

# A STUDY ON EXPRESSION OF COMPLEXITIES AND GLORIES TREATMENT OF MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIP

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## ABSTRACT

The idea of nationalism developed as a result of this newfound consciousness regarding one's freedom and ability to assert it. The majority of the novels written during the nineteenth century took their motivation from the inquisitive and open-minded nature of the Western world. Although the first English school was created in 1718 for the benefit of the children of the officers of the company, it took more than a hundred years for English education to become an official policy. This is despite the fact that the first English school was formed in that year. During this time period, missionaries created a significant number of educational institutions in order to teach English to the local population. A few establishments, such as the Hindu College, were established by individuals with a strong sense of public service. According to historians that M.K. Naik has cited, during the first three days of Hughli College in August of 1836, there were as many as 1,200 applications for admission. The Orientalists continued to put pressure on the government to support oriental education, but the Anglicists, led by Raja Rammohun Ray, were eventually successful in convincing the government to promote Western science and philosophy via the medium of English education. The arrival of the Western educational system was a significant turning point in the development of contemporary India. This was due to the fact that it prepared the way for a new consciousness to emerge among those Indians who had been taught in English.

**KEY WORDS:** *Expression, Complexities, Glories, Treatment, Man, Woman, Relationship.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

English colonial control in India, which lasted for over two centuries, is chiefly responsible for Indian literature in English. The literary work and the historical context from which it emerges are inextricably linked. Over the last 200 years, Indian culture has expanded immensely against western exploitation and colonization. It is a well-known truth that the English arrived in India under the guise of commerce but quickly understood that maintaining a strong political hold would significantly boost their profits.

Only the money generated from tax collection in the Indian colonies could support the Industrial Revolution in England. They then started to establish a colonial empire by annexing various lands in and around India. The agricultural self-sufficiency of the farmers was utterly destroyed by British administration, and the commerce in silk fabric suffered as a result of English factory-produced cloth being more widely and affordably accessible. The weavers and craftspeople lost their jobs and were forced to work on cotton plantations to support themselves. Millions of Indians experienced suffering, poverty, and death as a result of the comprehensive and systematic demolition and overhaul of the previous order.

After a few years of establishing colonial control, the English empire became involved in the contentious topic of integrating the English language into educational institutions. English was introduced to the Indian educational system in a landmark move that was seen as imposing not just the language but also a certain way of life and culture. Many reformers, particularly Raja Rammohun Roy, the Brahmo Samaj's founder, vehemently backed the movement to implement economic reforms that would open up new career possibilities in the government that needed an understanding of the English language. The production of "mimic men" through the Indian educational system, described by Macaulay, a member of the colonial Indian parliament, as "a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect," then began.

The colonists were innately racist, so they never saw the middle-class Indian intellectuals that the English had built for their own convenience as equals. "Defining themselves as the effective, moral, diligent, brave, and manly rulers of India, they started to describe Indians progressively as slothful, deceptive, and immoral." The English never offered Indians any prominent roles in the government because they believed they were too incompetent to rule themselves. The strong intellect that had developed in Bengal was destroyed by the division of Bengal in 1905, which was erroneously done for administrative convenience. The Swadeshi movement that came after brought about many cultural changes and a resurgence of traditional Indian customs, including the celebration of festivals, theater, and folk songs emphasizing patriotism and pride in one's country.

It is claimed that Raja Rammohun Ray was one of the first Indians to travel all the way to England. He did it in 1498. Conservative Indians of the time believed travel by ship to be irreligious, and anyone who dared to go on such a journey was socially shunned as a result. In spite of the widespread acceptance of such conventional views, an increasing number of Indians traveled to England and other nations in the West in pursuit of higher education, on political or spiritual missions, or just as tourists.

People who held traditional beliefs continued to believe that the impact of the West posed a danger to the integrity of their long-established civilization. The English way of thinking, as well as English education, cuisine, clothes, and manners, were not initially acceptable to the general populace. That, in the external conditions of social and personal life, English-educated Bengalis are fast becoming more Anglicized is something that few English-educated Bengalis will deny, as stated by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in "The Confession of a Young Bengal." The imprint of the Anglo-Saxon invader may be found on our homes, our furniture, our carriages, our food, our drink, our clothing, and our very familiar letters and speech. We construct and decorate our homes in accordance with English concepts of architectural beauty. We are no longer adhering to the teetotal and vegetarian lifestyles in their purest forms. We don't have any objections, either in theory or in practice, to drinking in the idiomatic English sense and in the English manner. Neither do we have any objections, either on principle or in practice, to dining on roast beef or veal cutlets. Our discussion consists of nine parts English with grammatical errors and one part Bengali in its purest form.

Even in the very last quarter of the nineteenth century, there were some who believed that getting an education in English was unethical. This sentiment can be found in the short story "Rebati," written by Fakir Mohan Senapati, who is considered to be the "father" of Oriya literature (1898). The schooling that Rebati received, according to her grandmother, is to blame for the deaths of her father and other family members.

But the elderly and traditionalist character Shunkur Menon in the book has his share of concerns and uncertainties: "...with your smattering of English, do you think you can flip our ancient family traditions and customs upside down?" ".With your smattering of English". The patriarch of the household, Panchu Merion, has another concern: "But my fear is that these young people would adopt Christianity as a result of continuously reading English".

These apprehensions were not completely without basis. Middle-class people who had received an education in English began to question a variety of socio-religious traditions as a result of a flood of revolutionary new ideas that came with their education. The following is a summary of the effects that having English education had on the society of India at the time:

The introduction of schooling in the English language was the driving force behind all of these developments. It was via this conduit that the people were awakened from their centuries-long slumber and agitated by the liberal concepts that had come from the West. The new awakening was characterized by a critical perspective on the past as well as fresh ambitions for the future. Reason and judgment took the place of blind trust and conviction;

superstition gave way to science; immobility was replaced by progress; and a desire for reform of proven evils prevailed over age-long indifference and inertia, as well as a complacent indulgence in whatever was now popular in society. The traditional interpretation of the Sastras was scrutinized, and conventional notions of ethics and religion were rethought in light of new ideas. As a result, conventional practices and beliefs were transformed.

The administrative will of the rulers of the time period served as a pillar of support for the endeavors of the philosophers and leaders of the day. Acts against the Suttee (1829), human sacrifice, and child marriage, as well as the passage of the Widow Remarriage Act (1856), all occurred concurrently with the introduction of postal service, railroads, and a plethora of other indicators of modern development. However, there was a group of Indians who were hostile to the changes that were brought about by the influence of the West all the way up until the end of the nineteenth century. The general consensus of public opinion was against blindly imitating the visible characteristics of Western society. The following is how one of the characters in *Sarala* (1897), a novel written by Kshetrapal Chakravarti, responds to the circumstances that have arisen:

Indians eventually established various associations and organizations in order to give voice to their complaints over the course of time. According to the writings of Gobinda Prasad Sarma, education in English has the potential to establish "a common platform for all the educated Indians" and cultivate in students "the sense of liberty and law." He goes on to say that studying not only British history but also the histories of other European nations taught Indians the importance of individual liberty or the dignity of man as man, regardless of God or the king. In addition to this, it instilled the importance of constitutional law and demonstrated the perils of granting absolute power to a monarch.

The authors of the novels conveyed the aspiration of the Indian people to be accorded the same status as the British. In the book "Reminiscences of a Kerani's Life" (1873), written by Shoshee Chunder Dutt, the narrator despises the fact that his European counterpart is regarded as superior to him. "I am very much underpaid," he says to a business associate in Europe. Our responsibilities are almost identical; however, you are in charge of the military accounts, whereas I am in charge of the accounts for the civil departments; however, you are paid only eight times more than I am. Do you not consider that to be a little bit unfair?

## 1.1 MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIP

Reformers and thinkers such as Raja Rammohun Ray, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Behramji Merwanji Malabari (1853–1922) inspired an administrative will within the government to put an end to social ills,

particularly atrocities committed against women. The suttee, child marriage, the infanticide of girl children, the suffering of widows, the economic dependence of women, and a great number of other harmful practices that were prevalent in Indian society were, to a certain extent, brought under control by official regulations.

In fact, the reform movement of the nineteenth century made improving the lot of women a primary focus of its efforts. Raja Rammohun Ray believed that educating women was the most effective way to solve the issue of women, so he campaigned for this cause. He pleaded for the Hindu laws of inheritance to be altered so that widows would receive more support. His efforts were continued by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, who was successful in convincing the government to legalize the remarriage of Hindu widows through the use of an act that was passed in 1856. Reformers such as B.M. Malabari were successful in persuading the government to pass the Age of Consent Act of 1891 in order to discourage marriages between minors.

Suttee and infanticide are two other practices that are currently being investigated as a result of the shifting conditions. By virtue of Bengal Regulation XXI of 1795 and another regulation in 1804, the government outlawed the practice of killing infants and declared that doing so was the same as killing an adult. Lord William Bentinck introduced legislation in 1829 called the Abolition of Suttee Act, which made it illegal to burn widows on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands. Education was eventually recognized as essential to achieving a more respectable position in society for women, and this realization came about gradually.

The Indian novel written in English during the nineteenth century has successfully captured the zeitgeist of its era and accurately portrayed the life of an Indian woman amidst shifting social norms. One can get an accurate depiction of a woman's role in the family and the community in which she lives. Despite the fact that they are still held back by social prejudice, Indian women are gradually gaining their independence. The traditional norm cannot be applied to the situation at hand in order to evaluate the nature of the man-woman relationship. Despite the novelist's unconscious allegiance to his sociocultural roots, the novelist is fascinated by the complexities of human relationships, particularly those that involve the many different dimensions of perception. On the other hand, the Indian author's artistic self has frequently been at odds with his general tendency to preach and idealize, which is a fairly common trait among Indian writers. There were times when he was unable to breach the restrictions that his society experienced. For example, K.K. Sinha, the author of *The Star of Sikri*, made a compelling argument in favor of the purdah system in his novel, which was not released until 1893:

Women who freely associate with men and openly leave their homes are unquestionably putting themselves and others in a position where they are vulnerable to intense temptations. Is it not appropriate, as a result, to keep

them as far away as possible from influences that could lead them astray? Is it not reasonable to keep them within *pardah*, which, in fact, is something that gives them both pride and pleasure?

According to the Indian belief in rebirth, lovers will continue to be lovers—or, more specifically, man and wife—in all of their subsequent births. This peculiar concept of love can undoubtedly be traced back to the way in which love is discussed in Indian classics like the *purana* and the *mahakavyas*. In other words, love is only considered appropriate in Indian culture when it is shared between married couples or between people who plan to eventually get married. The ideals of love and marriage that are extolled in works of literature and folklore are vastly different from those that are actually practiced in everyday social interactions. Love is frequently the overarching theme in *mahakavyas* written in the *Riti* tradition; however, there is very little evidence of an investigation into the complexities that arise as a result of the interaction between two individuals. The concept of love in the *Rig Veda* is typically restricted to the physical body.

The *nayaka* and the *nayika*, also known as the hero and the heroine, in the *puranas* are depicted as perfect individuals and are frequently incarnations of gods and goddesses. Due to the fact that the concept of love is often associated with sanctity and even divinity, it is challenging to consider love to be a purely human experience. A typical Indian mind, on the other hand, believes that love is a suprahuman experience that can be had only by gods, goddesses, or incarnations of these beings, or, at best, by *nayakas* and *nayikas* endowed with divine qualities and born in royal families. In most Indian verse narratives, the conflict does not originate from within the characters but rather from outside forces. When it comes to exploring the complexities of the experience of being in a man-woman relationship, Indian authors are typically constrained by fate, religious beliefs, and time-honored definitions of what constitutes a relationship.

The Indian novel written in English was unable to completely shake off the oppressive influence of its country's long-standing literary tradition. Because of the influence of English education and the spread of Christianity, there was a significant shift in society's perspective on women. This change occurred around the same time as the Industrial Revolution. Reformers and spiritual leaders in India played a significant role in spreading awareness among the general populace about the importance of educating girls. In addition, Indian novelists advocated for women's rights in their writings throughout the country.

It was widely assumed that education would cause women to become arrogant and neglect their domestic responsibilities. Moreover, they would become wayward and have little regard for their husbands. Sathianadhan argues that "liberal education" brings out the finest aspects of one's character:



*True education strengthens and forms the character, expands and cultivates the mind, gives a wide view of life and its duties, teaches the importance of all work, and tempers the bitterness of life. It must be admitted that with education there comes a certain independence of thought and action. The woman's spirit justly revolts against the social tyranny that she is subjected to.*

In the autobiographical book titled "The Story of a Widow Remarriage," written by Madhowdas Rughnathdas, the author describes his personal experience of remarrying a widow (1890). He describes how his relatives turned against him and excommunicated him because of his beliefs. Unfazed, he takes the initiative to organize a large number of remarriages for widows with the assistance of a social worker from Europe.

The protagonists or central characters in many of Bankimchandra Chatterjee's novels are widows. Sometimes, in accordance with the prevalent social tradition, young women were married off to much older men when they were still quite young. The majority of these young women would end up being widowed and would devote their remaining years to a life of self-denial and sacrifice. The lack of material comforts that they were forced to endure appears as a reoccurring motif in several of Chatterjee's books. In Chatterjee's well-known novel *Visa Vriksa* (1873), also known as *The Poison Tree*, the protagonists are a married young man named Narendra and a young woman named Kundalini.

The plot centers on their love affair and eventual marriage. A terrible event unfolded in the home as a result of a marriage that did not conform to social norms. The author of the story creates the terrible ending of Kundalini's life by having her commit suicide. In the novel *Krushnakanter, Will*, the main character, a married man, develops feelings for a young widow who is more beautiful than his own wife.

This irrational attraction brings about a tragic conclusion. In most of Chatterjee's works, there is a love triangle that involves a widow, a married man, and a married woman. Chatterjee does not deny the potential of romantic relationships between men and women, regardless of their social or marital situation, but he also does not draw a utopian or illogical conclusion from this possibility. The conflict that arises as a result of all of these socially inappropriate love connections is resolved in his books either by the lovers voluntarily severing their relationship or through the tragic death of one of them.

Some critics, such as Sukumar Sen, believe that Chatterjee pursues such answers because he has self-imposed the obligation of establishing himself as "a teacher of morals." "Remaining content as an interpreter of life" is not something he can say of himself. Sen goes on to add that this portrays him in an unfavorable light as a conservative reformer. Calcutta University had just opened its doors, and Chatterjee was one of the first two

students to graduate from the school. But he had traditional ideas about a number of important social issues of the time and was against widows remarrying.

Sharat Chandra Chatterjee (1876–1938), a famous Bengali novelist, is credited with being the person who first voiced the opinion that the conclusion of *Krishnakanter Will* is surrender to conventional morality," which "has no sympathy for a widow who falls in love and also entices another woman's husband." Other critics of the novel share this opinion. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee is of the opinion that such a conclusion is the result of having "a restricted vision of morality" and that it is also an "offense to authentic womanhood."

Even though it is irrelevant if Bankimchandra Chatterjee was against widow remarriage, it is undeniable that his books demonstrate that he was "an interpreter of life." Even if the practice of widow remarriage became more common and was sanctioned by the law, it is difficult to assert that it had the support of society. Even now, it is not usually acknowledged, even though the state of a widow is no longer extremely horrible. Rabindra Nath Tagore, for example, has never been thought of as conventional, and yet even he was unable to come up with a daring climax for his novel *Chokher Bali* (1902).

Binodini, our heroine, is a young woman who has recently lost her husband and is torn between the intense loves of Mahendra, who is already married, and Bihari, who is Mahendra's best friend. At the end of the tale, Mahendra and his wife Asha are once again reconciled to their marital status, and Binodini does not accept Bihari's offer for marriage. She tells him that their marriage is not feasible, and for their reunion they have to wait till their next birth. She moves away to Kashi and lives the life of a recluse. Indian authors, therefore, did not seek for an idealized or unrealistic climax in their books, but they did fail to highlight that love outside the accepted standards did exist in the culture.

Bankimchandra Chatterjee's lone English work *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864) is, incidentally, his first novel. In this work, he does not seem to be preoccupied with moral instruction. The novel depicts the narrative of Matangini, a courageous and adventurous woman, married to a nasty guy named Rajmohan. Although she belongs to the rural Bengal of the mid-nineteenth century, she is blessed with the attributes of the new lady rising out of her cocoon into a world of light and freedom. She and Madhav Ghose were lovers before she married Rajmohan, and Madhav married her sister Hemangini. Rajmohan is on Madhav's payroll, yet he has covert affiliations with a bunch of dacoits. Madhav is heir to the property of his maternal uncle Ramgopal by virtue of a will. Mathur, Madhav's cousin, in connivance with Ramgopal's widow, files a civil claim stating Ramgopal's will is fake and he (Mathur) should be the beneficiary. Mathur uses deception to steal Madhav's will with the assistance of



Rajmohan. Matangini overhears the dacoits plotting the heist with her husband. She sacrifices her safety and marital happiness and succeeds in alerting Madhav. Her spouse recognizes that their strategy was stopped by his wife. He is terribly upset with her and would have murdered her if the dacoit chief had not intervened. She goes home with pride but finally lands as Mathur's prisoner.

Rajmohan's Wife's story takes a tragic turn when Madhav is kidnapped by Mathur's men and taken to the same location. With the assistance of Tara, Mathur's first wife, and his childhood friend, Madhav frees himself and Matangini. The tale comes to a close with some of the thieves, including Rajmohan, being apprehended and punished. Mathur commits suicide to rescue himself from humiliation. Matangini, while in great love with Madhav, returns to her father's land to live a life of solitude and dies an early death.

This is the outline of the story, which more or less resembles that of Gothic fiction with the required components of family conflict, triangle love, and adventurous adventure. What makes it a serious piece is the nuanced manner in which Chatterjee tackles the love between a married lady and a married man. The topic was uncommon in the author's period and demanded very cautious handling. Matangini's character is the most intriguing part of the tale. The battle between the individual and the group is very clearly shown in the story via the desires of a woman of flesh and blood and her difficulty embracing the value system of her society. Matangini is presented as a bold and fearless lady, capable of profound love and exquisite restraint.

Chatterjee has conveyed with sincerity the married Indian woman's sense of shame in seeking an extramarital romance. Convention mandates that after marriage, a lady ought to devote herself to her spouse. Any weakness of flesh or mind is wicked. Love is sanctioned by society only when it is between a man and his wife. All other relationships are unethical and evil. Raji Narasimhan properly says, "There is probably no other thought coming to us from the West as much as that of love, which has blinded us to a complete set of our own seasoned customs for perceiving the man-woman association and relationship."

The new, thinking woman in Matangini is obvious even in her connection with her husband. She meets the bullying spouse with same calm and resolve and understands what exactly she should do. It is vital to observe that she discovers the individual in herself but does not emphasise it. In her it is the splendour of womanhood which dictates her actions. Her spouse asks her to justify her departure from home without his knowledge. She openly says : "I am your wife. ... I had gone because I felt there was nothing wrong with it. Her prideful remark bothers her husband even more:

*At this display of boldness, Rajmohan absolutely blazed up. "Have I not forbidden you a thousand times?", he shouted, and jumping on his wife who was standing stock-still, gripped her by the wrist, raising his other hand to strike her. The helpless woman seemed to understand nothing. She did not move away one step from her assailant, but only looked at him with such pathetic eyes that his hand remained motionless as if spell-bound. After a moment's silence Rajmohan dropped his wife's hand, but immediately shouted out, "I'll kick you to death".*

## 2. CONCLUSION

The strengthening of the British Empire in India coincided with the historical development of Indian literature written in the English language. This evolution took place at the same time. Despite the fact that faultfinders are in agreement that the history of Indian English literature dates back to at least the middle of the nineteenth century, there is still "a variety of suppositions about the main definitive Indian content in English." This is the case despite the fact that there is an abundance of Indian content written in English. Its beginnings were fueled by three factors: the British government's educational reforms, the endeavor of beginnings, and the response and adoption of English language and literature by privileged Indians in India. The key historical viewpoint of English-Indian literature is a drive to contextualize the development and ascension of this kind of literature from its beginnings to its wonderfulness in the present day.

This sort of growth and ascent can be traced back to the time when it was first written down. To begin, there was a group of educational reformers who were prompted to act by the Sanction Act of 1813 as well as the English Education Act of William Bentick, which was passed in 1835. In an effort to modify and even out a portion of the materialistic and gluttonous practices of the East India Company workers, which eventually resulted in trading them off, the English parliament endorsed the Charter Act, which made England responsible for the educational improvement of the locals. This was done as part of the undertaking to amend and even out a portion of the practices of the East India Company workers.

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