

Ghoti-Bangal Differences and Conflicts as Represented in Bengali Films

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Abstract:

Finding answers to questions of the present in the past is exactly why History as an academic discipline is essential. If one looks at the socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural aspects of life in one's surroundings, one will realise how almost all the problems one faces now have their germination in the past, and when one looks at the trajectory, he/she finds how from a certain situation the problem reached the present stage.

In such an idea, one situates the Bengal Partition of 1947 and attempts to look at the repercussions of it. There was mass migration from both sides to either side. At the macro level, it makes sense to say that huge numbers of Hindu Bengalis moved from East Pakistan to India, and a large Bengali Muslim population left India for East Pakistan. Due to this, there were two sets of people in West Bengal after the partition, namely the Ghoti Bengalis and the Bangal people. Naturally, there might have been tensions- the former might have not wanted a different kind of people amongst themselves, and the latter might have had problems settling in a new land, what with all the issues of different cultures, nostalgia, them being refugees for a long time, et al. And with such situations brewing up all around, there would be no way popular culture would not have taken those issues up. It is in fact almost a responsibility of popular culture to portray the times, so that the information is disseminated to the masses, but what is interesting and important is the politics associated with the portrayal of situations in the works of popular culture. A lot of times, the creator or producer would have certain ideologies that he/she might want to spread among the masses, so there might be distortion of facts.

This research paper therefore attempts to study the portrayal of the differences and conflicts between the Ghoti and Bangal people in West Bengal, after the latter moved into West Bengal, in films. For the purpose of this research, the researcher will engage with his primary texts taking theories of migration and human psyche as basis. The ideas of Tony Manstead, Steve Reicher, Katy Greenland, Sam Parker, Alastair Nightingale, and Simon Goodman will be looked at, who speak about 'acculturation', 'prejudice, culture and health', and 'media representations of and public discourse about migration'.

Key words: Ghoti; Bangal; Partition; Bengali; Films.

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I. Introduction

The Bengal Partition was also one of the most important and large scale events of 1947. The erstwhile Bengal province was split into the West Bengal state of India and East Pakistan. People migrated in massive numbers from both divisions to both. In a bird's eye view, it will be safe to say that mammoth Hindu Bengali populace shifted base to India from East Pakistan, and a huge count of Bengali Muslims went to East Pakistan from India. Thus, the West Bengal after the partition had clearly two distinct sets of dwellers; the *Ghoti* people were the people who had been there since earlier, and the *Bangal* Bengalis were the ones to have moved in from East Pakistan (today Bangladesh). Tensions would have only been expected- the previously based dwellers might not have welcomed a different kind of people into their midst, and the newcomers definitely would have had issues settling and starting afresh in a land that was so alien to them, what with all the different cultures, the nostalgia of '*chhereashadesh*' (the country left behind), their status being that of refugees for a long time, etc.

With the population of a space distinctly split into two, there would surely be problems aplenty. The *Ghotis* and *Bangals* had to live in close contact with each other, and many a marital bond had been made too, thus many *Ghotis* and *Bangals* also had to stay in same households. In all these situations, their different cultural practices and emotional situations would definitely have created a disjoint between them if both sets of people refused to compromise on their own. All this paved way for disunity, and therefore it can be taken up as a social issue of those times. But then, the aforementioned would not have occurred with the totality of the population. In cases wherein there were acceptance and a bit of compromise, a beautiful synthesis of cultures was formed.

Due to that very synthesis we have the West Bengal of today wherein mixed dialects have formed, food from both sides of the border are relished equally, it is difficult to point out one's origin without asking, etc.

But neither can one ever rule out all the possibilities of the consciousness of the differences arising again, nor can one assert with absolute surety that such thoughts have left people's minds forever. And that is where the importance of studying differences and the consequent conflicts between sets of people inhabiting a common space can be understood. One studies the evolution of the differences, the contributing factors, the impacts those have, etc. Among these, one of the most important aspects to be studied is how the differences and conflicts are represented by the popular culture and media. Popular culture and media construct truths for the masses, so they have the power to influence people's thoughts and consequent behaviour with their ideologies. Also, these are the very lenses that people from outside the place will adopt to look at the place and form ideas about it. This paper will focus only on the films and not on what happened or did not happen in the real world. This researcher attempts to proceed with the idea that the selected films' construction of the truth is such that they seem to assert that *Ghoti* Bengalis and *Bangal* Bengalis found each other's differences only unacceptable.

Primary Texts

The primary texts that the researcher will engage with in this research are three Bengali films. 'BhooterBhobishyot' (The Future of Ghosts or The Future of the Past) was produced by Sappy banzz and directed by Anik Dutta (2012), and 'GoynarBaksho' (The Box of Jewels) was produced by Srikant Mohta and MahendraSoni and directed by Aparna Sen. 'GoynarBaksho' was released in 2013. One is 'Chokher Bali' (meaning 'Eyesore' in English), which was produced by Srikant Mohta and MahendraSoni, and directed by Rituparno Ghosh. It was released in 2003.

II. Review of Literature

All the secondary literature for this paper is in the form of articles that the researcher found in JSTOR. None of them were exactly about the topic taken up by the researcher, but he found some close enough relevant. The articles are- "Bengali Cultural Themes in Satyajit Ray's "The World of Apu"" by Peter J. Bertocci, "Love in the Time of Nationalism: Bengali Popular Films from 1950s" by Dulali Nag, "In Step with Sunil Gangopadhyay, Across Boundaries" by SitanshuYashaschandra, "Cinema in the Colonial City: Early Film Audiences in Calcutta" by Ranita Chatterjee, "Language Use by London Bangladeshi and Chinese Adolescents: Some Language Diary Data" by Martha C. Pennington, Itesh Sachdev, and Lawrence Lau, "War, Migration and Alienation in Colonial Calcutta: The Remaking of Muzaffar Ahmad" by Suchetana Chattopadhyay, "Nostalgia of 'Desh', Memories of Partition" by AnasuaBasuRaychaudhury, "Remembered Villages: Representation of Hindu-Bengali Memories in the Aftermath of the Partition" by Dipesh Chakrabarty, and "The Migration Crisis-Psychological Perspectives", an anonymous report of a meeting held at Cardiff University, the ideas of which have been discussed in section 3 since they form the theoretical framework for this research work.

In "Bengali Cultural Themes in Satyajit Ray's "The World of Apu"" Peter J. Bertocci asserts that what might bear some significance with watchers and pundits alike, be that as it may, is a push to elucidate a portion of the more explicitly Indian and especially Hindu social topics in Ray's movies. These topics have been given some reference in western basic talk of Ray's work, however once in a while in much profundity. The present exertion, at that point, endeavours to concentrate on such issues. It is offered by one who isn't a film pundit, but rather an anthropologist whose proficient experience has been centred on the Bengal locale of the Indian subcontinent. Also, "it is tempting to impute elements of Ray's own family history to much of the incidentally specific content of his films, at least those produced in the late 1950s and early 1960s" (Bertocci 17).

The article "Love in the Time of Nationalism: Bengali Popular Films from 1950s" by Dulali Nag, with special emphasis on Suchitra Sen and Uttam Kumar starring movies and an analysis of 'Agnipariksha', tries to reflect on a dilemma (Nag 779). As women instruction turned into an unquestionable piece of the liberal innovator motivation of patriotism, in twentieth century Bengal, the nationalist patriarchal society confronted a problem in setting her inside its very own limits, for the plan of innovation and that of patriotism, were inconsistent with one another when it went to the 'informed ladies'. The patriot motivation was of building up the country through the continuous reinforcing, on the social front, of national working class instructed in the normal logical sense, subsidiary with present day establishments, while holding an awareness of a genuine social personality. Social legitimacy was looked to be secured by the belief system of the family and the female soul in that, while the task of improvement and innovation was to be completed in people in general circle, for the most part envisioned to be controlled by the soul of manliness. Since education was the essential for support in the general population circle, the informed lady came to possess a socially vague position of typifying both manliness and womanliness in her double limit as a member in an open circle and as a store of social realism.

Furthermore, there was "In Step with Sunil Gangopadhyay, Across Boundaries" penned by SitanshuYashaschandra. "Last year I asked him (using an old term) if he thought there was some way to undo

the 'Banga-bhang'. When he said, "Not in the near future", there was nothing new in the news part of it, and I was not looking for any. But the quiet tonality the voice (that I was listening to carefully) reflected a mind which a tough intellect found it possible to combine with gentle feelings." (Yashaschandra 70). Yashaschandra basically asserts in his piece that with the progression of time, they came to know a greater amount of this man and creator who arranged such a significant number of limits in such huge numbers of ways. He ran over to them through numerous limits as well, the phonetic one being the least troublesome. The more troublesome ones included hermeneutic cracks that stamp contemporary Indian culture. They came to feel and understand that Sunil Gangopadhyay thought about these cracks with an extraordinary clearness and a more noteworthy compassion. With able activities and due limitation, he drove (alongside others) both inventive and institutional work of step by step assembling an alliance of Indian writing.

Ranita Chatterjee's "Cinema in the Colonial City: Early Film Audiences in Calcutta" investigates the rise of film in the city of Calcutta, one of the two key film generation focuses in pilgrim India, alongside Bombay, and states of presentation during the 1920s to muddle the thought of quiet film groups of onlookers of "Indian film." It uncovers a differed show structure, tending to a scope of gatherings of people in the city of Calcutta, and detonates the legend of a homogeneous national crowd for film in India, following this thought back to the historical backdrop of theatre and to worldwide directions of diversion in the second biggest city in the English Realm. This perusing in this manner focuses to the insufficiencies of arranging film groups of onlookers along national divisions during a time of tenacious worldwide experiences. Chatterjee at one point reveals the divide between the colonisers and colonised when she asserts, "Cinema was introduced to the local Bengali population in theatres around Beadon Street, just as the European population in Calcutta first saw the moving image in theatres around Chowringhee." (71)

"Language Use by London Bangladeshi and Chinese Adolescents: Some Language Diary Data" by Lawrence Lau, Martha C. Pennington, and Itesh Sachdev, is not an essay which would seem relevant at first sight. The researcher picked it too with the aim of looking at if it provides insight on the dialects of Bangladesh and its use by the Diaspora 'commonly around the world', in which case the descendents of the people who had moved in from East Pakistan to India would figure in the equation. What was read was pretty much relatable to conditions in modern day Bengal. The native language is for the most part related in frames of mind investigate with the qualities of convention, network, solidarity, home, and family, while the dialect of the bigger society is for the most part connected with the estimations of advancement or advancement, 'prominent utilization' and monetary achievement, and scholastic accomplishment. Constantly age, an ethnic or minority gathering may demonstrate a guarantee to the persisting representative capacity of the mother tongue however not really to its open capacity. Subsequently, they may demonstrate their connection to the first language as far as frames of mind and influence yet not regarding genuine utilization. Accordingly, it might be that each succeeding age of foreigners relates to their ethnic dialect on an undeniably conceptual dimension and less and less as far as any solid practices. There is dependably the possibility in ethnic minority gatherings, be that as it may, of a social recovery of native language use, however with no distinct societal capacity; the dominant part dialect will commonly prevail. (Lau, et al. 77)

"War, Migration and Alienation in Colonial Calcutta: The Remaking of Muzaffar Ahmad" is a text written by Suchetana Chattopadhyay in which she says, "Why did he come to the city? In 1913, Muzaffar Ahmad was just one more in the sea of poor lower middle-class migrants. They crowded the urban space that was Calcutta, in search of a better life which often proved to be elusive. As his existence became intertwined with the city, Muzaffar gradually ceased to display strong attachment to his rural origins. Despite periodic absence, the city was to become the setting of his social and political activities. He remained in touch with the rural milieu he had left behind, yet it was no longer his world. Muzaffar's immediate rural environment had propelled him towards the city. In the vortex of metropolitan upheavals, his life would take a completely different turn. A new political focus, previously absent, was going to emerge." (214) This short snippet is more than enough to tell the readers what migration meant to an individual, that too from village to a metropolis, on top of which being the fact that it was from a Muslim majority area to a Hindu majority area. These would be the thoughts plaguing every single individual, even though history remembers only the massive group of them all, walking gradually towards uncertainty.

In the same spirit, Anasua Basu Raychaudhury writes "Nostalgia of 'Desh', Memories of Partition", wherein she documents the laments of people remembering what they still considered their homeland. The mobs that broke out in recent East Bengal not long after Partition saw an unflinching inflow of displaced people into West Bengal. In the more unoriginal government accounts, outcasts shaped piece of an immense strategic exercise. They had to be housed in camps, issued voter and proportion cards and, at times, gave due pay. Be that as it may, every individual exile story is a story of individual misfortune, of getaway and survival in another land; an account rendered particularly powerful by the sudden whiff of sentimentality for a lost country or 'desh'. In the more jingoistic present, 'desh' has gone up against an implication like the devoted intensity, 'nation' brings out. "However, for refugees, as the personal narratives in this article reveal, 'desh' will forever remain in place as one's homeland, now only sustained by memories." (Raychaudhary 5653)

Another relatively relevant writing the researcher came across was “Remembered Villages: Representation of Hindu-Bengali Memories in the Aftermath of the Partition” by Dipesh Chakrabarty. This paper talks about a lot of articles originally serialized in the Bengali paper ‘*Jugantar*’ from 1950 on and later gathered together in 1975 out of a book called ‘*Chhere Asha Gram*’ (‘The Surrendered Village’). Written in the fallout of the segment, these expositions catch the feeling of catastrophe that the division of the nation spoke to the writers. There are two perspectives to this memory: the feeling of sentimentality and the feeling of injury, and their opposing relationship to the subject of the past. A damaged memory has a story structure which deals with a standard inverse to that of any chronicled account. In the meantime, in any case, this memory, so as to be the memory of an injury, needs to put the occasion inside a past that offers power to the case of the person in question. “The native village is pictured as both scared and beautiful, and it is this that makes communal violence an act of both violation and defilement, an act of sacrilege against everything that stood for sanctity and beauty in the Hindu-Bengali understanding of what home was.” (Chakrabarty 2143) Muslims are mentioned in these articles; indeed their depiction is critical to the depiction of an idyll, but their ‘traditions’ are not part of the sacred or of the beautiful.

The research being undertaken by this researcher is unique from the existing corpus of related literature. Although it looks at situations created by the Bengal Partition of 1947 and attempts to study films, the difference lies in what it strives to analyse. The popular culture representations of the cultural differences between the hosts and the immigrants in West Bengal, after the 1947 Bengal Partition (special emphasis on films) and how their relations were affected, have not been worked on much before.

III. Methods and Methodology

In this piece of qualitative research, the researcher will employ textual analysis. In other words, he will look at only the films for the portrayal of the differences between the *Ghoti* people and the *Bangal* Bengalis, and not focus on how these impacted people or whether the portrayals were propaganda based.

The researcher situates this research in the framework of migration and human psyche. Migration has been seen in the world throughout the timeline of history and in almost all parts of the world. People migrate from one place to another for a variety of reasons such as better job opportunities, better standards of living, fear of persecution, to mention just a very few.

Individuals and families do it all the time, but when there is mass migration is when it affects the world in a great way; aspects more than one, such as demographics, geography, politics, social structure, et al change a lot. All these changes are bound to affect the psyche of humans, beings who can be said to favour inertia in life mostly. The concerned theorists in this case, i.e. Tony Manstead (Cardiff University), Steve Reicher (University of St. Andrews), Katy Greenland (Cardiff University), Sam Parker (Cardiff University), Alastair Nightingale (University of Limerick), and Simon Goodman (Coventry University) had posited their ideas at a meeting sponsored by SPSSI-UK and Cardiff University. The areas to be focussed on are ‘acculturation’, ‘prejudice, culture and health’, and ‘media representations of and public discourse about migration’. Mostly during policy making regarding migration, only the political, economic, geographical, and allied issues are taken into account, pretty much neglecting the psychological and social component as to how will the psyches of the displaced and the hosts be affected and how the formation of societies might face problems due to non-acceptance, and so on. Also, media looks at migrants as a collective and therefore ends up constructing common discourses about one whole set of people and further still, ends up influencing the masses and conditioning them to believe that representation as the truth, even though there might be an astonishing array of difference from person to person in that group. Many a time, this trend creates prejudice and subsequent fear and anger amongst both the migrants and the hosts. Last but not the least, policy makers, journalists, social leaders, and the masses need to work hand in hand if integration of the migrants into the fold of the dominant host population is desired. A more humanitarian approach towards the presentation of the refugees has to be adopted.

Analysis

The primary texts taken up when perused, gave the researcher a fair idea of what popular culture aimed to show of the entire *Ghoti-Bangal* equation. As aforementioned, the strained relationships that were shown in the films do not seem anachronistic if one looks at the situation at that time. The *Ghoti* population and the *Bangal* population had to live in common spaces and intermingle, wherein their differences in cultures and emotional conditions would undoubtedly have made a divide if both groups refused to accept a compromise. The portrayal of such a condition and of differences between the two sets of people (but not much of the similarities) was made in all the three films, as follows.

One sees how the food habits of both the populations were shown to be radically different, which apparently made coexisting with the other people very difficult.

According to the films, the *Ghotis* mostly liked Chingri (Prawns) and *Bangals* were partial only to Ilish (Hilsa).

The preference towards the particular *maach* (fish) does make sense considering the geography of the erstwhile inhabited lands. Bangladesh is abundant when it comes to deep and large rivers. The presence of rivers such as the Jamuna, the Padma, the Meghna, among others ensures a very good supply of freshwater fishes, the taste quotient of which are considered directly proportional to the depth of the river, by people. Especially, the Ilish (Hilsa fish) caught from the Padma (which the people so fondly call ‘*amagoPodda*’) are considered second to none by the customers throughout Bangladesh, East India, and North-East India. The problem in this case is with the exclusivity of the portrayal and the generalisation in terms of community. Tastes vary from person to person; it is pretty difficult to believe that one entire community would necessarily like something and not hesitate to demean some other kind of food, which on the other hand would be defended by another entire community. In the example picked from the film ‘BhooterBhobishyot’, although it might seem like a conversation between two people only, each stands representative of his community (which is understood by the fact that they are pitted against a person of the, in those cases, opposing community).

In ‘BhooterBhobishyot’, there is a long-winded battle of words between Darpo Narayan Chowdhury and the refugee Bhaduri concerning which is better- Chingri or Ilish. Bhaduri is of the opinion that *IlisherPaturi* (steamed Hilsa) is the best food in the world, whereas Chowdhury feels the same for ChingriMalai Curry. There are insults hurled at tastes of the entire community of the opposing person (refer to 6.1.3) and offences taken, too. The refugee calls prawns aquatic insects, which is scientifically not correct but the common Bengali term *poka* (meaning insects) is used for all Arthropods, so he was right. That highly triggers Chowdhury though, and he calls Bhaduri *astoboka* (highest grade fool), which technically makes no sense but culturally does. People call prawns Chingri ‘*maach*’ i.e. it is considered a fish. On the other hand, Bhaduri says that he would rather not be in a place where Padma’s Hilsa fish is insulted.

Bangals ate Shuntki (dried fish) whereas *Ghotis* did not; that is the idea shown in the films.

In this case too, the exclusive treatment of the differences in preference is very problematic, along with the generalisation by community. It might have been the case that more of the erstwhile population of Bangladesh enjoyed dried fish than the erstwhile population of West Bengal, but it is absolutely pointless to assume that the entirety of the *Ghoti* population would not like it. But in ‘GoynarBaksho’, it seems to be that idea being propagated. *Pishimaa* goes on to slightly abuse Somlata verbally for something as trivial as not eating Shuntki, after she says that they did not eat Shuntki.

“*Hoibona? Ghotibarirsutulukermayyato!*”

It means, “Is it a surprise? You come from a *Ghoti* household, that too poor and lowly!” It is clear how her aunt-in-law feels that they did not like Shuntki just because they belonged to West Bengal. Somlata’s statement can also be questioned at this point. She might not have liked Shuntki, but it makes no sense for her to assert that ‘they’ did not eat Shuntki, because some *Ghotis* might eat it, which is no big deal at all.

Bangal food is usually spicy whereas *Ghoti* cuisine is more inclined towards being sweet. This is, till a great extent, a reality; the issue with the films is that this preference is brought into conversations to demean the other community. It is clear how especially the *Bangals* seem to have no intentions whatsoever to try out the food of the people staying in West Bengal already.

In the film ‘GoynarBaksho’, *Pishimaa* remembers with nostalgia how Shuntki used to be cooked at their house in Faridpur (Bangladesh), and how it used to be made spicy. Her telling this in front of Somlata while she is cooking shows that she is dissatisfied with the kind of cooking Somlata (and maybe even Somlata’s mother-in-law, who is also shown to be a *Ghoti*) does.

Again in ‘BhooterBhobishyot’, during the Ilish-Chingri debate, Bhaduri attacks the taste of the entire *Ghoti* population. The refugee from Bangladesh says that no good food sense can be expected from people who eat food like how the *Ghotis* do. He says,

“*Byenzonrandhonermoydhyenoonerthekegurdhaalebeshi!*”

This means that the *Ghotis* put more jaggery than salt while cooking. He says that with an intention of proving that the *Ghotis* are not suitable judges of food.

It is seen how the *Bangals* had a strong nostalgia of the land left behind, and the dissatisfaction with their new land made it difficult for both *Ghotis* and *Bangals* to stay in peace.

In the films, it is shown that the *Bangals* remembered their past in Bangladesh in aspects such as food.

It is only natural and very understandable for the refugees coming in to West Bengal to remember their lifestyles of where they used to live. Also, missing the kind of food that would so easily be available to them back in their ‘East Bengal’ is a phenomenon which is quite believable to have happened after their migration. The ingredients that the *Bangals* liked to incorporate in their cuisine would be available with difficulty in West Bengal and their new neighbours and in multiple cases new family members by marriage would not have set much store by those. This would undoubtedly have made lives pretty dull, especially when one would think that that would be their permanent residence. This psyche was portrayed pretty well in the texts taken up for this study.

In 'BhooterBhobishyot' one finds the refugee Bhaduri remembering how his mother would cook *IlisherPaturi* with Hilsa caught from the Padma, and they would savour it. The only plausible explanation to this bit of reminiscence can be that he does not get to eat as good *Paturi* after shifting to West Bengal.

In the film 'GoynarBaksho', *Pishimaa* tells Somlata how in 'AmagoForidpurer Bari' (their house in Faridpur) really tasty Shuntki would be cooked with onions, garlic, and a lot of chillies. The same can be said for her that she does not see the same kind of dried fish preparation after migrating from East Bengal (although she cannot eat it, considering that she is a widow).

All these make total sense, but the question that comes to mind is that whether in reality such scenes were created by the *Bangals*. In the nostalgia that they had and the way that they missed the kind of food that they used to enjoy so much in their previous homes, neither the *Ghotis* had any fault whatsoever nor did they have the ability to anything about the situation. In that case, keeping their thoughts to themselves would have been the most prudent thing to do, and even if they needed sympathetic ears they would have just shared their sorrows and not demeaned the *Ghotis* for not cooking like them. If anyone would do that, the films have focussed only on those kinds of people. A possible explanation of why someone would do something of that sort albeit knowingly that it is a futile and mean exercise is posited previously.

The *Bangals*, who were from landlord households in Bangladesh, had a nostalgia regarding their regal lifestyles which no longer existed.

Landlords are called *jomidaars* in Bengali. The *jomidaars* were people who were very affluent and powerful, under the British rulers and leasing out huge tracts of land to great number of peasants. They lived very comfortable and rich lives in their massive mansions, with servants all around them. Festivals saw huge events with people from near and far thronging the feasts and enjoying the frolic for days. Furthermore, they had priceless objects such as antique showpieces, expensive carpets and furniture, costly clothing and jewellery, etc. and lots of them too. Once they were forced to migrate, they had to leave most things behind. They did have relatively more money than the commoners, but in comparison it was very less. Also, since for generations they were not trained and mentally prepared to take up any kind of job, they found it increasingly difficult to sustain their lifestyle without working. Slowly, they had to let go of their regal ways in the new land, which has been shown in 'GoynarBaksho' very clearly.

Pishimaa gets really emotional whenever some talk regarding Faridpur pops up, such as when she hears about the *Mukti Bahini* losing on the radio. Furthermore, when she visits their old mansion in Faridpur, she gets highly saddened by the fact that the military men have started using it as barracks. It is understandably a great emotional setback for a person who had grown up in the mansion.

When Chandan starts a business of saris, his father and elder brother get triggered by the fact that he would be doing something considered below their dignity of being from a landlord household. They, as anyone would be, were highly attached to their lavish and proud lifestyles. They took pride in the fact that they never worked under anyone, as Chandan mentions to Somlata. In that case, it would obviously be more disgusting for them to visualise their son and brother trying to convince people to buy some object and basically be at the mercy of the customers.

Furthermore, there is a scene where Somlata's mother-in-law is seen crying because her husband is giving away some valuable objects, instead of paying the people who worked to organise Chandan's marriage. She says,

"Daudau! Jaa ache shobkhali kore diyedau/ Jomi-pukhurjaachiloshobitohPakistaneroyegiyeche, barobhootenute-putekhacche/ Ekhaneibakicchubakithake keno?"

It means, "Give everything to him! Whatever we have, empty out everything. Whatever property we had had to be left behind in Pakistan, and we do not know who is devouring our stuff. Why should anything remain here too?" In this sarcastic statement, one can see how the character reminisces about their lives in East Bengal (which becomes East Pakistan), sadly.

Maybe in fear of the *Ghotis* dominating them the *Bangals*, in a way, attempted to keep them at check, by reminding them at intervals how they are inferior to the *Bangals*.

The *Bangals* had come in from East Bengal as refugees in the new land, that they were supposed to make home. But, refugees are almost never accepted positively by previous dwellers of any place, because they feel that the new comers will snatch their resources. The case of *Bangals* coming to live with the *Ghotis* would have been no different. Add to it the sensible assumption that many of the *Ghotis* might have been sad about getting separated from friendly neighbours who had to move to the newly formed East Pakistan, and one can assume that they would have felt doubly resentful towards their new neighbours. Even if all this never happened in that one particular case of migration, the refugees fearing non-acceptance makes perfect sense because of what usually happens when immigration happens. In 'BhooterBhobishyot', one can notice Bhaduri speaking very frequently about him being a refugee in West Bengal all his life. That shows that he never could really feel at home after migrating to West Bengal. To safeguard themselves, they might have become aggressive and tried to be offensive to the *Ghotis* before the *Ghotis* could be offensive to them, which has been shown in 'GoynarBaksho'.

One hears *Pishimaa* saying ‘*EiparerGhotiBarirMayya*’ (a *Ghoti* girl from this side of the border) with a look of absolute disgust, to her sister-in-law and her younger niece-in-law (*Somlata*). She also keeps on talking about their days back in East Bengal and showing off her belongings. She constantly reminds *Somlata* that she never had such privileges and their people can never compete with the *Bangalaristocracy*. *Pishimaa* says things such as,

“*EiparerGhotibarirmayya; baaperghorerkunusaal sura nai, potherkangal*”

and

“*Ghotibarirsutolukermayyato!*”

These statements respectively mean “A *Ghoti* girl from this side of the border; maiden home had nothing, wretched poor fellows” and “A girl from a *Ghoti* household, who are after all lowly people.” These statements very clearly show the tensions between both the communities.

All things considered, the texts picked for study in this piece of research portray a lot of differences between the two Bengali communities, i.e. the *Ghotis* and the *Bangals*. The film ‘*Chokher Bali*’ goes a great step forward to comment that these differences and consequent conflicts are irreconcilable. In the Bengal Partition of 1947, the cultural differences became very much pronounced once the two groups of people started staying in close quarters and gave rise to conflicts, but the differences nevertheless did exist or maybe at least the masses were conditioned to believe so even before the Radcliffe line was made, just that it might not have bothered the other community. And only because differences existed or at least so it was believed, the Radcliffe line could even be conceived in the very first place albeit with quite an overarching view. In ‘*Chokher Bali*’ this imminent nature of the partition has been emphasised on. *Ashalata*, in immense grief, says,

“*Ei je apnaraeto meeting korcchen ... eibar Bongo bhongoatkalen. Kintutatelabhobekicchu? Jetabhangarshetatohbhangbei. Take ki jor kore atkano jai?*”

It means, “You all are conducting meetings ... this time you prevented Bengal from breaking. But will that really help? What is bound to break will break. Can it be forcefully prevented?” This she says after reading *Binodini*’s letter. Her marriage has technically broken, and since *Mahendra* fell in love with *Binodini* there was really nothing much that anyone could have done to bring *Ashalata*’s marriage with *Mahendra* back to normal. *Binodini*, who was such a dear friend to her, also has left for some other place leaving no address, and nothing could have been done on that front as well considering *Binodini*’s guilt at not barricading her jealousy towards *Ashalata*. Therefore, *Ashalata* does have a pretty good experience to know that none can stop some event that is bound to happen. She compares this situation to Bengal’s condition at that time. The seeds of differences between the people had been sown in the psyches of the masses. True to her words, forty-two years later Bengal was partitioned.

IV. Conclusion

All instances taken into account, the researcher opines that the primary texts for this research, intentionally or otherwise, propagate ideas such as the eating habits of the two communities being distinctly different, which probably made coexisting very challenging, and the *Bangal* people having vehement nostalgic emotions for the land that they had to flee from and dissatisfaction with the new residence making it highly inconvenient for both groups to reside peacefully. Also, due to the differences between the two sets of people the partition of Bengal is also considered imminent. Therefore, he comes to the conclusion that the hypothesis that he had proceeded with is proved true. The construction of truth by the films selected for study is indeed that *Ghoti* people and *Bangal* people found each other’s differences only unacceptable.

In the larger discourse and narrative of the Bengal Partition, this research project is only a small contribution to the repository of research and is far from exhaustive. So many themes remain unexplored. Carrying on with a similar angle of looking at popular culture portrayals, research work can be undertaken in areas such as how these portrayals impacted then and impact now the masses of West Bengal, Bangladesh, and for that matter even the Bengali Diaspora around the globe, how they form stereotypes in the minds of non-Bengalis and consequently affect relations, whether the portrayals are political propaganda for gains and when one is at it, what kind of gains, et al.

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