

Theorising the Changing Discourse of Animation

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Theorising the Changing Discourse of Animation

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Theorising the Changing Discourse of Animation submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the joint supervision of Dr. Manas Ray, former Professor of Cultural Studies, CSSSC and Dr. A.F. Mathew, Associate Professor, Humanities and Liberal Arts in Management, IIM, Kozhikode.

And that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/ elsewhere.

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To my parents and sister

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Abstract

This thesis is primarily concerned with the absence of a rational discourse in early animation, or the presence of animated life as a non-binary existence without death. This was the effect of the frame-by-frame animation process that allowed for manifest plasticity and metamorphosis to inform omnipotent characters. Enquiring such an image would bring forth a new dimension of thinking moving images, in terms of the literal impossibility of creating death. Life was doubly animated in early animation. However, this early notion of deathlessness has shifted with ever increasing notions of realism afflicting the animated image. The contemporary image is informed by increasing sense of the scientific and the rational, which amounts to the hyperreal representation of the external world. This amounts to the creation and crossing over multiple thresholds of epistemologisation resulting in a scientific and rational image, eventually culminating into the creation of mortal bodies within the animated image. The changing character of the animated image, especially its uncoded aspects can therefore showcase more than meets the eye. It portrays the changing sense of the historical unconscious. In addition, it also depicts the changing nature of the historical transcendental. Finally, the changing form of the image shows the nature of subject-object dualism afflicting western philosophy. This can be articulated through a social theory of consciousness that could articulate the effects of power and capital on both the sense of social subjectivity and objectivity.

Keywords: *Animation discourse, plasticity, metamorphosis, historical transcendental, subject-object dualism, death in animation, death of animation*

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Introduction

With a spree of “live action” remakes of popular box office successes hitting the screen, from “The Jungle Book,” “Aladdin,” “The Lion King,” the forthcoming “Mulan” and “The Little Mermaid,” there is little doubt about the course taken by the animation industry towards photorealistic rendition of erstwhile productions. Although the economic ends to the productions are apparent, that is they are intended for extending the film franchise, of more concern is the image form which has been reworked without any major shifts of the narrative. Thanks to technological advancements, the erstwhile “animated” world can now be recreated within a live action setting. However, if the process is considered, these productions are fully animated. This thesis seeks to understand how and why such formal changes are taking place. Is this change simply because technology has the capability to recreate animated worlds into their live action counterparts, or does it refer to something else? Has the very conceptual definition of animation changed in the process? If so, then what are the changes? And has animation gained or lost something with such changes?

Although there are doubts shed upon anything salient to a conception, the peculiar nature of animation form can be attributed to its frame-by-frame process of construction. The early animated image resided outside of scientific reason as the ability to endow all forms with life. The supposed inanimate forms also became alive, while characters would never die. This unique landscape informed by *athanasia*, that is deathlessness, resided outside of dominant practices of knowledge. Attempts at comprehending animation through conventional conceptual categories applicable to cinema in general has actually failed without film theoreticians noticing it. Or perhaps they ignored it. Film theory has largely misconstrued animation by only looking at it as an image form similar to cinema proper without accounting

for the different reality that it posited. Due to such shortcomings of theory, animation's full potential in praxis has also remained largely unrealised.

The primary question would be about the term "animation" and what it stands for, both as a conceptual definition and as a process. The effect of the animation process is about endowing any and all forms with life. This animated life resided outside scientific, rational and linguistic binaries. Death does not exist in this world. This was part and parcel of early animation. However, the contemporary animation form does not show any signs of *athanasia*; instead, the live action image posits bodies that are liable to be hurt or die with violence inflicted upon them. In fact, the question of visible physical violence on the body is mostly kept latent in contemporary animated films, which ostensibly is meant for an innocent audience, namely children. The point of concern is how and why animation has shifted from its erstwhile conception to its present form. Subsequently, with the eventual shift of the animated image towards its contemporary rationalised form, the concern about the loss of animation's erstwhile unique attributes has been forgotten. If early animation allowed for bodies and forms to be malleable and morphable, can the same be applied to contemporary animated image? Bodies are not morphable any more, whether it is through the application of internal or external force. In the present scenario, this would possibly kill bodies violently. It seems that none of the studies find it essential to enquire why or how animated characters were rendered mortal. The point of enquiry of this thesis partly concerns the capture of the animated image by reason, whose effects are well observed in the present film form, whether it is mainstream productions or individual practices.

Animation and live action cinema were ontologically different, both in terms of the looks of the image form and also the process. Conceptual attributes of animation are also dependent on the process that sets it apart from live action imagery. Hence, a dictionary definition of animation not only talks about endowing forms with life but also about the frame-by-frame

manipulation of images to produce the illusion of movement. Yet, most film theoreticians have approached live action cinema (henceforth live action) and animation cinema (henceforth animation) on similar terms. Animation has mostly been treated as a subset of live action cinema. In fact, animation is a superset of live action imagery, since it provides all devices and tropes available to cinema and more. The point of concern of this thesis is to reconsider analysis taking the animated image with its differences in mind for a more holistic approach to understanding the medium. Since the animated image has shifted from how it had started, and no longer resembles the erstwhile form, it would be relevant to ask whether there has been a concomitant ontological and conceptual shift of the image and the process. In that case, analysis should correspondingly shift from earlier approaches to accommodate the shifted image. In addition, analysis would be incomplete if the image is not considered with respect to this historical shift of form and content. Contemporary animation can actually be much better theorised by film theory since it largely resembles live action imagery, both in form and content. However, the methodology of approaching this apparent similarity between animation and live action does not account for the historical and ontological shift of the form or the process.

Therefore, the first point of concern is to ontologically distinguish animation from other forms of moving images, particularly live action cinema. In the process, the salient features of animation, or at least how it was conceptually understood at its nascence needs to be identified. The intent is to reveal animation as a separate form that has to be approached from a different epistemological position than the ones used for cinema in general. When animation is identified in its conceptual essence, or at least how it was formulated in the early days of production, its changing form over the years could be comprehended in terms of their ontological shifts. Since the image has fundamentally shifted from its erstwhile form, accordingly its discursive nature has also shifted. Certain contemporary live action films are

almost entirely animated and can no longer be distinguished from recorded imagery. Moreover, even if contemporary animated films are given the “cartoon” look, they do not behave like erstwhile cartoon animation productions. The main difference is that even contemporary animation resembling cartoons would still be subject to a mortal life. Why? Comparing older imagery with contemporary forms at least shows an apparent ontological shift of the animation form. An archaeological understanding would definitely highlight such ontological shifts. A genealogical approach may bring forth a new understanding of such shifts through understandings of power. However, it may not be able to account for the formation of structural imperatives that rationalises the image. Therefore, a different methodological approach may be better suited for analysing animation, especially because it does not conform to conventional theory.

A more adaptive approach is required to understand the shift of the form and accordingly, the subject matter. Conventional theory has failed to realise that the fluid form of animation has also been subject to discursive influences over the years. Therefore, there has been a couple of fundamental gaps informing approaches to animation analysis. Firstly, animated movement has not been considered separately from movement in general. Therefore, animation analysis has largely been approached akin to analysis of live action cinema. This gap can only be addressed by taking the animation process specifically into consideration. This would help address the difference in nature of animated movement from movement in general. Secondly, the gradual shift of the animation form from its days of inception, from drawn or direct techniques or stop motion animation to its eventual shifts to computer generated imagery (CGI), has not been analysed keeping its ontological difference in mind. Therefore, such significant ontological shifts of the animation form over the past century, which is conspicuously visible needs to be addressed not only from a philosophical perspective, but also needs to be situated historically. Thirdly, since animation proper is

informed by deathlessness, and outside of the binaries of language, its conventional definition should be used as a framework to look into film analysis. This would help to theoretically situate a film from the unique perspective of animation proper.

Before delving further into the thesis it may well be relevant to discuss why this thesis is important. Since the transition of the animation form towards live action has not really been a problem for the industry, as new animation technologies with large capital investments can afford to create realistic imagery akin to live action imagery, the point of concern would be to first interrogate where lies the imperative to turn the animated image into its rationalised avatar. Whereas the world of early cartoon animation was informed by deathlessness, contemporary animation verily posits mortal bodies. The primary point of enquiry would be why and how this transition happened. And since animation is defined by the ability to endow forms with life, the primary question starts from a small problem: why would characters not die in early animation even when decapitated, and why does it seem that all animated characters in contemporary animation are likely to die? What has led to this change and why should we be concerned about such shifts of the animation form?

As already mentioned, to address such questions, animation needs to be enquired in terms of its fundamental ontological difference from live action imagery, both in terms of the image and the process. Animation has been considered primarily as a form of cinema and therefore has been incorporated under Film Studies without much focus on its ontological difference from cinema proper. But why? Is there some other fundamental problem afflicting film theory, or theory in general so that theoreticians fail to notice this difference? This is the primary problem afflicting all animation analysis where the material process and the image are not considered together for analysis. Under such circumstances, the problem at hand is to figure out ways to incorporate the visible and invisible changes of the form with a changing process, and which shifts historically. The main research questions need to address why

animation as a medium is unique. How and why has the conception of animation shifted from its early days of inception to its contemporary form? How can animation analysis adapt to such historical and ontological shifts? Why is it necessary to address such concerns? How is it relevant to animation analysis? Does a formal shift also imply a concomitant conceptual shift for animation? How does one theorise the animation form when it seems to reside outside of discourse? Given that animation films are created in as many styles as there are artists, why are their analysis undertaken with a homogenised approach? The primary question proliferates into multiple concerns and comes back full circle into the understanding of animation as something that could destabilise normative notions of reality.

With such queries in mind, the research was conducted by taking into consideration certain landmark films that shows the paradigmatic shift of the animation form with concomitant technological shifts. Although such conscious paradigmatic shifts are apparent from the changing form, of more concern are the unconscious shifts of the animation form that actually brings forth an understanding of the historical unconscious. The historical unconscious defines an epistemological space specific to a particular period which reveals a positive unconscious of knowledge that eludes the consciousness of scientists and yet is part of scientific discourse (Foucault 2005, xii). Foucault would call this positivity, which defines a field of historical emergence as the historical *a priori*. The case studies are intended to showcase the unconscious conceptual shifts alongside the conspicuous formal shifts. Since the image can also remain uncoded, partially if not fully, the uncoded aspects could reveal more of the unconscious shifts of the image form and consequently reveal the historical unconscious. An enquiry into the reasons behind the changing animation form, although apparently inconsequential to image making practices, could also have far reaching implications when it comes to understanding historical shifts of subject-object relations.

While there may not be an intrinsic nature of animation, it would still have certain fundamental traits if the animation process is considered. Also, animation would have an essential quality if considered from its conceptual definition, or from the images generated in its early days of inception. This would also generate an initial conception of the medium that sets its defining parameters. And the resulting form as an effect of the process can also be conversely looked upon as the process being the effect of a desired image. If animation has changed to its contemporary form that makes it indistinguishable from live action, then the pertinent question would be whether the process has also changed according to the changing image. The analysis of the form cannot be independent of the material processes of animation production. However, most studies are focused on the supposed meaning over the image form, although the latter holds much significance. Therefore, a relevant question would be how the animation form is related as a condition of possibility of meaning formation. And hence, this study of the animated image focuses more on the form and the process as the basis for knowledge formation in addition to affect residing outside of meaning. The expression of discourse upon the animated image may not be visible upon textual analysis, since the indeterminate form of animation is not so obviously decoded, and also because the primary focus is on the determinable aspects of the narrative form. The image which is the uncoded and the non-representational is nevertheless the main aspect of the affective, residing outside of discourse. The form of the visible residing outside of definitive meanings is the concern of this analysis so that the shifting image form is comprehended as the shifting conditions of possibility of knowledge formation. Therefore, the shifting image of animation could be used as the visual basis to analyse changing historical patterns, especially when it comes to understanding shifts of the present episteme.

Since the possibilities of animation have largely remained unexplored, particularly because it proffers endless possibilities, consequently theorising on animation as a possibility

including the unexplored could open up this very lack of exploration to enquiry. And since exploring theory could lead to better understanding of praxis, a new way of theorising animation could encompass what has not been explored as yet and bring about a new understanding of image construction. Theory could encompass the already produced and the unexplored. Theorising on what is absent and what could be achieved of the medium can be better understood by focusing on what has been overlooked or so far inadequately comprehended in theory. This could generate new approaches to animation praxis.

A theoretical approach primarily privileges determinate information over indeterminate aesthetics. The aim of this thesis is not so, since both aspects diffuse into each other for any media, animation showcasing the most visible of such diffusions. Therefore, significant problems surface in trying to distinguish the animation content from its form. Since a theory of animation could immensely be benefitted when taken from the perspective of a practicing individual who connects formal and aesthetic elements to the technical and critical, an applied approach that takes into account the visible, the unsaid and the inarticulable could be the best form of praxis, as applied theory. This praxis cannot be explained fully through words and yet remains visibly apparent. Since this is not possible within the current context of a thesis presentation, the indeterminable can only be described, with or without its association with meaning. And hence, the analysis of the animated image is largely confined to understanding the determinable aspects while comprehending the relegation and removal of the uncoded as a form of the unintelligible.

As everything in the animated image is created, decoding the animated image might be limited to the codified form. The uncoded of animation resides within the very scope of animated movement and therefore is crucial for deciphering from the manifest image. Specifically, in trying to bring the indeterminable and the unknown within the ambit of knowledge, more is excluded as the indeterminate, for meaning is absent without

determinacy of form. But more importantly, because movements produce affects and meanings that may be able to communicate beyond the definite linguistic interpretation of the form of the image.

The intent is to find an approach that would ultimately help reclaim animation to its erstwhile potential and open up new possibilities. Since the mainstream form has a hegemonic presence that stifles individual and peripheral approaches, a theory questioning the ascendancy of the dominant form, could help remember the forgotten aspects of animation. Technological advancements that are supposed to help realise animation its true potential has brought forth a constraining spectacle that all productions tend to emulate. Questioning such hegemonic forms would open up pathways to alternative approaches. Taking an approach that enquires into and simultaneously critically appreciates the form and process could help reclaim the erstwhile devices and their applications.

The first chapter highlights the ontological differences between animation and live action. It justifies why animation and live action should be theorised differently. The visual that arises from the subjective approach of the animator results in the potential rendering of space and time as plastic. Animation is about endowing forms with life, and this life is produced in the very creation of the form. This is contradictory to commonsensical perception, since animated life does not bear the opposing condition of death. This was very much the norm in early animation. The visible world unfolds in the form of attributing life to everything and in its very positing transforms the very substance of forms. Since animated life is contradiction, it needs to be resolved by introducing the binaries of life and death. Producing the binary of death also means the introduction of scientific life and therefore organic substance needs to be produced.

The second chapter finds plasticity as intrinsic to early animation. Plastic and metamorphic movement, which is the result of the non-discursive process brings out the true

potential of animation forms extending its own unique logic applicable to alternative life forms and worlds. Resistance to dominant discourses is found where there is a relation between the familiar and its subversion, in plasticity and metamorphosis. Plasticity, contrary to the imbuing of life in all forms by animation, showcases the impermanence of all forms. This also means a creative destruction of all forms. This goes against dominant knowledge. The plastic image of animation in its dematerialised potential is the manifest form of non-representation, continuously giving rise to the new. Since form is generally understood to be organising matter, the animated image is an anomaly to such relationships. As substance exists independent of form in the plastic image, it thwarts representation. Plasticity of animated movement renders signs into non-representational formations resulting in destabilised meanings that resists discursive formation. Since every component within the animated image is constructed, animation exposes organisation of form and its movement as a set of force relations. In fact, representation is destabilised since substance appears as force relation within the plastic image, thereby revealing the transgressive potential of the sign form disconnected from substance. Knowledge frameworks that codify representation into the normative as the hierarchy of unmarked and marked codifications are thereby exposed as effects of power/knowledge, which also highlights the relational co-dependency of concepts including that of scientific discourse.

The third chapter shows the gradual capturing of the plastic and incoherent form of animation and its codification according to the modern scientific discourse that develops as both a conscious and an unconscious structural imperative quasi-independently of the people involved in creating the image. The capture of the animated image by scientific rational discourse is also the creation of linguistic binaries. This rationalising process is also about making substance conform to scientific binaries of life and death. However, with the intent of creation of mortal bodies, or rather in imbuing forms with death, a threshold is reached

where subjective identification with bodies lead to the uncanny. The telos of animation has thus been the transition from the immateriality of immanent life as a primal protoplasmic substance informing all life forms into selectively endowing organic forms with life. But more importantly, the transition of bodies from being amortal to becoming mortal also reveals shifting subject-object relationships. The shifting image showcases a transitioning episteme and shifting subject positions with respect to the changing image.

It cannot be denied that there has been few significant animation productions in India. There are multiple reasons behind that. However, if the present concern could be confined to the aspects afflicting animation in general, then theory could not only encompass aspects inhibiting individual and limited budget productions, but also indigenous approaches to animation production. There are a couple of aspects to animation that simultaneously constrains and allows for alternative explorations beyond the mainstream. Firstly, animation is an expensive medium. It is both art and industry. Dominant hegemonic practices have ensured that animation is only possible with large infrastructural investments possible only with big capital. Therefore, it already curtails possibilities for alternatives beyond mainstream industry practices. Secondly, having the empty stage as a possibility for unlimited exploration, it allows for individual and peripheral practices to flourish as alternatives to the mainstream. Therefore, new individual and autochthonous modes of approaching animation praxis could be figured if a critical theoretical approach can be devised to enquire into the unique traits of animation. Alternative practices could therefore enter into visual dialogues with hegemonic forms. This aspect of dialogue between dominant and peripheral forms has largely been ignored, especially within third world contexts. This thesis, in enquiring into the mainstream form would also assert alternative frameworks that could possibly reclaim maximal possibilities of animation while also resisting the hegemony of expensive dominant approaches that stifle such approaches.

Chapter 1: Interrogating the Idea of Animation

1.1 The Starting Point: Difference Between Animation and Live Action Cinema

In trying to understand the basic parameters of animation, we come across a gamut of different styles that problematises its conception. The animation form does not conform to a universal style, since it is not only an industrial process but also practiced by independent animators. The conception of animation should apply to all its forms and practices. However, due to multiple approaches and styles, it is difficult to enumerate the nature of the animated image under a singular category. It proliferates into myriad forms distinct from live action cinema. While apparently there is no distinction between live action and animation, together referred to as moving images, the images corresponding to both differ in terms of their form and process. Since the final output seems to be the same for both, i.e. moving image, most theoreticians perceive animation as part of cinema. Otherwise, they are largely confined to discussing the image or the process through which the form has been achieved, but usually not together, either affecting the other. But more importantly, animation is ontologically different from live action cinema if the image or the process is considered for analysis. Therefore, animation needs to be understood specifically in terms of its difference from the live action imagery.

In fact, this would also have a bearing on how we name the two categories of animation and live action cinema. Contrary to film theoreticians approaching animation as a genre of live action cinema, it is more pertinent to name animation cinema and live-action cinema (henceforth, animation and live action) as two separate categories. An integrated nomenclature does little to solve this difference since it does not qualify to inform the visible

differences between animation and live action. The differences between the two have apparently blurred over the years with the arrival of computer generated imagery (CGI), generating widespread theoretical confusions about the difference between the two. It is as if every film spectator or theoretician has an inkling of the idea of the difference between the two, yet not graspable under some abstruse logic. If indeed they have to be brought under the broad rubric of moving images, then animation should be considered as the superset within which live action is a special case. This is because animation offers all the devices available to live action and more. In fact, the attempt to make the animated image to appear like live action has reduced its possibilities. Therefore, animation is considered in its nascency. This thesis enquires into early drawn animation, the arguments subsequently extended into other forms and formats, like stop motion, direct animation, and finally 3D computer generated imagery (CGI). Since CGI has become the mainstream dominant form, it would eventually be considered in greater detail.

1.2 False movement and the “Cinematographic Illusion”

The question of knowledge concerning animation has to do with how movement is conceived. The starting point of any conception concerns certain fundamental postulates that could be expanded into a broader perimeter of definitions extending the primary conception. However, the crucial problem with animation is that it hits at the very fundamentals of knowledge formation, since it concerns the unthought of continuous movement residing outside of knowledge that cannot be grasped within thought. The unthought may be considered as the undifferentiated given which is the basis of categorial conceptions conceived according to discrete thinking. This continuum cannot be converted into a discrete conception without committing error, or without misrepresenting “reality” in its very conception. Therefore, positive concepts involve the act of division of movement and

continuity residing outside of knowledge. The unthought of continuity and movement can only be conceived in terms of discrete thought, and hence misrepresents the nature of the given visible. Movement cannot be conceived in terms of representational thought.

Therefore, how real movement is divided and separated into concepts sets the course of discursive formation. In his “Creative Evolution,” Henri Bergson states that, “the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind” (Bergson 1944, 332), and that the technology of cinema likewise also possesses the same shortcomings of our ordinary perception, intellection or language. Therefore, apparently the way in which the cinematograph divides movement should be somewhat similar in the way the intellect conceives of movement. Apparently, there is little difference between how movement is constituted in the cinematograph and how it is constituted by the intellect. The cinematic apparatus presumes universal homogeneous time in the act of converting continuous movement into discrete instants. Bergson stated that the technology of cinema failed to represent the continuous nature of movement in reality. Cinema or the intellect missed the essence of becoming, which is the process of indivisible change that defines reality. Bergson calls this as false movement and gives it a name: “cinematographic illusion”. Deleuze, in elaborating Bergson’s theses on movement states this irreconcilability:

[...] you cannot reconstitute movement with positions in space or instants in time: that is, with immobile sections [coupes]. You can only achieve this reconstitution by adding to the positions, or to the instants, the abstract idea of a succession, of a time which is mechanical, homogeneous, universal and copied from space, identical for all movements. And thus you *miss* the movement in two ways. On the one hand, you can bring two instants or two positions together to infinity; but movement will always occur in the interval between the two, in other words behind your back. On the other hand, however much you divide and subdivide time, movement will always occur in a

concrete duration [durée]; thus each movement will have its own qualitative duration.

Hence we oppose two irreducible formulas: ‘real movement → concrete duration’, and ‘immobile sections + abstract time’ (Deleuze 1986, 1).

According to Deleuze, Bergson’s main contention is the irreconcilability of real movement with immobile sections of visuals. Movement always lies in the interstice between two positions in space or two instants of time and therefore it eludes perception. However, Deleuze shifts from Bergson’s contention and considers cinema as a model for philosophical thought. Deleuze banks on the impression of movement given by the movement-image as an “intermediate image to which movement is not appended or added but an immediate given” (Deleuze 1986, 2). Alternatively, if there is movement, then it has to be supported with concrete duration. And cinema uses the sense of false movement of instantaneous sections in combination with homogeneous mechanical time, where the intermediate image gives the movement as the “immediate given”. It is not clear how Deleuze envisages the idea of the immediate, since every false sense of movement is mediated, in this case by the cinematic apparatus. Anyway, if we ignore this fact, and focus on his subsequent contention, Deleuze avoids the problematic of the unit of movement with the idea of a shot reconstituting the movement image into sections of movement (Deleuze 1986, 3) while overlooking the frame as the primary unit of perceiving movement. Animation nonetheless has to constitute movement using frames. Animation goes against the Deleuzian contention of mechanical, homogeneous, and universal time that is copied from space, and identical for all movements. The animated image does not follow mechanical, homogeneous and universal time; its temporal anomalies are considered in detail subsequently. Animation, more importantly, does not bank on the “given,” although it creates movement by using the sense of the immediate intermediate image through spacing and timing (duration). This sense of movement is not immediate and given. Instead, it is a mediated interpretation and construction of movement.

In that sense, animation produces the intermediate image from the already mediated sense of divided and separated instants.

1.3 The Shot and the Frame

For Norman McLaren, “Animation is not the art of drawings-that-move, but rather the art of movements-that-are-drawn. What happens between each frame is more important than what happens on each frame”. McLaren’s definition involves both the discrete and the continuous. He does not attempt to define the interstice between frames akin to Bergson, although he refers to it. His definition actually refers to the intermediate image similar to that posited by Deleuze. He does not face the contradiction of dividing movement according to the cinematic apparatus. However, concrete duration is necessary condition for sensation of movement. McLaren includes the concrete duration that Bergson has conceived of, as perception of what happens “between” each frame. McLaren’s attempt to theoretically conceptualise animation produces contradiction as well, not in the sense of Bergsonian irreconcilability between the continuous and the discrete, but in the sense of producing movement from static instants. Since there is no movement without concrete duration, McLaren’s definition of “movements-that-are-drawn” also posits apparent contradiction. How can movement be drawn as an instant? Moreover, what happens between each frame is more important than what happens on each frame. McLaren’s definition includes both the continuous sense of movement and duration of the intermediate image, as the interstice in-between frames, as well as the discrete sense of the frame. Attempting to animate in actual practice also involves conceptualising both discrete frames from the sense of the intermediate in-betweens.

Deleuze understands privileged instants similar to how Eisenstein picks up certain movements or developments that are selectively extracted and brought into collision from the

equidistant snapshots that a cinematograph produces. This actually focuses on the idea of the montage envisaged by Eisenstein, as conflict. A conflict does reside between frames and it is the linkage and the collision between frames that produces the dialectics of transformation. The cinematic cut instead maximises a perceived difference between frames in order to produce collision. Deleuze refers to Eisenstein as the actualiser of the modern dialectic in the production and confrontation of singular points within movement. He identifies the remarkable instant as the production of singularities made by the “cut” as a qualitative leap from the accumulation of banalities of moving images. Eisenstein’s idea of the cut is the pathetic leap from organic development. From organic unfolding, which is genesis and growth of the narrative, as a sense of spiralling development, into the change of form and content through conflictual crossing over, is the pathetic leap. The way Eisenstein looks at the privileged instant is through conflict and collision of singularities as shots. For Eisenstein, “the minimum ‘distortable’ fragment of nature is the shot; ingenuity in its combinations is the montage” (Eisenstein and Leyda 1977, 5) . And according to Eisenstein, the frame is much less workable independently (ibid.). Kubelka would find this relegation of the frame to lesser importance problematic. Kubelka:

It can be a collision, or it could be a very weak succession. There are many many possibilities. It’s just that [Sergei] Eisenstein wanted to have a collision—that’s what he liked. But what I wanted to say is: Where is, then, the articulation of cinema? Eisenstein, for example, said it’s the collision of two shots. But it’s very strange that nobody ever said that it’s not between shots but between frames. It’s between frames where cinema speaks. And then, when you have a roll of very weak collisions between frames—this is what I would call a shot, when one frame is very similar to the next frame, and the next frame, and the next frame, and the next frame, and the next frame—the result that you get when you have just a natural scene and you film

it... This would be a shot. But, in reality, you can work with every frame. (Beckman 2014, 4)

Kubelka notes the precise control of the frame that would also produce the distinction between animation and live action. The frame would not have emerged significant without the arrival of animation as a process that conceives of movement not in terms of dividing movement from the given continuum but by creating it. And it is here that animation separates from live action where the unit of analysis or synthesis of movement converges in the control of the frame. The frame as a privileged instant for animation is not the same as a frame for live action cinema. For neither is movement necessarily conceived as the intended outcome in animation, nor is any visible change necessarily considered as animated movement.

The frame is the instantaneous image of the potential of form afforded by the emptiness of the animation stage. In other words, the frame is able to contain the potentiality of the form within itself, since form itself is the potential to be and to become. It is precisely the control of the frame that had allowed animators, starting from the likes of Emile Cohl in his “Fantasmagorie” to produce a separate artistic and graphic universe having a life of its own. As Bendazzi would call it, it produced a “fourth dimensional art” as a flow of incoherent images concatenated without narration and yet capable of generating some form of effect as the existence of an independent formal universe. Bendazzi specifically notes that this sort of flow of graphic characters gave rise to metamorphosis as the intrinsic possibility of frame-by-frame recording. The frame-by-frame system successfully allowed for the seamless events to develop in time as the concatenation of unrelated forms through movement, namely metamorphoses. Metamorphosis thus becomes the intrinsic effect of frame-by-frame shooting giving birth to a new form (Bendazzi 2016, 31), a plastic form of animation. Specifically, since metamorphic change can only be possible in terms of transitioning frames, the sense of

morph shifts the focus from the shot as a unit of cinematic analysis to the frame. It is therefore the precise control of the frame that informs the animated morph¹.

1.4 Recomposing Movement

Deleuze, in *Cinema 1*, subsequently goes on to reveal his predilection towards the cinematograph, a presupposition of an immediate natural point of view, which the cinematograph is forced to imitate, and its eventual liberation from a fixed viewpoint and mechanical abstract time with the arrival of the mobile camera and the montage. In fact, Deleuze privileges the shot over the frame as the liberation of the viewpoint through the montage and the mobile camera, which thereby converted spatial categorisation of the shot to its temporal character. In order to understand the difference between frame-by-frame animation and live action cinema as Deleuze sees, we need to reconsider Bergson's second thesis translated for the cinematic apparatus by Deleuze.

Bergson's second thesis is about the illusions of reconstituting movement from instants or positions in terms of antiquity and modern thought. For antiquity, movement refers to intelligible Forms or Ideas that are themselves eternal and immobile. These forms are potentialities that are actualised in a matter-flux. However, the question of matter-flux does not arise for the animation

frame, since it does not bank of the given. Moreover, its isolated control and subsequent gestalt of movement in aggregation of frames renders the forms non-representational. As already mentioned, the frame is the containing unit of this potential, and is liable to showcase alternative possibilities of the form through movement. Movement expresses an ideal synthesis of a "dialectic" of forms as a regulated transition from one form to another. For antiquity, movement is transition between significant poses.

¹ Plasticity and metamorphosis in animation is explored in detail in chapter 2

The modern scientific revolution has related movement to any-instant-whatevers instead of privileged instants. As Deleuze looks at it, “Although movement was still recomposed, it was no longer recomposed from formal transcendental elements (poses), but from immanent material elements (sections). Instead of producing an intelligible synthesis of movement, a sensible analysis was derived from it” (Deleuze 1986, 4). For modern thought, all frames are equivalent and equidistant in terms of their division in space and time. This is achieved by replacing the dialectical order of poses by mechanical succession of instants, taking time as an independent variable. Cinema, in this sense is a system that reproduces movement as a function of any-instant-whatever, as a function of equidistant instants producing an impression of continuity (Deleuze 1986, 5).

Deleuze goes on to state that the poses belonging to antiquity were renditions of eternal and immobile Forms or Ideas. Their potential is actualised in embodied matter. Movement was a synthesis of a “dialectic” of forms, and a “regulated transition” between those privileged instants (ibid.). Although Deleuze highlights the scientific approach as an alternative route that scientists take in order to understand movement, he himself conceives of division of movement into the division of “intensities” afforded by the recording device into any-instant-whatevers. In terms of modern scientific notion, this translation is from the continuous to the discrete, as homogenised movement in terms of equivalent recorded instants. The equivalent nature of all frames induces Deleuze to relegate the frame to the background while privileging the shot. In addition, the apparatus for shooting also combined with the apparatus for projection, both endowed the idea of uniform abstract time. Therefore, cinema emancipated itself with devices and tropes like the montage to produce the qualitative leap of producing significant mobile sections from quantitative banalities of accumulating equivalent frames.

Deleuze extends his thesis beyond live action cinema furthering his thesis into the realms of cartoon animation. Deleuze:

Any other system which reproduces movement through an order of exposures [poses] projected in such a way that they pass into one another, or are ‘transformed,’ is foreign to the cinema. This is clear when one attempts to define the cartoon film; if it belongs fully to the cinema, this is because the drawing no longer constitutes a pose or a completed figure, but the description of a figure which is always in the process of being formed or dissolving through the movement of lines and points taken at any-instant-whatevers of their course. The cartoon film is related not to a Euclidean, but to a Cartesian geometry. It does not give us a figure described in a unique moment, but the continuity of the movement which describes the figure.

This is about all that Deleuze has had to say about cartoons. Deleuze however observes correctly that animation is a system operating through a system of poses, although he alienates the cartoon from cinema proper. Yet, he overlooks one crucial aspect— that the potential of Form/Idea from antiquity is not actualised in embodied matter for animation. This is due to various reasons that are going to unfold subsequently. However, for the time being, since Deleuze mentions that poses dissolves, or transform and pass into each other in animation, yet he does not mention metamorphosis that crucially produces continuity of movement. Unlike how the shot can be theorised since it produces meaning from representative movement, metamorphosis cannot be theorised using intellection, since it is non-representational. If there was anything intrinsic to the animated image due to its process, it is the plastic and metamorphic form that results from frame-by-frame production. Therefore, the opposing contentions of Eisenstein, Deleuze and Kubelka can be resolved if the distinction between live action recorded movement and animated movement can be comprehended. The shot is the unit of representation for live action, while the frame is unit of

representation as well as non-representation for animation. While shot can be conceived as a representative meaning making unit of live action movement, the frame for animated movement is the unit of affect with or without meaning. This distinction is crucial as the form itself is the substance for the non-representational image, while representation splits form from its substance, and embeds it into a referent object, real or imaginary. Potential therefore resides in the image for non-representative animation, while for representation, substance is split from the image and embedded in matter flux, i.e. into the physical world. The historical trajectory of the animated image has been the transposition of substance from the image to its outside, namely the supposed external reality of the physical world.

1.5 Animation— Creating Movement

So, how does animated movement produce an impression of continuity? Could the “nature” of animated motion be comprehended? From the Deleuzian contention of movement, certain things are clear.

Firstly, the animation process shares affinity with concepts belonging to antiquity. However, it also belongs to modern thought in terms of its synthesis using the cinematic and projection apparatus. Animation follows a particular type of visual illusion of “phi” motion, in which the phenomenon of seen motion is generated when two stationary lines are successively exposed at an appropriate time interval, although in reality there is no physical movement of the stimulus lines, as demonstrated by Wertheimer (Wertheimer 2012, 93-94). This process is akin to the positive production of movement used in animation. The term “appropriate” is significant when it comes to creating stimuli for a visual illusion. For animation, stimulus is generated by appropriate “spacing” and “timing” between frames. As already explained, the control of the frame, and hence its manipulation informs transitions in terms of metamorphosis and plasticity. Deleuze may have overlooked the cartoon in its true

“essence,” since he mentions yet misses the transformation of poses, which may be foreign to cinema but intrinsic to animation. This is perhaps because he overlooks the distinctive processes of creating animation and live action. Early animation was an unstable plastic form. It is with regulated transition, particularly used to re-territorialise transitional forms to their representative identity, that the dialectics of transformation surfaces.

Secondly, since animation is not recorded image but created movement, form and matter are rendered disjunctive in their movement. With drawn forms, potentiality no longer conforms to and is liberated from matter flux. This is different from that of live action, for animation operates in a dematerialised spatiotemporality where matter is verily produced with movement. The nature of plasticity would represent immaterial movement. Potential is actualised in privileged instants, movement expressed as a dialectic of forms that actualises material substance. Animated movement, in that sense refers to notions of movement from antiquity, where potential is revealed in the non-representative movement of form that expresses substance delinked from matter flux. It is substance that is produced of the form through movement. In this sense, it does not resemble antiquity in terms of thought, but problematises the cinematographic illusion.

Thirdly, animation refers to a process of “transformation” of poses, which is potential deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation that was salient to early animation. The dialectics of poses produces movement with non-equidistant privileged instants. This is the effect of frame-by-frame manual control of spacing and timing of poses. Therefore, the control of the transitional frame effectively changes the nature of form and its movement. The animation frame is the site of potential of such regulated transitions, since the formal pose is constructed in terms of the material section of the frame, their synthesis producing movement. Specifically, the frames in between the privileged instants are crucial to the making and unmaking of synthetic movement. In that sense, all frames are privileged instants. This is

however not important for recorded imagery as movement is predictable and anticipated according to the material substance of the given. This also means that substance resides in the given. Therefore, reproduction of material substance in live action imagery produces representative movement of forms. However, for animation, in-betweens translate into the control of individual frames, consequently control over the divisibility of movement, which is not uniform but subjectively interpreted. Modern scientific thought is the replacement of such subjective interpretation of privileged instants with homogenised mechanical sections. This is also to make time as an independent homogeneous variable, the camera being the generalised equaliser of all instants into any-instant-whatevers. That means that once Deleuze sets the notion of the illusory cinematic apparatus, he subsumes animation within the same conceptual devices operating on recorded imagery. However, animation operates through a dialectical relation between privileged instants and the cinematic apparatus. Animation instead places time as an internal heterogeneity through its deterritorialising movement.

Fourthly, animation inverts the relationship that Deleuze conceives of with respect to modern thought on movement— that is firstly producing an intelligible analysis of movement, and then deriving a sensible synthesis from it. The sensible analysis of movement in the form of immanent material sections (any-instant-whatevers) that characterise recorded imagery is replaced by a process of sensible synthesis from intelligible analysis of movement in the animation process. Obviously, it is subjective interpretation of movement, and therefore involves the production of intelligible poses which are appropriately spaced and timed for effective movement. Animation is the synthesis of movement from intelligible poses, as privileged instants or singularities, rather than the accumulation of banalities (equivalent any-instant-whatevers). Therefore, with synthetic movement produced from privileged instants, animation effectively opposes the reproduction of uniform homogeneous

time produced by the general equalising principles of the cinematograph and playback device.

Fifth, a drawing not constituting a “completed figure” but a description of a figure always in the process of being formed, refers to plasticity of movement achieved in the dissolving lines and points. This aspect informs a figure, instead of a figure describing a unique moment. The line is already a locus of movement, and that movement moves in time. It is therefore a multiplying locus of movement. This multiplying nature of plasticity cannot be comprehended by intellection, although it can exist as an unintelligible visible effect and consequently a sensible affect. Composition of movement in animation is reverse to that of live action, since decomposition of movement as a sensible analysis of the recorded imagery is not essential for the creative process of constructing animation. However, this changes once animated movement is recomposed from uniform decomposition of movement from recorded imagery.

Sixth, Deleuze thinks of animation space as represented by Cartesian geometry. This is not true, since drawn animation initially belonged to an amorphous ungrounded terra incognita of potential and not based on geometrical principles. Possibly Deleuze has focused on the turn of animation towards multiplane camera that changed the amorphous space to a deep space of the denotative camera. This also shows Deleuze’s predilection with live action cinema, an understandable mistake made by a non-practicing animation theorist. The animation space is plastic and is an unlimited opportunity to render any form under an imaginary chronotope proffering spatiotemporal incoherence. Space and time can turn plastic or elastic. It is a fissiparous space that is generated by the dialectics of fluid forms that allows for such plastic tampering of space and time. Animated movement pressurises matter flux, which in turn showcases the empty homogeneity of space and time as force relation and physical relation. Affective relation is therefore also predicated in terms of substance, where

movement translates into meaning and materiality. The configuration of the animated body is therefore rendered as the site of conflation of force relation and material movement, effects and affects of which are characterised not only by action but also by their substance. Time is not independent of drawn movement as the pacing, acceleration or pauses includes the notion of spatiotemporal gaps. The intended movement is independent of the equivalent any-instant-whatevers, instead dependent on the notional emotive and psychological requirements of action. Action and substance are therefore intertwined within the dialectics of created movement, in terms of the rendering of psychological folds of the “inside out,” the virtual potential of imagination against the social constraints of the “outside in,” as explained subsequently. Substance and action are therefore linked both psychologically and socially.

1.6 Discourse and Diagram

While recorded imagery reproduces the given in terms of representative movement, animated movement produces presentational, representational and non-representational movement actualised from the virtual (presentation is a direct sign that does not have a referent, real or imaginary, as explained in chapter 2). The sense of constructed image could be similar in the way discourse operates on the given. The real is both the actual movement and the virtual sense of movement possible with any form produced according to imagination. So, firstly it is form that is constructed in terms of knowledge structure and secondly, it is movement that also needs to correspond to the same form, as representative movement produced from the same knowledge structure.

Since animation does not fall within classificatory and structural constraints, the human project of producing order out of chaos is limited to the human of a very limited period of time, and this classificatory order regulating the moving image would shift according to spatial and temporal differences conceived by knowledge regimes. Therefore, the actual and

the virtual needs to be understood in terms of the historical and social, both constituting the real by rethinking discursive practices. While the Nietzschean Will to Power is the primary active force of desire producing moving forms, reactive forces constrain and oppose such desires through normalising discourse, allowing only certain aspects of the constructed image to be true. This defines an “epistemological space specific to a particular period” (Foucault 2005, xi) that reveals a positive unconscious of knowledge that eludes the consciousness of scientists and yet is part of scientific discourse (Foucault 2005, xii). Foucault would call this positivity, which defines a field of historical emergence as the historical *a priori*. It is a sense of emergence of a shifting materiality of the historical which is also “*a priori*,” making it both prior to and independent of all experience, which is contradictory². Although Foucault does not really talk about the image, he nonetheless talks about historical and concrete *a priori* as those “discursive and institutional conditions of emergence that have to be in place for the aesthetic and political practice of the gaze to mutate into the central practice of the human sciences” (Lawlor, Nale eds., 201). He also takes into consideration both the empirical and diachronic dimensions about the conditions for the emergence of discourse. According to Foucault, it is impossible to describe or transform one’s own historical conditions, but one can perform an archaeology of how the present has been arrived at. In other words, only when a new conception of a dominant regime has emerged can the contours of a former historical *a priori* be envisaged.

The animation stage is empty, and operates as a spectrum of possibilities. However its possibilities have hardly been explored. The stage could render space as the flatness of a surface to depths of artificial perspective, or into multiple planar or warped dimensions, or confine it within the recorded space of the denotative camera. Under such circumstances, where freedom of expression is only limited by the artist’s imagination, the animated image

² This contradiction has been enquired in further detail in chapter 3

holds the key to epistemic shifts in knowledge practices. However, the leading question is why the apparently innocent animated image could be harnessed to understand such crucial epistemic shifts. Firstly, because it can be comprehended through the level of discursive capture of the image. Secondly, the uncoded aspects of the constructed moving image can reveal the unconscious aspects governing discursive formation. For Foucault:

“The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn’t outside power, or lacking in power [...] Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.” (Foucault 1980, 131)

Knowledge is formed both in a non-discursive social field or institution, that Foucault refers to as “learned behaviour” (Foucault 1980, 197-98) and also from a discursive field of statements. According to this contention, it can perhaps be stated that a system of light and a system of language are both made possible out of an empty stage. Whereas the system of light forms a general diagram of a positive visible image form out of a non-discursive process and environment, it does not necessarily produce a discursive field of statements. Foucault’s contention is largely discursive and does not directly encompass the image form. The Deleuzian contention of the diagram expands on Foucault’s notion of statements and also encompasses the image. The main aspect of the diagram as the visible is that it can reside outside of the field of discourse and yet be part of perception. As Deleuze will explain it albeit not directly, but with reference to the panoptic design of the prison “[...] it is a way of making power relations functions in a function, and of making a function through these

power relations” (Deleuze 2006, 36). To simplify, it is a map of relations between forces, acting as “a non-unifying immanent cause that is coextensive with the whole social field”(Deleuze 2006, 37).

The visible onscreen image should closely resemble or conform to the offscreen image for a system of language to be effectual in forming a discourse surrounding it. Rather, in order to make sense of the non-representational image of animation, discourse effectively divides the onscreen image to reproduce a world largely corresponding to the offscreen image. The image effectively is reproduced according to the dominant scientific discourse while a diagram of a system of light corresponding to the offscreen image is produced within the onscreen world. The diagram is actualised as the interiority within which forms are separated according to a supposed “natural” viewpoint corresponding to the constructed world. As Deleuze explains Foucault’s conception of the diagram:

“The *diagram* is no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field. [...] it involves a different relation between forces. More importantly, it creates intermediary diagrams in which we shift from one society to another [...] every diagram is intersocial and constantly evolving. It never functions in order to represent a persisting world but produces a new kind of reality, a new model of truth. It is neither the subject of history, nor does it survey history. It makes history by unmaking preceding realities and significations, constituting hundreds of points of emergence or creativity, unexpected conjunctions or improbable continuums. It doubles history with a sense of continual evolution.

Every society has its diagram(s)” (Deleuze 2006, 34-35).

It needs to be mentioned here that the image is different from the diagram, the latter being the rendition of the non-discursive process into a visible form, the image being one of its manifestations. The diagram is a cartography of the episteme and is larger than the image

although it is rendered in the form of the visible. The diagram being a system of light, or a system of visibility encompasses the subject position in relation to itself. Therefore, the image and its relation with the witnessing subject together constitute the diagram as a system of visibility. However, the ensuing question would be whether the subject and object positions are polarised, or whether the creation of a subject is at all a function of the image. The transformation of the image to a diagram is the point of concern. This concern already problematises the diagram in terms of producing subject-object relations. The diagram is social, as perception is social. Deleuze is emphatic about the diagram being coextensive with the whole social field. The diagram is the sense of social perception in the form of a visual base, a “model of truth”.

The visible is a combination of the discursive content and the non-discursive image and process. The form and the subject matter are entwined within the onscreen image. Onscreen form and its movement is comprehended in relation to the offscreen image. The connection between the visible form, the articulable content and the non-discursive process all surface not so much in live action as it does for animated motion, the latter being a construction on emptiness. Therefore, the conversion of emptiness to virtual spatiality is the virtualisation of the system of light in relation to a supposed subject position witnessing it. Alongside the cartography of the diagram, formal movement animates the image in terms of force relations. However, the representative diagram of animation refers to the fold of the inside out as much as the cinematic apparatus refers to the image of the given as the surface of the outside in. “The diagram stems from the outside but the outside does not merge with any diagram, and continues instead to ‘draw’ new ones” (Deleuze 2006, 89).

The offscreen image is taken for granted. It is the given and divided in terms of discourse. The onscreen image reveals how thought discursively divides and separates forms and their outsides into a diagram. The offscreen image is bound to the “cinematographic illusion” as

envisaged by Bergson in defining the erroneous nature of the cinematic apparatus and the intellect conceiving movement. And although truth and power encompasses diagrams as a system of light, the diagram is constrained by the cinematographic illusion. Since the cinematographic illusion lies closest to intellection and discursive formation, any image is defined in relation to it. This is true for theory which is predicated on the offscreen image and whose recording results in an iconic as well as indexical onscreen image. The recorded imagery is indexical with real referents that also reproduce space and time in terms of this indexical quality. Although there has been a lot of debate about the codified nature of the cinematic image, the basic parameters evaluating it remains the same, which is the cinematographic illusion. The conditions are accordingly laid down for visibility of what can be seen and revealed, while the conditions relating to statements allows for or confines what can be said under each historical formation. However, when it comes to the moving image, form and its movement has to conform to a spatiotemporality accorded to it by the cinematographic illusion. The dominant a priori condition of possibility for discursive formation is predicated on the same. Therefore, moving images residing outside the cinematographic illusion, that is that non-representational animated image consequently is a priori to and belongs to the visible, but also resistant to discursive formation. Therefore, the categories of space and time which constitute the intuitive a priori has to be rethought with animated form and movement. Moreover, they could belong to or bring about different overlapping discourses that conflict with each other. Since cinema conforms to the cinematographic illusion, and is the dominant form of perception of the moving image, it consequently affects all of theory. However, since the animated image resides outside of the cinematographic illusion, it consequently cannot be adequately theorised by the dominant discourses afforded by film theory. Animation theory should be based on the animated image, and its intellection should not be predicated only on the cinematographic illusion. It could be

based on the “animated illusion,” the illusion of animated motion residing outside of the cinematographic illusion. The highlights of animated motion contra cinematographic illusion can be conceptualised now. Yet, attempts at theorising would highlight that the first aspect surfacing is the codependent origination of concepts. And therefore, the animated illusion corresponds not to the diagram, which is a static subject-object relationship, but a dynamic visual base that corresponds to a relationship between the subject and a non-discursive dynamic image. The visual base has been explained in Chapter 3.

1.7 Theorising Animation: “Inside Out” and “Outside In”

Firstly, since animated motion reconfigures spatiotemporal ordering of reality, subjective rendering of form and its movement in dialectical relation with the cinematographic apparatus produces “unreal” results. A subjective act of the animator conceiving constructed movement should already be different from how the cinematic apparatus divides movement indifferently into equivalent sections. There can be two approaches to the act of dividing movement: the objective approach of the “outside in” that pertains to intellection from cinematographic illusion, and the subjective approach of the “inside out” that pertains to animated motion. Animated motion constituted from individual drawings are based on individual subjective interpretation of movement. An individual animator’s drawings would also differ from another, and across frames. Human drawing like handwriting, differs between persons and cultures and across time. The same goes for animated drawings. The sense of inside out may be extended to other processes of animating. In this sense, animation is the production of a sensible synthesis of movement from an iterative process of becoming constituted from intelligible non-equivalent instants. It is the construction of sensible movement from intelligible speculative constructions of movement. The inside out is active imagination involving the subjective sensuous dimension of constructing form and

movement. Since the individual's inside out is also social, as perception is a social construction, inside out is social subjectivity pertaining to an episteme. The outside in is the notion of objectivity associated with the scientific and social normative pertaining to an epistemological field that folds into the inside out. Since animated movement is constructed, the inside out and outside in are dialectically related in animation. While the outside in constitutes division and separation (classification) of form and movement in terms of prevailing knowledge systems, inside out reconfigures this supposed sense of classification as subjective deviations from the norm. Both inside out and outside in are virtual and their dialectics produce the actual.

Form and its movement is classified in terms of what can be actualised in terms of virtual potential, which is also part of the real. The virtual, which is also the real is not really the possibility of the actual. Instead, the actual unfolds from potentiality. Potentiality of inside out is a richer context from which the actual has emerged, and therefore inside out gives animation its transgressive qualities. The virtual dimension within the actual is the potential of the Idea that actualises itself. For the constructed image without constraints, it should be the manifest substance potential. The virtual condition is also the real condition based on which the actual is effected. Hence, the virtual potential realised in terms of different actualities can be scrutinised in order to understand the real. The virtual can be anticipated and conceived from actual movement. The virtual is also the potential boundary of the inside out. The Idea is also delimited by the outside in. This is because the Idea also belongs to the social constitution of objectivity. The virtual is an event (Parr ed. 2010, 301), and can be understood as a non-determining tendency in the eternal repetition of the different. The virtual as Idea, which although is not realised in the empirical world, must still be thought using the ontology of becoming, as sense. This is possible in the actualisation of virtuality of the inside out. Therefore, the real condition, which is also the virtual condition can be intuited

from the historical specificity of the actualised form. “Any actual present passes only because all presents are constituted both as present and as past. In all past presents the entire past is conserved in itself, and this includes the past that has never been present (the virtual)” (ibid.). The inside out is the sense of the virtual.

The supposed ‘free’ individual is confronted with abstract objective constraints. The “inside out” pertains to apparently self-determining subjects acting on the basis of their individual will. Simultaneously, individuals are also subjected to a structure of objective compulsions and constraints operating independent of their will at the societal level (from Postone, explained in chapter 2). In this sense, subjects are also ‘objects’ who are bound to the sense of social norm, which is the outside in. The dimension of subjects operating both consciously and unconsciously under abstract social compulsions constitute the “outside in”. Whereas the inside out is a subjective fold, the outside in is intellection predicated on the sense of objective “reality”. The inside out and outside in are not exclusive of each other, instead they fold into each other. For subjective interpretation of movement, the inside out interprets form on the basis of individual will. Since the inside is but a fold of the outside, the pure rendition of inside out is not possible without a concomitant topological folding of the outside in, both related to a totality. It is a dialectical relationship between the virtual potential of subjective interpretation of form and its movement and the actuality of objective compulsions affecting them. Therefore, the inside out is continuously brought within the bounds of scientific and ideological discourse in order for it to convey meaning. The inside out of subjective imagination cannot completely escape the bindings of the outside in. For, if the inside out did not in any way resemble the outside in, there would be no sense of territorialisation or meaning. The totality of the dialectical relationship between the inside out and the outside in is conveyed through the visual base of a historical formation. The visual base conveys a larger totality of the epistemological field as the cartography of the image in

relation to the subjective position. The totality encompasses not only the sense of objectivity but also the sense of subjective in relation to it, together constituting the visual base.

Subjective sensuous activity cannot be separated from objective material activity. And sensuous activity does not belong to separate abstract individuals in isolation, but to human society. Therefore, both inside out and outside in belong to social subjectivity in relation to objectivity. The material form of the image as the dialectics of the inside out and the outside in is also sensuous activity. Materiality needs to be understood as some form of concrete relation that can be construed in terms of the senses. The outside in is the tendency to conform to the material dimension and the cinematographic illusion, since it is constituted through objectifying discourse. It reconfigures the image as a historical condition of possibility for discourse to emerge. For example, the outside in works in relation to the spatiotemporal scale of the body. The inside out tends to transgress such constraints. While the subjective dimension of the inside out constructs spatial and temporal relations and measures afresh, the objective world of material reality conceives movement in the scale of corporeal relations. Since the outside in is supposedly the objective dimension, it relates the body to the external world and brings about coherence according to the corporeal order. Outside in is hence normalised according to the objective material dimension. The inside out is the virtual potential of social subjectivity to reconstitute the image beyond the relation of ideal and material dimension, verily questioning the historical conditions of possibility of knowledge formation. The inside out therefore materialises as immateriality of substance. Therefore, the inside out is the tendency of spatial and temporal reconfiguration and deterritorialisation in relation to the outside in. In other words, objective activity is also sensuous subjective activity. The active force of the inside out becomes reactive with the supposed objectivity of the outside in imposing a rational order upon it. As Nietzsche would claim, its result is consciousness. Hence, a dialectical relationship emerges between the inside

out and the limits set by the outside in. Yet, the inside out reimagines and disjuncts normative relations and knowledge structures reflected in the onscreen moving image. This can happen as the inside out is directly dependent on the process of image construction that allows for slippages of human control and lack of consciousness of the rational order. However, since the inside out is also social subjectivity alongside individual subjectivity, it could also be normalised. Yet, the inside out banks more on the lack of consciousness that allows for the virtual to flourish.

1.8 Animated movement

The conversion of movement into any-instant-whatevers by the cinematic apparatus is the transformation of becoming into being. However, animation is the conversion of frames as being into becoming. As soon as the industrial process incorporated cel animation techniques of drawn animation, the primary ontological shift that happened is the production of the singularity in each frame. Cel animation incorporated transferring draft drawings on to transparent plastic or celluloid sheets called cels. Each cel would feature one drawing with an outline on one side of the transparent sheet and the colour is filled on the other. These cels are then placed over a background and photographed in sequence. Their playback creates the illusion of movement. The dialectics of the inside out and the outside in plays out in each individual cel, and cels in sequence. Animation thus became the universality of the singular. Generality of the particular, thus stands opposed to repetition as universality of the singular. Deleuzian repetition is internal power to begin again, to carry on the first time to the “nth” power (Deleuze 1994, 1). For Deleuze, this is how festivals operate paradoxically, as they repeat the “unrepeatable”— they do not add a second or third time to the first, but carry the first time to the “n”th power. He would take the example of Monet’s first painting of the “water lily” that repeats all the others. Deleuzian repetition therefore corroborates

cinematographic illusion, in the sense that, “repetition can always be ‘represented’ as extreme resemblance or perfect equivalence, but the fact that one can pass by degrees from one thing to another does not prevent their being different in kind” (Deleuze 1994, 2). Animation takes up the universality of the singular, although in manifest form. This universality of the singular is not represented in terms of resemblance or equivalence; it clearly becomes different even if similarity is intended out of each frame. This is the manifest nature of the inside out. This is different from the cinematic vision, which banks on displacement of the same. Drawn animation instead manifestly replaces the image in each frame, as repetition itself. This gives the image a plastic character that is absent in the cinematographic vision.

Animated movement as complex repetition and pure difference is Heraclitean in manifest form. Movement, as with any form operating using the cinematic apparatus relies on dividing movement into frames and their interstitial voids. For animation, it is a reversal of the process of division and separation by concatenation of differing instants. The plastic form of the animated image is anticipated in terms of pure difference without negation, accruing as an addition and overlap over the existing aggregated movement of previous frames. Repetition results in potential deterritorialisation and ungrounding of the known sequence of movement in terms of speculative transformation. Potential is thus realised as the relation between frames, spacing and timing implicating poses as manifest force relations. This is because, without any form of constraints in the absence of the given, the possibilities proffered by the nascency of the medium is only constrained by force relations. Power is force relation regulating the intransigence of freedom, which are in agonistic relationship and is rendered in the form of the drawn line. Simultaneously, space and time are implicated by movement actualised by force relations. Force relation informs everything within the animation space. That is, if the non-discursive image can be theorised. In other words, the plastic form cannot enter discourse without a primary conception of force affecting forms and their boundaries.

Repetition, according to Deleuze is a positive power of transformation (Parr 2010, 226) while the negative force of representation constrains the plastic nature of animation. Anticipation of speculative transformation is dependent on subjective sense of the inside out in dialectical opposition with the outside in.

The consistency attributed to recorded movement is absent in animated movement. The singularity rendered due to the animation process of drawn movement has made animation as non-representational. This leads to an indeterminate image form. This indeterminacy arrives from singularities generated in each frame. Therefore, if labour is trained in order to arrive at producing smooth representative movement, it is directed at the conversion of the positive return of difference to the return of the same, of identity. This is the tendency to coerce the inside out towards the outside in. This transformation from replacement as manifest form of repetition to displacement of the same, from non-representation and non-conception to its conversion to representative movement is also the transformation of the active force of singular to the reactive force of the general. And this is also the transformation of the image towards objectivity. Objectivity would eventually shift substance from the image towards a referent, belonging to the external world.

In fact, Deleuze's "Difference and Repetition" animates philosophy with a non-representational modality of thought, and which upon closer scrutiny could have led to a foundational argument for animation, although it seems that it might have eluded him. Perhaps he was more interested in live-action cinema, or perhaps he had also fallen into the trap of the cinematographic illusion. This particularly holds true for non-practicing theoreticians who are unaware of the material processes directly affecting the construction of the image, particularly the animated image. The difference of material process differentiates animation from live action in terms of its "ontological becoming". Although oxymoronic, ontology as a specific term can be used to refer to the nature of becoming of animated

movement, which is the affirmation of becoming in the Heraclitean sense. “Heraclitus has two thoughts which are like ciphers: according to one there is no being, everything is becoming; according to the other, being is the being of becoming as such” (Deleuze 1983, 23). The idea of “such”-ness is the idea of animation that pressurises time into the present and outside of representative movement. This is possible as substance is linked to form and movement as time, all together residing within the image. Representation, on the other hand, shifts substance outside the image and accrues in terms of the past and memory. Deleuze conceptualises the insubordination of non-representational image to identity, although he overlooks the plasticity of movement necessitated for such thinking that reconfigures time. The animated image directly shows the non-representational through its plastic and metamorphic nature.

The animated image points to a grounding on repetition of difference, which amounts to a non-ground or groundlessness. Representation is hence ungrounded from its tendency to subordinate difference to identity, leading it to non-representational vision. In other words, since difference is not conceived as comparison, instead as repetition of the first to the nth degree, it cannot be generalised as representation. Non-representation cannot really be thought, since it is repetition as transgression or exception, always revealing a “singularity opposed to the particulars subsumed under laws, a universal opposed to the generalities which give rise to laws” (Deleuze 1994, 5). Animation shows difference in itself as an insubordination to identity, where difference is not negative. Where difference is categorised as negative, it would maintain contradiction to the extent that identity is restored. Therefore, the inside out is already contradiction in relation to the outside in, the latter restoring configuration and identity. The world of representation is defined by the primacy of identity (Deleuze 1994, ix). Non-representational animated world constitutes pure difference without negation; it makes animation liberated from the identical. And unless the animated image is

subordinated to identity, difference would not have to extend to opposition or contradiction, as the metamorphic image of animation is difference without negation.

Likewise, complex repetition is hidden differential, which is disguised and displaced. This is to say that repetition is related to the power of difference in terms of a positive productive process of variation. Repetition is “the power of beginning and beginning again” (Deleuze 1994, 136). This is akin to the process of frame-by-frame animation, affirming the new and the unforeseeable. However, repetition is produced by difference and both coalesce together in order to unground representation. There is no originary point from which repetition could cyclically reproduce itself (Parr 2010, 225). Additionally, it is not a linear sequence, self-sustainable and independent of a subject or object that repeats. Repetition is a positive power of creative transformation as the new that destabilises habit and convention. Therefore, repetition dissolves identities while changing them giving rise to something unrecognisable (ibid.).

1.9 Contradiction?

If we consider movement in terms of difference and repetition, then contradiction appears only when difference is categorised in the negative. Conceptualising difference in the negative would bring contradiction and opposition to the forefront of conceiving movement in terms of comparison between two states of representation. Conceptualising difference in the negative is also creating epistemological threshold in order to cross over into further rationalisation. Accordingly, the image would change since theory informs praxis, consequently the manifest image. Such crossovers introduce contradiction. Instead, difference in itself, if brought within the intelligible is also sensing the actuality of difference implicit in the particularity of things, which sets a new modality of understanding animation as residing outside of reason. Therefore, a frame in animation becomes the site of struggle of

dynamic movement and representation (static knowledge), between the inside out and the outside in. This transforms the dynamics of becoming into negative dialectics.

Cel animation primarily banked on two processes— straight ahead and pose-to-pose. Straight ahead techniques is simply about animating ahead with the flow, as a dialectics between re-presentation of the existing and the becoming different of that presented anew. Therefore, movement is immediately split between two opposing forms of thinking that affects the two dominant processes of animating. Firstly, straight ahead animation is the positive affirmation of difference as becoming without a telos. It is immanent within the constitution of events, as the eternal, productive return of difference. This is possible as each frame is a unique rendition of singularity. The process of straight ahead animation involves drawing frame by frame on the go, with a fuzzy anticipation of future course of movement. Therefore, forms may lack constancy of volume or rational representational movement. This produces non-representational movement of becoming different, which reconstitutes time in the present. “Becoming-different is its own time” (Parr 2010, 27), the present being the productive moment of becoming. Being, for Nietzsche is a process rather than substance (Parr 2010, 7). Straight ahead process of animating frame-by-frame as the relational production of singularities removes the idea of an essential “truth” of being. Nor is there the presence of a transcendent reality beyond the flux of appearances. In that sense, straight ahead techniques involve privileging the active force of deterritorialisation as well as incoherence of movement. Incoherence is basically produced as the pre discursive non-representational image rejects totalising discourses and resists discursive formation.

Pose-to-pose techniques on the other hand privileges the becoming reactive of drawing forces that re-presents the same world again, which is the primacy of identity constitutive of the world of representation. Even if there is deterritorialised movement, pose-to-pose technique already sets an anticipated telos of representation in advance. Movement would

reterritorialise to that predetermined identity. If the force of going straight ahead is about finding the flow of omnipotence of desire of the inside out, pose-to-pose is regulated movement according to predetermined constraints. Pose-to-pose technique can also be comprehended as a possible sequence of transitional frames in between poses, which also means the possibility of deterritorialising and reterritorialising movement according to a configured telos. If force relations are considered, then it is the setting of a telos of knowledge that reterritorialises into things or states. Therefore, the transition between poses is informed by the possibility of newness and new interpretations of form. Since difference in itself is not grounded on anything else, pose-to-pose technique builds up the virtual possibility of glimpses of particularities implicit in things at the time of their creation or perception. Pose to pose therefore grounds metamorphosis in terms of contradiction.

The latin verb “animare” meaning “to give life to” refers to animation or animator as the artificial creation of the illusion of movement (Wells 1998, 10). Wells does not really question how the illusion of movement would translate into giving life, or how forms are imbued with life. The artificial creation of movement also means, creating a form and its movement, which is form coupled with its directed movement, is action. However, for directed action there needs to be some kind of desire imbued on form and its movement. Desire could be defined as an internal volitional force that imbibes forms with life. Desire arrives with the very creation of forms, consequently is manifest in their frame-by-frame movement. The aggregate movement as locomotion can also be looked upon as endowing forms with life. This very act of giving life or its intent is beyond reason for it is beyond human capability to imbibe forms with life under rational logic. Although the desire to imbue forms with life could nevertheless exist as possibility of animating, this irrationality is the prelogical manifest in the very concept of animation. Imbibing forms with life as movement is one thing; imbibing them with a soul is another problem. The gestalt of the incomplete set

of forms and their movements gives a sense of the soul. Increasing details towards the completion of forms toward representation could actually obstruct gestalt perception. Animation, in this sense is definitionally contradictory. But perhaps most importantly, forms are already animated in their very creation.

However, how does one attribute life without the idea of desire informing the drawn line? What distinguishes possession of life from the possession of a soul? To draw is to leave a trace of one's desire. For Mitchell, "... that drawing itself, the dragging or pulling of the drawing instrument, is the performance of desire... Desire just is, quite literally, drawing, or a drawing— a pulling or attracting force, and the trace of this force in a picture" (Mitchell, 59). The locus of movement of the drawing tool directly traces desire into form. The line is desire formalised. This also means that the moving line is also the movement of desire. Form is desire, and so is movement. If a form moves, it is on the basis of desire. The movement of the drawn form becomes the movement of a movement, a locus of a locus. If movement is considered according to the process involved, then it would already be two different possibilities— a moving form that retains its identity, and a non-representational plastic form that resists being the same. The manifest plastic form is manifest difference in itself that is in the state of continuous becoming and therefore resides in a state of continuous liminality. Identity arrives with the sense of difference as comparison, and hence takes up this liminality as contradiction affecting the sense of the same. Since movement is desire, plasticity is rendered contradictory in relation to identity. Therefore, plastic forms contradict the logic of representation with their non-representational movement, simultaneously resisting the sense of identity.

As form and movement are both different renditions of desire, desire is also multiplied with animated movement. Desire is rendered as multiplying gestalt from the limited information available from drawn forms. Animation of the soul is the effect of movement of

this multiplying gestalt of the manifestly produced inside out. As McLaren suggests, “If you looked at a single frame of film you’d say that doesn’t mean anything there, there’s no images there, but once the thing goes into motion, the things that are there, no matter what kind of shape they may be, can behave in a human or animal way, which echoes something quite human in a person” (Schaffer, 2005). Soul is the effect of the animation process on which animators have little control.

Mitchell observes the nature of desire as consisting of two parts, as an agent and an instrument (Mitchell 2005, 57). It is a mutual desire of two concepts, desire being inseparable from the image. This is akin to making the subjective-objective circuit complete where one cannot be imagined in the absence of the other, being conceived in the form of codependency. Mitchell:

[...] this is not just painting as an instrument or object of love but painting as itself a thing that loves, a thing that is drawn toward an object. This becomes clearer if we reflect on the double meaning of drawing as an act of tracing or inscribing lines, on the one hand, and an act of pulling, dragging, or attracting, on the other, as when we talk of a horse-drawn buggy, drawing water from a well, drawing back a bowstring to release the arrows of desire, or ‘drawing and quartering’ a human body in that most grotesque form of capital punishment. ‘Drawing Desire’; then, is meant not just to suggest the depiction of a scene or figure that stands for desire, but also to indicate the way that drawing itself, the dragging or pulling of the drawing instrument, is the performance of desire. Drawing draws us on. Desire just is, quite literally, drawing, or a drawing—a pulling or attracting force, and the trace of this force in a picture (Mitchell 2005, 59).

Mitchell uses the dual concept of desire in the act of tracing lines and in the act of attracting the other. The trace of force in drawing is the force of desire. Desire is the locus of the pencil drawn towards the artist, by the force of her imagination by which she pulls the

tool towards herself. Simultaneously, form is also the articulation of desire and the trace of force. Form is already a force relation, and its movement is the movement of force relations. Since the screen is empty for animation, form is a consequence of a system of division and separation of this emptiness. Nonetheless, the primary focus is on the figure and therefore the force of drawing resides on the inside, as desire. Therefore, animation is also forces giving a sense of internal volition to the moving form. This has been elaborated subsequently.

In addition, the crucial point is the reciprocal relation between the drawer and the drawn, of the subjective desire and objective image, where one is concomitant with the other. If we extend the meaning of the dynamic visual base/static diagram into the virtuality of the image as a cartography of visibility, then the shifting image of animation could also be comprehended as the shifting nature of human subjectivity according to historical shifts of truth regimes. This is particularly evident from Eisenstein's positing of the changing nature of subject-object relationship and their stages of separation (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 97). The primary reason behind the subjective-objective split is the production of difference from the viewpoint of the subject. In a crucial footnote, Eisenstein explains the dialectical unity existing as the totality of the unified subject and object in non-differentiating consciousness that is evident in animism:

Animism is quite clearly no more no less than a transitional stage between prelogical and logical thought in the part of it that concerns the unity of subject and object. At first, "I" and an object— are one. Then there arises the element: both one and not one, but still without a qualitative differentiation between the attributes of "I" and the object: the object continues to be regarded as independent of the "I", but not independent of the attributes of the "I"; i.e. the same thing is considered to be present in it that you start to notice about yourself (hunger, emotions, etc.) A conception of the object is created "in one's own image and likeness"— if a swarm of "Regungen"

[feelings] makes up a soul, the concept of a soul then objects are endowed with a soul. The point, essentially, is not in a soul, but in the fact that an object is considered to be capable of the same actions as man himself. Then there occurs a second separation—not just from himself, but also from the attributes characteristic of him and by experience not appearing in the object. Thus he enters the stage of contradictions—the basis of logic. *Pour en retourner* [So as to return] to a dialectical unity at the dialectical stage of thought. (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 97)

A non-differentiating consciousness reflects a non-differentiated social environment (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 9). The view of the world resides upon the “comparison” of subject and object on the basis of the category of movement. Form and its movement is therefore the atavistic undifferentiated subjective and objective non-separation. When the image is unified it reflects the non-differentiated nature of social consciousness within subject positions, where the “I” and nature are one and the same. Subsequently, this sameness is differentiated into a relation of the identical and still further on, alike. The sense of non-separation residing in animism operates before the sense of difference. The sense of difference imbibes a soul to objects. Yuri Norstein had once pointed out that the ‘anima’ in animation means not just putting life into something, but imbibing it with a “soul” (Pilling Ed. 2011, 41). The soul is this intangible aggregate or multiplication of desire in the overall feel of a form. However, this multiplicity is reached in creating less where audience perception fills in the gaps residing in animated life. Gestalt as the production of a different whole is usually greater than the sum of its constituent parts. Therefore, accruing details could hinder gestalt perception and subject-object interaction, thereby stultifying the very intent of producing better rendition of “reality”. Although it is an aggregation of feelings, the soul cannot be conceived of from any rational basis. And therefore, investing with excessive details on form and movement could result in the loss of the soul. This leads into the third stage.

Further separation between the subject and the object leads to the stage of contradictions. The final stage is crucial to animation, since the prelogical form and alogical content of animation when brought within the folds of reason produces contradiction. The stage of contradictions arrives when logic becomes the framework for evaluating animation. However, the point of concern is how contradictions are resolved effectively for animation to make sense in terms of the dominant discourse. Logic as framework for evaluating animation has been dealt with subsequently in this chapter. The process of transformation of the animated image into a logical one is discussed in the third chapter.

Scientific or taxonomical qualifiers cannot ordinarily define life in animation, since they cannot encompass all life forms in their totality. If life is defined by change or movement, then change can also happen after its termination, in death. Nevertheless, change as decay, or the movement of the inanimate may not be perceived as possessing life, although there is visible change. A basic distinction between organic and inorganic forms, the former imbued with living consciousness does not really work for the animated image. For animation, even inorganic forms can possess desire. While decay after death is also change, and since the animator has to produce the necessary changes accordingly, whether such changes are convincing enough is the point of concern. For, if life and death are to be distinguished, perhaps the only factor is whether change after death is bereft of animating desire. If movement occurs without the feel of the soul, it is movement bereft of animating desire. Therefore, while contradiction resides in the generated soul with animated movement, contradiction also resides when movement occurs without the soul.

This brings up two crucial issues. Whether there can be movement without desire. This could be the equivalent to the movement of the inanimate, which could take place without desire through rational external impression of force. This is not the internal animating force of desire, but is external rational force. This is how we understand movement under rational,

scientific discourse. Live action recorded imagery does not face this dilemma, since moving forms are rational effects of external impression of force, while moving bodies are alive with internal volitional life force. For animation, however, the inanimate is also possessive of desire. Animation, whether in stasis or in movement, is always constitutive of desire. Hence it animates. Movement without desire is also soulless movement, which is the equivalent of movement without volition. It is movement that shows as the effect of external control on the form, and not from internal volition or desire. The externalisation of force means the removal of desire from forms and bodies, and hence would amount to the movement of the desireless. And although the movement of forms through external rationalised force is plausible to scientific perception, the same would produce the uncanny for living bodies. This is because if the movement of bodies occur due to external force, then it is non-volitional movement of living bodies, amounting to the movement of the desireless or the dead, under rational logic. Hence, while for early drawn animation desire was internal to all forms, for rationalised animation, desire is transformed into external force controlling all forms. If the nomenclature of the “body” is acceptable for and attributed to the living, then for early animation, most inanimate forms were rendered as animated bodies.

Live action is the middle ground of moving imagery, where all kinds of movement are rationalised under scientific and representative logic, where life and death are well demarcated categories. For the rational live action image, desire is internal to bodies and force external to inert forms that sets the balance for scientific discourse. The crucial distinction between any force and desire is that the latter is not a general force. Desire is life force internal to living bodies, and hence the notion of the soul is imbibed within animated movement. If external rationalised force takes over movement for all forms, living bodies would be reduced to inert forms informed by desireless and soulless movement. Live action films do not face this problem since movement of bodies are already informed by internal

force, while movement of inert forms is possible through external impression of force. However, when it comes to animation, if control shifts to external force, bodies are reduced to inert forms. This happens as desire is removed from movement. Movement could take place without desire, although it is another problem to categorise such movements.

The second problem is more fundamental— if life can exist without the binary opposition of death. A pure form of living outside of the binaries is possible if a codifying knowledge system could qualify animated life outside of binaries of life and death. Traditional animation like drawn, direct or stop motion techniques was informed by this knowledge system where characters refused to die even after violence afflicting the body. This “other” life animates all forms with life without concomitantly positing rational death. All forms were desirous and potentially animated. It is already animated in its creation. This non-binary life outside of death is already present in the animation form. Stasis does not automatically imply death. The inanimate is also desirous. Whereas animated life lies outside of the commonsensical that imbibes forms with a prelogical sense of desire, it can nevertheless be claimed as possessive of its own inherent logic interior to itself. This comprehension belongs to a discourse informing a conceptual category of life encompassing all substances, and without death informing forms. Therefore, the distinction between forms and living bodies does not exist, or exists as the prelogical. As Klein would suggest, the unity of this kind of life coheres in its alogical graphical nature, in its flatness as the graphic narrative of disunity (Klein 1993, 5). Therefore, early animation resided in a knowledge structure that was without any apparent contradiction in the non-distinction of substance or movement of different forms.

1.10 Resolving Contradiction

There is no contradiction in the positive conception of animated life. It becomes contradictory when death is necessitated from the need to govern the image in terms of

scientific discourse. In other words, the animated image has to be forced to enter the binary order of life and death in order to be theorised. Rational scientific discourse would therefore seek to resolve contradiction, firstly by creating a binary order, and which ultimately manifests as the introduction of death within animation. However, there are several problems with the imposition of a binary order, not only on animation, but also on the image in general.

Mitchell raises the question as to “Why is the moving image invariably characterised with vitalist metaphors such as ‘animation’ and ‘live action’?”. Mitchell does not see any difference between the two. According to him, to make an image is simultaneously to mortify and resurrect in the same gesture (Mitchell, 53). The error of rational thinking starts right there. While referring to early animation, Mitchell states:

Film animation begins, as is well known, not with just any old image material but with the fossil, and the reanimation of extinct life. Winsor McCay, the father of animation, films himself in “live action” sequences viewing the skeleton of a dinosaur in a natural history museum, and wagering his fellow artists that he can bring this creature back to life in three months, a magical feat he pulls off with one of the earliest examples of film animation.

This is factually incorrect. There are earlier examples of animation, prominent being “The enchanted drawing by J. Stuart Blackton (1900), “Humorous Phases of Funny Faces,” also by Blackton (1906) and “Fantasmagorie” by Emile Cohl (1908). If we discount those factual errors and only concentrate on reanimation, Mitchell’s idea of animation is already about reanimating from the ossified remnants of a fossil by ascribing it with a body. But why? Mitchell is caught in the zone of rational scientific discourse while invoking the sense of animation. It not clear how the body becomes the logical consequence for the fossil to possess life, and simultaneously death. It is also unclear how mortification and thereby resurrection takes place, that is death precedes the arrival of life. Death is immanent within

this conception. If the body is the logical consequence of animation, then the leading question would be if the concept of mortification is directly related to bodily death.

Mitchell draws upon a “semantic rectangle” adapted from the Greimasian semiotic square, a tool for the semantic mapping of conceptual frameworks³. According to him, the dialectics of life is informed by the rectangle with four corners as illustrated:

Living	Dead
Inanimate	Undead

According to Mitchell, the living organism has two logical contraries. Firstly, in the dead object as a corpse, mummy or fossil, which was once alive. The other contrary or opposite is the inanimate object that is inert and inorganic which was never alive in the first place. The third contrary is then, the negation of the negation as the arrival of life in the non-living substance or the mortification of life in the image, as in a “tableau vivant” (Mitchell 2005, 54-55). Mitchell transposes these verbal relations to the image. This also means that he imputes scientific and linguistic understanding of life and death on the image. Since Mitchell does not qualify life and death, it is unclear how he draws upon his conclusions.

If the image is enquired based not only on verbal but also through visible indicators, then the primary problem starts with the tableau vivant. Mitchell already categorises substance as non-living. How is substance non-living in the first place? It is neutral to life and death. And if it indeed needs to be categorised, then why not on the side of life instead of death? Additionally, the tableau vivant, as is understood conventionally, is stationary posing human figures in a “living picture”. There is no concept of death within this picture of the tableau vivant, even if it is reproduced as a still image. Stillness does not equate with lifelessness or deadness. The most that static imagery can do is to depict suspended animation, which is not death. In “Camera Lucida,” Roland Barthes examines photography’s relation to reality:

In Photography, the presence of the thing (at a certain past moment) is never metaphoric; and in the case of animated beings, their life as well, except in the case of photographing corpses; and even so: if the photograph then becomes horrible, it is because it certifies, so to speak, that the corpse is alive, as corpse: it is the living image of a dead thing (Barthes 1981, 78).

When it comes to the image of a corpse, it is the living image of a dead thing. The corpse, when it is turned into an image, is returned to suspended animation. The corpse could actually turn horrible or uncanny if and only if it became alive. In that case, how does one depict its coming alive without movement? Then again, is the movement of the dead qualitatively different from the movement of the living? To answer these questions, one has to reconsider Mitchell's semantic rectangle.

Mitchell overlooks that the arrival of life in substance is animation, although he is already decided that substance is non-living. Even if substance is already non-living, then the logical consequence of attributing it with life would make the non-living animated. Instead he focuses on the undead, or perhaps conflates the animated with the undead. The assumed body and a predilection with death does not leave Mitchell's analysis. He is already caught up with the binary positing of life and death on the body. "The figure of the 'undead' is perhaps the obvious place where the uncanniness of the image comes into play in ordinary language and popular narrative, especially the tale of horror, when that which should be dead, or should never have lived, is suddenly perceived as alive." Mitchell clearly privileges death over life, and also the non-living in conceiving the undead. Therefore, it is logical to find the uncanny in the undead.

Mitchell does not clearly distinguish between the verbal and the visual. He is talking

³ For further details on the semiotic square, refer to Jameson 163-167. Also, Chandler 2017, 124-128.

about the literary narrative residing in the verbal world. For the visual, it is therefore implied that the undead becomes alive with attributed movement. Since Mitchell does not distinguish between the animated and the undead, both needs to be sorted out in terms of attributing life. Life returning to the dead is the undead. Life returning to non-living substance is also the undead. Therefore, when life returns to uncategorised substance, it is animation. In that case, animation has a double sense of life, if it is already making all substance as either uncategorised in terms of living and dead, or if it treats all substance as potentially living, which is the category of positive attribution of life. This is contrary to the category of the non-living.

Since representative substance is contextual for the image, particularly for the line drawing, it can only be corroborated through form. Again, the undead as life returning to the dead cannot occur without positing a form of the dead. It is not the same as life returning to the non-living. Nonetheless, what is that form? In conceptualising the undead, Mitchell has privileged death as a known category and then attributed life to it. However, Mitchell has not defined death. Death as a word does not mean anything other than the absence or negation of life. When it comes to the visual, death is inexistent as stasis does not mean death, including the image of the corpse. This conception of the semiotic square of oppositions shows Mitchell's predilection with language when dealing with the image. And when he focuses on the image, he is trapped both within scientific and linguistic discourse. Therefore, firstly, the definitions of these four concepts are to be rethought with respect to the image, and especially animation. How can life and death be rethought? Since Mitchell has not defined death, what is the undead? And since life is posited as the binary opposition of death, what defines life? Is it movement and movement only? If the undead is nothing but life returning to non-living substance, or the supposedly dead which has become alive, then death needs to be comprehended with the available parameters of stasis/movement. In that case, the undead

as the dead becoming alive through movement cannot be distinguished from movement of the living. If animated characters are undead, then why are animated characters comical and not horrifying/uncanny when brought to life?

It could be noted that movement is only one factor that characterises life. Neither is it a necessary condition, nor a sufficient one. Mitchell, without clearly distinguishing or defining what informs life or death has instead defined the undead as the supposedly dead being perceived as alive. By these assumptions, since stasis is unable to qualify death, be it in a photograph or even a sculpture, then death remains an unknown category. In that case, the categories of the undead, and thereby the non-living and the dead can only be conceived of through movement. Therefore, the movement of the non-living and the movement of the dead should be different from the movement of the living. Now, if the undead is also capable of movement, then how is its movement different from the movement of the living? The answer to these questions would emerge subsequently. Before such questions can be delved into, certain other conceptions need to be clarified.

As is already evident, all static forms are already potent with life. However, if animation is to be illustrated, then volitional movement additionally informs all substances. This is different from the undead, as the undead is not necessarily attributed with volitional movement. This sense of doubling of life arrives with animation. Firstly, as suspended animation of all entities, and then as volitional movement potentially animating all forms. In that case, the square of oppositions can be rethought with animation in the picture. Without deviating from Mitchell's model, for convenience of understanding, the category "animated" has been introduced to compare it with the undead:

Living	Dead
Inanimate	Undead
	Animated

Instead of resolving the problem of contradiction in animation, three conditions with possible contradictions surface with Mitchell's model.

Firstly, as has been already highlighted, Mitchell presumes substance to be non-living. Therefore, the non-living fossilised creature is resurrected. He is focused on Andre Bazin's contention on the ontology of the photographic image. "If Winsor McCay's animation brought the fossilised creature back to life, Bazin's images do just the opposite: photography 'preserve[s] the object, as the bodies of insects are preserved intact ... in amber,' and the cinematic image is 'change mummified, as it were'." One wonders if director Steven Spielberg was remembering this passage when he decided to use the preservation of dinosaur blood and DNA in the bodies of mosquitoes as the technical premise for the resurrection of dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park*" (Mitchell 2005, 54). The comparison between Gertie and *Jurassic Park* is significant. If McCay films himself in live-action sequences, it is also important to note that McCay, in the final shot of his creation "Gertie," turns himself into a line drawing or an animated character to ride the dinosaur, a fact that Mitchell overlooks or ignores. The line drawing is not the posited "reality" of a denotative photorealistic image. Mitchell conflates this transformation of a live-action McCay to his drawn avatar under the same rubric. However, lines do not exist in the external world, but only in a drawn world of animation. The external world and its recording is informed by surfaces. Gertie's body is already presumed to be constituted by organic substance, which essentially imputes rational scientific binaries of life and death into the bodily form. Yet, it needs to be enquired how or why Mitchell qualifies substance in terms of living or non-living. From the opposing categories of the living organism and dead corpse informed by organic substance, to the inanimate object constituted by inert/non-living substance and finally into the undead, substance has qualitatively shifted. And even if Mitchell's contention is forced upon substance, then the substance informing the undead should be "dead" substance. Otherwise, by his own logic,

how would it be able to generate the uncanny? The dead becoming alive is different from the non-living becoming alive, the latter unlikely to produce the uncanny. More importantly, contextual substance is imputed by the knowledge of representative form. So, if we do not take the substance for granted, and instead understand the dialectics of life as also the transformation of substance, then the semantic rectangle could look like:

Living (organic substance — organism)	Dead (organic substance — corpse, mummy)/fossil
Inanimate (inorganic substance)/fossil	Undead (organic dead substance)
	Animation (uncategorised/non-living/living substance)

So, if we follow Mitchell's logic and extend the argument, then firstly, if a living body is informed by living substance, it would have two logical contraries— dead substance informing the dead corpse and non-living substance for an inanimate object. Only living substance can turn dead. Non-living substance is a superset of dead substance. Negation of negation involves the return of life to substance. Since Mitchell presumes substance to be non-living, the undead corresponds to non-living substance. Instead, the undead should ideally correspond to dead substance, if it is not supposed to be alive (by Mitchell's definition). In addition, that which should be dead is not the same as that which should never have lived. It is only with the dead becoming alive that a possibility of uncanny could be generated. Again, the non-living becoming alive could only selectively become the uncanny. On the other hand, the mortification of life, as the living appearing as dead is actually the living playing the role of the dead, which means it is living substance of *tableau vivant*. Mitchell overlooks that the undead should belong to the category of dead organic substance, but categorises it as non-living. Since Mitchell uses a scientific classification of life and death, then substance is either organic or inorganic. Organic substance could potentially be transformed into a living form, or the living form could die. By the same contention,

inorganic substance could become alive, but cannot die. Substance endowed with life without classification is animation.

Substance could be presumed to be a non-binary neutral category. Substance itself cannot be categorised as dead or living without being qualified by form. Therefore, a semantic rectangle involving the dialectics of substance is not possible. It is only through representational form that substance is qualified and transforms from the uncategorised to an object or an organism. The fossil becomes an interesting anomaly that could help illustrate this. The fossil becomes problematic since it transgresses the boundary of the dead and the inert and inhabits both sides of living and non-living substance. By scientific logic, only organic substance could potentially generate into the living, and therefore, only organic substance can also give rise to death. Therefore, the fossil crosses over from the dead to the inert/inanimate problematising rational binary substance. Here, the uncategorised resides in the fossil, which is both an erstwhile organic now inert/inorganic substance that is potentially animatable. Its form nonetheless remains the same independent of its substance. Something similar goes with the mummy, which was erstwhile dead and presently non-living.

In contrast, when it comes to the world of animation, the skeleton or the fossil is itself animated. The fossil is not dead and need not be resurrected. This is significant as the skeleton does not need to become alive through a rationalised body. Animated movement renders all forms as living without distinguishing between living or dead forms. By extension, all substances without differentiation can be imbued with life. Skeletons become alive in Disney's *Silly Symphonies* *Skeleton Dance*. The category of non-living form is transformed into living form. Since a non-living form and a living form can only be distinguished from experience of representation corresponding to the external world, representation itself is problematised with animation. The problem is furthered where there is a refusal to die within the animation chronotope. In fact, if the skeleton becomes alive, as is

possible within the animated world, then what is the corresponding image for death? Since the skeleton is the conventional image of the dead or the non-living (for the fossil), in that case, how does one kill a live skeleton? This non-dual and prelogical component of animation problematises the binary order of life and death. The undead can only be a conception of becoming alive for the already dead within the world of images. However, the death is an impossibility within the world of images. Perhaps, the closest to the dead or its idea is the deformed.



Figure 1 “Skeleton Dance” showcases animated malleable skeletons

The previous square already illustrates that the condition of animated life does not distinguish between living or non-living substance. Everything is animatable and all substances are informed by the immanence of life. Moreover, even in the absence of a representative form, animation already posits substance as neutral or living, or in suspended animation (as stasis). In fact, the term resurrection (discounting the fact that it is christian terminology), is inappropriate for animation. Firstly, because any static form is not dead, and

therefore resurrection is meaningless. Moreover, as has been amply illustrated in early animation, even decapitated bodies could remain alive or seamlessly reassemble in a world informed by *athanasia*.

The second problem that arises with Mitchell's contention is the concept of the body. Mitchell presumes a body in flesh and bone from the line drawing of the dinosaur's body. Mitchell and Bazin, both presume contextual substance and therefore cannot conceive of a non-dual conception of animated life bereft of death. It is presumed that the substance shifts from an unformed state to an inert object and eventually to a body. It may be said that a basic understanding of the body is that it is living, and that it can die, contrary to an object or an uncategorised form. McCay and thereby Mitchell's idea of "resurrection" arrives from the positing of a realistic body upon the skeleton that intends to produce rational life. This is representational thought. However, this gives rise to another problem, which is the turning of neutral/uncategorised substance into a body informed by organic life. In fact, if substance becomes organic, it enters scientific classification of conceptual life-death binaries. For representational forms, substance is contextually potent with scientific life and its binary other as scientific death. Since substance is contextual for the line drawing, a transformation of substance is also concomitant with the transformation of form, from the unformed, to the object or into the living body of an organism. Until the body assumes a representative form, it is also uncategorised in terms of scientific life and potential death, and consequently contextual substance. Therefore, form qualifies substance. In fact, form and substance qualify each other. Therefore, form and substance cannot be independent of each other within representative thought. Within this paradigm, form and substance might as well be referred to as form/substance, as both are conceptually entwined within representation. It becomes clear that the form can only become a body or an object under specific circumstances. Scientific sense of life can take place, or form can only possess specific materiality upon representative

configuration that transforms it into a body. Again, the fossil is an important transition, from a dead body, to an inert object, whether the body is retained or lost to decay. Likewise, the mummy is also an anomaly. Interestingly, in popular culture, the fossil is allowed to become alive in films without generating the uncanny, while the mummy is generalised towards horror. Possibly, because the latter is closer to a corpse, as a decayed and deformed body, also in flesh and bone. The fossil is both a transformation of substance and a transformation of form. If we reconsider Mitchell's presumed categories in terms of form, then their material substance would lend another semantic rectangle:

Living (body, organic)	Dead (body, organic)/mummy/fossil
Inanimate (object, inert, inorganic)/mummy/fossil	Undead (body, organic)/mummy
	Animated (form/unformed, living/uncategorised)

The organism is possessive of an embodied life and it would again have two logical contraries. A category of a configured body that can possess life is informed by organic substance. Therefore, the logical contraries are correspondingly inert formed object and dead formed body/corpse. The mummy could be an interesting study in this context. The negation of negation is representative body returning to the dead or deformed, which is the undead. It is actually the decayed mummy becoming alive and searching for a body that informs popular cinema. One aspect is clear; the transformation of the mummy, as the incomplete/unformed/deformed body getting completed is far more effective in generating the uncanny than the completely formed skeleton. Moreover, the mummy can traverse into the zone of the dead, the undead and the inanimate as well. It shows that the deformed body, albeit incomplete is representative of organic surface/substance, and therefore scientific life/death binaries. Deformation is consequently essential for accentuating the dialectics of life/death. Life returning to uncategorised form and substance is animation. Now, if representative form (body) returns to the dead, it also means a reversal of decay, deformation

and transformation of the dead to the undead. This is representation of the reversal of death. As the undead, it is the return of signs of life, typically movement, to the corpse. The transformation of the skeleton to the body, which McCay and Mitchell applies is also the return of body to the inanimate fossil. This is the return of representative body, and not necessarily life. McCay and Mitchell are concerned about representative life, while Disney's "Skeleton Dance" shows the return of life to the non-representational form/substance. Therefore, form returning to substance does not necessarily mean the return of life to substance, while the return of life to substance does not conversely necessitate the return of bodily form. For animation, the return of life is disjunctive from the return of the body. Animation can take place on the unformed and the non-representational form. Therefore, animated life produces a curious problem of the dialectics of form and substance manifest as deterritorialised plastic movement that problematises representational thought.

The third concern with the living body, which is representative form and its representative substance is movement. Again, how can substance shift from being non-living or inert to that of becoming alive? The transformation of substance has to do with the transformation of form. Since suspended animation already animates all static forms, therefore, death cannot be represented through stasis. Death as a category does not exist and mortification of life is impossible. However, in Mitchell's model, there is the existence of death. This also means that theory thrusts the dialectics of life/death upon the image. Conversely, the image, in order to be made to conform to the dialectics of life/death has to produce an image that represents the dead. This process intends to produce the presumed living/dead binary, albeit unconsciously. A practitioner like McCay has already placed Mitchell's theory into praxis, although McCay precedes Mitchell, as they are bound by similar logic. When practitioners and theoreticians reside within the confines of a particular knowledge system, then the constructed image would also unconsciously have the bearings of

theory, since the presumed already belongs to a particular system of thinking. How and why this happens is the concern of the third chapter.

Death as a category does not exist in the image. Stasis is representative of suspended animation. Therefore, since stasis cannot represent death, the other option that is left, is movement. However, can the dead move? According to Mitchell's model, the undead is the becoming alive of the non-living/dead. For the image, it should be through some kind of change, typically through movement. The leading question is whether such movement is possible in actuality, or whether it is sufficient to create the sense of aliveness. However, this kind of movement can only come into being with the creation of the dead. Since stasis is not death, it is only with the creation of scientific and rational death through movement, that the uncanny is produced. As is evident, the undead is not necessarily alive. In that case, how does one distinguish between movement of the living and movement of the dead? This creates a peculiar problem of the moving dead, which potentially generates the uncanny. Movement representing the dead is not animation. The animated cannot be conflated with the undead, as they are characteristically different.

The undead and the animated can now be explored in terms of movement. This could be posited as the square of oppositions for stasis/movement informing the dialectics of life:

Living (movement)	Dead (stasis, suspended animation)
Inanimate (stasis, suspended animation)	Undead (movement, stasis)
	Animated (stasis/movement)

Movement of the living has two logical contraries, in the stasis of death and the stasis of the inanimate. The negation of negation is movement returning to the dead or stasis returning to the living. It is clear now that stasis belonging to death as suspended animation cannot be distinguished from that of the inanimate. Moreover, the undead would also belong to the

domain of liminality of suspended animation and therefore is indistinguishable from the dead or the inert. Since the living can also be playing the role of the dead, stasis can also be representative of the living. Therefore, stasis cannot represent death within the image. So, how can the living and the dead be distinguished?

As already discussed, the notion of life is something that is irrational and intangible. Desire and soul are the effects of multiple factors. Movement alone cannot qualify living inasmuch as stasis cannot qualify death. It is only when movement is volitional, or is informed by internal desire that the minimal sensibility of animation emerges. In other words, the gestalt of the soul emerges with embodied desire. Only the living and the animated possesses volition. Therefore, if life could be qualified with volitional movement informed by desire, it would lead to the following square:

Living (volitional, desiring movement)	Dead (desireless stasis)
Inanimate (suspended animation, desiring stasis)	Undead (non-volitional, desireless movement)
Animation (volitional, desiring stasis/movement)	

The logical contraries pertaining to desiring movement is desireless stasis of the dead corpse (which is perhaps impossible to depict), and the desiring stasis of the inanimate in suspended animation. Both are theoretically different, but indistinguishable within the image. However, their movement would generate different emotions. The negation of negation is desire to be static, which are living bodies playing dead, as the enaction of the *tableau vivant*, another example being toys playing dead in the presence of humans in the film “Toy Story”. The other negation of negation is the removal of desire from movement, or arrival of movement upon the desireless, which makes it the non-volitional movement of the undead. According to Mitchell, the undead is the becoming alive of the dead. Since this conception falls within the binary knowledge structure, the undead is not animated, since the undead is pitted on the side of the dead, and is therefore desireless. This is also where McCay’s

rendition of Gertie is animation as volitional movement and not the transformation of the dead to the undead with desireless movement. Only mortal characters, and which are already dead can become the undead. The non-living, on the other hand, would become animated with movement. This is because the dead is desireless stasis, while the non-living is desiring stasis. Movement returning to the former would attribute it with desireless movement, while movement of the latter would result in desiring movement. Therefore, uncanniness arrives in the desireless movement of a corpse, as the contradiction of a zombie. This is soulless movement. Desire returning to its negation is unresolved contradiction of soulless movement, a new category that is possible in theory. How it happens in praxis and why, is the concern of chapter 3. As the figure of the undead is movement returning to the dead bereft of desire, it would generate the uncanny.

Yet, how can the dead be moving? And how can movement represent the dead? Movement of the dead is nothing other than movement as contradiction. Yet, how can movement be contradiction? It is only when representative movement is presumed that contradiction emerges. This is the fallout of forcing representational thought on the constructed image. The set of semantic rectangles can now illustrate the relations between form, substance and movement. Since organic life has been posited with respect to representative substance and representative form, it cannot be complete without representative movement. This is because, movement of representative form and representative surface/substance in combination with rational but non-volitional movement would illustrate movement without desire. Since rational movement cannot justify volitional movement of the dead, movement occurs through external control and not internal volition. Non-volitional movement of representative bodies imply their forced death, which is the undead in Mitchell's model. Therefore, the uncanny surfaces when rational non-volitional movement informs representative bodies. In other words, representative form and

representative substance has to be informed by representative movement, failing which, it is likely to generate the uncanny.

Movement of the non-living/inanimate also generates non-representational movement. This is irrational and non-representational movement. This supposed “contradiction” arrives with animated movement, which informs all form/substance with volitional non-representational (and therefore irrational) movement. Instead of the non-representational movement of the undead that is informed by external control, if desire returns to form/substance, it is animation. And since desiring movement can inform any substance, it is also non-representational. As non-representational movement informs everything, life exists independent of representational form and representational substance. This creates a new category of movement, which is non-representational and deterritorialising that disjuncts and thereby liberates form and substance from each other. Therefore, the semantic rectangle can be reinterpreted in terms of animation, which allows for all kinds of movement upon forms thereby destabilising the rational sense of representative movement for the dialectics of life:

Living (representational, territorialising)	Dead (representational, territorialised)
Inanimate (representational, territorialised)	Undead (non-representational, territorializing/deterritorialising)
	Animation (non-representational, deterritorialising)

Deterritorialising movement is also non-representational and irrational movement. When it comes to simultaneously attributing death along with life as Mitchell contends, it is the sense of rational death that can only be attributed to a sense of rational life. And the sense of rational life arrives with a rationalised notion of a body, its volume, representative substance, rational movement, all of which contribute towards forming a representational image of a territorialised body. Deterritorialising the representative body as could also generate the uncanny. Within the scientific linguistic world of the undead, deterritorialisation amounts to deformation. McCay cannot assume a deterritorialising body as Disney Studios could. Gertie

is a partial representation of a representational body and movement. Mitchell completes the representation by theorising it in terms of binary orders of life and death. Both McCay and Mitchell would think of the dinosaur in flesh and bone since the animated world of Gertie is partly rational and also conforms to the cinematographic illusion. Yet, Gertie possesses a sense of volitional desire that arrives with the drawn line. Gertie has a tendency to defy gravity, weight, force relations and representational movement. The dinosaurs in Jurassic Park instead possess a photorealistic representative organic body achieved through its skin texture, its surface depicting substance wrapped around the volumetric bodily form. It is unlikely that a line drawing can produce the uncanny without a rational body and accompanying bodily surface, and within a rational space. Instead, the line drawing cannot die, whereas a representative organic body is potentially mortal.

It is clear that death cannot be portrayed within the image. Moreover, a static image is always in suspended animation. Even the image of the dead is potentially alive. Therefore, what does animation do in addition? Within animation, life is immanently present in all forms. Therefore, the categories of the living, the dead, the inanimate dissolves into the positive production of animated desire. Undead cannot exist as a category. If animation attributes movement to disjunctive form and substance, it is an additional sense of deterritorialising life. Therefore, it is the sense of double animation that arrives with animated movement, as desire imbued in stasis and also in movement. Form, substance and movement are all rendered non-representational and plastic. When it comes to the plastic image of early animation, animated worlds were about graphic possibilities of the line and not about life/death binaries. This aspect of the form produced *athanasia* as the dominant reality of such graphic worlds. And therefore, animated characters, even when decapitated would not die. Moreover, since it attributes non-representational movement to the non-living, it results in destabilising spatiotemporal notions of form and substance.

Now that it is clear that the discursive implications pertaining to the image is different from external reality, the problem with a structuralist transposition of the semantic rectangle of scientific and rational life/death upon the animated image produces multiple contradictions. If death does not exist in the image, then it needs to be created. A drawing is amortal, which is outside the category of the negative positing of deadness. Moreover, the prelogical drawn form qualifies the line with substance potential upon configuration. The line is therefore unqualified potential that is liable to be rendered into all kinds of life forms in its nascency and liminality. Drawn animation is the liminality of the positive production of life from something uncategorised and undecidable. The imperative to differentiate into binary oppositions of a positive term with its negative counterpart, is to remove the normalcy of the absence of death and the doubling of life with animated movement. The immanence of consciousness informing animated life is a decidable on the positive side of life without a negative counterpart.

Contradiction to scientific reason appears when life returns to any and every form. Animation is therefore contradiction to reason. Contradiction also appears when life returns to unformed substance, which is non-representation manifest as plasticity. A plastic form is the attribution of disjunctive relations upon representation. Since we are dealing with the image and the only indicator of organic life is its visible surface, representation is the production of a surface logically coherent with its representative configuration. Therefore, configuration (form) and life (movement) are linked through material surface and this triad is held together as the coherence of representational substance, and therefore scientific life. This triad is however held together by a fourth factor, which is the force of desire that embeds the sense of soul into forms. Contradiction to the rational dialectics of life surfaces if any one aspect of the triad does not conform to scientific and representational knowledge frameworks.

Instead of positing something as the undead that was never alive, which subjects the image to scientific discourse, animated life is already positive, indestructible, amortal and non-binary. In actuality, the decidability of deadness, and its binary opposition in aliveness is dependent on the representative triad of form, substance and movement as the representation of an organism. And it is the very placing of this triad into the binaries of linguistic and scientific discourse that sets the telos of animation discourse. As reason cannot handle the undecidable line, uncategorised substance, non-binary positive life, the plastic omnipotence of forms, deterritorialised bodies, or a non-literary storyless form, all pointing at aliveness without death, the telos of the image and consequently the material process has been about the reproduction of representative configuration of the body. The trajectory of animation has been the production of a rational, territorialised, scientific, embodied life from animated life. The making of organic life is the making of the mortal body. While death is its logical consequence, the making of the decidable rational organic form according to scientific discourse is the unconscious telos of the image.

1.11 On Affect and Pure Sensation

As Balázs notes while talking of the filmed cartoon drawing that, “Only film could open up a new dimension of the imagination by showing us forms that do not so much exist as *come into being*, forms that are events in themselves” (Balázs 2010, 174). Speaking of the power of silhouette animation of Lotte Reiniger, he contends that the story arises from the visual form (Balázs 2010, 170) and is in that sense non-literary. The action arises from the “adventures” of animated forms. Therefore cause and effect are not determined by the laws of nature, instead by the pure laws of form. This new set of rules set by pure laws of form is sensation outside of comprehension. When it comes to cartoon and in this case Balázs refers to Felix the Cat or Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, he talks about the omnipotent pencil that has

invented an astounding world. “A world whose substance is the line and whose limits are the limits of graphic art” (Balázs 2010, 173). This world is constructed not with representations of the shapes of independent beings. Instead, the lines themselves are the substance of those beings, a conflation of appearance and reality. Balázs focuses on the lines in this world that function in accordance with the shape they assume. “Lines are lines and where lines can be drawn, everything is possible.” He draws on the conception of absolute films in the mysterious affinity between graphic forms that are generated by lines. “Where there is no difference between appearance and reality, resemblance becomes identity” (Balázs 2010, 174). Hence these are absolute images and the films are absolute films. By this, Balázs means that the substance of the image is the line and therefore appearance is the reality of the line. This also extends into the idea that substance is bound to direct appearance. Once appearance starts to copy external reality, substance shifts away from the image to the physical world. For contemporary CGI, this relation has shifted, as the image tries to resemble a different reality external to itself, and substance is predicated on that referent reality.

Eisenstein was also deeply mesmerised with Disney’s cartoon animation alongside the supposed unity of its form and content. However, his main focus was on the “grundproblematic,” which he considered to be central to all art practices in general. “Grund” is ground, and hence grundproblematic refers to the basic issue. The Grund problem focuses on the problem of bringing together the rationally logical and sensuous in art (Eisenstein, Leyda 1985, ix). His main concern was the mystery of attractiveness and affectiveness of art. Eisenstein concluded:

The dialectic of works of art is built upon a most curious “dual-unity”. The affectiveness of a work of art is built upon the fact that there takes place in it a dual process: an impetuous progressive rise along the lines of the highest conceptual steps of consciousness and a simultaneous penetration by means of the structure of the form

into the layers of profoundest sensual thinking. The polar separation of these two lines of aspiration creates that remarkable tension of unity of form and content characteristic of true art-works⁴.

Eisenstein was focused on the Leninist definition of dialectics of unity of oppositions. And therefore his bidirectional angst of overcoming the unity of oppositions within aesthetic experience or the resolution that he was seeking got resolved in the highest unity of form and content found in cartoon animation. This happens according to him in the dual unity of the conceptual and the sensual. It allowed for the graphic narrative to be united with the visual form which rendered the narrative fluid. The fluid metamorphic form extended into the subject (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 41). This for Eisenstein is the attraction of a “storyless form,” in a similar vein to that of Balázs’s idea of non-literary form. This correlation between the rational and the sensuous, according to Eisenstein was the equivocation that problematises the binary separation between form and content. However, this sensuousness of the form is the active force of desire that is made reactive as a rational form of difference in the negative. It is the becoming reactive of this active sensuous force into the dialectics of unity of oppositions that brings about the revaluation of values in terms of a rational order.

As Mitchell points out, the moving image is always endowed with animism, or vital signs and its creation amounts to the creation of the binary between mortification and resurrection. The birth of the image cannot be separated from its deadness (Mitchell 2005, 55). As explained already, animation does not conform to this model. Eisenstein looks at Disney’s moving drawings as they are termed in English, as animated cartoon. “And in this name, both concepts are interwoven: both ‘animateness’ (anima—soul) and ‘mobility’ (animation—liveliness, mobility). It follows that the drawing is actualised as “animated through mobility”.

⁴ (From his address at the Creative Conference of Soviet Film Workers 1935) (ibid.)

For Eisenstein, “If it moves, then it’s alive” i.e. moved by an innate, independent, volitional impulse (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 54-55). In trying to understand the “living” drawings of cartoon animation, he draws upon the notion of sensuous in contrast to logically conscious perception, of sensing vis-a-vis knowing. We know that they are drawings, projections or technology while we sense them to be alive, active, existing and even thinking. And by extension, thinking along the same lines, he finds “animisation” of everything, from everyday objects to landscapes. Eisenstein points to the “doubly animated” character of the animated image with respect to a couple of aspects. Firstly, they are “animated” in their movement, since they are animated drawings. From Mitchell, by “drawing,” we mean desire, and hence animated movement is the atavistic prelogical rendition of desire, manifest within animated life. Secondly, the cartoon image is further animated in being attributed with humanlike souls (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 41). It is well worth noticing that Eisenstein also refers to something intangible as the soul as the sense of double animation, which means that movement alone does not create animation. Animated movement requires the additional quality of being attributed by a soul. Combining both Eisenstein and Mitchell’s perception, it is clear that animation is a positive category, the multiplication of desire of the already animated, as the soul. However, it is not really a resurrection since animated characters are not dead in the first place.

Most importantly, Eisenstein finds the primal plasmatic origin in fire that assumes all possible guises. Eisenstein finds infinite changeability and eternal becoming in the protean nature of fire as a direct embodiment of animism found in the animated cartoon. He notices the same in “plasmaticness” and metamorphosis. While plasmaticness is volitional play of lines and contours that lends omnipotence to characters, metamorphosis is transformation of one form to another, volitional or otherwise. This protean nature in the form of ecstasy is actually dematerialised potential characteristic of fire. Specifically, Eisenstein equates fire

with ecstasy that is objectified, literalised and formalised. For Eisenstein the attractiveness of fire lay in its “infinite changeability, modulation, transitivity and the continuous coming into being of images.” Thus, fire is like an embodiment of the principle of eternal coming into being, the eternally life-producing womb and omnipotence. In this sense, it also resembles the potentiality of the primal plasma, from which everything can arise. He furthers this analogy with the principles of dialectics as an aesthetic spectacle in and of itself. He connects fire with Eros but more specifically with the idea of pure sensation. Ecstasy is the experiencing of such primal omnipotence that arises from the eternal coming into being. And ecstasy as a sensation is “beyond any image, without an image, beyond tangibility—like a pure sensation” (Eisenstein, Leyda 1985, 45-46). In trying to find an image of that state with traits belonging to this sensation Eisenstein tries to connect the image with an idea, as phenomena linked to polymorphic capabilities, like fire, or water, inconstant forms, clouds and most importantly, music for its image is not stable. The idea of the storyless form arrives from this understanding of ecstasy, which according to Eisenstein, is beyond any image, without an image, and beyond tangibility, like a pure sensation.

Eisenstein goes on to adulate Disney’s style as going beyond the usual standardised yardsticks of assessing “high” art. Instead, “[...] perhaps, precisely in this lies the especially curious nature of the method and means of Disney’s art, as the purest model of inviolably-natural elements, characteristic of any art and here presented in a chemically pure form” (Leyda, p.10). This highlight of the “inviolably-natural” is the idea of pure form which may be lacking in content that is intrinsic to nature. Eisenstein does not mention this in passing, as a few sentences later he goes on to draw a contrast between “affect freed from any purpose” belonging to pure form to the understanding of Disney’s animation with man at the centre. He takes examples of the singing of a bird, lacking in content but infinitely exciting in its warbling. He extends it to aroma without a flower, or a taste extracted from a fruit. This pure

form of essence is the generation of affect without a rational purpose. This sensation extends on to man. “For at the centre of Disney, as well, stands man. But man brought back as it were, to those pre-stages that were traced out by... Darwin (ibid.).”

Similar to Balázs, Eisenstein had also focused on the line, but more specifically on the contour, the outline of a drawing. The outline suddenly takes on an independent life, independent of the figures and the objects (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 59). However, he was more interested in how the contour takes on an independent life as being connected with definite stages of primitive and primordial thought. As he draws a connection between drawing and Darwin, and speaking of his own drawings and also of Mickey Mouse, he finds the link between the “primal protoplasm and formed man.” What he finds as truly appealing is the “coming into being” of the human form from plasma, and in this lies the attractiveness of the drawn outlines. As Klein suggests, that the freedom from the denotative photograph or film is essential to the cartoon and how the cartoon as hand drawn moving sketch would become a mock-conflict in itself. But specifically, for the early cartoon, “Pinocchio could never be transformed into a ‘real boy,’ not as a drawing that becomes ‘real,’ because the flat medium would not permit it” (Klein 1993, 17). Therefore, the form of animation has to change in order to accommodate the becoming “real” of its characters. This similar problem had also affected McCay’s dinosaur. In fact, this is what the animated image has been all about from its inception, the transition towards the “real” from the drawing, a transition that has happened gradually from the protoplasmic form of line and the surface to the making of a “real” body. Reproducing the triad of representative form, representative substance and representative movement according to the offscreen image is yet again at the forefront of this endeavour. The technological processes has changed according to the demands of reproducing embodied life.

Eisenstein draws a necessary distinction between two successive stages in the evolution of primitive communities. Firstly, when individualisation has not taken place and therefore there is a diffusive principle of universal forces which seems to animate persons and things endowing them with life. Subsequently, individual spirits inform and inspire every being and every object. The two stages are marked by a difference of mentality of social groups. The former consciousness belongs to individual consciousness in solidarity with collective consciousness, where there is uninterrupted feeling of participation between the individual and the group. Eventually, when the individual starts to differentiate himself from the group, do other beings and objects appear to him to possess individual minds and spirits (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 96-97). Noticing animism in Disney animation as a transitional stage between prelogical and logical thought in stages, Eisenstein had also unknowingly speculated a telos of the animated image. He had noticed the gradated shifts of animism from the reality of the line to the appearance of external reality.

The making of the body from the protoplasmic, whether it is of the animal, anthropomorphic transitions or the human body in general is part of identification and identity formation. Eisenstein therefore finds signs of totemism within Disney's cartoon animation. Finding instances of totemism is according to the making of anthropomorphic characters, capable of representative essences as adjectival characteristics belonging to character designs. These psychological developments are also a gradual unification of animal and human forms into archetypal essences in gradual stages. Eisenstein posits totemism in three stages. The first stage is the evolutionary stage where there is factual metempsychosis and belief in the transmigration of souls. This stage posits the unity of human and animal. The second stage places this unity in totemistic belief, like the Indians of the Bororo tribe who believe that they are simultaneously both humans and red parrots, their totemic beast. The third stage is the metaphorical comparison of man with animal (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986,

49). For Eisenstein, it is essential to understand this comparison because it is the gradual moving away from joint existence. This happens in ways of animalisation of humans as well as personification of animals, both through identification or likening. All of the three stages of totemism are involved in the anthropomorphic rendition of animated characters throughout the general trajectory of animation. Eisenstein's conception of totemism conveys the literal embodiment and essential usage of the animal elements or its metaphorical essence in the method of personification or animalisation of an organism. Eisenstein furthers his argument by highlighting the "doubly animated" nature of Disney's imagery, as both in the sense of the animated immobility of the drawing, and in the sense of animals being attributed with human traits and emotions, animated both physically and spiritually.

The totemistic transition is not confined to consciousness, but also in the transition of the image towards the making of representative forms. Nevertheless, making of representative forms is not necessarily the making of the body having organic life, instead a transition of substance from the image to its external referent. From ubiquitous life pervading all forms, to its eventual transition into scientific reason by making organic life residing inside bodies is the shifting sense of animation. When the making of the form shifts to the making of the body, as has been reflected over the years in the material production of the animated image, from the abstract to the protozoic or the fully configured organic body, there is also a qualitative shift of the very sense of animation. Therefore, the shifting construction of the moving image is also the shifting visual base towards the diagram. As the basis of discursive practices, the shifting image highlights the shift of prevalent truth regimes. Apparently simplistic and reductionist, a study of the complexity of the apparatuses and practices involved in the construction of the image could illustrate the shifting historical a priori of discourse. This has been taken up subsequently.

Chapter 2: Plasticity and Discourse

“Life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness by life” — Karl Marx from *The German ideology*.

“Metamorphoses is a direct protest against the standardly immutable” — Eisenstein

2.1 Between Presentation, Non-representation and Re-presentation

In referring to cartoon animation, Eisenstein has summed up the relation of form and its movement in a single sentence: “Disney forced the self contained objective representational form to behave as a non-material volitional play of free lines and surfaces” (Eisenstein, Leyda, 1986, 99). This crucial statement actually summarises the plastic and metamorphic nature of the animation chronotope, as the effect of frame-by-frame process of image construction. Since the animated image tends to the non-representational, as is evident from this statement, analysis might be limiting and limited to the codified form of representation. This is because only representational forms can be identified with or be translated into meanings leaving the rest outside of discourse. Nonetheless, the form behaving as a non-material absolute image, where appearance and reality coincide (from Balázs), is a necessary effect of the animation process. This also means that signs cannot represent the form, either because it is a presentation, or because its deterritorialising movement renders it non-representational. It is a presentation, and not representation since drawn lines generate graphic forms whose substance is the line. Representative form and its substance only occurs when graphic forms produce referents. It is non-representation since it is an unstable form generated as the movement of singularities that problematises the production of a referent object.

The animation stage is empty. Emptiness is to have no nature. The nature of things only exist in relation to other things. Therefore, if relations cannot be formed between things, they would remain “essentially” unknown. As the manifest dividing practices of thought operating on emptiness, thought as representative practice cannot escape the gap between the referent and its representation as meaning. Non-representational forms are direct signs. For a representative sign, meanings are posited with reference to the internal coherence of the constructed world, although actual referents belong to the offscreen world. Therefore, movement is the crucial link between presentational direct signs and identification with representative signs. If discourse is to emerge from the direct absolute image of animation, it needs to be configured in terms of representation. This representation is not photorealistic but iconic in the sense that there is a sense of similitude with a referent, although the sign form largely remains within the bounds of the drawn line. This also means that presentation splits into representation, into the sign and its referent. The referent object could belong to the offscreen image or it could refer to imaginary referents. Imaginary referents are possible if the form of expression refers to the substance of expression according to some form of knowledge, that is, by some already established relation. However, most signs contain direct presentational aspects that do not refer to another object. Presentation is therefore dependent on the sign form and its movement.

Since knowledge is predicated on static forms or representative movement, the very problem of animation has been the problem of determinacy constituting static knowledge. Knowledge relies upon the image surface on which division and separation operates. This is because any determination poses the primary problem of differentiation. And language cannot operate on the non-differentiated. If positive knowledge is to be constructed from the given, the given is identified through sign relations. For the constructed image, since the given is absent, representative forms are constructed on the amplification of the

representative aspects of signs. Forms are direct signs for presentational and non-representational division and separation.

2.2 Actualised singularities

The universality of the singular is the effect of the frame-by-frame process whose aggregative effect is the non-representational plastic image. The universality of the singular would therefore manifest as non-representation highlighting the impermanence of all objects of knowledge. Impermanence foregrounds forms as force relations while problematising their relative spatiotemporal bindings. Plasticity is the effect of the movement of not virtual but actualised singularities. Actualised singularities emerge from the synthesis of subjective construction of movement as the dialectics of poses. Since division and separation involves the creation of figure and ground, in which the figure is primarily animated (and not the ground), the “non-material volitional play” of forms is also the animation of desire. The word volitional is significant since movement resides in and is the effect of desiring movement of lines and surfaces. In other words, internal desire is attributed to forms whose effect is volitional movement. Forms thus appear to be animated with a sense of an internal soul. Its gestalt is the soul imbibed as the aggregate of desiring movement. Therefore, the sense of an internal life force animates all forms with volitional movement.

Representative substance can only come into being when both form and movement are representative and corroborate each other. Plasticity instead problematises formation of representative substance. Plasticity synthesised from speculative analysis of movement is actualised becoming. As with any sense of becoming, it is non-representational. However, plasticity cannot be arrived at through an intelligible analysis of movement as is possible with cinematographic illusion. This is also because substance resides in the image and in the sign form and not in the referent object. A plastic sign problematises representative form and

representative substance as well. It cannot enter discourse as representative movement. Plasticity is the manifest image of non-representation that is dialectically placed against meaning making practices possible through a system of representations. Meanings can only emerge from a system of representations positing internal relations of coherence. Therefore, in order to read the image as a text, to decipher its informational content over its formal aesthetics, the image has to be comprehended from its representational aspects. Deterritorialising non-representational movement resides outside of discursive practices, and although is part of the image, would only be present as the formal portrayal of becoming. In other words, although animated movement would be perceived in the sense of becoming, it cannot be brought into the sense of being if forms do not territorialise into sign forms. It would be the Heraclitean sense of being of becoming but not a concrete form that could be pointed out as representation. It would not generate meanings, although it may well generate unnameable affects. Non-representation amounts not to generating meanings but visual pleasure with minimal meaning, perhaps as visual music, the synaesthesia of “seeing sounds and hearing visuals” as is used in experimental animation.

2.3 From Being to Becoming

Difference-in-itself is manifest in the plastic image of animation. For Deleuze, the idea of difference in itself is not based on relationship of sameness, instead it is a state of groundlessness where difference is internal to a thing or event which is already present in its particularity or singularity. Deleuzian conception of difference is also against any kind of universal grouping in terms of unity of meaning or conceptual similarity in the Hegelian sense of Being. Instead, it resists representation in privileging ‘becoming’ over being, in individuation determined by specific differences inherent in particulars over generalisation. Animation externalises and makes manifest difference in itself as movement of manifest

actualised singularities. Since each frame is a singularity and the circumstances of its production is unique to itself, the resultant is ‘this’, here and now present in every frame. The manifest form of plasticity thus continuously reconstructs time in the present, and continuously reconstitutes the virtual into potentially alternative actualities.

So, whereas the need to represent a concept is dependent on subjective intent, plasmaticness is pure difference produced in the very act of repetition as the locus of the contour and the locus of the contour’s movement. On the other hand, metamorphosis directly moves away from representation and back towards it, with conscious intent as deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. Plasticity and metamorphosis therefore accords attractiveness to the ungrounded non-representational image resulting from difference in itself and its repetition. Since each frame is actualised, animated movement is the transformation of being into becoming. It is here that the virtual is foregrounded as the richness of potential unfolding into the actual. Rather, time is the potential for various trajectories of actuality (Parr 2010, 10). The virtual dimension of reality is this potential of the Idea to express itself into different actualities (Parr 2010, 10-11).

2.4 Transgression, Contradiction and Reification

The early animated image under industrial production was antirealist and was informed by the dialectics of the transgressive line. As Klein (1993) states; “Above all, the animation narrative was built around expressive possibilities of the anarchic. They are another deterritorialising object, a tribute to the power of the naked line as transgressor” (Klein, 1993: 12). The intrinsic nature of animation lay in flows between forms defying the realism expressed by recorded imagery. For Eisenstein, the ability to transgress was characteristic of a being that was of definite appearance, however behaving like a primal protoplasm bereft of a stable form and “which, skipping along the rungs of the evolutionary ladder, attaches itself

to any and all forms of animal existence” (Eisenstein, Leyda, 1986: 21). This strong tendency of the transformation of stable forms into fluid materiality transcends the boundaries of form to the realms of subject and theme (the substance of content). It also reflects on the nature of free expression (as against the regulative practices of power), where ideological freedom translates into the free movement of bodies. Eisenstein recognised the same in Disney’s drawings with its innate plasmaticness being a natural reaction to a mechanical and standardised society (America under capitalism) that promotes conformism and homogeneity in the form of model sheets, walk cycles (a repetitive character walk used for economising costs) and character expression charts that were byproducts of the industrial process. Eisenstein notes:

“In a country and social order with such a mercilessly standardised and mechanically measured existence, which is difficult to call life, the sight of such “omnipotence” (that is the ability to become “whatever you wish”), cannot but hold a sharp degree of attractiveness. [...] A lost changeability, fluidity, suddenness of formations — that’s the “subtext” brought to the viewer who lacks all this by these seemingly strange traits which permeate folktales, cartoons, the spineless circus performer and the seemingly groundless scattering of extremities in Disney’s drawings.” (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 21)

While the animation industry could initially use this sense of plastic omnipotence for a commercial market, the viability of plastic movement was nonetheless reduced with the concretisation of narrative logic affecting all forms. Plasticity and metamorphosis could never really find a market for itself, perhaps due to their resistance to meaning formation.

Eisenstein furthers that America and the formal logic of standardisation had to give birth to Disney as a natural reaction, cartoon animation being an example of “formal ecstasy” of the prelogical (Eisenstein, Leyda, p.42). The possibility of bodies being able to transgress

their preassigned boundaries at will was a reaction to standardising social order. Eisenstein effectively regards the observable freedom of the animated form with personal and ideological freedom. The subtext of the continuously changeable form is a production of the prelogical plasmaticness that is groundless and which takes it into the realms of the unrecognisable “terra incognita”. The formal ecstasy of the prelogical is the state of formal potential extending on to the subject matter with the possibility of generating new worlds. This groundlessness could be comprehended as difference in itself.

For Eisenstein, the prerequisites for attractiveness belongs to the ability to assume any form:

[...] An image which is profound in thought and irresistibly attractive and exciting in form?

What's strange is not the fact that it exists.

What's strange is that it attracts!

And you can't help but arrive at the conclusion that a single, common prerequisite of attractiveness shows through in all these examples: a rejection of once-and-forever allotted form, freedom from ossification, the ability to dynamically assume any form.

An ability that I'd call “plasmaticness”, for here we have a being represented in drawing, a being of a definite form, a being which has attained a definite appearance, and which behaves like the primal protoplasm, not yet possessing a “stable” form, but capable of assuming any form and which, skipping along the rungs of the evolutionary ladder, attaches itself to any and all forms of animal existence.

Why is the sight of this so attractive? (Eisenstein, Leyda 1986, 21).

According to Eisenstein, the prerequisites for attractiveness of an image lie in the flowing omnipotence that belongs to the depths of pre-memory. This ability, he termed “plasmaticness” was characteristic of a being that was of definite appearance, however

behaving like a “primal protoplasm” bereft of a stable form that could bend the rules of its preordained configuration. It is significant to notice Eisenstein’s reference of the primal protoplasm. He assumes that the form is already alive, although he refers to it in terms of organic life, a mistake akin to that made by Mitchell.

If a broad spectrum ranging from non-representation to representation could be speculated, then the representative aspects of the image can also be read as a text. The non-representational would tend towards escaping meaning making, while representation would afford and confer meanings. Dana Polan concentrates on the critique of representation, where representation as a form of text generally confirms the world and blinds us to contradictions, and that submission to a text means submission to its ideology. Texts are a complicity of codes, and simultaneously rhetorical which hides its own rhetorical nature. Polan would argue that without a degree of code-sharing between art makers and art receivers, the artwork becomes noise. Texts are contracts in which the audience willingly relates to codes in a certain way. At the same time it is important that there is some form of transgression of the codes. Polan: “Information theory emphasizes not only that information ceases without a common code but also that it ceases if a transgression of codes does not appear, a transgression actually inherent in the system and which expands it” (Polan 1974).

Polan claims that all art is based not only on confirmation but also on contradiction. For Polan, self-reflexivity in art heightens this interplay between credulity and skepticism. Speaking of the difference between art and political art, Polan suggests that it is a difference of attitude between a textual artifice and a social attitude. According to him, films differ not so much in their formal complexity as in their political attitude, which is the sense of the changing and changeable nature of the world. Perhaps the most important observation that Polan makes is that the conventional work of art does not remove contradictions, instead it divorces contradictions from its social causes. Specifically, bourgeois existence fissures

subjective self unity and social unity of acting subjects with its continuous succession of disappointments and subversions, precisely the reason why contemporary culture can accommodate formally subversive art (*ibid.*). The transgressive contradicts form and content and brings their inherent contradictions to the surface, although separated from their social causes. If social causes could be construed as repressive or standardising social structures, then transgressive reactions would surface as countercurrents to truth regimes. On the other hand, with normative powers of governance, reactions are placated, the transgressive is disciplined and deviations from the norm are minimised.

Talking of Brecht and his notion of realism, Polan draws on the political artwork as being the difference between the way things are and the way they can be. Therefore, Brecht's formal experimentation depends on content in two ways. Firstly, as the form changing in order to reflect changing realities. Secondly, "Brecht's political theatre is a theatre of possibility" that changes the image of human beings from being unalterable to the ability to alter. Accordingly, Brechtian art is connected with a reified vision of the world alongside the possibility of a new critical perspective of knowledge from which the familiar is scrutinised. Ultimately, Brecht's main concern is content and what it says about the real world and accordingly, to pay close attention to the world of possibilities that a work promises. And as Brecht's main intention is to please and to instruct, his main contention is a work that promises a combination of a world and its better version. Therefore, generation of content involves the establishment of form according to a reified vision of the world, failing which a critical perspective of knowledge cannot be established. However, the generation of expressive form that is in itself transgressive could be a source of subversion to reified forms. The possibility of form is also the possibility of content. If the form could be comprehended with a new critical perspective of knowledge, new content transgressing the familiar codes of a reified vision could be generated.

2.5 Dividing the Signifying Image

When it comes to the image, there is a significant confusion in comprehending the distinction between form and content. As Bordwell and Thompson would argue, form is not something in opposition to content. Form is not the container so that the content can take up or be placed within any form, which relegates the form as something less important than what it is supposed to contain. If form is the totality of the system of a film, then there is no inside or outside. Form is not separate from the content. With every component functioning within the overall pattern of a formal system, whether it is the subject matter or abstract ideas, all enter into the total system of the artwork. Whatever might be deemed as content is indeed a dynamic interaction of individual elements in the perceiver's mind that creates meanings (Bordwell, Thompson and Ashton 1997, 25). It is within the human mind that a segregation and resultant dichotomy of the content from the relegated form is conceived of. This also establishes that perceptions of such meanings are not in isolation of their context. Perception is socially constructed. In other words they are symptomatic of their social contexts. The sense of aesthetic relies heavily on prior experience. Prior experience creates conventions and rules for the notion of correct emotional response or perceived meanings within formal relations. The meanings, implicit or explicit are in a dynamic formal relation with one another within the formal system of the medium. A film's aggregate system and hence its meaning is larger than the individual meanings of its spatial and temporal units. Most importantly, formal relations should be internally consistent for the generation of discourse.

Chandler suggests that there is a tendency to equate the distinction between the signifier and the signified of a sign correspondingly with form and content. However, the tendency to relegate form to the container that is not itself meaningful, and meaning that can be extracted from it as content without an active process of interpretation is conceptually problematic.

Hjelmslev, while not rejecting the container metaphor chose to undermine the dualistic reduction of sign to form and content (Chandler 2017, 64). According to Hjelmslev, “there can be no content without an expression, or expressionless content; neither can there be an expression without a content, or content-less expression” (Chandler 2017, 64-65). This could be made clearer using Hjelmslev’s model of the sign. If we can visualise a matrix between the four terms, namely, form + substance along one axis and content + expression on the other, then the relation between form and content could be deciphered more comprehensively. The sign manifests as the function of two forms, the content form and the expression form. Simultaneously, a sign function is also manifest as content substance and expression substance. The content substance is the subject matter while the content form is the narrative, ideological or thematic structure. The content substance is also the conceptual and psychical manifestation of the sign. The expression substance is material culture, the physical material of the medium, the image, word or sound. It is the physical substance where the sign is manifest. The expression form is design and stylistic features, lexicon, or the morphological, syntactic or phonological structure (ibid.).

Nonetheless, content is not to be confused with the signified and expression with the signifier. The resultant is a discursive stratification of the visible and the articulable. The form of expression is the form of the visible, while the form of content is the form of the articulable. The articulable has primacy over the visible. However, for the articulable to emerge, the visible needs to attain a historical past as a stable form of expression. This means that the image needs to be representational. Since the constructed deterritorialised image of actualised singularities does not necessarily represent, dividing it according to a normative perception is problematic. In fact, the fissiparous animated image cannot be divided without complicating the categories of form, substance, content or expression.

The focus of analysis of form of content has largely been on the more comprehensible rhetoric and ideological biases of the narrative aspects. The form has been relegated because of its indeterminable aesthetics against the more graspable informational content as determinate meanings. Otherwise, it is elevated as residing beyond ideological biases, being an aesthetic code that is innocent *de facto*. In fact, Eisenstein had proposed Disney to be beyond good and evil. Nevertheless, this simplistic understanding of the animated image would call for closer attention. The expression of ideological biases or constraints may not be apparent on textual analysis, since the codification of the form of expression is not a discursive construction. This is because the form of expression is already an apparent construction of truth values in terms of scientific discourse within the epistemological field. Since image construction ordinarily resides within the discursive limits of the epistemological field, it is movement that problematises the division of the signifying image into comprehensible separations.

Hjelmslev's analysis works fine for the cinematographic illusion. Since the substance of expression is reproduced from the offscreen image, the physical substance of the image corresponds to intellection according to the cinematographic illusion. The substance of content or the subject matter of the narrative likewise does not pose any contradiction with the image form. The form of expression organises matter or the substance of expression together in the morphological structure of the image. The form of content is the emergent network of statements that results in discursive formation from the visible form of expression. The visible form of expression is the image form that needs to be a stable configuration for such emergence. Discursive formation predicated on the aforementioned classification of signs would be unproblematic if animated movement is not considered. This is nevertheless problematised by the plastic movement of the sign that disjuncts the form of expression, from the substance of expression, the physical matter. Moreover, the very nature

of construction of animation renders spatial and temporal incoherence as the normal. Since non-representational animation is not reproduced from the offscreen image, matter is not organised by form. Instead, since deterritorialising movement connects the visible form of expression (the morphological structure) with the subject matter (the content substance), the latter also destabilises into a structureless form. In other words, the narrative structure tends towards a storyless format. This is because the physical substance of expression is malleable and bound to the animation form. The story appears in short patches as sporadic discursive formation. This is not the case with photorealistic imagery of live action recordings. Hjelmslev's model is therefore inadequate to explain the animated image, primarily because the substance resides in the drawn form and not in a referent object as representative substance. This connection creates plausible and internally coherent alternative worlds relating the substance of expression (physical matter) and the substance of content (subject matter). However, it also shows that the link between the form and substance of expression is force relation, thus delinking potential from the matter flux. Moreover, since the substance does not conform to the sign form, the image showcases the multiple possible trajectories of actualisation of virtual potential. Since the plastic image consequently reveals that expression (image) and content (text) is related through by force relation, disjunctive substance and potential would generate new forms of presentation that transgresses the limits of scientific rationality, while producing new relations of signification. This is the pure potential of animation as the disjunctive relation not only between substance, potential and form, but also all of this connected with the content (subject matter). And hence, animation is able to posit a storyless form of expression. This is different from the storyless form of content, which is to do with a lack of narrative structure. This triad of non-relation is also the harbinger of a prelogical form of expression from which an alogical form of content emerges. When the plastic image confirms disjunction, force relations also confirms power/knowledge as the

only factor behind the construction of form and its movement. More importantly, plasticity shows that the content is a direct manifestation of force relations, unravelling the nature of power/knowledge directly asserting itself on visual expression. In fact, power/knowledge necessitates a structure through which power and knowledge are linked. Can power bereft of knowledge reside outside of structure as the difference between forces, and forces only? Power can only reside within plasticity in the form of manifest force relation affecting boundaries as pure affect. Yet, since it resides outside of knowledge, it is not necessarily power, nor does it posit any truth. It is only when knowledge can implicate plasticity and metamorphosis, in other words the ungraspable, could power emerge through knowledge.

2.6 Plasticity and Metamorphosis

Scrutinising plasticity leads to a comprehension of the pre-discursive virtual as the epistemological threshold. “In this respect, it is not enough to speak of a ‘threshold of epistemologisation’: the latter is already moving in a direction that leads to science, and will still cross a threshold of ‘scientificity’ and ultimately a ‘threshold of formalisation’. But other thresholds, moving off in other directions, also leave their mark on the stratum: thresholds involving ethics, aesthetics, politics, etc.” (Deleuze 2006, 51). Prelogical plasmaticness has to pass from the world of non-representation into the reified world of representation crossing multiple thresholds of epistemologisation in order to enter normative discourse. Metamorphosis, which makes the image non-representational and resistive to discursive formation is by extension resistive to theory. The early animated image did not belong to the world of “non-discursive formation of institutions” or the “discursive formation of statements” that Foucault would normally be associated with. This is because the non-discursive was yet to be trans-formed as the visible diagram with respect to the subject. This is due to the non-conformity of the animated illusion to the organisation of matter by form.

Therefore, the transformation of non-discursive environment into the static “visible” diagram also remains partially unfulfilled. “Any institution implies the existence of statements such as a constitution, a charter, contracts, registrations and enrolments. Conversely, statements refer back to an institutional milieu which is necessary for the formation both of the objects which arise in such examples of the statement and of the subject who speaks from this position” (Deleuze 2006, 9). This would mean the position of the image maker with respect to the emergence of moving images. For the unique condition of the image, this also translates into the emergent position of the subject audience. The image remains pre-discursive until and unless it replicates the diagram of an environmental formation. In other words, until and unless the negatively designated non-discursive environment is given its positive form as the visible according to the cinematographic illusion, the image remains pre-discursive and partially outside of discourse. Moreover, this non-entry into discourse is the primary aspect of metamorphosis. More importantly, since metamorphosis is the basis for the form of animation, its decoding is not possible without engaging into the dialectics of formal change that does not allow for meaning making. And when it does, discourse does not belong to the binary order of the rational, which destabilizes representation. It is affective and partially discursive, yet without rationally apparent meanings.

Since metamorphosis is the connection between representative forms through non-representation, it is the event taking place in the present between accumulated representative pasts. Therefore, actuality representative of the known past or anticipated future is brought within the folds of the present. The morph taking place in the present is a disjunction between the past already affected by force relations, and a future to be constituted by new combination of forces into new events. Therefore, plasticity as plasmaticness and metamorphosis coheres with the present, and removes the notion of any world behind appearances. The disjunctive morph between the past and the future as the present is therefore the development of events

without the accumulation of a representative past or anticipation of a known future. Bendazzi notes:

“The frame-by-frame system, alone, successfully portrays those events that develop in time. And what events do we see? An elephant becoming a house, people becoming somebody else, a thin character inflating like a balloon. Metamorphoses. The metamorphosis is an inborn possibility of frame-by-frame shooting, and of frame-by-frame shooting only.

Hence, a conclusion: The first stage of a new language was born. Since 17 August 1908, live action and animation would live parallel but distinct lives (Bendazzi 2016, 31).”

As Bendazzi suggests, metamorphosis became the new language of animation in its nascence. This creates a curious problem for theorising the form or its analysis. Klein states “[...] An image transmutes, as if by alchemy, into many others; its atomic structure seemingly comes unglued.” This furthers the problematic of materiality and potential. At the same time, substance resides in the sign form and not the referent. Klein also refers to substance, albeit differently than Eisenstein. For Aristotle, “matter exists in a potential state, just because it may come to its form; and when it exists *actually*, then it is in its form” (Cohen, 2000). This is also what Deleuze means when he mentions that form organises matter (Deleuze 2006, 33). However, Deleuze also sets a couple of actuality/potentiality. He takes the actual as that which has been effected from potentiality. And therefore, a broad gamut of potentiality can be intuited from the emergent actual. For animation, the richer potential can be intuited through dematerialised movement of forms translating into other forms. Morphing creates immateriality in the transition between forms. Either form, or its movement is indicative of material substance in the absence of a surface of determination. Material, substance and matter are separate determinations. Material is specific to form.

Substance is homogeneous matter that possesses uniform qualities. Matter is a form of universality. This understanding brackets matter, substance and material in terms of form. Since, for the line drawing, the line is the substance, its movement translates into the separation between the form and its contour. Material separation of the line in terms of figure and ground is also ambiguous, since the enclosed space that is considered as interior of forms does not necessarily translate into representative material. Or similar forms could translate into different substances depending on their functional movements. For example, in “Felix dines and pines” the same form of drawn lines in the form of parallel lines couples as both spaghetti or a straw depending on their context of use. Since any form of determinacy is form with its material association, substance is presumed. Yet, when it comes to the line, materiality as functional substance becomes relationally dependent on contextual usage. Materiality is functional separation of substance produced by coherence of representative movement. When it comes to plasticity, either these concepts conflate or become dematerialised potential.

2.7 Plasticity and Potential

As Marx suggests, humans conceive and then construct. It is the speculative form that is rendered into an object in the drawing. The relational nature of inside out is in a dialectical relation with the outside in. Since the outside in lies closest to the cinematographic illusion as objective comprehension of the external world, material function coincides with form. This is also the image of the given. However, the animated image as the unfolding inside out becomes a continuous praxis of dialectical overturning of the given. The outside in is bound to objectivity. Accordingly, all postulates belonging to scientific ordering of knowledge is bound to the outside in. The form is also defined by its function when potential coincides with its actualisation in matter flux. The objects in the image are also copies of objects

inhabiting the given. However, when it comes to the constructed image, potential is outside of the bindings of form and matter, as function disjuncts from form. Potential can appear as an actualisation of multiple possibilities. Time becomes the potential for various trajectories of actuality. And since the constructed image is the dialectics of virtual potential vis-a-vis its actualisation, potential becomes directly manifest in the spatial and temporal rescaling of form and its movement. In other words, plasticity is the actualisation of potentially multiple possibilities of the virtual, although it cannot be generalised into being. Now, instead of actuality associated with being, actualisation of plasticity is conceived becoming. Actuality shows the richer potentiality from which it has emerged. Actuality refers to the virtual dimension of reality that can express itself into different actualities. The Idea can repeat itself infinitely through different actualities. Therefore, the plastic or the morphing form actually shows the potential to realise different actualities into alternative realities.

2.8 Form, Substance and Potential

Empirical reality is generally construed within a universal chronotope. Spatial and temporal coherence cannot be separated from each other. However, spatial coherence stems from redundancies of relative measures of size, scale (distance and depth) or force relations (reactive forces, mass or gravity) between forms. Temporal coherence is predicated on relative measures of substance organised into form. Form affects both spatial and temporal relations as substance is presumed according to form. In that sense, form presumes substance. However, for the animated illusion, the sense of space and time are construed from both form and its movement. Movement problematises substance associated with form. Spatial incoherence informing animated motion also has its impact on how space is framed in the form of heterotopy anticipating alternative worlds. Forms and their relations produce space. Space could be shrunk or stretched, while even non-space can be created where time seems to

collapse on a character. There are ample examples of chases in Tex Avery cartoons, where Droopy inevitably reaches first or wins even though Wolfie manages extreme hysteric speeds.

The narrative space could afford multiple sense of spatial and temporal incoherence. In addition, changing substance in relation to form is time. Substance is comprehended through its movement. Substance appears as force relation, and its attributes are freely subject to alterity. Since time is shrunk or stretched according to movement of sign form, it implies accelerated or decelerated material movement of substance. Scientific discourse is ungrounded with the impermanence of representative forms through spatial and temporal incoherence. Anticipation of expected movement is situated according to an associated substance, the substance of expression following this universality. However, the line as substance endows forms with their own sense of reproduced spatiotemporality. Since space and time unfolds from incoherent relation between forms with respect to the offscreen image, the plastic image becomes manifest heterotopy and heterochrony.

Objects placed in relation to each other produce space in terms of differentiated depth planes. Objects divide the absolute homogeneous universal time in terms of differentiated temporalities. Discourse furthers this division in terms of scientific reason. Differentiated temporalities segregate different kinds of spatiotemporal actualisations with reference to differentiated planes and objects.

Plasticity renders temporality in the present. Heterotopy guides the entire image space with a groundlessness of seamless deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, violating spatial and temporal coherence. This kind of fragmented sense of temporality associated with separated forms with disjunctive materialities, is also the sense of fragmented individual timeframes demarcated by differentiated sense of movements. Plasticity, for its part would be foregrounded by heterogeneity of matter flux. Dematerialisation is the result of disjunctive

synthesis of form, substance and potential. With this kind of disjunction, time becomes germane to the discussion of materiality of the sign.

Valentin Voloshinov, who reinterprets Saussure's psychological and idealist model of the sign as having some sort of material embodiment, posits all signs including language as having concrete material reality, and that, "the physical properties of the sign matter" (Chandler 2017, 60). Now, when a world of signs is constructed, it also involves a spatiotemporal homogeneity of expected movement consistent with the concrete material reality of that world. So, even within an imagined world of animation, where forms may not be possessive of an equivalent referent belonging to the external world, signs would still maintain representative spatiotemporal homogeneity and in relation to the external world.

For drawn animation, the simultaneous transgressor and renderer of material properties is the animated line. Metamorphosis as dematerialising and re-materialising the sign from one form to another highlights the relational aspect of form, potential and substance. This sets a modality of relational form of expression and relational form of content, thereby positing a constructed world whose subject matter is relationality. In other words, both the form of content and the substance of content are relational. The narrative space is governed by relational space and time. Eisenstein's conception of a storyless form is possible due to this relational understanding of substance of content informed by spatiotemporal relativity predicated on movement. The shifting potential visible in the metamorphosis from one form to another is through dematerialising and re-materialising form that disengages representation from matter flux. Forms do not conform to their anticipated movement; instead, the universal chronotope informing all movements is subjected to microscopic and macroscopic spatiotemporal reconfiguration.

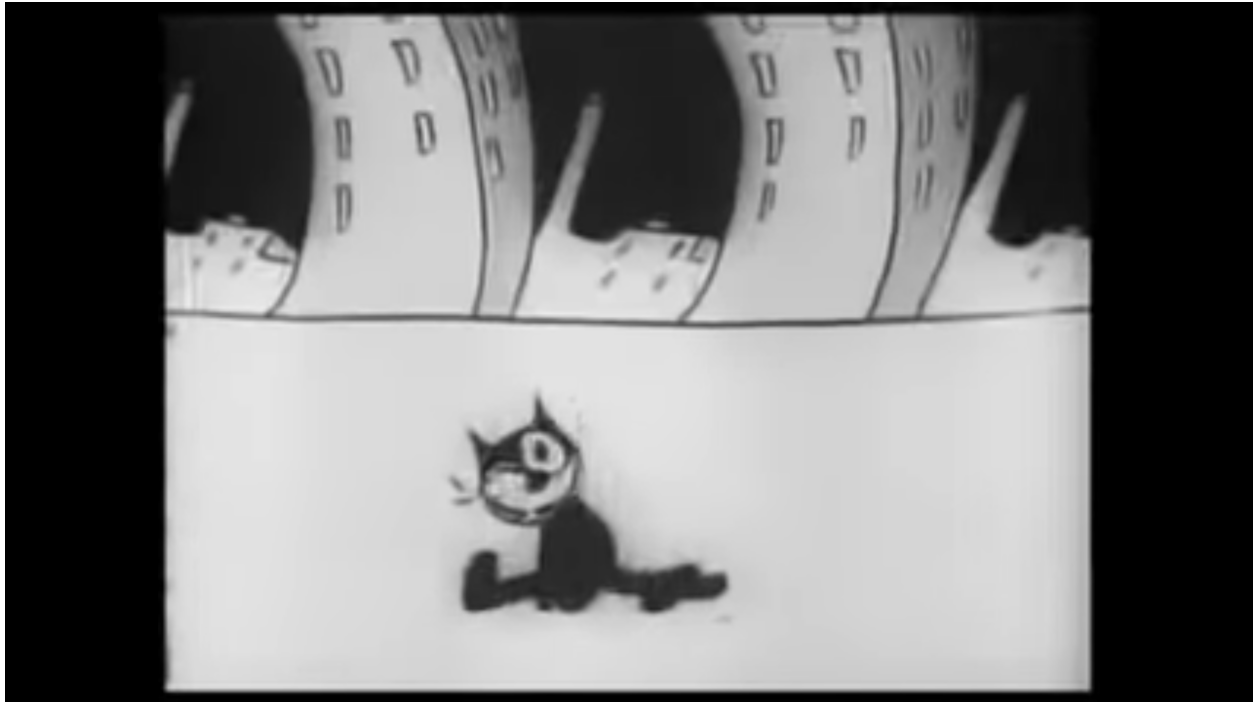


Figure 2 “Felix the Cat Woos Whoopee”; Bent dancing buildings showcase dematerialised substance and spatiotemporal reconfiguration

The separation of substance from an otherwise dematerialised space-time provides it with its duration. To lend it with some form of structure, there has to be representative configuration of form separating it from its ground, as if “naturally” separating the emptiness of the stage into positive affirmation of differentiated substance. In fact, Plato does not distinguish between Form/Idea and writes them as an inseparable duality. Since matter, substance and material are used interchangeably and without qualification in general under the cinematographic illusion, it is pertinent to make distinctions already to avoid future confusion. This distinction corresponds to an animated vision of the world. Matter is physical substance, while substance is matter possessing uniform properties that lends it with necessary attributes. Although not apparent for the cinematographic illusion, substance is force relation under animated motion, for specific attributes of substance are held together with respect to form. Form is held responsible for bringing matter into being (Williams 2015, 146-47). This is the distinction between the material and the formal. Matter is also contrasted

with idea, and therefore the Platonic conception of Form and Idea are conceived together. However, there is an important shift with the shifting specificity from matter to substance to materiality, and this is most evident through plasticity. Since representative form is also its functionality, the transformation of matter to materiality is specific to the transformation of the relational nature of matter to the uniform functional aspect of materiality. Materiality is the specific coherence of substance attributed to a form. Materiality of form is specific to its function. Therefore, form and idea, whose potential is relational, becomes functional when form is actualised in terms of materiality. Therefore, materiality is also representative of knowledge structures governing form and its movement. Bending the structures of form is also bending the structures of established representative knowledge that manifest as dematerialisation of substance.

Since form is held responsible for bringing matter into being, animated motion, by transforming being into becoming also transforms representation into virtual potential. Plasticity is contradiction for representative form, since representation is irreconcilable with the virtual potential of destabilised form. Representation being static knowledge, the dynamism of plasticity can only appear in the form of expression as contradiction of dematerialised substance of expression. In other words, representation as knowledge structure and plasticity contradict each other. It could be said that plasticity could create its own form of representation. However, the sense of plasticity is the being of becoming and not being itself, and hence it cannot be representation. This is because, if plasticity could exist in the offscreen image, it would have been identified and represented onscreen as recorded imagery. It would belong to a rationalised image that exists in real life. Plasticity is the direct image of non-representation without a referent and is the basis on which animation form is dematerialised. Plasticity arises from frame-by-frame animation and does not exist in external reality. Therefore, transgressing the normative is possible by showing the internal

contradictions within a representative system. And this potential is the virtuality of possible spaces of transgression of the normative. Since potential is detached from substance, time is their only link. This also means forms can potentially take up any kind of movement. This is contradiction afflicting substance and function of form. Contradiction is situated in the present that resists assimilation into a representational past. Contradiction is the event as it produces transgressive informational content that expands codified representation (from Polan). The event is the bringing forth of perceptual boundary with reference to knowledge formation, delimiting the logic of representative systems. Disjunctive knowledge is the coming apart of the rigid functionality of concepts held together under the logic of systems of representation. Contradictions would surface whenever disjunctive knowledge would push systems of representation towards the edges of its notional boundaries. Therefore, plasticity is the continual dialectics between the boundaries of systems of representation whose internal contradictions are brought forth with disjunctive knowledge.

2.9 Boundary: Dialectics of Form and Contour

Plasmaticness is the effect of a locus of a locus. Firstly, since it is the rendition of a drawn form, which is the locus of a point as line. Secondly, it is the locus of movement of the drawn form. Even if the animator wishes for stable representation, as re-presentation of the same or difference from the same, difference in itself is inevitable as non-conceptual singularity reconstituting itself in every frame. Deterritorialising movement is the resultant of the moving locus. This happens as manual labour is imperfect and it takes a lot of training and dexterity to create seamless movement. In fact, the mainstay of the hegemonic presence of Hollywood animation is the attempt at this perfection of seamless movement. This also means extensive training of animators to produce the same drawing style. Plasticity, which is salient to frame-by-frame process and was acceptable in early animation nonetheless became

the obstacle to narrative logic subsequently. Plasmaticness disunites forms from their contours, and is accorded to forms in the very act of producing newness in frame-by-frame construction. The dialectics of form and contour is the notional boundary of the moving form.

Eisenstein notes that the eye of the observer or the subject “runs round” the observed object, and in that very act preserves within it the preceding stage of “comprehension” through a glance. The subject (as the eye) moves along the outlines of the object (thing) and not the object that is moving in space. Eisenstein argues that at this stage of development in the act of glancing there is yet no difference between the subjective and the objective. And the movement of the eye running along a contour is read as easily as the running of the contour itself. Linguistic metaphors arise as traces from this process of glancing at this stage of thought. The action of glancing itself is “animistically” attributed to the object of observation. Through the indivisibleness of the subject and object at this stage, all movements and actions are ascribed upon all forms. Eisenstein would call it a motor metaphor, as a verbal active process but not objective (Eisenstein, Leyda 1985, 55-58). Disney, and by extension cartoon animation follows this process of objectively depicting in drawings. It is the elastic play of contours in the drawing, with a special attribute. The comicality of the cartoons arises from any representation existing in two ways—as a set of lines and as the image that arises from them. This is the difference between the contour and the limits of the notional boundary pertaining to forms. The contour is partly independent of the form it represents. To take from Eisenstein, “only after the contour of the neck elongates beyond the possible limits of the neck—does it become comical embodiment of that which occurs as a sensuous process in the cited metaphors.” Eisenstein’s comment means that there is a sense of territorialisation of the form and limits to deterritorialisation of the contour. For, if it means endless deterritorialisation, then the form would not have any relation with the contour. This would mean metamorphosis from the erstwhile form into another, resulting in

the rupture of dialectics with the formation of another. Deterritorialisation of contour is bound to the form to the extent that it does not lose its entity. The dual separation of representation as a set of lines and as the gestalt of form that arises are simultaneously independent of each other and also belonging together in the same image. Yet, the contour is possessive of a life independent of the objects themselves.

Material perception of time requires the determinacy of the formal boundary. The boundary is also the virtual potential of crossing over logical coherence. Boundary potential is the gestalt of contour and forms, where contradiction appears when contours violate the notional limits of form. Boundary is potentially a triad of sign form (signifier/representamen), its referent (object form), and its plasticity (sign form transgressing object form). And although the plane of the referent cannot be touched, it nevertheless directly affects the interpretant as the possibility of deterritorialising the materiality of the sign. The interpretant being a social sense and also historical sense of interpretation, the sign form and its movement is bound to sociohistorical limits of transgression. Sign form has associated materiality comprehended through multiple sensory information, like audio or texture, but which manifests as functional attribute of the substance of expression. The functional attribute emergent from the substance of expression is its form of expression. Therefore, plasticity, particularly metamorphosis as the special case, is the continuous transformation between the functional but which highlights the relational nature of forms in transition.

The boundary is the virtuality produced from the manifest dialectics between the form and the contour. While the contour can deviate from the form, representation is the generality that restores form to its recognisable state, that is identity. It is only when form is representational, and representation is transgressed that contradiction emerges. Transgression dissolves identity formation. Identification with sameness or difference is continuously reconfigured with deterritorialisation. In resisting consistent wholes across timed movement,

the iterative nature of plasticity disintegrates representative structures. The manifest nature of deterritorialisation disallows emotional investments into forms by highlighting the transitory nature of cultural identification specific to particular social and historical milieu. Rather than a fixed identity, plastic form reflects changeability and anti-essentialism. This is a form of supplementarity and iterability as the representative form unfolds continually into shifting meanings. Shifting meanings would lead to contradiction when the boundary condition becomes rigid. Plasticity expands identities beyond the redundant, already conceived and familiar.

The sign form or icon is linked by surfaces internally consistent with a representative world. Every representative world possesses a set of codified realities of its own. Since the form of content and the form of expression are relational, meaning making is resisted with incoherent movement of material substance, thereby problematising the interiority of scientific or ideological content. In other words, when the materiality of forms are incoherent with respect to their iconicity, contradiction surfaces within dominant meanings. As Svankmajer talks about his own work: “Animation enables me to give magical powers to things. In my films, I move many objects, real objects. Suddenly, everyday contact with things which people are used to acquires a new dimension and in this way casts a doubt over reality. In other words, I use animation as a means of subversion” (Wells 1998, 11). Svankmajer’s works bear ample demonstration of his suggested notions of subversion where forms and surfaces react to and subvert knowledge structures. Svankmajer amply uses formation and transformation through deformation of the normalised form and substance in order to generate his style of subversion.

Simultaneously, the boundary is also the site of shifting potential. Disjunctive potential without association with material substance is pure potential without the constraint of functional attributes of matter constraining form. With representation, the Aristotelian

problematic of non-contradiction would entail deterritorialisation impossible. Under Aristotelian reason, based on the principle of non-contradiction and the principle of excluded middle, the icon would have to conform to its functional material form conferring physical properties to the referent object. For imagined concepts without real referents corresponding to the external world, it is social and material relations predicated on the notional sense of norm that takes significance. The norm in this case purports to be functional. Rationalising the image is also concretising the form under linguistic and scientific discourse, as the binary between the sign as itself and not itself. This means the boundary coincides with the form and the contour. This also means that the form shifts towards notional objectivity. Fluid possibilities of formation of content or expression are removed by the principle of non-contradiction and the principle of excluded middle. Therefore, a direct transformation from difference in itself to difference as a system of comparison would also ensure the entry of form into the semiotic sphere of differences.

2.10 Ungrounding and Grounding

The line is repetition of difference that replaces itself in time. Repetition and difference reproduce each other in the very act of replacement of the shifting line. Repetition of difference of the new in each frame produces deterritorialisation. This is the process of ungrounding through continuous transformation of singularities. For Deleuze “repetition is produced via difference, not mimesis. It is a process of ungrounding that resists turning into an inert system of replication” (Parr 2010, 225). Deleuze looks into repetition from the idea of the “power of beginning and beginning again” (Deleuze, 1994, 136. As cited in Parr 2010, 225). However, since Deleuze’s understanding of repetition is virtual and internal, the animated line as transgressor is different from the Deleuzian contention, inasmuch as it actualises the virtual as manifest repetition of difference. The actualised form of the animated

image is externalised material production of difference in itself. And since it is externalised, its subsequent internalisation and further government into representation as repetition without difference is a historical trajectory hinting at a shifting episteme. The shifting episteme is comprehended through the shifting diagram of the constructed image.

Repetition of the singular therefore is the basis of plasticity. Construing the synthesis of singularities of the intelligible analysis of movement results in plasticity as well as transgressive boundaries, at times together. The manifest movement of singularities results in iterative repetition of the contour that expands the boundary potential into open generation of meanings towards indeterminate signification. Transgressive boundaries are entropic and are hence reflexive of expanded meanings and therefore expansive subjectivities. If actual singularities of animated motion are comprehended in terms of difference as comparison and not difference in itself, it would lead to intellection according to the cinematographic illusion. Nonetheless, animated motion does not conform to the cinematographic illusion although it is territorialised by discursive practices of knowledge. “Were we to understand the relationship between virtual singularities and actual individuals in terms of resemblance or analogy, we would reduce the notion of repetition that Deleuze advances simply to a repetition of the same” (Parr ed. 2010, 302). This is true for recorded imagery, since perception does not ordinarily construe representative image in terms of virtual singularities. With notional internal repetition, the boundary potential is lost in representative movement. Recorded imagery works in terms of the accumulation of banalities of any-instant-whatevers. Since movement is construed and constructed according to a sensible analysis of movement as the “mechanical succession of instants” instead of the dialectical order of poses (Deleuze 1986, 4), and this modern scientific approach applies to computer generated imagery (CGI) as well, the boundary potential contracts from the repetition of the same. This happens because repetition of the same is mechanical and without variation. It reduces notional boundaries,

and specifically associated meanings as redundancy of re-presenting. There is visually not much difference between CGI and live action recorded imagery, both working in terms of modern thought that construes time as an independent variable and which are predicated on repetition of the same.

Becoming is the positive return of difference. If positive difference is to be generalised for representation, then the active force of becoming is to be turned reactive for dialectics to operate as negative difference. Dialectics would appear as soon as difference of force relations appear oppositional. This happens when the active transgression of the singular is countered by the reactive territorialising force of the general/particular. Dialectics pertains to the sign and its territorialised repetition. Any form of deterritorialisation is the transformation of transgression into the dialectics of the singular and the general. This can happen if and when the lines of force as form of expression enter discourse through generalised grouping of difference. Form of expression enters discourse as form of content, as the transformation of the visible into the articulable. Difference in itself is transformed into representation, recognition and identity formation.

2.11 Recomposing Animated Movement

From the early application of metamorphosis to the eventual shift towards creating more “realistic” animation, the non-discursive process has been effective in generating the visual form. Producing realistic animation basically means animating from recorded movement. Since there is a continuous comparison between offscreen and onscreen, the former ultimately becomes represented onscreen. As Furuhashi notes, the industrial process of Disney’s animation adopted Fordist processes in order to arrive at the animation form. Furuhashi brings the plasticity of the animated image in relation to its material processes of production, in terms of referentiality. The use of observation of actual movements from live-

action footage and still photography crucially created the notion of degrees of possible deterritorialisation from the observed. Force relations between the active force of free movement becomes codependent on the constraining force of recorded reference. Recorded movement from the determinate referent to its interpretation is within the confines of structural ordering of the outside in.

Decomposition and recomposition of movement binds plasticity to representative movement. Representation of determinate structures is also the concretisation of force relations into form. Bending the structures of representation means bending the rules of knowledge. Higher determinacy corresponds to ostensibly higher objectivity associated with scientific discourse. And the maximum determinacy is gained by representing substance from the referent object. Relative proportions between forms is also maintained in order to arrive at scientific truth pertaining to spatial measures. Along with spatial objectivity, temporal objectivity is structured according to material substance. Therefore, representative structures would also become visibly more rigid in order to attain higher objectivity. This is related to the system of differences produced by determinate signs, their significations facilitated by language. Discursive practices are predicated on the more determinate offscreen image on which the cinematographic illusion is based. And referentiality is essential for language to operate onscreen, since similar discursive relations are sought for within the onscreen image. This also means that the binary divide between subject and object in terms of language or scientific practice would demand of the image to produce maximum separation in terms of their boundary potential. Therefore, the image is dependent on the non-discursive process and environment that goes on to build the onscreen image according to the ostensibly maximal objectivity.

Theorising the perception of the image is not independent of the material processes that go on to produce it. Furuhashi, in understanding plasticity draws the link between the material

process of production, that is the image making process, instead of simply looking into the finished appearance of the image (Furuhata 2011, 27). In analysing so, she considers two kinds of material conditions: the medium of animation and the organisation of labour involved in the production of animation. Furuhata draws on the example of Disney modelling his animation process directly after Henry Ford's automobile factory, with a standardised manufacturing process. The subjective interpretation and play of movement is brought within the constraints of Fordism and Taylorism under the industrial process. Furuhata highlights that Eisenstein acknowledges the Fordist system involved in the material processes of image production and therefore looks at plasticity as a form of alternative world and antidote to the rigidity and oppressive conditions under the Fordist system. However, as Furuhata claims, Eisenstein has failed to look at Disney at the level of the process, instead focuses only on the visual attributes. However, it may well be asked that is not the industrial process implied in Eisenstein's analysis of visual attributes?

Furuhata refers to the works of Imamura Taihei who highlights animation mediated by the camera. By this, he means that the process of Disney's animation uses a dual process of "decomposing a certain motion in photographs and of translating this observation into pictures" (Furuhata 2011, 32). It follows that the imagination of animation based on recorded imagery is based on mediation of the camera. However, Imamura Taihei does not make it clear as to how mediated imagery could be possible for all animation forms, for which a ready referent from the real world is unavailable. This form of "decomposition and recomposition" (Thomas and Johnston 1981, 323) of real movements has been compared with a twofold process. Firstly, Disney's animation method of observing movement and drawing pictures and secondly, the division of labour involved in the whole process of producing an animation film as the decomposition of a movement into discrete photograms on a filmstrip. Subsequently, Imamura compares the process of division-decomposition to the

Fordist mode of production where a complex process of division of labour assemble numerous distinct parts together into a whole. Imamura Taihei and thereby Furuhashi overlooks one crucial aspect here. The point of concern is plasticity pertaining to the image despite the referential process, not because of it. This is because, in referring to recorded imagery animation shifts from subjective interpretative movement of the inside out to the cinematographic illusion. The “objective” outside in takes over as the reactive force on which movement would be predicated henceforth. The outside in is objective since it is dominated by notions of scientific objectivity predicated on external reality. The outside in is purportedly more determinate than the inside out, the subjective interpretation of movement. The entire process of division-decomposition of movement based on a supposedly scientific device (cinematic apparatus) forms the hegemonic code of recomposing animated motion.

Early animation had maximum deterritorialising potential. If the question is about plasticity of the contour, then the potential to deterritorialise has been gradually subsumed by referential constraints. The active force of deterritorialisation is recast in the negative by the territorialising reactive force of linguistic and scientific objectivity. This is the primacy of the articulable over the visible as Foucault (and Deleuze) envisages. Thus, the reactive force of territorialisation is also the emergence of consciousness that “represents” active forces by “separating activity from what it can do” (Parr ed. 2010, 8). Recomposition of movement from recorded imagery is also making the active force of plasticity work against the power of its own affirmation. Therefore, the active force of desire that produces the disjunctive relation between form, substance, potential and consequently spatiotemporal coherence is relegated to the irrational through the making of rational consciousness. Rational consciousness simulates the active force of desire and turns it against itself, an illustration of the Will to Power being reconfigured towards reaction and negation, into the will to nothingness. The omnipotence of forms as the event of difference between active and reactive forces that also affirms “being”

as a process, would be considered as unintelligible or as deformation of representative form according to discourse. In other words, being as a process belonging to the economy of becoming would be transformed into being as substance, as a combination of discrete ideas, images and identities. The formation of consciousness is also the formation of representation, of difference as comparison. Therefore, consciousness is also the territorialisation of plasticity from becoming to being, from process to substance. This transformation of non-representational movement to its dependence on the given offscreen image is also the translation of pure potential to its ordering in terms of materiality.

2.12 Dialectical Synthesis of Movement

“Pose-to-pose” techniques gain primacy over “straight ahead” techniques as the focus shifts towards the narrative, the form of content capturing the form of expression. Cartoon animation’s push towards neorealist practices came with the concretisation of pose-to-pose techniques. To clarify, straight ahead techniques of animation involved anticipating speculated movement. Accordingly, the possibility for improvisation proliferated in the absence of a concretised telos. Pose-to-pose techniques, on the other hand is a transition between poses, between extremes poses and storytelling keyframes. With the arrival of the narrative constraints and the fixity of the ensuing frame towards which motion is directed, namely the keyframe or the storytelling frame, the frames in between became dictated by the narrative, and not by erstwhile metamorphoses. It may also be relevant to mention that Furuhata overlooks that squash and stretch techniques of animation is not really plasmaticness and metamorphosis that Eisenstein or Klein has been referring to, since squash and stretch are physical attributes of matter that arrives with the rationalising “twelve principles” of Disney. The absence of a framework directing movement is henceforth brought within regulative practices that govern animation. For example, squash and stretch attributes

physical laws like constant volume to matter that also renders forms elastic from being plastic. Therefore, the mediated material processes that Furuhashi refers to may not really be the reason for the plasticity of animation but despite the use of reference from live-action footage. Plasticity is not really the effect of division of labour; instead it is curtailed by the use of photographic decomposition of movement and division of labour. This has been amply reflected in the process of division of labour incorporated in cel animation techniques patented by Earl Hurd and John Randolph Bray, which does not reflect plasticity. Instead, they appear as staccato like, disruptive and jerky movements. However, animation of Disney and Fleischer Studios showcase a significant amount of plasticity. Fleischer Studios used “rotoscopy” techniques, which is taking human reference for animated motion, while Disney used recorded references as well. Dave Fleischer would dress up as a clown and have animators “rotoscope” or trace his movements on film for the role of Koko the Clown (Klein 1993, 20). Disney Studios, with the introduction of the “twelve principles” took the multimorphic world of animation and gave it mechanical laws, which are still followed in the animation industry. Klein refers to squash and stretch as the most important of those principles, where volume of a character was an absolute quantity, like the volume within a container that must remain constant, no matter what (Klein 1993, 50).

Furuhashi extends her argument with Hanada Kiyoteru’s interpretation of Imamura Taihei. Hanada Kiyoteru draws on a dialectical synthesis between a documentary process of scientific observation and the avant-garde process of imaginary deformation. Hanada finds this process dialectical as the first stage of photographic recording is both negated and preserved in the second stage of drawing pictures, the final outcome bearing traces of both stages. Hanada takes the drawing process as the key moment of dialectical mediation negating the previous stage of photographic recording. Interestingly, this process of decomposition and recomposition could be taken as similar to Eisenstein’s dialectics of the

form and the contour. Nonetheless, the process of positive difference-in-itself informed by the particular “singularity” at the moment of inception or perception is reconstituted in terms of Being in the representational model of thought. The dialectical process emerges from “this,” here and now if and when difference is conceived as “‘difference from the same’ or difference of the same over time” (Parr ed. 2010, 74). This is difference conceived of as comparison and an object of representation as relation of some grouping, in terms of resemblance, identity, opposition and analogy. The transformation of difference from the power to differ without any grounding, is recast and qualified in the negative that makes it operate against its own affirmation. This is the generation of consciousness as the dialectics between the present as becoming and the past as knowledge structure. Difference is therefore transformed from the singularity of the event of becoming different, that is time or movement into a relationship of comparison— comparison of forms between frames, or with the photographed referent.

Furuhata draws on Hanada’s interpretation as a dialectical process of formation and transformation and extrapolates it to the plasticity of animation as the key to Hegelian dialectics. Since Hanada looks at the drawing process as the intermediary stage between documentary and the final image and *prior* to the latter’s appearance, Furuhata would take upon Hanada’s understanding as a dialectical movement of formation and transformation as pertaining to the material process of image production. Since Furuhata draws on plasticity as a dialectical relation to both the perceptual interpretation and the material processes of image making, it would be pertinent to understand plasticity also in terms of knowledge structures. Since all forces are reactive, it is simply not only the Fordist process that could generate plasticity. Instead, it is the historical shift of force relations that organises form or function. The degrees of malleability, to which formation and transformation is allowed for, refers to

the historical specificity of the limits of deformation based on the sense of the normal, which is also historically specific. And this sense of the normal is set by the sense of the outside in.

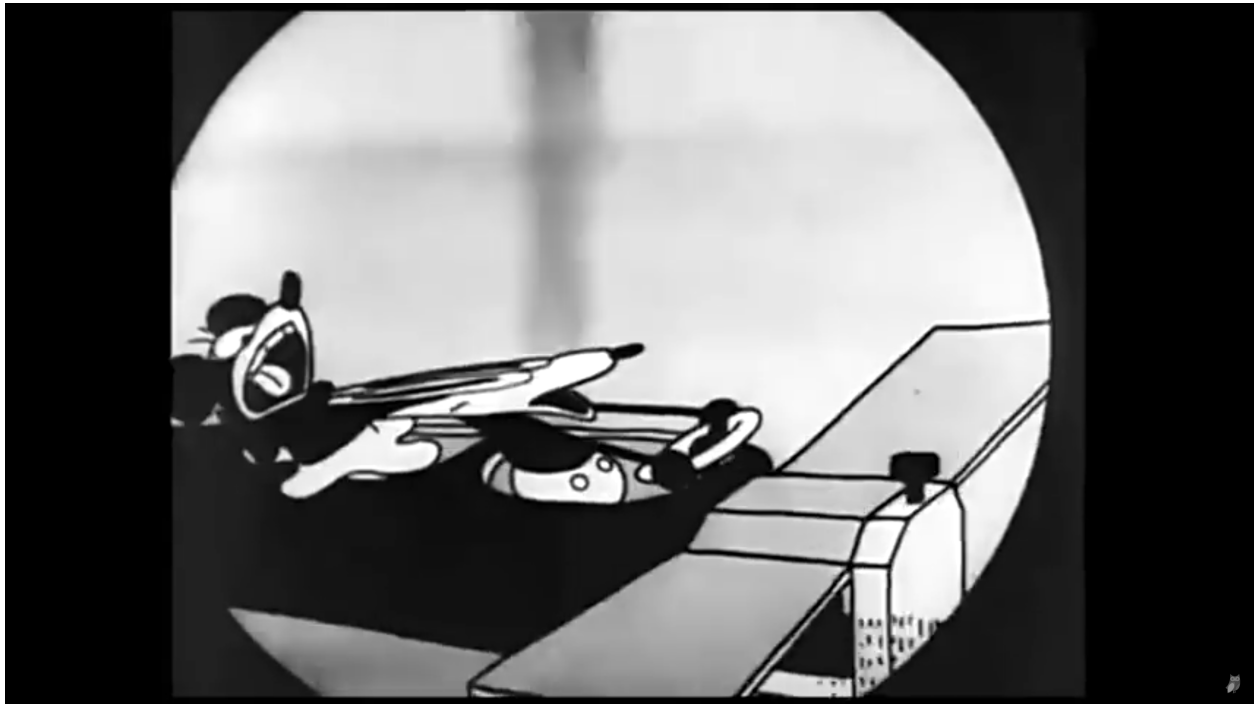


Figure 3 “Plane Crazy” illustrates the extent of permissible plasticity in early animation

There is a fuzzy interstice between transformation and deformation. The sense of normalcy can delimit the permissibility of plasticity, beyond which the rules of deformation becomes the quasi-structuring rules of violence of form and perception. The rules of personality animation eventually shifted metamorphosis from the violation of the animated boundary to emotional violence. This is possible as movement builds upon the metaphoric second order signifying system. The connotative emerges from the denotative form. A set of boundaries delimit deformation according to the rules of reason. The rules of transgressions are set on the denotative. Deformation belongs to second order signifying systems, systems which build upon already existing ones. Hjelmslev had pointed out the planes of connotation prior to Barthes:

...it seems appropriate to view the connotators as content for which the denotative semiotics are expression, and to designate this content and this expression as a *semiotic*,

namely a *connotative semiotic*. In other words, after the analysis of the denotative semiotic is completed, the connotative semiotic must be subjected to an analysis according to just the same procedure...

Thus a connotative semiotic is a semiotic that is not a language, and one whose expression plane is provided by the content plane and expression plane of a denotative semiotic. Thus it is a semiotic one plane of which (namely the expression plane) is a semiotic. (Silverman 1984, 26)

The denotative image and its concept becomes in its entirety the connotative signifier evoking additional connotative signifieds. Barthes furthers Hjelmslev's idea of connotation with the operation of ideology, which according to him is "myth". Ideology or myth according to Barthes, is also the deployment of signifiers expressing and "surreptitiously" justifying dominant values of a given historical period (Silverman 1984, 26-27). It is here that deformation would connote the abnormal based on the notion of the general myth propagated by the sense of the normal within a specific epistemological field.

There could be rules to plasticity or it could be without rules depending on the sense of this normal. Hence the change incurred cannot be fathomed or be brought into the realms of the rational without a sense of the connotative emergent from a normalising discourse. Plasticity beyond the limits of the normal generates the uncanny of the deformed. This is knowledge pertaining to the possibility of bending structures. However, this is ambiguous and dependent on the undecidable comprehended in terms of the uncanny, horror or comicality. As Freud understands, "... this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression... which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light." "Unheimlich," translated as uncanny, is a word that depicts a sense of estrangement within the home. However, more specifically it indicates to the presence of

something threatening, unknown and yet tempting that lies within the bounds of the intimate, familiar. The uncanny is the sense of the new and dreadful that returns to the long familiar. The word “heimlich” is ambiguous. It belongs to two sets of ideas, which are very different but not really contradictory. It means that which is familiar and congenial, on the one hand, and that which is concealed and hidden, on the other.

The unheimlich place, is the entrance to the former “heim” or home where everyone dwelt in the beginning. The home, for Freud, is a type of secret place, and the unhomely, the uncanny, is something which should have been kept a secret but is revealed. This means that the "canny-homely" and uncanny-unhomely are two opposites that bear each other's meaning. Freud draws upon the concrete example of a mannequin as something which appears to be familiar as a human figure, but is in fact lifeless and therefore a potential cause of dread. This is because of the dissonance of not knowing whether it is a human or a piece of plastic at first glance. According to Freud, “Thus heimlich is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, unheimlich” (Freud 2019). In this sense, the uncanny can also be generated when life tends to coincide with death (this is the uncanny valley, addressed subsequently in Chapter 3). The uncanny is a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and which has then resurfaced. The uncanny is a feeling of anxiety, which is something rediscovered only after repression has rendered it strange, and unfamiliar. The uncanny emerges when a certain trigger brings back repressed or primitive beliefs that has suddenly received renewed affirmation. Freud, among other issues has focused on the omnipotence of primitive thoughts which are no longer believed in. Yet although new beliefs are supposedly well set, the old set of beliefs still exist within the subject, always ready to seize upon any confirmation. Something actually taking place that seems to support old, discarded beliefs would bring about the uncanny.

This is true for plasticity, since the hidden is something that need not be hidden but is manifest and resides as an undecidable movement that lends animism to morphing lines or the uncanny to deforming surfaces. Nevertheless, this can only take place when identity has set its claim on forms. Higher the capture of form by representation, or representative identity, greater is the sense of deformation from the norm. Higher is the affinity towards realism, higher is the tendency to notice deformation. The line and the surface are actually different when it comes to configuration or deformation. Metamorphosis could generate both the comical or horror. For the drawn line, transgression of its iconicity would reside more on the side of the curious or the comical. The uncanny by definition, is related more with the familiar, and hence is related to the photorealistic surface as representation in relation to the offscreen world. Horror has got more to do with the deformation of the surface. Deformation of surface usually amounts to the uncanny or horror since it is the coming to light of the alienated and the repressed, of something that should have remained hidden. This means that violence lies latent on the surface of deformation, and the violation of its boundary connotes the uncanny.

2.13 Plasticity to Dialectics: Making the Plastic Determinable

There another aspect to plasticity that problematises knowledge formation. Discursive formation is only possible with the extraction of the form of content. If content is to become articulable, it already entails power/knowledge to operate on forms converting them into distinguishable sign relations. This has to do with both language and practice, although which is only capable of generating a discourse of the known. Therefore, even if the process works towards an unconscious creation of a certain kind of the visible, the deeper and broader consequence is the making of a discursive structure from the visible onscreen. This is because meaning does not reside outside of discourse and the non-discursive can only function in and

through discourse. However, there is a definite gap between what sign relations represent and what discourse makes out of it. Therefore, the imperative upon power/knowledge is to form a discourse predicated on the determinable and knowable. Perception of the plastic form is more as an uncoded affect residing outside of textuality rather than the extraction of the idea behind its form. It is the animator and the audience communicating without language, and much of it is outside the control of their intended meanings or interpretations. For the articulable, the visible needs to be removed of undetermined residuals of unknowable movement residing outside of discourse. Accordingly, a higher determination can be extracted from the form as sign form, while other abstractions of style or aesthetics remain inexpressible as excess of form, primarily as affect.

For Eisenstein, the prerequisites for attractiveness as the ability to dynamically assume any form is primarily the ability to bend the structures of representation. Since everything is created on emptiness for the constructed image, any representative construction operates as an icon of knowledge structures. The production of meaning would therefore depend more on how iconic configuration signifies through a system of representations. This is already ideological. As Voloshinov argues, a sign does not simply exist as part of a reality, instead reflects and refracts another reality. It has the capability of distorting the sense of reality. For Voloshinov, the domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs, and wherever a sign is present, ideology is present as well. He further suggests that every ideological sign is not only a reflection or shadow of reality, but is also a material segment of that very reality. “Every phenomenon functioning as an ideological sign has some kind of material embodiment, whether in sound, physical mass, colour, movement of the body, or the like” (Voloshinov 1973, 10-11). In this sense, the reality of the sign is fully objective and it becomes more and more material with added attributes to its material embodiment. Both the sign and all the effects it produces occur in outer experience. Accordingly, the meaning of a

sign resides in the social context of its use. This also means that signs become material in nature in relation to other signs.

If form is the idea, then there is some intent, and the intent is predicated on social subjectivity. And this intent is revealed iteratively through the becoming of plastic movement. However, if the content is to be extracted from the form, the form has to stabilise into representative signs, which is not possible from immaterial movement. Klein compares metamorphosis to what Eisenstein meant by the “intellectual montage,” albeit in the form of a linear version of “lapse dissolve” instead of an editing device connecting separate shots (Klein 1993, 65-66). Since metamorphic transition has been replaced with other cinematic devices like the cut and the dissolve, “conflict” through juxtaposition as the montage is also essential for meaning generation. If we enquire the nature of metamorphosis as Klein had claimed as a form of lapse dissolve and similar to the intellectual montage, metamorphosis contains both linkage and collision, yet it placates conflict as the “how” of the manifestly visible transition. Here, the frame is the remarkable instant and unlike how Eisenstein will look at montage as conflict between shots in his “Film Form,” it is the linkage and collision of qualitative singularities which reside as minimal unit of perceptual movement in terms of the filmic unit of analysis. It is clear that Eisenstein, when it comes to understanding the film form is very different than the Eisenstein theorising on animation (Eisenstein however never refers to the concept of the frame while theorising cartoon animation). Therefore, segmenting the morph into a series of determinable instances could transform immaterial movement into significance through segmentation according to power/knowledge. However, the chief highlight of Eisenstein’s understanding of the montage is his concern for the frame. For Eisenstein, “the film-frame can never be an inflexible letter of the alphabet, but must always remain a multiple-meaning ideogram.” And the ideogram can only be read or gains its significance in juxtaposition. Segmentation or elision of plasticity would generate fragmented

conflicting movements and their relations, as shot relation. This materialises segmented movement in terms of meaning, where motion is informed by ellipsis. The conversion of image sequences into shots is also the making of shot relations and sign relations, where shots could be construed as meaning making units. For Eisenstein, montage is conflict, while as he posits, for Pudovkin montage is linkage. As Eisenstein writes:

The shot is by no means an element of montage.

The shot is a montage cell.

Just cells in their division form a phenomenon of another order, the organism or embryo, so, on the other side of the dialectical leap from the shot, there is montage.

By what, then, montage characterised and, consequently, its cell-the shot?

By collision. By the conflict of two pieces in opposition to each other. By conflict. By collision.

[...] my viewpoint on montage as a col-lision. A view that from the collision of two given factors arises a concept.

From my point of view, linkage is merely a possible special case.

Recall ,what an infinite number of combinations is known in physics to be capable of arising from the impact (collision) of spheres. Depending on whether the spheres be resilient, non-resilient, or mingled. Amongst all these combinations there is one in which the impact is so weak that the collision is degraded to an even movement of both in the same direc-tion.

This is the one combination which would correspond with Pudovkin's view.

[...] So, montage is conflict.

As the basis of every art is conflict (an “imagist” transformation of the dialectical principle). The shot appears as the cell of montage. Therefore it also must be considered from the viewpoint of conflict. (Eisenstein, Leyda 1977, 37)

From Eisenstein's contention, it becomes clear that there is conflict manifest in the "imagist transformation" of the dialectical principle. A system of movement is predicated on differential materiality separating objects of knowledge from their grounding. Dialectics operates through conflict generated in the montage. It is the grounding of difference and repetition into the production of oppositions, as meanings. Becoming that characterised positive difference are now delimited by discursive formation through conflict. Eisenstein's sense of conflict induced meaning making is with reference to the narrative. And therefore, accruing conflicts would ultimately culminate into violence. Therefore, as plasticity reduces, and determinability increases, conflict and violence increases. Increasing conflict does not necessarily culminate into visible violence. Instead it connotes the latency of violence as possible surface deformation, which is violence on the body. However, this possibility is elided with the cut. Once discourse is formed, violence could also be invisible and reside latently within the text. And although the cut has multiple functions, like spatial and temporal elision or sense of motion, since accruing conflict amounts to taking the narrative forward, the sense of conflict tends towards generating violence. As Adorno and Horkheimer claims:

Cartoons were once exponents of fantasy as opposed to rationalism. They ensured that justice was done to the creatures and objects they electrified, by giving the maimed specimens a second life. All they do today is to confirm the victory of technological reason over truth. A few years ago they had a consistent plot which only broke up in the final moments in a crazy chase, and thus resembled the old slapstick comedy. Now, however, time relations have shifted. In the very first sequence a motive is stated so that in the course of the action destruction can get to work on it: with the audience in pursuit, the protagonist becomes the worthless object of general violence. The quantity of organised amusement changes into the quality of organised cruelty. The self-elected censors of the film industry (with whom it enjoys a close

relationship) watch over the unfolding of the crime, which is as drawn-out as a hunt. Fun replaces the pleasure which the sight of an embrace would allegedly afford, and postpones satisfaction till the day of the pogrom. Insofar as cartoons do any more than accustom the senses to the new tempo, they hammer into every brain the old lesson that continuous friction, the breaking down of all individual resistance, is the condition of life in this society. Donald Duck in the cartoons and the unfortunate in real life get their thrashing so that the audience can learn to take their own punishment. (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944).

2.14 Objects Get Life; Humans Become Things

Since plasticity problematises ideological formation with the impermanence of every sign, the plastic sign then stands in a completely eccentric relation to the dominant structuring force of society, which is the economy or capitalist logic. The seamless transition between forms, humans and objects bring about another aspect of metamorphosis. And this pertains directly to the visual content. For the transition of humans becoming objects or the like is something that is a reflection of the material processes that go on to structure representation. Emile Cohl had invented a plastic language of transforming ideographs in his “Fantasmagorie,” the first short consisting solely of animated images. Esther Leslie draws its analogies with the notion of phantasmagoric machinery that enters the definition of the fetish commodity as posited by Marx in his “Capital”:

The existence of things qua commodities, and the value relation between the products of labour which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. There it is a definite social relation between people, which assumes for them the phantasmagoric form of a relation between things.

Leslie argues, that the commodity as Marx says, through the process of commodity fetishism acts according to its own laws as an actor. The commodity attains a “ghostly objectivity” and leads its own life. “In the reports from stock exchanges cotton “rises,” copper “falls,” corn is “buoyant,” coal “slack” and the markets “animated”. Things have made themselves independent. They take on human characteristics. The fetish commodity is anthropomorphised.” This extends to a changed relationship between the worker and the means of production as well. As Leslie explains, Marx would detail it out further, how the machinery uses the worker, so that the producer of things empathises with the manufacturing machines, with its fetishistically driven objects so much so that it replaces its own self as the worker’s soul. For Leslie, fetishism’s processes capture humans within the trap of reification, where humans become things and things become humans (Leslie 2004, 6). This is different from how Eisenstein looks at the volitional movement of forms as ideologically liberating, something that is to be sought for within ossified societies. However, for Leslie, it is as if “sign-things” acquire some form of occult power over producers and consumers. “The sign-things are fetishised, invested with powers that makes them animate, more animated than us, who, in relation to them, become mere things, lifeless. And so it seems in animation too, whether drawn frame by frame or photographed, then brought to life in projection.” If Leslie’s argument is considered as the changed relationship between workers and the means of production, it is clear that she refers to a changed relationship between labour and capital, where capital is endowed with life at the cost of humans becoming lifeless.

Interestingly, humans would indeed get back their life when it comes to the transformation of the animation process into CGI, only at the cost of becoming objects. The telos of the animation is informed by the imperative to transform sign-things into real things. This means that the world of signs and the world of objects would eventually conflate although the world of objects are created for arriving at referent objects informing every sign

form. This attempt at materialisation of every form within the image results in a world of forms extending outside of the image into the external world. This imperative is not only about asserting a subject-object dualism and separation, but also the realisation of the fetish commodity from sign form to object form. However, the resultant image as an assemblage of things also attempts to produce an external world while simultaneously becoming its representation. Conversely, the external world of such imagery in their material realisation acquire the quality of fetish objects, with real substance informing its form. The concurrence between the two elements of being, between form and substance is restored from its erstwhile disjunctive relation found in plasticity. The third aspect of “function” connecting form and substance surfaces, so that scientific reason takes over the relation between form and substance. Plasticity is effectively removed from the image with its conflation with the external world. Attempting to make the forms within the image resemble referent objects in the outside world is also a sense of closure of representation, as if there is no representation and the sign itself is the referent. The image itself becomes closed as determinate.

Therefore, plasticity gets confined to the idea, instead of its manifest realisation within the image. Plasticity, which was actual, is now only valid in terms of theoretical speculation, in the realms of the virtual. Perhaps the best example would be to take up the explanation of plasticity taken up by Catherine Malabou. For Malabou, dialectics is already plastic. As Malabou contends, from the idea of the Greek word *plassein*, plasticity is the idea of moulding. Plastic, according to her, as an adjective means two things. Firstly, to be susceptible to changes of form or malleability, and secondly the power to bestow form, or the power to mould. Plasticity is being at once capable of receiving and giving form. Taking on Hegel’s conception of plasticity, Malabou argues that the dialectical process is “plastic” because, “It makes links between the opposing moments of total immobility (the “fixed”) and vacuity (“dissolution”), and then links both in the vitality of the whole, a whole which,

reconciling these two extremes, is itself the union of resistance (*Widerstand*) and fluidity (*Flüssigkeit*).” According to her, the process of plasticity is dialectical because the processes that constitute it, are contradictory. Malabou connects three concepts, “plasticity,” “temporality” and “dialectic” as the formation of future itself. Plasticity is the relation between substance and accidents. Accident, from its Greek meanings means to follow from, to ensure and to arrive, or emphatically, to happen. Plasticity can thereby designate “continuation” as consequence, that is “what follows” in a logical sense, and as event, and also “what follows” in a chronological sense. Self determination, central to Hegelian dialectics is thus a relation of substance to that which happens. Therefore, as it appears, the future is the relationship of subjectivity with the accidental. Together, “the future,” “plasticity” and “temporality” dialectically compose an “anticipatory” structure operating within subjectivity itself as Hegel had conceived it. Malabou coins this structure as “to see (what is) coming,” to observe how events are developing, simultaneously to probe and guess other people’s intentions. In combination, it is an expression that simultaneously refers to the state of “being sure of what is coming” and of “not knowing what is coming”. “To see (what is) coming” can represent the interplay of teleological necessity and surprise (Malabou 2005, 12-13).

Being susceptible to malleability as opposed by the power to bestow form could also be taken as force relations affecting the boundary condition of the form. The boundary is notional and virtual, while the contour is actual and demarcates the form. The boundary is thus the dialectical mediation between the form and the contour, and also demarcates the gestalt of the form. The leading question is that, if dialectics is plastic, is plasticity also dialectical? Where does plasticity reside in that case? It resides on the boundary threshold of the sense of inside and outside, the known and the unknown, the past and the future. It could be dialectical or it could be simply a positive sense of dematerialised movement. It could be

the positive sense of repetition of difference without dialectics implicating it theoretically, since plasticity is always already outside of conception. If plasticity is constituted by contradictory processes, as is the case of pre-linguistic manifest plasticity of animation, then it can also be claimed that the future cannot but remain contradictory. However, it is only when plasticity is also speculated as a dialectical process imbibing the logical and the chronological that the boundary comes into existence, and therefore its dialectics, anticipating a structure of the future. This is because it is the anticipatory continuation of change. It is already repetition, but more importantly, it is the dispersion of significance from the referent object, which attributes plasticity with dialectics. Malabou's contention is therefore about in-betweenness that plasticity brings to entities, the passage in the interstitial space between form and formless. However, in order for plasticity to become dialectical, a boundary needs to be posited that produces the interstice between the form and the formless. Therefore, firstly, plasticity is the transgression from the identified signifying referent finding a necessary telos in the selfsame, the object; and secondly, it is where teleological necessity is anticipated towards being another form, the signification of the supposed accidental future. It is more pronounced in metamorphosis. Somewhere in between the transitioning form, the boundary is encountered. Plasticity is the dialectics of self-changing while still retaining continuity of self determination within the anticipated. Plasticity therefore tends to break the threshold of internal contradiction within the subjecting discourse, the boundary potential crossing over the same into the formation of the different. It is the dissolution of identity of the same while translocating identification afresh with the new.

2.15 Subjective and Objective Activity

Moishe Postone, in interpreting Marx's famous dictum, "the philosophers have only interpreted the world, the point however is to change it," interprets it as raising the issue of

the relation of philosophy to society and hence the relation of philosophy and social theory. This problematic is central to the thesis on Feuerbach which begins by opposing materialism and idealism. Whereas according to Marx, materialism conceives of reality only in the form of the object, idealism grasps the active sensuous dimension but does so in a manner abstracted from sensuous activity. Marx treats this opposition as expressing a subjective objective dualism that has characterised modern western philosophy. His aim is to overcome the dualism itself which he claims can only be accomplished by an approach centred on sensuous human praxis⁵. In the “Thesis on Feuerbach,” Marx conceives of praxis as different from practice. He marks praxis as consciously guided revolutionary practice and not performing meaningless action. Marx goes beyond the analysis of relations of theory and praxis and exhorts for philosophy to descend from the high echelons of theory into praxis. In critiquing Feuerbach, Marx highlights that Feuerbach’s materialist doctrine as unable to restore full subjectivity in its sensuous reality, so that it remains contemplative and not conceived as praxis. Feuerbach looks at the sensual world only as an object of natural science and does not see how perception is conditioned by social praxis. Perception is in itself a social construction. Marx problematises the one-sided practice of thinking that separates the form of the object from subjective sensuous human activity. Hence, he claims that the active side of idealism was developed abstractly which is separated from sensuous activity. Marx wishes to overcome the subject-object dualism between sensuous objects and thought objects by conceiving human activity itself as objective activity.

Getting outside of abstract thinking, sensuousness according to Marx is practical human sensuous activity. And this sensuous activity resides in the human essence. However, this human essence is not abstraction residing in isolated individuals, instead as an ensemble of social relations. Of course, the term “essence” can be problematic. For Gramsci, there is no

⁵ Postone, lecture notes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLaRq25dYww>

definite human nature. Man is a “complex of social relations” and is not static. Man changes with social relations, that is, he becomes. Gramsci conceives of man as a series of active relationships, a process in which individuality is not the sole element that needs to be taken into account. The humanity reflected in each individuality is composed of at least three elements— the individual, other men and the natural world. However, the individual does not enter into relations with other men by mere juxtaposition. Instead, this relation develops organically. Likewise, man enters into relations with the natural world through active work and technique. These relations are not mechanical, but active and conscious. So each individual modifies himself to the extent that he changes the complex relations of which he is also a hub. Therefore, for Gramsci, the environment is an ensemble of relations and man’s entry into nature puts him in a set of relations with it. “If one’s own individuality is the ensemble of these relations, to create one’s personality means to acquire consciousness of them and to modify one’s personality means to modify the ensemble of these relations (Gramsci 1992, 352).

For Marx, the abstract individual belongs to the particular sociopolitical historical milieu of society. Therefore, Marx seeks to find thinking as not belonging to separate abstract individuals, but as sensuous practical activity belonging to human society. He goes on to state that all social life is essentially practical. Acting on the social conditions of humanity by scrutinising the material life processes involved, he would further state that the rational solution to all forms of “mysticism” (like value or commodity fetishism, although they are not mentioned in Thesis on Feuerbach) is found in human practice and its comprehension.

Whether it is Marx or Gramsci, to extend praxis to the drawn form, this practical sensuous human activity of drawing is the connection between the subjective active dimension and the objective world. Changing one’s style of drawing or animating, is also to change one’s personality and the complex ensemble of social relations. The aspect of

subjective-objective dualism that Marx problematises already resides in the drawn form where sensuous activity and objective activity conflate. Western philosophy predicated on the dichotomy of materialism and idealism is manifestly problematised in the plastic image. The drawn object is already the picture of formal conception, as for Marx, humans conceive and then construct. Simultaneously its movement problematises the separation between abstracted idealism of sensuous thought and materialism of the form of the object. Since matter is absent or dematerialised, and the substance of form is the line, the entire scientific and philosophical conception on which western philosophy is predicated is predictably dismantled. Marx's very attempt of overcoming the subject-object dualism is realised in plasticity.

For Marx, "My relation to my environment is my consciousness." Metamorphosis gained from frame-by-frame animation is therefore the dialectical overturning of the materially given through sensuous praxis. Since drawing is a process of rendering the inside out, the image is sensual practical activity belonging to human society. Subjectivity resides not in isolated contemplation. The form of the object is in itself the result of objective sensuous praxis. Since objective scientific knowledge is not separate from subjective sensuous activity, contradiction surfaces within scientific discourse where plasticity is attributed to the object form. Non-separation of subjective and objective activity is manifest in the constructed plastic image. According to the dominant scientific discourse, the need of knowledge structures would be to segregate desire from objective activity, and also to separate the subject and object according to the dominant western philosophical discourse of subject-object dualism.

"The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice" (Marx 2018). Social structures make the subject but simultaneously those structures can be changed by either reflective or unreflective action of subject. The idea of "self changing" is not only

the individual subject's desire rendered as the form, but also how subjective activity can reconfigure the general social conditions and circumstances that bring about such subjective changes. The subjective interpretation of the objective form is conscious codetermination of subject-object relation. The form reflects the subjective fold of the inside out as social subjectivity in relation to the outside in as supposed objectivity. Sensuousness is praxis.

Since the universality of the singular is always manifest within the animation process, the inseparability of the ideal and the material dimension is reiterated with the rendition of each frame. This also shows that the image is the mediator and the "visual base" between thought and external reality, between discourse and the outside. A supposed "objective" movement of form cannot be consistently maintained in frame-by-frame animation. The resultant plasticity therefore problematises scientific discourse by showing that supposed objectivity cannot be bereft of sensuous desire. This also means that scientific knowledge is not independent of desire. Since the objective activity of image construction includes the sensuous dimension, both plasticity and metamorphosis is problematic for producing a scientific object separated from subjective sensuous activity. Therefore, as discourse brings together language and practice, there is a continuous attempt to bring the manifest boundary of transgression into regulated ways of generating statements, which also means generating the scientific object separated from the sensuous dimension. Therefore, the process has to be changed in order to realise the supposed scientific object separated from the subject. So, although the subject-object dualism is subverted in plasticity, and consequently spatiotemporal incoherence of the constructed image, the entire non-discursive environment is reconstituted to realise and reassert the dualist separation.

2.16 Of Plasticity and Regulative Practices

Firstly, plasticity is resistance to discursive formation, since it resists identity. Therefore, in order to establish relations between forms, plasticity needs to be regulated. Representative structures need to remain in some way territorialised for the sign to retain its normative coherence. Movement of forms is representative as long as the boundary threshold is not encountered in daily experience. Iconicity of the sign form is a matter of degree of territorialisation. It is a spectrum of the least iconic to the most in terms of degrees of representative resemblance, presumed with the referent object and substance. Even if it means resemblance of certain abstract qualities pertaining to the referent, or for a referent not actually existing in reality, territorialisation pertains to representation according to intellection. This intellection is static representation of known movement that allows for forming generalities. Known movement belongs to generalised representation. Ultimately, it is the relational nature of signs that need to be established for meaning generation. However, it is not sufficient for either scientific objectivity or the sense of determinacy that the Aristotelian principle of excluded middle and non-contradiction advocates. This is achieved by making the surface of forms functional, that is determinate of a particular function. The sign form is transformed into a photorealistic copy of the object form, which is a real or imaginary referent.

Further on, the shift of non-discursive environment of image construction shifts the sign form towards an object form. This is because signs are no longer iconic but become photorealistic designs of object referents. Either the objects exist in the real world, or they are created for the real world as real three dimensional designs. Therefore substance, which resided in the image can possibly be rendered in object form from its design in the virtual space. Value is generated through the production of real objects directly from the image. The objects are produced and merchandised and as part of the animation process. Rather, in

producing the image, the design of the referent object is also concomitantly produced. Yet, more importantly, the relational nature of the affective image would be subsumed by the functional nature of scientific objectivity that arrives with real referents belonging to the external world.

Secondly, subversion is reaction to repressive power structures, especially when repressive power is visible. For industrial cartoon animation within the capitalist mode of production, normalising power makes the crisis of repression invisible, so that resistance is placated. Since subjectivity reacts to visible crises, the imperatives of power and capital is to make the subject part of knowledge formation. Capitalism however makes crisis invisible; in fact, capitalism has successfully subsumed crisis with its absence. Capitalism as the dominant ideology placates subversion into acceptable form by making its internal contradictions invisible. This happens through normalising power disciplining transgressive boundaries by relegating it to the abnormal or the unintelligible. The other highlight is the transformation of lines into surfaces, that asserts normalising discourse of scientific rationalism. The potential of subversion or the uncanny generated by the surface is much more than that proffered by the line. Therefore, when it comes to the manifest repetition of difference of the surface, a need to control transgression arises. The intervention of capital, eventually to produce computer generated surfaces is therefore required in order to counter manifest deterritorialisation of the surface into repetition without difference.

Thirdly, metamorphosis as dematerialised possibility gradually got under erasure, where potential and possibility got conflated and reduced to the material surface. The disjunctive relationship between form and substance eventually got reconstituted as direct relationship. As plasticity becomes more and more abnormal, potential becomes confined to the surface. As Klein quips, "I have to admit that I use metamorphosis as one way to determine whether the animator is using the medium more fully and more effectively. Too often, under the

impact of full animation, the possibilities of metamorphosis are forgotten. The characters become actors too completely, and a whole range of eye-popping continuities and happy brutalities are lost.” The making of material substance is also the making of more complete bodies and hence bodies cannot morph without reason. If the form concretises according to the cinematographic illusion, the form of expression directly translates into statements, a direct relationship developing between form and substance. Discourse would now generate form and substance of content according to formation of scientific determinacy. This is due to power/knowledge capturing the plastic image. Ossified “full animation,” which is with minimal usage of morphing techniques would gradually “normalise” the image in terms of the cinematographic illusion. This is made possible by following the dominant model of the cinematographic viewpoint of the world.

Fourth, as the possibility of metamorphosis is reduced, so would the potential of animation to imbue matter with life. As surface/substance is rationalised, the possibility of endowing all forms with life is reduced to specific forms according to how scientific discourse classifies life. Plasticity, which was possibly immanent in all objects would instead be removed from most. It would be replaced by laws foregrounding materiality conceived according to classifying frameworks based on scientific rationality. However, this would create problems for organic bodies whose life force is not internal desire but is externalised control of material objects. Since organic forms are also treated as objects, the loss of volition pertaining to living bodies is lost in the process. This has been taken up in further detail in the next chapter.

Fifth, since onscreen separates in terms of imagination in relation to offscreen “reality,” animation brings the form in a dialectical relationship with its boundary potential. Plastic transformation involves the conflation of the ideal with the material, of subjectivity and objectivity. The interstice of transformation between forms at the opposite ends of the morph

is also the condition of disaggregation between the subjective and objective dimension since it destabilises discursive limits. Plasticity of forms posits a peculiar coupling of disaggregation/desegregation as the mutability of formation. This does not allow for identification and consequently identity formation. Sameness is thus troubled in the liminality of disaggregation/desegregation of forms not tending towards anything identifiable. Aggregation in terms of interiority and separation from its exterior are simultaneous. Aggregation involves identification, which is also selective designation of concepts upon form. And this is being of the object. The simultaneous residual of the undesignated is homogenised as exteriority while identification resides with a supposed interiority, which is also an exterior, since it is an enclosed surface with a boundary. This bounded surface does not posit itself as a real exterior. Instead, it is a layered flatness without a true inside, although it possesses interiority of the exterior. Aggregation tends towards making an assemblage, a body consisting of territorialised parts and their relations. While identification with the aggregated are qualified with concepts, its relational dependency is apparently subsumed in producing and homogenising exteriority.

Chapter 3 looks into the making of such interiority and exteriority in the animated image with ensuing ramifications. The shifting visibility of plasticity within the image is also part of the shift of the changing historical *a priori*, which is also dealt with in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Changing Discourse and the Subject

After two straight weeks atop the global box office charts and over \$500 million in worldwide gross, Disney's *The Jungle Book* is on its way toward becoming one of the studio's most successful live-action remakes to date.

The film is not just an easy-to-digest update to a beloved Disney classic, it's an undeniably unique technical achievement, representing a huge leap forward for animated filmmaking. Or is that a huge leap forward for live-action filmmaking? Hybrid moviemaking? Who knows? Not even the filmmakers, it turns out.

[...] General audiences who watch *The Jungle Book*, not to mention most film reviewers, have called it a live-action film — and it's not an incorrect assessment since the film's conceit is that wild animals are interacting with a human boy. But this doesn't alter the fact that, with the exception of said human boy, nearly the entire film is digitally generated.

If that sounds confusing, don't worry, because the filmmakers aren't entirely clear on what they've made either. Jon Favreau, who directed this *mélange* of production techniques, has said that one could call the film either animated or live-action because “it would qualify for either.”

In an interview with *Animation World Magazine*, he elaborated:

“You know, every shot is animated. So there is as much animation in this film as there is in every other animated film. I think the aesthetics though shift, because you have a live-action character in the center of it and so it appears to be live-action if we are doing our job right. And as a result, I think, most people would consider it live-

action! But honestly the line is blurring so much between the two, especially with a film like this, you can call it either one.” - Cartoon Brew⁶

For early animation or contemporary individual practices not involving the totalisation by a computer generated non-discursive environment, the supposedly prelogical visual and alogical narrative had its own consistency. The transgressive contour of plastic forms is the site of deformation when considered under the light of scientific knowledge. Simultaneously, the transgressive boundary is the possibility of revolutionary praxis as uncoded plasticity. This uncoded form resides outside of knowledge, although it is the visible form of human imagination. The visible is therefore the non-discursive mediator between the outside and discursive interiority. The visible therefore needs to be comprehended as the base of discursive formation as its relations with the outside change with the transitioning image. There is a need to understand why and how the perception or even the definition of animation has changed with the proliferation of computer generated imagery (CGI), so that animation can no longer be distinguished from live action imagery. Therefore, the shifting image is to be considered as the shifting possibilities of animation from its gradual transition from manual mode of drawn animation to industry innovations and finally towards CGI, while not ignoring the combination of traditional and digital processes.

3.1 Regulative Practices

As Deleuze suggests in his book titled “Foucault,” power does not pass through forms, but through forces. Power is diagrammatic, which passes through particular points, the action and reaction of force in relation to others, which makes it local and unstable. Knowledge on

⁶ <https://www.cartoonbrew.com/ideas-commentary/jungle-book-filmmakers-cant-decide-made-animated-film-not-139075.html>

the other hand, concerns formed matters (substances) and formalised functions according to formal conditions of seeing and speaking, light and language (Deleuze 2006, 73). Therefore, the point of concern is how plasticity as a set of force relations and immaterial movement would allow for discursivities to emerge. Plasticity therefore undergoes division and separation into comprehensible differentiated units that segments the animated world according to a system of light and a system of language. Due to this, plasticity would be curtailed into legible units or obliterated altogether. This would enable the control of form and accordingly the content into readable meaning making units, a shift from the primal protoplasmic non-representational form to a controlled body performing rational action. A shift from the ungrounded unity of content and expression, into metaphoric rendition of meanings is coupled with a resulting loss of plasticity. The idea of the “abnormal” emerges alongside, that delimits the notion of violation of spatiotemporal rules of construction or engagement with the image.

The shifting trajectory of the hegemonic form towards the making of the representative image cannot be pinned down to practices by a singular studio. The trajectory has been somewhat anachronistic and sporadic. Shifting discursivities produce certain general trends although their specificities or exhaustive details cannot be encompassed for long periods of time. However, there is a singular trend— that of division and separation, the production of positivities on to emptiness, as forms differentiated into relations of notional space. In other words, it is the positive production of difference as comparison as the negative. This is how interiority of space, or spatial relations are constructed. It is also the division of time into narrative structures, from the chaos of non-representational present to its sequential ordering. Representation replaces creative destruction of the non-representational with an unfolding narrative that accumulates as knowledge and as memory.

Early animation was situated between both the cinematic representation and the non-representational. Yet, be it as it may, animation needs to be discussed as a possibility beyond its actual realisations belonging to the archive of already produced films, since much of it has not been realised in its full potential. This is primarily because its archive got restricted early on with scientific and rational principles applied by Disney, Fleischer and other studios. Animation theory thus has to be conceived of beyond the archive as a much broader gamut of possibilities that are visible and realisable although they may not have been realised consciously. The archive consists of not only the suppressed whose traces remain, and an extant set of individual experiments, but also potential theoretical possibilities informing it. The archive is constituted not only by the actual but also by the virtual, specifically in the case of animation. And this virtuality needs to be comprehended in terms of the transition of pre-computer animation to computer animation, the technological leap as also an effect of capital. Therefore, it is not only how certain forms got removed from the image, but also the coming into being of certain other forms that would not be possible without a continuous flow of capital into the non-discursive process, consequently the image. And this is directly related to capital's imperative to produce value out of the process, the image being a very small part of that realisation.

When it comes to understanding animation both as an industry and an art form, a trajectory of its shifting tropes and devices needs to be articulated. From its innate tendency of the irrational to its transformation into rationalised fantasy, from characteristic omnipotence of plasmatic forms to their regulation, from a graphic space to its conversion into narrative space, its subsequent rationalisation, from transgression with possible social and political ramifications to the making of representative and controlled bodies, is part of this shifting discourse.

Discourse as the articulable network of statements unfolds in time according to the proliferation of dividing practices. For this the emptiness of the animation stage is divided and separated into a visible form that is able to enter discourse. The system of language divides the system of light into sequential ordering. In other words, what is not graspable with the immediacy of the image and the non-discursive aspects of the visible, is slowed down in terms of unfolding statements. However, it is only under non-representational animated motion that the system of light becomes a non-relation with the system of language, working independently of and resisting discursive formation. Discourse seeks to construct an objective image from which truth can be constructed and therefore seeks to govern the image form. Time, in the present with the plastic form is accordingly sequentially ordered from the visible into the articulable.

The discursive base of power/knowledge that is apparently non-relational with the form and substance of expression actually affects it and in turn is affected by it. This is not apparent from recorded imagery. When it comes to animated motion, the resistance to discursive formation due to plasticity conveys a more fundamental problem. The conditions of possibility of discursive formation is the visible that needs to be divided and separated for generation of true statements. In order to generate meanings according to the dominant discourse the form and substance of expression needs to be converted into the form and substance of content. The shifting discourse of animation has been a telos towards an objective image for possible generation of discourse.

3.2 Interiority and Determinacy

The making of representative movement is essential for scientific discourse. Ideology, as a system of representations would emerge in a similar way scientific discourse emerges from the image. The denotative semiotic constructs the image according to truth values of scientific discourse. Since it emulates the given, the objectivity of the visible according to scientific construction is never questioned. It is a transparent and unmarked code of discursive formation. Ideological formation pertains to second order connotative semiotic based on the primary denotation of the visible. Stuart Hall by ideology, means mental frameworks, the languages, concepts, categories, imagery of thought and the systems of representation, which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make intelligible the way society works (Hall 1986, 29). Ideology, as systems of representation would be informed by coherence of internal relations. This interiority is also coherent only within set limits whose boundaries define the extent of their plausibility. However, since ideology would present a transparent picture of this coherent interiority, it would also mimic scientific objectivity since it seeks the normative. However, since ideology is more about how things ought to be rather than how they actually are, ideology would predicate itself on the normative discourse. Therefore, ideology would also seek discursive interiority in order to justify itself. Since the constructed visual, in both its discursive and non-discursive aspects, is ultimately manifest on screen and is also the condition of possibility of this interiority, the interiority is also to be made manifest in visual form. In other words, the “inside” is crucial to the making of scientific or ideological coherence and accordingly needs to be constructed for the image. The inside does not exist. It is built as an interiority within which the outsides of all forms operate. It is the positive production of the negative as difference of spatial and temporal planes. However, this interiority is not only spatiotemporal but also categorical.

3.3 The Categorical, the Historical Transcendental and the Subject

For Hume, causation was a matter of fact and not a logical necessity. Cause cannot be a priori. If it were, the effects resulting from each and every cause would be known. So, it must be an empirical problem, a “matter of fact”. Causal necessity is not logical, but psychological. We observe constant conjunction in the world, and we acquire a disposition to expect based on observation to come to general conclusions about cause and effect as occurring together. Hence, we are able to inductively predict the future, but can never be certain of it. It is not possible to make induction deductive, since it leaps from a limited set of observations to a universal truth. So, inductive reasoning cannot be made into a “relation of ideas”. It is because relation of ideas are analytic and a priori, while matter of fact is a posteriori. But its conclusions are also not empirically verifiable. We believe in causation through repetition. So it is with induction. Interiority is the making of this sense of cause-effect relations but predicated on the transcendental base, which is primarily the visible phenomena available for knowledge formation. For the constructed image, this visual base is rendered synthetic and not just as an inert image on which language and discourse is predicated. This also means that the visual base has to become the visual representation of the condition of possibility to discourse. With the arrival of multiple forms of image construction and their resultant varying outputs, certain leitmotifs could help categorise images according to their support for internal coherence and its own sense of logic. Likewise, rational or scientific logic and causality belongs to another set of images that are also internally coherent, but which may not resemble the previous set which may appear to be alogical in comparison. An impression of the visual base is the foundation and also founded by the categorical.

Division and separation not only is about viewing the world but also simultaneously constituting it. The sense of the world does not arrive from empirical experience, but through

the transcendental filter of perception. The image is the sense of transcendental imagination. Transcendental imagination is akin to drawing. Drawing is how the world is pictured by individuals or could by extension pertain to societal sense of the image in general. It can be noticed that individual drawings follow different sense of representative perspective. It can also be observed that once students and art practitioners are taught to look at the world through artificial perspective emulating the camera lens, it becomes difficult for them to look at the world or represent it differently. The sense of a priori arises *with* experience, but *not from* experience, and the image construction is also affected thereby. And therefore, the sense of the constructed image arrives from the physical world, albeit through transcendental imagination. The transcendental imagination could simply be put as the way the image is imagined, both in terms of abstract imagination and intended representation of the physical world. Certain forms of knowledge cannot come from empirical experience or reason, but from the transcendental filter. Reality cannot be constituted from the noumenal world, but can only be constituted from the phenomenal world. And since the phenomenal world is an image in the first place, visual perception being the strongest in humans, the phenomena of the constructed moving image is also the transcendental imagination from the physical world. Therefore, in order to get to the Kantian paradigm that all knowledge must conform to objects, and simultaneously, that all objects must conform to the mind, the image is constituted as an interiority which is transcendental. Since the animated image stays outside of synthetic discourse, primarily its non-representational aspects, the synthesis of a priori conditions of possibility for the animated image remains mostly unformed, from both the empirical or the rational. Form and its movement becomes the empirical conditions for the synthesis of space and time, and therefore reconstitutes synthetic a priori conditions from the moving image. The non-representational image resets conditions of possibility of subject-object relations. Whatever categories are presupposed for observation are problematised due

to the unstructured form of the animated image. This unstructured incoherence resides outside of language. Therefore, the image, although part of imagination and resulting in perception does not necessarily add to the transcendental conditions necessary for knowledge formation, as it resides outside of categorical understanding of experience.

Synthetic a priori knowledge cannot be arrived at from experience, because it is universal and necessary. Since the entire universe cannot be observed, universal and necessary knowledge cannot be derived from experience alone. Again, synthetic a priori knowledge is not a mere relations of ideas, since the predicates are not contained in the subjects. It actually tells about the world, in the sense of what is presupposed for experience. A third concept needs to be added in order to arrive at some form of synthesis. The constructed animated image typically posits the problem of inconsistent relations between forms and their movements and therefore a possible resistance to the formation of synthetic a priori knowledge. Or, such synthesis destabilises many of the existing synthetic conditions of possibility derived from the cinematographic illusion afflicting all theory. Incoherent movement of form problematises the synthesis of a priori knowledge from the image. Therefore, although space and time are conceived they cannot be rationalised in terms of uniformity or coherence. Instead, space would be amorphous with incoherent perspective, while time would likewise be freely rendered as plastic or elastic based on contextual movement of substance. The visible base is therefore an interiority constituted by internal coherence but which may not be rational or logical based on empirical experience of the physical world.

If there is a perceiving subject, then there must be some form from which the subject constitutes the world. More than the sense of objects, the mode of knowledge that constitutes objects is of concern, i.e. the conditions necessary for any experience or thought at all. The “transcendental” in Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, is what is presupposed for any sense

experience at all. Transcendental means a priori or necessary to experience. The term “aesthetic” comes from the Greek word “aesthesis” which means sense perception. Kant is concerned with sensibility or sensible intuition, for which the faculty of imagination is responsible. Imagination needs to be highlighted, since the image is under scrutiny although Kant would not talk directly about imagination or about the image. Kant would not be familiar with animated images, since technologies of moving images arrived after him. Transcendental imagination per se is primarily the pre-discursive visual rendition of the external world that forms the basis of the transcendental aesthetic and the transcendental analytic. The intuitive a priori necessary for experience could alternatively be based on form and its movement. It is unlikely for Kant to have envisaged space and time in terms of form and its movement. This is also because Kant’s perception resides within the cinematographic illusion and not the animated illusion. For the plastic and malleable image of animation, intuitions would not give rise to experience, since a bunch of “incoherent” sensations would rise with experience but not from experience. It can be validated by experience, but is not grounded in experience. Therefore, intuitions without concepts remain blind because the transcendental analytic remains unformed. It is just a cluster of raw experiences. The incoherent form and its movement (the object) appears unintelligible since the transcendental analytic as the structures of the mind cannot fathom an unstructured form. The plastic image that is form and its movement has also been imagined, but belong to the visual base and outside of the transcendental analytic. Categorical structures governed by language cannot comprehend the spatial and temporal dimensions of the acausal and incoherent form of animation.

There are some notable aspects to the transcendental imagination of the visible. Firstly, it is concomitant with language although the imagined visual is partly prior to language. Hence, it is the basis of categorial formation. Secondly, it is conditioned by

historical and geographical shifts. Thirdly, it differs across cultures and with differing ideologies.

According to Foucault, Kant's introduction of the "transcendental theme" was meant to renew and solve the older question of conditions of possibility of knowledge. Kant brings about the "Copernican" revolution by referring these conditions to the transcendental subject as "the foundation of a possible synthesis of all representations". But more importantly, in doing so, the questioning subject "ends up defining by its very interrogation the field in which its answer will be given, thus revealing itself to be the 'condition of possibility of experience itself'" (Han 2002, 18). Foucault would instead claim a discourse of historical emergence rather than having a philosophical origin. Foucault envisages his archaeological approach that defines a field as a positivity of what might be called a "historical a priori". While ideating the historical a priori Foucault is indeed concerned with the gaze, and therefore, it is really the image that is also an object of knowledge and experience. The archaeological method envisages that systems of thought as epistemes or discursive formations are governed by rules beyond those of grammar and logic, which operate beneath the consciousness of individual subjects. It defines a system of conceptual possibilities that determine the boundaries of thought in a given domain and period. In this sense, Foucault also talks about a boundary, although that shifts with history. In the "The Order of Things," which is a structuralist project, Foucault refuses to take the subject, be it transcendental or empirical, as a starting point for his analysis. Although Foucault would deny it this structuralist belonging, he himself defines the historical a priori as "the common structure that delineates and articulates what is seen and what is said" (Han 2002, 45). However, the Foucauldian understanding of the historical a priori is distinguished from the structuralist model in that it is neither universal nor unchangeable, but "a variable historical structure that only intervenes in the production of local knowledge" (Han 2002, 45-46). Foucault proposes

an a priori fully given in history and which transforms along with history. And if the historical a priori has to define the conditions of possibility, themselves variable, from which the knowledge of an epoch has to form, then it must be a network of relations between concepts and categories internally coherent and codependently originated that justifies and corroborates each other's existence. And these structures are liable to shift with time or space. The archaeological project's interest lies in finding the "historical transcendental" in concrete terms, and which actually fails to reach the transcendental, although Foucault would claim his intention was indeed to avoid the transcendental. Foucault was trying to escape any reference to the transcendental, which would be a condition of possibility of any knowledge. Foucault's dual project involved getting rid of the "anthropological illusions" while simultaneously finding a response to the question of the conditions of the possibility of knowledge in the transcendental theme through the historical a priori (Han 2002, 5). In addition, archaeology would distance itself from phenomenology by criticising the notion of the "'originary' and the 'origin' as further instance of the confusion between the empirical and the transcendental" (ibid.). Foucault was looking for a transcendental without a subject, in order to find the non-anthropological version of the fundamental. As Beatrice Han notes:

But against the ahistorical character of the Kantian a priori and the transhistoricality of its Husserlian equivalent, Foucault proposes the paradoxical hypothesis of an a priori fully given in history, which transforms itself with it, and which nevertheless somehow lies beyond it in defining the conditions of possibility, themselves variable, from which the knowledge of an epoch can and must form itself.

In this sense, archaeology appears as a gamble, the interest of which lies precisely in the paradoxical form of the venture: to find a historical transposition of the transcendental, or again to define in concrete terms the 'historical transcendental'

studied long ago by Foucault in reference to Hegel and distantly echoed by his own historical a priori (Han 2002, 4).

It is another problem to find whether the historical “lies beyond” the transcendental in defining the conditions of possibility of the knowledge of an epoch. Yet a more crucial problem would be whether the verbal, either transcendental or historical is emergent from another condition of possibility, which is the visible or its imagination. Given that Foucault’s project primarily deals with verbal matter, the point of scrutiny would be why or how could the animated image belong to the archive and simultaneously be outside of discourse. It could well be reasoned that certain images or discursive aspects are removed from the archive as they are considered to be unintelligible. In that case, it cannot justify how new imagery or conceptions are created in order to produce the historical shifts ushering in a transition, from the existing epoch to the next. The animated image is precisely the indication of that transition. Perhaps paintings could have also suggested such transitions; however since they are not moving images, synthetic a priori cannot be posited from empirical experience. Similarly, live action imagery cannot be an indicator, since it is recorded by an instrument and therefore does not reveal the unconscious bearings of the transcendental imagination. The animated image, as a moving art form showcases a conspicuous change of the visible due to the shift of relative concentration of labour and technology as well as epochal shifts with shifting power relations. Again, animation has posited an entire spectrum of variations from non-representational abstraction to representation, transitions from the so called cartoon style to cinematic realism, and most of these styles are found in contemporary animation. It is the shift of all forms of animation towards a certain kind of normative that is the point of enquiry. This is because animation posits a picture of conceptual understanding of the world in manifest form, with gaps in details, or possibilities of imagining the incoherent.

Again, Beatrice Han states, “[...] the Foucauldian journey as a whole could therefore be described as the passage from an archaeological interrogation of the conditions under which a subject can speak the truth, to the genealogical claim that truth is per se the major condition of possibility for the construction of the self as subject” (Han 2002, 10). Han furthers her point by stating:

Subjectivation thus appears as the reflective operation (hence the theme of “self-consciousness”) by which the subject “constitutes” itself by recognising itself in “such and such a determined form” (FF,10). But the problem is that this definition of the subject and of subjectivation seems to implicitly revive the transcendental understanding that archaeology has always sought to banish, which sees subjectivation through the mode of a reflective appropriation of the self doubled by the simultaneous positioning of a collection of exterior objects. How is it possible to return to the idea of a constitutive subjectivity without reopening the aporiae of transcendentalism?(Han 2002, 11)

The reflective sense of the self is a result of Kant’s distinction between the empirical and the transcendental whose effective outcome is the confusion of experience from the outside and experience from the inside. Foucault’s totalising ambition in sentences like: “In any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in a practice” (OT, 183) can be contradicted with many counter-examples. To counter Foucault’s claim, “A generalised and graphic version of this objection was formulated by Jean-Luc Godard (cited in Eribon 1991: 156 n. 3), when he said that he made films in order to prevent anyone in the future from saying, like Foucault, that, if they were not made it is because they were impossible. This formulation has the merit of drawing our attention to the precise meaning of the central concept of episteme. According to Godard, it obviously means

something like the mental walls of an era— walls from which no individual mind can escape, since they define what can and cannot be conceived at a particular time in a particular society without exception” (Falzon, O’Leary, Sawicki 2013, 116). What if those supposed “mental walls” of the era have already been overcome by certain practices, rendering primarily uncoded forms, and which has remained unnoticed simply because it resides outside of commonsensical discursive knowledge? Moreover, is it not possible that since the point of concern is the unconscious afflicting epochs, then there have been possibly too many breaches of those supposed mental walls verily through unconscious processes, primarily because the transcendental imagination can operate outside of transcendental categories? In that case, impression of the visual base could reside within the archive, but as an exception to and outside of discourse, and yet its form of expression remains as the condition of possibility for an alternative form and substance of content. Therefore, the uncoded visible could highlight epistemological shifts if the visual base is considered as a condition of possibility for discursive formation. It can also point to the problem that afflicts all of theory, the problem of the ‘cinematographic illusion’. Since Foucault is not an exception to the rule, i.e. he is also unknowingly bound to the cinematographic illusion, the animated illusion could well be considered to be out of the bounds of Foucauldian theory. This is because the notion of the empirico-transcendental doublet that pitches man as both the condition of possibility of all knowledge and simultaneously the empirical object of knowledge that renders those conditions as evident, is also about bringing man’s knowledge only as it knows itself. And that knowledge acquired through “a reflective appropriation of the self doubled by the simultaneous positioning of a collection of exterior objects” asserts the empirical man in relation to the physical world and also to himself. This reflective process lies within the intellection of the cinematographic illusion. This means that all conceptions of the external world are formed in relation to the empirical body. Foucault, in the first pages of his

“Commentary” states that the anthropological “self-observation” has the specific characteristic of reaching “neither the subject in itself, nor the pure I of synthesis, but a self which is object and present only its phenomenal truth. Yet, this object I, which is given to the sense in the form of time, is nevertheless not alien to the determining subject, since in the end it is nothing but the subject as it is affected by itself”. In other words, man is the paradoxical identity as the determined and the determining subject, an ambivalence as the empirico-transcendental double. Although Foucault would define the historical a priori as a “deep space, anterior to all perceptions and governing them from afar,” it could be a pertinent question whether he can conceive of archaeology without the contradictory space of the “originary” caused by the confusion between the empirical and the transcendental. Due to this impasse, the idea of the historical a priori is defined as a pre-conceptual articulation between seeing and saying and which remains abstract.

Foucault would continuously try to “historicise as much as possible in order to leave the least possible space for the transcendental” (Han, 6). However, he does not leave the “critical question” or the contest between the transcendental and the historical. He reinterprets the critical question in the “The order of discourse” through the distinction between the actual predication of truth and for a statement to be “in the truth,” i.e. its acceptability, the set of conditions that determine the “acceptability” of a discourse independent of its truth value. Acceptability logically and chronologically precedes the predication of truth thereby opening up a new interpretation of the historical a priori. Like archaeology, genealogy would consequently seek to “grasp [discourse] in its power... to constitute domains of objects [acceptability], in relation to which one can affirm or deny true or false propositions [predication]” (Han, 7).

Mere archaeological analysis could say little or nothing about the causes of the transition from one way of thinking pertaining to an epoch to another, since it was dependent on

contingency. So Foucault had to resort to genealogy in order to address this deficiency. Genealogical analysis was to show that a given system of thought, itself uncovered in its essential structures by archaeology, was not part of any grand scheme of progress of history. It was the result of contingent turns of history, not the outcome of rationally inevitable trends. This is where the imperatives of capital come in. Postone would contradict this post-structuralist notion of contingency and bring in the idea of necessity, stating that:

The categories of Marx's critical theory, I suggest, allow for a position that can get beyond the classical antinomy of necessity and freedom, recapitulated as one between a conception of history as necessity, and its poststructuralist rejection in the name of contingency (and, presumably, agency). As I shall elaborate, Marx's categories characterise modern capitalist society on a fundamental level with reference to an immanent dynamic, which they grasp in terms of historically determinate forms of social mediation. Within this framework, history, understood as an immanently driven directional dynamic, does exist, but not as a universal characteristic of human social life. Rather, it is a historically specific characteristic of capitalist society that can be, and has been, projected onto all human histories.

The structural constraints and imperatives implied by the large-scale global patterns that characterise capitalist history should be understood as expressions of a peculiar form of domination. A position that grounds such historical patterns in the categories of Marx's critique (commodity, capital) does not, then, regard such patterns affirmatively, but takes their existence as a manifestation of heteronomy. Heteronomous history, within such a framework, is not a narrative, which can simply be dispelled discursively, but a structure of domination that both is self-perpetuating and, yet, also gives rise to the conditions of possibility of its own overcoming. From this point of view, attempts to rescue human agency that posit historical contingency

abstractly and transhistorically, bracket and veil the existence of historically specific structures of domination. They are thereby, ironically, profoundly disempowering (Postone 2004, 55-56).

When Postone refers to history as a necessity in contrast to the post-structuralist notion of contingency, he is actually referring to “value,” the form of wealth which is specific to capitalism, which Marx distinguishes from material wealth, and which is simultaneously a form of social mediation. Marx’s conception of value is a peculiar form of wealth whose measure is temporal. Increasing productivity increases the amount of use-values produced per unit of time. However, this results only in short term increases in value per unit of time. The magnitude of value falls to its base level when productive increase becomes general. This results in a treadmill dynamic towards the extraction of more value. This is relevant as the “structural constraints” and “peculiar form of domination” referred to by Postone is with reference to history looked at through the structural imperatives of capital. Capital therefore entails a ceaseless process of value’s self expansion as a directional movement without an external telos that generates large scale cycles of production and consumption. The dialectic of value and use value can also justify the dynamic of ongoing transformations of technical processes (Postone 2004, 63). Therefore, the supposed contingent sense of history under genealogical analysis can also be rethought in terms of rational trends by the capitalist imperative thrust upon history. Therefore, a heteronomous manifestation of historical patterns could explain the transformation of the visual base as the effect of a peculiar form of domination. The transformation of the visual base into an interiority therefore cannot be looked upon through the framework of power or capital alone. Whether there are contingent turns of history or heteronomous history, the visual base shows a definitive directional dynamic towards scientific rationality as also towards discursive interiority, not necessarily concomitant developments.

Mannheim's contention is somewhat similar to that of Foucault, although it is not only temporal but also spatial. Moreover, Mannheim is concerned about ideology and not discourse. This has important implications when we consider the animated visual as the product of individuals or groups, or at the centre of empire or the postcolonial periphery.

To-day we have arrived at the point where we can see clearly that there are differences in modes of thought, not only in different historical periods but also in different cultures. Slowly it dawns upon us that not only does the content of thought change but also its *categorical*⁷ structure. Only very recently has it become possible to investigate the hypothesis that in the past as well as in the present, the dominant modes of thought are supplanted by new categories when the social basis of the group, of which these thought-forms are characteristic, disintegrates or is transformed under the impact of social change (Mannheim 1979, 73).

Mannheim claims that Kant's categories and his intuitions and forms of thought are themselves socially based and interest determined⁸. Time itself is ideologically encoded. In other words, the transcendental shifts according to the historical period, society and culture or ideological interests. Since form and substance in animation is directly related to temporality, the categories of the transcendental are directly affected by ideological imperatives. Mannheim furthers his claim suggesting that the "utopian element," or the nature of the dominant wish (ideological interest) could determine the sequence, order and evaluation of singular experiences. Such wishes are the organising principles that even moulds the way time is experienced. A given mentality not only orders future events, but also the past. It is the meaningful ordering of events extending beyond mere chronological orderings that structures a meaningful totality of historical time. Mannheim creates an analogy of this

⁷ There is a misprint in this edition. It has been printed "categorical" while it should be "categorial"

meaningful consciousness with gestalt, stating that just as the whole is prior to the parts and that our first understanding of the parts arrives from the whole, so it is with historical understanding of time (Mannheim 1979, 188-189). In that sense, the emergent transcendental categories of perception are also ideologically informed. As Postone has mentioned, it is the historically specific characteristic of capitalist society that has been projected on to all human histories. This is an interiority posited by a sense of ideological coherence that tries to place the transcendental categories in the absolute and as a totalising claim to truth.

So, whether it is discursive or ideological interiority, the conditions of possibility of such formations resides within the visual base as the phenomenal relation with the outside. There is also the necessity for a discursive interiority in terms of scientific coherence for statements to operate over the image. But more importantly, it is about linguistic coherence for which an interiority is required. In other words, interiority is also the entry into the binary order of language. The screen surface is not a window. Surface perception produces exteriority of the screen, or as outside surfaces of forms. The illusion of a window looking into a world is produced with the layering of forms separating differential planes in terms of figure and ground according to artificial perspective. If a gaze has to make the surface perceptible and visible, or rather if the gaze has to unfold a depth of the window in order to make an interiority out of the surface, then the positive image form is to be configured to produce its negatives. This negativity is produced through convention. Meanings based on linguistic frameworks cannot operate only with positive values. An exterior alongside an interior needs to be constructed for language to operate according to semiotic difference. Likewise, for representation, movement has to be vectorised from its ubiquitous positive direction to relational forward or backward movement. Forms are compared relative to their smallness or

⁸ Lecture notes from Robert Paul Wolff.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGrsAGh2tzE>

largeness. Distance is comprehended in terms of overlap or obstruction. Depth is produced through foreshortening. This follows for all positivities, where the negative is constructed relationally using difference as comparison. Therefore, difference as comparison is to be produced from difference in itself. This happens in the form of grouping forms in terms of relative stasis and movement that also generates conception of substance. Also, the imagist transformation of difference as comparison is achieved by creating artificial space of interiority, the surface giving way to the illusion of a window.

Discursive coherence imposes its logic on the image, since statements have primacy over the diagram. Hence, it becomes crucial to understand the image as a diagram, as a system of visibility and a cartography in relation to the subject position. The image is also a diagram of the epistemological unconscious of a historical formation, since it constitutes visibilities by interiorising the outside. As Deleuze states, “The diagram, as the fixed form of a set of relations between forces, never exhausts force, which can enter into other relations and compositions. The diagram stems from the outside but the outside does not merge with any diagram, and continues instead to ‘draw’ new ones. In this way the outside is always an opening on to a future: nothing ends, since nothing has begun, but everything is transformed” (Deleuze 2006, 89). Positive overlaps of layers is reconstituted as the negative space of interiority within which forms are arranged. Although this interiority is illusory, the process of production of the interior within which all exteriority operate is transforming the screen surface into a window to mimic the parallaxic gaze for producing depth. This diagrammatical construction is intended to unite all spatial and temporal relations from the vantage point of the subject animator/spectator. Moreover, instead of multiple and contradictory subject positions that could exist within the same individual, the image is so constructed as to bring separate and differing object centres ordered to a singular subject position within the same diagram. A singular coherent subjective centre needs to be

constructed which would align all objective centres to it. In order to bring the image aligned to a subjective centre, the image and the non-discursive process corroborate each other towards constructing a determinate representation of difference and interiority.

Now, it may be argued that the image is capable of generating multiple subject positions although the image has been restricted to a singular objective centre. Yet, the point of concern is the making of the objective centre, surrounding which the interiority is constructed. For, the conditions of possibility for the emergence of statements and thereby narrative discourse is totally dependent on how the image is fashioned. The closure of subject position at the level of the image is also the proliferation of subject positions at the level of discourse. However, for the animated image, it is the closure of its visual possibilities and also the closure of “pre-subjectivity,” if that may be a term, since it was outside of language, and yet was potentially capable of generating affect without purpose. It is also the closure of subjectivity, in the sense that plasticity and metamorphosis can only occur under a rationalised regime.

The diagram is the relation of the subject position with the non-discursive environment residing as the visible exterior that is mediated through the image. The making of a sense of difference is also the making of an axis and a cartography of separation of the subject from the non-discursive environment (as the process) represented by the image. Dividing practices produce axioms for the image and the process, and accordingly constructs a cartography in terms of discourse. This arrives with dividing and subdividing form and movement into a series of regulated steps, typical examples being Disney’s “twelve principles” of animation or the development of the multiplane camera to reproduce separation of depth planes of cinematic perspective. Artificial perspective is also the production of difference not only in terms of relations between forms, but also as relations between their outsides as negative spaces. Principles governing movement incidentally lays out trajectories of locomotion, as

visible or invisible lines, directing, regulating and restraining movement, according to a produced negative interiority. It is crucial to understand that, “power ‘produces reality’ before it represses. Equally it produces truth before it ideologizes, abstracts or masks” (Deleuze 2006, 29). Therefore, the positive production of a negative inside is also about laying out a field of possibilities within which all discursive relations would operate. Subsequently, the rationalised form supposedly becomes the only valid modality of image making, its repressive effects on animated motion becoming less evident and normalised.

3.4 From discourse to diagram

Discourse is not simply a way of utterances about things; instead it involves praxis. It also refers to regulated ways of speaking about the subject that sets the dominant ways of using language. It is not enough that the image can be transformed from the sensible to the intelligible, from the visible to the articulable. Power is about maximum government of the image, of maximum determinacy and closure of meanings. Hence, the image should be able to maximally subject the individual into a position aligned to its objective centre. The image could be divided into multiple sets of insides and outsides, and could also present multiple planes of comprehension. The image could also extend on to multiple subject positions from multiple object positions. Since an individual can only be centred in relation to the objective image, although the image can present multiple centres of subjectivity and objectivity, its maximal governance is achieved if all various subjective and objective positions are aligned according to a singular subjective centre. So all objects could be aligned in terms of a singular subjective centre. However, a singular objective centre is also a requisite for a governed image where all forms and objects conform to an image centre.

Perspective binds the subject to the image. Perspective, from the Italian “prospettiva” means seeing through “an open window through which I see what I want to paint”. In other

words, a window is constructed that binds both the object as the depicted world and the subject through the picture plane. Whether it is linear or synthetic perspective, forms of “scientific” perspective “presuppose a rule-governed, measurable scenic space organised around the optical vantage point of an implied spectator” (Bordwell 1985, 5). Bordwell also suggests that no consistent theory of scientific perspective existed prior to the Renaissance. Damisch also states that, “All evidence suggests that perspective theory belongs to that class of cultural products to which belongs scientific formations, and the sciences themselves, as well as works of literary art...” (Damisch 2000, 160). Therefore, the diagram elucidating the outside would also convey a scientific approach to the formation of the visible for “true” statements to emerge for a particular episteme. This kind of perspective is effortlessly generated by the camera, and therefore these ideas are well within the bounds of the episteme. The question is therefore not about the removal of certain aspect of the unprecedented deterritorialising form of animation from the archive, but how it is going to be styled according to the dominant perspective.

As explained by Alberti, that light rays travel in a straight line and gather in a bundle at the eye, forming a visual pyramid. A picture plane was then a cross section of that pyramid (Bordwell 1985, 5). Leonardo Da Vinci revised Alberti’s account by suggesting that foreshortening applies not only in depth but also horizontally and vertically. Hence, he projected straight lines as curved. Scientific perspective represents not only a fixed, imaginary witness but the spectator as a single eye, literally, a “point of view” (ibid.). Whereas the Soviet constructivist painter Tarabukin contended that the Oriental inverse perspective placed the spectator at the centre of a scene that surrounded him/her, the Albertian perspective by contrast sets the scene as a three dimensional event staged for a spectator “whose eye is the picture’s point of intelligibility but whose place is closed off from the event witnessed” (ibid.). In other words, the spectator is closed off from the world of the

image and of narrative action. Therefore, a perspectival eye can be attributed to an invisible observer.

André Bazin insists that a narrative film is like a photographed play, with the changes in camera position selectively stressing on certain details (Bordwell 1985, 9). For Pudovkin, the camera lens replaces the eye of the observer and hence the changes of the camera's angle should be subject to the same conditions as those of the eye of the observer. The film is to be shot in separate pieces and in joining them, directs the attention of the spectator "to see as the attentive observer saw" (Pudovkin 1960, 70). However, whereas it is fairly simple for the cinematographic apparatus to follow the scientific perspective, where the fourth wall is a given, animation can incorporate all kinds of artificial perspectives including the Oriental inverse perspectival form. The leading question would be why and how the animated image became a cartography of scientific perspective leaving multiple possibilities of spatiotemporal (re)presentation. The dominant argument is that various animation studios attempted to emulate live action cinema by mimicking the cinematographic apparatus by incorporating the multiplane camera, which eventually led to the hegemonic form showing definitive shift towards the rational scope of live action cinema. The tendency of turning the animation space akin to the cinematographic space is part of a specific trend towards cinematic realism as practiced by all major Hollywood studios, that eventually became the dominant mode of representation. This is further concretised with the arrival of digital animation where the animation space is turned into a virtual three dimensional space emulating cinematographic vision. The dominant form of animation aesthetics has moved closer towards live action cinema in trying to portray "realism". As Paul Wells contends, "Disney's concentration on innovations in the apparatus to facilitate the animated film ultimately had the consequence, however, of undermining the distinctive aspects of animation

itself.” Cooption of the animated image within the bounds of the cinematographic vision is a constraint rather than liberation of the image.

Damisch problematises the concept of paradigm stating that, if it is understood as no more than a constellation of ideas that impose their law in a given period on all productions of the field of science and thought in general, the temptation would be to view artificial perspective as only a conventional form of presentation suited to the times in which it was devised (Damisch 2000, 26-27). If one considers a given culture or civilisation to an expressive totality, with its constituent parts functioning as a reduced matrix of the whole, the question of systematic articulation of their diverse manifestations is resolved. Perspective could be taken as a sign of a historical conjuncture. More importantly, when new ideas come to light, so that culture cannot respond to the new demands with the already available ideas, the existing paradigm should be replaced by another which is better adapted to them. Damisch picks up the example of relativity which signalled the fall of the reigning Newtonian paradigm. “Just as linear perspective provided the set of conventions best suited to that representation of ‘truth’ prevalent in the Renaissance, ‘it is widely agreed [...] that Cubism and its derivative forms in modern art are in the same way the proper pictorial means for representing the ‘truth’ of the post-Einsteinian paradigm” (Damisch 2000, 28). In that case, the animated image, which was already relativistic rather than Newtonian, should have continued to proliferate in Einsteinian terms. Of course, Damisch speaks about artificial perspective in art and art has been much longer than animation and has had a different trajectory of paradigmatic shifts. More importantly, animation is moving image and therefore its construction would be very different from that intended for art. Additionally, it also involves the sequential ordering of a narrative form. Nonetheless, it would be appropriate to consider the cartographic shift of animation towards Cartesian perspective with a singular point of view, from its erstwhile form of multiple sense of subjective viewpoint. If we

consider the arrival of the Einsteinian paradigm and accordingly the expressive totality of a given historical conjuncture representing it, then the spatiotemporal construction of animation was already in terms of theories of relativity. In that case, why would the plastic image shift from a definitive showcasing of Einsteinian relativity towards Cartesian space and Newtonian time? There could be other possibilities to the codification of spatiotemporal configuration. However, the paradigmatic explanation does not suffice to explain the codification of the animated image. And hence, the unconscious processes affecting the constructed image needs to be systematically construed. The uncoded image showcases the set of unconscious rules governing all scientific discourse for a society in a particular time period. The primary question is how the image is constructed and accordingly, how it becomes a sign and a cartography of the conditions of possibility of knowledge. For Foucault, “In any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in a practice” (Foucault 2002, 183). Epistemological shifts are defined by unconscious processes, in contrast to paradigmatic shifts, which are conscious processes. However, the Foucauldian contention of discourse is primarily concerned with the verbal. And like Deleuze, Foucault is not outside the cinematographic illusion, and therefore, the animated visual, or the animated illusion is not encompassed in Foucauldian theory. If Foucauldian understanding of unconscious processes are taken, then the primacy of the inside out into deterritorialising animating form should not have been produced in the first place. And if something new has been produced, and that which also exists in contemporary individual practices, and yet stays outside of thinking, it is a form of “heterotopia”.

3.5 A Visual Base

While the diagrammatic representation of static images is relatively simple as it primarily deals with spatial relations, when it comes to pinning down the cartography of a moving image, conceptual categories dividing the image would seek static discrete presences of concepts over dynamic categorisations. As Deleuze notes, “A system of light and a system of language are not the same form, and do not have the same formation” (Deleuze 2006, 32). Conceptual categories divide the image such that it produces a cartography representative of discourse. The shifting lexicon of categories are not only revealed in the changing discourse but are revealed with their removal from discourse. So, what is present has also acquired its presence replacing what has been removed. Except that, the absence of the removed can only be comprehended from the archive of erstwhile presences. But if the presence of the supposedly removed forms are observed in individual and peripheral practices, then the question of the dialectics between the inside out and the outside in is regenerated. And therefore, power alone cannot explain the transition of the mainstream image from its deterritorialising form.

The onscreen image is united with a certain kind of discursive usage of language which is borne from specific material and historical conditions. The image likewise is divided under the aegis of specific historical conditions within which statements combine and regulate to form the distinct field of knowledge that defines the “regime of truth”. Since discourse is the making of objects of knowledge in an intelligible way by rendering other forms of reasoning as unintelligible, it regulates and censors the kinds of practices that are articulable under particular circumstances of discursive formation, while removing the supposed unintelligible. Since the articulable has primacy over the visible (Deleuze 2006, 50), changing discursive formations are directed at the removal of the dynamic and non-representational which remains unintelligible to static categorisations. The non-representable becomes un-relatable

and cannot be assigned a place within the network of statements. Therefore, although dynamic cartographies of space could be appropriate for forming defining categories, it produces an ungovernable image. But more importantly, a static diagram would stabilise the temporal dimension of the cartography and limit discourse only within spatial relations. Temporal shifts in the diagram would instead resist any form and formation of categories defining the conditions of possibility of knowledge. Since a dynamic cartography is also the visual movement of structures, it is also the movement of meaning making frameworks that produce thresholds of deterritorialisation of structures. Therefore, visibly shifting diagrams produces different structures of interiority that restructures systems of representation and accordingly produce shifting discursivities. Although the discursive statements and non-discursive diagram are apparently heterogenous and non-relational, it is the moving image that surfaces as the visual base. The material base and the discursive base can only be predicated through a cartographic interiority, where the visual base is both the mediator and mediated in this triad.

Since the visible is not codified, or is only codified through language, its construction or division is the most potent way of comprehending epistemological shifts. The visual base is the mediating base. The material base and the discursive base cannot operate without the concretisation of this cartography. The imaginary subject(s) is a production of language and grammar. Objects are not constrained by a singular viewpoint or linguistic constraints without a posited interiority. With multiple viewpoints offered by the image, the cartography is dispersive and does not necessarily produce “sufficient” interiority for language to operate. So, first there is a closure of visual subjectivation from the animated illusion to cinematographic illusion. Then, once the open world of affect and alternative meanings are closed down, there is a proliferation of verbal subjectivities within the scientific and rational.

Therefore discursive formation or material relations are prematurely dissolved without the concretisation of a “spatialised” subject-object dualism. A stabilised diagram would be essential for discourse seeks to organise the multiple associations of viewpoints and objects into a dualist separation between the subject and the object. A singular subjective viewpoint would lead to maximum subjectivation by bringing all differing subjective positions within a singular interiority.

The visual base is the uncoded non-discursive relation between the outside and the inside. Since the “inside” cannot be produced without concomitant construction of outsides of forms as surfaces, the visual base is the uncoded interior within which forms and statements operate. The inside is not a static diagram but the animation of structures of representation in relation to the spectator’s viewpoint. Here resides not a still image, instead an available gamut of plastic movements as the animated cartography of power relations that ultimately shows as the visual base. It is important that we distinguish the purely machinic live action recording from animation. While live action showcases the recording of the given through a lens, and hence maintains constant perspective in relation to the cinematographer, animation is not constrained with such imperatives and therefore a cartographic inside is a potentially amorphous construct. For the visual base, a system of light and system of visibility does not coincide, since visibility is determined by the subject position in relation to the produced interiority of the image. The immediate effect of an inside of a morphing image is the picture of resistance towards discursive formation since the interstice between the inside and the outside is continuously produced and problematised. There is resistance to knowledge formation in the morphing nature of the inside. Power and knowledge are qualitatively different in nature, the former as a relation between forces, the latter being relations between forms. According to this Deleuzian contention, knowledge concerns formed matters (substances) and formalised functions, divided up according to two great formal conditions of

seeing and speaking, or light and language. It is therefore stratified, archived and endowed with relatively rigid segmentarity. Power, however is diagrammatic, i.e. it mobilises non-stratified matter and functions, and unfolds with a flexible segmentarity. Power passes through particular points instead of forms and hence the state of power is always local and unstable, yet not localised (Deleuze 2006, 73-74). To put it in another way, forms can get into relations and thereby form knowledge. Deleuze further explains that, for Foucault, the practice of power remains irreducible to any practice of knowledge. In order to demarcate this difference, Foucault will say that power refers back to a “microphysics”. By this, he means a new type of relations that is irreducible to knowledge. “Micro” therefore means mobile and non-localisable connections (ibid.). In certain ways, the manifest form of power could well resemble the liminality of plastic forms. There is mutual presupposition and capture of power and knowledge. Since lines are manifest force relations, and although power passes through forces and not forms, it is the directionality of force embedded in lines that produces a knowledge of the inside. If meanings are to be stabilised or regulated through the operation of power, a stable cartography is to be generated. For this, a relatively stable inside is required. Lines acquire a crucial link between being manifest force relations and relations of depth between forms. Lines would showcase not only movement but also perspectival depth. Lines not only produce closure of forms but also planes of visibility directed according to subject position. But first and foremost, lines reveal the interiority of forms and that force relations are internal to forms and bodies.

Since the visual base is ultimately the historically specific “transcendental imagination” of the visible in relation to the outside, the shifting image is the basis of shifting discursive formation on which the historical *a priori* is predicated. For Foucault, panopticism is not just an efficient piece of prison design but “the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form”. The diagram is the resultant image of modern configuration of power and of the

configuration of human subjectivity. For Foucault, the panoptic subject, who assumes that s/he is always being watched, becomes both the prisoner and the one who imprisons— both the subject and object of his own gaze. According to Foucault, “he becomes the principle of his own subjection” (Mirzoeff ed. 1998, 277). Foucault continuously found the peculiarly modern configuration of human subjectivity in such diagrams of power. Batchen extends Foucault’s notion of the modern human subject as being both an effect and a vehicle for the exercise of power/knowledge. The modern human subject is thus produced within the interstices of a continuous negotiation between the virtual and the real (*ibid.*).

The modern human is thus positioned as both the subject and object of knowledge, and therefore is a “strange empirico-transcendental doublet”. Thus, man becomes a being “such that knowledge will be attained in him that renders all knowledge possible” (Foucault 2005, 347). Man is both the condition of possibility of all knowledge and also the object of knowledge that renders those conditions evident. In other words, man is both the object and subject. “It knows only as it knows itself” (Lawlor, Nale eds. 2014, 33). Modern philosophy, according to Foucault is defined by its attempts to work out an “analytic of finitude” that reveals how man is both transcendental origin of all objects of knowledge and the empirical object itself, that being studied. The problem goes back to Kant, who put forward the idea that the very factors that make us finite are also conditions necessary for the possibility of empirical knowledge. According to Foucault, human finitude is therefore founded and founding, positive and fundamental. Modern philosophy attempts to resolve this problem by reducing the transcendental to the empirical. Yet, all attempts at resolving cannot get past the problem that man is irreducibly both empirical and transcendental. This is the sense of man’s finitude. Kant put forward the crucial idea that the very factors making man finite, that is, his subjection to space, time, causality, and the like are also conditions necessary for the possibility of empirical knowledge. In other words, it is the design imputed by the mind on to

the outside. According to Foucault, human finitude is positive and fundamental, founded and founding. If the project of modern philosophy is the analytic of finitude, then the problem with the potential of animation, specifically due to its process, is its lack of this finitude, transcendental or empirical. Therefore, the main issue with the phenomena of form and movement in animation that is always potentially acausal, and destabilises space and time, is that its existence is in image form and outside of the understanding of the empirico-transcendental double.

3.6 Making of the Subject

From Foucault, it follows that humans are made subjects through their objectification insofar as they are free. If Foucault analyses the different modes of humans being made subjects, then subjectivation has been manifest with objectification of the image. In other words, the image is pushed further away from the subject with the construction of artificial objective centre and as a set of relations between objects in relation to the subject. This has been explained subsequently in detail. The objectivising of the speaking subject is also closely linked to the productive subject as the subject who labours. The labouring subject is involved yet separated from discursive practices and objectified within such practices. The labouring subject who is also producing the image is subject to power differentials. It is more complex, since it is an indirect production of subjectivity from discourse. This is because the constructed image is divided both consciously and unconsciously or remains undivided due to conflictual and overlapping discourses. The constructed image could also lack adequate divisions due to the subjective inside out operating as recalcitrant imagination violating discourse. Although knowledge regimes pertaining to the individual circulates in relation to power, it is the inside out creating the individual vis-a-vis a form of power that cannot recognise the visible in terms of dividing practices, and hence leaves the individual uncoded

and incomplete. The plastic image as the manifestly changeable could also be taken as a form of resistance where power operates on it, displacing, hiding or making its specifics “unmanifest” through rationalising processes. Of concern is how the subject is divided inside or divided from others or from their outsides that objectivises her in the production of signification. At the same time, it is the historical conditions that motivate the type of reality of the present through which the dividing practices are comprehended. As Foucault would insist, it is about analysing “specific rationalities” rather than rationalising in general in order to understand the economy of power relations. In order to understand the different forms of power, or in order to understand power in general, it would be pertinent to investigate power relations through the “antagonism of strategies” (Foucault 1982, 780) through various forms of resistance. Simultaneously, it is about separating the individual through their differences.

Foucault:

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word “subject”: subject to someone else by control and dependence; and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to (Foucault 1982, 781)

Foucault talks about three kinds of struggles against modes of objectification—against forms of domination, forms of exploitation that separates individuals from what they produce (alienation?), or that which ties the individual to the self and submits them to others. The subjection of individuals through any of the aforementioned forms reflect in the division and separation of the image. This is because the subject position of the animator/spectator

belongs to a milieu of production and dissemination of objectified forms of knowledge, which is also a form of social practice belonging to that particular milieu. The duality animator/spectator is only possible because individuals produce and reproduce the very structures of which they are subjects.

Since objective practice reflects on the subjectivation of individuals, the interior needs to be constructed into objective knowledge inside which truth operates. Transgressive borders are subjected to techniques of regulation and control. The forms of dividing practices that operate on the image are not so apparent until they are visibly made to move through constraints pertaining to rationalising discourse. The animation environment which includes hardware and software, capital investment, specific forms of economic and cultural discourse and therefore mechanisms of subjection and alienation are not separate from mechanisms of exploitation and domination associated with the making of the image. These forms of individuation involves knowing the inside of people's minds, forms of which will be noticed in the dividing practices of the screen into space, time, forms, their movements and their relations. Simultaneously, this form of power is not limited to the analytical concerning the individual only, but also the knowledge of man as a quantitative and globalising development. This extends on to not only the individual, but also to the dividual, of divisions extending to bodies or their insides, forms and their significant parts. Since the animator/spectator operates within and rarely moves out of discursive practices, the constructed image would largely be a reflection of positive practices of dominant knowledge. And the set of dividing practices ultimately resulting in the divided image is also the division of the subject in terms of forming identities, production of laws of truth and the production of self-knowledge.

3.7 The Effects of Capital

If power passes through forces and operates as the diagram into a flexible segmentarity, it is capital that also exerts itself as a quasi-objective structure of domination over the image. Such quasi-objective forms of domination with its historical dynamic is manifest in the changing form of the image. Since it is grounded in a form of wealth specific to capital, namely value which is simultaneously a form of social mediation, the image itself reflexively manifests or is rather the historically determinate form of this immanent dynamic. Additionally, since the image has been the site of increasing influx of capital, the manifest image is also rendered according to structural constraints implied by large scale global patterns expressive of forms of structures of domination.

Central to the commodity in capitalism, labour has a “double character”— it is both “concrete labour” and “abstract labour”. While concrete labour is labouring activity mediating interactions of human and nature, abstract labour has a unique social dimension that mediates a quasi-objective form of social interdependence. Abstract labour, with its historically specific mediating function, is the content, or rather the “substance” of value. Hence the objectifications of labour, as commodity and capital are both concrete labour products while simultaneously being objectified forms of social mediation (Postone 2004, 58). The mediated social relations constituted by labour are very different from the overt social relations or direct domination characterising other societies. The relations under capitalism has a quasi-objective dual character, of an opposition between an abstract homogeneous dimension (mediated relations) and a concrete particular material dimension (object), “both of which appear to be ‘natural,’ rather than social, and condition social conceptions of natural reality” (ibid.). Therefore, both the mediated relations and the object are essential for the operation of capitalist relations.

The image as an object is constitutive of quasi-objective forms and is also both the mediator and the mediated form of social relation, in manifest form. Therefore, as the product of concrete labour it is also intended to function as the “content” of value. This means that forms in their material manifestation should be of value. However, when it comes to animation, the plastic image reveals that form belongs to both the ideal and the material dimension. The ideal aspect of the form understands the active nature of the human subject but confines it to thought. On the other hand, if the material dimension of the form understands the physical reality of the world, it also ignores the role of the human subject in creating the world we perceive. If the ideal is considered as separate from the material dimension, and only confined to thought and not praxis, then the animated image becomes dematerialised. The form gets bound to the external referent of the physical world, while the ideal separates from the material dimension. Capitalist relations, and labour in both its concrete form and abstract form, with the imperative to reproduce the offline relations on screen would dematerialise the image, separating the ideal from the material resulting in a supposed scientific rational image form. In the process, the image form is relationally bound to the matter flux of the physical world. Separating the manifestly ideal form and the material dimension and embedding only the offscreen world on screen, is also separating the real fact that humans transform the world they find themselves in, through actual material activity. It also tries to reject the historical version of materialism, which figures industry as the real historical relationship between nature and man. Therefore, concretising the object by removing all traces of non-separation of the ideal and the material, is also dehistoricising materialism into a world of commodities alienated from the ideal dimension. The commodity is apparently rendered independent of historically shifting thought processes, as an inert and scientifically determined material object without history. Or for the fact that the manifest embodiment of desire as the plastic form is shod off of the object.

The design of bodies are also directed towards their objectification, since bodies and commodities belong to a uniform spatiotemporal scale of relations. Since the image is ultimately to be sold as a commodity, and it also consists of commodities, the capital infused screen image shifts from being the rendition of inside out to a converted outside in. In other words, the image would be brought in relation to the external world, the body being the spatiotemporal scale of substance. Reproducing substance is also reproducing substance of commodities in relation to the body. This is investing substance from the image to the referent, where actual referents are envisaged in terms of scientific rationale. It is about producing value from the design of the image. The image is so designed that the referent would be actualised as a real object purportedly belonging to the external world. Many a times, the referent objects are realised into merchandisable commodities.

As a relation between commodities, and the body in relation to commodities, the sign form qualifies discursive, social and material relations by associating itself with material substance. The resultant effect of internally coherent relations between the representations of bodies and commodities is the making of substance. This is the direct realisation within the image of what Marx would highlight, that for producers, “the social relations between their private labours appear as what they are, i.e. they do not appear as direct social relations between persons in their work, but rather as material [dinglich] relations between persons and social relations between things” (Capital 1, 166). In order to replicate material relations between things that would simultaneously express and also disguise social relations, the image is converted into an interiority with objects residing within and fulfilling those imaginary relations. For this, firstly, the outside surface of things are realised over and above their insides. This happens through the construction of overt material substance that also changes the form and substance of content (the subject matter) in terms of apparent relations between persons and things. Therefore, the image is constructed so that it imitates objects

belonging to the referent world in order to bring the internal relations within the image towards thought, that is, towards the cinematographic illusion. This ensures that the dominant structuring principle of the graphic form is transformed into a narrative form mediated by commodity exchange relations.

The common underlying assumption is that, for Marx, material production constitutes the fundamental base of society, while ideas are part of a superstructure, and relatedly, that beliefs for Marx are determined by material interests. Postone would however argue that Marx's mature theory of social constitution is not from the viewpoint of labour, instead labour acting as a socially mediating activity in capitalism. This transforms the relationship between labour and thought. Labour under capitalism, according to Marx is not something that is understood transhistorically and commonsensically, but is also a historically specific socially mediating activity. Hence its objectifications, which are commodity and capital are both concrete labour products while simultaneously being objectified forms of social mediation. Therefore, the relationship Marx posits is not between concrete labour and thought, instead between mediated social relations and thought. Therefore, the specificity of forms of thought, or more broadly subjectivity characteristic of modern society can be understood with reference to those forms of mediation. For Postone then, Marx's mature critique of political economy purports to be simultaneous determinations of social subjectivity and objectivity. They represent an attempt to get beyond the subject-object dualism, with respect to historically specific forms of social mediation constituted by determinate forms of social practice (Postone 2004, 69-70). The image is therefore not only the diagram of social subjectivity and objectivity, but also of historically specific forms of social mediation. Specifically, the constructed world of the animated image would reflect not only forms of social mediation but also a cartography of the social construction of knowledge practices.

3.8 Capital and Making of the “Subject”

The historically specific abstract form of social mediation, as social relations mediated by labour, becomes quasi-independent of the people engaged in determinate forms of social practice. This results in a historically new form of social domination that subjects people to impersonal, increasingly rationalised structural imperatives and constraints. Instead of being a function of direct social domination, as in slave or serf labour, the compulsions exerted by capitalist social relations represents abstract impersonal domination in the form of abstract and objective social structures. “Society, as the quasi-independent, abstract, universal Other that stands opposed to the individuals and exerts an impersonal compulsion on them is constituted as an alienated structure by the double character of labour in capitalism” (Postone 2006, 159). Postone comments that this form of domination envisaged by Marx is a different approach than the impersonal, intrinsic and pervasive form of power as proposed by Foucault. Postone further contends that in a commodity-determined society, the modern individual is historically constituted as a person apparently independent of personal relations of domination or dependence and who is self-determining. However, this ‘free’ individual is confronted with abstract objective constraints. Therefore, “these individuals are not only self-determining ‘subjects,’ acting on the basis of will; they are also subjected to a system of objective compulsions and constraints that operates independent of their will—and in this sense, are also ‘objects’”(Postone 2006, 163-64). Again, this contention of the Marxian framework approaching the subject/object nature of the individual is different from that developed by Michel Foucault in his discussion of the modern “Man” as an empiricotranscendental doublet (ibid.).

Hegel attempts to overcome the classical dichotomy between subject and object by demonstrating their intrinsic connection with the idea that all of reality including nature, as

constituted by practice is an externalisation and expression of the world historical Subject. This is specifically overcome by the objectifying practice of the Geist, the world-historical Subject. The Geist constitutes objective reality through a process of self-objectification or externalisation, and in the process reflexively constitutes itself. Since both objectivity and subjectivity are constituted by the Geist as it unfolds dialectically, they are of the same substance, both being moments of a totality, a substantial homogeneous whole (Postone 2006, 72). Therefore, for Hegel, Geist is the identical subject-object, the “substance” which is simultaneously the “Subject”. “The process by which this self-moving substance/Subject, the Geist, constitutes objectivity and subjectivity as it unfolds dialectically is a historical process, which is grounded in the internal contradictions of the totality” (ibid.). This historical process of self-objectification is one of self-alienation and leads ultimately to an endpoint— the realisation of itself by the Geist as a totalising and totalised subject— as a form of reappropriation by the Geist of that which has been alienated.

Marx does not simply invert the idealist Hegelian concepts in a materialist fashion. Instead, Marx uses the category of value as having a “substance,” which he identifies as abstract human labour (Postone 2006, 75). This substance is conceived as an attribute of labour-mediated social relations expressing a determinate sort of social reality. Marx conceptualises capital in similar terms as Hegel does to his concept of the Geist. This he does through value, which operates as an automatic subject. Through the self-valorising nature of value which continuously takes the form of commodity and money while changing its own magnitude, value suddenly acquires the nature of a self-moving substance. Commodity and money are mere forms of value. Marx therefore characterises capital as the self moving substance which is Subject (ibid.). Marx’s conception is not a “materialist” inversion of Hegel’s idealistic dialectic, instead it is its materialist justification. Whereas Hegel’s conception of the Subject is transhistorical, Marx accords historical specificity to his

conception of the Subject residing in the alienated social structures characteristic of capitalism. Marx envisages a social theory of consciousness inasmuch as he identifies subjectivity as distinguished from the sociohistorical Subject. Instead of conceiving an identical subject-object, Marx shifts the focus from a knowing subject and its relations to an external world to that of social relations as determinations of both social subjectivity and objectivity. The problem of knowledge is therefore a relation between forms of social mediation and forms of thought (Postone 2006, 77). Marx therefore asserts that capital, and not the proletariat is the total Subject and its historical negation would not involve the realisation of that totality, but its abolition (Postone 2006, 79). Marx's critique of Hegel in "Capital" suggests that capitalist relations are not extrinsic to the Subject, rather are those very relations constituting the Subject (Postone 2004, 61). The full realisation of the Subject, which Hegel envisages, would mean the full realisation of an alienated social form. This alienated social form is an image reflective of the visual base as the mediator between the outside and the subject/object, and which is the historically specific yet ubiquitous form of social relations as determination of both social subjectivity and objectivity.

3.9 Crossing over Thresholds of Epistemologisation— from the Dynamic Visual Base to the Static Diagram

The pre-discursive virtual, when in the process of being rationalised has to cross multiple epistemological thresholds. Thresholds of epistemologisation moves the plastic image in the direction of not only science, but also ideology. The conversion of form and movement into rational space and time and the formation of the body would traverse from aesthetics to ethics and politics. Control over prelogical plasmaticness is also the formation of the rational that passes from the world of non-representation into the reified world of representation. The crossing over of the plastic irrational form into the rational form of representation can be

illustrated as a series of technological breakthroughs which apparently helps cross several thresholds of epistemologisation in order to arrive at the rational image illustrating the dialectics of life/death. Mitchell's model of the dialectics of life/death is reached through the creation and subsequent conquering of such thresholds. Therefore, Mitchell's model is not the means through which animation could be understood. Instead, it is the model to which the animated image should reach in order to enter scientific and rational discourse. The creation of thresholds is also the division and separation of the image into determinable parts. This sense of determination arrives from the production of difference as comparison, which are actually the created thresholds imputed on to the animated image whose resultant effect is the cinematographic illusion and the dialectics of life/death.

The early animated image was anti-realist and was drawn specifically for the flat screen. The way of drawing rendered the animation stage amorphous. It drew heavily from the graphic art style of cartoon illustration in the form of a graphic narrative, an assemblage of gags with the main focus on surface, rhythm and line (Klein 1993, 5). Screen depth was non-existent that led to a multidimensional imaginary world. Morphing was immanent and produced the idea of spatiotemporal destabilisation in the form of heterotopy and heterochrony, also signifying the non-separation of space and time from form and its movement. Within the constraints or freedom of the flat screen, the possibilities of early animated characters were immense. It took cues from the print cartoon styles, yet presenting a new formal system of animation predicated on the morphability of everything. As a result, it attributed animistic potential upon everything, environment being as much alive as characters.

The potential emptiness of the stage meant movement along flat planar directions or along unknown degrees of depth. There was minimal or no existence of weight or gravity. Gravity arrived with the arrival of the sound film. And so did the notion of violence. The

notion of the three dimensional space within the classical tradition that Wells would term as “orthodox” animation (Wells 1998, 35-39) was yet to arrive and was largely based on the scaling of characters. A small size meant that the character was away from the audience, while scaling it up would bring it nearer. Scaling would otherwise not be associated with depth without it being made into a convention through repetition. This transformation of flatness of the surface to the window of the narrative is possibly the first step towards producing the illusion of space.

Since the image was absolute, as appearance resembling reality, the text was also literal. Text exchanged forms with characters. Words had character and the images were ideogrammatic and seamlessly interchangeable with text on the flat surface. Sometimes the text and the image would interchange, where calligrams were a distinct possibility. Characters could freely exchange forms with ideograms as well (Klein 1993, 6-7). Animation was characterised by the ideogrammatic punctuations emphatic in the visual form within an unreliable animation space, a visual dialectical relationship between the surface of the screen and the animated object. The “storyless” form, and also form as non-literary storytelling was possible due to plasticity extending on to the subject matter of the narrative. Therefore, a text as image and its possible exchangeability with characters rendered the image as a “graphic narrative”.

The equivocal polysemy of forms turned into the objectivity of denotative configuration. These transitions are a spectrum of unifications and separations between the text and the image, the transformation from the pictogram and ideogram to plastic form of the calligram. Although there is difference of nature between the form of content and the form of expression— where there is no isomorphism or conformity between the two irrespective of their mutual presupposition— they spill over into each other. The statement has its own discursive object and is not isomorphic with the visible object. However, residing within this

non-relation is the possibility of a calligram, a possibility of a symbolisation in animation, where the calligram gives the same form to both the text and drawing, between the linguistic and the plastic, between the spectacle and words. However, the calligram splits into the separation between character form and sound with the latter's arrival. The graphical form of the text transformed into synchronous sound and dialogue. A significant offshoot of the introduction of synchronous sound was the impregnation of materiality to forms that separated not only the figure and ground, but also forms from each other. With the appearance of volume, forms were separated from the environment and gained insides. The environment was rendered inert and passive with the separation of active characters against scientifically rationalised environments.

The two dimensions of meaning is the conceptual meaning (sense) and referential meaning (reference or denotation), where the reference usually belongs to the external world. The sign no longer remains a sign thing, but is represented as the very object that it refers to. The sign stands for the object as the reference to a sort of idea upon which it is grounded. As discourse seeks to ground meaning, the only possible way towards that is to bring the sign to its referential context. The ground is the context with reference to which the sign is interpreted. And since the ground of scientific discourse is the external object, the sign is made to resemble the object. Scientific discourse, in order to ground meanings within the image seeks to objectify the sign, and to that effort, the entire image is made to resemble the referent external world as it would be seen through an optical lens. Since the object is contained within the discursive space, maximum determination of meanings is sought for in the maximisation of objective reference. How it happens is the subsequent trajectory of the empty stage turning into representative space.

The transformation from one end of the spectrum which foregrounds play of signification to the closure of representation has been a trajectory towards increasing determinacy, for

discourse to emerge. To determine is to make finite, from late Latin “*determinabilis*” meaning finite, from the verb “*determinare*”. This trajectory towards maximum determination undergoes a shift towards maximum separation of objects of knowledge. This is especially evident when the details imputed to each and every form transforms their relational nature into functions. The fallout of higher determination is the creation of function. With the complete intersection between electronic media and architectural space, mainstream animation traversed towards ever-greater notions of realism. The multiplane camera arrived with the idea of simulating a camera’s perspective within the multimorphic animation stage. The mathematical techniques of linear perspective that tries to emulate the photographic lens became a convention for pictorial representation of “reality”. Monocular perspective changes the flatness of size and shape of things, adds depth, and produces an impression of scientific reason implied through scientific vision of the camera. The cinematographic perspective would become the model to emulate since it is the vision of a scientific instrument that is supposedly objective. As Klein would remark, “A drawing was free from the denotative illusion of a photograph... This freedom from the denotative photograph or film is essential to the cartoon, and often noted by animators, viewers and critics alike. When live action becomes the model instead, the freedom is reduced almost immediately... (Klein 1993, 15).”

The next step in the separation between the visible and the articulable involves the literalisation of metaphors. This would subsequently move into metaphorical non-literal usage of representation. Since what can be known is delimited by the dominant tropes within discourse, it is the association of form, action and language that begins to take up metaphors from its literal usage. At the same time, new visibilities surface in terms of bodies and forms. Bodies start gaining joints as invisible constraints, while they also turn out to be more complete which transforms the surrounding space. This takes place through the process of structuring that arrives in the form of ossification of plastic forms. It would also shift the

plastic and the metamorphic into the metaphoric, thus shifting the image from graphic world to the narrative world.

The graphic ideogram and consequently the calligram got replaced by the sound image. The text became literalised in the metaphor, as action. The metaphor replaced graphic articulation with sound and dialogue. The graphic and narrational anarchy was subsumed within realistic scenarios of “normalcy”; the natural order of the animated image consequently tending towards cinematic realism. Other cinematic tropes arrived with screen depth replacing metamorphic transitions. Accordingly, volumetric rendering of forms produced the exteriority of objects as representative surface. The necessary accommodation of all outsides of forms (volume) was complemented by the induction of the inside of the diagrammatic space.

With the introduction of the multiplane camera, multiple transparent layers of images separated by a distance from the camera would generate the effect of depth and monocular parallaxic gaze. The most interesting aspect of the constructed image is that every threshold tends to become a manifest rendition of its epistemologisation. Therefore, depth layers are also manifestations of rational space and rational time. The sense of difference as comparison percolated into the sense of positive difference in itself. The differentiated moving image, where the screen no longer construed as a surface, would instead be transformed into a window of stratified depth planes into the narrative world. As planes of depth separate into layers, depth of field is brought into focus, and the viewpoint gradually starts to mimic the camera’s viewpoint. Further identification of separation between planes, surfaces, objects and bodies would also extend into the image reflecting the nature of differentiated consciousness. The whole is now the axis of the subjective centre (the eye) connected with the objective centre of the image. As a result of the multiplane setup of layered backgrounds, the graphic space changed and the graphic narrative suddenly became unworkable.

Full animation arrived with the full sound stage movie space. “To the film industry at large, animation was the vital craft that created elastic time and space, and the inside/outside of the sound stage” (Klein 1993, 148). Artificial perspective took over the image, but rather the control of the form and the contour from every direction produced the imperative to produce a space that would contain and control the body from the inside and the outside. Before a concept can arrive, forms are rendered determinate according to separated atmospheres. In full animation, the layered separation of atmospheres meant a separation of air, mist or gravity and how they should be seen. Foreground and background existed in very different atmospheres. The production of volume achieved through lighting, shadow or illusory foreshortening was still a set of flat images separated along multiple layers. The twelve principles of animation started by Disney that enhanced the movement of the animated image through conformity to physical laws, emphatically maintaining constant volume and elasticity, eventually became the flagship of correct animation (Thomas, Johnston 1995, 47-70). “The volume of a character is an absolute quantity, like the volume within a container; no matter how much is altered, the volume must remain constant” (Klein 1998). The plastic nature of forms is transformed into the elastic informed by scientific rationalism. Morphing gets contained within the play of physical laws where the form and its contour starts to coincide. The contour would no longer be bending its dialectical relation with the form resulting in a restrained boundary. The intent was to bring about photographic representation of the external world.

The restrained boundary and control of the morph translates into the shift of time perception. The contours and lines gave way to surfaces. Surfaces in turn would be transformed into volumetric renditions towards higher determination. With volumetric surfaces, the layered space of the multiplane camera gives way to the volumetric space of CGI. The industrial process defines the area of freedom into a catalogue of rules that are all

pervading and once established, are all powerful to the last detail. The realities on screen flawlessly duplicate the world outside and reproduce it so that it becomes a natural extension of the outside, while conversely creates the illusion of an uncomplicated and straightforward world as a natural extension of the world onscreen. The power of artificial perspective thus seems to represent the visible world of the rational soul and the hegemony of these images have successfully subsumed the irrationalities and the artistic efforts that had erstwhile been used to show more than meets the eye.

With volume arrived the change of the graphic space to a narrative space. Accordingly, characters got personality. Personality animation makes characters into objects of knowledge with an outside surface accompanied by a psychological interiority. A brief phase of literally representing the “inside out” had also passed through the image. Paul Wells talks about two concerns pertaining to the inside out technique used for “Betty Boop’s Snow White”: “First, the desire to maintain the ambiguities and magical distortions of ancient fairytales, which foreground the relationship between interiority and exteriority, and treat the psychological and emotional with the same physical equivalence as the material world. Second, a formal need to demonstrate the capacity of animation to literally create impossible events and determine new relationships between representative forms and imagined conceptions within ephemeral modes of expression. In this, metamorphosis is the guiding and necessary principle” (Wells 1998, 75-76). However, with Disney positing mechanical laws upon the multimorphic world, which are still the most thorough survey of “personality” available, metamorphic transitions as manifest dialectics of change were transformed into elisions. Narrative devices including camera movements, framing, and cutting strove to imitate live-action cinema. The morph was rationalised. Metamorphosis could now only occur when it is functional and rational according to the narrative. As Bendazzi notes, for visual style, animated films lost the graphic stamp that had been their distinctive nature.

The process as a move towards better storytelling techniques, for precise timing of objects and likewise referenced character animation put into leash the exploratory nature of animation. It also created the planned animated image more attuned to syncopated movements with music. Plasmaticness got restrained to scientific properties of matter, buildings became rigid structures, fluid animation became configurations according to corresponding representative amorphous qualities (for example, smoke, fire or water), sounds became pointers to masses infused with materiality and weight, i.e. gravity. The arrival of sound and thus the synchronisation of animated bodies to foley sounds was to further the banality of representative motion that can be predictably apprehended by the audience, simultaneously making them passive to onscreen developments. Inappropriate sounds were much appreciated, although the same became more to do with representative sounds. Synchronous sound eliminated the intrinsic property of animated bodies to change at will and upon volition. Instead, it introduced the idea of action associated with accompanying sound representative of Newtonian dynamics of motion. Metamorphoses worked best without sound effects for sound brought in weight and ascribed gravity to objects. As sound appeared, rubbery multimorphic gags appeared alongside variations of metamorphoses that bordered on elisions. Even space could be expanded or shrunk, defying the very idea of space with the creation of “non-space”⁹.

However, sound brought in the sense of material substance and accordingly potential constrained to its substantiality alongside gravity and weight. With materiality arrived violence as well, since the surface would respond to rational force, metamorphosis would become volumetric deformation, and ossification produced a rigid form. Imposition of a structure is perhaps the most significant change in the form of ossification as constraining and directing movement. However, ossification is not limited to the form of the image but

⁹ For example in “Porky in Wackyland” (1938) (Klein 1993, 67).

exists as the narrative form, sound, lighting or depth, shadows, bodies, the architectonics of space, or the structuring and ordering of events. The very condition of the animation film's mutability demonstrated the evolutionary as Eisenstein would posit, and the revolutionary as refutation of structure. The controlled movement of ossified body structures conforming to physical laws

however, at the cost of free exploration resulted in the production of a form that would gradually become the only modality of representation of mainstream animation. These rules gradually subsumed the erstwhile devices of animation through the propagation of an essentialist notion of natural correctness predicated on the rationality of physical laws.

Yet, most importantly, it is through a series of creation of multiple thresholds of epistemologisation that the dynamic nature of the animated visual, and consequently the visual base is rendered into a static diagram corresponding to the cinematographic vision. While it is impossible to create an exhaustive list of such transitions and thresholds, the primary concern is the making of such thresholds so that the image can be turned into one of a stabilised scientific vision, also corroborating the primacy of subject-object dualism.

3.10 Value and the Image

One needs to understand how the non-discursive process uses alienated labour and capital for producing the animated image. According to Postone, labour in capitalism has two analytically separable social dimensions— a use-value dimension as “concrete labour” and a value dimension, which is abstract labour. The use-value dimension refers to labour as a social activity that mediates humans and nature by producing goods that are socially consumed. Productivity, for Marx is the productivity of useful, concrete labour. The social character of use-value dimension of labour encompasses social organisation of production and social knowledge, the development and application of science or acquired skills of the

working population, or the acquired productive abilities of humanity. It is not restricted to the use of direct labour alone.

The value dimension of labour, abstract labour, on the other hand, refers to labour's historically unique function under capitalism, as a socially mediating activity. The production of value is bound to the expenditure of direct human labour. Marx envisages capital as self-valorising value. Capital is a category of movement and expansion. It is value in motion. Capital has no fixed form but appears within the spiralling path in the form of money and commodities. Capital then is a directional movement and ceaseless process of value's self-expansion (Postone 2004, 60). Marx distinguishes value as a form of social mediation from material wealth. Abstract labour, as the historically specific mediating function of labour, is the substance of value. Marx analysed value as a form of social mediation that is bound to the historically specific role of labour in capitalism.

In the development of production, the use-value dimension of labour historically becomes an attribute of capital (Postone 2004, 67). At the initial stage, the appropriation of concrete labour's productive powers by capital seems to be a matter of private ownership, considering that direct human labour is involved in the production process. However, with the development of large scale industries, with big capital, the productive powers of concrete labour appropriated by capital no longer belong to the immediate producers. It is not that workers' powers are taken away from them directly. The condition for the coming into being of these powers historically is that they are reconstituted in alienated form, separate from and opposed to the immediate producers. Capital, for Marx, is not the mystified form of power that actually belong to the workers; instead, it is the real form of existence of "species capacities" that are historically constituted in alienated form (Postone 2004, 68). Capital is therefore, the alienated form of both dimensions of social labour under capitalism. Capital confronts individuals as an alien, "totalistic Other". Simultaneously, the species capacities

constituted historically in the form of capital opens up the historical possibility of a form of social production which is not based on surplus produced by the expenditure of direct human labour.

For Hegel, the spirit is never at rest but is always engaged in moving forward. Hegel draws the analogy of the first breath drawn by a child with the qualitative leap that breaks gradualness of quiet nourishment in the form of quantitative growth, resulting in the birth of the child. Likewise, the Spirit matures slowly into its new shape, dissolving the structure of its previous world. “The gradual crumbling that left unaltered the face of the whole is cut short by the sunburst which, in one flash, illuminates the features of the new world” (Houlgate 2005, 50). Likewise, capital in the form of technological advancements, while inundating its way into the classical two dimensional process, took a leap towards digital processes that changed the relations of production further in its favour. Since there is a limit to which capital can flow into the traditional process, it takes a leap to newer technologies—in this case—to the digital process that redefines the relations of production, specifically alienation. The shift from the classical process to the digital process is also the historical reconstitution of species capacities in alienated form, which is capital as technology.

Therefore, there are two aspects directly affecting the non-discursive process that goes on to produce the constructed moving image. If we discount the effect of value on time for now, then the non-discursive visible is the cartography depicting the aforementioned totalistic Other. On the other hand, since it is the alienated form of human labour, the non-discursive process appears as the manifest and literal alienating non-discursive environment within which the cartography is realised. Rather, both of them conflate with the arrival of computer generated software environment. With the arrival of computer graphics, the entire creative environment, that is the creative software environment becomes a structural imperative upon the animator. On top of that the direct tactile process of animating is removed through the

direct alienation of the production process. The digital environment had initially formed a different kind of morphing imagery with movement of computer generated lines¹⁰. The process literally alienated the animator by replacing the pencil and paper with digital tools. Nonetheless, with the loss of tactility, the line lost details of texture with the use of digitising techniques.

With the arrival of three dimensionality, lines were taken over by surfaces, furthering alienation that does not need the animator's drawing skills¹¹. While the software space was again an unlimited possibility of transgression, as was applied by Peter Foldes in "Hunger," albeit with limited morphability, the three dimensional software environment was already structured by mathematical perspective. Since movement is no longer about transgressive lines but about algorithmic surfaces¹², the focus shifted to controlling the surface in order to produce volume within this Cartesian space. This would gradually accrue into the making of

¹⁰ "At the National Film Board of Canada, Norman McLaren encouraged the development of computer graphics. In 1969 National Research Council of Canada scientist Nestor Burtnyk attended a conference in California where Walt Disney animators described their traditional methods. After he returned to Ottawa, Burtnyk teamed with physicist Marceli Wein to create a 2D keyframing technique that could be used to draw on a digital tablet. The images did not move in the classic sense so much as their component outlines morphed and rearranged themselves from one keypose to another [...] This technique intrigued experimental artist Peter Foldes, then working at the National Film Board of Canada (NFB)". (Sito 2013, 32)

¹¹ "[...] A Computer Animated Hand (1972), showed a computer-rendered hand articulating in space. The fingers moved, and the camera even went under and inside the hand. Added to this, his fellow student Fred Parke put salient points on his wife's face to create a working model of a face articulating. Both the hand and face were shown as vector wireframes but then also as surfaced images. They are probably the first 3D-rendered images, or raster images, ever seen on film. Catmull worked on creating three-dimensional curves that could be smoother than an assemblage of polygons, which was still a collection of small, straight lines. He also created "texture mapping" and an early "hidden surface algorithm," which would tell the computer that an image of a solid object should not show the construct lines at the back of the object. Frank Crow worked on anti-aliasing, so that lines didn't have that vector look known as "jaggies" (Sito 2013, 64).

¹² "In the beginning SIGGRAPH was all about research papers and conferences, papers on surfacing, raster graphics, translucence [...] in 1987 John Lasseter of Pixar presented a memorable paper in which he spelled out the twelve basic principles of character animation for the CG industry" (Sito, 2016)

the non-transgressive surfaces that needs to be firstly wrapped around into a hollow form of the body and subsequently moved using controllers mapped to human movement. Ossification became literal, with skeletons, bones, muscles, skin and surface textures constructed in order to maintain the structural integrity of the body. Alienation would be furthered with even more division of labour under post-Fordist processes, the animator getting limited access to the character, which are virtually modelled by the modelling artist, the virtual character literally ossified by the rigging artist, eye balls placed inside eye sockets, bones, muscles, skins and texture performed by separate ‘technicians’, subsequently clothed using simulation of physical dynamics, and staged in the virtual environment before the animator has access to a completed model. The animator is confined to moving parts of the body; the rest is taken care of by the software. This kind of controlled access furthers the fragmentation of uncontrolled movement into regulated practices, of bodies in particular.

The software environment becomes the all encompassing diagram within which forms operate, and that which produces the animated image as the reproduction of this diagram. The dynamic cartographic base has been fully subsumed into a static diagram of interiority. The software environment becomes the totalising structural imperative within which the subject-object dualism is reified. The software tool becomes the end in itself. The focus of animation is diverted into the goal of mastering its complex mechanisms albeit in fragmented parts working and belonging to the body as a machined assemblage. More importantly, the body becomes the object of focus. Plasticity as to “see (what is) coming” is now already known, as the body remains the repetition of the same and also since the division of movement follows according to the modern scientific conception of movement. The question of anticipating and to see what is coming is not at all there, with the removal of singularity from the process; “what” is arriving is already known. The maximum that could change are the poses of the already formed and the already known. In certain ways, what Deleuze had conceived of the

animation process by mistake has now become true. Poses are constructed and the frames-in-between are divided by the software into any-instant-whatevers. Plasticity has been removed through the capillary form of disciplinary power that percolates through the bodies and forms through ossified trellises. The entire software environment turns out to be a discipline in itself, with sub-disciplines of modelling, rigging, texturing, lighting, camera, dynamics, fluid or fur putting forth microscopic control on bodies. It constructs the body as the “bearer of power relations, at once its conduits and objects (Lawlor, Nale 2014, 458).” But more importantly, the body as a movable construct also brings forth the construct of the identifiable object, asserting that the subject does not exist naturally but is instead contrived by the double imperatives of power/knowledge and capital. And the non-discursive visible brings forth the alienated subject into existence. Yet, more importantly, the body more than being disciplined, which was part of the erstwhile process comes under total control.

The digital process is the result of historical reconstitution of labour in alienated form. It is capital as the manifest alienated environment within which the artist works. The digital process, as the repetition of the same, can only put forth variations of the same representation. There is the absence of finality of representation with manifold iterative possibilities. The images, which upon correction using tactile methods like the eraser, always palimpsest of previous imperfections, has been replaced with the option of “undo”. The ability to rectify mistakes would consequently remove the notion of finality of execution since the hyperreal spectacle is always incomplete, nevertheless feigning completeness. An ultra finished product is created which is complete in itself, which is yet incomplete due to the immense iterative technological possibilities that the (un)finished image can still undergo. The image is never complete and the artist is never confident enough about its completion or about her desires reaching finality of execution. The imperfection of plasticity transforms into the perpetual angst towards achieving perfection at the level of aesthetics, the codified layers

of the image being successful in occluding the end of perfection, which was never there in the first place.

Since the imperfections of the world outside cannot be replicated using the non-discursive environmental structure of mathematical perfection, technology faces the crisis of the absence of imperfection. More the alienation of direct labour from the production process, higher is the presence of uniform repetition, and hence its difference from the imperfect external world. The external world is not governed by mathematical logic. Capital tries to reach imperfections as the repetition of the different, or the universality of the singular of the manual process through randomisations of mathematical algorithms. Since movement is also controlled through mathematical algorithms, animated movement would therefore appear as alienating. With reduced possibility of gestalt, transgression or accidental creativity palimpsest of manual labour, alongside alienated movement, the form of object is further separated from the subject as an act of dispossession, impalpable in its “distanciation” and grandeur, as a de-politicised spectacle. Capital moves and manifests into all aspects of the image as the production of things. “The spectacle is capital to such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image” (Debord 1967). Interestingly, the case for the animated image presents just the opposite. The image itself becomes an assemblage of objects propagating internally coherent material and social relations. The image corroborates commodity fetishism that transforms the subjective and abstract aspects of economic value into objective real things that have intrinsic value. Since the social organisation of labour is mediated through market exchange of commodities, social relations among people, that is between capitalists and exploited labourers, instead assumes “the fantastic form of a relation between things”. Specifically, the image itself becomes an object as well as the interiority containing objects.

3.11 Value and Time

Movement is always considered in relation to the body. And therefore, plasticity of bodies is not only the problem of objects in relation to the body (also as an object), but also a general relation of space and time in relation to the body. Since animation posits relativity of space and time, animation is transformed according to how value reconstitutes the image. In fact, Marx considers value as a social form of wealth whose measure is temporal. He considers the magnitude of value in terms of socially necessary labour time, where increasing productivity increases the amount of use value produced per unit of time. However, increasing productivity results only in short term increases in the magnitude of value per unit time. Once the productive increase specific to a particular capitalist becomes general, the magnitude of value falls to its base level. This results in a form of treadmill dynamic (Postone 2004, 59), which is driven by value's temporal dimension. This form of social domination is bound to a historically specific and abstract form of temporality, which is abstract Newtonian time that is constituted historically with the commodity form (Postone 2004, 60). Needless to say that if value is to be conceived in relation to its temporal dimension so that social relations are maintained with it as the basis, time is to be reconstituted as a relation between objects belonging to a referential framework in relation to the body. "Abstract time," which is uniform, continuous, homogeneous, empty time is independent of events. Its conception became emphatic with Newton's formulation of "absolute, true and mathematical time [which] flows equably without relation to anything external". Abstract time is an independent variable within which motion, events and action occur. Such time is divisible into equal, constant and non-qualitative units. In fact, the Deleuzian contention of the cinematographic apparatus is informed by a similar sense of temporal homogeneity. Abstract time should be seen in terms of the constitution of social reality with the spread of the commodity-determined form of social relations (Postone 2006, 202).

Once time is transformed into uniform, continuous and homogeneous time, which also means the removal of spatiotemporal relativity from form and movement, movement is reconstituted in the form of narrative devices, primarily ellipsis. The essence of the morph that connects directly with reality in the form of an a-signifying semiotic system bypasses the shortcomings of representation. In the sense that there was continuity in the lapse dissolve between frames is however gradually turned into an assembly of pasts with the fragmentation of morph. Since the morph is non-representational, ellipsis would replace it and transform the sense of present into accumulation of representative pasts. The event is created using ellipsis. The linkage and collision between frames reconfigures into linkage and collision between shots that produces events. The supposed event under narrative structure evolves through conflict. According to Robert McKee, “A Story Event creates meaningful change in the life situation of a character that is expressed and experienced in terms of a value and achieved through conflict” (McKee 1997, 34). It is clear that conflict is salient to the making of a narrative logic. Representative pasts link in terms of conflictual ideas.

With the concretisation of representative pasts that projects on to the anticipated future, contradiction is internalised and disguised within appearance, of forms and their relations. As Deleuze contends, “difference implies the negative and allows itself to lead to contradiction, only to the extent that its subordination to the identical is maintained. The primacy of identity, however conceived, defines the world of representation” (Deleuze 1994, xix-xx). The narrative would ensure that difference is subordinated to identity, where difference in itself is lost to the identical, to resemblance. A similar problem arrives with repetition, it being treated as difference without concept. Animation, which was difference without negation, which was not subordinate to the identical cannot be extended into opposition and contradiction. Contradiction only arrives in the plastic image of animation when difference is confused with identity of the same. Simultaneously, animation is Deleuzian repetition, where

mechanical and bare repetitions of the same are instead “replaced” by manifest differential repetition, not internal, disguised or displaced. This character of pure difference liberated from the negative and the identical coalesces with complex repetition. “The perpetual divergence and centring of difference corresponded closely to a displacement and a disguising within repetition” (ibid.). Disguised repetition is part of live action imagery where differential changes are internal. The primary shift of difference and repetition with the arrival of the narrative is also the arrival of metaphors and representation, with change operating at the level of the articulable and not on the visible. Changes in the form of expression are invisible. Animation being characterised by manifest destabilising repetition and thereby alternative subjectivities, in order to be brought within identity of the same, had to be transformed into the repetition of the same, with CGI. It is no more disguised or differential. CGI is the manifest form of power/knowledge bringing the form within the ambit of government, where difference is relegated to identity or to the Same, while repetition becomes difference without concept. Hence, there is no apparent contradiction or opposition visible in difference subordinated to the identical. The temporal aspect of value is hence reconfigured not in terms of value produced per unit of time, but the determination of “what counts as a determinate unit of time” (Postone 2004, 62). Apparently, this is not really visible in the animated image. It is manifest as the attempt to produce smoother animation with higher frame rates. It often leads to the uncanny, as the manifest repetition of the same attempting for maximum accuracy produces unnaturally smooth movement. Theoretically speaking, excessive investment on identity comes through as excess investment on details, which is also accrued surfacing of flaws. Alternatively, it could be said that there is something as too much smoothness and perfection. A good example would be the unnaturally smooth movement of “The Hobbit” which ran at the rate of 48 frames per second.

3.12 A Regulated and Complete Body

In early cartoons bodies could be as simple as two circles attached by a cylindrical neck, without much volume, mostly skin without bones and without a clear sense of an anatomy inside. Bodies were virtually dematerialised, as if without any weight whatsoever, or the surfaces of substances were simply drawings. Bodies could also be inked with a blur along the back used to accelerate sudden bursts of speed. The blurs would suggest a body disintegrating under its own momentum, or intentionally incomplete, as if parts of the outline were missing. Being boneless and incomplete, they were designed to move as improbably as possible, “Enigmas who lived outside the rules of plot, space, and time” (Klein ,172). All kinds of possibilities— flattening or stretching of the skull, decapitation and its undoing, hollow or twisting bodies, and mostly an incomplete body without a full anatomical character that would become complete with audience perception (through gestalt).

With completion arrives regulation and control. Subsequently, the possibility of any form of transformation or disintegration would not take place out of volition, and without the external impression of force, which is rationalisation of change. The regulation of the completed bodies would significantly reduce their field of possibilities. Since the body and its boundary becomes rationalised in the dialectics of force relations, it also becomes a necessary condition for power to operate as knowledge of the possible. This is the transition and translation from the differential becoming and gestalt perception to the imperatives of scientific reason. The body would gradually gain completeness. It is the coming together of ossified structures informing the body, space or the narrative for temporal unfolding of characters.

Noticeable is the change in the force relations with the arrival of such rationalisation techniques, of the space and the body, and thereby a different articulation of division and separation. While division and separation informs movement of parts or locomotion of the

whole of bodies, it also splits the body into joints informed by discursive structures of anatomy. The unity of the complete yet fragmented body is dependent on the influx of capital into it. More the level of completion, lesser is the application of gestalt, and hence bodily unity is dependent on how capital ensures coherence over dividual fragmentation. Wherever the concentration of capital reduces, it results in a visible rupture and split in the dividual body, in terms of possibilities of rupture, tearing, immaterial movement, formation of incoherent folds, or deformation. The composite movement of the individual as an assemblage of the dividual, with visible joinery and conflicting overlaps of dividing practices are held together into an inconsistent corporeality. Joints are sites where splits and overlaps of differing knowledge structures, primarily the individual and the dividual, get into conflict. While power tries to govern the individual, capital sutures the splits of the dividual. So, on the one hand, discourse splits the image and the body in terms of various zones, while more capital would try to bring coherence to the varying discourses according to its own logic. For example, overlapping discourses of the CGI software environment and anatomy produces multiple conflicts in assembling and animating complete bodies.

The effect of fragmentation and rationalisation of plasticity is also the introduction of conflict and consequent violence. Since plastic characters cannot really operate on a narrative space, they were replaced by “governed” characters that operate in terms of knowledge working upon action predicated on language. The exercise of power on the sensible is about action upon existing actions or future actions. This results in an immediate introduction of regulated action. This involves the use of consent; in other words, the reduction of violation. Power is the “total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions”. By virtue of acting subjects being capable of actions, power acts as a set of actions upon other actions. Foucault associates the terms “conduct” or to “lead” others according to mechanisms of coercions as a way of behaving within an open field of possibilities as well as guiding a

possible outcome. Foucault uses the term “government” in its archaic sixteenth century usage as the conduct of individuals or how it might be directed. In this sense, it is to structure the possible field of action of others. Power would thus operate as a relationship not on the side of violence or of struggle, nor on that of voluntary linking, neither warlike nor juridical, instead in the area of a singular mode of action, which is government (Foucault 1982, 789-90). Insofar as the subject animator is free, there is always the field of possibilities within which the antagonism of power and freedom is constructed for the very movement of bodies. Government, which was latent structure of conduct is replaced by manifest structures of control.

Foucault simultaneously brings in the notion of freedom alongside the idea of government. Power is exercised only insofar subjects are free to react to a field of possibilities. Therefore, it is the field of possibilities that is brought within the gamut of expressions possible of bodies. Controlling the field of possibilities is also the control of its spatial range while bodies performing actions within such fields are defined by available gamuts of movement. Freedom becomes a precondition for the exercise of power, for without the possibility of recalcitrance power would be physical determination, which is not a power relationship. Foucault brings in the agonistic relationship between power and the “recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom” into focus that paralyses both sides of the power relationship (Foucault, 1982, 790). This is especially evident in computer generated animation where malleability of forms is replaced by paralysis as the default order of bodies on which movement is attributed. Drawn movements are replaced by the paralysing stasis of a scarecrow posture attributed to all ossified bodies. But specifically, the invisible constraints that were part of the classical process of animating got manifested into real visible constraints and structures in CGI. Therefore, for CGI, the exercise of power gets literally

manifested as a physical determination of ossified structures directly controlling the body.

This can be illustrated from the figure below¹³:



Figure 4 Controlling rigs of an ossified body

Containing transgression of the boundary through ossification renders metamorphosis as abnormal and results in converting transformation into deformation. This happens with the imposition of invisible structures afflicting the body. Although latent, there is a definitive introduction of hidden bone structures, or an internal skeleton that would ossify the body into the non-transformable. The structure becomes manifest as a literal skeleton in the digital process. The deformable always exists although as latent form of restraint that controls the transgressive tendencies of the boundary. It delimits the boundary of transgression by making the surface and hence iconicity more detailed so that representation becomes concretised with material association. This is achieved with the conversion of the line to the surface, subsequently from surface to volumetric surface. Since the line as contour can transgress or transform with relative ease, the natural recourse to screen dialectics is the form of the

¹³ Image courtesy: <http://www.3dart.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Download-Free-Rigged-3d-Model-Maya.jpg>

surface that produces the outside of forms, and consequently their opaque insides as well. The seamless flow of forms that was possible with the naked line or ink spot got curtailed with the creation of the surface. A different kind of reason took over, where reason came to define plasticity as ‘surface deformation’ thereby changing the very logic of animation. Transformation to deformation is the result of the imposition of ossified structure upon forms. Hence, the body and mind splits into separate zones of deterritorialisation, as the head territorialises in its ossification with an internal notional skull. Deformation of the skull would be death under ossified representation. More the ossification, higher the violence and the impossibility of any form of unified play of form and content. Morphing becomes impossible as the internal ossification disallows for any form of surface change without getting into the uncanny. Except that, the changing conditions of existence of the image itself goes through into the other side of meaning making where another problem starts to emerge to the surface. This is crossing over the cliff of the uncanny valley. It is not the crossing of the boundary from the immaterial to material. Instead, it is the crossing of materiality into organic materiality— into the world of mortality, the body imbued with life and death. Creating the epistemological threshold of scientific binaries of life/death is perhaps the final nail in the coffin of the animated image. Crossing over the threshold of life/death binaries amounts to finding death for the first time, and consequently coming face to face with the uncanny.

3.13 Crossing the Uncanny

Given that the skeleton behind ossified bodies cannot bend but break, contemporary three dimensional form allows for limited deterritorialisation. Violating bodily boundaries amounts to death under scientific reason. Completion of the bodily construct shifts it toward binaries of life and death. Nonetheless, the determination of the undead is in terms of the negative. A

leading question would be why it has not been termed as “un-living” instead of undead. Undead is predicating life on a double negation— firstly, by making the organic body (instead of a non-living body) that can be rendered dead, and secondly in the irony of desireless movement on such a body. The non-living becoming alive is not the same as the dead becoming alive. The undead belongs to the latter category. As already argued in chapter 1, death cannot be represented through stasis; death can only be possibly depicted with movement. Undead is not really the movement of something that is not alive (which means, say, animating a fossil). Instead, it is the movement of the dead, like a corpse, or a mummy, which has the sense of incompleteness and deformation pertaining to an organic body, and therefore in the ambiguous zone of alive/dead. Creating organic surface/substance is also the entry into the discourse of life/death binaries. The undead is the doubling of death, but through movement. Firstly, through the creation of organic substance, which resides as potentially ambiguous scientific alive/dead in stasis. Secondly, by imputing desireless rational movement, the ambiguity of organic binary substance is privileged on the side of the dead. It is “bare death”. Imputing desire on organic substance leads to manifest “bare life,” which is scientific mortal life. Drawn animation posited everything as alive in its basic state. It was informed by the doubling of animated life, as the suspended animation of uncategorised substance, and its animation in desiring movement that rendered substance as alive. The production of organic substance is its reversal. The possibility of death upon the living is reversed into the possibility of life not on the inanimate, but on binary alive/dead substance. With movement, binary substance can be rendered alive and mortal, or dead and desireless. Therefore, the undead and the animated are completely separate domains distanced by two steps of aliveness or deadness. When the image approaches photorealism, it is scientific discourse that produces the first threshold of binary separation between life and death, and then privileges death as the default reality through movement. The contemporary

constructed image as the image of the historical unconscious is also the new image of the immanence of scientific death. Therefore, undead as a category is the doubly opposed to the animated. When the body gains materiality consistent with organic life according to biological classification, identification with bodily form also nears the boundary of the binary order of life and death. Since scientific discourse privileges death over life in this binary divide in the form of desireless movement, the body becomes the site of bare death with imputed movement bereft of a soul, and not desiring life. With increased detail, there is increased demand of representative movement, failing which bodies are strangely empty of desire, yet informed by “rational” movement which makes them appear as zombies. It is a cadaver moving around looking for a desirous soul, perhaps that of the perceiver’s. The body is then the uncanny corpse facing the spectator who sees death in the face, and refuses to identify with this desireless state. The perceiver is directly faced with the factuality of her own demise and the loss of her own corpus. Subjective identification with the object is problematised, since the subject is forced to identify with its other, in the dead body. This is the uncanny.

Moving the dead is also administering the dead, where there is total control of the body by the non-discursive process and environment. With ossified control over the dead body, the control of actions upon actions is effectively administering the dead. Since organic substance is dead with non-representational movement under scientific discourse, materiality comes into direct conflict with movement. When it comes to bodies with dead substance, especially bodies where hair or fur does not cover up bare skin, it is bodily details reveal movement without desire. This is not animation, as it showcases the corpse in movement, which brings forth a subtle revelation. Details of movement fail to adequately support detailed bodies as overlapping discourses come into direct conflict with each other. The higher the control of the individual, the more would be the tendency to control gestalt, and the control of the

(in)dividual body. The focus on movement of parts destroys the locomotion of the whole. Conflictual discourses such as bodily discourse overlapping with scientific discourse of the design environment or the shortfalls of mathematical algorithms leads to the loss of the animating spirit, or internal volitional desire of forms. Since imbibing a spirit into the body is only comprehended in terms of movement, the understanding of life and death falls within “bukimi no tani” or the uncanny valley. As coined by Masahiro Mori, a condition of response of revulsion by humans towards the humanoid surfaces with “unnatural” movements of the body. Since Mori had explained the problem of affinity with android designs and not for the image, the problem of the uncanny is only generated with non-representational movement of bodies. It generates the problem of the undead body as it moves. The production of organic materiality of the body separate from life is the threshold condition of scientific reason. For bodies lying close to the threshold between the alive and the dead, there is a continuous shift of the undecidable between desireless movement of the dead corpse and it coming alive. However, it never comes alive with non-volitional movement. The initial resulting bodies were not different from inanimate automatons trudging across lifeless landscapes with near humanlike characteristics. Confusions ensued, as their existence was torn between the animation of the dead and the mortification of the alive, a figure close to living organisms, yet as organic cadavers walking within a hyperreal environment. The audience was quick to reject such shortfalls of three dimensional characters that could match up neither to cinematic reality, although which imitated the human anatomy to the last detail but nevertheless remained less than “human”.

A split between the body and the animistic spirit is brought about by the making of the organic substance. The organic substance is potentially both alive and dead. Since death cannot be defined other than that of the absence of life within this binary order, therefore the only factor that could remove forms of life is the absence of internal volitional movement. As

gestalt cannot operate fully upon a detailed surface, it falls short of imbibing bodies with adequate amount of desire. Crucially, this appears as the control of the body using external force that the rationalised software environment affords. Since the body moves not out of volition, instead by the impression of external force that is clearly evident in machinic and not organic movement, the sense of internal spontaneity and gestalt of desiring forces (the soul) is missing. Therefore, the body appears soulless and as the moving dead. However, the main problematic resides in the fact that while desire supposedly belongs to the inside of identified forms, the supposedly soulless body has forces appearing to work on it from the outside. The body is without agency and hence its movement is the administration of “bare death”. Bare death would be the totalised external control of the body, which however does not amount to attribution of life upon it. As the dead cannot be further mortified, since it is already dead, it has to be made potentially mortal in order to be killed. Therefore, if further violence upon the body is to be justified, then it has to first potentially be made alive in order to bear the threat of death. This could explain the reduction of violence within animation, albeit by making violence latent. The limits of physical laws would be tested on the body and yet remains latent. With the completion of the rational body, plasticity and metamorphosis would mean violation, and hence violence on the body. Since a rational body would get crushed or bleed with deformation, violence would always remain latent. Bodily violence need not be shown as long as its threat is immanent.

If the body has become mortal, then it is always potentially threatened with the loss of life in death, and that threat is a primal configuration of fear. It is the administration of fear that has taken hold of the body. Therefore, the discipline and control of the body rests more on administering fear over the administration of bare death/life. Since perception resists identifying with the dead, pathos or catharsis does not emerge in inflicting violence upon the dead. Violence on the corpse is plain factual. Therefore, the animation process is devised so

that perception identifies emotionally with the object. Identification with the object can only be “complete” if and when the body is turned mortal, which is also to make it alive, for the affective and the cathartic to emerge. As this is also the identification with the mortal body, it is also identifying with fear as a primal instinct. It is only within the immanence of fear and death that all other systems of power/knowledge is predicated. Since animation evades representing any kind of death, due to an ostensible myth of innocence, it banks on latent fear to undergo any excesses of violence. Animation entering discourse of death/fear/mortality is also its entry into ethics, politics or ideology. Therefore, bare life arrives with bare death. Bare life is the control of mortal bodies, and not dead bodies. The primary imperative of technology at present is to somehow reach the articulation of movement of a mortal body, which is bare life. Yet, more importantly, the sense of bare life is concomitant with the sense of primal fear of death. Therefore, the administration of fear keeps visible violence at bay to keep the myth of innocence at place, although violence becomes immanent and latent. Hence, all types of signs would only operate at their fullest, or the audience would fully identify with characters possessing a mortal body, complete with expressions and body language. However, since exposed skin gives away the lacuna of animating the individual for lack of detailed control, gestalt can operate better with skin covered with fur. The industry has taken a safe course after multiple failed attempts in animating the human (read exposed skin) that resulted in administering bare death. Therefore, although Disney’s “Jungle Book” (2019) uses animation for all animals which are mostly furry creatures, it uses a human actor. It has the sense of mortality informing all moving creatures. Although the film is mostly animated, it should be categorised as a live action film, since animation has lost its quality of *athanasia*.

As Foucault would claim, the power over life evolved into two basic forms, starting in the seventeenth century— anato-mo-politics and biopolitics (Foucault, Rabinow 1984, 261-262). The first of the poles, of anato-mo-politics centred on the body as a machine, that trickles into

the construction of the body, in its disciplining and the optimisation of its capabilities, or its subjugation, the control of its docility, its integration into systems of efficient economic controls by the procedures of power that characterise the “disciplines”. This disciplining of the body disqualifies death, evades it and is supplanted by the power over life. Within the present episteme, and which is shifting, the manifest mortal body in the animated image is not only the power over life, but the power over death. This is because the body is simultaneously attributed with life and death, although privileging death over life within the extant constructed image. This is how Mitchell had envisaged the dialectics of life. The mortal body is preferable for the symbolics of sovereign power, in the ancient right to take life or let live. With the regulatory controls of biopower, or the power to foster life or to disallow it to the point of death, death has become latent while violence has become manifest, immanent and imminent, always bearing the threat of death. The problem of bare death resolved as a bare body. As the constructed moving image manifests as bare death, the body’s conversion into a mortal form is also the attribution of a bare body with life within an immanently dead world.

Attributes are imputed upon the bare body. The bare body is denotative and is not possessive of second order semiotic connotation without the attribution of metaphors through the narrative space and character actions. In other words, the bare body of the identified object is defined by the attribution of relevant action that defines the ascribed power structure of the narrative. In that sense, there is a split between bare bodies and their attributed functions, without which bodies are irrelevant. It is only with the attribution of action that the bare body receives a mind, consequently, interiority. This interiority is externalised through language (dialogue) and action that lends function to characters. Within CGI, the body is manifestly objectified and it gains life only with this totalised objectification. This is the totalised control of the bare body. It can even be extended to the totalised control of bare life,

since the body is a photorealistic body under CGI, where surface represents organic bare life of a biological object. The construct of bare life does not exist with non-photorealistic imagery. This also means a totalitarian control over death alongside life that arrives with photorealism.

A bare body can be endowed with bare life, as a body with life and without agency or rights. Yet, since it is the making of a mortal body, it is also a sacrificial body that can be killed with impunity. Whereas the erstwhile plastic form could not be killed, the new body is liable to be killed at all times since it is a biological object, with continuous threat of violence inflicted upon it. An ossified body would not revive if crushed; instead it will face violent death. Therefore, the constructed body resides and performs within a space of structural violence and physical laws, while its narrative space is structured with the biological mortal object in mind.

3.14 The Present Cartography

As Merleau-Ponty quips, “Is not to see always to see from somewhere?” (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 77). This is a potent question to ponder about when considering the visual base as the cartography of subject-object relation. When there can be multiple senses of witnessing the image, privileging a particular diagram is also the production of space extending in front of the screen surface indicating subject-object relations. From a dynamic cartography and objects not constrained by any particular viewpoint to its eventual subjugation to a singular point of view is a historical trajectory of the visual base, as the base on which the historical a priori is predicated.

The world is an image before it is a system of objectified forms. Or rather, the image is the representation of the imaginary relations between persons and things. To take from Althusser, ideology is a system of representations, or “ideology is a representation of the

imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.” Whether it is discourse as a set of true statements, or ideology as a system of representations constituting an interiority, the imaginary relations with the real conditions of existence is reflected in the visual base mediating such imaginary relations. The process and the image directly implicate each other, and the process, more than the resultant image becomes the all encompassing Subject that both alienates and governs the subject/object. This is because the non-discursive visible is the totalising form of capital. The process posits itself as an alienated structure, the resultant image is converted into a cartography of this dominating structure placing the subject as an object in relation to it. The non-discursive visible process and consequently the image of capital is that of the self moving substance which is Subject.

Now, if the image, which was the object is also the Subject, then the relation between the subject and the object is inverted. It becomes the relationship between subject as object and object as Subject, the image of capital subjecting the perceiver to its imperatives. Since the inside helps bring all objects of knowledge within the interiority of an utterable system, and this interiority is in relation to the subject residing outside and bracketed out by the fourth wall of the picture plane, a static cartography can only be maintained if the moving image can maintain a homeostatic interiority even with a shifting viewpoint. This means that this constancy is maintained in relation to objects of knowledge that are also coherently related with each other and in relation with the objectified subject. The homeostatic cartography of object relations as Subject in relation to the constant witnessing subject would produce a curved interiority. The curved interiority is manifest as a concave sphere whose interior surface curves into the eye of the subject. The non-relation between the visible and the articulable is brought in relation by bringing different objects belonging to diverse dimensions into a singular perspective. The same axis links the subjective eye witnessing the objective centre of the image, while vanishing point(s) get aligned into a sphere, strictly

guiding all planes into tunnel vision of a monocular gaze. The present cartography fulfils multiple purposes.

Firstly, it asserts maximum separation between subjectivity and objectivity according to the western conception of subject-object dualism. The totality of the image is therefore a set of layered separations constitutive of a set of objects, including bodily forms, differentiated spaces or fragmented time. The picture plane simultaneously is a screen surface, a window, a mirror and a spherical interiority curving into the subject. With contemporary technologies extending virtual reality surrounding the subject from all around, capital and power/knowledge has managed to maximally subject the individual within the imperatives of an immanent reality. Hence, immersive technologies would necessarily create a world with horizontal and vertical infinity plotted as a curved surface of a sphere capable of accumulating an infinite radius with the subject as the centre. The beauty and possibly the resilience of capitalism is its capability to reformulate the possibilities of human thought within its paradigm. On the one hand is the beckoning of infinite possibilities and on the other is the curtailing of such potential inside ossified regimes of truth. Moreover, there are conflicts between overlapping discourses and senses of truth that directly affects body and its movement.

Secondly, in doing so it produces an illusion of objective truth of the scientific gaze akin to that produced by the cinematographic apparatus. The point of concern is not simply about the literal representation of objects and events but the primacy of language which always relates the emptiness of all objects into relations, thereby generating meanings. It is the production of a system of representations through forms of determinacy that is not confined to the text alone. It transforms the visible image into a denotative finite form. For this, the aesthetic functions of the image is transformed from forms of indeterminacy to forms of determinacy. The general tendency of the lines and forms shift from affective playfulness of

non-representation to closure of representation. Every representation, including bodies become objects not referring to but resembling external referents. The aesthetics of the hyperreal form becomes an end in itself, becomes the end of context. It attempts to become the end of crisis. Simultaneously, it attempts to become scientific objective reality. Every aspect of the affective form is brought into the domain of the mechanically and scientifically known— forms, shapes and colours being brought down to the logic of algorithms and numbers. Visual effects are but mathematical computations, technological effects that are indeed alienated expressions of capital. Hyperrealist details bring surfaces and bodily textures within knowledge paradigms so that there is little room for imagination outside the known. Imagination is constrained by degrees of ossification posited by structural imperatives of the epistemological field. Ideology can now be predicated on the scientific.

Thirdly, it becomes the alienated form of capital as Subject, appearing as the ubiquitous form of external reality governing all relations. Ossification into volumetric forms is also the subsumption of the symbolic by the economic, where sign forms are transformed into object forms for commodity determined social relations. Degrees of deterritorialisation are directly related to imputed structures of expression of social content. For Marx, fetishism, or forms of mystification are related intrinsically to their social “content,” as necessary forms of appearance of an “essence” they both express and veil (Postone 2006, 62). Commodity determined social relations are expressed in fetishised form— social relations appear “as what they are, i.e., ... as objective [sachliche] relations between persons and social relations between objects” (ibid.). The quasi-objective impersonal social forms expressed by categories of commodity and value do not disguise class relations; instead abstract structures expressed by those categories are “real” social relations. This means that the historical specificity of the “form of appearance” also implies the historical specificity of what it expresses. The social content or essence of form in Marx’s analysis is not labour but a

historically specific form of labour (ibid.). In this sense, the discursive base is also implicated by the material base where the sense of the object as a form of expression is specific to degrees of alienation from (direct) labour. Greater the alienation, more is the infusion of capital as dead labour, and higher is the determinacy of forms into denotative objects. The discursive base that is power/knowledge is thereby also specific to the appearance of the object form whose essence is historically specific form of labour or its alienated form. Therefore, the spectrum of form, from abstraction and plasticity to configuration could also be proportionately dependent on the degrees of labour or capital input into the process of production.

Fourthly, the construction of the picture plane is also the structuring of lack according to the logic of commodity determined relations— as objects with insides which has value but whose insides are unknown. Desire, now embedded in lack, when modified into a specific goal is “misunderstood as either an insatiable internal lack, or as a process whose goal is dissolution in pleasure” (Parr ed. 2010, 66). Lack manifests in terms of the need to possess the desired object. The transformation of spatial flatness into a deep space with a monocular perspective is significant, since the determinate image is concomitantly constructed as a void or volumetric lack of the surrounding space where forms occupy. Besides, the production of outsides produces as many insides which are opaque to perception, and therefore appears as additional unknowns. Additional unknowns also add to lack. It is here that life centring around the nomadic is brought within the ambit of a singular centre with the protagonist and consequently the subject position placed with respect to that centre of lack. In other words, addition of objects within a void of negative interiority is also the making of additional sense of lack that affects subjective perception, especially when it comes to accruing capital appearing as the spectacle. Therefore, without comprehending the true context behind the hyperreal form, peripheral perspectives residing outside of this immanent framework would

perceive of itself as lack in contrast to the hegemonic presence of the spectacular image. This affects independent animation production the most, which are overwhelmed by, yet would simultaneously wish to emulate this hegemonic presence.

Animation shows that the visual base is not confined to only the subject-object relation, but also how concepts form the outside into external reality. Determinacy directly affects the body. Centres are thus produced according to ideological conditioning of space-time whose aggregation is co-constituted with the synthesis of the bodily self. This is a possible spectrum that animated image is capable of transforming into, from complete abstraction to configuration, from the primal protoplasm to a fully configured body. This spectrum is neither chronological, nor follows a historical trajectory. However, the dominant mode of comprehension can be gathered from this transition of the plastic protoplasm entering scientific discourse. Since the contradictions facing the body with conflictual discourses have already been illustrated with respect to the making of the undead, the dead, and the mortal, it is clear that the visual spectrum is also implicated and conversely implicates the visual base. The visual base could be scrutinised to find the direct relation between the visible and structural violence.

Accruing capital within the industrial process is also accruing violence. A general mainstream conception could be termed as the 'innocence-violence' contract. Since plasticity primarily resided on the knowledge structure of the amortal, a tacit form of infantilisation of the subject was predicated on violence afflicting indestructible characters. Yet, it was not really structural violence, since plasticity did not resist bodily deformation. Moreover, most of the bodily transformations were volitional. With ossifying practices, transformation implies deformation as articulated violence. Bodies can only change form under the act of external rationalised force, but never under volition as technological reason takes over the previous mainstay of irrationality. Revival gets transferred into continuous threat of death in

deformation, upon violence on the body. Structural violence is furthering of conflict according to latent imminent violation of bodily limits. The threat of violence is qualitatively different from erstwhile plasticity. The body appears as ossified structure and dies with any transformation. Transformation is therefore obliterated from discourse. Violence is latent and morphability is impossible. Instead, the ossified body in deforming resists change, nevertheless breaks down in violence. As Benjamin notes, “If the natural utilisation of productive forces is impeded by the property system, the increase in technical devices, in speed, and in the sources of energy will press for an unnatural utilisation, and this is found in war.” (Benjamin, 1936). The alienation of the animator becomes so intense that the audience is made to accept violence inflicted on them in the guise of the spectacle. Meaningless violence is condoned off ostensibly for the establishment of a natural order, where the collective is supposed to understand a singular reality of friction in their living conditions, a condition imposed under the guise of the rational order that can never be subverted since any individual resistance breaks down in the apotheosis of violence. Any action against this natural order would lead to punishment of the unfortunate in society (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944). Capital, thus has to rationalise its prodigality in the most extreme form of the spectacle of violence as an aesthetic pleasure. At the same time, infantilisation of the subject is also justified governmentality, in the form of highlighting natural antagonisms and Manichaeic binaries. Additionally, the other is decontextualised in order to justify the immanence of violence on the same.

The shifting episteme, according to shifting diagram highlights the changing nature of power over life in the administration of mortal bodies. The process comes full circle with power seizing hold of the life of bodies in order to suppress them. The complete control of animated movement through ossified structures of body, space and physical laws brings the identified object, and hence the subject under totalised control. The visual base would now

reflect the administration of mortal bodies that has crossed over the uncanny valley and become bare life. Nonetheless, the uncanny bare body showing bare death is palimpsest whenever animated movement falters in producing adequate desire. Characterisation, narrative and action would imbibe bare bodies with agency. However, the primary problem is that the discursive base is informed by the visual base although the units of the visible cannot be defined other than through discursive structures. And therefore, the visual base exists as objects and bare bodies in relation— spatial, temporal or discursive, imbuing them with scientific and ideological coherence. However, there are neat categories of division informing the image that settles the body and its movements. In order to avoid contradictions, animation separates into separate domains informed by substance and movement.

- plastic animation, informed by impermanence with amortal bodies, rarely noticed in contemporary practices
- two dimensional animation, following physical laws, ossified and possibly mortal
- 3D cartoon animation, ossified, following physical laws, and informed by deformation, leading to death
- animation indistinguishable from live action, informed by the binaries of life and death
- the realms of the undead as bodies with desireless movement

In order to categorise the nuanced differences with respect to complexity leading to violence, and also to separate different kinds of mortalities associated with bodies, various pathways of government are found for animation. Animation separates into soft body cartoons and hard body or real body narratives. While soft body narratives would take up the supposed animation space of cartoon formats, hard bodies would gradually shift toward mainstream live action modes of storytelling. Further hardening of bodies would lead to superhero films. Either way, cartoon bodies would tend towards simplistic character designs

as much as superhero films would tend towards Manichaeian binaries, both for supposedly innocent storylines that infantilises the subject.

Chapter 4: Case studies

4.1 A General Understanding of the Approach

Most analyses of animation largely involve narrative analysis. The object of choosing the case studies is to firstly ascertain that the process and the image form cannot be separate domains of analysis. In fact, the analysis of the form is not undertaken by animation theoreticians, largely confining the formal analysis to the description of the process. On the other hand, when it comes to analysing animated films, it is largely confined to the interpretation of the narrative content. In either case, the politics of form is ignored. For animation, since the substance is bound to the image and not to the referent object, when form and substance of expression changes, so does its subject matter. While considering the case studies, the approach taken considers the form as the visual base or the condition of possibility of a particular subject matter. Converse to how Foucault would have it, that is privileging discourse over the visible, it is the primacy of the form and substance of expression over the content that is privileged as the basis of discursive formation. Therefore, for animation, instead of the primacy of statements over the diagram, it is the other way round, i.e. the visible has primacy over the articulable. This is obviously a kind of impossible task, given the non-representational visual of the plastic form tends towards the inarticulable. Therefore, articulation can only refer to changes of the form which contradicts the normative rational discourse, primarily predicated on the cinematographic illusion. It is the non-discursive aspects that remain inarticulable yet perceptible. Therefore, the crucial task at hand is to articulate the form in terms of its discursive capture, which reveals the historical shifts of the normative pertaining to the articulation of form. If the trajectory of animation form is taken into consideration, it is the visual form and substance (of expression) that have

gradually developed towards bringing the visible within the discursive stranglehold of meaning making. It becomes evident that the visible and the articulable are connected via an invisible thread of logical coherence. The subject matter that surfaces with the shifting image form, is also directly connected to this process of articulation.

More importantly, the image form that can exist as a viable form but also reside outside of meanings is a distant impossibility according to Foucault's notion of the episteme, which is a discursive formation within a given historical mode of thought. For live action imagery, whose substance does not reside in the absolute image but in the referent object, setting a straightforward notion of limits of imagination pertaining to a particular episteme is easier to conceive. Yet, if we consider the animated image, it overcomes the discursive limits of the given episteme, particularly because it already exists outside of such limits, in the form of non-discursive imagination of the inside out. The telos of animation has been to transform the image of the inside out to that of the outside in, specifically to bring the animated image within the discursive limits of the present episteme. Accordingly, the entire process is confined within a manifest structure. Therefore, since the manifest process itself becomes an image of knowledge structure, it also becomes manifestly visible. Power/knowledge, as discourse, in its attempt to capture the form even makes the process as a structured image of the environment of image construction. Therefore, the normalised form and process are very easily formally subverted as the form is directly manifest as force relation. Enquiring the process would manifestly reveal a structural environment in image form, showing the cartography of power functions. The form would therefore generate the alternative possibility of finding knowledge structures from its very process of construction.

The case studies have been chosen so that they reflect the broad aspects of the shifting form and how technological shifts of processes are equally responsible for such shifts. The case studies would therefore consider the visual form as the condition of possibility of a

certain discourse to emerge in the form of a possible subject matter. And this subject matter emerges at a particular historical conjecture which can also be responsible for not only specific discursive formation but a reflection of ideological bindings. Thus, the visual form and its subject matter and consequently the narrative discourse can be situated historically as well as philosophically. Analysis should therefore encompass the non-discursive animation process and environment that allows for a particular kind of narrative to emerge, its possibility corroborated by a particular form of expression and subject matter (substance of content).

This is also directly related to possible number of perspectival planes and viewpoints put forth by the image form. With possibilities of multiple perspectives or multiple viewpoints within the same space, alternative worlds and subject matters are a distinct possibility. Although the image does not directly produce multiple subjectivities just because it possesses a singular perspective, or conversely, singular or multiple subjectivities for multiple perspectival viewpoints, the uncoded visible is always potentially analysable with respect to the visual form. However, since the form is linked to structural knowledge and also the manifest process, it could at least reveal the pre-discursive formal tendencies as a priori to the substance of content, i.e. The subject matter.

Simultaneously, the case studies would also highlight the shift of substance from the visual form to an external referent in relation to the corporeal. This is also the shift of the form from indeterminacy towards determinacy. The substance transitions from pure potential of the line or surface to its conjunction with matter flux. The immaterial/dematerialised sign form could be absolute so that there is no difference between appearance and reality, to a material sign where the substance splits from the sign form to its referent. This can be an effective parameter to scrutinise the degrees of deterritorialisation, flattened perspectives with

multiple viewpoints, iconicity that does not resemble referents, photorealism or the construction of a world in relation to corporeality.

The development of binary separation distancing of the subject from the object, from the non-separation of subject-object and maximising it according to scientific discourse is concomitant with the construction of a Cartesian space. It is because scientific discourse has not allowed the malleable image of animation to affect thought. The form has instead been shifted towards objecthood distancing itself from the supposed subject according to the subject-object dualism of modern western thought. Therefore, subjective separation from objects according to various stages of animism could reveal stages of entry into logic. Or totemism can reveal stages of social development of thought, attributing animality to humans or human perception on animals thereby uncovering archetypal patterns.

Labour entails non-representational movement and substance. Different degrees of separation of substance from the form or the referent could be indicators of different degrees of influx of labour and capital. It is also an indicator of spatiotemporal deviations from the normative and therefore as points of resistance to dominant discourses. A politicised form alongside political content is a distinct possibility. Anomalies and slippages arising from greater control of the form could also reveal points of inflection for formal resistance to emerge. Discursive resistance is also found in incoherent forms, which is not necessarily politicised content. However, as has been amply worked out by Svankmajer, formal resistance can also be political resistance.

From affect without purpose to its capture by reason is another prime concern. As each frame is a discrete unit of movement and therefore causality is not an imperative for frames in sequence, a spectrum from the sense of non sequitur to embedded causality could also be associated with relative developments of narrative content transitioning from affect without purpose. Affect without a subject matter or narrative structure has been amply applied in

experimental animation. For mainstream productions, causality has taken precedence. However, a film could be historically situated in terms of pure laws of form, in terms of sensation outside of comprehension. Embedding causality within sequences of pure forms or sensations can be understood as a transition towards narrative possibilities and concomitant change of subject matter. Degrees of narrative rationality could also be an indicator of rationalised form. Conversely, if affect is enquired of as an intangibly pure sensation beyond an image, then such kinds of animation may well have found some of its true possibilities and potential. Such ecstatic and eternal coming into being is characterised by pure form lacking content that is the omnipotence of the primal plasma. Again, a graded transition from the unformed omnipotence towards the formation of a rationalised spatiotemporality can be looked upon in terms of metaphors and actions, association of sound or gravity or transformation of graphic space to narrative space. All such formal stages not only can be historically situated but also needs to be looked upon in terms of embedding life and character to stages of development of human subjectivity. All of these parameters could also be found working together and in relation to each other, facilitating or obstructing each other.

The next point of concern is to focus into degrees of homogeneity of style. The industrial process had always found ways and means to homogenise the works of different artists in order to find unity of configuration between different frames, or even uniformity of styles across different productions. It is significantly difficult and requires considerable amount of training to get animators to draw in a particular homogenised style. The technological process of CGI facilitated the repetition of the same form across frames. The most conspicuous effect of this technological turn is that the CGI environment has homogenised bodies and forms into a limited range of styles. It is no longer an attempt to produce a unified style for a particular film production. Instead, contemporary efforts attempt to extract different styles for different

films, which is clearly missing with the arrival of three dimensional CGI process. In fact, CGI has forced stop motion animation to look similar in form and style.

The other concern is about the visibility of becoming to the dialectics of identity. Identity can be distinct between presentation, non-representation and representation. A spectrum from the impermanence of everything to representative identity that banks on forming attributes through cultural identification could be charted out. To say the least, this would consider character animation in terms of its non-representational possibilities, and possibilities of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of identity brought forth in relation to spatiotemporal incoherences. If forms in general are considered, it would also enable taking the likes of experimental animation, motion graphics and visual effects into consideration. In addition, it would also consider these other forms of animation in terms of their representative possibilities or the degrees to which their form and movement have been rationalised and represented. Identity arrives with the sense of difference as comparison, and deviations as contradiction afflicting the sense of the same. Enquiring the transition of positive difference at its point of inception towards difference as comparison is also seeking to find the transition of direct signs without referents into the creation of representative identity. This could be situated within linear metamorphosis or plasticity as the spectrum of transition from unformed substance to a formed body. A film could also be historically situated in terms of labour and capital inputs or as the capture of animation by rational forces of government by power/knowledge or ideology, the result of which is the historical transition of malleable bodies to representative identity of formed rational bodies.

Conflicts between overlapping discourses will be evident whenever the process and intended image come into direct confrontation. For example, the design of the animation space and drawing style may allow for only certain kinds of movements and degrees of freedom of movement. This could be evident in cut-out animation techniques. Likewise, if

discourses of the body overlaps with the scientific discourse of the software environment, sutures will be visible, especially when organic movement comes into conflict with scientific movement. The influx of more capital and labour into the process would be able to create a seamless suture. Therefore, seamless animation, or better sutures are an indication of more influx of labour or capital, or both.

The other aspect informing animation is the seamless transition between forms and substances that questions models of semiotic divisions as can be done for most images. On the contrary, it is quite difficult and perhaps impossible to differentiate between content form and expression form, or content and expression substance for animation as per Hjelmslev's model. Confusions often reign supreme in trying to distinguish between form, substance, expression or content. If such classification can be applied, it means that image closely resembles the cinematographic illusion.

The most important aspect to look into is what kind of life is being attributed to forms. The beauty of creating form is that forms are already potentially animated in their very creation. Therefore, the problem with producing so called "realistic" imagery which mimics or records the physical world is about producing death rather than life. Whether it is animated life, that is life without death, or mortal life, that is life with death, the differences would be quite clear. By extension, even worlds and spaces can be deathless. While deathless spaces and bodies can be comprehended as characterised by malleability, metamorphoses, or even decapitation, for example in "Hold anything" (1930), the same cannot be conceived within mortal corporeal spaces. The same kind of effects would appear violent when attributed to forms or bodies informed by scientific reason. Moreover, such explorations are distant possibilities given that the entire space has been rationalised. Within rationalised or quasi-rationalised spaces, like the ones following Disney's principles of animation, bodies follow physical laws but are elastic, in the sense that they can be squashed and stretched. Based on

such observations on degrees of rationality or supposed irrationality, the form (narrative structure) and substance of content (subject matter) could both be considered as possibilities emergent from degrees of attributed death on forms.

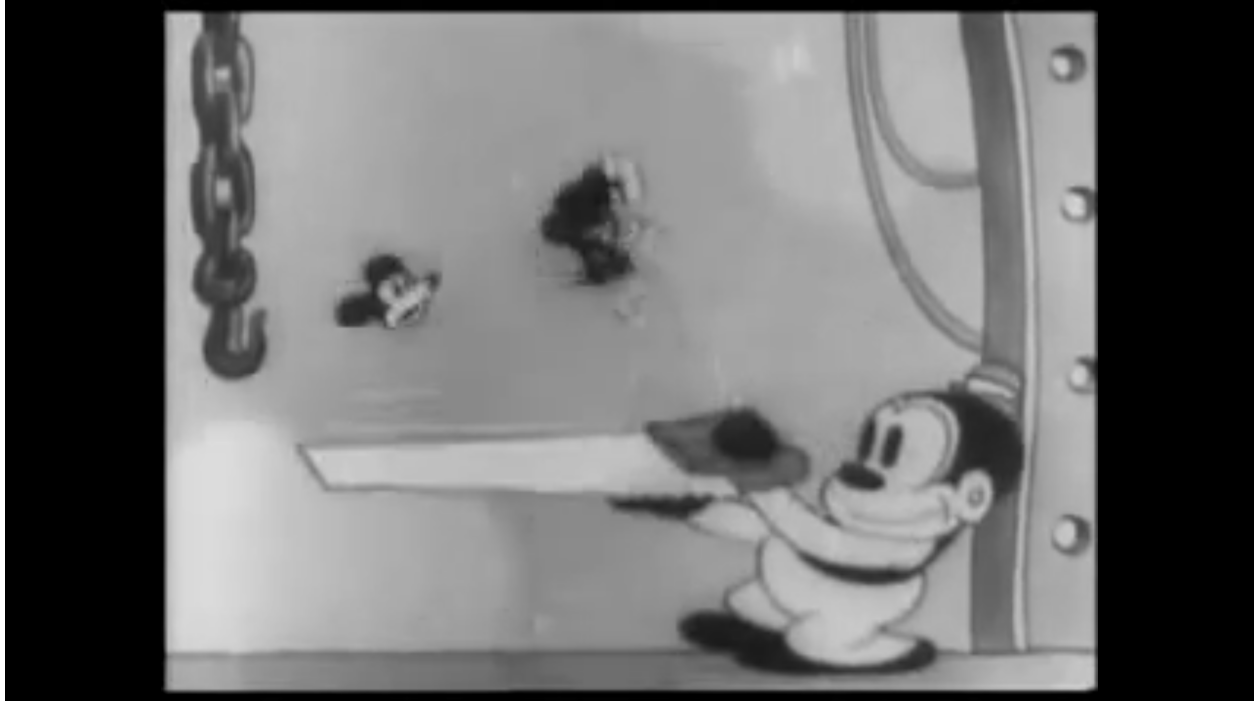


Figure 5 “Hold Anything” shows decapitated creatures that are alive

The next concern would be on which side of the valley does the body reside, based on force relations. The subject matter depends on whether the body is amortal or has been rendered mortal or the undecidable undead (also the uncanny). The degrees of supposed “realistic” representation is dependent on how well scientific life and consequently death has been imputed into the body. Depending on such factors, discourses could emerge that brings forth a concomitant narrative that involves violence in different degrees— from the supposedly innocuous violence of cartoons to latent violence threatening the body into the normative production of docile bodies. It could also culminate into the movement of the dead and could be used to generate the uncanny or horror on purpose. This is directly related to force relations— whether internal desire informs movement or if external force renders bodies as autonomous or heteronomous. As has already been explained in chapter 3, the shift

of movement due to internal volitional desire to external impression of force is also about shifting agency of the body and a relational subjectivation that historically shifts from autonomy to heteronomy.

Finally, it would consider the shifting control of the transitioning form, from the volitional internal play of desire to the control of bodies through external forces leading to the idea of the bare body. This also means that although genealogical aspects, that is the sense of contingent turns of history are considered, and thus allows for the generation of a certain kind of discourse, it cannot completely address the historical dynamic of the shifting form of the animated image, which could be necessary, possessive of a logic and not contingent. This is because the animated image as a possibility showcasing spatiotemporal incoherencies alongside its plastic and metamorphic aspects reside outside of discourse. It is not about rendering the incoherent unintelligible so that the visual is normalised as Foucault would claim of normalising power, but about the historical dynamics behind the image construction that also brings forth new productions of image replacing the old. If the manual mode of animation has been superseded by CGI animation, especially for mainstream animation, it has also been possible due to the imperatives of capitalism, as a dynamic system and an ideology, its ubiquitous presence in all aspects of image construction, and the expression of a self-perpetuating structure of domination.

The aforementioned attributes can be generalised across the entire gamut of animation films to contextualise them based on their approach. These points are applicable for analysing individual case studies although they are not mentioned in detail for individual case studies. The case studies broadly illustrate the epochal changes of the animated image and its process. The first case study is that of a silent era popular cartoon. This is followed by the first synchronous sound cartoon. The next case study is the first full CGI film to win an oscar. The other two are contemporary films, which are oscar nominees/winners for two consecutive

years, 2014 and 2015. These two are 3D CGI animation. Although it seems that there has been a major leap from the first two films to the contemporary ones, at least historically, the five films encompass the major shifts of the form and the technological process. An exhaustive list of films showcasing all possible formal and technological shifts could be constructed, but not discussed as its extent and scope would be unmanageable. Notable among them could be “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,” that was the first film shot with the multiplane camera, or Peter Foldes’s “Hunger,” one of the first computer animated films to be nominated for an Oscar, and the one to have used “tween”¹⁴ using the computer. The other film worth mentioning is “Toy Story,” the first CGI feature-length animation. Animated shorts have been chosen instead of feature length films as they can be analysed more exhaustively, while focusing more on the form and substance of expression alongside the narrative content. This is to keep in mind that only a certain form of expression could carry the discursive or ideological content that makes possible a certain kind of narrative to emerge. The focus has largely been about comparing the major shifts of the animation form. Yet, crucially, the form is to be considered as the visual base and basis of transcendental imagination from which discourse is generated. A certain form of discourse can only emerge with the support of a certain visual. Moreover, the almost impossible task of analysing a film shot by shot, or rather frame by frame for the animated image, is exacerbated by the fact that there are way too many details to everything that are constructed on purpose and hence unavoidably significant. Nonetheless, certain details have been chosen that are more significant than others. Specifically, the attempt has been to scrutinise the image both at the level of the visual form as a priori to discursive formation and at the level of the narrative after its formation. Yet most importantly, the focus has been on the pre-discursive form while

¹⁴ Tweening involves drawing only the key frames and the computer would fill in the frames in between, that replaced plasticity with mathematical computation of drawings.

also taking into account the non-discursive environment that constitute the visual base. This allows for concentrating focus on the form as the basis on which meaning making practices are predicated.

All of the aforementioned points can also be used to speculate formal possibilities that may not have been realised as yet. Therefore, future productions could use such speculative theory to find specific alternatives to existing productions, both in terms of expression and content.

4.2 Felix Dines and Pines

“Felix dines and pines” is a one of the more popular silent era cartoons. It revolves around the story of a hungry cat named Felix. He pulls out an empty menu card and a question mark appears on it. A man is shown preparing punch by an open window. Felix wants it but the window is too high up. He writes down the word “punch” for appetiser and looks for ways and means to access some punch. A chef prepares spaghetti in his shop and when he looks the other way, Felix steals some spaghetti from his pot. The chef is angered but Felix runs away with the spaghetti and lassoes it like a rope and into an elongated straw at the bowl of punch and empties out the bowl. A shift of substance is evident with this act of the transformation of spaghetti into a straw. Since the substance of the image is the line, a seamless transformation of substance from a string of spaghetti into a tubular straw are all context dependent. The substance shifts from referent to referent irrationally and so does the narrative that does not justify itself. The narrative need not justify itself as its form sets a quasi logical space for such formal shifts.

The man at the window is angered with Felix’s act but the latter looks the other way for more food. Felix is seen getting away with his mischiefs, a feature of the silent graphic

narrative, which is partly alogical and partly undeveloped. However, it is also part of the irrationality of the subject matter accompanying the plastic form (prelogical malleable protoplasm) that allows for a storyless form without appropriate closure as is sought for in a mature narrative. Felix finds himself yet again by another window from which ideogrammatic sheet music is emanating. Felix looks inside to find an old man slurping soup which turns into musical notes. This is another aspect of the graphic narrative. Since synchronous sound is absent, sound or dialogues are visualised into ideographs with calligrams often acting as transitions between image and text. The sound literally materialises into symbols of staff notations, an example of the formation of a visual immaterial sign without a sound materialising it with a referent.

Felix enters “soup” into his menu. He enters the old man’s house and tugs his beard which comes off. Felix wrings out soup from the beard and drinks it up. The beard seamlessly gets back to the old man and Felix has made another person angry. Felix ponders what to have next as food and bumps into a mouse. He instantly writes down “mouse” on his menu and gestures towards it to come over. The mouse and Felix chase each other. The mouse runs and enters into a garden hose, Felix after him. The mouse gets out of the pipe and attaches it to a tap and turns it on with Felix still inside. Felix is ejected out of the garden hose and the mouse catches hold of Felix and royally beats him up. The mouse gives a final punch to Felix’s head which decapitates at the impact. Felix does not die or bleed. The mouse kicks Felix’s buttock and the body rejoins with Felix’s head. The mouse snatches the menu from Felix, strikes out the word “mouse” out of the menu list and walks off. Felix regains consciousness and again starts looking for more food. This is an example of a world informed by *athanasia* where animated bodies refuse to die, or resurrect. Bodies can reassemble and work as before. The substance of the body is the line or the ink spot whose graphic limits are not necessarily the limits of the body, but the limits of the line. Therefore,

it is normal for Felix to get his life back under the associated epistemological field of possibilities.

Next, a title card shows, “Mexican Pete’s stock included a number of lively jumping beans.” A bean jumps out of a sac of beans. Mexican Pete instructs something to the bean and holds out a price tag. The bean picks up the tag and jumps out of the shop, with the entire sac following it outside of Pete’s shop. Felix notes “beans” in his menu and picks up some beans and throws them in the air. The beans float in the air and arrange themselves into rows and columns hopping into Felix’s open mouth in sequence. Felix starts to jump around involuntarily from the consumed beans. This is an example of the supposed “inanimate” animating as desire returns to forms, as discussed in chapter 1.

Felix finally stops only to come across a chicken. He writes down “chicken” and a chase ensues. Felix pulls out a fork and a knife and gets into a duel with the chicken. Felix manages to grab hold of the chicken and it cries “Help”. This is shown as an animated title card whose form and contour gets into a dialectical relationship for effective expression. Apparently hearing the call for help, some eggs jump out of a crate of fresh eggs. The eggs hop into the picture and cracks open into five chicks that instantly grow and who get together to beat up Felix and throw him off. It would also be noteworthy to notice that the characters do not squash or stretch significantly enough, since the physical laws informing “squash and stretch” is yet to be envisaged by Disney animators. Therefore, plasticity is amply evident in the animated image that does not conform to physical laws.

Felix is again helpless and irritated. He finds himself next to a garbage dump. He is frustrated, tears of his menu and throws it off. He picks up a torn shoe from the dump and eats it. He finds an open can and eats it up as well. As a result of the heavy meal he sleeps off on the dump and starts to have unpleasant dreams. The tree from the backdrop morphs into a spotted monster. Felix runs away and finds himself in a land of bent, twisted and zigzagging

buildings. The animation space showcases ample examples of multiple perspectival planes that do not posit a singular subjective viewpoint. Instead, it shows different senses of fluid spaces and artificial perspectives that do not conform to the cinematographic illusion. Hence conceptual categorisation of the plastic space is resisted.

Multiple examples of metamorphosis follow. Within this dream world, a Santa Claus calls Felix but then when the latter approaches, Santa morphs into a ghoul. Felix runs through concentric circles and spirals to escape into emptiness. But then a big angry chicken appears out of the emptiness of the screen and chases Felix. The chase continues as the chicken morphs into the old man from whom Felix had stolen the soup, to the mouse who morphs into Mexican Pete who in turn morphs into the torn shoe. The shoe morphs into a fish as the ground changes into water. Felix swims into a land of teapot houses and carrot like plants. As mentioned in chapter 1, Eisenstein had mentioned the idea of a “storyless form,” while Balázs notes, that the form conveys some sensibility through its “non-literary” form. Metamorphosis takes the story form towards the non-representational.

Felix is again attracted by the sight of a chef offering sausage. The chef disappears as soon as Felix holds the sausage which morphs into a mouse and starts to fight with him. The mouse yet again continues into a series of morphs re-turning into the sausage which in turn becomes a snake, the snake turning into an umbrella that Felix holds. The umbrella turns into a bird and picks Felix up into the air and releases him, and Felix is seen falling from a very high altitude into a city. This kind of morphing reconfigures potential and possibilities that takes characters anywhere while simultaneously rescaling potential and possibility on spatial and temporal dimensions. A seamless transition between forms and substances questions semiotic divisions between content form and expression form, or content and expression substance.

Felix falls into a city of distorted buildings with multiple distorted perspectival planes, with a black moon in day time, Felix breaks into nine selves who get back to become one. Yet again the amortal nature of animated character is revealed. The background turns into night and with the moon and blinking and flashing stars as buildings bends and twist and morph into water yet again. Felix drowns in the water only to confronted by a sea monster which turns into a chef holding a large fork on Felix who cries helplessly only to wake up at the garbage dump. Felix wonders what had happened, gets anxious and makes himself a soda and drinks it and waves goodbye to the audience.

As it can be seen that the narrative is linear, simple, partly incoherent, without rise or fall and plays more with the graphic space than with the narrative. The characters are functions that only appear in order to serve a singular purpose, that is whether to become food for Felix or not. The narrative structure is whimsical and follows a cartoon gag code as a series of gags assembled together into a seven minute graphic narrative. The gags are made around the possibilities of the expression of the anarchic. The naked lines are transgressive and it can be seen how representation shifts from one form to another through the sheer power of the transgressive boundary as the dialectics of the form and the contour. That is the reason why it is possible for Felix to seamlessly turn spaghetti into a pipe, with the line performing as the linkage and collision between the forms while seamlessly transitioning between them. Buildings morph showing the dematerialised nature of space that affects the bends temporal measures as well. Land can turn into water and the nature of potential of the drawn line changes in order to accommodate for the ensuing gag. The constancy of volume is not maintained, which became salient to subsequent animation forms. Volume shifts from form to form, as an illusionist style through form and its movement reconstitutes spatial coherence. In fact, spatial and temporal coherence is played with while time is brought into the present due to non-representational aspects of the morphs.

The image is anti-realist and is drawn specifically for the flat screen. Very little is borrowed from live action vocabulary. However, it does not possess the sense of a camera, like the one Disney would create subsequently. It is a sort of assemblage of cartoon zooms and pans. The nature of imagery belongs to a graphic medium rather than a photographic medium, based on first principles of character animation. However, while the story exists, its primary affinity is to work on lines, surfaces or the ink spot. Synchronous sound and colour is absent, and hence there is not much scope for talking in terms of syncopation. Instead, it is about the rules of a graphic narrative that pertains to a flat surface of division and separation produced by the drawn line. The tendency to become a window of the multiplane camera is not noticed here. Distance is non-existent in terms of depth or volume. The images defy perspective and plausibility. Felix is a flat ideogram, rather a hieroglyphic character that draws from print cartoon styles of the period. Although it has not been observed for this particular cartoon, there is much more usage of gags based on the interchangeability of words and images through calligrams, alongside a continuous shift in their materiality. The surface is abstract and continuously intrudes upon the story. A word could be as much a character as an image within the story. In "Felix trifles with time," he is chased by a dinosaur to the edge of a cliff. However, when Felix faces such a problem of fear and raging waters below, he does not go through any kind of peripeteia. Instead, he throws a rock made of lines into the river below, which creates a water splash visually resembling a parachute, which he uses to float down to safety. Felix has got some level of omnipotence, control over the forces of gravity, and is permitted to use magical graphic gags to free himself. This is possible in the simplified flatness. Therefore, whereas words can become characters in themselves, images are simplified almost to the level that they resemble letters for easy readability of motion.



Figure 6 “Felix dines and pines”; Felix fragments into multiple within an incoherent spatiotemporality

The flatness of the image also trickles into the flatness of the narrative. Or rather, the narrative becomes partly inconsequential because of the wondrous plasticity of spatiotemporal configurations. Felix learns very little from his ordeals and simply decides on what he can or cannot eat. He is mostly anarchic and occasionally faces moments of drama. As is evident, this kind of magical anarchic transformations are completely lost with the arrival of sound and colour, with the eventual rationalisation of the graphic narrative. As is also evident, there is not much morality or justice within the alogical gags of Felix. Felix does what he pleases and noticeably, Felix can go around unscathed and also never dies although he can break apart into pieces or into multiple clones. The gags are based on simple drives and relationships without much attention to their causality or their consequence. This is broken down into brief cycles of action, possibly in order to save money. However, as mentioned in chapter 2, neither does Felix need to see (what is) coming, nor how events are developing. Instead of an anticipatory structure of the future operating within subjectivity, Felix is the relationship of subjectivity with the accidental. There is an alogical relation

between what follows in the logical and the chronological sense. The narrative is the relationship between substance and accidents of which there is only one constant, Felix at the centre of everything. The rest of the spatiotemporal substance surrounding Felix is liable to a gamut of transformations of a visual labyrinth, an unreliable space and time continuously destabilised in its liminality. The appeal of hand drawn animation is this “visual war of surface against object” (Klein 1993, 6). And this continuous transformation does not allow for a possible fixity of representation on screen, that would allow the spectator to completely identify with Felix. Identity is unformed or partially formed in the nature of difference in itself that actualises singularities in the plastic image. A possibility of self reflexivity of the cinematic space is also on, since the transformations of the morphing forms and ideograms combining or disrupting each other also is “signifying the struggle between classes or opposing categories” (Klein 1993, 6-7). However, the major aspect of Felix is that metamorphosis residing outside of discourse resists meaning making. The primacy of the articulable over the visible has placed morphing outside of the dominant discourse. This will be evident with subsequent animation relegating the morph to the unintelligible. There is a limit to which Felix can be interpreted in terms of its content due to the plastic image of presentation. Instead, it has got the ecstasy of pure form with its “affect without purpose”. It may also be observed that form and its movement with concomitant plasticity and metamorphosis are all coherent within a discursive spatiotemporal interiority made alogical with deathlessness. Time seems to fly through day and night while buildings curl into otherworldly perspectives. Although this alternative world is visually possible, it cannot be discursively articulated into rationalised meaning making practices. Instead, this film is closer to the true possibilities of animation, where potential is revealed as changes of form and movement and how it liquifies space and time. It is really the effects on these four codependent parameters that is the highlight of this kind of animation. The possibilities are

most potent when graphic elements get into a dialogue with narrative elements and thereby destabilises rational organisation of narrative coherence. Also, if Felix is to be considered as a cartographical indicator, as the diagram of a certain episteme, a primitive folk or dream format of storytelling as the articulable alongside a diagram that resists discursive formation surfaces. All in all, it shows a de-centred subject within a flat space that lacks depth and volumetric understanding of interiority for discursive formation envisaging a narrative space. Instead, it is a graphic space that does not conform to the constrained boundaries of the photographic camera. The diagram of power is not vectorised into Cartesian perspective, showcasing a form of primitivism of forms and a plastic potential of space and time. Since the general tendency of animation has been to gradually rationalise the image, the case studies showcase no major anomalies if attempts are made to historically situate them. This film is an example of pre-synchronised sound film. However, the main contention is that this kind of animation in contemporary times would showcase alternative points of departures with reference to the dominant rational discourse.

4.3 Steamboat Willie

“Steamboat Willie” is the first Mickey Mouse cartoon designed for synchronous sound. Its narrative is somewhat incomplete and unstructured, yet it is more developed than Felix narratives. Mickey Mouse has taken the steering wheel of a steamboat. He pulls the whistle. Three whistles come alive in order. His captain pulls Mickey and his body is stretched like plastic material. Mickey gathers his body and places it inside his pants. The captain turns back. Mickey is caught showing faces at the captain who tries to kick him out of the bridge. However, his legs stretch and bend to such an extent that he kicks his own buttocks. Mickey however rolls down the staircase and slips on a bar of soap and lands in a bucket of water. A parrot laughs at him. Action lines as limited ideographs express emotions of characters.

Mickey is irritated and throws a bucket of water at the parrot. Although the bucket makes a metallic sound, it is stretched with the parrot inside. Substance is somewhat formed although its materiality is not functional, but relational. Substance is formed through sound, although inappropriate sounds would also hint on the materiality. The line is substance and therefore bends the rules of physical laws of matter. Yet, with the arrival of sound referents emerge and so does representative substance.

The captain bites off some chewing tobacco. His frontal teeth open like gates. He spits out some tobacco which flies backward and rings the boat's bell. The captain spits again anticipating it to repeat only to be hit by his own spit, which makes him angry.

The boat halts at "Podunk Landing" to pick up cargo of various livestock. The boat is soft and plastic and its various parts are animistic. There is a cow that is too thin to be picked up by the boat's crane. The cow is soft bodied with rubber hose like legs. Mickey stuffs the cow with hay and it fits into the belt so that it can be picked up. The cow's body is hollow that can be filled up at will to give it the necessary volume.

Smokestacks become alive as they puff out smoke for the boat to leave the jetty. Just as the boat starts, Minnie Mouse makes an appearance, running to catch the boat as it leaves. Mickey notices her running after the boat along the banks. Mickey extends the boat crane and its hook comes alive. The hook catches Minnie by her bloomers and lifts her up on to the deck. The first appearance of artificial perspective with vanishing point in the horizon is noticed. However, this is achieved only through drawings and not through a multiplane camera.

Minnie lands on the deck and accidentally drops a guitar and some sheet music of "Turkey in the straw", both of which are eaten by a goat. Mickey tries to pull the guitar out, although the goat wins. However, it emanates musical notes from inside its body alogically, since both the guitar and the sheet music are inside it. Mickey and Minnie gets the idea to

play music by transforming the goat into a phonograph and cranking its tail. Mickey uses various objects and animals on the boat as musical instruments to accompany the phonographic goat. Mickey plays quite violently with a cat, a duck, suckling piglets and xylophone on the cow's teeth, although the animals seem unperturbed with his actions. Mickey is caught in the act and the annoyed captain sends him to peel potatoes. The parrot returns to the port hole of the potato bin where Mickey is working and starts laughing again. Mickey is annoyed and throws a potato at the parrot knocking him into the river below. Mickey has the last laugh and the film ends.

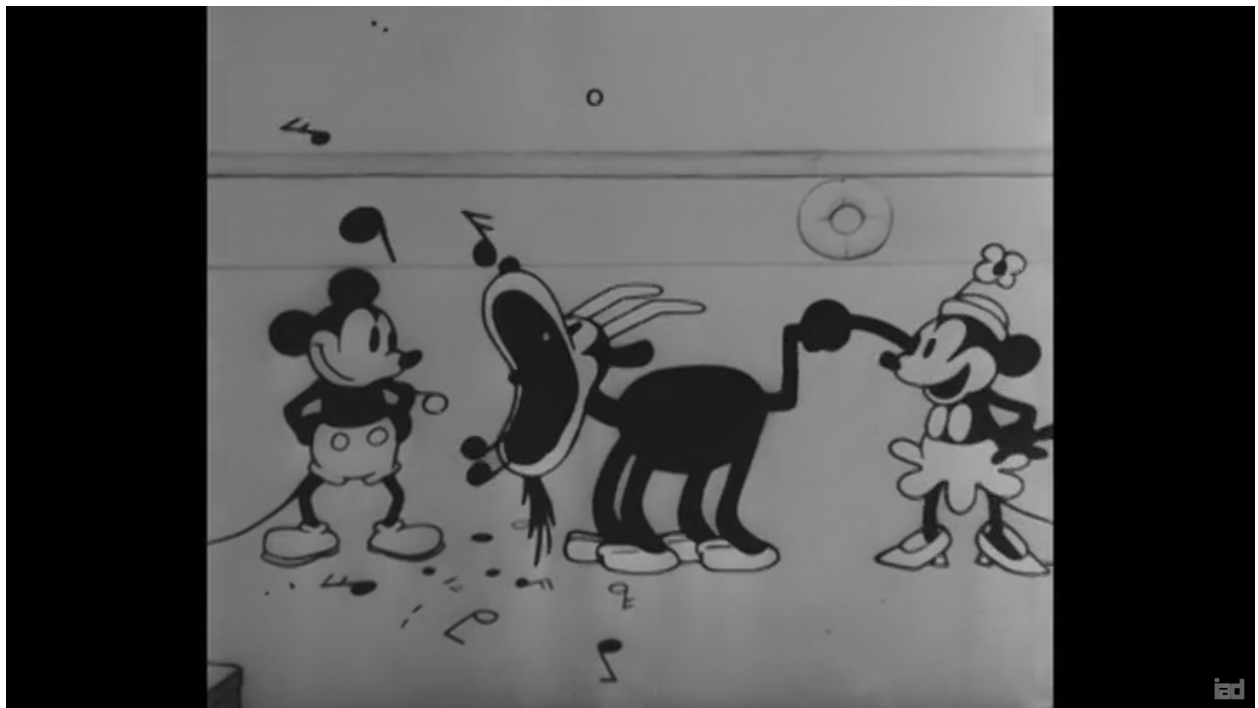


Figure 7 “Steamboat Willie”; Mickey and Minnie hand-cranking music from a goat

The narrative is still fragmented, although it has got more coherence than that presented by Felix cartoons. It is held together by sound, primarily the theme music. As can be seen that with the introduction of synchronous sound, certain aspects of filmmaking change. Although the film lacks dialogue, it is driven by the production of interior space, perspective and volume that sets discursive limits on the possibilities of the image. Plasmaticness is immediately controlled and becomes more nuanced, while metamorphosis is somewhat lost.

The boat show multiple levels of rubbery morphs. Objects, be it smokestacks or whistles, or the crane hook have lives. Their actions violates the associated substance of form. Mickey's body can be stretched like a chewing gum and can also get back its volume. The goat's tail can be reshaped into a hand crank of a phonograph, again shifting form and substance to perform like a machine. The cow's teeth can be sonorous like a xylophone— the play of sound with form produces substance which is often dissociated from their actual materiality. The film offers multiple possibilities of engaging in terms of visual gags and inappropriate music. But unlike Felix the Cat cartoons, with the introduction of synchronous sound, plasticity is almost immediately lost although a new kind of rubbery multimorphic gag is noticeable which is different from that of Felix cartoons. Music has replaced the ideogram. The line figure of Felix cartoons is replaced by the rubber hose character of Mickey. The entire inanimate world is alive with volumetric multimorphic style. Felix the Cat has no weight and his world is without gravity. The idea of gravity has arrived with sound. The world is now full of varying substances. Notably, air becomes substance. Soft body objects and characters do not seem to be affected by pain or sense of violence, and hence they can be used as instruments of play. Bodies are cartoon forms and hence posit an alternative world of fantasy within which formation and transformation occurs. Deformation is also a possibility with sound, something which was not there in the soundless film. Hence plasmaticness and metamorphosis are mostly obliterated from the animation space. The image tends to incorporate greater spatial and temporal consistency than in observed in Felix films. The sizes and shapes of objects and characters are partly maintained for relative coherence. Overall, although a diagram is yet to be formed in terms of a singular subject position with respect to the image form, a certain tendency of the visible being governed by the primacy of the articulable is already noticed.

While the stage for Felix was plastic, for Mickey it has turned almost elastic. However, both films incorporate forms that would allow for an alogical narrative, Felix having more logical inconsistencies in terms of rational scientific discourse.

4.4 Tin Toy

“Tin Toy” was produced by Pixar in 1988, and is the first computer-animated short film to win an Oscar. It happens to be a landmark film in many ways, but particularly because it tries to animate a human baby.

The film takes place in a room and stars a mechanical one-man band, Tinny. At first, the room is empty as Tinny looks around. Soon, a big baby, Billy enters the room. Tinny is delighted at the prospect of being played with by Billy. However, he notices that Billy is a destructive baby who is interested in chewing and breaking toys. Also, it seemed that Billy would drool on Tinny as well. However, when Tinny tries to escape from Billy, his musical instruments starts to play, catching Billy’s attention. Tinny begins to run, but is pursued by Billy. Tinny gets caught in his own toy box although he manages to escape Billy and finds cover under a couch. When he stops panting, and looks up, he sees that there are several other toys shivering in terror, also afraid of Billy, possibly after learning from similar experiences. Meanwhile, while trying to find Tinny and the other toys, Billy falls flat onto the floor and begins to cry. Tinny, feeling sorry for the baby, comes out of his hiding and tries to cheer up the baby. Billy cheers up, is briefly interested in Tinny, but then completely ignores him and plays with the box Tinny came in. Mad, Tinny tries to get Billy’s attention, but Billy plays with boxes and paper bags. Tinny follows him around but fails to grab his attention following him out of the room. As the end credits roll, the other toys previously hiding under the couch come out and begin to play.

This is the first time a human of flesh and bone has been animated, and it is apparent that CGI technologies were not developed enough to create or animate a plausible human body. Animating the tin toy has not been much of a problem though, since it is supposed to behave mechanically. However, when it comes to animating the baby, the play of forces controlling the baby from the outside is kind of evident. Not only has the baby's animation fallen into the uncanny valley, but also that there is lack of identification with it on the part of the audience, since the baby appears more like a machine than a human. This kind of movement can be historically situated as well as contextualised in terms of changing subject positions with respect to changing movement of the object. The baby resides at the historical juncture of technological transformation where internal desire is replaced by external control of the body. The baby's movement amply illustrate the restrictive flow of movement, emotion, action or most importantly, action. This is most evident when the baby crawls into the room, but seems to not touch the floor, which also creates an artificial sense of weight and bodily substance. The baby's surface does not seem to be able to emulate the human skin. The baby's diaper also does not look like it is made of soft fabric. Specifically, Billy's face is expressionless or with dead expression and fails to bring about emotional identification, definitely giving rise to the uncanny. The lack of suture around bodily joints are conspicuous, especially where the neck connects the body and the head, showing a visible cut. This is a definitive sign of overlapping and conflictual discourses of the software environment and the body. Again, when the baby falls to the ground, his belly floats on the floor.



Figure 8 “Tin Toy”; The neck shows a significant cut and creases at joints



Figure 9 “Tin Toy”; The baby seems to be floating. The diaper does not adhere to the body

Since this is a very early example of three dimensional CGI animation, subsequent technological improvements tries to address these shortcomings. The two following films are

example of such significant technological changes. However, the main contention of the uncanny valley remains unaddressed as yet. Animation has negotiated such shortcomings with the design of human characters in cartoon form.

The films that follow addresses the issue of a rational body, albeit in the form of an animated look and feel. It is crucial to note that they have crossed over multiple thresholds of epistemologisation to become mortal. Moreover, “Feast” showcases the kind of narrative that emerges with the inversion of subject-object relations. Bare death and its translation into bare life are conditions of possibilities based on which the narrative finds coherence. However, such conditions having transitioned into the realms of the supposedly rational and mortal, would remain inconspicuous to theory without the framework of animation proper. Animation’s entry into rational discourse has to be considered as the event in order to theorise the image.

4.5 Feast

“And Aaron shall place lots upon the two goats: one lot “For the Lord,” and the other lot, “For Azazel.”” — Leviticus 16:8

“The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.” - Blake

Disney’s “Feast” was released in June 2014 and has been adjudged the Best Animated Short in the 87th Academy Awards 2015. The reason for choosing this film for scrutiny pertains to various reasons, peculiarly the astounding amount of coded information embedded through the brevity of communication in a span of six minutes. The film is a practical condensation of the wide gamut of ideas that Hollywood animation communicates without

treading into language. Hence, the film is an immaculately crafted narrative that needs to be carefully examined for its posited meanings.

Feast, as the name suggests is a story about food, or rather a feast of a lifetime for an adopted stray dog. It is a silent rendition of a dog's life through a series of events. The dog Winston, an adopted Boston Terrier puppy, is picked up from a waste bin, a dumpster diver scavenging for leftovers. His life changes radically as he receives his own bowl and dog food. He is gradually promoted to human food, initially leftovers from the master's takeaways, eventually shifting to junk food. The dog loves junk diet over dog food and eventually has the pleasure of sharing from the master's plate. This happy routine is interrupted when the master, James falls in love with a waitress, Kirby a health conscious lady who brings about lifestyle and dietary changes in James. Winston's life is radically affected as he is subjected to the new green diet, which is inappropriate for him. This makes him resign to his dog food. Nonetheless, Winston's woes are short-lived as good days are restored when James resorts to binge eating post his breakup with Kirby, much to the elation of his pet. James is depressed while for Winston, it is back to happy days, till he finds parsley in a takeaway, serving as the mnemonic for Kirby. Winston, being a good dog tries to restore his master's love life. He finds Kirby, James following at his heels. In a brief reconciliation and ensuing marriage, Winston comes to understand his true position in the family and learns to be content with his dog food. Winston is soon rewarded with a new phase of feasting as his master's newborn rewards him with meatballs and spaghetti yet again. The film ends in a perpetual feast revolving around the family.

The narrative is a classic construction of a three act structure, where the beginning, middle and end is well demarcated with precise boundaries. The protagonist follows the primary tropes of Aristotelian dramatic structure with hamartia or fatal flaw of the tragic hero, peripeteia, a change of fortune usually pertaining to the flaw, and anagnorisis, which is

the recognition of the fatal flaw. It is also structured around building pathos, in which the audience suffers alongside the protagonist as bitterness accumulates before its eventual cathartic rupture. The classic structure is precisely demarcated into beginning, middle and end, by camera tracks representing the point-of-view of food as it enters the dog's mouth.

The core idea that drives the narrative is a well thought out one. Nevertheless, what is apparent as the core message for the average audience, albeit easily grasped, may not be the primary concern of the film, the primary ideology being codified equivocally in various levels of narrative construction using familiar cinematic tropes and techniques. To understand the film, we look at the apparent meanings, subsequently decipher the encrypted and layered meanings that affect in their ambiguities.

To start with, the core message works around the basic idea of sacrificing personal desires for the happiness of loved ones or family. A selfish dog takes a conscientious leap knowingly sacrificing its preferred food habits, in order to restore his master's love life. There is no presence of morphing and it could well have been constructed as a live action film. In fact, CGI follows intellection based on the cinematographic illusion. The narrative, the form of telling, film aesthetics, *mise-en-scène*, colours, editing or other cinematic devices have been designed to construct coherent meanings using familiar tropes of live action filmmaking. Interpreting such codes of cinematic storytelling generates meanings, both ambiguous and definitive. The image is thoroughly codified for direct meanings and disguised ones. For example, the dog is brought into the light, into focus and into the "warmth" of homely life. It occupies the centre in almost every shot of the film. The story revolves around him. There are numerous instances of *peripeteia* as the stray dog finds a home, shifts from dog food to human diet, rises to the master's couch, dining table, the master's lap, eventually learning to pick the meat from the bread. This routine is disturbed when Kirby, who has everything to do with green-ness or a healthy lifestyle, from her attire to her dietary concerns intrudes upon

the dog and his master's life. This results in a loss of position for the dog, erstwhile enjoying equal status with the master and sharing from his plate, to a life of vegetarian diet, eventually resigning to his dog food and to the floor. This is shown cinematically through the dog's displacement from the centre and getting out of the light and into the shadows.

Incidentally, the turn of events has nothing to do with any apparent flaw in the dog. Classical dramatic structures could involve a fatal flaw and that is important for the telling of a convincing tale. The aesthetics of the image reveals the shift of the narrative focus away from the dog while Kirby is in the picture, signalled by the light shone on the couple, the dog always displaced from the centre of the frame, either dissatisfied with his food or uncomfortable with his lost position, the couple's back literally turned towards it. The dog sees better times yet again as the couple breaks up. Its position is restored although the warmth is lost, darkness and cold taking over their life ("cold" lighting with blue and magenta dominating. Winston (the name of the dog) is brought back to his senses from excessive consumption by the glowing parsley leaf. The dog rises to the occasion, storms out into the streets with the parsley, in order to restore his master's love life. Winston is tested further in a final tryst with temptation in the restaurant, a literal hell's kitchen designed to carry him off guard from his supreme goal. Winston overcomes and navigates through a maze of temptations as delicious food, his conviction undergirded by the parsley (as the light in the bush) that he carries. Once Winston has overcome his temptation, he is yet to come to terms with it, till the couple reunites and the marriage is consummated with the arrival of the baby, the family system brought to order and everyone embracing their position and roles according to the family codes. Winston thus resigns to his place and role in the family, not happy but content. He quietly resigns to his fate, finding anagnorisis as his own reflection on the dog bowl, which now mirrors his sincere reflection.



Figure 10 “Feast”; Winston looks contentedly at his own reflection in the dog bowl

Winston accepts remaining in the shadows, accepts his position of not taking the centre, like a true family dog. He is brought back into the warmth of good times yet again by the new member in the family, his new master. The final shots revolve around the centrality of the family, with the shifting positions of all members within the domestic sphere. Once the family life is restored, the focus is back on the dog and his whereabouts, since it is now deservedly a part of the family. The interiority of the space is well developed in order to incorporate the notion of indoors. The camera privileges Winston’s viewpoint and interiorises his psychological angsts.

As stated earlier, the controlling idea does not reveal itself at first, and may be presented as a combination of ambiguities. To summarise the equivocations sent out to the audience:

Good/bad times equates to good/bad food

Good/bad food equates to good/bad times

Good/bad times equals bad/good times

Good/bad food equals bad/good food

Once this ambiguity is set, the audience has only one choice to make in terms of binaries clouded with ambiguities. However, if the audience identifies with the dog, then good times is indeed equated to junk food. Yet, it is not about good or bad times, but the neoliberal attitude of the exchangeability of anything with everything else. While this supposed seamless exchange was between forms in early animation, literally as metamorphosis, the present form of exchange is about metaphorical and symbolic exchanges. This is a different exchange of meanings governed by neoliberal ideology. While good times have to do with good food, good times is equivalent to bad times as well, as much as good food equals bad food. So, indeed, from the point of view of the dog, it is the food that ushers in the good times. And since the viewer identifies with the anthropomorphised dog, it is not about whether the food is healthy or not, but whether the food is considered to be good by the dog, with good memories of good times for the dog, consequently the viewer. And hence, the dog is ushered into a consumerist heaven of junk diet once it reaches “salvation”. The concluding shot could well be the strongest image in the film—the dog and a kid are eating a tower of a burger—as it sums up the final message: Indulge in junk diet, as it is “good” for you. The strong imagery with coded messages brings about another leading question: Is this an advertisement for a burger company? Notably, this is possibly the only instance which has got ketchup replacing the fireworks in the Disney logo.

The aforementioned aesthetics translate into ideologies offering various inferences. Since the audience empathises with the dog, it is cardinal to the understanding of audience psyche. Accordingly, we could relook at the film as an ongoing dialectical shift of relations between the dog, the man, the woman with respect to their changing positions within the family system. It is ultimately the latent Christian family codes residing in the unity of actions of every character. It may be noticed that it is apparently not the dog’s fault that it is being subjected to junk food in the first place. However, if we may carefully consider the classical

Aristotelian structure, the other components being present, why would an innocent creature face ill fortune (*peripeteia*) without having a fatal flaw (*hamartia*)? A carnivore is supposed to feed on whatever is given to it, provided it is not vegetarian. A dog is incapable of distinguishing between what its duty is vis-a-vis its desires. However, it had to learn to behave like a human. Why would a dog need to reach contentment or salvation? Is it that a dog is supposed to identify with the same value sets as a human? And hence, there has to be a *raison d'être* for the dog to face ill fortune, through the creation of a fatal flaw. On closer observation, it appears that Winston is party to a fatal flaw, gluttony according to the biblical code of conduct and hence suffers as a consequence of committing one of the seven sins. Whether or not Winston is within the ambit of the flaw is a question answered via anthropomorphism. Winston is a human, as the audience is human. Hence, he has to fall, and suffer till he reaches anagnorisis. But how? Winston is confronted with a secularised representation of “fire within a bush” (Exodus 3:2) in the glowing parsley, simultaneously making him as the fallen and the blessed one, who can only rise to the occasion above personal desires in order to absolve himself of his sins— that is choosing sacrifice over the inflicted desire of gluttony. Inflicted, because it is a created want.

The image belongs to the christian code. As Heidegger would claim of the “world picture,” a phenomenon of modernity is the loss of the gods, but not crude atheism. Firstly, the world picture Christianises itself but reinterprets Christianity as a world view and thus makes itself modern. It is the condition of indecision about the gods which results in a void, which is filled up by the “historical and psychological investigation of myth” (Heidegger 2002, 58). As Heidegger points out:

“... [A] phenomenon of the modern age is the loss of the gods. This expression does not mean the mere doing away with the gods, gross atheism. The loss of the gods is a twofold process. On the one hand, the world picture is Christianized inasmuch as the

cause of the world is posited as infinite, unconditional, absolute. On the other hand, Christendom transforms Christian doctrine into a world view (the Christian world view), and in that way makes itself modern and up to date. The loss of the gods is the situation of indecision regarding God and the gods. Christendom has the greatest share in bringing it about. But the loss of the gods is so far from excluding religiosity that rather only through that loss is the relation to the gods changed into mere experience. When this occurs, then the gods have fled. The resultant void is compensated for by means of historiographical and psychological investigation of myth.”

But how does desire become negative from being positive? It happens through the production of myth, which is second order semiotic operating at the level of connotation as mentioned in chapter 2. Are desires meant to be sacrificed? When does positive desire turn negative? Obviously, when desire is artificially constructed. Although there is a fuzzy distinction between the necessary and the excess, in a world of consumerism constructed upon artificial demands, certain desires could well be categorised as inessential. It is also the production of reactive force of consciousness that alienates active forces of desire from what it can do. While religion reinterprets the return of difference, the accumulation of the past reorders the desire in the present into the negative. Religion goes against blatant consumption. However, this desire cannot be shown in the negative light under neoliberal attitude that banks on ever increasing consumption.

On careful scrutiny, it may be observed that his happiness is not necessarily equated with events going according to ethical or moral codes, since his right ear is always twitching, while the left ear is pointed straight based on immediate value of something as not right gathered from the story events. Detailed semiotic cues like the aforementioned pertaining to character design are spread out across the image space within the film where language is

literally translated or metaphorically applied to actions. The ears behave asynchronously pointing to something being “not right”. It is only upon achieving contentment in resignation through suffering and abstinence that both of Winston’s ears work synchronously, drooping in unison. Winston also gets his name, his identity as part of the family, once he takes responsibility of the situation, takes the parsley and runs out to find Kirby. Receiving the name, or the name-of-the-Father, given by the father (his master), is his entry into the symbolic domain within the family system, as also rising to the unity of the embodiment of right action with his earned name. The animal is finally able to reject its “animality” and rise to the occasion as an embodied human, perhaps a messiah, since he has already seen the sign of the lord in the parsley leaf. The lord does appear as embodied innocence, as the angelic infant (diffused glow) who rewards him with meatballs yet again. This is a symbolic entry into paradise, since Winston has already gone through symbolic death in his fall and entry into hell’s kitchen to expiate for and absolve himself of his sins under the Judeo-Christian code.



Figure 11 “Feast”; Winston and the parsley leaf

Everything about Kirby is green in contrast to James, who is mostly in red. She stands for a healthy lifestyle of green diet and physical workouts, an embodiment of Foucault's notion of the care of the self, which is in binary opposition to everything that James represents, that is being a couch vegetable and living on takeaways. Ironically, she is a perky lady with spectacles as her prop, a visible indicator of her weak health regardless of her healthy lifestyle. In other words, her green diet has not been of much help. At the same time, she appears to be the mature one in the relationship, showing the juvenile James an adult lifestyle. The green diet is gendered feminine being associated with responsible lifestyles, while James's red diet is about fun, enjoyment, youth and masculinity. The reason for their breakup is the difference in their lifestyles, James immediately resorting back to his erstwhile binges once Kirby leaves. James is not able to reconcile with his new "adult" lifestyle over the old one he is already comfortable with, which Kirby was trying to change. It is also worth noticing that Winston, also loses his position and his favoured diet, Kirby as the sweet censure cum disciplinarian. Hence, Kirby is at fault for making both Winston and James unhappy, trying to make them grow out of their extant habits.

James's lifestyle of excesses is compensated for by Winston. James does waste, but for a good reason as his leftovers trickles down to Winston. Patriarchy notwithstanding, although James's actions are problematic, Winston is affected more due to the acts of Kirby. Since Winston was already happy with the junk diet, he pays for the acts of Kirby. It makes Kirby a usurper of family codes, a control freak who is insensitive to the plight of others. Is Kirby rendered insensitive or stupid in trying to "force" feed green diet to a dog, instead of his "naturally" loved diet?

A reconciliation can only happen if either James, or Kirby, or both of them shift from their position. Winston does bring James out of his house and to Kirby, thereby shifting the onus on Kirby to make the move, since James has apparently made his move. Interestingly,

James does not shift from his position as Kirby takes the step forward which leads to their marriage. Winston is a careful excuse and escape for James as patriarchy is not belittled or compromised. James does not change. As it turns out from the green wedding cake, it furthers an ambiguity about the cake being unhealthy but apparently green in colour, an exchange of sign with the actual removal of the appropriate referent. A careful exchange of materiality with form redefines the semiotic subtext of the colour green— green transforms from the unwelcome to good. James and Kirby reconciles, but at a cost, since the apparently green cake has got nothing to do with a green diet. Apparently a cake is healthy as long as its colour is green. Green is only a colour, converted from the natural to the artificial. This takes the content away from the form, in the free exchange of colour with the nature of the diet. Erstwhile, everything to do with unhealthy dietary patterns were in yellows and reds in opposition to the healthy greens. However, the sublation of the green diet and the eventual conflation of all colours for good food tells a different story. To place it very directly from its generated meanings, Kirby has to change her ways and accept James and his wayward excesses, although it may not work for her. As is further revealed, Winston is finally ushered into his desired paradise by the newborn as embodied innocence offering him with meatballs and spaghetti. The infant is born into the lifestyle of the erstwhile father figure, James. It serves multiple purposes. A healthy lifestyle may not be the desired lifestyle of the family as James is healthy sans green and his former diet continues into the life of his infant. Junk diet of meatballs and spaghetti is harmless enough to be fed to a baby. Winston gets a new master in the newborn and is accepted within the family with his preferred diet, so that the erstwhile junk/good diet is restored in family life. The adult lifestyle of Kirby was too much for James who wishes to live in eternally youthful world of fun, junk diet equated with innocence, Kirby being the only obstacle and at fault for trying to change him. Once she accepts him and his food, there is no problem at all as the family is ushered into a perpetual state of happiness,

a feast for a lifetime. It also tells that the mother has accepted this dietary pattern for herself and her newborn. She has indeed happily compromised on her previous lifestyle in order to save the family. Patriarchy is not compromised, the masculine codes between the dog and his master(s) persist as the woman has to accept an unhealthy lifestyle against her wishes for the family system to prevail. Kirby is the worst off in the film, as she has to change her dietary habits in order to be accepted within the family, worse off than Winston whose dietary patterns are restored and finally, as a mother who poisons her newborn with junk diet.

The audience identifies with the dog's point of view. The dog is not in control of either its food or its fate. It does not have the necessary voice or the agency to change the conditions of its existence. However, it has to face the consequences of "falling" for temptation. In other words, since the dog has been picked up from the streets, was a dumpster diver, it should already be thankful of its position that it does not "rightfully" deserve. It gets shelter and food, although it may not be the appropriate kind. It is never about how the dog had reached the streets in the first place, or the material conditions that has led it to that state. The dog lacks the voice or the agency to act otherwise, its rights not being there in the first place. Instead, it is given a taste of what "good" food is alongside the idea that it is all for taking, yet never to be taken, as it is undeserved. The market operates in terms of perennial and accruing debt in order to compensate for accruing desires. Likewise, the dog is perennially indebted to its master. It trickles down from a class of masters, who have got it all and who are kind and benevolent enough to let the less fortunate access "goodnesses" that life has to offer. Hence, the beneficiary should be perpetually obliged and offer in return their selfless gratitude as the innocent animal or the noble savage (quite a familiar trope in Disney films). The production of anthropomorphism as a naturalised essence in the form of a dog is part of this archetypal character design. The least that it can do is to remain passive, as a docile body that does not try to bring about any real change in their condition of daily lived experience.

There are exceptions now and then, where it is supposed to become active, or perennially suffer for desiring. Continual sacrifice is expected in order to continuously absolve themselves of the perennial guilt of desiring what it has tasted, for paradise and for salvation as desiring is profanation and deviation from the sacred code of austerity. The paradise is a fantasy that beckons, its lure may only be there with new and ever perpetuating cycles of desire like the infinite grid of capitalist accumulation.

The Hegelian concept of the double negation of ideology is about camouflaging what is not being told. Since the new paradise is a consumerist one, there is an apparent contradiction between the desires inflicted by advertising to that of the neoliberal code of austerity. However, they are not in opposition to each other. Once one enters the domain of capitalist consumption, all virtues, whether religion or ethics, are sublated under the overarching monolith of the singular virtue of the market. The dog is indeed brought from a life of darkness of the waste bin into the light, by the desire of junk food. It rises in life by accepting what it has been endowed with, with additional junk yet again.

The audience, in refusing to accept the dog's plight would predictably wish for an appropriate healthy diet for him, and they are provided with an alternative— green diet. The desire for proper diet and healthy lifestyle on the part of the audience has led to their fall, with bewildering consequences in the form of green diet. The audience is punished with the greens as a naturally antagonistic other to junk diet, which is a lie. Hating dog food would have meant something else. Instead, the burden is shifted on to the woman as the insensitive other, while the master is never at fault for being the apparent benefactor.

Hence, junk food is not at fault, and the conflict of consumption with religious prohibition is resolved as it provides the right path to anticipated paradise. Death is an inevitability in order to attain paradise. Nonetheless, for a consumerist paradise, desire of the undesirable-desired provides the regularity of sin, fall, suffering, sacrifice, death and eventual

resurrection, all exchangeable under the rubric of neoliberalism. The conflation of the undesirable and the desired, or the forbidden desire and the desire of the forbidden, which is supposed to be indulgence, is indeed a boon in disguise, a path to salvation. Ideology thus bridges the gap between religious moral codes of conduct, providing the rationale to negotiate between personal value systems while indulging in capitalist consumption.

However, the negotiation of religious ethics and capitalist ideology remains unresolved. Capitalism highlights lack through advertising, using it to its advantage, lack as the eternal in the ambiguity of the conflation of the undesirable-yet-desired, while forever subjecting the viewer to its opposite, which is desire to fulfil the lack. It is the exhortation to get into debt for the desired, emotional or financial. However, since the desire remains unfulfilled, consequently, sin is forever postponed. This creates the possibility of unlimited cycles of consumption, perpetuating debt and the sin of perpetual desire. One gets a taste of what is possible as long as everything is out of reach and also within reach, the dream of unlimited consumption as long as it is not possible. The concluding shot of the tower of Babel made of burgers appropriately sums it all up. Endless desire and consequently endless sacrifice is negotiated by administering the self, in self discipline and austerity, an eternal guilt alongside an eternal repetition of sin. The subject epitomises lack while the corporation constructs a consumerist world around the protagonists. Hence, within the system of objects surrounding the protagonist, lack is all that is featured in the spectacle as a set of objects to be consumed. Since consumption has to be perpetuated, there can be no concept of sin, instead a perennial beckoning of consumption that would continuously place the subject under sin and expiation through guilt. Guilt is salvaged through the idea of the messianic salvation in the form of rejection of temptation, although consumption is perpetually reintroduced to the redeemed. The cycle is endless.

However, as the Foucauldian “power over life” in the form of self discipline and self censorship is realised over the body of the subject, in the religious moral code, it is not in the interest of capitalism to further it. A healthy lifestyle is part of the discourse of “normal” living. Hence, Kirby who is representative of self discipline cannot support in furthering the capitalist agenda. The discourse therefore shifts in favour of junk diet posing as “good food.” Hence, a meta-narrative is constructed with a new set of power/knowledge setting the normative to consumption of junk food, simultaneously setting green diet as the deviation. The attempt is to shift the normal itself.

Hence the dog can consume not knowing that nothing is right, while the consumer audience notices its unrelenting desire for consumption—the commitment to a sin in wanting but not guilt ridden enough to abstain from over consumption. Thus the dog realises what it is supposed to do, its true position, its “dogness” in being thankful for what it receives, for its humanity lies in realising its animality. The flaw of the dog is its very existence, which needs to be kept alive for the market to operate, but to be repeatedly reminded of being a freeloader that naturally does not deserve its food. The usage of the “it” pronoun referring the dog or the audience is not for rhetorical implications, instead for the audience to understand its forced reduction to bestial innocence. The dog may only rise from animal to human through sacrifice.

At the cost of appearing prurient while observing a supposed children’s film that animation is often thought out to be, one may understand the dog in its phallic ears, since Disney has always ensured the innocence of animation at the cost of castrating its characters. The term “tragus,” which stands for the tongue-like projection of the outer ear derives from the Greek word “Tragos,” meaning “he-goat”. Prominent goat ears were also associated with Satyrs, lustful gods in Roman plays and as an adjective for a man with strong sexual desires. The Greek “tragedy” also derives its name from the ritual of sacrificing the goat. In biblical

traditions, two goats are sacrificed, first appearing in the Leviticus, one for the god and the other cast into the desert with the sins of the community, for “Azazel,” a fallen angel or a sort of “absolute removal”. Sacrifice belongs to the state of being included in the form of an exclusion, as a class of things belonging outside of society. Considering the subject as the zoe, there is a further order of exception in constructing a castrated zoe in tradition with the Disney order of innocent storytelling. The viewer is made aware that something is not right, as the right ear twitches leaving the left intact. The ears droop together or rise together on occasions citing innocence of the puppy or when it has resigned to its fate, the state of exception where things are set right, in this case also signalling a return to innocence through symbolic death. If observed carefully, the dog is brought face to face with self recognition or its “dogness” once the glowing parsley confronts him, the image showing the fallen or also the messiah/ son facing the lord in oft repeated biblical imagery. The moment of recognition is followed by a brief entry into hell. When the dog finally resigns to his fate, or reaches symbolic salvation, ears droop back as in the beginning, with contentment on its face and its reflection on the dog bowl. Yet another controlling idea emerges: in sacrificing personal desires and in the process of suffering, one reaches salvation. The protagonist is finally rendered as a docile body.

According to Foucault, a society’s “threshold of biological modernity” is situated at the point at which the species and the individual as a simple living body become what is at stake in a society's political strategies. After 1977, the courses at the College de France start to focus on the passage from the “territorial State” to the “State of population” and on the resulting increase in importance of the nation's health and biological life as a problem of sovereign power, which is then gradually transformed into a “government of men” (Dits et ecrits, 3: 719). “What follows is a kind of bestialisation of man achieved through the most sophisticated political techniques. For

the first time in history, the possibilities of the social sciences are made known, and at once it becomes possible both to protect life and to authorise a holocaust.” In particular, the development and triumph of capitalism would not have been possible, from this perspective, without the disciplinary control achieved by the new bio-power, which, through a series of appropriate technologies, so to speak created the “docile bodies” that it needed. - Giorgio Agamben. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*

It may be observed that the space and character design of the dog is actually more towards a mortal rendition of an animal life while the other characters are given the cartoon look. The dog has crossed over the uncanny valley into mortality, whereas the human characters exist as their cartoon self. Bios and zoe are thus combined within the same subject position of the dog where the confusion of formalising the inside and outside dichotomy becomes slightly confusing. The subject is rendered as an object, as zoe. So, the subject position is possessive of zoe with the rights of bios which can always be taken away. The subject position is defined as the biological object possessive of certain political rights. The dog is zoe, and so does the identifying audience's plight shift with him. The main contention of identifying with the dog subjects the audience into understanding that they do not have political life, only bare life. They are possessive of a consuming body but not a thinking mind. The audience is not considered to be constitutive of the positive discourse of self discipline, but has already been expelled by the very society that they constitute of (since the dog resides in the street). Therefore, they are included inside of society as an exclusion. The bios is already removed in the form of the dog and its lack of political agency. Consequently the identifying audience is only left with zoe or animal life. It is essential then to represent the protagonist as an animal, taking advantage of anthropomorphism that creates the state of innocence and animality simultaneously. However, the bare life is given by god and hence is

sacred, and hence cannot be sacrificed in any religious way. “Sacer” here means both sacred and cursed, from the Latin *sacrificium/sacr/sacer*. Therefore a symbolic sacrifice takes place with religious signifiers within a secularised christian image. Animation has to be understood in terms of the manifest representation and not only in terms of metaphorical and linguistic tropes offered by language only. According to Agamben, the distinction between *bios* as political life and *zoe* as bare life comes to the forefront, literally. Winston’s bare life is given by God and hence is sacred animal life, but at the same time potentially sacrificial, because Winston is not possessive of political life. His work is to find food, eat, sleep or survive according to the life of *zoe*. In that sense, Winston is also privileged in terms of his body and not his mind that frees him from *bios* or political life. And so is the identifying audience. Winston gains his position in the family and his preferred diet, however harmful it is to him, and perhaps his *bios* at a cost. So, while Winston goes through a checkered course between mostly *zoe* and also *bios*, Kirby the woman, faces a greater loss of political agency, being forced to comply to the demands of her husband, the dog, and the burger company. She is indirectly subjected to the spectacle of good diet through her husband.

So, although apparently the anthropomorphised dog has been doubly raised to the level of the human as the *bios* and subsequently to the level of the messiah, the audience is doubly relegated. Firstly, in the “bestialisation of man,” legitimised in archetypal anthropomorphism. And secondly, in the state of *zoe* or bare life, literally as the biological object with no rights— *zoe*, with the rights of *bios*. Using an animal as the protagonist interpellates the audience into bare life. Additionally, it absolves capitalism of the responsibility of market fundamentalism. Interestingly, this comes at another cost to the subject, who is no longer the subject, but the object. Thus, faith in capitalism is restored as the subject/object is responsible for their conduct and not because of the material conditions that result in their very

formation. Hence, the subject/object is given the idea that she is the subject while simultaneously not deserving of the rights of being so, being an object.

Thus, the consumer may receive as long as they are placed under the perennial threat of primordial fall in symbolic death, going through hell in the very acts of getting through temptation. In other words, the subject position identifying with the dog is designated for absolute removal, while simultaneously being inside society as bare life, perennially taking the blame for the systemic “sins” of the privileged other (namely gluttony for James, in this particular context). The spectator, having identified with animality and in becoming the sacrificial, is also the scapegoat in accepting the transference of sin. This is animal life. The subject as the object of bare life. The subject has to decide how not to become zoe by simultaneously embodying the disciplinary code and also internalising the shortcomings of advertisement induced consumerism as their own fault.

The discourse about bios and zoe is only made possible with the physicalisation of metaphors, or in their literalisation. Zoe, as animal life is literally present on screen, and the audience identifies with such animal life quite unthinkingly, simply because of the animated “innocence” proffered by the image.

4.6 Sanjay’s Super Team

“My parents’ whole world revolved around their gods, the Hindu deities,” said Patel, 41, who joined Pixar in 1996 as an animator on “A Bug’s Life” and has worked on several films including “Toy Story 3,” “Monsters, Inc.” and “The Incredibles. “Our worlds were diametrically apart. I just wanted my name to be Travis, not Sanjay.”

“I have one central objection to Anderson’s argument. If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain ‘modular’ forms already made

available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anti colonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonised.” - Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*.

In the very aptly titled “Whose Imagined Community?” Partha Chatterjee emphatically distinguishes between anticolonial nationalism and Benedict Anderson’s drawing of the history of nationalism. It is not based on identity but on a difference with the “modular” forms of the national society propagated by the modern West (Chatterjee, 05). It is a simultaneous rejection and acceptance of the modernity project by differentiating it into specific domains of operation of social institutions and practices, namely the material and the spiritual. The “material” is “outside” and belongs to the triumph of the West over the East, belonging to knowledge domains of economics, statecraft or science and technology. Western superiority in the material domain is to be “imitated” and “replicated”. “The spiritual, on the other hand, is an ‘inner’ domain bearing the ‘essential’ marks of cultural identity. The greater one’s success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one’s spiritual culture” (Chatterjee, p.6). Thus, while nationalism has not come into being initially with the reform of traditional institutions and customs by state action, in the later phase, it becomes a distinct form of culture where it appropriates the domain of the spiritual while simultaneously resisting intervention in matters of “national culture” (ibid.). The spiritual domain is refashioned into a “modern” yet not Western national culture. Hence, the nation is imagined as already sovereign, although the state has been colonised. This led towards a double dilemma for nationalism when it came to

seeking sovereignty on the domain outside of the state. Since the becoming of nationalism was in positing “difference” with the existing “models” of nationalism offered by European or American nation-states, it was ironical that anticolonial nationalism had to demand that, “There be no rule of difference” when it came to the public sphere, the material domain of the state, while simultaneously insisting on its own difference from the West in the private sphere. Nevertheless, the processes of the modern state were proclaimed in insisting on and preserving the difference between the ruler and the ruled by the ruling group, and hence, it was already an inlaid contradiction that is to extend into the postcolonial Indian state. The postcolonial Indian state is rendered from the ideology of the modern liberal democratic state for its self definition, and there lie complicated internal differences, more complex than homogenising bourgeois hegemony or universalist enlightenment ideas.

Chatterjee not only creates a possible space and discursive conditions for a well quipped “Indian (or Oriental) exceptionalism” within the inapt universalising discourses of modern regimes of power, but simultaneously highlights its inherence as suppressed elements within the latter (p.13). A new foundation for a universal idea of a modern community that sees differentiated forms in “Western universalism” or “Oriental exceptionalism” or their contestations could bring forth new kinds of freedom of imagination, albeit fragmentary discourses, which nonetheless make us rethink the modern state from the indigenous context.

It is in this context that Sanjay’s Super Team becomes significant with how empire looks into a peripheral nation. The film starts with an inherent conflict between father and son correspondingly embodying practices of tradition against empire induced modernity. The father is trying to pray while the son is busy with his favourite cartoon show of American superheroes. Their spaces differ as Sanjay, the protagonist is a little boy lost in his cartoon imagination in the television set, while his father sits for prayers in front of a miniature version of a temple. The conflict surfaces with the television volume increasingly

overwhelming the prayers of the father who promptly turns off the television to get the son to concentrate on praying instead on focusing on superheroes. Unable to concentrate, the son reaches for his superhero action figure and ends up lighting up its cape. Sanjay tries to blow out the fire, in the process inadvertently extinguishing the lamp in front of the altar of the gods. As soon as the light is turned out, Sanjay finds himself inside the sanctum sanctorum of his father's temple. A shapeshifting dark apparition from the television series emerges with multiple heads and bent on destroying all the idols of the gods while taking hold their weapons. The shapeshifter is predictably dark and operates within the dark confines of the sanctum sanctorum inside which Sanjay is also trapped. Sanjay realises that the lamp needs to be lit up to get rid of the dark apparition. With no choice in hand Sanjay takes his superhero action figure as the last resort to strike up a flame to turn the lamp on to vanquish the shapeshifter. The shapeshifter who smashes one idol after another and gains additional heads turns his attention to Sanjay who frantically tries to light up the central lamp. Upon lighting of the lamp, the destroyed idols are restored and the three gods come alive. They unleash their powers to defend the attacks of the shapeshifter. In order to control the shapeshifter, the gods ring a bell. The shapeshifter nevertheless is unrelenting and too powerful to be calmed by the bell's ring. The bell is destroyed by the shapeshifter. Sanjay realises that the way to defeat the shapeshifter is through a larger sound. It is here that Sanjay breaks his action figure on the metallic lamp to produce the loud sound that calms down the shapeshifter into spiritual submission. The shapeshifter loses his multiple heads, attains peace and vanishes into the light of the lamp. Sanjay saves the day and is rewarded by the gods for his efforts. His broken action figure is duly restored by the gods. His imagination is interrupted when Sanjay finds himself playing with his superhero figurine, with his dad disappointed by his actions. However, his father gives back the remote. Sanjay runs away, and gets to drawing in his

notebook. Sanjay shows the sketchbook to his father, in which he has drawn the three Hindu gods alongside his favourite western (Christian) superheroes as part of his superhero team.

The cinematic space is neatly divided into demarcated spaces, each working with an associated set of realities. The entire stage is a careful construction of spaces within an ascribed interiority of the room. The room is part of a larger invisible interiority— an Indian diasporic household within a larger assertive space of empire clearly demarcates the interiority of a smaller narrative within larger narratives of the world outside the room. The interior of the room is also divided into two other interiors, the first belonging to the television operating as a two dimensional space with ongoing superhero action, while the second is that of the religious space of the Hindu gods, the latter also coupling as the interiority for the child's vivid imagination. Significantly, both these boxes appear symmetrical— whereas superheroes reside in televised space, the temple is potentially a space for gods aspiring to be superheroes. This analogy can be highlighted since the fire/flame emblem in the superhero's attire is also present in the bell of the hindu gods and on the temple wall through which light leaks in.

The demarcated space of tradition is the zone of spirituality that is differentiated from the modern space outside of it in the form of a television and maps of India and America adorning the diasporic world. If the maps are to reveal the inclinations of Sanjay and his father towards the USA and India respectively, then the son stands for an already colonised mindset. The maps signify intellectual colonisation over and above geographical colonisation. And if the father's space, including India's map and the temple have not already been colonised, the superhero figurine would literally intrude upon the interiority of the space of "oriental exceptionalism". Among the project of creating the cinematic spacetime lies an effort to design a space in order to know the colonial subject. This form of domination constructs a productive space that intends to subject and subjugate the idea of the colonial

subject within this order. This involves navigating the Indian territory as well. Conspicuously laid out is the passing image of the Indian peninsula alongside the map of America on the other end. The neat plan of showing the southern provinces of the Indian map while showing north Indian gods is the very imposition of north Indian gods, alongside Hindutva rhetorics on to the “dravidian” heartland. While Kashmir cannot be shown in the Indian map, as the international community does not identify with the boundaries of Kashmir, not to mention border disputes with Pakistan and China, the filmmaker can pat himself for neatly showing the relatively less volatile Indian peninsula. However, in this cartography, Dravidian Tamil nationalism and its secessionist tendencies are supposed to have been truncated, perhaps one of the few successes of Indian federalism.

Rendering gods into superheroes recreate them in the light of super-heroic baggage of imperial ambitions as well. Not only nationhood but also religion is brought within the fold of ideological ambiguities. War is brought within the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. While the superhero figurine can penetrate inside the auspices of the temple and also provide agency to the Hindu gods, it is by no error that it is happening but as how empire’s hegemony looks into the space of spiritual interiority proclaimed by the idea of oriental exceptionalism, considering the fact that it has been constructed by the diasporic imagination. Ironically, war intrudes into the sacred space of the hindu gods. Whereas the gods are confined within the limits of the miniature temple the superhero inhabits all spaces, from the television, to the room to the interiority of the sanctum sanctorum. This is achieved by also inhabiting triple domains of science within the television space, the reality of empire as the room and the temple colonised by the superhero as the child’s imagination. The american superhero is free to enter, if not desecrate the auspices of the sanctum sanctorum. The interpellation of the colonial subject is ordered through the construction of imperial discourse. Notably, agency to vanquish the shapeshifter is provided by the superhero figurine. In other words, the ultimate

weapon to vanquish the supposed arch villain is provided twice by the superhero figurine— firstly, by lighting the lamp, and secondly by producing the sound to render the villain ineffective. And since the protagonist as the chief actor who brings war within the sacred space in a childish escapade, everything is acceptable. The father is only disappointed and not angry, while the gods are perhaps happy to become superheroes akin to their warmongering american counterparts. Perhaps the hindu gods brandishing weapons were looking for an opportunity to unleash their true powers in the fight between Manichaeian binaries of supposed good and evil.

A set of binaries operate within the formal and the narrative space.

Firstly, if morphing is something that is present in this animation space, it is justified as belonging to fictional spaces within interiorities of the television and the imagination of the child. The animation space in general does not hold any scope for plasticity within it and is set as the abnormal and naturally antagonistic to the normalising discourse. But more importantly, the rationalised morph is attributed to the arch villain. It may be noticed that the shapeshifter has been normalised and sanitised of its morphing abilities by the end of the film. Metamorphosis is problematic for power that seizes hold of life in order to suppress it. The whole idea revolves around trying to suppress the shapeshifting tendencies of the supposed antagonist. If the other in the shapeshifter could be considered as embodied change, then it is also about transgressing psychological, social and formal boundaries. Shapeshifter as an archetype is generally associated with ambiguous gendering of identity, in the animus— the man within a woman, and the anima as the woman residing inside a man. Generally, shapeshifting could also be associated with any kind of literal transgression of boundaries. Producing a character that is morphable is an act of transgression. Metamorphosis itself is the transgressive other. Within the generalised context, the shapeshifter is embodied change of the other, which should remain ossified and immutable.

The other in the shapeshifter is pejoratively referred as a psychological and social form of identity that is unwelcome, iniquitous and disempowered.

Secondly, the point of bringing plasticity within regulation is also the bringing of formal change into knowledge structures. It can be observed that the shapeshifting body is uncanny and inadequately sutured. It is to literally bring the morphing body to a rigid cast, and metaphoric caste. The literal form corroborates the metaphoric context. Within a generalised context, the other is cast in the mould of the unchangeable, so that what is arriving is known. The other's actions need to be predictable. Within the indigenous context it is representative of mostly violating caste boundaries. It is a dual project. Retain caste while pledging disavowal to caste Hinduism posited for the sanitised image of Hinduism. Caste vanishes within sanitised neo-brahminism; yet it is retained in its sanitised absence, as the brahminical gods, the naturally dark complexioned shapeshifter as the racial other, or also belonging to the lower caste.

Thirdly, the television is representative of the modern west, while everything that the American superhero stands for is against an image of everything that the it is not, namely as the non-west represented in the temple. The binaries of good and evil are already effective for the decontextualised shapeshifter. It is not clear why the shapeshifter is evil, or why would he want to amass weapons. Significantly enough, the shapeshifter does not possess weapons, while the gods do. In that case, the shapeshifter would seek to emulate the gods. It is as if the weapons are harmless with the responsible possession and control of the gods. And the shapeshifter being the decontextualised other without history, in seeking to snatch weapons from the gods to wreak havoc and destruction in its path, is "naturally" evil. Shapeshifting as the abnormal and the unintelligible is decidedly the enemy without any specific reason.

On the one hand the writer director of the film is both the coloniser harbouring greater imperial ambitions than empire itself; simultaneously, he is the colonised subject that seeks to

retain his indigenous identity. The intentions of the film does not state itself to be clear until the question of power as a productive and positive intervention is highlighted. The colonial discourse has allowed certain subjects to feel ennobled and superior, enabling a sense of self worth and also offering material benefit towards the making of the film as a product of the Empire. Sanjay has indeed been able to become Travis by transforming the hindu gods into superheroes. His sense of worth is elevated by converting his sense of identity into that of his coveted big Other—the colonising discourse in the embodiment of the superhero. In aspiring to become the Other, the colonised seeks to become the coloniser by controlling the other “other” in the shapeshifter. The global other in the television set becomes the local other in the autochthonous space. The enemy thus remains the same, although the identified self shifts between the global and the local. Therefore, the enemy as the global imaginary other possibly enters the sacred space of the gods, and to counter that, the real material figurine of the superhero is summoned.

It might also be pertinent to state that the entire cinematic space is constructed in the light of the poverty of India. It produces and reproduces itself within this domain of brutish and degenerate space of oriental past residing within the present. Simultaneously, it is the space of ambivalence where the hindu gods are ushered into modernity or at least try to imbibe its values while residing inside a dominant western space. As representation is manifest within the animation space, the latent assumptions are overtly revealed within this apparent timeless space of the shrine and the modern space outside. The action of the super heroic imagination of Sanjay is matched by the urge to make modern an enshrined past in the father’s religious space as primordial and timeless, that is occupied by the gods. This apparent timelessness and homogenising project of the premodern gods seeking help from the modern superhero is part of the asymmetrical and contrived idea of the mythic past of the gods of the East and the secular modernity of the self image of the West. The spiritual domain of the personal space is

violated by the material domain of the modern west. This intrusion into religious space by war is justified as the agency for defensive action is provided by the American superpower. The gods are therefore rendered lesser than the American superhero.



Figure 12 “Sanjay’s Super Team”; Interiority of room, television and shrine

In navigating the limited space of interiority that the Indian diaspora is offered within the vast space of the empire the binarism between tradition and modernity, religious non-secularism with super heroic secularism are part of the construction of everything that the hindu gods are. However, they are lesser than the secular superheroes. This unequal dichotomy is salient to the making of the colonial god who is lesser than the christian turned secular superhero. The film banks upon this unequal dichotomy, this asymmetrical relationship between the western superhero and the hindu gods. The idea of masculinity in war is to get the enemy before it gets you, and this has definitely to do with the agency provided by the superhero figurine. The Indian gods, unable to protect themselves without foreign aid, are gendered effeminate in the war of masculine proportions. This is the classic case of the asymmetrical relationship of the global north being able to fashion itself as an

image in opposition to a degenerate image of the other in the hindu gods, against which a beneficial self image can be generated.

This complexity of being the lesser one internationally while simultaneously being the greater one within the indigenous context is characteristic of the Indian superhero. While contest between the American hero and the indigenous ones in Sanjay's Super Team is apparently missing, the context becomes evident and latent as soon as an indigenous hero is posited within the local context. Here, the local hero is directly placed within national space in comparison with an absent comparison with that of the global imperial context. This is important as the third world superhero seeks to emulate the imperial superhero, yet be lesser considering modernity being averse to its battered and newly formed postcolonial present. Therefore a necessity to find a glorious mythic past within the present spatiotemporal void is sought after. This void is to be filled in with an imaginary fusion of religion, nation and state. A prototype needs to be figured out in the form of a nationhood that is both supremacist and fascist, yet posits itself as democratic in the embodied presence of superheroes. Therefore, in a democratic polity like India, there lies the necessity to find an ascendent quasi-fascist hardliner who would not hesitate to rise to extremities of war and violence if needed. Moreover, empire would transgress into the geographical or psychological space of its supposed vassal neighbours to fight a supposed common defined enemy. Sanjay's Super Team simply corroborates that fact.

To conclude, it is evident that although the narrative cannot be justified without the concomitant emergence of specific discursivities, the real conditions of possibility are the form and substance of expression that allows for those discursive formations. It is also to be noted that the film form cannot be made sense of without relating them to other films within the case studies in order to situate them historically. It is only that a specific sense of

normative of the form can be comprehended in comparison with a different set of normative which belongs to a different historical and geographical context. The films can therefore be situated in relation to each other for understanding the shifted force relations or the infusion of death unto the animated body. Although the baby in “Tin Toy” lies in the uncanny valley and is psychologically identifiable as the uncanny, the form is not justified or does not justify narrative content. Future technological improvements are yet to be able to satisfactorily handle the uncanny valley, and therefore the human characters remain cartoonish, while animals cross over to the other side of the uncanny valley, thereby making possible and justifying the subject matter. A particular discursive formation would also be applicable under a particular technological possibility.

Conclusion

It is now clear that the analysis of animation films cannot be undertaken using conventional film theory. This is because animation neither follows causal imperatives, nor does it go by the binary imperatives of scientific or linguistic understanding. Film theory has largely misconstrued animation by only looking at it as an image form similar to cinema proper without accounting for the different reality that it posits. Due to such shortcomings of theory, animation's full potential in praxis has also remained largely unrealised. And therefore, animation has been transformed into its current live-action look, which is not animation. It is as if the form has been refashioned in order to conform to extant theory. This thesis, in enquiring into the form tries to reclaim the erstwhile potential of animation in its conceptual essence. Therefore, it is crucial to summarise the answer to the fundamental query of the thesis.

Since animation is defined by the ability to endow forms with life, the primary enquiry of this thesis starts from a small problem: why would characters not die in early animation? The characters were malleable and did not die even when decapitated. However, if the same effects were to be applied to contemporary animation, it would possibly fracture or kill bodies violently. Bodies are not morphable any more, whether it is through internal volition or the impression of external force. With the eventual shift of the animated image towards its contemporary form, the concern about the loss of animation's erstwhile unique attributes has been ignored or forgotten. It seems that none of the studies find it essential to enquire why or how animated characters became mortal. This primary observation led to four fundamental questions, which consequently are addressed by the four chapters of this thesis.

The first question is what differentiates early animation from other forms of moving images, especially live action cinema? To answer this, the first highlight was the fundamental

ontological difference of animation from live action imagery, both in terms of the expression form within the image and its creative process. Animation has been considered primarily as a form of cinema and therefore has been incorporated under Film Studies, without much focus on its ontological difference from cinema proper. But why? Is there some other fundamental problem afflicting theory in general that film theoreticians fail to notice? The answer to this lies in the “cinematographic illusion,” as envisaged by Henri Bergson. According to Bergson, thought operates according to the same notion of false movement, as is the division of movement incorporated by the cinematic apparatus. Animation did not belong to this modality of thought. The frame-by-frame process of the construction of animated movement, which may be termed as the “animated illusion,” is distinct from the cinematographic illusion. The exception is visible in its plastic form and discursive incoherence that deviates from the recorded image of the given. It resides outside of theoretical boundaries afforded by linguistic and scientific discourse.

Animation has mostly been treated as a subset of live action cinema. In fact, it is just the opposite. Animation is a superset of live action imagery, since it provides all devices and tropes available to cinema and more. Moreover, the unit of analysis differs for both of them. A dictionary definition of animation not only talks about endowing forms with life but also about the frame-by-frame manipulation of images to produce the illusion of movement. For animation, it is the frame which is the unit of analysis vis-a-vis the shot corresponding to live action cinema. This possibility of spatial and temporal control of the frame gives animation its unique ability to generate heterotopy and heterochrony, the effect of free manipulation of space, time and forms. Since animation does not enter the binary structure of ordinary discourse, it renders scientific thought not as the given or natural, but as an opaque construction. Therefore, the categorial is manipulated through form and its movement.

The plastic image of animation could also show that form is force relation. And hence, the animated image can be considered to be a visual base of force relations, as a link of perception with the outside. Since perception is social, the image is a notional visual base, or a cartography of the whole social field. Moreover, it is a map of relations between forces informing a system of visibility. The visual base is a form of visual expression of the outside. The visual base is dynamic, and hence if we consider the dynamic moving image of screen animation, it would be similar to the Deleuzian concept of the diagram in certain way, sans the movement. The diagram is static. The optical character of the non-discursive process produces lines of force, or knowledge and subjectivation through systems of light and language, resulting in the visual base. The visual base problematises the a priori and therefore the sense of synthetic knowledge. The visual base may be considered as the condition of possibility for discursive formation. If we extend the meaning of the visual base into the virtuality of a cartography of visibility, then the shifting image of animation could also be comprehended as the shifting nature of human subjectivity according to historical shifts of truth regimes. Therefore, the transformation of the dynamic visual base and its transition into the static diagram is the point of enquiry.

The analysis of the form cannot be independent of the material processes of animation production. Recorded live action imagery is transparent and unmarked in terms of scientific discourse since the form already appears as normal and natural. However, the manifest plastic nature of the animated image highlights that all forms and their movement is an effect of force relation. Moreover, since any form irrespective of their substance is subject to creative destruction in plastic movement, it highlights the impermanence of all forms. Animation, as the manifest image of force relations highlights the problem of the non-discursive image that is unable to enter discourse, and consequently is also resistant to formation of power/knowledge. Most importantly, since all forms are of volitional movement, life is

immanently visible irrespective of substance categories. Therefore, as animation is not predicated on the given, it renders scientific discourse as opaque and marked.

The incoherent image of animation instead highlights the non-binary. It produces the problem of the non-dual existence of life without death, the existence of a multi-dimensional plastic space and time, and a general absence of relational binaries. This trickled into the subject matter of animation as well, where thresholds of epistemologisation such as pertaining to scientificity, ethics, or narrative coherence were not introduced. In other words, the image would have to cross over multiple thresholds of conceptual categories and thereby its form has to be refashioned to enter discourse. The entire trajectory of animation form and process has been the attempt to create such epistemological thresholds through which the animated image had to pass into the supposedly scientific and rational image.

To highlight a crucial attribute, representative substance was absent in early animation. Therefore, the materiality of forms were liable to change at will according to the needs of the graphic narrative. Seamless metamorphosis not only between forms but between substances was possible. The substance informing forms is non-representative and dematerialised, which extends into the subject matter and a malleable narrative. Moreover, this dematerialised substance does not distinguish between life informing organic or inert matter. This produces a unique landscape informed by *athanasia*, residing outside of scientific discourse. Animation therefore became contradictory to dominant reason which fails to come to terms with the “irrationality” of life bereft of the binary opposition of death. Manifest force relations reveal that scientific life is represented through a triad of representations— of form, substance, and movement. Any one of the parameters of this triad when manipulated would destabilise the others and consequently the supposed “natural” or “scientific” relations of the given. Producing representative organic life is also introducing scientific life and consequently scientific and rational sense of death. Moreover, as is the popular coinage for

animated life, the “undead” is something which has never been alive, or was not supposed to, is suddenly perceived as alive. However, this term already privileges death over life, by attributing life to select forms. On the contrary, animation extends the immanence of life upon everything, without the binary opposition of death. Moreover, in doing so, it extends both representational and non-representational form, substance and movement upon everything. Therefore, animated life appears as contradiction to scientific and rational life. The telos of animation has thus been the attempt to produce the coherence of representative substance and representative movement associated with form.

The second question is that, if animated forms were plastic and morphable, what was plasticity all about? Why was it necessary to remove it from the animated image? The form with a dematerialised substance, where appearance and reality coincide is a necessary effect of the animation process. Plastic and metamorphic movement, which is the result of the frame-by-frame process brings its own unique logic upon the world, without the need for its rationalisation. Resistance to dominant discourse is found where there is a relation between the familiar and reified, and its subversion. According to Dana Polan, information ceases without a common code but also that it ceases if a transgression of codes do not appear. Plasticity simultaneously produces two contraries: the impermanence of all forms and the lack of structure informing the image, since it lacks the representational triad. Animation transforms static images according to two Heraclitean conceptions. According to the first, there is no being, everything is becoming. According to the other, being is the being of becoming as such. However, both senses of becoming would still inherit the conception of substance. Plasticity is instead not only ungraspable but also problematises the being of becoming as it destabilises the representational triad, effectively rendering form/substance as immaterial. The plastic and metamorphic image of animation in its dematerialised potential is the manifest form of non-representation.

Form organises matter. The animated image is an anomaly to such a relationship, where “its atomic structure seemingly comes unglued”. Therefore, if matter does not conform to any particular material property, how can substance be organised into form? The disjunction between substance and potential in animation releases form from adhering to its constituent matter. This is already potentially resistant to discursive formation. It is potentially revolutionary praxis although not necessarily political. However, resistance to discourse or ideology is also to exist outside of binary forms of knowledge. According to Deleuze, power operates through forces, while knowledge operates on formed matter. Plasticity and metamorphosis are anomalies, being the manifest disjunction of power and knowledge. Under such circumstances, it is the imperative of power to bring manifest plasticity within the ambit of knowledge. However, for the plastic image, substance is force relation, which is power. If plasticity cannot enter theory, it also resides outside of power as force cannot be envisaged. As form exists independent of substance in the plastic image, it thwarts representation and therefore, discursive formation. Consequently, plastic movement renders signs into non-representational formations resulting in destabilised meanings. Thereby, the transgressive potential of the sign form exposes effects of power that can manifestly operate only through knowledge, which also highlights the relational co-dependency of concepts including that of scientific discourse. This makes the animated image as anterior to theoretical speculation, particularly to power/knowledge. Therefore, discourse needs an interiority of coherent relations between concepts that corroborate and assert each other. Without this interiority, power is brought into direct enquiry as it cannot operate without knowledge structures. Therefore, it is also the dissolution of force relations into a liminal state of affect.

The image of early animation points to a grounding on the repetition of difference, which amounts to a non-ground or groundlessness. The frame-by-frame process of animation

makes it as the universality of the singular. Every frame is an actualised singularity as labour creates unique discrepancies between images in sequence. This discrepancy between individual frames in sequence would create an incoherent moving reality upon playback. This non-representational image is already a mode of resistance to the general dominance of representative thought. Moreover, the tactile process of animation was responsible for the conflation of sensuous objects and thought objects, where human activity is itself objective sensuous activity, thus problematising the difference between the ideal and the material planes. Subjective sensuous activity cannot be separated from objective material activity. Praxis of animation could therefore be consciously guided revolutionary practice. As has been amply worked out by many animators, formal resistance using plasticity can also be politically conscious.

Manifest plasticity is rendered from the playback of animation frames or actualised singularities. Its effect is the non-material volitional play of forms and the animation of desire. The line of drawn animation is desire formalised. This also applies to the form. However, the transgressive capabilities of active force of desire is rendered reactive with the supposed objectivity imposing a rational order upon forms. Its result is consciousness, which is the tendency to find conformity with the given. The active force of desire banks on the lack of consciousness that allow for the potential of the virtual to flourish. The virtual condition is also the real condition based on which the actual is effected. Hence the virtual potential realised in terms of different actualities can be scrutinised in order to understand the real. The tendency to conform to the material dimension is constituted through objectifying discourse. The dialectics of plasticity directly addresses the totality constitutive of contradictory relations between oppositions, including the unity and separation of the subject and object, or the ideal and the material. Plasticity, by problematising object formation simultaneously problematises subjectivation. In other words, plasticity induces non-separation as the subject

and the object dissolve in the plasticity of forms. In fact, the fissures between subjective self unity and social unity of acting subjects is also problematised with non-separation. This is also how plasticity directly engages with animism, as a transitional stage between prelogical thought unifying subject and object, and logical thought that separates the subject from the object.

For all of the aforementioned reasons, the government of the animated image is necessitated in order to create some basis for the production of knowledge from this state of groundlessness. Plasticity could be reactive and transgressive if social structures are construed to be repressive or standardising. On the other hand, with normative powers, plasticity could be tamed and deviations from the norm are minimised. The telos of animation is the making of such a scientific normative.

This leads us to the third question. Has the conceptual definition of animation shifted with the shifting normative? If so, then what does the changing form indicate? More importantly, since most of the erstwhile animation form resided outside of scientific and linguistic codification, what really does the uncoded aspects of the image indicate? If the uncoded aspects have eluded theory, then surely the animated image is a glaring visible indicator of the verbal historical unconscious informing a transitioning episteme. In that sense, the shifting image is also an indicator of a shifting *a priori*, which is the sense of the historical transcendental. The form of the visible residing outside of definitive meanings was the concern of this analysis. Ultimately, representative substance is rendered by setting limits on plasticity and morphability, to create representation that can enter discourse. The shifting form is hence the visible indicator of the shifting conditions of possibility of discursive formation.

The historical unconscious defines an epistemological space specific to a particular period which reveals a positive unconscious of knowledge that eludes the consciousness of

scientists and yet is part of scientific discourse (Foucault 2005, xii). Foucault would call this positivity, which defines a field of historical emergence as the historical *a priori*. Foucault proposes an *a priori* fully given in history and which changes with history. Yet, this *a priori* nonetheless lies beyond it in defining the conditions of possibility from which the knowledge of an epoch can form. According to Beatrice Han, Foucault's archaeological project is interested in finding the historical transcendental. And if the historical *a priori* has to define the conditions of possibility, themselves variable and from which the knowledge of an epoch has to form, then it must be a network of relations between concepts and categories internally coherent and codependently originated. In that sense, Foucault attempts to find a historical transposition of the transcendental. However, since the verbal is predicated on the visual and the uncoded of the visual resides outside of discourse and is yet part of the archive, the incoherent image showcases the unconscious bearings of the shifting historical transcendental. Therefore, the shifting animated image as a visual base reveals the transition of the conditions of possibility towards the scientific and the rational, by setting limiting thresholds to forms, substances and movement. In the process, the prelogical plasticity crosses over multiple thresholds of epistemologisation, from scientificity, narrative coherence, literal action to metaphorical action, or ethics in order to enter discourse. It develops as both a conscious and an unconscious structural imperative quasi-independently of the people involved in co-creating the image.

“Power ‘produces reality’ before it represses. Equally it produces truth before it ideologises, abstracts or masks” (Deleuze 2006, 29). Knowledge concerns formed matters (substances) and formalised functions according to formal conditions of seeing and speaking, light and language. The plastic image of animation is dematerialised, and does not conform to rational visibilities or discursive coherence. Division and separation codifies animation into the positive production of the negative, or difference as comparison. This manifests as the

diagrammatic image of power. It is also the creation of a picture plane or a window by dividing the surface of the screen. The non-discursive animation process and environment gradually finds a telos of transformation towards a discursive interiority. However, power alone may not be able to account for this formation.

The effects of power are realised through the influx of capital in the image. The shifting image also depicts a shifting sense of the subject-object divide. Labour under capitalism is a historically specific socially mediating activity. Commodity and capital as products of concrete labour are objectified forms of social mediation. Subjectivity is a relation between mediated social relations and thought. Marx's conception is a materialist justification of Hegel's conception of the dialectic. Marx conceptualises capital in similar terms as Hegel does to his concept of the Geist. This he does through value, which operates as an automatic subject. Through the self-valorising nature of value which continuously takes the form of commodity and money while changing its own magnitude, value suddenly acquires the nature of a self-moving substance. The constructed image, as much as commodity and money are mere objectified forms of value. For Marx, the self-valorising nature of value operates as an automatic subject. Value suddenly acquires the nature of self-moving substance which Marx characterises as the "Subject". The plastic image of animation, which manifestly problematises subject-object dualism, becomes subjected to the imperatives of value and hence capitalist social relations. This occurs as the value transforms the supposedly valueless plastic non-representational affective substance into representative rational scientific substance, the image turning into a representation of the natural world and of commodities.

Marx envisages a social theory of consciousness inasmuch as he identifies subjectivity as distinguished from the sociohistorical Subject. Instead of conceiving an identical subject-object, Marx shifts the focus from a knowing subject and its relations to an

external world to that of social relations as determinations of both social subjectivity and objectivity. Marx accords historical specificity to his conception of the Subject residing in the alienated social structures characteristic of capitalism. The problem of knowledge is therefore a relation between forms of social mediation and forms of thought (Postone 2006, 77). The shifting visual base becomes the image of the “Subject,” which is capitalist social relations as an alienated form and a determinant of both social subjectivity and objectivity.

Ultimately, the image falls back into reifying subject-object dualism by maximising the distance and division between subject and object. The transition of bodies from being amortal to becoming mortal corroborates this shifting subject-object relationship. This is not only a shift of internal and volitional force relations informing the body to its transformation into external control of the bodily form. Since the constructed image is the manifestation of both social subjectivity and objectivity, the externally controlled body or identifying with it translates into the objectivation of the subject. As labour has been already alienated, the imperative of capital as dead labour is to externally control bodies through ossification. This fails, as ossified bodies informed by overlapping conflictual structures and discourses would result in rational but soulless movements. The telos of the animation process, while consciously attempting to produce photorealism and representative movement, has unconsciously shifted into producing the movement of the dead. Specifically, it firstly replaces the immanence of life with the immanence of death, and subsequently tries to imbibe the dead with life. The telos of animation has thus been the transition from a primal protoplasmic substance informing all life forms into selectively endowing the desireless dead with scientific life. Substance is therefore divided up into specific rationalities of organic life form, inanimate, dead or the undead, but no longer the animated.

This is not without consequences. With the intent of creating rational bodies, a threshold is reached where subjective identification with bodies would lead to the uncanny.

Since the meaning of *heimlich* develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*, the uncanny can also be generated when life tends to come into close proximity with death. In fact, with the movement of the dead, the undead actually crosses over the epistemological threshold of animated life to the immanence of scientific death. However, this relationship is inverted where the subject and object roles are reversed. Capital, which is the image of dead labour, is the dead Subject. This is precisely seen as the manifest image of “bare death”. Proximity to the idea of “reality” would generate the possibility of the “uncanny valley,” as revulsion in identifying with a dead object. Fear is latent in the identification with mortal bodies. Therefore, codification showcases the subjection and control of bodies to mortality and their eventual administration through fear. Social subjectivity is informed by latent death, while fear of violence/death becomes immanent within this understanding. This culminates into the administration of fear.

The fourth and final question is, given that animation is informed by the aforementioned set of differences from rational imagery, how does one address case studies using conventional film theory? Theory has failed to address the changing form with an adaptive framework, particularly because the image has not been considered through an archaeological approach taking into account the historical shifts of the image. It is clear that film theoreticians have failed to notice the conceptual transitions from animated life towards bodily death, from the non-representational to representation, the transition of conditions of possibility, or the inversion of subject-object relations.

Most studies are focused on the supposed meaning (content) over the image form (expression), although the latter holds much significance as meaning is predicated on the discursive specificities of the form. The “animated illusion” manifestly illustrates such discursive specificities. Therefore, the animation form has to be analysed as a condition of possibility for the emergence of discourse specific to individual films. It should be

remembered that animation not only resists the established categories but generates a different kind of the categorial. Therefore, animation is the totality of mediated social relations and thought, which ultimately manifests as the condition of possibility for a social theory of consciousness. In fact, the categorial is not only historical and geographical but also shifts with ideology and the animated image is the crucial diffusion between scientific discourse and ideology. This creates a curious problem for theory as the animated image would continuously problematise the sense of the a priori.

With animated illusion, plasticity and incoherence of movement is the condition of possibility for the categorial synthesis of space, time or substance. The image form is the manifest visual base of the non-discursive process, and the link to the articulable emerging as a network of statements. Moreover, the non-discursive process goes through transition to ultimately be transformed into the manifest structural environment as a virtual space within which the image operates. The primacy of texts over the image changes the visible form according to the articulable. In order to discipline the animation form, which is maximising the “government” of the image, the possibility of the transgressive is brought within the ambit of power/knowledge by binding form, substance and material potential, i.e., representative movement. Knowledge segments the image into its spatiality, the screen likewise converted from the flatness of surface to the window looking into the interiority of an illusory space. The non-discursive environment transforms accordingly into a layered diagram of the multiplane camera to the overarching structure of the volumetric software environment for computer generated imagery that ultimately translates into rationalised and scientific material potential.

As a side effect, this trajectory also entails the formation of certain other categories like difference as relation/comparison, negative volumetric interiority, positive volume, or life and its negation in death. Typically, the visible becomes the codified construction of

Manichaeian binaries, of light as brightness/darkness, colour as warmth/coldness, music as major/minor chords differentiating protagonist/antagonist and the like. Less apparent is the ideological baggage imbibed into the average audience from discursive knowledge, translating into good/bad or right/wrong or the self/other. Theorising animation from its erstwhile non-dual framework is surely different from a dualist framework informed by linguistic and scientific binaries. The intent is to figure out what the image was vis-a-vis what it became, whether there has been a concomitant ontological and conceptual shift of the image with the changing process. The normative for animation is different for different films, and therefore, theory must adapt to the specifics of individual films, in terms of differences of form, process, narrative content, influx of capital, historical context or categorial conceptions. In fact, animation analysis has to include the historical specificity of both the form and the process as a condition of possibility for the emergence of a specific discourse, as the shifting sense of the normal.

For animation, the visual had primacy over discourse. The transition of animated movement privileging the visual over discourse into the primacy of the articulable over the visible would help to theoretically situate a film from the unique perspective of animation proper. This would enable theorising animation films according to the animated illusion. Interrogating animation using this method is anterior to film theory. And if film theory can theorise animation, then the animated illusion has been replaced by the cinematographic illusion for the film concerned. Animated life is no longer possible and has already succumbed to the imperatives of bodily death. In that case, is it animation any more?

Exploring theory could lead to better understanding of praxis. A new way of theorising animation could encompass what has not been explored as yet and bring about a new understanding of image construction. Theory could therefore encompass the already produced and the yet unexplored. The intent of this thesis was to find an approach that would

ultimately help reclaim animation to its erstwhile potential, open up new possibilities and approaches to animating and consequently address the issue of homogeneity induced by contemporary technologies. Since the mainstream form has a hegemonic presence that stifles individual and peripheral approaches, a theory questioning the ascendancy of the dominant form could help reclaim the lost potential of animation. In addition, it has laid down a course of enquiry into the hegemonic mainstream form of animation, which could open up alternative possibilities and inform new discourses from individual or peripheral productions with limited labour and capital resources.

Certain intentions were possibly more ambitious than could be realistically possible within the purview of the thesis, and hence has remained unrealised. Perhaps no thesis is complete without the acknowledgement of its shortcomings. There has been a conspicuous lack of resources, especially with the dearth of available literature on animation, in India. Therefore, the primary resources available were based on film theory. Moreover, empirical observation of the image gives little understanding of major differences between animation and live action. The differences cannot be justified by cinematic theory since the animation process has a significant bearing on the image form. Therefore, finding theoretical devices that would encompass animated imagery in all its myriad forms of expression could remain inadequate. Although new methods of enquiry has been envisaged, an inkling of additional possibilities that have remained inaccessible has yet remained as a latent presence in the background. Being an animator has its advantages, as a practicing theoretician could resolve problems hitherto unnoticed by others. Yet, additional aspects need to be theorised. For example, codification of form according to a narratological framework remains to be developed. Or, the process of separation of expression from content has been a historical trajectory of narrative structuring. Again, the non-discursive environment and thresholds of epistemologisation that lead to contemporary practices also becomes manifest as an all

enveloping system whose range and scope could not be accessed exhaustively due to continuing accelerated proliferation of technology. Since all of the aforementioned changes have occurred over a span of more than hundred years, and this thesis could not have been possible without taking into account such an extended period specifically to understand epistemic shifts, or large scale cycles of capitalist production leading to technological shifts, a higher number of case studies could have afforded a better understanding.

Finally, it should also be acknowledged that there have not been many significant animation productions in India. There are multiple reasons behind that. However, this thesis is not directly concerned with such issues. Therefore, the selected case studies could not belong directly to Indian animation as it would be impossible to encompass the changing trajectory of animation through a limited set of films. Moreover, Indian animation, being a set of derived images from the first world or as stultifying adaptations of autochthonous visual folk forms of storytelling would have created a different set of complexities that could have taken the thesis away from its core intentions. Analysis using the present conclusions of this thesis could be extended to Indian animation and would definitely reveal the postcolonial underpinnings afflicting the “Indian” form. However, a postcolonial approach for understanding peripheral and individual practices to understanding the animation form could not emerge without first developing the scope and range provided by the present thesis. Instead, the intent was to envisage the possibility of visual dialogues between dominant forms/technologies and autochthonous forms/technologies. This aspect of dialogue between dominant and peripheral forms has largely been ignored, especially within third world contexts. The approach has been the opposite, where manifest non-discursive and discursive structures have appropriated the image, the indigenous forms struggling to come to terms such dominance. However, if the present concern could enquire aspects afflicting the animation form in general, then theory could encompass aspects inhibiting individual limited

budget productions, and indigenous approaches to animation production. Significantly, once the codification process is exposed, animation can be rethought from contexts outside of the dominant normative. Questioning and transgressing the reified forms would open up pathways to alternative forms of praxis that can be politically conscious design.

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