

Jake Lucko

Dr. Tallie

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The Contradictory Nature of British Feminism in the 19th and 20th Century:

Colonization, Co-dependency, and Controlling Images

As Great Britain reached her height of conquest of indigenous lands, a paradoxical phenomenon occurred within the interplay of a progressive objective that contradicted an inherent patriarchal undertone of colonialism and western culture. This essay seeks to explain and uncover this phenomenon and will be using Britain's colony of India as a telling model of imperial feminism. By exploring the idea of imperial feminism within the context of colonialism in the 19th and 20th century as the global powers reached the height of their expansion, I seek to shine a light on the inherent contradiction that while British women at home fought for equity and rights for the *universal woman*, their intentions were entirely egocentric, self-serving and any accomplishments were exclusive to white British women. Victorian feminists' use of universal suffrage as a mere strategy to attain an equal seat at the imperial table, leads me to argue that British suffrage was contingent on preserving the *helpless Indian woman* image, and the movement's success, ergo, relied on a co-dependent nature of a purifying British mother and a deserted Indian daughter.

This essay seeks to answer questions like what caused the rise of Imperial Feminism; what the gender conflicts between the imperial state and the colonized peoples were; what the lasting effects of white imperial women were fighting for their suffrage at the cost of indigenous people for the sole need to colonize; and how colonization created a landscape on which

feminists could fight for their rights. By discerning the gender dynamics of the portrayed colonized population and the colonizers, this essay will add to the field's dense conversation of gender's influence on the universal system of imperialism and Anglo-colonization. Some historians this essay will build on include: Mrinalini Sinha, Valerie Amos, Pratibha Parmar, Durba Ghosh, and Antoinette Burton to provide helpful ideas and context about not only how British women wanted to gain their suffrage at the cost of colonization and degrading marginalized groups, but also how the image of colonized people was directly shaped by the lasting effects of imperial feminism. However, in order to fully understand the paradox of imperial feminism and the atmosphere in which feminists had to assimilate into, a brief history of India's colonization is required.

I. The Crown's Colonial Conquest: Supremacy, Prejudice, and Legacy

By the middle of the 18th Century, Britain had a strong hold on the sub-continent, but Britain had been instilling Western ideas on the indigenous Indians far before via their trading ports. And after her victory over France in the Seven Years War, Britain essentially kicked out all other European trading companies within India and had full access to the continent and in 1613 the first British factory was erected in Surat. The British East India Company had a private army and found their conquests further into India to be easy weather through bribery, war with her million-man army, or pinning Indian states against each other.¹ Bengal is a prime example of the British agenda— the East India Company waged war on a now very weak and famine riddled Bengal state and seized control of the entire state and kicked the Bengal-allied French out, all while the entirety of the Bengal treasury was shipped to the company's headquarters.² This is just one example of the process of extracting Indian

¹ Aditya Mukherjee, "Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain." (*Economic and Political Weekly* 45, no. 50, 2010), p. 75.

² Thakur, Kundan Kumar, "British Colonial Exploitation of India and Globalization." (*Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 74: 2013). p. 405.

wealth, but the company also was taxing indigenous people for living on their homeland and also unearthing rare expensive materials from the land which ultimately made Britain the richest country at the time.³ “The trade during the first half of 18th primarily (about three-fourths) of textiles and silk from India, which was the largest grower of raw cotton and the largest producer and exporter of cotton textile in the world until the end of the 18th century.”⁴ Since Britain was searching for lands that were rich in potential trading materials, India was a prized colony and trading post that could also be heavily taxed. But the speed of imperialization extenuates due to the Atlantic Slave Trade and consequently, British colonies rose in numbers and their value also increased in order for Britain to compete with other world powers in the Atlantic Slave Trade.⁵ However, India received nothing in return for Britain stripping their materials and labor for their personal gains other than relatively cheap bullion that Britain was mining from the Americas. The Indian economy by the mid-18th century was already suffering as Britain forced India to pay for her own exports and Britain’s East India Company stopped importing treasure into India, the treasuries in British controlled Indian trading cities consequently emptied quickly.⁶ As Britain realized India’s value to the British mercantile system, her presence became more dominant and her victory at the battle of Plassey in 1757 was an early sign that Britain wanted a larger stake in India.⁷ Now that Britain had drained the Indian economy, India became dependent on Britain for economic and political success. But the only thing Britain was willing to offer was *modernity* even though 84.06% of British capital savings came from the West Indies and Asia.⁸ In other words, the British economy was running on her colonies yet the only import they offered to India was *civilization*. By the early 19th century, Britain exploited India to supply

³ Ibid.

⁴ Aditya Mukherjee, “Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain.” (*Economic and Political Weekly* 45, no. 50, 2010), p. 75.

⁵ Mukherjee, “Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain.” *Economic and Political Weekly* 45, p. 77.

⁶ Mukherjee, “Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain,” p. 77.

⁷ Thakur, Kundan Kumar, “British Colonial Exploitation of India and Globalization.” p. 406.

⁸ Mukherjee, “Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain,” p. 80.

capital which then in turn was dispensed to the rest of the world.⁹ For example, opium harvested in India was then used in China to fill British coffers yet again and in turn, expanded their empire, reimbursed war debt, and paid for other infrastructure projects. Another example is the use of indentured Indian laborers that were sent to other British controlled colonies to work in cruel-slave-like-conditions. However, my main concern lies in the exchange of western values for Indian materials.¹⁰ But as industrialization grew, India had to conform to the mass industry system and Britain was able to facilitate this shift via their political control of the sub-continent.¹¹ By now, the British East India Company was no longer a controlling player; India was under direct control by the Crown and accordingly, Britain became the direct governing force of all the territories accumulated via treaties, conquests, and trading occupation from previous decades. Moreover, the Crown by the time of the Industrial Revolution had a vast list of Indian territories under her belt and was ready to use her political power to not only change the infrastructure of India to fit in her industrializing agenda, but also to bulldoze Indian culture so a new western society could be built in a large prized British colony.¹² But by the reign of Queen Victoria, India had suffered mass famine, migratory death marches, fallen dynasties, a more rigid religious caste system, a plummet in wealth, removal of labor, attempted revolutions, and extreme discriminatory racial injustices.¹³ Although the nature of Indian oppression is a complex multifaceted history of multiple stages of imperialization, racism lies as a common root that these facets grew from.

⁹ Mukherjee, "Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain," p. 76.

¹⁰ Kumar, "British Colonial Exploitation of India and Globalization." p. 407.

¹¹ Kumar, p. 408.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Kumar, p. 407.

The nature of colonialism in the height of Britain's conquests is fueled by a Euro-centric mindset that is inherently racist. Britain, wanting to *bring modernity* to a continent that was already progressive in its own nature, partook in the common ideology of European powers seeking to *save* uncivilized tribal indigenous peoples.¹⁴ However, their saving intentions were utterly undercut with a white-savior complex that did not truly want to save anyone, rather they sought to *save* the indigenous people from their feudalistic culture that was not in touch with the rest of Europe.¹⁵ Were their intentions to save anyone from anything a coverup for their true intentions of stripping the land for everything it had to offer for profit's sake? Possibly. Regardless, British colonizers took on this role of a savior to either justify an internal moral dilemma or to fulfill their role of as a superior to the native Indians. Granted the British colonizers brought their white superiority mindset to India and saw themselves as far superior to darker skinned people, but they attempted to modernize India with their high-class intellect, religion and mindset.¹⁶ Indian officials were never taken seriously, the working class were turned into slaves for the English, and their culture was undermined and not recognized as a credible way of life.¹⁷ By bringing industrialization, English literature, science, and philosophy to India, the British sought to change Indian culture, yet even though some Indians assimilated to English culture perfectly, they were still never seen as equal or *British* given the color of their skin and their looked-down-upon heritage.¹⁸ Now that the timeline of British imperialization in India has been outlined, I can further discuss the role feminists played in this British imperialization system seeking to modernize India and how British woman's suffrage goes hand-in-hand with the history of Indian colonization, *Britishness*, and the circulating desires to reform.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Mukherjee, "Empire: How Colonial India Made Modern Britain." p. 80.

¹⁶ Benjamin Cohen, "Networks of Sociability: Women's Clubs in Colonial and Postcolonial India," p. 180-190.

¹⁷ Kumar, "British Colonial Exploitation of India and Globalization." p. 411.

¹⁸ Ibid.

II. The British Woman: Sufferer, Purifier, and Aspiring Colonizer

Sarah Amos frames the British feminist savor as such, “we are suffering not just for English women alone, but for all the women, degraded, miserable, unheard of, for whose life and happiness England has daily to answer to God.”¹⁹ This idea of a global sisterhood seems benign, but it is clear that British women by the early 20th century had a great burden they believed was theirs to carry.²⁰ The irony is also very evident as the British feminist movement sought to produce a universal “we”, it instead fragmented feminists worldwide.²¹ The universal “we” appears at the height of imperialism—before the 20th century—during a time of old imperial policies, and attitudes that had to conform to the growing empire. They instilled the values of the empire—as presented in the previous section—so passionately through their cries and arguments for emancipation. For example, their rhetoric for female emancipation was articulated in patriotic, nationalistic terms, in attempt to persuade the nation’s leaders to realize women’s suffrage complimented the empire.²² Emmeline Petick-Lawrence said that her cause wanted, “Nothing more than that constitutional rights should be given to women who were British born subjects of the Crown.... It was neither a strange nor a new demand and meant only the restitution of those ancient rights which had been stolen from them in 1832.”²³ The appeal to Britain’s prosperous future and the national interest was a common argumentative style which continued until the end of the Victorian Era—the first World War.²⁴ Arguments as such make their goal clear: “female emancipation was nothing less that the embodiment of Britain’s national-self-interest and the fulfillment of its historical destiny.”²⁵ And by doing so, feminists aligned themselves

¹⁹ Sarah S. Amos, “The Woman Suffrage Question,” (*Contemporary Review* 61: June 1892), p. 778.

²⁰ Antoinette M. Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (University of North Carolina Press, 1994), p. 4.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 5.

²³ Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, report on Albert Hall meeting, VFW, April 1908, p. 112.

²⁴ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 5.

²⁵ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 6.

with the national interests and the duties it beckoned— a duty to global power and its social undertaking energized by Britain’s cultural and racial supremacy. However, they were still looking for their role in the imperial state to solidify their inclusion and recognition as citizens of the empire. And they found such a role by replicating a practice British men used to legitimize their conquest over non-white societies.²⁶

Late-Victorian women drew upon accounts from British officers in India that depicted Indian women as “helpless, backwards heathens,” as justification to participate in the imperial nation-state— a seemingly identical tactic British men used where describing Indian life and culture as “savage-like” would in turn *justify* British rule in India.²⁷ The controlling image of Indian helplessness propagated throughout England and with it came a sense of piety and a burden to save the degraded powerless victims. Now that feminists had a cause and a burden— for which they bestowed on themselves— their contribution to imperial civilizing mission was firmly established. And the proof and reasoning for why British women should have rights and have a role in the empire was so they could represent and save the Indian women from their religious customs and uncivilized culture.²⁸ Even Florence Nightingale wrote that India’s health and welfare should be a home issue.²⁹ Many British feminists involved in education reform also placed a great emphasis on bringing British education and development to India in the interest of curating India into an environment where British led teaching programs could thrive.³⁰ In other words, reforming India’s education would make her a suitable place where British teachers could practice their professional training. A few feminism activists vouching for reform on behalf of Indian women include Anna Gore-Langton, Frances Power Cobbe, Annie

²⁶ Benjamin Cohen, “Networks of Sociability: Women’s Clubs in Colonial and Postcolonial India,” p. 180.

²⁷ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 7.

²⁸ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 8.

²⁹ Nightingale, “Our Indian Stewardship,” p. 330.

³⁰ Carpenter, *Six Months in India*, p. 80-102.

Besant, Henrietta Muller, Mary Scharlieb, Eva McLaren, Josephine Butler, Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Arabella Shore, Margaret Cousins, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, and Eleanor Rathbone.³¹ And their ideas and practices circulated through the feminist press often in praise of the British women's devoutness to saving Indian women. Mary Carpenter illustrated that feminist movement dedicated themselves selflessly, "to the glorious and blessed work of raising [our] Eastern sisters to fill that place in society for which the Creator has destined them."³² Their burden was also their defense for why British women needed the right to vote; because if they did not have political power, then they could not relieve Indian women from their suffering. In addition, feminists also argued that the condition of women in any country was indicative of how progressive and civilized the country was.³³ This argument in particular was radically challenging and threatening to the male political leadership audience as it undermined the superiority of Britain herself. Their argument was essentially saying that if Britain was the illustration of a superior civilization she claims to be, then why are the superior British women still treated unequally, *like* the oppressed Indian women they are fighting for. Victorian feminists were now fighting on two seemingly contradictory grounds: improve women's rights in Britain and improving lives of Indian women. But the latter could only be achieved if the former was achieved; yet the latter was also the facilitator of the former. Naturally, their quest for an equal political seat was met with opposition like this claim from Lord Curzon in 1912: "For the discharge of great responsibilities in the dependencies of the Empire in distant parts you want the qualities not of the feminine but of the masculine mind."³⁴ These type of sentiments which questioned their true intentions combined with arguments of women's physical strength and ability to take arms for the empire, generated a strong argument against women's suffrage from many men and female

³¹ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 9.

³² Carpenter, *Six Months in India*, p. 83.

³³ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 10-11.

³⁴ Harrison, *Separate Spheres*, p. 59.

thinkers.³⁵ However, feminist continued to argue that as caretakers and often virtue-instillers for children, women have a strong sense of righteousness and a maternal influence which would serve as a useful tool for improving the moral and cultural decay in India while also proving their ethics could improve the empire at home via political involvement.³⁶ Nevertheless, when prominent authorities like Curzon made such public claims degrading the suffrage movement's leaders to "female howling dervishes," the entire movement became somewhat of a national joke.³⁷ Political cartoons, printed opinion articles, and widespread literature—intending to humiliate the activists—circulated in attempts to de-rail the movement's popularity and legitimacy. An extensive fear dispersed to the public that colonies would view the empire as weak if women seemed to slip through the cracks of the dwindling, unsound empire who could not even properly govern her own women. The slippery slope of paranoia continued, and many feared the colonies would quickly capitalize on an unstable empire, resulting in civil right riots or worse, wars for independence.³⁸ Britain's home appearance on the global scale was evidently vital to her governing success abroad.³⁹ Feminist rebutted with their firm stance that even though they held the *English* sense of morality, philosophy, and responsibility, they were not trying to hijack the empire; their goal was to challenge the historical question for suffrage and to identify themselves with what it means to be *British*, and by doing so, they would signify a more ethical kind of imperial rule.⁴⁰

³⁵ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 13-14.

³⁶ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 9-14

³⁷ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 14.

³⁸ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 16.

³⁹ Durba Ghosh, "Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?" (*The Historical Journal* 47, no. 3, 2004), p. 738.

⁴⁰ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 16-17.

Consequently, feminists took on the image of an imperial ethical purifier— a role contingent on keeping Indian women’s subjugation apparent and stagnant for the purpose of proving their duty as Indian saviors was necessary.⁴¹ This co-dependent nature of British feminist’s image and the helpless underprivileged image of Indian women, leads Antoinette Burton to conclude, “Without their visible dependence on British feminist reform efforts, the case for female emancipation in the imperial nation would have been severely weakened, and with it, much of the rationale behind the claim of the women’s movement to be a civilizing agent in the world.”⁴² Consequently, through perpetuating the controlling images of Indian women as the “colonized female other,” major long-lasting stereotypes and misconceptions of Indian women and disillusion of any non-white woman was its result, simultaneously maintaining and immortalizing the concept of the *White Women’s Burden*.⁴³ But as Burton claims, the success of British feminism and suffrage rode on the coat tails of such misconceptions. The repeatedly established contrast between Eastern female oppression and Western women’s quest for freedom may have bolstered the British feminist movement, but at what cost to the Indian women it so belittlingly defined?

III. Defining the Indian Woman: British Periodicals and Mass Persuasion

Indian women in British literature are rarely referenced without mentioning their slave-like conditions or without declaring the British responsibility to their Indian sisters.⁴⁴ Pamphlets, articles, and newspapers only used Indian women’s image for the purpose of contrasting their lives to the modern life in Britain for the purpose of reaffirming women’s position in the empire.

⁴¹ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 17.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ghosh, “Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?” p. 740.

⁴⁴ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 101.

“Indian women were not considered suitable material in and of themselves: they became proper texts, catechisms even, only as they were explained, modified, and put to feminist use.”⁴⁵

Periodicals became the movement’s catalyst as it propagated the feminist-created narrative of the Indian woman in need of help. The rate at which the movement took off was historically unprecedented due to the novelty of feminist periodicals and the persuasive appeal to the British sense of duty.⁴⁶ The *Englishwoman’s Review* consistently produced literature on Indian primitive culture and other non-white women’s uncivilized life to stimulate popularity for their cause, yielding more British women to fight for Indian women. And when feminist writers came across histories about cultures where wife and husband are equal or non-white societies ruled by women, the feminist journals would brashly illustrate how shocking and rare these discoveries are.⁴⁷ To acknowledge these discoveries for what they are— progressive realities for many non-white civilizations— would be to belittle their role as purifier and savior since these seemingly *barbaric* women in fact have modern, British-standard rights and are in no need of saving. Henceforth, the controlled literature essentially created a platform where feminist could twist any contradictory reality into self-promoting propaganda.

But most of the time, feminist periodical writers never had to twist realities because they rarely solicited any Indian for their perspective of her own conditions or any viewpoints on feminism from an Indian intellectual.⁴⁸ The intentional lack of Indian perspective gave periodicals like the *Englishwoman’s Review* free range over its depiction of the Indian landscape. In a predictable result, the *Englishwoman’s Review* only provided authentic examinations of Indian women’s lives when such realities aligned with the image feminist were pushing for:

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 102-103.

⁴⁷ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 105.

⁴⁸ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 106.

oppressed, barbaric, and uncultured. For example, the review published an article about a child-wife who took her husband to court, but the reasoning for why the article was published is indicative of the true Victorian-feminist nature. The article does not praise the child for her self-advocacy or moral awareness, rather the column reaffirms the British view “that child marriage was responsible for the low status of Indian women.”⁴⁹ But the widespread comparison to English law, prompted a call for the British government to change Indian regulation and lift the marital age from eleven to fifteen.⁵⁰ Efforts like this were hailed as successful feminist progressions, bringing India closer to the British standards of what it means to be civilized with feminist at the helm steering India to modernity.

As for the *Englishwoman's Review* itself, the periodical served as a place of feminist praise and of Indian progression in spheres like medicine, education, and social reform. However, all praise, if any, rewarded to contemporary Indian women was shadowed with the British feminist hand taking credit for all success.⁵¹ For example, the life of Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati is frequently referenced in the *Englishwoman's Review* as a testament of the best qualities of an Eastern woman. As an educated woman, a Christian, convert, and a feminist social worker, Ramabai was hailed by some British feminist for breaking out of her oppressive religion and culture while redefining her life as a civilized women through British education and customs.⁵² Some were hesitant to give such praise as they did not trust Ramabai's achievements nor accepted her as *fully English*. Regardless, the *Englishwoman's Review* positioned Ramabai's story as a direct cause of how the British feminist involvement in India opens Hindus to their full

⁴⁹ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 109.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 116.

⁵² Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 118.

potential by reveling Hindu customs restrict their ability to advance in any aspect of society.⁵³ Burton articulates the circular relationship perfectly when she says, “[As Indian women], they need us to progress, they are making progress, we will remain until they’ve progressed, but they’ve never progressed sufficiently for us to say our time is up.”⁵⁴ It was evident that Indian women were becoming educated and were contributing to social reforms in India, but in order to maintain their role in the empire, feminists fabricated a new image for progressed Indian women: a perpetual half-formed feminist in the making.⁵⁵ Their goal to create a global sisterhood was successfully created; however the legitimacy in which they did so was based on false pretense—a pretense curated and propagated by the feminist press that virtually bound the motherland to her helpless child in every and any case.

IV. The Conclusive Verity: Exposing the Machine of a Progressive Regression

The philosophy in which British feminists built their case upon was nothing out of the ordinary. Their goals, reasoning, and strife was the very essence of *Britishness*.⁵⁶ And by appealing to what it means to *be British*, the feminist movement buttressed itself on the enterprise of helping the female Indian other. Without a definitive role in the empire, their suffrage campaign would have no legs for which it could stand against the patriarchal government. Controversies challenging the need for women to be equal citizens might have surfaced if this role was not founded. Consequently, British suffragettes fostered their movement on images and portrayals in which they could manipulate into their justification for equality.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 119.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Benjamin Cohen, “Networks of Sociability: Women’s Clubs in Colonial and Postcolonial India,” p. 180.

They fabricated a role for themselves as purifiers and civilizers so when the image of a helpless other woman was also manufactured, their role was easily established, recognized and justifiable. The feminist image publicized themselves as intellectual women with knowledge of *all* feminine topics, as ethical purifiers given their maternal duty, and civilizers who deemed a women's role in a society as the indicator for progress in a modern state. Their image fit seamlessly into what it meant to be a British citizen yet was missing the key qualification: how would they fulfill their British duty to the empire. Subsequently, British feminists produced an image of someone they could apply their *Britishness* to. In turn, the Indian woman as other, helpless, uncivilized, and oppressed by their own culture came to be. The mother-like, ethical, civilized British woman framed her duty through contrasting the powerless, savage-like, Indian daughter. In essence, the British feminist built a supply and demand relationship with Indian women to prove their citizenship was warranted and necessary. The engineered-demand was the Indian woman who perpetually needed help, and British women molded herself as the supplier of such help; ergo the role of British women as speakers, ethical cleansers, and representatives *for* Indian women ultimately blossomed into a qualified and respectable player in imperialism—the key that unlocked their eligibility for British citizenship. Notwithstanding, their citizenship was conditional on preserving their ostensible supply and demand relationship— if the Indian demand terminated, so would the need for British women's supply, resulting in an incapacity to fulfill their imperial duty which would yield a simultaneous annul of the woman's credentials for citizenship. To preserve their role in imperialism and to prevent the supply and demand relationship from discontinuing, British feminists reproduced Indian women as objects of history.⁵⁷ As historical objects, Indian women were essentially fixed images in time— an easy

⁵⁷ Burton, *Burdens of History*, p. 212.

target to control. British feminists controlled the historical image of the Indian woman by speaking for them via publication and public philosophies which propagated stereotypes, twisted truths, and false narratives— all of which controlled and puppeteered the Indian woman to seemingly demand the British feminist's supply.

Conceptions of feminism and suffrage are often denoted as progressive, revolutionary, altruistic, and universally irrefutably equitable. These connotations likely derive from what feminist movements wish to achieve: an independent voice for themselves, free from the influence of the male authority that historically spoke on behalf of women. But the verity of *how* these women achieved such goals is severely contradictory to the model of feminism as a liberal, noble, righteous, avant-garde movement. Exposure to the underlying strategies used by Victorian feminists, shines a sinister light on a movement once considered undeniably virtuous. However, their propaganda arguably worked because British feminists were historized as heroes, saviors, and pioneers; while their victims were historized as the synthetic, taxidermied images manufactured by, and for, such saving heroines. Nevertheless, the vessel in which British feminists used to achieve their goals, caused an intrinsic regression to the non-white women the feminist-vessel steamrolled. Such an altering exposure repositions feminism as a whole and forces contemporary historians and feminists to reanalyze their intentions and consider the ramifications of any seemingly progressive philosophy. Nonetheless, history evidently proves and acknowledges the Victorian feminist movement was a contradictory machine trekking towards modernity but fueled by oppressive and regressive strategies, which ultimately crushed non-Anglo women under its permanent *progressive* tracks.

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