

## "The Female Quixote" A Vivacious And Ironical Novel Of Charlotte Lennox: A Critical Note

Dr.Mohd Shamim<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Tribhuwan Kumar<sup>2</sup>, Thanwamas Kassanuk<sup>3</sup>, Khongdet Phasinam<sup>4</sup>, Dr.Mohd Shamim<sup>5</sup>, H.Seshagiri<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, Halim Muslim PG College, Chamanganj, Kanpur, UP, India, ORCID ID:<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5172-6512>

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor of English, College of Science and Humanities at Sulail,Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al Kharj - 11942, Saudi Arabia ORCID id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7259-9364>

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Food and Agricultural Technology, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok, Thailand. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3030-9768

<sup>4</sup>Faculty of Food and Agricultural Technology, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University, Phitsanulok, Thailand, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5795-9779

<sup>5</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, Halim Muslim PG College, Chamanganj, Kanpur, UP, India, ORCID ID:<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5172-6512>

<sup>6</sup>Research Scholar in English, JNTU Ananthapur, India, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8369-2206>

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### Abstract

The novel entered into the literary process of women in the 18th century in European literature, particularly thrown light on British literature. Women have made significant contributions. Some of the novels are fantastic, but not all of those authors are geniuses. Lennox is credited with being the first British novelist to publish a satirical novel. On the other hand, The Female Quixote is Lennox's reaction to the intersection of the literary genres with the novel, a genre experiment for female authors while male novelists dominate the world of literature. In this novel, the main genres are romanticism and fiction, with irony being given as a lesser "genre," which oscillates between the two and violates their boundaries. Charlotte Lennox has created a humorous novel about teasing and pointing out the flaws of women caught up in a tornado of love fantasies. Ironies and bubbly concepts are discussed in this research paper.

**Keywords:** Women, era, romantic, satire, century, literature, and ground-breaking.

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### Introduction

In the eighteenth century, there were several significant novels published in the United Kingdom. In truth, Daniel Defoe, the author of Robinson Crusoe's first novel, wrote it in 1719. In addition, Samuel

Richardson's extremely successful novels *Clarissa* and *Pamela* have just arrived. These are the world's first novels in written form. These novels, which featured female protagonists, caused a stir. Other works still considered masterpieces include Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Lawrence Stern's *Tristram Sandy*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*. All of these appeared at various times during the 18th century. But, with so many classics, where does women's literature fit in? Who is it that reads them? How long do they stay in the minds of readers? That isn't an adequate response. Fanny Barney stands out among writers as the uncrowned queen. After that, there's Mary Wollstonecraft. But, not all of them were held in high regard. However, this was a century when women primarily created stories. Fanny Barney, Madame De Stall (French), and Sofia La Rouch are among the top writers in the world (German) besides breaking abominable impresses with its essential tough-guy attitude of being a ground-breaking contribution to the genre. This is another reason Ian Watt, author of such celebrated and realistic novels as *The Rise of the Novel*, stated firmly that "most of the English novels of the eighteenth century were written by women.

Most women write romance and sentimental novels. The affairs written by Apsara Ben in the 17th century were also unique and distinctive. But by the 18th century, their status had deteriorated. Women who are swollen for love, women whose lives are miserable with unnecessary sentiments, become protagonists. The writing style lacks quality, whereas in all the stories, the innocent, the helpless, the blondes, the most crying heroines. There is no salvation for the writers and the readers until the end of their hardship, and someone becomes their husband. There must be a moral in all novels. There should be an instruction to tell girls how to behave in society and the family because then all the critics were men. Women are men who know how to write well. It would be wrong for women to publish their names prominently in their novels on purpose.

Even more bizarre is that women mistakenly mention their novels in the house and at the party. That is to say, it is all 'obscene' for women to say, discuss, expect and receive praise about something they have written on the planet. Authors who speak out are expelled. However, those writers enjoyed the opportunity to write as much as they could, but the word was within the limits of their creativity. Magazines also promote women's writing (as in Telugu in the 1960s and 70s). There were also instances where the press editors suggested how to write well. Because a high percentage of readers back then were women. McCarthy writes in *The Female Pen* that 'although the readers and writers are women, they are controlled by male editors and male critics.' Charlotte Ramsay Lennox is an author who has not only proved her uniqueness in such an environment but has also earned the admiration and respect of male writers. Because even though she also wrote the romance, as mentioned earlier at the beginning, she shocked everyone with her second novel. She has authored a total of five novels, most notably in *The Female Quixote*.

Charlotte Lennox has written a satirical novel about teasing women stuck in a whirlwind of romantic ideas and pointing out that weakness. In 1605, she adapted the Spanish novel *Don Quixote* and named her *The Female Quixote*. Lennox was the first British author to write a satirical novel.

The process of heroic romance was influential in the features of the last decades of the 17th century. The work of this novel is to confuse the 'virtues' in them. Some of the characteristics of heroic romance are elevated as girls are vulnerable and considered as Great blondes. They are neutralized by a brave leader. But the villains appear in many forms as they both fall in love. This is

how everyone sees the heroines want to pick them up and get married. They are in disguise, among relatives, as goat tigers, in all forms. Suffers from these weaknesses to escape from them. They run away from home and escape rapes, murders, and abductions from strangers. At last, that valiant leader appears from nowhere and saves the heroine forever. Misunderstandings in the middle come, but in the end, the leader with adventure wins her over.

Written by Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote's fame as the world's first novel is not due to its novel feature, even its message. It was the first text to critically analyse and examine life and society. Cervantes, who suffered indescribable hardships in his personal life, began writing novels while in prison as part of such hardships. He wrote many novels and was praised by the people. But her novels are not the only ones that can be compared to Don Quixote. Critics say the original was not in Spanish. In other words, Spanish alone is not enough. Many consider this to be the best novel in world literature. It is the story of Alonso, a middle-aged man who, with the desire to restore the lost glory of his country, bracelets to remind society of the wonders and prowess of adventurers. In this sequence, he imagines himself as a warrior in the tales of deceased heroes. The Trinitarian believes that the warrior himself was born.

The novel ends with him falling in every 'adventure' he does (such as women, child protection, the fight against corruption) and finally giving up his 'mania.' In the course of his experiences, the novel ridicules the lies in the poems depicting the glory of the past, the tales of heroes who never died the exploits of superhuman beings. But this is not just an overlay. An extraordinary work that presents before us many life truths that applies to all times. (There are many different meanings and interpretations to this novel.

### **Critical analysis of 'The Female Quixote'**

Lennox claims to have been inspired by the novel. In fact, the novel lacks the novel's intricacies, the philosophy of life, and the depiction of society from different angles. But in one respect, the novel successfully imitated Don Quixote. The novel humorously tells the story of a girl who lives in a world of dreams and. Fantasies and the process of bringing her into this world.

The mother of the protagonist, Arabella, died in infancy. Father makes it more significant. He keeps his daughter in solitary confinement to protect her from 'side effects. She has no breasts. All that remains are English translations of French romances in Father's Library. Her world is one of those weird love stories. She has nothing to do with real life, real people, and contemporary society. But with the death of the father, one has to step into real life. From there, her life begins, with the world of romance becoming unrealistic to the real world. In the first scene, a young man named Hervey is fascinated by her, telling his girlfriend Lucy not to succumb to the bribes and gifts he gives her if he gives her a love letter. He gives her the letter as she expected, but she refuses to read it (like the heroine of the romance he reads)and lots of suffering and wanting to commit suicide. But Lucy is surprised when he sees the letter coming back and says he burst out laughing. After that, he hears that he is resting with a headache and writes a letter saying that he is on the deathbed, unable to bear his rejection, that he is not so ruthless, and that he will not die without his permission. Unable to accept the sphere, he leaves.

Arabella is engaged to be married to her nephew Lord Glanville before her father dies. Arabella is shocked to learn that. Like it or not. Marriage has no significance. But what is the point of marrying

a heroine so quickly and living happily ever after? Sorry! Sorry! Will his love bear fruit no matter how hard the girls struggle in the romances he reads? The protagonist spends a long time in his quest as a hero, during which time he has to head over to another girl and finally get the opponent to his hanger and win her over.

Moreover, in any poem he reads, the girl does not marry the man shown by her father. But that nephew has no intention of leaving her, whereas he becomes enslaved to her. She is, after all, happy that she behaves well. No man is looking for all his flaws because there is a rule that he should not be loved. Meanwhile, the father gets sick and dies. There is a lot of realism in the gestures she makes towards his death, but there is much drama in the novels that shakes everyone up. After that, Glenville, his father Charles, came to look after her for a while. Glenville's younger sister also came, and so on. But the heroine's delusions and assumptions continue in her mind.

Edward, who works in his garden, occasionally sees himself as 'different way' and suspects that he is a prince of some dynasty who came as a gardener to kidnap her. This is what Matey tells her friend Lucy. The two flee at night to escape him. Lucy goes to call her brother to rescue Arabella, who has fallen asleep on the way. Arabella was not there when she arrived. Eventually, Edward, innocently saddened, finds himself searching for him and calls him by name. Glanville and Edward are shocked by one of her allegations. Arabella orders Glenville to kill Edward, who conspired to kidnap him. He realizes that his girlfriend is insane. Throughout the novel, she believes that every man will love her and see her lifelong experience. Not wanting to get out of that romantic world. Glanville's love for Arabella does not diminish despite his misbehaviour.

When Glanville's sister, Charlotte, asked him if he had been beheaded by an enemy who saw him being abducted, he asked, "Would our brother be punished for such murder?" Is it fair for you to punish our brother like that no matter how much you do? ' Then the answer that Arabella says applies to the heroes of contemporary Indian cinema as well.

"I perceive, interrupted Arabella, what kind of apprehensions you have:

I suppose you think if your brother was to kill my enemy,

The law would punish him for it: but pray to undeceive yourself, miss.

The law has no power over heroes; they may kill as many

Men as they please, without being called to any account for it;

And the more lives they take away, the greater is their

Reputation for virtue and glory".

The protagonist touches in a critical way to save such a strange young woman. Although her father told her to burn the romances she was studying, he did not want to annoy her at the time. When he has a suspicion, he compelled her to burn. All in all, he is often sick with this conflict. But Arabella orders him to get well soon, as he does not allow himself to die.

She concludes that it is not his command why he is healthy. Meanwhile, Sir George, another man who took advantage of her weakness and used his knowledge of romance, enters her life. Like her,

he speaks the pure romantic language. She also swears at her friend Glenville for fuelling her ignorance. After a few incidents like that, Sir George realizes that he has no real love for her.

“When Arabella, after a Look of Approbation to Sir George, replied; I find I have unwillingly engaged myself to more than I first intended: For, to enable you to judge clearly of the Matter in Dispute, 'tis necessary you should know my whole History”(page71).

Towards the end of the novel, he marries a Glenville sister. Glenville, on the other hand, keeps trying to save his fiancé from this strange mentality. They do not even know that a particular young woman suspects them.

According to Arabella's custom, the two men on horseback run fast and fall into the river Thames without reaching him, assuming that the two are following the same path as they go. From there, she is rescued and healed. Along with the doctor in that healing, her cousin Charles also brings a priest to examine her. The priest realizes that she is not even mentally healthy. From there, he starts psychotherapy for her. He explains to her that there is no comparison between the events of the novels she reads and that what happens in the novels does not happen in real life.

“Cousin, interrupted Glanville, to represent to you, the Inconveniency you will certainly feel, by staying so late in the Air: Leave the Justification of Cleopatra to some other Opportunity; and take care of your own Preservation”.(page.63)

Gradually she recovers by all means. Recognizing that his love for his cousin Glenville is genuine, she leaves the imagination and marries him.

There is plenty of humour throughout this novel. Arabella's thoughts and dialogues are melodramatic and hilarious. For example, someone says he loves her called SenVille. Arabella should be happy with justice. Already a lot of people love her account (it's just her myth). Another joined the list. But it was a pity in his eyes that everyone immediately understood that he loved her so much. Before he could not express his love, he had to crumble. There should be no benefit even if doctors come and treat. Then the doctors say he has a mental illness and there is no cure for it. As he was nearing death, the heroine came to greet him and said, 'I have no permission for you to die. Tell her why she's done it. Suffice it to say that he did not want his death. His disease should go away, and he should be healthy. Will she love him after that? Such thinking is wrong. The message here is that only the one who loves himself should not die without his permission. Besides, he was commanded to go to the brink of death without expressing his love. This is her tendency.

Through this novel, the author's main task is to criticize the French romances available to girls in those days and to warn young women about the dangers of not realizing real life and dreaming. But a few other aspects also emerge through this novel. Initially, the responses to this novel are praised by authors Samuel Richardson and Samuel Johnson. Richardson had just written two good novels. He also had a friendship with Charlotte. It is rumoured that he wrote some parts of the novel. Many believed that Richardson wrote the last scene where the archbishop spoke, significantly to change Arabella's mind. The novel also received critical acclaim in a magazine run by Henry Fielding, earning her the admiration of respected writers among her contemporaries.

### **Romantic ideas in the novel**

In English literature, and literally in European literature, the terms romance and novel are used interchangeably. Romantic novel separation; Romance is different. Romance is inherited from Latin literature. Everything in it is a fantasy. All Arabella reads were English translations of French novels that were copies of those Latin works. It can also be assumed that Charlotte is telling the difference between romance and the novel through this novel. He is writing a novel; She notes that what her heroine is reading is romance. Since the novel is supposed to be based on reality, it is safe to assume that she wrote the novel just to say it.

Feminist critics of this century viewed the novel from another angle. 'What did Charlotte show in the novel? The best house in those days for any woman was the one who changed the following. The plot revolves around killing the incredible imagination of Arabella and domesticating her. 'In their intent, Charlotte wrote not overlap on French romances; Criticism of contemporary society on how women are restricted to housewives in a patriarchal society.

The divine lecture on genres reveals the flat divisions between the novel and the romance when the novels the divine suggests to Arabella as an antidote for example are intertwined with her idea of the novels she used to read. "Copies of Life, and Models of Conduct" (pp. 380, 377). It seems that reading is the key to uncovering the enigma of the meta-fictional genre of Lennox. When the Divine seeks to reject Arabella's novels like "contemptible volumes" and "fictions which at once vitiate the mind and corrupt comprehension", he acknowledges that his words "imply an accusation far from the goal." (pp. 373-374).

Even when extended to the works he recommends to Arabella, his discourse connects novels with readers and becomes intrinsically faulty. The divine's tirade against romances comes to a head with his differentiation between reality and fiction. The divine promotes a different kind of fiction, the novel, which is practiced by Richardson and postulated by Johnson:

#### **Arabella's maturity in thinking reflects her foolishness.**

Arabella is completely obsessed with French Romances. This becomes problematic when she decides this is how the world should work and leads her life accordingly. Naturally, the world doesn't work like this and when Arabella's father dies, her life becomes complicated, as her perceptions of life and the real world start to clash. Arabella's voice is distinct and unique and was problematic for me. Lennox let her speak in the language of romance and that means long, convoluted sentences, which sometimes require several rereads to make sense. The following is a good example of Arabella's speech:

"When I shall be so fortunate, interrupted she, to meet with a Lover who shall have as pure and perfect a Passion for me, as Oroondates had for Statira; and give me as many glorious Proofs of his Constancy and Affection, doubtless I shall not be ungrateful: But since I have not the Merits of Statira, I ought not to pretend to her good Fortune; and shall be very well contented if I escape the Persecutions which Persons of my Sex, who are not frightfully ugly, are always exposed to, without hoping to inspire such a Passion as that of Oroondates". (p. 48)

Arabella speaks as if she should write on pink paper with purple ink and dot her i's with hearts. Luckily, only Arabella and occasionally Sir George, he of dishonourable intent, use this mode of speech. The other characters speak far more plainly. The difference in voice between Glanville and

Arabella is distinct and serves to emphasize Arabella's silliness. Arabella's strange notions are almost as exasperating, as the reader, as they are to her suitor Glanville.

In addition, Arabella's imaginative speculation that the men who cross her path will commit themselves due to her ignoring them is an intriguing extension of this. Mrs. Glanville tries to tell her father that, even if Mr. Glanville had taken his own life, she did not "wish" that he do so. She has complete faith in her ability to coerce men into taking their own lives because of their purported misery; she also has confidence in her ability to force men to live—for example, she tells Sir George, who appears alongside Arabella's extravaganza, to continue to live as well. "Arabella's Romances: Exploring the Use of Romance in Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*" (n.d.) asserts that "Arabella redefines the position of the feminine by ascribing to female subjects absolute and unquestionable primacy, while male figures are relegated to the side-lines."

The author has portrayed Arabella as a teenage blunder who needs to overcome to be happy. Nonetheless, her candid critique of the world to which Arabella's therapy requires her to adapt readers, like the heroine, wondering if the world of romance isn't preferable. The fundamental 'real' narrative's resemblance to romance also supports affairs and the beautiful heroine, beloved by the perfect man, whom she marries after hardships and separations, supposedly to live happily ever after. Perhaps Arabella is not much quixotic after all if the novel provides a romantic comedy beneath the veil of realism."

#### **A novel that discusses female literacy**

'What to read' for British young women who are occasionally becoming fully literate. Another analysis is that the novel deals with the imposition of 'what not to read' restrictions. 'Women read novels in the novel. The men in the novel read the women who read those novels. They make judgments on what they read and how they respond to what they read. That kind of strengthens their dominance over women '(in an article by Amy Hodges, 2013). Charlotte showed the young women of the day that reading novels was the main activity. What kind of novels are that aside. The great thing is that women read novels extensively. This novel makes it clear. That's not all. Why read romance? The original women were not named in England. Why were love stories written in the early days in all countries? That is also the question. This is also due to the political and social background of Britain at that time.

It was a time when the rich got richer in Britain. Schools for boys have grown. But girls are not sent to schools unless they are wealthy somewhere. People spend time learning stitches and textures at home. That is why all their reading is gathering and reading novels in the libraries collected by fathers at home. The only novels they can read with their language skills. Since there were not many novels in English, only English translations of French romances became popular. Those French novels are all fantastic fiction borrowed from Latin. In this context, it is not surprising that women can only write fictional love novels.

The 18th century was a significant era in many ways in Europe and England. In the middle of this century, the Industrial Revolution gave the country an economically superior status, but as a result, the economic gap widened further. By the end of that century, the American French Revolutions were well known. It is doubtful, however, whether the literature of the time depicted all those changes. Conflicts between the British and the French intensified in the 17th century. By the 18th

century, Britain had brought many countries (including our own) to power and consolidated its dominance over the world. Became Great Britain. The animosity between the French and British countries resonated in British literature at the time. In *The Female Quixote*, the protagonist is taken aback by French novels.

The Charlotte Lennox novel appears to have been analysed in many ways after the rise of feminist criticism. The novel is discussed in terms of literacy and masculinity. Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* mentions the tying up of a girl and some comment that the novel also seems to keep Arabella in custody. On the other hand, some say that any romance that the author made fun of in this novel is manipulating that romance.

Glanville could not convince himself to read them. These romances were created according to Glanville: "on the most trifling topics conceivable" (p. 49). The reluctance of Glanville to read Arabella's dreams is important because it foreshadows what Margaret Doody refers to "the new Realism's [sic] invasion of the major areas of prose fiction in the eighteenth century" (p. 288).

The response of Glanville to Arabella's romances indicates a departure from earlier romantic literature. Arabella's defence of her romance, on the other hand, legitimises her genre and emphasises the frequent confusion between novels and romance. Arabella tells Glanville fantasies are true. The novels that draw every helpful knowledge and the shining examples of generosity, courage, virtue and love, also regulate one's activities, shape manners and inspire people with a noble desire to emulate those important heroic and virtuous actions that made them so glorious at the time, and worthy imitates.

It is the same reasoning that the God will use later to critique the romance for the morals, virtue and didactics of Arabella's new novel. The heavenly will utilise Arabella's explanation of her dreams to promote this novel as an educational genre real to life. This new generation, who will be replacing romanticism, should perform as Arabella does, transmitting "the firmest instructions, the purest sentiments and the highest piety" and instilling "the love of virtue" (p. 377). This again creates a debate between fiction and romance.

But the critical thing to note here is how Charlotte defined the relationship between women's reading and women's writing and her method of analysing the number of restrictions on the number of conditions on girls' reading. Girls who could not go to school on an equal footing with men and could not get a formal education read what they could get their hands on. No father has the consciousness to have good literature at home for girls to read. Those women who read the find felt the same real-world and digested it. When the opportunity arose, they turned it into their creation. Charlotte can be thought of as telling this story in two layers.

#### **An Angle of unrealistic desire as a motivation.**

Arbela's excessive modesty and fear of forced entry into her apartment lent itself to a Freudian examination in which the brave woman's tremendously active sexual urges might be revealed emblematically or metaphorically. In reality, Arbela is a kind of tease and also a lady who enjoys amorous affairs. "Although the workings of want in most novels may strike readers as realistic enough not to draw attention to themselves, Lennox's genre-mixing foregrounds conflicting ways of understanding how desire connects humans to their environment", writes Watson (2011, p. 32). With this perspective, reading the *Female Quixote* compels readers to re-examine the ethical



implications of seeing desire as a narrative motif. He claims that the novel is a “landmark in terms of how realistic speech depicts reality and interprets desire” (Watson, 2011, p. 32).

As history dates back to the 18th century, it is clear that the main emphasis of the novel is on the negative consequences of romantic literature on the moral and ethical sense of Arabella. She was returned to sound reason only after she was cleansed of her disappointments in love and passion and so gave Mr. Glanville pleasure in his marriage. Arabella represents the characteristics and social label of heroines in romantic stories from the eighteenth century. The lack of reality of Arabella gives her a short remedy for her repressed patriarchal existence.

It allows the daring woman to take centre stage while also addressing female access to personality and power. The situation of a process in which there is disagreement over the ethical assessment of a scholastic method that is unbalanced between truth and deception. Desire is at the center of the argument. Fiction, like a seductive lady, has the potential to seduce its audience. As the Arbela's need reacts to that stated in romance, developing its own sophistication, every reader expresses a need for substance, which unforeseen reiterates the desire of the novel.

### Conclusion

This novel plays on human deepest longings, such as the urge to enter the most remote regions, and it is a singularly compelling creative form. The body is an object of fascination in modern art that tends to express its feelings and desires without considering pros and cons, whereas the girl who reads the worst literature and lives life with unrealistic assumptions, misunderstandings, myths, superstitions, and arrogance, gets out of them and enjoys real life. At the second level, it is their misfortune to say that our education dictates our behavior and personality and that it is not the crime of women to have access to that education. This is perhaps the first time a novel has commented on the most intimate connection between literature and life.

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