



The Nation's Unfinished Business: Caste, Exile, and Postcolonial Betrayal in Ritwik Ghatak's *Subarnarekha*

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Abstract: This article reads Ritwik Ghatak's *Subarnarekha* (completed in 1962; released in 1965) as a critique of the caste boundaries reproduced within a refugee community after Partition. It develops the concept of internal partition to describe how Ishwar's household grants Abhiram conditional belonging but rejects his marriage to Sita. Close readings of sound, landscape, institutional space, and the catastrophic recognition scene show how Ghatak's melodrama makes the incomplete promise of postcolonial freedom perceptible. The interpretation draws on Partition and Dalit scholarship while acknowledging that Abhiram's story remains mediated through bhadrakalok guilt. By keeping formal analysis close to caste and kinship, the essay explains how exclusion survives inside a community already marked by displacement.

Keywords: Ritwik Ghatak; *Subarnarekha*; internal partition; caste; Partition cinema; melodrama; Dalit studies; film sound



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The Nation's Unfinished Business: Caste, Exile, and Postcolonial Betrayal in Ritwik Ghatak's *Subarnarekha*

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Introduction

The opening sequence of Ritwik Ghatak's *Subarnarekha* (Ghatak, 1965) makes its political tension audible before its characters can explain it. Credits on parchment-like scrolls invoke the written register of history; a piercing female cry unsettles the visual order. The juxtaposition is not an opposition between truthful sound and deceptive image. Rather, it opens a gap between an official chronicle's promise of legibility and experiences of suffering that cannot easily be accommodated within it. As Biswas (2004) suggests in his reading of the film's chronicle imagery, Ghatak makes history a problem of cinematic form from the outset.

Ghatak completed the film in 1962, and it was released in 1965.¹ *Subarnarekha* is commonly discussed alongside *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (Ghatak, 1960) and *Komal Gandhar* (Ghatak, 1961) as the final part of Ghatak's Partition Trilogy.² Scholars have approached these films through epic form, myth, gender, melodrama, and historical memory (Rajadhyaksha, 1982; Rajadhyaksha & Willemen, 1999). Biswas (2004) reads kinship as a historically charged problem rather than a private domain; Bhaskar (2021) likewise situates Ghatak's cinema within the longer crisis of divided Bengal. These accounts differ, but they agree that political history is not simply illustrated by Ghatak's images: it is shaped by his audiovisual construction of narrative, relation, and loss.

The historical stakes require a distinction between the varied populations displaced by Partition. Large numbers of people crossed from East Bengal into West Bengal after 1947, among them upper-caste bhadralok families, rural laborers, lower-caste communities, and refugees whose experiences of rehabilitation differed sharply.³ The educated Bengali middle class brought particular investments in language, literature, rivers, and the cultural memory of undivided Bengal. Yet those investments were

not representative of all refugees. *Subarnarekha* locates much of its tragedy within this *bhadralok* world while allowing its exclusions to become part of the film's critique. Material rehabilitation might provide a job or a dwelling without restoring relations of trust, intimacy, or equitable social membership. The film treats the lost promise of home as a historical problem, not a universal cultural essence.

The violence of 1947 did not end with the drawing of the Radcliffe Line.⁴ In *Subarnarekha*, external borders become entwined with older social divisions. I use the phrase *internal partition* to describe a specific contradiction: a community wounded by exclusion reinstates a boundary within its own relationships, directing it against people granted only conditional belonging. This is not a metaphor for every social difference. In the film, caste functions as a concrete system of hierarchy: Ishwar's household offers Abhiram care and education but rejects the possibility that he might marry Sita. The internal border persists through inherited habit, fear, and the policing of kinship, even where no new territorial line is drawn.

The concept of internal partition draws on postcolonial accounts of hierarchy after independence, especially Chatterjee (1993) and Nandy (1983), while remaining grounded in Dalit studies' insistence that the experience of nationalist injury did not automatically undo caste privilege (Guru, 2009). As the film's central crisis makes clear, the border Ishwar draws between himself and Abhiram, the Dalit child he has raised, repeats the logic of partition within the domestic space: the defense of imagined communal homogeneity against a figure retrospectively marked as difference.

The article proceeds in four movements. The first examines sound, repetition, and landscape as ways of registering historical rupture. The second considers the refugee colony, foundry, and household as settings of incomplete rehabilitation. The third makes the relation between caste and kinship central to the concept of internal partition, with particular attention to the recognition scene. The final section examines the political force of melodrama when recognition fails to produce

reconciliation. Throughout, formal observation supplies the evidence for the political claim rather than illustrating a thesis established in advance.

Sound, Structure, and the Limits of the Image

In *Cinema and I* and *Rows and Rows of Fences*, Ghatak treats sound as a constitutive element of cinema rather than an ornamental accompaniment (Ghatak, 1987, 2000). In *Subarnarekha*, Bahadur Khan's score, vocal performance, ambient noise, and abruptly displaced music create tensions that dialogue alone cannot settle. Sound can direct attention toward lives that the narrative's dominant perspectives leave at its margins. The argument is therefore not that sound always tells the truth while images conceal it, but that their disjunction can expose the limits of a settled historical account.

The credits introduce this disjunction through an abrupt cry against chronicle-like writing. The scroll seems to promise ordered sequence; the sound cuts into that order without assigning the listener a stable source or explanation. The cry registers an experience that exceeds official narrative sequence, but it also asks spectators to work through the relation between sound and image rather than accepting either as complete. The political relevance to internal partition becomes clearer as the film proceeds: private and caste-marked losses struggle to find representation within the larger story of national recovery.

Sita's songs by the river continue this work through changes in musical mood and the relation between voice and landscape. Rather than assigning a fixed emotional meaning to each raga, it is more useful to attend to how singing extends beyond the immediate exchange among characters and gives the riverbank a remembered temporal depth. The scene binds intimacy to a landscape that is simultaneously a place of refuge and a reminder of what has been lost.

The nightclub sequence complicates the soundtrack further. Ishwar and Haraprasad drink in Calcutta while music associated with Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (Fellini, 1960) forms a dissonant background to invocations of Sanskrit learning and cultural loss. The juxtaposition places elite self-

consciousness beside indulgence and despair; it is not simply a condemnation of Western influence. Ghatak's own reflections on *Subarnarekha* are useful here because they describe the film's engagement with despair and the refusal to treat it as an end in itself (Ghatak, 2015). Haraprasad's denial of historical catastrophes suggests the temptation of cultivated oblivion. The question for the present argument is what such a culture can recognize beyond its own injury, including caste-marked losses within the refugee population.⁵

The sequence surrounding Abhiram's mother, Kaushalya, introduces a sharper asymmetry of recognition. The station scene links her frail body, Abhiram's recognition, Ishwar's reaction, the surrounding crowd, and a passing train through rapidly shifting attention. Rather than claiming that her death is wholly invisible or replaced by a single sound cue, the sequence can be read as denying her a sustained, individualized moment of mourning. The train's movement and noise carry the scene onward even as Abhiram identifies his mother. This rhythm is politically consequential: her recognition establishes Abhiram's caste-marked position in Ishwar's eyes, while her own history remains only briefly apprehended. Internal partition begins to take shape in this disparity between who is remembered and who is allowed to belong.

The scene's arrangement of looking also deserves attention. Abhiram approaches the injured woman as another figure enters the station, while the crowd's shifting focus divides the spectator's attention between personal recognition and public commotion. The camera's changing proximity does not place all viewers and characters on equal footing: what Abhiram recognizes as a relation of care is quickly reinterpreted by Ishwar as evidence of a prohibited social origin. This is an especially important distinction for the argument. The ethical significance of the mother's appearance is not reducible to a caste label, even though the household later treats it as such. Ghatak's sequence exposes how a vulnerable life can be apprehended primarily as information about someone else's social status. Read

alongside Banerjee's (2023) account of the limitations of bhadralok cultural memory, the scene reveals the uneven distribution of narrative attention within the story of refugee loss.

Landscape is equally important to the film's historical imagination. Dilip Ranjan Mukhopadhyay's cinematography returns to dry ground, the riverbank, railway crossings, and the remains of a British military airstrip. The airstrip is not merely a picturesque ruin. Its appearance during the children's play joins personal anticipation to the debris of war and empire. Space thus carries histories that the characters do not fully know, while the promised "new home" remains uncertain. This does not mean that the postcolonial landscape is empty or uninhabited; it means that the characters cannot assume stable possession of it. The contrast between the river's evocative name and the precarious life built along its banks gives this uncertainty visual form.

The final return to the river creates a structural echo rather than a completed circle. Sita's childhood question about a new home recurs when her son Binu approaches the same landscape with Ishwar. The repeated question changes meaning because Sita and Abhiram are absent. The film does not offer their return as compensation, and Ishwar's tentative answer cannot restore what has been lost. A new generation inherits not the memory of a single territorial crossing, but a pattern of family rupture and failed inclusion. The editing of the return, together with the reused landscape and remembered song, gives repetition its historical weight.

Colony, Foundry, House: The Topography of an Incomplete Recovery

The refugee colony that opens the film occupies an unstable position between formal citizenship and lived exclusion. Its residents are part of the new nation, yet settlement and livelihood remain precarious. The colony also presents an uncomfortable question about communal solidarity. Shared displacement can create obligations of care, but it does not automatically abolish caste or class hierarchy. That distinction matters to internal partition: the film does not present refugees as an undifferentiated moral community, and Ishwar's later conduct cannot be explained by trauma alone.

Haraprasad's charge that Ishwar has abandoned the colony by accepting paid employment stages a genuine ethical conflict. Remaining may be an act of solidarity; leaving may be necessary for survival. The film refuses to make either position entirely secure. Haraprasad fears that resettlement will dissolve shared commitments, while Ishwar seeks stability for Sita and Abhiram. By framing the choice as a conflict between obligation and livelihood, Ghatak shows how displacement pressures the relationships through which belonging is negotiated.

State rehabilitation after Partition was considerable but unequal in its effects. The Dandakaranya resettlement scheme, launched in the late 1950s, relocated many East Bengali refugees to unfamiliar environments and became a focus of criticism over ecological, cultural, and political dislocation (Mallick, 1999).⁶ The foundry at Chhatimpur provides Ishwar with work, but paid employment cannot by itself rebuild the relationships and cultural worlds fractured by Partition. This distinction between material provision and social belonging is central to the film, though the foundry should not be treated as a literal representation of every state rehabilitation program.

The brief encounter in which Ishwar, now a foundry manager, does not fully register a worker's request for leave is revealing. Its force lies less in deliberate cruelty than in distraction and unequal authority: the displaced man has become someone whose routine decisions affect the lives of others. The film thereby introduces a contradiction that later becomes explicit in the household. Experiences of exclusion do not automatically produce sensitivity to exclusion in others; institutional distance may instead make it easier to overlook another person's claim.

The household beside the Subarnarekha River becomes the most concentrated setting of that contradiction. Ishwar attempts to secure a new home for the children, yet his idea of protection depends on a boundary that eventually excludes Abhiram as a potential husband to Sita. The house is thus neither a simple emblem of national failure nor a space from which the lovers are straightforwardly expelled. Rather, Ishwar's refusal makes their relationship untenable there, leading to Sita's departure

with Abhiram. The shelter he has built is left empty of the relationships that might have made it a home. Its collapse is not an abstract national allegory: it follows from a specific caste-based decision within a particular family.

The film's movement from refugee colony to factory settlement makes this process spatially legible. The colony makes vulnerability visible as a collective condition, while the foundry introduces wages, managerial hierarchy, and a promise of individual advancement. The house by the river appears to consolidate that advancement into a settled domestic life. Yet none of these spaces fully resolves the problem of belonging. Each rearranges the relations among people who have already been displaced. When Ishwar seeks to secure Sita's future by arranging her marriage elsewhere, protection becomes a means of enforcing separation. The reversal matters because the house is not a neutral location that merely contains caste prejudice. Its capacity to define who may remain within it becomes the material form through which that prejudice acts. The distinction between a place to live and the right to belong gives internal partition a concrete geography.

Internal Partition: Caste, Kinship, and the Reproduction of the Border

Caste enters *Subarnarekha* through naming, social memory, and the shifting terms of kinship. Kaushalya, Abhiram's mother, belongs to a caste-marked fishing community; the film's account of her position is sharpened by the social history of caste hierarchy in Bengal.⁷ Names invoke another register. Kaushalya recalls Rama's mother in the *Ramayana*, and Ishwar's name evokes divinity, yet neither sacred association protects the vulnerable or prevents discrimination. The resulting irony should not be mistaken for proof that the film gives unmediated access to Dalit subjectivity. Rather, Ghatak uses a bhadralok household to reveal the discrepancy between ideals of care and the exclusions actually enforced in its name.

Abhiram grows up within Ishwar's household under conditions that seem generous until his affection for Sita demands recognition as a legitimate relation. He is educated and cared for, but when

intimacy threatens to become marriage, the boundary of belonging becomes visible. Ghatak's staging can be understood through hesitation, reaction, and the altered relations among the characters, not simply through an overt declaration of prejudice. The category that organizes Ishwar's response has not suddenly appeared; it has become consequential because the lovers challenge the distinction between being sheltered and being fully admitted to kinship. This is internal partition in its most precise domestic form: a refugee's experience of external exclusion coexists with his participation in caste-based refusal.

Biswas (2004) identifies self-destructive impulses within Ghatak's threatened communities, and *Subarnarekha* gives those impulses a specific social form. Ishwar's refusal of the lovers is more than the return of an unassimilated personal loss: it is a caste boundary maintained inside a displaced family. Independent India's constitutional prohibition of untouchability under Article 17 offers an important historical counterpoint, although legal abolition cannot be equated with the end of caste inequality.⁸ Formal citizenship and domestic hierarchies can coexist. The film asks spectators to recognize the distance between the nation's egalitarian promises and the exclusions reproduced by its citizens.

Dalit scholarship clarifies why bhadrakalok memories of Partition cannot stand in for all experiences of displacement (Guru, 2009; Rao, 2009; Rege, 2006). Some refugees carried histories of caste deprivation not adequately represented by narratives of lost upper-caste homeland. The essay's claim is therefore deliberately limited. Ghatak exposes the contradiction within Ishwar's household, but Abhiram's perspective remains mediated through a story organized around Ishwar's guilt and Sita's suffering. That limitation is politically instructive: the film critiques a community's failure to extend solidarity even as its narrative remains shaped by that community's point of view.

Ishwar's opposition to the relationship between Abhiram and Sita makes the home itself a site of boundary-making. Their departure exposes the difference between shelter and equality. Sita's experience brings caste and gender into the same field: Ishwar seeks to preserve the family's social

standing by controlling her choice of partner, while her life after leaving the household is shaped by economic vulnerability. Partition and caste-based gender regulation are not identical histories, but their pressures converge in the film's domestic plot (Butalia, 1998; Menon & Bhasin, 1998). The internal border is reproduced through kinship, not through a cartographic line.

The late encounter between Ishwar and Sita is the film's most devastating test of this boundary. In a dim room in Calcutta, Ishwar enters as a drunken client, unaware that the woman before him is his sister. Ghatak postpones recognition through blurred vision, fragmented close-ups, changes in angle, and an uneven progression of gestures. The spectator must register Ishwar's disorientation alongside Sita's dawning comprehension; the two do not recognize the situation at the same instant. The sequence repeatedly disrupts a continuous view of the room, making the relation between brother and client unbearable before dialogue can fully name it. Sita's death is presented through rapid visual and sonic fragments rather than a composed, consoling image. The *bonti*, a domestic cutting implement, becomes an especially disturbing part of that staging. The scene transforms the material of everyday household life into the means of irreversible loss. Its force does not depend on treating suicide as Sita's "only possible agency"; that claim would foreclose the economic and social constraints the film has labored to expose. Recognition here reveals a structure of damage but offers no rescue, and Ishwar's remorse cannot undo the caste boundary he maintained.

This withholding of a stable image is crucial to the scene's political meaning. A straightforward revelation could invite the spectator to treat the catastrophe chiefly as the terrible consequence of one man's mistake. Instead, the fragmented visual field makes it difficult to isolate guilt within the instant of recognition. Ishwar has reached the room by a series of earlier decisions: refusing the lovers' relationship, losing his connection to Sita, and retreating into self-destruction. The delay between Sita's apprehension and Ishwar's understanding therefore gathers an entire history of domestic power into the sequence's editing rhythm. No amount of recognition can return the characters to the moment

before the original exclusion. The force of the scene lies precisely in the gap between coming to know and becoming able to repair.

Melodrama Against Itself: The Politics of Formal Refusal

The political force of Ghatak's melodrama lies in his refusal to let heightened feeling settle the historical argument. As Rajadhyaksha (1982) and Biswas (2004) emphasize in different ways, his films interrupt familiar patterns of pathos and recognition. *Subarnarekha* asks what happens when revelation arrives too late to restore a relationship. Melodramatic devices—the estranged family, coincidence, recognition, and suffering—remain present, but their consequences are made difficult rather than reassuring.

Brooks's (1976) account of melodrama emphasizes the effort to make moral conflict legible. In Indian cinema, Vasudevan (2011) demonstrates the multiple ways that family narrative and public feeling can become interwoven. Ghatak works within these traditions without offering the repair that a recognition scene might conventionally promise. The reunion of brother and sister is a catastrophic encounter rather than the restoration of kinship. The refusal is historically significant because the family's hierarchy is not a mistaken impression waiting to be corrected; it is one of the conditions that has produced the tragedy.

The film's gendered suffering cannot be detached from caste. In the final act, the separated family and the sacrificial woman do not provide an emotional resolution, since the violence that drove Sita and Abhiram away has not been repaired. This does not mean that every audience must respond identically or that melodrama necessarily demands a happy ending. It means that the film places the spectator's expectation of recognition under pressure, exposing the gulf between an act of remorse and a social transformation.

The comparison with Satyajit Ray can clarify the specificity of Ghatak's ending if it avoids opposing an uncomplicated Ray to a purely pessimistic Ghatak. Ray's films often remain alert to

contradiction and loss. The movement toward reattachment in *Apur Sansar* (Ray, 1959), for example, is fragile rather than triumphalist (Ganguly, 2000). Ghatak's final movement in *Subarnarekha* is different: the return to the river renews the question of home without restoring the destroyed relationships. These are distinct formal responses to historical and familial suffering, not exhaustive descriptions of the two filmmakers.

The distinction should therefore remain a comparison of particular endings rather than a division between two fixed national or aesthetic temperaments. Ray's last images in *Apur Sansar* (1959) neither erase loss nor promise an untroubled future. They allow tentative care after catastrophe. Ghatak's return to the river, by contrast, recalls the family's earlier hopes without providing an equivalent restoration. In each case, landscape and bodily movement carry emotional meaning beyond dialogue. The difference is in the social work that the ending permits those movements to perform: fragile reattachment in one film, the continued transmission of a historically damaged promise in the other. This narrower comparison strengthens the account of Ghatak's formal refusal without treating Ray as merely therapeutic or Ghatak as incapable of imagining hope.

Banerjee (2023) offers a particularly useful qualification to celebratory accounts of Ghatak's Bengali cultural memory: his films can invoke an integrated *bhadralok* identity while marginalizing caste, class, communal, and gender distinctions. The present essay takes that objection seriously. Its argument does not presume *Subarnarekha* gives Dalit experience its own autonomous narrative voice; Abhiram remains partly positioned through Ishwar's household and the emotional demands of *bhadralok* loss. The later history of Dalit refugee mobilization, including the violence of Marichjhapi in 1979, supplies a cautionary historical perspective, not an event Ghatak could have anticipated in detail.⁹ The film's critique emerges from within a social formation whose limits it does not entirely escape.

Shahani (1987) likewise places Ghatak's formal experiments in relation to violence and artistic responsibility. The key issue is not that *Subarnarekha* discards melodrama but that its recognizable patterns lead to a confrontation without repair. The separated family is not reconciled, and the social logic of caste cannot be dissolved through a single act of revelation. Ghatak transforms melodrama from a means of moral confirmation into a demanding form of historical criticism.

Conclusion: The Cry That Precedes the Image

In the final return to the river, Sita's son Binu accompanies Ishwar and repeats the question of a new home. The question has survived the destruction of the family without acquiring a reassuring answer. The landscape is recognizable, but the relationships that once animated it are gone. The film's repetitions, songs, crossings, and remembered places—do not restore what has been lost; they make that loss present to another generation. The opening cry and the final question frame a history that cannot be completed by an official account of independence.

The article has argued that *Subarnarekha* criticizes more than the violence of territorial Partition. It identifies the persistence of caste hierarchy within a refugee community that has itself endured displacement. The central insight is limited and concrete: historical injury does not guarantee ethical solidarity. The film makes this contradiction intelligible through a household that grants protection but refuses equal kinship, and through cinematic arrangements that force the spectator to confront the consequences.

Methodologically, the essay's intervention also depends on distinguishing a film's depiction of caste discrimination from the standpoint from which that discrimination is represented. The analysis does not infer a comprehensive Dalit history from the household plot. It reads the limits of that plot as part of the film's historical contradiction: a refugee community can articulate its own injury and still fail to recognize the claims of caste-marked people within it. Sound, editing, location, and narrative recurrence are therefore not ornamental evidence attached to a political argument. They establish the

terms through which spectators encounter a history that is unequally remembered, unequally suffered, and never wholly resolved by the recognition of a single character.

Internal partition thus names the reproduction of caste-based exclusion within Ishwar's bhadralok refugee world. It may offer a question for comparison with other displaced communities, but any such extension would demand separate historical evidence; this film alone cannot establish an international pattern.¹⁰⁰ Here the concept belongs to specific characters, social practices, and images. A family inherits the injuries of border-making yet draws a new boundary inside its own home.

This is finally what makes *Subarnarekha* a work of historical thought in cinematic form. The off-screen cry disturbs the apparent certainty of the written record. The station sequence brings an unacknowledged woman into view only briefly; the foundry shows how displacement may give way to authority over others; the late encounter in Calcutta breaks recognition into unbearable visual fragments. Ghatak does not merely state that social freedom remains unfinished. Through sound, setting, repetition, and melodrama, he makes the audience confront how a wounded community can continue to wound.

Editor's note: Additional scholarship

In addition to the scholarship already discussed, Ghatak's own account in the English translation of "On Subarnarekha" (Ghatak, 2015) and Sarkar's (2009) study of Partition cinema offer useful contexts for the article's account of melodramatic history. Banerjee's (2023) CINEJ study is particularly pertinent because it questions how bhadralok cultural memory can marginalize caste and gender differences. Two further essays in this issue of CINEJ also read *Subarnarekha*: Francis (2026) examines history, affect, and memory in the film, and Erdem (2026) reads it, together with Ghatak's other Partition films, through cognitive estrangement. Raychaudhuri (2009) argues that Ghatak reworks myth in order to confront the violence of Partition, which complements the article's reading of kinship and the recognition scene. These sources have been included where directly relevant; the interpretive claims remain those of the article.

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ENDNOTES:

- ¹ The film was completed in 1962 and released in 1965. Accounts of its production and exhibition history differ over the precise causes of the delay; the article does not attribute the entire interval to censorship. For a discussion of its place in Ghatak's cinema, see Rajadhyaksha (1982).
- ² The conventional description "Partition Trilogy" refers to *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, *Komal Gandhar*, and *Subarnarekha*. Bhaskar (2021), in her edition of the screenplay, argues for a four-film account that includes *Nagarik*.
- ³ On the diversity of refugee experiences and the gendered history of Partition, see Butalia (1998), Menon and Bhasin (1998), and Sarkar (2009). Figures for migration vary by period and destination; the essay therefore does not infer a uniform caste composition from a single estimate.
- ⁴ The Radcliffe Line was the boundary drawn in 1947 between the new Indian and Pakistani territories in Punjab and Bengal. Its relevance here is the continuing social and affective consequence of territorial division, not a claim that caste and international borders are historically identical.
- ⁵ Ghatak's own account of *Subarnarekha* is available in an English translation by Moinak Biswas (Ghatak, 2015). A discussion of kinship and historical self-destruction appears in Biswas (2004).
- ⁶ On the Dandakaranya rehabilitation scheme and the later Marichjhapi policy reversal, see Mallick (1999). The project and the foundry in Ghatak's film should not be conflated as the same historical site.
- ⁷ Bagdi is identified among the Scheduled Castes in West Bengal in the Government of India's official listings (Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 2016). The film's treatment of caste should nevertheless be distinguished from the experiences and self-descriptions of contemporary Dalit communities.
- ⁸ Article 17 of India's Constitution prohibits untouchability; the persistence of caste hierarchy is not a claim that the constitutional provision has no effect. Ambedkar's (1936) *Annihilation of Caste* provides foundational criticism of caste as a social order.
- ⁹ The violent eviction of Dalit refugees at Marichjhapi in 1979 followed Ghatak's death and is discussed by Mallick (1999). It is used here only as later historical context, not as evidence of the filmmaker's foreknowledge.
- ¹⁰ Possible comparisons beyond Bengal, including other histories of forced migration, require independent documentation and should not be inferred from the present close reading.