bhamacharini |
 Saha rangshe taya bir baneshu madhugandheshu ||
 Shargehopi cha bina baso bhabita jodi raghav |
 Taya bina narabaghrya nahong tadapi rochaye ||”²

“O noble lady, your speech astonishes even me. I would not be able to speak so perfectly. Food, shelter, clothing, discipline, given by the teacher, father, king, and well-wishers. Therefore, O lady, tell me clearly the path of duty. For Rāma shines with glory through his vow of truth.”

This verse praises the wisdom and moral clarity of a woman (most likely Sītā), acknowledging that her understanding of duty, discipline, and righteousness surpasses even that of others. It highlights the greatness of Rāma as a man of truth and unwavering moral commitment.

“I shall go to the forest, harsh and devoid of human comfort, filled with countless wild creatures and haunted by fierce beasts. I shall live happily in that forest, as if it were my father’s home. Let the three worlds think what they may of a devoted wife. Serving you daily with discipline and purity, living with you in the fragrant wilderness, O Rāghava, even the heavenly palace feels worthless without you. Without you, O mighty hero, I desire nothing at all.”

This is a deeply emotional declaration of Sītā’s devotion to Rāma. She willingly accepts exile, danger, discomfort, and hardship simply to remain by his side. It reflects:

In the Aranyakanda of the Ramayana, the dialogue-driven narrative becomes prominent in the episode following Lakshmana’s attack on Surpanakha. The conversation between Surpanakha and Khara is especially telling, revealing the psychological foundations of their actions and personalities. This dialogue is preserved in the following verses:

“Kah krishanaswarpamasinmasibishanyagasama |
 Tuduttavishomaponnamangulagren lilaya ||
 Devgandharbabhutanamshinang cha mahattanam |
 Kohoyomebangmahabirjyastangbirupang chokar ha ||
 Nihataswa moya shankha sharasangkritta marmono |
 Shafenong rudhirang kashya medini patumicchati ||
 Upalovya shonoi sangang tang meye shangshi tumaharshi |
 Jenotang durbiniteno bane bikramma nirjita ||”³

Here, we need to discuss the core texts of Indian literature, and in this connection, the Mahabharata holds a position of paramount importance. There are numerous instances of dialogic narration in the Mahabharata. A remarkable example in the dialogue between Dhritarashtra and Vidura can be found, which occurs upon learning that Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva have survived. The conversation is documented in the following verses:

“Ebang bidur vadre te yadi jibonti pandava |
 Sadhwachara tatha kunti sambandha dhrupaden cha ||
 Anyabaye bashorjat prakriste manyoke kule |
 Bratabidyatapabridha parthibanang dhurandharo ||”⁴

Vidura, in response, says as follows:

“Tang tatha bhashomanang tu bidura pratyabhasat |
 Nityam bhabatu te buddhiresha rajanchatang shama |
 Ektukatwa prajajou rajang bidura sayang nibeshanam ||”⁵

After the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Srimad Bhagavad Gita is the only text that merits special focus in the context of literary dialogue.

The Gita is fundamentally a prolonged philosophical dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, organized into eighteen chapters. The text progresses through a series of probings posed by Arjuna and the explanatory

responses provided by Krishna. One descriptive example is found in the Karma-yoga chapter, where Arjuna raises the following question:

“Atha keyono prajuktahoyong papang charati purusha |
Anichannapi barshaneya baladiba niyojita ||” ⁶

Krishna’s response highlights the inner turmoil inherent in human nature, of which testimony appears as follows:

“Kama esha krodha esha rajagunsamudbhaba |
Mahashana mahapapoma biddhenamiha bainiram ||” ⁷

In the same way we find in the Aksara Brahma Yoga chapter, Arjuna asks Krishna a few questions to clarify metaphysical ideas related to the self and what happens now about death:

“Adhijagya kathang kohatra dehehasminma dhusudan |
Prayankale cha kathang geyohashi niyotatmavi ||” ⁸

Sri Krishna replies to Arjuna in the following manner:

“Akhsharang Brahma parmang swabhabohdhyatmamuchyata |
Bhutabhabadhbhabkaro bisharga karmashangito ||” ⁹

When we shift our attention to the exact circumstances of Bengali literature from the larger landscape of Indian literature, we find that dialogues or conversations between characters are a common feature. These dialogues sometimes are straightforward, and sometimes they are delicately woven. We also find remarkable illustrations of dialogues or conversations between characters in one of the pioneering works in Bengali literature, the Charyapada. The eighth number pada, for instance, contains verses that insinuate an exchange suggestive of oral communication:

“Bahut kamili gayan ubeshe |
Geli jam bahurani kaese ||
Khunti upari melili kachchi |
Bahut kamoli satguru puchchi ||” ¹⁰

In such a way, the tenth number pada also shows signs of adopting a conversational tone, which may be exemplified as follows:

“Ha low dombi toh puchmi sadbhabe
Aishoshi jashi dombi kahori nabe ||” ¹¹

The most notable text, ‘Sri Krishnakirtana,’ by Bari Chandidas, is a prominent example that displays direct dialogic structuring. The narrative framework of this text depends heavily on communications among three central personalities: Krishna, Radha, and Barai. A segment from the Vrindavan Khanda text effectively demonstrates the use of dialogic mode through conversation between Radha and Barai as follows:

“Tomma na dekhiya radha bikal kanai |
Ebe ammak pathailo tor thai ||
Tommak buyilo kanai binoyebachane |
Brindaban ashi more deu darshone ||
Ammar shashuri borai boro khorotoro |
Sab khan rakhe more ghorer vitor ||
Kemone jaibo barai tar brindabane |
Manot guniya bol upaye apone ||
Brata chal kori ful tulibak tare |
Brindaban jasi tok kichu nahi dore ||
Sakhi sab shange kori chaliholi radha |
Tobe ayihoner maye na koribo badha ||
Brater morom aihoner maye jane |
Prabadhite naribo tak ye sab bochone ||” ¹²

The dialogue format remains evident in later Bengali literary genres, furthermore, including versioned or translated narratives and Mangalkavyas. Krittibas Ojha's Ramayana is a prominent figure among the translated works, holding a unique position of significance. The Sundarakanda section features a memorable dialogue between Hanuman and Ravana, demonstrating a significant exchange between the two characters as follows:

“Dasanang boliche tomar nahi dor |
Satwa kori kaha re kahar tumi char? |
Swarupete kaha jodi khasaba Bandhan |
Mittha jodi kaha tobe bidhiba jibon ||
Hanuman bole ami Sri Ramer dut |
Bhangilam tomar kanon se adbhut ||
Bandhan maninu toma dekhbar mone |
Sri Ramer kotha kohisuna sabdhane ||”¹³

Mukunda Chakraborty's poem 'Abhayamangal' contains multiple narrative sections where the poet includes conversations between different characters. An illustrative example can be drawn from the following versions:

“Addias koroye ashi chamrir ghota |
Dekhoho poshur raja sobar lechkata ||
Gandar kohoye ami boro dhukkho pai |
Khoregar karone mor more dui bhai ||
Kopi bole rae mui hoinu nirbangsha |
Kalketu bandhiya bechilo mor bongsho ||”¹⁴

In such a manner, in the medieval Sibayan corpus, there are many instances that encompass direct conversations between characters. The dialogue between servant Bhim and Siva is notably remarkable, as noted below:

“Prabhateuthia Bhim bhutnathe bhabe |
Chala har jabo ghar kaj nai chase ||
Jatra kale jotno kore korechish mami |
Ekbar tar tatwa na korile tumi ||
Hoimabati hare duhe hoye ek angga |
Cha cha mash chariya rohile priyo sangga ||
Mami mor sabash jatir beti bote |
Anutape toma shane lagiache hate ||
Toke dukkho dite mami moke dae sure |
Motorer mordone mushur gelo ure ||
Bhule mami bhritte mare bhan kore sab |
Shiv kahe suniya sebak mukho rab ||”¹⁵

For studying the use of dialogic expression in literature among the most influential pieces is the Maimansingha Gitika. Many of the pala ballads contained in this corpus feature ongoing conversations among characters. The cycle concerning the bandit Kenaram provides one such example, specifically in the episode narrating the transformative moment in his life:

“Jokhon gaila pita behola vashan |
Felia hater khanda kande kenaram ||
Gurugo kigan sunaila guru fire kou suni |
Suniya pagol hoilo pashonder prani ||
Kiba dhan debo guru kon dhan ache |
Tomare j dibo dhan ayisho mor kache ||
Bora vora dhan ami rakhiachi lukaiya |
Sat purush khaiba tumi grihete boshia ||
Monussho maria ami kamaiyachi dhan |
Jibon voriya joto korchhi uparjan ||

Sei sab dhan ami dibo j tomar l
 Antakale sthan guru dio raja paye ll
 Vikkha na korio r bari bari ghuri l
 Jiboner kamai joto dibam ghoravori ll
 Thakur kohiche amar dhone karjo nai l
 J dhan paiyachi ami tomak janai ll”¹⁶

Correspondingly, the Kanka O Lila cycle also presents notable examples of the following dialogic style:

“Sunre bideshi Vai majhi mallagan l
 Koto na deshete tomra karo bicharan ll
 Pahare parbate jao taroni bahiya l
 Lagol paille bandhe amio kohiya ll
 Jahar lagiare ami hoilam unmadini l
 Nadir kinare kandi boshi ekakini ll
 Divas na jae re mor na pohaye rati l
 Monodukkho koiyo bandhe janaiyo minati ll”¹⁷

The conversation between Lila and the boatman illustrates a particularly sophisticated illustration of the dialogic structure. Dialogic representation is still used in present-day Bengali literature, highlighting a continuity of this literary technique from earlier periods to the present day. It is frequently utilized in intended pieces such as Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s, ‘Meghnadbadh Kabya,’ Vivekananda’s, ‘Swami-sisya Sambad,’ Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay’s, ‘Dharmatattva,’ and Rabindranath Tagore’s, ‘Panchabhuta.’

Meghnadabadh Kabya, one of the landmark texts of the modern era, contains a number of episodes of highly charged conversation. In the seventh canto of a literary work, there is a remarkable discussion between Lakshmana and Ravana that is worth noting or remembering:

“Etokkhone, re lokkhon— Kohila Soroshe
 Rabon, a ronokhetre painu ki tore,
 Noradhom? Kotha ebe debo bojropani?
 Shikhidhwoj shoktidhor? Roghukulopoti,
 Bh tor? Kotha Raja Sugriv? Ke tore,
 Rokkhibe pamor, aji?”¹⁸
 Lakshmana, in reply, tells Ravana

“Khotrokule jonmo momo, rokkhukulopoti,
 Nahi dori jome ami; Keno doraibo
 Tomay? Akul tumi putroshoke aji,
 Jotha sadhya koro, rothi, Ashu nibaribo
 Shok tobo, Preri toma putrobor jotha!”¹⁹

In Swami Vivekanand’s ‘Swami Shisya Sambad,’ there is a prolonged discussion between a master (or guru) and their disciple (or Shisya), possibly showcasing the teachings, questions, and discussions between them. Here, one person poses questions, while the other provides answers. The full composition stands as a crucial example of dialogic composition:

“Shishya - Mohashoy, apnar kripay sob bujhi; kintu kormer fere dharona korte pari na l
 Swamiji - kormo formo fele de l Tui-i purbojonme kormo kore ei deho peyechis, ekotha jodi Sotto hoy— tobe kormo Dara kormo kete, tui abar kenona e dehei jibonmukto hobi? Janbi, mukti na attogyan tor nijer hate royeche l Gyane kormer leshmatro nei l Tobe jara jibonmukto hoyeo kaj kore, tara janbi, porohitay kormo kore l Tara valomondo foler dike chay na; kono basona bij tader mone sthan pay na l”²⁰

Analogously, we find a back-and-forth exchange of questions and answers in Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay’s ‘Dharmatattva,’ between the guru and disciple. We find dialogue itself becomes the central form in this text. A brief example may be exemplified as follows:

“Shishya - Amader desher shikkhito somprodayer protti apnar eto kopdristi Keno?
 Guru - Ami kebol amader desher shikkhito somprodayer kotha bolitechilam na l Ekhonkar ingrejer shikkhai eirup l Amra je mohaprovudiger onukoron koriya, monushyojonmo sarthok koribo mone kori, tahadogero buddhi songkirno, gyan piradayok?

Shishya - Engrejer buddhi songkirno? Apni khudra bangali hoiya ato boro kotha bolite sahosh koren? Gyan piradayok?

Guru - ake ake bapu! Engrejer buddhi songkirno khudra bangali hoiyao boli! Ami goshipad boliya j dobak somudra bolibo emon hoite pare na j jati eksata kuri batshar dhoriya bharatbarsher adhipatta koriya bharatbashidiger sambandhe ekta kothao bujhilo na! Tahader onno lokkho gun thake sikar koribo ,kintu tahadigak prasasta buddhi balite paribo na!"²¹

If one were to highlight a major benchmark in Bengali dialogic literature, it would indubitably be Shri Shri Ramakrishna Kathamrita. The text is solely composed of dialogue. It documents the interactions between Sri Ramakrishna and his close circle of devotees and visitors who came to discuss a range of spiritual matters. A single passage from the text is illustrated as follows:

"Sri Ramakrishna — sudhu pandit ki hobe, jodi bibek bairagya na thake! Iswarer padaparda chinta korle amra ekti obostha hoy ! Tokhon poroner kapore pore jae, shir shir kore pa theke matha porjonto ki ekta othe! Tokhon sokol k trinogyan hoy! Panditer jodi dekhi bibek nai, isware bhalobasha nai, tahle take khorkuto mone hoy!

Daktar— Ram Narayan daktar hindu ki na ! Abar full chandan loe! Satta Hindu ki na !

Master (Swagata) --- Daktar bolechilen,ami shak ghontae nai!

Sri Ramakrishna (Daktarer proti) --- Bankim tomader ekjon pandit! Bankimer shonge dekha hoyechilo — ami jiggasha korlum, manusher kartabba ki? Ta bole, ahar, nidra, r maithun ! Ei sokol kothabarta sune amar ghrina holo ! Bollum j tomar e kirokom kotha! Tumi to boro chachra! Ja sab rat din chinta korcho, kaje korcho, tai abr mukh dia berocche! Mulo khelei mulor dhekur othe!"²²

Up to this point, we have tried to give a way of understanding dialogue and literature through its structure. Still, it is undeniable that the personality who perfected dialogic literature to full maturity is Anukul Chandra. He generated a large body of work of dialogic texts. There are 48 such works by Anukul Chandra, among which 2 volumes of Pratuldipta are still in manuscript form. His major works include:

1. Alochona - prashange (Total volumes- 23)
2. Katha - prashange (Total volumes -3)
3. Nana - prasange (Total volumes- 4)
4. Amio -bani
5. Dip- rakkhi (Total volumes- 11)
6. Islam- proshonge
7. Narir - pathe
8. Pratuldipta (Total volumes- 4)

Anukul Chandra's conversational texts are not constrained to just dialogue. Surpassing the demands of day-to-day life, these works also embody distinct literary dimensions. The writing at times uses metaphors to make intricate concepts easy to comprehend, and other times tells short stories to make theoretical notions relatable to general readers. Visual imagery is also present in several sections. In his vocabulary, he brings in new ways of thinking or expressing things, often recalling the etymological roots of words to uncover their core sense. Occasionally, the dialogue rhythm obtains an increased impact through his use of regional vocabulary, particularly the colloquial speech of the Panna region. From Anukul Chandra's dialogue, style writings, we present here a few illustrative examples as follows:

1. "Ami — Tini bodhidrumotole bodhi ba gyan labh korei to budhdho holen! Tarpor tini ja korlen ta to jogodhdhitay, tar nijer tate ki lav holo?

Shrishrithakur— Oi jogodhdhitay, oitei attohitay! Jokhon prokrito gyan hoy tokhon jogoter hit manei attohit! Tini jokhon jogonmoy, tai to jogoter hit korte eto akulota— ta na korle je purno, budhdhotto bojay thake na! Kajei setao budhdhotteri sadhonsworup! Oi sarthoporotatai sesh obodhi theke jay! Niswarthaparota - torota kichu not, borong boro swarthaparata! Sobi j ami, tobe r swartha chara ache ki? Ja kori tai nijer jonne, swar er jonne! Aro dekhun , kokhono newai swartha, abar kokhono dewai swartha! Joto proshar hoy, toto dewar swartha bere jae! Abar amakei ami dae, tar manei newa!"²³

2. Prosno — anubhutih pathe loy ashe sunte pai! Tar kotha to kichu bollen na! Onekei abar anubhutih obostha bisheshe obashmanashgocharan — er Kotha bolchen! Setai ba ki?

Sri Sri Thakur --- Loy hocche Sattar lin bhab! Emon bhabe mughdha hoye obosh hoye gelo;ja anubhab korche tai hoye gelo--- sei saruppe nimojjito hoye gelo! Adim ashokti jodi swarbatabhabe arthart swarbabidha sanskar o brittir bhetor dia otut o apran istanuragi na hoy tahle jokhoni se emontore oboshthae

jeye pouche jate tar oibritti mughdha anuranjane ranjita hoye othe, tokhuni oi rokom hote thake! Oi swaruppei satta nimojjita hoye nijhum hoe pore, bodh o chalana theme jae ei hocche loyer morkoj—obangmansgocharan, bakyo r mon dia eyotta kora jay na! Ei eyotta kora na geleo istanukjhok chetona k haria fele na!”²⁴

3. Prosno— mukti mane ki ?

Sri Sri Thakur — mukti mane ki kora anihillation noy k — brittived! R Jar ba jader jototuku ei brittived hoeyache, tini ba tarai toto tuku fit for every serviceable position to the environment hoben! R ei ved hoeyache— emon tara brittir sansporshe pariparshik jotoi attach hoy toto pariparshikker britti guli adjusted hoy, attaPrasad lav kore— tai tader kache surrender manushk mahiyan, gorioshi, gyanoman o premik koria tolen! Tai muktir tatporjo eikhane — aurthat environment amadigake tar moton kore bishlishta o bivokta korite pare na! Protteker hoyiyao tar boishishta otut thaken; tai sutor charidike jemon michirir crystal guli dana bhadhe, environment o tader charidike onontoro ekta dana badhia thaken — as if sab nia jeno ekta person! Tai tate manusher kache bhagobattar udbadhan hoy— take bhogoban bole! Ei jonnoi bodhoy baisnabera bolen — bhagoban e ek matro purush, ta chara r sab prakriti!”²⁵

4. “Monira (kar) — bhabmukhi hoye thaka Mane ki?

Shrishrithakur — bhabmukhi hoye thaka Mane howa mukhi hoye thaka! Cholay kritartho howar songket jeguli ache, oguli valo kore onushilon korte hoy! Ja bhab, vokti o onuragke pusto kore, takei amontron korte hoy, ar ja tate byaghat jonmay, take Amol dite nei!”²⁶

5. “Shorot da — Prokashanonda sarashwati, Sarbovoumo Bhattacharjee provriti boidantik chilen, tader moter modhye jeno kono opurnota chilo, Shrichoitnyadev jeno ta dhoriye dilen ebong tara take grohon korlen!

Shrishrithakur — Boidantik bhab Mane record of experience (gyan o oviggotar dolil) ora hoyto achieve (ayotto) korar poth thik obolombon korenni, seite choitonya mohaprobhu dhoriye diyechen! Bhokti lagei, bhoktipoth sohoj, susthu accurate (jothajotho) bhoktir rasta diyei jete hoy, tar songe boishistanujayi jhok thakei! Odwitobadeo gurubhoktir opor jor dewa ache! Noile egono Jay na!”²⁷

6. “Shorot da — Manush koshto pay Keno?

Shrishrithakur — Oggota ache bole! Manush nijer oggotar sworup jodi Puropuri dhore felte pare, tokhon tar nirakoron na korei pare na! Shudhu budhahir bujh jothesto noy, sotta diye upolobdhi kora chai! Oi dhorer upolobdhi asle budhdhodeber moto ulti ase— he grihokarok! ami tomake dekhote peyechi, tumi amake prolubdho kore ar grihonirman korte parbe na!”²⁸

7. Kalishostima — Apni roj gari dekhte jan Keno?

Shrishrithakur — Mone hoy eisob garite koto lok ase, koto lok jay, amio esechi— amio jabo!

Kalishostima — Apni o kotha bhabte jan Keno? O kotha bhabar apnar ki hoyeche?

Shrishrithakur kothar kono jobab na diye kalishostimar mukher dike cheye nirobe rohosso modhur vongite haslen!”²⁹

8. “Bikash da— Poribesho amader kharap kore fele! Bhalo kaj korte deyna!

Shrishrithakur — poribeshar chape tumi kabu hochcho tar mane tumi kichchu na! Tomar byaktittwo nei! Poribeshke ishtomukhi kore tulte hoy, ta na hole hoyna! Sincerity (okopotota) thakle sob hoy! Tar sathe tactful (kusholi) howa lage! Kothay ki kotha bolte hobe, kemon kotha bolte hobe, ta jana lage! Ister proti bhokti o bhalobasha thakle eguli sob apni ese jay! Istartho onunoyoni cholone obyosto howa lage, bujhli to?”³⁰

(“Bikash-da: “Our environment makes everything bad for us. It doesn’t let us do good work.”

Shrishrithakur: “If you are being dominated by your environment, then it means you are nothing, you have no personality of your own. You must shape the environment according to your will; otherwise, nothing will work. If you have sincerity (honesty of heart), everything becomes possible. Along with that, you must also be tactful (wise in action). You need to know what to say, where to say it, and how to say it. If there is devotion and love toward the Ideal, all these qualities come automatically. One must become accustomed to behaviour that is in harmony with the Ideal, do you understand?”)

Findings

The study reveals that Bengali Alāpan-Sāhitya (conversational literature) has been a continuous and powerful tradition from the earliest phases of Bengali literature to the modern age. From the dialogic elements of the

Charyapada and *Srikrishnakirtan* to the rich conversational structures found in the *Mangalkavyas*, dialogue has always served as a key literary tool for expressing emotion, philosophy, devotion, and social reality.

The findings also highlight that dialogue-based literature matured significantly in the modern era, especially through the spiritual discourses of Sri Ramakrishna as recorded in *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*. These works elevated everyday conversation into a refined literary and spiritual medium.

Most importantly, the research establishes that Anukulchandra made a distinct contribution to Bengali conversational literature by using simple, accessible spoken language to communicate deep spiritual, ethical, and philosophical ideas. His style brought literary dialogue closer to ordinary people and transformed conversation into a vehicle for moral education and social awakening.

Discussion

The discussion shows that *Alāpan-Sāhitya* functions as both a literary and cultural bridge between elite philosophical thought and common human experience. Unlike traditional poetic or narrative forms, conversational literature allows direct access to emotions, thoughts, and lived realities. It reflects society in its most natural verbal expression.

Anukulchandra's role becomes especially significant in this context. While earlier dialogic traditions were largely literary or devotional, Anukulchandra used conversation as a living spiritual method. His dialogues were not merely artistic expressions but tools for reform, devotion, discipline, and ethical clarity. Through direct speech, questions, and responses, he created a dynamic spiritual pedagogy.

The discussion also shows that Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya* is deeply connected with wider Indian dialogic traditions such as the Upanishads, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Buddhist Tripitaka, proving that dialogue has always been central to Indian literary and philosophical expression. Thus, Bengali conversational literature stands as part of a much larger Indian intellectual heritage.

Conclusion

This study clearly establishes that Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya* is not a minor literary form, but a vital stream of cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic expression. From ancient scriptures to medieval devotional poetry and modern spiritual conversations, dialogue has shaped Bengali literary sensibility in profound ways.

Anukulchandra's contribution marks an important turning point in this tradition. By transforming everyday speech into a medium of spiritual realization, he expanded the scope of *Alāpan-Sāhitya* beyond literary beauty into the realm of ethical transformation and mass spiritual engagement. His work demonstrates how conversational literature can inspire self-discipline, devotion, and social responsibility.

In fine, Bengali *Alāpan-Sāhitya* represents the true "voice of the people", where philosophy meets daily life through simple speech. The research confirms that Anukulchandra's role in this tradition is both historically significant and culturally transformative, ensuring that conversational literature remains a living and meaningful force within Bengali literary heritage.

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