

The political culture of address in a 'transitional' cinema: Indian popular cinema

Ravi S. Vasudevan

Recent discussions of cinema and national identity in the 'third world' context have tended, by and large, to cluster around the concept of a 'third cinema'. Here the focus has been on recovering or re-inventing local aesthetic and narrative traditions against the homogenising impulses of Hollywood in its domination over markets and normative standards. One of the hallmarks of third cinema theory has been its firmly unchauvinist approach to the 'national'. In its references to wider international aesthetic practices third cinema asserts but problematizes the boundaries between nation and other. In the process, it also explores the ways in which the suppressed internal others of the nation, whether of class, sub- or counter-nationality, ethnic group, or gender, can find a voice.(1)

A substantial lacuna in this project has been any sustained understanding of the domestic commercial cinema in the 'third world'. This is important because in certain countries such as India the commercial film has, since the dawn of the 'talkies', successfully marginalised Hollywood's weight in the domestic market. This is not to claim that it has functioned within an entirely self-referential autarchy. The Indian popular cinema stylistically integrated aspects of the world 'standard', and has also been influential in certain foreign markets. But it constitutes something like a 'nation-space' against the dominant norms of Hollywood, and so ironically fulfils aspects of the role which the avant-garde third cinema proclaims as its own.

Clearly, the difference in verbal, as opposed to narrative and cinematic, language cannot be the major explanation for this autonomy, for other national cinemas have succumbed to the rule of the Hollywood film. Instead, it is in the peculiarities of the Indian commercial film as an entertainment form that we may find the explanation for its ascendancy over the home market. In the Indian case the theoretical silence around the specificity of the commercial cinema is due not so much to third cinema discourse but to the discourses and institutions of art cinema in the 1950s which refused to seriously consider the commercial film as a focus of critical discussion.

Indian commercial cinema has exerted an international presence in countries of Indian immigration as in East Africa, Mauritius, the Middle East and South East Asia, but also in a significant swathe of Northern Africa.(2) Here it has often been regarded by the local intelligentsia and film industry in as resentful and suspicious a way as the Hollywood cinema in Europe.(3) On the other hand there are instances when the Bombay film's penetration of certain markets is not viewed as a threat. The popularity of the Hindi cinema in the former Soviet Union is a case in point. Such phenomena make one think of a certain arc of narrative form separate from, if overlapping at points, with the larger hegemony exercised by Hollywood. From the description of the cultural 'peculiarities' of the Bombay cinema which follows, one could speculate whether its narrative form has a special resonance in 'transitional' societies. The diegetic world of this cinema is primarily governed by the logic of kinship relations, and its plot driven by family conflict. The system of dramaturgy is a melodramatic one, displaying the characteristic ensemble of manichaeism, bipolarity, the privileging of the moral over the psychological and the deployment of coincidence in plot structures. And the relationship between narrative, performance sequence and action spectacle is loosely structured in the fashion of a cinema of attractions.(4) In addition to these features, the system of narration incorporates Hollywood codes of continuity editing in a fitful, unsystematic fashion, relies heavily on visual forms such as the tableau and inducts cultural codes of looking of a more archaic sort.

At first glance, there would appear to be a significant echoing here of the form of early Euro-American cinema, indicating that what appeared as a fairly abbreviated moment in the history of western cinema has defined the long-term character of this influential cinema of 'another world'. What is required here is a comparative account of narrative forms in 'transitional' societies which might set out a different story of the cinema than the dominant Euro-American one. However, to talk about transition might imply that such cinemas are destined to follow paths already set earlier. In fact, these cinemas may pose problems which will not admit of similar solutions. The problem of transition poses a cultural politics centred on the way local forms reinvent themselves to establish dialogue with and assert difference from universal models of narration and subjectivity. Recent currents in international film study have sought to recast the opposition between local and universally hegemonic norms of narration into a dialectical relationship. Here the specificity of particular cultural histories - European and American as much as 'third world' - have been constructed to understand the national and regional contexts in which the cinema was instituted,(5) how it came to assume an identity, became 'ours'.(6) At issue then is how traditions of identity, aesthetic form and cultural address are deployed for a politics of creative adaptation and interrogation of social transformation in a colonial and post-colonial world. To examine this process, I will take examples primarily from the Bombay cinema, but will also refer to films from other regional film cultures in the period from the 1930s through to the first decade after Independence was won, in 1947.

In exploring these issues, I want to analyze the various types of cultural adaptation involved without losing sight of certain larger political frames. For the problem of Indian popular cinema lies not only at the interface between the local and the global in the constitution of a politics of cultural difference, but must also be seen in terms of the internal hierarchies that are involved in the constitution of a national culture. The formation of a national market is a crucial aspect of these multi-layered relations of domination and subordination. Bombay became ascendant in the home market only in the 1950s. Earlier, Pune in Maharashtra and Calcutta in Bengal were important centres of film production, catering to the Marathi and Bengali speaking 'regional' audience as well as to the Hindi audience, the largest linguistic market in the country. While these regional markets continued to exist, Bombay became the main focus of national film production. This ascendancy was curtailed by the emergence of important industries in Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala, producing films in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. From the 1980s these centres produced as many and often more films than Bombay.(7) There has been a certain equivalence in the narrative form of these cinemas, but each region contributed its distinct features to the commercial film. In the Tamil and Telugu cases the cinema also has a strong linkage with the politics of regional and ethnic identity. In recent times the cinemas of the south have also made a greater effort to diversify their products than the Bombay industry.

The domestic hegemony achieved by the commercial cinema has had ambivalent implications for the social and political constitution of its spectator. All of India's cinemas were involved in constructing a certain abstraction of national identity; by national identity I mean here not only the pan-Indian one, but also regional constructions of national identity. This process of abstraction suppresses other identities, either through stereotyping or through absence. The Bombay cinema has a special position here, because it positions other national/ethnic/ socio-religious identities in stereotypical ways under an overarching north Indian, majoritarian Hindu identity. The stereotypes of the 'southerner' (or 'Madras', a term which dismissively collapses the entire southern region), the Bengali, the Parsi, the Muslim, the Sikh and the Christian occupy the subordinate positions in this universe. Bombay crystallised as the key centre for the production of national fictions just at the moment that the new state came into existence, so its construction of the national narrative carries a particular force.⁽⁸⁾ In the last part of this article, I want to explore how such a national hegemony came to take shape in the cinema through a discussion centred on how relations between the majority Hindu population and the crucial Muslim minority have been represented in the Bombay cinema.

Indian popular cinema genres and discourses of transformation

Arguments for cultural transformation have defined Indian cinema from very early on in its history. The key theme in these discussions was the social and cultural implications of film genres. In the initial phase, Indian cinema was dominated by the mythological film, which used Hindu myths as their major resource. Very soon, other genres developed, including the social, which addressed issues of modern day life, the costume film, or the 'historical', the spectacular stunt or action-dominated film, and the devotional film, which recounted tales of popular saintly figures who criticised religious orthodoxy and hierarchy.

Our knowledge about the terms on which the industry addressed spectators through genre, and the way spectators received genres, are as yet rudimentary. Steve Hughes work on exhibition practices in early South Indian cinema argues that Hollywood and European action serials catered to lower class audiences.⁽⁹⁾ And a 1950s essay by an industry observer⁽¹⁰⁾ noted that stunt, mythological and costume films would attract a working class audience. The film industry based this evaluation on two assumptions. Firstly, that the plebeian spectators would delight in spectacle and emotion, uncluttered by ideas and social content. Secondly, publicity strategies used by the industry suggest that exhibitors believed that such audiences were susceptible to a religious and moral rhetoric. In the industry's view therefore the lower-class audience was motivated by visceral or motor-oriented pleasures and moral imperatives.

On the other hand, the film industry understood the devotional and social films, with their emphasis on social criticism, to be the favoured genres of the middle-class. A running theme in social films was the need to maintain indigenous identities against the fascination for western cultural behaviour. While this has become part of the armature of films devoted to contemporary society down to the present day, a substantial vein of social films was devoted to making a critique of Indian society and setting up an agenda for change. Recent discussions of Tamil film of the 1930s and 1940s argue that there were repressive and disciplinary elements to the agenda for a modern social grounding of film narratives.⁽¹¹⁾ The agenda here was for the social film to displace the mythological and the superstitious and irrational culture it founded. In the 1930s, a host of studios emerged who employed script-writers to develop reformist narrative, and an alliance emerged in these decades between literature and cinema, with films adapting important novels as their source material. ⁽¹²⁾

However, by the 1950s, the industry reformulated genre and audience appeal. After the collapse of the major studios, Bombay Talkies, Prabhat, New Theatres, the new, speculative climate of the industry encouraged an eye for the quick profit and therefore the drive for a larger audience. This encouraged the induction of the sensational attractions of action, spectacle and dance into the social film, a process explained by industry observers as a lure for the mass audience. Industry observers clearly believed the genre label to be quite superficial, and, indeed, there is something inflationary about a large number of films released in the 1950s being called socials. The label of the 'social' film perhaps gave the cinematic entertainment that cobbled sensational attractions together in a slapdash way a certain legitimacy. However, arguably, the mass audiences earlier conceived of as being attracted only by sensation and themes of moral affirmation were now being solicited by an omnibus form which also included a rationalist discourse as part of its 'attractions'.⁽¹³⁾

We will observe a replaying of these discussions in more recent paradigms of the Indian popular cinema. One of my arguments will be that, rather than oppose different types of audience disposition on the ground of genre and subject matter, one needs to explore how forms of address may set up certain similar problems in constituting spectatorial subjectivity, whether this is played out within the domain of the mythological or the social. Especially important here is an agenda of moving beyond the deployment in Indian cinema of a rhetoric of traditional morality and identity to a focus on how cinematic address, the way spectators are positioned in terms of vision, auditory address and narrative intelligibility, may complicate and re-work the overt terms of narrative coherence.

Dominant currents in contemporary criticism

Here I want to briefly summarise some of the dominant currents in the contemporary criticism of the Indian popular cinema and the nature of its spectator. The dominant view is that of a tradition of film criticism associated with Satyajit Ray and the Calcutta Film Society in the 1950s. This school of criticism, which has proven influential in subsequent mainstream film criticism, arraigned the popular cinema for its derivativeness from the American cinema, the melodramatic externality and stereotyping of its characters and especially for its failure to focus on the psychology of human interaction. In these accounts the spectator of the popular film emerges as an immature, indeed infantile figure, one bereft of the rationalist imperatives required for the Nehru era's project of national reconstruction.⁽¹⁴⁾

Recent analyses of the popular cinemas in the 'non-western' world have indicated that the melodramatic mode has, with various indigenous modifications, been a characteristic form of narrative and dramaturgy in societies undergoing the transition

to modernity.(15) Criticisms of this prevalent mode have taken the particular form that I have just specified, and have had both developmentalist and democratic components. The implication was that, insofar as the melodramatic mode was grounded in an anti-rationalist ethos, it would undercut the rational, critical outlook required for the development of a just, dynamic and independent nation.(16)

This premise of modern film criticism has been taken in rather different directions. The critic Chidananda Das Gupta emerges from this earlier tradition, being one of the founder members of the Calcutta Film Society in 1948. But his book, *The Painted Face*, (1991)(17) pays greater attention to the commercial cinema than realist criticism ever has. Here his analysis develops certain insights about the narrative structure of the popular film, but it is still dogged by assumptions which spring from the earlier terms of reference. These relate to the belief that the commercial film of the early period and again after the 1950s primarily catered to a spectator who had not severed his ties from the countryside and so had a traditional or pre-modern relationship to the image, one which incapacitated him or her from distinguishing between image and reality.(18) Another of Das Gupta's theses is that the pre-rationalist spectator, en route from countryside to city in his mental outlook, was responsive to Bombay cinema's focus on family travails and identity, a focus which displaces attention from the larger social domain. He describes the spectator caught up in the psychic trauma brought about by threatened loss of the mother and the struggle for adult identity as adolescent and self-absorbed or 'totalist'.(19) We have echoes here of the realist criticism of the 1950s in its reference to the spectator of the commercial film as infantile. Following on from earlier discourses underwriting the cinema as a vehicle of modernization, he exempts the social reform oriented cinema of the 1930s through the 1950s from this general formulation, and underwrites its attempts to transform social perception in rationalist directions.

Such a conception of the spectator ultimately has political implications. Das Gupta sees this social and psychic configuration reflecting the gullible mentality that enabled the rise to power of the actor-politicians of the south, M.G. Ramachandran and N.T. Rama Rao.(20) The naive spectator actually believed his screen idols to be capable of the prowess they displayed on-screen. In Das Gupta's view the rational outlook required for the development of a modern nation-state is still lacking, and the popular cinema provides us with an index of the cognitive impairment of the majority of the Indian people. There is a sociological underpinning to this argument, that the middle-class are bearers of a rationalist discourse and the attributes of responsible citizenship, and that the popular cinema in its earlier and later manifestations is the domain of first a pre-modern, and then a de-cultured, lumpenized mass audience.

This psychological and social characterisation of the popular spectator is pervasive, even if it is not used to the same ends as Das Gupta. The social psychologist Ashish Nandy, while working outside the realist tradition, shares some of its assumptions about the psychological address of the commercial film.(21) Nandy argues that the dominant spectator of the popular cinema holds on to a notion of traditional community quite remote from the outlook of the modern middle-class; as such, this spectator is attracted to a narrative which ritually neutralises the discomfiting features of social change, those atomizing modern thought-patterns and practices which have to be adopted for reasons of survival. Nandy embraces the cultural indices of a subjectivity which is not governed by the rationalist psychology and reality-orientation of a contested modernity. In this sense he valorizes that which Das Gupta sees as a drawback.

So a psychical and sociological matrix for understanding the address of the commercial Bombay film to its spectator, deriving in some respects from the realist criticism of the 1950s has been extended into the more explicitly psychoanalytical interpretations of spectatorial dispositions and cognitive capacities. Ironically, these premises are shared both by those critical of the commercial film and its spectator for their lack of reality-orientation and those who see popular cinema resisting modern forms of consciousness.

The most complex attempt to transcend these oppositions between tradition and modernity in thinking about Indian cinema is the recent work of Madhava Prasad. His *Ideology of the Hindi film*(22) argues that many of the dimensions identified as composing a non-modern outlook in Indian popular films are in fact constructed under the aegis of an ideology of modernity. For the rhetoric and narrative form of modernity has to produce a traditional 'other' in order to overcome and institute a new form of subjectivity. Prasad situates this cinematic project in terms of certain overarching political and ideological formations in post-colonial India. Foremost here is the concept of passive revolution, where a modernizing state and its constituency in the bourgeoisie and bureaucracy has to adapt its transformative agenda to the realities of pre-capitalist power. In terms of narrative form, the political compromise at the level of the state is represented by what Prasad calls the 'feudal family romance'. This form releases a series of new drives - to individual romantic fulfillment and the formation of the couple for the nuclear family, consumerist orientations, affiliations to an impersonal state form - but ultimately subordinates them to the rule of 'traditionally regulated social relationships'. This regime of narrative coherence depicts landed gentry, urban gentlemen, representatives of social and religious orthodoxy, as ultimately capable of fulfilling or neutralizing the energies unleashed by new forces. In this regard, the feudal family functions as a way both of disavowing change and, more subtly, of allowing for it without disturbing social hierarchies. This dominant narrative form exists over a long period in Prasad's rendition, running from the 1940s through to the end of the 1960s, when the ruling configuration changes and the cinematic institution is diversified under the aegis of state support and through new developments within the film industry.

The politics of Indian melodrama

Where for Das Gupta the popular form subjects the spectator to pre-modern perceptions, for Prasad the pre-modern is an ideological construction rather than a cognitive problem. The ideology of his 'feudal family romance' echoes, but is significantly distinct from, melodrama theory as it has evolved in the west.

For Peter Brooks,(23) melodrama emerged in the nineteenth century as a form which spoke of a post-sacred universe in which the certainties of traditional meaning and hierarchical authority had been displaced. The melodramatic narrative constantly

makes an effort to recover this lost security, but meaning comes to be increasingly founded in the personality. Characters take on essential, psychic resonances corresponding to family identities and work out forbidden conflicts and desires. In the process, the social dimension collapses into the familial and, indeed, the family itself becomes a microcosm of the social level.

The distinction is that the issue posed by melodrama for Prasad is not simply one of striving to recover sacred forms and traditional hierarchical meaning, but a deployment of this desire for a strategy of transformation. Here, Prasad sees the imbrication of familial and social levels as political, as a register of the way pre-capitalist enclaves function as the ideological integument under conditions of social transformation. He compares the dominant Indian narrative form of his construction to the aristocratic romances of early European stage melodrama. Implicitly, the drives to alter this form are, in turn, comparable to the more democratic social vision of later melodrama.

Prasad's identification of a hierarchical coding of address in popular narrative form leads to a suggestive thesis about the informal prohibition on the private sphere and individuated characterisation in Indian popular cinema. The argument centres on the prohibition on kissing. Whereas conventional discourses on the cinema argue that the prohibition maintains a sense of national identity against the inroads of western cultural behaviour, Prasad places it within the coordinates of power of the dominant narrative form. He suggests that the feudal family romance seeks to contain those romantic drives that threaten traditional social authority with the spectre of secession. Here the kiss marks the incipient space of privacy and the nuclear family, understood as an infringement of the overwhelmingly public monitoring of sexuality and subjecthood under feudal scopical regimes.

Prasad argues that the pre-emption of such types of characterization have ramifications for the forms of knowledge and modes of performance in popular cinema. Instead of a narrative form constructed around enigmas, the popular cinema is governed by forms of speech and narrative mechanisms deriving from the domain of the already-known.(24) The spectator of this cinema is then addressed through the presentation of a pre-interpreted Symbolic order in contrast to the spectator of classical realist cinema who is complicit in the conversion of the raw material of re-presentation into narrative meaning.

I would like to hold onto Nandy's insight about community forms of address in complicating the terms of this very original and systematic thesis. Here one should consider Nandy's invocation of tradition, often rendered in a way that leaves the historical coordinates of how tradition is constituted unexamined, as a heuristic, an enabling function or stance with which to critique modern forms of political and cultural organization.

In terms of narrative form, the popular imperative engages in a series of transactions, both with methods and idioms marked as traditional or culturally distinctive as well as those defined as modern. Here, I would like to consider the location of the spectator's position around three issues: (i) how is the ideology of the traditional constituted in cinematic narration; (ii) what are the function of cinematic techniques of subjectivity in the construction of narrative space; (iii) how does the overall attraction based, presentational rather than re-presentational field of the popular film system address the spectator. These questions amount to an engagement with a history of the methods of film narration, film-style, as well as a history of the relationship between screen practices and audience reception.

Iconicity, Frontality and the Tableau frame

The question of mode of address concerns how objects and figures are located with respect to the look of the spectator within the spatial and temporal coordinates of scenic construction. Central here is the aesthetics of frontality and iconicity noted for Indian films in certain phases and genres by Ashish Rajadhyaksha(25) and Geeta Kapur.(26) The iconic mode is not used by these writers in its precise semiotic sense, to identify a relation of resemblance, but to identify a meaningful condensation of image. The term has been used to situate the articulation of the mythic within painting, theatre and cinema, and could be conceived of as cultural work which seeks to bind a multiply layered dynamic into a unitary image. In Geeta Kapur's definition the iconic is 'an image into which symbolic meanings converge and in which moreover they achieve stasis.'(27) This concept of the iconic needs to be grounded within a conception of mise-en-scene, and it is here that the question of frontal address surfaces. At one level frontality would mean placing the camera at a 180° plane to the figures and objects constitutive of filmic space. These may display attributes of direct address, as in the look of characters into the camera, but a frontal, direct address is relayed in other ways, as in the way the knowledge of the spectator is drawn upon in constructing the scene, through the stylized performance, ritual motifs and auditory address that arise from a host of Indian aesthetic and performance traditions. (28) This position of knowledge is not one which relays the spectator through a hermeneutic play, the enigma of what is to come, but through existing paradigms of narrative knowledge, although these may be subject to re-working. In genres such as the mythological film, the narrative process assumes audience knowledge of the narrative totality it refers to, so that a fragmentary, episodic structure can be deployed. The film song displays this function of 'frontal' address across genres, reaching over and beyond the space of the scene, locking the spectator into a direct auditory relay. Frontal planes in cinematic composition are used to relay this work of iconic condensation and also to group characters and objects in the space of the tableau. In Peter Brooks' formulation the tableau in melodrama gives the 'spectator the opportunity to see meanings represented, emotions and moral states rendered in clear visible signs'.(29) And Barthes has noted that it is

'a pure cut-out segment with clearly defined edges, irreversible and incorruptible; everything that surrounds it is banished into nothingness, remains unnamed, while everything that it admits within its field is promoted into essence, into light, into view... (it) is intellectual, it has something to say (something moral, social) but is also says it knows how this must be done'.(30)

Barthes also argues that the tableau has a temporal dimension, what he calls the 'pregnant moment' caught between past and future.(31) In the course of this argument, I will show that the temporality of the tableau can be deployed cinematically, its shape setting the geometrical terms of the temporal construction of the scene as it extends over a series of shots. The tableau also

displays interruptive, interventionist functions in the flow of scenic construction. In my argument, the function of this spatial figure is to encode a socially and communally defined address to the spectator. The reconstruction of the icon

I will illustrate the dynamic employment of the frontal, iconic mode, and of tableau framing in a sequence from Mehboob Khan's saga of peasant life, *Mother India* (1957). This segment presents, and then upsets, a pair of relatively stable iconic instances. The mother-in-law, Sundar Chachi, is centred through a number of tableau shots taken from different angles to highlight her authority in the village just after she has staged a spectacular wedding for her son. This representation of Sundar Chachi takes place in the courtyard of her house. The other instance is of the newly wedded daughter-in-law, Radha, shown inside the house, as she massages her husband's feet. It is a classic image of the devout Hindu wife.(32)

The two instances are destabilized because of the information that the wedding has forced Sundar Chachi to mortgage the family land. The information diminishes her standing, causing her to leave the gathering and enter her house. Simultaneously, it also undermines Radha's iconic placement as submissive, devout wife. As the larger space of the scene, the actual relationship between the inside and the outside, remains unspecified, the relationship is suggested when Radha, hearing the conversation, looks up and away towards off-screen left. The likelihood of this positioning is further strengthened when Sundar Chachi enters the house, and, looking in the direction of off-screen right, confesses that she has indeed mortgaged her land. There is the use here of a Hollywood eyeline match, where the direction of looks cast is consistent with the convention that characters separated into successive shots face each other in space. The women are narrativized out of their static, iconic position through narrative processes of knowledge circulation and character movement, and by the deployment of Hollywood codes of off-screen sound and eyeline match.

The mobilization of Radha out of one convention of iconic representation is completed when she assumes maternal functions extending beyond her family, and over the domain of village community and nation. In turn, she becomes the focal point of community norms, and her gaze acquires punitive functions in delineating the limits of permissible action. A process of the narrative dispersal of one iconic figure is thus finally brought to a close by instituting a new iconic figure to ground subjectivity. Central here is a particular reinscription in the cinema of a discourse of the image and the look in indigenous conventions.

Darsana

I refer here to darsana, the power exercised by the authoritative image in Hindu religious culture. In this practice, the devotee is permitted to behold the image of the deity, and is privileged and benefited by this permission, in contrast to a concept of looking that assigns power to the beholder by reducing the image to an object of the look.(33) Darsana has a wider purchase, being invoked in discourses of social and political authority as well. In a certain rendering of the category of darsana as an authoritarian form, social status derives from the degree of access which social groups and individuals have to a central icon of authority, whether of kingship, divine authority, or the extended patriarchal family and its representatives.(34) This eligibility then rests on very hierarchically coded criteria of social rank. There is a task here of identifying how the darsanic locates characters and is responded to by them within cinematic narration. One hypothesis would be that an authoritative figure, symbol or space (temple, landlord's house, court of law), is mobilized to order the place of characters within a scene and over the time of the narrative. But if such a diegetic instance is located, it is not necessary that characters abide by the positions they are assigned by it, nor that filmic techniques subordinate the spectator to the sway of darsanic authority.

Indeed, to assume otherwise could lead to the conclusion that the cinema is merely the vehicle of an archaic way of inscribing power on the visual field. Instead of seeing the discourse of darsana framing cinematic narration, we need to think of darsana as being enframed and reconstructed by it. Here, the localized deployment of filmic techniques in the micro-narration of a scene - editing, shot-distance and angle, camera movement, lighting, sound elements - alert us to how characters and spectators are being cinematically positioned in relation to the darsanic. The darsanic is not static, and generates new sources of authority from it, and in ways not entirely comprehensible in terms of established conventions. Thus, while much of the moral authority of Radha in *Mother India* derives from the preservation of her chastity, and thereby the assertion of her devotion to her absent husband, this patriarchal rhetoric is condensed along with other features, including a solidarity with other women, and an insistence on the maintenance of community norms.

The cinematic process of iconic reconstruction may in fact deploy and subordinate modern methods of subject construction modelled on Hollywood narration. By convention, the continuity system, and especially its point of view editing, is associated with the drives and perception of individuated characters. However, it is quite common in popular Hindi cinema to observe the yoking of such views to the bearer of darsanic authority. But the emergence of such enshrining views is tied to the dynamic of reconstruction, and is mobilized to the end of a patriarchal transformation.

To suggest the transactional basis on which popular cinema inducts those methods of narration marked as modern, I will cite an example from *Devdas* (Bimal Roy, 1955), a film based on a well-known Bengali novel by Sarat Chandra Chatterjee. Devdas, the son of a powerful landed family, is prohibited from marrying the girl he desires, Parvati, because of status differences. He is a classic renouncer figure of the type favoured in Indian story-telling, a figure who is unable or refuses to conform to the demands of society, and wastes away in the contemplation of that which he could never gain. I want to refer to a scene which employs continuity conventions to the highly 'traditional' end of deifying the male as object of desire. The sequence deals with Devdas' visit to Parvati's house, and indicates a strategy of narration whereby Parvati's point of view is used to underline the desirability and the authority exercised by Devdas' image. In this sequence, Parvati returns to her house to find her grandmother and mother discussing Devdas' arrival from the city, and the fact that he has not yet called upon them. Devdas, off-screen, calls from outside the door. From this moment, Parvati's auditory and visual attention dominates the narration. Before we can see Devdas entering the house, we withdraw with Parvati to her room upstairs, and listen to the conversation taking place below along with her. Devdas announces that he will go to see Parvati himself. In anticipation of Devdas' arrival Parvati hurriedly starts

lighting a diya, devotional lamp, and the melody of a kirtan, a traditional devotional song expressing Radha's longing for Krishna, is played. We hear the sound of Devdas' footfalls on the stairs, and Parvati's anxiety to light the lamp before Devdas enters her room is caught by a suspenseful intercutting between her lighting of the lamp and shots of the empty doorway. The door-frame in this sequence suggest the shrine in which the divine idol is housed. Devdas' entry is shown in a highly deifying way; first his feet are shown in the doorway, followed by a cut to the lighted lamp. Finally his face is revealed. There follows a cut to Parvati, suggesting that this is the order through which she has seen Devdas' arrival. As she looks at him, conch shells, traditional accompaniment to the act of worship, are sounded. The future husband as deity, object of the worshipful gaze, is established by the narration's deployment of Parvati's point of view. Her lighting of the devotional lamp and the extra-diegetic sound of the kirtan and conch-shells underline the devotional nature of the woman's relationship to the male image. Here we can see how the cinema reinscribes darsana, locating it within a new figure, that of the emergent if ultimately ineffectual patriarchal figure of Devdas, who cannot be assimilated to the reigning feudal order. And it does this in such a way as to both enable and limit the conditions of subjectivity. For, while the film mobilizes point of view codes to represent the subjectivity of the woman, this is done in such a way as to constrain the field of her look by focusing the beloved within a discourse of divinity. This setting of certain limiting coordinates for the woman's look also significantly institutes a division between the incipient formation of a new domesticity and the wider external world: Devdas' enshrinement in the doorway converts the public space beyond the door into his domain, restricting the woman to domestic space.

Tableau, time and subjectivity

A more complicated version of this pattern of looking is observable in Guru Dutt's *Pyasa/Craving* (1957), a film which refers to but in many ways contraverts the narrative of Devdas. In the pertinent scene, the poet-hero Vijay refers to the prostitute, Gulab, as his wife in order to protect her from a policeman who is pursuing her. The prostitute is unaccustomed to such a respectful address, especially one suggestive of intimate ties to a man she loves, and is thrown into a sensual haze. Vijay ascends a stairway to the terrace of a building where he will pass the night. Gulab sees a troupe of devotional folk-singers, performing a Vaishnavite song, 'Aaj sajan mohe ang laga lo' (Take me in your arms today, o beloved) and follows Vijay up the stairs. The scene is structured by Gulab's desire for Vijay, expressed in the song, and these relations of desire are simultaneously relations of distance, as the woman follows, looks at and almost touches the man she loves, (who is entirely unaware of all this) but finally withdraws and flees as she believes herself unworthy of him.

The relation between devotional voice, devotee and object of devotion determines the space of this scene, providing the coordinates for the extension and constraining of space. The relationship between characters is not one of the iconic frontality of traditional worship. The desired one is not framed in this way, for continuity codes dominate the scenic construction. Even in the scene I have cited from *Devdas*, continuity codes construct space and it is a shot-reverse shot relationship which defines the ultimate moment of looking. The spectator is offered a rather complicated position. If we think of the male icon as a 'traditional' marker of authority and desire which anchors the view of the female devotee, as in *Devdas*, then the scene conforms to the logic of darsana.

However, within the bhakti or devotional tradition, while the female devotee's energy is channelled directly into the worship of the deity, without the mediation of the priest, the Lord still remains a remote figure. The devotional act thus becomes a somewhat excessive one, concentrating greater attention on the devotee than the devotional object,(35) and this is only underlined in the maintenance of Gulab's distance from Vijay, and his failure to see her. This rather complicated structure of spectatorship needs to be framed within the address relayed by the devotional voice. The space assigned this voice emerges from Gulab's look off-screen, but it remains autonomous, never sharing her space. The narration periodically cuts back to the singer and cutting and camera movement closely follow the rhythms of the song. The soundtrack maintains a steady pitch to the singing, irrespective of how far the action moves away from the singer's (imaginary) space, and places it thereby at an extra-diegetic location.(36) The relatively stable articulation of these three points in the narrative construction - devotional voice, desiring woman, and her object, effects a dynamic, temporal deployment to the essentially spatial category of the tableau. The result for the spectator is neither the subordination of subjectivity to darsanic authority, whose circuit is left incomplete by withholding Vijay's authorizing darsanic look, nor the unmediated identification with the desiring woman, but a framing of these elements of scenic composition within the narrative community solicited by the kirtan. Here the audience is invited to participate in a culturally familiar idiom that re-invents itself by providing a supportive frame to the cultivation of new techniques for the representation of an individuated feminine subjectivity. However, the supportive frame of narrative community, while inducting a new view through the deployment of modern perceptual codes cannot, it would seem, abjure the anchorage given by the authoritative object. In this instance, where the darsanic circuit is not completed, the woman ultimately lies outside the sanction provided by the man returning her look. Later, however, the darsanic circuit is completed, instituting a new paternalist form in the conclusion of the film. Gulab's view enshrines Vijay, as travelling point of view shots punctuate her running down towards the beloved as he appears at the doorway of her dwelling, and his return of her look acknowledges her eligibility to reside within the orbit of his gaze.

How the cinema deploys these discourses of visual and auditory authority, how it hierarchizes them into its levels of narration is the issue at stake: who authorizes a view, locates a figure in narrative space, who speaks, who sees, who listens. Where these relations are organised to highlight the compact between the narrating instance and the spectator's attention, the place of the third look of the character is subordinated to the spectator's knowledge that it is s/he who looks and listens. As Ashish Rajadhyaksha has argued, in such instances, the concept of a third look codified by the requirements of an integral continuity narration emerges as a transaction between narrator and spectator, and does not acquire a decisive autonomy.(37) The discourse of narrative community is one such instance. But, in terms of Barthes' analysis of the tableau, narration may deploy an interventionist, intellectual rather than emotive use of this spatial figure, suggesting a distancing perspective rather than a shaping of spectatorial subjectivity into identification with characters. Thus, we may observe the emergence of a space in which the main characters are composed separate from the flow of character-grounded narrative awareness and development. The

narration places us in a position superior to that of all the characters, and we are alerted to how different character attitudes are framed within normative and hierarchical social discourses. This address does not, I would argue, ask us to accept the norm, but highlights the inevitability of a social frame to meaning.

I have suggested how this works in *Andaz/Style* (Mehboob Khan, 1949).(38) However, while these community grounded and socially coded modes of direct address constitute a fundamental aspect of cinematic narration for the popular cinema, the character driven codes of subjectivity and narration associated with Hollywood may stand quite independently of such an address, inducting another set of subjectivities or story-telling conventions into the architecture of filmic narrative. I have suggested how *Andaz* drew upon Hollywood narrative conventions in order to highlight the enigmatic dimensions of its female character's desires, and especially the conventions of hallucinations and dream to define her in terms of an ambivalent psychology and a transgressive if involuntary sexuality. Such conventions were drawn upon to be contained and disavowed. A nationalist modernizing imperative had to symbolically contain those ideologically fraught aspects of modernity that derived from transformations in the social position and subjectivity of women. The result was a fascinatingly perverse and incoherent text, one whose ideological drives are complicated by the subjectivities it draws upon.(39)

I would suggest that these examples indicate that for the popular Indian cinema the categories of public and private, and of feudal and modern scopic regimes may not adequately comprehend the subjectivity offered the spectator, and that this would in turn have implications for the culture of citizenship. The rupturing of an integral, self-referential narrative space via direct address suggests a circuit of imaginary communication, indeed, a making of audience into imaginary community. The authorizing voice of narrative community is not fixed, however. To complicate Prasad's insight, while speech may be pre-interpreted in the sense that characters do not speak in the register of everyday, naturalist conversation, but are vehicles of existing language systems, cinematic narration subjects these to a reconstitution which enables an inventive, dynamic address to contemporary issues. As I have suggested, the solicitation of the cinema audience into a familiar community of meaning via direct address may afford a certain movement, an outlining of new forms of subjectivity on the grid of the culturally recognizable. We have seen how this works in terms of a transgressive rendering of romance. An overt political address, bearing directly on questions of citizenship and state legitimacy, also emerges in new languages of direct address. The development of a new linguistic nationalist community in the direct address of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-influenced Tamil cinema would be an obvious example.(40) In fact, Indian popular cinema has, throughout its history, deployed such modes of address to constitute imaginary political communities, around issues of social reform and nationalist mobilization. Here, direct address may argue for change on somewhat different grounds than the protocols of narrative continuity, realism, and individual characterization.

Community authorization then rests alongside, and complicates 'feudal' and 'modern' ways of organizing narrative. Song sequences deployed from a host of musical traditions have often worked in this way, and in cases such as the one I have cited from *Pyasa*, have assumed the role of a narrational authority external to the main story. This is enacted by a source other than any of the fictional characters, and sometimes in a space separated out from theirs. In this sense the narrational song can be identified with the properties of extra-diegetic music. They both inhabit a location outside the fiction and shape a cultural space for the representation of characters. We are both inside and outside the story, tied at one moment to the seamless flow of a character based narration from within, in the next attuned to a culturally familiar stance from without.

Not only does this narrating instance function to outline new types of subjectivity that in a sense emerge from within the community of meaning; it may be deployed to offer a critical view on narrative development. In *Awara/Vagabond* (Raj Kapoor, 1951), the judge, Raghunath, expels his wife, Leela, on suspicion of bearing another man's child. The event is framed through a song critically invoking the mythical King Rama's expulsion of his wife Sita, and performed by a troupe located separately from the main action. The critical stance offered by the song renders the iconic figure of the judge as an oppressive one, subjecting the darsanic to censure.(41)

The comic, deriving from earlier theatrical traditions of the *vidushak*, also left his mark as one of the staple figures of the commercial cinema.(42) Here he sometimes plays the role of a narrator external to the main narrative and is often engaged in a relationship of direct address to the audience. There is a certain didacticism involved in his functions, but this is a didacticism gone wrong, relaying authoritarian discourses voiced elsewhere through a figure entirely lacking the status and integrity carried by a darsanic rendering of such discourses. For example, in *Andaz*, V.H. Desai, as the charlatan and free-loading Professor Dharmadas Devdas Trivedi or DDT, (the assigning of a Brahmin name to the comic sends up the pretensions and parasitical features of upper-caste status claims), is a spokesman and even a narrative agent of what he claims to be authentic indigenous attitudes to marriage. Such attitudes are similar to those voiced by the film's patriarchal figure and his delegates, but when the comic is made their vehicle they are subjected to a lampooning idiom. In a more commonplace function, it is the very absurdity of the comic figure, quite obviously opposed to the larger-than-life attraction of the hero, which invites a less flattering point of identification for the audience, and thereby a certain narratorial distance towards the story. Further, in the very superfluosity of his functions, we could say that the comic was the spokesman within the story for a different order of story telling, one which celebrates the disaggregative relationship to narrative and, indeed, makes coherent meaning within the world of the narrative a problematic agenda.

This would imply that, instead of only looking to the overall work of ideology that 'officially' organizes the text, perhaps one should also attend to the fissiparous qualities of cinematic form to focus on the importance of non-continuity in evaluating the narrative worlds offered the spectator. In terms of sensory experience, non-continuity would suggest a characteristic modern culture of distraction, where the spectator's world is governed by a multiplicity of focuses and not by a carefully calibrated, goal-oriented channeling of her investment in the narrative process. At issue here is the subjectivity arising from the development of this particular type of cinematic modernity.

The political terms of spectatorial subjectivity

The terms of cinematic narration I have sketched here are rather different from the notions of spectatorship which have emerged from that model of the successful commodity cinema, Hollywood. Historians and theoreticians of the American cinema have underlined the importance of continuity editing in binding or suturing the spectator into the space of the fiction. The undercutting of direct address and the binding of the spectator into a hermetic universe on-screen heightens the individual psychic address and sidelines the space of the auditorium as a social and collective viewing space. This very rich historiography and textual analysis, excellently synthesised in works by Miriam Hansen(43) and Thomas Elsaesser,(44) speaks of the fraught process through which American cinema's bourgeois address came into being. This work describes how social and ethnic peculiarities were addressed in the relation between early cinema and its viewers. The sites of filmic performance were institutions such as the vaudeville, in which the one and two reel film was one in a series of 'acts' on the programme; all of these items, including films, tended to solicit audience interest by referring to the ethnic particularities of the audience. The process by which the cinema took over and came to develop its own entertainment space was a process of the formation of a national market in which the spectator had to be addressed in the broadest, non-ethnic, socially universal terms. Of course, what was actually happening was that a dominant white anglo-saxon norm came to be projected as universal. Along with this process there developed the guidelines for the construction of a universal spectator placed not in the auditorium but as an imaginary figure enmeshed in the very process of narration.

The mixed address of the Hindi cinema, along with the spaces which open up within the commercial film, the song and dance sequences and comic skits, might suggest a rather different relationship of reception. Indeed, it recalls the notion of a 'cinema of attractions', a term developed by Tom Gunning to theorize the appeal of early Euro-American cinema.(45) In contrast to the Hollywood mode of continuity cinema or narrative integration, Gunning and Gaudreault argue that early cinema was exhibitionist. The character's look into the camera indicated an indifference to the realist illusion that the story tells itself. The films displayed a greater interest in relaying a series of views and sensations to their audience rather than following a linear narrative logic. These elements were to be increasingly transcended in the Hollywood cinema's abstraction of the spectator as individuated consumer of its self-enclosed fictional world. In the process, the audience, earlier understood to be composed of workers and immigrants, was 'civilised' into appreciating the bourgeois virtues of a logical, cause and effect driven and character based narrative development.(46)

However, something rather more complicated is happening here. For the direct address of popular Indian cinema, while certainly inviting immersion in fragmentary ocular sensation and exhibitionist performance, does more than this by founding elaborate scenic construction. The address, whether voiced directly by characters or relayed through song ensures a mediated relationship to processes of identification. At one level, this form of spectatorial subjectivity can deny the atomizing modernity associated with the construction of individuation and a privatized sphere for the couple. The comedian, for example, often disrupts a scenic construction that verges on an intimate moment or kiss, and thereby brings the couple back within the purview of a public view, but one which entirely lacks the disciplinary drives of an authoritarian gaze. Instead, the intervention could be said to draw the couple away from a hermetic space and back into a more expansive *communitas*. On the other hand, this non-atomistic form of spectatorship may also be harnessed to cultivate an aesthetic of the private. This constitutes a narration of desire in which the relationship between zones of intimacy and socio-political arrangements need not follow a model of opposition and separation of public and private experience. As I have suggested, narrative communities, both relayed and produced afresh by the cinema may provide sanction to privatized story-telling codes such as character point of view.

One needs to think this through in terms of the relationship between socially symbolic narrative forms and their political resonances. I would suggest that fictional processes parallel, interrogate, and question the authoritative functions communities have exercised under the colonial and post-colonial Indian states. While espousing the standard repertoire of democratic principles - civil liberties, universal suffrage - the nationalist movement also mobilized people in terms of community appeals, and this inevitably left its stamp on state and civil institutions after independence. Governments have regarded the rights of minority groups over their civil and familial laws, such as those of the Muslim community, as an area to be regarded with caution, apprehending that arguments for universal codes would take on an oppressive dimension. This has often meant the state shoring up the most retrograde patriarchal community authority in the field of women's rights to property and maintenance. (47) And the historical backwardness of ritually lower groups in the Hindu hierarchy - lower castes, and those outside the caste hierarchy - have given rise to state policies of affirmative legislation on their behalf. The assertion of the rights of such groups in government service and educational institutions have generated multi-community strategies in larger political formations, as well as distinct political parties catering to particular swathes of the socially deprived.

While one democratic agenda urges the state to disperse such forms of community authority in favour of individual rights, others have tended to problematize the characteristic institutions of modern democracy, emphasising the unequal, assymetric terms on which modern forms of political and cultural representation have been instituted. Such theoretical work has argued that modern civil society, the domain of freely associating individuals who contract to generate institutions of representation, is not the uncomplicated vehicle of democratic politics. The individualist dispositions and educational and cultural capital associated with such representational politics is, in operative terms, the preserve of a relatively small segment of society. This argument does not so much invalidate these forms of representation, and the types of rights to freedom of expression and civil liberty which they have developed, but suggests that digits of representation of a more collective order need to be developed for strategies of social change and gender justice. The category of community has thus become central, even when contesting oppressive community practices. In this paradigm, rather than entirely vacate the discourse of community in favour of that of the individual citizen, other dissenting traditions of community need to be mobilized to develop a consensus for change.(48)

In terms of how this broader frame impinges on cultural practices, I would suggest that rather than regard the pre-modern or the traditional merely as a repressive construction engaged in by the state and ruling elites we need to see it as a source of creativity, where traditions are reinvented in accord with the dynamics of social and political transformation. In this context, I

would like to draw attention to how the cinema deploys traditions such as darsana to enable the redefinition of collective rather than individual identity. As I have pointed out, bhakti constituted a form of worship which sought to circumvent the traditional mediation of the divine by the priest. As represented in saintly devotional figures of low-caste origin, the bhakt or devotee was dedicated to the worship of the deity through popular language rather than sacred texts monopolized by a priestly class. The establishment of direct links between worshipper and the sacred thus subverted ritual hierarchies and afforded a new sense of self. The devotional genre of the 1930s and 1940s is a case in point: critiquing brahmanical orthodoxy, films such as *Sant Tukaram* (Fatehlal and Damle, Marathi, 1937), have the reformist saint of the seventeenth century invoking the deity to provide an alternative vision of social conditions and political self-determination for the character/spectator. In a key sequence of the film, the saint, Tukaram, is involved in expounding a discourse of duty to the Maratha king Shivaji, and this extends into a more general address, as the film frames Tukaram in relation to other segments of the general public who have assembled in the shrine of Tukaram's deity, Pandurang. Tukaram's discourse of duty is designed to persuade Shivaji not to abjure his kingly role for a life of devotion, and it would appear to have conservative dimensions, fixing people to the roles they are assigned. But Tukaram's message emphasises that all will find their path to the divine, and the film then goes on to replay this message of ultimate, transcendent equality in terms of an earthly political equivalent. Shivaji's enemies, taking advantage of his absorption in the religious dialogue, descend on the shrine, and at this point Tukaram appeals to Pandurang to save his devotee. Cuts from Tukaram to Pandurang ultimately culminate in a series of phantom images of Shivaji being released from the deity and coming to repose in the assembled public; wherever the invaders look, they see Shivaji, but when they grasp the figure, he turns into a startled member of the public. This dissemination of kingship amongst the public, an image of popular sovereignty that undermines political hierarchy, is rendered through a transfer of looks: the spectator looks at the saint, who beseeches the deity, who then looks back, releasing images of the king which transform the identity of characters and spectators. In this instance the transfer is effected via a cinematic materialization of the miraculous. But redefinitions of subjecthood through image practices are more widely observable across genres. Indeed, one may observe a plurality of cinematically constructed darsanic motifs within a film, setting up a conflicting political forcefield of images and image-constituencies.

Nation and community

There is a suggestive containment of nationalist discourses in *Sant Tukaram*. In Hindu nationalist discourse, Shivaji is often perceived as a Hindu King whose main enemy was the Muslim Mughal rulers of India, but in this film the invader who threatens the Maratha king is not of the Mughals, but a local chieftain. Perhaps we have here an instance of how the period of the 1930s in the anti-colonial movement against British imperialism was concerned to preserve an inter-community amity in the construction of the nation-state. That legacy was to persist, and is one of the main inheritances cultivated by the independent nation-state, but by the end of the 1930s, we see the emergence of discourses about the cinema and within cinematic narratives in which a Hindu nationalist hegemony over the Muslim was being worked out.

At this time, discussions about genre surfaced as one of the key arenas in which cultural differences were conceptualised, and central here was the historical film. Historical films developed a number of subjects: the glory of ancient, pre-Islamic India (Chandragupta, Jayant Desai, 1945); Mughal kingship and its relation to local Hindu ruling groups, the Rajputs; (*Pukar/The Call*, Sohrab Modi, 1939, *Humayun*, Mehboob Khan, 1945); the heroism of the Maratha King Shivaji; and, after Independence, a set of films based on Indian resistance to colonial rule (*Anandmath*, Hemant Gupta, 1950, *Jhansi ki Rani/Queen of Jhansi*, Sohrab Modi, 1953). The historical genre provides an account of the relationship between foreign invaders and rulers and local Indian kings and ruling groups. These films endorsed a subtle re-reading of Indian history in favour of Hindu nationalism, whereby the foreign ruler's formal authority is shown to be ultimately contingent on the real hegemonic authority that Hindu aristocrats and ruling groups exercised over indigenous society.(49)

Here we can observe a significant mobilization and contest of darsanic codes. *Pukar* is organised around a series of spectacular public assemblies centred on the Mughal King Jehangir. While the camera at first places the spectator at a respectful distance and through low angles to the royal personage, subsequent scenes continuously alter these spatial relations and, in turn, the authority of the darsanic figure. This narrational pattern climaxes when a Rajput ally intervenes between King and diegetic audience. While the intervention is couched in the rhetoric of Rajput loyalty to the emperor, it is in effect a display of the hegemony the Rajput exercises over society, with the implicit message that Mughal rule is contingent on his power. The intervention here is also one between the Mughal king and the contemporary audience, for the order issued by the emperor to his subject is presented in an enormous frontal close-up which inducts the spectator into an overwhelming direct address. The Rajput countering of the command thus functions as a disruption of screen-audience relations. This challenge to Mughal rule and the medieval Indian past is governed by an imperative of recovering Hindu pride for a present and future organisation of nationalist culture, and is defined by leadership grounded in hierarchy rather than community. For the Rajput challenge does not represent an egalitarian rendering of Indian society against Mughal absolutism, but deploys the power the upper-caste aristocrat can exercise over the lowest of this society, an untouchable washerwoman.

Pukar was understood in contemporary writing to be a film about the historical amity between Hindu and Muslim communities, and was deemed a salient corrective to the sectarian animosity that was emerging at the time. Even more explicitly oriented to the theme of inter-community amity was the social film *Padosi/Neighbours* (V. Shantaram, Marathi, 1940), about the effects of modern technological change on relations within a village community. The film is a very moving story about how a grasping modern businessman seeks to break village opposition to his schemes of modernization by manipulating conflict between Jiwaba and Mirza, the leaders of the village community. The estranged friends are ultimately reunited when they are martyred by the new forces, and a grieving village community builds a shrine to their memory. But here, too, suggestive hierarchies emerge in the construction of narrative. This is especially marked in the opening scene, in which a devotional hymn to the Hindu God Rama is invoked on the soundtrack and over a tableau frame of a village scene, a cottage and sacred pipal tree in the background. A cut in anchors the voice to the village elder, Jiwaba, who sits by the tree. As he sings, we observe his good friend and neighbour, the Muslim Mirza, arrive with his prayer mat in hand. Mirza stands at a discrete distance, waiting for

Jiwaba to finish. As Patil concludes, he notices Mirza, and wryly remarks that he should have said that the time had arrived for his prayer; Mirza responds, what is the need when one gets ones requirements without asking?

The film opens on a Hindu devotional space. This is first articulated by voice, and then by a figure associated with sacred symbols who is iconized as vehicle of the discourse. Unlike the Muslim prayer which follows, this practice is defined by an enveloping auditory address from the screen, a public, communal address. Jiwaba, its expressive vehicle, is overwhelmed by the feelings it arouses in him, and wipes away a tear at its conclusion. In narrational terms, the enveloping address is of sustained duration, but its diegetic reference is to the perennial. A definite sense of time and sequence only emerges with the arrival of the Muslim, for whom a specific moment is required to conduct his prayer. The emergence of time, sequence, and narrative development is authorized by a privileged, because prior, Hindu discourse of emotive community. Jiwaba gives Mirza time, and thus is inaugurated an incipient, if never quite actualized, discourse of national origins. From the 1920s, right wing Hindu nationalist ideologues had developed an argument that India was originally composed of Hindus, who therefore had prior rights to the country over those, especially Muslims and Christians, who arrived subsequently.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Central to such ideologies is a profound ahistoricism that seeks to enforce a monolithic Hindu identity across time and against the historical reality of the many, very different traditions, conflictual and dissenting trends and inegalitarian social hierarchies that have loosely made up a rather inchoate religious and social history. These writings have provided the foundations for a Hindu majoritarianism whose objective is to assign a subordinate status to other religious identities in the make-up of the modern Indian nation-state. Later the film implicitly invokes anxieties about Muslim dominance in the medieval period, when Mirza heads the village council that has to rule on charges levelled against Jiwaba's son. Jiwaba's feelings of ignominy and powerlessness condenses a whole, specifically modern ideology of the historical subordination of Hindus to other communities, and provides the emotional ground for drives to assert Hindu authority over the nation-state, an objective echoed in the ideological work implicit in Pukar.

These ideological currents are never actualized, and, as in the case of Pukar, are never straightforwardly expressed, but indicate that even films arguing for amity were premised on a certain privileging of modern Hindu constructions of the 'other'. These incipient hegemonic drives took an articulate form in discourses about the social film in the early 1940s. An influential film periodical, *Filmindia*, argued that the genre was the preserve of Hindu drives to reform and modernize society, and that Muslim film-makers were averse to introspection about the practices of their community, preferring to invest in genres such as the historical. In this construction, the social genre constituted modern society and reformist nationalist initiatives as Hindu, and attributed to Muslims an isolationist, conservative and backward looking mindset and narrative disposition. It should be underlined that this argument was a retrospective one, for the reformist films of the 1930s, while addressing change in Hindu society, never identified themselves in terms of a particular socio-religious group, and some of the issues they raised, such as the oppression of women, the contest of feudal authority and the depiction of social inequality, could obviously have an appeal broader than the Hindu community. However, hegemonic practices tend to leave their identity unmarked in order to assume the ability to speak on behalf of society as a whole, and when the exclusionist and suborning aspects of an emerging Hindu nationalist hegemony surfaced in the 1940s, there developed a drive to pluralize unmarked categories such as the social. Thus we witness the emergence of the category of the Muslim social, films produced by Muslim led studios which laid claim to a reform and modernization of Muslim society. Films such as *Najma* (Mehboob Khan, 1943) and *Elaan/The Call* (Mehboob Khan) 1948, pitted liberal professionals against the effete, feudal face of Muslim society. Here the address to the particular group was not isolationist. Rather, in appealing for change in the Muslim community, they clearly staged, for a wider public, the desire of Muslims to embrace a common modern social agenda.

During the same period, we notice the emergence of a more aggressive nationalist stance, one which was to be influential in setting up certain symbolic coordinates for a Hindu hegemony. In 1937, an All India League for Censorship, a private body, was set up to lobby for stringent measures in regard to what was perceived to be an anti-Hindu dimension in the film industry.⁽⁵¹⁾ It claimed that the industry was dominated by Muslims and Parsis who wanted to show the Hindus 'in a bad light'. Muslim actors and Muslim characters were used, it declared, to offer a contrast with Hindu characters portrayed as venal, effete and oppressive. The League evidently assumed that the government of Bombay, led by the Congress party, would be responsive to their demand that certain films be banned for their so-called anti-Hindu features. Such expectations were belied by K.M. Munshi, Home Minister in the Bombay Government, who dismissed the League as bigots. Indeed, this was how the League must have appeared at the time. But their charges do bring to light the fact that certain off-screen information, that is, the religious identity of producers, directors and actors was being related to the on-screen narrative, and in fact was seen to constitute a critical social and political level of the narrative.

It is against this background that we should situate the as yet rudimentary information which suggests that in the next decade the industry itself was coming to project an address to its market which clearly apprehended and sought to circumvent Hindu alienation. Syed Hasan Manto, who had written scripts for Hindi films, recalled that he was pressurized to leave his job in the early 1940s because he was a Muslim. Indeed, Bombay Talkies, the studio Manto worked for from 1946 to 1948, came under threat from Hindu extremists who demanded that the studio's Muslim employees be sacked.⁽⁵²⁾ At a more symbolic level, a process was inaugurated by which the roles of hero and heroine, which normally remain outside the purview of stereotypes associated with other characters, had to be played by actors with Hindu names. In 1943, when Yusuf Khan was inducted as a male lead by Devika Rani at Bombay Talkies, his name was changed, as is well known, to Dilip Kumar.⁽⁵³⁾ In the actor's account, the change was quite incidental. But we have information about other Muslim actors and actresses who underwent name changes, such as Mahzabin, who became Meena Kumari⁽⁵⁴⁾ and Nawab, who became Nimmi;⁽⁵⁵⁾ and, in 1950 a struggling actor, Hamid Ali Khan changed his name to Ajit on the advice of the director, K. Amarnath.⁽⁵⁶⁾ I am sure that this short list is but the beginning of a much longer one and an oral history might uncover nothing less than a parallel universe of concealed identities.

The transaction involved seems to have been purely symbolic. Evidence from film periodicals suggests that the true identity of

such actors was mostly well-known, and yet a symbolic abnegation of identity had to be undertaken if the transition to the screen was to be achieved. It was as if the screen, constituting an imaginary nation-space, required the fulfilment of certain criteria before the actor/actress could acquire a symbolic eligibility.

Following in the tracks of the Hindu communal censorship

Leage of 1937, Filmindia showed that a bodily sense of communal difference had come to deflect a certain reception of film images. Filmindia, incensed in 1949 by the restrictions placed on Indian cinema imports by the Government of Pakistan, was delighted to see two Muslim actresses, Nimmi and Nargis, kiss the feet of Premnath and Raj Kapoor in the latter's *Barsaat*. In an ironic aside, the gossip columns of the periodical suggested that, to balance off this act of submission, a Muslim director such as Kardar should now arrange to have a Hindu actress kiss Dilip Kumar's feet. Clearly, it was understood that such an inversion was not a likely scenario, and a vicarious pleasure was being taken in this symbolic triumph.(57)

How much of these off-screen discourses actually went into the structuring of on-screen narratives? It seems to me no coincidence that in the same year that Filmindia carried this dark communal reception of *Barsaat*, in *Andaz*, a film by a Muslim director, Mehboob, Nargis should again be seeking to touch Raj Kapoor's feet, desperate to demonstrate her virtue as a true Hindu wife, and to clear herself of charges of being involved with Dilip Kumar. The image of the star is not just reiterated in this interweaving of on and off-screen narratives; there is an active working out and resolution of the transgressive features which have come to be attached to him/her. For example, speculations about Nargis's family background, and suspicions of her chastity following from her affair with Raj Kapoor seemed to repetitively feed into and be resolved within a host of films from *Andaz* to *Bewafa* (M.L. Anand, 1952), *Laajwanti* (Rajinder Suri, 1957) and *Mother India*.(58)

The way in which this symbolic space was charted out by the Hindi commercial cinema is comparable with the way in which the white hero became the norm for the north American commercial cinema, and, preeminently, his white anglo-saxon protestant version. In both cases the ideological construction of this symbolic space appears to be neatly effaced, but the discourses surrounding the films clearly indicate that this was not so.

A note on recent developments

In post-independence history there follows a complicated history, in which these coordinates of narrative form undergo important changes. To conclude this essay I would like to isolate a broad current in these changes, centred on how discourses of state, community and character are interwoven in new ways. Crucial here is the system of typage, ie the employment of a recurrent, relatively fixed set of attributes to define character. I have already noted the importance of character as a vehicle of direct address, a figure who establishes a junction between screen and audience to constitute an incipient political community. The system of typage, which emerges subsequently, and especially after 1970, while carrying on some of the earlier functions of character address, introduces a new regime of representation. For in this arrangement community is not presented as something achieved in the narrative process, where events come to coalesce in a character giving voice to community. Instead, community is condensed into the iconic figure, pre-eminently into the triad of Hindu, Muslim and Christian, whose attributes are largely fixed and unvarying. Even here there is a hierarchy, in which Hindus assume the apex position in a multi-community image of the nation, and display the attributes of modernity: education, modern profession, nuclear domesticity. Muslims and Christians are defined as less socially dynamic, caught up, respectively, in traditional occupations and indigent behaviour. Nevertheless, romantic drives animate each group within the triad. While marriage within community remains a basic narrative rule, romantic drives are nevertheless pitted against the repressive dimensions of patriarchal community. Further, while a symbolic hierarchy is observable in films of the 1970s, asymmetric hierarchies of star discourse were also deployed to pressurize narrative hierarchies. The key Bombay film star, Amitabh Bachchan, is a case in point. He could assume Muslim and Christian roles, as in *Coolie* (Manmohan Desai, 1983) and *Amar, Akbar, Anthony* (Manmohan Desai, 1977) but his commanding position in the star hierarchy put pressure on the regime of social representation which would subordinate such figures within the film. Something of a carnivalesque inversion of hierarchies then emerges; the plebeian communities acquire an attractive freedom, of personality, bodily disposition and romantic initiative, posed in marked contrast to the respectable, but also more repressed, Hindu hero of films such as *Amar, Akbar, Anthony*. It is as if the distractive, anarchic aspects normally associated with comic figures had erupted to envelop the narrative world, loosening hierarchies and coherent modes of symbolic social representation.

Such domains of possibility were significantly undermined in the climate of an aggressive Hindu nationalism in the 1990s, in which majoritarian discourses and political mobilization relentlessly targetted the Muslim other, culminating in the destruction of a mosque at Ayodhya on 6 December 1992. Significantly, the convention of the multi-community nation was dispersed in Bombay cinema, as the Hindu hero assumed a singular authority in expressing a social and political vision. Ironically, in the recent past it has been the re-emergence of the earlier, Hindu led multi-community triad, which has functioned as a form of resistance to a monolithic Hindu nationalist narrative.(59)

However, narrational techniques display a certain diversification in this period. While character typage, invoking an established pattern of rhetorical discourse centred on familial duty and patriotic sentiment, remained dominant, there has also developed a modernizing impulse in the deployment of point of view narration, naturalist acting styles, and the integration of song and dance sequences to a cause and effect driven narrative economy. These new drives in the popular cinema have appropriated an earlier impulse to diversify the cinematic institution in the 1970s. At this time there emerged a distinct middle-class cinema, displacing attention from the extraordinary, large-scale figure of the star, and invoking the pleasures of the ordinary and everyday.(60)

What is remarkable is that these discourses were successfully appropriated(61) to speak of larger issues, about how citizenship

and the nation-state could be consolidated against the threat of anti-nationalist forces invariably associated with the Muslim-majority nation-state of Pakistan. In a key film of the 1990s, *Roja* (Mani Ratnam, 1993, Tamil/Hindi), much of these ideological imperatives and new narrative strategies are on display, with a constant movement between character-driven narration and a condensation of the voice of (Hindu) community and nation into a character. The only signs of resistance to the dominant Hindu nationalist ideology of this film arise from its female character, who gives voice to small-scale motivations of romantic desire quite indifferent to the larger designs of patriotic duty and national interests.(62)(63)

To point to this node of resistance is not to argue that the logic of realist characterization will or must supplant systems of direct address in the popular cinema. For the particular implication of diegetic characters and film audiences in the fictive contracts of community and nation suggest the constant need to represent imperatives larger than the individual and to stage debates about the nature of social and political subjectivity.

Parts of this article were originally published in Ravi S. Vasudevan, 'Addressing the spectator of a "third-world" national cinema: the Bombay social film of the 1940s and 1950s', *Screen* 36 (4) 1995

1. For a representative selection of articles, cf. Jim Pines and Paul Willemsen edited, *Questions of Third Cinema*, London, British Film Institute 1989

2. M.B. Billimoria, 'Foreign markets for Indian films', *Indian Talkie*, 1931-56, Bombay, Film Federation of India, 1956, pp.53-54. A substantial deposit of Indian films distributed by Wapar France, an agency which catered to North African markets are in the French film archives at Bois D'arcy. For the importance of Indian film imports to Indonesia and Burma, cf. John A. Lent, *The Asian film industry*, London, Christopher Helm, 1990, p.202, 223; and for patterns of Indian film exports at the end of the 1980s, M. Pendakur, 'India', in *ibid.*, p.240.

3. '...none of these cinemas [from Morocco to Kuwait] is doing well... markets are flooded with Rambos, Karate films, Hindu [sic.] musicals and Egyptian films...'. Lisbeth Malkmus, 'The "new Egyptian cinema"', *Cineaste* 16 (3), 1988, p.30.

4. The term comes from Tom Gunning, 'The cinema of attraction: early film, its spectator and the avant-garde', *Wide Angle*, 8 (3-4), 1986. There is a more elaborate discussion of this term in relation to the Bombay cinema later in this paper. For reflections on other 'attraction' based cinemas cf. Laleen Jayamanne, 'Sri Lankan family melodrama: a cinema of primitive attractions', *Screen*, 33 (2), Summer 1992, pp.145-153; and Gerard Fouquet, 'Of genres and savours in Thai film' in *Cinemaya* no.6, 1989-1990, pp.4-9.

5. For example, Ginette Vincendeau, 'The exception and the rule', *Sight and Sound* 2 (8) 1994, which demonstrates that Renoir's *Rules of the game* (1939), invariably highlighted in the canon of world cinema by critics, should be understood within a set of local parameters of narrative form, performance tradition (boulevard plays) and cinematographic style (long takes and shooting in depth) that were shared by a number of French films of the time. Other stimulating writing on the importance of local industrial and cultural contexts includes: Ana M. Lopez, 'Tears and desire: women and melodrama in the "old" Mexican cinema', in John King, Ana M. Lopez and Manuel Alvarado (ed), *Mediating two worlds: cinematic encounters in the Americas*, London, BFI publishing, 1993; Thomas Elsaesser, *A second life: German cinema's first decade*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1996; James Hay, *Popular film culture in fascist Italy: the passing of the rex*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1987; Sue Harper, *Picturing the past: the rise and fall of the British costume film*, London, British Film Institute, 1994, for an understanding of how the historical film reflected popular perceptions about British history; Susan Hayward, *French National Cinema*, London, Routledge, 1999, who notes the importance of systems of gesture and morphology in condensing social and political consensus through the vehicle of the star. More generally, there is the elegant introduction

on the problems and possibilities of the notion of popular cinema in Ginette Vincendeau and Richard Dyer, *Popular European Cinema*, London, Routledge, 1992. Such writing is yet to evolve substantially for the 'third world cinema', as much recent writing has been centred on avant-garde 'third cinema' studies.

6. This agenda would also re-set the terms of an ethnographic cultural studies seeking to recover the many ways audiences interpret texts. Distinctions have arisen between an ethnographic cultural studies for the west and that applied to the third world. Where the former is governed by democratic assumptions, and the possibilities of multiple viewpoints in the construction of texts, the latter tends to be monolithic in its characterization of the cultural basis of interpretation. But clearly, once the west too is re-made into a series of specific cultural histories, the possibility of putting the democratic and cultural together within an ethnographic approach generates a more universal agenda.

7. For the standard account, E. Barnouw and S. Krishnaswamy, *Indian film*, London and New York, Oxford University Press, 1980; also Manjunath Pendakur, 'India', *op.cit.*, p.231

8. For reflections on the subordinating implications of Bombay's national cinema, see my 'Dislocations: the cinematic imagining of a new society in 1950s India', *Oxford Literary Review*, forthcoming.

9. 'The pre-Phalke era in south Indian cinema', *South Indian Studies* no 2. 1996

10. All references are to 'The Hindi film', *Indian Talkie*, p.81

11. Tamil film studies workshop, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, 1997

12. Moinak Biswas, 'Literature and cinema in Bengal, 1930s-1950s', paper presented at seminar 'Reading Indian cinema', Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University, 1998
13. The reasons for the restructuring of the 'social' film are complex. Artists associated with the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), which had ties with the Communist Party of India had started working in the film industry from the 1940s. Amongst these were the actor Balraj Sahni, the director Bimal Roy and the script-writer K.A. Abbas. The latter was involved in *Awara/The Vagabond* (Raj Kapoor, 1951), a film representative of the new drive to combine a social reform perspective with ornate spectacle. However, the years after independence were characterised by a broader ideological investment in discourses of social justice associated with the image of the new state and the personality of its first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.
14. For an exploration of this influential critical tradition, see my 'Shifting codes, dissolving identities: the Hindi social film of the 1950s as popular culture', *Journal of Art and Ideas*, nos.23-24, January 1993, pp.51-85; reprinted in *Third Text*, 34.
15. Cf. the collection of essays in Wimal Dissanayake edited, *Melodrama and Asian cinema*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993
16. e.g., Mitsushiro Yoshimoto's account of the post-war domestic criticism of Japanese cinema, 'Melodrama, post-modernism and Japanese cinema' in *ibid.*, pp.101-26, especially pp.110-111.
17. New Delhi, Roli books, 1991
18. 'Seeing is believing', *ibid.*, pp.35-44
19. 'City and village' and 'The oedipal hero', *ibid.*, pp.45-58, 70-106
20. 'The painted face of Indian politics', *ibid.*, pp.199-247
21. All references are to Ashish Nandy, 'An intelligent critic's guide to the Indian cinema', *Deep Focus* 1 (1-3), Dec. 1987, June 1988 and Nov. 1988, pp.68-72, 53-60 and 58-61.
22. *Ideology of the Hindi film: a historical construction*, Delhi, Oxford University Press 1998
23. Peter Brooks, *The melodramatic imagination: Balzac, Henry James, melodrama and the mode of excess*, 1976, reprint New York, Columbia University Press, 1985.
24. This part of the argument has been anticipated by several writers. See Ashish Nandy, 'The Hindi film: ideology and first principles', *India International Centre Quarterly*, 8 (1), 1981, pp.89-96; Rosie Thomas, 'Indian cinema: pleasures and popularity', *Screen*, 26 (3-4), 1985; and Ravi Vasudevan, 'The melodramatic mode and the commercial Hindi cinema', *Screen*, 30 (3), 1989, pp.29-50
25. 'The Phalke era: conflict of traditional form and modern technology', *Journal of Art and Ideas*, 14-15, 1987, pp.47-78; reprinted in T.Niranjana, P.Sudhir and V.Dhareshwar edited, *Interrogating modernity: culture and colonialism in India*, Calcutta, Seagull, 1993, pp. 47-82
26. 'Mythic material in Indian cinema', *Journal of arts and ideas*, 14-15, 1987, reprinted as 'Revelation and doubt: Sant Tukaram and Devi', in T.Niranjana et al, *Interrogating Modernity*, pp. 19-46.
27. 'Revelation and doubt', p.23
28. Kapur defines the formal category of frontality as arising from 'the word, the image, the design, the performative act... This means, for example, flat, diagrammatic and simply contoured figures (as in Kalighat pat painting). It means a figure-ground design, with notational perspective (as in the Nathdwara pictures, and the photographs which they often utilize). It means, in dramatic terms, the repetition of motifs within ritual 'play', as in the lila; it means a space deliberately evacuated to foreground actor-image performance, as in the tamasha. Frontality is also established in an adaptation of traditional acting conventions to the proscenium stage, as when stylized audience address is mounted on an elaborate mise-en-scene, as in Parsi theatre.' 'Revelation and doubt', p.20
29. *The melodramatic imagination*, p.62.
30. 'Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein', in *Image, music, text* (selected and translated by Stephen Heath), London, Fontana paperbacks, 1982, p.70.
31. *ibid.*
32. Reference may be made here to a panel from the eighteenth century Hindu text analysed by I. Julia Leslie in *The perfect wife: the orthodox Hindu woman according to the Stridharmapaddhati of Tryambakayajvan*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1989

33. For darsana, see Lawrence A. Babb, 'Glancing: visual interaction in Hinduism', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 37 (4), 1981, pp.387-401; Diana Eck, *Seeing the divine image in*

India, Chambersburg, Pa., Anima Books, 1981.

34. Madhava Prasad uses the concept in this fashion, to outline the way narrative relations are organised in the 'feudal family romance'. Prasad, *Ideology of the Hindi film*, chapter 3

35. Kumkum Sangari has noted the following effects of the female devotional voice: 'The orthodox triadic relation between wife, husband and god is broken. The wife no longer gets her salvation through her 'godlike' husband ... Bhakti offers direct salvation. The intermediary position now belongs not to the human husband or the Brahmin priest but to the female devotional voice. This voice, obsessed with the relationships between men and women, continues to negotiate the triadic relationship - it simultaneously transgresses and reformulates patriarchal ideologies'. 'Mirabai and the spiritual economy of Bhakti', *Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, Occasional Papers on History and Society, Second Series, no.28, pp.59-60*

36. I owe this observation to Jim Cook.

37. Ashish Rajadhyaksha, 'Who's looking? Viewership and democracy in Indian cinema', in Ravi S. Vasudevan edited *Making Meaning in Indian Cinema*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, forthcoming

38. 'Shifting codes, dissolving identities: the Hindi social film of the 1950s as popular culture'

39. "'You cannot live in society - and ignore it!': nationhood and female modernity in *Andaz* (Mehboob Khan, 1949)', in Patricia Uberoi edited, *Sexuality, social reform and the state*, New Delhi, Sage, 1996, pp.83-108

40. See Karthigesu Sivathamby, *The Tamil film as a medium of political communication*, Madras, New Century Book House, 1981; and S. Theodor Baskaran, *The Eye of the Serpent*, Chennai, East-West Books, 1997

41. For a more detailed account, see my 'Sexuality and the film apparatus: continuity, non-continuity and discontinuity in Bombay cinema' in Mary E. John and Janaki Nair edited, *A Question of Silence: the Sexual Economies of Modern India*, Delhi, Kali for Women, 1998, pp.192-215

42. For an account of narrators and comics in traditional and folk theatrical form, see M.L. Varadpande, *Traditions of Indian theatre*, New Delhi, Abhinav publications, 1978, pp.84-85.

43. Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: spectatorship in American silent cinema*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1991.

44. Thomas Elsaesser, *Early cinema: space-frame-narrative*, British Film Institute, 1990.

45. 'The cinema of attraction', op.cit.

46. Hansen, *From Babel to Babylon*, chapters 1 and 2.

47. For an outline of the complexity of these issues, see Nivedita Menon, 'State/gender/community: citizenship in contemporary India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31 January 1998, PE 3- PE10. For a historical account showing that the boundaries of state law and personal law were not immutable, Archana Parashar, *Women and family law reform in India*, New Delhi, Sage, 1993; for the mixture of codes in colonial criminal law, Radhika Singha, *A Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1998

48. Sudipta Kaviraj, 'Democracy and development in India' in Amiya Bagchi (ed) *Democracy and development*, London, St. Martin's Press, 1995, and 'Dilemmas of democratic development in India' in Adrian Leftwich (ed) *Democracy and development: theory and practice*, Oxford, Polity Press, 1996; Partha Chatterjee, *The nation and its fragments: colonial and post-colonial histories*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1994; 'Beyond the nation? Or within?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Delhi, January 4-11, 1997, 30-34 and 'Community in the East', *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 7 1998, 277-282; Veena Das, 'Communities as political actors: the question of cultural rights' in Veena Das, *Critical events*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1996

49. The following is a summary of a larger work in progress.

50. See Tapan Basu, Pradip Dutta, Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: a Critique of the Hindu Right*, Delhi, Orient Longman, 1993, for an analysis of these aspects of Hindu nationalist ideology.

51. All references are taken from Bombay, Home Department, Political file no. 313/1940. Maharashtra State Archives.

52. See the introduction to Saadat Hasan Manto, *Kingdom's end and other stories*, translated from the Urdu by Khalid Hasan, London, Verso Books, 1987.

53. *Filmfare*, 26 April, 1957, p.77.

54. Filmfare, 17 October 1952, p.19.

55. Filmfare, 28 November 1952, p.18.

56. Ajit, interviewed by Anjali Joshi, Sunday Observer, Delhi, 16 December 1991. For some ideas about the on-screen ramifications of

Hamid Ali Khan's change of name, see my 'Dislocations'.

57. Filmindia, May 1950.

58. For further reflections about Nargis' career, see Rosie Thomas, 'Sanctity and scandal in Mother India', Quarterly Review of Film and Video, 11 (3), 1989, pp.11-30; and my 'You cannot live in

society - and ignore it'.

59. Cases in point are Ghulam/Enslaved (Mukesh Bhatt, 1998) and Zakhm/The Wound (Mahesh Bhatt, 1999).

60. See Madhava Prasad, Ideology of the Hindi film, part II, for an account of how the cinematic institution was diversified in the 1970s.

61. See the arguments of Tejaswini Niranjana, 'Whose nation: tourists and terrorists in Roja', Economic and Political Weekly 24 (3), 15 January 1994; and Madhava Prasad, 'Signs of ideological re-form: from formal into real subsumption', Journal of arts and ideas no. 29, 1996, reprinted as the epilogue to Ideology of the Hindi film.

62. For a more elaborate analysis of this film, see Tejaswini Niranjana, 'Whose nation?'; Madhava Prasad, 'Signs of ideological re-form' and Ravi Vasudevan, 'Voice, space, form: Roja, Indian film, and national identity', in Stuart Murray edited, Not on any map: essays on post-coloniality, Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 1997.