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### PLOT OF THE NOVEL

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#### Introduction

*Gora* is a voluminous work, much longer than all the other novels. Tagore has written about eight novels. Of which the most famous are *The Home and The World*, *Sesher Kavita* and *Char Adhyay* and *Jogajog*. Of them the most significant is *Gora*. It was written by him in 1909 just after the partition of Bengal in 1905. The partition of Bengal gave rise to a very big movement in 1905. This movement stirred the national consciousness of the country and ushered in the great movement in India on a mass scale. Therefore the novel *Gora* is full of national consciousness. The movement awakened the spirit of revolt and freedom against British Imperialism. It also gave Tagore to portray the national hero Gora who is really the symbol of internationalism. Therefore, Tagore could not check himself to introduce hot arguments – political and social in the body of the novel.

#### Polemics in the Novel

*Gora* is full of those issues which were at that time very much present in the political and social spheres of Bengal. Thus in the novel there is long discussion on the conflict between Brahmo Samaj and traditional Hinduism. In the novel, Gora who is essentially a Christian, represents Hindu orthodoxy. He is opposed to the new principles of Brahmo Samaj based on the abolition of all restrictions in Hindu society. There is a conflict between the two families of Gora and Paresh Babu on this issue. From beginning to end the novel discusses this issue very hotly.

#### The Spirit of Nationalism in the Novel

Throughout the novel Tagore deals with the problem of Indian freedom. Gora, the hero of the novel, visits the countryside of Bengal and fights for the rights and well-being of the farmers, students and common people of the rural areas. Even for the defence of the common people and students of colleges, he has to pass one month in prison. Tagore has been successful in showing to the readers the outrages of the British rulers. British rule was nothing but a great suppression of the poor people of India. The farmers of Bengal were suffering injustice and political slavery at the hands of the British rulers. This has been amply shown in the novel. The novel is a realistic portrayal of the suffering people of Bengal.

### **Mrs. Baroda and Paresh Babu**

Mrs. Baroda and Paresh Babu are major characters in the novel. Paresh Babu was a servant in Dhaka and in Dhaka he had a friend who was his close associate. When his friend was about to die, he gave his daughter (Sucharita), his son (Satish) and his all property to Paresh Babu for taking care as trusty. Paresh Babu already had three daughters Lolita, Leela and Labanya. Paresh Babu looked after Sucharita like his own daughter. Paresh Babu was a kind person and on the other hand, Mrs. Baroda played a negative role in the novel. She treated badly her own sister Harimohini. She did not like her.

### **Anandmoyi and Krishna Dayal**

Anandmoyi and Krishna Dayal were the parents of Gora. At the time of Mutiny, a lady came to their house whose husband was already dead and after giving birth to a child she also died. That was Gora. So Gora was not their own child but they looked after him like a child. Binoy was Gora's friend and Anandmoyi and Paresh Babu also looked after Binoy like his own child. Anandmoyi was very kind and from the beginning to the end Anandmoyi seems like a real mother of both. Anandmoyi also took care of both of them.

### **Binoy's Marriage with Lolita**

Binoy was Gora's friend and he loved Lolita. After the steamer journey Lolita also loved Binoy. But there was a problem in his marriage. The problem was that Binoy was non-Brahmo and Lolita was Brahmo so the caste problem was a big hindrance in their marriage. And there was an other problem which Mohim who wanted his daughter Sasi's marriage with Binoy. But Binoy loved Lolita most so he was ready to become a Brahmo. And he thought that after being a Brahmo there would be no problem of caste. But Lolita did not agree with the Binoy's opinion and at the end, they marreed without joining in Brahmo Samaj. And after their marriage everyone was happy except Mrs. Baroda because she wanted that Binoy would be a Brahmo.

### **Gora's marriage with Sucharita**

Gora was the child of Anandmoyi and Krishna Dayal but he was not their real son. He was the son of an Irish man so he also looked like an English man. Gora was a great patriotic and he also loved *Sucharita* but he knew that he was not a Brahmo and *Sucharita was a Brahmo* so this marriage would not take place so he never told her that he loved her. He had a great spirit of patriotism. So he many times fought for corruption and once he went to jail for one month on the order of Mr. Brown Law. But after going to jail he continued his patriotic work.

Gora was against the marriage of Lolita and Binoy. At last when he came to know that he was not a non-Brahmo, he was not Anandmoyi and Krishna Dayal's son, he went to Paresh Babu's house and said to him that "I am not Christian and I can marry with Sucharita" and after that he took her hand in his hand, and he went away.

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#### Conclusion

After reading the novel we can come to the conclusion that this novel is a novel of character. Here Tagore has succeeded in giving us the character of Gora, Paresh Babu, Binoy, Mohim, Sucharita and Lolita. Therefore this can also be treated as a psychological novel. The novelist has given us the inner picture of the minds of the prominent characters in the novel. The range of the novel is epic. It has given us the scene of contemporary Bengal in vivid colours. The author has painted the social life of Bengal. The characters of the daughters of Paresh Babu have been drawn in relation to their marriages. The plot of the novel is well-developed. There is an element of suspense in the novel because the secret of the birth of Gora has been kept hidden till the reader reaches the end of the novel. And when the secret is given out the very theme of the novel changes from nationalism to internationalism.

31. Who were very close friends in *Gora* ?  
(a) Sucharita, Binoy (b) Gora, Binoy  
(c) Leela, Lolita (d) Gora, Labonya.  
**Ans.** (b) Gora, Binoy.
32. Whom did Binoy love most ?  
(a) Sucharita (b) Lolita  
(c) Lila (d) Labonya.  
**Ans.** (b) Lolita.
33. Whom did Gora love ?  
(a) Sucharita (b) Labonya  
(c) Lila (d) Lolita.  
**Ans.** (a) Sucharita.
34. What were the name of Lolita's sisters ?  
(a) Radha, Sucharita (b) Leela, Sucharita  
(c) Lila, Labonya (d) Sucharita, Labonya.  
**Ans.** (c) Lila, Labonya.
35. Who was Sucharita's real brother ?  
(a) Binoy (b) Gora  
(c) Haran (d) Satish.  
**Ans.** (d) Satish.
36. What was the name of Mrs. Baroda's elder sister ?  
(a) Anandmoyi (b) Harimohini  
(c) Sucharita (d) Radha Rani.  
**Ans.** (b) Harimohini.
37. What was the name of Harimohini's brother-in-law ?  
(a) Kalilash (b) Gora  
(c) Satish (d) Binoy.  
**Ans.** (a) Kailash.
38. Who decided to do penance ?  
(a) Gora (b) Binoy  
(c) Abinash (d) Satish.  
**Ans.** (a) Gora.
39. Who went to jail ?  
(a) Binoy (b) Abinash  
(c) Haran (d) Gora.  
**Ans.** (d) Gora.

50. Who were the second parents of Gora ?  
(a) Harimohini, Paresh Babu (b) Anandmoyi, Paresh Babu  
(c) Binoy, Lolita (d) Anandmoyi, Krishna Dayal.  
Ans. (d) Anandmoyi, Krishna Dayal.
51. What was the real name of Sucharita ?  
(a) Lolita (b) Radha Rani  
(c) Labanya (d) Lila.  
Ans. (b) Radha Rani.
52. Who changed the name of Sucharita ?  
(a) Mrs. Baroda (b) Harimohini  
(c) Lolita (d) Anandmoyi.  
Ans. (a) Mrs. Baroda.
53. Gora's real father belonged to :  
(a) America (b) England  
(c) France (d) Ireland.  
Ans. (c) France.
54. Who wanted to change his religion ?  
(a) Mohim (b) Gora  
(c) Lolita (d) Binoy.  
Ans. (d) Binoy.
55. Who was in the favour of Binoy, to join the Brahmo Samaj ?  
(a) Anandmoyi (b) Sucharita  
(c) Mrs. Baroda (d) Harimohini.  
Ans. (c) Mrs. Baroda.
56. Whose marriage created many problems ?  
(a) Binoy, Lolita (b) Sucharita, Gora  
(c) Abinash, Sasi (d) Sucharita, Haran.  
Ans. (a) Binoy, Lolita.
57. Who looked like an Englishman in the novel ?  
(a) Binoy (b) Gora  
(c) Mohim (d) Haran.  
Ans. (b) Gora.
58. Who did not want to come in the marriage of Binoy and Lolita ?  
(a) Paresh Babu (b) Satish  
(c) Binoy (d) Gora.  
Ans. (d) Gora.
59. Who was in the favour of marriage of Binoy and Lolita ?  
(a) Paresh Babu (b) Mrs. Baroda  
(c) Anandmoyi (d) Krishna Dayal.  
Ans. (c) Anandmoyi.

40. Gora went to jail for :  
 (a) One month (b) One year  
 (c) One week (d) One day.  
 Ans. (a) One month.
41. What was the name of District Magistrate ?  
 (a) Mr. Paresh Babu (b) Mr. James Law  
 (c) Mr. Brownlow (d) Mr. Krishna Dayal  
 Ans. (c) Mr. Brownlow.
42. Who were husband and wife ?  
 (a) Harimohini, Kailash (b) Krishna Dayal, Mrs. Barod  
 (c) Paresh Babu, Harimohini (d) Paresh Babu, Mrs. Baroda.  
 Ans. (d) Paresh Babu, Mrs. Baroda.
43. Who was the father of Sasi :  
 (a) Gora (b) Haran  
 (c) Mohim (d) Binoy.  
 Ans. (c) Mohim.
44. Who were the parents of Lolita ?  
 (a) Harimohini, Kailash (b) Paresh Babu, Mrs. Baroda  
 (c) Anandmoyi, Haran (d) Binoy, Sucharita.  
 Ans. (b) Paresh Babu, Mrs. Baroda.
45. Who was Sucharita's real father ?  
 (a) Paresh Babu (b) Mohim  
 (c) Krishna Dayal (d) Ram Saran Haldar.  
 Ans. (d) Ram Saran Haldar.
46. Who want to do marriage with Sucharita ?  
 (a) Satish (b) Binoy  
 (c) Haran (d) Mohim.  
 Ans. (c) Haran.
47. Who wanted to open a school for girls ?  
 (a) Sucharita (b) Lolita  
 (c) Lila (d) Labonya.  
 Ans. (b) Lolita.
48. Who was preparing of penance for Gora ?  
 (a) Haran (b) Mohim  
 (c) Abinash (d) Binoy.  
 Ans. (c) Abinash.
49. The problem of dowry came in the marriage of :  
 (a) Binoy, Lolita (b) Gora, Sucharita  
 (c) Abinash, Sasi (d) Haran, Sucharita.  
 Ans. (c) Abinash, Sasi.

60. Who was against the marriage of Binoy and Lolita ?  
(a) Paresh Babu (b) Harimohini  
(c) Mrs. Baroda (d) Krishna Dayal.  
Ans. (c) Mrs. Baroda.
61. Who was elder among these three sisters Leela, Lolita, Labonya ?  
(a) Sucharita (b) Labonya  
(c) Lolita (d) Lila.  
Ans. (b) Labonya.
62. Which is the noblest character in *Gora* ?  
(a) Lolita (b) Sucharita  
(c) Mohim (d) Paresh Babu.  
Ans. (d) Paresh Babu.
63. Brahma Samaj was founded by :  
(a) Swami Vivekanand (b) Ramkrishna Param Hans  
(c) Raja Ram Mohan Rao (d) Rabindra Nath Tagore.  
Ans. (c) Raja Ram Mohan Rao.
64. The hero of *Gora* is :  
(a) Paresh Babu (b) Krishna Dayal  
(c) Brownlow (d) Gora.  
Ans. (d) Gora.

**Q. 1. Discuss the question of widowhood as presented by Tagore through the personality of Harimohini.**

**Ans.**

### **Introduction**

The problem of widowhood has been presented by Tagore through the personality of Harimohini in chapter thirty-eight of the novel. Harimohini has told her story in her own words. She was the younger sister of Mrs. Baroda. Both the sisters were brought up by their parents very affectionately. She describes her own problem in the following words : "When I was eight years old I was married into the well-known Palsha family of Roy Chowdhuries, who were as wealthy as they were high born. But my fate was not meant to be a happy one, for some misunderstanding arose between my father and my father-in-law over my dowry, and my husband's people could not for a long time forgive what they regarded as my father's parsimoniousness. They used to hurl dark threats at me, saying : 'What if our boy married again ? We should like to see what their girl's condition will be then !

### **Large Family of Harimohini's Husband**

Harimohini's family of inlaw's was a large one and Harimohini had to cook food for a very large family and in this family she had no fixed place to sleep and she would sleep with anyone who could find a place for her. She had been totally neglected in the large house of her husband.

### **The Birth of a Daughter**

At the age of seventeen Harimohini gave birth to a daughter who was named Manorama. Then after three years she gave birth to a boy and her condition changed for the better. The father-in-law of Harimohini died after two years of Manorama's birth. Then the brothers of Harimohini's husband went to law over the division of the family property. Then Manorama was married to a beautiful husband who later on proved to be a drinker. The son-in-law was very cruel to Manorama. He used to beat often. Harimohini was in very much pain to hear about all the cruel treatment meted out to her. The boy used to exact money from Harimohini, "When I stopped giving him money and he began to suspect that it was my daughter who was at the bottom of it, he gave up all attempts at concealment. He then began to ill-treat Manorama so cruelly not hesitating even to insult her before outsiders, that once more I had to go



on giving him money without her knowledge, knowing full well that I was only helping him on the road to hell."

#### More Miseries for Harimohini

After some time the husband and son of Harimohini died. Later on her daughter Manorama also died then Harimohini called the family Pandit who advised her to give up all her rights and spend her remaining life in Vrindaban. Then she went to Banaras and there she spent some time. Thus Tagore has presented miserable lot of Harimohini in this novel.

#### Conclusion

Tagore has presented the problem of widowhood through the portrayal of Harimohini. He has also given the solution of the problem through the novel and kind treatment of Paresh Babu meted out to Harimohini. He is very liberal and kind to Harimohini when Mrs. Baroda dislikes the presence of Harimohini in Paresh Babu's house, Paresh Babu does not drive her out of home but provides another residence to Harimohini. This solution of widowhood is the most noble way of helping the widows.

**Q. 2. Write a brief note on Hindu orthodoxy as presented in the novel Gora.**

Ans.

#### Introduction

In the novel *Gora* the hero Gora is the most orthodox Hindu. He is pitted against the Brahma characters of the novel. Gora observes all the orthodox customs of Hinduism from the very beginning of the novel. He has been shown discussing the problems of Hinduism. He is an idealist who believes in all the noble ideas of Hinduism. For example, on the status of women Gora says, "The scriptures tell us, that woman is deserving of worship because she gives light to the home, — the honour which is given her by English customs, because she sets fire to the hearts of men, had better not be termed worship."

#### Orthodoxy of Gora in Caste System

Gora is quite orthodox in the institution of caste system. In his discussion with Krishna Dayal he discusses the merits of a Brahmin family. He says, "What are you saying father? Am I not a Hindu? If I cannot understand the deeper meaning of Hinduism today I shall do so tomorrow. Even if I can never grasp its full significance, its path is the only one for me to pursue. The merit of some previous Hindu birth has brought me this time into a Brahmin family, and in this way, after repeated re-births through Hindu religion and society, I shall reach my final goal. If by mistake I sever from my appointed path, that will only mean redoubled travail in returning to it." Similarly, Gora is quite orthodox in believing in the system of castes in India. He thinks that caste system is the wisest method of division of labour and intellectual work. Gora thinks that caste system aims at producing supermen. The Brahmin class is the class of the superman. A Brahmin is devoted to the highest ideal of spiritual knowledge.

After his release from one month imprisonment, he decides to do penance for living in jail in an undesirable manner. In chapter seventy-seven he describes his decision to hold a function of penance. He says to himself, "My penance is not tomorrow! Today it has begun. A greater fire is burning today than will be lighted tomorrow. At the commencement of my new life. I have to offer up a great sacrifice that is why God has awakened in my heart so strong a desire." ..... "Unless in the depths of my soul an innermost penance is performed how can I accept purification tomorrow. When once I have offered up that gift which is the hardest of all to sacrifice, fully and completely, then I shall become truly poor and sanctified then - I shall be a Brahmin."

**Conclusion**

Thus Gora is the character who has become the most burning example of orthodoxy in the novel. It is only at the end of the novel that he comes to know that he's not the real son of Krishna Dayal. At once he changes himself into an international figure. Then Tagore says, "In a single moment Gora's whole life seemed to him like some extraordinary dream. The foundations upon which from childhood, all his life had been raised had suddenly crumbled into dust, and he was unable to understand who he was or where he stood."

**Q. 3. Write a short note on the treatment of Nature in *Gora*.**

**Ans.**

**Introduction**

Gurudev Tagore is essentially a poet. The novel *Gora* had been written in 1909, when Tagore had written a large number of poems. Therefore it was in the period of poetic maturity that he wrote this poetic novel. The stamp of his poetic genius is present throughout the novel not only in the description of the background but also in the portrayal of characters. Tagore has exercised his rich imaginative faculty. In the art of fiction the poetic talent has come into full play. We find that Tagore has succeeded in making this novel, a beautiful record of Bengali renaissance.

**The Background of Calcutta is Quite Natural**

In the very beginning of the novel Gurudev Tagore has referred to the rich background of Calcutta: "It was the rainy season in Calcutta; the morning clouds had scattered, and the sky overflowed with clear sunlight." In the second chapter Gurudev Tagore describes the city of Calcutta in the following poetic manner:

"On a dark evening during the rains, the sky lowered heavy with its load of moisture. Beneath the silent sway of the dull drab stretch of cloud, the city of Calcutta lay motionless like a huge disconsolate dog curled up with its head resting on its tail. Since the previous night it had been rizzling steadily, persistently enough to make the streets muddy, yet not with sufficient determination to wash the mud away. The rain had ceased at four o'clock that afternoon, but still the clouds looked threatening. It was in this gloomy state of the weather, when it was as unpleasant to stay

indoors as it was unsafe to venture out, that two young men were seated on wicker stools on the damp roof terrace of a three storied building.

### **Gora's Appreciation of Nature**

The hero of the novel *Gora* is a great lover of his mother country India. He not only loves the ancient culture of India but he likes the mountains, rivers and beautiful spots on Indian earth in chapter twenty-one. He describes his great affection for the river Ganges at the end of 19th century. The river Ganges was pleasing the people of Calcutta with her great beauty. The following passages gives us the beautiful picture of the Ganges and its banks. "Gora, on leaving the house, did not walk at his usual pace, and instead of going straight home he absently sauntered down to the river. In those days the Ganges and its banks had not been invaded by the ugliness which commercial greed has since brought in its train. There was no railway beside it, and no bridge across it, and the sky on a winter evening was not obscured by the sortladen breath of the crowded city. The river used then to bring its message of peace from the stainless peaks of the distant Himalayas into the midst of Calcutta's dusty bustle.

### **Natural Beauty Presented in the Novel**

In chapter 21, Gora is going on the bank of the river Ganges. He was inhaling the fragrance of flowers and creepers. The sky overhead was most attractive. The nights and days were quite charming. This beauty created a spiritual and aesthetic appeal in the mind of Gora which has been very charmingly described in the following words. "A very vortex of sweetness surrounded Gora and seemed to draw him into unknown primal depths never experienced by him before. His whole being was assailed, at one and the same time, with shocks of pain and of joy. He seemed to be standing in utter self-forgetfulness on this autumn night by the river bank, – the vague starlight in his eyes, the undefined city sounds in his ears, – in the presence of the veiled elusive mystery which prevades the universe." In chapter thirty, Lolita and Binoy were travelling to Calcutta in the steamer and the steamer journey has been described with its natural attraction and charms which has been described by Tagore in the following words : "There was ineffable depth in the darkness of the night. The cloudless sky was filled with stars. The trees living the bank were massed together like a solid black plinth supporting the sky overhead. Below flowed the swift silent current of the broad river. And in the midst of it all lay the sleeping Lolita."

### **Conclusion**

Thus throughout the novel Gurudev Tagore has made nature the sensitive background for the expression of human emotions. At the end of the novel there is an expression of Gora's patriotism through the rich beauty of mountains and rivers of India. The love of mountains, rivers, green planes and verdorous fields is always present in the mind of Gora it seems that the whole plot of the novel comes out of the rich background of nature.