

### **Indicting Inequity: The Issue of Class in two Hollywood Films and their Bengali Film Adaptations**

Amit Bhattacharya is the Professor and Head of the Department of English,  
University of GourBanga, Malda,

Asit Biswas is an Associate Professor of English, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam  
Govt. College,  
New Town, Kolkata

According to the *Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* sociologists consider class as a fundamental kind of social stratification along with the ethnic identities like caste or race. It also refers to Karl Marx and Max Weber who interpreted social stratification in terms of economy, while the American accounts of social stratification does not consider economy as the sole cause of division of class in society. Marx's theory of social stratification was based on two concepts—ownership of money and the means of production, and he divided human society into two groups—the capitalists and the proletariat. Likewise, Michael McCreery, in his "Notes on the Lower Middle Class and the Semi-Proletariat in Britain" also argues that the Marxists have always attempted to analyze society in terms of the class divisions; but then they sub-divided the classes into various strata, e.g. various "intermediate strata"; but the importance of money as the determining factor of class division remains unaltered. Another important term the Marxists have always used is "middle class." Marx and Engels wrote, in *The Communist Manifesto*, of the bourgeois and the middle class owners of property, and again, the lower strata of the middle class can be subdivided into the small tradesmen, shopkeepers, the handicraftsmen and peasants etc. Another important term closely related to the class issue is "petty bourgeois". In order to interpret the term McCreery quotes Mao-Tse-Tung who wrote, in *An Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society*: that the petty-bourgeoisie; the owner-peasants, the master-handicraftsmen, and the petty intellectuals—students, the primary and middle school teachers, the lower government functionaries like the office clerks, the small lawyers and the petty traders – all belong to this category. McCreery also points out the various classes within the proletariat class: the section of the semi-proletariat comprises the majority of the salesmen and shop-assistants as these people are still closer to the proletariat than the clerical workers, for they play a vital part in the process of distribution of the goods to the customers; and in the process they add value to the goods they

distribute. But at the same time they collect money, for their capitalist employer and the petty bourgeois. They play a very necessary role in the realization of the value of the goods produced. However, their condition of work is much easier than that of the factory workers. They are less oppressed than the factory workers are. The semi-proletariat class can take the leadership role of the industrial working class in their struggle against capitalism. (<https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/uk.firstwave/mccreerynotes.htm>, Aug. 3, 2017). So, the concepts pertaining to the issue of class must not be confined within the two—bourgeois and proletariat, since they themselves comprise many subsections. In fact, society being a web of various social relationships must have various economic classes, and a film, a drama, a novel and even an epic would surely incorporate all the sections of the society into itself, in order to present a miniature form of the society it represents. Any faithful presentation, whether in film or drama or novel, of the society must dramatize the social conflict both interclass and intra-class, at least when the class is based on means of production or source of income; simultaneously it also shows the inter-dependability of various classes. However, the conflict between the working class struggling to change their economic identity and the capitalist trying to keep the status quo intact has always become a favourite subject-matter of any dramatic literature, and so of film as well. It may be recalled that the 162-year-old zamindari system came to an end in West Bengal on April 15, the Bengali New Year Day. More than a thousand people greeted the announcement ending the system which had been introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1793. The then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr.B.C. Roy described it as an epoch-making change. (<http://www.thehindu.com/2005/04/15/stories/2005041500160902.htm>). It was indeed historic, not only to bring an end to a capitalist system but to lead the wheel of history to various directions as well. Binodbehari Chowdhury in his article “Effects of the Abolition of Zamindari in West Bengal” published in the Economic Weekly, November, 1954 argues that the abolition of the zamindari system by itself can give no incentive for increasing agricultural production. For the cultivating people who hold the right of occupancy, it will not bring about any reduction of rent; the only change will be the shifting of the entitlement of tax to government from their immediate landlords and so, the change is of no positive consequence to him. Rather the amount of rent remaining the same, one would prefer his previous landlord for he might have good relationship with him whom might not recover the arrears of the rent by harsh procedure which the state may do.

( [www.epw.in/system/...effects\\_of\\_the\\_abolition\\_of\\_zamindari\\_in\\_west\\_bengal.pdf](http://www.epw.in/system/...effects_of_the_abolition_of_zamindari_in_west_bengal.pdf)). Rames Chandra in the chapter titled "Agricultural Growth and Poverty Reduction" in his book *Social Development in India* also argues that the cost of abolition of the system was also high and the compensation to the previous zamindars allowed some people to become agro-industrialists, or acquire ownership rights over the land not previously owned. Meanwhile the condition of the economically weaker sharecroppers and the landless people remained unaltered. (<https://books.google.co.in/books?isbn=8182050251>)

In this paper I shall focus on how the class issues in the selected films and their Bengali film adaptations and their respective remakes are addressed. Despite David James's views regarding the repression of 'class' in films and cultural studies, it must be kept in mind that films have always played a significant role as an apparatus in the class struggle, used equally by the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic classes. While the hegemonic classes in favour of status quo try their level best to eternalize the system of misdistribution of wealth, with the help of their Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA) and often Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA), the counter-hegemonic forces use only the ISA, and film as an audio-visual media belongs to the latter, though not beyond controversy regarding the nature of the messages the director(s) want(s) or seem(s) to convey. And this controversy often has categorized some of the Bengali film directors like Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen et al as 'Leftist' ones, irrespective of their personal propaganda. Actually the purpose that a film can serve is to provide a voice to a particular class hitherto kept muted or really incapable of ventilating their problems and demands, and thereby make the audience 'feel' for the downtrodden. But the films under review not only bring to light the picture of the so called 'proletariat' or the working class, but the pitiful plight of the privileged people is portrayed as well. They show how the greed for accumulation of wealth darkens some particular corners of their mind as well as of their family to which no attention is paid, that it duly demands, and therefore money brings forth with itself both inner and outer conflicts which deserves a deep sociological interpretation.

Any discussion on the issue of class must begin, advance or end by alluding to Karl Marx, irrespective of the interpreter's liking or disliking for him, since, although prior to Marx there might be many theories of class, the issue itself became one much debated, much thought of and much theorized after the advent

of Marx or Marxist theory of class, wealth, labour etc. R.J. Rummel in his article “Marxism, Class Conflict, And The Conflict Helix” considers Karl Marx’s sociological explanations of social conflict to be a very powerful one since Marks posited a class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie intrinsic to capitalist, industrial society. (<https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/CIP.REF.HTM>. Web. 2 July, 2017).

Frank Capra’s film *It Happened One Night* (1934) based on “Night Bus” (1933), a story by Samuel Hopkins Adams (<https://www.filmsite.org/itha.html>), dramatizes the story of the adventurous escape of Elly Andrews, the daughter of an immensely rich father Alexander Andrews who is as stubborn as her “old man”. She goes on a hunger strike in protest of her abduction in her father’s hand and attempts to elope with King Westley, an aviator, both being already married. Here the cause of the clash lies not in the mere marriage between a man and a woman but between two different economic classes. Andrews’s attempt to have the marriage annulled because of his consideration of the groom as a lightweight fool results from his class prejudices. When Elly jumps off the yacht on which she is going to be kept a prisoner, and escapes to her freedom, she, in course of her journey from Miami to New York, discovers a working class community during the Depression years of the United States. In particular, she meets the proletarian journalist Peter Warne. Their mutual interest joins them together—Peter wants to get her story and she wants him to help her get back to her legal husband King. At first neither the working class America of the Depression years nor Peter can elicit any interest from her, but gradually she begins to feel the fun and the loyalty in them, that she has never found in her father’s upperclass ambience. Peter, on the other hand, forgetting his contempt for Elly’s class status, gets captivated by her personality and physical charms.

Terry Eagleton in the Preface to his book *Marxism and Literary Criticism* argues that Marxist criticism is the part of a larger body of theoretical analysis that aims to understand ideologies—the ideas, the values and the feelings by which man experiences his societies at various times. And certain of the ideas, the values and the feelings are available to the people only in and through literature.

The remark of Eagleton is applicable to film as well, since film is considered audio-visual literature and it has more access to people of all classes since it

seldom requires the audience's formal educational degree, and the audience can easily be the target of the hegemonic classes.

The scene in the movie in which Elly and Peter have to share a one-room cabin overnight, and maintain their privacy by hanging a blanket on a rope, that Peter playfully terms "the walls of Jericho", shows not merely the respect Elly deserves, but also the class barrier between the rich and the poor that they have to inhabit. Besides, it is used in order to present a romantic situation created out of the skillful use of camera that captures the shadow of the persons standing behind the curtain.

The problematic of class pervades the film from top to bottom, starting from the apparent dig at the economically privileged class devoid of the sense of social responsibility. Moreover, economic power makes one irresponsible not only to the economically inferior classes but to other members of their own class (and, by condensation their own family). Needless to say, the nature and extent of this economic domination victimizes even their own peers who are somehow dependent upon the authority who manipulates the means of production and who imposes his/her decisions on all his subordinates. Indeed, the film chronicles the nobility and decency of the working class represented by the ordinary people whose camaraderie is aptly captured by Frank Capra, as on the long bus journey the passengers unknown to each other can spontaneously be engaged in singing-along, while the wealthy class lacks this spontaneity. The class difference leading to class affiliation and class conflicts has a deeper root than the one presented superficially in the film. In fact, the dramatization of the romantic adventure of the hero and the heroine belonging to two contending classes is not a mere temporal filmic necessity; rather it mirrors the social scenario of the then United States. What to an aristocratic lady is a mere adventure is an opportunity not to be missed to an ordinary working man. The patriarchal domination also is not an offshoot of mere economic realities; as regards class distinction, the gender group of women belong to the dependent class, if not exclusively to the working class. Thus, they were excluded from decision making, even when such decisions had direct impacts on them. The film also addresses the issue of the Great Depression in the United States. According to an unsigned article *It Happened One Night* was made at the time when the Great Depression in America was in full swing, and the audience could catch glimpses

of the fact in some darker scenes of the film—for example, on the bus a mother faints from hunger while the leading lady in the film is a wealthy woman generally seen wearing fabulous gowns. *It Happened One Night* in the end, is an escapist as well as an egalitarian film that offers glimpses of wealth but also upholds the power of love over merely mercenary motives.

(<http://www.shmoop.com/it-happened-one-night/society-class-theme.html>)

So, the film transcends the barrier of a mere adventure and romance of a self-willed lady and a working class man beginning in greed but ending in affection. On the contrary, it is a chronicle of the Great Depression in America as well as in Europe in the 1930s.

Similarly, William Wyler's 1934 film *Roman Holiday*, which may be considered to be a remake of *It Happened One Night*, subtly addresses the class issue by presenting princess, Ann who has to perform her scheduled duties for diplomatic as well as commercial purposes of her royal family. Her continuous and unhabituated attempts at entertaining the people of the aristocratic class tire her no end. So, feeling overwhelmed by her tedious schedule, she starts screaming in a very 'ordinary' manner, that is little suitable to her class. In order to calm her down, the doctor injects her with a sleeping drug. Here the arrival of the doctor for such a minor cause befits a royal class only. That the class hierarchy is very often to be bought at the cost of one's freedom and ease, is evident from Ann's desire for a carefree country life. This is why, before the medicine starts working, she jumps out and hides herself in an outgoing truck that reaches the lively part of a town where eventually the American reporter Joe Bradley discovers her lying prostrate on a stair. Unaware of her identity, Joe takes Ann to be drunk. But prompted by his sense of honour and duty, he reluctantly drags her into a taxi. Here the interaction between the haves and the have-nots begins and though the audience waits for a happy ending as of a romantic comedy, the film comes to an end by focusing on the harsh realities and the barrier between the feudal class and the working class who can never join in the wedlock.

The scene of Ann sleeping on Joe's couch is not an arbitrarily designed one; a girl like Ann cannot even think of an apartment with only a single couch. At his newspaper office, Joe, seeing the photograph of Ann comes to know of the real identity of the lady sleeping in his flat and at once he, instead of nourishing any

romance in his heart, finds it an opportunity for a handsome income for which he has to struggle every day. The contrast lies in the fact that while the rich can rush out for fun, the poor has to do for bread and butter.

While travelling stealthily in the goods carriage Ann sees the people who are having breakfast on the footpath and who are travelling by motor cycles. This scene is a sharp contrast to the life she herself leads. Her facial expression suggests that she is also happy to see the mirth the commonplace people enjoy.

The card gambling scene itself reveals the participants' class identity. This easiest way of making an amount of money is often noticed more in the lower class people.

While entering the taxi Ann astonishingly remarks, "It's a taxi!" and here her class status and habit are once again revealed—she can seldom think of travelling by an ordinary taxi.

Joe's poorly furnished small flat is a sharp contrast to Ann's royal residence. Her demand for a night gown befits her as she has learnt to place demands and is convinced that no demand of hers can remain unfulfilled.

So far Joe is not certain regarding the true identity of the girl sleeping in his flat. But learning it from the newspaper he at once comes back to his flat and gets the identity confirmed by addressing the sleeping lady by "Your Royal Highness" to which she, in slumbering state, responds because she is habituated to it and she in this semi-conscious state has forgotten that she is concealing her real identity. Then he shifts the princess from the ordinary couch to a better bed. The hospitality that Joe offers to Ann is based not only on his greed for money but his sense of duty to the royal class as well; he knows that it is the duty of the working class to offer the best services to the upper class.

When Joe sits on the bed on which Ann is already seated, she gets astonished, because she is not habituated to see an ordinary man sharing the same seat on which a royal person is seated.

The upper class is so much alienated from the ordinary people that, as the film shows us, they can seldom walk down the road along with the ordinary people,

and so, they have to lead a somewhat restricted life as there stands an invisible wall between the working class and the capitalist class. This restriction made Ann desire for an 'independent' and carefree country life. This restriction makes her desire a quite walk, even in rain, as the lower class people do.

In the bar Ann's demand for champagne is very natural because a girl of her class had never to think of its price but Joe, on the other hand, is in an awkward situation because he has not as much money as to buy the costly liquor.

Joe belongs to the working class but as a journalist of *The American News Service*, a reputed press, he is relatively affluent. This is why when he is arrested for breaking the traffic rules and damaging public property, he goes scot-free after showing the police the his journalist identity card. The complainants are favorably impressed by the show of Joe's clout, and forgetting their hurts and damages, they cheer Ann and the journalist on the expectation of a possible marriage of this richly attired couple. Thus the film shows how law often bends before the high and the mighty.

Dress, as a status symbol, plays a significant role in the theory of social stratification and is very often taken as an identity marker in determining the class of the wearer(s) and so is it in case of Ann. After waking up Ann takes a bath, and gets dressed, and borrowing some money from Joe, leaves the flat and walks on foot. She buys an ordinary pair of shoes from a street shop and then enters a saloon and gets her long hair clipped into a stylish bob in order to camouflage herself, lest she, in her royal attire, be recognized by the people. The camouflage in the film is to be taken not as an ordinary incident showing an adventurous princess temporarily attempting to conceal her identity in order to enable herself to roam about the town freely; rather Ann's attempt to change her dress and roam about the city freely with an 'ordinary' man, transcends the level of mere adventurous and temporal change and symbolizes an attempt to break the class barrier and class prejudices in the European society.

The film director, Ajit Ganguly adapted it into his 1973 Bengali film *Rater Rajanigandha* which is considered to be a remake of Yatrik's film *Chawa Pawa* (1959) and an appropriation of *Roman Holiday* which itself seems to be a remake of *It Happened One Night*. The cultural demands of the post-



Independent Bengal forced the directors to change the royal status of the heroine(s) in the source text(s) to that of capitalist aristocracy. The scenes of carousal are strategically omitted altogether, because the Bengali audience cannot accept the hero's or the heroine's consumption of liquor. Similarly, the scenes of Rome have been substituted with those in Calcutta. The Bengali audience would be dissatisfied to see the film ending in separation. This is why a romantic end is presented with the union of the hero and the heroine.

In *ChawaPawaManju*, the young aristocratic lady, the daughter of a press owner escapes from the train compartment in order to avoid an imposed marriage. Eventually she meets the hero Rajat who is a reporter in her father's press and who, being dismissed from his service, is in search of a healthy amount of money in order to found a press of his own. Manju can ignore the necessity of money because she has never suffered from want. In a later scene, in the guest house Manju would not stop herself from breaking the tea-cup if Rajat did not cast towards her a stern glare and did not narrate the incident of his poor life. But Rajat, the picaresque hero can hardly ignore the monetary matters, though, in spite of the fact that the romance between the two remains almost unuttered and suppressed, at last his benevolent outlook and heart's instinct prevail over the materialistic desire. The happy ending of the film, in spite of the class difference remaining unaltered, is historically grounded. Most of the Bengali audience had witnessed the freedom movement. The British rule and the cruel incidents witnessed especially by the East Pakistani migrants rendered the commonplace Bengali mind pessimistic and so, they were awaiting a temporal escape from the harsh reality, and naturally they preferred an optimistic and romantic mental refuge. Although the film, by dramatizing the romance and at last ending with the probability of a union between the haves and the have-nots may stand for a protest against the class barriers. Though the romance between Manju and Rajat remains unuttered, everybody of the audience knows of and expects the ultimate union of two souls. Rajat, the male protagonist feels an incessant attraction and so cannot initially overcome his greed for and severe necessity of the declared prize money. So, his romantic heart is at first submerged under his financial need. Manju, on the other hand, cannot recognize herself, since her romantic feelings were suppressed under her abundance of money and her belief that everything can be purchased. But now, after falling in love she cares no more about the world around her and about the circumstances because

she could never feel the harsh reality the lower class people have to undergo. But Rajat, on the other hand, though has been attracted towards Manju, tries to suppress his own heart's desire, in view of their wide class difference. The financial condition of Rajat is so precarious that romance, to him, seems only a pipedream, while Manju's father belongs to the capitalist class who can terminate the services of his employees in no time.

Rajat's initial hesitation in expressing his love is socially and historically grounded as noticed by Jessi Streib who in his article "Or richer or poorer: The challenges of marrying outside your class" interprets how different social class upbringings can affect a person's expression of his/her emotions to their partners. In order to substantiate his opinion he cited the example of a couple: the husband belonging to a blue-collar working class background believed that keeping one's emotions to oneself was 'dishonest' and so, he would express himself loudly, which was much to the displeasure of his wife, as she came of a more affluent social background and she had been convinced that romantic responses should be free from emotion and full of intellect. Needless to say, as Streib indicated, these differences created problems in their conjugal life but ultimately each of them learned the style more familiar to other. (<https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/04/19/issues-within-inter-class-marriages/>)

Thus the film dramatizes the same effect resulting from two different causes, of two different classes, but ultimately upholds the standard of humanity beyond class barriers.

The issues that the films do not directly address but merely imply and that deserve the attention of the audience and the critics are how class and power are interrelated, how dress, language and/or food habits may mark one's class identity, how the number of attendants may indicate the class status, and how class affects freedom.

The film *Chawa Pawa* begins with the theme of dominance arising out of class sentiment and class power. The dominating nature of Mr. Chaudhuri is financially grounded. His financial clout allows him to find faults with and even sack an employee in no time. That his servants are afraid of him as well as of his daughter is not an isolated phenomenon. Rather, from the Marxist perspective this

'fear' can be explained in terms of a deep-rooted power relation. The struggle for survival and domination between the capitalist class and the working class exists even today, as Deborah Cook argues in her article "Foucault Studies" which interprets Michel Foucault's concept of class struggle and power relation: Foucault admits the persistence of class divisions and struggle in the West. In case he was convinced that the social struggle between classes was likely to come to an end, he would come to realize that "the class struggle exists still now; it exists now even more intensely. However, since power permeates all the interaction in the society, class struggle is merely one of many agonistic (or antagonistic) relations existing today in society."

(<https://rauli.cbs.dk/index.php/foucault-studies/article/download/4936/5362>)

This is why Rajat in the film silently endures his employer's jeering words. In fact, Rajat longs for adequate funds that may enable him to become a press owner and thereby change his class status. His entire course of action in the film evolves round his ambition for changing his class identity. As a result, there arises a conflict between Rajat's romantic yearning and his socio-economic ambition. Often this conflict tempts him to choke his amorous self to death but he cannot; and it is best evident in his act of burning the letter to be sent to Mr. Chaudhuri. The domineering nature of the upper class girls is clearly seen in the character of Manju; actually Manju's remark, "Manju never knows that anybody can refuse her" is the peephole to the inner selves of the capitalist class who believes that money begets everything. (Trans. mine). Rajat's honest confession that he is not fortunate enough to have the courage to ask for anything testifies to the mental and emotional bankruptcy of the lower middle class. The financially and emotionally depleted Rajat's hesitation makes Manju guess that there lies a barrier between them but she cannot feel that it is due to their class difference—their relation is not merely between two individuals but between two classes; she cannot feel because she never had such an interaction with the working class.

Ajit Ganguly's film *Rater Rajanigandha* (1973), the remake of *Chawa Pawa* also addresses the issue of class hierarchy. It opens with the scene set in a palatial house that belongs to an affluent family. The Manager, Achintya Mullick, though he belongs to the working class, has become a petty bourgeois who now manipulates the means of production, and his authoritative

bearings, his costly and formal attire, his apparent concern for the heroine's (Anuradha) mental health—all become a nouveau riche capitalist and his wiles. But the maidservant as a proletarian is a sharp contrast to the petty bourgeois Manager who, usurping the financial control of Anuradha's property, bosses over the other working class people as well as the heroine. The power that Achintya wields, emanates from his financial skills and indispensability, and the film brings to light how money begets power and how power transforms class identity. At a further remove, Ajit Ganguly shows us how the loss of control over the means of production diminishes one's class status. Achintya's machinations stem from his desire for changing his class identity, by the nefarious means of a mercenary marriage. Anuradha's refusal of Achintya's marriage proposal is motivated less by class considerations, and more by the consideration of dominance. She, therefore, is willing to accept rather the stranger Raja, the amiable reporter from the working class.

Raja, the film's hero being an efficient reporter belongs to the middle class, as evident from his old car and small flat. His picaresque life history reveals the struggle of a poor orphan boy who wants to survive and thrive in an honorable way. The amount of money he is offered by Achintya Mullick for finding out the missing heroine leaves him speechless in astonishment but the statement of the newspaper Editor makes him realize the relativity of the largeness of the offered amount—while the amount is a covetous and almost unbelievable one to the working class, it is quite puny to the capitalists. Achintya is ready to spend any amount, as he says, but actually it is a astutely planned investment; his real desire is to encash the girl. Achintya's malicious plot is actually his chosen means of social and economic mobility from humble working class beginnings to a secure rich-man status.

The part of the film's cast of characters which is often neglected in any discussion of class issue is the underworld gang. As a matter of fact, the underworld runs a parallel economy and is hierarchically structured, wherein the ringleader always appropriates the largest chunk of the dark means of production and makes the subordinates toil and thereby extract the surplus. Such gang members often live in danger and die in misery. However, despite his criminal antecedents, Raja, the hero of the film is spared this cruel fate, thanks to his formal education and reportorial skills that Allen Touraine defines as 'ability'. (Citation) The ultimate

withdrawal of the gangsters and their favour done to Raja are measures, motivated not by mutual interest but by group loyalty. Likewise, the favour extended by Raja toward his non-consanguineous grandmother is inspired by his class solidarity.

As mentioned above, dress often acts as an identity marker of the person(s) concerned. The film *Chawa Pawa*, in the opening scene presents a number of people working in Mr. Chaudhuri's house. Their working class status can easily be detected from their dress. The character Asit is the worthless heir to a rich family; yet he is selected by Manju's father, to woo his daughter because of his upper class status which he confirms by his formal attire. Rajat, on the other hand, wears cheap and rather informal clothes. The general train compartment can easily be identified by the dress the passengers wear. The railway platform is a miniature society, full of people from various classes, as indicated by the dress they wear. Even in order to camouflage Manju, Rajat asks her to use the *ghomta* (hood) used as a must by the working class married women and here the *ghomta* is used in order to camouflage Manju's class identity, and make her play a working class wife. Moreover, Rajat carrying the luggage resembles one belonging to the poor. But his friend Bankim Ghosh belongs to the upper class and though his family profession is not mentioned here his and his elder brother's clothes clearly indicate their affluence. Rajat wears a coat only when he really falls in love with Manju and Manju clearly reveals her amorous feelings. Thereafter, he books a costly hotel meant for the wealthy class and quite beyond the capacity of the poor.

Although there is no scene, in particular, that shows the food habit of the capitalist class or of the working class, the refusal of Manju to drink a poor quality tea in the train and also her dislike of the ordinary tea set used in the guest house reveal the characteristically costly habits of the rich. The class discrimination is also perceptible in the behavior of the owner of the guest house who replaces the tea-set and the tea as well. His remark testifies to the fact that he has different sets of crockeries for different classes.

Almost in every language a particular form is considered to be the 'standard' one. In the Bengali films, under review, very often the class or the hierarchical position of the characters is revealed by the language they speak and of course by the manner of their articulation. So, the language of the speaker very often becomes an indicator of the class of the person concerned. The Bengali films

often present the labourer class through their use of the *Bangalbhāsa* (East Bengali dialects) or any form of Bengali with Hindi accents and, thereby, often make them objects of laughter, because these characters mostly belong to the financially weaker class. Thus language politics plays a pivotal role in the process of 'othering' a person.

One of the features of the capitalist class people, as presented in the films, is that they are unwilling to give their subordinates freedom, irrespective of their consanguineous relationship. But it seldom means that only the working class people suffers from lack of freedom; the intra-class dominance is very often found as well. In *ChawaPawa* Manju's freedom is controlled by her capitalist father, and in *Rater Rajanigandha* the freedom of Anuradha is stolen by the Achintya who happened to have the control over her property. But there lies a difference between the two kinds of dominance. While Manju's freedom is curbed by her father for sake of Manju herself, as he believes, Anuradha's confinement is for sake of the person who dominates her. But in both cases the person who dominates controls the means of production.

Agradoot's 1967 film *NayikaSambad* which is an appropriation of *Roman Holiday* and remake of *ChawaPawa* also dramatizes the escape of a high class lady and deals with the issue of class. The film shows the hierarchy existent within the working class. The train compartment is a miniature society, where the workers of the film industry are seen travelling but in different classes of the train compartments. Hiren Nag's film *Sabormoti*, also an appropriation of *Roman Holiday*, set in the industrial city of Amedabad in Maharashtra dramatizes the class issue more prominently. Purnendu Roychowdhury's 1971 film *BhanuGoendaJawhar Assistant* also subtly addresses the class issue and the missing of the elite class heroine serves as the exposition of the dramatic events. The very beginning of the film focuses on the issue of class within class.

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