

PARTITION IN BENGAL REFLECTS ON BENGALI MOVIES

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ABSTRACT

Partition in Bengal related focus on Bengali cinema is a wide range discussion on the context of post-independence era. Nowadays a countable number of filmmakers, thinkers , novelists have been paying attention to this matter in a new manner as well as Bengali cinema critics also trying to absorb their analytical discussion. Cinema is the mirror of a society and serious matters of the society have been bearing a very important message to the people. Some films on Bengal's Partition of Ritwik Ghatak acquired international recognition. This article examines such films against the experience of partition and the tension created and affected the human social cultural lives depicted through melodrama. All the films are based on Bengal's infamous partition that tells about the misery of peoples from the departed Bengals. The stories suggest, although the departed, the general mass could not ignore their umbrical urge. The films ultimately questioned whether any borderline exists in the psyche of the Bengalees of two Bengals which does not allow them to mingle?

KEYWORDS: *Cinema, Partition, East Pakistan, Bangladesh, West Bengal, Ritwik Ghatak, Tanvir Mokammel*

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INTRODUCTION

Partition in Bengal related focus on Bengali cinema is a wide range discussion on the context of post independence era. Nowadays a countable number of film makers, thinkers , novelists have been paying attention to this matter in a new manner as well as Bengali cinema critics also trying to absorb their analytical discussion. Cinema is the mirror of a society and serious matters of the society have been bearing a very important message

to the people. To discuss this matter, a very good number of Bengali cinema was released in several years. In the article named 'Influence and Importance of Cinema on the Lifestyle of Educated Youth: A study on University Students of Bangladesh' by Istiak Mahmood, Sociology Discipline, Khulna University published in IOSR Journal Of Humanities and Social Science, pointed out that "...Cinema is the most complex and powerful art form in the present world. It can help us to better understand our own lives, the lives of those around us and even how our society and culture operate. They can shed light on political and spiritual matters too and can provide catharsis and perspective and may open our eyes to new ways of thinking, feeling and pursuing our lives".

Cinema has really played a key function in changing our society. Patriotic movies construct us keep in mind to love our nation. Comedic movies had treated many patients through laugh therapy. Adventure movies have given us a sense of escape to explore new possibilities. There are more! The movies are tools to support individuals to get rid of dogmatism and also escort them along the factual pathway. It helps in eliminating unawareness from our society. Social reforms also can be familiarized and carried about cinema culture. It's debatable how literacy base cinema came to take gigantic pleas on social matters. Literature is the wealth of society that plays a very important role for knowing a society in every aspect.

ROLE OF CINEMA IN SOCIETY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BENGALI PARTITION

Some films on Bengal's Partition of Ritwik Ghatak acquired international recognition. The films clapped together as his Partition Trilogy are Meghe Dhaka Tara (1960), Komol Gandhar(1961), and Subarnarekha (1965). And there are some other films based on similar categories focused on Bengal's partition tragedy namely Chinnomul (1962), Rajkahini (2015), Shankhachil (2016). In this article, I will try to find out micro level values in the form of raw nature that affects the common audience. Bengal's partition is tragically fertilized with the Bengali soul through unremarkable debates with idioms, jokes, abuses, folk-songs, novels, storytelling and movies. It is easy for any Bengali viewer, though uninformed of film theories, to attach images to sense due to their everyday struggle for existence after the infamous partition.

Various film makers perfectly use this landscape to put forward this sense of fadedness.

This article examines such films against the experience of partition and the tension created and affected the human social cultural lives depicted through melodrama.

STORYLINE OF CINEMAS

Lakshmi Srinivas's in his "Another cinema, another audience" on International Conference on Broadcasting Media & Film Industry (Scientific Tracks: J Mass Communication Journalism. DOI: 10.4172/2165-7912.S1.002) had been specifically marked that Indian Cinema had advanced to take in hand the country's multi-culturalism and the severe multiplicity of its inhabitants. While the Bollywood culture is over and over again conflated with 'Indian' cinema, in reality, there are a few film industries and many remarkable cinemas in India. Heterogeneity shapes cinemas together with participatory audiences and interactive public surroundings making it a distinctive culture of cinematic entertainment. How can we appreciate cinema in Bengal, its culture and institutions in the background of ongoing change? How can Bengali cinema express the kindnesses of the countryside? These questions become noteworthy for a comparative stance on cinema.

CASE STUDY ON SOME SELECTED BENGALI CINEMAS FROM BANGLADESH

"Chitra Nodir Pare" (1998)

The film won seven national awards including the best film and the best director of the year 1999.

Directed by Tanvir Mokammel tells the story of a Hindu family in the post partition India of 1947. Based on the background of the erstwhile East Bengal which became East Pakistan following India's independence. An advocate Shashikanta Sengupta (role played Momtajuddin Ahmed) stays in village Narail beside the Chitra river.

Although after the division, rendering to religious supremacy, the Hindu community people from their land started to migrate to India, Shashikanta Sengupta and his widowed sister Anuprava, children Biduyt and Minoti did not leave. In this situation, Babu Shashikanta Sengupta was also pressurized to leave for Calcutta, but he won't leave his fraternal land, rather he would die in this land where his ascendants have been resting in peace for years.

The lawyer being emotion driven to his mother land decides, whatever would happen, to stay back. He feels nothing can beat staying beside river Chitra, not even heaven. He sends his son to study in Calcutta with his brother there, while his daughter Minoti (role played by Afsana Mimi) stays back with him. The story fasts forward to the period when people start getting disenchanted with the military rule of General Ayub Khan and protests break out in university campuses. Minoti starts loving Badal a neighbour Muslim. They grow up together.

Badal is a quiet dignified guy studying at Dhaka University. Inopportunately he becomes a prey of the police firing at the students. Many individuals start exit to migrate to Calcutta but the lawyer is persistent in his decision.

Eventually, Anuprava and Minoti compel to leave for Calcutta, and their house, land, belongings, as well as memoirs, stay behind. This one is really a heart-touching Bengali movie that exposes the miseries of religion-based “Two nation theory”.

Stills from “Chitra Nodir Pare” (1998)



Simantorekha - (“The Borderline”)(2017)

A documentary film written and directed by Tanvir Mokammel is the first successful crowd-funded venture of Bangladesh based on the infamous Bengal’s partition.

“Simantarekha” accounts the story of the Partition of the Indian sub-continent and the effects it had on the lives of people on both sides of undivided Bengal.

Tanvir expressed his gratitude to a couple, Debasis Mridha and Chinu Mridha, who alone contributed Taka six lakh to help complete the film.

During 1947 Partition Bengal was divided Muslim Mmajority East Bengal was tagged with Pakisthan and \West Bengal remained with India. After partition 2 million Muslims migrated to East Pakisthan and 5.8 million Hindus migrated to India, though the unofficial figures are much more than that.

Stills from Simantorekha - (“The Borderline”)(2017)



Swapnabhumi (The Promised Land) 2007

Swapnabhumi (The Promised Land) is a 2007 Bangladeshi documentary film by Tanvir Mokammel. The film expresses the dilemma of stuck Pakistanis in Bangladesh. They are also identified as Biharis. This is story of six decades and statelessness of around 150,000 people from the Urdu-speaking communal formerly emigrated from India to Bangladesh. It highlights the ferocity against Biharis and their misery of not being able to settle in Pakistan. The Biharis see as a betrayal.

Still from Swapnabhumi (The Promised Land) 2007



CASE STUDY ON SOME SELECTED BENGALI CINEMAS FROM INDIA

Meghe Dhaka Tara (1960)

Based on a social novel by Shaktipada Rajguru, *Meghe Dhaka Tara* is a 1960 film written and directed by Ritwik Ghatak. It deals with the aftermath of the Partition of Bengal during the Partition of India in 1947 and the refugees coping with it.

The film tells the story about a young girl named Nita living with her family in the suburbs of Calcutta. They are refugees from East Pakistan. Nita is an unselfish individual constantly exploited by the whole world. Even her own family take the goodness for granted. Her elder brother Shankar believes that his craft (singing) needs to be perfected before he can make any income from it and therefore the burden of taking care of the family falls on Nita. Her life is jogged with private misfortune. Her lover Sanat leaves her for her sister Geeta. Her younger brother while working in a factory is injured. As well as, finally, she becomes a load for her family by contracting tuberculosis. Her mostly aspiring singer brother becomes the only soul who cares about her in the end. At the end of the film, she screams out her pain. She expresses her last words: "Brother, I want to survive."

Stills from *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (1960)



CHINNAMUL

Directed by Nemai Ghosh, Chinnamul was the first Indian film that dealt with the partition of Bengal. The story orbited around a group of farmers from the erstwhile East Pakistan (Bangladesh) forced to migrate to India in 1947.

The film is grounded on a story of Swarnakamal Bhattacharya. Depicting the physical pain and crisis, the film is about the partition of Bengal and the flow of refugees from East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) into India's West Bengal. The story begins in a settlement of East Bengal where people (Hindus and Muslims) live serenely. Govinda and Sumati are husband wife. They are about to have a child. The partition forces Hindu people to leave their familial village. So, they become refugee. They don't find any location or shelter in Calcutta and teke out their daily lives in temporary shelters in and around Sealdah railway station. Along with millions of refugees the family has to face untold misery in big city.

Stills from Chinnamul



CONCLUSION

All the films are based on Bengal's infamous partition that tells about the misery of peoples from the departed bengals. The stories suggest, although the departed, the general mass could not ignore their umbrical urge. The films ultimately questioned whether any borderline exists in the psyche of the Bengalees of two Bengals which does not allow them to mingle?

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