

# **An Auteurist Assessment of Rabindranath Tagore's Works on Screen**

Shah Ahmed<sup>1</sup>

## **Abstract**

Rabindranath Tagore is and remains the most adapted author in Bengali and South Asian cinema at large. Although almost all great authors whose works are frequently adapted for cinema have been recognized in adaptation studies, the film adaptations of Tagore's works have not been given deserving critical attention. Through a systematic analysis of the historical documents, records and other sources that contain piecemeal information about 'Tagore films' – some of which are on the verge of oblivion and most remain critically unexamined – this archival research attempts to revive them for critical focus and theoretical examination, and contextualise them in academia. Identifying the directors' creative role behind critical acclaim and spectatorial acceptance, I argue that it is not the textual fidelity, but the directorial creativity that guarantees the success to adaptation of Tagore on screen. Thus, in distinguishing the adaptations works as either successful or unsuccessful from the prism of the auteur theory, the paper finally holds that filming a text arbitrarily is far from vindicating art or guaranteeing success; an exertion of the director's esthetic exhilaration makes the films transcend the philological medium, and the film becomes a visual art. It is believed that research professionals will have fresh perspectives from this study to re-evaluate Tagore films from a wide range of critical and theoretical interests.

---

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Department of English, Chittagong Independent University, Chattogram, Bangladesh

Corresponding author:

Shah Ahmed, Dean and Associate Professor, Department of English, School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Chittagong Independent University, 16, Jamal Khan, Chattogram-4000, Bangladesh. Phone: +8802333351262, Email: shah\_ahmed@ciu.edu.bd

## **Keywords**

Authors and auteurs; Tagore films; auteur theory; directorial freedom; screenplay; commercial and critical success; adaptational undercurrents

## **Introduction**

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), arguably the greatest writer of Bengali literature and the only Nobel Laureate from this literary tradition, is regarded as a bionic polymath of catholic talents. In fact, he is to Bengali literature what Shakespeare is to English literature (Iyengar, 2017). Like Shakespeare’s ‘timeless’ works, Tagore’s works have enormous universal appeal. As Somdatta Mandal (2020, p. 297) comments, “There is never an end to Tagore.” Although he is mostly recognized as a poet – partly because he got the Nobel Prize in recognition of his poems in *Song Offerings* (1912) – his fictional works are still considered worthy of high literary merit. Interestingly, when cinema production started in the 1900s, Tagore, much ahead of his time, felt drawn to “the primordial attraction of cinema” (Mollick, 2011). Later, he himself directed the film *Natir Puja* (*The Dancing Girl’s Worship* [1932]), an adaptation of his 1926 dance drama of the same name. Since then onward, the adaptation of his works, commonly known as the Tagore films,<sup>2</sup> has been a visual phenomenon in cinema and television media. As Alam and Chakravarty (2011, p. 26) confirm, “Stage and screen adaptations of Tagore’s works continue to draw audiences.” Apart from thousands of poems and songs, he is credited to have written a total of twelve novels and ninety-five short stories. Almost all of his novels, many of his short stories and a number of his plays have been adapted (and readapted) into film so far. Virtually all noteworthy Bengali directors of both mainstream and parallel cinemas translated Tagore’s fictional works to

---

<sup>2</sup> This neologism was first used by Merie Seton in her 1971 biographic book *Portrait of a Director: Satyajit Ray*.

screen. Additionally, hundreds of films have used *Rabindra Sangeet*<sup>3</sup> as background music in diegetic and non-diegetic forms. In fact, Rabindra Sangeet has been a yardstick for Bengali art films.

Unlike in Western countries, where the visual version of literary texts is included in the curriculum, literary teaching in the subcontinent is still limited to two-dimensional philological media – reading and perceiving. To put it differently, the teaching and reading of literature do not traverse interdisciplinary and intertextual premises in this respect. Moreover, the idea that a filmmaker is regarded as an artistic counterpart or equal to a literary author, as the auteur theory claims, is either unknown or depreciated in subcontinental academic studies. Therefore, the films adaptations of Tagore’s works, especially the creative ones such as *Kshudhita Pashan (The Hungry Stones* [1960]), *Streer Patra* [Letter from the Wife [1972]] and *Chaturanga (Quartet* [2008]) are not adequately evaluated in the academic arena, research scope, and critical review. In other words, the literary author and his auteurs (read creative filmmakers) are hardly given due recognition in film, transmedia or intermedia studies. Woefully, this inattention has led to the loss of a number of his films and the oblivion of many that bear tremendous aesthetic and academic values.

Hence, in this era of adaptation and media studies, interdisciplinary enquiry, comparative discourses, and translational mutation, Tagore’s works on screen deserve comprehensive research attention from the perspective of artistic rendition. If the cinematic versions of his works are not invested with a theoretical framework and aesthetic assessment like those of Sophocles, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, Henrik Ibsen and others, Tagore will be denied due attention in relevant academic discourse. Western auteurs or creative filmmakers – such as Jean Renoir, Sir Alfred Hitchcock, Akira Kurosawa, Stanley Kubrick, Federico Fellini,

---

<sup>3</sup> A variety of Bengali lyrical songs, also known as Tagore songs, written and composed by Rabindranath Tagore himself.

Ingmar Bergman, Jean-Luc Godard and Francis Ford Coppola – have been given constant research attention and brought in academic studies especially for their adapted films. However, except for Satyajit Ray, other talented Tagore auteurs such as Ajay Kar, Tapan Sinha and Rituparno Ghosh have hardly been examined in academic discourses.

It is from this critical stance, this paper attempts to revive Tagore films and explore them, using the tenets of auteur theory, to distinguish successful adaptations from unsuccessful ones. Eventually, I will place more emphasis on examining the reasons for successful renditions in order to position them in a theoretical context. Thus, examining these adaptations auteuristically, the paper finally reaffirms that an erratic film adaptation of a literary work without the director's artistic inscription in it is far from vindicating art or ensuring success. Put differently, an exertion of the director's aesthetic exhilaration makes an adaptation transcend the philological medium, and the film becomes a visual art. This attempt will, as I believe, give due recognition to Tagore and his cinematic counterparts (read auteurs) in adaptation studies and will benefit a wider readership as well as future researchers.

### **Existing Critical Propositions**

As mentioned above, the critical proposition is not proportionate to the proliferation of Tagore's works on screen. Though some of them have been individually studied, the annals in their entirety are not sufficiently vetted. Nonetheless, the ground-breaking works, though a few in number, which have triggered primary curiosity toward the visual representation of the author's works require critical examination. In this regard, probably Arunkumar Roy's 1986 book *Rabindranath O Chalachitra* (Rabindranath and Cinema) deserves the first consideration. The book made arguably the first significant attempt of probing into the historical enquiries regarding Tagore's

engagement with cinema and his works on screen. Meticulously ploughing through Tagore's writings (letters, essays, stories, and the archives at Visva Bharati) and interviews of his contemporary filmmakers, Roy explored Tagore's increasing interest in, and response to, cinema. Thus, being an essentially historical attempt, though the discussion includes some of Tagore's important adaptations, it does not expatiate upon the subsequent winning adaptations which have enshrined Tagore in the cinema world. However, this book has inspired a number of Bengali authors to further explore, albeit in the same manner, the background stories of Tagore's works on screen. Most notable ones may be Someswar Bhowmik's *Ruper Kalpanirjhar: Cinema Adhunikota Rabindranath* (Intuition of Cinematograph: Cinema, Modernity and Rabindranath [2011]) and Chandi Mukhopadhyay's *Cinemat Rabindranath Rabindranather Cinema* (Rabindranath in Cinema and the Cinema of Rabindranath [2015]).

Similarly, Somdatta Mandal, in "Adapting, Interpreting and Transcreating Rabindranath Tagore's Works on Screen" (2015) discusses Tagore's ideas of cinema and succinctly surveys the most contemporary adaptations of Tagore's works until 2011, with a short vignette given on each of them. With an overarching focus on Tagore's engagement with the photographic process, though the author identifies the textual departures in these adaptations, she refrains from concentrating on the question why the films of the great filmmakers such as Ray, Sinha and Ghosh are more successful and critically acclaimed. Almost in agreement with Mandal, Indranil Chakravarty in "Tagore, Cinema and Poetry of Movement" (2015) also engages in exploring Tagore's ideas of cinema and the direction of Natir Puja. The most apparent limitation of enquiry is that despite referring to a number of Tagore's adaptations, Chakravarty does not concentrate on the directors' creative vision, musical improvisation and technical command in these films.

Published in two volumes (part one and part two), *Chalachitre Rabindranath* (Rabindranath in Cinema [2012]) edited by Sharmila Ghosh may give an impression that it embodies the history and evaluation of Tagore's works on screen. Conversely, the book is in fact a collection of Tagore's texts – novels, short stories, plays and poems – which were transported to screen from 1923 to 2010. Though it does not contain any critical implications of the adaptations, it may be important as a comprehensive compilation in respect to Tagore's texts in cinema. Most recently, arguing for the contextualization of the auteur theory in the critical assessment of Bengali cinema, Shah Ahmed, et al (2020) identified a few Tagore's adaptations – such as Tapan Sinha's *Kabuliwala* (1957), Satyajit Ray's *Charulata* (*The Lonely Wife* [1964]) and Rituparno Ghosh's *Chokher Bali* (*The Eyesore* [2003]) – as auteur adaptations in Bengali cinema.

Given the importance and limitation of these attempts, it is clear the above authors do not vet Tagore films altogether in terms of directorial freedom, fidelity-infidelity issues, and adaptational undercurrents. The apparent limitation is that the existing critical perspectives on the adaptations and their box-office proceeds, which rehash their critical as well as spectatorial successes, have been regrettably avoided. Moreover, the existing works do not address some long-standing miasmas and misinformation (regarding Tagore films) which have been crucial in research and academic references. There remains a lot of confusion about the bard's works on screen in relation to filmography, exact years of release, and identification of the source of adaptation, musical direction and, more importantly, screenplay writers which play a pivotal role in a film's success or failure. The information about a film available in the film database IMDB and other web sources is sometimes either erroneous, insufficient or missing. At times, web information does not match bibliographic facts. Again, the fact that almost all the silent films and some of the talking films made from his works are not available anymore gives way to flawed

information about them. These issues ultimately pose constant problems for readers and researchers.

Providing a brief, yet informative, explanation of each Tagore film – under the theoretical premise of auteurism – the discussion that follows seeks to remove all these miasmas about Tagore film adaptations. More importantly, the succinct assessment of each of the adaptations in terms of artistic and commercial successes will eventually lead to distinguishing the directors between auteur directors and commercial directors. It is believed that this essentially archival research will promote subsequent research on these auteur directors and auteur adaptations.

### **Criterion of Assessment: Auteur Theory**

Since the aim of this paper is to study Tagore's works on screen in order to single out the most successful ones, both commercially and artistically, it concerns the filmmakers who adapted Tagore's works pursuing their creative queries and following the technique of compression and expansion. Both in compressing the novels and expanding the short stories, the directors had to, as the demand of the visual medium requires, depart from the source texts and interject their own ideas in such a creative way that the 'auteur theory' seems to be most appropriate for the theoretical framework of this study. In his 1948 article "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: The Camera Pen," the French film critic Alexandre Astruc claims that, apart from the expressional and material variations of the pen and the camera, there is no other essential difference between a literary author and a film author (1948, p. 17). He suggests that, though literary authors and cinematic auteurs produce medium-different artworks, they are equivalent in artistic stature. Indeed, Astruc's article significantly contributed to the theoretical formation of European cinema. Prior to such ideas, a film production was traditionally viewed as the subtle interplay of a group of specialized professionals with diverse skills, qualities, interests and opinions.

With the new shift of focus on the director as the sole author of a film, the subsequent exponents of the theory including André Bazin, Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut have made the director “a figure of cultish hero worship” (Brantley, 1996, p. 9). They put forward the argument that the same artistic exertion that underlies the process of literary art is required for its cinematic counterpart. An auteur of a film is, more precisely, equivalent to the author of a literary work. Almost without any divergence, they agree that if filmmaking is solely steered by its director’s artistic and creative style, which is called “auteur-structuralism,” the director is the auteur of the film (Hayward, 2000, p. 362). Moreover, the success or the failure – both artistic and commercial – of a film is determined largely by its director’s ingenious or slapdash approach.

Given the premise of auteurist criticism, this paper addresses the question of identifying the successful ones in the annals of Tagore films in terms of spectatorial acceptance and critical appraisal. Simultaneously, it looks into the crucial issues behind the successes/failures in the light of creative modification / faithful transference. In other words, the paper demonstrates whether the directors’ control over the production and creative vision have been pivotal in movie-goers’ acceptance of, and the critics’ response to, the films; that is to say, whether auteur direction remained as significant factor behind the success of the films. Consequently, special focus will be given to the directors’ multiple engagements such as writing, directing and directorial improvisation. More precisely, in espousing the auteurist claim of the director’s artistic and stylistic command by which they author the film, the discussion will scrutinise the adaptations in light of auteurism as a theory of authorship to show how much they are individually innovative and artistic in their respective adaptations.

### **An Auteurist Assessment of Tagore Adaptations**

This section of the paper briefly attempts to bring almost all of Tagore's works on screen adapted in both silent and sound eras during his life and after his death. With a view to distinguishing the auteur directors from the commercial ones, the discussion touches upon the adaptations chronologically, from *Manbhanjan* (1923) to *Postmaster* (2016), through a number of subsections. This pithy film-by-film scrutiny will lead to the 'auteurs vs. adapters' section that attempts to single out the theoretically-perfect Tagore auteurs whose adaptations may be examined, individually and/or comparative, in subsequent studies by other researchers. As this paper is an auteurist study of selected film authors, the analysis will be organized with the directors in mind. This process will ultimately lead to an assessment of those who have emerged from adapters to auteurs in Bengali cinema in both Bangladesh and India. The directorial ventures into six silent-era and about fifty talkie-era adaptations will be scanned for determining the auteurist signature in Tagore films. Though it is not possible to elucidate more than fifty adaptations in a single paper with detailed information, in what follows, a brief informative description will be provided to facilitate judging the auteurs from the adapters.

### *Adaptations in Tagore's Lifetime*

It is an interesting coincidence that the release of India's first full-length film *Raja Harishchandra* and Tagore's winning the Nobel Prize took place in the same year, that is, 1913. In 1919, six years after *Raja Harishchandra*, Rustomji Dhotiwalla made the first Bengali feature film *Billwamangal*. By this time, Tagore became a literary luminary worldwide. Hence, the origin of Indian popular cinema and the reputation of Tagore as the representative of the Bengali literary tradition are historically connected. It is quite reasonable that Indian filmmakers, especially those of Bengali cinema, would draw much from Tagore for their sources.

In contextualizing Tagore's works on screen, the first director to be mentioned is Naresh Mitra, the only director who adapted a maximum of four fictional works of Tagore in both silent and sound films. He adapted the short story "Manbhanjan" (1885) and the novel *Noukadubi* in the silent era. Both of the films are lost now. Sisir Kumar Bhaduri's *Bicharak (The Judge [1894/1929])*<sup>4</sup> encountered a disquieting censorship problem immediately after its release owing to the alleged low moral tone in it though after a hiatus of three years it was re-released in 1932 (Garga, 1996). Madhu Bose, another director to have adapted Tagore in both silent and sound cinemas, made two silent films, *Giribala* (also known as *Manbhanjan [1885/1930]*) and *Dalia* (1891/1930). The former was regarded as one of the most appreciated films of the silent era. Manju Jain (2009) believes that the success of *Giribala* in the director's own script inspired Tagore to direct *Natir Puja* after a couple of years.

With these six silent films, Tagore's works have made a beeline for sound-era cinema since 1932, and the poet himself blazed the trail in directing *Natir Puja* which is one of the earliest films of Bengali talkie cinema ushered in in 1931 by Ardeshir Irani through his *Alom Ara*, the first ever sound film in the subcontinent. There exists an overbearing polemic on whether *Natir Puja* is a success or failure. One string of the polemics, such as Krishna Gopal Ray (1975) and Mahbub Alam (2011) along with a number of reviews published in *Anadabazar Patrika*, glorifies the film as 'artistic,' 'creative' and 'wonderful.' Conversely, Someswar Bhowmik (2011) and Indranil Chakravarty (2015) argue that *Natir Puja* is a disaster and far from being a classic.

With sound came a new velocity in the popularity of Indian cinema. Accordingly, to keep literature popular on screen, Bengali filmmakers started adapting literature more frequently than ever. Since *Natir Puja*, around fifty films have been made on Tagore's works. Premankur Atorthy

---

<sup>4</sup> Here and henceforth, the first date is the year of a text's publication and the second date, the year of the release of its film.

directed the poet's comic play *Chirakumar Sabha (The Society of Celibates [1925/1932])*. A number of reviews published in the *Anandabazar Patrika* appreciated the film as an admirable adaptation (Bandopadhyay, 1995). As mentioned earlier, after making two silent films *Manbhanjan* and *Noukadubi*, Naresh Mitra adapted, in his own scripts, two more novels, *Gora* (1909/1938) and *Bou Thakuranir Hath (The Young Queen's Mart [1883/1953])*. Of the two, *Gora* received mixed criticism as a much-compressed adaptation though Nazrul's musical direction has remained a musical tour de force in Bengali cinema (Rahman, 2011). Satu Sen adapted Tagore's famous romantic novel *Chokher Bali* (1938). It is a very interesting coevality that the release of both *Gora* and *Chokher Bali*, two films based on the same author's novels, coincided on the same day, 30 July 1938. Tagore himself watched and highly appreciated the adaptation, and these two films were the last cinematic endeavors in the poet's lifetime.

#### *Posthumous Adaptations until 1999*

Saumyen Mukherji brought the comic play *Sodh Bodh (Final Reckoning [1926/1942])* to screen as the first attempt after the author's death in 1941. Nonetheless, *Sodh Bodh*, in the director's own script, is not known to be a successful film. Pashupati Chattopadhyay rendered the comic play *Sesh Raksha (Saved at the End [1927/1944])* in his own script. The film was rather a faithful adaptation of the play and could not preserve the intermedial balance of transcribing literature to visual media. The same is true about the play's second adaptation in 1977 by Shankar Bhattacharya.

The success of Nitin Bose's *Noukadubi* (1947) encouraged him to render a short story *Drishtidan (Donating Eyes [1898/1948])* and another novel *Jogajog* (1929/1958). These adaptations are considered trailblazers in reference to the director's creative rendition of Tagore's

works (Ghosh, 1982). However, except *Noukadubi*, Bose's other two films attracted neither audience nor critics (Rahman, 2011).

Importantly, after Tagore in *Natir Puja*, the first auteurist mark was traced in Madhu Bose's direction of *Shesher Kabita* (1929/1953]). After *Giribala* and *Dalia* in the silent era, Bose took Tagore films to a new height by rendering this poetically romantic novel in his own script. Artistically transmitted, *Shesher Kabita* is still regarded as one of the most successful and path-breaking adaptations of Tagore's works (Rahman, 2011). The acclaimed changes Bose introduced in the film for the demand of medium-specificity provided artistic freedom for the subsequent directors such as Satyajit Ray, Tapan Sinha and others (Hayat, 2012).

Tagore's novella *Malancha* (*The Garden* [1934]) was adapted twice, first by Prafulla Roy in 1953 and later by Purnendu Pattrea in 1979. In both adaptations, the directors themselves were writers though they followed the narrative linearization of the text. Pattrea's *Malancha* was, nonetheless, fairly notable as it is the first color film on Tagore's works. From the above adaptations, it turns out that in their cinematic rendition of Tagore's works, the directors were giving preferences to novels and short stories. His plays were hardly attempted until 1954 when a pair of directors, Hemchandra Chandra and Soren Sen, transposed the poetic play *Chitrangada* (1892). The main feminist undercurrent of the play was cinematically dramatized in the film. The directors attempted to keep the thematic spirit, musical malleability and dance docility of Tagore's *Chitrangada*. The film was highly appreciated by both moviegoers and critics (Hayat, 2012).

Though auteurist adaptation was previously traced in Tagore's *Natir Puja* and Madhu Bose's *Shesher Kabita*, Tapan Sinha's *Kabuliwala* is the first worldwide acknowledgement as a 'creative film' and an incredible success as regards Tagore's works on screen (Sinha, 2012, p. 132). The film won the director a number of national and international awards for the first time in

the history of Tagore's works on screen.<sup>5</sup> Inspired by its success, Sinha made two more award-winning adaptations *Kshudhita Pashan* and *Atithi*. After Sinha's successes, emerged Satyajit Ray. While making the doc-film *Rabindranath Tagore*, Ray undertook the making of *Teen Kanya* and released it in the same year before the biopic was released. Ray's *Charulata*<sup>6</sup> and *Ghare-Baire* are evidences of his continued interest in Tagore. After their ground-breaking adaptations, some subsequent filmmakers tried to transpose Tagore's works on screen exercising the same creative freedom. Perhaps, the most ardent and successful follower of them is Rituparno Ghosh who also made three Tagore films *Chokher Bali: A Passion Play*, *Noukadubi* and *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish*, and a biopic *Jeevan Smriti*, all of which were both commercial and critical successes. Importantly, in their Tagore films, these three directors – Ray, Sinha and Ghosh – worked on their own screenplays. The strategy of making films on their own writings helped them bring about as many narrative and thematic changes as their creative exhilaration demanded. Apart from directing and writing, they also exercised absolute freedom in controlling almost all other dynamics and modalities of productions, such as aesthetic, musical, technical and editorial control.

Beside Ray's biopic masterpiece *Rabindranath Tagore*, some other directorial attempts were made to celebrate Tagore's centenary in 1961. Debaki Kumar Bose made a documentary film *Arghya* (Worshippers' Oblation [1961]), based on four narrative poems of Tagore: "Pujarini" (The Female Worshipper [1900]), "Puratan Bhritya" (Old Servant [1995]), "Abhisar" (Love's Sojourn [2000]) and "Dui Bigha Jami" (Two Measures of Land [1896]). Although it was the director's most innovative film (Druick and Williams, 2014), cineastes did not receive it as favorably as they did Ray's doc-film. The most perceptible reason is that the fusion between poetry and cinema was

---

<sup>5</sup> National Film Award for Best Feature Film and Silver Bear Extraordinary Prize at the Berlin Film Festival

<sup>6</sup> As mentioned earlier, *Charulata* is based on Tagore's novella *Nastanirh* (*The Broken Nest* [1901]).

not gracefully harmonized (Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Another film in commemoration of Tagore's birth centenary is Jiban Gangopadhyay's *Sandhyarag* (Afterglow [1961]), based on the short story "Konkal" (Skeleton [1892]). The film was a failure both artistically and commercially and is not available anymore (Rahman, 2011).

It is perhaps important to note here that two unique team directors Agradoot and Agragami<sup>7</sup> contributed remarkably to Bengali cinema through making many popular films. They made one Tagore film each. Agradoot filmed the 1891 short story "Khokababur Pratyabartan" (Return of the Young Master [1960]) which was a remarkable commercial success and "one of the most touching Bengali films ever created" (Bengali Films, 2018). On the other hand, Agragami made *Nishithe* (1963) on the basis of the eponymous 1894 short story. *Nishithe* was a box office and critical success and earned the director a national award.<sup>8</sup>

The cinematic adaptation of literature in general has earned a different adaptational edge from Partha Pratim Choudhury's *Subha O Debatar Gras* (Subha and the Snatching of God [1964]). He ventured to make a fusion of a short story "Subha" (1882) and a narrative poem "Debatar Gras" (1898) into a film. We have already seen three short stories in Ray's *Teen Kanya* and four narrative poems in Bose's *Agrghya*, but *Subha O Debatar Gras* is an entirely unprecedented film in which a short story and a narrative poem are interwoven into a single film. Critics highly appreciated Choudhury's screenplay owing to its capable fusion of poetry and prose as well as the cinematic transgressions demanded by its visual version.

Around this time, the actress Arundhati Debi directed *Megh-o-Roudra* (*Sun and Showers* [1899/1969]). Written by the director, who took befitting freedom in writing the screenplay, the

---

<sup>7</sup> These two filmmaking companies were active from the 1950s to the 1980s.

<sup>8</sup> Certificate of Merit for the Second-Best Feature Film in the 10th National Film Awards

film was one of the super-hit films released in 1969 (Bhowmik, 2011). In the following year, one of India's filmmaking giants, Mrinal Sen brought the short story "Ichhapuran" (1895) on screen. The director's only Tagore film *Ichhapuran* (1970) failed to attract both viewers and critics. Despite Tagore's delightful story, the film appears to be a bit tedious and slipshod. Perhaps, it is because the director could not tackle the technique of visual expansion of a literary story.

Swades Sarkar visualized two Tagore stories, "Shasti" (Punishment [1893/1970]) and "Didi" (Elder Sister [1895/1984]). As a mainstream Bengali film, *Shasti* was very sentimental in style and used both Rabindra Sangeet and popular Bengali songs. The same is true about his *Didi*, which was criticised to be "too melodramatic" and "too insubstantial" (Mukhopadhyay, 2015, p. 149). The film overdramatized Tagore's poignant story of a compassionate sister towards her ailing brother. Eminent filmmaker Ajoy Kar also wrote and directed two Tagore films, *Malyadan* (*The Garlanding* [1903/1971]) and *Noukadubi* (1979). Though *Malyadan* was highly successful and secured a number of awards,<sup>9</sup> *Noukadubi* is not recorded to draw either positive or negative reviews. After making *Malancha*, as mentioned above, Purnendu Pattrea adapted the short story "Streer Patra" (Letter from the Wife [1914]) in 1972 which won the National Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali. In his screenplay, Pattrea brought in some artistic deviations from the short story, especially in elaborating on some characters and introducing new ones. "In all potentiality," as Chakravarty (2015, p. 4) observes, "*Streer Patra* appeared as a very lyrical and visually beautiful film." After Naval Gandhi in 1928, Bireswar Bose rendered "Bisarjan" in 1972 in his own screenplay. In his own admission, the director made a faithful adaptation of the story. Probably, it is the reason why film did not shine to critics or viewers. However, Nitish Mukherjee made the last Tagore film in the twentieth century in the Tollywood film industry. His *Rabibar*

---

<sup>9</sup> Notably, the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali in the 18th National Film Awards

(Sunday [1996]) from the 1939 short story of the same name was a faithful rendition and not reported to receive any rave review.

### *Tagore on Screen in the Twenty-first Century*

Rituparno Ghosh lent even a more elevated edge to Tagore's works. He invested the author's works with the heteroglossia of postmodernism, postcolonialism, feminism, narratology, intertextuality and cinematographical breakthroughs of the twenty-first century. Subsequently, some of his contemporaries have experimented with digressing the textual narratives, twisting the stories, interpolating new characters and fostering technical breakthroughs. Suman Mukhopadhyay adapted two Tagore novels *Chaturanga* (*Quartet* [1916]) in 2008 and *Shesher Kabita* in 2015. As a director and writer, his effort to film the poetic and lyrical *Chaturanga* with narrative twists of the novel and focus on the colonial legacy in the postcolonial era, is remarkable. *Shesher Kobita*, on the other hand, was not among the most artistic and successful ventures of his filmography though the film's narrative is much straighter than the poetic, subtle novel. However, director Aparna Sen admires the film's cast and their performances (Red Tapism, 2015).

To commemorate Tagore's sesquicentennial birth anniversary in 2011, a number of young filmmakers embarked on transporting his stories to screen. Pranab Chaudhuri's *Musalmanir Galpo* (*Story of a Muslim Woman* [1941/2010]) is probably the most appreciated attempt among these ventures. The story itself points to the overbearing polemic that Tagore in his writings has not convincingly focused upon the Muslims, the second largest faith community in India. It is perhaps important to note that whenever Tagore portrayed Muslim characters in his works, albeit infrequently, "he portrayed them in a positive light, often pitting them against corrupt and retrogressive practices in the Hindu culture and/or community" (Quayum, 2017, p. 244). In recognizing Tagore's promotion of a syncretic relation in "Musalmanir Galpo," Shah Ahmed

(2017, p. 445) says that the story “is strong enough to cleanse the hidebound views of those critics who hold some misgivings about him concerning the scope of Muslim characters in his works.” In this perspective, Chaudhuri’s adaptation of the story merits admiration, and critics have positively appreciated the endeavor. Similarly, in 2010, Raja Sen also filmed another controversial short story “Laboratory” (1940) which “urges women,” as Bharati Ray notes, “to find an identity of their own, and realize that wifhood and motherhood are but fractions of their whole being” (2010, p. 68). Sen’s film received mixed reviews from the critics. On her review of the film, Shoma A. Chatterji (2010) mentions that some pointless insertions of feminist issues dilute the inner strength of the story. After Ray’s adaptation of Tagore’s *Nastanirh* as *Charulata*, Agnidev Chattopadhyay makes another attempt as *Charuulata*<sup>10</sup> in 2011. However, it is negatively reviewed as a very loose version of the novella. The last attempt of the sesquicentennial celebration is Bappaditya Bandopadhyay’s *Elar*<sup>11</sup> *Char Adhyay* (2012), based on the novel *Char Adhyay* (*Four Chapters* [1934]). *Times of India* review (2016) commends the poetic, lyrical and feminist interpretation of the political novel.

In adapting “Tasher Desh” (1939), Qaushiq Mukherjee exploited sufficient creative freedom in his *Tasher Desh* (2012), the only adaptation of the short story. Onkar Dichwalkar suggests that though the director had made many changes, especially in the narrative, *Tasher Desh* is ultimately an artistic film (2013, p .2). Tagore’s play “Achalayatan” (Stalemate [1912]) was adapted as *An Obsolete Alter* in 2013 by directors Mrigankasekhar Gangopadhyay and Hyash Tanmoy. It was the only film selected to represent India at the 2013 Eastern Breeze International Film Festival in Canada and some other festivals. The directors ambitiously wanted to present a

---

<sup>10</sup> The intentional deviation in spelling from *Charulata* to *Charuulata* prepares the audience to expect a too free adaptation.

<sup>11</sup> Inclusion of Ela, the novel’s female protagonist, in the title suggests a directorial feminist concern

new dimension to the story of Tagore. Arnab Ghoshal adapted the short story “Aparichita” (The Inscrutable Woman [1914]) under the title *Dekha Na Dekhay* (Between Seen and Unseen [2013]). Though the synchrony of ten Tagore songs was highly praised, the film as a whole was negatively criticized for its overemphasis on sentimentalism. Writing for *Times of India*, Laboni Sarkar (2013) claims, “[T]he script fails to hold one’s attention for long. There’s little in terms of good dialogue. The first half is bearable but the second half seems never-ending.”

After more than fifty years since Nitin Bose’s first adaptation of *Jogajog* in 1958, Shekhar Das recently wrote and directed another film on the novel in 2015. Sustaining the inherent musical melody of the novel, Das rehashed the theme of marital rape in the context of contemporary conjugal difficulties. However, critics have identified faults with the direction of the film in terms of the temporal setting of the novel and film (Dutta, 2015). After Ray’s 1961 adaptation of “The Postmaster” in *Teen Kanya*, Srijon Bardhan visualized the story as *Postmaster* (2016). Critics severely criticized Bardhan’s extravagant freedom that prompted him to extend the story to an amorous relationship between Ratan and the postmaster. To this too free adaptation, Chatterji (2016) berates that it is insupportable why Tagore’s name is pegged to such a film that seems to be a new story in its script and plot. So far, the film has not received any favorable reviews.

Tagore’s lyrical and symbolic play *Raktokorobi* (Red Oleander [1923]), though frequently staged and televised, was not filmed since 2017 when writer-director Amitava Bhattacharya made a film *Red Oleanders Raktokorobi*. It is not an adaptation, in the strictest meaning of the process; it is rather an inspiration of the play in which Bhattacharya blends the concurrent politics. It is almost a metaphorical adaptation in Rituparno Ghosh’s fashion of improvising the play *Chitrangada*. Though not a commercial success, the film critically acclaimed and was longlisted for the general category of the Academy Award Best Picture in Foreign Category.

### *Tagore's Works in Bangladeshi Cinema*

Unlike Kolkata filmmakers, their Dhaka counterparts have not consistently turned to Tagore's works for their cinematic creations. Immediately after the liberation of the country in 1971, its mainstream cinema followed the formulaic stereotype of Indian commercial cinema. However, it is almost unknown that director Kazi Hayat first adapted "Kshudhita Pashan" as *Rajbari* (1986) in the tradition of Bangladeshi parallel cinema. It is untenable that this adaptation is not referred to the filmography of Tagore's works.

However, Chashi Nazrul Islam, a preeminent Bangladeshi film director, is probably the most important figure with regard to Tagore's works in Bangladeshi cinema. In his film *Ora Egaro Jon* (Those Eleven Freedom Fighters [1972]), the country's first film on the 1971 Liberation War, Islam used a Tagore song (*O amar desher mati* [O' the land of my country]) for the first time in post-Independence Dhallywood cinema. What is more, the first Tagore film in the mainstream cinema of Bangladesh, *Shasti* (2004), was produced under his direction. Both viewers and critics appreciated the rendition of the story in Bangladeshi social context. After two years, Islam transposed another short story "Subha" (1892) as *Shuva* (2006). It was also a box-office success and earned a mixture of positive and negative reviews. Momtaj Uddin Ahmed, a famous playwright, actor and educator of the country, wrote both of the films.

Later, Kazi Hayat wrote and made another film *Kabuliwala* (2006) in the typical standard of Dhallywood cinema. However, despite its commercial success, the film did not add anything significant to the fame of the short story's previous adaptations such as Sinha's *Kabuliwala* (1957) and Heman Gupta's *Kabuliwala* (1961). Inspired by Islam's and Hayat's successful adaptations, Nargis Akter, a promising female director, rendered "Samapti" (1893) as *Abujh Bou* (The Immatured Wife) in 2010. The film was a liberal adaptation and a commercial success. Critics

admired the director's effort to lend a contemporary feel to the film by changing the time and setting of the short story. Accordingly, in 2010, the films received a number of awards in the 35th Bangladesh National Film Awards, the most notable of which was the Best Screenplay (Nargis Akter). Importantly, though the directors of this cinematic tradition considerably extended Tagore stories to, more or less, two-hour films, their reworkings do not conform to the creative freedom and technical sophistication of their counterparts in Indian (Bengali) cinema.

### *Tagore's Works in All-India Cinema*

Considering the number of the film adaptations of Bangla literature, though Tagore's works are frequently adapted in Bangla cinema, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay (1876–1938), another preeminent novelist of this literary tradition, is the most adapted author in all-India cinema. However, a dozen of films have been made from the latter's works in Bollywood and other regional cinema of India. The first Tagore film in Hindi cinema is Naval Gandhi's *Balidan* (1927) on the 1890 play *Bisarjan* (*The Sacrifice*). Made in the director's own script, *Balidan* was a great success in maintaining the high literary quality of its source (Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 1999). Since it “was made to show Western audiences that Indian cinema could measure up to Western standards,” this silent film was successfully premiered in Europe (*Balidan* Reviews, 2021).

Among all Tagore's works, *Noukadubi* is probably the most adapted novel not only in Bengali cinema but also the regional cinema of the country. Nitin Bose first transported the novel Hindi cinema in 1946 in Sajanikanta Das's script. It is reported that the film was not a box-office success, but it earned the director and the music director Anil Biswas and the cinematographer Radhu Karmakar huge critical acclaim (Alam, 2011). In 1956, the polyglot T. Prakash Rao concurrently rendered the novel in Tamil cinema as *Mathar Kula Manikkam* (A Gem among Women) and in Telegu cinema as *Charana Daasi* (Wife). Both of the films were commercial

successes (Guy, 2012). Multilingual film writer Vempati Sadasivabrahmam wrote the script for both of the films. Inspired by Rao's commercial success, the famous filmmaker Ramanand made *Ghunghat* (1960), another Hindi-language film on the novel. A commercial success, the film's music and acting were highly appreciated by the critics (Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Muthyala Subbaiah's *Oka Chinna Maata* (1997) is another *succès fou* based on the novel *Noukadubi*. In the director's script, the film is apparently more connected to Charana Daasi than to the novel.

Presumed as based on Tagore's poem "Dui Bigha Jami" (Two Measures of Land [1896]), Bimal Roy's neorealist classic *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953) is one of the most influential films which introduced Indian cinema's aesthetic heights to the cinema world (Chatterji, 2017). However, the film's direct source is not Tagore's poem; it is based on Salil Chowdhury's (1923–1995) short story "Rickshawala" (1951) written in inspiration of Tagore's poem. Ritwik Ghatak, a friend of Chowdhury and Roy, suggested to keep the title in view of Tagore's popularity and recognition (Literature on Screen, 2020). The film is widely regarded as Indian first successful neorealist film and an influence of Vittorio De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* (1948).

Probably, *Uphaar* (Gift [1971]) based on the 1893 short story "Samapti" (The Conclusion) is probably the only Tagore film to have been submitted for the category of Best Foreign Language Film at the Academy Awards. Directed and written by Kumar Shahani, *Char Adhyay* (*Four Chapters* [1997]) is another critically acclaimed and commercially successful. Two more successful films in Bollywood are Heman Gupta's *Kabuliwala* (1961) based on Tagore's 1892 short story of the same name and Gulzar's *Lekin...* (*But...* [1991]) based on the poet's 1895 short story "Kshudhita Pashan." However, in a closer examination it turns out that the directors of the films have depended much more on their filmic sources than literary ones; Gupta's *Kabuliwala* in Vishram Bedekar's script can be, though uncredited, taken as a remake of Tapan Sinha's

*Kabuliwala* (1957) and Gulzar's *Lekin...* in Arun Kaul's script as the same director's *Kshudhita Pashan* (1960). *Lekin* is called "a forgotten classic" and its music and cinematography of *Lekin...* is appreciated by the critic (Nalik, 2016 and Chakravarti, 2018). In 1966, Zul Vellani rendered Tagore's famous play *Dak Ghar* (1912) in the same title. The attempt received both negative and positive reviews from the critic. Vrajendra Gaur (2012) appreciates the film's weaving together fantasy and reality though he is afraid, "Children may not entirely understand what is going on" in the film.

In the twenty-first century, like many Bengali filmmakers who experimented Tagore's works on screen through the buoyant theoretical perception and technological breakthrough, some other regional filmmakers retold Tagore's stories with remarkable improvisation in the narrative. Based on Tagore's 1898 short story "Drishtidan" (Denoting Eyes), The Marathi film *Taptapadi* (2014) is a critical as well as commercial success. The writer and director Sachin Nagargoje recontextualized the film in Maharashtrian social milieu. Appreciating the director's improvisation, Sunil Nandgaonkar (2014) comments, "Nagaroje has handled the story with maturity and has presented some hard-hitting scenes in a subtle yet soulful manner." Prodyut Kumar Deka made *Drishti (The Vision)* [2016] from the short story of the same, arguably the first Assamese film on any Tagore's work. The film has not yet received any significant critical insight. In 2018, Deb Medhekar in his own screenplay reinterprets Tagore's "Kabuliwala" in his Hindi film *Bioscopewala* in the contemporary Afghan context. In his review, Prasanna D Zore (2018) observes, "Deb Medhekar's *Bioscopewala*, a contemporary adaptation of Tagore's *Kabuliwala*, is a sweet film, soothing to the eyes, and weaves a story of human suffering cutting across national boundaries."

In Bipin Nadkarni's screenplay and direction, *Darbaan* (*Guard* [2020]), a Hindi adaptation of 1891 short story "*Khokababur Pratyabartan*" (Return of the Young Master), is a commercial success and has received mostly positive comments from the critics. Distinguishing the director's "own narrative bits" and its "endearing soundtrack," Pradeep Kumar (2020) in his review for *The Hindu* identifies the weakness in the screenplay. However, it is apparent that Nadkarni more relies on the story's 1960 Bengali adaptation by Agradoot. In his review, Archika Khurana (2021) maintains, "*Darbaan*' is an unusual story of loyalty, friendship, caregiving and the ultimate sacrifice that is powered by superlative performances, which make it a noteworthy tale"

### **Reason Behind the Success of Tagore Films: Auteur Direction**

A central aspect that is inexorably linked to the adaptation phenomenon is the technique of compression, omission, expansion and improvisation for the medium specificity of cinema. This genuinely cinematic technique, which largely contributes to the organic structure and the success or the failure of an adaptation, is crucial from two adaptational perspectives. Firstly, they allow auteurs to make textual departures, and secondly, these departures create an avenue for them to exercise their own artistic insights. From the above discussion of the author's works on screen, it becomes apparent that a few directors, in execution of these dynamics, altered his works and stamped their own aesthetic élan. They can be brought under auteurist criticism to explore whether they exercised directorial independence, worked on their own screenplays and trailed their creative pursuits, and whether the film ultimately made significant commercial returns as well as critical acclaim. Based on these criteria, directors such as Rabindranath Tagore, Madhu Bose, Satyajit Ray, Tapan Sinha, Purnendu Pattrea, Rituparno Ghosh and Suman Mukhopadhyay can be primarily distinguished as auteurs. Though some other directors have also exercised freedom, their

adaptations have not been considered artistic or successful. This suggests that transgressing a text erratically cannot vindicate art or ensure success; the transgressions, when exploited from the director's aesthetic exhilaration, may make the films transcend the philological medium and become visual art.

Making auteur films is always a challenge for directors since they have to give equal precedence to both critical appreciation and financial success, that is, they have to attract both audience and critics. So, making the film as a “popular,” “industrial” and “financial” art that will allow for a wider exposure to “a critical argument of much greater importance” (Bazin, 2005, p. 130) is an overarching challenge to auteur directors. The auteur has, in other words, to reach audience for commercial gross by the film's unique script, characters, performance, plot and innovation. Again, they inherently aim to win considerable appreciation from the critics through a distinctive narrative technique, philosophical bearing, theoretical relevance, cinematographic signature, musical elegance, and intertextual, political and stylistic interweaving.

Hence, a closer examination makes it apparent that even though the above adapters demonstrated auteurist tendencies, not all of them can be, to the strictest principle of the theory, justified as auteurs. In the light of auteur direction in which directors essentially remain a creative catalyst and organizing principle in a number of films, only three directors – Satyajit Ray, Tapan Sinha and Rituparno Ghosh – have made three Tagore films each. Stalwarts of Bengali parallel cinema, these master adapters are consistently inspired by the different genres of Tagore's corpus and have consistently translated them into visual medium (Gooptu, 2011, p. 187). In their Tagore films – Ray's *Teen Kanya*, *Charulata* and *Ghare-Baire*; Sinha's *Kabuliwala*, *Kshudhita Pashan* and *Atithi*; and Ghosh's *Chokher Bali: A Passion Play*), *Noukadubi* and *Chitrangada: The Crowning Wish* – they have exploited the auteurist role as “creative mind” (Benshoff, 2016, p. 63)

in overseeing the entire production. If closely observed, the screenplays of all these films are written by the directors themselves. This particular authority confirms the directors' overweening control in textual manipulations and visual improvisations. Moreover, the films are far from faithful rendition suggesting that the auteurs have artistically and historically modified Tagore's texts.

Apart from Tagore films, these directors made many other extraordinary adaptations from the works of other authors. In these works, they also demonstrated the same badge of creative aptitude and authoritative command, and transcended their literary authors. Moreover, in most of their films, they not only made musical directions but also wrote their own music for many of their films which gained considerable currency in Bengali musical studies (Gooptu, 2011). For example, in *Ek Je Chhilo Desh* ("Once There Was a Country" [1977]), based on Shankar's short story of the same name and *Raincoat* (2004), based on O. Henry's "Gift of the Magi," Sinha and Ghosh were the lyricists, respectively. In their musical directions they made a blend of Tagore's songs with other genres of Bengali music. For example, in *Charulata*, *Atithi* and *Chokher Bali*, Ray, Sinha and Ghosh respectively harmonized Tagore's songs with those of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Lalon Shah and Atul Prasad Sen. What is more, these directors intertextualized their adaptations with some other literary texts and historical references that ultimately gave them authorial status over their adaptations.

Therefore, in terms of unconstrained command of technical and aesthetic superiority in their respective filmographies, Ray, Sinha and Ghosh can be regarded as the three most outstanding auteurist representatives of the cinematic adaptations of Bengali literature and of Tagore's works in particular. Strangely, although their works were significantly appreciated at home and abroad, the textual departures they made received opprobrium, as literary texts are

considered superlative and cinematic versions derivative. If applied, auteur theory can initiate a new critical argument vis-à-vis the traditional methods, assess films on their real merits and contextualize them in the theoretical grounds of recent adaptation theories and approaches.

## **Conclusion**

Rabindranath Tagore is a cinematic phenomenon in South Asian cinema, especially in India and Bangladesh. Put differently, his stories, poems, and songs predominate in the cinema of this tradition. Since cinema is considered on a par with the equal artistic stature of literature, the cinematic translation of Tagore's works demands adequate critical (and also artistic) assessment in cinema and adaptation scholarship. Through the fidelity/infidelity criticism with which subcontinental film critics still tend to evaluate film adaptations, Tagore films may not have proper artistic justification. That is, these adaptation works necessitate being assessed through contemporary theoretical developments. This paper has focused on almost all Tagore films – from the silent era to the talkie dialogue system and from Bengali to all regional film industries – and examined them through the theoretical lens of auteurism, which helps identify the successful adaptations based on the extent of the directors' artistic and creative interferences.

It is a cinematic reality that the auteur adaptations on which directors leave their recognisable creative inscription receive critical introspection and contribute to the enduring appeal of the films. From the above discussion, it appears that the Tagore films that transcended temporal constraints and were critically acclaimed were, in fact, those adapted auteuristically. However, unlike the Western scholars, the South Asian ones do not acknowledge this directorial role; they rather bluntly and untheoretically argue that Tagore's works are classics and so do not need to be tempered in celluloid rendition. In fact, theories and scholarship of adaptation studies

are derogative about faithful adaptations (Ahmed et al., 2020). That is why film theories like auteurism require sufficient relevance in the academic study of South Asian cinema. There are other theories that have gained currency in recent adaptation discourse such as Linda Hutcheon's concept of "palimpsestuous adaptation" which claims that an adapted film is inherently an interference of other intertexts, literary or/and cinematic (2006, p. 8). Further work is also possible on Brian McFarlane's concept of "a modified structuralist approach" in order to distinguish "between transferable and non-transferable elements" (1996, p. 201) of Bengali fictions on screen. What is more, the film versions of Tagore's works can be assessed through Mikhail Bakhtin's literary theory of chronotype,<sup>12</sup> premising that "the work and the world represented in it" can enter any other time and space "in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 253). It is believed that assessing the films through these theoretical prisms will not only wean them from moralistic criticism of fidelity concern but also revive them from oblivion and recontextualise them in film discourse and academia.

This paper has given its predominant focus on the directorial role in order to distinguish the critically and commercially successful adaptations of Tagore's works. The films may also be seen through other creative and aesthetic concerns such as music in Tagore films (Rabindra sangeet and other musical genres), spatiotemporal recontextualization, thematic concern and intertextual plaits in Tagore films. Moreover, there are some directors such as Suman Mukhopadhyay, Qaushiq Mukherjee, Amitava Bhattacharya, and Deb Medhekar who retell Tagore stories with postmodern and postcolonial sensitivities diverting exuberantly from the originals in contemporary technological breakthroughs. These radical attempts, individually or collectively, have been

---

<sup>12</sup> Robert Stam (2005) has already suggested, albeit briefly, the relevance of chronotype in *Literature through Film*.

critically important for contemporary research concerns in the burgeoning popularity of adaptation studies.

## References

- Ahmed, S. (2017). [Review of the Book *A Feminist Foremother: Critical Essays on Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*. Edited by Mohammad A. Quayum and Md. Mahmudul Hasan.] *Intellectual Discourse*, 25(2), 441–46. From <https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/islam/article/view/104>
- Ahmed, S., Hasan, M. M., & Ramlan, W. N. M. (2020). Adaptation and Auteursism in South Asian Studies with Reference to Rabindranath Tagore's Works on Screen. *Asiatic: IUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, 14(1), 259-272. From <https://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/ajell/article/view/1866>
- Alam, F. & Chakravarty, R. (Eds.). (2011). *The Essential Tagore*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Alam, M. (2011). Chitraporichalak Rabindranath. *Prothom Alo*. July 11, 2011. From <http://archive.prothom-alo.com/detail/date/2011-07-15/news/170348>
- Astruc, A. (1948). The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo. In P. Graham (1968), *The New Wave*. (pp.17–23). New York: Doubleday.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Ed. M. Holquist. Trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Balidan Reviews*. (2021). From <https://www.tvguide.com/movies/balidan/review/2030339702/>
- Bandopadhyay, C. (1995). *Rabindra-Prasanga: Anandabazar Patrika* (Vol. 2). Kolkata: Ananda Publishers.
- Bazin, A. (2005). *What Is Cinema* (H. Gray, Trans.). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bengali films that proved Uttam Kumar was not just a romantic matinee idol. *Times*

- of India*. (2018 September 26). From  
<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/bengali/movies/photo-features/bengali-films-that-proved-uttam-kumar-was-not-just-a-romantic-matinee-idol/photostory/63907023.cms>
- Bhowmik, S. (2011). *Ruper Kalpanirjhar: Cinema Adhunikota Rabindranath*.  
Kolkata: Ananda Publishers.
- Brantley, W. (Ed.). (1996). *Conversations with Pauline Kael*. Mississippi: University  
Press of Mississippi.
- Chakravarty, I. (2015). Tagore, Cinema and the Poetry of Movement.  
*Lensight*. From:  
[https://www.academia.edu/10315517/Tagore\\_Cinema\\_and\\_the\\_Poetry\\_of\\_Movement](https://www.academia.edu/10315517/Tagore_Cinema_and_the_Poetry_of_Movement)
- Chakravarti, J. (2018). *Lekin: A Forgotten Classic! The Third Vantage Point: the independent  
perspective on Movies, Music & More*. From  
<https://thirdvantagepoint.com/2018/08/18/lekin-a-forgotten-classic/>
- Chatterji, S. A. (2010). *Laboratory* (2010) Bengali Movie: Exploring Rabindranath  
Tagore. *Calcutta Tube*. From <http://calcuttatube.com/laboratory-2010-bengali-movie-exploring-rabindranath-tagore/133651/>
- Chatterji, S. A. (2016). *Postmaster* Review: The Tagore Connection is Superfluous.  
*Silhouette Magazine: A Publication on Cinema & Allied Art Forms*. ISSN 2231 - 699X.  
From <https://learningandcreativity.com/silhouette/postmaster-review/>
- Chatterji, S. A. (2017). *The Cinema of Bimal Roy: An Outsider Within*. New Delhi: Sage  
Publications Ltd.
- Dichwalkar, O. (2013). *Tasher Desh* Movie Review: Fantasy of a Sexual Liberation.

- Mad about Movies: India's First Digital Native Movie Site*. From <https://madaboutmoviez.com/2013/08/27/tasher-desh-movie-review-fantasy-sexual-liberation/>
- Druick, Z. & Williams, D. (Eds.). (2014). *The Grierson Effect: Tracing Documentary's International Movement*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Dutta, P. (2015). New Bengali Film Jogajog Review; Tagore it is but to What Levels of Perfection? *Sholoana Bangaliana*. From <http://sholoanabangaliana.in/2015/05/19/new-bengali-film-jogajog-review-tagore-it-is-but-to-what-levels-of-perfection/>
- Garga, B. D. (1996). *So Many Cinemas: The Motion Picture in India*. Mumbai: Eminence Design Pvt. Ltd.
- Gaur, V. (2012). *Dak Ghar* (1966). <https://memsaabstory.com/2012/08/12/dak-ghar-1966/#more-19504>
- Ghosh, G. P. (1982). *Sonar Daag*. Calcutta: Jogomaya Prakashani.
- Ghosh, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Chalachchitre Rabindranath*. Vol. 1–2. Kolkata: New Bengal.
- Goopu, S. (2011). *Bengali Cinema: An Other Nation*. New York: Routledge.
- Guy, R. (2012). Blast from the Past Cinema: *Mathar Kula Manikkam* (1956). *The Hindu*. From <https://www.thehindu.com/features/cinema/mathar-kula-manikkam-1956/article4016223.ece>
- Hayat, A. (2012). *Rabindranath O Chalachitra*. Dhaka: Dibyapokash.
- Hayward, S. (2000). *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*. London: Routledge.
- Hutcheon, L. (2006). *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge.

Iyengar, S. (2017). Best Films Born out of Rabindranath Tagore's Stories. *Cenestaan*.

From <https://www.cinestaan.com/articles/2017/may/7/5673/best-films-born-out-of-rabindranath-tagore-s-stories-mdash-birth-anniversary-special>

Jain, M. (1997). *Char Adhyay*: Tagore novel adaptation is set to create ripples. *India Today*.

From <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/society-the-arts/story/19970714-char-adhyay-tagore-novel-adaptation-is-set-to-create-ripples-830343-1997-07-14>

Jain, M. (Ed.). (2009). Introduction. *Narratives of Indian Cinema*. New Delhi: Primus Books.

Khurana, A. (2021). *Darbaan* Movie Review: Sharib Hashmi shines in this heart-warming tale.

India Times. From <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/hindi/movie-reviews/darbaan/movie-review/79570145.cms>

Kumar, A. (2019). Capturing Madhubala's Pain. *The Hindu*. From

<https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/movies/capturing-madhubalarsquos-pain/article16836222.ece1>

Kumar, P. (2020). *Darbaan* movie review: A heartwarming tale that doesn't scratch beyond the

surface. *The Hindu*. From <https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/reviews/darbaan-movie-review-a-heartwarming-tale-that-doesnt-scratch-beyond-the-surface/article33248757.ece>

Literature on Screen. (2020, November 25). It is a common belief that Bimal Roy's *Do Bigha*

*Zamin* (1953) is an adaptation of...: From

<https://www.facebook.com/tagore.nazrul.336/posts/1699960326847784>

Mandal, S. (2015). Adapting, Interpreting and Transcreating Rabindranath Tagore's

Works on Screen. In S. K. Rai & A. Rai (Eds.), *Adaptations: Some Journeys from Words to Visuals*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

- Mandal, S. (2020). Mohammad A. Quayum, ed. Tagore, Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism: Perceptions, Contestations and Contemporary Relevance. *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, 14(1), 297–302. From <https://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/AJELL/article/view/1867/1009>
- McFarlane, B. (1996). *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Mollick, S. D. (2011, December 29). Images and Imagery: A Poet's Engagement with Moving Images. *Silhouette Magazine: A Publication on Cinema & Allied Art Forms*. ISSN 2231 - 699X. From <https://learningandcreativity.com/silhouette/images-imagery-rabindranath-tagore-moving-images/>
- Mukhopadhyay, C. (2015). *Cinemat Rabinranath Rabinranather Cinema*. Kolkata: Prativash.
- Nandgaonkar, S. (2014). Taptapadi (Marathi) / Emotional impact. *The Indian Express*. From <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/screen/taptapadi-marathi-emotional-impact/>
- Nalik, R. (2016). Audio master: Gulzar's 'Lekin' is a mystery in an enigma wrapped in raag Maand. From <https://scroll.in/reel/820775/audio-master-gulzars-lekin-is-a-mystery-in-an-enigma-wrapped-in-raag-maand>
- Quayum, M. A. (2017). Crossing Borders: Hindu-Muslim Relations in the Works of Rabindranath Tagore and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. In M. A. Quayum and M. M. Hasan (Eds.), *A Feminist Foremother: Critical Essays on Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*. Hyderabad: Orient Black Swan.
- Rahman, M. (2011). *Rabindranath: Chalachitra*. Dhaka: Murdhonno.

Rajadhyaksha, A. & Willemen, P. (Eds.). (1999). *The Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema*. New York: Routledge.

Ray, B. (2010). “New Woman” in Rabindranath Tagore’s Short Stories: An Interrogation of “Laboratory”. *Asiatic: IJUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, 4(2), 68–80. From <http://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/AJELL/article>

Ray, G. K. (1975). *Chitra Porichalok*, Rabindranath. Anondolok, Kolkata.

Red tapism delayed release of my film ‘Sesher Kobita’: Suman Mukhopadhyay.

(2015). *The Indian Express*. From

<https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/regional/red-tapism-delayed-release-of-my-film-sesher-kobita-suman-mukhopadhyay/>

Roy, A. (1986). *Rabindranath O Chalachitra*. Kolkata: Chitralkha Prakashani.

Sarkar, L. (2013). *Dekha Na Dekhai*: Movie Review. From

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/bengali/movie-reviews/dekha-na-dekhay/movie-review/19663674.cms>

Sinha, T. (2012). *Chalachchitra Aajiban*. Kolkata: Dey’s Publishing.

Zore, P. D. (2018). Review: *Bioscopewala* is a sweet film. From

<https://www.rediff.com/movies/review/review-bioscopewala-is-a-sweet-film/20180525.htm>