

**Resonances of the ‘forbidden’ and ‘Madhav tuya abhisarak lagi’ in *Rajmohan’s Wife***  
**Suparna Bhattacharya**

**Abstract**

With his ‘Sanskritic learning, Vaishnava devotionalism’ and acquaintance with Western literature and philosophy, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay represents an interesting juncture in colonial politics as he attempted to handle the novel as an emerging genre. In *Rajmohan’s Wife* (1864) he undertook various thematic and stylistic challenges, re-workings and strategic fashioning to portray the emotional tumult and decisions of Matangini. Her journey through the dark stormy night is generally read within typically Gothic tropes and her passion for Madhav is framed within the novelist’s attempt at negotiating the tension between individual and society. This essay seeks to interrogate the framing of Matangini, especially her journey and climactic meeting with Madhav, within the *padavali* poetry of Vaishnava tradition where Radha is portrayed as primal nature who cannot be deflected from her course of love and also feels vulnerable and caged despite the joyous abandon of her *abhisar*.

Key words: Indian English novel, colonial narrative discourse, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.