



**International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies (IJHSSS)**

*A Peer-Reviewed Bi-monthly Bi-lingual Research Journal*

ISSN: 2349-6959 (Online), ISSN: 2349-6711 (Print)

ISJN: A4372-3142 (Online) ISJN: A4372-3143 (Print)

Volume-VI, Issue-VI, November 2020, Page No. 60-65

Published by Scholar Publications, Karimganj, Assam, India, 788711

Website: <http://www.ijhsss.com>

DOI: 10.29032/ijhsss.v6.i4.2020.1-8

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**Impact of Women:  
A Brief Sketch in Kazi Nazrul Islam's Life and Poetry  
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**Abstract**

*Kazi Nazrul Islam, known as a rebel poet in Bengali literature, is the next generation poet of Rabindranath Tagore from the time and spirit. Nazrul's poems have declared an extraordinary rebellion on traditional social order, superstition, the pains of subjugation, inequality and neglect of women. His poem 'Bidrohi' is a shining example of this. In clear terms, no one has ever written about it before. Especially when talking about women, Nazrul is always outspoken and fearless. Many women had came to his personal life and his poetry. In his literary works, women have been transformed into many forms. While Nargis and Pramila are portrayed as lovers in his poetry, he has banished women like Birajasundari Devi as a symbol of mother. In his poems, Nazrul has declared that women have the equal rights of men in first half of twentieth century. It is repeated in Nazrul's poem that women are not less than men, but are entitled to sit in one seat with men. We will try to capture the nature of the influence of women in the life and poetry of Nazrul Islam in our proposed research paper*

**Key words: Woman, Poetry, Rebellion, Mother, Love.**

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**Introduction:** There is information published on 14th February, 2008 on page 4 'Tathya' of a daily newspaper 'Aajkal' from Kolkata. It was –

"In the year 1871, 33 Kulin had married 2151 women in the Hooghly district."<sup>1</sup>

The incident took place 28 years before Nazrul's birth. It can be inferred from this information that how much dignity women had in the country at that time. It is worth mentioning that the year 1871 is talked about, in Bengali literature it was the era of Madhusudan - Bankim. In Bangadarshan, published in the year 1872, 'Bishbrikha' will be released, Girish Chandra will establish 'Peshadar Rangamancha'. But it is clear from this information that the 'Mahiyasi' form of women which is found in Madhusudan or Bankim's works is probably not the typical female form of Bengali society. Without looking back at the period from 1872 to 1899, we can see that in addition to the rise of Rabindranath in Bangladesh, a section of women are regularly participating in literary activities. But all this

is about the uproar of society. About the civic life. It may not have been directly involved with the larger rural society and the lower society. Nevertheless, the male supremacy and the oppression of women was slowly diminishing through these events. Presenting women equally to men as a result of Vidyasagar's endless efforts was steadily advancing their femininity. In the literature, medieval reforms were dismantled and modern women were exposed to be free from being prejudiced. In the literature of Madhusudan - Bankim - Rabindranath - Sarat Chandra, women are brilliant in their own talents. Here she is recognized for her claim to womanhood. Nazrul literary women are not the exceptions from this.

**Objective:** The objective of the paper is to highlight how woman has their impact in the life of Kazi Nazrul Islam and how he sketch these woman in his poems.

**Methodology:** The methodology used in this research paper is descriptive and based on primary and secondary sources.

**Research Value:** This paper will play an important role understand the importance of woman in the life and literature of Kazi Najrul Islam. Moreover the contribution of his towards bengali literature may also be understood from this article.

**Overview:** Speaking about woman's influence in Nazrul's personal life, his mother comes first in the talk. Although Nazrul was fatherless at just the age of nine years (Kazi Fakir Ahmed) his mother was alive for a long time. But for a couple of reasons, Nazrul was probably deprived of motherhood since his teenage. This is, however, may be one of the reasons for Nazrul's family's indifferences and his outward fondness. Nazrul - biographer Prantosh Chattopadhyay, however, has mentioned the reason of the poet's egotism on his mother<sup>2</sup>. Due to this egotism perhaps, later during starvation, he has not met his mother. A critic writes:

"Even though considering multiple women at the place of mother, there is no explanation for the long uneasiness associated with your mother. When the poem titled 'Anandamoyeer Aagomone' in 'Dhumketu' on September 22, 1922 was published, Nazrul was imprisoned for one year due to sedition and during that period of his stay in the Hoogly jail, he was in a hunger strike for 39 days in protest of the wrongdoings of the jail authorities. Concerned about that critical condition of the poet's life, his mother, Jaheda Khatun went to jail for rupturing the hunger strike. But for an unknown reason he had not met her."<sup>3</sup>

That is why it is obvious that the memory of his mother has not been so deeply imprinted in his mind. Perhaps for this, later on he wrote -

"Forgetting the mother that baby deer who runs away hearing the flute,  
The way in which the rabbits run hearing the sounds of streams,  
Birds fly away endlessly,  
the children of the cloud beyond the sea flee to the sky -  
I run through that way! Like this I rush  
Through the mountains fields countryside straight zig-zag hundreds of paths."<sup>4</sup>

May be for this reason, the motherhood - deprived Nazrul, has wandered all his life in search of affection. Again he could never deny the claim of motherhood. "Perhaps for this in his later life the motherhood-affectionate Nazrul, laid down at the edge of the foot of the woman in whomever he got the motherly affection and endearment, 'To say mother is life', he yearned with eyes full of tears. There is no race, no religion of motherhood. Giribala Devi, Birajasundari Devi, Mrs. M. Rahman, etc. are the women who in unblemished maternal greatness gratified Nazrul's life with affection and grace."<sup>5</sup>

Nazrul has always placed women in the same seat with men. His pen has repeatedly railed against the oppression of women in the male-dominated society, treating women worse than the slaves. The narrow religious constraints could never tie Nazrul with the unmanageable. So the poems like 'Naari' (democratic), 'Mrs. M. Rahman' or 'Barangana' have come out of the hands of the liberal, outspoken, truth-telling Nazrul. With the help of various social superstitions, if women are used as instruments of torture, the damage that comes at the end is of the society and this has clearly been captured by this rebellious poet. He has never given favouritism to this medieval mindset.

"That era has gone,  
In that era no men, women were slaves!  
Era of pain, era of human being, era of equal,  
None will be captured by none,  
If man capture woman, then after that era  
Man himself will die with pain in that prison. "<sup>6</sup>

Azharuddin Khan writes -

"The poet recited to the selfish society that women are not only the fuel of men's desire, the puppet of play or the helpless device of reproduction, but also the great contributor to the culture of art in the history of creation."<sup>7</sup>

The power that a woman symbolizes is within her. In a dormant state. The poet knows that the situation will change with the awakening of this power, equality will be established in the society. Therefore, the poet's call to the woman -

"Today you can't see in eyes, handkerchief in hand, anklet in leg,  
Pull out the veil, break the chains!  
That veil for which you're timid, throw away that cover  
Remove the signs of slave and all garnish! "<sup>8</sup>

In 1921 March-April, the poet accompanied Ali Akbar Khan to his home at Kumilla. As a guest in Indrakumar Sengupta's house, he got motherly affection from Indrakumar Sengupta's wife Birajasundari Devi. A beggar of affection, Nazrul also had addressed Birajasundari as his mother. It is to be remembered that this Indra Kumar's elder brother's daughter is Ashalata, who was later tied up in marriage with the poet. Whatever that is, in Ali Akbar's village Daulatpur, near Kumilla, the poet met Ali Akbar's eldest sister's daughter, Syeda Khatun (Dubraj or Nargis). The young poet also falls in love with the girl and intends to marry her. This love blossoms as a memory in his poem-

"Don't look at me constantly with eyes full of tears,

Don't look with eyes full of tears,  
With that painful voice don't sing the farewell song,  
Just don't sing the farewell song. "(Biday Belay, Chayanot)  
In 'Manash Badhu' also the relish of romantic love for women can be seen -  
"In dreams whose unity is, full of tears in their kiss  
I lose my life desiring my that nameless dear."

The love of this woman could not get the fulfilment in Nazrul's personal life. The bridegroom broke the marriage himself. The biographers of Nazrul say that Nargis has acted love with Nazrul and as soon as it was revealed, the poet broke the marriage. This breaking of marriage has caused unbearable pain in the poet's heart. In a letter to Nargis later (about fifteen years later), he writes:

"I received your letter at the new densely moist dawn of the New Year. There was turbulent stream of shower on that cloudy day. Fifteen years ago in the month of Aashar a same flood of shower came down - you may remember it all. Greetings to the new cloud of Aashar. This cloud has carried the words of the unlucky to the era of Kalidasa, on the banks of the river Reba in the land of Malbika, to his beloved. The blessings of these thunderbolts bring immense pain to my life. This Ashar has swept me from the paradise of imagination into the eternal stream of pain."<sup>9</sup>

Again writes

"Have you read the poems in my book of poems Chakravak? You will find answers to many of your accusals."<sup>10</sup> etc.

Then Pramila came to his life. In 1331, 12 Baisakh of Bengali calender, April 25 of the year 1924, the empty life of Nazrul was fulfilled. There were not many people of the two religions in the society favouring the marriage. Even Birajsundari whom Nazrul had seated in his mother's seat, could not wholeheartedly accept this marriage of Nazrul. This egotism may have been there in the heart of Nazrul. So in a poem of proletarian, he wrote -

"Maybe, mother, you forgot one day  
On this way one of the deserted Bedouin children  
Came. In a mild voice  
he said - 'Will you be my mother? '  
Maybe she had come, if recalled  
or she had not come - if not recalled  
The distance which she has gone, won't come again  
Perhaps in his heart your altar is  
Awaking silently, or she is not there!  
I get so many like this - so many I lose....."<sup>11</sup>

But in the presence and with the blessings of Giribala Devi, mother of Ashalata (Pramila) this marriage is completed. His poetry will also be influenced by the coming of Pramila. In the poem 'Dolonchapar Samarpan' he wrote -

"Dear!  
This time I surrender myself to your feet

You just raise your face, let say whatever they say.  
Your eyes as black as kajal  
I liked without any reason  
Made me forget the path  
In the water of that eyes  
Today I lost my path in the illusion of the path of forest,  
You just raise your face, let say whatever they say. "

(Samarpan, Dolanchapa)

Nazrul got the affection of various sweethearts in his life of distressed fate. A friend's daughter Shamsur Nahar of Chittagong is one of them. In 1331, 19 Magh, in a benediction poem 'Shamsur Nahar Khatun Jayajuktasu' Nazrul wrote -

"You know your identity you're bliss you're woman -  
So you bring so much shower to the desert of the heart." (etc.)

(Ashirbad, Phanimanasa)

Talking about the lover's entity of Nazrul, one critic said -

"In case of love, he did not believe in the principle of 'pure love'." <sup>12</sup>

The internal lover of Nazrul has constantly caused him pain, burnt him in flames.

The information which is got about his poem 'Barangana' is as if in the road next to the restaurant in Harrison Road where the poet used to hang out with his friends, a young woman with a child used to beg. By nature some pedestrians would often make some derisive comments on the girl. He probably wrote the poem 'Barangana' saddened by this rude behaviour. His intense pun for the so-called sanctimonious hypocrites -

"Listen to the whispers of religion -  
There is no difference between an orphan and a saint child.  
If the son of a dishonest mother is an orphan,  
Of course the son of a dishonest father is also an orphan." <sup>13</sup>

In Nazrul's poems, we see women in various forms. Sometimes she is a warrior, sometimes a lover, sometimes a loving mother - different impersonations of women are carved in the poems and songs of Nazrul. It can be assumed that this stance of women of various impersonations has been influenced by his personal life. In fact, although women are portrayed in various forms in the poetry Nazrul, yet there is no hindrance to admit that the picture of women as a lover is the brightest of all. Throughout awakening in his mind is his lover's entity. From time to time this entity has been published intensely. Amalendu Dasgupta has rightly said -

"He did not sing with tones the formless song of the pain which he did not get." <sup>14</sup>

The love that lies in his heart, the wound of the love that is in his heart - that dead love is expressed in his composition of women. Has made them rebellious. For the time being, this rebellion has been cherished in Nazrul's heart. The comment of Ahsan Habib is apt -

"The rebellion in the artist's heart is in the entity of the artist." <sup>15</sup>

And since his artistic entity is full of love, it would not be wrong to say that the main source of this rebellion is love. In poems like "Bidrohi", "Gopan Priya", "Sindhu", etc. we see that love is raising women as a freelancer and women are revolting against superstitions.

This awakening of the rebellious entity of women is the main feature of women in Nazrul literature.

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