

Use Of Sound In Visual Storytelling: A Study To Analyze The Symbolic And Metaphorical Use Of Music In Satyajit Ray's Films.

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Abstract

Satyajit Ray is recognized as one of the greatest filmmakers in the world of cinema. However, outside the industry, very few people know about the underlying painter and musician that this iconic director was. The year 2021 marks the 100th birth anniversary of Satyajit Ray. The study is focused on exploring how Satyajit Ray created a new idiom for film music in India. This study is a tribute to his unmatched contribution to the world of visual storytelling. Just like his films', Satyajit Ray's music has its own auteur. The people who grew up watching Ray, and anyone who is slightly familiar with his cinema, will have their ears trained enough to recognize the peculiarities in his composition by merely listening to it. Ray's compositions and the elementary structure of his themes and scores and lyrics are in itself a complete work of art that has its own expression and meanings. When put together with the visuals, these compositions can etch completely new meaning and underline subtle meaning to what we see and decipher from the story. Every great director has put a lot of effort into exploiting music for a high-quality visual experience in their films. The science of music and art shares similar fundamental elements and are deeply connected when it comes to express meanings and emotions. Both music and art have rhythms, patterns, and harmony in the context of communicating ideas. Music facilitates sensory satisfaction. Altering and playing with the elements of music is what gives us various genres that have distinctive styles, moods, expressions, history, and psychological effects. Just like art, Music is a source of cultural documental. Throughout history, many genres have evolved through human struggles, civil wars, social movements, and unrest. The type of music, lyrics, and instruments tells a lot about a community where it evolved. For example, we can support a visual with sounds of xylophones, djembes, or African folklores to establish a content that represents the life and living of tribal people of African tribes. Music genres like Rap, Country, Punk, Metal, Grunge, etc have evolved from various social movements and carry distinct meanings. Many filmmakers keep the historical and cultural context of music in mind while representing social groups and communities. This is how music becomes the identity of a group as well as of individuals. India accommodates a rich musical heritage. We associate music with individuals and their times as a whole because there have been iconic writers, composers, and poets who have given birth to classic musical literature which holds sociopolitical and religion- cultural importance. Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Saint Kabir, and Meerabai are a few examples of such people. Their works are a representation of collective culture, political changes, and religious paradigms and times and phases of Indian history.

Keywords: *100th Birth Anniversary of Satyajit Ray, Films, Background Score, Bengali Cinema, Visual Communication, Visual Metaphor, Sound Element, Ray's Music, 100 years of Ray, Satyajit Ray, Heritage, Culture, Symbolism, Indian Classical, Western Classical, Rabindranath Tagore*

I. Introduction:

Sounds as an element of Visual Language in Films

In a study done in University of Colorado by Tim Schwartz, about Intersection of Visual Communication, Art and Music, draws similarities between elements of visual communication and the elements of music. The finest works of the greatest directors demonstrate that the sound is not only used very precisely but also with great detail in order to enhance the intricacies of the visuals. To understand

this in a better light, consider one of the most iconic movies of all time, *The Schindler List*, directed by Steven Spielberg in 1993. The movie was shot in black and white considering the tonality of its dark theme. There is this scene where the director has experimented with a monochrome called ‘The Girl with the Red Coat’. The premise of the film is set in Nazi Germany and while establishing it on screen, the director prefers to show a little girl in a red coat who is walking through the lanes of the city, witnessing the entire situation where Jews are thrown out of their houses by the Nazis and forced arrested, their properties being seized and they are lined up in rows and moving towards the ghettos. This little girl is traumatized at the sight where German soldiers are killing people, humiliating Jews, lining them up in a row, and shooting them horizontally in order to save bullets. The scene is from the point of view of Oscar Schindler who is our protagonist here and what disturbs him is that this is the barbarism that the kids are witnessing and that they will learn and repeat this in the future. Now when we consider the element of sound in this scene, we see that it is supported by a very distinct Jewish hymn ‘Oyfnripetchik’, whose translation goes like ‘The Rabbi (teacher) is teaching the kids alphabets and so the kids are repeating after them’. *“Oyfnripetchikbrent a fayerl, Un in shtubizheys,*

Un derrebelerntkleynekinderlekh, Dem alef-
beys.

Zetzhekinderlekh, gedenktzhe, tayere,

Vosirlernt do;

Zogtzhnokh a mol un take nokh a mol:

Komets-alef: o!”

Symbolically it suggests that whatever the kids will see around them is what they are going to learn and repeat in the future. Let us also take the example of an iconic postmodern cinema directed by Quentin Tarantino’s ‘*Inglorious Bastards*’ released in 1994. The movie begins with a scene where we see soldiers approaching a countryside home. The sequence is supported by background music where we hear the famous symphony of Ludwig Van Beethoven, the “*Fur Elise*”.

We might wonder at the complete mismatch of the visual with the kind of music used but what if the director does it intentionally to create meaning? Tarantino masters the art of using unconventional songs and scores to support the visual content. The thought that goes behind using *Fur Elise* for German soldiers approaching is simply to convey that ‘the Germans are coming’. Beethoven himself was a German and the popular theory is that the Third Reich approved of Beethoven’s music over other composers whose names are associated with Jewish lineage. Another conspiracy theory against the legendary composer tells that he had anti-Semitic inclinations of which there is no substantial proof. However, it is the way Tarantino has exploited popular theories is the genius work of a director. Not many directors are successful in experimenting with contrasting visuals and music to create metaphors but the best storytellers have always impressed fairly intelligent audiences with this art. Quentin Tarantino’s experiments with music are a special part of his Auteur. In *Pulp Fiction*, Tarantino used the song “*Girl, you’ll be a woman soon*” of Urge Overkill to highlight the change in feelings of Mia (Uma Thurman) who for the first time sexually drawn towards a male, Vincent (John Travolta) who works for her mafia husband. The song’s lyrics were in contrast but apt to describe the unpleasant turn of events where she inhales poisonous drugs and almost loses her life.

There are countless examples of films where music becomes the meaning in a subtle manner, sometimes so intensely that one doesn’t need dialogs to comprehend the context of the visual dynamics happening between the characters and their premises on the screen.

Review of Literature

Most of the studies done on Satyajit Ray’s music, mostly talks about his mastery in music direction alongside being a fine filmmaker. While a study done at Vishwa Bharati University by Parth Pratim Ray, talks about Satyajit Ray as a multifaceted filmmaker. However, as far as his music is concerned, the studies have been restricted only to the aesthetics of his compositions. Unfortunately, the genius of

his works in the field of music has always been studied from the perspective of melody rather than its symbolism and elemental structure. For a large number of audiences, his movies would be considered as ‘content with limited and typical Ray’s music’.

Through this study, we want to disintegrate the meaning of what the laymen term ‘Ray’s music’. Ray has been limiting the use of music in his later films and rather focused on converting music as a means of visual communication rather than just a supporting element to suggest moods and emotions.

Background of the Study

Critics suggest that Satyajit Ray was largely influenced by western music so much, that he played the piano himself and preferred giving a western blend to his compositions and scores. Ray made a beautiful amalgamation of Indian classical with western classical music to create a dynamic music experience for sound-conscious audiences. A lot of his popular films like *Charulata* (The Lonely Wife), *Ghare Baire* (Home and the World), *Teen Kanya*, had a blend of Rabindrasangeet (songs of Tagore) with western instrumentations. In his interviews, he would mention that he was much inspired by the storytelling of directors like Ingmar Bergmann, who would use negligible to no sound effects or music at all. Such directors rather play with silence and natural sounds and so did Ray. Ray also mentioned the importance of sound and music to underline the mood and change in story dynamics for lesser intelligent audiences. This study will analyze how Ray expanded the used music beyond the role of expressing moods and emotions but also establish itself as visual metaphors for the cinematic designs and help in understanding the larger meaning behind the things that we see on screen as well as help in defining the context in a far more intelligent and creative manner.

Statement of the Problem

Today, the use of sound in video content has become extravagant and also lacks value. Back in the golden era of Indian cinema, a movie could hit a blockbuster only by the number of songs that it had. Later, music had become essential only for the pleasure of the ears of the audiences. Less has been focused on using sound for creating meanings and symbolically expresses the depth of the content. This study is important to help the upcoming storytellers to take inspiration from Ray’s work and create a fresh perspective when it comes to using sound along with visuals. There is a plethora of musical content and a rich legacy of music in India to be exploited both technically and aesthetically to create valuable content. Ignoring the importance of sound is limiting the extent of creativity that can be explored by the filmmakers to make quality content.

II Aim & Objectives

The study aims to analyze the symbolic and metaphorical use of sound and music in Satyajit Ray’s films.

The objectives of the study are:-

- To study the elements in Ray’s compositions that make it his unique Musical Auteur
- To study how music and themes have been used Symbolically and Metaphorically in Ray’s films
- To trace the Expressionism in the songs used by Ray concerning the visuals

III Methodology

This study is a qualitative analysis based on 7 iconic movies of Ray. The movies selected have been rated above 7.5 on the IMDB website. Additionally, the movies have been critically acclaimed for their background scores and music globally. The list of the movies that we are considering for evaluation is as follows:

- PatherPanchali (IMDB 8.6)
- GopiGayenBaghaBayen (IMDB 8.8)
- HiraKajarDeshe (IMDB 8.9)
- Nayak (IMDB 8.3)
- GhoreBaire (IMDB 7.6)
- Sonar Kella (Feluda Series) (IMDB 8.4)
- ShatranjKeKhiladi (Hindi language movie) (IMDB 7.7)

The technique which is chosen for evaluation is Content Analysis and below are the Units of analysis on which the study has been based.

1. The symbolic and metaphorical meaning behind sounds and compositions
2. Unique music themes and scores that support the concept
3. Lyrical expressionism in songs concerning the visual dynamics

IV Findings The Three Elements of Expression in Ray's Composition

Rhythm, melody, and lyrics are three essential elements of composition and make it complete. Through the implementation of lyrics could be subjective and situational, but rhythm and melody are the integral components. While choosing music for visual content, one must consider the alignment of these elements (rhythm, melody, and lyric) with respect to what the audiences are able to see. Complete disorientation of the musical elements with the visuals can distort the meaning that a director wants to communicate. For example, we generally use uplifting music to express positivity and would refrain from using upbeat rhythm to establish a situation where maybe the protagonist has lost a dear one. Satyajit Ray took this sense of music and visual alignment to a different level by using these three elements for communicating specific emotions and metaphors. In his compositions, the rhythm, the melody and lyrics, all function symbolically and establishes a larger picture. The first element is the percussion or the rhythm that helps to set the movement of the story. The second element is the Melody which defines the flow and the mood of the scene or the sequence. The third element, the lyrics, uplifts the emotions and adds symbolic meaning to the premise. Below are the three elements in detail with help of examples from his cinema.

The Element of Rhythm

The element of rhythm is exploited to underline the sudden change in the power dynamics and also establishes a movement of the story. In Satyajit Ray's compositions, percussion helps in defining the movement in the story and the change in the situational dynamics. The abrupt interruption in the percussion marks the dead end to a sequence and the beginning of a completely new situation. It helps in building up a premise and breaking it as well. We observe this in most of his title montages of films. In the title montage of Shatranj Ke Khiladi the beats revealed how one by one, the British East India Company took hold of the constituencies from the emperors till they reached Awadh (Oudh). While in the title montage of the film Nayak, with each beat the visuals reveal the central character in his action of grooming himself to perfection till the story starts where each sequence tells of his lavish lifestyle. The rhythm here reveals piece by piece the new character and sequences. In the second part of the musical trilogy, 'HiraKajar Deshe' an intense use of percussion is done to set the change in power dynamics between the oppressive king and the mineworkers. The rhythm elevates the uprising of the working class and pulling down the King's statue while the king himself gives up and loses his mind to join the workers to pull down his statue.

The Element of Melody

The second element of music that Ray would explore is the melody or the tune. Ray would exploit the violin or synthesizers to underline the moods and enhance the emotional quotient of the visuals in the

scene. Music in general has the power of elevating feelings and when combined with visuals smartly and correctly, it can bring out a range of subtle emotions that are often not enough to be understood only through visual content. Melody can express a plethora of feelings from sadness to happiness, confusion, and distortion of thought as well as situational catharsis. In most of Ray's music, the melody or a tune follows an upbeat and impactful composition which has become the auteur of his storytelling.

The signature theme music of Feluda (The Detective) in the film *Shonar Kella* has become an identity for the character itself. So much that people no more relate the tune with the movie *Shonar Kella* but to the character of Feluda. Not just in his compositions but also in his collaborations with other renowned composers like Pt. Ravi Shankar, Vilayat Khan, or Ali Akbar, he made sure that there is always a theme to his movies and characters. The signature themes and scores also become metaphors to new beginnings as well as closures. Signature themes of movies like *Pather Panchali* (flute), *Nayak* (violin), *Charulata* (sitar) has not only defined the characters and premises but also have become the identity of the film itself. When asked from the viewer's perspective, the film music of Ray is more of an identity of visuals and concept rather than just compositions.

The Lyrical Element

Satyajit Ray was exposed to music and literature since the very early phase of life. Belonging from the land of culture and rich musical literature, Ray imbibed the music and poetry of great authors and composers like Rabindranath Tagore and blended it with western music to suit and convey the central theme of his movies like *Ghore Baire* and *Charulata*, which spoke about the cultural influence of British rule on India. Vishwa Bharati's hold on the literary works of Tagore would have never approved of a fusion but Ray was much more visionary about how it will affect and enhance the underlying concept of the movie. Ray must be given the credit of bringing out the true essence of the novels like *Ghare Baire* and *Charulata* which spoke of the invasion of western culture despite the constant denials by the flag bearers of the Swadeshi movement. Ray told in his interviews that we are moving towards a society where the practicality of sticking to old lifestyles is just restricted to moral science books. Hence our movies should also reflect the reality of such a society rather than romanticizing a false picture that we still live in the pre- medieval era. This is the reason he chose fusions and a blend of Indian and Western music to establish this dilemma related to the sense of nationalism. Ray had a deep understanding of how much impact words could add to the visuals when used in a poetic manner along with melody as audiences perceive a picture better with music rather than without music. Hence, despite being against the idea of highlight everything through lyrics, he chose to underline the subtleness of the scene and the concept through selective songs. Ray mastered the art of conveying the hidden and untold meanings through the use of simple lyrics or poetic dialogs or by simply using popular literature.

The Harmony of Sound and Visuals

The harmony between sounds and visuals can be understood as the aggregate meaning that both combined together. The audience seldom realizes that the background sounds in a film adds meaning to a lot of things that we see on the screen. Also, if these sounds will be removed, it might as well affect the impact of the scene or might give a sense of incompleteness and dissatisfaction. In an interview with Pierre Andre Boutang, Ray told that in his later films he used music as discretely as possible to underline the moods and story movements. The type of music that is used in a film must be in harmony with the visuals, otherwise, it can lead to discord and the content won't make any sense. Say for example if there is a scene where we show the protagonist is falling, we cannot use happy music to romanticize the downfall. However, some directors do play with contrasting music viz visuals but those are also subjected to the perception and context. Ray used to make sure that the themes and scores would become part of the visuals storytelling and create a meaning which otherwise would be lost if we remove the sound elements.

For understanding this in a better light, below is an analysis of sound elements from the scenes of his famous movies based on the unit of analysis that we have chosen.

Music used as Symbols and Metaphors:

Visual metaphors can be understood as an abstract but symbolic representation of an idea, an opinion, or an issue. Visual metaphors always have a concept behind them. Similarly, whenever it comes to music in Ray's movies, it is more of an abstract composition that has symbolic expression. We might be able to extract meanings behind the actions of the characters just by listening to the sound elements or the kind of music used in that particular scene.

Let us consider one of the most iconic scenes ever made in the history of cinema, The Dream Sequence from the movie *Nayak* released in 1966. The story revolves around the life of a movie star, Arindam (Uttam Kumar). Arindam lives in a larger than life kind of environment. But there's a bit of dissatisfaction and void in him. He is traveling to another city for receiving an award. On his way, he dreams that he is bathing in a rain of money and among huge mountain-like piles of money everywhere. Arindam is mesmerized at the sight and is enchanted at the moment. Here Satyajit Ray has used arpeggios of bells and vibraphones suggesting the supernatural and enchanting moment. The same bells set a rhythm of Arindam's movements on the screen. While the vibraphones set the flow of his overwhelming emotions as he finds himself completely lost in the waves of glamour and material happiness. With the rhythm, we then hear the strings taking up to highlight the moments of joy and overflowing emotions of Arindam till he is completely lost in the valor. The peculiar pace and the crescendos in the use of the strings elevate Arindam's emotional bursts eerily, suggesting that this mesmerizing world is just a trap. And then suddenly the money rain stops. If we want to understand the art of using 'silence' as a sound, this would be a great example. The sudden eerie silence is followed by the visuals of Arindam confused and wondering about the abrupt cease of money rain. Now there are only natural sounds of winds suggesting a negative omen and destruction. From distance, we hear the very low sound of telephone rings. Arindam wonders who could be calling and from where? We now once again hear the element of rhythm in form of phone calls and accompanied by the cult phrase for the funeral journey '*Hari Bol Hari*' which is sung during the final journey of a man's mortal body after death. Ray uses this as a symbol of Arindam's end of valor, false complexes, and ego. The entire scene consists of several visual metaphors which could be said completely in itself. However, when combined with the smart visual direction, the scene attains symbolic value and perfection.

A single scene may consist of more than two symbolisms through variation in the music and these variations add different aesthetical dimensions to the meanings that audiences can perceive.

Satyajit Ray had directed his first elaborated musical trilogy, *Gopi Gayen Bagha Byne* in the year 1969. This entire film is in form of phrases and rhyming dialogs, Ray exploited his creative freedom for music to its utmost level. For studying the metaphors and symbolism in this film, we have selected the famous 'Psychedelic Ghost Dance' sequence in the movie. The Ghost Dance from Ray's '*Gopi Gayen Bagha Byne*' is a fine example of a visual metaphor that represented the phases of Indian history and how the powerful exploits the weak. In the premise, we see that the protagonists Goopi and Bagha were thrown out of the kingdom by the King on the insistence of the powerful men who call themselves 'alive, awaken and civilized'. Goopi and Bagha both suffered poverty and hunger in a rural world. Losing the game of survival in the normal society, they decided to embrace fate and hopelessly waited in the woods with fear of being devoured by wild animals. The fear-stricken duo starts to sing and dance with a dilapidated drum to overcome their fears. Impressed by their nonsensical, yet innocent dance, the ghosts in the jungle started dancing too.

Given that psychedelia is a genre that deals with the form of art that is inspired by the unconventional spirit of intoxication, the background music used for depicting the ghost dance has been kept trance like. There is two symbolic inference of this scene. For lesser intelligent audiences and for children, the main aim could be depicting ghosts in a manner that is not scary but simply different and more acceptable

rather than scary. This also helps in adding an entertainment factor in the scene. At the same time for smarter audiences, this scene is a complete work of visual and sonic art. When carefully observed, the caricatures and the kind of rhythmic variations that follows with each set of characters, we will find that these caricatures and ghosts are actually representing the oppressor and the oppressed. It is the history of humans killing humans and being insensitive and stupid. In the first sequence, we see that the king's men are killing the indigenous tribal people. A very fast-paced Carnatic (South Indian) classical beat supports the sequence suggesting the Aryan-Dravidian divide of ancient India. The music elevates the central idea that how people have been discriminated against by their looks, their choice of clothes, and their style of living. In the second sequence, a set of characters represent the hierarchy and class divide as well as their struggle to survive. There we see, lawyers, bureaucrats, armed men, and clergy people playing their politics with each other and creating a catharsis. Everybody is just trying to climb the ladder of success by putting each other down.

Their pointless power game holds no importance to the supreme being who looks down upon them (here it could be the viewers) and probably laughs. This catharsis has been accompanied by comic music that will make anybody laugh at their actions. The entire scene is symbolic of how thirst for power and fear of death keep humans deluded their entire life. The demons and ghosts who we fear are right inside us while we are afraid of the imaginary creatures. Hence the fear of the ghosts makes no sense. At the end of this scene, the King of the ghosts who is pleased by the innocence of Goopi and Bagha grants them three boons. And out of everything that they could have asked for in this world, these men ask only for sufficient food, traveling the world for knowledge and the ability to make people happy with their music. The scene tries to define the crux of human existence through music and visuals.

Music Themes and Scores:

Unlike other great directors of his time, Ray stood out when it comes to establishing his characters. He achieved this by implementing specific themes for all his characters and movies. Right from the beginning of Apu Trilogy, each of his films has a title score and theme music for his central character. The theme music would tell about the essential qualities, quirks, and behaviorism of the character.

In the movie *Pather Panchali* (The Song of the Road), Ray used typical Hindustani classical music to depict the typical village life of the people of Bengal. Ray said that pure Indian traditions and life are best expressed with the support of pure classical music. At times, the music has been used to depict major changes in the story and to support several visual motifs. Ray decided to use a flute tune as the signature theme music to the film. Pt. Ravishankar's sitar has been used to establish many changes in the story arches like that of 'time-lapse' where the sitar's uplifting rhythm and positive melody accompanies the change of season. However, Ray's challenge was to get distinctive but precise themes for short shot sequences which might last for only a few seconds. This was not possible by collaborating with big artists' since their lack of time. With Pt. Ravishankar, they recorded 1.5 hours of continuous music and used it in bits and pieces to etch the meaning in the movie. However, Ray was not satisfied with it and decided to compose the music and themes for his own movies. This was the time when he started employing theme music for underlining the central mood or the lead motifs and sometimes crisp scores for precise shot sequences and complex structure of the film.

The title montage of the film *Nayak* (1966), Ray slowly reveals the action of the protagonists through bands that vanishes one by one with the beats of music and unfolds a complete frame. With each passing beat it is observed that the actions of the actor are taking over the frame. This title montage was one of a kind as far as its visual aesthetics are concerned. The intense and buildup melody of the violin in minor notes and chord progressions perfectly inclines with the visuals where we see a sophisticated superstar Arindam is grooming himself to perfection. The music had a sense of elevation and nobility with the use of flute and violin and a blend of western touch which coincides with the character's attitude and lifestyle.

The same music is also used for underlining Arindam's struggles and dissonance with his thought process and past experiences.

In history, every detective series had a signature theme for its protagonist and so did Feluda (The Detective). In the film *Shonar Kella*, Ray used a violin theme to establish Feluda (The Detective). Every time the characters would begin with their adventure, we would listen to the same theme. This theme has become the identity of The Detective Feluda and has been popular among film lovers in Bengal. The variations of this signature theme are still used in many Feluda series. Ray used multiple variations of this theme evolving as per the mood and setting of the sequence. Each Feluda film has its own unique signature theme with violin and upbeat rhythm which gives an instant feeling of adventure and thrill. The Feluda series films hardly have any additional music which can be said as background score. The only experimentations that we see in all the Feluda series is mostly with this same theme in its varied forms with altered instrumentations to highlight the premise of the scene.

Expressionism with Lyrics:

Lyrics are just like dialogs but they have the beauty of expressing a situation or a feeling in a careful and poetically crafted language. However, when it comes to Ray's choice of songs for his movies and specific scenes, it is more than feelings and emotions. For Ray, the lyrics are just not melodious poetries but also metaphors for the underlying contexts and concepts. Ray exploited some of the greatest songs written by famous songwriters like Rabindranath Tagore, Jyotirindronath Tagore, Mirabai, and songs of Vaishnav cult as well as his self-composed songs, in a manner that added meaning to the visual and established contexts and story arches.

In the film *Ghare Baire* (1984), an adaptation of a novel written by Rabindranath Tagore himself, Ray employed a blend of Western and Indian music to signify the context of the movie. Set during the preindependence period of Gandhi's Swadeshi movement the film was a story about Bimala, an educated housewife who got influenced by her husband's friend Sandip, a young Swadeshi movement leader. While Bimala's husband Nikhilesh was a pragmatic thinker and believed in the liberation of women, his friend Sandip was a pseudo-intellectual who believed in the extremity of the movement and had no guilt in burning down the houses of poor peasants who could not afford Khadi cloths. Nikhilesh believed in the value of Swadeshi and he appreciated Sandip's talent in public speaking. However, he was against the instigation of leaders to burn down homes and clothes of people forcefully which lead to the killing of many innocent lives. Nikhilesh argued that given the changing times, it is impossible to exclude foreign-manufactured goods completely. The country was not ready for self-sufficiency. He believed that there are a few good things in every culture (in western culture) which people can accept without harm. Nikhilesh wanted his wife to be socially and politically aware. He educated her and also arranged western classical piano and singing classes for her. Throughout the film, we see the contrast of Bimala's nature with respect to the other woman, etched out through the English songs and a Piano class scene. Unlike other women who would sing devotional songs and follow veil (*purdah*), Bimala would wear an English blouse, sing English songs and take piano training from Miss Gilbert. Bimala's knowledge about socio-political events in the country and her personality showed a blend of Indian and western culture. We see how Ray has used the piano and English songs to underline the fact that our society was turning into an adaptive and inclusive culture rather than an orthodox and conservative form of nationalism which the hypocritical leaders like Sandip preached but never practiced themselves. Sandip would rather go for English tea and imported Cigars while he disillusioned poor people and students into giving up on the essentials of their living.

In the movie *Pather Panchali* (1955), we often see Apu's aunt 'Pishima' (Chunibala Devi), singing a very traditional Bengali hymn '*Hari Din to Galo, Shondha Holo Paar koro*

Amare’ written by Kangal Harinath Majumdar. The meaning of this song goes like ‘Oh Lord, carry me across’. This appears as a quirk of Pishima, but the placement of this with the situations of the old lady and the kind of life she is living symbolizes the unbearable state of poverty- stricken human life. The lyrics symbolize that a person cannot bear the harshness of the mortal world and eagerly waits for her death, in fact requests the Lord to call her for her final journey.

This song becomes a strong visual motif, communicating the helplessness of the old lady as well as Apu’s family. Pishima sings the song when there is an eerie silence after the thunderstorm.

This comes across as a plea to God for protection. The song also plays after the death of Pishma, in her voice because throughout the movie, this song has been symbolic of Pishima’s presence as a theme.

In his Hindi language movie, *Shatranj Ke Khiladi* (1977), an adaptation of Premchand’s novel by the same name, Ray used Thumri songs to elaborate the feelings of the heartbroken Emperor Wajid Ali Shah of Awadh (Oudh). After the abdication of the throne of the constituency of Awadh to the British, the sensitive and art/literature-loving emperor, sings the song ‘*Jab Chod Chale Lucknow Nagri, Kahe haal ke humpar Kya Guzri*’, meaning being that he cannot explain his pain after leaving the city of Lucknow (Oudh). Not only this, but Ray has used the Thumris written by Wajid Ali Shah and implemented them merging with the story’s seriousness in a way that it doesn’t appear as a supportive element to the visual but defines the underlying meaning. In a scene where Wajid Ali Shah lost all hope of saving his kingdom, Ray used Wajid Ali Shah’s poetry to enhance the feelings of the moment.

*“Tadap tadap sagari rain gujari Kaun
des gayo sawariya
Hoa bhar aayi ankhiyaan madwari
Tadap tadap gayi chunariyaa”*

‘Tadap Tadap Sagri Rain’ reflects how disappointed and helpless the emperor felt after the betrayal from the British empire when they discarded the old treaty and confiscated Awadh on faulty grounds.

The musical trilogy of Goopi Gayen Bagha Byne, had a lasting impact on the viewers through its unique music and exceptionally beautiful composition of songs. We also find that the songs have played an essential part in defining the story arch. In the first part, soon after the Ghost Dance sequence, the king of ghosts blesses Goopi and Bagha with three boons. After waking up from his dream, Goopi tries to sing in his usual day-to-day style assuming that he would be no better than any other day and the boons were just a dream. To his surprise, he found that now he can sing exceptionally well. His happiness knows no limit. He was still skeptical and to convince himself that he is not dreaming, he tries an *Alaap* (set of critically arranged notes of music in Indian classical Ragas). He realizes that the boon was true and then he sings the song ‘*Dakho Re*’.

*“Dakhore noyon mele
Jogoter bahar
Diner aloi kate andhokar
Ki bahar
Diner aloi kate andhokar
Aha mori ki bahar”*

The song signifies the beauty of a new beginning, new dawn, new life, and new adventures that any fresh day would bring in a person’s life. Goopi is so happy that he tries to test his full range of voice. The scene is pictured in the same way as the song is composed i.e. totally aligned with the context. A person is just not singing randomly but testing the random uncertain change in his life which he has been dreaming of. Soon after he is convinced that he has got the boon of singing, he wakes up Bagha who also realizes that now he can play the drum like a professional. They both celebrate this new beginning by

singing the joyous song whose lyrics go like- ‘*Bhooter Raja Dilo Bor*’ (the ghost king’s gave us three boons).

The sequel of the same series, *Hirak Rajar Deshe* has a scene where Goopi and Bagha are stuck inside a jail cell where they have to access a secret chest. Soon they noticed that the chest is guarded by a tiger. Unsure of whether their boon of mesmerizing people with music would work on animals or not, Goopi is distracted and cannot concentrate on his singing. He is afraid of being devoured by the tiger and hence manages to sing in his disheveled fear-stricken voice, the song ‘*Paye Podi Baagh Mama*’ (We request you dear Tiger uncle). The song accompanies the comic visual of Goopi and Bagha trying to empty the chest while Goopi is singing a song to the Tiger. The songs of this musical trilogy are way more than just melodious rhymes but have deep literature value to them. The song “*Ora Joto Beshi Pore*” is a fine example of such work.

*“Ora Joto Beshi Pore
Toto Beshi Jaane
Toto Kom
Mane”*

The song tells that ‘the more they read, the more knowledge they get, the more they know and less they believe’. The song tells the importance of skeptical thinking and knowledge. The lack of which is used by the oppressors to oppress people.

Conclusion:

If film making is a part of visual storytelling, then music is its voice. Sound has the power to add context and metaphors in a visual and balance it. Indian cinema today has a long way to understand the intricacies of the use of good and appropriate music that has meaning behind it rather than garnishing the visuals without an underlying thought. We saw how Ray has created his musical auteur. He has set a new idiom from film music in Indian Cinema which will continue to inspire generations of film directors. It would be a loss for the creative world to ignore music from the point of view of visual communication because when we analyze the components and elements of visual communication and music, we find striking similarities in the structure of these two art forms. Music is both abstract and mathematical at the same time which makes art and music an inseparable unit of visual storytelling.

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