

**REFLECTIONS OF INDIAN SENSIBILITY: A STUDY OF COMPLEX SAGA OF MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIPS IN BIMAL ROY'S BANDINI**

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**Abstract**

*No look cast on the history of Indian Cinema can ever escape the mention of Bimal Roy. Well known for his immaculate directional skills, he was termed as- "One of the most successful directors of Hindi cinema" (Tilak Rishi, 2012). UdayarPathey (Towards the Light, Bimal Roy, 1944) the Bengali masterpiece marked his debut as a director. Ever since then there was no looking back for the great maestro. In his oeuvre he directed various classic masterpieces in the Indian cinema viz. Do BighaZamin (Bimal Roy,1953), Devdas (Bimal Roy,1955), Parineeta (Bimal Roy,1953), Sujata (Bimal Roy,1959), Madhumati (Bimal Roy,1958), BirajBahu (Bimal Roy,1954), Parakh (Bimal Roy,1960) etc. which makes him stand equal amongst the contemporary great directors like-Raj Kapoor, V. Shantaram, Guru Dutt, and Mehboob Khan etc. In this series of masterpieces-Bandini (Bimal Roy,1963) was a women centric saga. It was bestowed with the National Film Award for the Best Feature Film and also the Film Fare Award for the Best Film and Bimal Roy was accolade with the Film Fare Award for the Best Director. Set in the late colonial times the story is about a woman who is shown to sail through her rough life as does the nation at that time. True to its title Bandini (Imprisoned) films the story of a - caged woman. The theme of being caged is exploited in literal as well as metaphorical term by the director. Strong and complex faces of man-woman relationships are seen as the underlying pattern in the progression of the film narration. The life of central character Kalyani (The one who does the well being of others) is seen to be affected by the male characters in the movie. The absence of any other lead female character*

*is actuated to enhance the relationships that Kalyani shares with the other male characters in the film. While dealing with these set of relationship and their rise and decay are specifically focused onto. Bandini is a women centric movie wherein the character of the protagonist is very carefully crafted. It is not a story line which usually treads helplessly through female lead who is -wronged, oppressed or denied justice by the society like- (Phoolan Devi (Shekhar Kapur,1994), KhoonBhariMaang (Rakesh Roshan,1988), Ram Lakahan (SubhashGhai, 1989) etc.) The female lead here is cast through a saga of man-woman relationships.*

**Key words:** Bimal Roy, Man-woman relationships, Bandini, Indian Culture.

## I

### Man-Woman Relations in Indian Culture

The world largely in its primitive form developed societies which were patriarchal in nature. Women thus have had a subjugated role to play in these societies. The patriarchal system has its roots so deep down the ancient societal system that it had almost dinged to the soul of modern day societies also. The various evidential factors in this regard can be cited as the major issues like those of –equality of wages and of women suffrage which was guaranteed in the late nineteenth century. The comment of Allan and Barbara-“All things are not equal; men and women are different... Not better or worse-different” (Allan & Barbara, 2001), stands firm as the evidence of correlation of man-woman relations in the human society from the earliest days to the modern day.

The limits of the patriarchal system plagued females such that they could not afford to perceive any change in their status- as the French existentialist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir states-“In actuality...for man represents the both positive and the neutral...whereas woman represents only negative, defined by limiting criteria” (De Beauvoir, 1984). This limiting criterion was the world over phenomenon. Indian culture and traditions also agreed and followed the notion. The rich Indian Vedic literature laid down strict terms and conditions- of high moral values for leading a respectable life. In Indian societal system although the women were expected to be the docile and humble, but were also offered due recognition for their contribution to the development of family and society as a whole. The Vedic literature, great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata and Manu Smriti together constitute the encyclopedia of societal and cultural norms which draws the guidelines and patterns of ideal society and the execution of duties and roles within it. Manu Smriti is also treated as the colossal code bank for the man-woman relations in the society. It has been largely debated and scrutinized for its content and their inherent meanings.

The scholars have had various and varied opinions in this regard. For the purpose of observing simplicity and brevity of appraisal of these code bank, presented below are some selected (translated) quotes:

***A) General Respect and Protection:***

1. Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and brothers-in-law, who desire (their own) welfare. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.55.]
2. Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.56.]
3. Where the female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.57.]
4. The houses, on which female relations, not being duly honored, pronounce a curse, perish completely, as if destroyed by magic. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.58.]
5. Hence men, who seek (their own) welfare, should always honor women on holidays and festivals with (gifts of) ornaments, clothes, and (dainty) food. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.59.]
6. In that family, where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting. [Biidler, G (1979) v.3.60.]
7. But to the maiden (sisters) the brothers shall severally give (portions) out of their shares, each out of his share one-fourth part; those who refuse to give (it), will become outcasts. [Biidler, G (1979) v.9.118.]

***B) Disrespect:***

8. It is the nature of women to seduce men in this (world); for that reason the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females. [Biidler, G (1979) v.2.213.]
9. For women are able to lead astray in (this) world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger. [Biidler, G (1979) v.2.214.]
10. One should not sit in a lonely place with one's mother, sister, or daughter; for the senses are powerful, and master even a learned man. [Biidler, G (1979) v.2.215.]

***C) Dependence:***

11. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent. [Biidler, G (1979) v.5.148.]

12. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both (her own and her husband's) families contemptible. [Biidler, G (1979) v.5.149.]
13. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence. [Biidler, G (1979) v.9.3.]
14. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families. [Biidler, G (1979) v.9.5.]

**D) Matrimonial**

**i) Subjugation:**

15. Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure (elsewhere), or devoid of good qualities, (yet) a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife. [Biidler, G (1979) v.5.154.]
16. A faithful wife, who desires to dwell (after death) with her husband, must never do anything that might displease him who took her hand, whether he be alive or dead. [Biidler, G (1979) v.5.156.]

**ii) Happiness:**

17. "Let mutual fidelity continue until death", this may be considered as the summary of the highest law for husband and wife. [Biidler, G (1979) v.9.101.]
18. Let man and woman, united in marriage, constantly exert themselves, that (they may not be) disunited (and) may not violate their mutual fidelity. [Biidler, G (1979) v.9.102.]

Apart from Manu Smriti the Man-Woman relationships have been portrayed and exalted in other sacred texts such as *Upanishads*, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Few broad citations from these are charted as under:

1. *Ardhnarishwar (Lord Shiv – Goddess Parvati)*: The strong concept of Shiva and Shakti; the male and female power in the universe. These are twined in the one to put forth the harmonious face of the two powers as one in the half Shiva and half Shakti; the Ardhnarishwar. It symbolizes the need of overall harmony in the matrimonial (man-woman) relations.

2. *Dhitrashtra and Gandhari (Mahabharata)*: this concept draws from the famous great epic tale of Mahabharata which again strengthens the idea of commitment and assimilation in the matrimonial relations. Gandhari the queen of Bharata regime blind folded her eyes for life to parallel her blind husband-king Ditrashtra.
3. *Ramayana and Mahabharata*: the two great Indian epics are based on the basic theme that women (like: Sita, Draupadi and Amba) should be respected, within or outside, or the clans are doomed.

Expectantly man-woman relations in the Indian culture and cinema have been overshadowed by the ancient relics and the classical ideal women characters. Rachel Dwyer states: “The major way in which mythology appears in the social film...usually those of the two great epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana” (Rachel Dwyer, 2006). These ideal characters are decorated with adjectives like-obedient, sacrificial, dedicated, and righteous, with an endless list of many more to follow.

## II

### **Man –Woman Relations in Contemporary Indian Cinema**

Since Indian cinema was born during the colonial times it bears the everlasting imprints of the contemporary social consciousness. Since- Literature is the mirror of the society; cinema too is carved out of the reality of the time in which it is made. It bears the slice of social, political and economic life. It is thus realized as the best entertainment medium of all times.

K. Gokulsing and Wimal Dissayanake have commented with regards to Indian audience that- Films are believed to be the opium of the Indian masses (Gokulsing & Dissayanake, 1998, p.88).

Man-Woman relationship in early Bollywood (of 1950s-60s) was characterized under the influence of great Indian epics-Ramayana and Mahabharata, classical Sanskrit plays (which were mostly borrowed from the Vedic literature) and the Folk theatre which was mostly reincarnated version of the old Sanskrit texts. Hence man-woman relations in Bollywood are mostly linearly built up. Men would be the usual custodian of the women folk. Indubala Singh notes that - “the portrayal of a woman even in subtle ways, usually presents her as the guardian of culture and religion or embodiment of purity and spiritual power, yet constantly requiring the protection of man as her lord and master.” (Indubala Singh, 2007) Thus the patriarchal impact of ancient sacred texts is seen to be so deep and strong that man-woman relationships of all orders are marginalized to being the epitome of virtue and values.

Marked by the stereotype image, the cinematic man-woman relations in those times were certainly poised against the contextual reality. Directors of those times realized the changing scenario at hand and thus they heeded to the need to redefine the cinematic truth in the existing times. Bimal Roy in his jury address at the First International Film Festival held in Moscow (July, 1959) said that-“I also wish sincerely that we made films like this in Bombay. That would help change the very complexion of our national cinema”. During these changing times women began getting the larger share in terms of the role percentage in the cinematic drama. Moreover at times they would be seen taking bold decisions controlling the male-Mother India (Mehboob Khan, 1957), a classical masterpiece by Mehboob Khan is great example of the same. During these transitional times the directors adopted the scripts of the cinema to suit the changing role of the females in the Indian society. Although this was subtly mild in manner, in fact tailor made, for consumption of the native audiences.

### III

#### **Kalyani as ‘Bandini’: Indian Context**

Introduced as a prisoner to us, Kalyani is the one who is over-burdened by her schemas of ideal Indian women. She is imprisoned by her sweet will at all stages in the movie.

In “Bandini”(Bimal Roy,1963), Kalyani’s character in the movie is infused with the necessary blend of conditioning and the tinge of faction. As discussed in the section I of this paper Bandini is seen conditioned in the ideal Indian context. She is brought-up on the feed of devotional Vaishnav (Related to Lord Vishnu) hymns; which display extreme devotion in relationship.

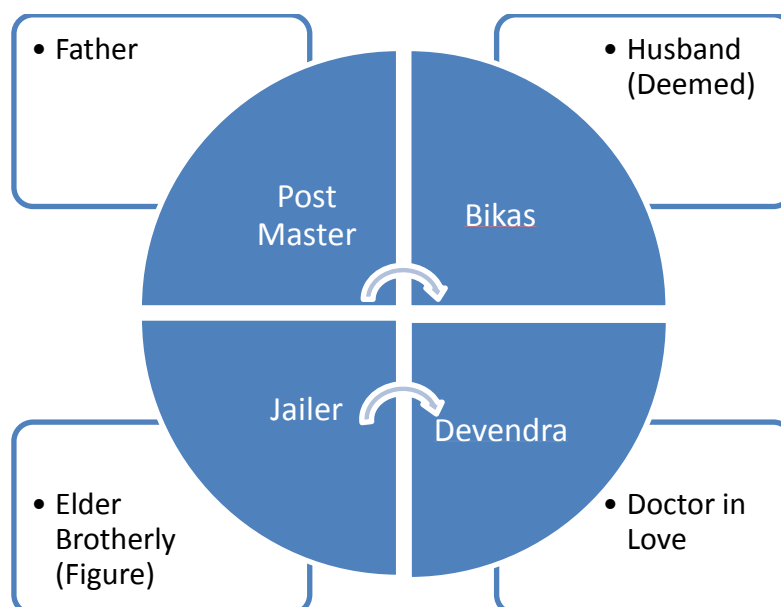
Her belonging is her past. It is her past which hounds her. She is unable to forget the loss of her brother (cries while narrating the story to the Jailor), her father’s social boycott and the betrayal of Bikash Ghosh. The memories of her past are always fresh in her mind. These memories are the obstacles in her accepting her present. Devendra (the doctor) was the harbinger of her promising future. But the nostalgic impressions of her past result in her self-imposed imprisonment even in her present. The will and longing for her past is the resultant of her profound attachment to the people in her bygone days. This attachment is continuously triggered by her conditioning of a typical stereotype Indian ideal woman; who would bear all the pain without the slightest expectation for any gain. As Tere has said it was- “Through the ideas of loyalty and obedience to the husband, Hindi cinema successfully institutionalized patriarchal values”. (Tere N.,2012)

## IV

### Man-Woman Relationship Spectrum

Various shades of man-woman relationships portrayed in the feature are mapped against Kalyani with the following characters:

1. Brother ( who died)
2. Post Master (Father)
3. Bikash Ghosh (Love interest & deemed husband)
4. Devendra (Doctor in love)
5. Jailer (Occupies fatherly figure after father's death)



*Fig. Showing complex Man–Woman relationship in Bandini.*

In the above figure Kalyani's fixture in the trap of man-woman relationship is depicted. The first quarter deals with the Father (who is postmaster in the movie). Although we find that the father is worried for marriage of Kalyani, but Kalyani is of opposite opinion. She is imprisoned by her self-dedication to the well being of her father and hence is trapped in the emotional bond. In the second quarter a shift in her emotional status is seen. Bikash comes as a new found emotional attachment in her life. Her father is free to her being introduced to Bikash. It's only when this relationship begins to take shape that Bikash is arrested from



Kalyani's house and he has to leave. A dilemmatic social situation arises in wake of unmarried status of the Kalyani to Bikash. Hence Kalyani finds herself again caught in emotional fetters.

In the next set of quarter the Jailer is adopts the role of a deemed elder brother (who is deemed equivalent to father in Indian sensibility) for Kalyani. He too is empathetic towards her condition and supports her. Jailer is worried about her settlement; post her release from the Jail (almost like her father). In the last quarter of the figure the doctor shows her interest in Kalyani. She refuses to marry him, since she is concerned about his image and thus is ready to sacrifice herself by restraining to start afresh (at doctor's cost).

In the all the four quarters the protagonist is seen to sail through the event and circumstances as they come. But at the end of the story we find that there occurs a sudden shift from fourth quarter (Devendra) to the second quarter (Bikash). Here Kalyani makes a choice of forming a final matrimonial bond. But that is a choice of living with the deemed husband who is in the ailing state. Thus succumbing to the nostalgia and love for Bikash and choosing the final cage for herself.

## V

### **Normative Audit of Man-Woman Relationship Spectrum**

The normative in Indian film industry has been the core of the all the portrayals. As Anil Sari has said: "Since all cinemas has at its core the primal relationship between a man and woman, a very specific role has been played by female characters in the feature film, reflecting the changing image of women in the twentieth century society" (Saari, 2009) The character of Kalyani hints the awakening of the social change in folds of Indian society that we all very well now see as a part and parcel of our modern world. The assessment of the above statement is attempted through the normative audit of various man-woman relationships featured in the movie which is depicted in its various shades -father, brother, beau and suitor, as follows:

#### ***a) Father – Daughter, Brother-Sister***

Kalyani is introduced as a charming and educated young lady, well versed in domestic chores. She is a loving daughter to her widowed father and takes good care of him. After the loss of her brother whom she regarded as her all in all, Kalyani transfers her great deal of love and affection, which she bore for her deceased brother, to the lonely, old and grief stricken father. She yearns to fill the vacuum that her the demise of her brother had created. As a true daughter she puts her father over her own priorities in life. In her quest to adopt the role of her brother can be visualized from the dialogues:



**Kalyani:** “*Kya soch rahe ho baba ji*” (what are you thinking respected father).

**Father replies-**“*teri he baat soch raha hun beti*” (I’m thinking about you my daughter). “*Sab khatein hain ab tere hath peele kar tujhe parai kar dena chahiye*” (all say that I should get you married and send you off to your home).

**Kalyani asks-**“*Achha agar main tumhara beta hoti to?*”(What if I would have been your son?).

**Father replied-**“*nahi tu beti hi bhali*” (no you are okay as a daughter dear).

Her repetitive attempts to reshape the normative (daughters are best married off) could not hold water in the eyes of her father.

Later in the movie Kalyani leaves her house to save her father from any further social disgrace (Due to Bikash-Kalyani relationship fiasco). Thus as a daughter she had to pay the price for her father’s honor to be restored. She is shattered when she hears of her father’s death. Her incident encounter with Bikash’s lunatic wife turns gory. She poisons Bikash’s wife to avenge the death of her father (*much like a son*).

### ***b) Deemed Husband-Wife***

The concept of deemed husband has its roots in the traditional patriarchal system. The females expectedly dedicate themselves to the male counterpart; even without any formal relationship being established/ solemnized. In instances even being married to a simple portrait or any belonging of the- to be spouse. The idea here is to show utmost reverence and awe for the deemed bridegroom. Such that he is treated more like idol of god who resides in her temple of heart.

The Vaishnav Kavita (hymns in praise of lord Krishna and goddess Radha) had a great impact on the mind of Kalyani. In these hymns supreme love and unconditional dedication is rhymed. Kalyani’s formal meeting with Bikash at her father’s house had Vaishnav Kavita in context; it from this point that roots of the relationships start to take shape. The song “*jogi jab se tu aya mere duware...*” which follows the scene has been beautifully placed. It conveys the kind of affections that Kalyani is breeding for Bikash. Another song in the flick- “*Mera Gora Ang Le Le, Mohe Shyam Rang De De*” (take my fair complexion, give me your dark one), follows in line to the earlier one. The entire lyrical pattern is innocent and based on the acceptance of liking and compassion for the beloved. Kalyani is every bit a traditional woman she develops a soft corner for Bikash.

On normative grounds the relationship between Kalyani and Bikash witnesses a see-saw trend. While Kalyani is seen to nurture a non-normative love for Bikash. She is also seen to

exalting the normative iconic female at the end of the movie, when she clearly chooses to stay with ailing Bikash rather than Devendra with a better promise of life ahead.

**c) Jailor (Deemed Brother)-Kalyani**

Relationship of Jailor and Kalyani has no formal token in the movie. They are attached through Devendra. It is through Devendra's eyes that the Jailor (a considerate fellow) forms fair opinion about Kalyani. Jailor's initial opinion was a look of shock; on learning that Kalyani was imprisoned for murder (This in orient culture is considered far more unacceptable and heinous than a man committing a murder). This emotion quickly gives way to her bent of mind on risking her life for the goodwill of others. He seems confused and quotes from Shatras that- "*Triya charitram, Purushasya bhagyam, Devo Na Janati, Kuto Manushya*" ("*A woman's character and a man's destiny even gods can't gauge, how poor humans can do?*"). Certainly the Jailor is impressed by the exceptionality that was displayed in Kalyani's character.

In this relationship Kalyani is seen to adorn the role of a- docile, submissive and caring Indian woman. The man-woman relationship exhibited here is quite pure and yet full of intense affinity. In normative terms Kalyani's character confirms to the parameters of the ideal brother sister relationship.

**d) Devendra (Doctor) - Kalyani**

Devendra is struck by the sacrifice and beauty of Kalyani. The emotion of liking perforates the boundary for Devendra to transform into love for Kalyani. Devendra's faith in Kalyani finds shelter in his words- "*Agar koi ek baar aprad kar hi behte to wo hamesha ke liye apradhi nahi ho jata.*" (If someone does a crime once that does not mean that he is convict forever). But in view of oriental classical sentiments Kalyani refuses to reciprocate the emotions nurtured by Devendra.

Devendra and Kalyani's relationship thus presents a somber episode of the man-woman relations in the contemporary society. We can see in hints the episode between the two exhibits a budding non-normative relationship. Thus it helps to highlight the transformation which the society was willing to undertake during those times by harboring and securing good opportunity even to prisoners.

Eventually the relationship culminates by Kalyani choosing to stay with Bikash rather than Devendra. This depicts that though the relationship basis between the two may be virtuous and progressive, but still it is a long way to go before society and people together can accept to make such an option of relationship viable.

## Songs and their implication on the depiction of Man-Woman Relationship

The songs are lyrical representation of Kalyani's heart:

4. *“Mora Gora Ang le le mohe shaym rang de de, chup jaungi raat mein hi mohe pe ka sang dei de...”*

The song is settled in the situation wherein the Kalyani is showing her extreme devotion and dedication towards Bikash. It is a Vaishnav poetry showing exaltation of love between Radha and Krishna. But this does not mean that they are utilized for invoking religion-“This does not mean that the songs themselves are religious, but their sensibility and their way of thinking are associated with these traditions”. (Dwyer, 2006, p149)

5. “*De de ke awaz koi har ghadi bulai...O jane wale...*”

The song is featured at the point in the feature when Kalyani decides to leave her father’s home and village. The metaphoric assumptions are two phased - first a recall is invoked for the event when Bikash left the Kalyani and her village never to return. Second is the reference to present leaving of Kalyani. The metaphoric assumption is:

a) “Jane Wale” (person leaving): Bikash/Kalyani

b) “Koi” (somebody): Kalyani for Bikash and Kalyani’s father when Kalyani is leaving.

6. “*O re Majhi re...ooree...Mere Sajan hai us paar...*”

The song appears in the flick at the end when Kalyani is going to Devendra’s home to start a new relationship. This song exalts the ending and clarifies the situation of Bikash and Kalyani. Rachel Dwyer comments that- “The song expresses the emotion of the moment...” (Dwyer, R., 2005). The lyric affirms the acceptance that she (Kalyani) is the prisoner of her beloved (Bikash). This completes the circle and the Kalyani returns to be encaged by the love Bikash.

## Conclusion

Artistic chiaroscuro of man-woman relationship created by Bimal Roy in ‘Bandini’ (Bimal Roy, 1963) is mesmerizing. The twists and turns shape a real life look alike scenario and the depiction of characters is realistic and authentic. The movie proves that-“Unlike many film makers who force situations and limit the space and compromise the essence of the feelings, Bimal Roy had the sensitivity and vision to do otherwise” (P. Joshi, 2009). Bimal Roy has been successful in painting the shades of man-woman relationships in the backdrop social and contemporary understanding. In Bandini (Bimal Roy, 1963) we see empowerment of the Bollywood heroine. Anil Sari commenting on these contemporary times viewed that- “In India...the twentieth century saw womanhood gradually breaking out of unwanted, archaic, and burdensome orthodoxies.” (Anil Saari, 2009) The character of Kalyani is the lead one in the movie. She has been to able bridge the gap between reality and cinema. The transition that Bimal Roy’s films wore in depiction of women characters seemed like realistic saga and helped the viewers to identify themselves with the characters. Maithili Rao states-“Some film-makers appeal to heart. Some to the brain. It is rare auteur who appeals to both the head

and the heart. Bimal Roy is that rarity..." (P. Joshi, 2009). It was this magic that he was able to create that made him the master director of his times.

Kalyani's journey of life meanders through complex display of man –woman relations, she craves for her own space, falls in love, possesses the spirit of vengeance, commits crime and even repents. The screenplay shows the complex order of human sea of emotions and immense possibilities that it churns out. Thus Kalyani as a female in the male dominated patriarchal society is- every bit a human. Rajadhyaksha and Willemen stated that Bandini (Bimal Roy,1963) remains "the only consistent expression in Indian film of female guilt." (Rajadhyaksha and Willemen,1999)

In Bandini (Bimal Roy,1963) we also find concise reflections of religious borrowings. In general aspect also Indian cinema borrowed freely and was inspired-"to a large extent from religion and mythology whereby the women characters were seen as the epitome of virtue and values, those who could do no wrong." (Tere N.,2012). One of the many instances can be cited as:

Women's role as the provider of food is glorified by Kalyani's father: calling her Goddess Annapurna (the provider of food); to whom even great god Shiva has to ask for.

Progressive ideas are also featured like- Equality among men-women in the following instances:

- a) Women glorification is also seen in the incident narration done by Bikash to Kalyani wherein he speaks very high of the sacrifice and cooperation of a lady (wife of prison in charge).
- b) Bikash's further statement that women need not work shoulder to shoulder to men; they are capable of helping us even by being at home.

One of the important inference is that the man-woman relationships in the movie do not have any formal solemnization. The relationships are based on value of people in life rather than their formal place in life of Kalyani. Her brother and she are strongly bonded, but the brother is never shown to really exist in the movie as such; only his memories are sustained. Relationship with father is overshadowed by the brother's loss viz. when Kalyani is bonded to her father after the demise of her brother it is her brother's role that she is playing and not her own self. Relationship with Bikash too remains unrecognized by the society as Bikash and Kalyani are never formally wedded. Devendra and Kalyani too share the same set of relations they too admire each other but the formal bond never takes shape. Thus we are ushered into Kalyani's life which is full of uncertainties, and is woven by unsure relationships. It is these relationships which bring joy and sadness to her. Her whole life features through these relations. They come as flash in her life and till she is able to make them mature into a dependable one, they unknowingly fade away. Hope and dejection form an important tool in the hand of the director to display the complexity of man-woman

relations in the movie. Kalyani's life moves in a sine-wave pattern. It has its high and low; crest and trough patterns.

Evaluating the man-woman relationships and the state of the lead character from staunch feminist point of view, herein in *Bandini* (Bimal Roy, 1963), the concept of "Dasi"-the slave cannot be applied. As it is not subjugation of female by male domination. Instead the humility that we witness is a willful submission by the actual self (female) for the supreme "love" that one has for the other. The character of *Bandini* (Bimal Roy, 1963) is a prisoner but certainly never a slave. Roy has been successful in conveying it through the exceptional picturing of the last scene in the movie. The last song- *O re Majhi re...ooree...Mere Sajan hai us paar...* gives the lyrical support to the heartfelt feeling of Kalyani. While the setting of the song at the junction point of two modes of transportation- the ship and the train are symbolic of the two options in her life viz. Bikash and Devendra. Both are ready and calling out/signaling to depart. Importantly Kalyani takes her decision of boarding the ship instead the train. When the steamer and the train leave they leave behind a cloud of smoke which symbolizes her dark past and the clear sky ahead symbolizes her bright future ahead. Bimal Roy's depiction of free womanhood amongst the background of complex man-woman relationships is the hallmark of the movie.

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