

DECLARATION

*The present thesis entitled ‘**PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN SATYAJIT RAY’S CINEMA – A Critical Analysis**’ is an original work carried out in the Department of Mass Communication, Assam University, Silchar, for the Degree of Ph.D. The work has been prepared and written under the supervision of Professor (Dr.) Gyan Prakash Pandey, Head, Department of Mass Communication, Assam University, Silchar. It has not been submitted in part or full for any Degree to this or any other University.*

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India is the largest producer of cinema in the world. The history of Indian cinema is almost as old as the history of world cinema. But it took many years to get maturity in terms of content and cinematic treatment. It was in the year 1957 with the making of *Pather Panchali* by Satyajit Ray the Indian cinema overnight shed off its nascent face. Indian audience for the first time witnessed a real world on the screen. Natural ambience , earthy people and natural feelings for the audience. No dancing around the trees, no hero-heroin, no theatrical make believe, everything was new. There was one more newness that was its female characters. Meaty, strong and earthy. That was a new face of Indian women depicted hitherto unknown in Indian screen.

Stronger women roles in Indian film are few and far between. Bollywood uses its women as metaphor for sufferings of the downtrodden or for India or alternatively as the stereotype of a restricted Indian woman's life. Strong female roles were witnessed first in parallel cinema and of course in Satyajit Ray's cinema.

Satyajit Ray appears to have an edge over the other film makers of India. His films have female characters of substance. In Ray's films, female characters got a new hue and dimension.

In Ray's films the female characters are always stronger, more determined, more adaptable and resilient than the men in his films. In Ray's word "*..... There have been many strong women characters in Tagore and in Bankimchandra. But it also reflects my own attitudes and personal experience of woman..... Although they are physically not as strong as men, nature gave women*

qualities which compensate for that fact. They are more honest, most direct, and by and large they are stronger characters. I am not talking about every woman, but the type of woman which fascinates me. The woman I like to put in my films is better able to cope with situations than man.”

The study will encompass the socio-economic-political and historical milieu in which the characters are set– their dreams, desires, failures, their voices etc. in the context of the aesthetic of cinema of Satyajit Ray.

Therefore, the proposed study aims at to re-explore the women characters of Satyajit Ray’s films.