

Chapter : 5

Conclusion:

From the present study some research findings can be pointed out . This is the reason why a general lay out of the basic idea of this study is systematically arranged in this concluding chapter. These findings can be segregated in different levels. These levels of findings can really provide an insightful observation on adaptation and Rituparno's take in it.

From the beginning of this study it is intended to highlight on the relation between art and an artist. This relation is justified with Rituparno Ghosh's relation with films. But it is a vital truth that Rituparno Ghosh's relation with films developed much later in his career. Thus this study began with the first chapter where Rituparno's journey towards becoming a film maker is highlighted. The intention behind tracing Rituparno's journey towards becoming a filmmaker is only because of the fact that his artistic talent depicted through his films evolved through different phases of his life. His evolution as an artist is a proof of the truth that no one is borne as an artist. But it also has to be accepted here that without his inherent talent the journey towards becoming an artist would have been difficult for him. It is observed that his inherent talent was polished by his parents. These polished inherent qualities of Rituparno could touch its greatest heights with his exposure to literature, music and art.

It is a truth that it will not be possible to tag anyone as an artist without his art. This is the reason why the second half of the first chapter is concentrated on his films. Rituparno can be termed as an artist on the basis of his art of filmmaking. So, this latter half of the first chapter has revealed that most of his films are both critically and commercially successful. With his aesthetic understanding as a filmmaker he is successful in creating a blend of art and commercial cinema. It is also an interesting revelation here that he had an undying interest in literature. It is evident in his craving for

adapting literary text into films. Both his first and his last film are adaptations with many others in between.

In the following chapters of this study there are many revelations on adaptation which are eventually tracked down in Rituparno's handling of adaptation in his films. It must be pointed out here that findings from all these chapters have enriched each other to generate a fresh understanding on the issue taken up for this study. In the following pages of this concluding chapter detail on these findings as observed at different levels of this study has been enlisted. Thus findings are enlisted with the following details.

Literature of all times has contributed to cinema and it is a fact that some of the most significant and benchmark films happen to be adapted from literary texts. With proper attention on these adaptations, it can be understood that there is a linkage between the text and the elements of drama of both these fields. Apart from these linking cords between these two fields, there are interactive cultural contents which allow these separate fields to contribute to each other. These interactive elements between the two fields make the task of adaptation challenging. The difficulty of adaptation originates with the comparison made between the two different media- literature and film. It is observed that there is a vast difference between these two mediums. The most striking difference between the two media is that literary texts are written but films are audio-visual. Due to these differences between the two media there occurs the question of accuracy and justification. When literature is considered as superior, any modification in its content, in the process of adaptation is never accepted. So Adaptation of literature into film carries many difficulties. Within such difficulties how adaptation has come out as an art form is worth mentioning. At this point, adaptation of literature into films can be read as a particular art form where an artist can play with his own artistic vision. Thus in such adaptations, beyond all comparisons, there lies the question of artistic liberty where the creator –director gets his own share in re-creating the same text. It so happens because every art form works on different levels of interactive possibilities. Thus the artist of the

source text and the director of the adaptation get their chance to float in different approaches of the same subject.

The mechanism of adaptation incorporates technical involvement of camera, sound, light, actors, editing, dubbing etc. while re-narrating the story for the screen. These technical aspects of the film-making process usually help to understand and analyze at least half of the methods deployed to adapt a literary text for the screen. These technical aspects of film making process are crucial in determining how the story and its narrative will look on screen. In this regard, it must be said that these technical involvements are useless without the director's directorial skill to handle the story. The imagination of the director gets its perfect shape when all the technical help work together. It is like joint missions where from the camera man to the editor, work in a line to get a compact whole. Thus without the presence of one the other can never move ahead. So when we talk about adaptation of a literary text into a medium like film there appears a lot of technical difference. It is crucial here to realize that literature is solely created by an artist and on the other hand film cannot be produced without a collaborative effort involving more than one individual. In spite of many differences between these two media, there remains a single connecting cord – 'art'.

It is interesting to find out that, the question of fidelity works in adaptation till that point, when the viewer is also the reader of the text adapted for the film. If the reader of a text is also the viewer of the film adaptation, he will be critical of the film. This viewer who is also the reader of the original text is most likely to ask questions on the adaptation's fidelity to the original text. On the other hand, while watching an adaptation, if the viewer is unaware of the source text, his reception will be different. For this viewer an adaptation is nothing but a film. This viewer cannot compare the film to any text. This is the reason why, this reader will never ask questions on fidelity issue. After watching an adaptation a viewer can be influenced to read the text that he or she has never read. In this way the literary text gets a new life which in Walter Benjamin's term is the 'after life' of the literary text.

The literary texts and their adaptations into films are chosen for the present study to understand Rituparno Ghosh as an artist and his interest in the art of adaptations. Among the four selected films and their reference texts it is evident that he is interested in literature. Specifically his interest on Tagore can be considered as his driving force . It can be assumed here that, it is his interest in literature which pushed him towards adaptation. In this context it would be apt to say that it is for his latent interest in literature that he began his career with an adaptation of Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay's novel in the film *Hirer Angthi*. His adaptations are stretched in different genres of literature like novels, dance dramas, short stories , children's literature etc. Within such extended and stretched out options, those areas are also covered where the implication of cross cultural adaptations can be read.

It is noted that , though he has denied, majority of his films are either a direct adaptation or an indirect one. For most of his adaptations, he has chosen literary texts written by Bengali writers. The reason behind his selection of regional literature must have been his affinity with the language , Bangla. In many of his interviews he has claimed that he feels more comfortable with the language Bengali. *Raincoat* is the only film in which he has opted for a western writer. Apart from O' Henry, there is no other writer from the west, who could influence him profoundly enough.

It can be asserted that Rituparno Ghosh has dealt with adaptation in many of his movies. His venture into this area of adaptation has great impact on his career as a film maker. It would not be wrong to say that literature went deep into his movies with all its essence . In his adaptations he has chosen stories from writers like Shirshendu Mukhopdhy to Rabindranath Tagore and even O' Henry . But among all these writers Tagore seems to be his favorite writer. Even in the select adaptation for this study except *Raincoat*, Tagore and his literary ideas are glorified. It is not only Tagore's writing but also his personality influenced Rituparno. Tagore appears to be the most elevated figure in his movies. For the followers of Tagore , Rituparno's adaptations may appear to be surpassing what Tagore intended to say through his writings.

In his adaptation of Tagore's *Chitrangada*, Rituparno Ghosh has used some autobiographical elements and by doing so he has lifted adaptation to a different level. It is an attempt on his part to tell his own story through the adaptation of the literary text of Tagore. *Chitrangada: A Crowning Wish* is semi-autobiographical in nature, so Rituparno's life is not included in its totality in this film. Rituparno's selection of a identity of in-betweenness is validated through this adaptation. It is interesting to note here that, this adaptation is a statement on the possibilities of gender and sexuality beyond the accepted norm of the society. So like other adaptations, Rituparno is successful in maintaining his position as an auteur in this film too. Maintaining his position as an auteur, the most provocative question asked through his cinema is about the tabooed identity of transgender or third gender living in a society where, man and woman are the two possible genders. In a society, where heterosexuality is considered as a norm, Rituparno comes up with a film that questions hetero-normativity. His venture into this arena is a bold strike against the myth of hetero-normativity. It can be claimed here that, in his adaptations like *Chitrangada:A Crowning Wish*, literature is handled to give a voice to the voiceless. The unheard and un-communicated emotions of the neglected section of the society are restored in this film.

This auteur can handle cinematic text to unveil his understanding on different issues ranging from the issue of Third gender to domestic violence. To communicate his agendas through his films, Rituparno uses different tools. It appears that poetry and songs are powerful instruments in Rituparno's hand to regulate his intention in his films. In his adaptations too, he has thoroughly used songs and poetry. At times, these songs and poems become a motif in his films. Repetitive use of these songs throughout a film is intentionally added to highlight a particular issue. For example the use of the song '*khela ghor badhte legeche*' in *Noukadubi* serve the purpose of highlighting the issue of the fluctuating meaning of home and marriage for women in a patriarchal society. It is evident that in his films there is an effective use of background score, poetry, and songs. Through the use of such tracks Ghosh has effortlessly connected one scene with the

other. This is the reason why sound tracks play a very important role in his films. He has done a lot of experimentation with *Rabindra Sangeet*. It is another attempt on his part to come closer to Tagore. His fascination with Tagore and his works find a different dimension through his use of *Rabindra Sangeet*.

His experimentation is not limited to Songs. He has experimented with different aspects of a film making process. But when it comes to the issue of adaptation he too could not avoid the question of fidelity to the text. Despite knowing the obvious allegation of doing injustice with the original text Rituparno moves freely in his task of filmmaking. In his films Rituparno takes artistic freedom for giving new shade to the adapted literature in the films. Rituparno's bold and outspoken attitude as a director has added new light to the old classic. In Rituparno's hand literary narrations are well adjusted on the celluloid screen. He has always tried to maintain a balance between those elements excluded from the original source and those included in the film version. Thus in all the select films of Rituparno Ghosh for this study, adaptation is not simply an act of following the source text, it is also about change - creating something new, with a perspective of the director of the film. These select films of Rituparno Ghosh are making it clear that adaptations can be termed as a byproduct of the source text. Here it will be fair to say that adaptation is fundamentally a creative work. With Rituparno this creative process of adaptation becomes dynamic. Apart from re-reading and re-working on the original text, his approach in the way of looking at the source and in its re-presentation seems to be different and vibrant.

In all his adaptations he has chosen those subjects, where he can get a chance to explore the nuances of the conditioned life of a woman. In his adaptations he has never overlooked issues and questions that are related to the struggle of the feminine self. In many of his films he has dealt with the dilemma of women, who are forced to follow suppressive norms code of the society. The vulnerability and the marginality of the weaker sex of our society is transparent in his films and specifically in his adaptations. . In Rituparno's films women are often seen on the margin. Film for him is a kind of

instrument through which he has tried to elucidate the reason behind such marginalized identity of women.

His interest in dealing with the human emotion and with multiple layers of human relation is spotted to be the most vital aspects of his cinematic renditions. Moving ahead from the center of Rituparno's cinematic experimentation it can be noted that he is very much critical about the society where humans are treated with less human feelings. The layered identity of individuals living in a society is critically handled in most of his films and even in his adaptations. Social issues are revealed through the microscopic presentation of character in woven situation. So, after reading Rituparno Ghosh's select movies as adaptation, the whole process of adaptation can be linked to the issue of perspective.

Adaptation for him is a way of taking a shield against the reparation expected from his bold steps to break stereotypes and the set norms of a patriarchal society. In adaptations like *Chokher Bali*, Rituparno's projection of Binodini's menstruation may be considered to be very bold in Indian Cinema. Through this projection he opens up discourse on taboos surrounding Women's menstruation in Indian society. Like *Chokher Bali*, in other adaptations too he has taken the opportunity to deal with a lot of controversial issues. This liberty taken by Rituparno Ghosh is guaranteed by the reputation of the writer. Specifically in his adaptation of Tagore's literary texts, he has taken enough liberty to break stereotypes. Rituparno has accepted that Tagore's reputation and the acceptance of his literary texts work like a protective shield for him. Standing behind this protective shield he could think of moving beyond the truth accepted by the society.

His implication of 'gaze'- a female gaze in specific can be considered as one of his thoughtful techniques used in his films to reveal the hidden world of female desire. The female gaze is explicitly used by Rituparno to deal with female sexuality. He has intentionally used this 'female gaze' against the 'male gaze'. The gaze of Binodini in

Chokher Bali allows the viewer to see the world through a female's point of view. Through her look of desire, existence of female sexuality is validated by Rituparno.

Rituparno's effortless presentation of female psyche in his films is commendable. It can be clearly stated here that his androgynous self allowed him to gather the experience of both male and a female. This is the reason why his understanding of female psyche is projected with vibrant colours through his cinema. His experience as a queer gave him a new dimension of understanding the world around him. This deep understanding of the society and its people compelled the audiences to see his adaptations in a different light.

There is a chance to read his adaptations as *mise-en-scene*. In his cinematic text viewers are presented with minute details of sight and sound. Through these detailed work in his films, a lot is communicated without dialogue. His use of the color red in *Chokher Bali* is symbolic of Binodini's passion, her rage, her revolt. In *Raincoat* the closeted desire of Mannu and Neeru is projected through the claustrophobic atmosphere of Neeru's home. It is also implied through the reference of a raincoat, the bathroom where Mannu weeps and so on. Thus if intended, his adaptations can provide a sense of *mise-en-scene*.

Within the *mise-en-scene* of his films, close up is used to the maximum for fetching a concentrated expression of the characters. Camera angles are used in such a manner that the impact of the scene can be maintained. Among many techniques used by him in his films, the use of close up is worth mentioning. Close ups allowed him to project the emotion and feeling of the character in detail. It is not only the use of close up but also his technique of distancing that helped him in projecting situations properly. In *Noukadubi*, the distant view of women peeping and gossiping through the window of Ramesh's house is intriguing to bring out the outer society close to the inner world of Ramesh's life. Like this film, Rituparno's directorial skill in handling technical aspects of his other films is helpful in dealing with the totality of expression.

The domestic life of individual living in a society is often neglected by filmmakers. For Rituparno this domestic sphere is always attractive. Familial relation always allured him. Thus in most of his films he has projected the life of his characters within the four walls of their home. This is the reason why his films are mostly shot indoor. Like most of his films , in these adaptations also Rituparno has preferred indoor set rather than shooting outdoor. Films like Raincoat is having majority of its scenes indoor.

As highlighted in the earlier part of this write up, his films and specifically his adaptations have compelled the viewers to read the text and compare. These adaptations , though cannot avoid the question of fidelity to the text , these have got a new shade on the literature on which these films are based. He is the auteur , who has left his own mark on the film and thus viewers can automatically realize it. In his adaptation of O'Henry's *Gift of the Magi* he has outwardly erased the cultural gap between the text and the film. He has given a whole new shade to the story. Though the story remains the same , the narrative is different. In this case he has played with the expectation of those who have read the text . For his film he has restructured the story in a totally Indian background , making it a statement of his creativity. It is not simply with *Gift of the Magi* , but with other adaptations as well that he creates an urge in the readers to see the film and instigate the viewers to read the text as well.

Literary Adaptation can provide a stretched out text where a dialogue between the source and its appropriation in the film moves in a very tricky lane. For those audience who watch Rituparno's adaptations with the baggage of knowledge about the original story, can often be critical about the approach of Rituparno but they leave with a new insight on the literature they have already read. Through his adaptations regional Indian literature has reached a global platform. Adaptations in general and the four adaptations of Rituparno in particular have brought literature closer to the wider public, who otherwise might not have shared interest in the original text.

Rituparno's adaptation of literary texts into film is a proof of his understanding as an artist. This artist is an auteur too, who has used adaptations as his weapon to register his voice as distinct. His adaptations are specimen of his artistic venture to bring literature closer to the medium of film. These adaptations are also testimonials of his journey as a reader of literature. Through these adaptations his preferences on the subject for his films is deliberately maintained.

It is therefore a study which essentially reflects on two basic aspects- one which deals with the process of adaptation in general and the other deals with the adaptations of Rituparno Ghosh in particular. This study begins with an analysis of how Rituparno Ghosh evolved as an artist. The second chapter *A critical overview of Rituparno Ghosh's films* is fit to analyse all his works in brief. After this the term adaptation and its technicalities are dealt in the third chapter which is titled as *Adaptation: Negotiating film and originality*. The fourth chapter which follows with the title *Rituparno Ghosh : Translation of Tagore and O' Henry* carries the limelight in its discussion of Rituparno Ghosh's influence in the adaptation of literary works from writers like Tagore and O'Henry. In the fifth chapter, *Viewers and Readers*, importance has been given on how readers and viewers are positioned in the dialogue between the original text and its film version. Thus in the last concluding chapter findings of this study are pointed out in details to have a clear understanding of the whole study. All in all it may be said that the symbiotic relation between literature and film has many intricacies, thus there can never be an ultimate finding in it. Such an interesting topic has much scope left for contemplating on many shades of it.

Bob Dylan's banquet speech on receiving the Nobel Prize for literature is quite thought provoking and this justifies the reading of cinematic adaptation of literary texts by Rituparno Ghosh-as cinema can also offer a text for reading and thus can be a part of literature.

Bob Dylan writes-

“I was out on the road when I received this surprising news, and it took me more than a few minutes to properly process it. I began to think about William Shakespeare, the great literary figure. I would reckon he thought of himself as a dramatist. The thought that he was writing literature couldn't have entered his head. His words were written for the stage. Meant to be spoken not read. When he was writing Hamlet, I'm sure he was thinking about a lot of different things: "Who're the right actors for these roles?" "How should this be staged?" "Do I really want to set this in Denmark?" His creative vision and ambitions were no doubt at the forefront of his mind, but there were also more mundane matters to consider and deal with. "Is the financing in place?" "Are there enough good seats for my patrons?" "Where am I going to get a human skull?" I would bet that the farthest thing from Shakespeare's mind was the question "Is this *literature*?"..... like Shakespeare, I too am often occupied with the pursuit of my creative endeavors and dealing with all aspects of life's mundane matters. "Who are the best musicians for these songs?" "Am I recording in the right studio?" "Is this song in the right key?" Some things never change, even in 400 years.

Not once have I ever had the time to ask myself, "Are my songs *literature*?"”

This very question has enlarged the area of literature. It has enlarged the scope of literature. Reading cinematic texts and their roots into literature has made it necessary to push the boundary of literature beyond written pages. It is the screen which captures the essence of literature, and by doing so literary adaptations become a part of the literary venture.
