



Voices of Resistance: Subaltern Identity and Contestation in Kallol Literature Beyond the Bhadrakol Hegemony

Nandini Gayen

Research Scholar, Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, India

Abstract:

This study critically examines *Kallol* magazine (1923–1929) as a platform for subaltern articulation, challenging the hegemonic narratives perpetuated by the Bhadrakol elite in colonial Bengal. Rooted in Antonio Gramsci's concept of subalternity and enriched by postcolonial feminist discourse, the research underscores *Kallol*'s role in reframing subaltern identities from passive subjects of marginalisation to active agents of resistance. By foregrounding the lived experiences of marginalised groups working-class labourers, slum dwellers, and urban poor- *Kallol* literature disrupts the homogenising nationalist discourse that silenced alternative voices. Through a critical analysis of urban spaces such as factories, slums, and middle-class neighbourhoods, the study reveals how these settings became aesthetic devices to critique colonial oppression, economic exploitation, and the ideological failures of modernity and nationalism. The narratives serve as counter-discourses, asserting the subaltern's right to self-representation and interrogating exclusionary practices within nationalist frameworks. Drawing on the intersections of caste, class, gender, and space, the research highlights the complexities of subaltern identities, demonstrating how *Kallol* literature resisted the commodification of marginality by reclaiming authentic narratives of despair, resistance, and identity. This exploration not only deconstructs the ideological supremacy of the Bhadrakol but also positions *Kallol* as a critical site for understanding subalternity's evolving role in identity politics and cultural resistance. The findings contribute to broader debates on representation, intersectionality, and the reclamation of fragmented voices in postcolonial literary studies.

Keywords: Subalternity, Bhadrakol, Resistance, Intersectionality, Colonial Bengal.

I. Introduction

Kallol magazine, which was active from 1923 to 1929, played a significant role in the intellectual and societal transformation of Colonial Bengal during the 1920s and 1930s. *Kallol* translates to "roaring wave," symbolising the magazine's flourishing presence during a crucial period in Bengal's history. Jointly edited by Dineshranjan Das and Gokulchandra Nag, *Kallol* embodied the spirit of a transformative era.

The precursor to *Kallol* was the Four Arts Club or the Chatushkala Samiti, founded on the enchanting full moon night on June 4th, 1921. Comprising luminaries such as Suniti Devi, Dineshranjan Das, Gokulchandra Nag, and Satiprasad Sen, this club laid the foundation for the cultural movement as a mixed-gender club in the heart of Bangosanskriti, Kolkata, standing as

a revered institution in Bengali society and culture. Before its inception, women were often excluded from such spaces. However, within the Chatuskala *Samiti*, distinctions of caste, gender, and social standing dissolved. Here, individuals engaged freely in dialogue and camaraderie without constraint, embodying a spirit of inclusivity and progressive thought. The abrupt dissolution of the Four Arts Club in 1922 precipitated the birth of *Kallol* magazine in 1923. Many aspiring writers, who had initially sought opportunities with the Four Arts Club, would become influential figures in the literary landscape of the following era. The inaugural issue of *Kallol* magazine featured contributions originally submitted for consideration to the Four Arts Club.

In a time when Bengali literature faced a void after Rabindranath Tagore, *Kallol* magazine ushered in a new literary wave. Young writers aimed to break away from Tagore's ideals, notably due to their perceived lack of emphasis on individualism. This was a time when the socio-political climate was charged with social reforms and intellectual awakenings, as the region sought to redefine its identity and challenge colonial influence.

The bilingually educated *Bhadrakol* intelligentsia assumed the responsibility of safeguarding a modern national literary culture, characterising the rest of society as aesthetically and morally deficient, lacking the ability to discern between refinement and indecency. The culture of literary periodicals thus became, at least conceptually, an autonomous domain embodying Bengali literature (*Banga-sahitya*) as a surrogate representation of the nation itself.

This study delineates the role of Little Magazine *Kallol* in becoming a mouthpiece of the marginalised communities who were not only disturbed by their colonial rulers but also by the indigenous Elite *Bhadrakols*. It is a qualitative exploration of the short stories, essays and the novels published in *Kallol* magazine which reshaped the prevalent colonial Bengal society on questions of nationalism, elitism, identity and politics. Rooted in Antonio Gramsci's concept of subalternity and enriched by postcolonial feminist discourse, the research underscores *Kallol*'s role in reframing subaltern identities from passive subjects of marginalisation to active agents of resistance. Parimal Ghosh (2016) noted, "Bhadrakol, of whatever religious or caste denomination, or political persuasion, evolved certain common markers, which taken together may have even implied a common agenda" (p.26); and that common agenda was to enlighten the society, social and national reconstruction in the way of their colonial rulers. One of the major aspects of the *Kallol* Era was the resistance against the literary conventions of the *Bhadrakols* and the westernisation of indigenous culture.

2.1. Elitism, Exclusion and Resistance

The dominance of the *Bhadrakol* was largely due to their access to English education, which became a defining symbol of social and cultural superiority. English education served as a crucial means of attaining status, employment, and influence within the colonial framework, benefiting primarily the *Bhadrakol* and positioning them as leaders in both the colonial administration and nationalist movements. However, this education system, controlled by the elite, systematically excluded the denigrated and lower classes who lacked the financial means and social standing to access these opportunities.

The introduction of English literature marks the effacement of a sordid history of colonialist expropriation, material exploitation, and class and race oppression behind European world dominance. The English literary text, functioning as a surrogate Englishman in his highest and most perfect state, becomes a mask for economic exploitation, so successfully camouflaging the material activities of the colonizer (Viswanathan, 2015, p.20).

Poromesh Acharya contended that access to education in schools was extremely limited, as the system was designed primarily to serve the elite, leaving the masses with few opportunities. The cost of education was prohibitively high, making it inaccessible to most. Moreover, the education system was predominantly controlled by the *Bhadrakol*, catering primarily to their

interests. Broomfield has mentioned that even for those outside the *Bhadralok* class who did manage to obtain the necessary education, the challenges didn't end there. Securing employment and achieving career advancement posed significant hurdles, as these offices were dominated by high-caste chief clerks. These clerks wielded substantial influence over hiring and promotion processes, creating additional barriers for non-*Bhadralok* individuals to succeed professionally. The overall system was structured to maintain the privilege and status of the *Bhadralok*, making it difficult for those from other social backgrounds to break through and thrive in the professional environment (1995, p.9). This bifurcation not only reinforced class divisions but also widened the cultural gap, as the educated class adopted Western lifestyles, dress, and values, while the rest of society adhered to more traditional ways of life.

The power structure established during colonial rule played a crucial role in shaping national consciousness among the Indian population. As the British solidified their control over the subcontinent, the concept of the nation-state with its well-defined borders began to take root. Nationalist discourse, particularly in its dominant forms, usually narrates the mobilisation for India's independence as a spectacular demonstration of collective enthusiasm. The image that emerges from such accounts is one of widespread and voluntary participation, where the people, inspired by the idea of freedom, come together in massive numbers to support the cause of independence. Crowds, often numbered in the hundreds of thousands, are vividly depicted as eagerly coming to listen to their leaders speak, whom they saw as inspired and eloquent. The crowds are presented as manifestations of the people's deep commitment, with representative crowds drawn from all strata of life and united in their longing to be free from colonialism.

In many cases, the nationalist elite aimed to rally the discontented masses by framing their struggles for national unity, independence, and liberation from oppressive regimes, whether colonial or otherwise. This connection between intellectual leadership and mass mobilisation became a defining characteristic of nationalist movements worldwide. By appealing to the common people, these movements transcend class divisions, though they often encountered challenges in aligning the varied interests of different social groups. Ultimately, nationalism became a powerful force, fuelled by the aspiration to create independent nation-states that promised inclusion, equality, and progress for all citizens, even though these promises were not always fully realised.

That the whole of Bengal presidency supported the Bhadrakol sponsored renaissance and the subsequent phenomenon of Swadeshi nationalism is a myth perpetrated by most writers.....uppercaste consciousness is so dominant among the intelligentsia that little research has been done on the egalitarian aspirations emanating from the traditionally depressed communities (Aloysius, 2020, p.69).

These changes in societal life are reflected in the intellectual awareness of the *Kallol* group. The expansion of democracy and socialism on both the national and international stage during this period influenced their worldview, which can be observed in their writings and perspectives.”এই যুগে সমাজের বিভিন্ন স্তরে দেশবাসীর জাতীয় চেতনার বিকাশ ঘটেছে এবং সেই জাতীয়তাবোধ প্রতিফলিত হয়েছে সমাজের নানা বিক্ষোভ ও আন্দোলনে”। (Basu, 2007, p.59) “In this era, the national consciousness of the people has developed across various strata of society, and this sense of nationalism is reflected in the numerous protests and movements of society” (personal translation). The *Kallol* group openly supported nationalism and the stories and novels penned by these authors often captured the implicit conflicts and social-political changes brought about by the nationalist movement. Though the central focus of the literature of *Kallol* writers was on the issues of society, personal problems, and subtleties of urban life, their writings unconsciously carried the feeling of the time because the nationalist zeal was on the rise everywhere in the country. One such instance can be seen in the novel *Michil* by Premendra Mitra -

পাড়াগাঁয়ের ছেলে, গ্রামের ক্ষুদ্র পরিধির ভিতর দেশসেবার স্বপ্ন দেখিয়াছি। ঘরে বসিয়া চরকা কাটিয়াছি, নিজের হাতে বোনা এক কাপড়ে থাকিয়া দুঃসহ শীতের দিনে দেশের জন্য কৃচ্ছ সাধন করিতেছি ভাবিয়াছি, পল্লি সংগঠনের উৎসাহে গভীর রাতে দল বাঁধিয়া পরের বাগানে বাঁশঝাড় কাটিয়া গিয়াও পরের ডোবায় কেরাসিন তেল ঢালিয়া দিয়া মার ও ভর্ৎসনাও যে খাই নাই তাহা নয়।

Voices of Resistance: Subaltern Identity and Contestation in Kallol Literature Beyond the Bhadrakalok Hegemony

তারপর অসহযোগ আন্দোলনের প্লাবনে ভাসিয়া কলিকাতায় আসিয়া ছিলাম জেলে যাইতে। জেলেই সচিনের সাথে আলাপ।
লম্বা একটা ঘরের ভিতরে জন পঁচিশ শুইতাম। (2020, p.9-10).

(A village boy, within the small confines of rural life I dreamt of serving the Nation. Sitting at home, I've spun the charkha, dressed in a single piece of cloth woven by my own hands, I've endured harsh cold winters, thinking that I was practising austerity for the country. I've gone late at night in groups, encouraged by rural organisation efforts, to cut down bamboo groves in others' gardens and pour kerosene into others' ponds, and it's not as if I was not thrashed and castigated for that.

Then, I came to Kolkata with the intent of going to jail, carried by the zeal of the Non-Cooperation Movement. It was in jail that I met Sachin.

About twenty-five of us slept in a long room (personal translation).

The idea of nationalism, constructed and championed by the *Bhadrakalok* society in Bengal, was lost upon the real conditions and struggles of the thousands of young individuals who left their mofussil house and homeland to join the nationalist movement in the city capital- as- "the metropolitan bourgeoisie who professed and practiced democracy at home..... were quite happy to conduct the government of their Indian empire as an autocracy" (Guha, 1998, p.4). For these young men, idealistic and full of potential but leaving behind their families and communities because of a promise of participation in something greater than themselves, the journey to Kolkata awaited. What emerged was an environment in which lives are not forgotten or sacrificed but are missed out on in the grand narrative of Bengal's history, especially as drawn and established in Elitist Historiography by the *Bhadrakalok* class. "The destruction of the colonial state was never a part of their project" (Guha, 1998, p.5). These nameless national warriors were wrongfully charged and put behind bars. Such instances are penned down by the writers of *Kallol*, in the novel *Pathik* (1923) Gokul Nag wrote –

আজ এক হফতা হইলো শ্রীশ জেল হইতে ফিরিয়াছে। পথের ধারে দোকানে কতকগুলি মহিলা স্বদেশী দ্রব্য ব্যবহার করিবার অনুরোধ করিয়া ফিরিয়েছিলেন। পুলিশ শান্তিভঙ্গের জন্য তাহাদিগকে ধরে এবং পুলিশের এই ব্যবহার মহিলাদিগের উপর উপযুক্ত হয় নাই বলিয়া প্রতিবাদ করিতে গিয়া শ্রীশ, তার বন্ধু সুধীর এবং আরও কতকগুলি যুবক ধৃত হয়..... বিচারে শ্রীশ এবং ঐ দলের অন্য কতকগুলি যুবকের ১৫ দিন সশ্রম কারাদণ্ড হয়, কিন্তু সুধীরের এইসঙ্গে হয় নাই; কারণ সুধীরের সুগঠিত দেহ। তাহার বিচার হইতে লাগিল শহরের খুনী, গুপ্তা এবং ডাকাত প্রভৃতির সঙ্গে। (p.125)

It has been a week since Shreesh returned from jail. On the roadside, some women had requested people to use Swadeshi goods. The police arrested them for disturbing the peace, and protesting against this treatment of women, Shreesh, his friend Sudhir, and several other young men were also arrested..... In the trial, Shreesh and several other young men from that group were sentenced to 15 days of rigorous laboured imprisonment, but Sudhir was not included; because of Sudhir's well-built body. His trial began with that of the city's murderers, goons, and robbers (personal translation).

Most of these young men went to live in cramped, claustrophobic messes; shared tiny overcrowded rooms with many others, partly dark and dingy and had little ventilation, barely allowing the inhabitants to move freely, let alone live comfortably. These messes were where many unfortunates went to live their lives in hardship, scraping along for meagre earnings from short-term or low-waged jobs, mostly. The elitist narrative failed to identify the class struggles in nationalist movements-

তাহারা চারজনে মিলিয়া কয়লা কুঠিতে কাজ করিত। তাহারের সংস্থান করিয়া গায়ের যে রক্তটুকু জমা করিত, মনিবের পায়ে সেটুকু ঢালিয়া দিয়াও যখন কোন প্রকারেই তাঁহাকে সন্তুষ্ট করিতে পরিল না, তখন তাহারা প্রাণ দিতেও কসুর করিল না। (S. Mukhopadhyaya, 2020, p.6)

The four of them worked together in the coal mine. They collected the meagre food provisions and poured out their blood to satisfy the master. When they still couldn't please him in any way, they did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives.

The *Kallol* movement, in its ideological stance, intentionally and consciously distanced itself

from the Tagorean school of thought, which was perceived as more aligned with the elite and privileged sections of society. The discontent towards these so-called Elites had reverberated through every page of *Kallol*. In *Swami* (1924), Bhabataran Basu remarked –

বাঙ্গালার জমিদারেরা প্রজার সর্বস্ব শোষণ করতে জানে। ক্ষুধিতের মুখের অন্ন কেড়ে নিয়ে নিজের সভ্যতা শিক্ষা বজায় রাখবার জন্য দেশের অর্থ বিদেশীর হাতে তুলে দিতে জানে, আর জানে মটরে, জুড়িতে বন্ধুভোজে নিজের ঐশ্বর্যের বহর দেখাতো। বিকাশের স্বপ্নের এসব কিছু বাদ যায়নি। অধিকন্তু তিনি কাউন্সিলের মেম্বর হবার জন্য, ভোটের সংগ্রহে জলের মত অর্থব্যয় করতে, রায় বাহাদুরীর লোভে ‘নিউজিল্যান্ড ফেমিন ফন্ড’ দান করতে বিশেষ উদযোগী ছিলেন (p.39)

The Zamindars of Bengal know how to exploit the people. He knows how to take away the food from the mouth of the hungry and hand over the country's money to foreigners to maintain his civilization and education, and he knows how to show off his wealth at a feast of peas and beans. These things of Bikash's father-in-law were not left out. Moreover, he was particularly enthusiastic about becoming a member of the council, spending like water on voter recruitment, donating to the 'New Zealand Feminine Fund' at the behest of Roy Bahaduri.

By shining a light on these overlooked areas, the *Kallol* movement sought to bring attention to the harsh realities faced by many urban dwellers and to challenge the romanticised notions of city life often portrayed in more mainstream works. Furthermore, the movement sought to highlight the experiences of those deceived or abandoned by societal structures.

3.1. Rise of the Bengali Bhadramahila

The emergence of the “New Bengali” language among the educated upper middle class transformed print media into a crucial instrument for establishing dominance over marginalised groups. This era marked a significant juncture, as it represented the initial instance of the *Bhadralok*'s cultural identity being expressed in print. To assert their superiority over less privileged segments of society, the Bengali *Bhadraloks* deliberately constructed stereotypes that portrayed traditional, unrefined women and lower classes as antithetical to their cultured existence. The 19th century ushered in linguistic purification, enabling the enlightened upper class to eliminate vulgar elements and distinguish themselves from the primitive and rustic aspects of their society. The “Sadhu Bhasa” or Sanskritised Bengali Language utilised by the upper-class *Bhadralok* was incomprehensible to the typical home-tutored “antahpur” Bengali woman and underprivileged groups. In the absence of female writers, male authors assumed the responsibility of catering to the growing female readership.

Men themselves had earlier shared this language with women in the domestic sphere. But the rigid identification with a ‘polite’ Bengali on the part of the educated male during this period, made him gradually withdraw from such joint cultures. What was previously only a form of spoken Bengali thus became stereotyped and stigmatized as women's language, and responsibility for lack of gentility in speech and culture shifted onto women's shoulders. The essentialized coarseness of women's speech' came to define male *bhadralok* 'respectability' (A. Ghosh, 2006, p.227-28).

Consequently, many novels of that period became instruments for the Bengali Intelligentsia to subjugate women. In their endeavour to solidify their social standing, the *Bhadralok* aimed to redefine the roles of women within their community, including their wives, daughters, and sisters. To this end, the influential Umesh Chandra Dutta, a member of the esteemed Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, founded the *Bamabodhini Patrika* (1863-1922). This periodical served to educate elite, upper-class women and offered them a platform to express their views through writing. However, this privilege was granted to only a few women who were expected to follow the new patriarchal codes established by the *Bhadralok*. These women belonged to the upper-middle-class stratum and were nurtured in the refined arts of civility and Victorian modesty. They were introduced to the realm of writing by male benefactors and guardians who facilitated their artistic pursuit. The *Bhadralok* attempted to shape and mould the minds of these privileged women through the *Bamabodhini Patrika*. By controlling the narrative and limiting the voices allowed to be heard, they sought to reinforce the patriarchal values and norms that would secure

their position in society. In one of the articles written by an unknown woman writer, it is mentioned that –

Women cannot be a part of the Bramho Samaj and take part in the meditations of the *Parama Bramha*, the Supreme Being, with their relatives, neither can they enter school premises and to quench their thirst for knowledge. They can only lead their lives like the caged cuckoo, fluttering to and fro within their enclosed space (Chanda & Bagchi, 2014, p.4).

The “New Women” depicted in *Kallol* literature starkly contrasted with their obedient predecessors, challenging societal expectations and pursuing lives on their terms. Unlike the traditional, compliant figures of the past, these women actively questioned authority, confronting the rigid societal norms that had previously constrained them. In Ahalya Gupta’s short story *Vidhava*, (2007) the protagonist Madhabi voices this resistance, reflecting on the plight of women shaped by the actions of their forefathers. With profound anguish, she condemns these ancestors for constructing societal rules that failed to protect their daughters from suffering. Rather than safeguarding future generations, these men prioritised their social status, neglecting the long-term impact on the lives of their wives and daughters. She further asked the poignant question– “দিদি, আমি বিধবা কেন?” “Sister, why am I a widow?” (Gupta, 2007, p.310) which resonated with every widow in Bengal society. Madhabi further exclaimed – “তোমরা কি ভুলে যাও, আমি বিধবা কিন্তু আমিও মানুষ?” Do you forget that despite being a widow, I’m still a human being?” (Gupta, 2007, p.311). Madhabi’s realisation portrays a profound critique of patriarchy’s selfishness, highlighting the generational consequences of oppressive norms. Ajit’s impassioned stance against the rituals and customs imposed on widows reflects a growing awareness of social injustice and a desire for reform in society. His empathy towards the plight of widowed individuals demonstrates a progressive mindset that challenges long-standing traditions rooted in patriarchal structures. By recognising the selfishness inherent in those who formulate such oppressive practices, Ajit exposes the underlying motivations behind these customs, which often serve to maintain power imbalances and restrict individual freedoms. He exclaimed- “সমাজ? সে সমাজ জাহান্নামে যাক।” “Society? That society can go to hell” (Gupta, 2007, p.311). As a flagbearer for change, Ajit embodies the aspirations of a new generation seeking to break free from the constraints of outdated traditions. His character represents a shift in societal values, emphasising the importance of compassion, equality, and individual agency. This rejection of oppressive norms signifies a broader movement towards social progress, where the suffering of marginalised groups, such as widows, is no longer accepted as an inevitable consequence of tradition. Ajit’s declaration catalyses challenging the status quo and encourages others to question the validity of practices that perpetuate inequality and suffering in society.

In one of the excerpts published in *Kallol* magazine, the importance of *Strisikkha* or women’s education was emphasised:

উচ্চশিক্ষার পথ তাদের নিকটও অবাধ ও উন্মুক্ত করে দেওয়া হোক.... মেয়েদের বিয়েটা অনেক পিছিয়ে দেওয়া হোক..... বিধবা দের শিক্ষা ও আবশ্যিক মতো তাদের পুনর্বিবাহের ব্যবস্থা করা হোক..... এমন কি আবশ্যিক হলে বিবাহ বিচ্ছেদের ও ব্যবস্থা করা হোক। (Das & Nag, 1924).

The way of higher education should be made free and open to them too... the marriage of girls should be postponed a lot... the education of widows and their remarriage should be arranged as necessary... even the divorce arrangement should be made if necessary. (personal translation)

The writers associated with *Kallol* magazine, through their diverse and compelling short stories, shed light on this persistent issue. Notably, one of the prominent figures of the *Kallol Gosthi*, Nirupama Devi, was herself a widow passionately advocating for women’s emancipation. In the

narrative of *Andhakarer Andhakup*, (2010) the writer Fanindranath Mukhopadhyaya passionately declares that the key to liberating the oppressed women of society lies in education. However, during that period, girls' education was still confined to the study of Hindu Scriptures, limiting their exposure to broader knowledge and ideas. Despite these constraints, the protagonist, a young widow, experiences a transformative impact when she receives a brief touch of education. Through the power of education, the young widow undergoes a profound change in her perspective and demeanour. In the past, she endured the harsh treatment of her stepmother and father in silence, but now, armed with newfound knowledge, she finds her voice. No longer willing to accept the injustices forced upon her, she fearlessly protests against the inconveniences and hardships she faces. Her stepmother complained about her change:

তোমরা আসার আগে রাতদিন খাটা খাটনি করতো, মুখে কথা ছিলো না। মার ধোর খেয়েও কাঁদতে জানতো না। আর এখন এমনি অন্যায় আদুরে হতে চাচ্ছেন যে..... মার-ধোর তো বরাবর ই করা হয়, কিন্তু তখন এত সব ছিল না। (F. Mukhopadhyaya, 2010, p.326).

Before you came, she used to do the household chores day and night, hardly uttering a word. And now, she wants justice. She had always been beaten and scolded but there wasn't so much of all this. (personal translation)

The story beautifully exemplifies how even a small dose of education can empower an individual, particularly a marginalised woman, to challenge the oppressive norms of society. By taking a stand and voicing her grievances, the young widow embodies the potential of education to break the shackles of traditional constraints and ignite a flame of courage and resilience within her.

Within the literary landscape of *Kallol*, women were portrayed as enthusiastic learners, embracing education to transcend the limitations imposed by societal norms. Irrespective of their social identities, they emerged as empowered individuals, taking charge of their own lives. This phenomenon gave rise to a new group, the *Bhadramahila*, representing a paradigm shift in the patriarchal society, where educated women asserted themselves as a formidable force, driven by their quest for empowerment and self-determination. The ethos of *Kallol* thus championed the idea of educated women actively participating in shaping their destiny and challenging the conventions of their time.

4.1. Conclusion

Research on *Kallol* provides insights into a pivotal period in Bengali history, elucidating the development of Bengali literature, nationalism, and social movements. The approaches adopted by *Kallol* in challenging dominant ideologies and amplifying marginalised voices offer valuable perspectives on fostering social change. An analysis of their methods and achievements will yield significant lessons for dismantling oppressive structures and advancing social justice in contemporary contexts.

Kallol's emphasis on representing the experiences of doubly subjugated subaltern groups, such as the working class and women, aligns with contemporary discourse on identity politics and the importance of diverse narratives. *Kallol's* critique of colonialism and resistance against *Bhadralok's* dominance remains pertinent in a world grappling with neocolonialism and cultural hegemony. Examining their strategies will enhance our understanding of ongoing struggles for cultural independence and self-determination across diverse contexts.

The profound impact of *Kallol* continues to reverberate through generations, inspiring individuals to challenge stereotypes and advocate for gender equality and social justice. This study provides significant insights into the transformative role of *Kallol* and the emergence of writers who resolutely confronted nationalist patriarchy and *Bhadralok* hegemony in late colonial Bengal. Future research endeavours might enhance our understanding by considering a broader sample size, conducting comparative analyses of different magazines, and incorporating additional historical sources. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that, like any study, this research has its

limitations, such as the relatively small sample size and the potential subjectivity introduced by relying primarily on writings from *Kallol* magazine. Nevertheless, these limitations do not diminish the valuable insights it provides into the intricate dynamics of marginalised lives within the context of colonial Bengal. This study aims to elucidate these dynamics and offer fresh perspectives that challenge conventional narratives, contributing to a deeper comprehension of subaltern experiences during that era.

References

- Acharya, P. (1995). Bengali *Bhadrakal* and educational development in 19th century Bengal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30(13), 670–673.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4402564>
- Aloysius, G. (2020). *Nationalism without a nation in India*. Oxford University Press.
- Basu, B. (2007). Swami. In A. Mukhopadhaya (Ed.), *Kallol galpasamagra* (Vol. 1, pp. 38–41). Mitra and Ghosh Publishers.
- Bhattacharya, S. (2014). *The defining moments in Bengal: 1920–1947*. Oxford University Press.
- Casci, S. (1999). Nationalism and gender ideology in Bengali literature. *Il Politico*, 64(2), 277–291.
- Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference*. Princeton University Press.
- Chanda, I., & Bagchi, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Shaping the discourse: Women's writings in Bengali periodicals, 1865–1947*. STREE.
- Chatterjee, P. (1993). *Nationalist thought and the colonial world: A derivative discourse* (2nd ed.). University of Minnesota Press.
- Chatterjee, P. (1998). *The present history of West Bengal: Essays in political criticism*. Oxford University Press.
- Chatterjee, P. (2020). *The nation and its fragments: Colonial and postcolonial histories*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvzgb88s>
- Ghosh, A. (2006). *Power in print: Popular publishing and the politics of language and culture in a colonial society, 1778–1905*. Oxford University Press.
- Ghosh, P. (2016). *What happened to the Bhadrakal?* Primus Books.
- Guha, R. (1997). *A Subaltern Studies reader: 1986–1995*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Guha, R. (1998). *Dominance without hegemony: History and power in colonial India*. Harvard University Press.
- Gupta, A. (2007). Vidhava. In A. Mukhopadhaya (Ed.), *Kallol galpasamagra* (Vol. 1, pp. 309–311, 325–328). Mitra and Ghosh Publishers.
- Gupta, M. (2014). *The short stories of Kallol: A critical study* [Doctoral dissertation, Gauhati University].
- Mitra, P. (2020). Michil. In S. Dasgupta (Ed.), *Premendra Mitra satabarshiki sankalan* (No. 3, pp. 87–130). Mitra and Ghosh Publishers.
- Mukhopadhaya, F. (2010). Andhakarer andhakup. In A. Mukhopadhaya (Ed.), *Kallol galpasamagra* (Vol. 3, pp. 325–328). Mitra and Ghosh Publishers.
- Mukhopadhaya, S. (2010). Maa. In A. Mukhopadhaya (Ed.), *Kallol galpasamagra* (Vol. 3, pp. 5–10). Mitra and Ghosh Publishers.
- Murshid, G. (1983). *Reluctant debutante: Response of Bengali women to modernisation, 1849–1905*.
- Nag, G. (1923). *Pathik*. Indian Press Limited.
- Nag, G. (Ed.). (1923–1929). *Kallol*. Kallol Publishing House.
- Nandy, S. (2022). Contaminating the binaries: The rhetoric of resistance in women's

autobiographical narratives in the *Bamabodhini Patrika* (1863–1922). *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 7(5).

<https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.75.38>

Viswanathan, G. (2015). *Masks of conquest: Literary study and British rule in India*. Columbia University Press.

Bio-note

Nandini Gayen is a researcher and full-time scholar in the Department of English at Banaras Hindu University. With a Master's degree in British English literature, she has developed a deep interest in cultural theory, gender studies, and decolonial and postcolonial studies, particularly within the context of Bengali literature. As an academic writer and educator, her research examines the complex interaction between historical colonial paradigms and contemporary discourse, illuminating marginalised perspectives and broader post-colonial implications. Her thorough investigation of the consequences arising from colonial legacies makes a significant contribution to socio-cultural discussions. She has participated in various national and international conferences and has published several articles. Her forthcoming manuscripts include *Bhadramahila Chronicles* (Cambridge Scholars Press) and a critical study of *Kallol* magazine's gendered resistance in *Development in Practice* (Scopus Q2).

Email id: nandinigayen@bhu.ac.in

ORCID ID: 0009-0006-9359-0194

