



Simulation in the Afternoon: A "Documentary" Faces Evidence Quest¹

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I didn't have the heart to prompt in the refugee camp. They were going through so much. (Lear Levin, October 2013)

But once you make a film, it goes out into the world, and it has its own journey. It's not always clear where that journey will take it. (Catherine Masud, February 2020)

The two co-directors introduced the screening with the precise term 'docu-fiction'; the end credits also included the phrase 'based on original footage shot by Lear Levin.' But these two qualifiers went largely unnoticed in the darkness of the auditorium, and that obscuring continued after audiences walked into the afternoon sunlight. At the 1995 premiere of *Muktir Gaan/Song of freedom* at the National Museum in Dhaka, most of the audience responded as if they had watched an exactly archival document of the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan (Figure 1). In the five decades since that year, the war had become the singular event defining the idea of nation built from evolved self-actualisation and rejection of earlier foundational statehood.



Bangladesh, the former East Pakistan, and before that former East Bengal, was a geography that insisted it was not India after 1947, and not Pakistan after 1971. To make 1971 the central, and even only event, the 1947 partition had to be largely occluded. Instead of Partition's ravages, the brutality of the Bangladesh liberation war became the narrative centre, because it brought a psychic sundering from West Pakistan (today's Pakistan) and a vanishing of the earlier trauma of partition. But what was the look and feel of this war, the defining event of a postcolonial nation? To many in that early audience, the film *Muktir Gaan* was exactly *muktijuddho*—liberation war as it happened, with colour, sound, language, and gesture intact.

Film poster of *Muktir Gaan*.



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Figure 1, source: Tareque Masud & Catherine Masud.

In spite of sustained international coverage of the conflict, a documentary film record of the war remained largely unavailable to Bangladeshi audiences for the first two decades of independence. The few exceptions included *Nine months to freedom* (S. Sukhdev 1972) and *Stop genocide* (Zahir Raihan 1971a), both in English, with limited circulation after the war. Feature films of the first half of the 1970s contained hyperbolic fictional



reconstructions, and then a period of silence arrived as war memories became embroiled in a post-1975 politics of compromise and forgetting. This period of amnesia extended through the military junta of the 1980s and early 1990s. In this gap, the 1995 release of *Muktir Gaan* was cheered by audiences as the first fully 'authentic' documentary of the war.

Two decades after its release, the film occupies a canonical position among Bangladeshi films (fiction and documentary) about the war. *Muktir Gaan* was followed by a small trickle of films about 1971, but none had quite the same impact on the formal and informal memory industry in Bangladesh. The film's co-directors, Tareque and Catherine Masud, went on to become leaders of Bangladeshi parallel cinema for the next two decades. Intervening in a range of situations (documentary, feature, short, animation, public talks, film workshops, festival juries), they were the most prominent of a post-1980s set of films that circulated internationally (others included Tanvir Mokammel, Morshedul Islam and Yasmine Kabir). The film's reverberations were felt even in the subsequent reception of the Masuds' two fiction films on 1971: the Cannes award winning *Matir Moina/Clay bird* (2002) and *Noroshundor* (2009).

The primacy of *Muktir Gaan* within the genre of 1971 film was so strong that the Masuds were able to, through these two subsequent films, create an opening into two sensitive (almost taboo) areas within the war narrative: the wartime position of piety and the madrasa (*Matir Moina*), and the Urdu-speaking "Bihari" minorities (*Noroshundor*). Indeed, two other films on these topics—Shaheen Dil-Riaz's documentary on madrasas *Koran-kinder* (2009), and Tanvir Mokammel's documentary on the stranded "Bihari" refugees *Swapnabhumi/The promised land* (2007)—are by long-time associates of the Masuds and could be framed as part of the same set of conversations about the more grey subjects of 1971.

In 2011, a tragic road accident killed Tareque Masud and his cinematographer Mishuk Munier, just as he was beginning work on his newest film, a history of the 1947 partition of Bengal. Masud's death not only truncated the movement he was leading, it also froze his work into institutional ember. Before his death, his newest feature film *Runway* (2010) was the first to receive mixed reviews in Bangladesh. But after 2011, a give-and-take conversation around his films stopped, as I remarked at a North American retrospective of his work: 'Death freezes the dialogue. The next generation of filmmakers needed to grow through debates, and even disagreements, with Tareque's films. But his untimely passing means we can only speak into the absence.' (2013)



In an attempt to move past this impasse of a devotional lens, I returned recently to *Muktir Gaan* to look again at its impact on memories of the 1971 war. I looked in particular at a few scenes that, on second viewing, appeared to be script or recreated. When I had first watched the film in a cinema hall in the 1990s, like most in that Public Library auditorium, I had also taken it as an exact documentary. Looking back at the film after a long gap, I now saw tell-tale signs of recreation. As I wrote the essay, I wondered if the *ur*-documentary about 1971 contained simulations, what was the status of the record of the war? Jean Baudrillard's sense of 'simulacrum' is that it is not only a copy of the 'real,' but becomes 'truth' in its own right. But this concept travels inadequately within a Bangladeshi war narrative where the stakes continue to have an intense life and death impact, and the search for evidence of war crimes is ongoing and sometimes not fruitful. Individual and collective roles during 1971 have the power to decide current political fates in Bangladesh—dispensing execution or ostracism on one hand, and rewards and insulation on the other.

War crimes happened extensively in 1971 and were documented to some degree in the aftermath of the war; but at a distance of four decades, the evidence gathered for news reports proved woefully inadequate for legal proceedings. Yet such evidence was in high demand as the government began long-delayed war crimes trials against alleged war criminals from the 1971 war. Contestations around the available evidence intensified as the accused convicts' (many of whom were from the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami) defence counsel began targeting the evidence. The back-and-forth over war crimes reached fever pitch in 2013 as the failure to reach death sentence verdict in one case instigated the Shahbag movement (Sabur 2013; Sultan 2013), a youth movement (soon appropriated by the government) that demanded the death penalty in all war crimes cases.

Shahbag is only the most recent expression of the controversies around war crimes, but the issue has been on a high simmer for most of the last four decades (the primary difference is whether advocates for extended war crimes trials and punishment are in power or in opposition). This high-volume environment places excess weight on a film such as *Muktir Gaan* to function primarily as legal evidence. In one example of the slippage between 'docu-fiction' (as the Masuds described it) and documentary evidence (as the trials require), the film was often screened in large outdoor setting during the Shahbag protests. Since the Shahbag movements' most well-known slogan was 'fashi chai' (we want the noose), any participant may look at the inclusion of *Muktir Gaan* as part of the collectively



marshalled body of evidence against war criminals. Any consideration of simulations within *Muktir Gaan* play out in a political context where the film is subject to pressures beyond only an audience's desires for felicity.

War and forgetting

To understand the audience that was entranced by the possibility of exact documentary within the entire span of *Muktir Gaan*, it is useful to briefly survey the state of films about the war in post-independence Bangladesh. Scanning the country's cinema halls, we note a sharp drop in representations of the war from the late 70s—a gap that *Muktir Gaan* was overburdened to fill in. A mysterious disappearance in the aftermath of the war underscores storytelling absences in the new country's film industry. Prior to 1971, relationships between the two wings of 'united' Pakistan—West Pakistan (today's Pakistan) and East Pakistan (today's Bangladesh)—were marked by the complaint and perception in East Pakistan of discrimination at the state, social, and individual level. Some of these tensions played out in East Pakistan through debates pitting Urdu (the state-encouraged, 'more Islamic' language of the Pakistani state) against Bengali (the language of the majority of East Pakistan, and a linkage to pre-1947 united Bengal).

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In spite of these roiling tensions, Lotte Hoek (2013) argues that the 1960s saw significant amount of Urdu-language East Pakistani filmmaking. She tabulates the Bengali actors in 'cross-wing' Urdu language films, including Shabnam, Robin Ghosh, Subhas Dutta, Khan Ata, as well as directors Nazrul Islam, Baby Islam, and Ehtesham. One of the Bengali film directors who prevailed in this environment was Zahir Raihan, making films in both Urdu and Bengali. In addition to working as second director on the iconic but ill-fated hybrid (with an invented Urdu patois of East Bengal) *Jago Hua Savera* (1959), Raihan's Urdu language films included *Sangram* (1964) and *Bahana* (1965). Hoek argues that the dominant discourse after 1971 flattened these films into primarily a commercial choice driven by available funding, erasing the possibility of voluntary participation in creating hybrid forms that may have eventually spoken to the two mismatched 'wings' of Pakistan.

Raihan's feelings about the disputed position of the Urdu language in which he sometimes worked remain unexplored. However, once the war broke out, his filmmaking decisively focused on the Bengali sovereignty cause. From exile in India, he made a crucial documentary about the war called *Stop genocide* (1971). Tracing a lineage back to the Holocaust, the



film made an appeal that also pushed outside the particularities of Bangladesh. Beginning with images of Lenin, the documentary narration emphasised class struggle as well as the, usually amplified, linguistic self-determination as an inspiration for the war. The film's tone discarded his more allegorical pre-1971 tone, moving to a direct action script. In an interview given to a TV journalist, Raihan expressed outrage that the Pakistan army was also using cameras, to mount a counter-propaganda offensive (Figure 2):

I'm Zahir Raihan. I don't belong to any political party. I'm a [indistinct] filmmaker. But I saw, in Bangladesh, the most surprising aspect of that was, while a military unit was moving for operation, after destroying and killing people, they were taking shots by a movie camera of the dead bodies. After burning a house, they were taking shots of the burnt house with a movie camera. After compelling people to loot a shop, they were taking shots of those looters through a movie camera. And later on, I heard and I saw that they edited those portions and relayed it to the world [...] telling and showing that the Bengalis were killing non-Bengalis and because of that chaos and confusion they "had to intervene." (Raihan 1971b)

Zahir Raihan interview on Television, 1971.

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Figure 2, source: copyright unknown.

Stop genocide's fate was initially uncertain after editing had been completed in India. The opening shot of Lenin, rather than the liberation war leader Sheikh Mujib ('*Bongobondhu*' or 'Friend of Bengal'), irritated



some of the rebel war command. The messaging was also unnerving for a diverse war coalition that featured an uneasy cohabitation with leftist Bengali forces. A special screening was arranged for Tajuddin Ahmed, civilian leader of the exile government, and it was his nod that was rumoured to have secured the film's wide release for raising awareness about the war. Raihan continued to work during 1971, completing *A state is born* (1971), and producing two other documentaries on the war—Alamgir Kabir's *Liberation fighters* (1971) and Babul Choudhury's *Innocent millions* (1971). He was also working on an English-language feature film, *Let There Be Light*, which was never completed.

Raihan returned to liberated Dhaka after the war, but went missing in 1972 while searching for his missing brother, the novelist Shahidullah Kaiser. I have spent some time with Raihan's biography because I believe his death significantly altered the post-1971 film industry, shifting Bangladesh national cinema away from the more socialist-realist grain that he would have championed. Given the decision to begin *Stop genocide* with Lenin's words, we can presume that he would have also opposed the uncomplicated view that emerged in films after 1971—one that presented the war as having a singular aim and constituency.

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In the newly independent country under a reconstructed FDC (Film Development Corporation, where Raihan's portrait hangs in a central location), there was initially a surge of feature films about the war including *Ora Egaro Jon/They are eleven* (Chashi Nazrul Islam 1972), *Roktakto Bangla/Bloody Bengal* (Momtaz Ali 1972), *Bagha Bangali/Tiger Bengali* (Ananda 1972), *Dhire Bohe Meghna/The Meghna flows slowly* (Alamgir Kabir 1973), *Slogan* (Kabir Anwar 1973), *Orunodoyer Ognishakhi/Pledge to a new dawn* (Subhash Dutta 1972), *Sangram/The struggle* (Chashi Nazrul Islam 1974), and *Megher Onek Rang/Clouds have many colors* (Harunur Rashid 1976). But after the first wave, the war started becoming a generic backdrop, often deployed to underscore the original sin of the film's villain (who had evolved from wartime collaborator to post-war black marketer or thug). In an essay about war films, *Muktir Gaan* co-director Tareque Masud cited this gap in representations:

Many of us carry this frustration inside: this many years have passed and still there is no complete film on the war. When we use the word "complete," we mean a complete war film. Are only representations of war all aspects of the liberation war? [...] Was the war fought only by *They (are) Eleven*? If not, then how do you make those eleven representatives of the war? The liberation war does not have one face, one color— just as *the cloud has many colors*. This war had thousands



of colors, thousands of lacuna– we have been able to bring very little of it to screen. (Masud 2012: 133, translated by author, names of films italicised)

The film industry may have moved past this stage of war narrative, but the political context made war films more fractious from the mid-1970s. Starting around 1976, films about the war received confusing signals from a fluctuating national environment. Although the 1971 war ended with the creation of Bangladesh, the narrative of who fought in the war from the Bengali side became a highly contested site. A 1975 military coup resulted in the assassination of founding president Sheikh Mujib, and a period of instability and countercoups began. General Ziaur Rahman, a 1971 war veteran, eventually came to power and in an attempt to create his own power base, included in his government those who had sat out the war or opposed independence.

The two political parties (Awami League/AL and Bangladesh Nationalist Party/BNP) that have dominated Bangladesh's post-liberation politics both claim foundational links to 1971, although the AL's claim is much larger. The war was fought in the name of jailed independence leader Sheikh Mujib (AL), and the declaration of independence was made on behalf of Mujib by Ziaur Rahman (BNP). Both parties lay claim to the war, but because of the post-1975 political calculus, their investment in war narrative is striated by a desire for emphasising their own sides' role. This manifests in tremendous state pressure on formal and informal memory industries (textbooks, commemorations, and of late, speech), in a move that I call a desire for 'shothik itihash (correct history)' (Mohaiemen 2014). War remembrance is now linked to a murky process of listing or erasing 'treasonous' wartime conduct.

Faced with this unstable political pendulum, many filmmakers either moved away from war films or faced limbo in censorship. Journalist Shahidul Khokan referenced these problems in his witty vignette about the censor board:

Your film is submitted, the knowledgeable members look at it and say: cannot be released. You start doing *tadbeer* (request)– what was the issue, brother? "Hey *miya*, who did you show as the announcer of independence? Why is there so much 'Joi Bangla'? Are we Bangali or Bangladeshi [...] why go into all that nonsense? I could not get your film passed, sorry." Then it goes to Appeal Board. More *tadbeer*, another four months to get the appeal date. Appeal Board does not change the decision. Your film is banned. You are crushed. Meanwhile the producers who lent you four crore are slanging your head off. Then



suddenly a ray of hope, the government falls. Again, you start *tadbeer*. (Khokon 2009, translated by author)

Facing these uncertainties, the number of films on the 1971 war went into decline in the late 1970s, and even more so in the 1980s after the arrival of General Ershad's military government. For the first time, there was an army officer in control of the country who did not have a 'glorious' claim to the liberation narrative (Ershad had been stationed in West Pakistan when the war broke out). During his junta (1982-90), there was a further de-emphasis on war narrative in the cinema. A rare intervention came from the short film movement (itself deeply anti-junta), which premiered two fiction films on the war from the 'cultural-modernist leaders' (Raju 2007) of this movement—Morshedul Islam's *Agami/Tomorrow* (1984) and Tanvir Mokammel's *Hulia/Warrant* (1985).

Underscoring that 1971 continued to be a challenging subject for realist filmmakers, Mokammel's focus on this subject resulted in frequent run-ins with the censors. His 1971 documentary *Sreeti Ekattur/Memory seventy-one* (1991), and feature film *Nodir Naam Modhumati/A river called Modhumati* (1995) were both initially blocked by the Censor Board (Mohaiemen 2013). Meanwhile, in regular cinema halls, the war remained largely off-screen, with the exceptions being *Ekattorer Jishu/Jesus of 1971* (Nasiruddin Yusuf 1993) in 16 mm local release and *Aguner Poroshmoni/Touchstone of fire* (Humayun Ahmed 1994) in wide release. Blogger Trikaldorshi ("Witness of Three Eras") wrote, in a history of 1971 films: '[From 1981] was the long pause. This collapse of our film industry continued into the 1990s' (Triakaldorshi 2011). This long period of film silence around the war was finally pierced by the premiere of *Muktir Gaan* in 1995.

Bookended newsreels

Over seventy percent of Bangladesh's current population was born after the war. A majority of this population has no personal memories of 1971, and, in most cases, no recall of either Mujib (1972-75) or Zia (1975-81) period. A generation came of age in the 1980s and 90s, during a long pause in production of war films. When *Muktir Gaan* was released in 1995 after a prolonged tussle with the censor board ("Conspiracy to imprison" 1996), it was the first glimpse of war images for this generation. The film industry had in the meantime moved away from the brief possibility of '*jibon mookhi* (life facing)' work such as *Surjo Dighal Bari/The ominous house* (Sheikh Niamat Ali & Masihuddin Shaker 1979), instead focusing on commercially successful 'dhisoom-dhisoom' action pictures. The urban middle class



embraced the new ubiquity of television, especially enjoying *natok* (drama) written by authors such as Humayun Ahmed which targeted their lives (Mohaiemen 2015). Cinema halls were patronisingly, and erroneously, considered the province of the 'rickshaw class'. The Masuds responded to this transformed exhibition space situation by organising their own screenings, at venues such as the National Public Library.

The release of *Muktir Gaan* therefore fulfilled two roles in the Masuds' mind: the return of the 1971 war as a focus of film storytelling, and the reformation of a middle class cinema audience. Tareque Masud wrote enthusiastically about the premiere, 'People waiting in line to watch a film. Such a sight was beyond imagination in Bangladeshi cinema halls.' (Masud 2012) Of course, lines for cinema tickets was not 'beyond imagination' at all, but Masud was pointing to the missing middle class viewers, and the cultural elite. I posit that most of that audience was there to find the actual war on screen, not a recreation. The two feature films about the war released prior to 1995 (*Aguner Parashmoni* and *Ekattorer Jishu*) were stylised narratives that did not claim 'reality' in the way of *Muktir Gaan* (indeed *Jishu*'s crucifixion scene is a hallucinatory sequence). The film's impact as a document can be seen in the film reviews of that time, for example in Syed Shamim's contrast between what came before and the *Muktir Gaan* moment:

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In plays or films about the freedom fight, we are used to seeing women as rape victims, or breaking into helpless tears after losing their husband and children in the war. But *in reality*, women came into that war with a very specific characteristic [...] *Muktir Gaan* is the rescued *archeology* of their achievement. It is a *preserved fossil* of glory tales. (Shamim 1995, translated by author, emphasis added)

Similarly, both Jahid Rahman (1995) and Shakil Jahid (1996) called the film 'a live document,' Saifullah Mahmud Dulal (1995) found 'accurate scenes of the war,' and Anisul Huq (1995) praised 'the truth [has been] presented with ease.' Clearest of all is Tarek Ahmed's (1995) praise for the film: 'The benefit of photography and film is that if a scene is captured on this medium, you can see it *exactly as it was* 39/40 years, or even later.' (translated by author, emphasis added) A rare dissenting critique came from Obaid Jaigirdar (1995) and Salimullah Khan (2011).

The film followed a musical troupe that toured refugee camps inside India, trying to raise funds for the Bengali guerrilla forces. The footage was shot in 1971 by filmmaker Lear Levin. He was never able to finish the film, and two decades later the Masuds tracked him down in New York and



convinced him to allow the use of his footage for *Muktir Gaan*. The scaffolding of the film is Lear's twenty hours of raw footage, repurposed by the Masuds (Figures 3, 4 & 5). The beginning and finale of the film contain archival material from the Film Division of India, Bangladesh Department of Films & Publications, Independent Television News/ITN (UK), and the UN archives. The film begins with the footage of Sheikh Mujib's famous 7th March 'this time the struggle is for independence' speech, followed by footage of guerrilla fighters superimposed on the audio of the broadcast of Major Zia's independence announcement.

Both of these clips were 'new' in 1995: the first newsreel sequence stopped circulating after the 1975 assassinations, and the second reconstructed newsreel had never been 'seen' in Bangladesh. The film's ending included two more sequences of archival footage. In the first, from the UN archives, Pakistani Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (the main political beneficiary of the war on the West Pakistan side) is seen tearing up the Security Council resolution that ratifies the end of the war. In the second, Indian soldiers are seen entering liberated Dhaka to rapturous cheers and crowds (critiqued in Jaigirdar 1995). I contend that the impact of these two bookended archival segments was to recast the entire film as exactly indexical to events over the nine months of the war.

Lear Levin shooting *Muktir Gaan*.



Figure 3, source and copyright: Lear Levin.



Lear Levin shooting *Muktir Gaan*.



Figure 4, source and copyright: Lear Levin.

Lear Levin with Tareque Masud in Dhaka, 2010.



Figure 5, source: photograph by Naeem Mohaiemen.



The script of the film follows the musical troupe as they travel and sing. Although all the scenes of traveling did happen, they were edited to make a coherent story that spanned the war.

It had a documentary aspect, because of the handheld shots and the synced sound and the archival look. And yet it was structured like a fiction film in many ways, in the form of a "musical road movie," with a scripted narration, some staged scenes, and a musical score. (C. Masud 2020)

As Tareque Masud highlighted, the Indian authorities suspected Lear Levin to be an American spy (the Nixon White House was on the wrong end of this conflict). As a result, his access was severely limited, and he was forced to return to America when the fighting heated up. An accurate representation of Levin's shooting experience would have reflected a corralled period of only three weeks in November 1971. However, the editing of the film radically lengthens the on-screen timespan, intercutting the March declaration of war with the troupe's first appearance, and the December entrance of victorious Indian soldiers into liberated Dhaka with their final musical goodbyes. In this manner, a three-week shoot was telescoped outward on the editing panel to stand as a record of a nine-month war.

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When *Muktir Gaan* was released, I believe that the post-war generation received it primarily as a 'documentary' representation of the war. This audience did not always parse scenes as being scripted, because they had no object to compare it with. Catherine Masud (2015) highlights that even for the actual footage, this was the first time audiences were seeing war material in colour with synchronised sound, further enhancing the 'real' effect of the visual. Even those old enough to have seen films released in the 1970s would recall celluloid representations played out in artificial settings. My review of the film on its first release contained some signs of unease that had not properly found its object:

The subtext that is not explored in the film but is nevertheless clearly present on screen, are the class differences among the Bengali refugees and freedom fighters. The troupe members are, for the most part, from middle-class backgrounds. Yet, here in the course of the film, they mix with village refugees, farmers, and foot soldiers. There is *some awkwardness in these interactions*, as when the troupe embraces a group of soldiers at a liberated zone. In these few moments, one of the fundamental contradictions of the war effort is visible on screen. (Mohaiemen 1997, emphasis added)



Not every audience member accepted the film as a document. In a response to the film written by Obeid Jagirdar (1995), questions were raised about how Lear Levin could have received filming access at close range. In the post-premiere journey of the film, the Masuds now took additional steps to emphasise the scripted nature of the project. Catherine Masud points out that the source material made some of these aesthetic decisions necessary. 'We were dealing with material that had already been shot and were working backwards to create a script and a story. This type of film forms a whole sub-genre of documentary, the compilation film.' (C. Masud 2020). But in spite of intentions, audiences breathed a different meaning into the film through a continued insistence on felicity.

There is a level at which people don't want to believe, Even if they are told, they don't want to believe that a film like *Muktir Gaan* is fiction at any level [...] Even now, after so many years have gone by [...] We made a documentary about the making of *Muktir Gaan*. We deconstruct in detail the way it was, in some sense, very much an artificial construct [...] Still, people don't want to believe that [...] Because *Muktir Gaan* has a symbolic value which is beyond its entity as a film, and that symbolic value lent it a kind of abstract value. Which has, in some ways, little to do with the film itself [...] So at that level, since it's an abstraction, maybe all this doesn't matter so much. It certainly does not matter to the people who believe in the representations of *Muktir Gaan*. (ibid.)

War and reenactment

I personally subscribe to this form of documentary more than the purist approach or the "talking heads" style. It just takes too fucking long and too much film/tape or disc memory to get people to say what you hope that they will say. That's why I always called my approach by the term theatrical documentary, so as not to bullshit anyone, but rather to make sure that I got my point across. (Lear Levin, December 2013).

An early example of a constructed documentary is Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), which Lear Levin cited as an inspiration in conversation with the Masuds. Flaherty had mastered, in a break with previous documentarians, the 'grammar' of fiction films (Barnouw 1974: 39). Shooting from multiple angles, a 'surrealistic privilege, unmatched in human experience,' was a core part of this film. Flaherty's focus was 'authenticity of result,' and the means to get there (e.g. shearing away half an igloo to get a well-lit shot) did not disturb him. In a mock review of *Nanook*, Bill Nichols harpooned this process:



[In] the scene where Nanook and other men (where did they come from, Central Casting?) spear a walrus, Flaherty is nearby, (Jaigirdar 1995) filming. According to Flaherty's own account, the men begged him to use his rifle to kill the walrus, but Flaherty pretended not to hear them. This forced them to risk their lives unnecessarily, but it also allowed Flaherty to "observe" an "authentic" hunt as if he wasn't there [...] Flaherty's whole effort is a form of fraud. (Nichols 2010: 268f.)

The process of reconstructions within a documentary was regarded, post-*Nanook*, as part of the 'ingenuity' of filmmaking (38). Rouch and Morin's 'New Cinéma-Vérité' moment (Morin 1985: 229) had not yet arrived.

Long before *Nanook*, simulations were mixed into documentaries, including Doublie's insertion of unrelated footage in his film on the Dreyfus affair in *Actualités* (1898), the Méliès' intercutting of genuine and 'reconstitution' material in *The Coronation of Edward VII* (1902), the staging of volcano explosions in Biograph's *Eruption of Mount Vesuvius* (1905), William Selig's use of a Roosevelt lookalike in *Hunting big game in Africa* (1909), and the use of a soundstage in *Night mail* (1936) (Barnouw 1974: 24-7; Nichols 2010: 125). In his biography of Selig, Andrew Erish (106) points out that the faked footage in *Big Game* left such a vivid impression on audiences that Cherry Kearton's subsequent, factual documentary *Roosevelt in Africa* (1910) suffered in theatres because it was 'boring' in comparison. The technical difficulties and dangers of war zone shooting meant that simulation was in particularly frequent use in war films. Among early war simulations were Albert E. Smith's recreation of the 'battle of Santiago Bay' on a table-top, staged battles in James Williamson's *Attack on a Chinese mission station* (1898), and New Jersey standing in for distant war zones in Biograph's *Battle of Yalu* (1904) and Edison's *Skirmish between Russian and Japanese advance guards* (Barnouw 1974: 24f.).

A significant shift came during World War II, the first time there was actual footage in abundance. For the first time, the filmmaker had the option to use extensive war footage—a choice absent to filmmakers earlier. André Bazin, in his discussion of the film series *Why we fight*, describes facts during wartime as having 'exceptional amplitude'. The conditions of war are so exceptional, he argued, that the audience and critics have reified facts, such that any recreation is seen as 'dubious, indecent, and sacrilegious' (2001: 60). Bazin found a simulation of a different register in *Why we fight*—an 'a posteriori editing' of the film (61), taking footage shot for a different purpose and attaching it to a different script. This more sophisticated mode of simulation is visible in post-1945 films, for example where



sequences from Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens/Triumph of the will* (1935) were re-appropriated to establish the crimes of the Nazi regime. What Riefenstahl had constructed as a paean to masculinity and order had become, after appropriation by anti-Nazi filmmakers, evidence of fascism and brutality. The type of re-enactments seen in *Muktir Gaan* were not, therefore, unique to a postcolonial context.

A rustling newspaper

Andre Bazin argued, in his discussion of *Bullfight (1951)*, that it was the editing that created a new kind of realism. More important than the 'camera eye' was what Bazin called, borrowing from Alexandre Astruc, *caméra stylo* (camera pen). This tool would write a new reality far beyond what the film footage represented. This process of *caméra stylo* was deployed by the Masud's editing of Levin's original footage, as well as the insertion of new, recreated scenes. At the same time, Bazin insisted on the significance of "real time" on film, something *Muktir Gaan* contravened. Zakir Hossain Raju (2011) has described the struggle inside *Muktir Gaan* as one of 'weaving story out of a non-story' of found footage. On subsequent, repeat viewings of *Muktir Gaan*, what I referred to as 'some awkwardness' in my 1997 review were actually signs of staging I had not recognised two decades ago.

In the scene I had commented on, the peasant soldiers were not rehearsed for simulating verisimilitude and, mid-embrace, one of them looked directly at the camera and smiled. This stilted half-smile is what I had read, perhaps a little too enthusiastically, as a sign of discomfort with class tensions. Also stilted were the scenes of a musician (played by a Tariq Ali who later became a director of the Bangladesh Liberation War Museum) trying to join the guerrilla force, and being interviewed by a Major Gyas—the latter's odd Bangla accent continues to puzzle me. Ali's monologue in the film is presented as a diary entry, but was also written by the Masuds. The most scripted scene comes during a break in travel, when troupe members are reading newspapers.

The scene begins with the troupe traveling in their truck (Figure 6). One group of women playfully comb, and then tousele, a friend's hair. She yells 'dhuttori (drat)' at her tormentors, and everyone starts giggling. The lead singer is asleep on top of a Bangladeshi flag. In one corner is another singer (we presume this is 'the serious one'), and we glimpse the cover of the book she is reading: *Cancer ward* (Figure 7). This is a semi-autobiographical novel by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, published in 1967, and seen



here in an English translation. It is a glimpse that hints at the class background (English fluency) and political orientation (thinking back to Raihan's use of Lenin) of some members of the traveling troupe that push at the edges of the unitary 'Bengali culture' on display in the troupe's self-projection (e.g., Tagore and Nazrul songs). When the car breaks down, the women start reading a newspaper from the war front, dividing up segments and announcing headlines slowly (Figure 8). Everything is in English, perfectly enunciated. Through the snatches of dialogue, we piece together that one singer's father is on the front, that her brother Nadeem is also fighting, and that she has not heard from them in months. There are reaction shots, and close-ups, but all throughout the sound stays synced.

Truck scene from *Muktir Gaan*.

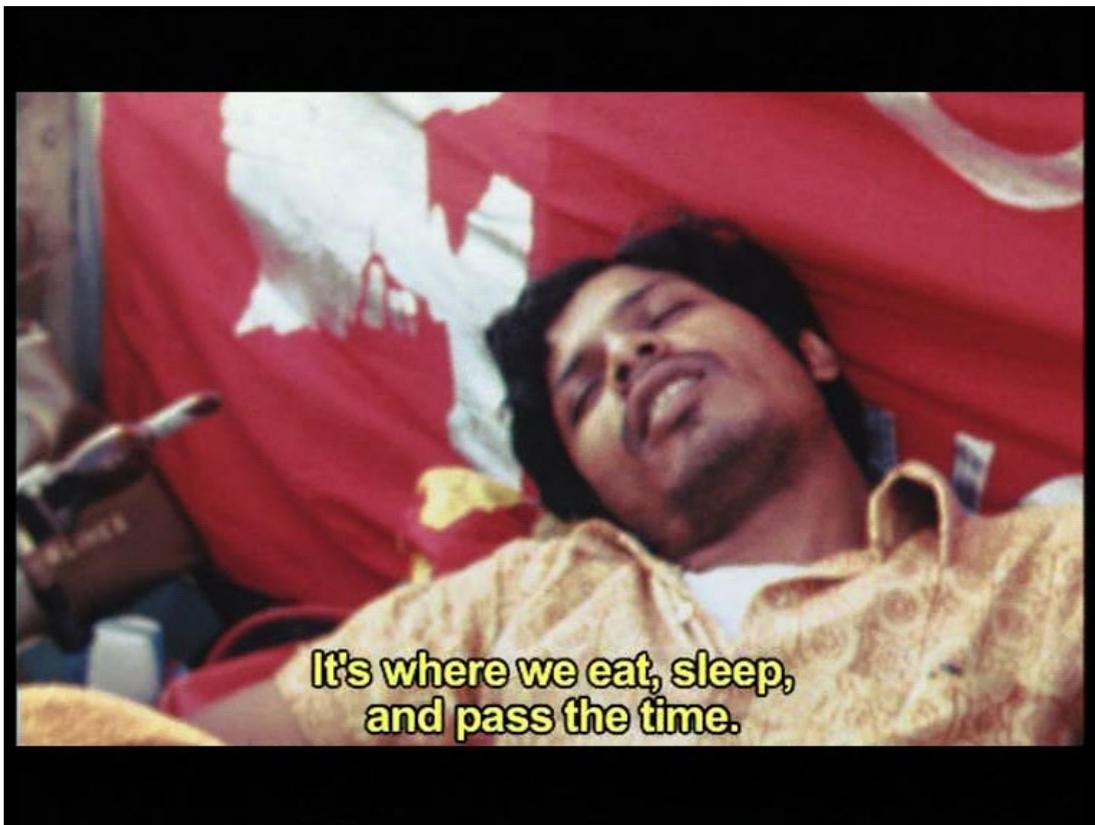


Figure 6, source and copyright: Tareque Masud & Catherine Masud.



Reading 'Cancer Ward' in *Muktir Gaan*.



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Figure 7, source and copyright: Tareque Masud & Catherine Masud.

Truck scene from *Muktir Gaan*.



Figure 8, source and copyright: Tareque Masud & Catherine Masud.



I had known Lear Levin for some time in New York, and finally approached him to ask about the scene. He was forthright about the scene being scripted:

I needed a certain amount of exposition. Explaining things without having to put in subtitles. So, that was a scene where we felt we needed to explain a certain amount of stuff. I studied with the great theater actress, Uta Hagen, at her HB Studios in Greenwich Village. In acting, there is Object Exercise— you give people a point they have to get to, and then any actor will know how to get there through the dialogue. "Who am I, where am I?" I gave them those directions and then they went from there. I had to shoot it maybe three to four times. I did a master shot, and then moved around to get reverse angles. Then I would shoot cutaways: people looking, or shots of newspapers, over the shoulders, cutaways to objects, all of that. (Levin 2013)

Dancer and theatre director Lubna Marium was one of the musicians in that scene. I reached her in Dhaka and asked her about the same scene.

This was a genuine conversation. It was forty years ago. I don't remember repeating it. I just remember Lear and his group were quite unobtrusive. There are scenes where I am combing my hair, picking flowers from the pond. They shot all that unobtrusively. They might have asked us to repeat this one scene— I have no memory of that. But they were filmmakers, they might have. And we also became friends. So they might have asked Naila and me to repeat it. (Marium 2013)

Night moves

Muktir Gaan has one scene that was recreated from scratch in the 1990s. This is the water fight in the third half of the film. A group of guerrillas swim through dark water full of *kochuripana* (a regular film motif of Bangladesh's rural landscape), arriving at a Pakistani army camp and beginning a night battle (Figure 9). The scene is filmed with skill, and there are no obvious signs of re-enactment. Co-director Catherine Masud highlighted the scene, urging me to view the 'extras' section of the film's DVD. In that section, there is a short 'making of' documentary in which Tareque Masud talks about recreating the scene. As Masud described it, his priority was to have at least one actual night battle scene, which was absent from Levin's footage. The scene was based on an actual skirmish that took place in Dhamrai to capture a bridge, and shooting was done on the actual site with former guerrillas as technical advisers. To film the scene, the filmmakers recruited members of a local political party—men who would perhaps be



known as 'mastans' (local toughs) but here had become 'actors'. 'Those so-called local gang leaders, they were so dedicated to this. They were filled with the spirit of the liberation war. They slaved for two nights in that cold poisonous water, side by side with actual freedom fighters.' (Masud 2008)

Water fight scene from *Muktir Gaan*.



Figure 9, source and copyright: Tareque Masud Memorial Trust.

Lear Levin points out that this scene would have to be a recreation, because he could not have done a night shoot:

I had a 0.95 lense for my 16mm camera, and that was the fastest lens made at that time. I could shoot by lantern light, but that was the most it could do. The fighting was at night– were I to turn on the lights, forget it! I would become a victim. There were corpses all around in daytime, but not fighting. (Levin 2013)

The technical challenges of the equipment also made the water scene impossible in 1971. Levin explained the complicated technical setup he worked with:

I had a 16 mm NPR camera, one of the earliest cameras to shoot super 16. I rented it at Samuelson's in London. Frank Gell brought it over when we met in Calcutta. I called Haskell Wexler just before we left to ask if there's anything we should look out for. I woke him up in the middle of the night. "Just watch out for dirt in the gate, because that



would be magnified. Keep it clean. Good luck, keep your head down." The only lights I had were two portable stun guns, 12 volt battery operated lights that last for thirty minutes. The downside was, there were so many moths and mosquitoes, whoever held it at night would get swamped. My assistant was holding it and shooting, and all these moths gathered and crawled all over Frank– my assistant– and they covered his body. He was fearless in all other aspects, but mortally afraid of bugs. Without turning, I said: "Frank for Christ's sake, you're ruining the soundtrack." Finally, when I turned I realized he was whimpering, but would not put the light down. So, then I gave him a hug because I was so touched. I felt bad about not realizing what was happening. After that I gave the light to someone else who was not afraid of bugs. (Levin 2013)

These constraints would limit *verité* filmmaking by Levin. In his interview, he also described night shoots as solo processes: 'When I went on patrol, I would not take my assistant with me.' (ibid.) When Levin shared the few location shoot photographs he had, I found only one photo where he was shooting alone. In other photos, he is usually accompanied by at least one crew member. We can deduce that the minimum crew Levin needed was two people: himself as camera-man, and at least a light person (if night shoot), or sound recordist (if recording dialogue or song). Yet, in Lubna Marium's recollection, Lear's shooting is described as unobtrusive. Was there a degree of recreation of action that was now forgotten? I was no longer sure after interviewing Levin and viewing his photographs.

I went back to the DVD and watched *Muktir Gaan* again, going frame by frame for certain scenes. This time, several more moments seemed at least one step away from staging: not only the awkward embrace I had noticed in 1997, but more quotidian moments. From the pause before applauding a song (waiting for the camera cue?), to the tentative stepping off from a boat—all these moments carry the possibility of recreation. The question then is, does all this change this war documentary (or 'docu-fiction' in Masud's words), especially vis-a-vis the audience's truth demands?

Uncle Sam

Near the film's climax, we encounter a remarkable song on the moving truck. As the flag waves, and the camera jumps from person to person, singer Swapan Chowdhury goes into a trance and dissolves the chorus into applause (Figure 10). The song's lyrics are a direct reference to the role of the Nixon administration in trying to send the Seventh Fleet to the aid of Pakistan:



But now the Pak army flees for their lives
 And with them flees the Seventh Fleet
 Then Yahya Khan cries out
 Tell me, oh tell me,
 where did Uncle Sam go?
 But now the thugs flee,
 And with them flee the collaborators
 Then General Niazi cries out
 Tell me, oh tell me,
 where did Uncle Sam go? (Masud 1997)

Swapan Chowdhury sings "Uncle Sam" song.



Figure 10, source and copyright: Tareque Masud & Catherine Masud.

This climactic scene connects the traveling musical troupe with the larger war, and from there to superpower politics in the form of a duel between the Nixon White House and the Indira Gandhi administration (and behind her, the Soviets). Yet, this song did not exist in 1971; Tareque Masud wrote a new song to dub over the filmed scenes, as he explained in an essay:

Lear had filmed the scene so beautifully. The visuals were amazing. But what could I do with the *kirtan* song? It did not go with the subject. So I inserted contemporary concepts with the newly written lyrics, I wanted to explain through this song that independence was finally at



our doorstep. The musicians didn't return to liberated Bangladesh on December 16th, they actually returned in February. I took creative license to show that they sang their way victoriously into liberated Bangladesh. (Masud 2012, translated by author)

Theatre scholar Sudipto Chatterjee was a graduate student in New York at the time of the film's editing. Like other Bengalis in New York at that time, including translator Alam Khorshed and UN official Hasan Ferdous, Chatterjee was recruited to help with the film. Initially his brief was to reproduce dialogue in Urdu, as a stand-in for Pakistani army officers in conversation. Chatterjee had grown up in India and learned Hindi as a second language; he could therefore simulate Urdu better than many who had grown up in Bangladesh (where Urdu became unacceptable after 1971). Eventually he became the singer for this scene, dubbing in his rendition of the 'Uncle Sam' song over the shots of Swapan Chowdhury.

The song is of a different register of recreation than other moments in the film. For example, the newspaper scene was stage managed by Levin himself. The water fight scene was recreated in the 1990s, to make up for the technical limits of the 1971 shoot. In a third example, two scenes were intercut to suggest spatial and temporal contemporaneity of the musicians on the truck and the victorious Indian army. For the 'Uncle Sam' song, the scene is with the original footage, but the gentle folk song has been replaced by something with a harder edge. The song's political references evoke Vietnam war protest songs, such as Country Joe and the Fish's 'I Feel Like I'm Fixin' To Die Rag' (Well, come on all of you, big strong men/Uncle Sam needs your help again/He's got himself in a terrible jam/Way down yonder in Vietnam). Masud may have been channelling Allen Ginsberg, whose poem about the 1971 war—"September on Jessore Road"—he had translated into Bengali, but decided not to use in the film (Masud 2012: 20).

Reviewing the decision to create a song that had not existed in 1971, Chatterjee considered the line stretching from Baudrillard back to the epic *Mahabharata*:

[Baudrillard] is talking about simulation and the existence of something called the simulacrum, which hangs between live contact and virtual contact. [This] I would like to label as the "virtuative"—it's not life, it's not virtual, it's something in between. In *Muktir Gaan*, Tareque is trying to address a bigger truth that goes beyond historical factualness [...] [Now], the *Mahabharata* is referred to as *itihasa*, or history. As opposed to *Ramayana*, which is *kabya*, or poetry. Why is *Mahabharata itihasa*, although it's written in meter? It's the world's



longest existing poem, a few million verses. It calls back a time when the lines between factuality and literature were fuzzier. Why is it that the lines are not fuzzy any more? Why do we ask that if it is not verifiable, it did not happen? (Chatterjee 2013, terms in Bengali italicised)

Nayanika Mookherjee has documented what she calls 're-captioning' of photographs (2015: 163), used during the war by Pakistani authorities, and both during and after the war by the Bangladeshi forces. The first trend we have already encountered in Zahir Raihan's interview about the redeployment of footage by the Pakistani army. Mookherjee dissects a photograph taken by Kishore Parekh, of a soldier peering inside the *lungi* of a villager. In Parekh's book, *Bangladesh: a brutal birth* (1972), the caption identifies the soldier as Indian, and the villager as 'Pakistani spy'. In the Bangladeshi post-war media, this photograph was widely reproduced with the soldier identified as Pakistani, and the villager as a Bengali (and the object of the exercise was now to look for absence of circumcision, which would mark out Bengali Hindus). Mookherjee considers this an example of the open semiotics of the visual image, and the Masuds are an example of a similar process applied to the film editing process itself.

On brutality

Lubna Marium believes that the Masud's film should be considered a 'Herculean effort' of recreation, but she added the cautionary note that audiences may take from this documentary the idea that the 1971 war was glorious and clean.

The Bangladeshi Mukti Shongrami Shilpi Shangstha was totally based in Calcutta. Troupes or singers were sent, to refugee camps in India, on day trips mostly, to motivate and inspire the demoralized, and heart-broken refugees [...] A far cry from the battlefields of the war. Never once was any member of the troupe in any danger of shedding a single drop of blood. [...] I know I write today, because I am a coward. Today I too, have a 16 year old son, whom I will do all, in my power, to prevent from joining any war. Son, I love you too much. I want to tell you what war really is about, though a part of me dies every time I remember. War is not beautiful. It is about brutality and death. War is about your baby brother telling you how scared he is to face death. It's about the trembling of a teenager relating the horror of the gouging of an enemy soldier's eyes. War is about standing in front of the lifeless, blood-stained, bayoneted body of someone you loved dearly. It's about crying and crying till you think your heart is actually going to break into two. Sadly, war is about coming home to disillusionment. (Marium 1996)



In 1937, Joris Ivens decided against using Orson Welles' voice in *The Spanish earth*, because he felt his voice was 'too beautiful' for a film on the Spanish civil war. In an essay for a 2007 art exhibition, *Beautiful suffering: photography and the traffic in pain*, Mark Reinhardt pointed out that one consistent critique, starting from the Frankfurt School and going up to the late Allan Sekula, has been that aestheticising suffering is 'politically reactionary' and invites 'sadism' on the part of the viewer. Reinhardt pushed back against this position, arguing that Sekula's charge of 'retinal excitation' (Emerling 2012: 106) makes an error by forcefully separating the purely visual impact from the critical possibilities. For Reinhardt, images have far more possibility than this binary, as he asked, 'Is there not something in images that resists or eludes every effort to fix meaning through language?' (Reinhardt 2007: 24)

Although the critique of aestheticised suffering has validity, the possibilities of war images probably lie somewhere between Sekula's concerns and Rheinhardt's flexibility. What impact does a film like *Muktir Gaan*, absent any major moments of onscreen brutality, have on the ongoing debates around the 1971 war in Bangladesh? The risk of aestheticised, sanitised violence in *Muktir Gaan* can be gleaned in the words of Marium, a person who inhabits the war's trauma in a deeply individualised form. In her 1996 op-ed, she worried that, 'there is an insidious movement to intellectualize the war of 1971. It was not an intellectual's war. It was a war fought by a people totally defenceless and unprepared.' (Marium 1996) In 2013, the Shahbag protests polarised liberal groups that were previously united on the issue of justice for war crimes of 1971. The rupture came because, faced with a possible resolution in war crimes trials, portions of the secular, liberal alliances disagreed on expedient tactics. In the middle of these intense debates, many of us finally learnt, from an article by Marium, about the fate of Nadeem, her 'baby brother':

My younger brother, Nadeem, at the age of 15, was a Muktijoddha (freedom fighter). As a young person he used to read philosophy all the time – Buddhism, Marx, Sarte. And then a machine gun was placed in his hand. His most horrifying experience was when our Muktijoddhas caught a Pakistani soldier and gouged out the soldier's eyes. Nadeem was never able to overcome the horror of war, and later committed suicide. Think about it, that's all I ask. (Marium 2013)

The violence that Marium referred to, repeatedly, is absent from *Muktir Gaan*, and the film's presumed accuracy for Bangladeshi audiences risks



erasing the brutality she wanted viewers to remember. Marium's recollection of her brother's traumatisation from the war evoked angry responses in the Facebook wars of the Shahbag period, reflecting a younger generation that considered descriptions of any brutality on the Bengali side to be beyond the pale, even from a war survivor. *Muktir Gaan* may have played a role in strengthening the imagery of a war fought by 'gentle' people facing off against a united military machine, as opposed to the messy reality of an actual war. Catherine Masud (Figure 11) acknowledges the liberties in this film, but also underscores the Bangladeshi audiences' receptiveness to particular versions of their own narrative.

Perhaps we took a little more license than a cinema *vérité* filmmaker would have taken, in seamlessly weaving together the factual with the imagined, the spontaneous with the constructed. But I think it was in part due to our seamless manipulations that the film was embraced as truth by those audiences you talk about, including yourself – an audience that was eager to embrace the film as a reflection of their own ideal perceptions and mythologizing of the war. (C. Masud 2020)

Catherine Masud at Public Library screening, 2010.

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Figure 11, source: photograph by Naeem Mohaiemen.



Conclusion

So in terms of responsibility, as an artist you can only think about the moment in which you're releasing a film, and whether it's appropriate from an ethical perspective in that historical moment or not, and to consider what your responsibilities may or may not be given the situation. But what comes after that down the line, it's anyone's guess and I don't think the maker can be held responsible for unintended uses and consequences. (Catherine Masud, February 2020)

At a distance of two decades, I read *Muktir Gaan* as a composite of the actual (the musical troupe's performances at refugee camps), the staged (the newspaper reading scene), the fiction (the water fight), and the recoding (the 'Uncle Sam' song). Cinematographer Lear Levin, co-director Catherine Masud, performer Lubna Marium, and singer Sudipto Chatterjee all acknowledge the simulated scenes. Masud pointed to the 'making of' chapter of the DVD, although we note that this DVD extra came long after the film's release (Figure 12). Lubna Marium referred to the op-ed she had written after the film's release, highlighting that she had not spent months with the traveling troupe.

If I hadn't been honest about the fact that I had not been on the truck more than five days, it would always be a lie. I had to say it. We have been taught to be honest about history. My being honest does not lessen Tareque's work. (Marium 2013)

Tareque Masud, 'Making of' *Muktir Gaan*, DVD.



Figure 12, source and copyright: Tareque Masud Memorial Trust.



What emerges from the documents provided by the production team is that the facts of the film's simulated portions started to be made public soon after the film began its screening journey. Yet, Catherine Masud highlights that the Bangladeshi audience chose not to see the disclaimers of recreation, because their relationship to the film was framed through a search for evidence. Sandy Flitterman-Lewis observed that, in the context of the Holocaust, any rendering of the past evokes the future within a continuum 'whose constant is social responsibility' (1998: 205). Such a 'responsibility' question weighs on *Muktir Gaan*, in the context of war crimes trials framed by national yearning and international isolation.

The facts of 1971 are legally admissible as evidence in the trials, and TV newsreels have been submitted by lawyers for prosecution. Prior to the tragic accident of 2011, both Tareque Masud and his long-time cinematographer Mishuk Munier (whose father was killed in the war), were scheduled to give testimony to the war crimes tribunal. With the trials continuing to be a live issue with political consequences, it does not seem likely that pressures on films about 1971 will lessen any time soon.

My reading of audiences' responses to *Muktir Gaan* depends partially on an idea of the naive viewer, just as I myself was in 1995. Tom Gunning's view (2004) of early film takes issue with the idea of an audience that is hypnotised by cinema's illusionist power. Rather, he argues that a certain kind of magical vision was possible precisely when the belief in the marvellous declined. Audiences inhabited a space of rationalism, and yet held on to the power to be charmed by that which they knew to be untrue. This is Gunning's 'aesthetics of astonishment' and 'cinema of attraction,' where the audience does not get lost in a fictional world, but remains aware of the act of looking and its fulfilment. I am however unsure if such a rationalist audience is what was filling Dhaka theatres in 1995. Recent events in the backdrop of Shahbag, such as the misidentification on Facebook of an image from Belsen 1945 as Rayer Bazar killing fields of 1971, demonstrate that audiences still suspend scepticism when it comes to documents that support popularly held views.

Gunning argues that the audience could believe in magical illusions due to a desire to test the limits of intellectual disavowal: 'I know, but yet I see.' (ibid.: 80) Perhaps this concept may hold a key to understanding why audiences persisted in seeing *Muktir Gaan* as entirely factual. In 1995, audiences were responding to a political context where war images had been moved off-screen by censors and political meddling. In 2015, they are in a situation where war images are in high demand as evidence for the



war crimes trials. The viewer therefore continues to have a strong desire to believe what is on screen in the Bangladeshi war film, although the reasons for it have shifted in the last two decades while the film has remained the same.

There is no second Lear Levin, with an undiscovered cache of film footage lying in a Manhattan basement, waiting to be discovered. Thus, any future film on the 1971 war, by necessity, will have to depend on recreation. The layout of 1971 on screen will now be more actively framed between event, simulation, and scripting. Perhaps future films can occupy a different space, since in recreating the scene, it may be able to go deeper into the trauma of the film. A final summation belongs to the late Tareque Masud, whose absence is the void into which I write, searching for more answers to the film's unresolved questions. Masud had already replied to us, as far back as 1997, when he wrote these sentences:

That scene where Indian army is entering, and the musicians are smiling as they look on [...] *The truth is more important than the facts.* Perhaps that scene did not happen in real life. Perhaps they were actually laughing with some children. This may not have happened, but this is a historic truth within the liberation war. (Masud 1997, emphasis added)

Endnote

¹ Naeem Mohaiemen is a Mellon Fellow in Anthropology and Institute for Comparative Literature & Society at Columbia University, New York. This essay benefited from extensive comments by Lotte Hoek, additional comments from Nico Bambauch, Catherine Masud, Lear Levin, Zakir Hussain Raju, Garga Chatterjee, and an anonymous reviewer for *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies*. A 2020 seminar hosted by Mushfiq Mobarak at MacMillan Center for international and Area Studies, Yale University provided a forum for an extended conversation with Catherine Masud.

Interviews

Interview with Sudipto Chatterjee. 2013, 12 December.

Interview with Lear Levin. 2013, 20 October and 10 December.

Interview with Lubna Marium. 2013, 23 October.

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