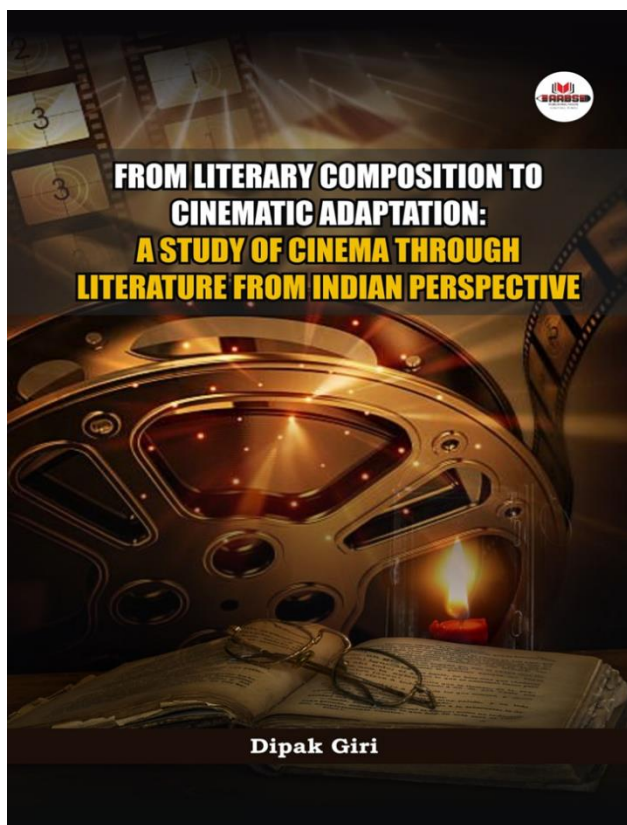


***From Literary Composition to Cinematic Adaptation: A Study of Cinema through Literature from Indian Perspective* by Dipak Giri, AABS Publishing House, Kolkata, 2022, pp. 225, INR 899/\$ 15, ISBN: 978-93-91146-51-1**

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“Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination. Devour old films, new films, music, books, paintings, photographs, poems, dreams, random conversations, architecture, bridges, street signs, trees, clouds, bodies of water, light and shadows. Select only things to steal from that speak directly to your soul. If you do this, your work (and theft) will be authentic. Authenticity is invaluable; originality is non-existent. And don’t bother concealing your thievery - celebrate it if you feel like it.



In any case, always remember what Jean-Luc Godard said: “It’s not where you take things from - it’s where you take them to” (Jim Jarmusch, MovieMaker Magazine, 2004).

Originality is a myth in the time of technology and globalized scenario especially when it comes to literature and cinema. Presentation and portrayal may be innovative, creative and impressive. There has been symbiotic relationship between literature and film adaptation since the inception and perception of cinema in India. Film adaptation is one of the most popular and potential genres of cinema studies since the evolution of Indian cinema in the 20th century. It is also one of the most emerging trends of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research in the field of literature, cinema, mass media etc. in the 21st century. Literature has been the eternal and unbounded source for the movie makers from Raja Harishchandra (1913), the first full length feature film to Adipurush (2023). Most of

the movies based on literature have been popular as well as commercially successful in all aspects. There has always been interface between literature and cinema. Sometimes cinema also inspires and ignites the minds and moods of the poets, playwrights and authors to write successful literary works which become landmarks in its field.

The present book *From Literary Composition to Cinematic Adaptation: A Study of Cinema through Literature from Indian Perspective*, edited by Dipak Giri has explored the role and relevance of film adaptation in shaping the sense, sensibility and sensitivity of our society in the fast changing globalized era. This book has also delved deep into the poetics, popularity and politics of portrayals of situations and characters in a way that meets the growing demands of the producer, director, actor, audience and script writers. Filming fiction is not an innocent activity but a high level of politics is also involved and sometime the essence and the soul of the text and context are lost due to keeping in mind the commercial success by adding such items which please the palate of the audience. This book has profoundly examined the loss and gain in adaptation or appropriation so that the film adaptations will be judged through liberty and loyalty lens. Cinematic adaptation should ideally work on the principles of entertainment, education and empowerment for the advancement of discourse, enrichment of human experience and the betterment of society. The book consists of sixteen chapters which deal with the in-depth analysis and insightful thoughts that lay bare the film adaptation discourse and show new dimension and direction that become fascinating for the readers. The first chapter is “Raktokarobi (2017): A Narrative of Struggle between Personal and Political” by Shehreen Ataur Khan which vividly tries to portray the contemporary politics that damage and disturb the society. It is a Bengali film directed by Amitabh Bhattacharya starring Kaushik Sen, Shantilal Mukherjee, Rahul and Mumtaj Sarkar revolving around dehumanization and exploitation of the gold diggers, hierarchy of control, corrupt council, power and politics, and life and liberty. It was long listed for the Academy Award (Best Picture) in the general category. It is the first Bengali film that is listed for such a prestigious award. Amitabh Bhattacharya remarked, “Now the real competition has begun, and we are hoping for the best, because the movie received positive reviews from jury members of the Academy. They appreciated the script, music and background score. Actors were also praised”.

Mr. Khan begins this chapter with his discussion on adaptation and issues related to it such as to adopt or not to adopt, the issues of fidelity and infidelity, justification of title, and the concept of ‘auteurism’. After this discussion is over, there is in-depth analysis and critical evaluation of the text and its film adaptation in the contemporary political context of West

Bengal. The writer also explores the political issues of the stage production of Raktokarobi by the theatre group Natyaparijan. The artists of this theatre group are from the political party of Raja Sengupta, a cultural minister and renowned theatre director. And after this it turns into a political dilemma regarding Sengupta's identity "as a politician and as an artist". Amitabhav Bhattacharya takes political and ideological issues and tries to depict present day politics with symbols and metaphors subtly. He also questions the idea of democracy, hierarchy of control etc. to serve the purpose of his cinematic adaptation. That's why it is often said that like translation, adaptation is also not an innocent act but too much politics is involved in this process and product. Cinematic adaptation of Bhattacharya gives 'afterlife' to the text of Raktokarobi, which is one of goals of literary adaptation. The director transforms the text and makes it relevant in the contemporary socio-political and socio-cultural contexts.

"The Cinematic Apparatus in Kunal Basu's The Japanese Wife: A Study through the Lens of Aparna Sen" by Dr. Anupriya Roy Srivastava is the second chapter of the book which is a wonderful adaptation and it has been appreciated by the author Kunal Basu during an interview in these words "Aparna wrote the screenplay and I gave her a lot of inputs. I have seen the film...it truly reflects the essence of the story" (Financial Express). Most often it happens that authors are not happy with their literary adaptation since sometimes this process takes away the essence which upset them. R. K. Narayan was not happy with the film adaptation based on his popular novel The Guide and Phanishwarnath Renu was also disappointed and dissatisfied with the movie 'Tisri Kasam' based on his amazing short story 'Maare Gaye Gulfam'. It is the genius and, art and craft of Aparna Sen that impressed Kunal Basu. She as a director maintained the balance between cinematic liberty and loyalty. She made a few changes, for instance, the widow in the text has no name but she gave her the name Shondhya and her son is also given name in the film to serve the purpose of the director. Like translator, the director is also the reader and interpreter of the text and a text may have multiple meanings and interpretations which depend upon the perception of the readers. Aparna Sen has aesthetically and vividly portrayed the theme of love using the scene of kite flying, showing the profound passion for each other, depicting responsibility, loyalty, trust and care by sending medicines to Japan and Snehamoy's deep thinking to visit Japan for his ailing wife. As a director, Sen has maintained the beauty, purity and originality of the literary text.

Anjali Krishnan G has beautifully authored a chapter "Indian Film Adaptation: An Art of Popular Fidelity in Fiction and Motion" that is centered on the problems, possibilities and

prospects of Film adaptation. It also delves deep into the theorization of 'Art of Fiction' and 'Art of Cinema'. The opening quote "if it can be written or thought, it can be filmed" (Stanley Kubrick) sets the tone and tempo of the entire essay. She advocates that filming fiction is a challenging, collaborative as well as a creative art that is a must for the advancement, entertainment and betterment of the self and society but for this process and product, the director needs creative and cinematic liberty without which it will be a herculean task. For this purpose of analysis and evaluation of film adaptation, she has taken two versions 3 Idiots in Hindi and Nanban in Tamil inspired and influenced by Chetan Bhagat's Five Point Someone: What not to do at IIT. The main plot of both the movies is same. But differences lie in the politics of portrayal. Physical intimacy is depicted in the novel but it has been deliberately removed from the movie to maintain the morality and sanity of the society. These films are not the faithful film adaptations but altered, modified and transformed so that they could meet the expectations of market and box office collection. The paper concludes with the opinion that art of cinema and art of fiction are not different and we can draw many connections and parallels to highlight certain issues.

"The Blue Umbrella: A Comparative Study on the Cinematic Adaptation of the Novel by Arun Kumar D" is a fascinating take on challenges from literary composition to cinematic adaptation. The novel was adapted into film by Vishal Bhardwaj in 2005 which won him the National Film Award for Best Children's film. The director has made several changes in the cinematic adaptation. The names of the characters have been changed keeping in mind the culture and climate. The article is the detailed and comparative analysis of the novel and the movie. Aesthetics, poetics and natural scenery is beautifully maintained throughout the film. The veteran film director Vishal Bhardwaj has omitted many scenes from the book and has added or created new scenes to make the film more entertaining and commercially successful. Addition and deletion is an integral part of the film adaptation process since composition of a text and conversion of text into movie are two different media and they require different art and craft to meet the demands of the audience. "A Study of Chetan Bhagat's Novel 2 States with Relation to Its Cinematic Adaptation" by Kamble Pooja Ashok deals with the comprehensive, extensive and intensive study of the literary text, its film adaptation through drawing parallels and connections between them. Chetan Bhagat is a popular and prestigious author who has become an icon among youths. His novels are best sellers across India. 2 States written in 2009 delves deep into the inter caste alliance revolving around the theme of love and marriage which is deeply rooted and related the perception and conception of our culture and society we live in. The movie 2

States was directed by Abhishek Verma in 2014 starring Arjun Kapoor, Aliya Bhatt, Ronit Roy and Amrita Singh. The text and the movie both have some sensational ingredients such as bold scenes, intimate relationship, half naked costumes, songs and kisses which make it a popular and commercially successful movie. There is much similarity in terms of plot and characterization. The director adheres to the notion of fidelity and he does not have to add any extra mirch-masala since these things are already inherent the novel.

Preethi Jose's "Maqbool: An Adaptation of William Shakespeare's Macbeth" is more an appropriation than a faithful film adaptation by Vishal Bhardwaj. He is very noted for adapting Shakespeare, and Maqbool is the first adaptation of Shakespearean trilogy which also includes Omkara (Othello) and Haider (Homer). The film features a stellar cast, including Irfan Khan, Tabu, Pankaj Kapur, and Naseeruddin Shah. It is very well received by Indian audience since the movie is the Indianisation of Shakespeare's play. The movie has been completely transformed into Indian ambience of underworld crime and killing. When discussing adaptations of Shakespeare's Macbeth within Hindi cinema, Vishal Bhardwaj's Maqbool remains a remarkable and critically acclaimed example. It transforms and transposes the setting of Shakespeare's play to the Mumbai underworld, creating a captivating and gritty portrayal of wild and untamed ambition, betrayal, and fate. Maqbool is highly remarkable for its transformative and deviative adaptation of the source material. It has been appreciated by the audience for its compelling performances from the cast. The movie is highly incredible for its innovative direction and incredible cinematography. There has been dominant use of the Mumbai underworld as the background and backdrop since this kind of setting was in fashion at that time. Shakespeare's contribution is immense in enriching and expanding the horizon of film adaptation in Hindi cinema since numerous movies have been made on his popular plays.

"Partition of India and Violence against Women in the Context of Ethnic Genocide: An Analysis of Deepa Mehta's Film 1947: Earth based on Bapsi Sidhwa's Fiction The Ice Candy Man" is the joint venture of Dayal Chakraborty and Dr. Partha Sarthi Mandal. 1947: Earth, a 1998 film, is an innovative and incredible cinematic adaptation and appropriation that brings to life the horrible events of the Partition. While it is not a faithful adaptation, it succeeds in conveying the emotional and social impact of this historical tragedy that took place in India. The film serves as a strong reminder of the threats and perils of communal violence especially against women. Mehta effectively catches the cruelty and chaos of the Partition through powerful and often disturbing imagery. The film vividly and immensely doesn't shy away from depicting the violence and its devastating impact on individuals and

communities. The film successfully depicts the breakdown of social systems and the fast changing relations into those of cruel and callous enemies in the neighborhood. The film shows mesmerizing performances from Nandita Das and Amir Khan. Mehta's depiction of the characters reflects the human cost of political chaos showing how ordinary people are swept up in heinous cruelty. Like the novel, the film highlights the perspective of Lenny, the young Parsi girl. This permits the audience to witness the unrolling events through the eyes of a child. The director beautifully adapts the novel's deliberation of central ideas such as communal violence, religious extremity, and the depletion of humanity. As with any adaptation, some simplification of the novel's complex narrative is inevitable. Some critics have argued that the film's focus on the love triangle between Ayah, the Ice-Candy Man, and Hassan sometimes overshadows the broader political and social context. The authors delve deep into the in-depth evaluation and critical deliberation of the movie and the novel which opens the eyes of the readers.

Sahadev Roy critically and creatively provides the intensive and extensive overview of film adaptation based on Indian English fiction in his fascinating paper "Adaptation of Indian English Novels into Cinema: A Critical Overview." Mr. Roy emphasizes on the symbiotic relationship between literature and film adaptation. Film adaptation, as an emerging discourse in academia, has popularised and democratised Indian English fiction which shows the supremacy of visual media on literary composition, and this trend is rapidly impacting and influencing society in different ways at different places. A number of films based on fiction have been aesthetically evaluated with quite precision using aphoristic style that catches the attention of the readers.

Raghavendra Garaj, in his article entitled "A Study on Screen Adaptations and Variations from Literature with Reference to Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*", deals with the issue of appropriation while adapting fiction into film with special focus on *The God of Small Things*. Khalid Ahmed as a director has taken so much cinematic liberty deliberately that leads him to digression and deviation from the novel which has been widely and hugely read incredibly popular across the globe but the serial drama adaptation has not been able to attract the attention of the audience. There have been many variations and differences such as changing title, names of characters, various scenes, symbols and images, addition of new characters so many and so forth. These modifications and alterations have been made knowingly to meet the expectations of the audience and the purpose of the box office that is minting money since huge amount of money has been invested to make the serial. Such adaptations lead to multiple new interpretations and

deliberations of the text and like us, the director is also a reader who has power to provide new sense and meanings to the text.

The paper entitled “The Dynamics of Sringara from Literature to Cinema: A Critical Analysis of Bimal Roy's Film Adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Devdas*” by Aakankshaa Dubey is a remarkable take on rasa theory and its depiction in the movie which profoundly fascinates the audience. The film *Devdas* has successfully rendered the dominant theme of the novella that is love and loss, destruction and death. Bimal Roy has been an incredible director whose adaptation is fair and faithful that reflects his profound respect for the literary composition and Indian Rasa theory. Dubey writes,

Bimal Roy's craft is unparalleled as he not only respected the original text and adapted the story exactly on-screen but he also revered the tenets of Indian aesthetics that form the basis of any dramatic or literary production. (Giri 135)

The visual portrayal of rasas is so evocative and vivid throughout the film that appeals Indian audience strongly across the nation. Dialogues in Hindi have been quoted in the paper so beautifully which please the palates of the readers. Rasas have been emphatically used in all the songs and scenes of the movie which caters the mental and emotional needs of the audience.

“The Fusion of Diaspora Film and Novel: Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*” by Sonika Kumari is the detailed discussion on the novel and film adaptation made by the same name. Mira Nair subtly and significantly blends the theme of displacement, identity, diaspora and migration that reflect the main themes and plots of the novel. There have been several modifications and variations but in this process the soul of the novel is not lost. It is maintained and alive throughout the movie which makes it faithful adaptation. The novel has been discussed in detail with critical insights and opinions along with movie. Irfan Khan and Tabbu as Ashok and Ashima make the movie worth watching and critically acclaimed across the globe.

“Intertextuality in Indian Films” by Nitasha Jamwal is yet another remarkable chapter in the book which is the comprehensive and critical interpretation of intertextuality in Indian cinema. Jamwal defines and describes in detail the term and connects the concept with Indian films. The notion of self-referentiality in films has been analysed with some of the excellent examples of *The Dirty Picture*, *Lucky by Chance* and *AK vs AK*. The paper emphasizes on *Om Shanti Om* as a wonderful example of Intertextuality in Hindi film. The concept of intertextuality can be also traced and tracked in the discourse of film adaptation. Nitasha Jamwal remarks:

The intertextual relationship between literature and cinema was established from the day a literary text was adapted into a film. There have been a plethora of references to the characters of Shakespeare's plays or Stephnie Meyers's *Twilight* in films and television series around the world. (Giri 160)

Indian film industry creates beautiful ambience for intertextuality and this concept is well accepted, expressed and reflected in Indian films.

There is another chapter on the successful adaptation and interpretation of the novel *The Namesake* in the paper entitled "From literature to Cinema: A Critical and Literary Study on the Film Adaptation of *The Namesake*" by Tanmoy Mandal, Santanu Panda and Tanmoy Kumar Bhattacharya which explores how aesthetically and faithfully the film has been made on this novel which deals with the theme of identity, displacement, diaspora, cultural assimilation, naming, immigration etc.. Both the film and novel delve deep into the poignant portrayal of plethora of problems that the central characters encounter from beginning to end. The movie seeks to emphasize on the problems and possibility of multiculturalism in this globalized scenario. It has been herculean task for the director to portray the issue of alienation, loneliness, cultural crisis and changing identity on the screen. The film has been a successful and faithful adaptation of the novel especially when it brings socio-cultural milieu of two different worlds on the screen. The writers of this paper elaborate on all the main aspects of the novel and the movie since both the media catch and capture everything that has been good for their success and popularity among the readers and audience.

"Reading Lalithambika Antharjanam's *Agnisakshi* through the Lens of Shyamaprasad" by Radhika Rajeev is another fascinating chapter which examines the prevalence of patriarchy through the term and concept of "male gaze of the camera" in the Indian cinema industry. The film has been so popular and prominent among the audience and critics that it won various awards and accolades including the National Film Award for the best feature film in Malayalam. The novel is more centred on gender roles and questions the various stereotypes and their domination in society but the film is focused on prevalence of patriarchy. The writer of the paper has elaborated and examined several issues from the lens of Shyamaprasad.

"The Modern *Devdas*: A Study of the Degradation of a Literary Protagonist through Numerous Adaptations" by Shamik Pal and Supriyo Mapder is focused on the various adaptations and appropriations of the Novella *Devdas* written by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. Now in this post modern age, the term *Devdas* has become a derogatory

term which refer to social destruction, moral decay and cultural degradation that propagates paradigm shift in our Indian tradition. This collaborative work highlights modern interpretation and changing perspectives with the passage of time. The dominant term in new sense and sensibility deals with failure in love and marriage due to social hierarchy and it also refers to the persons who are profoundly betrayed and broken in love. The paper also underlines the various variations and plethora of alterations due to changing pace of time and perception of society we live in.

The final chapter of this book is written by the veteran editor and popular author Dipak Giri about the sensational cinematic adaptation of “Lihaaf”, a ground-breaking and controversial Urdu short story, written by Ismat Chughtai, the most renowned and revered writer of the modern age who has given new dimension and direction to Urdu fiction. The last paper entitled “Cinematic Adaptation of Ismat Chughtai's short Story “Lihaaf” (“The Quilt”) is the most effective and enriching discussion and deliberation that opens fresh interpretation on LGBTIQ. The LGBTIQ movement has become most dominant and prevalent demanding their rights and dignity across the globe in this fast changing time. It was quite unimaginable at that time for Indian readers to digest such contentious, obscene and unacceptable content for our traditional society. The vision and foresight of the writer rest in exploring things that transcends time and space. These incidents are very common in so called our civilised and cultured society.

The film appears to be loyal to the source text but it fails to touch the sense and sensibility of the audience since its portrayal of lesbian relationship on the screen is not so convincing and connecting to the emotional chord. There are also some deviations and digressions such as least focus on the reasons of Begum Jaan's orientation to lesbian relationship, the representation of the character of Mir Sarwar etc. indicate towards the politics of film adaptation because cinematic adaptation is not an innocent activity. What should be included and what should be excluded in the films depend upon the ideology and the purpose of film makers. While adapting “Lihaaf” into film, Rahat Kazmi has showcased his creative and critical craft and his amazing skills of cinematic genius. Giri seems to advocate that imitation is an integral part and parcel of film making but this act of mimesis is active, intensive and imaginative. The director has cinematic license and liberty to choose scenes and shoots what may please the palate of audience and suit to the ideology of film makers. So, it is not always appropriate to appreciate the film adaptation through the lens of loyalty and liberty which at times become cumbersome for creative art, movie making skill and critical interpretation. Hence, Giri has brought so many concepts and issues which

have been elucidated and evaluated in a way that gives us in-depth understanding and extensive exploration of the subject undertaken for the analysis.

From Literary Composition to Cinematic Adaptation: A Study of Cinema through Literature from Indian Perspective edited by Dipak Giri is a landmark contribution in the field of literature, cinema and film adaptation studies and extensive exploration of the interdisciplinary discourse that expands the horizon of teaching and research. It is a worth reading book for students, scholars and academics who are interested in the intersection of literature and cinema. Film is also considered a text with the emergence of various concepts, theories and philosophies across disciplines. The emergence, cognizance and presence of this least explored discourse is impacting, influencing and enriching our society immensely and profoundly, and providing newer perception and perspective on plethora of social, cultural, political and educational issues and challenges that our society faces on everyday basis irrespective of caste, colour, creed and gender. I am sure that the readers will be able critically and creatively, profoundly and perfectly examine and evaluate the text as a film and the film as a text. All the challenges and opportunities of film adaptations have been beautifully blended and dominantly debated, discussed and deliberated so that it must cater the needs of the concerned scholars and the lovers of cinema and literature. Like literature, cinema is also the mirror of society which exposes all the emerging evils in society, resolves conflict and chaos, entertains the audience, educates our masses and empowers all directly or indirectly.