

**MAPPING THE PRISON: FROM TESTIMONIOS TO THE POPULAR, A CONTEXTUAL  
STUDY OF INDIAN PRISON LITERATURE AND THE FILM ‘MUKTODHARA’**

*Manjari Thakur*

*Research Scholar, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India*

**Received: 11 Sep 2020**

**Accepted: 14 Sep 2020**

**Published: 30 Sep 2020**

**ABSTRACT**

*This paper looks at the Bengali film Muktohdhara to understand how the prison space has been interspersed with aesthetic qualities. On one hand, it shows the prison space, dark and dreary, on the other it brings into focus the rehabilitation of prison inmates. The main protagonists of the film are Niharika and Mohammad Yousuf. An unhappy housewife, Niharika takes it upon herself to organize a dance drama in the prison, Rabindranath Tagore’s Valmiki Pratibha and trains the inmates including Yousuf who plans to escape but eventually finds redemption through the artistic enactment. It also explores the idea of ‘natya’ or ‘drama’ as a mode of expression and realization by prison inmates. The paper follows a discursive analytical method to understand the development of prison literature into popular culture.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Prison, Popular Culture, Rehabilitation, Literature, Drama*