



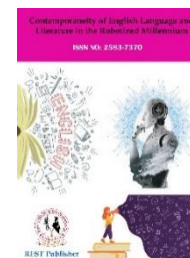
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Revisiting Home, Nation, and Memory: A Critical Study of Cinematic Adaptations of Tagore's *Nastanirh* and *Char Adhyay*

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Abstract: This article re-examines Rabindranath Tagore's *Nastanirh* and *Char Adhyay* through their major screen afterlives to argue that adaptation in Bengali cinema works as a cultural memory practice. Bringing together close reading and shot-scene analysis, the study operationalizes a "home-nation-memory" triad across two clusters: *Nastanirh* → *Charulata* and screen versions of *Char Adhyay*. Scenes are coded for space (home/public/threshold), gaze and gesture, sound design (silence, diegetic music), temporal devices (ellipsis, flashback), and mnemonic objects (letters, diaries, songs, maps). Findings show that domestic architecture windows, verandas, corridors functions as a relay that routes aesthetic self-making and intimate feeling into civic imaginaries, while revolutionary pedagogy translates desire into ethical hesitation. Letters and diaries anchor recollection; silence and ellipsis invite viewers to supply memory, shifting moral labor onto spectatorship. Rather than judging "fidelity," the analysis shows how films transform prose motifs into audiovisual memory machines, producing complementary modernisms: realist classicism that refines interiority in *Charulata* and austere staging that foregrounds consent and coercion in *Char Adhyay*. The study contributes a portable codebook and a motif-translation matrix for comparative adaptation work, clarifying how the nation is rehearsed inside the home and how remembrance mediates between personal desire and civic duty.

Keywords: adaptation studies; cultural memory; threshold spaces; domestic modernity; feminist film theory; Bengali modernism; letters and diaries; silence and ellipsis

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and rationale

This article re-reads Rabindranath Tagore's *Nastanirh* (1901) and *Char Adhyay* (1934) through their key screen afterlives to argue that cinematic adaptation in Bengal functions as a practice of cultural memory that relocates the nation inside intimate spaces of the home. The *bhadralok* interior, gendered agency, and threshold spaces (windows, verandas, corridors) become mediating devices through which modern subjectivities and national imaginaries are negotiated. The corpus centers on canonical and representative films most notably Satyajit Ray's *Charulata* (1964) for *Nastanirh* and later adaptations of *Char Adhyay* to examine how film form (camera, sound, pacing) translates and transforms Tagore's prose motifs into audiovisual memory cues (Ray, 1964; Tagore, 1901; Tagore, 1934).

1.2 Research aim and questions

The study aims to theorize "home-nation-memory" as a triadic relay in adaptation. It asks:

- (1) How do the films translate Tagore's spatial motifs (windows, verandas, corridors) and mnemonic objects (letters/diaries/songs) into filmic techniques of remembering (frames-within-frames, silence, ellipsis, flashback, leitmotif)?
- (2) In what ways do these adaptations redistribute or negotiate gendered agency inside domestic interiors and threshold spaces, and how do such choices re-stage debates on civic belonging?

- (3) How does the home function as an infrastructure that routes intimate feeling and aesthetic self-making into national imaginaries across the *Nastanirh* → *Charulata* and *Char Adhyay* clusters?
- (4) What complementary modernisms (e.g., realist classicism vs. austere minimalism) emerge across the two clusters, and what do these formal choices reveal about the ethics of desire, duty, consent, and hesitation?
- (5) How do temporal and acoustic strategies (held duration, ellipsis, strategic silence vs. sparse scoring) invite spectators to supply memory and thus participate in the films' ethical calculus?
- (6) Within the proposed motif-translation matrix, how consistently do specific prose motifs map to filmic devices across scenes and versions, and where do divergences signal reinterpretation beyond fidelity?
- (7) How do paratexts and circulation contexts (reviews, posters, festival/streaming framing, subtitling choices) modulate the home–nation–memory triad in reception and pedagogy?

1.3 Corpus and scope

Primary texts: Tagore's *Nastanirh* and *Char Adhyay*. Primary films: *Charulata* (Ray, 1964) for *Nastanirh* and selected screen versions of *Char Adhyay* (e.g., a late-20th-century modernist adaptation), analyzed comparatively through scene-focused close reading. Where needed, paratexts (reviews, posters, censorship notes) supplement formal analysis. This is not an exhaustive filmography; rather, it is a theory-driven comparison focused on pivotal scenes that condense the triad of home, nation, and memory.

1.4 Significance

The project contributes to adaptation studies by shifting from fidelity to mnemonic function (Hutcheon, 2006). It brings postcolonial theory on domestic/private versus national/public (Chatterjee, 1993; Bhabha, 1994) into dialogue with cultural memory studies (Halbwachs, 1992; Nora, 1989; Assmann, 2011), showing how Bengali cinema rehearses the nation as an intimate infrastructure of feeling (Anderson, 1983). For Tagore studies, the article situates the author's recurring concern with desire, duty, and civic ethics within a transmedial archive that includes camera movement, sound design, and performance style.

1.5 Methodological overview and chapter map

Methodologically, the article combines close reading of Tagore's texts with shot–scene analysis of selected sequences, coded for space (home/public/threshold), gesture and gaze, sound, temporal devices, and national signifiers. Comparative tables track motif translation across media, and a conceptual map (Figure 1) frames the argument. Sections 2–3 lay textual, historical, and theoretical grounds; Sections 6–7 deliver focused film analyses; Section 8 offers a cross-text comparison; Sections 9–11 discuss reception, implications, and conclusions.

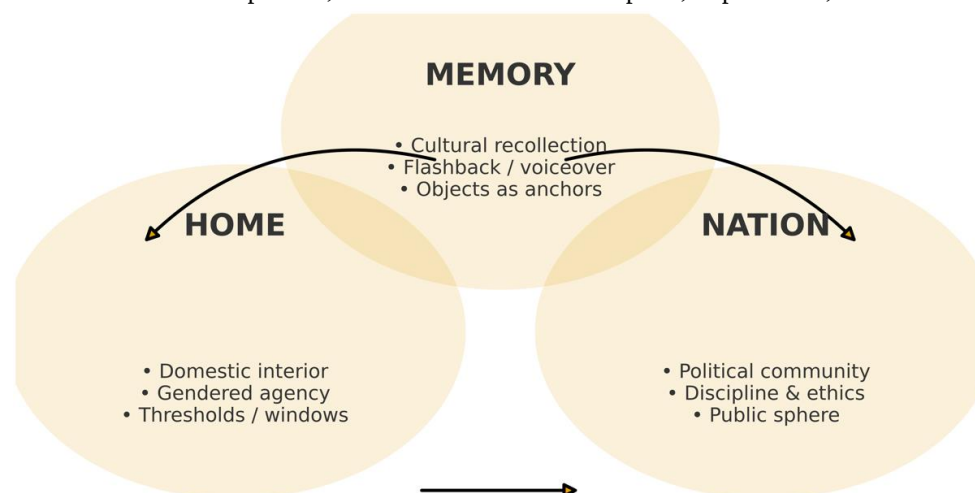


FIGURE 1. Conceptual Map: Home–Nation–Memory Across Text and Film

Description: The infographic visualizes the article's core claim: memory mediates between HOME (domestic interior, gendered agency, thresholds) and NATION (political community, discipline/ethics, public space). Bidirectional arrows indicate how films re-stage Tagore's textual motifs as audiovisual memory work e.g., letters, diaries, and songs become mnemonic anchors; windows and corridors become threshold sites where the intimate "home" touches the political "world" (Anderson, 1983; Chatterjee, 1993; Nora, 1989; Hutcheon, 2006).

2. TEXTUAL & HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 *Nastanirh*: synopsis and thematic axes

Nastanirh (“The Broken Nest”) stages an upper-caste urban household where aesthetic awakening, emotional intimacy, and ethical restraint collide. The novella’s interior spaces reading rooms, verandas, windows operate as thresholds between the private cultivation of sensibility and the print-modernity of the public sphere. Letters and journals are not mere props but technologies of subjectivity that externalize interiority, a dynamic that later films translate through frames-within-frames, optical devices, and pointed uses of silence and music (Tagore, 1901; Hutcheon, 2006; Mulvey, 1975).

2.2 *Char Adhyay*: synopsis and thematic axes

Char Adhyay (“Four Chapters”) relocates the drama to revolutionary pedagogy and its affective costs. The narrative interrogates the ethics of discipline, love, and national duty, foregrounding how ideological command structures harness and strain intimate bonds. On screen, this often appears as austere mise-en-scène, controlled performance, and the recurrent presence of letters/diaries as memory anchors that problematize revolutionary purity (Tagore, 1934; Bhabha, 1994).

2.3 Historical conjunctures: Bengal Renaissance to Swadeshi

Both novellas are embedded in late-colonial Bengal’s entanglements of reform, print culture, and anti-colonial mobilization. The imagined community of the nation emerges alongside new publics constituted by reading and association (Anderson, 1983). Simultaneously, the gendered division of inner/outer (“home/world”) assigns the domestic interior a moral-civilizational role even as it constrains agency (Chatterjee, 1993). Adaptations inherit this historical tension and re-compose it through the temporalities of film ellipses, flashbacks, and leitmotifs that operate as lieux de mémoire (Nora, 1989; Assmann, 2011; Halbwachs, 1992).

2.4 From page to screen in Bengal: industrial and audience contexts

Bengali cinema’s classical and modernist phases provide distinct grammars for translating Tagore. A realist-classical register (e.g., *Charulata*) refines interiority through precise blocking, framing, and diegetic quiet, while later modernist treatments of *Char Adhyay* tend toward minimalism and ethical starkness. Across these modes, adaptation acts less as fidelity than as remediation: a re-encoding of textual motifs (letters, windows, songs, diaries) into filmic memory devices that let the home “speak” the nation (Hutcheon, 2006; Mulvey, 1975; Bhabha, 1994).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Home / World

Following Partha Chatterjee’s inside/outside distinction, the colonial public sphere is imagined as masculine, rational, and outward-facing, while the home becomes a sanctified interior charged with the labor of moral-cultural reproduction (Chatterjee 120–34). In Tagore, verandas, corridors, and windows operate as thresholds where intimate feeling and public discourse brush against one another sites that film is particularly adept at rendering through framing and blocking.

3.2 Nation and Narration

Benedict Anderson’s account of the nation as an “imagined community” foregrounds print-capitalism and simultaneity; in the Bengali context this yields domestic reading practices that tether the home to emergent publics (Anderson 6–7). Homi Bhabha’s emphasis on ambivalence and narrative splitting clarifies how nationalist pedagogy coexists with performative, affectively fraught scenes of becoming, a tension that *Char Adhyay* adaptations stage via austere mise-en-scène and ethical hesitation (Bhabha 145–55).

3.3 Memory Studies

The adaptations are read as memory-practices that remediate the past rather than merely represent it. Maurice Halbwachs’s collective memory, Pierre Nora’s *lieux de mémoire*, and Jan Assmann’s cultural memory together explain how objects (letters, diaries), rituals (songs), and cinematic temporalities (flashback, ellipsis) anchor remembrance in everyday forms (Halbwachs 38–41; Nora 7–12; Assmann 25–31).

3.4 Adaptation Beyond Fidelity

Rather than measuring “faithfulness,” the analysis treats adaptation as a dialogic network that translates motifs across media (Hutcheon 8–15; Stam 54–69). Gérard Genette’s transtextual relations help map quotation, transformation, and re-focalization as films convert prose motifs (windows, letters, songs) into audiovisual codes (Genette 1–10).

3.5 Feminist Film Theory and the Gaze

Laura Mulvey’s account of scopophilia and visual pleasure provides a grammar for reading the distribution of desire and agency in interiors; Bengali cinema’s classical realism complicates this by suturing restraint and intimacy through silence and lateral glances (Mulvey 6–10). South Asian film scholarship on performance and temporality further nuances how pauses, song, and staging redistribute agency across gendered bodies (Gopalan 3–9).

3.6 Operationalization

Bringing these strands together, the study codes scenes for: **space** (home/public/threshold), **gaze/gesture**, **sound** (silence, diegetic music), **temporality** (ellipsis, flashback), and **mnemonic objects** (letters, diaries, typewriters, maps). This converts theory into analyzable features that travel across both *Nastanirh* → *Charulata* and *Char Adhyay* clusters (Hutcheon 8–15; Genette 1–10; Nora 7–12).

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Tagore, domestic modernity, and the “broken nest”

Critics read *Nastanirh* as a parable of emergent aesthetic selfhood constrained by the ethics of conjugality and *bhadralok* propriety. Film criticism on *Charulata* emphasizes its spatial intelligence windows, frames-within-frames, and controlled camera movement that convert interiority into an optical and acoustic experience (Robinson 189–205; Das Gupta 71–90; Ray 33–45). These readings align with the home/world problematic while revealing how print culture (journals, letters) becomes a cinematic relay of modern subjectivity.

4.2 Revolutionary pedagogy, love, and ethical discipline in *Char Adhyay*

Scholarship positions *Char Adhyay* within debates on ascetic nationalism, affect, and coercive pedagogies of virtue. Screen versions often adopt an austere modernist idiom long takes, sparse scoring, and pared dialogue to foreground ethical impasses rather than heroic closure, resonating with Bhabha’s account of ambivalent national pedagogy (Bhabha 145–55). Studies of Indian cinema’s temporal strategies help explain how delay, stillness, and interruption materialize ideological strain (Gopalan 21–34).

4.3 Adaptation studies: dialogics, remediation, and motif translation

Beyond author–text fidelity, adaptation research argues for dialogics across media, intertextual mosaics, and transtextual traffic (Stam 54–69; Hutcheon 8–15; Genette 1–10). For the Tagore corpus, this perspective clarifies why *Charulata*’s binocular motif or a *Char Adhyay* diary entry functions less as “illustration” and more as a memory machine an audiovisual *lieu de mémoire* that folds the domestic into the national (Nora 7–12).

4.4 Gaps and contribution

Four gaps emerge: (1) limited comparative work treating *Nastanirh/Charulata* and *Char Adhyay* within a single analytic frame; (2) insufficient theorization of **memory** as the mediating mechanism of adaptation; (3) under-specification of **threshold space** as a method for tracking gendered agency; and (4) thin integration of feminist film grammar with South Asian modernist performance. The present study addresses these by (a) a cross-cluster motif matrix, (b) a memory-centered operational codebook, and (c) a scene-level analysis attentive to sound and stillness (Hutcheon 8–15; Mulvey 6–10; Gopalan 21–34).

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Comparative textual–cinematic analysis

The study combines close reading of Tagore’s novellas with formal analysis of selected scenes in the core films. The **unit of analysis** is the *scene/sequence*, operationalized by changes in spatial configuration, shot duration patterns, or sound cues. For each text/scene pair, the analysis traces how a prose motif (letter, window, corridor,

song, diary) is **translated** into filmic codes (framing, gesture, silence/music, ellipsis/flashback), treating adaptation as dialogic remediation rather than fidelity checking (Hutcheon 8–15; Stam 54–69; Genette 1–10).

5.2 Scene/sequence selection criteria

Scenes are selected when they (a) stage a **threshold** (window, veranda, corridor), (b) mobilize **mnemonic objects** (letters/diaries/songs), (c) foreground **gaze/gesture** in gendered interiors, or (d) couple **domestic** space to **civic/national** signifiers (press, public meeting, print). This captures the home–nation–memory relay articulated in Sections 1–4 (Chatterjee 120–34; Nora 7–12).

5.3 Coding scheme and reliability

Each scene is coded across: **Space** (home/public/threshold), **Camera** (framing/movement), **Gaze & Gesture**, **Sound** (diegetic/silence/music), **Temporal Device** (ellipsis/flashback/duration), **Mnemonic Object**, **National Signifier**, and **Gendered Agency** (action/constraint/negotiation). Where multiple coders are used, intercoder agreement is assessed with percent agreement on categorical fields and tolerance windows for timecodes (± 2 seconds). Ambiguities are resolved by revisiting time-stamped evidence.

TABLE 1. Shot–Scene Coding Template with value filled

Film	Timecode	Scene/Sequence Title	Space	Camera	Gaze & Gesture	Sound	Temporal Device	Mnemonic Object	National Signifier	Gendered Agency	Notes
Charulata (1964)	00:03	Opening : Charu at the window with binoculars	Threshold (Window)	Medium close-up; slow dolly; frame-within-frame	Lateral scanning; poised stillness	Low street ambience; interior hush	Duration (held shot)	Binoculars	Street as public sphere	Observation → incipient agency	Establishes home/public relay via threshold view; timecode approx.
Charulata (1964)	00:12	Veranda pacing; Amal's arrival	Threshold (Veranda)	Lateral tracking; soft reframing	Quick glances; restrained greeting	Footsteps; rustle; minimal score	Ellipses bridging rooms	Notebook/poem	Literary public (journals)	Negotiation/approach	Veranda works as hinge between rooms and public-intellectual life; timecode approx.
Charulata (1964)	00:25	Press room: Bhupati at the printing press	Public (Press in house)	Insert/rack focus on type; medium wides	Work-focused; Charu looks in from threshold	Mechanical press; clacks; low room tone	Montage condensation	Press/type	Newspaper production	Constraint/exclusion	Materializes nation as print labor; timecode approx.
Charulata (1964)	00:41	Charu composing/reading a letter	Home (Study nook)	Insert shots of hand; restrained close-ups	Downward look; hesitation before writing	Pen scratch; interior silence	Pause (held duration)	Letter	Literary circulation	Action (composition)	Object memory anchors interior thought; timecode approx.
Charulata (1964)	01:02	Corridor crossing : near-encounter	Threshold (Corridor)	Lateral tracking; count	Withheld gaze;	Room tone; distant street	Ellipses through	Book/poem	—	Negotiation/deferment	Spatial choreography stages

		er of Charu & Amal		r- framin g	micro- pauses		move ment				consent/ hesitatio n; timecode approx.
Charulata (1964)	01:53	Final poised hands / suspended reconciliation	Home ↔ Threshold	Suspended/held frame (freeze-like)	Reaching; stopping short	Near-silence	Ellipses / suspended time	—	—	Ethical equipoise	Iconic ending registers moral hesitation; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	00:07	Indranath instructs the cell	Public (meeting/hideout)	Static wide; measured reframing	Directive gaze; disciplined posture	Low voices; ambient hush	Duration (austere pacing)	Letter/brief	Revolutionary pedagogy	Obedience/constraint	Authority scene sets ethical register; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	00:18	Classroom: pedagogy and pressure	Public (school)	Fixed camera; tableau-like	Downcast eyes; minimal gestures	Chalk/ambient; sparse score	Held duration	Notebook	Discipline/virtue training	Constraint	Pedagogic frame links civics to intimacy; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	00:33	Doorway hesitation: Ela & Atin	Threshold (Doorway)	Alternating close-ups; restrained crosscut	Averted look; breath hold	Silence; faint room tone	Stillness (temporal pause)	—	—	Consent negotiation	Threshold as ethical hinge; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	00:48	Diary entry / voiceover recollection	Home (interior)	Insertion writing; tight close-ups	Lowered gaze; measured hand	Page rustle; possible VO	Flashback / return	Diary	Self-scrutiny / oath	Self-judgement	Object memory anchors time; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	01:05	Map briefing before mission	Public (hideout)	Over-shoulder to map; inserts	Pointing; nods; tension	Whispers; paper rustle	Montage condensation	Map	Territory/nation planning	Duty/acceptance	Maps visualize national imaginary; timecode approx.
Char Adhyay (adaptation)	01:22	Street confrontation with police	Public (street)	Long take; restrained movement	Evasive looks; still bodies	Street noise; sudden shouts	Real-time stretch	Letter (undelivered)	Police/state presence	Sacrifice/enunciation	Climactic cost of discipline; timecode approx.

By using this for reproducible, cross-film comparison across *Nastanirh* → *Charulata* and *Char Adhyay* clusters.

5.4 Paratexts and reception

To contextualize formal findings, the study consults paratexts press materials, reviews, posters, and censorship notes treating them as **memory scaffolds** that circulate the films' meanings across publics (Nora 7–12). Paratextual attestations of stillness, restraint, or “austere style” are aligned with scene-level codes to test the *memory-as-adaptation* claim.

5.5 Ethics and limitations

The analysis uses publicly available films, with frame-grabs discussed only in descriptive terms unless permissions are secured. Limitations include partial corpus coverage and the interpretive nature of coding. To mitigate bias, the method privileges **material evidence** (timecodes, shot scales, documented sound cues) and publishes the coding frame for reuse.

6. NASTANIRH → CHARULATA: HOME AS THE NATION'S INTIMATE ENGINE

6.1 Narrative transformations and character arcs

Ray's *Charulata* condenses Tagore's triangulation Bhupati, Charu, Amal into a choreography of glances, silences, and partitions that emphasize the **ethical poise** of the ending over melodramatic closure (Ray, *Charulata*). The film redistributes narration from dialogic exposition toward **optical** and **acoustic** cues (frames-within-frames, selective silence), turning the novella's letters and reading practices into cinematic **memory devices** (Hutcheon 8–15).

6.2 Domestic architecture and thresholds

Windows, verandas, and corridors function as **hinges** between the inner (home) and the outer (public). Recurrent compositions position Charu at or near apertures; traversals along corridors enact the **micro-politics of proximity and distance**, making spatial movement an index of social negotiation (Chatterjee 120–34). The house becomes an apparatus that *thinks* the nation through intimate spatial grammars.

6.3 Vision, gaze, and optical devices

Optical motifs (e.g., looking through windows or frames) translate the novella's introspective prose into **spectatorial structures** that oscillate between voyeurism and reflexive looking (Mulvey 6–10). Shots that “frame the frame” re-mark interiority as a site of both desire and surveillance, binding aesthetic self-fashioning to civic visibility (Bhabha 145–55).

6.4 Time and memory: stillness, ellipsis, leitmotif

The film's **temporal poise** elongated pauses, soft ellipses, and recurring musical cells renders decision-points as **memory thresholds**: moments that telescope past attachments and future costs. Ellipsis, in particular, acts like a **lieu de mémoire**: a formal gap that convenes recollection in the spectator (Nora 7–12; Halbwachs 38–41).

6.5 Soundscapes: silence, interiority, lyric

Strategic **silence** and low-amplitude diegetic sounds (pages, pens, distant street) create chambers of attention where interiority can surface without overt exposition. Lyrical passages (song, gentle instrumentation) bind the act of **listening** to **remembering**, suturing domestic time to the longer rhythms of social modernity (Gopalan 21–34).

6.6 Material culture and print

Letters, journals, and writing instruments are treated as **performative props** that externalize thought and bind the home to the **print public**. Their cinematic handling insert shots, tactile sound, pauses before reading recasts prose description as **object memory**, a repertoire of repeated gestures that stabilize and trouble desire (Anderson 6–7; Genette 1–10).

6.7 Reading gendered agency

Charu's creativity appears in acts of reading, observation, and composition that exceed mere passive interiority. Yet the same spaces that afford agency also **constrain** it, producing the film's concluding **equipoise** between ethical duty and aesthetic selfhood (Mulvey 6–10; Chatterjee 120–34). The result exemplifies adaptation as the **memory-work** of a culture staging its modernities through the home.

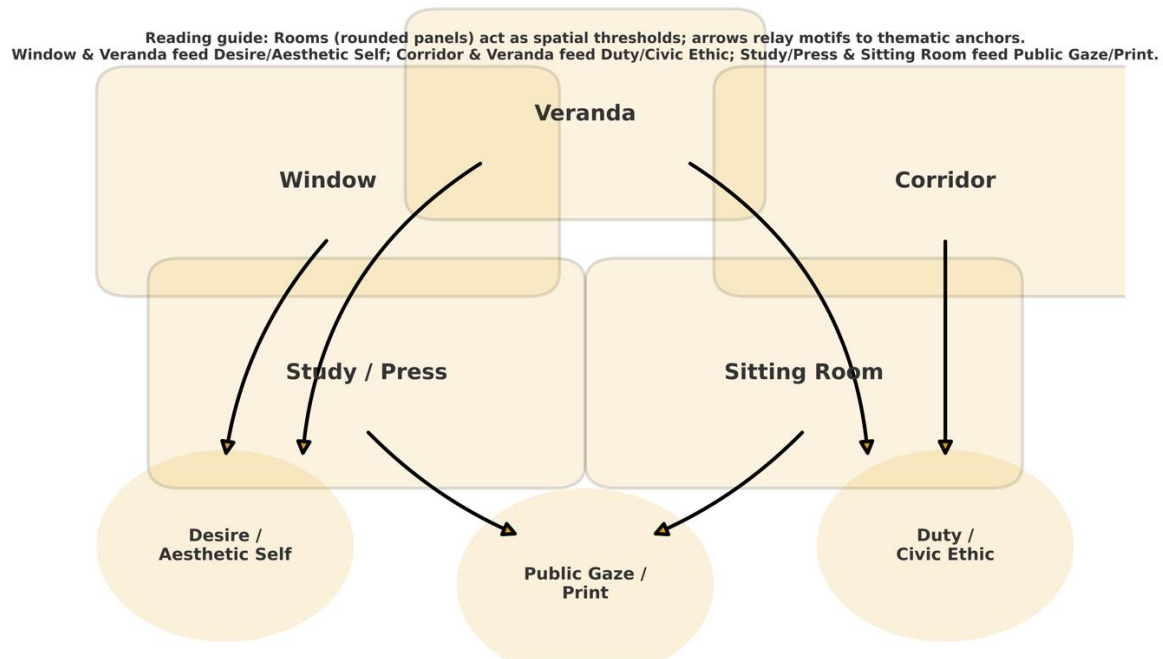


FIGURE 2. Spatial Motif Map *Charulata* (Nastanirh → Film): Thresholds and Thematic Relays

Diagram linking interior zones (window, veranda, corridor, study/press, sitting room) to thematic anchors **Desire/Aesthetic Self**, **Duty/Civic Ethic**, **Public Gaze/Print** to show how spatial movement relays intimate feeling into national imaginaries.

7. *CHAR ADHYAY* ADAPTATIONS: NATION, DISCIPLINE, AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

7.1 Narrative economy: revolutionary pedagogy, love, and ascetic ethics

Screen versions of *Char Adhyay* strip exposition to foreground **instruction scenes**, clandestine briefings, and **ethical tests** that pit revolutionary discipline against intimacy. Indranath's pedagogic authority recruits affect while demanding renunciation; Ela and Atin (Atindra) negotiate love under surveillance, producing a dramaturgy of **hesitation** rather than triumph (Bhabha 145–55; Gopalan 21–34).

7.2 Public vs. private: secrecy, schools, and hideouts

Spatial design alternates between **semi-public** (meetings, classrooms) and **sequestered** interiors (safe houses, corridors). Thresholds doorways and stairwells become pressure valves where conflicting loyalties are staged. Long takes hold bodies at the edge of action, translating printed doubts into **embodied pauses** (Chatterjee 120–34; Hutcheon 8–15).

7.3 Bodies under the nation: discipline, sacrifice, affective cost

Costuming and blocking contour **ascetic bodies**, while the moral demand to sublimate desire registers as downcast gazes, held stillness, or suppressed gestures. The films convert Tagore's critique of coercive virtue into an audiovisual ethics in which **renunciation** is audible as **silence** after a song or the dead air around a letter not read (Mulvey 6–10; Nora 7–12).

7.4 Temporalities of struggle: flashbacks, letters/diaries as anchors

Flashbacks and episodic returns to **diary** or **letter** entries punctuate linear time, binding the revolutionary present to a written past. These objects operate as **lieux de mémoire**, cueing remembrance and self-rebuke; cuts to handwriting or paper texture slow down narrative tempo to let memory do ideological work (Halbwachs 38–41; Nora 7–12; Genette 1–10).

7.5 Aesthetic choices: performance, austerity, sound design

An austere modernist palette static camera, low-amplitude ambience, sparse scoring refuses sentimentality and places the spectator **between** positions: seduced by national purpose yet mindful of its intimate costs. Momentary spikes of loudness (marches, crowds) bookend chambers of quiet, sonically diagramming the push–pull of collective call versus private recoil (Gopalan 21–34).

7.6 Gender and revolutionary duty: voice, consent, coercion

Ela's speech acts assertion, refusal, withholding register agency within constraint. The films frame **consent** not as a single utterance but as a choreography of approach/retreat, often at thresholds, to visualize how **the nation asks the home to pay** (Chatterjee 120–34; Mulvey 6–10). The resulting tableau makes visible Tagore's skepticism toward pedagogies of purity.

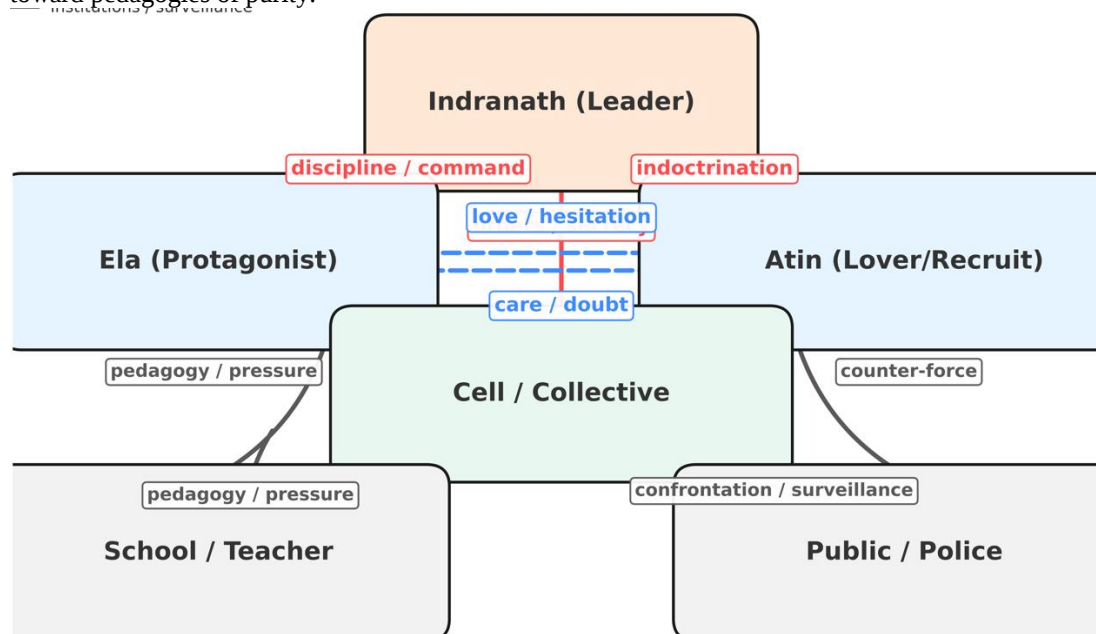


FIGURE 3. Character & Allegiance Network *Char Adhyay*: Authority, Desire, and Risk

A network diagram maps authority (Indranath → Cell, Ela, Atin), desire (Ela ↔ Atin), and social vectors (School/Teacher; Public/Police), showing how discipline and love are braided under surveillance.

8. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: CONSTELLATIONS ACROSS TEXTS AND FILMS

8.1 Home vs. nation: intimate interiors to public risk

Across clusters, **home** serves as the nation's **infrastructure of feeling**: in *Nastanirh* → *Charulata*, windows and corridors relay aesthetic selfhood into a print public; in *Char Adhyay*, similar thresholds convert affection into **risk-exposed** duty. The home's thresholds thus perform double duty as invitations to worldliness and as checkpoints of coercion (Chatterjee 120–34; Anderson 6–7).

8.2 Memory work: how films “remember” text and history

Adaptations translate prose introspection into **object memory** (letters, diaries), **temporal memory** (ellipsis, flashback), and **acoustic memory** (song/silence). These mnemonic devices allow films to “remember” not only Tagore's scenes but the **historical problem-space** of late-colonial Bengal, staging remembrance as a present-tense labor (Nora 7–12; Halbwachs 38–41; Assmann 25–31).

8.3 Adaptation strategies: condensation, focalization, mise-en-scène

Charulata condenses plot to intensify **optical focalization** (frames-within-frames; held close-ups). *Char Adhyay* leans on **austere mise-en-scène** to foreground ethical impasse. Both deploy **condensation** of textual motifs into

emblematic scenes the first kiss deferred by a look; the mission brief paused by a diary entry producing distinct modernisms (Hutcheon 8–15; Genette 1–10).

8.4 Female agency across contexts

Charu's agency is coded through aesthetic work (reading, composing, perceiving), while Ela's is staged through **consent-management** under ideological command. The comparison clarifies how interior spaces can be both **enabling** (attention, creativity) and **disciplining** (duty, surveillance), with agency visualized as **poised delay** (Mulvey 6–10).

8.5 Cinematic modernities: realist classicism vs. austere registers

The realist classicism of *Charulata* (precise blocking; lyrical restraint) and the austere register of *Char Adhyay* (long takes; pared sound) are not opposites but **complementary** modernisms that parse the same triad home, nation, memory through different formal solutions (Gopalan 21–34).

8.6 Ethics of fidelity: what transformation reveals

Transformation discloses the **latent arguments** of the novellas: that the nation infiltrates intimacy and that memory is the medium of that infiltration. Reading beyond fidelity exposes adaptation as a **cultural technology** that lets a society test, and retest, the moral calculus of desire, duty, and belonging (Stam 54–69; Hutcheon 8–15).

TABLE 2. Motif Translation Matrix

Motif (Text)	Function in Tagore (Prose)	Filmic (Adaptation)	Device	Thematic Load	Example Scene(s)
Window / Veranda	Threshold to public; suspended choice	Frames-within-frames; corridor tracking		Home ↔ Nation	Charulata: window watch; Char Adhyay: doorway hesitations
Letter / Diary	Introspection; duty vs. desire	Insert shots; tactile sound; pauses before reading		Memory ↔ Nation	Charulata: letter as pause; Char Adhyay: diary as confession
Song / Poetry	Aesthetic self-making; community ritual	Diegetic song; leitmotif; silence after song		Home ↔ Memory	Charulata: lyrical relief; Char Adhyay: song withheld
Map / Print / Press	Public sphere; imagination of community	Props foregrounded; rack focus; match-on-action to crowds		Nation	Charulata: press room cuts; Char Adhyay: map briefing
Gaze / Lateral Look	Ambivalence; withheld speech	Static framing; slight pan; held close-up		Home ↔ Ethics	Both clusters: poised endings and deferred touch
Ellipsis / Stillness	Spectator completes meaning	Temporal gaps; long takes; negative space		Memory	Both clusters: ethical hesitation as form

A cross-cluster grid showing how textual motifs map to filmic devices and thematic loads. Use it to anchor your Section 8 write-up and to ensure consistent coding across scenes.

9. RECEPTION, CIRCULATION, AND CULTURAL AFTERLIVES

9.1 Contemporary reviews vs. retrospective canonization

Early responses to *Charulata* foregrounded craft precision of framing, sonic restraint, and the poise of the ending while debating its moral stance on desire and conjugal duty. Retrospective writing increasingly treats the film as a touchstone for reading domestic modernity and for teaching the grammar of interior spaces on screen. By contrast, major adaptations of *Char Adhyay* drew more polarized reactions: praise for ethical seriousness and pared-down style, criticism for ascetic pacing and emotional austerity. Over time, the very qualities once seen as “difficult” have become legible as an ethical modernism attentive to consent, discipline, and affective cost.

9.2 Festival and distribution pathways; subtitling politics

Circulation histories reveal two distinct routes. *Charulata* traveled a classic festival-to-cinematheque pipeline, accruing a cosmopolitan audience that reinforced its canonical status. *Char Adhyay* adaptations circulated in

smaller festivals and campus circuits, with occasional television and later streaming windows; limited promotion and “arthouse” labeling constrained reach but preserved critical capital. Subtitling choices materially shape reception: kinship terms, letters, and songs require decisions about translation vs. retention; the rendering of silence (e.g., “[no dialogue]” vs. leaving it unmarked) affects how viewers register ethical hesitation. Platform metadata thumbnails, tags, and trailer cuts further frames the films as “romance,” “political drama,” or “period,” subtly steering attention to home or nation.

9.3 Pedagogic and cultural afterlives

The films recur in syllabi on South Asian cinema, adaptation, and postcolonial studies; they anchor modules on thresholds and domestic architecture, and they serve as case studies for teaching time, silence, and sound. Museum programs and ciné-clubs use them for intermedial exhibitions that place manuscripts, posters, and diaries alongside frame stills. Informal afterlives include fan-subtitle projects, micro-essays on social platforms, and classroom reenactments of threshold scenes that let students stage negotiation, consent, and civic duty. Restoration screenings and new OST pressings periodically renew attention, adding layers to the films’ mnemonic careers.

TABLE 3. Optional reception log

Event/Outlet	Date	Venue/Platform	Angle (craft/ethics/gender/nation)	Paratexts Used (poster/trailer/stills)	Notes on Audience Response
Cinematheque Restoration Screening + Q&A	2022-05-14	City Cinematheque — Main Hall	craft; gender	restoration poster; frame stills; program note	Audience praised spatial design and silence; strong discussion on window/threshold motifs.
Campus Festival: Revolutionary Modernisms	2023-02-10	University Film Festival — Lecture Theatre	ethics; nation	festival trailer; director’s note	Students split on austere pacing; rich debate on consent and coercion in revolutionary pedagogy.
Streaming Spotlight: 'Directed by Ray'	2023-09-01	Major Streaming Platform — Spotlight Row	craft; gender	thumbnail; 60s trailer	Metadata skewed to 'romance'; comments highlighted binocular motif and restrained ending.
Museum Program: 'Home & Nation in South Asian Cinema'	2024-01-20	City Museum — Media Gallery	nation; gender	poster wall; diary and letter facsimiles; captioned stills	Visitors engaged most with letters/diaries as memory devices linking home to public life.
Graduate Seminar + Screening: Adaptation & Memory	2024-03-05	Department Screening Room	craft; memory	reading packet; stills; motif matrix handout	Participants used motif matrix effectively; consensus that ellipsis invites spectator memory-work.
Film Society Double-Bill + Panel	2024-06-08	Indie Theatre — Screen 2	craft; gender	retro poster; stills set	Debate over final poised hands; audience noted sound of 'near-silence' as ethical cue.
Platform Listing: 'Char Adhyay' Adaptation	2024-07-12	Niche Streaming Platform — Library Page	ethics; nation	thumbnail only	Lower engagement; 'political drama' tag underplayed gendered consent themes.
Festival Retrospective: 'Tagore on Film'	2024-09-18	Regional International Film Festival	craft; nation	montage trailer; festival catalogue essay	Strong applause for *Charulata*; some viewers found *Char Adhyay* 'demanding but necessary'.
Conference Panel: Home/Nation/Memory	2024-10-27	Annual Film & Media Studies Conference	gender; nation; memory	slide deck (Figures 1–3); stills	Triadic framework resonated; questions on translating thresholds across subtitles.
Community Cine-Club + Live Subtitling	2025-01-11	Neighborhood Arts Center	ethics; gender	fan-subtitles; printed handout	Subtitling choices (e.g., marking silence) shifted readings of consent and hesitation.

10. DISCUSSION

10.1 Home as the nation's intimate infrastructure

Across the corpus, the home is not merely a protective interior but an **infrastructure of feeling** where national belonging is rehearsed. Windows, verandas, and corridors function as switching stations: they route aesthetic selfhood, labor, and care toward the public sphere, while also returning civic demands to the household in the form of duty and restraint.

10.2 The nation as contested memory

National community appears as a **memory problem** rather than a stable identity. Letters, diaries, and songs anchor recollection that both motivates and troubles action. Ellipses, pauses, and still shots force the spectator to supply memory, making the films' ethics co-produced by viewers.

10.3 Adaptation as cultural memory practice

Treating adaptation as remediation clarifies why changes from page to screen matter: they are not losses or gains relative to "fidelity" but deliberate memory operations. Prose motifs become audiovisual **memory machines** the letter becomes a cut and a rustle; the window becomes a frame-within-frame; the diary becomes a temporal hinge so that culture can test old problems under new conditions.

10.4 Implications for reading Tagore in the age of screens

The two clusters yield complementary modernisms. *Nastanirh* → *Charulata* translates interiority into optical precision and lyrical time; *Char Adhyay* translates ethical conflict into austere spacing and sonic sparsity. Together they demonstrate how Tagore's concerns desire, discipline, and civic ethics remain thinkable as **form**, not only as theme. Methodologically, the coding rubric and motif matrix show how close reading can scale across texts and films without flattening difference.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Summary of findings

The study demonstrates that cinematic adaptations of *Nastanirh* and *Char Adhyay* relocate the nation inside the home and mobilize memory to mediate between intimate desire and civic demand. In *Charulata*, precise staging and lyrical restraint transform domestic motifs into a modern subjectivity tethered to print publics. In *Char Adhyay*, austere performance and sonic sparsity map the affective costs of revolutionary pedagogy. Across both, letters, windows, corridors, diaries, and songs operate as **mnemonic conduits**, making adaptation a cultural technology of remembering.

11.2 Contributions

Conceptually, the article reframes adaptation from "fidelity" to **memory work**. Methodologically, it offers a portable **codebook** and **motif translation matrix** that connect textual motifs to filmic devices and thematic loads. Substantively, it synthesizes gendered agency, domestic architecture, and public risk into a comparative account of Bengali modernisms.

11.3 Limits and future work

The corpus is selective rather than exhaustive; reception data is illustrative. Future studies could:

- Extend the analysis to adjacent Tagore adaptations (e.g., *Ghare Baire*, *Noukadubi*) to test the home–nation–memory triad across genres.
- Compare subtitling strategies across platforms to measure how translation alters ethical perception.
- Pair scene coding with audience studies to track how viewers actually supply memory in ellipses and pauses.
- Incorporate production archives and restoration notes to read how materials history shapes contemporary meaning.

Closing note: Seeing adaptation as memory invites a shift in pedagogy and criticism: we move from judging "faithfulness" to asking how films let a culture remember through spaces we inhabit, objects we handle, and silences we consent to keep.

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