

Moumita Haque Shenjutee*

The Conflict between Gender, Sexuality and Patriarchal Ideals emerging from Colonial India: A Retrospective on Nirad C Chaudhuri's Literary Works and Essays.

ABSTRACT

Nirad C Chaudhuri, a prominent Indian scholar, whose upbringing was mostly based on the nineteenth century English values, had addressed many injustices done towards women in India in his youth. However, this paper will explore, studying primarily *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, *Bengalee jibone Romonee* (*Women in Bengali life*) and some other of his articles on women, his cultural context to comprehend his aversion towards the poststructural conceptualization of sex, gender and sexuality despite being a well-known Anglophile in his lifetime. To analyze this issue, this paper will use Chandra Talpade Mohanty's (1955-) postcolonial feminist perspective which emphasizes the applying of distinct methodologies to unravel intersectional exploitation of women within a particular country instead of the White feminists' approach of homogenizing or creating an unequal binary of Western/Eastern women, and Judith Butler's (1956-) poststructural feminist theory of gender performativity that refers to the stylized repetitive social performances which essentialize gender and assert definite gender roles to confirm a static heterosexual society. Finally, this paper will posit that the patriarchal culture that was embedded through Victorian England's rules and regulations in colonial India was the catalyst for his disinclination to engage in this new wave of feminism emerging in the Western world.

Key words: Postcolonial Feminism; Poststructural Feminism; Victorian Colonial India; Queer Theory

* **Moumita Haque Shenjutee:** Lecturer, Department of English, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1. “In my young age, I was a Leftist; Leftist according to Brahmoism one might say; that means I was very interested in women education, women emancipation, women – devotion etc. Hence, I should be happy seeing the change. I cannot be so only because of the lack of judgement in it. There is no logic, no emotion, no judgement of value, nothing - behind today’s female education.’ (Chaudhuri 218)

This self-proclamation of being a feminist and later despising it- is one of numerous controversial statements that Nirad C Chaudhuri had given throughout his life. Whether it’s politics or history or religion- he, in fact, had always somehow managed to provide contentious information for his readers. However, amidst this sea of assertions regarding these fields of politics, history or religion, his complex conflicting ideology about gender and sexuality got overshadowed. Nevertheless, this is an essential field to elaborate because the catalysts that helped him to form this complicated relation with feminists and the ideology of feminism are still present in the places where colonization was materialized. Especially, in this subcontinent, the ethics and morality of Victorian colonial patriarchy still dominates the psyche of the mass people as well as many scholars. Mr. Chaudhuri seems to be one of these scholarly figures who was a successful by-product of that deep rooted patriarchal structure.

To form an understanding about Mr. Chaudhuri’s treatment of gender and sexuality, the necessity to have an intermingling conception about feminism, postcolonialism, Victorian England and Modern and Post-modern world is enormous in this paper. The amount of research work on Mr. Chaudhuri on the ground of feminist studies is inadequate. The most used angle to scrutinize Mr. Chaudhuri has been the postcolonial one. One group of critics dismisses him considering him as a sycophant. Postcolonial critic Professor Fakrul Alam (who does not agree with this group), while sharing his personal experience about Mr. Chaudhuri’s acceptance in this South-Asian intelligentsia in his article “In Memory of Nirad C Chaudhuri” says that he has met very few academics from Bangladesh as well as West Bengal who prefer to talk about Mr. Chaudhuri (Alam 146). However, there is another group that appreciates him for being a cosmopolitan too. Nevertheless, the most significant aspect amidst these disputes is that there is this one characteristic of Mr. Chaudhuri which is highlighted by numerous critics, and that is his struggle against the changing ideologies of Western Modern and Post-modern world and admiration towards the Victorian world of ethics and morality. Researcher Ian Almond, in his book *The Thought of Nirad C Chaudhuri*, dedicates one chapter explaining how archive created mental as well as physical alienation for Nirad C Chaudhuri by constituting utmost devotion towards Arnold, Austen, Gibbon etc. which eventually enslaved him within the Victorian/Edwardian bubble (Almond 91).

Postcolonial critic, Dipesh Chakravarty too, in his book *Provincializing Europe* presents Mr. Chaudhuri with his “Colonial – Victorian prejudices” (Chakravarty 186). Now, to come to the feminist point of view, as already mentioned, there is not much work on him in this theoretical ground. However, in a feminist article, Urbashhi Barat critiqued Nirad C Chauhduri for the exclusion of his sisters in his autobiography, and overall marginalization of women in his writings. (Barat quoted in Ian Almond 164). Critic Ian Almond tried to dig deep into this matter and eventually put forward his postulation of Mr. Chaudhuri’s subtle homosexual tendency in his autobiographies (Almond 177). Now, besides writing his autobiographies, Mr. Chaudhuri also extensively wrote about women in his Bengali pieces of articles and books. Without including these pieces and simply just focusing on his write ups in English might not lead to a comprehensive understanding of his treatment of gender and sexuality. He did write about women oppression and marginalization in this part of the world as well. Hence, the absence of women or his lack of admiration for female gender as these writers posit can be refuted through textual analysis. However, this rebuttal in no way is to postulate him as a feminist; rather, to simply repudiate their assumptions for the root cause of his patriarchal stand. In this regard, this paper will focus on those articles and book published in Bangla along with his autobiography. Besides his writings, this article will interweave postcolonial, post structural feminist theories along with the issue of Victorian patriarchal culture in colonial India to reflect how his intellect was constructed in a static way that complicated his notion of gender identity and sexuality in a rapidly changing world.

The feminist Discussion

The subordination of women happened and still happens, mostly on the basis of essentialization, and in Western history, this essentialization goes back to the ancient Greek culture (Bem 49). Women as the weaker sex was repeatedly posited through religious scriptures in the beginning, and later, through biological determinism and evolution theory during the Victorian period. However, the first wave of feminism also commenced during this period, and focused on achieving the basic legal rights of women to eradicate that disparity. For them, the “legal reform” was the “key to women’s emancipation” (Shanley 19). Nevertheless, even in Modern world, there was still this desire to hold onto a unified, coherent identity. The structuralist concept of binary construction of male/female obviously had the inherent idea of essentialism within it. However, as the poststructural feminists began to emerge during the third wave, these preconceived ideas of essentializing gender with some sort of inborn qualities or given characteristics, and practicing heteronormativity were questioned. This

insight is very significant in the feminist discourse because legal reformation would not be possible if this concept of gender and sexuality as cultural and social construct was not there to refute the whole argument of men being the superior being. This postulation of the very idea of gender being a social construction can be dated back to 1960s when Simone De Beauvoir wrote “One is not born, but rather, becomes a woman” (Beauvoir 273) in her well-known book *The Second Sex*. The second wave of feminism was inspired by this book of hers. Later, the poststructural feminists started deconstructing these concepts of sex, gender and sexuality even more vehemently during the third wave. Especially, the LGBTQ community felt excluded during the second wave of feminism as there was still no community or theoretical ground which was inclusive of their rights. It is at this time when Judith Butler became a prominent figure in Queer theory with her 1988’s article “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory”. Regarding gender, her most popular concept is ‘gender performativity’ which posits that gender is not essential, rather, is “instituted through a stylized repetition of acts” (519). As how the binary opposites of gender should perform has been historically and culturally constructed through repetitive patterns, this performative nature seems natural. Next, her another groundbreaking postulation is of sex too being “as culturally constructed as gender” (9). She does not repudiate the biological explanation of sex or how the anatomy is different for different sex; rather, she is against the over simplification of the binary concept of sex which eventually effects gender and sexuality. Consequently, the people who do not abide by these performative acts are excluded in different manners, as Butler says that “performing one’s gender wrong initiates a set of punishments.” (Butler 528). Hence, anything that does not align to the heteronormative behavior and sexuality is not accepted in society which is how the LGBTQ people or even simply any girl or boy who does not behave in the feminine or masculine way becomes excluded and punished by the society.

Even though the concept of individual gender essentialism was first criticized during the second wave of feminism, the generic gender essentialism was still in practice. Till the second wave of feminism, western feminists used to put all women of the world under one umbrella term “universal sisterhood” where the only dominating figure is the oppressive male, and women all over the world experience same sort of oppression. Already it has been shown that the queer people felt left out in this kind of feminist scholarship. Beside them, the women of the third world countries also felt excluded in that discourse of feminism. Hence, during the third wave of feminism, postcolonial feminists raised against this generic gender essentialism and thrived towards creating a more inclusive scholarship of

feminism. One of the leading postcolonial feminists Chandra Talpade Mohanty in her article “Under Western Eyes” refutes these concepts by putting forward three basic principles – firstly, how “women are characterized as a singular group on the basis of a shared oppression”; secondly, the lack of proper “methodologies” to identify the oppression of women and thirdly, how there is this “political nature” of western feminist scholarship in which there is a “possibility of detecting a colonialist move in the case of a structurally unequal first/third world relation.” (Mohanty 336-337) In this article, firstly, it will be observed how Mr. Chaudhuri uses historical, literary and social reference in his approach to explore the sexual objectification that happened within this heterosexual culture which inadvertently covers the first two principles of Mohanty’s argument. Simultaneously, while doing so, the notion of anti-essentialism will also be evident in his exploration to some extent. However, later, his apparent feminist façade will be closely read and highly critiqued by the author.

Nirad C Chaudhuri: Seemingly A Female Rights Advocate?

Nirad C Chaudhuri was born in 1897, a period when Bengalee Renaissance was at its peak in Bengal, and Queen Victoria was still in the throne of England. Most of his articles and books written on women present the Pre-Bengal Renaissance period as a dark time for women. According to him, before Bengal Renaissance, women hardly had any knowledge about sexual oppression, harassment or their own sexuality. For example, in one article from *Selected Prose*, he depicts the scenario of ancient Bengal where women would be married off at the age of 8/9, even before acquiring any knowledge of their body and the way body functions. On the other hand, their husbands would be two or three times older than them. They would be tortured by their husband’s lustful attempts from this young age which eventually would turn themselves against their husbands (Chaudhuri 205). Furthermore, the very existing norm was that men would have their own prostitutes and their wives had to conciliate without any question. The men would remain outside the house for the whole day only to come back at night to his wife which, Mr. Chaudhuri sarcastically describes as a situation where the husbands would not recognize his wife’s face if it’s seen in the daylight (Chaudhuri quoted in Ghulam Murshid 235). Being an avid reader, this knowledge about the general scenario of women oppression in Pre-Bengal Renaissance was mostly derived from reading various literary and historical books. For instance, Nirad C Chaudhuri illustrates some general socio-cultural scenarios in another article named “Bangalee o Romonir Roop” from *Selected Prose* about this Bengalee Renaissance period where he uses Bankim Chandra’s novel “Rajmohoner Stree”. He narrates one scene from this novel where the husband is seen raising his hand on his wife

because she went to bring water from river despite his prohibition and finally stating “I shall kick you to death” (Chaudhuri 160).

However, only books are not his source of knowledge. In addition to this general socio- cultural scenario of women oppression, he also mentions his own experience of women oppression. For example, in *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, he provides hints of certain types of oppression which are contextualized according to our South Asian culture, and he provides his own methodologies to analyse those problems. This is a significant aspect of his portrayal of women because it reflects Mohanty’s first and second principle of women oppression having different forms according to the socio-cultural and historical conditions, and the need for different methodologies. Now, all women are not necessarily bonded by their homogenous feelings of sisterhood, rather sometimes some of them are in compliance with the patriarchal norms of the house and subjugate other female members. He especially talks about the marginalization of an already marginalized group of the society- the newly wedded girls. His mother herself was oppressed by his grandmother. She had faced this cyclical pattern of power and domination between daughter-in-law-mother in-law as she once mentions about being cursed by her mother-in-law to ‘have every kind of happiness but the happiness of the spirit’ (Chaudhuri 194). However, Mr. Chaudhuri does not blame the mother-in-law only as he thinks it is a power politics between these two parties where the daughter-in-law takes pride in snatching the man from the mother while the mother gives curses on her for that. Nevertheless, this might not be an apt reasoning and it might need intermingled sectors of understanding. Yet, his pointing towards this complex structural pattern of women oppressing women is significant. However, the most salient point to note is that while describing this pattern of women oppressing women in Pre-Bengalee Renaissance in *Bengalee Jibone Romonee*, Nirad C Chaudhuri brings the concept of homosexuality in a derogatory manner, where the mother-in-law tries to satisfy her sexual desire forcefully using daughter-in-law (Chaudhuri 51). This stance of his is questioned and discussed more elaborately towards the end of this article.

Another socio-culturally and historically contextualized abuse women have to face is for their colour of the skin. This is a racial issue which is seen almost worldwide. However, Mr, Chaudhuri gives an interesting explanation by contextualizing this issue with the caste system of India:

“This adoration of colour in the Hindu has a profound historical basis. The Hindu civilization was created by a people who were acutely conscious of their fair complexion in contrast to the dark skin of the autochthons, ... Varna or colour was the central principle round which Hindu society organized itself...” (Chaudhuri 147)

This is a very different approach from the generally viewed approach of the origin of the hatred towards coloured people. The “problem of colour”, as he believes, began because of the prevalent caste system in India, not because of British Imperialism. A caste system which does not acknowledge males of lower origin, women having respectable position was beyond imagination. While sharing his personal experience in this matter, he mentions an anecdote where one of his family’s old friends tried to warn him before marrying his wife suggesting that he was committing a “folly marrying a dark girl”. (Chaudhuri 147). But he went against these people as well as his mother’s will, and married her although she belonged to comparatively lower class, and was dark in colour.

Even though his methodologies and contextualization are not very aptly elaborated and sometimes even twisted for his own favour which will be discussed in next sections, it is noteworthy that living within a time when his ancestral family followed some of the typical societal patriarchal norms of Pre- Bengalee Renaissance culture despite being followers of European liberal thoughts, he still questioned those constructs regarding gender roles and appreciated anti-essentialist qualities. In *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, he repeatedly appreciates his mother as a “woman of liberal and reformist views” who did not believe in superstitions. (Chaudhuri 64). He portrays her grandmother as a very strong woman by mentioning one anecdote of his grandmother who once walked twelve miles “the whole day at dead of night with only one maidservant as escort”. (Chaudhuri 62). He praises women like Kali for being “witty and always sprouting poetry” (Chaudhuri 100). Thus, he seems to appreciate women being strong, confident, intelligent and liberal. He supported women education movement in his youth as he says in one of his articles which is mentioned in the introduction of this article. In a society, where men were and still are considered to be the strong, educated, rational ones and women are the weak, uneducated and hysterical ones, he supported those women who challenged these binaries and dared to perform the then non-confirming roles.

The Unequal Western/eastern Binary

It is indeed true that he brought some real situations of Bengal into light; however, by keeping significant facts hidden or distorted for his own agenda. In this regard, the third principle of Mohanty gets reflected as he creates the unequal binary of Western/Eastern culture where he upholds the culture of English monarchy neglecting important historical facts of his own country. To begin with, when he historically draws the oppression of women in *Bangalee jibone Romoni* or other articles written on women, he mostly focuses on how the situation of women improved only after the British rule

with the light of English education. Before this period, the nation, its people – men, women alike were in complete darkness. It is deceiving in the sense that being a historian himself, he did not give the overall landscape of women's position in the civilization of mankind in this subcontinent. In the concluding chapter of *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian*, he divides Indian history chronologically into three cycles to prove that India was always ruled by foreigners, be it the Aryans, Mughals or English. However, he cannot ascertain the origin of people before this cycle. He says:

“I believe in the more or less independent and unadulterated evolution of Hindu culture, though in emphasizing the independent and materially Aryan character of Hindu civilization I do not imply that there was not a civilization already flourishing or decaying in India when the Aryans came in. There may have been. But whether it can be called Dravidian or not is a different question, and whatever its character it too might have been of foreign origin.” (Chaudhuri 566)

This uncertainty and simplistic division of Indian history has been debunked by many scholars. For instance, in 1973, C.P. Verghese wrote a book on him showing how Mr. Chaudhuri does not mention the presence of Dravid and Harappa culture at all to prove certain propositions of his own. (35) However, the existence of Pre-Vaidik culture is important as one researcher Prof. Rayhan Rhyne shows how before the arrival of the Aryan in the agricultural Bengal, women used to have highest honour. In the very first few lines, he clearly mentions what he wants to articulate in the whole article. Here a translated version of that extract is given:

¹“In Bengal, the primitive anthropological clans Austrick, Dravid, Alpiyo had matriarchal society. In their society, women were the dominant figures and it was their authority that was practiced in family and society. Because of this dominance of women, the lineage and rights were not patrilineal, rather matrilineal. (khitimohon Sen, 1982:82-85). This matriarchal society started to change in India during Fourth and Fifth century B.C as Vaidik emerged. Later, Vaidik Brahmoism started to have an impact in Bengal. Gradually Matriarchal society altered into patriarchal society which made the women totally subjugated by the men.... (Rhyne 103)”

Therefore, when Nirad C Chaudhury, being a historian, simply divides the history of India into three cycles without mentioning this society, a tendency to erase a powerful matriarchal society can be observed, obviously with his bias towards the British rule in India.

This motif of eliminating dominant female figures can be seen in his historical analysis of his own time too. In his autobiography, which is “more of a national than personal history” (547), he does not mention any

1. My translation

prominent female figure of that time from this subcontinent who was engaged in different social, political or educational movements. There were Begum Rokeya Shakhawat Hossain (1880-1932), Kadambini ganguly (1861-1923), Anadi bai Joshi (1865- 1887) Swarnakumari Devi (1835-1922) and as such who were working in various social, political, literary and educational sectors of the then society. However, there are two names that he mentions enthusiastically, Toru Dutt and Aru Dutt. It is very interesting to note that they struck his eyes because they dressed in the “late Victorian English” dress and he felt “proud that Bengali girl secured a place in English literature.” (219-220) Apparently, the female rights advocate that was pictured at the beginning section of this article seems to uphold the ideology of White feminism at this point.

The Clash with the Post Structural Feminist View

Till now, Mr Chaudhuri’s patriarchal social context, and how he rebelled against certain cultural constructions which essentialize women whilst simultaneously creating an unequal binary of Western/Eastern culture by fabricating his own nation’s history has been discussed. This discrepancy where he is fighting against women oppression on one hand, and undermining and/or hiding the progress of the women of his subcontinent while overmining the women of the Western world and their feminist ideas might lead to simplistic assumption that his Pro- British sentiment would have understood the conceptions of poststructural feminism and revolted against these constructions even more vehemently in his later period of life. However, that does not seem to happen as some excerpts from his different write-ups analysed in this section will prove.

In the beginning sections, his appreciation for the educated, liberal, strong and rational women was shown to reflect on his apparently anti- essentialist tendency given at a period when rationality, education, strength- these were considered essential male qualities. However, in this section it will be argued that that anti- essentialist tendency of him was again to support his own particular agenda. Close reading of certain parts of his writing might bring this agenda to light. In this regard, few lines from his preface to *The Autobiography of An Unknown Indian* are given below:

“She has organized and sustained a balanced regime for me and kept me on an even keel amidst the many torments and not fewer inconveniences of present day living. Those who know what it means in these days to provide a husband with good food and similar amenities of life, and how necessary and yet how impossible it is for a man to ride on an even keel in the contemporary world, will understand my gratitude to my wife.” (Chaudhuri xiii)

These lines are very interesting because, on a surface level, these lines seem to reflect genuine heartwarming gratitude to a wife from his husband. Nevertheless, if one reads carefully, and tries to deconstruct the covert meaning, the apparent innocence seems to evaporate. The reader sees the hidden essentialization of women as a provider of “good food and similar amenities” of life. It is also interesting to note that in his autobiography, as it was already mentioned in the beginning section of this paper, he talks very highly about his mother and grandmother for being a very strong, witty, educated women of that time; however, none of them seems to have any work to do in public sphere. Their lives revolve around the private sphere. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was difficult for women to come out and work in this subcontinent. Thus, it is understandable if he does not mention his mother doing any work outside. But, while writing in later half of 20th century and not mentioning any woman who works outside and whom he appreciates for that, provokes the reader to doubt his intention. In all his later periods’ writings too, the very words and phrases that are associated with women are beauty, love, marriage, rearing children, serving men, precisely the works to do in private sphere. So, it seems that on one hand, he wants women to be educated and free and on the other hand, he wants them to play the stereotypical gender roles that she is assigned to perform by the historical and cultural constructions.

This notion of essentialization and performing the gender right becomes more and more highlighted in his later write-ups. Consequently, as Judith Butler opined that “performing one’s gender wrong initiates a set of punishments.” (Butler, 1988, p. 528), the women or men who do not perform accordingly are unappreciated and verbally abused by Mr. Chaudhuri. For example, the women who were increasingly becoming more career oriented instead of fulfilling the gender roles of the private sphere become adulterous in his perspective. In one of his articles from *Selected Prose* he blames Henrik Ibsen for writing books like *A Doll’s House* which, he believes, teaches women to be adulterous instead of being a devoted housewife:

“²That heroine, Nora Helmer, after seeing the triviality of married life, thought his husband’s house as doll’s house and by leaving that house, she went outside in search of a free and fulfilled life. It couldn’t be fathomed where she reached, now it’s being understood. These women are now existing in offices, that means, coming out from Doll’s House, they are living in the Robot’s house.” (Chaudhuri 210)

Besides these socially constructed gender roles, he became incredibly critical towards the inclusive and pluralistic view regarding sexuality. Just

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like many other people of this subcontinent, he thought that this was the hegemonic belief of Modern Western World where fornication, open sexual activity, homosexuality, fluidity of gender identity were polluting the society and its people. It has already been shown what his view was about homosexuality in the second section where the mother-in-law would use daughter-in-law for her sexual pleasure. In another article, while posing his idea of India being influenced by Modern Western ideals, he redeems the priests of Anglican church being not only “adulterous” but also “homosexual”. In his ideology, it seems, homosexual is worse than being “adulterous” (Chaudhuri, 1997, p.208). All these evidences direct the readers towards the conflict that he was going through in the postmodern world to cope up with the ideology of post-structural and queer identity. But, given Mr. Chaudhuri’s pro-British sentiment as it’s seen earlier, he should have been the first one to participate in the third wave feminism which refuses gender and sexuality as a static object. This leads to the most important question that this paper seeks to answer- why did he become so critical of these post structural radical feminists despite cultivating dense pro-British sentiment his whole life?

Mr. Chaudhuri: A Representative of Victorian Patriarchy in Colonial India?

Now, to answer the last question, the patriarchal social construction of Victorian period must be discussed in the beginning of this section. Despite being ruled by a queen, this period in the English history is famously known for its patriarchal social structure. The concepts of Victorian womanhood, separate sphere, Victorian morality and as such are some important issues which are related to this construction of essential gender attributes and sexuality. The concept of separate sphere developed with the industrialization in the nineteenth century which was based on the essentialization of gender. To prove the difference between essential gendered role, instead of going for the divine power, scholars tried to engage in biological determinism in this period. For example, Geddes and Thompson, in 1889, argued that social, psychological and behavioural traits were caused by metabolic state. Women supposedly conserve energy (being ‘anabolic’) and this makes them passive, conservative, sluggish, stable and uninterested in politics. Men expend their surplus energy (being ‘katabolic’) and this makes them eager, energetic, passionate, variable and, thereby, interested in political and social matters. These biological ‘facts’ about metabolic states were used not only to explain behavioural differences between women and men but also to justify what their social and political arrangements ought to be as according to Geddes and Thompson, “what was decided among the prehistoric Protozoa cannot be annulled by Act of

Parliament” (quoted in Moi 18). This essentialization of gender where woman is passive and uninterested in politics, reinforces the idea that her role is within the private sphere. As the house was a place to grow ethical, moral and religious perception within the British citizens, women were supposed to play that role of a nurturing figure. Men were supposed to be the receiver of that care and nourishment because they worked hard at the public sphere to sustain the family economically.

These concepts seemed to emerge in India too after it went directly under the rule of Queen Victoria in 1858. The historical analysis of the Victorian colonial India shows that the British colonizers and western feminists were fighting to reform many acts for the oppressed women of India under the guise of British enlightenment without fully comprehending the diverse pluralistic culture of this subcontinent. However, their desire to help the third world women, homogenized the oppression of women which resulted into double oppression. As Ratna Kapur says, “The position of women within the Hindu tradition was simultaneously exploited by the British to continue their rule... Women were strikingly absent from this debate. At no point, however, were the legal measures sought based in any sense on the argument for equal rights for women” (30). Various reform acts regarding consent age, abortion, restitution of conjugal rights that were introduced here actually backfired and worsened the situation of Indian women according to different caste, class, place, and forced them into the concepts of Victorian womanhood. Another significant part where the colonized India directly gets influenced by the Victorian legal rule of controlling gender and sexuality is through the criminalization law of sodomy. The recent research prove that this intolerance was not imbedded in Indian subcontinent; rather, its deep root lies in the Judicial system of the colonial India. Many historians now have proofs through art and sculpture that the LGBTQ people were accepted by the society before colonization. Historian Rana Safavi states in the article “Why legalising gay sex in India is not a Western idea” of *BBC news* “Whether ancient or medieval India, fluid sexuality was present in the society. One can see the depictions of homosexuality in the temples of Khajuraho and Mughal chronicles.” In the same article, Prof Mukhia agrees with this statement. He believes that even if there was some “disapproval”, these people were not “ostracized” as they are being now. And, this exclusion exclusively started in India by section 377 of the Indian penal code which dates back to 1861, during the reign of Queen Victoria, as mentioned by Gardiner Harris in *The New York Times*. Hence, to come back to Mr. Chaudhuri’s write-ups, his over emphasis on the marital age of the girls without any critical analysis of their condition and its possible consequences in this subcontinent, the simplistic division of Indian history disregarding the Pre Vaidik culture, his essentialization of gender,

the subtle emphasis on the separate sphere and his extreme intolerance towards LGBTQ community that have been discussed in the previous sections seem to reflect his alignment with the very patriarchal culture of Victorian period that's deeply rooted in colonial India.

To conclude, the culture of Victorian patriarchy in Colonial India, which made Mr. Chaudhuri raise his voice against certain disparaging situations of South Asian women, even to an extent where he ironically creates the binary structure of unequal First world/Third World culture; made him also an emissary of fossilized beliefs in his later life keeping him far remote from the feminist movements of both Eastern and Western world of Modern and Post-modern period. But, the most disappointing fact is that many countries which were once colonized, still retain this mentality of Nirad C Chaudhuri and practice that culture through enforcement of law. It is high time the judicial system of these once colonized South Asian countries abandoned once imposed colonial rules and became more inclusive in their treatment of gender and sexuality.

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