Explorations in Cinema through Classical Indian Theories

New Interpretations of Meaning, Aesthetics, and Art

Gopalan Mullik

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Those Magical Moments *of* Learning *about* Cinema

Preface

When I had started studying cinema in an informal course organized by Chitrabani, a Jesuit School of Social Communication in Kolkata in 1989, its director, Fr. Gaston Roberge had, with a missionary zeal, imbibed in us the need for studying Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, a classical Indian treatise on drama. He had reasoned thus: if Aristotle's *Poetics* could still be useful for cinema, why not it's near contemporary, Bharata's detailed compendium on drama, be useful too? The idea had caught hold of my imagination. Since it was also the time of *glasnost*, which questioned existing thoughts, and *perestroika*, which called for new constructions in its place, it represented a heady time to break conventional barriers and initiate new thoughts which resulted in my present work.

This need to rethink things had become acute in the context of the existing film discourse as well. It had reached a stage of stagnation, even a "crisis," as diagnosed by eminent film theorists of our times. Through reading and analysis, I found that the primary reason for this moribund state was the failure of the existing film theories to incorporate film audiences' ordinary experiences of cinema, the very "emotions" and "affects" that drive them to cinema halls in hordes all over the world. On the motivation provided by Fr. Roberge, when I started exploring classical Indian theories, I found surprisingly sophisticated insights there which, at the very least, could act as an effective counter-foil to the Western theories on cinema. As my research progressed, I sought to make it available to a large number of people, comprising of both the academics and the general public. In order to do so, I only culled rational inputs from

there, that is, inputs which were rationally understood both in the East and the West alike were put in my work. Further, since the idioms used in Western theories have acquired the status of being the *lingua franca* of the modern world, I compared and contrasted classical Indian concepts with their Western counterparts wherever I could with the hope that the readers have a greater grasp of the points at issue.

The present work is the result of my doctoral research at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. In this connection, I remain ever grateful to my Primary Supervisor Dr. Daniel J. Rycroft for ensuring four and a half years of quality time in my research. Dr. Rycroft's advice that I compare Merleau-Ponty's existential phenomenology with classical Indian theories opened up a radically new understanding in me of the embodied aspects of classical Indian theories, especially the Nyāya theory, which have rarely been highlighted in any academic discourse so far. In this context, I have challenged the overarching idealism that has come to prevail in interpreting classical Indian theories. I am also deeply indebted to Dr. Rycroft for suggesting that I interview Indian scholars and professionals in order to get an idea of how Indian theories are preached and practiced in Indian art-forms in contemporary times. In this connection, my interviews of the film scholar & filmmaker Dr. Moinak Biswas, the Nyāya scholar and Professor Emerita Amita Chatterjee, the theater and film director/actor Suman Mukhopadhyay, the left art critic Samik Bandopadhyay, the experimental filmmaker & film production faculty Dr. Ashish Avikunthak and the much decorated theater and film actor Soumitra Chatterjee eventually proved to be a game-changer for my work.

I am also grateful to St. Xavier's College, Kolkata and it's the then Principal, Fr. Dr. S. J. Felix Raj, SJ who was instrumental in having arranged a sizable grant for me from the Mittal Trust Fund without which I could not possibly have completed my research in the UK. I also acknowledge my deep gratitude to Y. Radhika, Ananya Chakraborti Chatterjee, and Subroto Das who extended their help both financially and psychologically whenever I needed them. I also remain grateful to Gautam Basu for his constant help in the production of this book including finding Anindita Dutta who posed as 'Madhuri' in my illustrative photographs. I, of course, remain in the permanent debt of my family who kept their cool even when my research seemed to be going nowhere!

Kolkata, India Gopalan Mullik

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The first lines in Richard Allen and Murray Smith's "Introduction" to their edited book *Film Theory and Philosophy* are as follows:

> It is widely recognized that the field of film studies is in a state of flux, or even crisis or impasse…it is during such periods of relative intellectual insecurity that new connections and alliances may be forged, new perspectives discovered, and old questions recast in fresh and dynamic ways.[1]

What is the "crisis" the authors are talking about? David Bordwell (1947–) and Noël Carroll (1947–) have subsequently devoted a whole book, *Post-Theory: Restructuring Film Studies*,[2] in noting the contours of this "crisis" and seeking deliverance from it. Briefly stated, the above film theorists hold that the "crisis" has primarily resulted from the existing film theories' deliberate adoption of an intellectual approach to cinema at the cost of the ordinary film goers' normal response to cinema. The contemporary film discourse preferred to advocate how the audiences *should* respond to cinema rather than how they *actually* experience cinema.

The basic reason identified by the above authors for such a turn of events is the employment of *disembodied vision* as the privileged tool of

[1] Richard Allen and Murray Smith, Eds. "Introduction", in *Film Theory and Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997): 1–35, 1.

[2] David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, Eds. *Post-Theory: Restructuring Film Studies* (Wisconsin and Madison: The University of Wisconsin, 1995).

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film analysis which totally relegated to the background the audiences' *embodied* experiences of cinema. It is, however, these *affective experiences* which largely determine the audiences' most basic engagements with cinema. In the above context, my work seeks to examine how classical Indian theories respond to ordinary peoples' *every day* experiences of cinema.

In the course of my research, I found that all classical Indian theories are ultimately bracketed by human beings' habitual experiences of the world, which includes their embodied experiences, the socio-cultural practices they have built around them, and the experiences *taught* to them through 'formal' teachings and trainings given by the society. Indeed, for all classical Indian theories, the ultimate criterion of success is the "practical results" they achieve in the empirical world. In the above sense, since these theories appear to be based on the peoples' *normal responses* to the world, they may be said to represent a *theory of the ordinary* for ordinary human beings' engagement with cinema at the most basic level of their being. Since these theories had already been extended to the fields of aesthetics and arts in classical India, I argue that they could be easily applied to cinema as well. In the course of doing such an application, while I might have ended up with what may be called an "Indian film theory" in an embryonic form, I do not, however, seek to replace the Western film theories with an Indian one. Rather, I prefer to see the *theory of the ordinary* that classical Indian theories throw up as a counterfoil to the Western theories' *intellectualization of cinema* with the hope that the two together would make film studies whole again.[3]

I start my work by analyzing the emergence and branching out of film theories during the twentieth century and their limitations in dealing with cinema. Developments in Marxism and Psychology during the nineteenth and early twentieth century led to the idea that both human psyche and intelligence could be conditioned by forces beyond individual's conscious control. Thus, for Marx (1818–1883), the social means of production conditioned human consciousness that severely circumscribed their freedom of action, which, when used by oppressive social regimes, became instrumental in the repression of the individuals

[3] It may be mentioned that early film theorization in the West, like Vachel Lindsay's, *The Art of Moving Picture* (New York: Macmillan, 1915) and Hugo Münsterberg's, *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study* (New York: D. Appleton, 1916) and, had predominantly dealt with the cinegoers' embodied experiences of cinema.

concerned.[4] Marx sought human freedom through social revolution where the proletariat would own all means of production, the basis for setting up a classless society.

While, for Marx, a collective liberation was still considered possible, for Freud (1856–1939), however, repressed human desires, which significantly motivated their conscious actions on the surface, could only be sublimated in individual cases by adopting certain psycho-analytic processes.[5] These theories indicated, among others, that the notion human "intelligence" could no more be considered as "free" as Descartes had once thought. It put a question mark on the *age of the reason* which had preceded the above theories in Europe.

When the Marxist theory was in its prime during the first half of the twentieth century, cinema had just arrived on the scene. As cinema gathered momentum, the first significant film theory to emerge was the *theory of montage* formulated by the early Soviet filmmakers, Lev Kuleshov (1899–1970), Psevolod Pudovkin (1893–1953), Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948), and Dziga Vertov (1896–1954) during the early 1920s and 1930s. With the Russian revolution fresh in their minds, these Soviet filmmakers devised *montage practices in cinema* as an innovation which used *juxtaposition of discontinuous pieces of social reality* not only to *de-naturalize* the audience's bourgeois conditioning effects but also to produce "new" social meanings from them. Thus, for example, in contrast to the Hollywood filmmakers' practice of ensuring the primacy of *continuity of action* on the surface, in the early Soviet cinema, Kuleshov developed the *montage practice* of generating different meanings by juxtaposing the same image of a person in different contexts. Thus, for example, while the image of a person juxtaposed with a bowl of soup would "mean" to the viewers that the person is "hungry," the same image juxtaposed with a child playing with balloons or a dead child in a coffin would "mean" the person's "happiness" or "sadness" respectively. The Kuleshov experiments were, however, criticized by Eisenstein on the ground that, since, even the juxtaposed

[4] Karl Marxs' seminal works are *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and *Das Kapital* (1867–1894), both of which have been translated and published many times in the English language.

[5] See Sigmund Freud's seminal work in 1905, *Interpretation of Dreams* (English translation published by London: Macmillan, 1913), all his subsequent works being based on this insight.

"discontinuous pieces" only portrayed different experiences of the bourgeois life, they did not create any condition for socially revolutionary thinking among the audiences. Terming the Kuleshov experiments as "linkage montage," Eisenstein sought to substitute them by what he called "collision montage" where two "discontinuous pieces" could not be linked up with each other in any way which would force the viewers to go beyond conventional "meanings" produced by the society in order to understand them. A common juxtaposition in Eisenteins' films was between a capitalist and his workers indicating that the exploiter and the exploited cannot be reconciled under normal circumstances. It is important to emphasize the primacy of *the editing process* in the Soviet montage theory on the basis of which new "meanings" were created for the audiences. However, in their zeal to 'educate' the masses so that they can rise against the bourgeois reality, these filmmakers completely disregarded the audiences' normal experiences of cinema. Ultimately, however, the Soviet authorities clamped down on these filmmakers on the ground that these experiments were becoming too esoteric for the ordinary masses. In the process, however, the Soviet authorities failed to notice the gains that were made in constructing a new language of cinema. The ceasing and destruction of the film footage of Eisenstein's film *Bezhin Meadows* (1937) and the posthumous release of his film *Ivan the Terrible Part II* (1944) in 1958 told their own stories.

The next film theory to follow was the *theory of realism* in cinema formulated by the French film critic André Bazin (1918–1958) and the German film historian Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1966) during the 1940s and 1950s. Their theories initially had a phenomenological streak in them when they held that human beings' natural relationship with Nature from where they had come and the world where they lived formed their own experiences of life which were "revealed" to them *directly* rather than through an interpretative process as held by the montage theorists. Both Bazin and Kracauer thought that, since the cinematographic instrument has the ability to record "reality as it is," it could enable the audiences to establish a *natural* relationship with reality. While critiquing the editing process championed by the Soviet filmmakers as a manipulative practice, Bazin recommended the use of *depth of field*, *long take,* and *staging-in-depth* as the preferred film practices in cinema which maintained the integrity of space and time being

projected on screen.[6] In their effort to establish a deeper, natural connection between the audiences and the projected reality, the *medium specificity of camera* became the preferred choice of the realist filmmakers.

Together called the *Classical Film Theory*, both montage and realist schools were, however, imbued with the same aim of *educating the masses* about the true nature of reality. Even though their processes differed, they had no interest whatsoever in dealing with how the audiences *ordinarily* reacted to cinema. Bordwell also critiqued their notion of choosing the *medium specificity* of a particular film apparatus as the analytical tool par excellence on the ground that "no film lyes any closer to the essence of the medium than others."[7]

During the 1950s and 60s, development of three distinct thought processes, the Saussurian (1857–1913) reading of linguists, Lacanian (1901–1981) reading of Freud, and Althusserian (1918–1990) reading of Marx radically altered peoples' thinking about cinema. A merger of the three resulted in the formation of *Contemporary Film Theory* during the late '60s. The basic premise of this theory was that the audiences as *subjects* were wholly constructed by ideologies which even conditioned what ordinary people considered to be their voluntary behavior.

In case of Psychoanalysis, primarily based on Lacan's theory that the psychological process helps one to construct a *position of unity for the subject*, cinema reconfigures this *unity* by either manipulating the audiences' mental representations in order to repress them or to channelize them into socially acceptable bourgeois patterns.[8] This projected *unity* is facilitated by two factors in the Lacanian psychological register: an "Imaginary Stage," in which the subject is represented as a mental and bodily *unity* by *the other*, metaphorically represented as the "Mirror Stage" involving the Care-givers of the child, and the later "Symbolic Stage," in which the subjects are conditioned to obey patriarchal order that *governs* its subjects according to social laws formulated "In the Name of the Father".[9] Althusser notes that while the "Mirror Stage" gives a child a sense of unity in his body and mind, the "Symbolic Stage" conditions him through the "Ideological State

[6] Annette Kuhn and Guy Westwell, *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 250.

[7] Bordwell, "Historical Poetics of Cinema", 374.

[8] Ibid., 6–7.

[9] Ibid., 7.

Apparatus" or *ISA*, represented by social institutions such as family, religion, education, et cetera, which *give* the individual a social identity by giving him a "position" and a "name" in the society. Whenever the individual would be *hailed* by that "name" in future, he would respond to it "voluntarily".[10] At this stage, the principles underlying the formation of Saussurian linguistics comes into play. It indicates that "meaning" for individual members of a society arises only through *differences* occurring within a social hierarchy that is not only closed but also passed off by the bourgeoisie as the "natural" order of the society.[11] Contemporary film theory holds that this new ideology, which replaced the earlier ideal of a homogenous society, is enforced among the audiences by cinema by the twin means of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Saussurian linguistics.

Bordwell had categorized the above theory as a "subject-position" theory which was solely aimed at analyzing how the audiences are conditioned or "fixed" by cinema to give robotic responses prescribed by the bourgeois society:

> The subject is neither the individual person nor an immediate sense of one's identity or self. It is rather a category of knowing defined by its relation to objects and other subjects. Subjectivity is…unavoidably social. It is not a pre-given consciousness, it is acquired. Subjectivity is constructed through representational systems.[12]

Bordwell mentions that Contemporary Film Theory is the first "Grand Theory" to emerge in the sense that it brings psychology, social ideology, and communication theory together in the form of a unified theory[13] aimed at demonstrating that cinema is merely a symptom of the larger conditioning process operating in the society.[14] Bordwell notes that, since contemporary film theory leaves "no room for 'agency' as

[10] Bordwell, "Contemporary Film Studies and the Vicissitudes of Grand Theory", 7.

[11] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, Trans. and Introduced by Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1916).

[12] Bordwell, "Contemporary Film Studies and the Vicissitudes of Grand Theory", in *Post-Theory*, 3–36, 6.

[13] Ibid., 3.

[14] Ibid.

ideological representations there so thoroughly determine subjectivity," it is not clear how individuals could ever be made to resist ideology.[15]

In search of a solution, *Cultural Studies* introduced socio-cultural variations as a factor that had the potential to subvert the above all-consuming process:

> Culture is a site of struggle and contestation among different groups. A culture is conceived as a network of institutions, representations, and practices which produce differences of race, ethnic heritage, class, gender/sexual preferences and the like. These differences are centrally involved in the production of meaning.[16]

In the form of new identifications and alignments, *cultural studies* shifted its focus from *film as a text* to its *reception* by the audiences. However, Bordwell had shown through an exhaustive analysis that contemporary film theory and cultural studies continue to remain integrated in the following crucial areas: first, in both of them, human institutions and social practices remain *socially constructed* in all significant respects; secondly, both require the *theory of subjectivity* to understand viewers' engagement with cinema; thirdly, in both of them, *spectator response* depends upon processes of identification theorized by contemporary film theory; and, finally, both require *linguistics as a model for understanding* how film images generate "meaning" for the audiences.[17] In other words, according to Bordwell, even the newly constituted discipline of *cultural studies* essentially continued to traverse the same path as formulated by contemporary film theory!

Since contemporary film theory was considered to be a grand theory that purportedly "fits" all situations, Bordwell notes that "By the mid-1980s, subject-position theory had become sterile through repetition."[18] Dissatisfaction with contemporary film theory signaled the emergence of *Cognitive Film Theory* during the 1980s. Reacting against the notion that the film audiences are the ultimate constructs of cinema who only

[15] Bordwell, "Film Studies and Grand Theory", 8, modified.

[16] Ibid., 10.

[17] Bordwell, "Film Studies and Grand Theory", 13–8.

[18] Ibid., 12.

passively consume ideology and act accordingly, cognitive film theory's crucial departure was to hold that viewers interact with cinema in the same conscious, rational way as they do in real life.[19]

In the process, however, cognitive film theory employed excessive rationality to indicate that the audiences *infer* the plot of the film by piecing together cues given in the film like a detective does when surveying a crime scene. In this sense, cognitive film theory's empowerment of the subject remained entirely at the intellectual level. Critics have since held this theory to be a prototype of the economic model where buyers optimized their choice in a market place by undertaking a rational cost–benefit analysis in their minds.[20] Nowell-Smith notes:

> As a general model for aesthetic perception, it [cognitive film theory] is deficient…I would not deny that inference plays a role in aesthetic appreciation, in understanding a Bach partia or a Jimmy Hendrix guitar solo…or making sense of the hero's behavior in *Hamlet*…but there is more to it than that. There is more to films than is allowed for in the theory of narration, and more to mind than is allowed for in even the most sophisticated cognitivist model.[21]

In fact, the theory's excessive reliance on reason made it ill-equipped to deal with "aesthetic" questions where the Greek word *aistheses* meant "the science of feelings." In other words, descriptive emotions alone, that is, emotions which rose to the surface when rational expectations of the audiences were either interrupted, thwarted, or delayed in their fulfillment.[22] The theory could neither handle depth psychology nor had any room for dealing with film sensations generated by the human body. However, since cinema is not only a means of cognitive understanding but also a medium of *feeling experience*, the "emotion-phobia" of both contemporary and cognitive film theories worked to the detriment of a proper understanding of cinema.

[19] Kuhn and Westwell, "Cognitivism (cognitive film theory)", in *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 86.

[20] Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, "How Films Mean, or, from Aesthetics to Semiotics and Half-Way Back Again", in *Reinventing Film Studies*, Eds. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams (London: Arnold, 2000): 8–17, 14.

[21] Nowell-Smith, "How Films Mean", 14.

[22] Ibid.

I also indicate in Chapter 2 that André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning in their theorization of *Early Cinema* demonstrate a visual form called *monstration* or "showing" which produced emotions and affects related to the embodied experiences of an unfolding of novelty- and awe-inspiring "events" in front of the audiences that formed a dominant part of *Early Cinema* rather than merely being a cognitive, analytical instrument which cinema later became in terms of the narrative unfolding of a story. However, it is interesting to note that the former kind of cinema is making a spectacular comeback in the form of "jaw-dropping" digital effects in contemporary block-buster movies. I show in this chapter how conventional film histories and film studies have neglected this embodied aspect of cinema while highlighting only its narrative properties as advocated by both contemporary and cognitive film theories.

In seeking to explore new avenues which would also include the audiences' embodied and reflexive responses to cinema apart from their cognitive responses, I started exploring classical Indian theories. However, I soon realized that classical Indian theories would not make sense to the readers unless a Vedic paradigm of thought was constructed as its basis which would include both the support lent to it by what have been called the "Hindu" theories as well as the critic mounted against it by the "Non-Vedic" theories like Buddhism which opposed it. While completing this construction in Chapter 3, I stumbled upon a peculiarity of Indian theories: even while criticizing each other, they freely borrowed from each other in a non-partisan, non-preaching way which rightly earned them the epithet "The Argumentative Indian" coined in recent times.[23] These vibrant argumentations between schools while exhibiting the utmost respect towards each other primarily occurred during the 7th/6th BCE to 5th/6th CE, a time period generally called the "Age of the Systems,"[24] during which all major classical Indian schools were formed.

The Vedic cosmology is distinguished in holding that the cosmos is an energy-form, called the *Brahman* which operates on the principle of *conservation of energy* where one energy-form or an energy-cluster gets transformed into another energy-form or energy-cluster but never gets lost totally in the universe. Even though the underlying *Brahman* or the cosmic energy force remained as one, the *Brahman* appeared in

[23] See Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).

[24] The word *darśan* stands for the Sanskrit name of an Indian philosophical school, thought or system.

two forms, a static involutionary form where the cosmos exists in the form of a "point-instant" (*bindu*), conceived as the "golden womb" (*hiraṇyagarbha*), and a dynamic evolutionary form which creates the universe. The change from static to dynamic and vice versa with some apparent "stability" in-between is a process considered by the Vedas to be going on since eternity. Despite the above changes, since the underlying reality remained as one, it led to the famous Vedic dictum of *whatever is is one*. The most significant form of this idea was given in the form of an identity between "the cosmos" and "the self" or the "soul" of an individual, *Brahman = ātma*, which indicated a *radical continuity* between all things of the universe. Championed by the Hindu theories, it was vehemently opposed by Buddhism which held that the universe was a site of *radical discontinuity* consisting of momentarily existing "ultimates" called *dharmas* which, due to their instant decay, could neither cause nor produce a stable entity, 'stability' being a mere illusion created by the constant effusion of 'similar' *dharmas*.

Since Vedic cosmology underlies the Hindu theories in terms of which I explain the processes of perception, aesthetics, and art, with the Buddhist theory being used as a critic par excellence, it is necessary to understand the working model of the above cosmology in empirical terms. I discuss the Vedic cosmological process in terms of three *structural modules*. In the first module, I discuss the potential and kinetic forms of the same cosmic energy-form which occurs as an *archetypal pair of opposite forces* held in an overarching balance. This process is symbolically represented as the static "masculine" form called the *puruṣa* and the dynamic "female" form called the *prakṛti*. When the kinetic form becomes active, it breaks the involutionary balance of the cosmos to evolve the universe, only to go into the potential involutionary form again as its potency gets exhausted. The *correlative pair of the opposites*, which underlies this whole existential process, is symbolically represented as the *ardhanāriśvara image* in the Indian tradition which depicts the androgynous half-man, half-woman figure known variously as the *Puruṣa-Prakṛti*, *Śiva-Śakti*, *Śiva-Pārvatī*, *Hara-Pārvatī* or the *Śiva-Kāli Principle*.

This cosmic cyclical process of evolution-existence-involution gives rise to a seasonal cyclical process at the emprical level, called the *Principle of Ṛta*, which controls birth, growth, decay, and regeneration at the organic level and a process of assembly and dissolution at the gross material level.

The evolutionary process in general represents *work done* which invariably leaves an equivalent effect on the systems concerned, the

inherent potency of which leads to more *work being done* and so on. Called the *doctrine of karma*, it operates at all levels of cosmic existence with the formation of the universe being determined in each new cycle by the *work done* in the past and so on down the cycle. The karmic action-reaction model not only works at the *gross material* level but also at the level of *human consciousness* which came to be developed more prominently in the Indian theories. Based on the overarching principle that every thing has a "cause," it involves the crucial concept of *saṃskāra* which generally means "impression" or "trace" that an "action" invariably leaves on a system as an "effect" and so on.[25] Allied to the concept of what may be called the "memory-traces" of the *saṁskāras*, there is another concept called the *vāsanā* which, coming from the root "*vas*" 'to stay', generally means merged forms of "desire-traces" left from previous lives and so on. Dasgupta notes:

> It is often loosely used in the sense of *saṃskāra*. But *vāsanā* generally refers to the tendencies of past lives [existences] most of which lie dormant in the mind. Only those appear which can find scope in this life. But *saṃskāras* are the sub-conscious states which are being constantly generated by experience. *Vāsanās* are innate *saṃskāras* not acquired in this life .[26]

While *vāsanās* keep influencing a system from deep within, it, however, does so only remotely. It is the more recent and hence more active "impressions" or "memory-traces" represented by the *saṃskāras* which keep influencing a system directly. The potency involved in both these "traces" give birth to *dispositional tendencies* within a system which keep influencing it's "actions" on the surface. Thus, while the "memory-traces" of food makes us respond immediately, the "desire-traces" associated with the archetypal mother image elicits a much deeper response from within our being. Since human beings at

[25] Surendranath Dasgupta says "The word *saṃskāra* is used by Pāṇini in three different senses: (1) improving a thing as distinguished from generating a new quality (2) coglomeration or aggregation and (3) adornment. The meaning of *saṃskāras* in Hindu philosophy is altogether different. It means the impressions (which exist sub-consciously in the mind) of our experiences, whether cognitive, emotional or conative, exist in sub-conscious states and may under suitable conditions be reproduced as memory (*smṛti*)." *A History of Indian Philosophy,* Vol. 1, First Indian Edition (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), Footnote 1, 263, modified.

[26] Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy,* Vol. 1, Footnote 1, 263.

the local level largely remain ignorant of the "events" precipitated by the larger processes or, for that matter, their previous lives, they have a tendency to explain them away as chance occurrences, striking similarities, or strange coincidences due to forces unknown, generally termed by them as "fate" or "destiny."

Within the above Vedic schema, I have briefly analyzed three groups of ontologic and epistemic processes on both sides of the Vedic and Non-Vedic divide, which broadly characterize Indian theories. All these processes involve the following factors as their prime movers: "the self" where knowledge accrues, "the body" which generates the empirical knowledge for "the self" to note, "causality" as the basic process which represents knowledge and "consciousness" considered to be indispensable by the Indian theories for understanding human experiences, even when these factors are merely considered as 'fluxes' by the Buddhist theories. The three groups that I have chosen to represent here involve the "atomic" theory of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīṁāmsā, so named because they consider the empirical world to be constituted of "atoms" of various types, the "substantialist" theories of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedānta, and Kashmir Śaivism (even though the latter belongs to the Non-Vedic Tantric tradition, Kashmir Śaivism continues to profess a remarkable affinity with the "substantialist" Vedic theories), the name "substantialist" coming from their idea that "pure consciousness" forms the basic ingredient of the cosmos. Even though the Non-Vedic theories are made up of Buddhism, Jainism and Lokāyata or Materialism, yet Buddhist ontology and epistemology is primarily discussed here because Jainism is basically an attempt to reconcile the Hindu and Buddhist principles and Lokāyata is a materialist theory whose details have been lost in history.

The motifs that emerged from the Vedic cosmology hugely influenced Indian art-forms which, in turn, had some influence on other art-forms occurring elsewhere in the world as well. Some of the most important motifs in this regard are as follows. The first motif is the *pair of correlative opposites* which represents an idea of *gender equality* as two complementary forces which not only arise from the same underlying source but also profoundly interpenetrate each other at all stages of their existence. While one form may dominate the other at some stage of its existence, neither is, however, ever fully absent from the other. Another significant motif is the *cyclical nature of all natural forces* which, if disturbed, can have profound consequences for all concerned. It forcefully posits the

idea that human beings must live in *harmony with nature* rather than dominate it, an idea which deeply influences the Indian psyche. The third motif of *karma* or *work done* not only operates on the basis that *every action has a cause* ("causeless" actions being unknown in classical Indian theories) but also that each cause leaves an *equivalent effect* on players that be, the two together leading to the overarching idea that *each action recoils on itself*. The above motifs give birth to a typical conception of space, time, character, and event that frequent in Indian artworks.

Chapter 4 deals with "Nyāya theory of Perception." From among the theoretical choices available, I chose to concentrate on the Hindu theory of Nyāya (more correctly, the amalgamated school of Nyāya-Viaśeṣika theory where Vaiśeṣika contributes the ontology on which Nyāya builds up an epistemology) to develop a theory of perception because Nyāya is both an arch-realist and a logical school whose logical propensity is visible in its extension, the Navya-Nyāya or the Neo-Nyāya theory. I have briefly compared and contrasted the Nyāya theory of perception with other Indian theories of perception as also with the contemporary Western theory of perception to afford a greater grip on the issues at stake for the readers. Nyāya theory concerns perceptual "meanings" that are *directly* formed where *embodied experiences* of the perceiver make a contribution to the "meanings" thus formed. However, the process does not stop there. On the basis of the formation of perceptual "meanings", "analytical meanings" are formed among the perceivers on the basis of *indirect* processes of "meaning-generation" theorized in the Indian theories, like inference, word (taught experiences), comparison, postulation, and absence. Together the *direct* and *indirect* "meanings" lead to the evocation of their associated "emotions" and "affects" in the perceiver which, in turn, produces a "dispositional tendency" in her to act in a particular way in order to "neutralize" its effects.

In *direct* perception, the "mode of appearance" of a percept within view—like a person with books in front would *appear* as "she is studying", an *appearance* where she would be perceived as a "student" and the books as her "reading material"—is the most significant constituent of the "meaning" produced in the viewer. Classical Indian theories hold that even the above process occurs in two stages with mutual differences between them. As far as N-V is concerned, while, in the first step, the perceiver experiences individual sensations appearing in the form of isolated concepts, like "woman," "books," et cetera, called

"simple perception" or *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa* ("unrelated conceptual knowledge"), in the second stage, called "complex perception" or *savikalpa pratyakṣa* ("knowledge based on related concepts") the individual concepts get related to each other to form the "causal whole" of "she is studying" for the perceiver. It is important to note that, in the Indian theories, both the processes occur on the basis of the perceiver's habitual experiences of life, including her embodied experiences and the ideas that have been taught to her. It is also important to note that, in the Nyāya theory, both *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa* knowledges represent conceptual cognitions or *qualificative cognitions*, an idea which is clearly influenced by the linguist-grammarian Bhartṛhari's (c. 5th CE) theory that "all cognitions are word-mediated acts of consciousness"[27] discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter. The other Indian theories differ from Nyāya by holding that while, in the first stage of perception, a pure non-conceptual, sensuous stage of perception occurs, in the second stage not only concepts are formed but also get related to each other to form *integrated wholes* for the perceiver, such a formation being essential for the perceiver to generate a unique response to a scene or a situation necessary for her survival in the world.

Nyāya process of perception in the form of a *mode of appearance* may be summed up as *something predicated of something*, a process in which a "particular" or a *qualificand* gets *qualified* by a "property" through a "functional" *relationship* based on the perceiver's experiences of life involving his embodied experiences, the socio-cultural practices built around them and the teachings and trainings he might have received from the society. The above process is represented in the Nyāya by what is called the *fundamental formula of perception*:

$$\text{Perceptual Knowledge} = \text{Qualificand} + \text{Qualifier} + \text{Relationship}$$

Thus, in "simple perception", the first stage of perception in a two-step process, an undetermined sense-particular, that is, an unknown *qualificand* is made sense of in perception on the basis of certain clues occurring in the form of a *qualifier* and a *relationship* based on the perceiver's habitual experiences of life, et cetera. In other words, based on certain cues occurring in an unknown "particular," like its shape or smell, called "relevant distinguisher" (*viśeṣaṇa*), its infinite possibility of "meanings"

[27] Matilal, *Perception*, 29.

is "limited" (*avacchedaka*) to, say, being a "flower" by the imposition of the "property" of "flower-hood" on it to generate the cognition "This is a flower." Nyāya's bracketing of the whole perceptual process with the perceiver's habitual experiences of life leads to the idea that perceptual knowledge is likely to differ from person to person, society to society, and culture to culture as well as the teachings and trainings one might have received from a particular society. Thus, hypothetically speaking, if a person has grown up in a flower-less space, she would fail to recognize a flower *as a* "flower." In the second stage of perception, called "complex perception", Nyāya holds that an "object" might act as a *qualifier* for another "object" to form an *integrated whole* on the basis of the perceiver's experiences of life. Thus, when a "lady," as the *qualificand*, is *qualified* by "books" surrounding her, the cognition is likely to be "She is studying" on the basis of the *functional relationship* of "studying" occurring between the "lady" and the "books" habitually observed by the perceiver. This perceptual process may be easily extended to more complex "reading positions" developed in the society, like when a *qualificand* in the form of a capitalist is *qualified* by workers through a "functional" *relationship* of "exploitation" prevailing between them in terms of the Marxist theory. It makes Nyāya theory of perception an evolutionary one.

"Modes of appearances", which represent *integrated wholes* in one's perception, are called "universals" (*sāmānya*) in the Nyāya theory. These "universals" are, however, a far cry from the *ideal* "universals" that Plato called "Forms" or "Ideas". In the present case, their formation occurs as follows: over time, the bits and pieces collected from similar "events" habitually observed by the perceiver or learnt about them get detached from their original sources of occurrence to *merge* into a source-less "universal" form that represents a pure form of potentiality for the perceiver. When a person comes across even the slightest clue of such an occurrence, it immediately revives the memory of the *merged event* of the "universal" in the perceiver. The above analysis of the "universal" owes a debt to the Yoga theory and its subsequent theorization by the Kashmir Śaiva philosopher Abhinavagupta who takes the process further by holding that the "universals" are not only memories of an "event" in its abstraction but also represent the "emotions" and "affects" associated with such an "event". They automatically produce a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver that seeks to restore balance within the perceiver's organism.

The second major constituent of direct perception is the "mode of presentation" which represents the way a percept is being *presented* to the perceiver. I argue that Nyāya theory is a full-fledged *theory of embodiment* which holds that, since every view is perceived from a particular bodily standpoint, it invariably generates an "embodied sense" in the perceiver given by the formula:

$$\text{Embodied Sense} = \text{Percept} + \text{Sense} - \text{Percept Trajectory}$$

Accordingly the two aspects *directly experienced* by the perceiver are as follows:

$$\text{Perception} = \frac{\text{Mode of Appearance}}{\text{(Universal)}} + \frac{\text{Mode of Presentation}}{\text{(Embodied Sense)}}$$

Thus, while a "lady" surrounded by "books" would generate the "mode of appearance" that "She is studying," its "mode of presentation" would generate our *embodied sense* based on whether the books seem to tower over her in our perception or appear normal to us leading to an "embodied cognition" that "Books are posing a threat to the lady" or "Books pose no threat to her", respectively.

The *directly perceived* "event" is now ready for further analysis by the application of an "explanatory mode" involving *indirect* processes of meaning generation such as "inference," "word" (also called the "testimony of a trustworthy person," usually conveyed through the verbal language, which almost exclusively deals with *taught knowledge*), "postulation," "comparison," and "absence" (Nyāya is the sole theory which considers "absence" as part of *direct* perception explained later), all of which generate knowledge of an unknown based on a known on the basis of the invariable sequence "If *x*, then *y*" either habitually observed by the perceiver or taught to him:

$$\text{Perception} = \underset{\text{("Universal")}}{\text{Mode of Appearance}} + \underset{\text{("Embodied Sense")}}{\text{Mode of Presentation}} \rightarrow \underset{\text{("Analytical Meaning")}}{\text{Indirect Mode of Cognition}}$$

Since the cognition of an "event" is generally associated with certain "emotions" and "affects" in terms of the perceiver's habitual experiences of life, Nyāya holds that they also get triggered automatically in the perceiver based on a process it calls "presentation through revived memory" or *jñāna-lakṣaṇa-pratyāsatti*. Emotion and Affect, thus produced, are as follows:

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation → Indirect Mode of Cognition → Emotion and Affect

Since the whole of the above process form part of perception, the perceiver is likely to *read* a lady overwhelmed by books as "she is worried" or a lady with books in a normal relationship with her as "she is happy." Nyāya extends the above process to synesthetic statements like "I see *cold* ice," "I see a *hard* surface," et cetera, an argument which finds its echo in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1908–1961) theory of existential phenomenology.

Such a reading automatically gives rise to a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver, aimed at neutralizing the "effect":

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation → Indirect Mode of Cognition → Emotion & Affect → Dispositional Tendency

Another aspect of the Nyāya theory of perception is that it holds even a minor change in the inter-se position held by elements in an *integrated whole* within perception would produce a different relationship between them producing a different *integrated whole* within the perceiver's view. The theory goes to the extent of claiming that even if a single thread is changed in a stitched cloth, a "new" cloth gets produced in its place. Thus, in the "mode of appearance" pertaining to the cognition "she is studying," if the lady is seen to be looking elsewhere than at her books, the scene is likely to produce the meaning or the "universal" "she is distracted," et cetera. Similarly, if the "mode of presentation" changes from being a "normal angle view" to that of a "low angle view," the perceiver's cognition is likely to change from the lady being in "control" of her studies to she being "overloaded" with her studies. Nyāya draws the above conclusion on the basis of its idea the relationship prevailing between elements within a *causally integrated whole* is not merely one of "aggregation" or *samyoga*, but one of a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*) which *adds* something more to the percept *over and above* that of being a case of mere "aggregation." This aspect would be explained in detail in the Nyāya chapter on perception.

It is clear from the above that what the classical Indian theories are talking about is *approximate knowledge* (*jñāna*) born out of peoples' habitual experiences of life, including those taught to them, rather than

one of *proven knowledge* (*pramā*), the 'proof' of the former lying in the ability of the *whole* to perform "fruitful activity" in the real world, a general criterion which almost all classical Indian theories adhere to. Clearly, the above represents a *theory of the ordinary* which I had been searching for in my understanding of cinema.

In the concluding section on perception, I compare and contrast between three signifying systems formulated by Saussure, Lacan, and Nyāya. In this connection, I discuss how the Lacanian and the Nyāya theories of signification can be useful in identifying the generic modes that prevail in cinema.

We next move onto the aesthetic field of artworks. Chapters 5 deals with the Indian aesthetic theory of *rasa* or "aesthetic pleasure" propounded by Bharata (c. early 1st millennium CE) in his well-known treatise on drama, the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The main issue here is when and how peoples' "ordinary" perception changes into an "aesthetic" one and at what stage does it start producing *aesthetic pleasure* or *rasa* for them? The following are the seminal contributions made by Bharata's theory together with the significant additions made to it by the aesthete-philosophers, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka (c. 9th CE) and Abhinavagupta (c. 10th CE) coming after him:

i. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka seeks to solve what has been called the "paradox of junk fiction", that is, the phenomenon of the audiences getting emotionally affected by artworks which they know to be fictions. His solution lies in the idea that when individuals decide to engage with a fictional work, a *generalization* (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, 'universalization') of their experiences occurs which removes the audiences' personal egos from the scene. The audiences, therefore, do not personally "suffer" the "events" happening on stage resulting in all experiences generated by all artworks becoming "pleasurable" for them;
ii. As to the question why the audiences at all engage with an artwork despite knowing it to be fictional in nature, Abhinavagupta answers it by saying that the audiences *willingly identify with the fictional mode* (*āhāryajñāna*, 'costume knowledge') of the artwork which ensures their continued and active engagement with the work;
iii. Still the question of activating the audiences' "unconscious bodies" remains which would otherwise appear as an inert appendage to the consciousness of the audiences. This problem Bharata

himself solves by holding that whenever the audiences witness a "goal-directed activity" (*kārya-kāraṇa-sambandha*, 'cause-and-effect chain') being performed in a fictional work, a 'lasting' *psycho-somatic state of affect* (*sthāyībhāva*, 'abiding state') is evoked among them similar to the ones being experienced by the protagonists within the play. It has the effect of bringing the audiences' "consciousness" and their "unconscious bodies" on the same platform which enables them to *relive* a scene both in terms of their heart and soul;

iv. When the audiences continue to witness a well-enacted play in a state of *generalization*, *willing identification* and an *abiding psycho-somatic state of affect*, it produces "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* among them.

The audiences' experience of engaging with an artwork in the above state has been described as "chewing" (*carvana*) akin to an experience of "tasting" something from outside. In a *generalied state*, it produces what has been called "ownerless emotions " or "generalized emotions" among the audiences which remain ever "pleasant" for them irrespective of whether the play is a tragedy or a comedy.[28]

Bharata's celebrated two-stage formula representing a unit of performance which produces "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* among the audiences is as follows:

Determinant + Consequent + Transient → Production of an Abiding State (*Sthayī bhāva*)
→ Production of Aesthetic Pleasure (*Rasa*)

In the above formula, a determining situation (*vibhāva*, "determinant") is that which evokes a psychological response (*anubhāva*, "consequent") among the protagonist(s) which are equally experienced by the audiences in their *generalized state* together with experiencing some transients (*vyabhicāribhāva*, 'transient', 'promiscuous state') experienced by the side characters, the latter playing the role of being "neutral witnesses" who evaluate an independent "measure" of the "events" unfolding in the drama.

[28] Edwin Gerow's "Notes" in S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics as a Study of Aesthetics with Notes by Edwin Gerow* (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1963): 81–112, 87–8.

As the drama progresses, the audiences undergo various *levels of identification* with the different stages of an artwork in consonance with the *affective states* produced by those stages. Thus, a play starts with the audiences' *preliminary identification with the perceptual-cognitive mode of an artwork* as their initial interest is aroused in the play which, then, quickly moves onto the following stages: a *sympathetic identification with the narrative mode of the play*, a *sympathetic identification with the action mode of the play*, and, finally, a possible *empathic identification with the basic focus of the play*, the latter depending on how effective the play is for the audiences.

Bharata also shows his innovative acumen in providing a three-pronged analysis of the *extended structure of a drama* or the plot-structure (*itivṛtta*) of, say, a 5-act play as follows: the "main stages" or "junctures" in a play (*sandhis*), the "psychological state of the protagonists" (*avasthās*) during each significant stage of the play and the "form of actions" (*arthaprakṛtis*) being undertaken within the play. While the *sandhis* provide "interlacing" between the "main stages" of the play based on its two sub-parts called the *saṅdhyaṅgas* (*sandhi-anga*, 'templates of episodic action'), which represent various "span-elements" or "autonomous action modes" like "the confrontation," "the reversal," et cetera within a play and the *laksaṇas* or the "indicators" (more appropriately termed as the "enhancers "), which are elements that do not influence the narrative directly and yet heighten audience experiences profoundly within a play; the "psychological state of the protagonists" (*avasthās*) give the mental state of the protagonists in different stages of a play; the "forms of action" represent the "nature of actions" (*arthaprakṛtis*) being undertaken within a play.

Based on the spirit of Bharata's analysis, one may classify the type and the nature of "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* being produced among the audiences. These are: "aesthetic relish" (*bhoga*) where the audiences undertake a *mode of enquiry* to solve the intrigues posed by the play; "aesthetic saturation" (*rasa-viśrānti*) where the audiences' "consciousness" reaches a *mode of saturation* having solved an intrigue posed by the play; and "aesthetic immersion" (*samāveśa*) where a *mode of ecstasy* is generated among the audiences on the revival of certain archetypal experiences that lie immersed within them beyond the recall of their conscious memory.

In this chapter, I also deal with Abhinavagupta's "list of obstacles" or *bighṇas* which thwart the arising of "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* among

the audiences, his primary idea being that it is because reality intrudes into the fictional mode of a play.

Finally, in this chapter, I deal with the mode of subjective–objective alteration occurring in a play which seems to be the preferred mode in Indian artworks.

In Chapter 6, I deal with the classical Indian theories of "art." The conventional definition of "art" in classical India is simple yet striking: "any expression that exceeds its literal meaning is art." It leads to the following contrast between "art", significantly called *kāvya* (lit., "literature"), and "science," called *śāstra* (lit., "treatise"): while, in the "arts," the expression and the expressed create a "gap" for the readers' imagination to have a free play, in "science" the two should ideally converge to generate as truthful an account of reality as possible for the scientists to have a greater grip on reality. In the chapter, I analyze following two theories of "art" which, even while adhering to the above conventional definition, diverge radically from each other in certain important respects. The Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School which represents the *embellishment theory* or the *alaṁkāra theory* of "art" (c. 7th CE) advocates the creative "embellishment" of an utterance *externally* to create the necessary "gap" in an artwork. The theory accepts two modes of such creative "embellishment": the "mode of realistic expression" (*svābhāvokti*, 'natural utterance') and the "mode of formal expression" (*vakrokti*, 'oblique utterance'). While the realistic form adopts the principle of "conscious accumulation of significant details" (*samuccaya*) based on the artist's deeper insights into a reality which lay bare the unexposed aspects of a reality to the receivers, thereby creating a "gap" between the literal sense of an expression and its expressed, the formalistic mode creates that "gap" by comparing reality with heightened forms of imagination in the form of simile (*upamā*), hyperbole (*atiśayokti*), pun (*śleṣa*), and irony (*atiśleṣa*) in order to expose the deeper aspect of a particular reality to the receivers.

The second theory of art, Ānandavardhana's *dhvani theory* or the *theory of suggestion* (c. 8th/9th CE) creates the required "gap" through "suggestions" by triggering the revival of communications suppressed within individuals due to reasons such as their socio-cultural repression, suffering of a trauma by them leading to the production of an existential condition within them or the loss of archetypal experiences from their conscious memory. The revival of such lost communication restores "full word" to the individuals which, in turn, restores their truncated

subjectivity. The process is similar to the "talking cure" advocated by Freud and Lacan in their psychoanalytic theories. Both Ānandavardhana and his commentator Abhinavagupta hold that restoring communications that have been lost to individuals should be considered as the basic purpose of "art".

In Ānandavardhana's *dhvani theory*, "suggestions" not only occur in the two conventional modes called the "realistic mode of suggestion" (*vastudhvani*) and the "formal mode of suggestion" (*alaṁkāradhvani*), differently named here to distinguish them from the "embellishment" theory, but also generates a new mode, called the "direct mode of suggestion" (*rasadhvani*), where the archetypal experiences suppressed within an individual are triggered to come up to the surface directly with the help of appropriate "suggestive" clues provided in the artwork. For both Ānanda and Abhinava, the third mode represents the highest form of "art" as it produces *rasa* directly among the audiences.[29] The continued relevance of the *dhvani theory* is indicated by Lacan, among others, who profusely acknowledge his debt to this theory in the course of framing his own post-structural theory.

The Upaniṣadic dictum *Brahman=ātma*, the Hindu theories' ultimate ideal, which influences Non-Hindu theories as well, leads to the formation of a third theory of "art" which help the audiences to experience their ultimate *harmony with nature*. Since it represents a state of highest realization by human beings, which signifies a *state of liberation* for them, it practically remains an always to be craved for though unachievable 'ideal' state for the "arts" to aspire for. This aspect has been briefly discussed as the final frontier of "arts" in this chapter.

In Chapter 7 involving Conclusion, I have discussed how important insights from Indian and Western theories can be effectively merged to form a united whole. In seeking a solution, I have tried to project classical Indian theories as *the other* of Western theories by heeding Mohanty's advice that it is only when *the other* is analyzed as *the other* that it is likely to prove the most fruitful for our purposes. In this respect I have chosen the following two areas of Indian *otherness* for my analysis: *multiple perspectives* vs. *identifiable perspective* and the *hearer's* or the *audiences*' point of view vs. the *speaker's point of view* as representing the Indian and Western theories, respectively. The above analysis, together with

[29] Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 81–2.

the difference between *disembodied vision* represented by the Western theories devoid of phenomenological inputs entering in them recently and the *embodied vision* represented by the Nyāya theory of perception and Bharata's aesthetic theory, is likely to prove extremely beneficial for reevaluating film discourse in our contemporary times. I have ended this concluding chapter by stating that Rheinberger's concept of the *epistemology of the concrete* and his notion of the *fuzzy concepts* can be profitably applied to weave together the different paradigms represented by the classical Indian theories and the Western theories respectively.

In dealing with classical Indian theories, I have primarily based myself on the modern interpretation of the Nyāya theory provided in various writings of Surendra Nath Dasgupta, Mysore Hiriyanna, Bimal Krishna Matilal, Jitendra Nath Mohanty, Ramkrishna Puligandla and the invaluable *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* edited by Karl Potter as my primary sources and the writings of Arindam Chakraborty, Jonardon Ganeri, and Amita Chatterjee, among others, as my secondary sources. As far as the aesthetic and art theories are concerned, I have depended on a translation of Bharata's *Naṭyaśāstra* by a Board of Scholars, on the translation of Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* with Abhinavagupta's commentary *Locana* by Daniel Ingalls, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson and M. V. Patwardhan and edited by Daniel Ingalls, the various writings of Sheldon Pollock and Edwin Gerow including the latter's invaluable *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech* and a *History of Indian Poetics*, Patrick Colm Hogan's incisive analysis of Abhinavagupta's aesthetic theory in terms of modern cognitive and neuroscientific research and the Series published as *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization* under the general editorship of D. P. Chattopadhyaya with particular reference to its Vol. VI Part 3 dealing with *Indian Arts: Forms, Concerns, and Development in Historical Perspective* edited by B. N. Goswami in association with Kavita Singh and Vol. XV Part 3 dealing with *Science, Literature, and Aesthetics* edited by Amiya Dev. I have heavily relied on Alice Boner's authoritative work on the Principles of Indian Compositions to gain an insight into the formative principles of Indian arts and their influence on other art-forms across the world.

On the question of the Western discourse on cinema, I have consulted the writings of Sergei Eisenstein, André Bazin, Louis Althusser, Jacques Lacan, David Bordwell, and Nöel Carroll among others to understand the formation of Film Theories which have overwhelmingly shaped the nature of contemporary film discourse.

The "methodology" I use in this work generally concurs with Bordwell's following understanding of the term: "In film studies, as in its literary counterpart, 'method' has been largely synonymous with 'interpretative school'."[30] This "interpretation" consists of the following four factors: a *semantic field* which involves theoretical concepts that seek to generate "meaning" from the field; a set of *inferential procedures* that move the audiences' understanding from point A to point B within the *semantic field*; a *conceptual map* that determines the path of progression from A to B within the field; and a *rhetorical practice* that organizes arguments in order to reach the final "interpretation" or conclusion in the matter.[31] The process advocated by Bordwell is broadly supported by classical Indian theories which hold that the "method" of knowing something "starts with an initial doubt (*saṃśaya*), which sets in motion a process of investigation aimed at reaching certitude, which finally generates a conclusion (*nirṇaya*) that is convincing to the enquirer."[32] In adopting this process, the Indian "method" constitutes a hypothetical "person in the middle," called the *madhyastha*, whose doubts, while being *neutral* to the issue, need to be resolved about the eventual conclusion.[33]

While the above arguments hint at some kind of a convergence between the Western and Indian ideas of "methodology," there are, however, significant differences between the two. As far as contemporary Western thought is concerned, it broadly believes that *method may be separated from metaphysical reality* which, thereby, is expected to yield an objective and accurate conclusion about the state of reality to which it is being applied to from above. The above methodological process is a product of the following two important developments in the West. First is Descartes's belief that human beings 'understand' on the basis of a transparent "intelligence" which, being *res extensa*, is separate from matter being *res cogitans.* Being a transcendental entity, this notion of "intelligence" is used synonymously with "common sense" and "reason," which when applied to reality from outside is considered to be capable of delivering accurate knowledge of that reality *transparently.*

[30] Bordwell, "Historical Poetics of Cinema", 370.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Matilal, *Perception*, 70, modified.

[33] Ibid.

When, however, the duality inherent in the Cartesian thought developed its own contradictions, it led to an alternate idea. In this second development, we have Kantian thought which believes that we understand the world by imposing certain "categories of understanding" on it which exist within human beings *à priori*. In this Kantian form, the Cartesian transparent "intelligence" gets replaced with "consciousness" which is not transparent but loaded with *à priori* "categories of understanding" that help to understand reality in those terms. It leads to a clear bifurcation between *phenomena* or the reality as understood by us and *noumena* or things as they occur in themselves.[34] Potter notes an inherent anomaly in this process:

> The above views share a common assumption, which might be called the assumption that *there can be a method without a metaphysics*, that is that methodological decisions can be arrived at…independently of any testing of the suitability of the method in its application to reality.[35]

The great upheavals that the West witnessed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the aftermath of colonization and industrial revolution paved the way for the emergence of Marxism on the one hand and the radical skepticism of Existentialism that the two world wars produced on the other. Marxism considered human consciousness to be a product of the socio-economic modes of production that were monopolized by the capitalists and the bourgeoisie. It bred exploitation of the working classes, a desire to break out from this form of imprisonment being triggered by the human desire to improve one's living conditions.[36] Existentialism, in contrast, simply refused to be imprisoned by the ethical and moral standards of the bourgeoise society, its "liberation" being exclusive to the person concerned despite efforts being made by Jean-Paul Sartre to marry the two. However, while these new trends in the West sought to combine theory with practice in their theories, a predominant section of the Western intelligentia, including even a large section of the scientific establishment, continued to tacitly support the view that human "intelligence" is independent of reality and hence can be

[34] Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of Indian Philosophies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991): 51.

[35] Ibid., 51, modified.

[36] Ibid., 51.

made to act as an independent measure of the reality itself! This inherent contradiction has ultimately resulted in a conflating of meanings between "method" and "truth" in Western thought.[37]

In contrast, in Indian theories, *theory* and *practice* have always been welded together. Thus, the *method* of knowing reality, called the *pramāṇas* (lit. "proofs"), defined as that "by means of which true cognitions are arrived at" (*pramīyate anena*),[38] incorporate within them aspects of reality to which they are being applied to, the reality itself being interpreted in terms of human beings' lived experiences of the world. Thus, even the means to the so called "higher thoughts," like inference, et cetera, invariably include human beings' socio-cultural practices as an essential factor in interpreting reality. Thus, the conclusion that "there is fire on the hill" is not only based on observing "smoke" there, but also on the formation of an "invariable sequence" between smoke and fire by the inferer in terms of his habitual experiences of observing his "kitchen." In the above sense, the *pramāṇas* serve the twin purpose of being both *knowledge* as well as a *proof of that knowledge* simultaneoulsy.[39] Mohanty notes:

> It is a peculiar feature of Indian epistemologies that the causal meaning of *pramāṇa* is also taken to imply a legitimizing sense so that cognition is true only when it has been brought about by a legitimate *pramāṇa*.[40]

Accordingly, there is no scope for the existence of an *à priori* "categories of understanding" in Indian thought where all "experiences" and their "interpretations" remain *à posteriori* based on the inquirer's *lived* experiences of life, et cetera. In other words, in Indian theories, there is no question of a divorce between "method" and "reality".

In this connection, in Sanskrit, while the word *śabdārtha* (*śabda* means "word" and *artha* means "meaning") denotatively means "the

[37] "Reason" is "the intellectuall faculty by which conclusions are drawn from premises" and "intellect" is "the faculty of reasoning, knowing, and thinking as distinct from feeling [experience]" (OERD). Clearly, this is circular reasoning based on the assumption that these intruements can independently *know* reality without being a part of it leads to the farther assumption that "intelligence" does not form a part of empirical reality.

[38] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 16.

[39] Matilal, *Perception*, 36.

[40] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 16, modified.

meaning of a word," *artha* in Sanskrit connotes an aim (*sādhya*), the means (*sādhana*), and the process (*itikartavyatā*) with the help of which the "meaning" of an expression is arrived at. Thus, "methodology" for the Mīmāṁsā theorists must ask the following three questions: "what is being effected?" (*kim bhāvayet?*), "why is it being effected?" (*kena bhāvayet?*), and "how is it being effected?" (*katham bhāvayet?*).[41]

The above discussion on "methodology" leads to an important allied topic here. While "methodology" is considered necessary for reaching certitude about a phenomenon, in the case of humanities, however, such evidence remains invariably circumstantial in nature. This is because disciplines in the Humanities generate an "understanding (*verstehen*)" of the subject more based on "preponderance of probability" rather than on "proof beyond doubt" which invariably results in "a degree of *tentativeness* about its conclusions."[42] Since, in this work, I am searching for a *theory of ordinariness* which fits the experiences of an average film-goer who is far from being an "ideal spectator," a degree of "tentativeness" is bound to creep in the results reached. Since such experiences are bound to vary with society and culture, the extent of such "tentativeness" is also expected to increase further. In order to reduce the level of "tentativeness" in my theory, I have decided to adopt the following criteria in my analysis of cinema:

i. The analysis should represent *identifiable processes*;
ii. The analysis should lead to an *identifiable product* at the end of such a process;
iii. The analytical process should be *repeatable* under similar circumstances.

In other words, the processes of "art" in general and "cinema" in particular should be *verifiable* and, if necessary, *falsifiable* in case any of the above criteria fails to hit its mark. However, since the above criteria are generally identified with what is more generally known as the "scientific process," I may be misunderstood as conflating "arts" with "science." I, thus, need to make my position clear here.

[41] Daniel Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 2.4L FN 44, 232.

[42] Bordwell, "Historical Poetics of Cinema", 387, emphasis added.

The word "science," which originated from the Latin word "scientia" meaning "to know" or "knowledge gained by study" (Bloomsburg Dictionary of Word Origins) has since come to mean "a branch of knowledge conducted on objective principles of systematized observation and experimentation with phenomena" (OERD). In other words, the expression "science" would mean the adoption of a *rational process* in a *systematic study of phenomenon*. While this understanding of the word "science" still doesn't indicate any bifurcation between "arts" and "sciences," the shift happened when "science" increasingly came to be associated with evaluating observable quantities alone. Thus, while, for Aristotle, "science" still meant not only the study of objective "quantities" alone but also its subjective "qualities," like love, hate, et cetera, for Galileo, it meant only those things which could be empirically measured, that is, "quantities" alone. The modern connection of "science" with the technical and the mathematical, or, broadly, the "non-arts" subjects clearly belongs to the Galilean stream of thought. This is indeed an unfortunate development since we lack a suitable alternate expression in English that would indicate the rational basis of analyzing the humanities as well. In reality, however, the basic criterion of gaining valid knowledge in "science" through *a mode of rational enquiry based on systematic observation of data that leads to certain generalized conclusions* is equally applicable to humanities and arts subjects as well. Thus, disciplines like the "social sciences" and the "arts," which though continue to be as rigorous and as observant of worldly phenomena as "sciences" are, they have suffered by comparison. However, in terms of arguments advanced below, I seek to reclaim the word "scientific" (in the absence of an alternative word of equal import) for humanities as well.

As far as the processes involved in the "social sciences" are concerned, they, first, gather painstaking details of socio-cultural practices of communities and then collate them to reach general conclusions about the value-laden behavior of those societies. This process is not only *repeatable* but also *verifiable* and *falsifiable* in case one's analysis significantly diverges from reality. The importance of the conclusions reached by "social sciences" lies in the fact that, in contemporary times, all governments without exception have based their social and economic policies on the conclusions reached by them.

The "arts" employ equally meticulous observations to understand the effects that an artwork has on its audiences, an aspect on which the

entire art industry depends for its economic survival. Where "art" goes beyond both "pure science" and "social science" is in the fact that it is not only a cognitive instrument which understands from outside but also an instrument which makes the audiences *feel* the emotions and affects being experienced by the protagonists in a scene. In this sense, it not only represents an eminently *repeatable* process as well as being a *verifiable* and *falsifiable* process in case a particular audience response is not found to be in consonance with the expected results but also a process which goes beyond by reproducing similar emotions and affects within the audiences as felt by the characters on screen.

We may highlight the similarity and difference between the three processes through the following "event": *a person looks with nostalgia at a chair where his father used to sit and enjoy his morning cup of tea*. "Pure science" would be able to tell us *what* the physical intensity of the observer's mental experiences are by measuring neuronal firings occurring within his brain; the "social sciences," through a systematic study of the socio-cultural norms and the family practices surrounding the individual's community, would be able to tell us *why* the individual is feeling nostalgic in the given situation; finally, the "arts" would be able to make the audiences feel exactly *how* the protagonist is *feeling* in the situation through a creative re-presentation of the situation within a play. In case of cinema, one would like to paraphrase Tarkovsky's expression that cinema would create a *subjective time pressure* around the chair for the audiences to *feel* a similar kind of nostalgia among them. In this sense, while the "pure sciences" and the "social sciences" use *symptoms* to assess a situation from "outside," "arts" generates an *experiential process* that makes the audience *relive* a scene from the "inside." The Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu had chronicled the strain and the breakdown of Japanese families in the wake of Japan's rapid industrialization since the Second World War. No natural or social scientist could have been able to make us *feel* the pain that disintegration of family brings to its member as Ozu does through his films. Clearly, each of these processes have every right to be called "scientific" because of the rationality, the systematic observation and the experiential element they bring to their subject matters.

Finally, in this work, I illustrate theories and ideas with a number of film examples. Bordwell warns that often authors only cite those examples which best support a particular argument even while ignoring

counter-examples that challenge its very premises.[43] He points out that such examples denote "enumerative inductivism" which remains "vacuous because any number of hypotheses can be supported by a set of such instances."[44] Instead, Bordwell points out that the ideal solution lies in citing examples representing "eliminative inductivism":

> No conjecture about the world is in and of itself confirmed by evidence. It is always evaluated relative to some rival. The degree of its acceptance is simply the extent to which, at any particular time, it is considered better than its comparable rivals.[45]

It is hoped that the film examples chosen by me would meet Bordwell's rigorous criteria.

In sum, this work seeks to bring back ordinary audiences to the center stage of film discourse, a position from which they had been most unjustly thrown out during the last century of theorization about cinema. I emphasize that the main reason for this displacement has been the adoption of *disembodied vision* as the main analytical tool by these theories. This has happened even after promising starts being made in an *embodied analysis* of cinema adopted by the early film theorists like Vachel Lindsay and Hügo Münsterberg.[46] On the basis of a series of insights provided by the classical Indian theories, I demonstrate that they do not deal with how the audiences *should* experience cinema but how they *actually* experience cinema. In this sense, this work is primarily about establishing a *theory of the ordinary* in the field of cinema which would complement the *intellectual theory of cinema* prevalent in the existing film theories. The two together should make film studies whole again.

[43] Marshall Edelson, *Hypothesis and Evidence in Psychoanalysis*, quoted in Frederick Crews, *Skeptical Engagements* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 80; quoted in Bordwell, "Historical Poetics", 387–8.

[44] Bordwell, "Historical Poetics", 387–8.

[45] Gerow, "Notes", 86–7.

[46] Vachel Lindsay, *The Art of Moving Picture* (New York: Macmillan, 1915 and Modern Library, 2000) and Hugo Münsterberg, *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study* (New York and London: D. Appleton & Co., 1916).

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CHAPTER 2

Film Theories and Cinema: Limitations of *Disembodied Vision* in the Existing Film Discourse

The Brief
The points being made here are briefly summarized as under. After making a promising start of dealing with film sensations along phenomenological lines in their theories, both Eisenstein and Bazin become busy in containing film sensations within "measurable" limits. Thus, while the Soviet montage filmmaker Eisenstein did deal with film sensations in his brilliant idea of "film attractions" in the initial phase of his theory,[1] realists, like Bazin and Kracauer, championed during the '40s a phenomenological response to reality as representing the *natural* way human beings interacted with the world.[2] Later, however, both Eisenstein and Bazin sought to "contain" the almost uncontrollable and spontaneous bodily responses within "measurable" limits in order to highlight the educative aspect of cinema.

[1] Montage reaches its final form in Eisenstein: "In my view montage is…an idea that DERIVES from a collision between two shots that are independent of one another (the "dramatic" principle)". See Eisenstein, "The Dramaturgy of Film Form", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 1* (1929): 161–180, 163, italics and bold in the original.

[2] For montage theory in cinema, see seminal works of Lev Kuleshov, *Kuleshov on Film: Writings* (California: University of California Press, 1974) and Sergei Eisenstein, *Selected Works*, 3 Vols., Trans. and Ed. Richard Taylor (London: BFI, 1988, 1991, and 1996); for realism in cinema, see André Bazin, *What is Cinema?* 2 Vols., Trans. and Ed. Hugh Gray (California: University of California Press, 1967 and 1971) and Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

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As classical film theory started to decline during the late '50s and early '60s, contemporary film theory emerged on the scene almost simultaneously.[3] It represented a heady combination of the structuralist-semiotic paradigm of Saussurian re-reading of Sanskrit and Buddhist linguistics, Lacanian re-reading of Freud and the Althusserian re-reading of Marx, all three strands merging in the conclusion that meanings are not naturally *given* in reality but are artificially constructed which could be manipulated by vested interests to further their own interests. More importantly, it held that unsuspecting audiences became passive consumers of such products. In seeking to identify the element(s) through which such manipulations were done in cinema, contemporary film theory underlined *film narration* as the villain of the piece which created "meanings" and produced "emotions" that were largely controlled and manipulated by the bourgeoisie. Naturally, film sensations found no place in such a theorization as it remained too "untamed" for their narrative purpose.

Cognitive film theory arose as a reaction against contemporary film theory during the mid '80s. It held that the audiences, instead of being passive observers, were, in fact, active agents who consciously constructed film narratives from the cues given in a film.[4] However, since, even in the cognitive film theory, the crucial function of the audiences remained the construction of a *film narrative* by them—its only difference with contemporary film theory being a conscious piecing together of cues given in a film as against their passive consumption in the former—it also had no room for uncontrolled film sensations within its repertoire.

Significant writing of film history, which only had started during the late '50s, was influenced since its birth by contemporary film theory—the theory which reigned supreme from the late '50s till '80s—which made film histories focus on the evolution of *film narration* as the prime motif in cinema. In the process, film historians primarily concentrated on those techniques and technologies of the filmmaking process which aided the narrative process. Similarly, when new film studies departments were inaugurated in Euro-American universities during the late '50s and

[3] For an excellent introduction to contemporary film theory, see *Contemporary Film Theory*, Ed. Anthony Easthope (Harlow: Longman Publishing, 1993).

[4] The seminal work on cognitive film theory is by David Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film* (London: Routledge, 1985).

afterwards, they had also started searching for a “scientific” criterion that would explain the popularity of cinema in diverse countries and cultures. Influenced by then in-vogue contemporary film theory and the existing film histories, they also identified film narration as the crucial piece that made cinema into a universal language.

In this way, the film discourse that came into being since the ’50s onwards relegated the audiences’ *bodies* to the background which formed the backbone of their basic engagement with cinema. In this dismal scenario, where the audiences’ normal response to cinema were being suppressed, two new possibilities held promise of a rectification. In the West, *phenomenology*, which primarily developed through the theories of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and others, progressively brought back *the body* into theoretical reckoning.[5] In the East, a promising development concerned the *embodied aspect* inherent in *classical Indian theories*, where the school of Nyāya not only anticipated many of phenomenology’s arguments but also transcended them in significant ways. The latter possibility also offered a promising new line of entry into non-Western theories of meaning, aesthetics, and art. While in this work, I would only briefly mention the Merleau-Pontian theory of *the body* being the center of all cognitions (see Box 4.1), I would elaborately demonstrate the efficacy of classical Indian theories in analyzing meaning, aesthetics, and art in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6.

In the present chapter, I would discuss the limitations of existing film theories alongside those of film histories and film studies due to the non-incorporation of *the body* in their theories and their overwhelming *Eurocentric viewpoint* which severely restricted their understanding of cinema.

In the above context, the following areas would be covered in this chapter:

[5] Seminal works on phenomenology are by Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, Trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1931) and *Cartesian Mediatations*, Trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960); Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Trans. J. Stambaugh (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962) and *The Visible and the Invisible*, Trans. Alfonso Lingis, Ed. Claude Lefort (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968).

2.1. Limitation of Film Theories: *The Disemboded Vision*
 2.1.1. Classical Film Theory
 2.1.2. Contemporary Film Theory
 2.1.3. Cognitive Film Theory
2.2. Limitation of Film Histories
2.3. Rediscovering Film Sensations in *Early Cinema*: The Application of *Embodied Vision* to Cinema.

2.1 Limitation of Film Theories: *The Disembodied Vision*

For the first time in Western thought, one comes across the words "sensuous knowledge" (*cognitio sensitiva*) in Alexander Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* (1750), which originally drew from the Greek word *aistheses* meaning the "science of feelings." It later became "aesthetics," a new discipline of study,[6] which basically contrasted "clear and distinct knowledge" of conceptual understanding from "confused knowledge" produced by sensations.[7] Apparently because of its basic "untamed" nature, sensations, primarily generated by *the body* in response to an "event," are generally considered to be disruptive of conceptual knowledge. Due to this difficulty, efforts at theorizing embodied sensations have been few and far between. I will discuss below few such attempts at theorizing film sensations and the reasons for their progressive devaluation in the history of cinema.

2.1.1 Classical Film Theory

It has two parts: the montage theory devised by the early Soviet filmmakers during the 1920s and 1930s and the realist theory propagated by André Bazin and Sigfried Kracauer during the '40s and '50s.

The *Principle of Montage*, held to be sacrosanct by the early Soviet filmmakers, signifies an *expressive reconstruction of reality* through editing of

[6] Eivind Røssaak, "Figures of Sensation: Between Still and Moving Images", in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, Ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006): 321–36, 321.

[7] Martin Steel, *Aesthetics of Appearing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005): 29, quoted in Røssaak, "Figures of Sensation", 321.

shots that generate new "meanings" for the audiences. The *constructed* nature of such meanings, as demonstrated by the *montage of shots,* challenged the notion held by Hollywood cinema that meanings are *given* in the shots themselves. Arguably, Eisenstein's initial interest in film sensuality must have been aroused due to the disruptive role of the montage process vis-à-vis the conventional idea of "meanings" being inherent in the shots themselves. Using the term "attraction" for the first time in the history of performing arts, Eisenstein defined it in the context of theatre as follows:

> An "attraction" (in our diagnosis of theatre) is any aggressive moment in theatre, that is any element of it that subjects audiences to emotional or psychological influence, verified by experience and mathematically calculated to produce specific emotional shocks in the spectator in their proper order within the whole.[8]

However, Eisenstein crucially notes that it is not always necessary that film sensations should invariably be subversive of the narrative. He cites the example of Chaplin films where "attractions" are made to coexist with narrative cinema: "The lyrical effect of a whole series of Chaplin scenes is inseparable from the attractional quality of the *specific mechanics of his movements*."[9] In a wonderful essay, Lesley Stern describes how, for Eisenstein, the bodily somersault, which may be seen as an extension of Chaplin's body acrobatics, is used as a trope to establish a relation between cinema and the body of the audiences.[10] Peter Wollen notes that, inspired by the Symbolist movement, Eisenstein spent the latter part of his career investigating "synchronization of the senses" and "synaesthesia" along that line.[11]

However, despite such brilliant thoughts, it is but strange that Eisensteins' ideas on film sensuality remained confined to his random

[8] S. M. Eisenstein, "Montage of Attraction (1923)", in *Eisenstein Writings: Volume 1 1922–1934*, Trans. and Ed. Richard Taylor (London: BFI, 1988): 33–8, 34.

[9] Ibid; also quoted in Donald Crafton, "Pie and Chase: Gag, Spectacle and Narrative in Slapstick Comedy", in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, 355–364, 358.

[10] Lesley Stern, "I Think Sebastian, Therefore…I Somersault: Film and the Uncanny", *Para*doxa*, Vol. 3 No. 3, 4 (1997): 361.

[11] Peter Wollen, *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969): 57, 59.

musings alone. One of the basic reasons for this departure might have been his idea that film viewing has to be an intellectual exercise rather than a bodily one, a basic requirement, as he thought, for treating cinema as an "art" in those days. Eisenstein notes:

> My artistic principle was therefore, and still is, not intuitive creativity but the rational constructive composition of affective elements; the most important thing is that the affect must be calculated and analyzed in advance.[12]

Thus, despite recognizing the disruptive force of film sensations, he ultimately sought to contain them within "measurable" limits.[13] Eisenstein's formulation of "collision montage," whose final aim is to make ideas collide with ideas to generate new ideas through a *thesis vs. anti-thesis→ synthesis* format that works on an eminently calculable basis, is a prime example of this line of thinking. Thus, despite a young Marx having warned that Western tradition privileges the intellect over the senses by proclaiming that "man is affirmed in the objective world not only in the act of thinking but with *all* his senses,"[14] Eisenstein couldn't get away from his intellectual bias of containing film sensations within mathematically calculable "units of impression."[15]

In contrast, the *Principle of Realism*, inherent in the theories of André Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer, champion an *objective re-presentation of reality* based on the camera's ability to mechanically reproduce natural surfaces that have close affinity with human beings' normal responses to the world. In this context, Bazin mentions "The photograph as such and the object in itself share a common being, after the fashion of a *fingerprint*"[16] which "affects us like a phenomenon in nature, like a flower or snowflakes."[17]

[12] Richard Taylor, "Introduction", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 1*, 1–26, 12.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Trans. M. Milligan (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987): 108.

[15] S. M. Eisenstein, *Eisenstein Writings Volume 2: Towards a Theory of Montage*, Trans. Michael Glenny, Eds. Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, new ed. (London: BFI, 1994): 384.

[16] André Bazin, "The Ontology of Photographic Image", in *What is Cinema?* Vol. 1, Trans. and Ed. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967): 9–16, 15.

[17] Ibid., 13.

This is clearly a promising phenomenological line with Bazin even celebrating those moments of film sensuality which disrupt the narrative flow of a film. Thus, in his analysis of the final scene in Jean Renoir's *Boudu Sauvé des Eaux* (Boudu Saved from Drowning, 1932), he revels in the tactile response of the audiences:

> The water is no longer "water" but more specifically the water of the Marne in August, yellow and glaucous…an extraordinary slow 360° pan…picks up a bit of grass where, in close-up, one can see distinctly the white dust that the heat and wind have lifted from the past. One can almost feel it between one's fingers.[18]

His contemporary realist, Siegfried Kracauer, also exhibited similar phenomenological inclinations. Vivian Sobchack mentions that Kracauer understands the spectator as a "human being with skin and hair" and that "the material elements that present themselves in films directly stimulate the *material layers* of the human being: his nerves, his senses, his entire *physiological substance*."[19] However, despite such phenomenological proclamations, none of the realist theorists ultimately developed their ideas along this line any further. In this context, Bazin's reasons for moving away from the phenomenological line are briefly discussed below.

Bazin moved away from his phenomenological leanings in order to adopt the legacy of linear perspective arising from Renaissance which represents a spectator standing in front of a *window* where the latter "stabilizes" vision along a static mathematical grid located in front of the viewer.[20] This idea, unfortunately, peels off layers and layers of material surroundings that represents tactile impressions of the audiences' embodied experiences of the world to produce a static, *disembodied vision from the window*.[21] Thus, one surprisingly notes that both Eisenstein and Bazin, while starting so promisingly with the idea of film sensations, ultimately ended up containing them within a mathematically calculable grid that represented a pre-determined cinematic space for the audiences!

[18] Bazin, *Jean Renoir* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1974): 85–6, quoted in Tiago Magalhães de Luca's PhD Thesis, *Realism of the Senses: A Tendency in Contemporary World Cinema* (Leeds University, 20011): 15–6.

[19] Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye*, 55, original emphasis.

[20] Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 5.

[21] Ibid.

Apart from their ideologies, another reason for this turn of events happened to be that, for both Eisenstein and Bazin, the primary goal was to determine whether cinema can be considered as "art" in the same lines as literature and theatre had already been so considered. In the tradition of Aristotle, they attempted to identify a unique feature of cinema that would establish such a claim. While, for the Soviet formalists, this unique feature was *editing* which juxtaposed different pieces of reality to generate new "meaning" from them, for the realists, it was *camerawork* which sought to reproduce *reality as it is* for them. However, since, for both, the starting point remained "reality," it is necessary to understand what each meant by the term "real." Henderson notes: "For Eisenstein, as for Pudovkin, pieces of unedited films are no more than mechanical reproductions of reality…Only when these pieces are arranged in montage patterns, does film become art."[22] Bazin criticizes the montage theory by noting that it "reinforces the meaning of one image by association with another image not necessarily part of the same episode"[23] which signifies that montage "did not show us the event; it (merely) alluded to it."[24] Arguing against the manipulative practices of montage that dissolved "the event" by substituting for it a synthetic reality,[25] Bazin notes:

> The photograph and object in itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it…shares, by virtue of the very process of its becoming, the being of the model of which it is the reproduction; it is the *model*.[26]

Thus, for Bazin, film art is fully achieved in the shot itself: "if the shot stands in a proper relation to the real, it is already art."[27] Henderson notes that, on this ground, Bazin only allows a simple linkage between shots in cinema: "if the individual shot exhibits fidelity to the real, then it follows that a series of such shots, merely linked, must be faithful to the

[22] Brian Henderson, *A Critique of Film Theory* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1980): 18.

[23] Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema", 25, modified.

[24] Ibid., 25.

[25] Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema", 25, quoted in Henderson, *A Critique*, 22.

[26] Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image", 14, quoted in Henderson, *A Critique*, 21, original emphasis.

[27] Henderson, *A Critique*, 26–7.

real also."[28] In the above context, Henderson sums up the limitation of both these theories:

> The sequence is as far as either theorist gets to in his discussion of cinematic form. The film theory of each is in fact a *theory of the film sequence*… The problem of the formal organization of the whole film is not taken up by either. This is the most serious limitation of both theories.[29]

At the most basic level, extended narration, thus, remains an anathema to both theorists. Noting that whenever such discussions came up both veered off into literary theories, Henderson comments: "Their solutions in terms of literary models are a failure to take up the problem at all."[30]

As contemporary film theory started being accepted more widely since the late '60s, film studies departments, in order to differentiate current efforts from those made in the past, branded all earlier efforts as "classical film theory" retroactively. It is thus that, despite representing two entirely contrary trends of formalism and realism in them, theories of Eisenstein and Bazin subsequently came to be lumped together under the same brand name of classical film history!

2.1.2 Contemporary Film Theory

Contemporary film theory, which started earning its dominant status since the late '60s, took as its major platform one of Saussures' major linguistic findings: meanings do not occur in individual words but arise *differentially* from a selection of words having similar meanings arranged along a paradigmatic scale and words arranged in a particular order in a syntagmatic structure to generate a particular meaning from them. The meaning changed when either the choice of the word or its position in the order changed. This linguistic idea eventually paved the way for theories of structuralism and semiotics in Western thought. When translated into cinema, it led to the idea that "meanings" are not *given* in the film shots themselves as Hollywood would like us to believe but are the result of the way the film is structured and presented to the audiences. This

[28] Henderson, *A Critique*, 27.

[29] Ibid., 23, original emphasis.

[30] Ibid., 24.

idea shifts the focus of film analysis from the serial unfolding of meanings in a film narration to the way shots are selected and arranged in a film.[31] In what has been termed as the "linguistic turn" of film theory, Saussure's idea of structuralism came to play a crucial role in contemporary film theory during the '60s.[32]

Box 2.1 Ferdinand de Saussure and Indian Linguistics: *Meaning as Difference*

Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857–1913) linguistic theory is hugely influenced by Sanskrit and Buddhist linguistics of which he remained an avid reader and teacher all throughout his life. Since he formed part of a long list of Western linguists who were influenced by Indian linguistic theories, it would be useful to briefly recapitulate that history in order to establish its period.

The Indologist and Philologist Sir William Jones (1746–1794) had believed that Sanskrit, Arabic, and Latin languages all have the same root. His third discourse, delivered in 1786 at the Asiatic Society, Calcutta and published in 1788, includes the famous "philologer" passage which is often cited as the beginning of comparative linguistics and Indo-European Studies in Western countries:

> The *Sanskrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin* and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed that no philologer could examine all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source which perhaps no longer exists.[33]

Jones was influenced by words such as "pater" which in Latin meant *father* being similar to "pita" in Sanskrit, "mater" in Latin

[31] Two seminal works in the field of semiotics is Roland Barthes' *Writing Degree Zero* (London: Cape, 1967), *Mythologies* (London: Cape, 1972) and *S/Z* (London: Cape, 1975).

[32] See Anthony Easthope, *Contemporary Film Theory* (Harlow: Longman, 1993).

[33] Wikipedia Entry on "Sir William Jones", Accessed May 2018.

meant *mother* similar to "mata" in Sanskrit, "agnus" in Latin meant *fire* which is similar to "agni" in Sanskrit, "mentem" in Latin meant *mind* which is similar to "manas" or "manah" in Sanskrit and so on; among the derivative languages also, he noticed the same trend. Thus, "daughter" in English is "duhita" in Sanskrit, "horse" in English is "ashva" in Sanskrit, "hand" in English is "hasta" in Sanskrit, et cetera. Such examples could be multiplied ad infinitum.[34]

Sanskrit soon took the pride of place in the study of linguistics by replacing Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian from the Western curriculum. Even though a Sanskrit Chair was first established at Copenhagen in 1794 only, yet German Universities in general and the University of Leipzig in particular, which also had established a Sanskrit Chair soon after, became the model of all such studies in the West. Ever since then, we have a long list of European scholars who were deeply versed in Sanskrit like Friedrich Schlegel, William von Humboldt, Franz Bopp, Jacob Grimm, Angus Schleicher, Karl Brugmann, Georges Cuvier, et cetera, who were the veritable who's who of linguistic studies in the nineteenth-century Europe. They literally formed the first, second and third generation of Western linguists whose major works happened to be on Indo-European languages with special reference to Sanskrit.[35]

When Saussure started to study linguistics at the University of Leipzing in 1876, his teachers were Georg Curtius (1820–1885), August Leskien (1840–1916), Karl Brugmann (1849–1919), et cetera, all of whom were Sanskrit scholars teaching Indo-European languages at the university. Of the two works that Saussure published in his own name during his life time, one was his PhD thesis titled "Genitive Case Study in Sanskrit" and the other a work on Sanskrit poetics called "The Concept of Kavi." He then taught Sanskrit, Indo-European Languages and General Linguistics at Sorbonne and the University of Geneva from 1881 till his death in 1913. Indeed the influence of Indian Linguistics on Saussure was so strong that he was often called a "Hindoo"!

[34] See above for a fuller list. Accessed May 2018.

[35] Zsigmond Telegdi, *Acta Linguistica Academia*, Published Online, 2008.

When we come to his immediate disciples like Roman Jacobson, the father of phonological theory in linguistics and Nikolay Trubetzkoy, the father of structural phonology, both happened to have been associated with the Prague School of Sanskrit Studies. In fact, Trubetzkoy's PhD at the University of Moscow in 1916 was on Ṛg Veda. Similarly, Louis Hjelmslev of the Copenhagen School, which had first established a Sanskrit chair in the West, was also deeply influenced by Sanskrit. Must one say more of these influences? When we add to this list the names of Schiller, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Max Muller, Hegel, Voltaire, J. S. Mill, and Martin Heideggar, to name only the crème de la crème of Western thought, who either supported or critiqued Sanskrit culture but never bypassed it, then we are simply amazed at the extent of the influence that Indian linguistics had exercised on modern Western mind at that time!

When we come to the specific Indian linguistic concepts which influenced Saussure's theory of structural linguistics, we find that his basic idea came from the Astādhyāyi of Paniṇi, considered to be the magnum opus of the grammarian par excellence of linguistic thought, where the notion *unity* via *relations*, which essentially meant that the meaning of a word or sentence changed in different contexts, signified that no linguistic unit has "meaning" in itself but gains it from a cross section of "opposites" occurring in a linguistic structure. While the Sanskrit idea primarily caters to "meaning" as *referential*, that is, meanings that *refer* to stable "things," the Buddhist theory, in contrast, being a theory of momentarily existing "ultimates" (*dharmas*), signified a pure *becoming* without any stability whatsoever that a word can refer to. Under the circumstances, "meaning" in Buddhism necessarily arose *differentially* from a series of "ultimates" or *dharmas* that falsely generated an appearance of "stability" on the surface. Called *apohavāda* ("meaning as difference"), it asserted that, there being no positive entities in the world, when two things are said to be similar, like two horses, it does not mean that they share certain positive characteristics between them, but, rather, that they share the negative characteristics of *not being non-horses*. The theory of differences or *apoha* ultimately led to the idea of a two-way determination of a "thing" in terms of the *token* (*vyakti*, "individual"), which signified

an individual member of a particular *dharma series*, and the *type* (*sāmānya*, "class"), which signified the particular type of a *dharma series*, the two together forming a cross section from which the "meaning" of a "thing" finally emerged. Parimal Patil elaborates this process:

> In late Buddhist epistemology, a 'token' (*vyakti*) is sometimes described as a vertical universal (*ūrdhva-sāmānya*) which represents an object that is excluded from those that belong to the same class (*sajātīya-vyāvṛtta*) and a 'type' (*sāmānya*) as a horizontal universal (*tiryak-sāmānya*) which represents an object excluded from those that belong to a different class (*vijātīya-vyāvṛtta*). In addition to being defined in terms of *exclusion*, each of these universals is also associated with a particular *mode of determination* (*adhyavasāya*) as well. A vertical universal (*ūrdhva-sāmānya*), for example, is understood to be constructed through the determination of a singularity or non-difference (*ekatva-adhyavasāya*) and a horizontal universal (*tiryak-sāmānya*) through the determination of a difference (*bheda-avasāya*). Since particulars (*sva-lakṣaṇas*) are the only objects that can be directly present (*pratibhāsa*) in awareness, Ratnakīrti holds that both types of universals (*sāmānyas*) are constructed from the directly present particulars (*sva-lakṣaṇas*) through a process of exclusion (*apoha*) and determination (*adhyavasāya*).[36]

The above factors indicate that all the basic elements of Saussurian linguistics, viz., the *syntagmatic-paradigmatic axis*, the arising of *meanings through difference* and the fact that *there are no positive terms in a language* are overwhelmingly influenced by Buddhist linguistics and, to some extent, by Sanskrit linguistics. Saussure's classic work *Course in General Linguistics* was compiled by his students Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye from notes taken in his class during 1906 to 1911 and published posthumously in 1916. It is likely that if Saussure was alive during the book's publication, he would have acknowledged his Buddhist and Sanskrit debt.

[36] Parimal G. Patil, "On what It Is That Buddhists Think About—*Apoha* in the *Ratnakīrti-Nibandhāvali*", in *Special triple Issue, Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 31 No. 1–3 (June 2003), Ed. Piotr Balcerowicz, 229–56, 233–4.

Since sensuous experiences are normally disruptive of determinations along linguistic lines, they automatically get banished from contemporary film theory. This debarment is further accentuated by the Marxist turn that contemporary film theory took since the May ’68 events in France. It led contemporary film theorists to find an ideological binary between a privileged and an exploitative bourgeois class and a manipulated and exploited proletariat class in the narrative structures of cinema. Films consequently came to be classified as “progressive”/“liberated” or “regressive”/“reactionary” depending on which class they belonged to. Under this dispensation, commercial cinema came to be branded as “bourgeois cinema” since it sought to “normalize” the non-egalitarian exploitative structure of the society. On the question why, then, ordinary citizens continued to frequent commercial cinema even though it represented their exploitation, two powerful theoretical tools, formulated by Louis Althusser and Jacques Lacan respectively, were combined to forge an answer.

Louis Althusser, on the basis of his re-reading of Marx, held that “ideology” was the very process through which individuals were constituted as *subjects*.[37] He mentioned that this process worked because “man is an ideological animal by nature,”[38] meaning thereby that consciousness of man is basically constructed by the means of social production surrounding him. What it essentially signified is that “man is by nature a subject”[39] with Althusser mentioning that *there is no ideology without subjects and no subjects without ideology*: “The category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology in so far as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of “constituting” concrete individuals as subjects.”[40] In the above sense, “individuals are always-already subjects”[41] with Althusser holding that all social formations had ideology because it was involved in a continuous reproduction of subjects as “willing” members of the social process.[42]

[37] Louis Althusser, “Ideology Interpellates Individuals as Subjects”, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, Trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971): 170–7, 170.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., Footnote 15, 170.

[40] Ibid., 171.

[41] Ibid., 176.

[42] Carrol, *Mystifying Movies*, 59.

According to Althusser, the primary task of constructing subjects is undertaken by conventional institutions like the family, educational institutes, religion, et cetera, called the "Ideological State Apparatus" or *ISA* by him, on the failing of which the "Repressive State Apparatus" or *RSA*, consisting of the police, the army, et cetera, was pressed into service. In *ISA*, subject constitution occurs by "naming" a person and then offering her a "role" in the society. When she is now *hailed* by the society by that "name" and "position," she "willingly" responds to the call. In this way, Carroll notes "the subject is thereby constituted by or in the discourse, or to be positioned by or in the discourse."[43] Carroll emphasizes that the underlying assumption of the theory is as follows: "Discourse addresses the individual as a *unified subject* which the individual mistakes from the *seeming* intelligibility, unity, and coherence of the discourse and its address of him as an autonomous 'I'."[44] In this context, even when the individuals consider themselves to be autonomous units who are taking decisions of their own free will "voluntarily," Althusser held that their "autonomy" remains an *imaginary* one, being a case of *misrecognition* by the individuals concerned: "relation of these roles and values to the real conditions of the social formation being imaginary."[45] Althusser calls this the process of *interpellation of the subject psyche*. [46] Carroll explains that the Althusserian notion of interpellation has ultimately been extended to pervade all aspects of society by subsequent thinkers:

> Under the sway of the semiotic, these researchers have a rather expansive view of discourse. Almost every aspect of civilized life – from sentences to clothing – has an address or a discursive component. So, virtually every element in the culture is participating in the construction of subjects in an ideologically significant way.[47]

To the Althusserian notion of "interpellation," Lacanian psychoanalysis provided a much needed psychological justification.[48] Along with Freud,

[43] Ibid., 60.
[44] Ibid., 61.
[45] Ibid., 57.
[46] Althusser, "Ideology", 170–7.
[47] Carrol, *Mystifying Movies*, 60, emphasis added.
[48] Ibid., 61.

Lacan had felt that the human subject is constructed in several ways. While being in the womb signified a state of plenitude for the child, birth meant alienation and separation from this state referred to as *lack* by Lacan. During the child's first six to eighteen months, the child feels this *lack* more acutely due to the absence of motor coordination within its own body which makes the body appear disjointed to the child. Against this background, the child's first desire is to acquire "wholeness," thereby gaining a unified sense of identity for itself. The faculty that bestows this subjecthood on the child is called *The Imaginary* by Lacan, a process metaphorically represented as the "Mirror Stage": when the child looks at its own image in a mirror, it "represents" a sense of "wholeness" for the child, a sense which is not real but constructed by its own faculty of imagination.[49] Lacan mentions:

> This form would have to be called the Ideal-I…But the important point is that this form situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction which will always remain irreducible for the individual…[50]

Carroll notes two points of importance in relation to the "mirror stage." First, *the child's sense of unity and autonomy both come from outside in the form of representations.*[51] In this connection, Lacan holds that *The Imaginary* operates as a psychic mechanism throughout one's life instilling in him or her illusions of subjecthood or unity on the basis of external representations or discourses that it engages with.[52] Secondly, this process of representation or, misrepresentation rather, is generally brought about by the *other*, like the care-givers of the child who generally include the parents, the society, et cetera, the mirror here standing as a metaphor for the way they constitute the child. Carroll notes: "This sets forth what might be regarded as a continuing contradiction. We believe that we are unified, autonomous subjects, but this is based upon an extrapolation from *the other*."[53] This is the psychic mechanism

[49] Carrol, *Mystifying Movies*, 63.

[50] Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience", in *Écrits: A Selection*, Trans. Alan Sheridan, Reprint (London: Routledge, 1989): 1–7, 2.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Carroll, *Mystifying Movies*, 64.

[53] Ibid.

that Althusser was looking for in his theory: the bourgeoisie takes help of the psychology of the "mirror stage" to interpellate the subject's psyche in a particular way.

For Lacan, *The Imaginary* carries forth in other developmental stages of the child as well. In the *Symbolic Stage*, roughly equivalent to what the Freudians call the "Oedipal Stage," the child gets *culturally* constructed by the society.[54] Carroll notes:

> It is the period in which the male child, putatively fearing castration by the father, leaves the quest for mother to emulate the father in a process called *introjection*. That is, the boy child introjects the father which means that he attempts to take on the values, rules, and behavior of the father.[55]

In other words, the father comes to be *introjected* into the child's social being resulting in the child now being sexed as "male"[56] which is not merely a matter of biology, but is also a matter of culture as well.[57] The Freudians hold that culture reproduces itself through this process which forms the basis for Althusser's notion of social construction of individuals as subjects by the capitalist-bourgeois society.

However, Lacan's theory soon moves beyond the above position. He farther reads Freud to hold that the *Symbolic Stage* is also the point in which the child enters into the *language*. Lacan bases his notion of the language on what is sanctioned and what is held as taboo for marriages in tribal societies. Lacan considers social taboo to depend on *how one is named*, that is, positioned in a tribal network, with "the name of the father" acting as its anchor.[58] Carroll notes that this leads the Lacanians to see social laws—called "The Law" by them—as a "language system," which uses "the name of the father" as its fulcrum, also called the "phallus," which signifies the centrality of the patriarch in the tribal organization represented by "The Law."[59] Carroll specifically points out why Lacan thinks that *language* is identical with "The Law." By combining

[54] For both Freud and Lacan, the child is invariably a male child.

[55] Carrol, *Mystifying Movies*, 67.

[56] The psychoanalytical "child" is always a "male child".

[57] Lacan, "The Mirror Stage", 6.

[58] Carroll, *Mystifying Movies*, 68.

[59] Ibid., 68–9.

Saussurian linguistics and Lévi Strauss's laws of tribal society with his own psychoanalytical theory, Lacan arrives at the following conclusion about the *social language*: "the meaning of the sign in a language is diacritical or differential, that is, the meaning of the terms is not defined in isolation but in relation to other terms in virtue of their differences."[60] Thus, with the help of the *Imaginary* on the one hand, which projects a child's unity and wholeness in terms of representations, and the *Symbolic* on the other, which operates on the basis of "The Law" of differences, the subject is "fixed" into a pre-determined hierarchy of cultural positions in the society in the same way that *language* functions in a semiotic system.[61]

On the basis of Lacan, contemporary film theorists came to hold that mis-identification of one's real self for one's "constructed" self is ultimately a *psychologically given state* for all individuals.[62] By virtue of this psychological trajectory, an individual "voluntarily" accepts the hierarchical order constructed by the bourgeoisie as the *given* order of the world of which one happens to be a "natural" part. Contemporary film theorists hold that by projecting this unconscious aspect of their belief on to the film screen—called "ideal projection" by Lacan—the audiences themselves become instrumental in "naturalizing" the world they live in for themselves.

Since *film sensuality*, with its untamed *affects*, is likely to be disruptive of this "naturalizing" process, it has no place in the contemporary film theory. Instead, *film sensations* are castigated as being "excesses" to narrative cinema. In reply to the persisting question why, then, do sensuality get represented at all in commercial cinema which is produced by the bourgeoisie, the theorists hold that sensuous titillations primarily serve to bring the audiences to the cinema halls, a basic requirement before their consciousness can be manipulated by the narrative of the film to suit bourgeois needs.

In this kind of analysis, attention shifts from what makes cinema a unique art-form in terms of processes like *montage* or *reproduction of reality* to an analysis of the generic binary structures inherent within a film narrative. Carroll notes the consequences of this shift of emphasis for cinema:

[60] Carrol, *Mystifying Movies*, 69.

[61] Ibid, 72–3.

[62] Lacan, "The Mirror Stage", 6.

i. It makes all films—or at least all films that employ certain generic structures—ideological in nature and
ii. It makes them ideological in the same way. [63]

The overriding ideological preoccupation of film theorists during this period is well reflected in the slogan of the ’60s & ‘70s: *everything is political*. This tendency eventually led to detecting ideology not only in the film narrative as such but also in all other aspects of cinema as well like characters, situations, filmmaking practices, and, even, the filmmaking apparatus itself. Thus, for example, the monocular perspective of the camera comes in for some sharp criticism on the notion that it ideologically instills in the viewer the illusion of being a unified and autonomous subject who exercises full control over the scene which engages her. Carroll critiques the above notion of “ideology” as being too broad: “By identifying ideology with subject construction, the concept has become roughly coextensive with that of culture, thereby losing its pejorative force”.[64]

2.1.3 Cognitive Film Theory

Even during its heyday, contemporary film theory was, however, not free from dissent. Feminist and other marginal groups found its idea of a unitary “subject position” biased in favor of a dominant male ideology. They further found that neither structuralism nor psychoanalysis leaves much space for an alternate gaze to challenge the male gaze. Newly instituted Cultural Theory departments in Euro-American universities also called for a rethink on the ground that spectators have cultural differences which influence their understanding of cinema in significant ways. All these developments militated against contemporary film theory’s notion of a largely “passive” audience becoming a *subject-construct* to be manipulated by the bourgeoisie. In response to such objections, a new line of thinking emerged which considered the audiences to be conscious subjects who are capable of critically responding to cinema.[65] Called Perceptual-Cognitive Film Theory or, simply, Cognitive Film Theory, it was constructed by David Bordwell,

[63] Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 231.

[64] Carroll, *Mystifying Movies*, 73.

[65] Wartenburg and Curran, “General Introduction”, in *The Philosophy of Film*, 3.

Noël Carroll, Kristin Thompson, and others during the mid-1980s. Its basic premise is elaborated in Bordwell's book *Narration in the Fiction Film* (1985) as follows:[66]

i. A spectator is a *rational agent* who, based on her own experiences of living in the world, is capable of constructing a meaningful narrative on the basis of schemata of how objects occur and events unfold in the real world.

   Bordwell notes: "I adopt the term 'viewer' or 'spectator' to name a hypothetical entity executing the operations relevant to constructing a story out of the film's representation. My spectator, then, acts according to the protocols of story comprehension."[67]

ii. A spectator *infers* the narrative on the basis of clues provided in the film.

   Bordwell says: "In all these activities, whether we call them perceptual or cognitive ["a constructivist theory permits no easy separation between perception and cognition," *Narration*, 31], organized clusters of knowledge guide our hypothesis making. These are called *schemata*."[68]

iii. Since perception and cognition are considered to be "goal-directed activities," audiences invariably search for "closure" in them.

   Bordwell notes: "According to constructivist theory, perceiving and thinking are active, goal-oriented processes… Sensory stimuli alone cannot determine a percept, since they are incomplete and ambiguous. …Inference-making is a central notion in constructivist psychology. In some cases, an inference proceeds from the 'bottom-up' [such as] color perception…Other processes, such as the recognition of a familiar face, operate from 'top-down'. Here the organization of sensory data is primarily determined by expectation, background knowledge, problem-solving processes and other cognitive operations."[69]

[66] Bordwell, *Narration*, 5.

[67] Ibid., 30.

[68] Ibid., 31.

[69] Ibid., 33–4.

iv. Since perceptual-cognitive theory primarily deals with the conscious level, the only form of psychology it uses is descriptive or folk psychology where *emotions* result from immediate, interrupted, or delayed fulfillment of ones' desires. According to Bordwell, for understanding deeper *emotional* and other *affects*, one has to refer to psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Lacan.

Bordwell mentions: "As a perceptual-cognitive account, this theory doesn't address affective features of film viewing. This is…because I am concerned with the aspects of viewing that lead to constructing the story and its world. I am assuming that a spectator's comprehension of the film's narrative is theoretically separable from his emotional response. (I suspect that psychoanalytic models may be well suited for explaining emotional aspects of film viewing)."[70]

Clearly, the cognitive film theory is exclusively focused on the unfolding of the story element within a film. Calling it a Copernican revolution in its simplicity, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith notes that Bordwell replaces the entire semiotic apparatus of contemporary film theory in which film narration is *passively* consumed by the audiences with a film narration which is *actively* cognized and responded to by the audiences.[71] Nowell-Smith, however, cautions against the *inferential model* employed by Bordwell in his perceptual-cognitive model:

> The cognitivist model imagines the mind as an inferring machine. It asks the question "how can I get from point A to point B?"…it assumes that our minds work when watching a film as they do in a crossword puzzle or as policemen's mind do in detective stories.[72]

Noting further that this theory is hamstrung by the "intellectualization of the spectating process," he notes that Bordwell's "rational agents" act as ideal consumers in a market place where they optimize their choices by testing various alternatives. However, since there is more to cinema than a mere optimization of one's choices, Nowell-Smith notes that cognitive film theory is deficient as an aesthetic theory:

[70] Bordwell, *Narration*, 30.

[71] Nowell-Smith, "How Films Mean", quoted in *Reinventing Film Studies*, 8–17, 13.

[72] Ibid., 14.

> *Finding meaning* has become an academic exercise in both good and bad senses of the phrase…films *mean*. But they do not just mean. Because they can be described with the aid of language, we can be led to think that description can substitute for the film. This is the perennial temptation of what I have called the linguistic analogy. But films also work…as painting or music does…partly in ways that have linguistic equivalence and partly in ways that do not.[73]

With intellectualization as its basis, where "concepts" or "words" are the basic vehicles of "meaning," cognitive film theory has no place either for *the body* or the *film sensations* which the audiences experience in cinema. Arguably, it is a concept-laden position like this that makes Deleuze (1925–1995) revolt in following terms in the course of his theorization of *movement-images* and *time-images*: how can one possibly explain in linguistic terms such phenomena as movements and affects in cinema?

While castigating the "intellectualization" of the theory in no uncertain terms, Bill Nichols notes its other perverse socio-political consequences as well:

> Analytic philosophy and cognitive psychology cling to the same assumptions of abstract rationality and democratic equality that leads to a politics of consensus (based on a denial of bodily, material difference) and the repression of a politics of identity…Cognitive psychology and analytic philosophy, in fact, themselves exemplify a conceptual framework radically incommensurate with politics of multiculturalism and social representation.[74]

One would now like to sum up the theoretical developments taking place in film discourse since the '50s. The notion of *disembodied vision*—a kind of vision that "refuses" to acknowledge that *the body* has an important role to play in one's engagement with reality—underlies the notion of a monocular perspective whose anti-sensuous nature was never in doubt. The mathematically calculable nature of such a monocular perspective becomes evident when one examines paintings in the post-Renaissance period. A monocular viewing process of a painting was first constructed

[73] Nowell-Smith, "How Films Mean", 16, original emphasis.

[74] Bill Nichols, "Film Theory and the Revolt against Master Narratives", in *Reinventing Film Studies*, 34–52, 41.

by the Italian painter Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) based on the idea that light rays travel in straight lines to the retina of the eye where they form an inverted visual pyramid of the source there. A cross section of this view can, then, be transferred to a picture plane which would permit objects to be drawn in terms of pre-determined spatial calculations in relation to human beings' normal vision. Since the human retina was subsequently found to be curved, Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) incorporated foreshortening in all three dimensions of a picture plane. Together these ideas made the visible space of an artwork not only *static* but also *quantifiable* in a mathematical sense. Bordwell notes its consequences:

> With scientific perspective, the painting represented the spectator as a single eye, literally a point of view. *What scientific perspective creates, then, is not only an imaginary scene but a fixed, imaginary witness.*'[75]

He goes onto explain what the process does in terms of cinematic space:

> We witness the birth of a theatrical scenography of painting. *Space is autonomous*, a grid or checkerboard or stage preexisting any arrangement of objects upon it…in the Albertian perspective, the scene exists as a three-dimensional event staged for a spectator whose eye is the picture's point of intelligibility but whose place is closed off from the event witnessed.[76]

This process represents a disembodied and fixed Renaissance eye which underlies psychoanalytic film theory's notion of the "mastering gaze" of voyeurism in cinema. Standing in opposition to *the body* and the resulting *sensations* that it produces, the process presumes a distanced, de-corporealized, monocular eye which masters all that it surveys without getting physically involved in its vision.[77] Linda Williams quotes Christian Metz's striking description of the disembodied nature of this vision: "spectator-fish taking in everything with their eyes, nothing with their *bodies*: the institution of the cinema requires a silent, motionless

[75] Bordwell, *Narration*, 5, original emphasis.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Linda Williams quoted in Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004): 59.

spectator, a *vacant* spectator."[78] Vivian Sobchack informs that in the film theories thereafter, the notion of this "mastering gaze" and the view that it encloses becomes the explanatory model for analyzing film spaces in cinema.[79] Naturally, in this disembodied schema of the "mastering gaze," the sense of embodiment that film sensations generate becomes ideologically debarred from entry!

2.2 Limitation of Film Histories

When one asks the question how film history relates to *the body* and the *film sensations* it generates, one comes up with the same disappointing answer: they form no part of their discussion. This situation becomes understandable when one considers that film histories have been overwhelmingly influenced by the dominant film theory or theories of their time. Since narrative cinema had become the center of analysis in film theories since the '60s, film histories, which started being written about that time, had generally been engaged in presenting "evolutionary" accounts of how film narration had come to be "perfected" in cinema. In their critique, the theoreticians of *Early Cinema*, André Gaudreault, and Tom Gunning point out how film histories ultimately becomes a catalogue of various techniques and technologies of the filmmaking process which progressively moved toward an ever greater realization of the narrative potential of cinema. The authors argue that film historians in general have labored under the assumption that an *ideal* "film language" for narrative cinema already *exists* whose "codes" merely need to be "discovered" one by one to enable cinema to realize its full potential.[80]

In this context, film histories generally assumed the emergence of Griffith as the "code" manufacturer *par excellence* of *narrative cinema*. Under this spell, these historians branded *Early Cinema*, which, in its early phase, professed an *exhibitionist mode* which was generally subversive of the narrative mode, as "primitive cinema."[81] However, Gaudrault

[78] Christian Metz quoted in Linda Williams, "Introduction", in *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*, Ed. Linda Williams (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1997): 1–20, 2, original emphasis.

[79] Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts*, 59.

[80] Gaudreault and Gunning, "Early Cinema as a Challenge to Film History", 370.

[81] Ibid.

and Gunning note that since the category formation for *Early Cinema* hadn't yet started, how could these historians lump the whole body of *Early Cinema* together and brand it to be "primitive" as a whole? Even though, there have been other histories of cinema, like the history of the evolution of film technologies, like 3-D, et cetera, historians have generally focused on how technological developments brought film narratives ever closer to optimization in cinema. Despite his championing of realism in cinema, it happens even in the case of such a perceptive film critic as Bazin. Luca notes:

> Bazin's thought is traditionally associated with the long take, yet his defense is only tangential to it…the sequence shot in Bazinian terms is the direct consequence of another technique – depth of field – which, as Wollen notes, is in turn subordinated to dramaturgic efficiency. For example, expounding on William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1948), Bazin justifies its lengthy shots with the fact that they are "necessary to convey the narrative clearly."[82]

In the above sense, the rediscovery of film sensations by Gaudreault and Gunning in the course of their theorization about *Early Cinema* came as a welcome breath of fresh air in film discourse, an aspect which would be elaborated below.

2.3 Rediscovering Film Sensations in *Early Cinema*: Applying *Embodied Vision* to Cinema

While theorizing *Early Cinema* during the '80s, André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning revived ideas of film sensuality enshrined in Eisenstein's notion of "film attractions." In the course of their research, they found that, at least till 1906, cinema predominantly used an *exhibitionist mode* in films which routinely foregrounded sensual experiences at the expense of a film's narrative line. In this process, the primary aim of *Early Cinema* was to generate shock and awe among the audiences as novelties offered by cinema in lieu of making them concentrate on

[82] Tiago Magalhães de Luca, *Realism of the Senses*, 21; quotes are from Peter Wollen, "Citizen Kane", in *Orson Welles's Citizen Kane: A Casebook*, Ed. James Naremore (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): 252, and from Bazin, *Bazin at Work: Major Essays from the Forties and Fifties*, Ed. Bert Cardullo, Paperback (London: Routledge, 1991): 11.

the narrative line of the story. This *exhibitionist mode* contrasted with the *mode of narration* which got progressively adopted as the preferred mode since 1906, a mode in which all pro-filmic elements were generally integrated within a cohesive and causal narrative structure.[83] Against this context, Gunning redefined "attraction" as being "dedicated to presenting discontinuous visual attractions [which presented] moments of spectacle rather than narrative".[84] In contrast to the voyeuristic aspects of narrative cinema that wants to *tell* something to the audiences, the exhibitionist mode of cinema wants to *show* something to them.[85] He elaborates his stand by saying that while *Actuality Films* personified exhibitionist cinema, even non-actuality films of this period showed similar tendencies.[86] In this context, Gunning quotes Méliès as saying: "I can state that the scenario constructed in this manner has *no* importance, since I use it merely as a pretext for the "stage effects," the "tricks," or for a nicely arranged tableau."[87] More importantly, however, like Eisenstein, Gunning also mentioned that "attractions" exhibited by film sensuality are not *necessarily* opposed to the film narratives:

> Although different from the storytelling exploited by cinema from the time of Griffith, it is not necessarily opposed to it. In fact, the *cinema of attraction* doesn't disappear with the dominance of the narrative, but rather goes underground, both in certain avant-garde practices and as a component of narrative films, more evident in some genres (e.g., the musical) than in others.[88]

[83] André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning, "Le Cinéma des Premiers Temps: Un Défi à L'Histoire du Cinéma", in *Histoire du Cinéma: Nouvelles Approaches,* Eds. Jacques Aumont, André Gaudreault, and Michel Marie (Paris: Sorbonne, 1989): 49–63, subsequently translated for the first time as "Early Cinema as a Challenge to Film History" in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, 365–380, 370.

[84] Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde", in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, 384; definition of "attractions" given by Tom Gunning in *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema*, Ed. Richard Abel (London: Routledge, 2005): 124.

[85] Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions", 384.

[86] Since Lumière films generally represent documentary footages, they are called "actuality films" which are often contrasted with the "non-actuality films" of Méliès.

[87] Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions", 384, original emphasis.

[88] Ibid.

In cinema, the occurrence of film sensuality may be mapped along a sliding scale constituting three basic forces in cinema: film sensations that "disrupt" the narrative, like some non-integrated song and dance sequences in Indian commercial cinema; sensations that are in "excess" of the narrative, like scenes depicting gory violence in "excess" of the narrative requirement as in Hollywood cinema; and sensations that are fully "integrated" with the narrative, like Chaplin's walk in his films. Despite their various forms, film sensations invariably occurred as pure forms of sensual energy in cinema which film theories utterly failed to engage with.

Based on the Russian Formalist Tynianov's theory, Gaudreault and Gunning argued in favor of setting up a new criterion of writing film history where substitution of one system by another should also elaborate on the changes required in the formal functions that particular film elements are called upon to play in the respective systems.[89] Thus, if cinema's *exhibitionist mode* is required to generate wonderment and awe among the audiences through spectacular showings, it represents one kind of cinema while narrative storytelling calls forth another. Under the circumstances, a close-up or a mid-shot in *Early Cinema* and a close-up or a mid-shot in narrative cinema would have two completely different functions to perform.[90] For example, the function of the mid-shot used in Edwin Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) is entirely different from the function of a mid-shot used in contemporary cinema. In Porter's film, it is used as a means of *monstration*, that is, "showing" an "attraction" to the audiences which had nothing "primitive" about it at that time.[91] When a recreation of similar awe-inspiring extravaganzas is now being attempted in modern commercial cinema, like in Hollywood, Bollywood and other commercial film centers of the world, they have nothing to do with "primitivity" at all. Through this analysis, Gaudreault and Gunning showed that while there is "progression" in the modes of expression that cinema adopts, there is necessarily no "progress" in cinema in the sense contended by the film historians that it "naturally"

[89] Gaudreault and Gunning, "Early Cinema as a Challenge to Film History", 372, emphasis added.

[90] Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions", 376.

[91] "Monstration" is a term primarily used by Gaudreault in "Early Cinema as a Challenge to Film History".

evolves from a stage of *film attraction* to a stage of *film narration* in the course of film history.[92] Clearly, a new film history is required that would do full justice to the role that *the body* and *film sensuality* play in the progression of cinema!

As far as film studies is concerned, it was increasingly being felt that the existing discourse, which involves disembodied, culture-neutral theories and ideas, have resulted in a biased one-sided view of cinema. Under the circumstances, Gledhill and Williams advocated reinventing film studies as follows:

> Film studies' suspicion of the mass-ness of cinema rested to a large degree on the perception of dominance – by ideology, by complicit formal structures, by an underlying psychic substructure to which all differences would be reduced. Dominance locked film studies into an unproductive binarism of progressive versus reactionary text. The political point of analysis was to separate the progressive from the ideologically contaminated or the retrogressively nostalgic.[93]

In the above context, Gledhill and Williams recommended the inclusion of *the body* as a key factor in an effort to reformulate film studies:

> Reinsertion of the body and the affective into film re-conceives the social, cultural, and aesthetic as equally significant but distinct factors, mutually determining but not reducible to one another.[94]

However, to make a largely "passive" body "active" again calls for a major reconfiguration of theory. This is where significant insights from the alternate paradigm presented by classical Indian theories become important: their notion of *embodiment* can help us understand a *theory of the ordinary* which involves how 'average' film-goers enjoy their bodily engagements with cinema at a basic level of their being.

[92] Mitry quoted in Gaudreault and Gunning, "Early Cinema", 371.

[93] Gledhill and Williams, "Introduction", in *Reinventing Film Studies*, 1–4, 2.

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CHAPTER 3

Vedic Cosmology and the *Notion of Correlative Opposites*: An Indian Paradigm of Thought and Its Influence on Artworks

He Atita, Tumi Hṛdaye Amar, Katha Kao, Katha Kao!
(O Past! I Implore You, *Talk* to Me, Please *Speak* in My Heart!)
—Rabindranath Tagore

The Brief
The main ideas that permeate Vedic cosmology are the following. The whole cosmos is constituted of one single energy-source (*Brahman*) with nothing lying beyond it which leads to the principle *whatever is is one*. The principle operates on the basis of *conservation of energy* where while one energy-form may get transformed into another, it can never vanish altogether. In itself, the energy-source *Brahman* represents a "force" that consists of *correlative opposite* forms of the same "power" represented by the cosmic energy-source that alternately become passive and active signifying their potential and kinetic forms respectively. Vedic cosmology holds that, while in its passive form, the cosmos collapses into a point-instant (*bindu*) through a process of involution (*pralaya*, *saṁhāra*), in its active phase, formations start all over again through a process of evolution (*sṛṣṭi*) which attains relative stability (*sthiti*) before collapsing again, the whole process of involution-evolution-involution is considered to be going on since eternity. The above *cyclical process* operating at the cosmic level manifests in the form of a *cyclical process of nature* operating at the global level which brings about birth, growth, death and regeneration among organic entities and assemblage and dissolution among gross material entities of the world.

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The *work done* by all such processes, including the ones done at the empirical level by human beings and other such systems is controlled by the *doctrine of karma*, which ensures that each "action" only leaves an *equivalent* "effect", neither more nor less, so that the principle of conservation of energy is maintained, an "uncaused" activity being anethma to Indian thought. These "effects" are like "imprints" (*saṁskāra*) left on a system which acts like an "impressed force" (*vega*) to goad the system into further action (*kārya*) and so on. These "imprints" or the "memory-traces" of a system has an allied concept in the form of *vāsanās* ("desire-traces") which represent centuries of primordial forces working within a system that have remained blocked due to a lack of conducive circumstances. While all the above processes are controlled by the *doctrine of karma* which determine the shape and size and occurrence of 'things' and 'state of affairs' to appear, all three processes continue to interpenetrate each other where the larger one always subsumes the smaller one. These basic ideas have formed the bedrock of various Indian ontological and epistemological theories to emerge either in support or against the Vedas, those in support called the "Hindu Theories" and those against called the "Non-Vedic" theories. Together they are called the "classical Indian theories" and their time of emergence the "age of the systems". Various aspects of these theories and ideas keep empowering this book.

The Cambridge historian Christopher Hill argues that it is a peculiarity of Indian thought that it has always adopted an *anti-preaching stance* which has the distinct property of reconciling opposed ideas. It has resulted in a situation where even radically diverse ideas have continued to coexist in India with nothing ever totally going out of reckoning, a significant departure from the main trends in Western thought. This idea of *reconciling the opposites* has left an indelible mark in the field of the "arts" where it has not only significantly influenced the construction of Indian narrative forms involving space, time, character, and event but also its compositional principles in terms of straight line, curve, circle, and center including its notion of "idealization". These ideas have influenced art-forms in other cultures as well.

In the above context, the following areas would be discussed in this chapter:

3.1. Constructing an Indian Paradigm of Thought: Formation of Classical Indian Schools in the Age of the Systems
3.2. Three Major Ontological and Epistemological Processes in the Age of the Systems

3.2.1. "Atomic" Theories of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā: "Intentional Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge
3.2.2. "Substantialist" Theories of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism: "Pure Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge
3.2.3. Non-Vedic Theory of Buddhism: "Streams of Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge
3.3. Influence of Vedic Thought on Indian Arts
3.3.1. Vedic Motifs and the Formation of Narrative Principles in Indian Arts: Construction of Space, Time, Character and Event
3.3.2. Vedic Motifs and the Compositional Principles in Indian Arts: Significance of Straight Line, Curve, Circle, and Center and "Idealization"

3.1 Constructing an Indian Paradigm of Thought: Formation of Classical Indian Schools in the Age of the Systems

In the context of dealing with an Indian paradigm of thought, Amartya Sen cautions us as follows:

> There are many differences in reasoning within the West and the East, but it would be altogether fanciful to think of a united West confronting 'quintessentially eastern' priorities. It is my claim, rather, that similar – or closely linked – ideas have been pursued in many different parts of the world which can expand the reach of arguments in Western literature and that the global presence of such reasoning is often overlooked or marginalized in the dominant traditions.[1]

While classical Indian thought has some significant differences with Western thought, it also shows some striking similarities with it, a proper study of them can throw new light on how different cultures negotiate reality and the arts including that of cinema.

[1] Amartya Sen, "Preface", in *The Idea of Justice* (London: Allen Lane, 2009): VII–XIX, XIV, modified.

The earliest known treatises of human speculation in India and, arguably, in the world are the Vedas and the Tantras, even the most conservative estimates of which put their compositions at around 2000 BCE. I would primarily concentrate on the Vedic cosmology here because the classical Indian schools which I seek to deal with owe their allegiance to it, the solitary exception being Kashmir Śaivism which, even though coming out of the Tantrik tradition, has a close affinity with the Vedic thought as well. The Vedas conceive the cosmos as a conserved energy-source (*Brahman*), visualized as a point-instant (*bindu*) of infinite density in its original form, which periodically forms the universe (*Brahmanda*) due to the activation of forces within it that dissolves into the point-instant again once the underlying force has become passive once more. It is held that this process, involving evolution (*sṛṣṭi*, "creation"), involution (*proloy*, "destruction") with a period of stability (*sthiti*, "existence") in-between has been going on since eternity. Since nothing exists beyond the cosmos, it signals the outer limit of knowledge in the Vedic reality.

The formation of the universe—the state which primarily concerns us here—the interactions occurring within it may be conveniently explained in terms of the following three structural modules and the principles that guide them:

i. An *archetypal pair of correlative opposites*, which represent potential and kinetic forms of the same underlying force that represent the cosmic energy-form bring about a *cyclical process* of evolution-existence-involution at the cosmic level (*brahmanda*) called the *Puruṣa-Prakṛti Principle*, et cetera.
ii. The above process manifests as a *cyclical process* at the global level (*jagat*) as well, called the *Principle of the Ṛta*, which brings about seasonal changes that control the processes of birth, growth, death and regeneration of organic entities and assemblage and dissolution of gross material entities at the empirical level.
iii. The "work done" (*kārya*) at the above levels invariably leaves its "imprints" or "traces" (*saṁskāras*) on the concerned systems which, acting like an "impressed force" on the involved systems, goades them to further action and so on, the whole process being called the *Doctrine of Karma*.

The first structural module conceives cosmic energy (*Brahman*) as occurring in the form of an *archetypal pair of opposite forces* which manifests alternately

in *static* and *dynamic* forms. While the cosmos remains in a formless (*Nirguṇa Brahman*, "Brahman without qualities") "point-instant" (*bindu*) representing a state of infinite potentiality, called the "seed" (*bīja*) or the "golden womb" (*hiraṇya-garbha*), in its active phase, a state of cosmic manifestation (*Saguṇa Brahman*, "Brahman with qualities") starts occurring, only to lapse into the "womb" again as its potency gets exhausted, the process of involution and evolution considered to be occurring since time immemorial. The idea of the *correlative opposites* has given birth to the Yogic "theory of contradiction" (*dwanda*, "conflict") in all spheres of reality, from the miniscule to the gross, where the extremes must either be transcended or held in creative tension with each other, a state of affairs in which none ever gains full control over the other.[2] Coward comments:

> In Hindu thought, the *pairs of opposites* are experienced as a continuum extending from external opposites such as heat and cold to the fluctuation of inner emotions and the conflict of ideas such as good and evil. The Hindu *marga* or path aims at a *union of opposites…Brahman* is the union and dissolution of all *opposites.*[3]

The above idea of a *correlation between a pair of opposites* leads to the formation of a crucial relation between the "cosmos" (*Brahman*) and the individual "self" (*ātma*), also called "the soul" (*jīva*), in the Vedic theory enunciated in the Upaniṣadic principle of *Brahman*=*ātma* where "the self" (*ātma*) is described as the *puruṣa* meaning *puri-śaya* or "what lies in the citadel of the body."[4] It represents the thought that the very existence of the non-conscious physical body, with its diverse but cooperative parts, are not aimless formations but serve the strivings of something inner in the individual, "the self," or else it would have become a meaningless mechanical process, an idea abhorrent to the spirit of the Vedas which believes in the "liberation" (*mokṣa*) of "the self" (*ātma*) as being the highest goal in front of human beings.[5] In time, a similar idea came to be imposed on the objective universe or the "cosmos" (*Brahman*) as well whose physical embodiment, like that of "the self", was also determined in terms of the "work done" in the previous manifestation and so on.

[2] Harold Coward, "Jung's Encounter with Yoga", in *Jung and Eastern Thought* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publication, 1991): 3–27, 9.

[3] Coward, "Jung's Encounter with Yoga", 15.

[4] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 66.

[5] Ibid.

Fig. 3.1 Goddess Pārvatī as Ardhanāriśvara (*Source* Lotus Sculpture. Used with permission)

In this sense, the principle *Brahman=ātma* essentially meant that, within both the "cosmos" and "the self," similar forces were at work.[6] The above principle was captured in the "great sayings" (*mahāvākyas*) of the Vedas like "you are that" (*tat twam asi*), "I am *Brahman*" (*aham Brahmoshmi*), et cetera. It could be safely said that it signaled the beginning of Indian philosophical thought with the Hindu schools defending the idea and the non-Hindu schools opposing it.

A perfect harmony between the *archetypal pair of opposites* became the ultimate ideal of the Hindu Schools, the forces being represented as the "male" motif signifying a passive state and the "female" motif signifying an active state, variously represented as the *Śiva-Śakti*, *Śiva-Pārvatī*,

[6] Ibid., 56.

Hara-Pārvatī, or *Śiva-Kāli* motifs in Kashmir Śaivism, the *Puruṣa-Prakṛti* motif in Sāṁkhya-Yoga, and the *Nirguṇa-Saguṇa Brahman* motif in Advaita Vedānta, their perfect union signaling an ideal balance symbolically represented as the *ardhanāriśvara* (lit., "half female God") *principle* which depicts an androgynous half-man half-woman concept in Indian thought. Figure 3.1 depicts some of its examples.

The Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung had been hugely influenced (see Box 3.1) by the idea of the *correlative opposites* being held in balance in the formation of a balanced human personality, an idea which not only extends to gross material formations but also to the emotional domain involving *happiness* and *grief* as well as to the moral domain involving *good* and *evil*.[7]

The second structural module of Vedic cosmology consists of the manifestation of the cosmic *cyclical process* at the global level, called the *principle of ṛta* or the seasonal changes that give rise to the processes of *birth*, *growth*, *death*, and *regeneration* among organic entities and *formation* and *dissolution* among gross material bodies. It makes the empirical world an orderly place where a determinable cause leaves a determinable effect, an information which makes knowledge possible. Since mathematical equations represent an equivalence between two sides, the notion of an orderly universe makes a mathematical representation of nature possible. It is a Vedic motif which has an overarching influence on Indian thought as it holds that going against the natural process would be disastrous for the life-cycle of entities existing within nature. In fact, the Indian tradition holds that every person is born with a three-fold debt on his head—famously called the *Concept of Ṛna* ("*Debt*")—which he is obliged to repay: debt to nature which made life-systems possible, debt to those who made the knowledge of nature available, and a debt to those who made the dissemination of such knowledge possible. In the process, it celebrates both scientists and artists; scientists for accumulating such knowledge and artists for creating a value system which helps preserve that knowledge. In the Indian arts, a narrative unit is conceived in the form of a living organism whose birth and growth are constructed along organic lines, an idea which would be explained in greater detail later in this chapter.

[7] Coward, "Jung's Encounter with Yoga", 31; Jung's comment on "The Secret of the Golden Flower", translated by his friend Richard Wilhelm, in his "Alchemical Study" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967): 51.

The third structural module involves the principle of “work done” within or by a system which leaves an equivalent effect on concerned systems which make the systems work further to “neutralize” the effect and so on. During the evolutionary phase, cosmic-energy gets fragmented into innumerable number of pieces each of which enjoys a kind of provisional independence within the manifested whole. “Work done” by such pieces invariably leave an “imprint” or “trace” (*saṁskāra*) on the systems which “imbalances” them requiring more “work” to be done to set right the effect. The “work done” either by the donor system or by the receiver is called the *doctrine of karma* which holds that not only *every action has a cause* but also that *every cause produces an equivalent effect* on its “surroundings.” The history of *karmic accumulations* of a system at any moment not only narrates how a particular unit has arrived at its present state but also where it is headed in future. In case of living beings in general and human beings in particular, the “work done” by them not only leaves an effect on the gross “matter” that constitutes them but also on the “consciousness” of the systems, the latter considered to be a subtler form of “matter” in some of the Schools, while, in the others, both “matter” and “consciousness” are considered to be forms of “pure consciousness” that underlie the whole of the universe. In the above sense, even though the results of “work done” may appear to be different in organic and inorganic entities, the underlying process, however, remains the same. Coward notes:

> A thought, called *citta vṛtti* in Yoga, is understood as a specific shaping of psychic matter or *citta* in the same way as an external object, like a chair is a specific shaping of physical matter. In the Eastern view both are equally real. Jung says “It seems to me far more reasonable to accord the *psyche* the same validity as the empirical world”.[8]

While, in the material field, the *laws of karma* have been worked out in terms of the “impetus theory” developed by the Vaiśeṣika School, in the field of consciousness or the mind, it has been worked out in detail by the Yoga theory. Its underlying principle that *every action produces an equivalent effect* not only reinforces the idea underlying a natural cycle that the universe is an orderly system and not a chance conglomeration of disparate elements. Since, in this system, effects are meted out in exact measure to its causes, it makes the world a moral one. Since the *doctrine of karma*

[8] Harold Coward, *Jung and Eastern Thought*, 1st Indian ed. (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1991): 31.

has influenced not only the classical Indian theories but also all walks of the Indian life, its working modalities are briefly described below.

Since the *karmic principle*, which represents the cause-and-effect chain held sacrosanct in classical Indian thought, underlies "work done" at all three levels—the cosmic, the global and the local levels—its influence remains paramount in Indian thought.

The working principles of the *doctrine of karma* are as follows. The formation of a particular "impression" or *saṁskāra* on a system in terms of the "work done" by the system remains as an "impressed force" or *vega* not only within the system which is doing the "work" but also on the system on which "work" is done. The "Impetus Theory" is more famously associated with its development in the West during the 14th CE by William of Ockham, Jean Buridan, and others who moved away from the Aristotelian dynamical principle of "moving bodies are moved by something else" because the latter failed to explain the motion of projectiles as such. Instead, the "impetus theory" held that the "impressed force" within a system would "cause an uninterrupted continuity of action in a fixed direction even when the initial force ceases to act," which is basically the idea that underlies the Vaiśeṣika "Impetus Theory."[9] In the Indian theory, the process works as follows. The "impressed force" (*vega*) generates a "momentum"[10] ("momentum" is variously described by OERD as "the product of mass and velocity in physics," "the impetus gained by movement," "the strength or continuity derived from an initial effort," et cetera) within the system. The unique feature of Indian theory is that every "action" or *karma* or "work done" comes associated with its own "emotions" and "affects", like an emotion of fear producing horripilation in the body as an affect such as sweating, trembling of hands, et cetera, which, in turn, evokes a "dispositional tendency" in the self-body system to make it "neutralize" those affective states. The distinctive aspect of the Indian notion of the "impressed force" is that it is applied in three different areas: in material bodies it is called the "impressed force" or *vegas* or "motion"; in the psychical realm, it is called *bhāvanā* or "mental

[9] Sen, "The Impetus Theory of The Vaiśeṣikas", 39; we know the details of this theory primarily on the basis of the commentary written by Praśastapāda (c. 5th CE). Sen notes: "Actual development of the Impetus Theory in any detail is really witnessed in Europe only during the 13th & 14th centuries. But here in Praśastapāda's *Padārthadharma Saṃgraha* (c. 5th CE), we have more or less a complete and full-fledged impetus theory in the fifth century CE of whose germ can be traced without any ambiguity to the third century BCE when the Vaiśeṣika viewpoint was being established." Ibid., 44.

[10] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, Footnote 2, 67.

impression"; and in a third area where certain things have the tendency to return to their original shapes it is called *sthitisthāpaka* or "elasticity."[11]

At the level of "consciousness" or the psychic realm, its most telling effect can be perceived in the field of knowledge where every bit of knowledge and thinking influences one's consciousness which changes the attitude of the person concerned and the actions to be undertaken by him thereafter. Such an effect comes in two forms. While the "traces" of the "work done" or *karma* on consciousness remain as *saṁskāras* on its surface which can be readily recalled in memory by human beings, *vāsanā* ("desire") represent the totality of effects that the whole primordial existence of the system in all its previous forms together with the eco-system that is empowering it currently has on the self-body system, which residing at a deeper level of the being, can not be fructified immediately due to the non-availability of conducive circumstances but would surely bear fruit as the situation changes. In this sense, *vāsanās* represent *congealed forms* of all unfulfilled "desire-traces" at the primordial level which keep tugging at human hearts and minds from deep within them that continues to exert a pressure at the subliminal level of a system. While sighting a snake may be cited as an example of cognition, together with its associated emotions, affects and dispositional tendency produced by a *saṁskāra*, *vāsanās* produce a deeper response among us when faced with archetypal images like, say, birth and death.

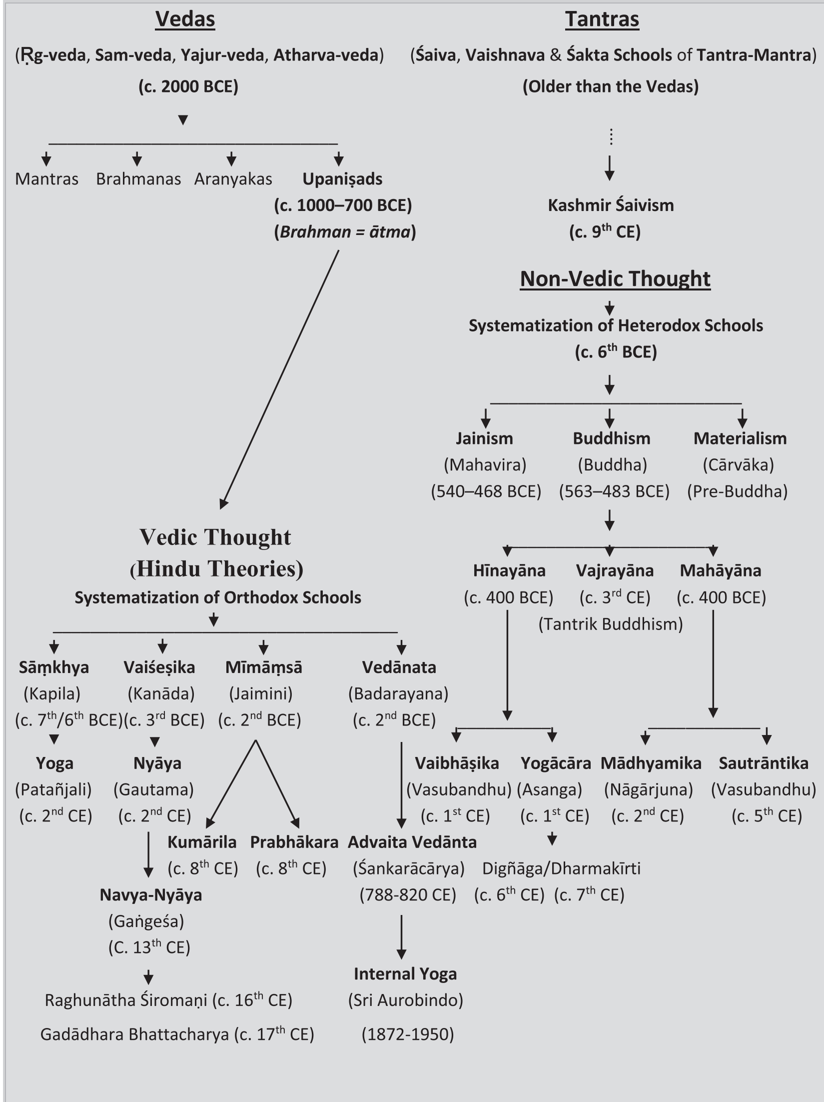
The *saṁskāras* and the *vāsanās*, which constitute the *psyche* in the Indian classical thought, work at different levels within human beings. Called the *doctrine of kośas* or "sheaths" in the Vedic theory, it involves the following levels: *annamayakośa* ("the sheath of the physical body" of *jīva*), *prāṇamayakośa* ("the sheath of the vital breath" of the *jīva* where the root *jīv* means "to continue breathing"), *manomayakośa* ("the sheath of consciousness"), *vijñānamayakośa* ("the sheath of self-consciousness"), and *ānandamayakośa* ("the sheath of selfless pleasure and tranquility").[12] Hiriyanna notes that the state of self-forgetfulness and peace in the last "sheath" is akin to the state of "liberation" in Indian theories which may also be compared to the state of forgetfulness involved in art contemplation mentioned as *raso vai saḥ* in Taittiriyo Upaniṣad (ii, 7) with the proviso that the aesthetic state is only a temporary one.[13]

[11] S. N. Sen, "The Impetus Theory of The Vaiśeṣikas", presented on December 13, 1965 at the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Calcutte and published in the *Cultivation of Science Magazine*, Vol. 1 No. 1, December 1965, pp. 34–45, 39–40.

[12] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, Footnote 4, 67.

[13] Ibid.

Illustration 3.1 Genealogy of Classical Indian Schools



3.2 Three Major Ontological and Epistemic Schools during the Age of the Systems

Depending on their ontological considerations, the classical Indian Schools may be divided into the following three groups: the "atomic" theories of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṁsā and the "substantialist" theories of Sāṁkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism (even though originally belongs to the Tantrik tradition, it has features similar to the Vedantic tradition) and the "streams of consciousness" theory of the most radical of the Non-Hindu Schools, Buddhism (other members in this category being Jainism which tried to provide a kind of synthesis between the Vedic and Non-Vedic Schools and Materialism whose development did not reach its fruition due to reasons unknown in history). These three ontological groups viz. the "atomic," the "substantialist" and the Buddhist, in turn, produced three major epistemological schools in Indian thought which different notions of "the self" as the platform (*āadhār*) where knowledge accrues, "the body" or "matter" from where knowledge is gathered, "consciousness" as the instrument of knowledge and "causality" as the process which represents knowledge become crucial concepts for discussion in these theories. Even though complicated, this section needs to be gone through to understand how the arising of cognitions, emotions and affects among human beings are differently formulated in different classical Indian theories. The different theorizations of these ontological and epistemological processes are briefly described below.

3.2.1 "Atomic" Theories of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā: "Intentional Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge

The Hindu theories pertaining to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṁsā are called the "atomic" theories because, in their metaphysics, which primarily comes from the Vaiśeṣika school (c. 3rd BCE), while both eternally existing material and non-material entities occur, the material entities are entirely "atomic" in nature. Puligandla notes:

> The Vaiśeṣika system is essentially an ontology in the sense that its main concern is not with logical and epistemological matters but with the enumeration and delineation of the ultimate constituents of the universe.[14]

[14] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 157–8.

Puligandla clarifies that Vaiśeṣika only enumerates what it calls the *padārthas* which represent "a thing or an object signified by a word," under which all knowable things of the world are comprehended. Interested only in the empirical world rather than searching for a process of "liberation" of "the self," Vaiśeṣika enumerates the following seven *padārthas* as making up the whole empirical world: (i) substance (*dravya*) (ii) quality (*guṇa*) (iii) action (*kārya*) (iv) particularity (*vaiśeṣa*) (v) generality (*sāmānya*) (vi) inherence (*samavāya*), and (vii) non-existence (*abhāva*). In the above list, substances (*dravyas*) are of two types, "material" and "non-material," where the "material" consists of earth, water, fire, air, and ether, all of which are "atomic" in nature, and the "non-material" consists of space (*dik*), time (*kāla*), self (*ātma*) and mind (*manas*).[15] The most important conclusion of Vaiśeṣika is, however, the notion that "the self" is a consciousness-less entity. Puligandla notes:

> According to Vaiśeṣika, consciousness is not an *essential quality* of the self, but an *accidental quality* which the self acquires through its association with the body. In other words, when the self dissociates from the body, it no longer has consciousness.[16]

The above idea is fully incorporated in the amalgamated schools of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṁsā. The "atomist" group is, thus, distinguished in holding that there is no existence of "pure consciousness" in reality; whatever is perceived as an "intelligent" response by a system is actually an *effect* of the system's *embodied response* to the world. In this sense, "consciousness" is "intentional consciousness" which arises only in response to "self's" particular engagement with reality. In Chapter 4, which deals with Nyāya theory of perception, I have undertaken a more detailed analysis of the ontological aspects of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory.

As far as the school's epistemology is concerned, the notion of "the self" in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory represents an eternally existing "non-material" unit (the non-material categories being space, time, self and mind) to which knowledge accrues from eternally existing and "atomic" material categories like earth, water, fire, air, and *ākāśa* which helps explain the empirical world. Since many combinations can be formed of the "material" categories in the real world, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika

[15] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 158–9, 163.

[16] Ibid., 164, emphasis added.

theory is both "plural" and "real" in its dispensation. In the N-V dispensation, "the self" is a unit where consciousness (*jñāna*, 'knowledge'), desire (*icchā*) and volition (*yatna*, 'effort'),[17] arise as *accidental properties*, the school's explanation being that all these attributes are "object-centric" (*saviṣayaka*) in nature and hence disappear whenever the "object" disappears. Hiriyanna calls these attributes "the mind" in this theory: "The really mental element in the doctrine accordingly is not 'the self', but these three attributes which are all transient in nature."[18] In the above sense, a "liberated self" is a "qualitiless self" which has no *consciousness*, no *desire* and no *volition* to think of! Since such a concept of the "liberated self" makes it useless for all *practical* purposes, clearly the attention of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theorists had been on the empirical world as such rather than on a "life" hereafter.

As far as "causality" is concerned, in classical Indian theories a "cause-and-effect chain" in the form of an "invariable sequence" leads to *knowledge* in the 'if "*x*", then "*y*"' sense: if "*x*" is known as a cause, its effect "*y*" automatically becomes known. N-V standardizes many varieties of the above invariable sequence: it occurs as "invariable concomitance" in a *syllogistic inference* where a cause invariably leads to an effect like the existence of smoke leads to the conclusion that there is fire there; it occurs as "analogical reasoning" or "seen from likenes" in inductive inferences of the type since qualities like odour and color inhere in substances like earth and fire, touch must also inheres in a substance like air even though the latter is not visible; *postulation* tells us that a particular effect is the most probable outcome of a cause and *comparison* tells us that when a particular description is "similar" to an element in reality, the two are likely to be identical. Apart from the above three, there is another type of causality which works on the basis of pure induction, like the rise of a particular group of stars signals the rise of another group of stars in the sky.

However, for Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, "causality" also has certain distinctive features. First, it holds that there is a "necessary relation of inherence" (*samavāya*) between a cause and an effect where "necessary relation" *adds*

[17] In the Indian theories, "desire" is of various kinds. One classification mentions 8 types: *kāma* ("desire for erotic pleasure"), *abhilāsah* ("eagerness to possess something"), *rāgah* ("repeated desire to enjoy a thing"), *samkalpah* ("resolution"), *kārunyam* ("altruisitic desire in complete disregard of one's own interests"), *vairāgyam* ("desire to renounce all objects because of their inherent faults"), *upādhi* ("desire to cheat"), and *bhāvah* ("desires deeply concealed within oneself"), Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 67.

[18] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 230, modified.

something more to the effect than a case of mere "aggregation" (*samjoga*, "contact") or "conjunction." Thus, for example, a fabric is produced only when threads are brought into a particular relationship with each other. By virtue of this *added* relationship, the fabric becomes a *new product* rather than being a mere aggregation of threads as such. Hiriyanna notes: "It is the belief that there is difference in the manner in which *dravyas* or substances may come together which is at the bottom of the conception of the 'necessary relation' or *samavāya*."[19] Since, for something to become a cause in this theory, the existence of a "necessary relation" is essential, an effect does not automatically exist in a cause. The theory is, therefore, called the *a-sat-kārya-vāda theory of causation* where the effect (*kārya*) remains non-existent (*a-sat*) in a cause and is only produced when a particular relationship between the causal elements is brought into being.[20]

Secondly, based on its idea of "necessary relation," the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika divides the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) into two sub-groups: first, where a "necessary relation" occurring between its elements outlasts its "cause," called the "inherence cause" (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*), like a fabric, and, secondly, where the occurrence of a "necessary relation" between elements only exists as long as the "cause" exists, called the "non-inherence cause" (*asamavāyi-kāraṇa*),[21] an apt example of which occurs in cinema where an effect lasts as long as a particular shot lasts. Thus, in contrast to other theories having two causal conditions viz. the efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) and the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*), Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika has three: efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*), an inherence cause (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*), and a non-inherence cause (*asamavāyi-kāraṇa*).

Thirdly, in the idea of a "cause-and-effect chain", the "cause" has an "invariable temporal precedence" (*niyatapūrvavartitva*) over the effect which the Nyāya theoretician Annambhaṭṭa (c. 17th CE) defines as "what exists *uniformly* before an effect is to be considered as its cause" (*kāryaniyatapūrvavṛitti kāraṇam*). Thus, if a horse is by chance present on an occasion when a pot is being produced, it would not be considered as its cause.

Fourthly, the notions of the "limitor" (*avacchedaka*, "slicer") and the relevant "distinguisher" (*viśeṣaṇa*) which, together, act as the "cause" to produce a particular "mode of appearance" of a "thing" to the perceiver as an "effect," like, in a scene where a "lady" is seen with "books," the

[19] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 238.

[20] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 74.

[21] Ibid.

cognition is that "she is studying" and not that "she is hungry", et cetera. Mohanty gives another example: "to say that fire causes burning is to regard *fire as limited by fireness* (*vahnitvāvacchinnavahni*) as the cause and not fire as limited by its color."[22] "Limitor," in association with the "distinguisher," is a crucial concept which has a great bearing in explaining cinema as would be demonstrated in Chapter 4.

3.2.2 "Substantialist" Theories of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedānta, and Kashmir Śaivism: "Pure Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge

The "substantialist" Hindu group of theories have been so called because its members, like Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedānta, and Kashmir Śaivism, advocate that "pure consciousness" is the basic "substance" that underlies everything in the universe (even though S-Y is properly a duality consisting of "the self" as "pure consciousness" and "matter"). Differentiating between static and active phases of "pure consciousness," these theories equate the former with a state of general "awareness" and the latter with the specific "consciousness" of an "object" or a "thing" as such. The Neuro Surgeon Dr. Deepak Ranade quotes Nisargadatta Maharaj as follows:

> Awareness is primordial; it is the original state, beginningless, endless, uncaused and unsupported, without parts and without change. Consciousness, on the other hand, is a reflection of a contact with a surface, a state of duality. There can be no consciousness without awareness, but there can be awareness without consciousness, as happens in deep sleep. While awareness is absolute, consciousness is relative to its content. In this sense, consciousness is always of something.[23]

While the above idea appears to be similar to the ideas inherent in "atomist" theories which advocate *intentional consciousness*, there is, however, a basic difference between the two: while, in the "atomic" theories, there is no state of a general "awareness" occurring there but only that of a specific "consciousness," in the "substantialist" theories, an "awareness" already exists as "pure consciousness" at the primordial

[22] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 75.

[23] Dr. Deepak M. Ranade, "Consciously Unaware or Unconsciously Aware?", Newspaper Article in the *Times of India*, Thursday, 27th July, 2017, modified.

level, an idea supported by the argument that, even in deep sleep, the sense of "self" continues in a person.

Ranade explains that, in the "substantialist" theories, "consciousness" means *condensed awareness* that has crystallized into a specific locus consisting of a subject–object duality in a spatio-temporal matrix. It means the coming into being of a "conscious entity" for a limited period of time, like "the self." Using modern scientific terminology, Ranade explains that the neural network of the brain is a means of processing the formless infinite awareness into discrete forms of "consciousness," its sense of separateness being produced primarily by the sense organs setting up sensual boundaries. "Consciousness," therefore, represents a state of duality signifying a need to be "conscious" of something, in which a limited "conscious self" comes into existence on the one side and an "object" on the other. While "awareness" shines through all such "consciousness" states, there still remains a state of impersonal "awareness" as witnessed in deep sleep when one's "consciousness" of "I am" remains inactive even though the "awareness" of "I" continues.

The state of "absolute awareness" or "pure consciousness" is referred to as "Neneev" in the scriptures. It is not the opposite of "consciousness" but is, rather, according to Dr. Ranade, a state of "quantum-super-position," a state that encompasses every conceivable state *limited* only by an observer who, by invoking her specific "consciousness," collapses one of the possible states into a reality.[24] Thus, in this group of theories, with certain difference in details between them, empirical knowledge represented by specific "consciousness" signifies a *limitation* or a *contraction* of knowledge from all the possible states that "pure consciousness" signifies. In this sense, the "substantialist" theories represent a "top-down" process of knowledge acquisition in contrast to the "bottoms up" process advocated by the "atomist" theories.

One striking and rather intriguing example of the "top down" knowledge process occurs in the Indian epic *Mahābhārata* where Lord Kṛṣṇa's all-knowing state of knowledge at the "top" is beautifully portrayed in his Cosmic Image, called the *Viswa-rūpa-darśan* (lit. "view of the cosmos"):

The "event" occurs as follows. Arjuna, the great warrior of the *Pandavas* at the beginning of the Mahābhārata war, suffers an existential crisis when he sees all his near and dear ones ranged against him. In

[24] The above is a summing up of Dr. Rande's Article mentioned above.

this state, he anticipates Hamlet by expressing to Lord Kṛṣṇa, his charioteer, the following concern: "To fight or not to fight that is the question!" By gifting Arjuna special powers of vision, Kṛṣṇa asks him to see his cosmic form where a huge mass of men and material is continuously entering Kṛṣṇa's mouth and disappearing there. Kṛṣṇa enigmatically says that, while, from this cosmic viewpoint, he can see the whole of the past, present, and the future at the same time, Arjuna can only see the portion "now" occurring in the present. From this viewpoint, even as Kṛṣṇa sees that certain "events" have already "happened" at the cosmic level, human beings remain unaware of them being rooted in the present alone. Thus, even when Kṛṣṇa can *see* that all the elders that Arjuna reveres and all the friends that he cherishes are already dead, Arjuna cannot see that. Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna to merely act as an instrument (*nimitta-mātra*) and "collapse such events into reality" in the present.

As far as the formation of "the self" in the "substantialist" theories are concerned, Sāṁkhya-Yoga theory follows a *puruṣa-prakṛti model* where *puruṣa* represents "pure consciousness," a state of primordial "awareness," and *prakṛti* the dynamic principle that entirely represents "matter" including all the material formations that occur during the evolutionary phase of the cosmos. As already mentioned, Sāṁkhya-Yoga is basically a dualist theory where there are many *puruṣas* which exist eternally as transcendental selves and one material universe or *prakṛti* to which the *puruṣas* may get attached. The material aspect of *prakṛti* is constituted of three types of matter, *sattva* or the subtlest and the purest form of matter; *rajas* as representing the dynamic activity of "matter" with motion being conceived as original to "matter"[25]; and *tamas* as representing gross "matter" which resists activity and motion ensuring that "material formations", once made, resist any change. The above three forms of "matter" forever remain entwined with each other. S-Y gives the analogy of a rope produced from different intertwinings of three different strands of a thread (*guṇa*). Human form represents the most complex inter-weaving of the above three material strands to produce the following elements in this theory: intellect (*Mahat*, *buddhi*), ego (*ahaṁkāra*), five sense organs (*sparsendriyas*), 5 motor organs (*karmendriyas*), and mind (*manas*) where intellect, ego and mind are together known as the internal organ (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) which forms the basis for experiencing sensations, perceptions, and conceptions, in short

[25] Pulingandla quotes Hiriyanna, *Fundamentals*, Footnote 11, 123.

all of our mental life.[26] While the whole of *prakṛti* is "non-conscious," the portion termed "intellect" or *Mahat*, being made of *sattvika* material, is, however, so subtle that it is able to reflect the illumination of "pure consciousness" from *puruṣa* within it. Hiriyanna notes:

> Though neither *puruṣa* nor *prakṛti* by itself can serve as the 'subject', it is stated that they do so together, with the 'intellect' (*Mahat*, *buddhi*) contributing all the activity involved in it and *puruṣa* the element of awareness (*caitanya*). Thus illumined, the two together serve as the "conscious subject". We may call their unity the "empirical self" to distinguish it from the *puruṣa* or the "transcendental self".[27]

Hiriyanna further mentions: "Owing to the above association, the two parts of the "empirical self" appears completely transmuted – non-sentient *buddhi* becoming 'sentient' and passive *puruṣa* becoming 'active'."[28] The two other theories mentioned under the "substantialist" group, Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism, are essentially monistic theories where while, in the Adaita, a passive *Nirguṇa* ("qualitiless") *Brahman* appears to undergo *apparent* changes to assume the form of an active *Brahman* or *Saguṇa* ("with qualities") *Brahman*, in Śaivism, *Śiva* becomes active in the real sense of the term when, in association with the creative form, *Pārvatī*, it brings about real formations in the universe. However, the above differences between "substantialist" theories are only a matter of detail and need not detain us here. In sum, among the Hindu theories, while in the "atomic" Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory, "the self" is an eternally existing entity which, in amalgam with a material body, develops an "intentional consciousness" to gain knowledge of the material world, in the "substantialist" theories like Sāṁkhya-Yoga, "pure consciousness," in amalgam with a material body, forms an "empirical self" to gain knowledge of the world.

As far as the Sāṁkhya theory of "causation" is concerned, it is described as the *sat-kārya-vāda theory of causation* where the effect (*kārya*) already exists (*sat*) in the "cause" which is the same as saying that the "effect is the cause in a new form."[29] The only job of the efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) in this regard is not to actively generate a

[26] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 127.

[27] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 283–4.

[28] Ibid., 284.

[29] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 76.

"new" effect through a causal process but to remove "obstacles" from the material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*) for it to evolve in a particular shape and form in terms of its material propensity. Hiriyanna notes:

> Prakṛti is characterized by universal potency, holding within itself the possibility of all forms. The efficient cause is only required to dermine the direction in which it is to evolve. An analogous example is water stored in a tank which is forever trying to find an outlet. Eventually, it flows out from a spot where the resistence is the least.[30]

In place of believing that a "necessary relation" comes into being between elements forming a causal chain as believed by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, both Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Kashmir Śaivism believe in a "relation of identity-in-difference" between elements which occur in a causal chain. Mohanty notes: "Between the cause and the effect, there is a relation of identity-in-difference (*bhedābheda*) – identity of stuff but difference in form - both identity and difference being real."[31] Advaita Vedānta, however, believes in a "relation of non-difference (*tadātmaya*)" between elements occurring in a causal chain. It cites the example of the sentence "A blue lotus" from which a unified meaning can only arise when both "blue" and "lotus" are understood to be *non-different* from each other.[32]

Explaining the above process in the formation of "the self," the "substantialist" theories generally hold it to be either a "relation of identity-in-difference" with the cosmic energy-form or the *Brahman* or a "relation of non-difference" with the *Brahman* in which "the self" or the "soul" (*jīva*) always remains identical with it.[33] While Sāṃkhya-Yoga and Kashmir Śaivism hold *Brahman's* transformation into "the self" to be *real*, called the theory of *parināmavāda* or "real transformation", Advaita Vedānta holds that the change is not real but only an *apparent* one, the process being called the theory of *vivartavāda* or "apparent transformation." While these appear to be minor differences, they do, however, have some implications in the way these theories conceive knowledge to arise among human beings.

30 Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 281–2, modified.

31 Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 76.

32 Ibid., 81.

33 Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 67.

3.2.3 Non-Vedic Theory of Buddhism: "Streams of Consciousness" as the Instrument of Knowledge

On the other side of the Vedic spectrum are the heterodox, "Non-Hindu" theories which challenge the Vedas. While this group consists of Buddhism, Jainism and Materialism, Buddhism is the most significant of these theories as it contains some of the most radical ideas about the world and the knowledge that arises from it.

Its ontological ideas hold that the phenomenal world is constituted of momentarily existing "ultimates" (*dharmas*) which represent various types of "consciousness" systematized in the theory that instantly arise and decay without having any stability in them. Conze notes:

> The Buddhist science of salvation regards the world as composed of an unceasing flow of simple ultimates called "dharmas" which can be defined as i) multiple ii) momentary iii) impersonal and iv) mutually conditioned events.[34]

The *dharmas* belong to two broad types: "in-composite" (*a-samaskṛta*) and "composite" (*samaskṛta*) types. In the first group belong the five *skandhas* or a series of five constantly emanating *dharmas* that give rise to five experiential states (*vithi*) of "consciousness": the sense-experiences of "form-consciousness" (*rūpa*)[35] involving the five sense-organs of eye-consciousness, body-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, and tongue-consciousness; "feeling-consciousness" (*vedanā*) which generate sensations of pleasure, pain, and indifference; "concept-consciousness" (*samjñā, saññā*) represents experiential states relating to the form of the concepts, though they are ultimately false, that "bind" sensations into particular forms; "traces" (*saṃskāras, saṅkhāra*) which are spaces vacated by the disappearing *dharmas*; and "consciousness" (*cetana, viññāna*) representing an, albeit false, notion of "volition" (*yatna*, "effort") whose separate existence some of the Buddhist schools deny by holding that "the consciousness in the immediately preceding moment acts as the 'locus' (*āśraya*) of consciousness in the next moment, a process designated as the

[34] E. Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967): 97, quoted in Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, Footnote 45, 65.

[35] Mohanty notes: 'The smallest aggregate of rūpa is called an "atom." However, it is not a substance-atom (*dravya-paramāṇu*), but the smallest gestalt (*samghāāṇu*)', *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 53–4.

'mind'."[36] However, others argue that, since there cannot be an "experience" without a "consciousness,"' all the above packets of experience actually represent states of "experiential consciousness" which are "bound together" as an "effect" by the one comprehensive "consciousness" representing *cetana*.

While the above are "in-composite" *dharmas*, the "composite" *dharmas* are only three: empty space (*ākāśa*), liberation (*nirvāṇa*), and a temporary cessation of mental attention tuned to one "object."[37]

On the basis of their focus on momentariness, the Buddhists deny all abiding existences and experiences in the world. Takakusu notes:

> Buddhism assumes no substance, no abiding individual self, no soul, no Creator, no root principle of the universe. But this does not mean that beings and things do not exist. They do not exist with a substratum having a permanent essence in them as people often think but they do exist as *causal relatives or combinations*.[38]

The most radical explanation in this regard is provided by Nāgārjuna's concept of *sunyata* or emptiness. He is the pre-eminent Buddhist philosopher of the Madhyamika School who holds that it is not pure emptiness or non-existence (*abhāva*) that he is talking about but the emptiness of something called *svabhāva* or the essence of a "thing." He argues that *svabhāva* of an "entity" has *sunyata* means that it lacks an autonomous existence which means that it is dependently originated (*pratīya samutpāda*)[39] which brings us to the final significant point of Buddhism, the notion of *conditioned causality*. Gethin notes:

> Buddhist thought does not understand causality in terms of Newtonian mechanics where billiard balls rebound off each other in an entirely predictable manner. The Buddhist "causal link" refers to conditions created by a multiple of causes [which ultimately comprises the whole universe].[40]

[36] Bimal Krishna Matilal, *Logic, Language and Reality: Indian Philosophy and Contemporary Issues*, 2nd ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991): 334–5.

[37] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 53–4.

[38] Junjiro Takakusu, *Elements of Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: Office Appliance Company, 1956), 59, quoted in Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, Footnote 54, 69, emphasis added.

[39] Internet Entry on "Nāgārjuna and Sunyata", Accessed April, 2018.

[40] Ibid.

At the most basic level of "dependent origination" (*pratīya samutpāda*) is the idea that the space vacated by a disappearing *dharma* invariably conditions the emergence of the next *dharma* in its place. In this way, everything becomes dependent on everything else captured in the following striking dictum:

> If this is, that comes to be; from the arising of this, that arises; if this is not, that does not come to be; from the stopping of this, that is stopped.[41]

What the above ideas mean is that the *dharmas*, being only momentarily existing "ultimate units of conciousness," their inherent "power" is exhausted in *becoming* alone which brings about their decay in the very next moment. In other words, they do not have any causal efficacy left in them either to influence other *dharmas* or to persist long enough to form "continuity" with anything else in the universe. The Buddhist cosmology is, therefore, entirely a story of *becoming* alone, there being no state of *being* in this theory. Thus, as against the three stages of evolution in the Hindu theories viz. a state of *becoming* (*sṛṣṭi*), a state of persistence or *being* (*sthiti*), and a state of involution or *collapse* (*saṁhāra* or *proloy*), the Buddhists only have two states in the form of *becoming* and *disappearance* alone, there being no *being* or "stability" in its' theories. The Buddhists ultimately identify 12 principle causes or *nidanas* from among a multiple of other causes as the basic reasons for human suffering which can be stopped on the basis of an adequate knowledge about the process.

Buddha challenges the notion of "the self" in the Hindu theories which experiences sensations as a unity.[42] The Buddhists explain "the self" not in terms of a continuing entity, but as a continuous succession of different states without a persisting link running through them on the analogy that, while there is continuum in a river or a stream, there is no persisting entity in them.[43] In this sense, in contrast to Heraclitus's famous saying that "you do not step into the same river twice," the Buddhists, because of their belief in reality being constituted of only momentarily existing *dharmas*, would perhaps like to say "you do not step into the same river even once" even though "one may step into a

[41] Saṁyutta-Nikāya II, 64–5, quoted in Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 53.

[42] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 138–9.

[43] Ibid., 333–4.

similar river more than once"! The Buddhists hold that when all the five types of *dharmas* bunch together to form an "aggregate,", called *pañca skandhas* (also *khandhas*, lit., "the trunk of a tree"),[44] they represent a "personality-aggregate" (*pudgala*) which usually substitutes for "the self" (*ātma*) in the Hindu theories.[45] In Buddhism, it is this individual series produced by an aggregate of the five *dharmas* which generate the false impression of a unity in "things" or "objects" on the one hand and an abiding "self" on the other that *falsely* "appropriates" such phenomena to itself. In reality, according to the Buddhists, there is only the existence of an ever changing *fluid* "self" which cannot "own" any phenomena as it keeps changing every moment.[46]

The above explanation attracts two criticisms: first, if everything is changing every moment, how do we recognize something as the *same* and, secondly, if "the self" is changing every moment, then how do we account for *memory*? In answer to the first point concerning *recognition*, Hiriyanna explains the Buddhist position: "Things in the two moments are only *similar* but not the *same*. In this sense, all *recognitions* are erroneous since we mistake similarity for identity."[47] In response to the second criticism concerning *memory*, Hiriyanna mentions:

> The Buddhist holds that each phase of experience is wrought into the next so that every successive phase has within it 'all the potentialities of its prdecessor' which manifest when conditions are favorable. Hence, though a man is not the same in any two moments, yet he is not quite different either. In this sense, 'the self is not only a collective but also a recollective entity'. It is on this basis that Buddhism establishes moral responsibility.[48]

The Buddhist conception of a "self in flux" is a radical departure from not only the notions of "self" so far conceived not only in India but also any where else in the world during its time, including the Greek atomic theory of Leucippus and Heraclitus for whom "the self" did have a brief "identity."

[44] Dasgupta, *A History*, 93.

[45] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 334.

[46] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 55.

[47] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 145.

[48] Ibid.

A crucial aspect of the Buddhist notion of a “self in flow” is that “nobody” stands aside from the process of the momentarily existing *dharmas* in order to experience them from “outside”: the *dharmas* are *self-experiential* (*sva-lakṣaṇa*) entities which together form “the flowing self,” *the experiencer and the experience being one and the same thing* in this theory. In this sense, the Buddhist phenomenology consists of *streams of consciousness* of continuous and ceaseless oozing of different *dharmas*, all the different experiences being self-experiential in nature. There is no question of such *streams* being experienced by a separate entity, leave alone being appropriated by it.

As far as “causality” in Buddhism is concerned, it does not believe that something endures in midst of change. That is, it negates the common-sensical view that when XA changes to XB, X stands for an element which remains common in both the phases. Instead, in Buddhism there being no *Being* but only *Becoming*, change is not only *total* but also *perpetual*. Thus, a *dharma* not only works out its full potentiality through its *becoming* alone, it does not have any potency left for “staying” or “interacting” with other *dharmas* as such. Hiriyanna mentions Buddhist arguments against forms of conventional “causality”: “If the conditions bringing about a change from A to B without at all affecting X, then the latter is a superfluous adjunct which may be dispensed with.”[49] Thus, as against the conventional belief that a seed *causes* a shoot to appear, the Buddhists explain the phenomena thus: the “seed” actually represents a seed-series at every instant till it is altered to a shoot-series when certain new conditions appear.[50] It also leads to the Buddhist criterion of “truth.” Since, by the term “truth,” a “stable” something is normally assumed, it militates against the Buddhist view of impermanence of things. The Buddhist notion of “truth” is, thus, *fitness of a series to secure practical results*. Even though this knowledge can only be an *approximate* one, it is good enough to meet one’s practical requirements in reality.[51]

Indian theories believe that, since knowledge changes human perception, it also changes our desires and our motivations toward what we perceive. For example, while our knowledge that something is real makes us act in a particular way, the same thing when known to be a fiction would completely change our attitude toward it, an aspect on which the whole

[49] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 211, modified.

[50] Ibid., 212.

[51] Ibid., 209–10.

of the Indian aesthetic theories depend. Indian theories extend this idea all the way to attaining true knowledge about reality which is essentially similar to the ontological assumptions made by the individual theories. Indian theories also hold that, once people know that the true nature of the elements which constitute worldly things is also the sources of all their pains, pleasures and indifferences, it is likely to change their attitude toward reality completely. It leads to what is called "liberation" (*mokṣa*, *nirvāṇa*) in the Indian theories. The process of attaining such knowledge, however, differs from school to school. Thus, while the Vedic schools believe in shunning the worldly material "temptations" (*nigama*) from the beginning in order to achieve mastery over them, the Tantric theories, including Kashmir Śaivism, believe that worldly experiences must be gone through (*agama*) in order for an individual to be able to transcend them. In contrast, for Buddhism, "the self" is a flux consisting of an aggregate of all the five *dharmas* out of which only the first is physical and the rest all being mental. Due to the constant practice of understanding the ephemeral nature of worldly things, a conviction grows in a person about the vacuity of reality. Due to this conviction, the psychical *dharmas* involving narrow beliefs change only to ultimately disappear altogether. In such a mental state, when the person dies and his physical vesture is resolved too, there remains "no remainder of empirical existence" for him which leads to his *nirvaṇa*. If we compare the essencelessness of "self" in the post-modern theory with the notion of liberated "selves" in Indian theories, then we find that, while in the N-V, "the self" is a complete blank, in "substantialist theories, "the self" is "pure consciousness" in a state of bliss and in Buddhism, "the self" simply does not exist anymore.

Box 3.1 Jacques Lacan and Kashmir Śaivism: *The Mirror Image*

Jacques Lacan (1901–1981) uses the *mirror image* as a representational form that imparts a sense of 'wholeness' to a child suffering from a felt disunity or *lack* in its own body. It is a projection which the child carries throughout its life which essentially signifies a split in its psyche between reality and representation. In this sense, Lacan's *mirror stage*, which metaphorically stands for representations generated by the *other*, artificially fills up the *lack* felt by an individual. What the process signifies is that an individual is psychologically rendered 'complete' only when the *other* constructs him or her through various modes of such representations.

Fig. 3.2 Goddess Pārvatī showing Mirror to Lord Śiva, Pāla Dynasty, c. 9th CE (*Source* Kolkata Museum)

In Kashmir Śaivism (c. 9th CE), a branch of the Tantrik school having much affinity with Vedic thought, the cosmos is conceived as representing the balancing activity of an *archetypal pair of correlative opposites* representing the potential and kinetic aspects of the same underlying force, symbolically represented by the *Śiva-Pārvatī* motif in the system.

In the sculpture of *Śiva* and *Pārvatī* shown in Fig. 3.2, representing the potential and the kinetic forms of the cosmic force, *Pārvatī* shows the mirror to *Śiva*—who is totally immersed within his own "self" during meditation—three times to bring him to his 'senses' that the cosmos or *Brahman* consists not only of "the self" but of "matter" as well, her mirror (*Pārvatīdarpaṇa*) signifying the

state of knowledge that a person has at that moment about reality.[52] In the first stage of her showing, *Śiva* only sees himself in the mirror signaling that he is still absorbed in his own image; in the next stage, *Śiva* only sees *Pārvatī* in the mirror indicating that *Śiva's* knowledge is now entirely constituted by external reality; it is only in the third and final stage that *Śiva* sees both himself and *Pārvatī* in a harmonious embrace in the mirror indicating that the two forces represented by them are now in a harmonious balance.

While *Pārvatī*'s role here appears to be similar to the image constructed for the child by *the other*, they are essentially different. While *the other* in the Lacanian theory is truly *the other* who imparts a false knowledge to the child, in Kashmir Śaivism, *Pārvatī* is not really *the other* but essentially the same as *Śiva*, a knowledge that *Pārvatī* seeks to convey to *Śiva*. In this sense, while the *lack* that Lacan is talking about essentially represents one's artificial severance from the *whole*, what the Śaiva school preaches is that one has to experience different layers and forms of reality to be able to transcend them in search of higher knowledge. This Tantric idea of 'transcending' the world by learning from the world is called the 'positive path' (*agama*) as against the Vedic 'negtive path' (*nigama*) of avoiding ones' sensuous desires in order to resist their temptations. The Indian theories in general and Kashmir Śaivism in particular would like to hold that the Lacanian *lack* is not really a *true lack* but an *artificial* one which can be eradicated by the acquisition of true knowledge about the *lack* rather than being fed a false impression about reality. In this sense, such a split between an individual and his representations is not a permanent one. The idea that there is no true *other* in Indian thought is unequivocally conveyed through the innumerable Śiva-Pārvatī Embrace (*Śiva-Pārvatī alingaṇa*) images spread throughout the length and breadth of India.

[52] The details of the *Śiva-Pārvatī* myth, also called *Hara-Pārvatī* or *Śiva-Kāli* myth, have been collected from Harsha V. Dehejia, *Pārvatīdarpaṇa: An Exposition of Kashmir Śaivism through the Images of Śiva and Pārvatī* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997): 62.

3.3 Influence of Vedic Cosmology on Indian Arts

While the conventional notion of "science" advocates gaining certitude of knowledge by eliminating human subjective experiences from the process as far as possible, the notion of "science" (*śāstras*) propagated by classical Indian theories is different in the sense that the process of gaining knowledge in them remains inalienably implicated with the way human beings experience reality in their habitual experiences of life or taught or trained about it. The process occurs both in terms of gaining direct knowledge as in perception as well as in gaining indirect knowledge through such processes like inference, postulation, comparison, testimony of a reliable person and absence, called 'proofs' in Indian classical theories. In this process, even though human subjectivity remains a part of the knowledge one seeks about reality, yet, to reduce its individualistic streak, such subjectivity is sought to be "standardized," at least among people belonging to a particular culture, society, or knowledge regime. In contrast to the "standardization" of human subjectivity in the Indian notion of "science" (*śāstra*), in the "arts" (*kāvyas*), however, the Indian theorists had soon realized that one must necessarily go the other way by enlarging human subjective experiences rather than limiting it in any significant way. By virtue of this broadening of "meaning" in the "arts", human significance necessarily gets added to the "events" being depicted in the "arts." It is this broadening of subjective experiences which creates the required "gap" in the "arts" for human imagination to have a free play as required by the traditional Indian definition of "arts".

3.3.1 Vedic Motifs and the Formation of Narrative Principles in Indian Arts: Construction of Space, Time, Character, and Event

The conception of narrative in Indian artworks, involving notions of space, time, character, and event, remain prominently influenced by Vedic motifs, some of which are being discussed below:

i. The Vedic conception of the cosmos holds that it contains an interaction between *correlated opposite forces* representing periodically altering potential and kinetic aspects of the same force. Termed as the "male" force of passivity and the "female" force of dynamic construction, they are forever seeking to strike a balance between them with neither ever gaining full control over the other.

On the idea that harmonization of the *pair of opposites* is the basic principle of the Vedas, the Indologist Doniger O'Flaherty makes the following perceptive comment:

> One must avoid seeing a contradiction or paradox where the Hindu merely sees an opposition in the Indian sense – *correlative opposites* that act as interchangeable identities in essential relationships.[53]

She notes that the contrast between the erotic and the ascetic tradition in the character of Lord *Śiva* is not the kind of "conjunction of opposites" with which it is generally confused not only in the West but also in India. Desire (*kāma*) and Asceticism (*tapas*) are not diametrically opposed elements like black and white; rather, they are like two forms of the same heat where *tapas* signifies destruction and *kāma* the desire for creation.[54]

The idea of *gender equivalence* inherent in the Vedic cosmological idea of *whatever is is one* and a *balance between correlative opposites* plays a dominant role in determining gender norms in Indian thought, an aspect whose manifestation in Indian artworks, including cinema, would be illustrated with examples in Chapter 5.

ii. In Vedic thought, three processes are considered to be working in reality: a *cyclical process of evolution-existence-involution* working at the cosmic level; a *cyclical process of nature* working at the global level involving the basic natural elements like air, water, fire, et cetera, called the *ṛta*, which not only brings about seasonal changes but also determines the processes of birth, growth, death and renewal of the organic elements and the formation and dissolution of gross material entities; a process of "work done" at the local level as well as at the other two levels, called the *doctrine of karma*, which operates on the principle that *every action has an equivalent effect*. Since the higher levels subsume the lower, the *action-reaction model* of *karma* keeps influencing "events" at the local level even though human beings remain "unaware" of them.

In the above sense, Indian narratives cannot be ideally "closed" at the local level. It requires the intervention of "higher" knowledge in some form or the other for an adequate understanding of the totality

[53] Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Śiva: The Erotic Ascetic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973): 35, original emphasis.

[54] O'Flaherty, *Śiva*, 35.

of processes that keep influencing an "event." Since characters, however, remain ignorant of such higher processes, chance occurrences, striking similarities, and strange coincidences are always ascribed to the unseen forces like "fate" (*daiva*). Thus, while plots involving cases of "lost and found" abound in Indian narratives, they are resolved through providential *re-cognitions*; similarly, chance occurrences and strange coincidences form a normal part of Indian narratives, Kālidas's *Abhijñānaśakuntalam* being a classic example in this regard.

iii. Since, in terms of the Vedic principle of *whatever is, is one*, the same urge permeates both the macroscopic and the microcosmic worlds, there is an equivalence between the cosmos and Man expressed in the Upaniṣadic dictum *Brahman = ātma* which leads to the basic conclusion that Man is inalienably integrated with Nature.

Living organisms, as models of birth, growth, death, and renewal, form the basic motif of development in Indian arts with the "tree" model acting as the most favored guide. A typical Indian plot, thus, consists of a seed developing within a womb, then sprouting in the form of a shoot and then becoming a plant as developments continue, all the time facing obstacles to its growth, finally to overcome them and to bear fruit.

Such developments occur both horizontally and vertically. Thus, for example, a tree cyclically sheds old leaves and sprouts new ones, growing horizontally in terms of its trunk and vertically in terms of its branches, all of them being circumscribed within larger ecological cycles of Nature.[55]

The above ideal is, however, in conflict with one of the conventional Western models of growth where an organism "grows" only in conflict with Nature. Dasgupta describes the essence of Indian arts as follows:

> In India, man is regarded as part of nature. If man is a part of nature, like a flower in a creeper or the green foliage of the trees, the spirit of both must be so realized that one may not be in conflict with the other.[56]

[55] Vatsyayana, "Metaphors of the Indian Arts", in *Indian Art: Forms, Concerns and Development in Historical Perspective*, VI Part 3, Ed. B. N. Goswami in association with Kavita Singh, in the series *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Gen. Ed. D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Reprint (New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2005): 247–77; 248, especially see her portion on the "Navel".

[56] Dasgupta, *Fundamentals of Indian Art*, 20–1, modified.

The above model profoundly influences the Indian narrative tradition in Indian artworks.

iv. In the Vedas, the notion of space and time is modular in the sense that each of the three modules operating within the cosmos has a particular sense of space and time associated with it. In other words, the Vedic notion of space and time is concentric in nature where a particular form of it is contained within the next higher module and so on like the peeling of onion skin till it reaches the form of absolute knowledge portrayed in Lord Kṛṣṇa's cosmic vision of *Viswa-rūpa-darśan*.

The modular form space and time in Indian arts has larger implications. In India, artists do not conceive of passing moments constituting the history of a living organism as a case of mere aggregation; instead, they identify the *pivotal point* of a living organism, that is, its "navel" (*nābhi*) in terms of which the passing moments act as a unity representing an organism's birth, growth, death, and its renewal. In this model, the *navel* is conceived as the seed (*bīja*) from which all actions sprout like the center of a revolving wheel signifies the point where all actions are potentiality concentrated and from where all actions sprout.[57] Vatsyayana mentions:

> The chariot wheel (*cakra*) is the term of reference for power and movement in the Buddhist and Hindu conceptions. It denotes order (*ṛta*), [both] spatial and temporal, and symbolizes the ceaseless movement of time in *cyclicity*. The centre holds the circumference and vice versa.[58]

The center ultimately represents the conjunction of two potential forces, the *static force of being* and the *dynamic force of becoming* contained within a dimensionless point (*bindu*) conceived as the "drop" that eventually "spreads and flows."

In the above sense, the Indian process may be said to represent the *systems view of an event*, where a *moment* represents *correlated opposites* signifying a *static force of being* and a *dynamic force of becoming*, which results in a "moment" being much more loaded in the Indian conception than a "moment" operating in a conveyor-belt system.

[57] Vatsyayana, "Metaphors of the Indian Arts", 258.

[58] Ibid., 248.

In contrast, in the Western artistic tradition, space and time is singular, viz. it exists in one plane alone, is linear and continuous, the same model manifesting in both sequential and simultaneous occurrences. In this schema, each moment represents a loop through which past and future can be visualized in terms of a causal chain. Such moments act like moments of "becoming" where a particular moment in the linear chain remains empty till it is filled by an unfolding action. In this sense, the space-time moments in Western thought represent separable moments which, only when linked up causally, form a continuous chain.

While depicting a figure, the Indian artist, thus, follows the practice of abstracting its pivotal static form from its flow of motions. The depiction of the *Naṭarāja* as the dancing figure of *Lord Śiva* signifies such a static center in midst of creativity. Dasgupta notes:

> It may be remembered that, according to Indian mythology, the whole universe was regarded as having emanated from the rhythmic dance of Lord Narayana on the waves of the great ocean at the beginning of creation. Thus, the movement of dance in itself represents the rhythmic motion leading to creation and the opposite rhythm of dissolution. From this point of view, the whole universe may be regarded as congealed or sliced off states of motion.[59]

The above are some of the important ideas in the Vedic paradigm of thought which keep influencing concepts that underlie Indian artworks. For example, Bharata's theory of drama conceives a sequence of "events" (*itivṛtta*, "thus it happened," loosely translated as "plot") in terms of concentric circles having progressively expanding dimensions. The process represents the Indian view of *modularity* where, at each moment, elements belonging to the past and future keep impinging on the present. It is no wonder then that, in both the Indian epics of *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, the future is foretold at the very beginning of the tales signifying thereby that each moment is loaded not only with the knowledge of what has gone before but also with what is to come in future. It is based on one of the most abiding articles of faith in Indian thought: *action recoiling upon itself*. Richard Lannoy notes:

[59] S. N. Dasgupta, *Fundamentals of Indian Art*, 2nd ed. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1960): 71–2, modified.

> The "continuous narrative" of the Ajanta frescos is cyclical and non-sequential. Similarly, the dramatized structure of a Sanskrit play is cyclical. Various devices are used, such as the dream, the trance, the premonition, and the flashback, to disrupt the linearity of time which enables *action to recoil upon itself*.[60]

One may cite Indian classical music as a prime example of the modular structure where an unmoving center signifies the "seed" (*bīja*) that manifests into a "drop" (*bindu*) underground from where all developments start. The center of this compositional system is the navel (*nābhi*) from which cyclical "growth" and "dissolution" follow in the form of a wheel (*cakra*) within a fixed circumference (*vṛtta*). Within the limits set by the frame, there are near infinite possibilities of permutations and combinations that a musician can bring about as long as s/he comes back to the center of the composition, that is, the *navel* of the piece from time to time. This is also similar to the basic designs (*yantras*) followed by Indian architecture and sculpture.[61] For example, the architecture of ancient Indian cities like Varanasi or Bodh Gaya consists of concentric circles built around a center, considered to be the *navel* of the system. This whole scheme of progression in Indian thought which represents the *concept of freedom within a fixed form* is unique to the Indian artistic tradition.

3.3.2 Vedic Motifs and Compositional Principles in Indian Arts: Significance of Straight Line, Curve, Circle and Center and "Idealization"

Alice Boner, who had an in-depth examination of the principles underlying Indian cave temple architecture, highlights the significance of the straight line and the circle as part of the compositional principles of Indian arts:

> A given space or surface may be divided and subdivided indefinitely by straight lines without ever becoming an organic whole. But as soon as a point is placed in the center of a given space or surface, the amorphous extension becomes transformed into an organized structure. The center is

[60] Richard Lannoy, *The Speaking Tree: A Study of Indian Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), modified, emphasis added.

[61] Vatsyayana, "Metaphors of the Indian Arts", 276.

> a point of reference towards which all parts converge, and, therefore, the whole structure becomes "con-centrated".[62]

Noting that "the substratum of these compositions is a circular field around a central point" which acts as the source for all emanations,[63] she elaborates on how the above structure creates a composition which is analogous to the formation of an organic whole in Indian thought:

> The existence of the center creates a hierarchy of values, in which the parts cease to be equivalent and assume different weights and importance… Between the center and the outer parts, between the interior and the exterior, there is a polarity that creates tension as well as organic coalescence. The center is the source and fountainhead of this organic whole and the position of all outer parts are determined with reference to the center.[64]

According to Boner, elements in Indian arts invariably tend toward full development of the potentiality contained within a structure which, *ideally*, should lead to its fulfillment. Noting that in the Indian system, a linear progression is invariably contained within a cyclical process, she notes that, a straight line, which has the potential for an infinite linear extension, is always contained within a curved line in order to contain its forces:

> Every curve is part of a circle and has the tendency to close into a full circle. In plastic representations, such a curve collects and rounds up movements and, thereby, creates an element of rest without stress. It gathers up movements as a pool gathers up the inflowing waters.[65]

In the above sense, Boner notes, the circle becomes the fundamental determining factor in Indian arts:

> Between the center and the circumference of the circle, there is the indissoluble cohesion of polarity from which nothing can escape. The

[62] Alice Boner, "Introduction", in *Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture: Cave Temple Period* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990): 1–50, 18.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Boner, "Introduction", 18.

[65] Ibid., 45–6, modified.

> movements thrown out by the center are collected by the circumference and reversed towards the center, or, an unending movement may arise and flow around the circumference.[66]

In comparing the compositional principles of Western and Indian sculptures, she comments on the uniqueness of the Indian forms thus: "None of the other methods of composition, except for the Gothic to an extent, represents concentric space organization of such primary and exclusive consideration."[67]

The Indian aesthetic concept holds that the source of tension in an organism ultimately represents a desire for balancing the *correlative opposities* working within it, a process which represents the organism's innermost desire to live in harmony with Nature. In this context, the Soviet Sculptor Ernst Neizvestny's following description ideally fits the process adopted by the Indian artists:

> Two sculptors are carving a sphere out of stone. One of them wants to achieve the most perfect form of a sphere. The other wants to convey the inner tension of the sphere filled to the bursting point. The first will be the work of a craftsman, the second that of an artist.[68]

In the context of the Vedic dictum *Brahman* = *atmā*, Boner notes that Indian compositions may be considered as cosmic symbols where the center or the *bindu* represents the *Brahman*, the surrounding circle represents the potential form of its manifestation in the womb (*garbha*) and the space within the circle its field (*kṣetra*) of operation.[69] Stressing once again that *Indian compositions signify concentric circles that represent force-fields* which overlap when stresses are converging inwards as in "quiescent images" and diverging as in "movement images,"[70] she notes:

> The life of every composition depends not only on the counter-play of *movement* and *quiescence*, but also on the opposition between big and small form-elements, between rounded and straight movements, between sizable plains and aggregates of multiple smaller forms.[71]

[66] Ibid., 50, modified.

[67] Ibid., 9–10.

[68] Ernst Neizvestny, unknown quote.

[69] Boner, "Introduction", 29–30.

[70] Ibid., 49.

[71] Ibid., 49, emphasis added.

The notion of "compositional quiescence" has its roots in the Indian theory of *darśan*, where "ideally" the eyes of the deity should fall on the devotee with the latter becoming aware of it, a process which signifies that the deity has accepted the offering (*prāsāda*) and showered blessings on the devotee in return. This image presents a picture of perfect "containment" exercised in terms of the subject and the object within a scene. In contrast "movement" compositions are those where "looks" move outwards from the compositional frame.

The practice of "eyeline match" in cinema represents the notion of "quiescent images" in Indian arts. Arguably, the "shot-counter shot" technique in cinema, where the outward "look" of a character is matched and contained within the "look" of the person being "looked at" in the next shot, is an example of a "quiescent image" in the Indian arts. All the rest, where images are not contained within consecutive frames would present "movement images" in the Indian tradition. While it is customary in the Western tradition to provide a "lead" to the viewer to enter a "quiescent" scene, in the Indian arts, such a "lead" would be considered "disruptive" of the scene modeled on the principle of *darśan* in the Indian tradition.

An important aspect of Indian arts is the notion of "idealizations" which appear as an essential ingredient in Indian artworks. While there is "idealization" in Western art as well, the nature of the "idealizations" in Western and Indian arts are different: while the Western arts "idealizes" by breaking surface reality in order to incorporate inner dynamics of a situation imagined by the artist, Indian arts "idealizes" in terms of human beings' habitual experiences of the 'event'. Thus, in Indian commercial cinema, the construction of characters, involving heroes, villains, mothers, friends, et cetera, are based on *models* which are "idealizations" of human beings' habitual experiences of them in their socio-cultural life. The contrast between the above two forms of "idealizations" may be made clear from the examples below. Analyzing photographic images, Christopher Pinney, the art historian of early photography in India, contrasts Bourdieu's analysis of ordinary people's response to photographs in the French village of Lesquire with the Indian response in the village of Bhatisuda as follows:

> In the French village of Lesquire, the density of their local knowledge makes photography almost wholly redundant: "We have seen each other too many times already! Always the same faces all day. We know each other

> down to the last detail!" and, hence, concluding "…it's not worth it!" In Bhatisuda, conversely, photography never seems to merely duplicate the everyday world, but is, rather, prized for its capacity to make traces of persons endure, and *to construct the world in a more perfect way* than is possible to achieve in the hectic flow of everyday life.[72]

Marks of Indian "idealization", which reflect idealizations of the "normative values" of an "event" constructed by a perceiver in terms of one's worldly experiences, may be found in the early practice of "filling out" of photographs of Indian subjects by painting the photographs based on "idealizations" that a particular character or subject should have in the Indian tradition. Pinney notes Judith Mara Gutman's pathbreaking study of early Indian photography, *Through Indian Eyes*, in this matter:

> While European photographs also used paint, both to retouch negatives as well as to enhance color on the final print, for Indian photographs dating from 1860s, paint is much more than a supplement to the photographic image; rather the overlay of paint completely replaces the photographic image in such a way that the original is "obscured".[73]

Not only in the above respect but also in some other aspects as well, Western critics feel perplexed while encountering Indian arts. Thus, Pinney quotes Guttman again of her difficulty in negotiating Indian photographs:

> …with no "invitation" into the picture, my eyes did not know how or where to enter. So they leaped in and were surrounded by one group of women. Even, inside the picture, my eyes could not move around… There were no "leads" as you find in Western imagery.[74]

The reason for such Western perplexity clearly lies in the fact that Indian "idealizations" are not really *idealizations* in the true sense of the term but *ideally* represents a *theory of the ordinary* in human beings habitual experiences of life.

[72] Christopher Pinney, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997): 149, modified, emphasis added.

[73] Ibid., 77–9.

[74] Pinney, *Camera Indica*, 95; quote from "Women at Sipi Fair", c. 1905, in Judith M. Guttman's *Through Indian Eyes: 19th and Early 20th Century Photography from India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982): 6.

In sum, the principles and motifs that Vedic cosmology has generated exercise a huge influence not only on the way an average Indian spends his daily life even today, but also in the way its arts and sciences function. It, however, assumes greater importance when one notices that some of the Vedic thoughts, both for and against it, have a striking similarity with some of the Western thought processes that have gone on to become pillars of Western wisdom subsequently. Thus, Saussure's liberal borrowings from Indian linguistics in general and Buddhist linguistics in particular had influenced Western thoughts on structuralism and semiotics in contemporary times; the striking similarities between Lacan's mirror stage and Pārvatī's showing a mirror to Śiva in the Śiva-Pārvatī myth is a symbol of how knowledge is supposed to accrue in the two thought-processes; there are striking similarities between Merlau-Ponty's theory of embodiment and the Nyāya theory of perception; Yoga theory's profound influence on Jung's theory of analytical psychology and collective consciousness is well-documented and Lacan's acknowledgment of the influence that Ānandavardhana's Dhvani theory and the comments made thereon by Abhinavagupta had in the formulation of his postmodern, post-structural ideas all point in that direction. In the above sense, the insights generated by the Vedic paradigm of thought far exceed those demarcated by Indian boundaries. These insights, when applied to cinema, are more than likely to deepen our understanding of the whole cinematic process.

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CHAPTER 4

Nyāya Theory of Perception or *Pratyakṣa*: Classical Indian Theories of "Meaning" and Their Relation to Cinema

> Perceptual awareness has no other awareness as its *causal condition par excellence*
>
> —Gaṅgeśa Upadhyaya

The Brief

In the Nyāya theory, perceptual "meaning" consists of a direct meaning, an indirect meaning and an affective state evoked in the perceiver resulting from the cognition arising from the direct and indirect meanings. Out of the above, direct meaning has two parts: a "mode of appearance" which determines the way things would *appear* to a perceiver and a "mode of presentation" which indicates the way a thing is being presented to the perceiver which generates an *embodied sense* in the perceiver. As far as the "mode of appearance" is concerned, it is given by what is called the *fundamental* formula of perception in this theory:

$$\text{Mode of Appearance in Perception} = \text{Qualificand} + \text{Qualifier} + \text{Relationship}$$

In the above formula, the process of generating "meaning" is as follows: the *qualificand* represents an "unknown particular" that represents a broad discursive field without any specific "meaning" being assigned to it; depending on certain signs sen in the "particular", the perceiver imposes a *qualifier* representing a property or properties on it which narrows down the open-ended field of "meaning" of the "particular" to a particular "meaning", the linkage between the *qualifier* and the

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qualificand being based on a *functional relationship* habitually observed by the perceiver in terms of her *lived* experiences of life. Since one's *lived* experiences generally depend on the perceiver's embodied experiences of the world, the socio-cultural practices built around them, taught experiences including teachings and trainings she has received in the society, the whole process of perception, that is, what would actually be perceived in a case would differ from society to society and culture to culture.

The perceptual process, involving the "mode of appearance", basically consists of *integrating* the perceptual field into a *causally connected whole* in order to enable the perceiver to develop a unique response to the elements occurring within the perceptual field, essential for the survival of the perceiver. Nyāya holds that such *causal wholes* are formed in the following two distinct ways: a "simple perception" involving the formation of isolated "objects" or "things", which are basically "concepts", within view resulting in the cognition "This is a flower," et cetera, and a "complex perception" where an "object" formed in "simple perception" act as a *qualifier* for another "object" in perception through a *functional relationship* habitually observed in life by the perceiver or that taught to him, like a "table" may be *qualified* by a "flower-vase" resulting in the cognition "There is a flower-vase on the table," et cetera. Nyāya holds that all perceptual "meanings" signify "universals" (*sāmānya*) representing merged forms of bits and pieces of "events" repeatedly observed in life, the original source of such an "event" having been lost to memory, perceiving even a minor clue of which would be enough to trigger the whole "universal" in the perceiver's mind. A Nyāya "universal," which essentially represents a particular "mode of appearance" of an element within view, is considered to form a "necessary relation" (*samavāya*) between them which *adds* something more to the view than a mere aggregation of perceptual elements would do. Thus, for a perceiver, a lady surrounded by books would mean that "She is studying", an integrated whole where the "necessary relation" would make the lady out to be a "student" and the books as her "study material." As already mentioned, the fundamental formula of the above "modes of appearance" may be written as follows:

$$\text{Mode of Appearance} = \text{Qualificand} + \text{Qualifier} + \text{Relationship}$$

A further idea which places Nyāya far ahead of other theories of perception is its idea that the "mode of presentation" of a percept generally evokes an *embodied sense* in the perceiver since the percept would

be invariably seen through a particular bodily point of view of the perceiver. The evocation of such an *embodied sense* in the perceiver influences the "meaning" generated for him through perception. Nyāya gives the formula of the "mode of presentation" as follows:

Mode of Presentation = Percept + Sense-Percept Trajectory

The Nyāya formula of the totality of *direct* perception may now be written as follows:

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation
(Universal) (Embodied Sense)

Explanatory models generate further "analytical meanings" over and above the *directly* perceived "meanings" on the basis of *indirect* processes of "meaning" generation like inference, postulation, word (testimony of a reliable person), comparison, et cetera:

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation → Analytical Meaning
(Universal) (Embodied Sense) (Explanatory Mode)

The *direct* and *indirect* "meanings" together evoke "emotions" and "affects" associated with them in the perceiver:

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation → Analytical Meaning
→ Evocation of "Emotion" and "Affect"

The perceptual process finally leads to the arousal of a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver which seeks to "neutralize" the effects that is disbalancing the perceiver:

Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation → Analytical Meaning
→ Evocation of "Emotion" and "Affect" → Production of a "Dispositional Tendency"

The above process captures in the whole the cognitions and its associated affects that arise through the perceptual process in this theory.

This chapter discusses the following aspects of the Nyāya theory of perception which are relevant to cinema:

4.1. What Is "Perception" in the Nyāya Theory?
4.2. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Ontology: Notions of "The Self," "The Body," "Space," and "Time"
4.3. Nyāya Epistemology: Distinguishing Features of Nyāya Theory of Perception
  4.3.1. Narrative Integration of Perceptual Elements into a *Causal Whole*
    4.3.1.1. "Mode of Appearance" in "Simple" and "Complex" Perception
      i. Notion of "Necessary Relation"
      ii. Idea of "Universal"
      iii. Concepts of "Limitor" and "Distinguisher"
    4.3.1.2. "Mode of Presentation" as an "Embodied Sense" in Perception
    4.3.1.3. "Analytical Meaning" as Indirect Means of Knowledge in Perception: Evocation of an "Affective Mode" in Perception
      i. Evocation of "Emotions" in Perception
      ii. Arousal of a "Dispositional Tendency" in the Perceiver
  4.3.2. Nyāya Theory of Direct Perception of an "Absence"
  4.3.3. Nyāya Notion of "Visual Synesthesia"
    4.3.3.1. "Haptic Visuality" and Nyāya Notion of "Visual Synesthesia"
    4.3.3.2. "Haptic Visuality" and PoV Shot in Cinema: A Nyāya Analysis
  4.3.4. Indirect Means of Knowledge in Nyāya Theory of Perception
    4.3.4.1. Inference, Word, Postulation, Comparison and Point of View
4.4. Applying Nyāya Theory of Perception to *Read* Audio-Visual Images
  4.4.1. Reading Images of Madhuri and Books
  4.4.2. Reading the Practice of "Continuity" in Cinema
  4.4.3. Reading the Practice of "Montage" in Cinema
4.5. Comparing Nyāya Theory of Signification with Lacanian Signification: Determination of Film Genres

4.1 What Is "Perception" in the Nyāya Theory?

Before I start discussing this section, it must be made clear why I specifically choose the Nyāya theory from among all other "Hindu" and "Non-Hindu" theories for discussing perception. Nyāya theory, which is amalgamated with the Vaiśeṣika theory that gives the theory its ontology, is a theory of realistic-pluralism having the following characteristics described by Hiriyanna:

> The word 'Vaiśeṣika' is derived from viśeṣa which means 'difference' with the theory being so designed as to uphold diversity and not unity as the root of the universe. The word 'Nyāya' is commonly understood as meaning 'argumentation' (lit., 'going back'). It indicates the method followed in the system as being predominantly intellectualistic and analytical.[1]

In the above sense, the "atomic" theory of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is a refreshing departure from the idealistic theories of the "substantialist" Hindu schools, the latter being an aspect with which, generally, "all" the Hindu theories are wrongly conflated. Two postulates of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system, often termed as the "N-V" theory or, simply as "Nyāya" for the sake of convenience, are of crucial importance for our analysis of cinema. First, the theory holds that "all knowledge by its very nature points to an object beyond it and independent of it."[2] What it essentially means is that "the existence and characteristics of external objects are independent of the experiencing subject" which makes all relations necessarily *external* in this theory which also makes it realistic in nature.[3] Since, in view of the above idea, objects are plural in this theory, the system is called pluralistic-realism.[4] Secondly, the theory holds that while the elements we see in perception, called "particulars," are "real," the way they are perceived as an *integrated causal whole*, called a "universal," is epistemological in nature. Nyāya is a *direct realist school* which is distinctive in holding that both "particulars" and the "universals" are *directly perceived* by a perceiver despite the fact that while a "particular" represents an isolated "object," a "universal" represents a relation between them which cannot be directly seen.

[1] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 225.

[2] Ibid., 228.

[3] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 187.

[4] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 228.

The word *pratyakṣa* or perception is etymologically made up of the words *prati* meaning "to, before, or near" and *akṣa* meaning "sense organ" which together mean "present to or before the sense organ" and hence called a *direct* or *immediate* experience.[5] *Nyāyasūtra* (c. 2nd CE), the original text of Nyāya by its founder Gautama (different from Gautama the Buddha), gives the following definition of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*):

> Perception is knowledge that arises from the contact of a sense with its object which is determinate, non-deviating, and non-verbal.[6]

The above qualifications of perception aim at eliminating doubts by being "determinate" or "certain" (*vyavasāyātmaka*), not generate false cognitions or illusions by being "non-deviating" or "non-promiscuous" (*a-vyabhicārin*) and eliminate verbal knowledge by being "direct" or "non-verbal" (*a-vyapadeśya*).[7] The Neo-Nyāya logician Gaṅgeśa Upadhyaya (c. 13th CE) gives a more comprehensive definition of perception from the point of view of its felt *immediacy* and *directness*:

> Perceptual awareness has no other awareness as its *causal condition par excellence*.[8]

In the above definition, "causal condition par excellence" means a causal factor that has no mediating condition, called an "operation" or *vyāpāra* in classical Indian theories, which is, therefore, not only *immediate* but also *direct*.[9]

The above two highly condensed definitions, however, assume the satisfaction of certain internal and external conditions for perception to occur. As far as external conditions are concerned, three general *defects* have been mentioned which must be removed for proper perception to occur: *environmental defects* concerning inadequate lighting, inadequate

[5] D. M. Datta, *The Six Ways of Knowing: A Critical Study of the Advaita Theory of Knowledge* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1972): Footnote 1, 34.

[6] *Nyāyasūtra*, 1.1.4, quoted in Matilal, *Perception*, 228.

[7] Matilal, *Perception*, 228.

[8] Karl Potter and Sibajiban Bhattacharyya, "Epistemology", in *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol. II: The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Up to Gaṅgeśa (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977): 53–67, 58, emphasis added.

[9] Potter and Bhattacharyya, "Epistemology", 59.

distance, etc.; *pathological defects* concerning myopia and other bodily defects of the perceiver; and *cognitive defects* concerning one's retarded capacity to know, etc.[10]

As far as internal requirements are concerned, the following three conditions must be fulfilled for perception to occur: the "sense organs" must be in touch with the *object*, "the mind" must be in touch with the "sense organs," and "the self" must be in touch with "the mind" for perception to take place [11] (what are specifically meant by the factors "sense organs," "the mind" and "the self" would be explained shortly). As far as the "contact" between "the self" and "the mind", is concerned, it is commonly called *mental attention* (*manaskāra*) which is of crucial importance as Matilal explains below:

> In the causal condition of perceptual awareness, 'mental attention' or *manaskāra* is to be included side by side with the working condition of the eyes, adequacy of light and proper distance between the object and the perceiver. Abhinava says, just as the object accounts for its 'appearance' (*pratibhāsa*) in awareness, the 'mental attention' (*manaskāra*) accounts for the *vimarśa* or the 'distinguishing' feature of the same, the two resulting in a full-fledged perception.[12]

Potter notes that, among the full collection of factors (*kāraṇa-sāmagrī*) that need satisfaction for perception to occur, while some may appear to be more important than the others, ultimately, however, even the seeming "accessories" must be taken care of adequately for proper perception to take place.[13]

In contrast to the *direct* process of perception, "meaning" is also generated on the basis of five *indirect* processes or "ways of knowing" represented by inference, word (verbal testimony of a competent person), comparison, postulation and absence (in contrast to other theories, Nyāya considers "absence" as part of *direct* perception). These *indirect* ways, which essentially function on the principle of *knowing an unknown on the basis of a known where the two generally coexist together in terms of the perceiver's habitual experiences of life or taught knowledge*, add to perceptual "meaning" over and above those created by *direct* perception.

[10] Jonardon Ganeri, *Semantic Powers: Meaning and the Means of Knowing in Classical Indian Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999): 69.

[11] Potter and Bhattacharyya, "Epistemology", 58.

[12] Matilal, *The Word and the World*, 138–9, modified.

[13] Potter and Bhattacharyya, "Relations", *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, 55.

The Jaina theorists add the perceiver's point of view to the above list. It may be mentioned that, while the knowledge of the *unknown*, consisting of a "substance" (qualificand), a "property" (qualifier) or an "action" (relationship), may arise through direct or indirect means, primacy is, however, always accorded to perception in the Indian theories. The final cognition or "meaning" that arise out of *direct* and *indirect* processes generally evoke "emotions" and "affects" associated with them in the perceiver which sets up a kind of an "imbalance" in the perceiver that is sought to be set right by the arising of a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver which goads him to act in a particular way aimed at neutralizing those effects. The whole process may be represented as follows:

Enquirer → Direct Perception → Indirect Knowledge → Emotions & Affects
→ Disposition to Act

The above process would be explained in detail in the epistemological section of this chapter appearing later.

4.2 Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Ontology of Perception: Notions of "The Self," "The Body," "Space," and "Time"

It has already been mentioned that in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory, while Vaiśeṣika contributes to the ontological part of the combined theory, Nyāya contributes its epistemological part. Both aspects have arisen from an enumerative process of identifying elements and principles that were required for a satisfactory explanation of the world.

As far as the ontological aspect of this system is concerned, it has been mentioned in Chapter 3 that Vaiśeṣika lists nine eternally existing "substances" (*dravyas*) as ontologically sufficient for explaining the world, out of which the following five are "material" and "atomic" in nature, earth (*pṛthivī*), water (*ap*), fire (*tejas*), air (*vāyu*), and ākāśa (a term not easily translatable in English, the word "ether" may only give some idea) and the following four are "non-material" entities, the self (*ātma*), mind (*manas*), space (*dik*), and time (*kāla*). The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika ontology may be conveniently divided into a subjective side involving the "non-material" elements which seek knowledge from the "material atomic" side, that is, the "objective" side of the world. Since, in contrast to other Indian theories, "embodiment" becomes an important aspect of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory, I would try to unearth its roots in this theory.

"The Self" and "The Body" in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theory

In the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, the true state of "the self" is a *quality-less* state which acts as a basis (*āadhāra*) for qualities like pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, cognition, volition and traces of past experiences to accrue to it as *accidental qualities* of "the self". Rather strangely, the theory also holds that 'consciousness' is also not a normal part of "the self" but arises in it *accidentally* on the sighting of an 'object' or in its interaction with the surroundings, making 'consciousness' an *intentional consciousness* in this theory. In this sense, "the self" is a complete blank having no essence of its own at all. In the above connection, an important point to note is that, since all these qualities also happen to be dependent upon "the body" (*śārīra*), the overarching role of "embodiment" in this theory becomes clear. Chatterjee notes that, in this theory, "the self can never have knowledge in a disembodied state; it is only an embodied being that can have cognition."[14] Clarifying further adding that, in the Nyāya theory, "the body" is not only the center of all cognitions, but also the locus of all experiences.[15] While it already poses a contradiction in terms of the non-material "self" combining with a material "body," Mohanty notes a further one in the theory:

> The relation of "embodiment", the connection between "the body" and "the self", is generally brought under the relation or quality of conjunction or *samyoga*. But *samyoga* is an external relation which cannot adequately do the job of that intimate relation called "embodiment".[16]

After a detailed analysis, Mohanty comes to the conclusion that the following position offers a better explanation of "embodiment" of "the self-body combine" in this theory:

> A much better way of conceptualizing the situation would be that there is a sort of identity between intentionalities of "consciousness" and intentionalities of "the body". Experienced from within by "the self", the intentionality is "inner" (relating to the specific state of the soul which is not

[14] Amita Chatterjee, "Embodiment and Nyāya Philosophy", Seminar on "The Philosophical Contributions of Professor Sibajiban Bhattacharya", University of Calcutta, December 12, 2011: 1–13, 5.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 65.

> that of pure soul but of the soul as limited [*avacchinna*] by "the body"). At the same time, as experienced from outside, intentionality is of "the body" (not still of "the body" as a lump of matter but of the living body as limited [*avacchinna*] by the relation of belonging to the soul).[17]

In the above schema, "the self" and "the body" act as the "limitor" of each other combining the two into a united whole.

The above explanation still leaves the following question unanswered: while "the self" and "the body" is able to "limit" each other when acting in conjunction with each other, the question is how are material and non-material entities able to form a linkage between them at all in the first place? It is a common practice among Hindu theorists to explain "the self's" interactions with the material world as a case of "the self's" *false identification* with "the body" which imbues "the self" with the properties of "matter". Further, since "the self's" identification with "matter" generates material "desires" within it, "the self" constructs a particular material body out of "matter" for the satisfaction of its material desires. The Oxford Philosopher Gilbert Ryle had termed Cartesian mind–body duality as a "category mistake" on the ground that, since mind and body belong to two different existential planes, they cannot possibly interact with each other. Classical Indian theories' notion of "the self's" *false identification* with "matter" by-passes this problem. It results in "the self" acquiring an *agency* during its interactions with the world through "the body" which, even though falsely initiated, produces real results in "the self" according to the Nyāya theory on the analogy that the false perception of a rope as a snake produces a real response in the perceiver. This material activity of "the self" continues till it frees itself from its material bondage by acquiring true knowledge about itself and the world which paves the way for its "liberation" (*mokṣa*).

As already hinted, it is important to note that, in the Nyāya theory, "liberation" for "the self" means that it regains its original state of being a conscious-less, agency-less entity, a state in which it is unable to cognize anything at all and hence live a "blind" existence for all practical purposes. Because of the most unwelcome nature of this so-called "liberated" state, one realizes that "liberation" is not important for this theory at all; rather, it is the *active bonded state* of "the self" in its *illusory identification* with "the body" which is of crucial importance to it. In other

[17] Ibid., 66.

words, "the self-body system" as a unit—a system which may be called "the empirical self"—is what matters to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory. Since consciousness is not primordially *given* in this theory, it arises as an *effect* of "the self-body system's" interactions with the world. In this sense, consciousness becomes *intentional* in this system.

"The Mind" in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theory

An important feature of the notion of "the body" in orthodox Indian theories is that it includes "the mind" as an extended part of "the body" alongside the "sense organs," a significant departure from Western theories where "the mind" invariably represents conscious thinking generally coterminous with "the self" being conceived as an intelligent being. While the Indian notion of "the mind" represents the conception of an inert matter, Schweitzer notes the difficulties of a conscious "mind" in Western thought:

> The deep philosophical problem in case of human perception lies…in the fact that such *perceptual structures are perceived to be imbued with consciousness*…It is consciousness, rather than content, which provides the most compelling reasons for dualism.[18]

Schweitzer notes that the Western mind–body dualism raises the following question: *how can an unconscious material process get represented in one's consciousness which occurs in a different existential plane*? In the Indian theories, however, Hiriyanna notes: "Each self has its own *manas* which is merely an instrument of knowing and hence completely inert. It is consequently incorrect to translate it as 'mind'."[19] Arguably, since it is only through the "manas" ("the mind") that "the self" comes into touch with "the body" and the world that "manas" has been clubbed together with other non-material entities in the Indian theories. Basically, in the orthodox Indian theories, including Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, while "the sense organs" *sense* what is in their vicinity, "the mind", which acts as the reservoir of all memories pertaining to all experiences, acts mechanically to identify the nature of the present "event" in the light of the past.

[18] Paul Schweitzer, "Mind/Consciousness Dualism in Sāṅkhya-Yoga Philosophy", in *Indian Philosophy: A Collection of Readings*, Vol. 3: Metaphysics, Ed. R. W. Perrett (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000): 327–41, 331, emphasis added.

[19] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 230.

Schweitzer notes the advantage that the Indian conception of "the mind" as a material entity enjoys: "By including 'the mind' in the realm of matter, mental events are granted causal efficacy, and are, therefore, able to directly initiate bodily actions."[20] In this way, Hindu theories are able to ensure that the process of mental causation follows conservation laws, held sacrosanct by both Eastern and Western theories, whose violation poses a major threat to the Cartesian mind–body system. By becoming a full-fledged *theory of embodiment*, where "the self" is synonymous with "the body" for all practical purposes and "consciousness" is an *effect* of matter, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika effectively solves the problem of duality in its theory.

"Space" and "Time" in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theory

We next come to the notions of "space" and "time" which are the remaining two items in the non-material categories enumerated by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. Potter analyzes its construction of "space" and "time" as follows:

> Philosophical scholars sometimes divide *theories of space and time* into two main divisions: absolute and relational. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory is relational, though it might, at first glance, seem otherwise. Space and time are not viewed either as receptacles in which objects move over a continua of fixed points constituting extension. Rather, *they are inferred, or, for some Naiyāyikas, even perceived as the necessary relating principle among physical things such as being above and below, before and after, farther and nearer*, etc..[21]

On the relative position of "space" and "time" in its theory, Nyāya says that both become perceptible only as a *qualifier* of a thing or an action within view. Thus, space *qualifies* a particular table as "This table" with the perception of its space as being "here," which represents a "certain space relation" *between* objects or things like "far" and "near," et cetera.[22] Similarly, time is perceived only when it *qualifies* a perceived "event," like "This table," et cetera, as occurring "now."[23]

However, since Nyāya also speaks of the "indivisibility" of "space" and "time," it is likely to create confusion in the mind of the reader. Potter clarifies that while Nyāya's core concept of "space" and "time"

[20] Ibid., 334.

[21] Potter, "Substance", *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, 91, emphasis added.

[22] Kumar Kishore Mandal, *A Comparative Study of the Concepts of Space and Time in Indian Thought* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1968): 101, 104.

[23] Potter, "Substance", 92.

remains *relative*, its mention of an *absolute* "space" and "time" is necessitated by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika requirement that any two entities anywhere in the universe are capable of being related in some sense or the other. If there were more than one "space" and "time", then A in *one* "space" and "time" could not be connected to B in *another* "space" and "time". A conceptual *space-time continuum* is, therefore, posited as a heuristic device to subsume the relativity of "space" and "time" in this theory.

The above exposition completes an analysis of the "non-material" elements in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory. This, together with the process of "material atoms" forming dyadic and triadic combinations resulting in the production of 'objects' and 'things' of the world (a process not being elaborated here), completes an analysis of the ontological aspect of this theory. The working of "the self-body system" is given in a nutshell in the following section.

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Concept of "The Self-Body System"

The functioning of the "The self-body system" is illustrated below:

1st Stage: Generation of Sense Awareness and its Classification by "the Mind"

1. The sense organs *sense* an undefined "particular" in their vicinity;
2. The mind, which represents inert matter in Indian theories, acts as the *memory-bank* of the system which mechanically *matches data* of the present experience with earlier experiences, including feelings of "pleasure," "pain" or "indifference" felt by "the body" in those instances, and classifies them;
3. The body reflexively responds to the sensations in trying to "maximize pleasure", "minimize pain" and a "feeling of indifference" toward others.

2nd Stage: Generation of an "Intentional Consciousness" as an Effect of the Body's Interactions with the World

An intentional consciousness arises contingently as an *effect* of the body's interactions with the world.

3rd Stage: Generation of Knowledge in "the Self" as part of "The Self-Body System"

The "self-body system's" interactions with the world accrue as knowledge in "the self", which is *falsely identified* with "the body" at this

stage, which motivates "the self-body system" to act in a particular way in a particular situation.

However, the above system does raise the following important question: since, in the Nyāya theory, "the self-body system" effectively acts as "the self," why does Nyāya conceive it as a separate entity at all and not replace it with "the body" as Merleau-Ponty had done at least in the initial stages of his theory? Larson and Bhattacharya attempt an explanation.[24] Since the material processes of "the body" is ultimately an unconscious mechanical process which goes on endlessly till the system lasts, it can have no *conscious content* at all. In this sense, the world would not only become "meaningless" but also "pointless" for all practical purposes. In order to break the "meaninglessness" of this cycle, "the self" or the *ātma* is given an identity of its own even though only a provisional one within the cosmos or the *Brahman*. Further, by making "the self" non-material in nature and yet which can *falsely identify* with "matter", "the self" becomes an effective instrument for "measuring" the activities going on in the material world.[25]

Perception in Advaita Vedānta

In an effort to conclude the chapter on perception, theories of perception occurring in the "substantialist" theory of Advaita Vedānta, in the heterodox theory of Buddhism and in contemporary science are briefly mentioned below in order to enable a contrast being made between them and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of perception which is likely to provide a greater grasp over the subject matter.

According to Vedānta, a theory which assumes "pure consciousness" to be the only reality in the world, "the mind", called the "antaḥkaraṇa" or the "internal organ," goes out through the sense-organs or the indriyas to the 'object' and envelops it, like water assuming the shape of the container in which it is poured. Its difference with the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika notion of "the mind" is noted by Dasgupta as follows:

> Vedānta does not regard *manas* or mind as an *indriya* or sense. The same *antaḥkaraṇa* is called *manas* ('mind'), *buddhi* ('intelligence'), *ahaṃkāra* ('ego') and *citta* ('apperceptive reason' or 'that which gathers and integrates knowledge'). In its function as doubt, it is called *manas*,

[24] Gerald James Larson and Ram Shankar Bhattacharya, Eds. "Sāṃkhya: A Dualist Tradition", in *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol. IV, Gen. Ed. Karl H. Potter (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987): 79.

[25] Larson and Bhattacharya, "Sāṃkhya", 79.

> as originating definite cognitions by clearing doubt, it is called *buddhi*, as presenting the notion of an ego in appropriating things to an 'I', it is called *ahaṃkāra* and as producing an integrated knowledge experience, it is called *citta*. These four represent different modifications or states (*vṛtti*) of the same entity called *antaḥkaraṇa*.[26]

The process through which knowledge about an 'object' arises in the perceiver is also uniquely conceived. Dasgupta clarifies that as soon as the *antaḥkaraṇa* has assumed the shape of the 'object' called *vṛtti* or 'state', the ignorance (*a-jñāna*, 'absence of knowledge') about it is removed when *cit* or *ātma* (which in the Vedānta theory is "pure consciousness" in its original state) is able to throw its "light" on the "form" assumed by *antaḥkaraṇa* (*antaḥkaraṇa*, being closest to "the self" or *cit* in subtlety of the material gradation of *sattva* which, together with *rajas* and *tamas*, offers a diminishing order of material subtlety, is able to capture *cit's* reflection). In this theory, therefore, perception of an 'object' is the shining of *cit* on a "form" assumed by *antaḥkaraṇa*.[27] In other words, perception means the partial breaking of the veil (*āvaraṇa*) of ignorance spread over the 'object' resulting in a temporary union of the *cit* with the 'object' through the broken veil. In this state, the 'object' has no separate existence from the subjective consciousness of the perceiver, the two remaining undifferentiated (*abheda*) in perception.[28]

Perception in Buddhism

As far as Buddhism is concerned, *it considers only that perception to be valid where nothing is added to reality through the process of perception*. In other words, where only pure sensations are encountered and not the "names" or "concepts" which subsequently get *added* to it by "the mind" in terms of human beings' habitual experiences of life. Dasgupta notes:

> Perception (*pratyakṣa*) has been defined by Dharmakīrti (c. 7th CE) as a presentation which is generated by the senses constituting the objects alone, unassociated by any names or relations (*kalpanā*) and which is not erroneous (*kalpanāpoḍhamabhrāntam*).[29]

[26] Dasgupta, *A History*, Vol. 1, Footnote 1, 472, modified.

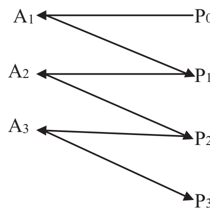
[27] Dasgupta, *A History*, Vol. 1, 4720.

[28] Ibid., 472–3.

[29] Ibid., 153.

According to Dharmakīrti, while indertminate knowledge (*nirvikalpa jñāna*) consisting only of sensations which produces a form in the likeness of an 'object', is valid knowledge, determinate knowledge (*savikalpa jñāna*) as formed by the conceptual elements occurring in the mind in terms of an experience one has undergone before, like that of a 'chair', cannot be regarded as truly occurring in reality.[30] In the above connection, what Dharmakīrti means by "erroneous" is simply this: a person should not be confused by what she is encountering in terms of the senses as an 'object' actually occurring in reality.[31]

As far as the process of perception is concerned, according to the Yogācāra School of Buddhism which propagates an idealist theory, "each awareness-episode splits itself into two forms, one taking the form of perception (*grāhya*), the other the form of a percept (*grāhaka*)."[32] In order to counter the many problems that such an account raises, Matilal prefers to represent the process as a case of *sequential conditioning* where the process mutually and sequentially conditions both the 'object' and its 'perception'. In view of the "momentariness" doctrine assumed by the Buddhists, Matilal envisages the following series[33]:



In the above graphic, while A_1, A_2, and A_3 stand for different percepts at three different moments in the above sequence, P_1, P_2, and P_3 represent three different perception-forms of consciousness at those three moments.[34] Matilal concludes: "This mutual-sequential conditioning also asserts the beginningless character ('power') of our consciousness (*anādikālikam śaktiś cānyonyahetuke*, Diṅnāga)."[35]

[30] Ibid., Footnote 1, 153.

[31] Dasgupta, *A History*, Vol. 1, Footnote 1, 153.

[32] Matilal, *Perception*, 3640.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 365.

[35] Ibid.

While the theories of perception in Advaita Vedānta and Buddhism, alongside those of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, describe the prevailing theories of perception in terms of classical Indian theories, below is provided a brief description of a theory of perception that occurs in contemporary science. Together they give a comprehensive idea about the theories of perception in the past and the present.

Perception in Contemporary Science

In contemporary times, perception is generally divided between a "lower order" *direct perception* advocated by J. J. Gibson and a "higher order" *representational perception* constructed by higher faculties.[36]

Gibson's theory advances an ecologically driven approach to visual perception, a theory of *indirect* or *mediated* perception where what one perceives is converted into mental representations to be read by "higher order" cognitive faculties.[37] Both these theories draw their sustenance from the German physicist Hermann von Helmholtz's "likelihood principle": *we perceive that which, in our normal life, are most likely to have produced the effective sensory stimulation we have received.*[38] In using the terms "normal life," Helmholtz had reasoned in 1850 that "the sensory signals had meaning only in relation to associations built up by learning."[39] The above thought forms the basis of both Gibson's ecologically learnt direct perception and the representational theory based on symbolic learning. A final scientific confirmation on which theory is closer to truth is still awaited.

Wrestling with the question of how moving organisms adjust to changing patterns of light and other sensations to accurately pinpoint the location and physical dimensions of an entity, Gibson reasoned that certain information remain "invariant" for an organism in the midst of the plethora of sensations that it keeps receiving all the time. In other words, in

[36] OERD defines "perception" as "the ability of the mind to refer to sensory perception of an external object as its cause".

[37] Joseph and Barbara Anderson, "The Case for an Ecological Metatheory", in *Post-theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, Eds. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996): 347–67, 353.

[38] Helmholtz's rule is compressed and rephrased from his *Treatise on Physiological Optic*, Vol. 3, trans. and ed. J. P. C. Southall (Rochester, New York: The Optical Society of America, 1924–1925): 4–13, quoted in Julian Hochberg and Virginia Brooks, "Movies in the Mind's Eye", in *Post-theory*, 368–87, 373, original emphasis.

[39] Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 352–3.

what Gibson calls an ecological approach, perception and action remain "tightly interlocked and mutually constraining."[40] On the question of how the *Ames Room*, which has tilted floors and walls that do not form square corners, produces the perceptual illusion of a "normal" room when viewed through a peephole, Vilayanur Ramachandran and Stuart Anstis propose that visual systems make following three "assumptions" in order to interact with the physical world: 'objects' remain in continuous existence, 'objects' are rigid making all their parts move together, and a moving 'object' progressively covers and uncovers portions of its background.[41] Ramachandran and Anstis are categorical that all these assumptions operate *directly* at the "lower level" in which no thoughts are involved:

> [Our experiment] were designed to eliminate the effects of high-level cognition; specifically, we flashed images at speeds too rapid to allow the brain to make thoughtful decisions about what it was seeing. Our results therefore suggest that low-level processes can, on their own, control the perception of apparent motion during the early stages of visual processing.[42]

Joseph and Barabara Anderson note:

> Information, then, consists of *patterns of actual relationships between objects in the real world*. It is not something added or deduced or inferred from raw data. The information contained in these patterns of light is encountered directly by the visual system and processed immediately and ongoingly without the necessity of high-level logical or linguistic constructions which only humans might be able to perform, for after all perception is not unique to humans – it began with the fish. This is what Gibson meant by "direct perception".[43]

In other words, perception becomes a process of selection of certain patterns based on perceptual schemata in order to "see." The Andersons

[40] Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 349–50.

[41] Ibid., 357.

[42] Vilayanur S. Ramachandran and Stuart M. Anstis, "The Perception of Apparent Motion", *Scientific American*, Vol. 254 No. 6 (1986): 102–9, 109, quoted in Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 359.

[43] Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 360–1.

note: "This is not to say, however, that we see only what we know. It is rather, in Neisser's words, that 'we can see only what we know how to look for'."[44] The Andersons observe that only when one moves from this simple 'object' to other items of furniture, like a chest of drawers, etc., it requires a leap of abstraction needing "higher level" faculties.[45] In the context of cinema, the Andersons persuasively argue that, while movies do go beyond basic-level categorization, yet it is the perceptual basis of the film-viewing experience that allows these intellectual and cultural abstractions to make sense. However, film theories generally ignore "low-level" perception for the sake of higher level processes.[46] While scientific research is continuously discovering how complex perceptual processes are, yet the Gibsonian idea that some basic assumptions are necessary to give stability to what one perceives has struck deep root.[47] Even Hochberg and Brooks, who detail scientific discoveries that undercut common sense beliefs about perception, favorably comment on the criterion of "normal life" used by Helmholtz in his *likelihood principle*: "That principle must surely be at least approximately true, or we could not survive."[48]

One may conclude from the above brief mention that a large part of what we perceive comes through *direct perception* in terms of human beings" experiences of living in the world. Perception also involves "higher thoughts," even though, in terms of current scientific knowledge, the boundaries between *direct perception* and *analytical meaning* have not yet been clearly demarcated. In all these areas, Nyāya theory of perception fares very well indeed.

[44] Ulric Neisser, *Cognition and Reality* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1976): 20, quoted in Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 362.

[45] Anderson and Anderson, "Ecological Metatheory", 365.

[46] Matilal, *Perception*, 365–6.

[47] For a detailed description of the scientific discoveries, see Julian Hochberg and Virginia Brooks, "Movies in the Mind's Eye".

[48] Hochberg and Brooks, "Movies in the Mind's Eye", 373.

Illustration 4.1 Concepts in the Nyāya Theory of Perception (*Pratyakṣa*)

The Self: Even though the true state of *the self* is devoid of all "consciousness" and "agency" in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory, its *false identification* with matter develops within it material "desires" of interacting with the world. For this purpose, *the self* manufactures an appropriate material body from surrounding matter to be able to engage with the world. The resulting "self-body system" acquires an "intentional consciousness" (a "consciousness" which arises only on sighting a 'object', et cetera) and "agency."

The Body: *The body* has three prominent parts, *the body*, *the sense organs,* and *the mind*, in which the *organs* detect sense data, the *mind* classifies the data and *the body* reacts to it to maximize bodily "pleasure," minimize bodily "pain" and remain "indifferent" toward others. Since the true state of *the self* is a conscious-less, agency-less existence, the embodied "self-body system" is of paramount importance in this theory.

Consciousness: It has no independent existence in the Nyāya theory. It arises only as an *effect* of "the self-body system"'s interactions with the world. It is, thus, an *intentional consciousness* which "completes" 'objects' and relations between 'objects' on the basis of experiences of life.

Perception: In Nyāya Theory of Perception, "Mode of Appearance" = Qualificand + Qualifier + Relationship" where an undetermined "particular" (*qualificand*) is *qualified* by a particular "property" (*qualifier*) in terms of a "function" (*relationship*) habitually observed by the perceiver in life, et cetera which "limits" the meaning of an "event" to those known by the perceiver. While the perceived "event" *directly* constitutes a "universal" representing how 'things' *appear* to us in perception, like in the example below, a "flower" generally *appears* to us as a 'decorative piece', its "Mode of Presentation", given by the formula "Percept + Sense-Object Trajectory", *directly* evokes an "embodied sense" in the perceiver. The formula of "Perception = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation" further generates "Analytical Meanings" *indirectly* through inference, word, postulation, comparison, and point of view which, in turn, evokes "emotions" & "affects" and a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver to "neutralize" its effects.

"Simple Perception" of an "Object"

Ex: "Particular" + "Flower-Hood" + "Flower as a Decorative Piece" → "This is a flower"
(Qualificand) (Qualifier) (*Functional* Relationship)

"Complex Perception" of a "Relation between Objects"

Ex: Lady as a "Student" + Books as "Study-Material" + "Studying" → "She is Studying"
(Qualificand) (Qualifier) (*Functional* Relationship)

4.3 Nyāya Epistemology: Distinguishing Features of Nyāya Theory of Perception

It has already been indicated that perceptual knowledge in the Nyāya theory is constituted of certain *direct* and *indirect* processes as mentioned below:

i. Knowledge from *Direct Perception* results from the following two factors:

Perceptual knowledge = Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation
(Universal) (Embodied Sense)

ii. *Indirect Perception* almost invariably adds, like a cascading effect, to knowledge gained from *Direct Perception* on the basis of analytical processes such as inference, word (testimony of a competent person), postulation or hypothesis, comparison, and point of view:

Indirect knowledge from Perception = Analytical Meaning
(Explanatory Mode)

iii. The Perceptual Process finally ends with the generation of Emotion & Affect and the consequential arising of a Dispositional Tendency in the Perceiver to neutralize affective effects:

Production of an Affective Mode = Emotions & Affects + Dispositional Tendency

Above aspects of the Nyāya theory of perception together with their attendant features would be discussed in the following sections:

I. Narrative Integration of Perceptual Elements into a *Causal Whole*

Direct Perception

A. "Mode of Appearance" in "Simple" and "Complex" Perception
   i. Notion of "Necessary Relation"
   ii. Idea of "Universal"
   iii. Concepts of "Limitor" and "Distinguisher"

B. "Mode of Presentation": "Embodied Sense" in Perception

Indirect Perception

C. "Analytical Meaning" in Perception: Inference, Word, Postulation, Comparison and Point of View

Affective Response in Perception

D. Production of "Affective States" in Perception
   i. Evocation of "Emotion" & "Affect" in the Perceiver
   ii. Arising of a "Dispositional Tendency" in the Perceiver

II. Nyāya Theory of Direct Perception of "Absence"

III. Nyāya Notion of "Visual Synesthesia"
   A. "Haptic Visuality" and "Visual Synesthesia" in Nyāya Theory
   B. "Haptic Visuality" and "PoV Shot" in Cinema: A Nyāya Analysis

IV. Indirect Knowledge in Nyāya Theory of Perception
   A. Inference, Word, Postulation, Comparison, and Point of View

4.3.1 *Narrative Integration of Perceptual Elements into a* Causal Whole

According to classical Indian theories, an organism instinctively responds to a *situation as a whole* rather than to its constituent elements individually. Its roots lie in the *survival instinct* of the organism, accepted as a preliminary *given* in the Indian system,[49] which makes the organism constantly judge whether its surrounding is benign, threat-full or indifferent toward it and respond accordingly. Interestingly, the *survival instinct* includes two other instinctual *givens* in the Indian system: *an instinct for continuity and propagation* primarily involving the *sexual instinct* and an *acquisitive instinct* involving a desire to "work" on the surroundings in order to make it suitable for the organism. The idea of an *acquisitive instinct* is unique to Indian theories in which an organism is expected to exercise "ownership" (*sattva*) and "power" (*śakti*) over its surroundings in order to make it safe for the survival and propagation

[49] In Indian psychology, 'instincts' are merged forms of desires that have been frequently repeated in time. In this sense, 'instincts' are *forms of pure potentiality* which get activated on the slightest clue. While OERD describes 'instincts' as an 'innate impulsion', the Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis (Ed. Charles Rycroft, London: Penguin, 1972) describes 'instincts' as 'a biologically determined drive to action', 73.

of the organism.[50] The operation of these three instincts in unison make the perceiver reflexively *integrate the perceptual field into a causal whole* and then *relate the whole to the perceiver's own self* in order to generate an appropriate response in the matter.[51]

The formation of the *causal whole* depends on the perceiver's embodied experiences of the world, her habitual practices of life and the teachings and trainings she has received in the society. The Vaiśeṣika commentator Praśastapāda (c. 5th CE) exclusively categorizes previous experiences as *saṃskāras* ("memory-traces") which arise from ones' repeated practices and the mental attention (*saṃskārātiśayaḥ*) paid to such practices as well as to what Gilbert Ryle has called "intelligent capacities" inculcated more by training than by mechanical drill. Praśastapāda specifically enumerates "intelligent capacities" as involving the practice of arts and crafts (*vidyāvyāyāmādiṣu*) such as music, painting, et cetera, on the one hand, and archery on the other.[52]

The *objectification of the perceptual field into a causal whole* actually involves a case of *narrative construction* by the perceiver based on her habitual experiences of life, et cetera. In case some of the elements cannot be narrativized into a causal whole, they either remain un-integrated within the perceiver's view sticking out like sore thumbs there that are either ignored by the perceiver or synthesized at a higher level of understanding based on new knowledge and "reading positions" developed

[50]While these three instincts have often been mentioned also as the "will-to-live," "will-to-continue," and "will-to-power" in both the orthodox and heterodox Indian schools, it is only the Jaina theory which specifically mentions the third instinct as the "acquisitive instinct" (*parigrahasamjñā*) which captures its underlying motivation perfectly rather than the Buddhist mention of it as the "thirst for wealth and power" (*vibhāva-tṛṣṇā*) or the "desire for wealth" (*vittaiṣṇā*) as Bṛhadāraṇya Upaniṣad says. See Jadunath Sinha, *Indian Psychology*, Vol. II (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986): 98–9.

[51]Sinha notes: "All desires for the satisfaction of organic needs – thirst, hunger, sex, etc. – constitute *bodily desires*. The desires for power, fame, wealth, enjoyment, etc., constitute *social desires*. The desire for knowledge constitutes an *intellectual desire*. All these desires are *non-self desires* (*anātma vāsanā*). The desire for the apprehension of the 'self' (*paramātma vāsanā*) is different from these empirical desires which only arises when all desires for external objects (*bāhya vāsanā*) have been extinguished for the self while it remains fixed only on the inner 'self'. It is only in such a state that the intuition of 'self' dawns in a person." Ibid., 98, modified.

[52]Matilal, *Perception*, 132, modified.

within a society like Marxist theory led to the formulation of Eisenstein's theory of *collision montage* in cinema. One may sum up by saying that *perception always aims to achieve narrative closure of its field* in order to enable the perceiver to judge where she "stands" in terms of her "survival." In this sense, *narrativization*, according to the classical Indian theories, is a basic characteristic of the human psyche.

In the following sections, the steps involving *direct perception* are analyzed.

4.3.1.1 "Mode of Appearance" in "Simple" and "Complex" Perception

Nyāya theory of perception, also called the fundamental formula of perception in this theory, is given by the equation:

$$\text{Perception} = \text{Qualificand} + \text{Qualifier} + \text{Relationship}$$

Even though the above formula is supposed to represent *direct perception* in the Nyāya theory, yet it is actually a construction where the perceiver imposes a property (*qualifier*) on an unknown "particular" (*qualificand*) based on certain clues available in the "particular" on the basis of a relation (*relationship*) known to the perceiver in terms of her habitual experiences of life, et cetera. The 'object' thus perceived in the form of "This is X" ultimately represents *an objectification of the causal whole* within one's perceptual field.

"Simple Perception" (Savikalpa jñāna, viśiṣṭa jñāna)

According to Nyāya, there are two broad stages of perception. In the first stage, called "simple perception" (*savikalpa jñāna*, *viśiṣṭa jñāna*), object-formation occurs at the preliminary level. Thus, when an "unknown particular" (*qualificand*) is imposed with the property of "flower-hood" (*qualifier*) through a relation (*relationship*) habitually observed by the perceiver, it leads to the identification of an 'object' in the perceiver's cognition like "This is a flower." Such *objectifications* may even involve a "state of affair" involving feelings, like "It is cold," et cetera. The important point to note is that, at this preliminary level, perception consists of only the formation of *isolated* 'objects' and not a *relation* between 'objects' as a whole. The latter phase occurs in the second stage of perception.

However, according to Nyāya, the meaning-formation even at this preliminary level remains more loaded than it appears on the surface.

Thus, a perceiver doesn't view a "flower" in abstract terms; rather, it always remains value-laden in perception. For example, a conventional member of a society is more likely to perceive a "flower" as a "decorative piece" rather than as a particular "specie" of "flower" which a botanist is likely to perceive. Thus, even though both are viewing the same "flower," yet the contents carry different values for them. Moreover, a perceiver, who is living in a society hypothetically deprived of "flowers," would not be able to perceive a "flower" *as a* "flower." In the above sense, perceptions vary from geography to geography, society to society and culture to culture as well as the teachings and trainings that a perceiver might have received in the hands of a society.

"Complex Perception" (Viśiṣṭa-vaiśiṣṭya jñāna)

In "complex perception" or "perception of a higher order" (*viśiṣṭa-vaiśiṣṭya jñāna*), one 'object' acts as the *qualifier* or the property of another 'object' within view in terms of a *functional relationship* habitually observed by the perceiver. Matilal clarifies that, in this process, such diverse physical materials as fire, smoke, water, a cup or a pot do not only act as individual 'objects' of perception but also act as "properties" *qualifying* other 'objects' within view like the above 'objects' may *qualify* a mountain, ground, lake, a kitchen or a plate respectively.[53] Thus, while 'cup-ness' may act as a *qualifier* for an "undefined particular" leading to the cognition "This is a cup," the 'cup' itself may thereafter act as a *qualifier* for the 'table' resulting in the cognition "The table has a cup."[54] Matilal holds that the apparent oddity of treating one 'object' as a *property* of another 'object' can be resolved *if one conceives that anything that has a location can also act as a property of another* in the Nyāya theory. Thus, a lady surrounded by books may be perceived as "She is studying" where the lady appears as a "student" and the books as her "reading material," the two being combined through the functional *relationship* of "studying" between them habitually observed by the perceiver in daily life.

[53] Matilal, *The Character of Logic in India*, Eds. Jonardon Ganeri and Heeramon Tiwari (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998): 145.

[54] Ibid.

Whether in "Simple" or in "Complex Perception," the Nyāya theory involves the following three important concepts which together determine the "mode of appearance" for a perceiver: the notion of a "Necessary Relation," the idea of a "Universal" and the concepts of the "Limitor" and the "Distinguisher" in perception. Each of these concepts is explained below.

i. Notion of "Necessary Relation" (*Samavāya*)
It has already been mentioned that, in the Nyāya theory, *all relations are external*. External relationships can only be of two types: "conunction" (*samyoga*) and "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*). The latter *adds* something more to a particular relationship than a mere "aggregation" (*samyoga*) where elements may lie side by side without actually combining with each other. The "necessary relation" obtains between substance and its attribute, universal and the particular and a whole and its parts, all of which, however, remain external in this theory. In the above sense, a "necessary relation" may be represented as "A + B + Relation" where A and B combine with each other in terms of a particular relation resulting in the formation of a *causal whole* within the viewer's perceptual field. Thus, according to Nyāya, in "simple perception," the determination "This is a flower" represents a *causal whole* for the perceiver that represents a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*) between "flower-hood" (*qualifier*) and an "unknown particular" (*qualificand*) formed in terms of a "necessary relation" (*relationship*) known to the perceiver his habitual experiences of life, et cetera. In "complex perception," a lady with books in front is likely to be perceived in terms of a "necessary relation" such as "She is studying" where the lady appearing as a "student" is *qualified* by books appearing as her "study material".

The Nyāya notion that a "necessary relation" *necessarily adds something more* to the product than what a simple addition of its parts does is explained in case of the above example by the fact that "studying" is an *addition* to one's cognition over and above the mere observation that the lady and books are occupying a particular place in space vis-à-vis each other. In the realistic Nyāya disposition, the *additional* element of "studying" that appears in perception has a real existence where both the individual elements within view like 'she', 'books', 'table', et cetera, would be perceived simultaneously with the whole "she is studying" together. In this theory both the individuals and the whole are real in contrast to the Buddhist view which holds that the integrated whole is only a "mental construction" which does not occur in reality.

More significantly, as far as the formation of *wholes* in the Nyāya theory is concerned, it holds that even a minor change in the inter-se relationship between elements forming a "necessary relation" would produce a *new whole* in perception, the underlying idea being that *the individual parts must stay in a certain relation with each other in a "necessary relation" to produce a particular whole in one's perception*. What it essentially means is that the constituent elements forming a "necessary relation" cannot be separated without destroying the nature of at least one of its relata. For example, any change in the inter-se position between a lady and books is likely to destroy the "necessary relation" prevailing between them in the cognition "She is studying." Thus, for instance, if the lady looks in a different direction or the books are kept far away from her, it is likely to generate a different cognition in the perceiver like "She is distracted in her studies," et cetera.[55] The idea of a "necessary relation" or "inherence" is essentially as follows: a particular "meaning" *inheres* in the *whole* rather than in its parts which leads to an intriguing comment by Nyāya: while a *whole* necessarily arises from its *parts*, the *parts* do not *necessarily* make up the *whole*! In contrast, since the Buddhists advocate momentarily existing "ultimates" or *dharmas* as the only existents of the universe, they espouse "aggregation" of similar *dharmas* to be producing a *false appearance* for the perceiver on the surface. Nyāya criticizes the above idea on the ground that a relation involving a mere "conjunction" or an "aggregation" (*samyoga*) represents only a contingent, mechanical fact, a separation between its elements does not affect the elements in any way. The criticism may be illustrated in the following way: while the removal of books kept on a table would not destroy the nature of either the books or the lady in any way except for their *imaginary* relationship which, in any case, is *false* in Buddhism, it would certainly destroy the cognition of the lady as a "student", et cetera, which the N-V theory considers to be *real*. Hiriyanna clarifies the typical characteristic of a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*) thus:

> When a piece of cloth is woven, we have in it threads in conjunction or *samyoga*; but *over and above* the conjoined threads, we also have a particular way of stitching the cloth which generates a "necessary relation" or *samavāya* between the threads which makes it a 'new' product…In a mere

[55] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 170–1.

bundle of threads, there is only aggregation or *samyoga* but no *samavāya* and hence it is not a 'new' product.[56]

Consequently, coming into being of a "necessary relation" always signifies the formation of a *new product*. It is interesting to note that, in the puzzle represented by the *Ship of Theseus*, even the changing of a single plank in the ship would make, according to Nyāya, a "new ship" for the perceiver!

"Inherence" and "Non-Inherence" Cause (Samavāyi and A-Samavāyi-Kāraṇa)

More significantly, however, Nyāya identifies the following two forms of a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*): "inherence cause" (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*) and "non-inherence cause" (*a-samavāyi-kāraṇa*), the latter being of paramount importance in the case of cinema. In the case of an "inherence cause" (*samavāyi-kāraṇa*), the "necessary relation" between its constituent elements continues to exist in the effect even when its cause has disappeared. Thus, for example, in a "pot," the "necessary relation" continues to exist between elements constituting the pot even when the original cause of making the pot has disappeared. In the second case involving "non-inherence cause" (*a-samavāyi-kāraṇa*), the "necessary relation" exists in the effect only as long as its cause exists.[57] Thus, for example, in cinema, the effect of a shot would continue to exist only as long as its cause, that is, the particular camera setup, et cetera, continues to exist on screen. Cinema, thus, creates what Nyāya calls "nominal" or "bogus universals" which have no "permanency" like the existence of a "pot" has even when its cause has been removed.

Matilal notes that the notion of "non-inherence cause" (*a-samavāyi-kāraṇa*), which has tremendous application in analyzing cinema, is a unique idea that has no parallels whether in the East or in the West before.

ii. **Idea of "Universal" (*Sāmānya*)**

A "mode of appearance" or a "whole", which comes into being through the formation of a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*) between elements occurring within one's perceptual field, is called a "universal" (*sāmānya*) in the Nyāya theory. The meaning

[56] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 239, modified, emphasis added.

[57] Matilal, "Causality in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika School", in *Metaphysics*, Vol. 3: Indian Philosophy: A Collection of Readings, Ed. Roy Perret (New York: Garland Publishing, 1916): 41–7, 42.

of Nyāya "universal" is, however, radically different from the notion of "universal" occurring in Plato's thought. Thus, in contrast to the notion of an *ideal copy* espoused by Plato which occurs beyond normal space-time configurations, for Nyāya, a "universal" consists of a *merging* of bits and pieces of an "event" observed repeatedly in one's life but whose origin has been lost to memory. Since "events," even when they are similar, are not exactly carbon-copies of each other, the *accumulation* of such bits and pieces of the "event" into forming one empirical whole is far from being an *ideal copy* of the "event." The Nyāya reasoning is as follows. When a perceiver repeatedly observes similar "events," like people "eating" or engaging in "face-to-face talk," the memories of such "events" eventually get dissociated from their original sources and *merge* to form an *accumulative picture* of people "eating" or "talking" in the perceiver's mind. Having been dissociated from their original sources, these images, thereafter, continue to exist in a *pure form of potentiality* in the perceiver's memory, the presentation of even the slightest cue of such an "event" triggering the cognition of "eating" or "talking" in the perceiver. Since such "events" are only similar to each other but not identical, they need to be "named" for identification of the "event" within certain tolerance limits. The eventual "ground" for the "naming" of an "event" would be its "basis for use" (*pravṛttinimitta*), that is, its "function" habitually observed by the perceiver. Such a "named event" is called a "universal" (*sāmānya*) in the Nyāya theory.[58] Bhattacharya notes that the process of applying a common term like "eating" or "talking" to a "function" that belong to a class of activities and called a "universal" remains inexplicable except on the assumption that the term applies to a property or a set of properties shared in common by all the elements which belong to a functional class, the "function" itself being called the "universal."[59] Such "functions" should normally represent a unitary activity for the perceiver irrespective of how many parts it may have or the looseness with which those parts may be "connected" to each other. Ganeri gives an example: "So, if 'Cyclops' is a singular term,

[58] Matilal, "Introduction", *Analytical Philosophy in Comparative Perspective: Exploratory Essays in Current Theories of Meaning and Reference*, Eds. B. K. Matilal and J. L. Shaw (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing, 1985): 1–37, 28.

[59] S. Bhattacharya, "Abstraction, Analysis and Universals: The Navya-Nyāya Theory", in *Analytical Philosophy*, 189–202, 190, modified.

then it is an 'object' for the perceiver," irrespective of how many parts such a contraption may have for the perceiver.[60] Any particular example would merely represent a "particular" instantiation of a certain "universal," with Nyāya holding that the perceiver sees both the "universal" and the "particular" in her perception at the same time.

On the question of how such imperfect "universals" come to be memorized by the perceiver, Nyāya identifies its attendant processes as follows: the thinking of a cause leads to the remembering of its effect through similarity or by opposition or by an acute attempt to remember.[61] To this list, the Mīmāṃsāka Praśastapāda (c. 6th CE) adds a few more: unexpectedness, repetition, and intensity of interest.[62] Ultimately, Nyāya argues that, since these revived memories consist of some loose generalizations of elements occurring in one's memory, they may also be revived by many other processes, a detailed list of which has also been provided by Nyāya.[63]

Comparing Nyāya "Universals" with Ideas of "Schemata," "Prototype," and "Exemplum" in Cognitive Research

Borrowing from Patrick Colm Hogan, one may further analyze a "universal" in terms of the category of "lexical entry" used in contemporary cognitive research which "has multiple cross-indexing references to other entries" as well.[64] Thus, for instance, while the lexical name "monkey"

[60] Jonardon Ganeri, *The Age of Lost Reason: Philosophy in Early Modern India 1450–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 169.

[61] Dasgupta, *A History*, Footnote 1, 216.

[62] Dasgupta notes: "Praśastapāda says that *bhāvanā* is a special characteristic of the soul, contrary to knowledge, sorrow, and intoxication, by which things seen, heard, and felt are remembered and recognized. Through unexpectedness (like seeing a camel in South India), repetition (as in studies, arts, etc.), and intensity of interest, the *saṁskāra* becomes particularly strong." Dasgupta, *A History*, Footnote 1, 316.

[63] Nyāya gives an enumerative list of a huge number of causes that revives memory. Dasgupta notes: "The causes of recollection on the part of the self are given as follows: 1) attention, 2) context, 3) repetition, 4) sign, 5) association, 6) likeness, 7) association of the possessor and the possessed like master and servant, 8) separation, 9) simpler employment, 10) opposition, 11) excess, 12) that from which anything can be had, 13) cover and the covered, 14) pleasure and pain causing memory of that which caused them, 15) fear, 16) entreaty, 17) actions such as the chariot reminding the charioteer, 18) affection and 19) merit and demerit." Dasgupta, *A History*, 300.

[64] Patrick Colm Hogan, "Toward a Cognitive Science of Poetics: Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and the Theory of Literature", *College Literature*, Vol. 23 No. 1: Comparative Poetics: Non-Western Traditions of Literary Theory (February, 1996): 164–78, 173, modified.

may trigger "universals" like "ape" and "chimpanzee" in a perceiver, it may also trigger the associated names of "Africa" and "India" as their habitats, depending on how the "monkey" information is "primed" by the perceiver.[65] Based on modern research, Hogan further analyzes a "lexical entry" in terms of a "schema," a "prototype," and an "exemplum." "Schema" pertains to an "event" which has been "named" and consists of properties or qualities arranged in a descending order of priority from those which are definitive and central to it to those that are merely peripheral to it, with the former acting as the entry's "default value." "Prototype" signifies the way an "event" appears as a "universal" in perception. Thus, while both an eagle and a penguin are 'birds', the way the "universal" of a bird is generally constructed in the perceiver's mind in terms of its default values, eagle is more likely to make the grade. "Exemplum" represents any "particular" instantiation of a particular "universal."[66] Thus, a particular person would be an instantiation of the "universal" 'Man'.

In sum, one may once again like to stress the fact that *Nyāya "universals" are far from being perfect examples of 'objects', 'properties' or 'events' in the world*. In this sense, as already mentioned, they are markedly different from the Platonic "universals" which represent ideal "Forms" or "Ideas" that exist on an ideal plane of 'objects' and 'events' occurring empirically. In fact, since in the theory of Nyāya realism, all the parts of a "universal" are considered to be real, the ultimate *assemblage* of parts that give rise to the "universal" is also *real* rather than *ideal* in this theory.

Formation of "Nominal" or "Bogus Universals" (Upādhi) in Perception

While not withstanding its notion of a "universal" being real, the N-V theory does make a distinction between a "real universal" and a "nominal" or "bogus universal". Analyzing on the lines of an "inherence cause" and a "non-inherence cause," the Naiyāyika Udayana (c. 11th CE) calls a "real universal" (*sāmānya*) that where an effect remains even after its cause is removed like that of a 'pot', and a "nominal or bogus universal" (*upādhi*)[67] where the effect persists only as long as its cause persists like that of a 'shot' in cinema. In the above sense, while a "real universal" (*sāmānya*) means the actual occurrence of a feature in a thing, a "nominal or bogus universal" (*upādhi*) does not *objectively* represent

[65] Ibid., 173–4.

[66] Ibid., 175.

[67] Matilal, *Perception*, 418.

the real occurrence of a particular feature in an 'object' but only what is *subjectively* experienced by the perceiver as being there like in the example of "She is studying" mentioned above. Some further examples of "bogus universals" may be cited. Thus, a crystal lying close to a red flower would be *subjectively* perceived as "red" by a viewer even though the property of "redness" does not occur in the crystal *objectively*. In this sense, the word "upādhi," where "upa" means "proximity" (*sāmīpya*) and "dhi" means "attribution" or "imputation" (*āropya*), signifies an 'object' which imparts or attributes its "property" or "action" to an 'object' lying close in its proximity.[68] It is only because "nominal universals" represent *conditional or subjectively imposed properties in a substance*, they have also been called "bogus universals" (*upādhis*).[69]

In the above sense, instances of "non-inherence cause" (*a-samavāyi-kāraṇa*) also represent cases of "powerless causality" which only purports the *appearance* of a causality on screen rather than a real causality as happens in the case of "real universals." Mohanty analyzes:

> The relation of "causality" – stripped of the notion of "power" – was analyzed into (a) a substance, a quality, or an action, and (b) the relation of an "invariable temporal precedence" (*niyatapūrvavartitva*) occurring between them.[70]

In other words, the mere *coexistence* of a particular group of items, involving a "substance" (*qualificand*), a "property" (*qualifier*), and an action (*relation*) in front of the audiences, generates an "invariable sequence" involving a "before" and an "after" between them which triggers a particular "mode of appearance" in the perceiver's view based on one's habitually observed by experiences in life, et cetera.

Such subjective functions are generally called "relation-particulars" (*svarūpa-sambandha-viśeṣa*) in the Nyāya theory which are "uniquely contrived for the occasion not ontologically distinguishable from the terms they connect."[71] Once any one of the terms disappears, the "bogus universal" or the "relation-particular" formed on its basis

[68] Mentioned by Mrinal Kanti Gangopadhyay in "The Concept of Upādhi in Nyāya Logic", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. V No. 1 (1971): 146–66, 153.

[69] Matilal, *Perception*, 418.

[70] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 58, modified.

[71] Matilal, *Perception*, 419.

disappears too. Thus, the "universal" formed by the audiences of looking at a view from a particular camera viewpoint in cinema would disappear the moment the viewpoint is changed. According to the Naiyāyika Uddyotkara (c. 500 CE), a special form of such an application is called an "accidental universal" (*upalakṣaṇa*), like a crow sitting on top of a house may generate the "universal" "The house with the crow" for a perceiver![72]

The above ideas lead to the conclusion that Nyāya "universals" essentially act as heuristic devices for a perceiver who constructs them in order to "understand" a situation. This idea had exerted a huge influence on Indian theories of aesthetics and arts, an aspect which would be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

iii. Concepts of the "Limitor" (*Avacchedaka*) and the "Distinguisher" (*Viśeṣaṇa*)

Matilal emphasizes the decisive role that a *qualifier* plays in the formula "perception = qualificand + qualifier + relationship" in forming a "mode of appearance" for a perceiver:

> We need a prior grasping of the qualifiers or characteristics, but we need not have a prior acquaintance with the subject or the *dharmin* ('what holds'). For we can become acquainted with it at the same time we "construct the judgment"... Nyāya says that a prior awareness of the qualifiers is all that is logically needed for us to formulate a "qualificative" judgment.[73]

Matilal argues that, in case of the "simple perception" of something seen from a distance, we may speculate whether it is a "man," a "post," or a "tree" only because we are already acquainted with the above factors in our habitual experiences of life.[74] Depending on the clues we see in our perception, we "limit" our perception to it being a "man" or a "post" simply because we have already seen the above features in our habitual experiences of life, et cetera. Similarly, in the "complex perception" of "She is studying," the lady is perceived as a "student" and books

[72] Potter, "Relations", in *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II: Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, 47–68, 55.

[73] Matilal, *Perception*, 351.

[74] Ibid., 352.

Fig. 4.1 Makaṛa (Crocodile), Sandstone, Bharhut, Madhya Pradesh, India, c. 2nd BCE (*Source* Kolkata Museum)

as her "study material" which *mutually* "delimit" (*avacchedaka*) each other to generate the cognition of "studying" in the perceiver. It represents the "maypole" theory of judgment[75] where the role of the *qualifier* in the formation of perceptual "meaning" acquires an overwhelming status in the Nyāya theory of perception. The following sculpture strikingly illustrates the point (Fig. 4.1).

The aspect of the crocodile that catches our attention is its massively coiled tail which is generally not perceived in nature and hence "unrealistic" in the context of an artwork. However, the artist's specific use of its coiled form is to make it act as a *qualifier* for the crocodile in order to convey to the perceiver the "function" of extreme *lethality* of the animal. In order to convey this impression, the artist *idealizes* its tail on the model of a coiled snake to make it appear as a "coiled menace" to the perceiver in terms of people's habitual experiences of life, et cetera. Matilal points out that, in the above sense, an 'object' has a *two-way determination* in perception:

[75] Ganeri, *Semantic Powers*, 145.

> According to Nyāya, "object-hood" has a two-way determination: on the one hand, it is determined by the *object itself* and, on the other, by the *unique way the viewer cognizes it*. Generally, the two "object-hoods" are different with the second being determined by the Nyāya notion of the "delimitor" (*avacchedaka*).[76]

The Navya-Nyāya philosopher, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi (c. 16th CE), holds that cues provided in a scene, called "distinguishers" (*viśeṣaṇa*), plays an equally important role in the production of a particular "mode of appearance" in the perceiver. Thus, for example, in the cognition "She is studying," the lady is "delimited" as a "student" on the basis of certain "distinguishers" like her age, her demeanor, et cetera (in case of an elderly person with a weighty demeanor, the "delimitation" is likely to be that of a "teacher") which further "delimits" "books" as her "study material" based on their "distinguishing" marks of much-thumbed look, et cetera (in case of a "teacher," the "delimitation" is likely to be "reading material"), their relationship being "delimited" as "studying" (in case of a "teacher," the "relationship" is likely to be "perusing" or "consulting") based on the perceiver's habitual experiences of life, et cetera.

The above arguments point toward a special feature of the Nyāya concept of cause-and-effect chain: "x" *causes* "y" only when "x" appears in a particular "mode of appearance" to the perceiver which causes "y" to come into being in a particular "mode of appearance" too [77]:

> "X as F *causes* Y as G"

On the crucial question of in what "mode" a thing is most likely to appear to a perceiver, Śiromaṇi makes a significant point: human beings invariably perceive "events" by comparing them with *normative values* of similar "events" held by them. In this sense, the appearance of a particular "mode of appearance" depends on the "normative values" constructed from the "basis for use" (*pravṛtti-nimitta*) of a function determined by the perceiver in terms of her habitual experiences of life, et cetera.[78] Sometimes, the psychological condition of the perceiver

[76] Matilal, *Perception*, 18.

[77] Bhattacharyya and Potter, "Introduction", in *Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, 35.

[78] Ganeri, *Semantic Powers*, 3.

may also act as a "limitor" of meaning for the perceiver. An oft-quoted example in Indian philosophy is that a greedy person is likely to misconstrue the luster emanating from a conch-shell as "silver" in contrast to a person who is in complete control of her faculties. Another instance is provided in Macbeth where, while the guilty conscience of Lord Macbeth makes him hallucinate that a dagger exists in an empty space, Lady Macbeth perceives blood to be continuously oozing out of her hands even after she had repeatedly washed them!

Film Examples

In Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936), when Chaplin picks up a red flag that has accidentally fallen off a truck and starts walking holding it in his hand, quite unknown to him, he is seen as leading a procession of agitating workers marching behind him. Based on their appropriate "body orientation" toward each other, the red flag acts as the *qualifier* of the scene which *limits* the meaning of the scene for the audiences. In other words, Chaplin carrying the red flag in front of people marching behind him results in the cognition "Chaplin is leading the marching workers" based on the imposition of a functional relationship between them based on the viewers' habitual experiences of life. However, since this functionality arises only accidentally unknown to both Chaplin and the workers, the scene becomes comedic for the audiences.

In Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), the scene depicting Susan Alexander's (Dorothy Comingore) attempted suicide has the following elements that meet the viewer's eye. Susan, breathing heavily, is lying on bed with her face covered in darkness while, in the foreground, a bottle marked "Poison" and an empty tumbler with a spoon stand prominently on her bedside table. The bottle acts as the *qualifier* of the scene which, together with her bodily orientation as well as other elements in the room, *limits* the meaning of the scene to the cognition "She has *taken* poison" among the audiences based either on their own experiences or instances they have heard in life. In a subsequent development, the door is flung open as Kane (Orson Welles) and another person rush in. Based on the body language of Kane, the audiences perceive—it doesn't really matter whether they have physically witnessed a similar scene in real life or been taught about them or have seen them depicted in an art-form—Kane as being *qualified* by a poisoned Susan resulting in the cognition "Kane is *worried* about her" among the audiences. The proof that

qualifier limits the meaning of a scene for the audiences occurs in the fact that a big flower-tub lies by the side of the door in the same room which, being unconnected to the scene, remains unnoticed by the audiences!

4.3.1.2 "Mode of Presentation" as "Embodied Sense" in Perception

The second element in *direct* perception is the "embodied sense" generated by a scene. The importance of a *body perspective* in perception has been evocatively described by Tagore as follows:

> Our capacity to stand erect has given our body its freedom of posture, making it easy to turn on all sides and realize ourselves at the center of all things. As one freedom leads to another, Man's eyesight also found a wider scope. From the higher vantage point of our physical watch-tower, we have gained our view – *not merely information about location of things but their inter-relation and their unity.*[79]

In the above sense, each "mode of presentation" generates an "embodied sense" in the viewer represented by the following Nyāya formula[80]:

$$\text{Mode of Presentation} = \text{Percept} + \text{Sense-Object Trajectory}$$

The perceiver's "embodied sense" arises from the fact that the *connector* that links the perceiver with the perceived 'object' (*sannikarṣa-vāsya-samsarga*, 'sense-object trajectory')[81] essentially represents a particular point of view from which the viewer is looking at the scene which, in terms of the viewer's embodied experiences of living in the world, is bound to generate a certain "embodied sense" in the viewer.

It is important to note that, while a "mode of presentation" may generally appear to involve vision only, a "mode" is, however, by no means

[79] Rabindra Nath Tagore, *Religion of Man* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931), quoted in Chatterjee, "Embodiment and Nyāya Philosophy", 3–4, original emphasis. Prof. Chatterjee has been kind enough to draw my attention to it.

[80] Matilal, *The Word*, 51; Achyutananda Dash, "Śabdabodha, Cognitive Priority and the Odd Stories of Prakāratāvāda and Samsargatāvāda", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 27 (1999): 325–76, 332.

[81] Dash, "Śabdabodha", 332.

restricted to vision alone. It may involve other factors, like a particular use of sound, light, voice-intonation, et cetera, each of which may endanger a particular "bodily sense" in the perceiver. Thus, for example, it has been found that the use of "harsh sound" vis-à-vis "soft sound," "hard light" vis-à-vis "soft light," "harsh tone" vis-à-vis "soft tone," et cetera, influence the "meaning-content" of a scene, the "bodily sense" being one of the primary reasons for such an occurrence.

In this connection, an important point needs to be made here. While there is a common strain in Western theories which holds that verbal expressions involving words, et cetera, can be an exact representation of "thought", Nyāya holds that "meanings" that arise in us as "thought" cannot be wholly captured by the verbal description of a scene alone. The reason is the following: while Nyāya holds a *causal whole* in perception to be constituted of "mode of appearance", its "mode of presentation" that generates an "embodied sense" in the viewer cannot be captured in a linguistic expression. Potter and Bhattacharyya note:

> On the Navya-Nyāya view, no linguistic expression can adequately represent all the factors in the content of a propositional awareness. This is because whenever content is expressed by a word or a sentence, its manner of presentation remains unexpressed…There is no way of expressing it in language. It is widely held in Western philosophy now that 'thinking' is impossible without using language. Navya-Nyāya shows the inadequacy of such a theory. It points out that…understanding the meaning of expressions is an altogether different activity than the activity of perceiving, inferring, etc., which continue to be fundamental.[82]

Moreover, the Nyāya philosophers hold that a piece of cognition is necessarily *intentional* in nature. Thus, even when two sentences represent the same content, like "cat is on the mat" and "mat is under the cat," the Navya-Nyāyikas hold that, since the *intentions* behind the two utterances are different, including the different "embodied senses" that hearing the above two sentences generate, they are likely to produce different awarenesses in a cognizer. Chatterjee notes:

[82] Karl Potter and Sibajiban Bhattacharyya, *Encyclopedia: Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika from Gaṅgeśa to Raghunath Śiromaṇi*, Vol. VI, reprint (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001): 26.

> The Navya-Nyāyikas have explicitly pointed out that though there may be logical equivalence between two sentences p and ~ p, the awareness of p is not identical with ~ p. The reason for this is not far to seek. First, while developing knowledge and belief, we need to take into consideration how actually the content has been *presented* to the cognizer. Second, the Naiyāyikas do not think that human beings are omniscient. So, one may not be aware of every implication that a particular content may have. Consequently, one may know an object under a particular mode of presentation while another may know the same object under another mode.[83]

In order to counter this deficiency, Navya-Nyāya had constructed a "scientific" language for the purpose,[84] an aspect which need not detain us here.

The "embodied sense," which is constituted of a particular sense of space and time in the perceiver, would make the percept appear as "benign," "threatening" or "neutral" to the body of the perceiver in terms of one's *lived experiences* of life, an aspect which, at the deepest level, is rooted, as already mentioned, in the *survival instinct* of the perceiver. This instinct prescribes certain "dos" and "don'ts" for the body, which in order to maximize pleasure, minimize pain and be indifferent to other cases, establishes a certain relationship between the "intention" of "the self-body system" and what is happening in its surrounding. Thus, if "x" *causes* bodily pleasure and "y" *controls* "x," then the body, through numerous repetitions, would internalize the fact that "y" is a means of generating pleasure.

Film Example

It has already been stated that perception is a product of the "mode of appearance" and "mode of presentation" together. The "universal" constituted by them alters even when even one of the elements alters in a scene. The following film example illustrates that when the "mode of presentation" of a scene is altered, the "meaning" of the scene alters despite the "mode of appearance" of the scene remaining the same. In Satyajit Ray's *Nayak* (The Hero, 1966), the journalist Aditi (Sharmila Tagore) is interviewing the matinee idol Arindam Mukherjee (Uttam Kumar) in the dining car of a moving train. Aditi's ultimate aim is to

[83] Amita Chatterjee, "Navya-Nyāya Language as a Medium of Science", unpublished article, 1–33, 29–30.

[84] Ibid.

make the hero reveal details of his last scandal with a heroine. In a particularly longish scene, the scene keeps alternating between a series of flashbacks revolving around the hero's life and the scene of the interview in the dining car. While the technique used is that of editing cuts between the faces of Aditi and Arindam at the end of the first few flashbacks, at the end of the last flashback, the technique changes to a smooth to and fro panning shot between the two. While the position of the two characters does not visibly change neither do the tenor of their dialogue delivery, the change in the "mode of presentation" of the scene, where the camerawork physically links them into a unity, generates among the audiences an embodied sense of the two now being united. It *metaphorically* translates into the meaning that Aditi's attitude toward Arindam has changed from being a cut-throat journalist to that of a more *sympathetic* person now. The audiences' embodied understanding of the scene is confirmed when Aditi tears all her notes in the climactic scene. To Arindam's astonished question as to whether she will write from memory, Aditi replies that she will *keep* it in her memory!

Western theorists have given serious attention to the "embodied" aspect of perception in their phenomenological theory which came to the fore only during the twentieth century due to the efforts made by Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and others. The theory had a more potent fall-out when Merleau-Ponty made *the body* the center of all cognitions. In the context of these phenomenological ideas, Lakoff and Johnson note the crucial importance that "embodied sense" has in human perception:

> There is no fully autonomous faculty of reason separate from and independent of bodily capacities such as perception and movement. The evidence supports, instead, an evolutionary view in which *reason not only uses but also grows out of bodily capacities.*[85]

In a series of writings, Lakoff and Johnson have made the point that the notion of *disembodied vision*, on which much of the Western theories depend, is faulty, an aspect which would be discussed in greater detail later.

[85] Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (Basic Books, 1999): 17, modified.

4.3.1.3 "Analytical Meaning" as Indirect Knowledge in Perception

The Indian tradition acknowledges "six ways of knowing," out of which "perception" presents a direct mode while "inference," "testimony," "comparison," "postulation," and "absence" represent indirect modes of knowing an "event", a list to which Jainism added "point of view" later. While, in the strict sense, the "explanatory mode" does not fall within "perception" as such, yet there are "analytical meanings" which generally follow from perception almost simultaneously, an aspect which is, arguably, related to the *survival instinct* of the perceiver. The formation of such "analytical meanings" are different from those analytical meanings which arise independently of perception. In fact, in case of perception, the process of "meaning-formation" through "mode of appearance" and "mode of presentation" and later through the formation of "analytical meanings" represents a cascading effect where one "meaning" leads to another and so on till a perceiver decides to call a halt to the process. Thus, when a lady is perceived with books, it generates the "universal" "She is studying." If our point of view is a low angle shot of the scene, it would generate an "embodied sense" in the viewer, like "Books are posing a *threat* to her." These two *directly perceived* "meanings," in turn, is likely to generate an "analytical meaning" of "She is *overloaded* with her studies" in the viewer based on *inference* based on the viewer's prior knowledge about the situation which may lead to the further *inferential* conclusion that "She is an *average* student," et cetera. "Analytical meanings" are generally formed on the basis of *normative values* of such situations entertained by the perceiver. Thus, a "student" would be judged as "good" or "bad" based on the *normative value* of a "student" in terms of the perceiver's habitual experiences of life.

A more detailed analysis of the production of "analytical meaning" through indirect means of knowledge not necessarily based on perception alone, would be discussed in detail later in Section IV of this chapter as it forms an important part of knowledge among human beings which largely determines their engagement with the world which, ultimately, comes to influence their perception as well.

4.3.1.4 Production of an "Affective State" in Perception

It has two parts. In one part, "emotions" and "affects" associated with an "event" is evoked in the perceiver and, in the second, a "dispositional tendency" is produced in the perceiver to "neutralize" the affects.

i. Evocation of "Emotions" and "Affects" in the Perceiver

The Kashmir Śaiva philosopher Abhinavagupta (c. 10th CE) takes the idea of a merged form of potentiality, formed from bits and pieces of an "event" habitually observed in life by a perceiver, forward by holding that such *congealed memories* invariably evoke "emotions" and "affects" associated with such "events" as well. The process is called "presentation through revived memory" or *jñāna-lakṣaṇā-pratyāsatti* where the memories of such associations are triggered in the perceiver's mind even though there are no visible signs of such "emotions" or "affects" being present in the scene. Thus, to give an example from cinema, when the "neutral face" of the Soviet actor Ivan Mozzukhin is juxtaposed with a child playing with balloons, audiences read it as "Mozzukhin is happy" strictly on the basis of their habitual experiences of life.

ii. Arising of a "Dispositional Tendency" in the Perceiver

Whenever an "affective state" is evoked in a perceiver in response to a scene, a "dispositional tendency" arises in the perceiver to "neutralize" the affects that are destabilizing the perceiver. The oft-quoted example of mistaking a rope for a snake in the Indian tradition may be cited as a case in point. In this perception, even though it involves a case of a mistaken identity, the following sequence arises in the perceiver's mind: direct perception → analytical cognition → emotion & affect → disposition, the latter making the perceiver jump to safety.

An aspect of the Nyāya theory may be emphasized here. Because of its overarching dependence on the embodied experiences of the perceiver, her socio-cultural practices of life and the teachings and training she might have received from the society, Nyāya theory of perception represents a *theory of the ordinary* which, essentially, makes perception a *social act* rather than a *rational act* as perception is generally thought to be.

We may sum up this whole process of *direct* and *indirect perception* in terms of certain conclusions reached by Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht in his thought-provoking work *Production of Presence* (2006).[86] Calling the *embodied sense* generated in one's perception as the "presence effect"

[86] Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006): 2, emphasis added.

vis-à-vis the "meaning effect" produced by an explanatory model, he holds that, *in any understanding reached by a person, the "presence" and the "meaning" effects either keep oscillating or reinforcing or resisting each other*. While it is entirely possible that one of the "effects" may remain attenuated in a particular situation, it could never happen that it would totally remain absent from there.[87] Gumbrecht notes:

> That any form of communication implies such a *production of presence*, that any form of communication, through its material elements, will 'touch' the bodies of the persons who are communicating in specific and varying ways may be a trivial observation, but it is true nevertheless that this fact had been bracketed and progressively forgotten by Western theory since the Cartesian *cogito* made human existence depend exclusively on the movements of human mind.[88]

In the above context, Gumbrecht mentions what needs to be done in the face of such a willful obliteration: *problematizing the meaning effect which represents the process of knowing the world through interpretation alone*. It would mean adding layers to the world in a way that is more complex than merely attributing meaning to it.[89]

Gumbrecht highlights the effects that a *presence culture* can have in a human understanding of the world[90]:

x. Mind, generally considered to be immaterial in the Western culture, produces a kind of 'subjectivity' which, being eccentric to the world, forever creates a subjective-objective schism in human understanding of the world; in contrast, body forms part of nature whose meaning remains inherently known to the body;
y. In *meaning culture*, the material signifiers conveying a meaning ceases to have any effect as soon as the meaning becomes known; in *presence culture*, the material signifiers do not vanish but continue to impart its effect till the end;
z. In *meaning culture*, various interpretations of space and time prevail which often ignore bodily experiences; in *presence culture*,

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid., 17, emphasis added.

[89] Ibid., 52, emphasis added.

[90] Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence*, 80–2.

> bodies are inscribed within natures' rhythms with the help of which a body experiences the world directly.

Clearly, Gumbrecht's model offers important pointers to how the perceptual process works in reality.

In the following sections, some more features of the Nyāya theory of perception are unveiled.

4.3.2 Nyāya Theory of Direct Perception of an "Absence"

In classical Indian theories, it is held that the maximum number of ways through which knowledge can be gained are six viz. perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), word (*Śabda*), comparison (*upamāna*), postulation or hypothesis (*arthapatti*), and absence (*anupalabdhi*). As already indicated, while perception does generate knowledge *directly*, it generates further knowledge *indirectly* by employing the intellectual principle of processing "invariable sequences" of the type "if x, then y" in a situation. Normally, all classical Indian theories, except Nyāya hold that absence falls in the above category since a perceiver intellectually cognizes a "situational absence," that is, an element habitually present in a place is *absent* today which helps the perceiver to reach certain conclusions in the matter. However, Nyāya goes against all such theories to hold that *anupalabdhi* or "knowledge through non-cognition" is part of *direct* perception. Referring to cases of "situational absences" (*abhāva*), Nyāya holds that such absences generate knowledge *directly* in the perceiver on the basis of a *negative* process. What Nyāya is saying may be summed up as follows: a flower-vase, which is regularly present on a table, is *directly* perceived to be *absent* today by a perceiver through a process of *negation* rather than a *positive* inferential cognition in such cases. The Nyāya idea is, however, more loaded than it appears on the surface. In the Nyāya theory, the perception "x does not exist in a location" is not to be understood as denying the occurrence of "x" there, but rather as affirming the presence of something positive in that location, the "*absence of x*"[91] in that location. Matilal notes the Nyāya practice of treating the "absence of something" *as a whole* as something positive: "For Nyāya, the absence of a property is treated as another property. It rephrases the sentence "The pot is not

[91] Potter, *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, 109.

blue" as follows: "The pot has the absence of blue color."[92] Thus, the perception "absence of flower-vase from the table" forms an "invariable sequence" between the flower-vase and the table which is considered to be *directly visible* as a positive *whole* to the viewer. In this sense, "situational absences" form "invariable sequences" with their locations for the perceiver in the Nyāya theory which signifies the availability of additional intentional information from the scene for the viewer.

Explained in terms of the epistemic formula "perception = qualificand + qualifier + relationship," the "the absence of the flower-vase" *qualifies* the location through the *functional relationship* of its habitual occurrence on the table. However, since an "absence" as such cannot be *functionally related* to a table in concrete terms, Nyāya considers such relationships to be cases of "self-linking relations" (*svarūpa saṁbandhas*) which hold "absences" to be identical with either one or both its relata.[93] This notion finds useful application in cinema. It is a general practice of filmmakers to deliberately keep a certain "space" empty within a particular frame in order to draw the audience's attention to the "situational absence" occurring there which, in terms of the N-V theory, has deeper implications for the audiences.

Film Examples

In Arjun Gourisaria and Moinak Biswas's *Sthaniyo Sangbad* (Spring in the Colony, 2010), a bulldozer demolishes a slum which is watched by the slum-dwellers in utter silence. In this scene, the soundtrack is also deliberately kept silent. This *felt absence* of the bulldozer's sound is experienced by the audiences as *qualifying* the location that represents the slum-dwellers' *silent protest* against the demolition.

In Michelangelo Antonioni's *L'Eclisse* (Eclipse, 1962), a series of 52 "empty" shots of busy city corners at the end of the film generate "invariable sequences" between *busy* city corners and their present *absence* for the audiences to experience a *felt absence* signifying the ephemeral transience of all forms of relationships in the modern-day city life.

4.3.3 Nyāya Notion of "Visual Synesthesia"

The notion of *vision–touch equivalence* has been an integral part of Indian theories since the Vedic times. The Vedic scholar, Jan Gonda notes: "That

[92] Matilal, *The Character of Logic*, 146.

[93] Chatterjee, "Navya-Nyāya Language", 18.

a look was consciously regarded as a form of contact appears from the combination of 'looking' and 'touching.' Casting one's eyes upon a person and touching him were related activities."[94] In the same vein, the Indologist Stella Kramrisch makes the following comments:

> *Seeing*, according to Indian notions, is a going forth of the sight towards the object. Sight touches it and acquires its form. Touch is the ultimate connection by which the visible yields to being grasped. While the eye touches the object, the vitality that pulsates in it is communicated…[95]

Among the sense experiences, Nyāya distinguishes vision–touch sensations from other sensations, like smell, hearing, and taste, by holding that, it is only in the former two that the sensations continuously unite with the surfaces they are connected with. Hiriyanna notes:

> The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika considers that substances are also directly cognized. But not all the senses are capable of doing this. In regard to external substances, it is only the organs of *sight* and *sound* that can do so; and in regard to the internal, it is the *manas* [mind]. In other words, *while all the organs can sense, some can perceive also*. The position is substantiated with reference to experiences such as "I am now *touching* what I *saw*".[96]

Hiriyanna farther clarifies: "What the two senses apprehend are clearly different, yet an identity is perceived by them explained as referring to the underlying substances being experienced alike in the two moments."[97] What Hiriyanna means is that these two sense organs remain continuously in touch with their surfaces rather than acquiring an independence from them. This process is in contrast to the sensation of sound, for instance, which, once emitted from a surface, exists independently of it, making it possible for particular pieces of sound to be artificially linked to synthetic surfaces. In the same sense, the other sensations like smell and touch do not have a unique connection with the surface from which they originally emanate. In other words, while

[94] Jan Gonda, *Eye and Gaze in the Veda* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1969): 19.

[95] Stella Kramrische, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. 1, reprint (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1946): 136.

[96] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 248, emphasis added.

[97] Ibid., 248–9, modified.

vision and touch "grasp" both sensations and their surfaces, sensations like smell, hearing, and taste "grasp" only the relevant sensations but not their surfaces. Matilal says:

> Nyāya would say, for example, that we smell the fragrance of the flower but not the flower itself and we taste the sweetness of sugar but not the sugar lump itself.[98]

Thus, while vision–touch equivalence is able to detect whether sensations are coming from synthetic or natural sources, it remains beyond the grasp of the other sense organs to be able to do so.

However, Nyāya does incorporate the other sensations like sound, smell, and taste in the vision–touch experience of an "event" in a unique way. It holds that experiencing something through vision and touch may automatically revive memories of hearing, smell, and taste associated with the "event" in the perceiver's mind through a process it calls "perception through revived memory" (*jñānalakṣaṇā pratyāsatti*).[99] Nyāya holds such revivals as generating *extraordinary modes of perception* since these sensations are not physically sensed by their respective sense organs but are generated in the viewer's mind through her memories. Thus, when a rose is seen from a great distance, its smell is unlikely to reach the perceiver. However, mind still revives the smell of the rose for the perceiver in terms of the viewer's embodied experiences in the past. According to Matilal, these revived memories *qualify* the visual nucleus or the location of the vision–touch experience through a *functional relationship* to form a *whole* based on the viewer's habitual experiences of life. In this sense, according to Nyāya, perception is much "fuller" than what vision–touch equivalence produces in the viewer. Matilal notes that this theory generates the following perceptual experiences for the viewer:

> The above principle of Nyāya is extended to explain various facts about perceptual situation. It is contended by Nyāya that even such reports as "I *see* sweet honey", "I *see* cold ice" or "I *see* fragrant flowers" would be correct as long as the 'nucleus' of the object-complex is visually presented [and is *qualified* by the senses of smell or taste or hearing].[100]

[98] Matilal, *Perception*, 252–3.

[99] Ibid., 372.

[100] Matilal, *Perception*, 289.

When the above Nyāya principle is extended to cinema, it leads to the conclusion that film audiences are generally privy to a far more enriching sense experience than merely an audio-visual experience as film theories have presented so far.

Film Examples

In James Cameron's *Titanic* (1997), when the protagonists are sinking in the sea, Nyāya would like to say that the audiences would not only experience touch sensations, but also other sense qualities like sound, smell, as well as taste, in case the audiences have personal experience of tasting saline water or have learnt about them from authentic sources. Totality of such experiences would generate a much greater experience among the audiences with sensations of sound, smell, and taste which would produce their own senses of what is "pleasant," "painful," or "indifferent" for the audiences.

Similarly in Ritwik Ghatak's *Titas Ekti Nadir Naam* ("A River Named Titus," 1973), a boy wades into the river up to his waist while the camera stands in waist-deep water watching him. As weeds float by the camera lens, the audiences not only experience the touch sensations of the cool river water, but also *smell*, *sound*, and *taste* of the river water revived in their memory including the *smell* of the weed floating by. Nyāya theory of cinematic experience flies in the face of existing film theories based on the notion of *disembodied vision* alone.

4.3.3.1 "Haptic Visuality" and Nyāya Notion of "Visual Synesthesia"

Advocated by Laura Marks, *haptic vision* is a tactile form of perception where "the eyes function like organs of touch."[101] The film critic Donato Totaro comments:

> As Marks explains, in optical visuality, the eye perceives objects from a distance to isolate them as forms of space. *Haptic visuality* is a closer form of looking, which tends to "move over the surface of its object rather than plunge into illusionist depth, not to distinguish form so much as to discern texture".[102]

[101] Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000): 162.

[102] Donato Totaro, "Deleuzian Film Analysis: The Skin of the Film", *Off-Screen*, Vol. 6 No. 6 (June 2002), accessed online in June 2016.

For *haptic visuality*, which signifies an experience of the surface rather than depth, closeness rather than separation, intimacy rather than representation, Marks' professed aim is to "restore a flow between the haptic and the optical that our [Western] culture is currently lacking."[103]

Marks has been influenced by two currents of thought: Merleau-Ponty's ideas of vision–touch equivalence which generates a synesthetic experience among the audiences as elaborated by Vivian Sobchack in her writings on cinema and the Bergsonian ideas of space, time and identity as elaborated in the Deleuzian analysis of cinema. While the former has been explained in great detail in Box 4.1, the latter is being elaborated here.

Deleuze follows Bergson to hold that "meaning" is on the outside or surface of things, which the perceiver "touches" through her body to know. In this sense, the "image" of the thing and the "thing" itself becomes indistinguishable for the perceiver which makes Deleuze to hold *Image = Movement*, implying, thereby, that the current "appearance" of the "thing-image" is the "thing itself" and not its *sign*.[104] This is a kind of "appearing" where "not even an eye" would be capable of discerning what the "thing" is.[105] Delueze terms the infinite presence of such images in cinema as the "plane of immanence" whose very "touch" generates some kind of a *wild meaning* (to borrow a Merleau-Pontian term) among the audiences which is not a disembodied, intellectual "understanding" of *images as signs* in cinema. These images are *cinephilic* and *tautological* in the sense that they do not represent anything else but pure existence in the form of pure "movement" and "appearance."[106]

More importantly, Deleuze has devised many types of images which do not translate into narrative action, but generate "meanings" and "affects" simply by virtue of their being. Thus, the falling of a lock of hair on an actor's face may not advance the narrative as such but may generate a lot of visceral effect among the audiences. Called "opsigns" or

[103] Laura U. Marks, *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002): XIII, quoted in Claire Perkins, "This Time It Is Personal", Book Review, *Senses of Cinema*, Issue 33 (October 2004), accessed online on June 2016.

[104] Perkins, "This Time It Is Personal".

[105] Marks, *Touch*, 2, quoted in Perkins, "This Time It Is Personal".

[106] Perkins, "This Time It Is Personal".

"affection-images" by Deleuze, which form a part of the huge body of images he has classified from the optic to the haptic, they interrupt the narrative flow of the film in order to "touch" the image.[107] In this sense, unlike the Lacanian subject which can only represent a lack or a void, the *haptic subject* does have an embodied presence in phenomena.[108]

What is the deeper implication of "haptic visuality" in cinema? Marks holds that filmmakers use it to revive memories that are suppressed by the dominant discourse or the "official history" where vision and hearing or *optic visuality* master the symbolic forms from a distance rather than proximal senses like touching and smelling that produce *haptic visuality* which can only be experienced being close to a thing.[109] Marks delves into Bergson to hold that, while "habitual memory" primarily depends on the audio-visual senses that serve one's pragmatic needs, "pure memory" are un-habituated forms of memory where the mind generally makes connections *laterally* between unrelated things which, she argues, are normally revived through non-optical triggers like the *haptic visuality*.[110] Bergson also refers to a third kind of "unsolicited" independent memory, called "involuntary memory," in which a person is flooded with unsolicited images that overwhelm his sensibilities, like the ones which occur in Marcel Proust's celebrated work *The Remembrance of Things Past*.[111] It may be mentioned that "involuntary memory" has a striking resemblance with Yogic conception of *vāsanās* discussed in the next chapter.

The "haptic images," which may include the memory of certain traumatic events in personal or collective memory mentioned by Marks, have the potential to be liberating for the audiences when they come face-to-face with it. Marks cites experimental filmmakers who evoke experiences involving proximal senses which, despite inroads being made by industrialization, continue to linger in certain non-Western cultures. Examples of such experiences occur in the films of Andrei Tarkovsky who employs perpendicular overhead tracking shots over pools of water

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

[109] David M. Lowe mentions "'Hierarchy of Sensing", in *The History of Bourgeois Perception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982): 2, quoted in Totaro, "Deleuzian Film Analysis".

[110] Totaro, "Deleuzian Film Analysis".

[111] Ibid.

filled with items that are associated with deeply affective memories of the past as in *Stalkęr* (Stalker, 1979) or in *Nostalghia* (Nostalgia, 1982).[112] Similarly, narration in *Nostalgia* is often interrupted by an apparently unrelated shot of a person sitting with a dog close to a pool of water, a shot which evokes overwhelming affects among the audiences for reasons which remain unknown to them. Torato also gives the example of Abbas Kiarostami's film *The Wind Will Carry Us* (2001) where a series of characters, while remaining unknown visually, become known to the audiences through other senses that evoke *haptic visuality*. More importantly, in Majid Majidi's film *Children of Paradise* (1999) where Majidi uses extreme colors and natural beauty to make the spectator experience how a blind boy experiences reality through his proximal senses.[113] Significantly, Abbas Kiarostami sums up his filmmaking experience by saying "I want to create the type of cinema that shows by not showing."[114]

In her analysis, Marks provides a number of enriching ideas concerning "haptic visuality," some of which have a striking resonance with classical Indian ideas. Thus, while the Nyāya notion of vision–touch equivalence to which all other sense-experiences get integrated through memory, provides an important platform for *haptic visuality* to occur, Marks' notion of revival of certain experiences which lie submerged within the audiences unknown to them has a resounding similarity with Abhinavagupta's idea of *samāveśa* in which archetypal experiences "lost" to the audiences are revived by employing appropriate cues used by artworks. Abhinava's idea is eventually based on the Yoga theory which is elaborately discussed in Chapter 5. Finally, Mark's idea that *haptic visuality* often revives traumatic memories suppressed within individuals which, at times, enable them to counter it has some affinity with Ānandavardhana's theory of *dhvani* which aims to restore subjectivity "lost" to individuals through revival of communications truncated due to social repression, traumatic experiences or archetypal experiences lost to memory. All these aspects have also been elaborately discussed in Chapter 5 of this work.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Totaro, "Deleuzian Film Analysis".

[114] Quoted by Totaro above.

4.3.3.2 "Haptic Visuality" and "Point of View Shot" in Cinema: A Nyāya Analysis

Relation between "haptic visuality" and a "PoV shot" in cinema would be evident to even the most ardent critic of the haptic process. Murray Smith says that a PoV shot *works to promote central imagining where a character imagines a scene from inside a scene even though it stops short of the total replication of the situation.*[115] Smith mentions the following interesting example:

> Close to the beginning of Phillip Noyce's *Dead Calm* (1989), a character climbs on board a deserted boat drifting on a calm sea…the calm is broken by a loud noise; our protagonist John Ingram (Sam Neill) turns his to see a large, heavy pulley swinging directly towards him…rendered for us through a PoV shot…My reaction to this shot on a first, unprepared viewing, was visceral flinching…[116]

The same thing must have happened to the audiences in the first Lumière show of the *Actualités* in Paris when they ran helter-skelter on seeing a train coming toward them in the short *Train Arriving at the Station*. Similar reaction has been noticed among the audiences when 3-D films were first introduced in cinema halls. Such reflexive reactions have been described as the "startle response" by Carroll:

> If we are studying horror films, it strikes me as incontrovertible that filmmakers often play upon what psychologists call the "startle response", an innate human tendency to "jump" at loud noises and to recoil at fast movements. This tendency is, as they say, impenetrable to belief; that is, our beliefs won't change the response. It is hardwared and involuntary.[117]

Arguably, Nyāya would not agree with Carroll that the "startle effect" is impervious to belief. Its explanation is likely to be as follows. The prospect of imminent harm to the body would be enough for the "self-body system" to tear asunder the fictional façade of the scene and neutralize the situation. However, as one gets conditioned to such reality effects, its ability to affect the audiences diminishes progressively. With the fictional cover once again in place, the audiences would start integrating the scenes in the fictional

[115] Murray Smith, "Imagining from the Inside", in *Film Theory and Philosophy*, 417.

[116] Smith, "Imagining from the Inside", 412.

[117] Noël Carroll, "Prospects for Film Theory: A Personal Assessment", in *Post-theory*, 37–68, 50.

mode resulting in such reality effects becoming part of their aesthetic pleasure in future. However, since PoV shots may involve other aspects as well, as held by Gregory Currie and Murray Smith, a fuller discussion on the subject would require garnering further facts in the matter.[118]

4.4 Arising of Indirect Knowledge in Nyāya Theory of Perception

Out of the "six ways of knowing" advocated in classical Indian theories, while perception (*pratyakṣa*) forms a *direct* and *immediate* process of knowledge, the following five represent *indirect* and *mediate processes*: inference (*anumāna*), word or the testimony of a reliable person (*śabda*), comparison (*upamāna*), postulation (*arthāpatti*), and absence (*anupalabhdhi*, *abhāva*).[119] Indian theories accord primacy to perception as a knowledge-gathering instrument because all the mediate processes are based on perception at some stage or the other. To the above list of *indirect* processes, Jaina theorists add point of view (*naya*) on the ground that all knowledge remains partial to the point of view being adopted by the enquirer. While the process primarily applies to knowing a thing that is already known but not for certain (seeing smoke, one reaches the certainty of fire there), it also applies in determining a hitherto unknown factor, that is, a novelty. Thus, while this process vouches for the certainty of our knowledge (*artha-paricchitti*), it also adds novelty to our knowledge (*anadhigata*).

The whole process of mediate knowledge is often termed "higher thought" because it enables a person *to know an unknown from a known based on their mutual relationship habitually observed in life*. In other words, if two elements are generally known to form an "invariable sequence" in reality, then, if one of them is known, the other automatically becomes known to the enquirer. Since, in the Indian theories, the knowledge of such sequences is invariably rooted in one's habitual experiences of life or those taught to him, the knowledge process championed by classical Indian theories remains rooted in what may be called a *theory of the ordinary*.

[118] See Smith's detailed discussion of POV in "Imagining from Inside," 417–24, where he raises various points without reaching any definitive conclusion.

[119] Not all classical Indian theories subscribe to all of them. For example, some of them hold that some of the processes are equivalent to "inference". Thus, for Nyāya, "postulation" is nothing but "inference" and "absence" is part of "perception."

i. Inference (*Anumāna*)

The *inferential process* has been considered for long to be the quintessential representation of "higher thought" in human beings. Often considered to be synonymous with the scientific process of thinking, the process involves the formation of an "invariable concomitance" between two elements, also called "pervasion" or *vyāpti* in Indian thought, which exist without fail in all such cases. This "invariability" of the sequence manifests in the following two major forms of inference accepted all over the world: inductive and deductive inference.

An "inductive inference" is primarily based on observing "invariable sequences" occurring in nature. It is primarily based on the principle called "analogical reasoning" or "seen from likeness" (*sāmānyato-dṛṣta*) conclusions drawn from nature. Thus, by observing the regularity of sun rising from the east every day, one may *inductively* draw the following inference:

Since the sun rises from the east every day
It would rise from the east tomorrow

A "deductive inference", also called "syllogistic inference", in contrast, involves an inference where certain conclusions invariably follow from the premises assumed in a proposition. The following celebrated Aristotelian syllogism is a case in point:

Man is mortal,
Socrates is man,
(Hence) Socrates is mortal

It may be mentioned that since the conclusion is *deduced* from the assumption, the process is called a "deduction". While the above assumption appears to be in keeping with the regularities observed in nature, the formula is, however, formalistic in nature. For example, the following syllogism would be equally valid in the above formulation:

Man is immortal
Socrates is man,
(Hence) Socrates is immortal

It may be mentioned that there is a third model of inference called "abductive inference" which works on the following principle: once possibilities of particular solutions are eliminated one by one, whatever

remains must be the truth. The process basically works on the principle of exclusion (*pariśeṣānumāna*). At times Sherlock Holmes employs this method to solve some of his celebrated cases.

In this context, the Nyāya model of inference is generally called an "inductive–deductive inference" accepted by almost all classical Indian theories. A classic example of this model occurs as follows:

> There is fire on the hill
> Because there is smoke there
> Wherever there is smoke, there is fire, like in the kitchen
> This smoke is like that
> (Hence) There is fire on the hill

It is called a "deductive–inductive" model because, in this model, an "inductive inference" invariably "limits" the range of "deductive inferences" being made there. This "limit" is imposed by the Indians apparently to keep deductions within empirically verifiable "limits." The form indicated above is called "inference for others" (*parārthanumāna*) which is aimed at convincing a skeptical person of the conclusions reached ("inference for self" or *svārthānumāna* consists of the first three steps only). In "inference for others," the first step lays down the inferential "conclusion" (*sādhya*) to be reached; the second step enumerates the "reason" (*hetu*) on the basis of which the conclusion is to be drawn; the third one deals with the "principle" (*siddhānta*) of "invariable concomitance" (*vyāpti*, "pervasion") being applied here, duly supported by a positive and, often (as insisted by the Buddhists), a negative "example" (*dṛṣṭānta* or *udāharaṇa*); the fourth step gives the "advice" (*parāmarśa*) that the present case is similar in nature; it, finally, leads to the "conclusion" (*nirṇaya*) in the fifth step. The point is that the model involves both *deduction* viz. "fire from smoke" as well as *induction* viz. "wherever there is smoke, there is fire like in the kitchen" observed in real life.

If we reframe the Aristotelian deductive syllogism in the empirically verifiable deductive–inductive form of Nyāya, it would appear as follows:

> Socrates is mortal
> Because he is a man
> Wherever there is man, there is mortality, like in human societies
> Socrates's case is similar
> (Hence) Socrates is mortal

However, since the above "deductive–inductive" Indian model consists of a step involving empirically verifiable facts, it does not permit any formal manipulations as Aristotelian syllogism does.

ii. Postulation (*Arthāpatti*)

While it still works on the principle of "X" and "Y" forming an "invariable sequence," it works more on the principle of probability rather than proof beyond doubt. A common example is as follows:

"Even though X is fasting, he is still gaining weight"

The possible explanation, based on the common experience of an "invariable sequence" existing between a person's weight and his eating, the following hypothesis is made:

"X is eating during the night"

Even though Nyāya discounts "postulation" as being part of "inference," it may be argued that "postulation" is not exactly "inference" as such. The main difference between Nyāya "deductive–inductive inference" and "postulation" is that, while the former uses the certainty of an "invariable concomitance" or *vyāpti* ("pervasion"), "postulation" uses the *probability* of an "invariable sequence" happening as the basis for its conclusion. Thus, for example, while there may be other explanations available for a person to gain weight, like suffering from a metabolic disorder, et cetera, the above explanation happens to be the most probable one in terms of human beings' habitual experiences of life.

iii. Comparison (*Upamāna*)

In the Nyāya theory of "comparison" (*upamāna*, "similarity"), while the knowledge process of "if x, then y" is still applicable, the form adopted here is as follows: when a person, who has been taught about a "wild cow" (*gavaya*) on the basis of its description, is able to identify a similar animal in the wild as a "wild cow," the process is called "comparison" in Indian theories:

"This is a *wild cow*"

Here an "invariable sequence" is formed between elements taught and those observed in real life. Mohanty clarifies that, in "comparison" "A person is able to determine a meaning relation between a word and a thing. It is the knowledge of similarity—at first verbal, then perceptual, and finally memory—which is the cause of the cognition arising from comparison or *upamāna*."[120]

iv. Word (*Śabda*) or the Knowledge Taught Through the Testimony of a Competent Person (*Āpta*)

'Word' (*śabda*) as a means of knowledge or a *pramāṇa* ("proof") is extremely important as it encapsulates almost the whole of taught experiences and a large part of trainings received by human beings. At the center of the verbal process lies the *testimony of a trustworthy person* who has the conviction that what is being conveyed is valid knowledge. The use of 'word' as proof is because all taught knowledge is generally conveyed through verbal language. Thus, when a competent person says that "it is 'x'", one takes the knowledge generally as certain. However, 'word' becomes important in the Indian theories because of another purpose: the linguistic process mirrors how knowledge arises among human beings at the most basic level.

Before a competent person can impart knowledge through verbal language, Indian linguists hold that the following three conditions must be fulfilled for verbal language to be grasped appropriately: the "utterer condition", the "linguistic condition", and the "understanding condition", all of which deal with the need for adequacy of knowledge in the verbal language for the desired communication to arise in both the listener and the speaker. In other words, for *śabdabodha* ("cognition arising through words") to arise as a *pramāṇa* or "proof," the above conditions must be taken care of.

However, as already indicated, a more important aspect of the Indian linguistic theories is that verbal language *is representative of the way knowledge-process works among human beings*. This had made Indian linguistic theories exert an overwhelming influence on Indian philosophy in its theorization of knowledge as such. However, there is no unitary linguistic process in the Indian linguistic theories. Broadly speaking, they

[120] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 31, modified.

advocate the following three ways: *referential*, *differential* and *symbolic*. While the "Hindu" theories generally subscribe to the *referential model* with some differences between them, the "Non-Vedic" Buddhists follow the *differential model* with, again, some difference between its various schools, and, finally, the linguist-grammarian Bhartṛhari (c. 5th CE) follows his own unique *symbolic model* of "meaning-generation" among hearers.

As far as the Nyāya *referential model* is concerned, it holds that a child generally learns language in terms of the repeat utterance of a "word" or a "sentence" in a particular context, thereby creating a *word–object connection through convention*.[121] These processes worked in various ways like analogy, speech-behavior of elders, circumstantial evidence, reliability of the speaker, et cetera. It may be interesting to point out that the Nyāya verbal process generates a "mode of appearance" in the listener exactly in the same way a visual process does for its viewer:

Unit of Verbal Cognition = Qualificand + Qualifier + Relationship
(*Vācya*, 'Expression')

The underlying principle of knowledge-gathering in the *referential model* is that a "thing" or an "object" exists "out there" independently of the observer or the language-user, the various sides of which are then *referred to* by particular "words" and "sentences". Being influenced by Bhartṛharian linguistics (for a discussion of the Bhartṛharian theory, see below), Nyāya does not hold that bare sensations are cognizable as the Buddhists do. Instead, it holds that bare sensations can only be understood when they form concepts, initially in the form of isolated concepts, called *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa* ("indeterminate perception"), like experiencing a "chair" as an isolated ides and, then, in the form of related concepts, called *savikalpa pratyakṣa* ("determinate perception"), to view it like "It is my chair". In this connection, the Nyāya theory holds, on the basis of the principle *sāmānyalakṣaṇa pratyāsatti* or "experiencing a universal", that a language-user understands, like in perception, both the "particular," like a "chair", and the "universal," like "chair-class," simultaneously.

[121] Matilal, *The Word and the World*, 29.

Buddhist linguistics is, however, a different proposition altogether. It is unique in holding that a *differential process*, called the *theory of apoha* (*apohavāda*), is the basis of generating "meaning" through a difference between a paradigmatic selection of "words" having a relative grading of similar "meanings" and a syntagmatic order of their placement within a sentential formation. The Buddhist process is based on the principle what the word *apoha* symbolizes: "when two things, like two cows, are found to be similar belonging to the same class, it is not to say that they share certain positive characteristics between them but that they merely share the negative characteristic of not being non-cows."[122] This process of describing something *negatively* is necessitated by the Buddhist phenomenalist theory that reality consists of five varieties of momentarily existing "ultimates" or *dharmas* that represent particular forms of "consciousness", called *svalakṣaṇa* ("the simplest, not further analyzable, element"). A unique part of the Buddhist theory is that the "consciousness-dharmas" are synonymous with their experiences—there is no body standing separately who experiences them from outside. Essentially, in Buddism, all such *experiences* belong to sense-experiences that are non-conceptual in nature. "Universals", like this a "chair", a "pot", et cetera, are held to be intellectual formations based on the similarities observed between one's habitual experiences of life and the experiences generated by particular *dharmas* that have no sanction in reality. In other words, while in the Buddhist theory only non-conceptual sense-experiences are held to be true, all conceptual experiences like that of a "chair" or "It is my chair", et cetera, are held to be false knowledge that have no validity in reality.

In the same vein, the Budddists also consider "the self" also to be a conglomeration of "particular" "selves," called a "contingent self," produced from a "bunching together" and continuous oozing of all five *dharma-series* that give the illusion of an abiding "self" on the surface. However, since there is no stability either in a "thing" which is perceived or in "the self" who perceives it, there is no question of having a stable "meaning" in the Buddhist linguistic theory. Ingalls notes:

> From the Buddhist doctrine of the momentariness of all things, it follows that anything which we experience has ceased before we can verbalize it. Under the circumstances, we can only *verbalize* the *general aspect of a*

[122] Puligandla, *Fundamentals*, 334.

> *thing* (*sāmānya*, "universal") which doesn't really belong to the "particular" but is superimposed on it by our own mind.[123]

However, since the subtlety of the Buddhist process of "meaning" generation may escape general listeners, it adopts the following process: *exclusion of all those appearances which an "object's" present appearance does not represent*. Thus, the word "horse" would broadly "mean" the denial of all "things" that are not a "horse." This *negative way* of understanding a "thing" is more "truthful" for the Buddhists in the sense that it doesn't have to *positively* identify the "thing" which, according to the Buddhists, have no stable existence in reality. It may be mentioned, though, that the Buddhist theoretician Ratnakīrti (c. 11th CE) had later held that both positive and negative identifications are required for identifying a "thing" in reality.

The sum and substance of the above discussion about Buddhist linguistics means that, for the Buddhists, language signifies only the "general" or the "universal" (*sāmānya*) aspect of a "thing" and not its "particular" instance. Simply told, the knowledge process in Buddhism operates on the following principle: *while the object of perception is the bare "sensation" (svalakṣaṇa), only the object of inference as the "universal" (sāmānya) is known in language which merely represents a mental construction by the perceiver that has no sanction in reality.*[124] Mohanty notes:

> We do not, strictly speaking, perceive physical objects which, according to the Buddhist view, are aggregates of parts not all of which are perceptible. My alleged perception of a "tree" over there must then be in truth an inference. Only the simplest, not further analyzable, "particular" would be perceptible.[125]

For the Buddhists, therefore, bare sensations constituting *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa* or "indeterminate perception" is the only valid means of knowledge while *savikalpa pratyakṣa* or "determinate perception"[126]

[123] Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 4.7aL, FN 3, 710.

[124] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 153, modified.

[125] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 83.

[126] Buddhists originally conceived the above two forms of perception viz. indeterminate or *nirvikalpa* and determinate or *savikalpa* perception in their theory.

involving conceptual formations remain false. Despite such broad differences between the *referential* and the *differential* modes of language, the interesting part is that neither the Nyāiyāyikas nor the Buddhists had faced any difficulty in dealing with, say, a "chair," whether it is "out there" as held by the Naiyāyikas or constituted by sensations giving the false impression of a "chair" as held by the Buddhists, so long as it serves a practical purpose for the user!

One of the most revolutionary and intriguing linguistic theories to emerge from India is Bhartṛhari's (c. 5th CE) *sphoṭavāda* which, arguably, remains way ahead of other linguistic theories in being able to incorporate both the "mode of appearance" and the "mode of presentation" in the theory. In this connection, Bhartṛari not only considers "words" (*śabda*) and "sentences" (*pada*) to be forming a "meaning" but also the extra-linguistic factors, like intonations, contexts, et cetera, as contributing to the "meaning" as such. For Bhartṛhari, the linguistic and extra-linguistic factors together form "symbols" (*sphoṭa*, "blossoming")[127] that reveal "meaning" to the hearer *all at once* where the word "symbol" essentially means that a "lot of things have been put together" in its coming into being.

The underlying principle of knowledge in the Bhartṛharian theory may be summed up as follows: "there can be no awareness without concepts."[128] It is a strong thesis which holds that unless sensations are converted into "concepts," they do not come within the cognizable zone of human purview. While this idea is itself new, the revolutionary aspect of this theory is that elements which generate "concepts" or "meanings" consist of both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors representing an *unbreakable whole* for the hearer. Thus, for example, the "meaning" of a sentence uttered in a particular voice-intonation (*kāku*)[129] would be completely different from the same sentence being uttered differently. It is in this sense that, for Bhartṛhari, all utterances represent unbreakable

[127] Etymologically the English word "symbol" originates from the Greek *sumbállein* where the prefix *sun* means 'together' and *bállein* means 'throw', together generating the meaning 'throwing or putting things together' (Bloomsbury Dictionary of Word Origin).

[128] Matilal, *Perception*, 388.

[129] The word *kāku* is derived from the verbal root *kāka* which means 'to be greedy' for something. It signifies that the very intonation of a word in an expectant or non-expectant tone seeks (is greedy for) a meaning over and above its ordinary meaning. Ingalls in *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.38L, 617.

"symbols" for the hearer which is the same as saying that, for Bhartṛhari, *a meaningful expression is invariably a performative act rather than a mere passive utterance.*

The above idea had challenged the Buddhist notion that only bare "sensations" constitute valid knowledge. In contrast, for Bhartṛhari, both "particulars" and "universals" are not only conceptual in nature but also constituted of both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. Bhartṛhari's difference with Buddhism lies in the fact that while, for the former, both a "particular" and a "universal" are not only conceptual in nature but also arises *directly* and *immediately* in cognition, in Buddhism, all concepts are *inferential* in nature.

Bhartṛhari ultimately lists the following three template categories, among others, as exerting crucial influences on verbal cognition: *elements which are generally together*, *contextual factors* and *reliability of the speaker*. Some of the important elements that fall under the above three "categories" are association, dissociation (for example, two factors which are always seen together are separated now), hostility or opposition (for example, light and shade which take off from a contrast between day and night), context, purpose, capacity (syntactic expectancy or *ākāṃkṣā*), proximity (contiguity or *āsatti*, *sannidhi*), propriety (semantic fitness or *yogyatā*), place, time, gender and accent.[130] When looked at closely, the above list, which had been more or less accepted by all Indian theories,[131] has, at its center, the formation of "invariable sequences" between linguistic and non-linguistic elements in terms of a particular language-user's habitual experiences of life which is likely to differ from person to person, society to society and culture to culture. Thus, for example, the expression "The sun has set" is likely to suggest three different "meanings" to three different groups of people. For example, to a thief, it would "mean" time has come for stealing; to a lover, it would "mean" time has come for meeting her beloved; and to a house-holder, it would "mean" a time for prayers has come.[132] In this connection, the extra-linguistic factors that Bhartṛhari employs in his theory has a *suggestive* aspect that has the ability to either partially (*tiraskṛta-vācya*) or fully subvert (*atyanta-tiraskṛta-vācya*) linguistic "meanings" conveyed by

[130] Matilal, *The Word and the World*, 25–6.

[131] Ibid., 25.

[132] Matilal, *The Word and the World*, 24.

"words" or "sentences", an aspect which assumes crucial importance in the formation of Ānandavardhana's theory of "art" called the *dhvani theory* or the "theory of suggestion" to be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

Since, in Bhartṛhari, an utterance consisting of "words" and "sentences" also include extra-linguistic factors, for a person desirous of knowing what a particular "word" or a "sentence" means in isolation, *apoddhāra* method or "the method of progressive extraction, comparison, synthesis and abstraction" is to be resorted to. In this process, a particular piece is turned into a separate whole by assigning an independent "metaphorical existence" (*upacāra-sattā*) to it[133]: "we create abstract entities from the given concrete wholes by breaking them into pieces and reifying them."[134] After Bhartṛhari, it became impossible to sustain theories which assigned individual "meanings" to "words" and "sentences." Thus, even the great Mīmāṃsāka, Kumarila Bhaṭṭa (c. 8th CE), who was an ardent supporter of the designation theory of "words," was forced to concede the existence of an external power or *śakti* in each "word" which acted as a glue for individual words to form *meaningful sentential wholes.*

Point of View (Naya)

The Jainas (c. 6th century BC) are non-Vedic theorists whose primary drive was to reconcile the contrary viewpoints of the Hindu and Buddhist theories. The basic idea of the Jainas hinged on their unique claim that reality has infinite aspects and, hence, a theory has to be many-sided or non-absolutistic in nature to be able to do justice to it. Called *anekāntavāda* or the "theory of many-sidedness," the Jainas worked it out in terms of two logical pillars, the notion of the "point of view" (*naya*) and the "conditional assertion" (*syat*) which together led to a generalization of all utterances into a maximum of seven possible assertions (*saptabhaṅgī*).

The Jaina theory of *point of view* (*naya*) holds that, since theories follow different "points of views" to arrive at their conclusions, there is no basis to claim that a particular "point of view" is more privileged than another. In fact, each *point of view* represents a *naya,* a partial

[133] Ibid., 106; Matilal, *Perception*, 393.

[134] Matilal, *Perception*, 393.

truth.[135] In this sense, the Jaina thinker Umāsvati (c. 4th century AD) says: "Acquiring knowledge is through a means of knowing (*pramāṇa*) based on a perspective (*naya*)."[136] Another Jaina philosopher Siddhasena Divākara (c. 8th century AD) says:

> An object whose nature is to be many-sided is the content of complete knowledge; the field of a *naya* is a thing qualified by one aspect.[137]

A metaphor used in Vidyānanda's *Tattvārthaślokavārttika* (c. 8th century AD) says that "just as a part of the ocean is not the whole ocean but neither is it something other than the ocean, so too a *naya* is not a *pramāṇa* nor is something other than the *pramāṇa*."[138] Ganeri notes: "Crucial to the Jaina concept of a *naya* is the idea that the knowledge of one aspect of an object does not exclude knowledge of its other aspects."[139] In this sense, the Jainas challenge the epistemological principle "If one knows that x *is F*, then one does not know that x *is not F*," that is, if a "thing" has a particular property, it does not have its contrary property. The Jainas hold that since human beings are not in complete control of all knowledge, it is possible that there could be hidden parameters on the basis of which contrary properties could be located in the same "object."[140] If, hypothetically, all *points of view* could be combined, then, according to the Jaina theory, one would be able to gain almost complete knowledge (*sakalādeśa*) about a "thing" or an "event." The Jaina prescription for gaining complete knowledge is through "the accumulation and integration of all partial knowledges… through a proper evaluation of their hidden parameters."[141]

Whether such an all-comprehensive knowledge is ever possible to be gained by an individual has been debated by other theories as a critic of the Jaina theory. Associated with the notion of the *point of view* is the Jaina idea that each assertion is specific to a particular standpoint (*syat*) and

[135] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 91.

[136] Umāsvati, *Tattvārthādhigamasūtra*, 1.6, quoted in Ganeri, *Philosophy*, 134.

[137] Siddhasena, *Nyāyāvatāra*, 29, quoted in Ganeri, *Philosophy*, 134.

[138] Quoted in Ganeri, *Philosophy*, 134.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Quoted in Ganeri, *Philosophy*, 134, modified.

hence conditional in nature. Accordingly, their advice is to insert the clause "from a standpoint" (*syat*) before every assertion that one makes.[142] The Jainas hold that there could be a maximum of seven-fold predication about reality (*saptabhaṅgī*) which captures the totality of reality. For example, on the question of whether "x *is* F," the following seven-fold answer could be given:

1. From a certain standpoint, x *is* F
2. From a certain standpoint, x *is not* F
3. From a certain standpoint, *x is* and *is not* F
4. From a certain standpoint, x *is* Indescribable
5. From a certain standpoint, x *is* F and Indescribable
6. From a certain standpoint, x *is not* F and Indescribable
7. From a certain standpoint, x *is* F, *is not* F, and *is* Indescribable.[143]

In view of the partiality of all knowledge due to they being rooted in particular points of view, the Jaina advocacy that all statements be made in a *non-exclusive* manner is a signal contribution to Indian theory.[144] Mohanty notes its importance as follows:

> The Jaina theory of 'many-sided doctrine' or *anekāntavāda* was opposed by all others, each of which was a one-sided doctrine (*ekāntavāda*) including the non-dualistic Vedānta and Buddhist doctrines. Śamkara launches a critique of the Jaina position by stating that they raise their own theory to the absolutist status as well. Despite such critiques, the Jaina position remains as one of the finest achievements of the Indian mind.[145]

Whether it is possible to gain complete knowledge by integration of all partial knowledge is besides the point here. What is important is the attitude of the Jaina thinkers that there should be tolerance for others' points of views.

One would now like to sum up this whole section involving *indirect knowledge*. It works on the basic principle of observing an "invariable sequence" occurring between elements on the basis of which an

[142] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 91.

[143] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 91–2.

[144] Ganeri, *Philosophy*, 138.

[145] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 92, modified.

unknown element becomes *known* to an enquirer. Since, in the classical Indian theories, these "invariable sequences" are based on human beings' habitual experiences of life, et cetera, they essentially form a *theory of the ordinary* for us.

4.5 Applying Nyāya Theory of Perception to *Read* Audio-Visual Images

Let's apply Nyāya theory of perception to visual images to indicate how a "mode of appearance" and a "mode of presentation" an are formed *directly* in perception, followed by the formation of "analytical meanings" based on *indirect* processes operating on the basis of perception that evoke "affective states" involving "emotions" and "affects" in the perceiver which gives rise to the production of a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver to restore his or her balance.

4.5.1 Reading Images of "Madhuri and Books"

The following is a Normal Angle Viewpoint of a Scene (Fig. 4.2):

Fig. 4.2 Madhuri and Books—Normal Angle View

1. Formation of a "Mode of Appearance" as a "Universal" in the Above Perception

According to the Navya-Naiyāyika, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi, elements occurring within the field of vision mutually "delimit" (*avacchedaka*) each other based on cues provided within the scene called "distinguishers" (*viśeṣaṇa*) to form a *causal whole* that manifests a "necessary relation" or an "inherence" (*samavāya*) occurring between them. Such a *causal whole* represents a particular "mode of appearance" for the perceiver who, by comparing it with the *normative values* of a similar "universal" held in memory, *directly perceives* the scene as follows:

"Madhuri is *studying*"

In the above visual, while Madhuri acts as the *chief qualificand,* books act as her *chief qualifier* with the pen-stand and the flower-vase acting as *secondary qualifiers* for her, the *qualificand* and the *qualifier* being combined through the *functional relationship* of "studying" between them based on the perceiver's habitual experiences of life. While the *functional relationship* essentially represents the formation of a "necessary relation" between them, the whole process is given by the fundamental formula of perception mentioned as follows: "perception = qualificand + qualifier + relationship."

While the above *causally connected whole* or the "universal" arises *all at once* in one's perception, it consists of the following processes understood retroactively or through the *apoddhāra method* mentioned by Bhartṛhari:

a. "Delimitation" of the "Mode of Appearance" of Madhuri as a "Student"

Objective features of Madhuri, like her age, her general appearance, her eye-line trajectory, the presence of books in front of her, et cetera, act as "properties" *qualifying* her which "delimits" her as a "student" in terms of the perceiver's habitual experiences of life:

"Madhuri is a *student*"

b. “Delimitation” of the “Mode of Appearance” of Books as Her “Study Material”

Similarly, the old look of the books, their location on the table, et cetera, “delimits” the books as “study material” for Madhuri in terms of the perceivers’ experiences of life:

> “Books are her *study-material*”

2. “Mode of Presentation” as an “Embodied Sense” in the above Perception

The “mode of presentation,” given by the formula “percept + subject-object trajectory,” generates an “embodied sense” in the viewer because of the particular point of view through which she is looking at the view. In this case, the particular point of view is a *normal angle viewpoint* which makes the books *appear* at a “normal” height vis-à-vis Madhuri to the viewer. It evokes an “embodied sense” of books being *benign* to Madhuri in terms of the perceiver’s *embodied* experiences of the world, that is, the *felt experience* of the perceiver which results in the cognition:

> “Books pose no *threat* to Madhuri”

3. Formation of an “Analytical Meaning” Based on Direct Perception

An “analytical meaning” is generated over and above those produced by *direct* perception. The overarching principle on which the explanatory model works in the Indian tradition is *to know an unknown based on a known where the two are known to exist together*. On the basis of *indirect* processes of knowledge-gathering, like inference, word or verbal testimony, postulation and comparison, an “analytical meaning” is generated in the perceiver. In the above case, the following “analytical meaning” based on *inference* is likely to arise in the receiver:

> “Madhuri is *in control of* her studies”

It is likely to lead to the generation of a further "analytical meaning" based on *comparison* in the perceiver:

"Madhuri *is a good* student"

If we put some of the above values in the formula for perception, we get:
Perception =

Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation + Analytical Meaning

↓ ↓ ↓

"Madhuri is *studying*"+"Books are no *threat* to Madhuri"+"She is *in control of* her study"

4. Production of an "Affective State" in Perception
Once a percept is clearly identified, the perceiver is likely to read "emotions" and "affects" usually associated with the percept in the scene. The percept "Madhuri is *in control of* her studies" is likely to generate the following "affective states" in the perceiver:

i. Evocation of "Emotion" and "Affect" in Perception
Since Madhuri's studies are posing no threat to her, she would be perceived as being "happy" in terms of the viewer's own experiences of life:

"Madhuri is *happy*"

ii. Arising of a "Dispositional Tendency" in Perception
Since the scene generates *happiness* in Madhuri, the viewer would assume that Madhuris' efforts are adequate in the matter. The resulting "disposition" in the viewer is likely to be:

"Madhuri is *making adequate efforts* in her studies"

Based on Gumbrechts' findings, one may draw a significant conclusion from the above by holding that cognitions are a result of a continuous process of *oscillation*, *reinforcement* or *resistance* operating between a *presence effect* born from *direct perception* and a *meaning effect* involving

the "analytical meaning(s)" produced thereafter, both *effects* being present all the time in one's perception.

When the same scene is analyzed from a Low Angle Camera Viewpoint, we find (Fig. 4.3):

1. "Mode of Appearance" as a "Universal" in Perception
Since the "mode of appearance" remains the same even in the low angle viewpoint, the resulting cognition is likely to remain the same for the viewer as well:

> "Madhuri is *studying*"

2. "Mode of Presentation" as an "Embodied Sense" in Perception
In this low angle viewpoint, the *sense-object trajectory* makes the books appear "taller" in relation to Madhuri. Since anything "tall" carries an overbearing "embodied sense" of "threat" for a viewer, the above scene would be perceived as posing a *threat* to Madhuri as well:

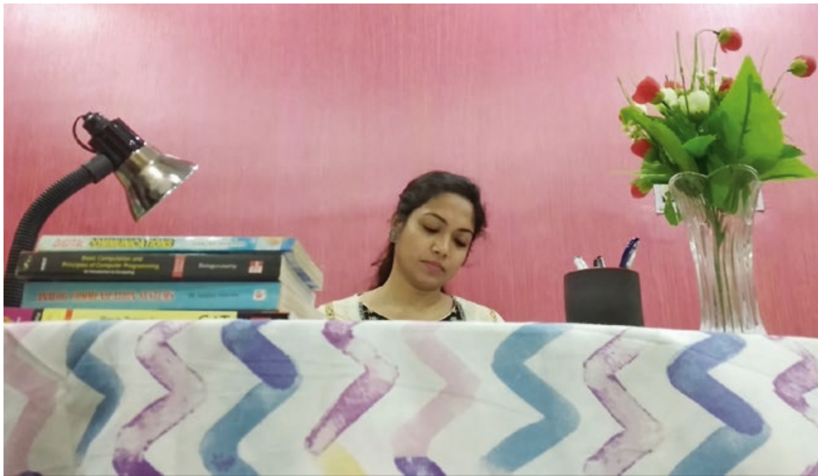


Fig. 4.3 Madhuri and Books—Low Angle View

"Books are posing a *threat* to Madhuri"

3. "Analytical Meaning" in Perception
On the basis of *inference*, it is likely to lead to the following analytical cognition:

"Madhuri is *unable to handle* her studies"

It leads to the following cognition based on *comparison*:

"Madhuri *is an ordinary* student"

When some of the above values are inserted in the formula for perception, we get:

Perception =

Mode of Appearance + Mode of Presentation + Analytical Meaning

↓ ↓ ↓

"Madhuri is *studying*"+"Books pose *threat* to Madhuri"+"She is *overloaded* with study"

4. Production of an "Affective State" in Perception
It has already been mentioned that the identification of a percept generates certain "affective states" habitually associated with an "event":

i. Evocation of "Emotion" and "Affect" in Perception
Since Madhuri is perceived to be *overloaded* with her studies, the perceiver would naturally associate the "emotion" of "anxiety" with her in terms of his own experiences of life. The scene is, thus, likely to be read as:

"Madhuri is *worried*"

ii. Arising of a "Dispositional Tendency" in Perception
Since Madhuri is perceived to be *overloaded* with her work which makes her *worried*, the "dispositional tendency" likely to be produced in the viewer to off-set such affects is:

"Madhuri *should make greater efforts* in her studies"

Let's now examine the same scene from a High Angle Camera Viewpoint (Fig. 4.4):

From this top angle viewpoint, Madhuri does not seem to be "studying" at all!

How "Normative Values" of an "Event" influence Perception
It has already been said that the Navya-Naiyāyika, Raghunātha Śiromaṇi had held that perceptual knowledge arises by comparing the "universal" of an "event" being perceived now with the "normative values" of a similar "event" held in the perceiver's memory. Thus, even imagining that Sigmund Freud's table contains more books than Madhuri's, the "normative values" associated with him would not permit the viewers to think that "He is *overloaded* with studies".

Similarly, even when one imagines that a huge number of books is present on the table of Rabindra Nath Tagore, in one of his numerous

Fig. 4.4 Madhuri and Books—Top Angle View

photographs where he is seen as working, no body is likely to cognize the scene as "Tagore is *under threat*" because of the "normative values" associated with him.

The question is which of the above three viewpoints involving Madhuri and books or those involving Freud and Tagore are *true*? As an arch realist, Nyāya does not hold any particular viewpoint to be privileged as long as the *pramāṅa*, that is, the correct procedure for perception, like appropriate lighting, adequate distance, et cetera, have been maintained. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is said to advocate the correspondence theory of truth where the "truth" of a situation is given by its ability to produce "practical results." Hiriyanna comments:

> There can obviously be no direct testing of correspondence, for we cannot get outside of our knowledge. Hence the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika proposes an objective or indirect test involving "fruitful activity" or *saṁvādi-pravṛtti*. While this verification is pragmatic, it should be remembered it is not the definition of truth. Truth is not what 'works', it is what conforms to reality.[146]

The above position is explained further by Mohanty: "The only reason some contents are regarded as "real" is that they have not yet been contradicted. When one replaces "truth" by "un-contradicted-ness," one can, at best, say "un-contradicted as far as experience up to this time goes."[147] In the above sense, in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory, "reality" is a state which prevails till it is contradicted by an opposed view which, in turn, continues to be "real" till its own contradiction arises and so on. Certainly, Nyāya notion of the "truth" is one of the most revolutionary notions of the "truth" that science is grappling with today.

4.5.2 Reading the Practice of "Continuity" in Cinema

The practice of "continuity" in cinema involves the adoption of a filmmaking process that ensures a seamless unfolding of the narrative story-line in cinema. The practice primarily involves the following processes: continuity of direction by maintaining the "180° axis" of shot-taking, "eye-line match" where the eyes of two persons match

[146] Hiriyanna, *Outlines*, 253, modified.

[147] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 142–3, modified.

while talking to each other in a "shot-counter shot" format of capturing the scene, "match-cut" where two shots pertaining to an action are matched and the maintenance of a "30° rule" where a difference of minimum 30 degrees is maintained between two shots of the scene in order to avoid jerks in the audiences' perception. Thus, for example, if we take the case of a person "walking," the shots have to be taken in a manner that the person's direction of movement, et cetera, is maintained. According to the N-V theory, the process essentially represents the formation of a "necessary relation" between the person as the *qualificand* and her walking as the *qualifier*, the two combining to form the cognition "She is walking" in the perceiver's mind.

If we leave aside the technical aspects of film "continuity" mentioned above, Nyāya would like to explain the "continuity of a scene" in commercial films on the basis of its theory of "collective-recollective cognition" (*pratisandhāna*) where the memory of the "content" of the immediately preceding shot *qualifies* its immediately next shot in terms of *functional relationship* based on the story-line endorsed by the audiences' habitual experiences of life. The shots, in turn, give rise to the formation of *causal wholes* in perception involving elements occurring within the perceptual field that form a "necessary relation" or "inherence" (*samavāya*) between them. In case any one of the elements occurring in a continuity scene is changed, it would give rise to another *causal whole* in perception.

4.5.3 Reading the Practice of "Montage" in Cinema

It is, however, in case of the *montage theory* that Nyāya offers a radically different interpretation than what has been provided by the early Soviet filmmakers, Kuleshov and Pudovkin. The *Kuleshov Experiments* involved the juxtaposition of the Soviet actor Ivan Mozzukhin's same "neutral face" serially with a bowl of soup, a child playing with balloons, and a dead child in a coffin in none of which he was physically present resulting in the audiences reading three different 'meanings' of Mozzukhin's face (Fig. 4.5).

In the *mind-based* explanation given by Kuleshov of the above experiment, he held that the audiences *intellectually* synthesized the following "meanings" from the above three juxtaposed shots: "Mozzukhin is hungry," "Mozzhukhin is happy," and "Mozzukhin is sad."

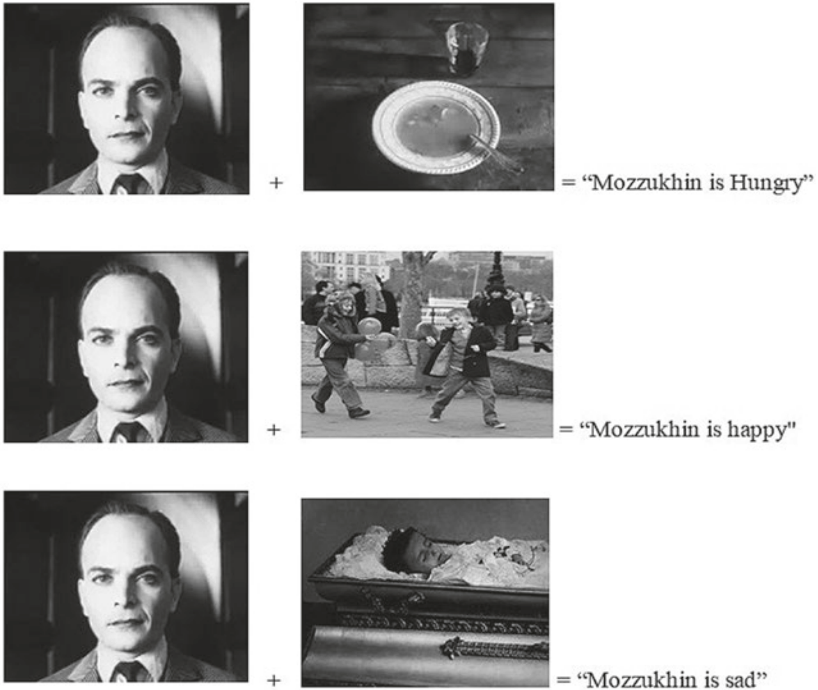


Fig. 4.5 *Kuleshov Experiments*

In contrast, however, Nyāya would like to offer a completely different explanation of the *Kuleshov Experiments.* According to the Nyāya theory, "meaning" in the above three situations arises through the process of *direct perception* where no *intellectual processing* is immediately involved. Nyāya perception works as follows: the shot of Mozzukhin's face is the *qualificand* which gets *qualified* by the shots of the bowl of soup, a child playing with balloons, and a dead child in a coffin respectively to form different *functional relationships* between them based on the viewer's habitual experiences of life. These *relationships* are assumed to form "universals" or *causally integrated wholes* in each case. While the "necessary relation" in the image is formed in terms of the *functional relationship* of "hunger" that links the first two shots, the audiences read "happiness" and "sadness" in the next two instances because these

"emotions" are invariably associated with those "events" in terms of the audiences habitual experiences of life.

Strength of Nyāya Theory of Perception vis-à-vis Kuleshov's Theory

The strength of the Nyāya theory of *direct perception* vis-à-vis Kuleshov's theory of *intellectual synthesis* may be demonstrated from the following two examples.

In the context of the *Kuleshov Experiments*, when Mozzukhin's "neutral face" is juxtaposed with a "bowl of soup," the audiences' "intellectual" reading of the juxtaposed images as "Mozzukhin is hungry" raises the following question: why don't the audiences intellectually read the shots of Mozzukhin as a Chef who is admiring his dish or Mozzukhin is a Hotel Owner who is feeling proud of the dish, both of which would have generated the cognition "Mozzukhin is proud" among the audiences? Nyāya has a simple explanation to offer in the above case. Since, in this theory, it is the qualifier which determines the meaning of a scene in terms of the perceivers' habitual experiences of life, et cetera, in the first juxtaposed image, it would clearly be the bowl of soup as the qualifier which would determine its 'meaning'. In this schema, Mozzukhin's face in front of a food plate is more likely to be read as that of a "hungry" person rather than the more uncommon occurrence of he being a proud chef or a hotel owner. In peoples' commonsensical reading, Mozzukhin would need to have some "distinguishers" like the chef's head-gear or the appropriate attire of a hotel owner for the audiences to "limit" the 'meaning' of the scene as "Mozzukhin is proud".

The second example involves Kuleshov's "Sensitivity Test." Kuleshov had earlier found that when Mozzukhin's "neutral" face was juxtaposed with the visual of a child playing with balloons, the audiences *read* it as "Mozzukhin is happy." When Kuleshov replaced Mozzukhin's "neutral face" with Mozzukhin's "grief-stricken face" and juxtaposed it with the same shot of the child playing with balloons, the audiences still *read* the scene as "Mozzukhin is happy"![148] This experiment is rather unsatisfactorily explained by Kuleshov as signaling the perseverance of the mentally intuited "third idea" that links discontinuous shots for the audiences. However, Nyāya offers a much simpler solution. It has already

[148] Vance Kepley Jr. "The Kuleshov Workshop", *Journal of Theory on Image and Sound*, Vol. 4 No. 1 (1986): 5–23, 21.

been indicated that, in the Nyāya theory of perception, *qualifiers* act as the "limitors" of "meaning" for viewers. Matilals' comments are being reproduced once again to emphasize this important point:

> Nyāya says that a prior awareness of the qualifiers is all that is logically needed to formulate a "qualificative" judgment…The knowledge of the location or place signified by "there" may simply co-arise with the judgment…[149]

In the present case, the "child playing with balloons" becomes the *qualifier* of Mozzukhin's "face." Since "happiness" is habitually associated with people observing a child playing with balloons, it becomes the essential meaning-generator for the scene even when Mozzukhin's own expression belies that idea!

Eisenstein's Critic of Kuleshov Experiments: Notion of "Intellectual Montage"

Significantly, Eisenstein critiques *Kuleshov Experiments* as being instances of "linkage montage" in which shots are *perceptually integrated* rather than *intellectually synthesized* by the audiences, an idea which supports the Nyāya view.[150] Eisenstein holds that, only in his concept of "collision montage," an intellectual process of dialectical montage occurs among the audiences.[151] Thus, in the sequence "Kerensky climbing steps" in Eisenstein's *October* (1928), Kerensky is repeatedly seen climbing the same flight of steps even as his designations keep rising all the time. No *functional relationship* can be conceived by the audiences in terms of their habitual experiences of life to link Kerensky's rising status with his climb of the same flight of steps each time. This contradiction can be resolved only by executing a higher level of synthesis in the matter. Eisenstein notes: "The incongruity between these two shots produces a purely *intellectual* resolution at the expense of this individual. This is *Intellectual Dynamization*."[152] The *intellectual montage*, representing

[149] Matilal, *Perception*, 351–2.

[150] S. M. Eisenstein, "Beyond the Shot", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 1 1922–1934*, Trans. and Ed. Richard Taylor (London: BFI, 1988): 138–50, 143–4.

[151] Ibid., 144–5.

[152] Eisenstein, "The Dramaturgy of Film Form (The Dialectical Approach to Film Form)", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 1*, 161–80, 163, original emphasis.

the dialectical process of thesis vs. antithesis → synthesis, which operates at a higher level of understanding, remains entirely beyond the Nyāya perceptual process of forming *causally integrated wholes* in terms of the viewer's habitual experiences of life.

In Mrinal Sen's *Padatik* (The Guerrilla Fighter/The Rank and File, 1973), an ad-film is being shown to corporate clients by the producer Shilpi Mitra (Simi Garewal). The film intercuts between shots of a healthy baby and a voice-over which keeps eulogizing the nutritional values of a particular baby food. When the show ends, a young executive requests for one more viewing during which he imagines skeleton figures of under-nourished children being intercut with the voice-over recommending baby food for children! In no way can these shots be *related* by the perceiver to form an integrated *causal whole* except by resorting to a "higher" level of understanding that comprehends the situation as the result of an exploitative society.

Box 4.1 Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the Nyāya Theory: *The Embodied Vision*

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) is the first towering figure in Western philosophy who foregrounded *the body* as the source of all human experiences and cognitions. However, in order to appreciate the revolutionary nature of his ideas, one would have to briefly retrace ones' steps and start with Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Kant's revolution in epistemology shifts focus from an objective understanding of the world on the basis of a transparent "intelligence" which debars human subjectivity to enter its domain to Kant's notion of a subjective understanding of the world based on certain "categories of understanding" occurring *à priori* in human consciousness, like the category of three-dimensional space, linearity of time, cause-and-effect relation, et cetera. Since Kant does not deny the existence of a world 'out there', Kant's theory represents a *subjective-objective* account in which human beings *subjectively* understand the world existing *objectively* "out there." This new mode of experiencing the world has important ramifications not only for the phenomenological theory that emerged next but also for understanding audience response in cinema.

The phenomenological theory, starting with Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), even while owing its allegiance to Kant, signified an important shift from him. Husserl moves away from Kant's "categories of understanding," which are *given à priori* in human consciousness, to human beings' *lived experiences* of the world where *the body* plays a significant role. He holds that "objects" are perceived not through an imposition of "categories of understanding" on them, but through the imposition of *archetypal elements of structure* on them, called "eidos" by Husserl, that are formed within human consciousness during human beings' embodied and socio-cultural life in the world. Thus, even though an "object" is actually perceived in 2-dimensions, the archetypal forms contained within human consciousness make it appear as a 3-dimensional entity. Husserl further holds that, in human perception, "objects" get related to other "objects" *subjectively* through the imposition of a *functional relationship* between them by the perceivers, called "motivational causality," in terms of the perceivers' embodied and socio-cultural experiences of life.

Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) comes next in the phenomenological line. He expands the mode of human experience of the world by extending it in terms of the "tools" that human beings use in the world as an extension of their bodies based on their bodily orientation toward the world during such work. By considering "tools" as extensions of their bodies, Heidegger brings about the important notion of "dasein" which potentially represents all the relationships that human beings can have with reality while being-in-the-world.

While the notion of a pre-existing human consciousness that is separate from *the body* still remains part of both Husserl and Heidegger's thinking, Maurice Merleau-Ponty makes a decisive break by making human being's embodied understanding of the world fundamental to his phenomenological theory by holding that human beings' primordial experiences of living and responding to Nature have already oriented their bodies in a certain way toward the world. Called "operational intentionality", *the body*, in this sense, already *knows* "things" of Nature, like trees, mountains, rivers, et cetera, called *wild meanings* by Merleau-Ponty:

> In a sense the whole of philosophy…consists in restoring a power to signify, a birth of meaning, or a *wild meaning*, an *expression of experience by experience* which, in particular, clarifies the special domain of language. And in a sense… this *language is everything, since it is the voice of no one, since it is the voice of the things, the waves, the forests.*[153]

Moreover, since the world is continuously being shaped and reshaped by human interventions in the world, the *human body* keeps reorienting itself in terms of the artifacts constructed by human beings, a process which forms a second layer of instrumentality of *the body* vis-à-vis the world which Merleau-Ponty calls "bodily intentionality". Since Merleau-Ponty considers that these two bodily functions are enough for a meaningful understanding of the world, he not only dispenses with the notion of human *consciousness* but also, at least initially, the notion of human *ego* or *the self* as well in his theory of existential phenomenology.

Since Nyāya theory is essentially an embodied theory, it not only has certain striking similarities with the Merleau-Pontian theory but also exceeds them in certain important respects. Thus, for example, for both Merleau-Ponty and Nyāya, "consciousness" is perceived as an *effect* of human beings' *embodied experiences* of the world; similarly, both theorize on a *vision–touch equivalence* that generates *synesthetic experiences* among the perceivers such as "I *see* cold ice" or "I *see* a hard surface," et cetera. However, in case of such *synesthetic experiences*, Nyāya does go beyond Merleau-Ponty by holding that the sites of experience also include other sensations, like smell, sound, and taste, which are incorporated via memory, called "presentation through revived memory" or *jñāna-lakṣaṇā-pratyāsatti*. Similarly, Nyāya exceeds Merleau-Pontian notions in certain epistemological respects as well as this chapter would have indicated.

Lakoff and Johnson's Analysis: *Embodiment* as the Basis of Thought

In the context of Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on *the body* as the center of all experiences and cognitions, Lakoff and Johnson point out

[153] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, Trans. Alphonso Lingis, Ed. Claude Lefort (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968): 155, emphasis added.

its subversive potential on some of the cherished notions of Western thought.

In the first three sentences of their remarkable work, *Philosophy in the Flesh*,[154] Lakoff & Johnson summarize their position as follows:

The mind is inherently embodied;
Thought is mostly Unconscious; and
Abstract Concepts are largely Metaphorical

The concept of “reason”, which represents the human capacity to *think*, an idea which, in turn, is based on the underlying assumption that a form of “consciousness” lies inherent within all human beings—an article of faith in Western thought since the Greeks—raises serious questions about it. In summing up the following conclusions emanating from the embodied theory, Lakoff and Johnson continuously critique the status of “reason” in the prevailing Western theories[155]:

i) Since it goes beyond saying that we need a body to experience the world, “human reason is embodied reason, a reason inextricably tied to our bodies and the peculiarities of our brains.”[156] Thus, “reason” is not *disembodied*, but arises from our embodied experiences.
ii) Reason is not universal in the sense of being a transcendental entity; rather it is ‘universal’ being common to human beings.
iii) Even abstract reason is based on animal nature which arises from human embodied experiences of the world and its naturalization in terms of socio-cultural practices of the world.
iv) Since the body, being unconscious, can only react to the world in terms of “pain” and “pleasure” internalized as body memory, reason is both *unconscious* and *emotionally engaged*.

[154] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and the Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

[155] These conclusions are culled from a book review of *Philosophy in the Flesh*, The New York Times on the Web, accessed online in June, 2016.

[156] Review of Lakoff and Johnsons’ *Philosophy in the Flesh*, Web accessed in June, 2016.

v) The body being unconscious, it "understands" the world in terms of similar experiences from the past. In this sense, reason is basically metaphorical and imaginative in nature which can be only loosely represented in language.

Explaining their conclusions, Lakoff and Johnson note that, since reason is embodied in the body which is unconscious, there is no *real* understanding by human beings of what is happening in the world; rather it is an unconscious mechanical process where an "understanding" is reached by comparing with other embodied experiences in the past. Mentioning that the process is metaphorical in nature where "the essence of metaphor is one's understanding through experience of one kind of thing in terms of another," Lakoff and Johnson note that "the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined."[157] The latest research in Neural Theory of Language has shown *an inalienable connection between bodily behavior and human concepts*, like "above," "below,' "in," "out," et cetera. The researcher Srini Narayanan has shown that patterns of one's bodily motions underlie our understanding of metaphors, such as "France *falls* into a recession," et cetera.[158] Interestingly, Lakoff and Johnson analyze the metaphor "Argument is War" as a product of a combination of sentences such as "Your position is *indefensible*," "I *demolished* his argument," "Ok, *shoot*," et cetera.[159]

4.6 Comparing Nyāya Theory of Signification with Lacanian Signification: Determination of Film Genres

Saussure's formula for signification is given as follows:

Signifier + Signified = Sign

[157] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5–6, modified; OERD defines "metaphor" as "The application of a name or a descriptive term or phrase to an object or an action to which it is imaginatively but not literally applicable".

[158] "Review of Lakoff & Johnson", accessed from the Web, June 2016.

[159] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4.

Lacan signals a major departure from the above formula by imputing the concepts of what he calls a *master signifier* S_1 and its *point de capiton* or the *secondary signifier* S_2, in the formula:

S_1	+	S_2	= Signification
(Master Signifier)		(*Point de Capiton* or Secondary Signifier)	

In the above formula, S_2 lends "meaning" to S_1 by "putting knowledge into circulation" in terms of the information gathered by the receiver.[160] First set out in Lacan's "University Discourse"—one of the four discourses which he gave in Seminar XVII (the Seminar's English title "The other side of psychoanalysis" has been given by Russel Grigg and Justin Clemens)[161]—Dr. Ben Tyrer notes its significance:

> If we examine the schema of the *point de capiton* as set out in Lacan's Elementary Cell of the Graph of Desire, then we can see that it is S_2, the second signifier arriving after the fact, which determines S_1 *qua* pre-existing chain of signifiers. The *point de capiton* is thus a term that intervenes and retroactively transforms the whole situation.[162]

What Tyrer means is that while a "master signifier" in a situation generates "meaning" in terms of class-concepts, like a "woman", or such overarching values, like "liberty" or "freedom", it is the "point de capiton" represented by the second signifier or a group of second signifiers which reduce such broad concepts into specific "meanings" in given contexts which are then received as concrete "knowledge" by the receiver. Tyrer notes:

> The "master signifier" in fact stands for an *impossible fullness of meaning covering a void*. It is as Žižek says 'a kind of empty container' that holds open the space for the thriving within it of 'an irreducible plurality'. The

[160] Dr. Ben Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre: Film Noir and the Master Signifier", Published on 21 April 2017 in Academia.edu, accessed in September 2017, 1–10, 7; Ben Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 5.

[161] Internet access of "Psychoanalysis—What Is Master-Signifer?", Philosophy Stack Exchange, Uploaded on the Internet on 29 August 2017.

[162] Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 5.

"master signifier" must therefore be filled out with some positive content for it to become 'knowledge' for the reader. Thus, while the "master signifier" designates a certain discursive field, it is, however, the network of 'knowledge' that determines precisely what this field would mean. In this sense, while the structure of the discursive field remains the same, its terms are re-invested each time a new S_2 is inserted into the signifying chain.[163]

This is exactly similar to the Nyāya fundamental formula of "knowledge" as occurring in the formula "qualificand + qualifier + relationship" where "qualificand" acts as the "master signifier" S_1 which is lent a specific "meaning" by the "qualifier" or the "point de capiton" S_2. However, it is in the imputation of the third factor "relationship" in its formula that Nyāya goes beyond the Lacanian formula:

S_1	+	S_2	+	Relationship	=	'Meaning'
("Qualificand" or "Master Signifier")		("Qualifier" or "Point de Capiton")		(Functional Relationship between S_1 and S_2)		

Why does Nyāya feel compelled to add the factor of "relationship" to its formula which is otherwise so similar to what Lacan had conceived? Let us consider the following two images of Madhuri.

In Figs. 4.6 and 4.7, while Madhuri acts as the "master signifier" S_1, in both the images, in the first, the "second signifier" S_2 involve "books" which generates the "meaning" "She is studying" and, in the second, the "second signifier" S_2 involves a "bowl of soup" which generates the "meaning" "She is hungry" or, more specifically, "She is drinking Soup." Where the Nyāya formula exceeds the Lacanian formula is in the nature of "relationship" that prevails between S_1 and S_2 or the "qualificand" and the "qualifier" which link the two. In case of Nyāya, the "relationship" formed is a "necessary relation" that represents a *functional* relationship between the two which is observed by the perceiver in terms of her habitual experiences of life (which includes her embodied experiences of the world, the socio-cultural practices of her society as well as the teachings and the trainings she might have received in her society). Since the perceivers' experiences may differ from society to society and culture to culture, the "relationships" may change too. While this aspect remains *implied* in Lacan's formula, Nyāya categorically includes it in its formula in order to highlight the fact that *perception is a social act*.

[163] Ibid., 5–6, modified, emphasis added.

Fig. 4.6 “Madhuri is Studying”

Fig. 4.7 “Madhuri is Hungry” or “Madhuri is drinking Soup”

I find an interesting parallel between Nyāya and Lacanian ideas and Eisensteins' thoughts on how a particular "meaning" becomes "knowledge" for the perceiver. Eisenstein notes that a shot is "always an ambiguous hieroglyph" which "can be read only in context…only *in combination with* a small sign or a reading indicator placed alongside it."[164] Eisenstein gives an example of four different shots which depict the following "views":

1. A gray-haired old man
2. A gray-haired old woman
3. A white horse
4. A snow-covered roof

Eisenstein notes that the "dominant" ("master signifier" S_1 for Lacan, "qualificand" for Nyāya) of these shots could either be "old age" or "whiteness." He notes that the above series of shots could be indefinitely continued in the same manner without any definitive "knowledge" arising in the perceiver. This position changes only when a "signpost" shot ("point de capiton" or the "secondary signifier" S_2 for Lacan, "qualifier" for Nyāya) is introduced which immediately collapses the series into generating a particular "meaning" for the viewer.[165] Clearly, the ability of the perceiver to read this "signpost" shot would depend on the perceiver's habitual experiences of life which confirms the importance of the term "relationship" inserted by Nyāya in its formula.

Film Example

Ashish Avikunthak is one of the most exciting filmmakers of our time. He deliberately and diligently let his film images represent a series of "master signifiers S_1" without making any effort to reduce them to conventional "meanings" with the help of "secondary signifier S_2." In other words, he stoically refuses to insert "sign-post" shots that would facilitate their appropriation as "knowledge" by the audiences. Thus, none of the images, whether occurring in his short film *Vakratunda Swaha* (2010)

[164] S. M. Eisenstein, *Selected Works: Volume 1: 1922–34*, Ed. and Trans. Richard Taylor (London: BFI Publishing, 1988): 74 quoted in *Cinemas of the Mind: A Critical History of Film Theory*, Ed. Nicolas Tredell (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2002): 50.

[165] Nicolas Tredell, Ed., *Cinemas of the Mind: A Critical History of Film Theory* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2002): 50.

or in the longer versions of his films like *Rathi Chakravyuh* (2016), *Apothkalin Trikalika* (The Kali of Emergency, 2016), et cetera, generate any "common sense" understanding among the audiences which make these films difficult to be "appropriated" by them. In my talks with Ashish as well as the interview I took of him,[166] he had repeatedly complained that what cinema has done during its more than hundred years of existence is to try to "fix" "meanings" to images for their easy absorption by the viewers. Like a stereotypical character immediately provokes a fixed response from the audiences, film images are read literally even before they have appeared on screen, resulting in a considerable impoverishment of what cinema can do as an exciting new mode of signification. It is to Ashish's credit that, at no point, he permits his images to collapse into a *given* "meaning" which makes his images full of possibilities, an "impossible fullness of meaning covering a void" as Tyrer says or "a kind of empty container" that holds open the space for the thriving of "an irreducible plurality" within it as Žižek says.

Reading Generic Modes of Cinema

Dr. Ben Tyrer perceptively applies the above Lacanian formula of the "master signifier" S_1 being "filled" by a "secondary signifier" S_2 to retroactively read the generic evolution of *film noir* in Hollywood cinema. *Film Noir* is often cited as having first made its appearance in Billy Wilder's *Double Indemnity* (1944) in Hollywood cinema which, thereafter, kept producing such films on a regular basis till the first wave of these films came to an end with Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil* (1958). However, Tyrer claims that *film noir* as a "genre" with specific *noir* markers was only established retroactively during the'70s with the emergence of films like Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (1973), Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974), and Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976). Tyrer quotes Altman as saying: "film genres begin as "reading positions" established by critical dissections which are then expressed and reinforced through filmmaking."[167] Tyrer notes:

> Films, we could say, are thus read in terms of a certain identifier and attendant generic expectations (characters, plot, visual style, affect); the concept of the genre, thereafter, determines the meaning attributed to or expected

[166] The whole interview can be obtained from the address gmullik@hotmail.com.

[167] Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 4.

> of the films by the audience. This was, however, impossible during the period subsequently [retroactively] identified as "classic film noir" because, as we know, such a "reading position" did not exist then.[168]

In this context, Geoff Mayer says: "Film Noir, unlike genres such as the Western or the Gangster film, did not appear on studio production schedules in the 1940s."[169] He goes on to note:

> We can say that *film noir was not a genre nor could it become a genre until its reappraisal in the 1960s and 1970s.* In this sense, "film noir" stood as a retroactive ordering principle through which such films started being read and their meanings determined.[170]

What it means is that certain "reading positions" become critically established only later which then start reshaping the way we look at the past. Neale suggests: "Films like *Double Indemnity*, etc, are now viewed generically as *noirs* in a way they never were when initially released."[171] Tyrer holds that the contrast between the function of *noir-type* films in the '40s and the *neo-noir* during the '70s can be well understood in terms of Lacan's "master signifier" S_1 and his "point de capiton" S_2. It is only when the "point de capiton" or the "second signifier" S_2 lent a certain *noirish* meaning to the films of the '70s that, retroactively, the *noirish* elements occurring in the '40s films also came to *qualify* those films. Since the '70s, Martin notes "*noir* was subjected to such rigorous academic and critical investigation that the concept of what exactly constituted *film noir* became diffuse and fragmented."[172] In other words, the "master signifier" representing *film noir* became an empty receptacle for filmmakers, critics and the audiences alike.[173] It is the presence of the "secondary signifiers" S_2 which lent "meaning" to them by filling them out with specific *noir* content. It is such new "fillings" which determine the *space of the genre*: "noir" as a generic term representing the master

[168] Ben Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre".

[169] Geoff Mayer quoted in Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 4.

[170] Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 4.

[171] Steve Neale quoted in Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 4.

[172] Richard Martin quoted in Tyrer "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 6.

[173] Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 6.

signifier S_1, guarantee the meaning and the readability of the films which come under its rubric but only because they have been duly "filled in" by the secondary signifiers S_2 which determine what that "meaning" is going to be. Tyrer notes: "the master signifier "noir," in my opinion, only intervenes as an ordering principle that in itself adds no new content, but only a *sense of order*, "reading position" or a "genre."[174] Tyrer significantly adds:

> Each time the idea of "noir" is reconfigured, *the present re-constitutes the past in its own image*. While the past may have a grip over the present, yet, I suggest, it is the most liberating insight of psychoanalysis that there is, in the present, the possibility to determine the past. Žižek captures this idea when he says: "I am determined by causes, but I retroactively determine what causes would determine me".[175]

It suggests the possibility that a different version of the idea "noir" can be posited again and again in cinema in terms of the changes that keep occurring in our society. Thus, since the '80s, the "noir" films made by Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat* (1981), Curtis Hanson's *L. A. Confidential* (1997) or Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez and Frank Millar's *Sin City* (2005) all express aspects of "noir" in their own ways.[176]

As already noted, while there are striking similarities between the Lacanian theory of signification and the Nyāya fundamental formula of knowledge, the latter exceeds the former by making clear the "relationship" factor in terms of which the perceiver links elements within view into a *causal narrative whole*. While one may argue that in Lacan's "secondary signifier" or *point de capiton*, the "relationship" factor is implied—indeed Lacan's S_2 does appear to have a much wider scope while dealing with social mores—the "relationship" factor in Nyāya draws our pointed attention to the embodied and socio-cultural aspects that influence the perceiver. Being an evolutionary concept in the Nyāya theory, the notion of "relationship" has the potency to become a useful instrument in the hands of film theorists in determining the generic evolution of cinema.

[174] Ibid., 8.

[175] Žižek quoted by Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 10.

[176] Tyrer, "Towards a Lacanian Theory of Genre", 7.

In the Indian context, let us take the example of the generic form of "realism." Ever since Satyajit Ray's significant intervention in Indian cinema as a realist filmmaker, it has become a "reading position" for all realist films in India which came before him or after. In this light, we now determine Bimal Roy's realist Hindi film *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953) to be "melodramatic" or Rituporno Ghosh's realist Bengali films to be "naturalistic" in nature. This "reading position" has held sway despite the fact that Ray's films cater to a particular form of "realism" only. According to the Nyāya, all such "reading positions" are bound to change due to evolution of "relationships" occurring in society.

The following film example illustrates the efficacy of the Nyāya's theory. In Mrinal Sen's *Akaler Sandhane* (In Search of Famine, 1980), a film director, who is shooting a film on the 1943 Bengal famine, shows two photographs that depict skeleton figures without showing their faces to a perceiver. Later he reveals that while one of the faces belong to Buddha, who, during his penance, voluntarily starved himself of food, the other belongs to one of the famine-starved persons of Bengal who were deliberately denied food by the British Government in 1943 on the plea that food needed to be preserved for waging the IInd World War. In terms of Nyāya, while the "relationship" that links Buddha with his skeleton figure would be that of voluntary "sacrifice" (*tyaga*), the "relationship" occurring in the latter would be that of "exploitation."

In conclusion, one may sum up by saying that Nyāya gives us a comprehensive idea of *how ordinary people process audio-visual images.* Its theory of perception offers us the following advantages vis-à-vis other theories:

i. It makes clear that different elements occurring within one's perceptual field are integrated into *causal wholes* based on narratives constructed by the perceiver in response to our instincts of *survival*, *propagation*, and *acquisition* meant to safeguard our beings in the world. In this sense, *causality*, which acts as the basic factor producing an *integrated whole* within perception, becomes a "goal-directed" activity that forever seeks a *narrative closure* for us, an open-ended process being dangerous for our survival. Construction of narratives and their closures are, thus, an in-built component of our psyche.
ii. As far as the specific mechanism of perception is concerned, it highlights the roles that following elements play in perception:

"mode of appearance" which gives us the "event" and "mode of presentation" which gives us the "bodily measure" of the "event" which together form a *direct mode of perception* in a viewer; "analytical meaning" which arises in the perceiver on the basis of one or more *indirect modes of analysis* like inference, word, postulation, comparison, and point of view being employed by the perceiver; evocation of an "affective state" in perception involving "emotions" and "affects" based on the arising of *direct* and *indirect* "meanings" in the perceiver; and, finally, the production of a "dispositional tendency" in the perceiver aimed at restoring the perceiver's balance. One may sum up by saying that all the above experiences and cognitions are dependent on the perceiver's habitual experiences of life, his embodied experiences of the world, the socio-cultural practices he has built around them and the teachings and trainings he has received from the society.

iii. Perception is an evolutionary process where it becomes associated with various "reading positions" which keep being established and discarded within societies.

Existing film theories had narrowed the role of perception to *disembodied vision* alone which had acted as the role model for the West since the renaissance. Nyāya significantly reverses this trend by holding that the audiences do not witness a scene in isolation; rather, they carry with them a load of experiential factors relating to their body, history, and culture which determine what they ultimately *see* on the screen. In this regard, Nyāya seems to be far ahead of contemporary theories of perception. Its emphasis on the audiences' embodied and socio-cultural experiences of life helps it to bring back *ordinary audiences* to the center of academic discussion, a position from which they had been most unjustly banished by the existing film discourse.

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CHAPTER 5

Bharata's Theory of Aesthetic Pleasure or *Rasa*: Classical Indian Theories of "Aesthetics" and Their Relation to Cinema

> The drama I have devised is a *re-presentation* of the behavior and conduct of people as they occur in different situations of a play, rich in various emotions.
>
> —Bharata

The Brief

This chapter takes the Nyāya theory of perception as a platform for developing Bharata's aesthetic theory. We have seen that, according to the Nyāya theory, whenever we perceive something, a *causal whole* is formed within perception based on the perceivers' embodied experiences of the world, the sociocultural factors built around them and the teachings and the trainings they have received in the society. Psychologically the perceivers develop a *level of identification* with the process of the formation of the *causal wholes* because it enables them to produce a unique response to the situation essential for their survival and propagation in the empirical world.

Bharata's theory holds that all aesthetic experiences are "pleasurable" for the audiences irrespective of whether the play is a tragedy or a comedy. Called the *paradox of junk fiction*, it had defied a satisfactory solution for centuries both in the East and the West. While Bharata himself does not offer a solution to the above problem, two philosopher-aesthetes offered interesting solutions later. In the ninth century, Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka introduced the important concept of *generalization of audience experiences* (*sādhāraṇīkāraṇa*, where *sādhāraṇa*

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means "common" and *kāraṇa* means "to render") in Bharata's theory which says that, because of the audiences' prior knowledge that it is a "fiction" they are watching, all their experiences get *generalized* having the effect of removing all their practical concerns of life from the way they experience artworks. It makes even "painful" experiences appear as "pleasurable" because they are being experienced by the audiences as if from the "outside." However, it still leaves the following question unanswered: if the audiences *know* that artworks are essentially "fictions," why do they still watch them? In the 10th CE, the philosopher-aesthete Abhinavagupta offered an innovative solution: the audiences watch artworks because they *'willingly' identify with the 'fictional mode' of the work* (*āhāryajñāna*, where *āhārya* means "costume" and *jñāna* means "knowledge") they are watching. This willingness generates a state of "willing suspension of disbelief" among the audiences about the "events" happening within a play.

The above solutions go hand-in-hand with Bharata's idea that an *abiding state of affect* (*sthāyībhāva*, where *sthāyī* means "abiding" and *bhāva* means "state") gets evoked among the audiences when they watch "goal-directed activities" being enacted within a play which bring their "consciousness" and their "unconscious bodies" on the same platform that enable the audiences to *psyco-somatically relive* a scene, the very basis which makes the audiences experience "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* from the play.

Once the audiences are, thus, engaged with the play, following *levels of audience identification* develops with different stages of an artwork:

i. Preliminary Identification with the Perceptual-Cognitive Mode of an Artwork and its corresponding Affective State.
ii. Sympathetic Identification with the Narrative Mode of an Artwork and its corresponding Affective State.
iii. Sympathetic Identification with the Action Mode of an Artwork and its corresponding Affective State.
iv. Empathic Identification with the Basic Focus of an Artwork and its corresponding Affective State.

Bharata also enters into an elaborate analysis of the *structure of a drama*, ideally having five parts, in the following three sections:

i. The main section is called the *sandhis* or the thread that binds various parts of the narrative junctures. The *sandhis* are farther subdivided into the following two sections:
   (a) "Templates of Episodic Action" called *saṅdhyaṅgas* ("action-spans"), which occur within a particular section or part of a play, like "confrontation," "contemplation of revenge," et cetera.
   (b) "Indicators" or *lakṣaṇas* (more appropriately called "enhancers") which influence the audiences without affecting the narrative in any way.

ii. Psychological condition of the protagonists or their *avasthās* in each stage of the play.

iii. Forms of action (*arthaprakṛtis*) involving the source and the nature of the action occurring within the play.

Bharata's theory may also be extended to classify the nature of "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* produced among the audiences in the various stages of a play:

I. Aesthetic Relish (*Bhoga*)
II. Aesthetic Saturation (*Rasa-viśrānti*)
III. Aesthetic Immersion (*Samāveśa*)

In "aesthetic relish", the audiences undertake a *mode of enquiry* in order to unravel the intrigues presented in a play; in "aesthetic saturation", the audiences succeed in unraveling them in a particular section of the play or the play as a whole which produces a sense of saturation among them; in "aesthetic immersion", certain archetypal experiences, whose original source had been lost to individual memory, are revived through clues provided by the playright which flood the audiences' consciousness.

In the penultimate section of this chapter, a list of obstacles mentioned by Abhinavagupta which thwart the audiences' experiencing of aesthetic pleasure has been provided. Since, the central factor underlying such obstacles is the *intrusion of reality in the fictional mode of a play*, a separate discussion on documentary vs. fiction is undertaken in this section.

The final section would involve a discussion of *the subjective-objective alterations* occurring in Bharata's theory.

In the above context, the following issues would be dealt with in this chapter:

- 5.1. Pre-Conditions for Generating "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa* among the audiences: Solving the "Paradox of Junk Fiction"
    - 5.1.1. "Generalization of Audience Experience" in relation to an Artwork: Notion of "Ownerless Emotions"
    - 5.1.2. "Willing Identification with the Fictional Mode of an Artwork": Notion of "Willing Suspension of Disbelief"
- 5.2. Evocation of an Abiding Psycho-Somatic State among the Audiences and their Levels of Identification with an Artwork:
    - 5.2.1. Evocation of an "Affective State" among the Audiences
    - 5.2.2. "Levels of Audience Identification" with an artwork:
        - 5.2.2.1. Identification with the Perceptual-Cognitive Mode of an Artwork Notion of "Mental Attention"
        - 5.2.2.2. Identification with the Narrative Mode of an Artwork Notion of the "Narrative Universal"
        - 5.2.2.3. Identification with the action mode of an artwork Notion of the "Action Universal"
        - 5.2.2.4. Empathic Identification with the Focus of an Artwork
- 5.3. Bharata's Theory of Extended Action: The Plot Structure of a Play:
    - 5.3.1. Five "Main Parts" or "Junctions" (*Sandhis*) in a Narrative Plot
        - i. Templates of Episodic Action (*Saṅdhyaṅgas*)
        - ii. Indicators (*Lakṣaṇas*)
    - 5.3.2. "Psychological Condition" (*Avasthās*) of the Protagonists in various Stages of the Narrative
    - 5.3.3. "Forms of Action" (*Arthaprakṛtis*) in the Narrative
- 5.4. Classification of "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa* in a Play:
    - 5.4.1. Aesthetic Relish (*Bhoga*)
    - 5.4.2. Aesthetic Saturation (*Rasa-viśrānti*)
    - 5.4.3. Aesthetic Immersion (*Samāveśa*)
- 5.5. Abhinavagupta's "List of Obstacles" to Experiencing "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa*: Intrusion of Reality into the Fictional Mode of a Play
- 5.6. Subjective–Objective Alterations in Indian Thought and its Application to Artworks

Modern Interpretation of Aesthetic Concepts frequently used in Bharata's Theory

Before delving into Bharata's theory, it is necessary to explain in modern terms the real import of the following classical Indian concepts of aesthetics which Bharata uses frequently or given new significance by him: aesthetics, aesthetic experience, affective state or *bhāva*, identification, and aesthetic pleasure or *rasa*.

The first concept that needs clarification in the Indian context is "aesthetics" and its associated term of "aesthetic experience." The word "aesthetics" has been defined as "a philosophical approach to art that addresses the value of works of art and the way in which they may be experienced."[1] However, the evaluation of the word "value" of an artwork has varied between "aesthetic cognitivism, which holds that the value of a work lies in its capacity to help us understand, order, and illuminate everyday experience" and "other approaches that may emphasize value in terms of enjoyment, pleasure, or emotional stimulation."[2] Due to the overriding influence of contemporary film theory on film discourse until recently, aesthetic issues have so far been considered as ideological in nature. However, due to the growing interest in the application of philosophy to films, question of aesthetics is being reexamined in film studies: "Key current concerns include gauging artistic merit by looking at the ways in which a film can be effective, affective, or thoughtful."[3] It is in this sense that the concept of "aesthetics" has been used in this chapter.

"Aesthetic experience" in cinema means the way film images are both consciously and affectively experienced by the audiences. In this sense, since the audiences not only experience an objective reality as it is reflected from the film's surface but also undertake a subjective integration of this reality within their view, "aesthetic experience" as a whole would consist of harmonizing both these kinds of experiences within oneself.

The second concept in Bharata's theory is "*bhāva*" which plays a crucial role in his theory. While *bhāva* is often translated as "emotion" and *sthāyībhāva* as "dominant emotion," they are, arguably, better represented by the English words "affective state" and "abiding affective state," respectively, for reasons mentioned below. Etymologically, *bhāva* comes from the root *bhū* which means "to be" or "caused" which have

[1] Kuhn and Westwell, *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 6.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 7.

been used in two different ways: "cause to be"' ("to bring about," "to create") or "to pervade" like a perfume. Clearly, *bhāva's* meaning as "emotion" has come from the latter use. However, the verve of the word *bhāva* is *bhāvayati* which means "something exists due to a cause" while its noun *bhāvanā* means "state which is caused."[4] On these lines, Gupt translates myriad meanings of *bhāva* as "a state of being, becoming, way of feeling, or thinking, sentiment, purport or intention."[5] In fact, *bhāva* is a state which not only produces "thought," but also "emotion" and a "state in-between" them, like indifference, indolence, laziness, sleep, et cetera, the latter forming an important part of Bharata's category of transient states or *vyabhicāribhāvas* to be explained shortly in this chapter. In the absence of *sthāyībhāvas'* being rendered as an "abiding affective state," Bharata's categories are likely to create enormous difficulties for interpreters like Marie Higgins as follows:

> This list includes many things that we in the west would not consider to be emotions at all, such as sleep, epilepsy, death, and deliberation. These may, however, occur as side effects or consequences of an emotional state, and that is enough for Bharata to classify them as *vyabhicāribhāvas*.[6]

In other words, in order to make sense of the categories that Bharata is using in his theory of drama, *bhāva* clearly needs to be reinterpreted as the evocation of an *affective state* among the audiences. A final argument in this regard has been provided by the Indian art critic Mukund Lath as follows:

> We can speak of *narrative bhāvas* which represent specifiable "states" in the realm of action rather than emotion. Bhrarata's *sthāyībhāvas* ("abiding state") are subservient to actions that seek their own dramatic value in a narrative. For example, "suspense" generates a *sthāyībhāva* which is specifiable only in terms of the narrative requirement of creating surprise, tempo, and the like rather than specific emotions which remain secondary, ambiguous or even vague. Similarly, *moral dilemmas* (*dharma-saṇkatas*) generate

[4] Meera Chakravarty, "The Concept of Emotion in Tantra", *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 9 No. 2 (1982): 123–30, 123.

[5] Bharat Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts Greek and Indian: A Study of the Poetics and Nāṭyaśāstra*, 3rd Imp. (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2006): 252.

[6] Kathleen Marie Higgins, "An Alchemy of Emotion: Rasa and Aesthetic Breakthroughs", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 65 No. 1 (2007), Special Issue "Global Theories of Art and Aesthetics", 43–54, 46.

a kind of *sthāyībhāva* which, while being rich in feelings, are not specifiable in terms of emotions.[7]

Clearly, we cannot make out what Hamlet's specific emotion is when he suffers from the dilemma "To be or not to be."

Deeply connected with *bhāva* is the term "affective state." In terms of modern research, an "affective state" is considered to be a *psycho-somatic state* which is evoked among human beings in order for them to experience feelings and emotions.[8] In terms of modern research, an affective state has the following three operational dimensions: *valence*, which evaluates subjective experiences along with a positive to negative trajectory; *arousal*, which activates a sympathetic nervous system within the organism in relation to such experiences; and *motivational intensity*, which generates an impulse to work in a particular way in relation to a situation or a scene.[9] The evocation of an abiding affective state in Bharata's theory clearly contains the above aspects which is primarily used to bridge the gap between the audiences' "unconscious" body and their "consciousness" which enable them to *relive* a scene both body and soul.

The fourth concept is "identification" which plays a stellar role in Bharata's theory. In Indian theories, identification happens with the process of forming a *causal whole* representing a cause-and-effect chain of elements which the audiences witness as being involved in "goal-directed activities" occurring within a scene. At the deepest level, all such "activities" being rooted in human beings' survival instincts, et cetera, the perceiver's identification invariably occurs with the above processes rather than with the individual elements occurring within the perceptual field which signifies the audiences' "consciousness" moving from a *state of uncertainty* to a *state of certainty* essential for an organism's survival.

The fifth concept is "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa*. It essentially represents a "generalized resultant emotion" not belonging to the audiences. Called "ownerless" emotions, they are devoid of any personal "bite" for the audiences making these experiences become aesthetically "pleasurable" for them, including even tragedies. Bharata and following him two aesthe-philosophers

[7] Mukund Lath, "Review Article" on V. K. Chari's *Sanskrit Criticism* (Honululu: University of Hawai Press, 1990), *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. 11 No. 1 (September–December, 1993): 123–38, 129, modified.

[8] See Wikipedia listing of current research on "Affective State" in www.affect, accessed in July 2015.

[9] Ibid.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka (c. 9th CE) and Abhinavagupta (c. 10th CE) isolate 3 pre-conditions only on the fulfillment of which "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* would arise among the audiences. Since these pre-conditions have been effectively explained in this chapter, they would not be elaborated here.

Illustration 5.1 Concepts in Bharata's Theory of Aesthetic Pleasure (*Rasa*)

Identification→ In artworks, a *generalization of experience* (*sādhāranṇīkaraṇa*) occurs among the audiences due to their prior knowledge that it is a "fictional work" they are watching and their further *willingness to identify with the fictional mode* (*āhāryajñāna*) of that work, which together produce an *aestheticized state* among the audiences which by removing their personal egos from the scene enables them to experience *aesthetic pleasure* (*rasa*). An aesthetic engagement with the work produces following *levels of audience identification* with an artwork:

1. Identification with the *Perceptual-Cognitive Mode of an Artwork*
2. Sympathetic Identification with the *Narrative Mode of an Artwork*
3. Sympathetic Identification with the *Action Mode of an Artwork*
4. Empathic Identification with the *Basic Focus of an Artwork*

Affective State→ Witnessing a "goal-directed causal activity" being performed on stage evokes an "abiding" *affective state* (*sthāyībhāvas*) among the audiences, a *psycho-somatic state* which aligns their "consciousness" and their "unconscious bodies" to make them *relive* a scene.

Plot Structure (*Itibṛitta*, "And So It Happened")→ Bharata divides the narrative into five "Main Parts" or "Junctions" (*Sandhis*) which are further subdivided into "Span-Elements" or "Templates of Action" (*Saṅdhyaṅgas*) involving episodic actions and "Indicators" or "Enhancers" (*Lakṣaṇas*) which impact the audiences without influencing the narrative. Bharata also indicate the "Psychological States" (*Avasthās*) of the protagonists in each stage of the play and "Forms of Action" (*Arthaprakṛtis*) involving the source and nature of actions in the play.

Rasa→ The above structure generates following aesthetic experiences among the audiences:

1. Aesthetic Relish (*Bhoga*)→When the audiences get into a "mode of enquiry" to resolve enigmas posed by the play, their consciousness remains in a state of expansion (*vistāra*).
2. Aesthetic Saturation (*Rasa-viśrāntt*)→When the audiences are able to solve the enigmas, their consciousness remains in a state of rest and repose, blossoming (*vikāsa*) internally.
3. Aesthetic Immersion (*Samāveśa*)→Audiences' consciousness is in a state of immersion or melting (*drūti*) due to the triggering of archetypal experiences submerged within them.

5.1 Pre-conditions for Experiencing "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa* by the Audiences: Solving the "Paradox of Junk Fiction"

It has been explained that the fulfillment of the following three pre-conditions paves the way for the evocation of "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* among the audiences while witnessing a play: *generalization of audience experiences* on knowing that they are watching a fictional work, their *willing identification with the fictional mode of the work* and the *production of an abiding psycho-somatic state* among the audiences. While the first two points would be discussed under point 5.1, the third point would be discussed under point 5.2 below.

5.1.1 "Generalization of Audience Experience": Notion of "Ownerless Emotions"

One of the great insights of Bharata (c. early 1st millennium CE) in his classic work *Nāṭyaśāstra* ("A Treatise on Drama") had been that all artworks generate *aesthetic pleasure* or *rasa* among the audiences irrespective of whether they are comedies or tragedies. In wrestling with this question, the philosopher-aesthete Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka (c. 9th CE) makes one of the greatest breakthroughs in Indian aesthetic history. He argues that the audiences' prior knowledge that an artwork is a "fictional" work *generalizes* their experiences (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, "universalization") as a whole in relation to the work. In such a *generalized state*, a person experiences an "event" without personally "suffering" it. It is like "tasting" or "chewing" (*carvana*) an "event" by standing outside it. Abhinavagupta describes the nature of *generalization* as follows:

> In this state, one's own self is neither completely immersed (*tiraskṛta*) nor in a state of emergence (*ullikhita*), the same thing happening with others as well. As a result of this, the *generality* involved in this process does not get limited (*parimita*), but extended (*vitata*), as happens when pervasion subsumes the relationship between smoke and fire or that between trembling and fear.[10]

[10] Raniero Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience according to Abhinavagupta* (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1985): 56.

In such a state, emotions are no longer personally "owned" by the audiences as they do in their personal lives. On the question, whose emotions do the audiences then experience in such a *generalized state*, the literary theorist Viśvanātha (c. 14th CE) enigmatically replies "they are another person's, yet not quite another person's; mine, but not quite mine."[11] Chakrabarti has described such an emotion as an "ownerless emotion" which, irrespective of its particular hue, remains *pleasurable* for the audiences.[12] On the varieties of *rasas* that occur in a play, Ingalls makes the following perceptive comment:

> These different types of *rasas* were distinguished by the basic emotion or state of the soul on which they were built: sexual excitement, laughter, masterful energy, and so on. And yet their "relish" by the audiences was clearly recognized to be distinct from their "emotion". The "emotion" belonged to the character on stage, the "relish" belonged to the audiences. To produce a certain "relish", one had to furnish not only the "emotion" and the "character" in which it seemed to reside but also certain "stimulating factors of environment", like gestures and the like.[13]

While all aesthetic experiences are considered to be "pleasurable" for the audiences, they are not, however, "pleasurable" in the same way. In different generic formations of narratives, the "taste" of aesthetic pleasure changes. Abhinava gives an example:

> All the *rasas* consist in beatitude. But some of them, on account of the objects by which they are colored, are not free from a certain touch of bitterness; this happens, for example, in the *heroic rasa* which consists of, and is animated by, a firm endurance of misfortunes.[14]

[11] Quoted by Arindam Chakrabarti in "Play, Pleasure, Pain: Ownerless Emotions in Rasa-Aesthetics", in *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Genl. Ed. D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Vol. 13: Science, Literature and Aesthetics (New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilization, 2009): 189–202, 189.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Daniel H. H. Ingalls, "Some Problems in the Translation of Sanskrit Poetry", *Abhinavagupta: Reconsiderations, Indian Representations*, Vol. 4 No. 1 & 2 (2006), Eds. Makarand Paranjape and Sunthar Visuvalingam (New Delhi: Samvad India Foundation, 2006): 194–210, 198, modified.

[14] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 73.

However, while the notion of *generalization* goes a long way in explaining the process of "aesthetic pleasure," it does not explain the whole process. The next section would indicate as to why *generalization* is not enough for the purpose.

5.1.2 Audiences' "Willing Identification with the Fictional Mode of an Artwork": Notion of "Willing Suspension of Disbelief"

Even after Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka had introduced his great idea of "generalization", the following question was still left unanswered: even after knowing that the artwork they are engaging with is a "fictional" work, why do the audiences still engage with it at all? The issue gains further traction when one considers peoples' desire to even engage with tragedies which can only produce "painful" experiences for them. Abhinavagupta (c. 10th CE) offers an innovative solution. He extends Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's idea of *generalization* (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, "universalization") by holding that the audiences like to engage with artworks, including tragedies, because they not only *know* that it is a fictional work but also *willingly identify with the fictional mode of the work* (*āhārya-jñāna*, "costume knowledge"). Only when the *generalization of audiences' experiences* is combined with their *willingness to identify with the fictional mode of the work* would the audiences be ready to *suspend their disbelief* in the work and engage with it fully. Abhinavagupta's explanation may be illustrated with the dear-hunting scene in Kālidāsa's celebrated work *Abhijñanaśākuntalam*. Gupt notes[15]:

> Abhinava says that on seeing a deer being chased by King Duṣyanta [ready to be felled by his arrow at any moment], the spectator knows that even though the deer appears to be afraid within the scene, there is "no earthly reality" (*viśeṣa rūpa abhāvaḥ*) to which this fear can be related to as the "chaser is unreal and the chase is also not happening in real space and time." Therefore, says Abhinava, the spectator is neither afraid himself, nor does he think that the actor [playing the role of the deer] is afraid nor does he think whether the other actor [playing the role of King Duṣyanta] is a friend or a foe.

[15] Bharat Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts: Greek and Indian: A Study of the Poetics and the Nāṭyaśāstra*, 3rd Imp. (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 2006): 268.

It is this process of "role-playing" in a "fictional work" that the audiences "willingly" subscribe to and identify with in the work which generates *rasa* among them.

Abhinava's solution, however, raises the following question: since A believes *p* and does not believe *p* at the same time, does it not violate the law of contradiction which is held sacrosanct by both Eastern and Western thinkers? Indian tradition utilizes the well-known concept of *āhāryajñāna* or "the knowledge produced by a fictional work" to address the problem: "the knowledge produced by an artwork is *a knowledge produced out of one's own desire at a time when a contradictory knowledge is present in the person's mind*."[16] The above solution, however, is not totally satisfactory as one may question how such a contradictory desire may at all arise in the same person? It is ultimately left to the Navya-Nyāya School (c. 13th CE), the logical arm of Nyāya, to offer a possible solution on the basis of the following principle of logic: "a property *p* and its absence *not-p* cannot be asserted of the same subject at the same time *in the same sense*."[17] Thus, a tree may be conjoined to a bird as well as not being conjoined to it at the same time if the spatial segments of the tree are appropriately *delimited* as a *qualifier* for particular "meaning" to appear in a perceiver. One can then say that while the bird is conjoined to the upper branch, it is not conjoined to the lower branch of the three at the same time![18]

Navya-Nyāya's solution is based on the "Hindu" theoreticians' general belief that *a temporal unit of experience consists of the following three moments (pal)*:

i. Moment of Origination when a particular awareness arises in one's consciousness (*sṛṣṭi*, "evolution");
ii. Moment of Existence when that awareness leaves its trace in one's consciousness (*sthiti*, "existence"); and
iii. Moment of Destruction when the awareness ceases to exist (*saṁhāra* or *proloy*, "involution" or "destruction") in the person.

[16] Raghunath Ghosh, "The Concept of Ahāryajñāna in Navya-Nyāya: Some Reflections", *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. 15 No. 1 (1997): 88–93, 88.

[17] Matilal, *Epistemology, Logic, and Grammar in Indian Philosophical Analysis*, Ed. Jonardon Ganeri (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1971): 36.

[18] Ibid.

Navya-Nyāya argues that even while a new awareness is arising in one's consciousness in the moment of its origination, a memory-trace is being left at the same moment by the previous awareness making the two beliefs co-exist in a series of temporal moments even when one of the beliefs happen to be contradictory to the other.

Efforts to Solve the "Paradox of Junk Fiction" in Western Aesthetic Theories
It would be interesting to compare and contrast Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka's idea of *generalization of aesthetic experiences* and Abhinavagupta's notion of the audiences' *willing identification with the fictional mode of a play* with the Western aesthetic theories that deal with the "problem of junk fiction" or the fact that the audiences willingly subscribe to tragedies. The following is a very brief analysis of Western aesthetic theories involving the following thinkers: Aristotle's theory of purgation or *catharsis*, Kant's idea of *disinterested observer*, Hegel's analysis of the *aesthetics of collective consciousness* and Bullough's notion of the *psychic distance* or *Distance*.

Aristotle (384–322 BCE), for whom tragedies constitute *the basic mode* of a play, thinks that they act as instruments of purgation (*katharsis*) of the sentiments of pity and fear from the audiences' psyche.[19] In this connection, Aristotle's use of the word "purgation" has been deeply puzzling. According to Filliozat, the Greek belief system is similar to the Indian belief system in the sense that *acts of transgression* are considered to pollute (*miasma*) not only the protagonists but also the people around them.[20] Arguably, Aristotle holds that, by identifying with the good and hating the bad in a tragic play, the audiences' reasons for pitying the protagonists and fearing the consequences that their wrong-doings would bring upon them are both purged from their psyche, arguably, thereby providing relief to them.[21] While Aristotle, thus, provides an answer to the question "why do the audiences *enjoy* tragedies?" it raises a fresh question about other *modes* of a play, like comedy, et cetera: what is purged from

[19] Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 23, quoted in Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 255–6.

[20] Fillozat says "That is why there are between Indian and Greek medicines, so very particular and precise similarities that are not easy to ascribe to chance." See J. Filliozat, *The Classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1964), quoted in Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 61.

[21] Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 258.

the audiences' psyche in these cases? Since Aristotle is silent on them, his theory remains unclear about the basic purpose of arts: is it meant to be a vehicle for providing *psychic relief* to the audiences by *educating* them or to *entertain* them with a make-believe world which would take them away, even if temporarily, from their day-to-day worries of life?

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804 CE) holds that, bracketing human beings' practical concerns while contemplating art represents an "aesthetic attitude" of a "disinterested observer" which moves them away from their personal concerns.[22] Devoid of selfish interests, such an experience, according to Kant, would become "pleasurable" for the viewers concerned.[23] However, in this theory, while "disinterestedness" merely explains the removal of the audiences' practical concerns of life while contemplating artworks, it does not explain why the audiences feel the urge to engage with artworks at all? Clearly, a piece is still missing in this puzzle.

Even though Hegel's theory of art arrived earlier than Bullough's, still it is being left for the last as it continues to be the most influential theory in the West today. Edward Bullough's (1880–1934) article on the *Psychical Distance* or *Distance*, published in 1912, was instantly hailed as a seminal paper in the solution of the aesthetic paradox.[24] While he follows Kant's lead in holding that the audiences' personal concerns need to be removed during their experiences of art, Bullough draws attention to the important problem that Kant's idea could not solve: why are the audiences drawn to artworks at all? Bullough points out that, unless there is a basic concordance between the play and the audiences, they would not be drawn to it at all.[25] In other words, mere "disinterestedness" is not enough; something like a "willing acceptance of the fictional mode" of artworks, something on the lines of Carlyle's notion that the audiences need to have a "willing suspension of disbelief", is necessary for the audiences to be able to enjoy artworks. In this connection, Dace notes certain striking similarities between Bullough and Abhinavagupta's ideas as follows:

[22] Sebastian Gardner, "Aesthetics", *Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, Eds. Nicholas Bunin and E. P. Tsui-James (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996): 231–56, 233.

[23] Gardner, "Aesthetics", 233.

[24] Edward Bullough, "'Psychical Distance' as a Factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle", *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 5 No. 2 (June 1912): 87–118, quoted in Wallace Dace, "The Concept of 'Rasa' in Sanskrit Dramatic Theory", *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 3 (October 1963): 249–54, 252–3.

[25] Dace, "The Concept of 'Rasa'", 253.

> "Consent of the heart" is a key phrase in Abhinavagupta's dramatic theory and seems to anticipate Coleridge's idea of "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith" in the theatre. This idea is not fully grasped in some quarters even today. There are still those who would agree with Samuel Johnson when he attacked the unity of place by arguing that it doesn't matter if Act I is laid in Athens and Act II in Rome, because we, in the theatre, know that we are neither in Athens nor in Rome anyway.[26]

The fact of the matter is that, while watching the play, the audiences *willingly suspend their disbelief* that they are neither in Athens nor in Rome during the play, *willingly* accepting instead that they are indeed in Athens and Rome during the play!

Georg Hegel's (1770–1831) idea that as an individual spirit/mind, the *geist*, moves through various historical developments in the course of human evolution, which are duly influenced by social customs or *sittlichkeit* that keep organizing and reorganizing human perceptual and cognitive processes from time to time in human history. Through this process, the *individual geist* becomes a *collective geist* which, not remaining at the individual level any more, becomes a reflection of the whole history of human evolution up to that point. Evocatively expressing this process as "the real is the rational and the rational is the real," Hegel says that this process is entirely rational in nature which dispenses with the idea of a "genius" as the creator of "art." Hegel conceives this progressive process as signifying the whole historic process where human beings keep evolving as they keep learning from their experiences, in the process learning to achieve progressively greater freedom. The end of this process represents a mental state where collective Spirit/Mind or Consciousness achieves its full self-realization, thereby signaling an end of history. This historical process, which occurs dialectically through a process of thesis and antithesis leading to a synthesis that "mediates" between the two, the synthesis, in turn, becoming a new thesis and so on, signify the evolution of *collective consciousness* through various stages of social evolution in history.

In this process, certain individuals, including artists, become capable of capturing the historic moments of their times. Hegel's understanding of "art" is the way artists express "ideas" through specific "forms" which historically keep "evolving" as follows: in the symbolic satge, "form" is

[26] Ibid., 252.

not adequate to the "idea" being expressed by it, like in the Egyptian, Indian, African or Inca arts; in the classical period, while an "idea" is well-represented by a "form," the "idea" itself is quite superficial, like those occurring in the classical Greek sculpture and, in the romantic stage, the inadequacy of the "form" to carry an "idea" is stressed, making art look inwards, like Christian art focuses on crucifixion, martyrdoms, and sufferings. Hegel notes that the liberated, totally free "form" of art has not yet arrived. In this connection, one of his most puzzling claims has been that, like history, art would also come to an end someday. It perhaps means that as *collective consciousness* reaches full self-realization, the need for artists to express their times in terms of "forms" would also wither away.[27]

While Hegel's historic sweep is massive, it must be noted, however, that he does not specifically tackle the issues of the "paradox of junk fiction" and "aesthetic pleasure individually."

5.2 Evocation of an Abiding "Affective State" Among the Audiences and Their "Levels of Identification" with an Artwork

Bharata's celebrated two-step formula of dramatic performance is given below:

1st Step

When the audiences in a *generalized state*, *willingly* watch a "goal-directed activity" being staged in a fictional play, it produces an "abiding" *psycho-somatic state* among them:

Determinant	+	Consequent	+	Transient	→ Formation of an "Abiding State"
(*Vibhāva*)		(*Anubhāva*)		(*Vyabhicāribhāva*)	(*Sthāyībhāva*)

2nd Step

When the audiences, in the above *states of aestheticization* and an "abiding" *psycho-somatic state of affect*, continue to watch the play, "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* is produced among them:

[27] The above is a summing up from "Aesthetics—Hegel", accessed online, May 2017.

Determinant	+	Consequent	+	Transient	→ Production of "Aesthetic Pleasure"
(*Vibhāva*)		(*Anubhāva*)		(*Vyabhicāribhāva*)	(*Rasa*)

In the above formulation, "determinant" (*vibhāva*) is a dramatic situation which produces a psychological response among the protagonists called the "consequents" (*anubhāva*) and some fleeting responses either among the protagonists themselves or among side characters called the "transients" (*vyabhicāribhāva*). The above process follows the classical Indian *theory of action*. Mohanty notes[28]:

> Theory of action forms the basis of practical philosophy…While all the philosophical systems had something to say about it, the common structure from which they all started may be represented as:

Knowledge	→	Desire	→	Will to Do	→	Motor Effort	→	Action
(*Jñāna*)		(*Cikirṣā*)		(*Pravṛtti*)		(*Ceṣtā*)		(*Kārya*)

By making the audiences witness the first and the last step in the above sequence, Bharata was able to evoke an affective state among the audiences which corresponded to the psychological states represented by the intervening three steps.

The two steps in Bharata's formula of enactment are being discussed below in greater deatil as follows:

5.2.1 Evocation of an Abiding "State of Affect" Among the Audiences

The first stage of Bharata's two-stage formula mentioned above is as follows:

Determinant	+	Consequent	+	Transient	→ Formation of an "Abiding State"
(*Vibhāva*)		(*Anubhāva*)		(*Vyabhicāribhāva*)	(*Sthāyībhāva*)

[28] J. N. Mohanty, "The Idea of the Good in Indian Thought", in *A Companion to World Philosophies*, Eds. Eliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1999): 290–303, 292.

In the above step, Bharata achieves a crucial breakthrough in the aesthetic field by indicating that there is a need for the occurrence of a stable *affective state* among the audiences as a prior condition for their experiencing of aesthetic pleasure or *rasa*. In the absence of such a state, the audiences' "unconscious" *bodies* would remain unresponsive to a scene even as their "consciousness" would enthusiastically respond to it, a limitation which would severely restrict the "aesthetic pleasure" generated by the scene. In this connection, Bharata's seminal finding has been that when the audiences witness a particular unit of performance, arranged in the form of a cause-and-effect chain, that is, a "goal-directed activity", would automatically evoke an *affective state* among them as well.[29] This *affective state* represents the arising of an "abiding state" (*sthāyībhāva*, where *sthāyī* means "abiding" and *bhāva* loosely means "emotion" but, more potently, means a "state of mind"), corresponding to the "dominant emotion" being portrayed in the scene, among the audiences which may be compared to the "soaking" of bread in a particular juice which generates the "taste" of the juice in a person who consumes the bread. As the audiences continue watching the play, this "abiding state" (*sthāyīn*), *soaked* in a particular mental state or emotion, acts as a platform for the experiencing of the particular kind of *rasa* being produced by the scene.

"Self-Reflexivity of Emotions": A Seminal Discovery by Indian Aesthetes

It has been generally believed that at the center of "thoughts" lie "concepts" which are both abstract and universal in nature. Once these "concepts" have been taught to others, "thoughts" arising in a person can be communicated to others which makes dissemination of thought-based knowledge possible in a society. In other words, "thoughts," despite being "owned" by individuals, can be shared with others. In this sense, "thoughts" become "self-reflexive processes" where a person can not only refer back to them himself in "self-reflexivity" but also communicate them to others in concrete terms.

In contrast, it has generally been held that "emotions" remain exclusive to individuals which can neither be taught nor communicated to others. In being a subjective experience entirely, "emotions" cannot be "self-reflexive" in nature, that is, they cannot be *similarly* experienced

[29] For different interpretations of the term "*bhāva*", see Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 252.

by others as the self experiences them. Thus, even though a person can recall a particular "emotion" which has been subjectively experienced by her earlier, she can only communicate it to others in the broadest of terms, like "I was feeling sad," et cetera, which, being a cognitive process, cannot convey the subjective *feel* of the particular "emotion" to others in an equal measure. In this sense, it has generally been held that "emotions" can never become part of "knowledge" since, unlike "thoughts," they can never be disseminated to others. The art critic Mukund Lath, however, says that Indian aesthetic theories contradict this notion by holding that, like "thought," "felt emotions" can also be effectively communicated to others. In other words, according to Lath, subjectively experienced "emotions" as *felt* by the protagonists on stage can also be equally *felt* by the audiences:

> Though rooted in my emotional self and I remain in a subjective mode, it is clearly akin to knowledge because the subjectivity of the felt emotion no longer relates to a personal or individual "I" but is akin to an "idea" in the realm of "feeling" just as "concepts" are in the realm "thought," common to all "I's" and and all "me's."[30]

He perceptively comments that "the *rasa theory* implies that…art is possible only because of the possibility that self-reflection can extend to our emotional self too."[31]

Discovery of "Mirror Neurons" in Science: Evidence of the Production of an Affective State among the Spectators through Embodied Simulation

The evocation of an *affective state* among the audiences as they witness a causal "goal-directed activity" being played on screen has been scientifically established now. In early 1990s, Giacomo Rizzolatti, Shaun Gallaghar and others found that when great apes are made to observe a "goal-directed activity" being undertaken by some members of their specie, an act that is not "aimless" involving random movements but "purposeful" in nature, similar *neurons* (reason they are called "mirror neurons") start firing within the bodies of the observing apes as well

[30] Mukund Lath, "The Aesthetics of Music", in *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Vol. 15 Part 3: Science, Literature and Aesthetics, Ed. Amiya Dev, Gen. Ed. D. P. Chattopadhyay (New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2009): 177–88, 183.

[31] Ibid., 184, modified.

which puts them in the same *affective state*, that is, the *psycho-somatic state* that the performing apes are experiencing. In the course of the "observers" *reliving* a scene, the automatic initiation of motor activities within them reverses the hitherto understood formula of perception as representing a process of "perception → cognition → motor activity." What the new understanding means is that an *embodied* understanding of the "event" is *directly* produced in the observers rather than a higher faculty making "meaning" for them.[32] In fact, scientists now claim that it is only on the basis of this *evoked state* that an observer understands what a performer is doing: "without a mirror mechanism we would still have our sensory representation, a "pictorial" depiction of the behavior of others, but *we would not know what they were really doing*."[33] Scientists further claim that the evocation of such an affective state among observers forms the very basis of *inter-subjectivity* operating among human beings.

Spearheaded by Parma University in Italy, cognitive and neuro-scientific research in Embodied Simulation has since progressed further. Vittorio Gallese and Hannah Wojciehowski make the following comments:

> Embodied simulation is quite different from standard accounts of the Simulation Theory of mind-reading. Embodied simulation is a mandatory, pre-rational, non-introsepective process – that is, a physical, and not simply 'mental', experience of the mind, emotions, lived experiences and motor intentions of other people. Embodied simulation challenges the notion that interpersonal understanding consists solely of our explicitly attributing to others propositional attitudes like beliefs and desires which we map as symbolic representations within our own minds. Embodied simulation creates internal non-linguistic "representations" of the body-states associated with actions, emotions and sensations within the observer as if he or she was performing a similar action or experiencing a similar emotion or sensation. This is what the "Feeling of Body" (FoB) amounts to.[34]

[32] Giacomo Rizzolatti and Corrado Sinigaglia, "Preface", in *Mirror in the Brain: How Our Minds Share Actions and Emotions*, Trans. Frances Anderson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): IX–XII, XI and XII, also 124–5.

[33] Ibid., "Preface", X, emphasis added.

[34] Vittorio Gallese and Hannah Wojciehowski, "How Stories Make Us Feel: Toward an Embodied Narratology", *California Italian Studies*, Vol. 2 No. 1 (2011), http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3jg726c2, accessed January 2019 (page nos. not mentioned).

Gallese and Wojciehowski further note:

> By means of the neural format that we share with other humans and, to an extent, with some animals, we can map others' actions, emotions and sensations onto our own viscera-motor and somato-sensory systems. It has been proposed that empathy is rooted in embodied simulation. Consequently, the "FoB" is not to be uniquely conceived of as a mere sensing pf how our body reacts to external stimuli but how the body makes sense of our social world.[35]

Gallese clarifies that our vision is not a simple visual recording of what we see, but the result of a complex construction produced by a fundamental contribution made by our body with its motor potentialities, our senses, our emotions, our memories, and our imaginations. He notes: "We must definitely abandon the outdated concept of solipsistic and 'purely visibilist' vision. Vision is a complex experience, intrinsically synesthetic, that is, made of attributes that largely exceed the mere transposition of the visual coordinates of what we see."[36] He goes on to further say: "The expression 'laying the eyes' indeed betrays the haptic quality of vision: our eyes are not just optical instruments, but also a 'hand' touching and exploring the visible, turning it into *something seen by someone*."[37] Vittorio Gallese and Sjoerd Ebisch sum up by saying:

> Embodied Simulation provides a new empirically based notion of *intersubjectivity*, viewed first and foremost as *intercorporeality*. In relation to touch, by means of ES we do not just "see" a sensation being experienced by someone else and then understand it through an inference by analogy. By means of ES we map others' sensations by re-using our own somatosensory and viscera-motor representations. ES provides an original and unitary account of how *intersubjectivity* works.[38]

[35] Gallese and Hannah Wojciehowski, "How Stories Make Us Feel".

[36] Vittorio Gallese, "Visions of the Body: Embodied Simulation and Aesthetic Experience", *Aisthesis*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (2017): 41–50, 48, Firenze University, www.fupress.com/aisthesis.

[37] Ibid., 48–9, original emphasis.

[38] Vittorio Gallese and Sjoerd Ebisch, "Abstract" in "Embodied Simulation: The *Sense* of Touch in Social Cognition", accessed from the internet in January 2019.

Embodied simulation, being different from the "Simulation Theory of Mind-reading," has an important extension into the narrative field involving aesthetic experiences. Gallese and Wojciehowski note:

> We propose that embodied simulation can be relevant to our experience of narratives for two reasons. First, because of the "Feeling of Body" triggered by narrated characters and situations with whom we identify by means of the mirroring mechanisms they evoke. In such a way, embodied simulation generates the peculiar *seeing-as* that plays a prominent role in our aesthetic experiences. Second, because of the bodily memories and imaginative associations that the narrated material awake in us without going through an intellectual understanding of the process.[39]

Embodied simulation may ultimately be represented as "an automatic, unconscious, pre-reflective mechanism of the brain-body system whose function is to model objects, agents and events and which is triggered by perception, although is plastically modulated by contextual, cognitive and personal-identity related factors."[40] On the question of narrative in artworks, Gallese and Wojciehowski make the following interesting comment: "artistic fiction is often more powerful than real life in evoking our emotional engagement and empathic involvement".[41] In other words, artistic creativity can create more potent situations for the audiences to be engaged in.

5.2.2 *Levels of Audience "Identification" with an Artwork*

It has already been indicated that, as the audiences keep witnessing a play in an *affective* and *aesthetized state of mind*, it produces "aesthetic pleasure" or *rasa* among them which is given by the second step in Bharata's formula for a unit of performance mentioned above:

Determinant + Consequent + Transient → Production of "Aesthetic Pleasure"
(*Vibhāva*) (*Anubhāva*) (*Vyabhicāribhāva*) (*Rasa*)

The transformation of "determinant + consequent + transient" into an *integrated causal whole* by the audiences based on "goal-directed

[39] Gallese and Wojciehowski, "How Stories Make Us Feel".

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

activities" being staged in a play also mirros the *levels of identification* produced among them in relation to the scene. However, before I embark on analyzing the different levels of "identification" produced among the audiences, the following idea about "identification" held sacrosanct by classical Indian theories, including Nyāya, must be made clear: *an individual's basic identification occurs with the "knowledge-process" that underlies the formation of a causal whole within one's perceptual field that enables a unitary response to be given to a situation by the perceiver in terms of her instincts of survival, et cetera, rather than with the elements occurring there individually.*[42] In case of artworks, it may also lead to "secondary identifications" with individual characters like the "heroes" who aid such a process repeatedly or *detest* "villains" who thwart such a process. In this sense, Indian theories depart from Paul Ricoeur's idea that *primary identification* occurs with individual characters who act as centers for linking experiences and actions in a narrative.

Bharata holds that specific scenes in a play have particular emotions associated with them even though a "dominant emotion" permeates through them all. While Bharata identifies such "basic emotions" or "dominant emotions" to be eight in the field of arts, not all the members of the audiences have equal "taste" for all such processes. Thus, while some may subscribe to the romantic-lyrical process of a narrative, others may be better equipped to deal with the heroic process depicted there.

Bharata's theory may be extended to discuss the following levels of "identification" occurring between the audiences in relation to the various stages of an artwork.

5.2.2.1 Preliminary Identification with the Perceptual-Cognitive Mode of an Artwork: Notion of "Mental Attention"

A preliminary identification with a play starts when the audiences begin to pay "mental attention" to it. Hitchcock's following description of a hypothetical scene may be taken as a classic example of the arousal of the audiences' curiosity representing a preliminary identification with the perceptual-cognitive mode of the scene:

[42] At the deepest level, however, classical Indian theories hold that identification with the process of survival signifies a 'clinging to life' which prevents a person from attaining the highest level of realization representing the state of liberation.

> A curious person goes into somebody else's room and begins to search through the drawers. Now, you show the person who lives in that room coming up the stairs. Then, you go to the person who is searching and the public feels like warning him "Hey! Be careful, watch out. Someone is coming up the stairs." Even if the snooper is not a likable character, the audience would still feel anxiety for him.[43]

In Indian thought, while "mental attention" or *manaskāra* represents a process when an "object" floates into one's perception (*prakāśa*, "revealed"), Abhinava defines it as one's readiness for the "distingushing act" (*vimarśonmukhatā*) which reveals the "object" in a particular "mode of appearance" to the perceiver. The Buddhists hold such a process to be a case of *cittābhoga* or an "expansion of the mind."[44] Matilal notes:

> In this way, the two aspects of perception, the act of apprehension (*prakāśa*) and the act of determination (*vimarśa*) are not held to be incompatible with each other and hence can arise together because (and when) either has its own causal antecedent present at the same time.[45]

It is held that, in the initial arousal of "mental attention," the "distinguishing act" is impregnated with subtle word-seeds, called "a very contracted or primitive form of ascertainment through words" (*pratisaṃhṛta-rūpa-śabda-yojanā*). In this preliminary stage of ascertainment through words, the verbal representations are considered to be "withdrawn to themselves," a representation where no prior conventional word meaning or *saṃketa* is necessary because the "distinguishing act" may simply consist of a "this" rather than a conventional word like a "chair" or a "tree."[46]

This level is of crucial importance for Bharata since paying "mental attention" to "goal-directed activities" in a play is the basis for the evocation of an *affective state* among the audiences, a process which is synonymous with the beginning of a "preliminary identification" with the play that paves the way for more intense forms of "identification" arising among the audiences latter. In connection with the example given by

[43] François Truffaut, *Hitchcock*, Reprint (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986): 73, modified.

[44] Matilal, *Perception*, 138–9.

[45] Ibid., 139.

[46] Ibid.

Hitchcock, Truffaut notes Hitchcock as saying that when the unknown interloper becomes Grace Kelly as in his film *Rear Window* (1954), the audiences' "identification" with the scene intensifies immeasurably.[47]

5.2.2.2 Sympathetic Identification with the Narrative Mode of an Artwork: The Notion of "Narrative Universals"

The British writer E. M. Forster had explained when a "reportage" becomes a "narrative". He says that while the statement "The King died and then the Queen died" is merely a reportage of unconnected "events" in their chronological order, the description of the causally connected "event" "The King died and then the Queen died *of grief*" forms a narrative. For Forster, *a narrative is a causally linked chain of events* which forms the basis for its absorption as "knowledge" by the receivers. It endorses the Nyāya view that unless a *causal whole* is formed within view, no "knowledge" can arise in the viewer. However, the formation of a *causal whole* is not a unique process but may be formed differently by different people depending on their habitual experiences of life, et cetera, a "must" requirement in the Indian theories in general and "Hindu" theories in particular. It leads to the idea that a consistent process of adopting a particular type of *causal linkage* results in the formation of "genres" in artworks. Herman & Others mention:

> Genres reflect one of the fundamental realities of human cognition and communication: we understand and refer to phenomena by comparing them to existing categories, and, if necessary, by modifying the categories or creating new ones.[48]

The audiences' continued engagement with an artwork ultimately depends on their "taste" on the basis of which they may identify with a particular narrative genre more than with another. In Bharata's theory, narrative genres represent "narrative universals" whose construction follows exactly the same pattern as the one followed in the formation of "universals" in the Nyāya theory of perception, that is, they are constructed from a merger of bits and pieces of having watched similar "events" repeatedly in life or in artworks by the perceivers. It is interesting

[47] Truffaut, *Hitchcock*, 73.

[48] David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan, Eds. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, Reprint (London: Routledge, 2010): 201.

to note that Patrick Colm Hogan has been deeply influenced by the above Indian notion of the formation of "narrative universals" in his work *The Mind and its Stories: Narrative Universals and Human Experience*.[49]

Production of "Abiding Affective States" Involving "Dominant Emotions" among the Audiences by "Narrative Universals"

It is held that the primary reason for which the audiences come to witness a play is experiencing "aesthetic pleasure" or the *rasas* produced by the play. In this sense, it is a unique feature of Indian aesthetic theories to hold that the production of a particular "abiding affective state" is the end-product of an artwork since it is ultimately this state which is automatically experienced as *rasa* by the audiences with the narrative merely acting as its instrument. Even in the ultimate ideal of Vedic thought, where one experiences an inner harmony with nature represented by the formula *Brahman* = *ātma*, the above state signifies a *felt experience* of *tranquility and peace* for human beings, the ultimate state that human beings can achieve in their experiences. It is in terms of such *felt experiences* that "emotions" finally supercede "thought" as the ultimate ideal in Indian theories. The following comments by Hogan support the Indian ideal: "My contention is that story structures are fundamentally shaped and oriented by our emotion systems."[50] Drawing from both Western and Indian culture, Hogan elaborates his statement thus:

> Needless to say, I am not the first person to have seen a link between story structure and emotion. In the West, the theory of story structure begins with Aristotle's *Poetics* which stresses the emotional force of such recurring story elements as recognition and reversal. Indeed, for Aristotle, story structure is fundamentally guided by the generation and catharsis of emotions, particularly fear and pity. Similar concerns may be found in other traditions as well. Thus the early Sanskrit theorists like Bharatamuni and Dhañanjaya stressed the emotional operation of literature [and dramas] and the organization of stories by reference to emotionally driven and emotionally consequential goal-seeking.[51]

[49] See Patrick Colm Hogan's *The Mind and its Stories: Narrative Universals and Human Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[50] Patrick Colm Hogan, *Affective Narratology: The Emotional Structure of Stories* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2011): 1.

[51] Hogan, *Affective Narratology*, 10, modified.

Lamenting that many authors ignore "emotions" despite being acquainted with current research, Hogan cites the example of David Bordwell as a case in point:

> David Bordwell's pathbreaking *Narration in the Fiction Film* and his erudite work of metatheory *Making Meaning* bring his profound knowledge of cognitive research to bear on film. But these and other works of his do not engage with the emotions that have been part of the recent "cognitive revolution".[52]

Recent cognitive researches on "emotions" in the West have led to the formation of two distinct theories of "emotion." The first theory, supported by Keith Oatley, Nico Frijda, and others, is called "The Appraisal Theory of Emotion" where large, plan-guided "events" lead to the production of "emotions" on the basis of a relation between an "event" on the one hand and the perceivers' interests, needs and desires on the other, a process which ultimately underlie the formation of stories, et cetera. The second theory called "The Perception Theory of Emotion," held by Joseph LeDoux, António Damátio, and others, points to the possibility of small proximate incidents evoking "instinctual" responses in terms of "emotions" in a mechanical manner, like the sudden citing of a snake evokes "fear" in a person, et cetera. While both aspects may be true in a fully worked out theory of emotions, at this stage of scientific knowledge, one cannot make a final call about either contending theory or a combination of them. Sunthar Visuvalingam comments on the above "instincts" vs. "emotions" dichotomy:

> For Neuroscience, *instinct* refers to the biological reflexes (aggression, sex, fear, disgust) of an organism, rooted in the genetically programmed propensity of an animate being to preserve and perpetuate itself. *Emotion* refers to the various corporeal (chemical, nervous, etc.) changes that are brought about by the operation of such instincts in response to an immediate context in order to maintain an internal equilibrium.[53]

[52] Ibid., 1.

[53] Sunthar Visuvalingam, "Towards an Integral Appreciation of Abhinava's Aesthetics of Rasa" in *Abhinavagupta: Reconsiderations*, published by *Evam: Forum on Indian Representations*, Vol. 4 No. 1 & 2 (2006), Eds. Makarand Paranjape and Sunthar Visuvalingam (New Delhi: Sambad India Foundation, 2006): 7–55, Footnote 13.

In contrast, neuroscience describes another related term, “sentiments”, in the following manner:

> *Sentiment* is distinguished in the above evolutionary perspective by the integrated mapping of the experience of such emotions in relation to their external causes – evoking the memory of past patterns and future projections – onto the general psycho-somatic state as a whole. Manifesting already in higher animals, like birds, dogs, apes, etc., sentiment is hence characterized by “self-awareness” from the automatism of the body, finding its culmination in the subjective human consciousness where such cognitive autonomy is mirrored in language.[54]

In the above context, Visuvalingam says: “Bharata’s *sthāyībhāva* is a *sentiment* (which includes both *instincts* and *emotions*) which is, thus, a cultural construct which depends on our biological inheritance” at its base.[55]

Bharata identifies eight “abiding states” (*sthāyībhāvas*) consisting of the following “dominant emotions”:

> The erotic, comic, tragic and heroic,
> The flavors of fury, fear, disgust and wonder;
> Such are the *rasas* which number eight,
> That represents the dramatic tradition of our time.[56]

Graphically represented, they appear as follows:

Narrative Universal (Genre)	Abiding State of “Dominant Emotion” (*Sthāyī-bhāva*)
Erotic (*Sṛṅgāra*)	Delight (*Rati*)
Comic (*Hāsya*)	Laughter (*Hāsa*)
Pathetic (*Karuṇa*)	Sorrow (*Śoka*)
Furious (*Raudra*)	Anger (*Krodha*)
Heroic (*Vīra*)	Heroism (*Utsāha*)
Odious (*Bibhatsa*)	Disgust (*Jugupsā*)
Wonderful (*Adbhūta*)	Wonder (*Vismaya*)
Terrible (*Bhayānaka*)	Fear (*Bhaya*)

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Bharata, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 6.15, quoted in Ingall’s Ānandavardhana’s *Dhvanyāloka*, 110.

Abhinava adds an important ninth "dominant emotion" to the above list, the "emotion" of "quiescence or peace" (*śānta-rasa*) considered to be the ultimate form of emotion among all human beings[57]:

Tranquility (*Śānta*)	Serenity (*Sama*)

As to why such an emotion is considered to be the highest form of all emotions is explained as follows: in the above emotion, "one feels the same towards all creatures, where there is no pleasure, no sorrow, no hatred and no envy."[58] Subsequently, some more "dominant emotions" have been added to the above list in the Indian tradition by the Vaishnav theoretician Rūpa Goswamin as Mohanty has noted.[59]

According to Bharata and other aesthetes, there are also some "emotions" or *rasas* which, though not being "dominant emotions," are yet compatible with the main *rasas* and hence may be developed alongside it as a subordinate *rasa* that may help in strengthening the main *rasa*. The mutually compatible *rasa* listed by them is: the heroic and the erotic, the erotic and the comic, the cruel and the erotic, the heroic and the marvelous, et cetera. In the same context, the mutually exclusive *rasas* have also been listed as under: the erotic and the loathsome, the heroic and the fearsome, the peaceful and the cruel and the peaceful and the erotic.[60] Abhinavagupt, however, holds that even obstructive *rasas* may be used in an artwork provided the following conditions are fulfilled[61]:

i. They should not be developed to their full extent
ii. One should not introduce too many such *rasas*
iii. One should be constantly mindful that obstructive *rasas* remain subordinate in the play.

[57] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 136.

[58] Masson quotes from the 20th chapter of *Viṣnudharmottarapurāṇa*, quoted by Roshni Rustomji, "'Rasa' and 'Dhvani' in Indian and Western Poetics and Poetry", *Journal of South Asian Literature*, Vol. 16 No. 1, Part 1: East-West Literary Relations (Winter, Spring 1981): 75–91, 86.

[59] Mohanty notes: "Rūpa Goswamī, in his *Ujjvalanīlamani*, developed the *rasa* theory into the domain of the *Bhakti Movement* which represented a loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa. In his work, the *sṛṅgāra rasa* or love becomes *bhakti-rasa* with its various forms such as *śānta* (tranquility), *dāsya* (servility, humility), *sakhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (affection for a child) and *mādhurya* (sweetness)." *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 136.

[60] Ingalls, "Introduction" to Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.24A, 506.

[61] Ibid., 3.24K & 3.24a, 508, 511.

It is also generally held by Bharata that a state of mind that extends over the basic plot of the play must necessarily appear as an "abiding" state whereas that which accompanies only an incident in the plot should necessarily appear as a "transient" state only.[62]

Abhinava delves into another interesting area of aesthetic experience: can a *rasa* arise without the express understanding of the "meaning" of a scene or an "event"? He cites the example of sound in music to hold that a *rasa* may indeed arise without an express understanding of a situation:

> The perception of a *rasa* can arise without any perception of expressed meaning, as when it is brought about by the aid of mere sound in songs and the like where we have a meaningless succession of syllables (*svarālāpa*) without words…Even where there is meaning in the words of a song, the understanding of that meaning is not necessary because *rasa* here arises in accordance with scale and mode of music without regard to the suggested meaning.[63]

Abhinava's another insight is that, in repetitive processes, which arguably include visual and other sensuous processes, practice makes us arrive at a conclusion by *force of our habit* without really paying attention to the intervening process.[64]

The basis for Bharatas' theory of "dominant emotions" is natuarally in line with classical Indian thoughts on the subject which holds that human beings are endowed with certain "basic emotions" which have co-arisen along with their evolution in nature. When a particular "basic emotion" is aroused among the audiences in response to witnessing a particular situation or affect, the "emotion" itself doesn't get exhausted by that act. Rather, such an arousal represents a particular manifestation of the emotion concerned and would rise again once conducive circumstances become available. In terms of a modern example, basic emotions are like engraved recordings which would play whenever they are made to play. Abhinava quotes an intriguing line from Vyāsa's *Yogabhāsya*: "The fact that Caitra is in love with one woman does not mean that he is out of love with others" (*na hi caitra ekasyāṃ striyāṃ rakta iti anyāsu*

[62] Ibid., 3.24aL, 513–14.

[63] Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.33bL, 543–4.

[64] Ibid., 3.33bL, 546.

viraktaḥ)![65] The above does not mean that Caitra is promiscuous; rather, it means that a reservoir of similar sentiments reside deep within him which are bound to arise whenever appropriate clues are presented in a situation. Gerow further clarifies the idea thus: "In art, we experience not love for 'x', but love as such in so far as all men share such a determination."[66] Naturally, for a harmonious social living, one is trained to manifest certain desires only while keeping others within check.

It is interesting to note that, in the West, the Basic Emotion Theory or BET has dominated affective sciences for decades, where the no. of basic emotions identified thus far have been six: anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise. However, in recent times, the theory has been criticized on the following grounds: (i) it is refuted by cross-cultural linguistic differences, (ii) it is tainted by the use of a forced and hence flawed methodology in collecting evidence of pan-cultural facial expressions, (iii) it is incapable of accommodating context-sensitivity and openness of emotional episodes, and (iv) it is unsupported by contemporary neuro-imaging data, et cetera. However, the researcher Daniel D. Hutto, in an exhaustive analysis, has shown that above objections can be effectively nullified which makes the Basic Emotion Theory the best BET in the present state of research.[67]

5.2.2.3 Sympathetic Identification with the Action Mode of an Artwork: Notion of "Action Universals"

A narrative and its action modes mutually reinforce each other: "actions could not be mentally projected at all in the absence of narrative-based norms of actions."[68] Since a narrative is generally co-extensive with a particular action mode, the audiences' identification does not remain confined to the narrative mode alone, but extends to its associated actions as well.

[65] Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 231.

[66] Edwin Gerow, "Abhinavagupta's Aesthetics as a Speculative Paradigm", in *Indian Philosophy: A Collection of Readings*, Vol. 3, Ed. Roy W. Perret (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000): 266–88, 267.

[67] See Daniel D. Hutto's article "A New Better BET: Rescuing Basic Emotion Theory", accessed from Academia.edu in May 2018.

[68] Herman and Others, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, 3.

An "action mode" may be defined as the distinguishing feature of certain types of action which, though involving planned behavior within a narrative, generally include some unpredictables as well which result in the production of enigma and suspense among the audiences.[69] Even though, "action modes" are more clearly defined on the generic conventions of film that differ from genre to genre, their pattern generally follows the underlying schema:

i. An *initial state* where the story world rests before action is initiated,
ii. An *end state* where the story world reaches at the end of the action, and
iii. *The state* in which the story world would have been had the "action" not been initiated.[70]

The generic action modes with which the audiences identify may be called "action universals" which may be "defined" in the same way as the Nyāya notion of the "universals": when bits and pieces of certain "actions," which are similar in nature, are "observed" to happen repeatedly or "heard about" or "taught" in a tradition regularly, they are joined together by the perceiver to form a prototype of the "actions" in question, together called an "action universal." These "actions" are not aimless actions, but causally determined sequences of "goal-directed activities" aimed at serving a particular purpose in a narrative. Nyāya would like to hold that such "action universals" represent the formation of a "necessary relation" or an "inherent relation" (*samavāya*) between elements constituting such "actions." Thus, a lady with books generates the "action universal" that "She is studying." Changing any one of the elements occurring in this "action scene" would necessarily affect all other elements in the scene which would destroy the "action universal" of "studying" with the formation of a new "action universal" occurring in this case.

Defining or distinguishing *discrete acts* within major "action modes" or "action universals" associated with a particular narrative which do not advance the narrative on their own and yet have a profound influence

[69] Ibid., 384–5.
[70] Ibid., 2–3.

on the audiences, has always posed a problem for theoreticians. Virginia Woolf notes some such *discrete acts*:

> Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you – how, at the corner of the street, perhaps you passed two people talking. A tree shook; an electric light danced; the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic; a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.[71]

In the above sense, an action represents an "image" which Ezra Pound describes as: "An image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."[72] Such actions fall within Bharata's classification of 36 *lakṣaṇas* ("indicators," more appropriately termed as "enhancers"), which represent signifying moments of an artwork that may not advance either the narrative or its action mode in any significant way and yet leave a deep impact on the audiences. This aspect would be subsequently discussed in this chapter.

Bharata's Anticipation of Eisenstein's Formula of "Dramatic Performance"

It is interesting to note that Bharata's formula of dramatic action has a remarkable affinity with Eisenstein's formula for constructing a dramatic scene in theater or cinema. In analyzing what an *Image* represents, Eisenstein says that it consists of the following two components: an "image" (*obraz*) which represents the psychological content of a scene that has an effect on the characters and a "depiction" (*izobrazhenie*) which represents "people's normal, accepted behavior" in response to the scene[73]:

$$\text{Image} = \text{Inner Psychology of a Dramatic Situation that has an Effect on Characters} + \text{Characters Normal Behavior in Response to the Situation}$$

[71] Virginia Woolf, *The Second Common Reader*, Ed. Andrew McNeillie (Mariner Books, 1932): 282–3, quoted in Krishna Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics: A Critical and Comparative Study* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1965): 82–3.

[72] Ezra Pound quoted in Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 82–3.

[73] S. M. Eisenstein, "Montage 1937", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 2: Towards a Theory of Montage*, Trans. Michael Glenny, Eds. Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, New ed. (London: BFI, 1994): 11–58, 20.

Since the "Inner Psychology of a Dramatic Situation" is nothing but "Determinant" in Bharata's formula and "Character's Normal Behavior in Response to the Situation" is equivalent to his notion of the "Consequents," Bharata's formula is essentially similar to Eisenstein's except for the omission of a crucial factor in Eisenstein's formula: the *notion of the transients* (*vyabhicāribhāvas*) used by Bharata in his formula. This idea needs some explanation.

By the "transients," Bharata means states which occur on the sides of the main state being experienced by the protagonists. Marie Higgins clarifies its need as follows:

> *Vyabhicāribhāvas* are represented only in passing, but *they strengthen and provide shadings for the main action and the durable emotions they represent*…In *Hamlet*, for instance, Hamlet's fear of ghost, his wistful recollection of Yorick, his sarcastic attitude in speaking to the King, his wrathful outbursts towards his mother are among temporary emotional states that hamlet undergoes and that contribute to the avenging anger as the prevailing emotional tone of the play.[74]

While Higgins emphasizes the role of "emotions" in the "transient state," she is puzzled that it even includes states like indolence, laziness, et cetera, which occur as "in-between states" of "thought" and "emotion" in Bharata's theory. Her puzzlement, however, could be removed if one translates an "abiding affective state" as an "abiding mental state" rather than as a "dominant emotion" only.

I also argue that, in Bharata's theory, the "transients" serve another important purpose: they act as a neutral "measure" of the "events" that are unfolding in front of the audiences. The importance of the concept lies in the fact that if the audiences are forever kept within the narrow confines of the main development, they may miss experiencing the "intensity" of the "events" from outside, in the process losing their perspective on the larger ramifications of the "events" being seen from outside by them. This aspect is being illustrated through the film example given below.

[74] Kathleen Marie Higgins, "An Alchemy of Emotion: Rasa and Aesthetic Breakthroughs", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 65 No. 1 (2007): 43–54, 46, modified.

Film Example

At one point in Clint Eastwood's *Sully* (2016), which portrays the true story of an airliner hit by birds landing safely on the river Hudson by the pilot "Sully' Sullenberger, the bird-hit airplane veers dangerously close to the highrises of the New York City as it prepares for an emergency landing on the frozen river. At this point, the director cuts to three unrelated characters, involving a car driver, a person on the terrace with a cup of coffee in his hand and a company executive looking through the glass panes of his office, whose surprised reactions give a "measure" of the alarmingly low flight of the plane in between the towering buildings of the New York City. Happening so close to the 9/11 event in the New York City, such a flight has serious psychological ramifications for the city residents. In the absence of this "neutral" perspective, the danger of the situation can only be guessed by the audiences. In this sense, Bharata's *vyabhicāribhāvas*, representing "promiscuous activities," assume crucial importance. It is only with the help of the *vyabhicāribhāvas* that a playwright could increase or decrease the "measure" or "intensity" of the main "event." While such characters obviously exist in Eisenstein's films, he didn't elaborate on the need for their presence there.

"Shot-Reverse Shot Technique" in "Face-to-Face Communication" in Cinema: Bordwell's Notion of the "Contingent Universal"

Shot-counter shot or shot-reverse-shot has been defined as "an editing technique widely used in dialogue sequences in which characters exchange looks: one character is shown looking (often off-screen) at another character, and in the next shot the second character is shown apparently looking back at the first."[75] On the surface, it is based on the idea that "since the characters are shown facing in opposite directions, the viewer assumes that they are looking at each other."[76] While analyzing the popularity of the shot-counter-shot technique in cinema, Bordwell first discounts Pudovkin's idea that it is because of the fact that it mirrors the "natural" way of looking at a thing, that is, the device is "subject to the same

[75] Kuhn and Westwell, "Shot-countershot", in *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 373–4.

[76] Ibid., 374.

conditions as those of the eyes of the observer."[77] Bordwell points out that "the shot-reverse-shot device is *unfaithful to ordinary vision* because it not only changes the camera position to favor ¾ views" but also, as a person directly taking part in a face-to-face interaction, "we are not perceptually capable of shifting our angle of view as drastically as is normal in shot/reverse-shot cutting."[78] Bordwell mentions that Pudovkin was ultimately forced to change his stance to acknowledge the presence of an "ideal" omnipresent observer in this mode of viewing to explain the discrepancy between the cinematic practice and reality.[79]

Having discounted Pudovkin's "natural" position, Bordwell next takes up Jean-Pierre Oudart's theory of "suture": "the filmic processes by which the spectator is continuously 'sewn' into the series of shots and spaces playing out on the cinema screen."[80] Oudart holds that *the first shot* entails an off-screen space which represents "a pure field of absence" for the perceiver. The *counter shot* then reveals to the audiences that something occupies that off-screen space.[81] While the first *shot* raises a question, the *counter shot* answers it which the audiences then *stitch* together to make the whole. Bordwell notes that Oudart's process works on the basis of two conditions: camera angles of the two shots must be oblique and not occupy the subjects' "optical" positions, and secondly, the same portion of space must be shown both in the visual field and in the off-screen space.[82] Oudart has commented that his idea works on the following basis: "the appearance of a *lack* perceived as the absent one is followed by its abolition by someone or something placed within the same field."[83] Noting that Oudart claims the suture movement as helping the audiences to construct a narrative space around a semantic meaning, a "signifying sum,"[84] Bordwell criticizes it on the ground that, in

[77] V. I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique*, Reprint (New York: Evergreen, 1970), 70, quoted in David Bordwell, "Convention, Construction, and Cinematic Vision", in *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*, Eds. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 87–107, 88.

[78] Bordwell, "Convention, Construction, and Cinematic Vision", 88.

[79] Ibid., 89.

[80] Kuhn and Westwell, *Oxford Film Dictionary*, "Suture", 417.

[81] Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 111.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 111, modified.

[84] Ibid., 111.

this process, the audiences must build everything up from the ground level each time the shots change. That is, the process of "stitching" has to be repeated again and again which signifies that the audiences have "learnt" nothing from the previous processes.[85]

In its place, Bordwell offers a "constructivist" account of the technique where the audiences "come to the image already "tuned," prepared to test a spatial, temporal, and logical scheme against what the shot presents"[86]:

> In this sense, the "signifying sum" often *precedes*, as a hypothesis, the perception of the object…Contrary to Oudart, the viewer checks the shot against what he or she is expected to see and adjusts his hypotheses accordingly. By using conventional schemata to produce and test hypotheses about a string of shots, the viewer often knows each shot's salient spatial information *before* it appears.[87]

What Bordwell indicates is that the audiences have been "taught" this process over time which conditions them to physically expect the radical change in angle that takes place within the process. For Bordwell, thus, the audiences read the cues contained within the shots or the editing practices occurring there to expect what is being presented in the scene. In this sense, imputing a separate explanation for this conventional process, as done by Oudart, becomes superfluous.

While Bordwell's explanation appears to be satisfactory, it still does not explain reasons for the "popularity" of what must be an extremely disorienting technique for the audiences involving, as it does, a rapid shift of viewpoints between characters on screen. Bordwell is aware of this problem. Further explorations of the technique brings him to the interesting concept of the "contingent universal" which signifies a process of *naturalization of certain repetitive embodied and socio-cultural practices* pertaining to human communication among viewers. Bordwell notes that, given certain uniformities in the environment across cultures,

[85] Ibid., 111–12.

[86] Ibid., 112.

[87] Ibid., 111, modified.

human beings have forged certain “universals” that represent such phenomena in the society.[88] Bordwell notes: “Neither wholly ‘natural’ nor wholly ‘cultural’, these sorts of ‘contingent universals’ are good candidates for being at least partly responsible for the ‘naturalness’ of artistic conventions.”[89] Holding that “face-to-face personal interaction is a solid candidate for a cross-cultural universal”, Bordwell says that shot-reverse-shot technique represents one such “contingent universal”[90]:

> As for the instantaneous change of view which is said to create the “ubiquitous” or the “ideal” observer, this would seem to be a special case of the immediate leap in time or space caused by any cut, of any sort. And once spectators, presumably from a very young age, have acquired the skill of taking a cut to signal such a shift in orientation, the other cues present in shot/reverse-shot may suffice to motivate the distinct changes of angle.[91]

Bordwell’s notion of the “contingent universal” is interesting in the sense that they are exact equivalents of the Nyāya notion of “universals” formed from bits and pieces of “actions” collected from repetitive observation of similar “events” by the members of a particular society or culture. The idea of such a “universal” has already been elaborately explained in Chapter 3 and their application to “narrative universals” and “action universals” have also been discussed in detail in this chapter.

At base, “face-to-face communication” is an *embodied experience* in terms of the viewer’s *lived experiences* of life. Clearly, explanations of such “events” are likely to benefit from the embodied theories of Merleau-Ponty and Nyāya. While the efficacy of the Nyāya notion of a “universal” has been mentioned above, Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the *chiasm*, where a subjective–objective alteration keeps occurring between the perceiver and the “object” *naturally* anticipated by the body and hence psychologically expected by the perceiver, provides a further insight into the process.[92] More research can only enrich this field.

[88] Bordwell, “Convention, Construction, and Cinematic Vision”, 91.

[89] Ibid., 91, emphasis added.

[90] Ibid., 94.

[91] Ibid., 98.

[92] See Ted Toadvine, “Chiasm”, in *The Routledge Companion to Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2012): 336–46.

5.2.2.4 The Final Level: Empathic Identification with the Focus of an Artwork

The ultimate ideal of Indian philosophy is to gain the realization *Brahman = ātma* represented by the experience *tat tvam asi* or "you are that". It forms the basis for generating a state of *empathic identification* with others (*saṁvedana*, lit., "identical experience"). The above state signals a complete shift from one's egoistic self involving "selfish action" to one's "ego-less identity" involving "self-less action" (*niṣkāma karma*, "action without any selfish desire") in the service of others (*lokasaṃgraha*, "for the people"). In the Indian tradition, this ideal signifies a state of liberation for "the self" in this life itself (*jīvan-mūkti*, "liberated in this life") rather than in a life hereafter.

Abhinava has equated the experience of a liberated "self" (*Brahma-svada*) with the *aesthetic experience* of the audiences since, in both cases, the individuals forget themselves. Mohanty notes:

> The enjoyment of *rasa* is said to unfold through various stages: other objects disappear from consciousness until *rasa* alone is left…Aesthetic enjoyment then becomes somewhat like the contemplation of the *Brahman*.[93]

Since *rasa* represents a *universalized state of mind* (*sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*) for the audiences in relation to an artwork, which is removed from their practical, egoistic self, it invariably represents a state of restfulness (*viśrānti*) for the audiences akin to a realization of the Ultimate by an individual seeker. An *empathic state of identification* ultimately signifies one's realization of one's *inner harmony with Nature,* an experience which is held up as the highest goal for all "arts" in the Indian tradition. Mohanty explains that, since the experience of *rasa* invariably leads a person to a state of mental tranquility, Abhinava holds *śānta rasa* or the *rasa of peace* to be the highest form of all *rasas* in artworks.[94]

[93] Mohanty, *Classical Indian Philosophy*, 135.
[94] Ibid.

5.3 Bharata's Theory of Extended Action: "Plot Structure" of a Play

Bharata extends his formula of dramatic action to a five-step structure in a play. Such an extended segment usually represents a "story-line" having a defined "plot structure" or "so it happened" (*itivṛtta*) as mentioned in the Indian aesthetic theory. Aristotle has repeatedly said that a "complete" action is one of the primary conditions for experiencing aesthetic pleasure: since "beauty depends on magnitude and order" that has a beginning, middle and an end which result in a "story" appreciated by the audiences.[95] That a full-scale drama, involving five-acts, exerts maximum impact on the audiences appears to have been universally accepted both in the East and the West. While Aristotle called such "acts" "plotting," in India it has been called "itivṛtta" ("so it happened"), an idea extensively developed by Bharata in his magnum opus *Nāṭyaśāstra* and incisively discussed by Abhinavagupta in his commentary *Abhinavabhāratī* (c.10th CE). Margaret Kane notes:

> Even though Bharata deals with all facets of dramatics ranging from the structure of the stage to the use of hand gestures, one of his most significant and interesting contributions to dramaturgy is the elaborate theory of "plot structure" that he details in the ninth book of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The plot of dramas, according to Bharata and subsequent Indian dramatists, consists of many individual members who together give shape and substance to a unified idea.[96]

Bharata's brilliance lies in describing the plot of a drama in three interrelated categories having five members each, called the *pañcakatraya* ("three five member groups") as follows:

[95] Aristotle, *Poetics*, VII: 3–4, quoted in Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 218; also see S. N. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 4th ed. (New York: Dover, 1951).

[96] Margaret Lynn Kane, *The Theory of Plot Structure in Sankrit Drama and Its Application to the "Uttararamacarita"*, PhD Thesis, Harvard University, 1983: 2, modified.

I. Five "Main Parts" or "Junctions" (*Sandhis*) of a Narrative Plot and its two Sub-Parts:
   i. "Templates of Episodic Action" or *Sandhyaṅgas*
   ii. "Indicators" or *Lakṣaṇas*

II. "Psychological State" (*Avasthās*) of the Protagonists in the Narrative

III. "Forms of Action" (*Arthaprakṛtis*) in the Narrative[97]

The above "Plot" divisions are discussed below.

5.3.1 *Five "Main Parts" or "Junctions" (*Sandhis*) of a Narrative Plot*

It had already been mentioned earlier that Bharata's dramatic form is modeled on the form of a living organism. He classifies five main parts related to the joining of limbs in a living organism (*sandhis*)[98]:

Main Parts or Junctions of the Plot (*Sandhi*)

1. The Mouth (*Mukha*)
2. Unseen Development (*Pratimukha*)
3. Revitalization in the Womb (*Garbha*)
4. Disappointment, Pause or "The Struggle" (*Avamarśa* or *Vimarśa*)
5. Fulfillment (*Nirvahaṇa*)

Bharata's drama is conceived along the line of the birth and growth of a living organism as it starts attaining maturity and then bearing fruit after overcoming obstructions on the way.[99] The different stages of this whole process have been designated as *Sandhi* that represents the task of "binding" or an intricate "interlacing" (*bandha*, "stitching together") of the various parts to form a whole in the five-fold structure.[100] The most

[97] Kane, *The Theory of Plot Structure*, 2.

[98] Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 221–2.

[99] Kapila Vatsyayana, "The Nāṭyaśāstra: The Implicit and the Explicit Text", in *Indian Art: Forms, Concerns and Development in Historical Perspective*, Vol. VI Part 3: *History, Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, Reprint (New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilizations, 2005): 77–106, 92.

[100] Vatsyayana, "The Nāṭyaśāstra", 93–4.

celebrated drama theorist after Bharata, Dhanañjaya (c. 10th CE) clarifies the role of *sandhis* as follows:

> While the parts of the plot are connected with the single goal of achieving the final objective, a *sandhi* is that whose connection is with the purpose of forming a particular constituent related to the larger purpose.[101]

The whole conception of the above five stages signifies the arising of a *desire* in the protagonist to get something and the consequent developments involving his efforts and the frustrations she faces to fulfill her desire. Such examples are: desire for gaining the love of a lady or vice versa, seeking revenge for an act perpetrated in the past, the fulfillment of a vow taken earlier, et cetera. Each such desire acts as "the mouth" (*mukha*) for initiating action in a play; in the next stage, "unseen developments" (*pratimukha*), keep occurring under the surface, like "love" between the hero and the heroine keeps "growing"; the following step of "revitalization in the womb" (*garbha*) represents the process where the unseen development comes out into the open; this openness attracts opposition which puts the protagonists' efforts into doubt in the section involving "disappointment" (*vimarśa*); in the final section called "fulfillment" (*nirvahaṇa*), the developments end with a possible success for the protagonists concerned (or their possible failure).

"Main Parts" have the following sub-parts:

i) "Main Parts"

(*Sandhis*)

"Templates of Episodic Action"

(*Saṅdhyaṅgas*, "Model Situations"', "Span-Elements")

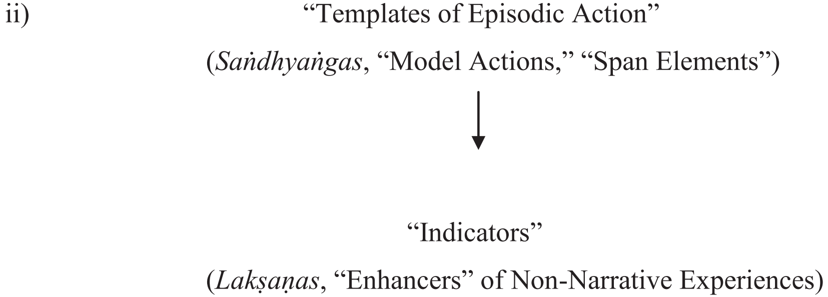
Bharatas' "Templates of Episodic Action" or *Saṅdhyaṅgas* have 64 possible episodes or "completed" actions in a play which signify certain

[101] Dhanañjaya, *Daśarūpaka*, 1.23cd.

"span-elements" representing "model situations" occurring at a particular juncture in a Sanskrit play as noted by the Indologist Maria Christopher Byrski[102]:

> *Nāṭyaśāstra* breaks up the major action-spans of the *Sandhi* phase to a series of "Span-Elements" called the *Saṅdhyangas* which establishes the characteristic of Indian drama as a series of *Situation-Models.*[103]

A random sampling of the *saṅdhyaṅgas* helps illustrate the nature of the episodic actions contemplated by Bharata in a play: "suggestion" (*upakṣepa*) which indicates the main problem, "allurement" (*vilobhana*) which makes the problem interesting for the audiences, "decision" (*yukti*) which indicates the protagonists' resolve in the matter, "dissention" (*bheda*) which introduces differences among the protagonists, et cetera.[104] Byrski divides "templates" into two broad types of "situation-models," one that represents the situation, and another that represents the psychological condition of the characters.[105]



Bharata classifies 36 *Lakṣaṇas* or "Indicators" (better represented as "Enhancers") which represent certain types of expressions in the play called "lineaments of nature" (*sāmudrika lakṣaṇa*) which may not

[102] M. Christopher Byrski, "Sanskrit Drama as an Aggregate of Model Situations", in *Sanskrit Drama in Performance*, Eds. Rachel Van M. Baumer and James R. Brandon (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993): 141–66, 143.

[103] Ibid., 146.

[104] Ibid., 147–8.

[105] Ibid., 147.

advance the narrative in any way and yet have a deep impact on the audiences. Some of the *lakṣaṇas* classified by Bharata are as follows: "ornaments" (*bhusana*) that help generate the impressive appearance of a person (for example, the look of a hero or a person having a sporting look, et cetera); "compressions" (*akshra-saṅghata*) help produce smart dialogues, et cetera; "beauty" (*śobha*) that represents the production of compositional harmony, et cetera. The *lakṣaṇas* do not "signify" but only "glorify" the dramatic execution of a scene by adding "grace" to it. Thus, even the falling lock of hair on a character's forehead would serve this purpose. In this sense, the *lakṣaṇas* or the "indicators"/"enhancers" may not belong to any particular juncture of the play, but may be spread throughout a play.[106] Lane notes: "They are not actual events or happenings, but rather are individual or specific moments of dialogue or brief expressions of emotions".[107] In connection with his celebrated work *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov notes the importance of these subtle moments:

> These are the nerves of the novel, the secret points, the subliminal co-ordinates by means of which the book is plotted – although I clearly realize that these and other scenes will be skimmed over or not even noticed or never even reached…[108]

The examples cited by Virginia Woolf, quoted earlier under "discrete acts" in the "action universal" section of this chapter, clearly belong to the category of *lakṣaṇas*. Thus, her mention that the distinct impressions left by the corner of a street, two people talking, the dancing of an electric light, et cetera, which while they capture a whole vision, an entire conception in a moment, they do not influence the narrative as such and yet leave an indelible mark on the audiences concerned.[109]

[106] Surendra Nath Shastri, *The Laws and Practice of Sanskrit Drama: An Investigation into the Canons of Sanskrit Dramaturgy and their Application to Some Principal Plays in Sanskrit*, Vol. 1 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1961): 157–8.

[107] Lane, *The Theory of Plot Structure in Sanskrit Drama*, 65.

[108] Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*, Reprint (New York: Greenwich House, 1982): 318, quoted in Lane, *The Theory*, 4–5.

[109] Virginia Woolf, *The Second Common Reader*, 282–3, quoted in Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 82–3.

*5.3.2 "Psychological State" (***Avasthās***) of the Protagonists in the Narrative*

Second of the *pañcakatraya* or the "three groups of five" represent the psychological state of the protagonists corresponding to the "main parts" or the "junctures" of the plot:

Psychological State of the Protagonists (*Avasthās*)

1. Beginning (*Prārambha*)
2. Effort (*Prayatna*)
3. Hopeful of Achievement (*Prāptisaṃbhava*)
4. Certainty of Achievement (*Niyatāpti*)
5. Fulfillment (*Phalaprāpti*)[110]

In Bharata's theory, the "Main Parts" constitute the "Determinants" (*Vibhāvas*) that are designed to have a psychological impact on the protagonists called the "Consequents" (*Anubhāvas*) that represent the "Psychological States" (*Avasthās*) of the protagonists in each stage of the play. These "psychological states" or *avasthās* are nothing but "abiding affective states" or *sthāyībhāvas* produced among the protagonists by certain situations occurring within a play. Since these "affective mental states" are automatically evoked among the audiences as well by virtue of the "abiding affective state" produced in them, they help the audiences to *relive* protagonists' experiences within the play.

An intriguing point needs to be discussed here. While in the "Main Parts" or the "Junctures" (*Sandhis*), the fourth stage is shown as "Disappointment," "Pause" or "The Struggle" (*Vimarśa*) which signifies the occurrence of obstructions on the way, its corresponding "Psychological State" (*Avasthā*) is shown as "Certainty of Achievement" (*Niyatāpti*) which appears to be contradictory in nature. However, Byrsky has shown through an extensive analysis of Sanskrit dramas that the terminology "certainty of achievement" has been misinterpreted. In fact, he has shown that enough problems keep happening in the fourth stage that keep hampering the protagonists' efforts to reach their goal. In this sense, Byrski recommends that the fourth stage be read as "Despair," the Sanskrit word "Niyatāpti" permitting such an interpretation.[111]

[110] Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 220–1.

[111] See Maria Christopher Byrski's work, *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1974).

The above psychological states of the protagonists are held to be sacrosanct by Bharata. He has repeatedly said that, even if a five-act drama is replaced with a three-act drama, the protagonists must pass through the above five mental states (*avasthās*) in the same order for realization of appropriate *rasa* by the audiences.[112]

5.3.3 *"Forms of Action"* (Arthaprakṛtis*) in a Narrative*

The third member in Bharata's *pañcakatraya* or the "three five-stage structures" involves an analysis of the source and nature of actions occurring in a play[113]:

Forms of Action (*Arthaprakṛtis*)

1. The Seed (*Bīja*)
2. The Flow of Action (*Bindu*)
3. The Sub-Plot (*Patākā*)
4. The Side-Plot (*Prakarī*)
5. Working toward Fulfillment (*Kārya*)

Noting that the meaning of *artha* is "fruit" and *prakṛti* is "means to the fruit," Abhinava describes the nature of *arthaprakṛti* as follows:

> Where the *avasthās* are the logical progression of the action in pure and simple terms, the *arthaprakṛtis* are the causes by which the *avasthās* progress.[114]

Since Bharata's theory of dramatic structure is formulated on the analogy of the development of a living organism,[115] the heros' actions (*svāyattasiddhi*) may be analyzed as falling under the following broad categories: the *bija* ("seed") which Bharata defines as: "That which, being the first emitted, disperses in small measures in many directions until it culminates into the fruit is called the *bija*"; the *bindu* ("the drop") which initiates the action defined by Bharata as: "Just as a drop of water is

[112] Byrski, *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre*, 113.

[113] Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 221–2.

[114] Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhāratī*, 19.20, quoted by Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 25–6.

[115] Vatsyayana, "The Nāṭyaśāstra", 92.

sprinkled on the roots of a tree for the sake of the fruit, this *arthaprakṛti* is called the *bindu*"[116]; and the *kārya* ("action") which brings the actions to a conclusion.[117] Since the *bindu* is crucially important in forming the narrative and the action parts of a play, Abhinava elaborates its role thus:

> The *bindu* is a conscious activity with reference to the principal goal, and its essential nature being of the primary cause that supports other causes, it is called the *bindu* because, like a drop of oil, it spreads everywhere.[118]

As far as the remaining two "forms of action" are concerned, *patākā* is an episode where, in trying to help the hero, the *patākānāyaka* [hero of the episode] also advances toward his goal, his own pursuit not being distinct from that of the main protagonists or *nāyakas.*[119] In this sense, the name *patākā*, which signifies a flag, indicates that "like a banner, it proclaims the fame and glory of a hero much in the same way that a banner on a chariot indicates the strength and the valor of the warrior."[120]

In contrast, *prakarī* (from the roots *pra* and *kṛ* meaning "to scatter about") is an isolated incident which occurs without any interruption from the beginning to its end, the main purpose of *prakarī's* action being to help the hero either directly or indirectly without any consideration for the *prakarīnāyāka* or the side-heros' own interests. Abhinavagupta clarifies as follows:

> The *cetana arthaprakṛti* of *patākā* and *prakarī* are connected with the success of another's goal but also accompanied by either the success of one's own goal [the *patākā*] or purely connected with the success of another's goal [the *prakarī*].[121]

In the above sense, *patākā* and *prakarī* merely represent "incidents" which, once completed, do not have any further use or connection with the main event.[122]

[116] Bharata, *Naṭyaśāstra*, 19.22, quoted by Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 26.

[117] Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 438–9.

[118] Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhāratī*, 19.23, quoted by Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 41.

[119] Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 29.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhāratī*, 19.20, quoted by Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 232.

[122] Lane, *The Plot Structure*, 33.

Lane notes that it would be wrong to view the *arthaprakṛtis* as a list of actions "from the beginning to the end of a play".[123] Rather, they delineate the crucial *sources* from which *actions* emanate in a play. Thus, we have the "germ" or *bīja* which signifies the original source of the ensuing actions, the "drop" or *bindu* which represents the source or the medium through which the action "spreads" and *kārya* as representing all the main actions within a play that remain directed toward the final goal, the "secondary actions" being *patākā* and *prakarī* which either directly or indirectly advance the action.

Bharata's detailed theory of plot structure would, however, still fail to engage the audiences in the absence of the following two concepts introduced at different times in the Indian aesthetic tradition: "artistic creativity" (*kavi pratibhā*, "creative intuition") and "audience sensitivity" (*sahṛdaya pāthaka*).

Artistic Creativity (Kavi Pratibhā)

As far as "artistic creativity" (*kavi pratibhā*) is concerned, Bharata mentions that, unless the ingredients of a drama are "well cooked", no *rasa* can arise among the audiences. In this connection, all Indian aestheticians, including Bharata, hold that "artistic creativity" is an essential component of all artworks. Ānandavardhana (c. 8th CE), whose *dhvani theory* or "theory of suggestion" would be discussed in detail in the next chapter, and Abhinavagupta (c. 10th CE), who is the commentator of Bharata's work, hold that an artist's genius is essential for presenting an artwork in a manner that would arouse and retain audience's interest. In this connection, Ānandavardhana notes that, even when the nature of things remains the same, they can be made "endless" with an artist's ability to render it in a varied manner (*kavi vyāpāra*, "artist's business") through differentiations in its state, place, time, and individuality (*svalakṣaṇa*). Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta elaborate by stating that only when the mode of expression (*ukti*) and the arrangement or texture (*saṃghaṭanā*, *ghaṭanā*) that it manifests are woven (*gumphana*) appropriately in an artwork, would it result in the perfect ripeness (*paripāka*) of the work.[124] On the question of an artist's genius in an artwork, the literary critic Kuntaka (c. 10th CE) notes:

[123] Ibid., 40.

[124] *The Dhanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with Locana of Abhinavagupta*, Trans. Daniell H. H. Ingalls, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, and M. V. Patwardhan, Ed. Daniel Ingalls (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1990): 4.6 L, 703.

> The poet uses different means, viz., rhetoric, qualities of words and meanings and style, but real beauty does not reside in any one of them singly. It is created by the magic touch of the poet's own genius.[125]

Ānanda and Abhinava eventually lay down certain "must follow" rules in order for an artist to produce an engaging artwork:

i. Forming of a plot, whether traditional or imagined, in keeping with the appropriateness of determinants, consequents, and transients,
ii. The abandoning of a pattern traditionally imposed on a story if it fails to harmonize,
iii. Introduction, by invention if need be, of incidental narratives appropriate to the *rasa*,
iv. Intensifying and relaxing of the *rasa* at appropriate occasions within the work and revival of the predominant *rasa* whenever it begins to fail, and
v. Constructing artistic figures in conformity with the *rasa* in question even though one may have the ability to construct more elaborate figures at that juncture, et cetera.[126]

Even in contemporary times, the advice given by Bharata, Ānadavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and others, appear to retain their timeless quality.

Audience Sensitivity (Sahṛdayatva)

As far as "audience sensitivity" (*sahṛdaya pāthaka*) is concerned, all Indian aesthetes have held that an artwork, even when it is well cooked by the genius of an artist, would fail to achieve its full potential unless the audiences have the necessary skill to engage with it. Regarding the "sensitive reader" or *sahṛdaya pāthaka* (*sahṛdaya* means "similarity of heart" and *pāthaka* means "reader"), Abhinavagupta has declared in no uncertain terms that the audiences' identification with an artwork would only occur when they have "sensitivity" toward the work. In this context, Abhinavagupta's celebrated definition of a *sensitive reader* is as follows:

[125] Quoted in Bimal Krishna Matilal, "*Vakrokti* and *Dhvani*: Controversies about the Theory of Poetry in the Indian Tradition", *Evam*, Vol. 4 No. 1 & 2 (2000): 372–81, 380, modified.

[126] Ānandavardhana, *Dhanyāloka*, 3-10-14K, 427–8.

> The word *sahṛdaya* denotes persons who are capable of identifying with the subject matter, as the mirror of their hearts have been polished by the constant study and practice of poetry [*kāvya*, a generic term for the "arts"] and who respond to it sympathetically in their hearts.[127]

Both Bharata and Abhinavagupta point out that not everybody has the capacity to "identify" with an artwork. *Sahṛdayas* are sensitive, cultured, and learned in the way of the world as well as of the arts on the basis of which they are able to perceive "the natural appropriateness of what is being represented" in an artwork.[128] Abhinava notes that, when the hearts of the audiences are aligned with an artwork, the following experience arises among them:

> When the realization (*bhāva*) of the artistic object consisting of determinants, etc., finds sympathy in the audience's heart, it becomes the origin of aesthetic pleasure (*rasa*). In this state, the audience's body gets pervaded by *rasa* in the same way as dry wood gets pervaded by fire.[129]

Abhinavagupta sums it all up by saying: "Reader and the artist are of the same heart" (*Nāyakasya kaveḥ srotuḥ samānonubhavaḥ*).[130] In the above sense, all major Indian aestheticians go as far as to say that sensitive readers are co-creators of artworks alongside the artists themselves.

Gustav Freytag's Triangle

In the Western theory of drama, "tragedy," given its pride of place since Aristotle's time, has been graphically represented in the form of a triangle by Gustav Freytag (1816–1895) which has justly become famous. In the triangle below, at "A," characters, settings, and the initial state of affairs are introduced, "AB" covers "rising action" of the protagonists to reach their goal in the face of obstacles, and "BC" covers the "falling action" representing the protagonists' declining fortunes ending in catastrophe in case of a tragedy which Freytag had theorized.[131]

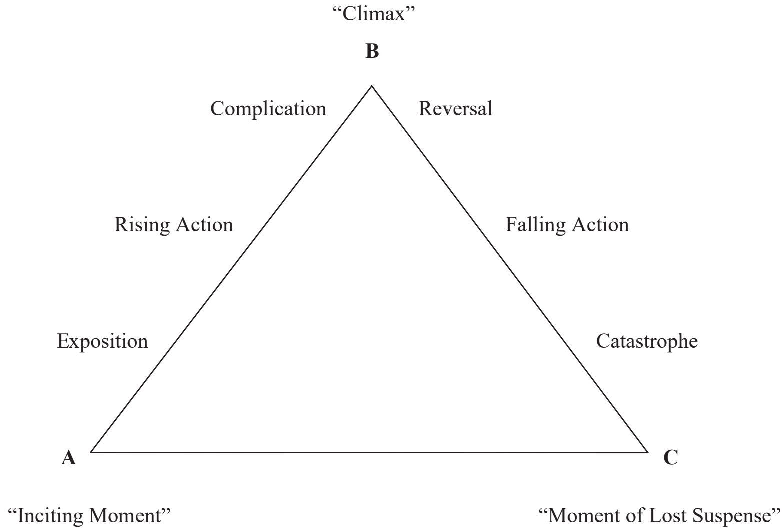
[127] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, XLIII.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Abhinavagupta, *Locana*, 20, quoted by Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 39.

[131] Herman et al., *Routledge Encyclopedia*, "Freytag's Triangle", 189–90, 189.



In Freytag's own analysis, "Exposition" consists of early material providing the theme, establishing the setting and introducing the major characters. Sometimes, it also gives the early hints of the coming conflict.

The "Rising Action" signifies an increase in tension or uncertainty related to the conflict the protagonist faces.

Traditionally, the "Climax," also called "Crisis," is situated in the third act of a play. It is the moment of greatest tension and uncertainty generating maximum audience involvement.

The moment of "Reversal" is also called Peripeteia. In classical tragedy, the reversal is that moment when the protagonist's fortunes start changing irrecoverably for the worse. Frequently, the very trait that we admire in a tragic hero brings about the hero's downfall.

At some point after the reversal, the tragic hero realizes or verbalizes his tragic error. This moment of tragic recognition is called the Anagnorisis.

During "Falling Action," the earlier tragic force causes the falling fortunes of the hero. This culminates in the final "Catastrophe" and invokes *catharsis* ("emotional purgation") among the audiences.

The "Catastrophe" often spirals outward. Not only does the hero suffer from an earlier choice, but that choice also causes suffering to those the hero loves and wants to protect.

In the "Moment of Lost Suspense," where the suspense ends, the denouement helps unwind the previous tension that provides closure.[132]

Later theorists have redistributed the Freytag points in terms of introduction, development, complication, climax, and resolution of a story.[133] In this connection, Bordwell notes the plot structure of Hollywood "canonical" films which also appear to have a striking similarity with Bharatas' "Junctures" or *Sandhis*:

Introduction of Settings & Characters
Explanation of a State of Affairs
Complicating Action
Ensuing Events
Outcome/Ending[134]

One may note that the massive sweep that Bharata exhibits in his theory of drama, dealing with, as it does, from the construction of a stage to the structure of the drama to music to acting, going all the way to describing even minor details pertaining to a drama, his theory remains unparalleled in the history of dramatic theorization undertaken anywhere in the world.

5.4 Classification of "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa*

Bharata's theory may be extended to classify aesthetic experiences representing *rasa* as belonging to the following three broad categories:

I. Aesthetic relish (*bhoga*, "sensuous enjoyment as *rasa* experience"),
II. Aesthetic saturation (*rasa-viśrānti*, "experiencing saturation, rest and repose as *rasa* experience"), and
III. Aesthetic immersion (*samāveśa*, *āveśa*, "experiencing ecstasy as the highest form of *rasa* experience")

[132] Google Search "Freytag's Triangle", accessed May 2018.

[133] Bordwell, *Narration in the Fiction Film*, 190.

[134] Ibid., 49.

The above aesthetic states may be said to be modeled on the process of making an offering by a devotee to a deity, resulting in the deity giving *darśan* to the devotee once the offering is inspected and accepted by Him or Her. Since a proper understanding of this process also makes us understand the model on which Indian aesthetic processes work, it is being described below.

In the Indian tradition, *bhoga* or *prasāda* represents an offering by the devotees to God, which is considered to be inspected and accepted by the deity, evidenced in the final casting of His or Her glance (*dṛṣṭi*, "vision")[135] on the devotee. Even though, the devotee is supposed to be acutely aware of this process, yet he is expected to avert his eyes lest God's *glance* singe him. However, only when the two glances become aware of each other as a "happening," does the process of *darśan* becomes "complete." The above process literally represents an activity of sensuous consumption through vision.[136] The deity not only inspects the devotee but also his offering, a process which may not only be fraught with "doubts" on the deity's part, but even a "doubt" and "crisis" on the part of the devotee lest the deity should reject it.[137] The important takeaway from this part is that, even when the devotee's "mode of enquiry" remains filled with "doubts" and consequent "anxiety" about the eventual result, it still generates an experience of "delectation" in the devotee as, despite mistakes, he believes that he is still making progress toward the desired goal.[138] Once the devotee feels that he has indeed reached his goal, it generates a "mode of saturation" within him which puts his consciousness into a *state of rest and repose*. It produces a different kind of pleasure within him. Finally, when the devotee realizes that he has indeed been given *darśan* by the deity, it generates a *sense of ecstacy* which floods his consciousness representing a "mode of immersion" for him. These three processes which make up the phenomenon of *darśan* for the devotee may be summed up as follows: "aesthetic relish" involving a "mode of enquiry" fraught with "doubt" and "anxiety" which "expands" (*vistāra*) his consciousness; "aesthetic saturation" which

[135] Because of their notion of reality being a reflection of *Śiva-Pārvatī* in union, orthodox Indian theories are full of both "Devas" ('Gods') and "Devis" ('Goddess').

[136] Diana L. Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998): 6.

[137] Gerow, "Notes", 8.

[138] Ibid.

generates a sense of "rest" and "repose" in a "mode of saturation" where his consciousness internally "blossoms" (*vikāsa*); finally, when the devote senses that he has indeed been blessed with the deity's *darśan*, he experiences a sense of ecstacy which floods his consciousness (*drūti*) in a "mode of immersion."

In the following sections, Indian aesthetic processes are discussed in terms of the above *darśan* model.

*5.4.1 Aesthetic Relish (*Bhoga*)*

It represents a "mode of enquiry" unleashed by the audiences when they encounter puzzles and intrigues thrown on their way by the artist. In this state, the audiences' consciousness remains in a state of expansion (*vistāra*) which the audiences *relish* till they are able to form an *integrated whole* within their perception.

Since Detective Films or Suspense Movies are directly based on "modes of enquiry" that unravel enigmas posed by the narrative, they may be cited as models for unleashing a process of enquiry where the outcome still remains uncertain. In this process, "suspense engages our emotions through anxious uncertainty" which makes the kind of emotions that arise from such uncertainty as ambiguous. This state generates a special form of sensuous pleasure among the audiences.[139] Mukund Lath mentions that there are certain *narrative bhāvas* which are not specifiable "states" in terms of "emotions". He cites "suspense" as a specific example of such a *bhāva*. Its corresponding *sthāyībhāva* can only be specified in terms of the narrative requirement of creating surprise, tempo, and the like rather than as a particular "emotion", the latter remaining secondary, ambiguous or even vague.[140] Such cases, where the end result remains uncertain or even unknown, "aesthetic relish" or *bhoga* representing sensuous experiences results.

Film Examples

In Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960), the private investigator Abrogast (Martin Balsam) is slowly climbing the steps of Norman Bates' house to meet

[139] Herman & Others, *Routledge Encyclopedia*, "Suspense and Surprise", 578–9, 578.

[140] Mukund Lath, "Review Article" on V. K. Chari's *Sanskrit Criticism*, *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. 11 No. 1 (September–December, 1993): 129.

"the mother." In the background of the audiences' knowledge, they would be expecting the worst for Arbogast. It is to Hitchcock's credit that despite such anticipation, the final act of his murder still comes as a shock. The important point to note, however, is that the scene proves "delectable" for the audiences even though they constantly face a "crisis" generated by the uncertainty and fear of what might happen to him.

In Quentin Tarantino's *Inglorious Basterds* (1978), SS Colonel Hans "The Jew Hunter" Landa (Christoph Waltz) plays a cat-and-mouse game with the French dairy farmer Perrier LaPadite (Denis Manochet) to make him reveal where the Jewish Dreyfus family is hiding. Framed against the audience's background knowledge of their hiding place, it provides a mesmerizing sequence of enquiry and the impending "crisis" the family faces in the possible revelation of their place by LaPadite. This results in a delectable state of sustained suspense for the audiences.

*5.4.2 Aesthetic Saturation (*Rasa-*Viśrānti)*

When the audiences' "mode of enquiry" is able to unravel the enigma(s) posed by an artwork, it leads to a "mode of saturation" among the audiences where their consciousness tends to "rest" and "repose" (*viśrānti*) in the finding, signifying a state of inner "blossoming" or "radiance" (*vikāsa*) of their consciousness which the audiences enjoy.[141]

While *viśrānti* originally means an epistemic rest signifying the "last meaning" (*rodhana*) reached by an enquirer,[142] it has subsequently come to mean "the fullest delight from the complete awareness of an object."[143] This is a state where the subject and the object are no more "adrift like two logs in an ocean," but form two equal parts of a dynamic whole.[144] In this state, the subject rests in her own knowledge, thereby,

[141] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 1.5L, in *The Dhvanyāloka of Ānandavardhana with Locana of Abhinavagupta*, Trans. Daniell H. H. Ingalls, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson and M. V. Patwardhan, Ed. Daniell H. H. Ingalls (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990): Footnote 3, 118.

[142] Ibid., 117, Footnote 3.

[143] Dehejia, *The Advaita of Art* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996): 136, modified.

[144] It is symbolically represented by the androgynous *ardhanāriśvara* image of man and woman. See Dehejia, *The Advaita of Art*, 135.

ending the subject's "all dependence on the outside world."[145] Dehejia notes:

> Abhinavagupta argues that the cognitive process, which moves out towards knowledge and enjoyment of objects, is not complete until it is reversed and brought to rest in the knowing subject. This signifies that all objective knowledge culminates in a deepening awareness of the subject and subjectivity. This culminating moment of rest in the subject is technically called *viśrānti*.[146]

In classical Indian thought, particularly in the school of psychology represented by Kashmir Śaivism (c. 9th CE), *bindu* ("the point") represents a state of consciousness, which "when saturated with a particular knowledge, gathers into an undifferentiated point-like state".[147] In such a state of saturation, the audiences' consciousness tend to "blossom" (*vikāsa*) internally.

Film Examples

For example, in the last scene in Ritwik Ghatak's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (The Cloud-Capped Star, 1960), Shankar (Anil Chatterjee) watches a young lady returning from her office. As the strap of her slipper is torn, she picks up the slipper in her hand, gives a wan smile to Shankar and moves on. It reminds Shankar and the audiences of a similar scene where the main character Nita's (Supriya Choudhury) slipper was equally torn which symbolically represented the endless sacrifices that she was making for establishing her refugee family. Since Nita not only loses her lover to her younger sister but also dies of TB subsequently, the audiences "rest" in the knowledge that the present lady is also destined to suffer a similar fate. This very realization leads the audiences' consciousness to a mode of rest and repose (*viśrānti*) belonging to a type where a *generalized* sense of pathos (*karuṇa-rasa*) is experienced by them.

In the last sequence in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Andrei Roublev* (1966), the Painter Roublev (Anatoly Solonitsyn) watches in wonder Boriska's (Nikolai Burlyayev) casting of the bell which ends in success. He asks himself, how can a boy, who has never ever been taught the necessary

[145] Dehejia, *The Advaita of Art*, 135.

[146] Ibid., 134.

[147] Harsha V. Dehejia, *Pārvatīdarpaṇa*, 114, modified.

skill, cast such an enormous bell in his first attempt? Roublev takes it as a miracle and regains his faith in God. He starts painting again where restoration of his faith is reflected in the color sequences of Roublev's painting captured by Tarkovsky. The final shot of horses grazing peacefully on the banks of a river enables the audience, exhausted by a continuing cycle of violence and counter violence in the film, to repose (*viśrānti*) in the dominant emotion of "peace" and "tranquility" (*śānta*) where their minds blossom internally, its "abiding state" (*sthāyībhāva*) being "equality" (*sama*) as mentioned by Abhinavagupta.

5.4.3 *Aesthetic Immersion or Ecstasy (*Samāveśa, Ā*veśa)*

In modern parlance, "immersion refers to any state of absorption in some action, condition, or interest."[148] Holding that the "getting carried away" phenomena is instigated by mimetic, illusionistic devices, Plato had critiqued it on the ground that anything inaccessible to analytical thought is epistemologically void and hence dangerous.[149] While noting that "the psychological and representational features of the state of imaginative immersion are still very poorly understood," Herman & Others note:

> Plato's view of immersion as an illusionist device that fools the senses and the mind seems to be misguided. In fact, Walton maintains that, in the course of the immersion process, the spectator always remains conscious of the fact that he or she is in a "game of make-belief," retaining an awareness of the distinction between the imagined situation induced by mimetic primers and her real-world surroundings.[150]

Yoga theory (c. 2nd CE) offers a unique explanation of the above phenomenon. It basically says that, since certain types of common activities or images, along with their associated emotions, affects and dispositions, keep recurring in human experience, they ultimately get detached from their original source "events" to *merge into generalized forms of experience* that remain submerged in the human subconscious as a "source-less" memory

148 Herman et al., "Immersion", 237–9, 238.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid., 238.

of *pure potentiality*. Such experiences cannot be recalled through conscious memory since their "originals" have been lost to memory. That is, according to classical Indian theories, spearheaded by Yoga, conscious acts leave "impressions" (*saṁskāras*) of specific "events" in memory, including their associated "emotions," "affects," and "dispositions," which can only be recalled but "events" which are "source-less" cannot be so recalled. The "impression" of these "source-less" memories are called *vāsanās* (lit., "abodes" but which, in the derivative Indian languages, have come to mean "desires") in the Yoga theory which reside deep within human beings. Over time, some of the more significant of such "source-less" "impressions" come to form *archetypal images* which, being more basic to human lives, come to define them in definite ways. Because of their overwhelming, repetitive nature, they may be triggered even by a minute cue, the important point being that the experiences themselves may or may not have anything to do with the narration or the story of a film being shown on screen. All such cases of archetypal experiences generate an immersive experience among the audiences who experience emotions much beyond the capacity of the images being screened. Arguably, this idea is not only close to the Nyāya notion of "universals," where bits and pieces of elements occurring in repetitive experiences tend to merge into "universal" forms in human memory as elaborated in Chapter 3, but also the idea of "narrative universals" and "action universals" discussed in Bhrarata's aesthetic theory.

The Yoga theory further holds that, since some of the *archetypal experiences* are repeated across societies and cultures, they cut across their boundaries set-up by individuals, in the process becoming a common legacy inherited by human beings as a whole. It is well-known that the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), who was originally a disciple of Freud till his line of thought changed, was deeply influenced by the above Yogic thought in formulating his own theory of *collective unconscious* where the revival of *archetypal experiences*, like the *mother image*, et cetera, generate an overwhelming response among human beings all over the world.[151]

Abhinavagupta, who had significantly applied the above Yogic process during his engagement with the aesthetic field, has used the terms *samāveśa* or *āveśa* interchangeably to describe the *process of immersion* as follows: "the immersion of limited and restricted subjectivity

[151] See Harold Coward, "'Desire' in Yoga and Jung", *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. 5 No. 1 (September–December 1987): 57–64; see also Box 5.1 in this Work.

into the unlimited universal self."[152] In such a state of aesthetic immersion or ecstasy (*vigalita-parimita-pramārtṛtva*), the audiences' consciousness remains in a state of "melting" (*drūti*). The following question arises: since these submerged emotions are audiences' *own* emotions, do they personally *suffer* its consequences? According to Yoga, as well as Abhinava, the audiences do not personally *suffer* their consequences because the original "sources" of their experiences have been "lost" to conscious memory. In other words, such "source-less events" together with their associated emotions, affects and dispositions cannot be *appropriated* by the audiences as their "own" and, hence, the question of *suffering* them personally do not arise. Abhinava quotes Bharata to say that these experiences would be like "chewing" or "tasting" (*carvana*) an "event" while standing "outside" it.

Hogan holds that Abhinava's idea is duly supported by modern research. Cognitive science has found that the memory of a person has two components, one *representational* and the other *emotive*. Over the years, while the *representational* part tends to get "lost" to conscious memory, its *emotive* part remains intact.[153] Being detached from its original source, while the *emotive* part cannot be consciously recalled, yet these affective memories keep bleeding into the audiences' consciousness and are revived once suggestive cues are presented to them. Hogan clarifies the specific nature of this process as follows:

> The emotive part is not an abstract recollection of one having had an emotion…it is, rather, *a re-experiencing of that emotion*. In other words, it is not remembering that one was sad or happy or frightened at a given time and place, but actually feeling again, in some degree, that same sadness or happiness or fright…The experience of *rasa* is precisely the experience of these feelings.[154]

Hiriyanna notes that "it consists in an 'ideal revival' (*udbodhana*) in the reader's mind of a like emotion which, being elemental by hypothesis,

[152] Manju Deshpande, "Samāveśa", in *Indian Aesthetics and Poetics*, Ed. V. N. Jha (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 2003): 115–24, 115, modified.

[153] Patrick Colm Hogan, "Towards a Cognitive Science of Poetics: Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta and the Theory of Literature", *College Literature*, Issue "Comparative Poetics: Non-Western Traditions of Literary Theory", Vol. 23 No. 1 (1996): 164–78, 170.

[154] Hogan, "Towards a Cognitive Science of Poetics", 170–1.

may be expected to lie latent in all."[155] In such a state, *one does not identify with King Lear or Hamlet as such but experience similar emotions within oneself which have been experienced by King Lear or Hamlet.*[156] Hiriyanna points out a deeper aspect of this process:

> Being a revival, it necessarily goes back to one's past experiences; but it is, at the same time, much more than a mere reminiscence. In particular, the emotional situation, owing to the profound transformation it undergoes through artistic treatment, throws a new light on that experience, revealing its deeper significance for life. Thus, love in Kālidāsa's *Śakuntala*, while first appearing as a manifestation of a natural impulse, slowly gets transformed into what has been described as "a natural welding of hearts."[157]

Hiriyanna points out another important aspect of this process as well. In order to realize the significance of the situation fully, the audiences need to imaginatively recreate in their minds the whole situation as conceived by the artist:

> *Rasa* experience is, thus, the outcome more of reconstruction than of remembrance. The whole theory is based on the recognition of an affinity of nature between the artist and the audience. On the basis of this affinity, it is explained that appreciation of poetry is essentially the same as the creation of it.[158]

Even though emotions felt by the audiences are essentially private, yet past experiences may serve as the center around which their reconstruction takes place and, in that reconstructed form, they are anything but personal.[159]

Hogan elaborates the nature of cues that may revive such submerged experiences. He notes that such cues are often in the nature of being "a pang of sadness" or "a moment of tenderness" created by the artist which generates a sense of "melting" (*drūti*) of the audience experiences.

[155] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 38–9.

[156] Vikram Chandra, Interview, Times of India, Kolkata, April 30, 2017.

[157] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 39, modified.

[158] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 39.

[159] Ibid.

When used in a patterned manner, they result in "a more pronounced and continuous experience" for the audiences.[160] These triggered moments, which result in an affective deluge of emotions, affects and dispositions for the audiences, represent "autonomous" states of *rasa* which are not only independent of the preceding or anticipated developments of the narrative but also are qualitatively different from them in signifying an *aesthetic leap* for the audiences. Dehejia notes:

> Knowledge of ultimate reality is a step-ladder process which proceeds step-by-step, from joy to greater joy, but that *the penultimate step requires a leap produced by the thrill and unbounded joy of the expansion of consciousness.*[161]

According to Ānandavardhana as well as Abhinavagupta, the *state of immersion* represents the highest form that art can achieve.[162]

Film Example

In Ritwik Ghatak's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (The Cloud-Capped Star, 1960), Nita (Supriya Choudhury) discovers her sister's treachery in trying to takeaway her lover who is no longer prepared to wait for Nita who is making endless sacrifices in trying to establish her refugee family. As Nita watches them chatting animatedly, she asks her brother, Shankar (Anil Chatterjee) to sing with her the Tagore song, "Je rate more duar guli bhanglo jhore" ("the night storm broke all my doors"). Ghatak takes the shots not only from very close below her chin but also from all odd angles during the song, with one particular shot, taken from below her chin, projecting an unusually elongated profile of her face resembling the mother image in the form of a Goddess to the audiences. While these shots generate a *haptic*, that is, a synesthetic experience among the audiences, their representation of the *archetypal mother image*, who makes untold sacrifices for her children, trigger the revival of "ownerless" pathos (*karuṇa-rasa*) lying submerged within the audiences which overwhelm their sentiments generating an experience of *immersion* in them.

[160] Hogan, "Toward a Cognitive Science of Poetics", 169.

[161] Harsh V. Dehejia, *Pārvatīdarpaṇa: An Exposition of Kashmir Śaivism Through the Images of Śiva and Pārvatī* (Delhi: Motila Banarsidass, 1997): 71, emphasis added.

[162] Hogan, "Toward a Cognitive Science of Poetics", 169, original emphasis.

Box 5.1 Carl Gustav Jung and Yoga Theory: *The Collective Unconscious*

The relationship of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) with classical Indian theories has been one of a love-hate relationship. While he kept enriching his theory of analytical psychology with concepts borrowed freely from classical Indian theories, especially the Yoga theory, he never recommended their blind acceptance by Western theorists. Always claiming himself to be an experimental psychologist and an empiricist, he critiqued the classical Indian theories for being based on too much intuition and their consequent lack of empirical base.

When, in 1912, Jung started toying with the notion that *the unconscious* was not only personal, being the repository of an individual's sexual instincts and drives, but also a collective which harbored the emotions and dispositions belonging to a collection of people represented by a society in particular and the whole human race in general, his friendship with Freud ended. In this critical period, when he was looking elsewhere for "a widening of consciousness beyond the narrow limits set by a tyrannical intellect,"[163] he turned toward the Yoga theory with a cautionary note: "It is not the case that modern West should give up its highly developed scientific intellect—only that the intuitive and feeling aspects of psychic function must achieve an equally high development in Western consciousness so that a creative balance can be achieved."[164]

In the Yoga theory, "psyche" is called the *citta* which is "matter" even though it is composed of the subtlest part of "matter" called *sattva*. Coward notes that *psyche*, representing thought as well as feeling, is understood in the same way as a material object is understood in the external world, an idea which Jung shared.[165] In the above

[163] Jung, Commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, the section on "The Secret of the Golden Flower", quoted in Harold Coward, "Jung's Encounter with Yoga", in *Jung and Eastern Thought*, Ed. Harold Coward (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1991), 3–27, 8.

[164] Coward, "Jung's Encounter with Yoga", 8.

[165] Coward, "The Influence of Yoga on Jungian Psychology", in *Jung and Eastern Thought*, 29–59, 31, modified.

sense, Jung's falling back on the Yoga theory, which was validated for centuries in Indian, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese theories, was natural.[166] Jung's notion that "the concept of *libido* in psychology has functionally the same significance as the concept of energy in physics"[167] is definitely influenced by classical Eastern thought. Coward notes:

> Jung's view differed from that of Freud in that, for Jung, *libido* is not the sexual instinct, but a kind of neutral energy that can be canalized into many different expressions of desire, of which sexuality is an important part but not the only part. For example, an equally strong expression of *libido* is to be found in human creativity.[168]

Sāṃkhya, which contributes the ontological aspects of an underlying reality on which Yoga builds its epistemic principles, analyzes the properties of "matter" in terms of three qualities (*guṇas*) involving its power of discrimination (*sattva*), power of incessant motion (*rajas*) and power of material formations (*tamas*) which signify various powers of the same neutral cosmic energy occurring in all of them. Thus, for example, even *rajas's* dynamism is a *neutral dynamism*. As to which way this dynamism would go—whether it would be used in lustful activity or in pursuit of knowledge—would depend on the way it is canalized by the relevant energy system operating within human beings and determined by the accumulated "work done" or *karma*, together with their associated emotions, affects and dispositions, residing within his or her system. While the three *guṇas*, conceived as various strands of a thread that make up a rope through their intertwining, the mutual relationships between the *guṇas* keep changing constantly.[169] Jung's *libido* represents such a *neutral but dynamic psychic energy*

[166] Ibid., 31.

[167] Jung, "The Concept of LIbid.o" in "Symbols of Transformation", quoted in Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 32.

[168] Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 31, modified.

[169] Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 32.

whose orientation would depend on the constantly evolving *psyche* and so on.[170]

Jung's most revolutionary innovation, however, consists in holding that *psyche* consists of the following three constituents: "consciousness" which acts as the tip of the iceberg representing the psychic domain; "personal unconscious" which also acts like the tip of an iceberg, representing personal instincts, drives, and desires that, however, remains submerged within him; and a "collective unconscious" which represents the iceberg itself that does not belong to a particular mind or person but to mankind in general. Jung holds that, if we deeply introspect, we would be able to reach a layer in our "unconscious" where "man is no longer a distinct individual, but where his mind widens out and merges into the mind of mankind, where we are all the same."[171] Jordens notes:

> Jung has caused a Copernican revolution in the conception of psychic reality by doing away with the narrow opposition between the human psyche and the material world which had dominated Western thought for so long. The ego-consciousness in Jung's system has been compared to the tip of an iceberg, its submerged part forming the "personal unconscious" and an ocean of "collective unconscious" which, however, remains in direct continuity with the personal conscious and unconscious of the psyche.[172]

Jung's idea that certain *archetypal* experiences, consisting of myths and legends of mankind, exist in seed-form in the collective unconscious may be traced to the notion of *samskāras* in the Yoga theory defined as follows: when a particular mental state (*citta-vṛtti*) passes into another, it does not totally disappear but is preserved within consciousness in a latent form as a memory-trace.[173] Yoga

[170] Ibid.

[171] Jung, *Analytical Psychology: Its Theory and Practice*, 46, quoted in Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 39–40.

[172] Dr. J. F. T. Jordens, "Prakṛti and the Collective Unconscious: Puruṣa and Self", in *Jung and Eastern Thought*, 145–68, 146, modified.

[173] *Yoga Sūtra*, III: 9, quoted in Coward, "Where Jung Draws the Line in His Acceptance of Yoga", in *Jung and Eastern Thought*, 61–78, 65–6.

theory further holds that repetitive thoughts and actions eventually get detached from their original "sources" to generate *forms of pure potentiality*. These forms, together with their associated emotions, affects, and mental dispositions, generate certain *seed-patterns* (*vāsanās*) within the *citta* or *psyche* which surface on the slightest cue. In the above sense, the Yoga notion of *citta* or *psyche* may be conceived as the totality of all *psychic* processes, both conscious and unconscious.[174] One may sum up the process by saying that, at any moment, a person's *psyche* consists of all conscious experiences, all memory-traces (*samskāras*) pertaining to "events" which are available for recall and all the desire-traces (*vāsanās*) of all archetypal experiences whose original "sources cannot be recalled but which, nevertheless, remain in the psyche as collective memory which get filled with content only when they come into contact with one's individual consciousness."[175] While the "personal unconscious" has a therapeutic value for an individual, the "collective unconscious" generates certain "dispositions" to respond to "events" in a patterned way whose knowledge, like "patterns of behavior" in biology, becomes useful for understanding human beings as a whole.[176]

On a final note, we may recall the occurrence of one more classical Indian concept in Jung's thought: the existence of *archetypal opposites* in one's *psyche* whose *correlation* and *harmonization* becomes necessary for producing a balanced personality. In Vedic thought, the *Śiva-Śakti Principle* is conceived as consisting of *puruṣa* ("male") and *prakṛti* ("female") motifs representing potential and kinetic forms of the same power. Called the *Ardhanāriśwara Principle* represented by the androgynous half male half-female figure in Hindu thought, it can be clearly seen to be at work in the *animus-anima* principle conceived by Jung's friend Richard Wilhelm. Jung mentions that, either by means of Yoga or by employing Western modes of analysis, the *opposites* may be effectively separated from each other and recombined to

[174] Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 31.

[175] Coward, "Where Jung Draws the Line", 65.

[176] Gerhard Adler's summing up of Jung's archetypal ideas, quoted in Coward, "Where Jung Draws the Line", 65.

generate a balanced personality. For Jung, this balance is represented by the Buddhist symbol of the *maṇḍala*[177]:

> The *maṇḍala*'s basic motif is the premonition of a center of personality, a kind of central point within the *psyche*, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which itself is a source of energy. This center is not felt or thought of as the ego or the *self*. This center is surrounded by a periphery consisting of a *pair of opposites* composed of consciousness, personal unconscious and collective unconscious which make up one's total personality.[178]

Even though not directly connected, the idea of the *pair of opposites* appears to be the basis of Jung's notion of "synchronicity" as well. In contrast to "causal thinking" *which develops linearly*, a process that seems to dominate Western thinking, "synchronicity" is built on the *a-causal simultaneity of events*. Since "the causal principles had seemed insufficient for explaining certain remarkable manifestations of the unconscious",[179] Jung had become convinced that there are *psychic parallelisms* in the *collective unconscious* which cannot be explained *causally*.[180] Jung attempts to define "synchronicity" as follows:

> It seems that time, instead of being an abstraction, is a concrete continuum which possesses qualities or basic conditions capable of manifesting themselves simultaneously in different places by means of a *a-causal parallelism* such as we find, for instance, in the simultaneous occurrence of identical thoughts, symbols or psychic states.[181]"

Even though not mentioned by Jung, a possible explanation of the above *parallelism* may lie in the *cyclicality* of natural phenomena

[177] Coward, "Where Jung Draws the Line", 45.

[178] C. G. Jung, "Concerning Maṇḍala Symbolism", quoted in Coward's "Mysticism in Jung and Yoga", in *Jung and Eastern Thought*, 125–44, 132.

[179] C. G. Jung, "Richard Wilhelm: In Memoriam", quoted in Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 43.

[180] Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 43.

[181] Jung, "Richard Wilhelm: In Memoriam", quoted in Coward, "The Influence of Yoga", 43.

called *ṛta* in classical Indian theories: while ordinary processes work *causally* and *linearly* at the local level to produce a result, the *cyclical movement* of *ṛta* works *causally* at the global level producing results that remain beyond the knowledge of ordinary human beings.

We may close by reemphasizing where we began. Even though Jung continued to be hugely influenced by Eastern ideas, his training in Western medical science had always made him skeptical of those very ideas at the very same time.

5.5 Abhinavagupta's "List of Obstacles" to "Aesthetic Pleasure" or *Rasa*

Abhinava notes that in a well-enacted play, a *single unified experience* (*ekaghanatā*) is generated among all spectators based on the triggering of similar desires and emotions residing within them.[182] Noting that, in the above sense, the audience's consciousness undergoes an *expansion* in a public place or an auditorium, Abhinava says:

> *In public celebrations, it returns to a state of expansion since all components are reflected in each other.* The radiance of one's consciousness (which tends to pour out of oneself) is reflected in the consciousness of all bystanders, as if in so many mirrors, and, inflamed by them, it abandons its individual contraction.[183]

It leads to the production of a specific state of consciousness, together with its corresponding affective state, which is experienced by all members of the audiences alike. As already stated, Abhinava had noted the audiences' *special state of being when they experience an artwork* in terms of neither being "completely immersed" (*vigalita*) in them nor being in a state of "emergence" (*ullikhita*) from them, an intermediate state which not only permeates within oneself but also within all other selves in the auditorium. In such a state, the generality involved is not limited

[182] Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabhāratī*, 6.31, quoted in Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 68–9.

[183] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, XXXVIII, modified, emphasis added.

(*parimita*) but is extended (*vitata*) to pervade the whole edifice of a play as happens in cases of trembling and fear.[184]

Abhinva's idea appears to be similar to Kant's notion of "a common connection" between disinterested viewers.[185] In the above context, Abhinava notes the importance of the audiences' necessary skill and attitude (*sahṛdayatva*) to be able to identify with a play:

> For this very reason, in meetings of many people, fullness of joy occurs only when every bystander is identified with the spectacle…On the other hand, even if only one of the bystanders does not concentrate on the spectacle and does not share the form of consciousness in which other spectators are immersed, this consciousness gets disturbed, as if touched by an uneven surface.[186]

In the above context, Abhinava deals with the following question: what happens when *reality intrudes into a fictional play*? This aspect is discussed in the following two sections below:

I. Intrusion of Reality in the Fictional Mode of a Play as an "Obstacle" to Experiencing "Aesthetic Pleasure"
II. Intrusion of Documentary Mode in the Fictional Mode of Cinema

I. **Intrusion of Reality in the Fictional Mode of a Play as an "Obstacle" to Experiencing "Aesthetic Pleasure"**

Abhinava lists the following "obstacles" (*vighṇas*) in the generation of an appropriate aesthetic experience among the audiences primarily focusing on the central issue of reality intruding into the fictional world of an artwork:

i. *Lack of verisimilitude*
According to Abhinava, since "consent of heart" is a necessary condition among the audiences in relation to a play, a lack of conviction among them would vitiate their appreciation of the play. Among the factors which may vitiate their appreciation of a play, lack of verisimilitude is an important factor. In this

[184] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 56.

[185] Sebastian Gardner, "Aesthetics", in *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, Eds. Nicholas Bunin and E. P. Tsui-James (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996): 231–56, 233.

[186] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, XXXVIII, modified.

context, one recalls Aristotle's advice that actions must be plausible, rather than being improbable in a play.

ii. *Immersion in one's personal thoughts*
If one is too heavily weighed down with her own practical problems, that is, a spectator cannot relinquish her egoistic self, then appreciation of an artwork would elude her.

iii. *Absorption in one's own sense of pleasure*
One should not be distracted in the theatre by the awareness that one may lose one's sense of pleasure in real life. In this sense, it is absolutely necessary that a psychic distance between the viewer and his practical life is built up. To put a spectator into such a state, conventions of theatrical illusion like the ambience of the cinema hall, et cetera, must be judiciously executed.

iv. *Defective means of perception*
Abhinava notes: "if the means of perception are absent, perception itself will also be absent too."[187] Clarity about what is being perceived in an artwork is an essential condition for identification by the audiences.

v. *Lack of clarity in the play*
Abhinava notes: "The presence of words alone, by means of which the reader infers the narrated acts, is not enough to make the reader identify with the subject and the characters of the play."[188] In this connection, Susan Langer perceptively comments that actors must develop *actions to the point of self-sufficiency* in order that speeches become dispensable for them.

vi. *Lack of an abiding mental state*
Wallace Dace notes: "If a person's consciousness rests on something of a secondary order, that is transitory [and fragile], then an obstacle to *rasa* is encountered because the spectator's perception, finding no rest in itself, would run [elsewhere]. Only the presence of "abiding mental states" can be the object of "tasting" [*rasa*]."[189]

[187] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 82.

[188] Ibid., 84.

[189] Dace, "The Concept of 'Rasa'", 254.

vii. *Doubt about what is being conveyed through the play*
Doubts cannot be eliminated among the audiences unless consequents are attached to appropriate determinants. Abhinava notes:

> Tears may be aroused indifferently by a great delight, or a pain in the eye. A tiger may arouse either anger or fear [on stage]. The combination of these elements, however, has an unmistakable significance. For example, when the determinant consists of the death of a friend and the consequents involve tears and wailing and transitory mental states involve anxiety and depression, then the resulting dominant mental state cannot be other than sorrow…[The act of 'tasting' this dominant mental state in a play] is perfect *rasa*.'[190]

The "obstacles" noted by Abhinava may be summed up as follows: whenever the fictional façade of a "play" is broken (*āvaraṇa-bhaṅga*) by the intrusion of real life into the play, it not only ruptures the *generalized state of the audiences' experience* but also the basis on which the audiences' *willing identification with the fictional mode of a play* occurs.[191]

II. <u>**Intrusion of Documentary Mode in the Fictional Mode of Cinema**</u>

Vivian Sobchack discusses a scenario where reality intrudes in fictional cinema. In Jean Renoir's *La Règle du Jeu* (Rules of the Game, 1939), the hunting sequence was real where scores of rabbits and birds were massacred for the scene. How do the audiences react to it? There have been two deaths in the film, the rabbit's death and the first transatlantic pilot André Jurieu's (Roland Toutain) death. While both deaths are totally "meaningless" in the context of the fictional work, the second death, belonging to a great national hero like Jurieu is supposed to have been more tragic for the audiences. In reality, however, the audiences all over the world have been haunted by the meaningless massacre of the little rabbits, particularly the one which folds its paws on its chest as it rolls over and dies. Why is it so? Clearly, it is because of the fact that the audiences have prior *knowledge* that while Jurieu's death is fictional, the

[190] Gnoli, *Aesthetic Experience*, 96.

[191] Chakrabarti, "Play, Pleasure, Pain", 197.

rabbit's death is real which breaks the fictional cover of the film for them. In this connection, Sobchack quotes filmmaker Haskell Wexler as follows:

> I find people's reaction to "real" death and "movie" death fascinating. For example, in Jean-Luc Godard's *Weekend* (1967), perhaps twenty people are dramatically killed. But there is one scene in which the throat of a pig is cut. I have seen the film several times, and each time that scene appears, the audience gasps. They know that they are seeing an animal die. They know that, unlike the actors, when the Director says "cut," the pig will not get up and walk away.[192]

Same thing happens to the audiences when a real ox is slaughtered in Eisenstein's *Strike* (1924).

Vivian Sobchack offers two explanations for the above phenomenon.[193] First, there is a difference between the "documentary attitude" and the "fictional attitude" of the audiences. While, in the first case, the audiences are ready to deal with reality, in the second, they *know* that it is fiction they are dealing with. For example, when in Robert Zemeckis's *Forrest Gump* (1994), Tom Hanks is shown as shaking hands with successive American Presidents like Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon respectively, despite its seamless editing, the audiences aren't fooled. The point is how do the audiences *know* what is real and what is fictional in a film? Here Sobchack makes her second point. She says that, in contrast to, when the audiences encounter real trees, real rivers, et cetera, they engage with them in the same manner as they would do in real life, in a fictional film, however, they are willing to put their reality "out of play," taking instead their *generalized existence* to analyze the necessary elements of the play. Sobchack notes:

> In fictional experience…the audiences would be engaged with what philosophers call *typical particulars* – a form of *generalization* in which a single entity is taken as exemplary of an entire class. Thus, although they retain a diffused existential "echo" with reality, trees and rabbits and grasshoppers in fictional consciousness are not taken up by us in their individual and specific particularity.[194]

[192] Jean Epstein, "Interview with Haskell Wexler", *Sight & Sound*, Vol. 45 No. 1 (Winter 1975–1976): 47, quoted in Vivian Sobchack, "The Charge of the Real", in *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004): 258–85, 271.

[193] Sobchack, "The Charge of the Real", 271.

[194] Ibid., 281.

Sobchack notes that this is, however, not the case when some real incidents intrude in a fictional film which by "foregrounding their specific existential status for us, restructures the kind and quality of our investment in them."[195] She concludes by drawing our pointed attention to the fact that the audiences' *extra-textual knowledge* of *real events in the real world outside in terms of their own embodied and socio-cultural experiences of living in the world* remain crucial in judging the status of "events" happening within a fictional film. Any departure from it would disturb the audiences' appreciation of the artwork in question.[196] These are ideas which are entirely in line with Nyāya and Bharata's thoughts on the subject which have been analyzed before.

5.6 Subjective–Objective Alteration in Indian Thought and Its Application to Artworks

The practice of evoking a subjective–objective alteration in the theories of Indian art is strongly influenced by the concept of *darśan* elaborated earlier. In the context of worshipping a deity, it is commonly believed that, while the deity "gives *darśan*," the devotee has to make herself available to "take the *darśan*." Diana Eck notes:

> What does this mean? The very expression is arresting, for "seeing", in this religious sense, is not an act which is initiated by the worshipper. Rather, the deity presents himself to be seen through his image. One might say that this is a "sacred perception" given to the devotee, just as Arjuna was given special vision to see Kṛṣṇa's universal figure (*viswarūpa*) as described in the Bhagavad Gita.[197]

Devotee's *seeing the image of the deity*, however, represents only one part of the process; the more significant part lies in the deity *seeing the devotee* as well.[198] When a crowd cranes its neck to catch a glimpse of the deity, it wishes not only to "see" the deity, but also to be "seen" by

[195] Ibid., 271.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Eck, *Darśan*, 6.
[198] Ibid., 7.

the deity.[199] Taking a cue from this process, various Indian schools have come to be called *Darśan* or Philosophy that signify different "points of view" to see ultimate reality rather than representing a single path to the realization of truth.[200]

The process of *darśan* exercises an overarching influence on the idea that motivates Indian arts. If we take up Bharata's theory of drama, how does such a process work there? Bharata holds that on witnessing "goal-directed activities" being performed on stage, an *affective state* is evoked within the audiences which form an "abiding state" (*sthāyīb-hāva*) for them to experience similar emotions being experienced by the protagonists on stage. This process makes the audiences an inalienable part of the play which helps break down the subjective–objective barrier between the stage and the audiences. In the above *states of affect*, which forms the basis for their subsequent *identification with various parts of the play*, when the audiences experience *rasa*, it involves an experience of both "tasting" and being "tasted" for them.[201] Heckel notes:

> This means that while *rasa* is the taste of performance, it is realized completely only when *tasted*, that is to say, when a relationship is established between what is staged and the spectators.[202]

Clearly, it represents a case of *subjective-objective alteration* happening in an artwork where the audiences not only form part of the stage but also retain their own individuality.

Film Example

The opening sequence in Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Hiroshima, My Love, 1959) may be cited as a classic example. The sequence has three intercutting segments: the present day story of an affair between the French actress "Nevers" (Emmanuelle Riva) and the Japanese architect "Hiroshima" (Eiji Okada), both of whom are married;

[199] Ibid.

[200] Ibid., 10.

[201] Angelika Heckel, "*Rasa*: The Audience and the Stage", *Journal of Arts and Ideas*, Nos. 17–18 (1989): 33–42, 37.

[202] Ibid.

Never's self-narrated past involves her love affair with a German soldier during the Occupation, his subsequent death, her incarceration by her family and society; and the new scale of destruction wrought on Hiroshima by the atom bomb.

The voice-over flashback of Nevers makes the film image to be a shared mental image between Nevers and Hiroshima, between her own past and the present with Hiroshima's frequent interruptions "you have seen nothing about Hiroshima" brings the film back to an objective present. Clearly, therefore, an overlapping of different systems of reference exists in the film with the images sliding along multiple points of a subjective–objective scale.

A documentary-like footage of a hospital is then introduced where people even look directly into the moving camera. Even though these are supposed to be documentary images, yet they are presented as mental images pertaining to Never's memory. All these factors force the immanent field to constantly shift between various planes of reference: the objective present, Nevers looking at the objective plane subjectively, Never's own act of looking at herself as an object interjected with Never's past memory, and Hiroshima's subjective interruptions of Never's account.[203]

Subjective–Objective Alteration and Gender Issues in Indian Thought: An Alternative to Laura Mulvey's Notion of "Male Gaze"

Whether in Vedic cosmology, which gave birth to "Hindu" theories or in Budddhist phenomenology, gender difference is not a *given*. It has been shown in Chapter 3 that Vedic cosmology operates on the basis of Śiva-Sakti Principle where Śiva is traditionally conceived as "male" (*puruṣa*) representing a potential static force and Sakti as "female" (*prakṛti*) representing the dynamic kinetic form of the same underlying force. In the Vedic cosmology of the *Brahman* representing the toality of existence, the ultimate idea is one of an overarching unity, viz., *whatever it is one* which leads to an eventual identity between "the self" and "the cosmos" represented by the dictum *Brahman = ātma*.

In Buddhism, the male–female difference is considered to be an *appearance* alone. The theory holds that "the self" is constituted of five

[203] Hunter Vaughan, *Where Film Meets Philosophy: Godard, Resnais and Experiments in Cinematic Thinking* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013): 117–18 *SZS*.

types of momentarily existing "ultimates" or *dharmas* that Buddhism conceives as the basic constituents of the universe. The Buddhists hold that the "bondage" between the five types of *dharmas*, called *skandhas*, is a case of mere aggregation rather than synthesis, the momentarily existing "ultimates" or the *dharmas* possessing no efficacy in them. In this sense, gender duality becomes a case of mere appearance alone. While, in the empirical world, there does appear to be a difference between the two sexual orientations which have different "capacities," they merely represent *contingent capacities* that serve some "practical purpose" in the empirical world which have absolutely no basis in reality. In the Indian thought, there is, thus, clearly a difference between "sex" and "gender" in Indian thought.

In the iconic *Śiva-Kāli Image* where a naked *Kāli* stands on *Śiva* lying postrate at her feet, *Kāli* represents the dynamic "female" force (*prakṛti*) signifying the kinetic force of the cosmos and the static *Śiva* represents the potential form of the cosmic energy called the *puruṣa* ("male"). In the dissolution phase of the cosmos, the active phase of the *Kāli* disappears.

This "male–female unity" is worshipped as *ardhanāriśvara* images or the androgynous half-man half-female form in various parts of India, an aspect which has already been elaborated in Chapter 3.

Because of this very conception of the "male" and "female" forms representing *correlative opposites* of the same "force", the "Hindu" Gods are always conceived together with Goddesses and vice-versa, the only solitary exception being *Brahma*, who, in its quality-less, form-less appearance or *Nirguṇa Brahman* form represents the whole of the cosmic energy-form as a unity.

In the above context, while analyzing "gaze" in an artwork, Uttara Coorlawala mentions that, according to Laura Mulvey, there are three mechanisms of *gaze* in cinema: *gaze of the camera* which "choreographs" the audiences' perceptions, *gaze of the male characters* within the film which determines the audiences' relation to the content, and *gaze of the spectator* which combines the other two to form a united whole. Mulvey contends that, ultimately, all three forms combine to serve the *male gaze* in cinema.[204]

[204] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989): 17–19, quoted in Uttara Asha Coorlawala, "Darshan and Abhinaya: An Alternative to the Male Gaze", *Dance Research Journal*, 28 No. 1 (1996): 19–27, 20.

Coorlawala, however, contends that, in Indian artworks, the "gaze" doesn't operate in the same way. Citing the example of an Odissi Dance Drama, Coorlawala says that, in a dance presentation of poet Jayadev's (1170–1245) masterpiece *Geet Govinda* (c. 12th CE) which celebrates love between Radha and Kṛṣṇa that evoke an erotic sentiment (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*) among the audiences, the gazes of Radha and Kṛṣṇa are both portrayed alternately by the same dance maestro Kelu Charan Mohapatra in a manner that they ultimately come to signify different forms of the same underlying unity.

In the above erotic play, Radha is not only married to another person but is also elder to Kṛṣṇa almost by eight years. In depicting this erotic play, Mohapatra portrays the following alternating gazes between Radha and Kṛṣṇa: the gaze of Kṛṣṇa being absorbed in decorating Radha's breasts with sandalwood on being invited by her to do so and when he ends his work by gently applying two dots (*tikka*) on Radha's two nipples visibly admiring his own work; the gaze of Radha representing herself as an object of desire for the male so far, regains her own subjectivity by expressing her pleasure as she slowly closes her eyelids in ecstasy[205]; and, finally, in a subtle shift of gaze, Radha now joins Kṛṣṇa in decorating her own body as well as watching him continue to decorate her. Thus, Radha's position, which started as an adorned erotic object, gradually shifts to the male position of constructing the subject in the play. In the final act, a modest Radha, who, as the wife of another person, applies *sindoor* (red turmeric powder signifying the married status of a woman) on her forehead, draws a veil around her, and walks away to her husband.[206]

In this context, differentiating between the idea of "seeing" in *scopophilia*, which represents the voyeuristic pleasure generated by the infantile component-instinct signifying the "male gaze,"[207] and the idea of "seeing" in *darśan*, which acts as the model of subjective–objective alterations in India, Coorlawala notes:

> A mutually complicit merging of subject-object positions is a necessary requisite of *darśan*. A transformative *darśan* necessarily involves reciprocal 'seeing'…An observer who aligns with the dominating male gaze which

[205] Coorlawala, "Darshan and Abhinaya", 21.

[206] Ibid., 21–2.

[207] Charles Rycroft, *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (London: Penguin, 1968): 148.

> claims possession, or which criticizes and separates [from the ongoing act], is unlikely to experience transformation.[208]

She finally concludes: "Thus, subjective-objective interaction or *darśan*, where the aesthetic equivalent of the performer acts as the 'mirror' or *darpaṇa*, involves a reversal of the power structures of voyeurism."[209]

Coorlawala's contention may be illustrated with the help of certain common paintings depicting *Radha-Kṛṣṇa images* available in abundance as decorative motifs in calendar art, wallpaper, et cetera, all across India.

It is quite clear that, in painting the Figs. 5.1 and 5.2, the artist's emphasis has been on finding similarity between the two figures rather than highlighting their differences. More interestingly, in order to highlight the interchangeability between the two forms, the artist has alternately put agency of the flute in Kṛṣṇa and Radha's hands!

This inter-penetrability of the masculine and the feminine forms had produced a very different conception of the male "hero" in Indian commercial cinema. Thus, in Bollywood cinema, almost till the '80s, the "hero" figures had pronounced feminine streaks in them. We, thus, have "heroes" like Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand and others till the '60s and Rajesh Khanna during the '70s who are very different in conception from the masculine "heroes" ruling Hollywood cinema during that period. One can, however, notice a change happening in Bollywood cinema since the mid '70s when the Hollywood machismo started influencing the Indian "hero" image in a major way. We, thus, have the emergence of Dharmendar, who together with the "angry young man" image of Amitabh Bachchan, started redefining the "hero" image in Bollywood cinema. Since the '80s and '90s, the "he-man" image of Salman Khan, Shahrukh Khan, Akshay Kumar, et cetera, have continued to rule the roost till almost the first decade of this century. However, the trend is now reversing again with the feminine elements becoming visible among modern Bollywood "heroes" like Ayusman Khurrana, Barun Dhawan, Rajkumar Rao, et cetera.

[208] Coorlawala, "Darshan and Abhinaya", 21.

[209] Ibid.

Fig. 5.1 Radha-Kṛṣṇa Union

In Bengal, where Vaishnavism (16th CE) propagated by Sri Krishna Chaitanya (1486–1534) had advocated unity between all living forms with non-violence being its watchword, cinema showed similar proclivities with the highly feminine "hero" figure of Pramathesh Barua ruling the screens both in his persona and in his performance. Its only slightly attenuated forms continued to dominate during the '50s and afterwards in the "hero" figures of Uttam Kumar, Soumitra Chatterjee and others in Bengali cinema.

As an interesting aside, let's analyze the Fig. 5.3 in terms of a Bollywood song-and-dance sequence. While the above image highlights the similarity between Radha and Kṛṣṇa figures, it also shows the origin of the song and dance sequence in Bollywood cinema where the hero and the heroine dance with "extras" in sylvan landscapes. More significantly, this dalliance between the hero and the heroine occurs at a surreptitious location about which the parents remain blissfully unaware of. While the Kṛṣṇa-Rādha love affair indicates that true love brooks no social boundaries, for ordinary people the affair would have appeared to be a socially illicit one. It is the latter which influences parents to look suspiciously at any friendship developing between a boy and a girl in the

Fig. 5.2 Radha-Kṛṣṇa Union

Indian scenario! Interestingly, it is exactly opposite in Western cinema where the parents usually welcome such friendships!

In conclusion, one would like to highlight the fact that the notion of "generalization" (*sādharanīkaraṇa*) of audience experience arising from their prior knowledge that it is a fictional work and their "willing identification with the fictional mode of the work" (*āhāryajñāna*) are seminal

Fig. 5.3 Radha-Kṛṣṇa and the Gopinis Dancing

Indian contributions to solving the "paradox of junk fiction" representing the phenomenon where artworks generate experiences which are invariably "pleasurable" for the audiences, including even tragedies, a problem which had plagued art theory for a long time.

Bharata's formula of for a unit of enactment, which acts as the basis for forming a "goal-directed" *causal whole* by the audiences, leads to the idea that the evocation of an automatic, unconscious, pre-reflective and abiding *affective state* among the audiences acts as a crucial bridge between their "consciousness" and their "unconscious" bodies that enable the audiences to *relive* a scene both in terms of their bodies and souls. Once such an abiding state is evoked, it acts as a platform for generating different *levels of identification* start forming between the audiences and various stages of an artwork. These aspects bring a lot of clarity on how an artwork works and how it influences its audiences.

Bharata's detailed analysis of the "plot" structure of drama throws new light on the levels of signification occurring in an artwork. Bharata's theory may be further extended into classifying aesthetic experiences as a *sensuous experience*, an *experience of saturation* and an *experience of immersion* for the audiences which may undoubtedly be considered as a significant contribution by Bharata and other Indian aesthetes in the field

of arts. Abhinavagupta's identification of elements which act as "obstacles" to audiences' aesthetic realization, which is basically due to the intrusion of reality in the fictional mode of a play, is full of insight for artists, critics, and viewers alike. Finally, the notion of *subjective-objective alteration* in Bharata's theory of drama, which not only cuts across binaries between the stage and the audiences but also undercuts ideas about gender duality, is relevant in challenging contemporary Western notion of the "male gaze." In the end, it may be safely said that Bharata and his commentators leave us with a legacy whose implications would continue to be felt by us for a long time to come.

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CHAPTER 6

Ānandavardhana's Theory of Suggestion or *Dhvani*: Indian Theories of "Art" and Their Relation to Cinema

Dhani is art and *Rasa-dhvani* is the highest form of art

—Ānandavardhana

The Brief

It was only after a prolonged debate and discussion that the question "what is art?" was settled satisfactorily in classical India. It was held that when an artwork contributes in creating a "gap" between an expression and what it expresses, thereby opening up a space for the audiences' imagination to play within it, the process would be called "art." In the above context, the following two theories of "art" achieved prominence. First, there was the "theory of embellishment," called the *alaṁkāra-śāstra* or the *guṇa-rīti-aucitya school*, where quality (*guṇa*), style (*rīti*) and appropriateness (*aucitya*) formed the essential qualities that "embellished" an expression as "ornaments" (*alaṁkāras*) on the surface, thereby creating the necessary "gap" between an expression and its expressed that offered the audiences a free play.

The second theory is called the "theory of suggestion," known as the *dhvani* theory or the *dhvani-śāstra*, where restoration of human subjectivity truncated or lost due to the curtailment of human communication due to social repression, suffering of trauma and the consequential production of existential conditions and/or the loss of archetypal experiences in one's memory, are revived through "suggestive means" that creates the necessary "gap" for the audiences to play around with.

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While the above two constitute the main schools of "art" in Indian thought, there is also the presence of a third form of "art," considered to be the ultimate form of all "arts", in the Indian tradition. It holds that "art" crosses the final frontier when it becomes instrumental in the realization of an inner harmony between Man and Nature, considered to be the ultimate goal of Mankind in terms of the Vedic formula *Brahman* = *ātma* that conveys a basic identity between the "cosmos" and "the self".

In the above context, the following ideas would be discussed in this chapter:

- 6.1. "Art" as "Embellishment": *Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School* (*Alaṁkāra Śāstra*)
    - 6.1.1. Expressive Elements in an Artwork: Figures of Speech, Style and Appropriate Measure
    - 6.1.2. Modes of Expression in an Artwork
        - 6.1.2.1. Mode of Natural Utterance (*Svabhāvokti*)
        - 6.1.2.2. Mode of Oblique Utterance (*Vakrokti*)
- 6.2. "Art" as "Suggestion": Ānandavardhana's *Dhvani Theory* (*Dhvani Śāstra*)
    - 6.2.1. *Dhvani* as "Suggestion"
    - 6.2.2. When *Dhvani* as "Suggestion" becomes "Art"
        - 6.2.2.1. Mode of Realistic Suggestion (*Vastudhvani*): Negotiating Socio-Cultural Repression
        - 6.2.2.2. Mode of Formalistic Suggestion (*Alaṁkāradhvani*): Negotiating Trauma and Existential Conditions
        - 6.2.2.3. Mode of Direct Suggestion (*Rasadhvani*): Negotiating the Loss of Archetypal Experiences
- 6.3. Final Frontier of "Art": Experiencing Man's Inner Harmony with Nature

6.1 "Art" as "Embellishment": *Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School* (*Alaṁkāra Śāstra*)

Bhāmaha (c. 7th CE), who is the first among a significant group of literary art critics to emerge in classical India, holds that "art" is *śabdārthau kāvyam* or "art" is "a combination of the expression and the expressed."[1]

[1] Edwin Gerow, "Notes", 92; *kāvya* is an expression which literally means "literature" but which ultimately comes to represent all forms of "art" during the ascendency of the literary theorists in India from 6th CE onwards. The dominance of literature is even now

This pretty innocuous definition, however, suggests a deeper meaning: while *śabda* represents "word" signifying "meaning," *artha* is a "stronger word than its translation "meaning" conveys, for it implies an aim, an intention and a will" of the person who is using it.[2] In this sense, *artha* represents more than what *śabda* implies, thereby creating a space between an expression and what it expresses in the Sanskrit language. In contrast to the natural "sciences" (*śāstras*), where this "gap" is sought to be closed in order to have a tighter grip on reality, "art" (*kāvya*) goes in the other direction by creating a "gap" between an expression and what it expresses in a work, a space within which the readers' imagination finds a free play. In this sense, the essence of the artistic process is evocatively captured by the literary theorist Kuntaka (c. 1000 CE): there is a "mutual rivalry" (*parasparaspardhā*) between the expression and the expressed in the "arts".[3] The more pregnant a "gap" is supposed to be in an artwork, the more significant it is expected to be in the field of "arts".

6.1.1 "Embellishment" of Elements Constituting an Artwork: "Figures of Speech," "Style," and "Appropriate Measure"

Classical Indian thought have generated two distinct theories of "art" both of which had a profound influence on the way "art" was practiced in India. The first major theory was the "Theory of Embellishment" or the Alaṁkāra-śāstra which uses elements as "ornaments" (*alaṁkāras*) that externally "embellish" the literal meaning of an expression in an artwork. One of the elements is represented by "figures of speech"—140 "figures of speech" had been identified on the last count in classical India by literary theorists—which *add* a particular "quality" (*guṇa*) to the literal expressions, like the use of the word "robust" in a heroic tale, et cetera. Bains comments on the free space that "figures of speech" created for the receivers: "A figure of speech is a deviation from the plain and ordinary mode of speaking for the sake of greater effect: it is an unusual form of speech."[4] Another element was "style" (*rīti*), like the "lyrical"

palpable in India when persons going to cinema still say "Going to see a *book*"! Similarly, while going to a folk theatre, they say "Going to *hear* a jatra", an expression which has similar though reverse connotations!

[2] Ibid., "Notes", 91, modified.

[3] Gerow, "Notes", 91.

[4] Bain, *Rhetoric and Composition*, I, quoted in Krishna Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 79.

style in a romantic poetry, et cetera, which conveyed to the receivers a sense much beyond what the words or images *literally* meant for them. The mutual arrangement of words that "style" represented, also called "diction" (*rīti*), *added* value to the expression by creating a particular texture in an artwork. Thus, for example, since the "diction" of a romantic expression is characterized by sweetness (*mādhurya*), it should not only be woven by tender images but also should avoid its opposite images like using vulgar expressions, et cetera. Chaitanya notes:

> Excited by the discovery that in "diction" we have an integrative reality of a higher order than the "figure of speech" or image, Vāmana went to the extent of claiming "diction" to be the soul of poetry (*rītir ātma kāvyasa*).[5]

Vāmana's (c. 8th/9th CE) notion of *rīti* or "diction" is close to what Eisenstein meant by the expression "intellectual montage" in cinematic representation: "In every such juxtaposition, *the result is qualitatively distinguishable from each component element viewed separately.*"[6]

For Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, "style" or "diction" means *saṅghaṭanā* or "organization" (formed from the verb *saṅghaṭ* "to put together") which has an independent property of its own different from the earlier notions of *rīti* or *rachanā* where the effect was considered to arise from the "quality" or *guṇa* of the words used.[7]

Kuntaka introduces a new aspect in the form of the "poetic attitude" in "diction": "diction" or "style" is not only characterized by the way words or images are spun, but also by the artists' *distinctive attitude* which permeates them. Chaitanya says: "Style is, thus, not merely a manner of expression; it is a 'way of seeing things' as Flaubert put it."[8]

In the above sense, what "propriety" or *aucitya* does is to set boundary-conditions for using either "figures of speech" or "style" in an expression; anything used in excess is held as spoiling the artistic sense of an expression. It is from a unity between these three elements, viz., the *quality* of the "figures of speech," the *rīti* or "style" representing the mutual arrangement of elements within an expression and the *propriety*

[5] Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 105.

[6] Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Sense*, Trans. Jay Leyda (London: Faber and Faber), 18, quoted in Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 75.

[7] Ingalls in *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.6A, FN 1, 401–2.

[8] Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, 107.

of using either of them in an appropriate measure—"everything in good measure"—is what constitutes "art" in this theory.

It is quite clear from the above that "embellishment" generally means *external embellishment* alone which has nothing to do with the internal workings of the human psyche. The external process of adornment represents the whole process of appearing to be "beautiful" or "ugly," "symmetric" or "asymmetric" to the receiver.

6.1.2 "Embellishment" of the Modes of Expression in an Artwork: "Realism" and "Formalism" in **Alaṁkāra School**

As far as the *form* or the *mode of an expression* (*ukti*) is concerned, Bharata had advocated two broad modes of representation in his theory of drama, realism (*lokadharmī*) and formalism (*nāṭyadharmī*).[9] While accepting these modes, the literary critics had changed their names to the modes of "natural utterance" (*svabhāvokti*) and "oblique utterance" (*vakrokti*) as appropriate to a literary work. *Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School's* analysis of the above two modes are important in devising new principles on the basis of which these modes work.

*6.1.2.1 Mode of Natural Utterance (*Svabhāvokti*)*

In the initial stages, the "theory of embellishment" or *alaṁkāra-śāstra* had held that realism or natural utterance cannot be considered as "art" since, by virtue of its very nature of being a truthful representation of reality, it does not "embellish" its content whatsoever. In this sense, realism is unable to create the necessary "gap" between reality and its representation, an essential requirement for the Indian theory of "art." In contrast, formalism or *vakrokti*, by its very nature of being an *indirect speech*, *necessarily* creates a "gap" between an expression and what it expresses. In a trenchant criticism of realism, the proponents of formalism (*vakrokti*) asked the following pointed question: can the realistic expression "the sun has set, the moon is up, and the birds are going to their nests" ever become part of an artistic expression?"[10] The formalists held that this description can at best be considered as "reportage" (*vārtā*) rather than as "art" (*kāvya*). However, problems with the above line of

[9] For a detailed analysis, see Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 236–47.

[10] Bimal Krishna Matilal, "*Vakrokti* and *Dhvani*: Controversies About the Theory of Poetry in the Indian Tradition", *Evam*, Vol. 4 No. 1 & 2 (2006): 372–81, 374.

thought surfaced immediately. Many oblique expressions, like "hit the nail on the head," et cetera, had long become part of realistic day-to-day expressions.[11] In fact, all languages have in their kitty a large number of such expressions which originally belonged to the formalistic repertoire but were naturalized subsequently as realistic expressions. Moreover, the literary theorist Mammaṭa (c. 11th CE) showed that, depending on differing socio-cultural contexts, even the reportage "the sun has set" et cetera, would *suggest* at least nine different "meanings" to the receivers![12] Matilal notes that even Kālidāsa, the doyen of Sanskrit literature, had himself used realism and formalism in tandem on many occasions:

> The point is that the cart driver's plain or vulgar language can be invested with beauty or obliqueness by setting it in an appropriate context. For example, in the Vishkambhaka in *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, the fisherman's as well as the policeman's plain, rough and ready speech becomes part of an excellent *drishyakāvya* [audio-visual scene].[13]

The Indian theorists ultimately came to the conclusion that, since the process of naturalization of expressions had gone on for centuries together, a "pure" mode of expression was no more available for use in the "arts." They, therefore, accepted that both realism and formalism are legitimate forms of artistic expression which, if used selectively and judiciously, can complement each other, rather than work at cross purposes in the field of "arts".

The basic question, however, remained: how would realism create the necessary "gap" between an expression and what it expresses as prescribed by the Indian aesthetic theories? The answer that the Indian theorists came up with was both innovative and important in the context of "arts." They found that "realism" works on the basis of an "accumulation of significant details" (*samuccaya*) which, if collated consciously by an artist, help the receiver to differentiate between the "normative values" of a particular reality held by her in her memory and a reality constructed through a conscious "accumulation of significant details" by the artist, the "gap" between the two permitting a deeper understanding of various aspects of such a reality by the receiver concerned. For example, the artists'

[11] Ibid., 373.

[12] Ibid., 374–5.

[13] Ibid., 378.

accumulation of details could direct the receiver's attention to areas of reality which were not noticed by her before. The literary theorists ultimately found that the significant details were more potent when they were ideally collected from the following areas: genera or class (*jāti*) that a particular reality belonged to, typical properties (*guṇa*) of that class of reality, typical acts (*kriyā*) undertaken by the members of that class and the special property (*dravya*, *viśeṣa*) of a particular member of that class, if any. Together, these details formed what has been called "factuals" (*vāstava*) that belonged to a particular class of "events", which generated a deeper insight into the nature of the particular reality being represented to the receiver. In other words, a *conscious accumulation of significant details* helps the artist to construct a reality much richer in detail and insight than an unimaginative presentation of reality would have brought to the receiver.[14]

Film Example

For example, in Sam Mendes's *Road to Perdition* (2002), Michael Sullivan, Sr. (Tom Hanks) is a hit man for the Irish-American crime boss, John Rooney (Paul Newman) during the days of Great Depression. One day, out of curiosity, his son, Michael Sullivan, Jr. (Tyler Hoechlin), surreptitiously follows his father only to find him, along with his crime boss's son, Connor Rooney (Daniel Craig), gunning down a disgruntled employee of John Rooney. When Connor comes to know of this event, he seeks to eliminate the whole Sullivan family as being dangerous witnesses. This results in a cat-and-mouse game between Sullivan Sr. and Connors, a process of enquiry which results in a continuing state of aesthetic relish (*bhoga*) for the audiences. Sullivan Sr., in a desperate bid to save his son, guns down John Rooney and his henchmen. This massacre, which happens in pouring rain, awash with bluish lighting and slow-motion camerawork, has an underlying suggestion of inevitability which acts as an "embellishment" for the scene. Johns' final words to Sullivan Sr. before dying "I'm glad it is you" further highlights the aspect of inevitability present in the scene.

At this stage, it would be pertinent to point out the difference between "realism" and "naturalism" as being two different forms of expression in the field of "arts." While in "realism," an artist selects

[14] See Gerow, *A Glossary*, 324–6 for an exhaustive analysis.

certain expressive details from reality to lay bare its deeper aspects, "naturalism" is a truthful representation of all the elements that constitute a particular reality. In the latter mode, it is on the basis of the very "naturalness" of an "event" that the artist seeks to probe this particular form of reality. It is here that the "realism" of Shakespeare and Tagore differs from the "naturalism" of André Gide and Émile Zola.

*6.1.2.2 Mode of Oblique Utterance (*Vakrokti*)*

In formalism or *vakrokti*, the artistic process basically involves *heightening* of the receivers' experiences of certain aspects of a particular reality by the adoption of certain formal means of expression employed by the artist. Here the "gap" is created between the "normative values" of the reality held by the receiver and the artist's *imaginary heightening* of certain aspects of that reality. In this connection, the basic difference between "realism" and "formalism" may be represented as follows: while, in realism, the artist nowhere departs from a truthful representation of reality, in formalism, the artist seeks to compare the receiver's habitual experiences of a particular reality with heightened, *idealized* forms of certain aspects of that reality in the form of an "ideal revival" (*udbodhana*)[15] in the artist's imagination. Since the aspects *ideally imagined* by the artist do not occur in reality, the process creates a *montage of discontinuity* between the receivers' own experiences of that reality and those created by the artist for the receiver, the resulting "gap" enabling the receivers' imagination to have a free play within it. This process permits an unusual level of freedom to the artists to *imagine* "events" in a manner that collides with the reality habitually experienced by the receiver, thereby throwing in bold relief certain points about that reality.

The literary theorists later found that, in formalism, the artists' use of the following tropes carry high expressive values for them: simile (*upamā*), hyperbole (*atiśayokti*), pun (*śleṣa*), or irony (*atiśleṣa*) to generate an "ideal revival" among the receivers that essentially break the boundaries of realism. These formalistic modes are briefly described below.

The literary critic Rudraṭa (c. 8th CE) defines "simile" (*upamā*) thus: "a simile is a relation (similitude) between two things that are different, yet share some aspect of sufficient note to permit us to [ideally] overlook

[15] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 38–9.

that difference."[16] In other words, simile (*upamā*) "embellishes" a particular piece of reality by comparing it with an imaginary piece of that reality which becomes "meaningful" for the receivers. For example, when Robert Burns compares love with a red rose by saying that "My Luve's is like a red, red rose" or when Daṇḍin compares a lady's face with the moon "The moon of her face, slightly flushed with drinks, rivals the moon ruddy above the eastern hills", they are essentially using similes to compare two essentially incomparable things.[17] While the simile "He is like a tiger" (*puruṣa-siṃha*) is a common example, Abhinava's unusual example "Travellers who are like an audience" (*pathika sāmājikeṣu*) extends the scope of simile in unknown directions.[18]

The literary critic Bhāmaha (c. 7th CE) defines "hyperbole" (*atiśayokti*) thus: "An expression whose sense exceeds reality for an artistic purpose is called a hyperbole (*atiśayokti*)."[19] It "embellishes" by comparing a piece of reality with an exaggerated imaginary construction in order to make a particular point. Sandburg's following example is a case in point: "They built a skyscraper so tall that they had to put hinges on the two top stories so as to let the moon pass",[20] the hyperbole essentially suggesting the unusual height of the new construction to receivers.

The literary critic Mammaṭa (c. 10th CE) defines "pun" (*śleṣa*) thus: "When an expression, which expresses one meaning taken in one way and another taken in another, are combined, it constitutes pun (*śleṣa*)".[21] Thus, when a Court Jester's pun (*śleṣa*) "embellishes" by comparing a piece of reality with an incomparable thing in a derogatory manner, he is using pun to make a point.

In the Indian tradition, there is no separate category for "Irony". It is usually subsumed under an extreme form of Pun (*Atiśleṣa*).[22]

[16] Edwin Gerow, "Indian Poetics", in *A History of Indian Literature*, Ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), V 5, 240.

[17] Gerow, *A Glossary*, 37.

[18] Ibid., 668.

[19] Ibid., 336.

[20] Ibid., 37.

[21] Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 300.

[22] Gerow, "Indian Poetics", 240.

Film Example of "Simile" (Upamā)
In Ritwik Ghatak's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (The Cloud-Capped Star, 1960), Nita (Supriya Choudhury) comes to her lover Sanat's (Niranjan Ray) room only to realize that her younger sister Gita (Gita Ghatak) is present in the next room. Feeling betrayed, she walks out of the room. Ghatak's picturization of her coming down the staircase is extremely evocative. As the audiences watch the shot, taken from a low angle just below her chin as she comes down the stairs clutching her throat and looking straight ahead with repeated whiplashes heard on the soundtrack, evokes a *comparison* between her face and that of a *devi* or a goddess as a simile (*upamā*) essentially signifying the extreme sacrifices that Nita had made for her family as a *devi* does for her children and the agony she is going through now in being betrayed by her near ones.

Film Example of "Hyperbole" (Atiśayokti)
Peter Greenaway's film *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989) is a classic example of using "hyperbole" (*atiśayokti*) to generate "meaning" in cinema. Albert Spica (Michael Gambon) is a ruthless mafia who owns the luxury restaurant *Le Hollandais*, his wife Georgina Spika (Helen Mirren) is endlessly abused by Albert, the former's brief affair with a bookseller Michael (Alan Howard) having an idealized vision ends in the latter's tragic death as Albert finds out and force-feeds him with the pages of a book dealing with the French Revolution, the Cook Richard Boarst (Richard Bohringer) is the unflappable chef who remains a mute observer to even the most atrocious of things happening in front of him. The film is a real veritage of hyperbole involving orgy, violence, perverted sex, excrement, torture, and cannibalism, to mention only a few.

The symbolic aspects of the various characters in the film are indicated by the film critic Edgar Cochran as follows. The Cook Richard is the typical citizen that serves the society by unquestionably following its orders; the Thief Albert represents all that is evil in an all-consuming capitalism where all that occurs in the surroundings is mercilessly exploited for one's aggrandizement, a powerful reference to Thacherite England then; the Wife Goergina represents the idealized image of a society which remains unfulfilled, resulting in disappointment and a consequent backlash; and the Lover Michael is a gutless dreamer who doesn't have the strength in him to transform his world through meaningful action. The use of color in the film strengthens the symbolic aspects of the film: the exterior of the restaurant is mostly painted blue representing a paradise

that has been lost; the kitchen is predominantly green indicating human vitality symbolized by food; the seating area of *Le Hollandais* is painted red like hell where breaking of all social norms takes place with impunity, symbolically representing capitalism as a devilish presence; and the restroom, where the first physical intimacy between the mafia wife and her lover takes place, is painted white, symbolically representing an arclight under whose harsh glare anything good and innocent would be found out and destroyed.[23]

While reviewing the film in 1997, Campos notes that the film exactly portrays what Watson says about Elizabethan and Jacobean Revenge Dramas: "the portrayal of a world in which people are nothing more than desperate little bodies consuming each other, indistinguishable in sex and murder".[24] Reflecting on the "inhuman" nature of human beings, Greenaway himself acknowledges that the above dramas provide him with a model which offers him "an alternative examination…which basically looks at the center of human predicament by going to the edge, to the extremes".[25] The hyperbolic representation of the extremes makes sense at many levels, both present and past, for the audiences.

Film Example of "Pun" (Śleṣa)

One of the great examples of using "pun" (*śleṣa*) in cinema occurs in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (1962). The wandering monks Andrei (Anatoly Solonitsyn), Daniil (Nikolai Grinko) and Kirill (Ivan Lapikov), who are icon painters in search of work, enter inside a shelter during a heavy shower. There they come across a Skomorokh or a Jester (Rolan Bykov), who earns his living with his scathing and obscene social comments, making bitter puns about the state and the church. On seeing the monks, he bitterly ridicules them as well. He is shortly caught by the soldiers who render him unconscious by beating him. After destroying his musical instrument, the soldiers finally take him away. In the meantime, since the rain had stopped, the three monks also leave.

[23] Edgar Cochran, "Review", *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989), accessed from the Internet, September 2018.

[24] Miguel Ángel González Campos, "Crime, Revenge and Horror: Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*", Review available on the Internet, accessed September 2018.

[25] Campos, "Crime, Revenge and Horror".

Illustration 6.1 Concepts in *Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School* of Art (*Alaṁkāra Śāstra*)

Art: The process of creating "art" is to generate a "gap" between an expression and what it expresses in order to permit a free play of the receivers' imagination there.

Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School: Its modus operandi is to create a "gap" through "embellishing" expressions by using "figures of speech" (*guṇa*), the "style" of their lyrics and their arrangement (*rīti*) in an "appropriate measure" (*aucitya*).

Guṇa: Guṇa menas the *quality* of an expression. In the course of finalizing his *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Bharata had held that there are ten excellences (*guṇas*) of individual expressions: *śleṣa* (coalescence of words), *prasāda* (clarity), *samatā* (evenness), *samādhi* (superimposition), *mādhurya* (sweetness), *ojas* (strength), *sukumārya* (smoothness), *arthavyakti* (explicitness), *udāra* (exaltedness), and *kānti* (loveliness). The literary critic Vāmana classified them in terms of *śabda guṇa* pertaining to the words being used in an expression and *artha guṇa* pertaining to the quality of their meanings. The critic Mammata finally reclassified them into three groups: *mādhurya* (sweetness), *ojas* (strength) and *prasāda* (clarity). The literary critics Viśvanāth and Danḍin held that the values of "excellences" and "flaws" of expressions are not absolute but related to what aids or hinders the evocation of desired feelings among the readers.

Rīti: It denotes arrangement of expressions which produces an "artistic" effect among the audiences. To Vāmana, it means the arising of an integrative reality which is of a higher order than what solitary expressions or images portray.

Aucitya: Appropriate placement of elements within an artwork that creates *rasa* is called "propriety" (*aucitya*). *Aucitya* generates *harmony* by maintaining appropriate proportion between the whole and its parts, between the chief and its subsidiaries, between the *aṅga* and its *aṅgins*, all of which are the hallmarks of "beauty" in "art."

Mode of Natural Expression (*Svabhāvokti*):
It represents a Realistic Comparison between an artist's conscious *accumulation of significant details* from a reality and the reality as habitually experienced by the audiences. The "significant details" are usually collated from Genera (*Jāti*), Property (*Guṇa*), Action (*Kārya*) and Special Property (*Viśeṣa*) of a particular form of reality which generates a deeper understanding of that reality by the receivers.

Mode of Oblique Expression (*Vakrokti*):
Formal Comparison between an artist's "ideal" *imagination* of Reality and Reality as experienced by receivers creates a "Montage of Discontinuity" between them. Formalism creates "ideal revivals" in following aspects of reality for comparative purposes: Simile (*Upamā*), Hyperbole (*Atiśayokti*), Pun (*Śleṣa*) and Irony (*Atiśleṣa*).

Eisenstein's Theory: Complementarity of Realism and Formalism in Cinema

Eisenstein starts with the notion that cinema is essentially a representational medium which generates meaning by *comparing* between the audiences' *lived* reality and the reality *created* by the artist for them:

> *I should call cinema the art of comparisons* because it shows not facts but conventional (photographic) representations…For the exposition of even the simplest phenomena, cinema needs comparison (by means of consecutive, separate presentations) between the elements which constitute it: [as a comparative process] montage is fundamental to cinema, deeply grounded in the conventions of cinema and the corresponding characteristics of perception.[26]

He clarifies that, while in the above process, montage generates "new" meanings by juxtaposing two or more discontinuous pieces, the two juxtaposed, discontinuous pieces must, however, be represented realistically for the intended meaning to arise among the audiences. What Eisenstein is essentially saying is that the idea of an action in cinema is generated by the accumulation of distinct pieces of the act represented realistically but juxtaposed "discontinuously" which generates "a similar (and often stronger) effect only when taken as a whole". Eisenstein notes that, in the above mode of cinematic comparison, both realistic and montage modes play complimentary roles:

> Whereas in theatre an effect is achieved primarily through the physiological perception of an actually occurring fact (e.g., a murder), in cinema, it is made up of the juxtaposition and accumulation in the audiences' psyche of associations that the film's purpose requires, associations that are aroused by the separate elements of the stated fact, associations that produce, albeit tangentially, a similar (and often stronger) effect only when taken as a whole.[27]

While the discontinuous pieces mentioned above represent montage formulations, the associations they generate in the audiences' psyche have to be realistic to have any "meanings" for them.

[26] S. M. Eisenstein, "The Montage of Film Attractions (1924)", in *Eisenstein Writings Volume 1: 1922–1934*. Trans. and Ed. Richard Taylor (London: BFI, 1988): 39–58, 41.

[27] Ibid.

In a striking anticipation of Eisenstein's thoughts on the complementarity of realism and formalism in cinema, Abhinava notes that realistic modes of expression act "like a wall" on which formalistic expressions are inscribed:

> While noting that some *dharmīs* are of the *loka* kind [realism] and some are of the *naṭya* kind [formalism], Bharata calls realistic drama "svabhāvopagatam" [natural expression of human behavior] and says that *lokadharma* or the ordinary behavior of people is primary and that it acts like a "wall" on which embellishments are eched like carvings.[28]

Thus, for both Abhinava and Eisenstein, realism and formalism essentially play a complimentary role in artworks.

6.2 "Art" as "Suggestion": Ānandavardhana's *Dhvani School* (*Dhvani Śāstra*)

Even while accepting that the *guṇa-rīti-aucitya school's* means of analyzing an artwork is valid, Ānandavardhana's *dhvani* school (c. 8th CE) criticizes it on the ground that it deals with *external embellishments* alone rather than dealing with an artwork *internally*, that is, in terms of human psyche. The *dhvani school* implies that the basic purpose of "art" is not only to create a free space or a "gap" *externally* for the audiences to dwell in but also to have a deeper purpose in creating a "space" *internally* which would enable the audiences to look within themselves and understand what is psychically troubling them. The theory holds that human beings feel depressed when they lose their power of communication due to various reasons like social repression, suffering of trauma which gives rise to existential conditions among them that make them lose all sense of space and time and the loss of archetypal experiences in their memory that deprives them of their history and richness of being. Such repressions and losses lead to the truncating of human subjectivity which seriously jeopardizes their existence as sensitive beings. The process of *dhvani*, which by virtue of aiming to bring individuals face-to-face with what has been bottled up within them becomes, in certain respects, similar to the psychoanalytic process of "talking cure" recommended by Freud.

[28] Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabharatī*, 13: 85, quoted by Gupt, *Dramatic Concepts*, 242.

The process that *dhvani theory* adopts for its purpose is to revive communications "lost" to individuals through "suggestive" means and, thereby, to restore "full word" to them. Since the *suggestive expressions* generate more than what they mean on the surface, they create the necessary "gap" between an expression and what it expresses for the receivers to find their subjectivity, a hallmark of what is considered "art" in the Indian tradition. The *dhvani* process is, arguably, the first theory of note to deal with human psyche *internally*, a theory of "art" that considers "art" to be uniquely endowed with powers of engaging with human beings in terms of their interiority.

6.2.1 **Dhvani** *as "Suggestion"*

Noting that "*dhvani* is another meaning" (*dhvanirnāma arthāntaram*),[29] Ānandavardhana holds it to be the fourth power, called *suggestion* (*vyanjanā*), which generates a meaning or a sense over and above the traditionally accepted three conventional powers of "meanings" like the primary, secondary, and intentional "meanings" of an expression. Analyzing in terms of a linguistic expression, Ānanda uses the celebrated example "A hamlet *on* the Ganges" (*gaṅgāyāṃ ghoṣaḥ*) to demonstrate how *dhvani's* power of "suggestion" exceeds those of the conventional powers. Since a hamlet or a village cannot be located *on* a river, the "primary" denotative power (*abhidhā*) of the expression is blocked requiring the "secondary power" (*lakṣana*) to be pressed into service and remove the ambiguity thus: "A hamlet *on the bank* of the Ganges" (*gaṅgātireḥ ghoṣaḥ*). However, since the author has deliberately used the poetic expression of "*on* the Ganges" to convey his sense, his "intention" (*tātparya*) is clearly to make more sense of the expression than what appears on the surface. Ānanda holds that the speaker's intention is to *suggest* a sense of "coolness" and "serenity" for the village by making the village's association with the river more direct.[30] For Ānanda, however, the expression's meaning-potential is not exhausted even there. Since the river Ganges is considered to be a "holy" river for devout Hindus, the expression also *suggests* a sense of "purity" and "piety" to them. However, since the latest "meanings" are not likely to occur

[29] Dehejia, *The Advaita of Art*, 113.

[30] Gerow, "Notes", 95.

among the non-Hindus, it indicates the culture-specificity of Ānanda's "theory of suggestions". Thus, for example, while the English expression "Newcastle-upon-Tyne" has a history, the British culture does not permit bestowing of "holiness" upon it.[31] Moreover, not all expressions concerning the Ganges convey "holiness" to even pious Hindus. Ingalls notes: "The word *Gaṅgā* possesses suggestiveness of purity [and piety] only under certain conditions, not, for example, in the situation portrayed by the expression 'There are many fish in the Ganges' (*gaṅgāyāṃ bahavo matsyā jīvanti*)".[32] Thus, in addition to the culture-specifity of Ānanda's theory, it also indicates the context-specifity of his ideas.

The crux of the above discussion is that the teachings and trainings imparted by a society to its members make a difference in people's understanding of the sense suggested by an expression. Lacan, who was deeply influenced by Ānadavardhana's *dhvani theory*, cites the following interesting example from Indian mythology:

> When Devas [gods], Maṇusa [men], and Asuras [devils] were ending their novitiate with Prajāpati, the God of Thunder…they addressed to Him this prayer "Speak to us". "*Da*" said Prajāpati and the Devas answered "Thou have said to us: *Damyata*, master yourself"; "*Da*" said Prajāpati and the Men answered "Thou have said to us: *Datta*, give"; "*Da*" said Prajāpati and the Asuras answered "Thou have said to us: *Dayadhyam*, be merciful". That, continues the text, is what the divine voice of Thunder caused to be heard: *Da, Da, Da*, submission, gift, grace. Prajāpati replied to all of them: "You have heard me."[33]

[31] While *dhvani* literally means "sound" or "voice", it also means "echo", "reverberation" or "resonance", all of which signify a process of "that which comes back" to the receiver. In keeping with the Sanskrit tradition, Abhinava explains the triadic signification of *dhvani* as "the suggestion, the suggested, and the process of suggestion", which, together, generate greater comprehensibility of a situation among the audiences. For "echo", see Sheldon Pollock's "The Social Aesthetic and Sanskrit Literary Theory", *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 29 No. 1–2 (2001): 197–229, Footnote 13, 224; for "reverberation", refer to Daniel Ingalls, *Dhanyāloka*, 1.13 I L, 170.

[32] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.33 l A, Ed. Daniel Ingalls, Footnote 2, 579.

[33] Jacques Lacan, Chapter 3: "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis", in *Écrits: A Selection*, Trans. Alan Sheridan, Reprint (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1989): 30–113, 106–7, modified.

While formulating his *dhvani theory* or the "theory of suggestion", Ānandavardhana also appears to have been influenced by the grammarian-linguist Bhartṛhari's *sphoṭa theory* which holds that the "meanings" conveyed by a linguistic expression are constituted of both linguistic and extra-linguistic elements, like the intonation, context, reliability of the speaker, et cetera, which *add* something more to the "suggested" sense. In this sense, Ānanda does appear to have been influenced by the linguist-grammarian Bhartṛhari's theory that a linguistic expression is a *symbol* which generates meaning *at one go* by instantiating a relevant "universal" in the receiver's memory *directly* and *immediately*, the individual contents of which, that is, the *symbol* can only be analyzed artificially by separating the elements through the *apoddhāra method* that bestows a metaphorical individual existence on them.[34] Thus, for example, like in Bhartṛhari, Ānandavardhana's *dhvani theory* is able to shift or even subvert the "meaning" of an expression through "suggestive" means in the following manner:

i. Where the literal meaning is subverted either partially (*tiraskṛta-vācya*) or fully (*atyanta-tiraskṛta-vācya*)
ii. Where the literal meaning is shifted to another sense (*arthāntara saṅkramita*)[35]

Though *dhvani* is initially used in explaining the role of "suggestions" in poetry alone, it had ultimately been applied to all forms of "art". Hiriyanna notes:

> This is indicated by Ānandavardhana's own references to other arts, like music, for purposes of illustration. It is clear from the nature of *dhvani* itself; for the means of suggestion need not be confined to linguistic forms, but may extend to the media employed in arts other than poetry.[36]

In the next section I search for an answer to the following question: at what point do "suggested" meanings become "art" in the *dhvani theory*?

[34] See Matilal's *The Word and the World*, 77–105 for a detailed discussion.

[35] Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 171–2.

[36] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 71.

6.2.2 *When* Dhvani *as "Suggestion" Becomes "Art"*

Pandit points out that, for both Ānanda and Abhinava, *dhvani* functions as a *meta-language* in the field of "arts":

> *Dhvani* meaning is that which lies beyond spoken words. It is the meaning that is constituted by *silences in midst of speech*…Through *dhvani*, the poetic language reaches its condition of silence. It functions like a *meta-language*, generating many meanings by deploying collective and individual memory, latent impressions, and mental associations.[37]

For Ānanda, when *dhvani* starts acting like a *meta-language*, it necessarily creates a "gap" with *ordinary language*, the former necessarily forming a basis for "art" in the Indian tradition. The "suggestions" that revive suppressed meanings in the *dhvani theory* is what constitute artistic "beauty" for Ānanda: "Suggestiveness is nowhere found without the suggested meaning being a source of beauty whereas secondary [literal] meaning…needn't necessarily have a beautiful meaning".[38] Abhinava clarifies by stating that "suggestiveness" is "beautiful" because it holds the audiences' attention, its absence forcing the audiences to turn back to the literal sense of the expressions alone "like a common man who catches a glimpse of the divine only to lose it in the next moment".[39] However, the full potential of *dhvani theory* is realized for Ānanda when it is able to restore "full subjectivity" to human beings. The above process have been theorized by him to occur not only in the conventional modes of artistic expressions, like *realism* and *formalism*, but also a third mode called the *direct* mode by him and commented upon by Abhinava:

i. Mode of Realistic Suggestion (*Vastudhvani*)
ii. Mode of Formal Suggestion (*Alaṁkāradhvani*)
iii. Mode of Direct Suggestion (*Rasadhvani*)

[37] Lalita Pandit, "Dhvani and the 'Full Word': Suggestion and Signification from Abhinavagupta to Jacques Lacan", *College Literature*, Comparative Poetics: Non-Western Traditions of Literary Theory, Vol. 23 No. 1 (1996): 142–63, 148, emphasis added.

[38] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 3.33j A, 570.

[39] Ibid., 3.33L, 574, emphasis added.

While, in all the three modes mentioned above, suggestive aspects dominate the literal sense of an expression, Ānanda also classifies following two subsidiary forms where the literal sense dominates the suggested sense:

iv. Subordinated Suggestion where Literal Sense dominates the Suggestive Meaning (*Guṇībhūtavyañga*)
v. Suggestion is only Incidental to an Artwork (*Citrakāvya*)

In this chapter, only the first three modes would be discussed.

While elaborating the suggestive aspects of realism, formalism, and the direct mode, I argue, in the spirit of Ānandavardhana's theory, that while "suggestive realism" works best in reviving communications curtailed due to socio-cultural repression, "suggestive formalism" works best in reviving communications in individuals having suffered a trauma and the consequent production of existential conditions among them and "suggestive direct mode" is most effective in reviving archetypal experiences "lost" to one's conscious memory.

*6.2.2.1 Mode of Realistic Suggestion (*Vastudhvani*): Negotiating Socio-Cultural Repression*

If the examples that Ānanda gives of *Vastudhvani* are any guide, it may be argued that he considers socio-cultural repressions to be the major focus of this kind of suggestion dealing with curtailment of one's subjectivity. Pandit notes:

> Abhinava and Ānanda's selection of examples revolves around the subject of prohibition, transgression, and other such contextual conditions as motivations for denial, negation, and foreclosure.[40]

Ānanda's very first example in his classic work *Dhvanyāloka* is as follows:

> Go on your rounds freely, gentle monk
> The little dog is gone;
> Just today a fearsome lion had emerged from the thickets of Godā
> And had killed the dog.[41]

[40] Pandit, "Dhvani and the 'Full Word'", 155; also Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 2.27c A, 337.

[41] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 1.4b A, 83.

It is an example of a Prakrit free verse (*muktaka*), generally interpreted as follows: a young girl, in the habit of meeting her paramour in the thickets of the river Godāvari, has been disturbed recently by a monk frequenting the thicket in search of flowers. Under the garb of a "friendly" permission, she is actually *suggesting* to the monk not to go there anymore! Lacan, who is a huge fan of the *dhvani theory*, admires the idea of the lion in it thus: "The absence of the lion may thus have as much effect as his spring would have were he present, for the lion only springs once, says the proverb appreciated by Freud."[42]

Ānanda's second example of *vastudhvani* in *Dhvanyāloka* is even more interesting:

> My mother-in-law sleeps there and I here,
> Look well, Traveler, when there is light;
> For, by mistake, you should not fall into my bed,
> During the night.[43]

The literary critic Rudraṭa (c. 8th CE) comments: "With these words, the youthful wife conveyed to the traveler his opportunity"![44] In contrast to the earlier verse where the speaker is *suggesting* a prohibition under the garb of a friendly permission, here exactly the opposite is happening: the young wife is *suggesting* permission under the garb of a stern prohibition!

Film Examples

We know that realism works through "an accumulation of significant details" (*samuccaya*) from an "event" belonging to a particular class (*jāti*) of the "event," the typical characteristic or property (*guṇa*) of that class of the "event," the typical act (*kārya*) belonging to that class of the "event" and a special property (*viśeṣa*), if any, of that class of the "event".

In the very first sequence in Satyajit Ray's realistic film *Paras Pathar* (The Philosopher's Stone, 1957), we find Paresh Chandra Dutta (Tulsi

[42] Jacques Lacan, Chapter 3, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis", in *Écrits: A Selection*, Trans. Alan Sheridan, Reprint (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1989): 30–113, 82.

[43] Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, 1.4b A, 98.

[44] Ibid.

Chakraborty), who is a clerk in a commercial firm, waiting for the lift at the end of office hours. As his colleague joins in the wait, Dutta informs him that he has recently received a lay-off notice from his office. As the lift comes up and they are about to enter, senior officers arrive on the scene for whom they immediately make way. Dutta's colleague even hurriedly removes his umbrella from the lift cage as if that would have stopped the lift from moving. As the lift gate is closing, a junior officer appears on the scene and the gate opens for him again. The lift finally leaves with this full contingent, leaving Dutta and his colleague behind. In this scene, Ray accumulates significant details to show the complete "power-less-ness" of Dutta and his colleague in their office, in the process revealing them to be mere cogs-in-the-wheel of the commercial system.

In Ray's *Charulata* (The Lonely Wife, 1964), the celebrated first sequence where the reel time and the real time match, establishes Charu as belonging to the upper class Bengali intelligentia in the time of Bengal renaissance. While she appears to be well-versed in Bengali literature as well as has a comic sense, she is confined to looking after the household alone. Her husband Bhupati is a loyal British subject and runs the paper *Sentinel* from his press. While Charu spends her afternoon by consulting the Bengali author Bankim Chandra, looking outside through her eye-glasses and raising a tune in the piano, on this particular day, Bhupati comes and returns with a book from his library. Being absorbed in the book, he even fails to notice that Charu is standing in the corridor right in front of him. As Charu symbolically looks at him through the binocular like one does for things distant, the whole sequence reveals the status of Charu as being a mere appendage in the house.

In Grigori Chukhrai's *Chistoye Nebo* (Clear Skies, 1961) people of all ages are waiting at a station in Soviet Union to catch a glimpse of their near and dear ones travelling in a train to the war front which is supposed to pass through the station without stopping there. From capturing a few ladies powdering their nose, the camera zooms up to reveal a large number of men and women waiting at the station, revealing that they belong to the same class of people. Their overriding hope is, however, subverted when the train zooms past at great speed without any of its passengers being seen by the waiting crowd. The process marginalizes the groups, both inside the train as well as those on the platform. Since some of them may never see their loved ones again, the whole scene *suggests* the tragedy of war over which ordinary people have no control, they merely being cogs-in-the-wheel in the whole war machine.

*6.2.2.2 Mode of Formal Suggestion (*Alaṁkāradhvani*): Negotiating Trauma and Existential Conditions*

The formal mode works by comparing the normative values of an "event" held by a habitual observer with an imaginary reality constructed by the artisit that aims at an "ideal revival" for the audiences. As already indicated, the comparisons occur in the forms of a simile (*upamā*), a hyperbole (*atiśayokti*), a pun (*śleṣa*), or an irony (*atiśleṣa*) which, by generating montage of discontinuities for the audiences, draw their attention to relevant reasons that are curtailing their subjectivity in the society.

The following represents a literary example of a hyperbole (*atiśayokti*) cited by Ānanda:

> The women of the Triple City wept from lotus eyes
> As Sambhu's arrow-flame embraced them;
> But, still, though shaken off, the fire caught their hands,
> Though struck, did pluck their garment's hem;
> Denied, it seized their hair, and scorned,
> Like a lover who has lately loved another, lay before their feet,
> May this very same fire burn away your sins.

Ingalls notes that this famous poem, quoted again and again in critical literature, is attributed to Amaru (c. 7th or 8th CE) even though it might have been borrowed by him from the celebrated Sanskrit poet Bāṇabhaṭṭa (c. 7th CE). It talks about *Śiva's* power and his mercy as he destroys the demon city Tripura, an act which the demons themselves had prayed for. The act, although painful for the demon women as their dresses and their bodies burn, is regarded as an act of mercy for them because it purifies and releases them. The fire is here likened to a lover's insistent embrace of a jealous mistress.[45]

While the above example does indicate the curtailment of demon womens' desire and their eventual release from such suppression, I, however, argue that, *dhvani theory's* formal potential needs to be pegged at a much higher level like dealing with "traumas" suffered by individuals which also disrupt their space-time coordination that results in the production of an existential condition among them. "Trauma," from the Greek root *traumat* meaning "wound," started being theorized in modern times since the clinical experiments conducted by Jean-Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud, and Josef Bauer who started

[45] Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 2.5A and FN 1, 238.

understanding it as a case of extreme psychic distress, earlier called "hysteria" in the medical annals.[46] They thought that it affected individuals in a manner that detached them from their personal memories, leading to a state of extreme helplessness among the patients in believing that no responsive actions are possible, a reaction which subdue their instinctual responses to danger, et cetera, in their normal life. In other words, experiencing *trauma* leads to individuals losing all their sense of direction and purpose in their lives. In such a state, a person finds his or her surroundings to be "meaningless" and hence fails to engage with them. Thus, Hamlet dithers in taking action against his mother and his uncle as does Arjuna, the mythical fighter from the Indian epic *Mahābhārata*, who lays down his arms in order not to fight the very people he reveres and cherishes in his personal life.

Since "trauma" is an extremely painful experience which individuals tend to shut out from their memory, it is generally believed that for the individuals to come back to normal life, a *re-enactment* becomes necessary which enables them to consciously *recall the traumatic event* that would make it possible for them to deal with the "event" both cognitively and emotionally. The process generally requires the construction of a story around the "trauma" suffered by the individual that would "mean" *something* to the individual rather than a story neutrally told to him.[47] This process is expected to transform one's traumatic memory into a narrative memory which has a therapeutic value for the individual concerned. In this respect, an important finding is that cases of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as "trauma" is medically called, is "the product *not* of trauma in itself, but of trauma and culture acting together; PTSD is, thus, the product of a particular cultural situation, and not an inherent disease".[48] "Trauma" has raised another important question: is it a personal phenomenon which universally occurs among all human beings as Freud had claimed or is it caused by cataclysmic events uniformly happening to all individuals located in a particular location, history, and culture? Critics today favor the latter.[49]

[46] Herman et al., "Trauma Theory", in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, 615–9, 615.

[47] Ibid., 616.

[48] Ibid., 618, modified, original emphasis.

[49] Ibid., 618.

Deleuze has analyzed the manifestation of a "traumatic" state by contrasting his notion of the "time-image" with that of his "movement-image." In the latter case, there is "coherence of filmic space and temporal causality" in which the characters have a clear sense of moving forward; in the former case, the characters neither have any clear-cut goal nor an action that can lead to such a goal.[50] In such cases where the characters are bereft of causality, while they do subjectively experience time passing, they do not, however, experience any causal movement in them. In this connection, Deleuze's distinction between *action-image* as "movement-image" and *crystal-image* as "time-image" is interesting. Talking about spaces in Tarkovsky's films, Deleuze notes:

> There are *crystallized spaces*, when the landscape becomes hallucinatory… What characterizes these spaces is that they cannot be explained in a simple spatial way. They imply non-localizable relations. These are direct presentations of time. We no longer have an indirect image of time which derives from movement, but a direct time-image from which movement derives… we have a chronic non-chronological time which produces movements necessarily "abnormal", essentially "false".[51]

Tarkovsky's characters generally roam in such crystalline spaces in which their Cartesian co-ordinates of space and time have been lost. Having been deprived of a measurable sense of space from which a measurable sense of time can emerge, these characters dwell only in a generalized sense of time that Deleuze evocatively calls "chronic non-chronological time".[52] This generates an experience for the audiences that do not depend on space but on time alone which echos Hamlet's existential lament "time is out of joint"!

Film Examples

In the *Wash Sequence* in Andrei Tarkovasky's *Zerkalo* (Mirror, 1974), the first identifiable black & white dream sequence occurs. A small child gets up from bed and utters "papa" as an owl hoots and a mysterious sound

[50] Kuhn and Westwell, "Movement-Image/Time-Image", in *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 271.

[51] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Trans. H. Tomlinson and R. Galeta (London: Continuum, 2005): 125–6, emphasis added.

[52] Skakov, *The Cinema of Tarkovsky: Labyrinths of Space and Time* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2012): 125–6.

is heard. As he stands in the doorway of an adjoining room, an uncanny scene confronts him. His father is helping his mother wash her hair in a basin. However, as the mother straightens up in slow motion and makes flapping gestures with her arms almost like a ritual dance, the camera zooms out to reveal another room in a flat where neither the father nor the washbasin is there. As water streams keep rolling down its walls and plasters keep falling from its ceiling, the flooded floor remains lit by a gas stove.[53]

Skakov notes that the uniqueness of this sequence lies in its "doubling of the double": the mother looks into the camera like a mirror, then the camera by-passes her to reveal an actual mirror; we, however, see the mother's reflection in the mirror as an old woman (played by Tarkovsky's real mother, Maria Ivanovna).[54] Even though there is no actual *action-movement* here since we still notice the same streams of water flowing down the walls and the same glow from the stove, there is a temporal progression in Tarkovsky's imagination where the young mother is meeting her old self. We then see the aged mother touching her own reflection on the mirror's surface. This dream episode, which sequences a flash forward imagination that ends with the shot of a hand placed against the fire,[55] the immanent plane slides from child Tarkovsky's memory to adult Tarkovsky's imagination, the abnormality of the space transition being signaled by transition from a room in their summer house to a room in their Moscow flat. The hallucinatory aspect of this new space transports the scene to a poetic domain where experience of the present time compared with an imaginary space constructed by the filmmaker in tune with the character's memory of the past generates a new sense of experience among the audiences. In Tarkovsky's words, one feels "time pressure" in these images without experiencing any "movement pressure" in them, their comparison yielding new experiences and insights about reality among the audiences.

Ritwik Ghatak is a filmmaker whose displacement from the then East Pakistan, currently Bangladesh, due to partition had a traumatic effect on his *psyche*. In fact, all the films that he made in his troubled life carried marks of this trauma on their bodies. Thus, in his film *Ajantrik*

[53] Ibid., 115–6.

[54] Skakov, *The Cinema of Tarkovsky*, 115.

[55] Ibid.

(The Unmechanical/Pathetic Fallacy, 1957), Bimal (Kali Banerjee), the driver of his "human," that is, "unmechanical" motor car, picks up a lady (Kajal Gupta) whose name remains unknown, who has been abandoned by her lover (he had driven them earlier to their destination), sitting vacantly atop a stone ledge. As he drives her to the nearest station, Bimal purchases a ticket for her for Calcutta. But she says she doesn't know where to go! As she gets on to the train, Bimal runs alongside it to hand her the ticket which she fails to take. She also says something which Bimal fails to catch. Thus, communication, either way, remains interrupted and incomplete. This is strongly suggestive of a character in a state of existential crisis, symptomatic of the "trauma" she had suffered due to her abandonment by her lover, framed within the larger loss of identity and communication in the aftermath of partition. In a series of striking shots, Bimal is framed in the lower 1/4th of the frame while the rest 3/4th shows the skies. Since conventional balance calls for a 1/3rd—2/3rd division of the frame, this framing of Bimal's head at the bottom-most part of the frame seriously destabilizes audience's viewing perspective. Called *dynamic construction*, Renoir claims to have first used it in *La Bête Humaine* ("Human Beast," 1938) to suggest mental disorientation of his hero who is in love with both his girlfriend and his engine. In *Ajantrik* also, this unusual angle of framing Bimal's floating head on the screen operates as a kind of de-framing for him that suggest his extreme disorientation in the existing reality.[56]

*6.2.2.3 Mode of Direct Suggestion (*Rasadhvani*): Negotiating the Loss of Archetypal Experiences*

The *rasadhvani* mode or the mode of "direct evocation of *rasa*" is unique to Indian aesthetic theories which have largely remained unknown in the West till now. While early Indian thoughts on arts were restricted to the realistic and formalistic modes of expression alone, the arrival on the scene of the School of Kashmir Śaivism (c. 6th CE), to which, arguably, Ānanda, and certainly Abhinava, belong, brought considerable psychological depth to Indian thoughts on "arts." The process of direct evocation signifies a *state of immersion* experienced by the audiences in terms of certain revived memories which lie submerged within

[56] Megan Carrigy, http://archive.senseofcinema.com/contents/directors/03/ghatak.html, accessed July, 2018, p. 7.

them beyond their conscious recall. The revival of these experiences has been called *rasadhvani* in which "suggestive" cues trigger them directly without having anything to do with the narrative as such. Thus, for instance, a certain view of the sea, a single musical note, a lock of hair falling on one's forehead, et cetera, may be enough to revive archetypal experiences submerged within the audiences, irrespective of the meanings they may have in the narrative context of a film. Called *vāsanās* or "desire-traces" in the Yoga theory already discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, they represent certain memories which, because of their repetitive nature, tend to get detached from their original sources and *merge to form a pure form of potentiality* including emotions, affects, and dispositions associated with those "events". Starting from ordinary repetitive "events" like walking, eating, face-to-face talking, et cetera, to deeper psychological "events" like the mother's care, suffering, destitution, old age afflictions, et cetera, they represent a series of *archetypal images* which *affect* human lives in the most pronounced way possible.

Cognitive science has since found that, while the representational aspect of ones' memories tend to get lost in the face of the repetitive nature of certain "events" and "actions", their affective aspect, consisting of *emotions*, *affects* and *dispositions* associated with such "events" and "actions" remain in tact. The revival of these affects means a flooding of the audiences' consciousness with elements which lie much beyond what the images on screen denote. However, since there is no cognitive element present in these memories, they mostly operate at an emotive level. As already mentioned, Hogan says that these affective memories can be revived with patterned cues representing "moments of tenderness" or "pangs of sadness" in an artwork.[57]

Film Examples

In Satyajit Ray's *Aparajito* (The Unvanquished, 1957), Apu (Smaran Ghosal) returns to his village to meet his mother. As he keeps moving from room to room without meeting his mother, his anxiety grows. When Apu finally encounters the immobile figure of his uncle, he realizes that his mother is dead. The scene ends up with Apu sitting down under a tree and weeping uncontrollably. This "tender moment" evokes an *empathic* identification with Apu which makes the audiences experience a

[57] Hogan, "Towards a cognitive Science of Poetics", 169.

flooding of emotions of pathos (*karuṇa rasa*) triggered by the *archetypal mother image* lying submerged in all of them.

In William Wyler's film *Roman Holiday* (1953), in the climactic press conference in the final day, true identities of Bradley and his friend (Eddie Albert) as press reporter and photographer are revealed to the princess. Her anxiety is, however, dispelled when her eyes finally meet Bradley's. At that "tender moment," she *knows* that he is not going to betray her friendship. This "moment of tenderness," coupled with "a pang of sadness" generated by the fact that they are not going to meet again, revive the audiences' own "desire-traces" (*vāsanās*) of unrequited love generating an overwhelming *rasa* of love-in-separation emotion (*vipralambha-śṛṅgāra-rasa*) among then audiences.[58] As the audiences watch Bradley's long walk back through this ecstatic state, their consciousness remain flooded with emotions much beyond the view occurring on screen, the walk remaining as the high point of the whole film.

In Sam Mendes's *Road to Perdition* (2002), Michael Sullivan, Sr. (Tom Hanks) is a hitman of the Irish-American crime boss, John Rooney (Paul Newman), during the days of Great Depression, guns down all his bosses to help save his family as they had become a dangerous witness to a killing perpetrated by the bosses and carried out by Sullivan Sr. himself. As peace apparently returns to their lives, Sullivan Sr., along with his son, visits his sister-in-law's beach house. In a totally unexpected development, an assailant, Harlen Mguire (Jude Law), who had earlier tried to kill Sullivan Sr. but failed and been disfigured by him in the process, shoots him there. This comes as a sudden shock to the audiences. Coming at the end of a series of "senseless" killings and counter-killings, it revives the audience's own pacifist tendencies buried deep within them in the form of *vāsanās* or "desire-traces" which Abhinava had called *śanta-rasa* or a desire for peace. The revival of this sentiment immerses them in a state of ecstasy as Sullivan Sr. dies in his son's arms advising his son to run away from it all which the son heeds and runs, eventually to accept a farmer's life.

[58] Ingalls in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, 2.12 A, Footnote 2, 264, modified.

Illustration 6.2 Concepts in Ānandavardhana's Theory of Suggestion (*Dhvani*)

Suggestion → Ānandavardhana's *Theory of Dhvani* seeks to express through "suggestive means" human expressions that remain "unspoken" due to various reasons like socio-cultural repression, trauma and the consequential production of existential conditions and the loss of archetypal experiences

"Loss" of Human Subjectivity due to the "Loss" of Human Communication

Communication truncated due to Socio-cultural Repression:

Normal expressions, including sexual desires, are blocked due to the socio-cultural repression

Communication truncated due to the Suffering of a "Trauma":
Human beings cannot meaningfully relate to their surroundings in terms of space and time due to the suffering of trauma which induces existential conditions in them.

Communication truncated due to the "Loss" of Archetypal Experiences:
Certain repetitive human experiences, together with their associated emotions, affects and mental dispositions, get detached from the "source events" to remain submerged within human beings as pure forms of potentiality.

Restoring Human Subjectivity by Restoring "Full" Word to the Suffering Individuals

Suggestion in the Realistic Mode (*Vastudhvani*)
When the audiences are made to experience, through "suggestions", a conscious "accumulation of significant details" (*samuccaya*) from the following areas like the class (*jāti*) of an "event", generic characteristics (*guṇa*) of that class of "event", typical activity (*kriyā*) of the members belonging to that particular class of "event" and any special property (*viśeṣa*) pettaining to that class of "event," they are able to face and transcend them.

Suggestion in the Formal Mode (*Alaṁkāradhvani*)
By comparing aspects of a *lived* reality with that of an "ideal revival" of certain aspects of that reality constructed by the artist create a "montage of discontinuities" for the audiences in the form of a simile (*upamā*), a hyperbole (*atiśayokti*), a pun (*śleṣa*), or an irony (*atiśleṣa*) which throw a deeper light on the reality in question.

Suggestion in the Direct Mode (*Rasadhvani*)
It restores "Full" Word to individuals by reviving "archetypal experiences", which have been lost to their conscious memory but remain submerged in their sub-conscious in a *potential form*, by the judicious use of patterned cues in artworks.

While the "mother image" has evoked associated emotions and dispositions in all art-forms across culture, there have been other images, like the images of old age, poverty, childhood, and death, whose associated affects have also continued to influence human behavior on the surface all over the world. Ritwik Ghatak deals with *archetypal images* at a much deeper level in cinema:

> Take, for instance, the question of the *archetype*. Even before man became human, the social collective unconscious, the storehouse of collective memory beyond consciousness, had formed itself. It is the source of all our deepest feelings. And some fundamental symbols (archetypes) determine our reaction to various things. Most of our spontaneous reactions have their roots there. And the archetypes always find their way into images in the form of symbols.[59]

Noting that the naked image of the Mother is even present in the deep caves of the Pyrenes, he mentions its overarching influence in Bengali culture: "This mother archetype has penetrated our society in its every pore. All the songs of Agamani and Bijaya from Bengal [associated with Goddess Durga as *the mother*], the deeper aspects of our folktales, bear witness to this".[60] Being deeply influenced by Carl Gustav Jung's theory of *Collective Unconscious*, Ghatak recommends that the ultimate basis for judging films should lie in a film's ability to connect with archetypal images in a society.[61]

Ghatak mentions certain examples from cinema to illustrate his point. Thus, the characters of the *Tramp* in Chaplin's films, *Indir Thakrun* (Chunibala Devi) in Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* (Song of the Little Road, 1955) or the *Priest* (Francesco Rabal) in Luis Buñuel's *Nazarin* (1959) represent archetypal forms that are capable of stirring the audiences profoundly from within irrespective of their narrative significance.[62] The oft-repeated image of a man sitting with a dog in a water-soaked space in Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* (Nostalgia, 1983) generates the archetypal experience of loneliness among the audiences which remains submerged within them.

[59] Ritwik Ghatak, "Human Society, Our Tradition, Filmmaking, and My Efforts", Trans. Moinak Biswas, *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 54 No. 3 (Spring 2015): 13–7, 14, emphasis added.

[60] Ibid., 15.

[61] Ibid., 15, modified.

[62] Ibid., 15.

Box 6.1 Jacques Lacan and the *Dhvani* Theory: *The Notion of Post-structuralism*

Ānandavardhana's theory of *dhvani* or suggestion has certain striking similarities with post-structural thoughts in the West. For Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), and especially for Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), the workings of the unconscious in language-use plays a subversive role in rupturing the structural "closure" of an expression. Lacan notes:

> Impediment, failure, split. In a spoken or written sentence, something stumbles. Freud is attracted by these phenomena, and it is there that he seeks the unconscious…What occurs, what is *produced* in this gap, is presented as *the discovery*. It is in this way that the Freudian exploration first encounters what occurs in the unconscious.[63]

Lacan replaces the Cartesian thought "I think therefore I am" with the enigmatic expression "I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think I am".[64] In going beyond the thinking that "the unconscious merely acts [as] the seat of instincts",[65] he says that the workings of the unconscious is akin to the workings of language as becomes noticeable in *poetic expressions* that "signify *something quite other* that what it says". In this sense, artistic expressions "disguise the thought" of the subject much more effectively than the Freudian processes of slip of tongue, et cetra does.[66] By holding that artistic expressions have great power to circumvent social censure,[67] Lacan recommends a *renewed technique of interpretation of the symbolic effects in a carefully calculated fashion* as the means for restoring "full word"

[63] Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis*, Trans. Alan Sheridan, Ed. Jacques Alain Miller (New York: Norton, 1973): 24, original emphasis.

[64] Lacan, Chapter 5, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason Since Freud", in *Écrits*: *A Selection* (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1989): 146–78, 166.

[65] Ibid., 147.

[66] Ibid., 155, original emphasis.

[67] Ibid., 158.

to the subjects,[68] described by Freud as "I must come to the place where that was".[69]

In this venture, Lacan acknowledges his debt to Ānanda's theory of *dhvani* and "the teaching of Abhinavagupta (tenth century)" thus[70]:

> In this regard, we could take note of what the Hindu tradition teaches about *dhvani*, in the sense that this tradition stresses the property of speech by which it communicates what it does not actually say. Hindu tradition illustrates this by a tale whose ingenuousness, which appears to be the usual thing in these examples, shows itself humorous enough to induce us to penetrate the truth that it conceals.[71]

The example that Lacan refers to is the very first example mentioned by Ānandavardhana in his magnum opus *Dhvanyāloka*: a lady, under the garb of giving permission to a monk, actually prohibits him from visiting a thicket where she regularly meets her paramour. Since the overriding influence of Sanskrit and Buddhist linguistics on Saussurian structuralism has already been mentioned, Indian theories appear to have played critical roles in the formation of both Structuralist and Poststructuralist thoughts in the West during the '60s and '70s.

6.3 Final Frontier of "Art": Experiencing Man's Inner Harmony with Nature

The basic motivation for the *dhvani* insight of dealing with the interior of human beings comes from the Vedic principle of *Brahman* = *ātma* where the Upaniṣads say that the essence of reality is as much manifest in the inner self of man as in the outer world. In this connection, what

[68] Lacan, Chapter 3, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis", in *Écrits*, 30–113, 82, emphasis added.

[69] Lacan, Chapter 5, 171.

[70] Lacan, Chapter 3, Footnote 74, 110.

[71] Ibid., 82.

we commonly regard as *real* is not true reality but only a semblance of reality occurring on the surface of an expression.[72] The above idea had a profound influence on the theory of "arts" in India. Hiriyanna notes the new aesthetic ideal in India:

> The new ideal was the achievement of a life in harmony, not through the extinguishment of interests but by an expansion of them – not through repressing natural impulses but by refining and purifying them. For the realization of this ideal, the training of the feelings was a necessary preliminary and, in consequence, *the first aim of life became not so much the cultivation of the intellect or the will, but the culture of emotions.*[73]

In the context of "emotion" becoming the ultimate aim of art, Hiriyanna draws our attention to an important point here. A person in harmony with Nature becomes an "emotional" being because his experience of being one with Nature occurs as a *felt experience* in him and not as the realization of a *thought* that "I am now one with Nature." A *felt experience*, however, cannot be communicated through words. Thus, words like "love" or "anger" can only convey the general idea of an "emotion" but not generate a specific *felt emotion* in the reciever.[74] In this connection, Hiriyanna notes how "thoughts" work in artworks:

> According to the Indian conception, the term "thought" (*jñāna*) means "what reveals" (*prakāśaka*) which is always intimately connected with "what is revealed" (*prakāśya*), viz., the object. Hence the *process of thinking* is meaningless apart from its reference to some presentation.[75]

That is, only when an experience becomes expressible, that is, verbalizable, it can appear as "thought".[76] Hiriyanna clarifies that, in contrast, since a *felt emotion* is a phase of our own being and not a presentation from outside, this experience cannot be contemplated but only *lived through*. Bharata had already indicated how such *felt experiences* can be generated among the audiences by evoking an *abiding psycho-somatic state* as a platform among them on which such *felt experiences* can arise.

[72] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 2–3.

[73] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 4, emphasis added, modified.

[74] Ibid., Footnote 1, 36.

[75] Ibid., Footnote 4, 36.

[76] Ibid.

Accepting that *dhvani theory* has the maximum potential to attain this state, Hiriyanna notes that while there may be a presentational aspect in *dhvani* work, like the poetic quality of an expression or the beauty of an artistic style, they act like "embellishments" which merely remain as subsidiaries to the primary aim of generating *felt experiences* by this artistic school.[77] The basic difference between *felt experiences* and *thoughts* lies in the fact that while "thoughts" must remain "speak-able" (*vācya*) at all times,[78] a *felt experience* can only be made known to another by generating a similar experience within her.

> The *dhvani* theory tends towards the final aesthetic goal where an aesthete has attained full harmony with Nature. Being free from all tensions, it generates a state of pure bliss (*ānanda*) in an individual. In the aesthetic domain, it not only signifies a state where personal egos are set aside but also a state where a person experiences an inner harmony with Nature. This is a state which is not intellectually grasped but emotionally apprehended, for there is no such thing as a mediated *ānanda* or bliss.[79]

In this state, the notion of what is "beauty" changes. Hiriyanna notes:

> "Beauty" is now symmetry, now novelty, and now something else; and it is this variety that accounts for the almost bewildering number of theories of the "beautiful" that one finds in any history of aesthetics. According to the monist school of Vedānta, these do not constitute true beauty at all but only constitute its outward and visible symbol. In reality, it is the same underlying unity which manifests as harmony that constitutes true beauty.[80]

In the above sense, objects we commonly call "beautiful" represents an experience of pleasure only in a secondary sense: "True beauty is neither expressible in words nor knowable objectively; it can only be realized."[81] In such a state, both symmetry and asymmetry form two essential aspects of the inner "beauty" of Nature.

[77] Hiriyanna, *Art Experience*, 36–7.
[78] Ibid., Footnote 2, 36.
[79] Ibid., 7–8.
[80] Ibid., 8, modified.
[81] Ibid., 9.

Generating an experience of a state of complete "harmony" between man and nature among the audiences generally remains an unattainable goal for "art" which, like in the *dhvani theory*, can only *suggest* such a state.

Film Example
In Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (1960), Marcello Rubinni (Marcello Mastroanni) envies the character of Max Steiner (Alain Cuny) because he has everything in life. Roger Ebert reviews their relationship as follows:

> Steiner lives in an apartment filled with art. He presides over a salon of poets, folk singers, intellectuals. He has a beautiful wife.and two perfect children. When Marcello sees him entering a Church, they ascend to the organ loft where Steiner plays Bach while urging Marcello to have more faith in himself and finish that book.[82]

Then comes the terrible night when Steiner murders his two children and commits suicide. While it completely baffles his acquaintances, Steiner, quite unknown to them, had been recoding sounds of Nature to make his two children listen to them. Though variously interpreted, one of the most significant explanations of this unexpected event is that, for Steiner, a world where sounds of nature cannot be heard is not worth living anymore whether for his children or for himself.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that, Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta identify a much larger role for the "arts" than what both Western and Indian traditions had prescribed till then. The overarching definition of "art" given by Indian tradition had been that it is an instrument for creating a "gap" between an expression and what it expresses to enable the audiences' imagination to find a free play within it. Based on this definition, the first "art" theory to have emerged in India had been the *Guṇa-Rīti-Aucitya School* or the *Alaṁkāra Śāstra* which considered the "embellishment" of an expression through external 'ornamentation' (*alaṁkāra*) on its surface as "art."

Ānandavardhan and his commentator Abhinavagupta succeeded in drawing "art" away from merely being an *external property* of an expression to being the *internal state* of an individual. They hold that the basic purpose of "art" is to restore "full word" to an individual whose subjectivity has been truncated due to socio-cultural repression, suffering

[82] Roger Ebert, Review of *La Dolce Vita*, accessed Online, May 2017.

of a trauma resulting in the production of existential conditions or the loss of an individuals' archetypal experiences that truncated an individual's sensitivity and inner being. Advocated by Ānandavardhana's *Theory of Suggestion* or the *Dhvani School*, it is clearly a revolutionary notion of "art" which had been far ahead of its time whether in the East or in the West. The process through which such an idea of "art" works are "suggestions" mooted in the traditional forms of realism (*vastudhvani*) and formalism (*alaṁkāradhvani*) and a new mode which revives archetypal experiences directly (*rasadhvani*) among the audiences. In the process of developing and elaborating such a theory, Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta succeed in showing that "art" can be used in engaging human beings at a much deeper level of their being than visualized so far, an idea which had won them psychoanalyst admirers like Lacan and others from the West. In this first ever full-scale application of the *dhvani theory* to cinema, the new directions chalked out by Ānanda and Abhinava provide significant new tools in the hands of analysts to understand cinema.

In the ultimate analysis, Dhvani theory has also been suggested to have the potential to act as an instrument of "art" for realization of the ultimate ideal that human beings can aspire for, the state of *Brahman = ātma* which signifies Man's *inner harmony with nature*.

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CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Philosophy, according to Bertrand Russell, represents a *no man's land* between different disciplines by virtue of which philosophy is able to collect more analytical tools from different fields than any other discipline in the world. Its basic difference from science lies in the fact that, while philosophy analyzes "situations" and "events" keeping human beings at the center of its considerations, science, till quantum physics and evolutionary biology appeared on the scene, would, if it could, eliminate them altogether from its deliberations. As far as philosophy is concerned, it subscribes to the common sense view that, since human beings have undergone different embodied and cognitive experiences in different parts of the world, they would have produced different knowledge-regimes as well. Instead of celebrating them, the world has, however, become more Eurocentric in nature in contemporary times. While searching for the roots of this Euro-centrism is not the main focus of this work, this unfortunate "development", however, had the deleterious effect of relegating all Non-Western theories and ideas to the background in contemporary studies in general and film studies in particular.[1] Even when studied, the only reason offered for taking such a step by the film studies departments is the unearthing of "national identities" of Asian, African, and Latin American countries in the wake of their struggles for decolonization and independence.[2]

[1] Kuhn and Westwell, "National Cinema", in *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 277–8, 277.

[2] Ibid.

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The national sensibilities of these non-Western cultures are expected to be found in the authorial works of masters like, among others, Satyajit Ray in India, Akira Kurosawa in Japan, Tomás Guitérrez Alea in Latin America, or Ousmane Sembene in Africa. At times, successful commercial films belonging to these cultures have also been studied but, then, merely as the esoteric *other* of Hollywood cinema, like Bollywood Song-and-Dance films or the hyperkinetic Kung-Fu films of Hong Kong.[3] Even when it becomes necessary to study films of these countries as "transnational cinemas," they have been studied only "grudgingly," almost as a concession to their growing popularity worldwide. Even in the course of such studies, the focus had, however, always remained on their "ideas of nationhood and national cinemas".[4] Whenever aesthetic concepts belonging to these cultures are needed to be discussed, as in the case of Indian *rasa theory* or Ozu's *tatami shots*, they have been considered as peculiar to their respective cultures which have no bearing beyond their national boundaries. In the above sense, the contemporary film discourse seems to be caught in a bind which Edward Said had tellingly portrayed earlier as *Orientalism*!

However, if we take India as a case in point, the truth is that it is not only the most prolific film-producing country in the world today, but it is also the only Non-Western country to have a bigger demand for domestically made films than their Western fare. It has also an export market that is not only growing by the day but is now spread throughout the world. India also has a long tradition of academic debate between its various schools of philosophical thoughts represented by Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Materialism, et cetera. In the above context, while taking issue with the "national cinema" and the "area study" syndrome of contemporary film studies departments, I raise the following question: why can't Indian theories, or, for that matter, theories emanating from older cultures like China or Japan, be discussed as part of the main theoretical concerns of cinema today? It has been amply demonstrated in this work that India has a significant contribution to make in the areas of language, aesthetics, and art of cinema. While acknowledging that contemporary world largely thinks in terms of the Western idiom today, it is, however, also a matter of fact that that *idiom* has been constructed by heavy borrowings from the older cultures. Some of the significant Western borrowings from

[3] Ibid., 322.

[4] Kuhn and Westwell, *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 432.

Indian theories or certain striking similarities between classical Indian thought and Western ideas have been highlighted throughout this work, the more significant of them having been separately mentioned in Boxes 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1. In the above context, any effort to incorporate the insights generated by classical Indian theories can only be beneficial for the world discourse on cinema today.

The film theoretician Carroll reacts against the "top down" approach of the predominantly Eurocentric film theories of today as seeking a "totalizing" *grand theory*:

> It attempts to answer all our questions concerning filmic phenomena in terms of a unified theoretical vocabulary with a set of limited laws (primarily concerned with subject positioning) that are applied virtually like axioms. In contrast, I favor theorizing that is "piecemeal" and "bottom up". That is, where contemporary film theory presents itself as the Theory of Film, I prefer to propose film theories – e.g., a theory of suspense, a theory of camera movement, a theory of Art Cinema, etc. – with no presumption that these small-scale theories will add up to one big picture.[5]

In the above connection, Carroll makes the following striking comments in his jointly edited book with Bordwell *Post-Theory*: "New modes of theorization are necessary. We must start again". What Carroll is advocating is to incorporate theories having different sources of origin into the larger picture of cinema today. Two eminent Indian philosophers, B. K. Matilal and J. N. Mohanty, whose ideas have profoundly influenced the present work, offer possible solutions to the difficulty posed above.

The first idea comes from Matilal who suggests that conclusions reached by different frameworks of analysis should be taken as so many *assertions* rather than as being representations of *truths* as such.[6] He says that even the statement "My finger touches the button", which common sense holds to be true in all frameworks of thought, is, however, not true in the framework of the physical sciences where "atoms" cannot possibly touch each other[7] and, arguably, in the Buddhist thought, where

[5] Carroll, *Mystifying Movies*, 6, original emphasis.

[6] Matilal quoted in M. Krausz, "Relativism and Beyond: A Tribute to Bimal Matilal", in *Relativism, Suffering and Beyond: Essays in Memory of Bimal K. Matilal*, Eds. P. Bilimoria and J. N. Mohanty (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997): 93–104, 102–3.

[7] Ibid., 103.

the momentarily existing "ultimates" or *dharmas* decay before they can interact with each other!

The second idea comes from Mohanty who, in response to the question "Can we ever truly know *the other*?" replies that "*One can only know the other as the other and not as a replica of oneself*".[8] He clarifies as follows:

> From a strictly philosophical point of view, it is more interesting to detect differences than to find agreements. If one finds that a theory in one tradition is the same as in another, then, while that discovery is interesting, bolstering faith in the universality of reason, it is not *philosophically* interesting…But if a researcher discovers that underlying seeming identities, there are differences, then we have philosophically more interesting findings. You can still search for the truth, but your initial confinement to your framework will be shaken by these other possibilities with *your thinking being liberated as never before*.[9]

Mohanty's idea may be generalized to say that, in an academic discourse, *the other* may be permitted to remain as *the other* provided it is given a legitimate space for existence within the dominant discourse. This idea gives us a possible way ahead in the matter.

However, despite the above conjectures, the crux of the problem lies in the following question: is it possible to map conclusions reached by different paradigms of thought, like the Western, Indian, et cetera, into a common platform that can yet appear harmonious and "unified" to us? While reviewing Bryan W. Van Norden's book *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto*, the Indian philosopher Jonardon Ganeri notes the difficulties posed by cross-cultural fertilization of ideas:

> Cultural diversity seems now to present a dilemma, the horns of which we might call "embrace and fragment" or "exclude and contract"….What it generally means (in the former case) is that philosophers trained in one tradition don't know how to make use of the standard tool kit of arguments couched in an unfamiliar vocabulary, and which draw upon texts they have never read, not even in translation. It's a short step (but still a step) from

[8] J. N. Mohanty, *Explorations in Philosophy: Essays by J. N. Mohanty*, Vol. 1, Ed. Bina Gupta (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001): 86.

[9] Mohanty, *Explorations in Philosophy*, 85–6, modified, emphasis added.

> here for someone to feel threatened that they are being pushed into the dreaded road of cultural relativism.[10]

The dilemma is whether one should "embrace" ideas thrown up by *other* cultures which necessarily demands "fragmentation" of one's own ideas or "exclude" *other* ideas to be more "unitary" in one's own thoughts?

Just to give an idea of the complexities involved in such a synthesizing process, let us examine what exactly is meant by the idea that Indian theories act as *the other* of Western theories. Two examples of such Indian *otherness*, which are profound and yet not highlighted enough, are discussed below.

The first such *otherness* involves the Indian idea of *including the absent space in one's perception*. In other words, Indian theories not only involve perceptible space but also space which remains absent in perception. It brings about a difference in the notion of the "perspective" prevailing in the Indian and Western theories. While, for a predominant part of its history, the Western artworks have been dominated by the *single perspective* of an "event" or view which is *linear* and relatively *stable*, the Indian artworks represent *multiple perspectives* aimed at *including spaces that remain absent from the immediate frame of reference*. The noted Indian *avant-garde* filmmaker and an exponent of Indian classical music, Mani Kaul (1944–2011), says: "The object of *multiple perspectives* and the *perspectiveless object* share a common goal: to bring in view the integrating absent whole".[11] He cites the examples from *Mughal Miniature* paintings presented in Figs. 7.1 and 7.2 below.

On the "events" occurring in the above paintings having been presented simultaneously from many perspectives, Kaul makes the following comments:

> What may, therefore, appear as subtle distortion in a miniature to the eyes of a realist…makes, for the discerning eyes, the most articulate passage into the very interiority of those images. The event portrayed in an *Akbarnāmā* miniature, for example, abstracts the physical to the extent

[10] Jonardon Ganeri's Review dated August 10, 2018 of Van Norden's *Taking Back Philosophy*: *A Multicultural Manifesto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017). Accessed Online in September, 2018, modified.

[11] Mani Kaul, "Seen from Nowhere", in *Concepts of Space: Ancient and Modern*, Ed. Kapila Vatsyayan (New Delhi: Abhinava Publications, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 1991): 415–28, 423.

Fig. 7.1 Reconstruction of Fort Chitor in 1567

where it may anchor the viewer's sensuous attention as well as absorb the so-called distortions enabling him thereby to enter *into* the picture. From the unsettling proportions, planar distortions and visual shifts, [the ground is prepared for one's entry into] the whole.[12]

[12] Kaul, "Seen from Nowhere", 425–6.

Fig. 7.2 Shuja'at Khan Pursuing Asaf Khan in 1565

Kaul points out that the same idea prevails in Indian classical music as well. He notes that the melodic structure, common to Indian music, involves the idea of included/excluded space where the included space

manifests as consonant space while the excluded space make up for the dissonant and absent space.[13] Kaul notes:

> Between any two included notes in a *raag* lies in darkness the excluded area. But in a way similar to how all rational discourses address the irrational, the structured melody addresses itself to the unstructured dissonance. [For this to happen], the *shruti* ('the way a *raag* is sung') is made to traverse in a particular way within a particular *raag*. When the included/excluded space is thus made to actively shape the elaboration, the total space, the unified space or the integral whole seems to emerge from the individual features of the *raag*, without in any way mutilating the sensuous experiences of those features.[14]

Kaul gives another interesting example. While the door to his house seen from *a particular perspective* does generate a particular kind of sensuous experience in the viewer, the experience of the whole door, however, does not lie in a combination of all the angles from which the door can be seen, but in traveling *into the whole* from the single frame which depicts the door.[15] The specific way that one experiences the *whole* in the Indian tradition is called *dṛṣṭi* or the *gaze*. In this sense, the Indian tradition holds that each house has a *dṛṣṭi* of its own which would differ from an absolutely similar house built farther away.[16]

In contrast, Western artworks generally follow an *identifiable perspective*. Even when Picasso and others break this perspective, they do so from a different standpoint. Kaul notes:

> In different ways, the cubists and Picasso were the first to break into an unrestricted vision of an object. But in moving around the object, to release it from its optical unfreedom, they still dealt with the object as situated *in* space, dealt with a reconstruction of the object from a debris of sharply angled perspectives. The radical shift for the Western painting from the object to the entire space really germinated in the watercolors of Cezanne and realized in the theories and practices of Paul Klee.[17]

[13] Ibid., 418.

[14] Kaul, "Seen from Nowhere", 418.

[15] Ibid., 423.

[16] Ibid., 426.

[17] Ibid., 415–6.

While a detailed analysis of Cezanne and Paul Klees' paintings need not detain us here, what Mani Kaul does is to highlight a significant aspect of the Indian *otherness* vis-à-vis Western arts.

Another significant difference between Indian and Western thought processes lies in the fact that while the Indian theories generally analyze a situation or an "event" from the *hearer's point of view*, the Western theories usually analyze it from the *speaker's point of view*. First pointed out by Kalidas Bhattacharya in his article "Some Problems Concerning Meaning",[18] this difference, which is subtle and yet profound, has not yet been paid due attention in academic circles. Matilal comments:

> Historically, the West has been concerned with the *speaker's meaning* while the Indian philosophers have traditionally been concerned with the *hearer's meaning*. The two may be generalized as two fundamentally different attitudes in philosophy. One is characterized by an implicit dependence upon "I" while the other upon "this" and "he", their basic difference being that while the former inevitably incorporates *subjectivity* into meaning, the latter need not do so.[19]

The point is brought home by the Nyāya idea that a "universal" is not only *subjectively* perceived but also *objectively* cognized in one's perception. The issue is that *subjective observation* of "events" repeatedly viewed over years tends to acquire *objective features* through standardization of "meanings" attributed to them. Nyāya would like to hold that, similar to the linguistic process, where a particular "meaning" belonging to an object like a "chair" tend to become stabilized as a "universal" involving many types and forms of "chairs", what a perceiver *sees* in his part of the world also have a tendency to get standardized over the years. Talking about the formation of such "universals" in perception in the Nyāya theory, Bhattacharya even makes the important point that the *objectification of a "universal"* need not wait for repeat observations of similar "events" but even a single instance may be enough to evoke it in the viewer's perception:

[18] See Kalidas Bhattacharya's article "Some Problems Concerning Meaning", in *Analytical Philosophy in Comparative Perspective: Exploratory Essays in Current Theories of Meaning and Reference*, Eds. Bimal Krishna Matilal and Jayshankar Lal Shaw (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1985): 173–87 for a comprehensive discussion of these viewpoints.

[19] Matilal, "An Introduction", in *Analytical Philosophy*, 1–37, 26–7, modified.

> The beauty of the whole thing, scarcely noticed by philosophers, is that one instance experienced is enough. The larger the number of instances, the better may be the universal character. But even of this one cannot always remain assured. What is beyond dispute is that if a child has seen a creature, say, in a picture, and is told that it is called an 'elephant', the very next time he sees such a creature, whether in a picture or in reality, he recognizes it and speaks out 'elephant'.[20]

Since no two instances of an "elephant" can exactly be the same, the viewer is clearly observing both a "particular" and a "class" in his perception as Nyāya would like to claim.

The *hearer's or the audiences' point of view*, which is represented in the Indian theories, appear on the surface to be similar to the recent emergence of "reception theory" in the West. About the latter, Kuhn and Westwell note:

> Reception takes place in the context of pre-exisitng expectations, notably reader's prior knowledge of, and pre-suppositions about art. The reception of a given work is, thus, likely to change as these expectations shift over time…In cinema, reception studies is concerned with how viewers make sense of films in their existing involvement with, and prior knowledge about, films and cinema.[21]

However, the difference of *reception theory* with the *audience point of view* prevailing in the Indian theories lies in where the two theories place their respective emphasis upon: while, in the former, the onus is on the audiences to understand the artist's work,[22] in the Indian practice, there is still an *objectification of features in a given text* which are *standardized* within certain limits of tolerance to which the receivers are said to respond in a certain *standardized way.*

While the above presents only two examples of the Indian *otherness*, the question is how can they be seamlessly integrated with Western presentation of ideas so that the whole appears to be a unified theoretical work? Recent researches on how epistemic processes work in evolutionary biology have thrown new light on how such a process can be made to work. Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, in his work, *An Epistemology of the*

[20] Bhattacharya, "Some Problems Concerning Meaning", 179.

[21] Kuhn and Westwell, "Reception Studies", *Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, 346.

[22] Ibid.

Concrete: Twentieth-Century Histories of Life (2010),[23] a work which is destined to become a classic in its time, has arrived at certain startling conclusions in the above matter. Holding that knowledge is *historically contingent*, Rheinberger's notion of "historical epistemology" focuses on uncovering the conditions and the possibilities under which knowledge arises in each epoch. In the *Preface* to Rheinberger's book, Lenoir says that, by virtue of his idea of historical epistemology, Rheinberger challenges the earlier belief held by the philosophy of science that truth is independent of the context of discovery with scientific knowledge being a linear progression toward that truth. Instead, Rheinberger believes that knowledge is determined by specific conjunctions of scientific and technical practices and the social, institutional and cultural configurations within which they operate. Historical specificity being essential to this philosophical project,[24] Lenoir notes:

> The theory of knowledge considered classically as an existing structure of logic applied to fit lock-and-key to an externally existing, pre-given nature is replaced in Rheinberger's account by epistemology considered as a deeply historical process of constituting both the scientific object and our knowledge in a never-ending recursive process of reconfiguration and rectification.[25]

A significant aspect of Rheinberger's research is that the "social moment" of the time of a particular research, that is, the social knowledge that permeates a society in a particular time in history contributes to the scientific knowledge that arises in that society at that time. He cites the example of the Polish biologist Ludwig Fleck, who, belonging to the Jewish descent had survived two successive concentration camps, says that since "as a member of some society, every thinking individual has his own reality in which and according to which he lives", the "social moment" is important in determining the type of knowledge that is produced by the society.[26] Fleck comments:

[23] Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, *An Epistemology of the Concrete: Twentieth-Century Histories of Life* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010).

[24] Tim Lenoir, *Preface* to *An Epistemology*, xi–xix, xii, modified.

[25] Ibid., xii.

[26] Rheinberger, *An Epistemology*, 18.

> As a member of some society, every thinking individual has his own reality in which and according to which he lives. Every epistemology must be brought into relation with the social and, further, with the history of culture, if it is not…to come into sharp conflict with the history of knowledge and everyday experiences.[27]

Scientific knowledge is, thus, *relational* rather than *absolute* in nature. In another thought-provoking research work produced in the book, *Objectivity*, Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison lay down in detail how the notions of "objectivity" and "subjectivity" have changed over the years, their meanings arising from the way they have been linked to each other which had kept changing over the years. Analyzing Western civilization, they show how the above relationship has changed in history.[28] In the above context, Lenoir notes "epistemic history should not be a history of grand unified theories but of historical conjunctions that give rise to new concepts and instrumental configurations".[29]

The upshot of Rheinberger's research about epistemology throws up certain interesting concepts that are extremely important in the context of our initial question: can different paradigms be brought together in a unified work? On the basis of his crucial finding that *"truth" belongs to the set-up that human beings build to access knowledge*, Rheinberger generates new concepts like the *rhizomatic structure of knowledge*, *assemblages*, *fuzzy concepts, contained excesses,* and *mixed explanations*, all of which deal with knowledge arising from different disciplines which can be fruitfully combined into a unified process he calls an *assemblage*. The usefulness of these concepts in our present search is briefly discussed below.

Rheinberger starts his enquiry by finding out whether scientific processes transcend boundaries between different disciplines, boundaries that do not seem to have any sanction in nature. He notices that there is a growing preference among scientists for "practice-oriented" works of knowledge as opposed to "theory-dominated" accounts of knowledge production[30] where, according to Rheinberger, "Phenomenon and instrument, object and experience, concept and method are all engaged in a running process of mutual instruction."[31] In the above

[27] Quoted in Rheinberger, *An Epistemology*, 18.

[28] Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

[29] Lenoir, *Foreword*, xvii.

[30] Ibid., xi.

[31] Ibid., xiii.

process, where, in contrast to the traditional epistemic framework of a solitary subject confronting a pre-given object, a "rhizomatic structure of knowledge" prevails which foregrounds distributed cognition ("where cognition resides as much in distributed external objects as in human cognitive agents themselves"[32]) in terms of an embodied reason and enaction which represents, according to Rheinberger, a new epistemic process.[33] This kind of an epistemic process works on the basis of an "assemblage" where, instead of successive steps belonging to a particular discipline building up knowledge in a unilinear manner, processes involving different disciplines and divergent experimental systems are brought together to generate knowledge.[34] Rheinberger cites the example of molecular biology in which the instruments used had nothing to do with molecular biology as such; rather they were taken over from various biological and chemical techniques, like liquid scintillation counters, electron microscopy, chromatography, et cetera, processes that had no previous theoretical coordination with molecular biology at all.[35] Instead of generating precise knowledge belonging to a particular paradigm of thought, "assemblages" generate "fuzzy concepts" which have their distinct advantages. Rheinberger cites the examples of "atoms" in physics, "molecules" in chemistry, "species" in evolutionary biology, and "gene" in genetics as being examples of such "fuzzy" concepts which cannot ever be precisely defined.[36] Lenoir notes that, strangely, fuzzier the concepts are, the more productive they become in generating knowledge! Rheinberger comments:

> What is crucial for both epistemologists and scientists is how and why fuzzy concepts, half-baked definitions or definitions that overshoot the mark can have positive effects in science. As long as epistemic objects and their concepts remain blurred, they generate a productive tension: they reach out into the unknown and as a result become research tools. I call this tension *contained excess*.[37]

[32] Lenoir, *Foreword*, xvi.

[33] Ibid., xvii.

[34] Rheinberger, *An Epistemology*, 5.

[35] Lenoir, *Foreword*, xvii.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Rheinberger, *An Epistemology*, 156, emphasis added.

The strength of the imprecise "fuzzy" concepts lies in their very malleability to cross boundaries set up by various disciplines.

Rheinberger concludes by saying that, since no epistemic object is ever simply given but is made by nature, culture and human efforts to erect registering apparatus, we should be ready to work with *mixed explanations*. It challenges the age-old division between the natural sciences and the humanities with the sociologist and philosopher of science, Bruno Latour, holding that since human beings, in fact, have always inhabited a hybrid universe between nature and culture, he recommends the convening of even a "parliament of things" to gain knowledge from the hybrid world that we live daily![38]

One may take the idea a step further by holding that such "assemblages" are examples of what Ludwig Wittgenstein called "family resemblances". Daston and Galison note:

> In a later famous passage on "family resemblance" in his posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations* (§67), Wittgenstein developed a more subtle notion of what unites the members of a concept like a "game": not what all members had in common but rather a weave of partially overlapping traits. Some exhibit the same nose, others the same gait.[39]

Rheinberger's refreshing research opens up a window of opportunity for "mixing" Indian and Western theories in constructing an explanatory model for artworks, including cinema. Like the Wittgensteinian idea of "family resemblance," a film set-up, involving camera angle, et cetera, while having their own characteristics, are also engaged in a "game" being played *together* to produce the film.

Since cinema is a world-wide phenomenon today, incorporation of insights from different streams of thought is no more a luxury but has become an urgent need of the hour. A departure from the present overwhelming dependence on the *Eurocentric point of view* which foregrounds *disembodied vision* as its basic tool of analysis has become crucial for a fuller understanding of cinema. Since, in their pursuit, such *Eurocentric* film theories had also banished, most unjustly as one would say, *ordinary audiences* from contemporary film discourse, the need for

[38] Rheinberger, *An Epistemology*, 3.

[39] Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 336.

new thinking had become even more pressing for all of us. Such a step must begin by the immediate recall of the *ordinary audiences* to the center stage of film discussion again. It is only by using a *theory of the ordinary*, painstakingly elaborated above on the basis of classical Indian theories, as a counterfoil to the predominantly Western film discourse that film studies can be rejuvenated again. As to how such an "assemblage" between Indian and Western theories can be done in cinema would be a matter of further research.

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