

Notes for Subtitle File kabi-1.srt

This reference text accompanies subtitle file kabi-1.srt for the VCD one of movie 'Kabi' by Devaki Basu, made in 1949, story and dialogs by Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay.

These terms or concepts from Bangla language or Indian culture and society are discussed not in alphabetical order, but the order in which we get them in the dialogues. Some other related things are mentioned too.

Here we pick up the whole subtitle entry in which the note occurs and discuss it. So first comes the Notes index [#] as we get it in the subtitle file, then comes the entry number in which it occurs in the subtitle file, then the whole entry, and then our comments.

To build this notes file texts of Tarashankar Bandopadhyay (both the novel and his reminiscences about this novel) were used, together with some other related texts. For the translation of the folk song in Bhojpuri Hindi I took some help from Rekha Singh and Suraj Shah, my colleagues in S A Jaipuria College, Kolkata.

I have spent quite a lot of labor (more than three hundred hours) on this subtitle. I think, Devaki Basu's Kabi should get a much bigger importance than what it gets in the history of Indian films. And it is a film that never fails to create a very passionate response in me as a viewer even after so many views. So I gave my best in creating it. I would like to get any suggestion or any comments from you.

This is the first part of the notes file, to be read with the subtitle file kabi-1.srt.

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Note [01]

8

00:02:32,990 --> 00:02:35,789

((Train whistle))[01]

'Train and Railway' is almost the most important motif of this film, occurring hundreds of times through the film. And it goes in line with the most important dynamics of British India, and the time this novel or film depicts, that is, the time between World War I and World War II. So, it may not be at all a coincidence that this film opens with a whistling train and ends with a shot of the parallel rail tracks vanishing in infinite.

Note [02]

9

00:02:51,289 --> 00:02:52,989

Chanditala Rail Station[02]

This is the place where the primary part of the story of the film happens. It is Chanditala Rail Station built near Chanditala village. This Chanditala comes from the Mother Goddess Chandi, 'tala' means the area around the temple of Chandi. It refers to a place for social gathering, in many cases before a temple of Goddess Chandi. 'Chanditala' or 'Chandimandap' has gathered a surplus meaning of social existence as a whole, because many rural gatherings and meetings happened there.

Note [03]

14

00:03:25,500 --> 00:03:31,190

Hurry, kabigan will start in Chanditala.

Take this signal. Start.[03]

Kabigan: Kabigan is literally translated as 'poet-song', meaning instantly created poetry, adding tunes to them, sung by the poets themselves. These tunes are very predictable in most of the cases, rhythmic, widely used, and in many cases, high in beats. This was a very popular form of folk-art in Bengal. It drew its elements from the social life and the rich travesty of Indian Scriptures, like Mahabharata, Ramayan, and Bhagabat. Radha-Krishna discourse was a very widely used component in kabial/kabi/kabigan literature. Related terms with 'kabigan' are 'kabial', 'kabi', and 'kabar larai'. Kabial is those poets who engage in this kind of musical fights. 'Kabi' is a short form of 'kabial'. In modern urban Bangla, 'kabi' means a poet. 'Kabar Larai' literally translates as 'fight between kabi-s', referring to the kabial performance, same as 'kabigan'.

Note [04]

22

00:03:53,790 --> 00:03:58,990

- Still speaking millitary Hindi?

That too 90% mistakes![04]

Here this refers to Rajan, the son of a Bengali cobbler who is a war veteran. Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay in his memoirs mentions that this war in the novel 'Kabi' is Mesopotamia War, a component of World War I, in which a lot of soldiers and officers came from British India. This Hindi-speaking by Rajan is important in a sense. Tarashankar writes in his memoirs that he does not know why he made Rajan speak Hindi, because the real person on whom he built this character did not speak Hindi. But we can guess the reason. The time of writing the novel was 1938 to 1942, and the character is a war-veteran from WW I. So, this speaks of a time when the traditional identity space is getting opened up and brought in interaction with different other identities. In fact the identities like Bengali, Bihari, and so on, the identities in Modern India, mainly defined on language, are emerging through this interaction, and are also emerging the different orders of hybridity. Rajan is a character that represents this

hybridity. Maybe that is why he is much less affected by the prevailing feudal values, in dealing with things like extramarital love between Nitai and Thakurjhi.

Note [05]

25

00:04:21,990 --> 00:04:25,390

Hey, trader-uncle,
keep my blue cloak.[05]

'Trader-uncle' is a quite popular form of address in Bengal, even today. And this blue cloak, mentioned in color because the film is black-and-white was the standard uniform of the Indian Railway workers. Rajan is a pointsman in Chanditala station of Indian Railway. The film opens with a shot of train entering in Chanditala station. And this is nothing surprising. One important aspect of 'Kabi' is the struggle of values of an aspiring poet in a feudal society, and in this society of British India one of most important source of social-economic dynamics was Indian Railways.

Note [06]

26

00:04:27,090 --> 00:04:35,190

Pointsman-sahib, why so hurry?
Failed the train?[06]

As we mentioned, Rajan is a pointsman in Chanditala station.

Note [07]

28

00:04:40,190 --> 00:04:42,990

Trader-uncle, a bhonar of hot tea.[07]

Bhonar is the name of indigenous earthen cup.

Note [08]

30

00:04:49,990 --> 00:04:51,990

'Ustad', a bhonar of hot tea?[08]

Ustad as a word means 'skilled'. It is a term used to signify friendly respect.

Note [09]

35

00:05:07,190 --> 00:05:11,390

You have no petty job there,
Like 'dohar' or a 'kasar'?[09]

Dohar as a word stands for the assistants to kabial, who must possess some poetic skills too, for assisting the kabial. This word means 'the second one'. Kasar is a round metallic plate, stroked by wooden sticks, used as an indigenous musical instrument, particularly in religious festivals, till today in Bengal and elsewhere. In this film we later see Rajan and his son practicing songs together when the son is beating a kasar.

Note [10]

36

00:05:12,790 --> 00:05:18,990

You are now an aspiring kabial,
Rajan's 'sabha-kapi'?[10]

Rajan is a proper name, the name of the friend of kabial Nitai. But, 'rajan' means 'king' in Sanskrit or Bangla. And this word is continuously used as a multiple-meaning ploy. The village brahmin on the platform of the station calls Nitai as a 'sava-kapi' of Rajan. Usually, the courts of the kings, called 'sava' had a chief resident poet, who was called a 'sava-kabi', which was a highly respected post. Here the brahmin, mocks Nitai with a play on this word, because 'kapi' means ape or monkey. And sarcasm is directed towards Nitai, who wants to become a 'kabial' even after coming from a very low caste like 'doam'.

Note [11]

37

00:05:20,190 --> 00:05:25,190

Blessed by a brahmin like you,
A lame crosses mountains.[11]

Brahmin was the highest social caste in feudal India. And this sentence of Nitai actually mocks this brahmin by making a parody of a Sanskrit verse which says that by the grace of god lames can cross mountains.

Note [12]

42

00:05:39,190 --> 00:05:49,590

Let me be an ape, and write
Rama in gold on my ribs. [12]

Rama was the most important character of the most popular Indian epic, Ramayana. By the name of Rama still elections are fought and won in India. And Hanumana, himself a very popular god in India, was an ape who was a staunch disciple of Rama in Ramayana. On his ribs, as legends go, the name of Rama was written in Gold embossed alphabets.

Note [13]

45

00:05:59,400 --> 00:06:03,100

A 'doam' by caste,[13]

And a porter in this station -

Doam was a warrior caste in medieval and feudal India. A traditional Bangla nursery rhyme starts this way: আগে ডোম বাগে ডোম ঘোড়া ডোম সাজে, or, doam in front doam in rear doam on horse prepare. That was the way kings went to war. In British India, the kings vanished, and thus the profession of war. So doams transformed to dacoits and thieves in many cases, with their proficiency in martial arts. A lot of doam people were employed in burning-ghats or the Hindu cremation places. Doam people were also called as 'Rajbanshi', 'king's-kin' or 'Birbanshi', 'hero's-kins'.

Note [14]

54

00:06:45,900 --> 00:06:51,800

Let's go - kabigan is starting.

Where is Rajan's wife - 'rani'?[14]

Rani means queen. Here the word 'rani' comes as a play on the meaning of the word 'rajan', that is, king.

Note [15]

55

00:06:52,500 --> 00:06:56,300

Hey, Rajan's son - 'yuvaraj' -

Where are you?[15]

Yuvraj means prince. Again a play on the word 'rajan'.

Note [16]

57

00:07:03,500 --> 00:07:10,800

They all went to kabigan,

In Chandi-Mother's fair.[16]

We have already mentioned the significance in the discussion on 'chanditala'.

Note [17]

65

00:07:44,600 --> 00:07:47,200

My wife's sister - 'thakurjhi'?[17]

Thakurjhi literally means 'sister-in-law'. It is a term of familial respect. And calling Rajan's sister-in-law as 'thakurjhi' Nitai pays her some respect too. The original novel had a lot more on this point. And it is a very interesting thing that neither the novel or the film mentions the proper name of 'thakurjhi'. She is situated as a familial position, yet to become an individual. But, with respect to the time the story narrates, thakurjhi shows a lot of grit and independent passion.

Note [18]

69

00:08:19,300 --> 00:08:22,500

Hey - all getting sold![18]

The things that are getting sold are 'papad' - a popular Bengali snack, till today's time. Pasted pulses are made into round shapes and dried up in sunlight. They are usually fried or roasted, and in some cases used in vegetable curry.

Note [19]

71

00:08:33,900 --> 00:08:38,100

'Didi', you came without telling

'Jamaidada' - he will get angry.[19]

Didi means elder-sister. Jamai means her husband. Dada means elder brother. Jamai-dada is the address that thakurjhi uses towards Rajan, with both the senses of brother-in-law and brother.

Note [20]

81

00:09:13,100 --> 00:09:17,800

Purchase some garlands!

She will honor all good people.[20]

Garland is a popular symbol of different forms of regard in Bengali/Indian culture. Garland means respect, used to pay respect to people in public functions. Traditional Indian marriage actualizes through mutual garlanding by the spouses. Garland is taken as one of the most poignant symbols of romance between lovers. Here multiple surplus meanings are used in this mild banter.

Note [21]

Note [22]

93

00:09:56,800 --> 00:10:00,090

((Disapproval - Balohari Haribol[21]))

'Silence, silence, order, order'.[22]

"Balohari Haribol" is the chant of the funeral processions. Here it signifies disapproval.

'Silence, silence, order, order' is the exact statement used by the upper caste Bengali Babu (gentleman). If Rajan stands for the Hindi hybridity, this babu stands for the English hybridity. They incessantly use English words and phrases and expression, both by the inertia of habit in their Westernized education, and their pang to prove their degree of Westernization. This is equally operative till today, more than six decades after the British left.

Note [23]

96

00:10:09,850 --> 00:10:14,650

Instead of money,

'Mohanta' gives 'belpata' .[23]

Mohanta is a synonym of priest or 'purohit' in a temple. He is a powerful person in a rural society. Belpata means 'leaves of bel'. Bel or Bael is *Aegle marmelos* in Latin. These leaves are an integral part of any Hindu worship. They are considered extremely pious in religious contexts.

Note [24]

101

00:10:34,200 --> 00:10:38,990

Fight with teacher, like Mahabharat?[24]

We cannot do it, sir.

Mahabharat is one of the two Indian epics. Literally great (maha) India (bharat), it is one of the most important sources of Indian culture and tradition.

Note [25]

102

00:10:39,100 --> 00:10:41,390

'Absolute cowards, cowards'.[25]

Another example where the character speaks in English - the Anglicized Bengali babu.

Note [26]

105

00:10:50,300 --> 00:10:52,300

What is a 'madel', didi?[26]

This shows one of the interesting moments of Anglicization in Bengali culture. The traditional Bengali word, পদক (padaka) is gradually replaced by English 'medal'. The

wife of Rajan uses it once in the film. The educated people say medal as a replacement of 'padaka'. And the uneducated mass distorts it once again, from medal to 'madel'. So the Anglicization is once again Bengalicized.

Note [27]

113

00:11:18,490 --> 00:11:20,500

Oh, Mother.[27]

Here Mother refers to Goddess Chandi.

Note [28]

121

00:11:56,090 --> 00:12:00,000

Beside the rail-tracks, under
The Krishnachura tree.[28]

Krishnachura is *Delonix regia* in Latin, a tree that blossoms in bright red flowers. The name breaks in Krishna (the god lord Krishna) and Churha, the crown. This flower is very much a symbol of romance and also reminds us of the Krishna-Radha discourse which will be used a lot particularly in the second part of the film.

Note [29]

142

00:14:31,800 --> 00:14:34,400

Oh, alas, Siya-Ram.[29]

Siya-Ram means Sita and Ram together, two characters from the Indian epic Ramayana, and two important Indian gods. This habit is prevalent in Hindi speaking rural population, and this shows the Hindi-connection of Rajan. Used quite a few times in this film.

Note [30]

145

00:14:40,990 --> 00:14:46,800

No one appreciates you, only I
And this ugly-darky thakurjhi.[30]

The original word used in the novel is কালকুড়ি or 'kalkutti', meaning pitch-black. Fairness was an important parameter in judging beauty of Indian girls. Though, the description of thakurjhi as given in the novel, or as represented by the nick 'kalkutti' or 'ugly-darky' goes hardly in line with the actress Anubha Gupta. She is quite fair by any Indian standard.

Note [31]

148

00:14:58,090 --> 00:15:07,800

The son of the wise 'doam'[31]

Started getting stupid

We have already commented about the history of doam caste in Note [13]. Here Mahadev kabial focuses in on the socially recognized profession of this caste, because Nitai is trying to become kabial, which is a quite elite profession. And so, in a way, Nitai is challenging the social hierarchy of caste and profession.

Note [32]

154

00:15:45,200 --> 00:15:50,100

His mother's father was a dacoit,

Died in deportation.[32]

This deportation refers to the British Indian practice of deporting dangerous convicts to the prison in Andaman archipelago. Because the condition of the convicts was unbearably inhuman even by British Indian standards, the death rate of them was quite high.

Note [33]

158

00:16:07,950 --> 00:16:11,600

what's bad in doam caste?

We are 'rajbanshi'[33].

We have already mentioned in Note [13] about this rajbanshi or birbanshi tag on the doam caste.

Note [34]

170

00:17:06,300 --> 00:17:10,100

Like legendary Ratnakar[34]

A carp in a prawn's womb.

Ratnakar was the name of Valmiki, the writer of the Indian epic Ramayana, as the legend goes, before he became a poet, when he was a dacoit. There are a lot of stories, myth, and history of language and society involved here. This is hardly a scope for such a discussion.

Note [35]

176

00:17:41,400 --> 00:17:46,100

What a time comes,
Mosquito becomes Garuda.[35]

Garuda is a character from the Indian epic Ramayana. A very learned and heroic bird, he has quite long strands of mythology attached with him.

Note [36]

193

00:18:57,450 --> 00:19:01,250

No. Going away from kabi[36]
Violates the Mother's temple.

Nitai here mentions the religious connection of the kabial/kabigan practice. Kabigan has a kind of value and honor attached with it, which, say the jhumur practice does not have, as will be clear as the film proceeds. Jhumur rather represents the commercial and the lewd, while kabigan represents the religious and the philosophical.

Note [37]

213

00:21:14,000 --> 00:21:35,100

You smile, I weep,
And let the flute play
Below the 'Kadam' tree[37]

This is one of the many times where the Radha-Krishna discourse in Indian philosophy, religion and sexuality is obliquely referred to in this film. Here the image of true love is being created by Nitai, where the epitome of true love is Radha and Krishna, whose traditional depiction as a couple is below a kadam tree (*Haldina cordifolia* in Latin, kadam or kadamba in Bangla), with Krishna playing flute and Radha listening to him. Kadam is quite common in poetry, literature, and love in Bangla, with very nice and bright yellow flowers, looking like furred balls.

Note [38]

221

00:23:42,100 --> 00:23:50,200

Who threw my books?
Ramayana, Mahabharat,
Manasamangal?[38]

Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two epics and the two most important religious texts from Indian scriptures. Manasamangal was a Bangla text, written in so many versions through centuries, starting from thirteenth. They had a very big readership and effect in Bengal's social, religious and cultural life. There was a genre called মঙ্গলকাব্য or

mangalkabya -- they represented historically the core of Bengali thought and perceptions. Even as literary texts some of them are marvellous.

Note [39]

233

00:25:38,200 --> 00:25:44,100

Guests will hear! Last night,
Didi came here from the fair.[39]

As we said, didi or দিদি means elder sister, and as a common courtesy, practiced even till today, Vrindaban is addressing his wife's didi as didi too.

Note [40]

239

00:26:18,900 --> 00:26:24,150

Good. Jamaidada's due
Gets paid on me today?[40]

As we mentioned earlier, thakurjhi calls Rajan as jamaidada. Rajan is the husband of the woman with whom thakurjhi is talking now, that is, her elder sister.

Note [41]

246

00:26:36,100 --> 00:26:40,500

Didi, don't mind what she says.
You're Rajandada's Maharani.[41]

This is another version of the play of words in Note [14]. Rani or রানি means queen, and maha or মহা means great.

Note [42]

248

00:26:50,600 --> 00:26:54,800

Say mathrani, chnachrani![42]

Here these two words are used as a counterpoint to maharani or মহারানি. Mathrani or ম্যাথরানি means the wife of a lowly-caste man who cleans sewerage or toilets. And chnachrani or ছাঁচরানি means wife of a petty thief. One interesting point can be noted here about mathrani. It derives from mathor or মথর, that means the man who cleans sewerage. The interesting thing is that this word comes from mahather or মহাথের, a variant of mahasthabir or মহাস্থবির, that means one of the highest posts in a Buddhist monastery. That this word is used to mean a man like that can be called the revenge of Hindu Brahminism on Buddhism and Buddhists. But, as a ploy it was so successful that hardly any Bengali knows or remembers it any more.

Note [43]

259

00:27:30,800 --> 00:27:35,200

Peace, if there, is in being dumb.

Glory to Siya Ram.[43]

See Note [29].

Note [44]

267

00:28:07,900 --> 00:28:12,500

No.

No more petty jobs for you.[44]

There is a logical loop here in the film, because a sequence was skipped maybe keeping the length of the film in mind. In the earlier sequence, Nitai tells Rajan to listen to his reading of Ramayana while smoking a cigarette. And then we come back to it, and Rajan says this. The novel depicts Nitai reading a portion of Ramayana which suggests that a person dealing with deep philosophical things must keep away from petty jobs.

Note [45]

279

00:29:30,850 --> 00:29:32,900

Gentlemen are angry too.[45]

This shows a problem of my inadequate translation. The word बाबू or babu is a very common word in Bangla, and this novel and film too. It has a lot of surplus meanings, starting from lord or owner to the foppish urban elite. And Tarashankar's text, even the script and dialogues, are so multi-layered, dense, and complex, that it is hardly possible, at least in notes to a subtitle file to represent them. And a major problem to me was that, the subtitle text is limited both in terms of characters per line (35 at most) and duration of display. So, translating dialogues as subtitles is even more complex than translating dialogues in a novel. In most cases, I had to opt for the smaller version, condensing the whole thing into two, and in some cases, three lines of at most 35 (in one or two 38) characters in each line. So, it was absolutely impossible to translate the nuance of many such words. The word babu, at least in majority of the cases, in this film/novel, represented an upper-caste/educated/elite aura. This is hardly carried in the word gentleman.

Note [46]

285

00:29:51,100 --> 00:29:53,200

(Mohanta thakur.)[46]

Mohanta or ମୋହାନ୍ତ is a religious post in Vaishnava hierarchy, usually chief of an ashrama or monastery or temple. And thakur or ଠାକୁର, literally meaning god, is added with it for the honor of the post.

Note [47]

344

00:34:46,200 --> 00:34:48,300

(Bhojpuri folk song.)[47]

She went to bring water.

Bhojpuri is a local dialect of Hindi, usually spoken by rural people. But, in a way it carries the rich tradition of Brajabuli or ବ୍ରଜବୁଲି, the ancient poetic language in which a lot of important literature was written. In translating this song, I got the help of my colleagues in my college, whom I mentioned earlier. This girl went to collect water, and then her mates, all girls from the village who accompanied her, went away, because it is getting late. And the girl tells her lover (interestingly, in Bhojpuri songs, in many cases the lover is mentioned as Sipahiya or the soldier, as I came to know) to lift the pot filled with water to her head and put the lid on it. And bids farewell to the lover. In fact this is a variant of the Radha-Krishna paradigm of meeting of the lovers. In that case, the pot would be filled with milk. In fact this whole paradigm is pre-loaded in the viewer's psyche when watching Kavi as film or reading as a novel.

Note [48]

367

00:36:31,000 --> 00:36:32,800

Rajan-bhaiya.[48]

I too.

Bhaiya is an address of respect, literally meaning brother in Hindia.

Note [49]

373

00:37:09,100 --> 00:37:12,300

No, please come.

I'm swearing on me.[49]

The word used was ଦିବ୍ୟ or dibya, translating what was beyond me. It represents a custom common among loved ones, usually romantic. When someone does a dibya on someone else on doing something, it means, if that thing is not done, it will bring the destruction of the dibya-maker. And so, this breaking dibya is something that is not done.

Note [50]

391

00:38:55,500 --> 00:39:02,700
Mahadev kabial invites you,
To fight against him, in Katwa.[50]

Katwa is a place in the Bardhaman district of West Bengal, where a lot of events of the film will happen. Katwa's fair was quite renowned.

Note [51]
402
00:39:41,300 --> 00:39:42,500
Come, kabial.[51]

It is a common custom among Bengali people, even till today, not to pronounce the word 'go', as if it is a bad omen. So, in place of go, when someone is leaving, the usual custom is to say 'come'. Even the one who is leaving cannot say 'going', the usual thing is to say 'coming'.

Note [52]
403
00:39:42,700 --> 00:39:43,500
Durga, Durga.[52]

Durga or দুর্গা is the name of the most important Bengali goddess. Pronouncing her name twice while starting a journey was a common custom, a kind of a good omen.

Note [53]
427
00:42:40,500 --> 00:42:41,300
Go to Yama's place.[53]

Yama or যম is the god of death. To tell someone to go to Yama's place means to tell him to die. In the next dialogue, and in a big way in the second VCD, this concept will be used again and again.

Note [54]
436
00:44:10,100 --> 00:44:11,050
Shiropa.[54]

Shiropa or শিরোপা means a token of honor, something symbolic of honor. It may be a title or some object or some post or something. It maybe very interesting to note that, as the novel tells, skipped by the film, Nitai himself bought this shawl and told his friends that it was given to him as a shiropa.

Note [55]

449

00:45:32,400 --> 00:45:34,850

Gentlemen gave this shiropa.[55]

As we already know, this is a lie. And the use of the word gentleman, as like Note [45] represents the power dimension of the babu people, who legitimize all versions of honor.

Note [56]

476

00:47:09,500 --> 00:47:12,700

Ustad, see, what a ustadin.[56]

Ustadin is the feminine form of ustad as given in Note [08].

Note [57]

484

00:47:52,100 --> 00:47:53,800

A great jhumur performer.[57]

We have already mentioned the commercial dimension attached to jhumur in contrast to kabigan/kabial. Jhumur groups toured through the country side. They had some female dancers, who danced to the songs composed by the poet resident to the group. Usually some loosely defined dramatic forms were created, some examples of which we witness in the second VCD, where they create depictions following the Radha-Krishna discourse. And this dramatic depiction is done through songs accompanied by dances. The group's poet is in a way a variation of the kabial thing, but the chief motive here is popularity among the rural folk.

Note [58]

491

00:48:40,400 --> 00:48:46,800

Hell to all show-off. As if

Lying in temple's dharna.[58]

Dharna means waiting with fast and other forms of self-inflicted hardship in a temple demanding something from the god, like, say, son's recovery from a disease or something. This word is still used today, but the meaning has displaced from religious to political, where dharna is done in some authority's office till the demand is met.

Note [59]

496

00:49:09,200 --> 00:49:12,300

Masi, you've come? Give me
Some paan and tobacco.[59]

Paan or পান is the tradition of chewing betel leaf (Piper betle) with areca nut and slaked lime paste. There are many regional and local variations.

Note [60]
506
00:50:09,800 --> 00:50:13,300
No, no - food not in his hand.
Give it to me.[60]

This is one example of the intricate and elaborate caste-system. This guard is obviously low in caste, and hence food cannot be given to him.

Note [61]
513
00:51:04,500 --> 00:51:07,500
Beware - bashikaran is mixed.[61]

Bashikaran or বশীকরণ is a concept derivative of the religious/tantric practices. A kind of Indian black magic. As if some chant or object can make someone fall in love with a particular person. Traditional literature and folk art forms have a lot of bashikaran references. Here, it says that some herb or something that represents that tantric power is mixed, and hence will make Basan fall in love with Nitai.

Note [62]
515
00:51:14,500 --> 00:51:24,300
What else, when love fails,
Chandra's hue graces Shyam[62]

Chandra or Chandrabali (in fact the word used in the film was Chandrabali, I had to shorten it to chandra to bring the whole thing under the 35-character and two lines statute (the time duration would not allow reading more than two lines) was the third person in the love of Radha and Shyam/Krishna/Kalachand/Govinda/Radhanath -- all these names and many more are the names of Krishna. In fact he had one hundred and eight names, all of them are described in some songs. Chandrabali was quite luxe et volupte, as depicted in Radha-Krishna literature, and allured Krishna to spend a night with her, creating a lot of tension between Radha and Krishna. As the story goes when Krishna returned, Radha discovered the brief and secret sojourn in Chandrabali's place from the face colors and paints transferred to Krishna's face from Chandrabali's. Here this rhyme refers to that.

Note [63]

545

00:53:25,000 --> 00:53:29,800

Pondering on shimul flower.[63]

And the moon.

Shimul (I could not get the Latin name) is a tree full of thorns, and the flowers of it are purple in color, though without any fragrance. Here these two aspects are compared, and fragrance is taken to be the quality that defines flowers. And hence shimul is put lower in rank as a flower because it has no fragrance, only some attractive color. This fragrance-less bright-colored thorn-full flower of shimul will be used by Nitai later to compare Basan, who, in Nitai's elaboration, does not have any important quality other than ostentation of physical beauty.

Note [64]

588

00:57:21,100 --> 00:57:30,900

Ugh, too dark. See, Kalomanik is

sacrilege, better is Koilamanik.[64]

Kalamanik or Kalachand or Kalomanik are some of the many names of Krishna. Krishna was black, as the legend goes, and kala or kalo means black. So, it will be a sacrilege to call Nitai by that name. And Koila or কলা means coal, obviously referring to the complexion of Nitai, which was quite dark.

Note [65]

597

00:58:06,100 --> 00:58:10,800

No. If they want, send them

To Yama's place to listen songs.[65]

Let me mention one thing here. Many of these atrocious grammars are not my contribution. The line already has 37 characters, 2 above the 35 mark. So, I had to drop the necessary 'to' before 'listen'. And this is obviously a form of abuse, Yama being the god of death.

Note [66]

633

01:01:35,400 --> 01:01:36,500

Fortune line.[66]

This is a very important aspect of the word kapal or কপাল, and a translator's nightmare. Kapal means both forehead and luck in Bangla. And in majority of the cases they carry both the senses. In this film at least twice it is used, striking or showing forehead, or

mentioning forehead and bringing in the 'luck' sense of the word. And then comes the word line or রেখা. When used with kapal, this has a double sense too. It is assumed that before a human being is born, all the luck is written to his/her forehead in god's invisible letters. Now, when used with kapal, the word rekha or likhan means both the grooves or skin folds on forehead and the text of luck written there by god. What thakurjhi says here is, 'amar kapal' or 'আমার কপাল', that refers to her forehead where the bruise is, and also her bad luck which made the incident happen.

Note [67]

636

01:01:48,800 --> 01:01:51,600

Mother, give me some murhi.[67]

Muri or মুড়ি is a very common Bengali food item. It is prepared from rice by frying it in a dry way, without oil, on heat, stirring the rice continuously. That Vrindaban is wanting it from her mother shows that thakurjhi is failing in her family duties.

Note [68]

637

01:02:10,400 --> 01:02:15,700

Couldn't spoil the milk on a
Thursday - violating Lakshmi![68]

It is a common folk belief that Thursday or বৃহস্পতিবার belongs to the goddess Lakshmi, or the goddess of wealth. And hence spoiling anything of value is a kind of disrespect to her. Obviously this is a lame logic here used by thakurjhi to hide her eagerness to come back to Nitai's place.

Note [69]

658

01:06:42,900 --> 01:06:45,600

Better return in a sari.[69]

Sari or শাড়ি is a woman's attire, and hence it refers to the weakness of Naran. It is a very common Bengali abuse, where nothing can be more insulting to man than being called a woman.