Fundamental Evocation in Theater

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Over the course of theater history, there have been basically two contrasting poles of approaches to performance: one side, when the performers are acting for the sake of the presence of an audience, and the other, when performers act in a state where they don't communicate with the audience directly. The prior approach is sometimes termed "presentational"; the latter is referred to as maintaining a "fourth wall" (a term in use in Western drama since the late 19th century).

By contrast, presentational performance typically breaks the fourth wall with speeches that are or have the intention to be directed toward the audience. This style of performance allows the audience to experience themselves as directly implicated in the stage action - and, arguably, to empathize more strongly with the actors and characters. Multiple artistic approaches may be taken in order to achieve such a connection between the viewers and the characters on stage. Over time many techniques have been investigated and created in order for thespians to be able to break this wall on stage between themselves and the mental boundaries of their audience; also to create nuance produced when the spectators were watching and simultaneously imagining.

Beginning in ancient rituals and spiritual practices, empathy and connection had long been the topic of experiment and investigation. Prior to the development of a theater separate from religious ritual, building connections were already a topic that required deliberate design by the shamans, priests, and even poets, in order to achieve a shared mental state. It is a relatively common development in both Western and Eastern dramatic literature. Thus, connections between the characters and the audience, which no culture could escape in defining, are exclusively important as a foundation of performance art. Even though different cultures took different approaches to theater art, they all strive to create or destroy the so-called fourth wall, thus manipulating the experience and perspectives of the audience. Most cultures took artifice in either similar or different forms, but will eventually result in aligned effects. This paper will explore the shifting dynamics of the direct address of the audience vs. the fourth wall in the proximity of goals achieved through varied techniques within theatrical literature across cultures and times.

Whether the work of theatrical literature demonstrated an exhibition of a certain level of shared agitation of spiritual and emotional evocation is the question that determines the proximity of goals of theater arts in the context discussed by the paper. Approaching this question from the perspective of comparative literature and theater studies, it is certain that among plays developed in different cultures, all strived to accomplish somewhat a form of audience-actor interaction.

One of the earliest plays to take the investigation in such a tactic was The Little Clay Cart by the Indian Sanskrit playwright Sudraka. In The Little Clay Cart, Charudatta, the main character of the play experiences charges and doubts, but eventually defeats Sansthānaka, and fulfills his desire to be with his lover Vasantasenā. The most significant development in the Sanskrit plays that dissolves and maneuvers the fourth wall is the introduction (prologue) and the inclusion of the audience in collective scenarios. We see this device in work in the introduction of The Little Clay Cart, a narrator will come out, and there is a great chance that this person is the actual the playwright or director of the play; they would talk about how the playwright and the director had fascinating tastes and abilities, how good they are as a person, how talented they are in theater arts or just in general. This is like an exaggerated autobiography written by the Playwright. It is very interesting, because this converses directly with the audience, and it exposes one of the most inconspicuous roles whose jobs were done behind the scene instead of on stage. It kind of feels like a verbal artistic statement with many hyperboles. The prologue establishes a relaxing atmosphere, and a sense of humor among its audience, in order for it to better introduce later's comedic moments.

This artistic choice emphasized the magical realism of the Little Clay Cart, and it also engaged the audience in this fiction of domestic reality. Such engagement was introduced slowly through the transition between the director's speech and the actual lines of characters: at the beginning, the director's speech addressed domestic issues and his personal contributions. At the end of the speech, the director starts a conversation with one of the characters, making the reality blend slowly into the magical world of the play. It is like slow guidance across the fourth wall. Through such technique, the actual play will not be awkward to have started directly with a comedic scene. Directly following the prologue, we find the

characters searching in the dark for their companions and victims; now the audience can observe the actions of the actors distinctly. Interestingly, the characters whisper to each other and it seems like their voices are directed to the people they are meant to converse with without being overheard by others regardless of their voices' volumes. "Sansthānaka. Women! I kill hundreds of 'em. I'm a brave man. Vasantasenā. [Seeing that no one answers.] Alas, how comes it that my very servants have fallen away from me? I shall have to defend myself by mother-wit." When Sansthānaka was condemning and disrespecting Vasantasenā, Vasantasenā didn't seem to hear it. When Vasantasenā is calling for her servant, Sansthānaka, who is physically proximate to her, couldn't hear a word and failed to detect her location, while the servant far away is supposed to hear it.

This interaction between the characters is Hyperfictional in which those invisible connections and barriers were created by the actors themselves. Such creation or deprivation of the reality on stage functions the same as the fourth wall, in which pretension and conviction of the barrier determine the lack of presence of an audience-actor interaction. The audience is asked to suspend disbelief when the stage is being designed into sections like in the Little Clay Cart. It's an obvious use of theatrical "devices" or conventions: separate playing areas indicating distinct locales that are in reality proximate to one another. This separation of space made the audience, who were in a completely different reality than the play, relate more to the familiar distinction.

It pulls the performance toward reality and the reality toward fantasy. It creates a sense of liminal theater, where the two ends tend toward each other to create a mutual, shared mental state.

This time the audience sees the scene clearly without being actually present in the dark rooms. This shaped the audience like an omniscient crowd — the audience or characters being well aware of the context and the situation. The characters are playing out the falsehood that the audience is not present. However, mimes and dialogues taken as artistic choices of the playwright and director helped the audience to envision and relate to the darkness the characters are experiencing. This technique used by the Indian Sanskrit playwrights demonstrated one way of building a shared emotional state that would later be called "breaking the fourth wall". But this is not the only route to achieving such a goal.

In many cultures, the defined timeline and shortened period of duration for the entire event, for example in Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, gather the attention and concentration of the audience. However, in Sanskrit plays, the playwrights don't intend to confine the time spent, but rather build the entire story with detailed descriptions, actions, consequences, and perspectives without relation to clear time progression. The events are distinct between acts, however, the play does not jump over events or large periods of time. It's like the Sanskrit playwrights weren't trying to portray a time difference at all, but the opposite. They tried to let people see what they can't in real life: understanding the cause and effect of an event unrelated to themselves with a first or second-person perspective. Thus, thematic connection and an understanding of causality are reached while verisimilitude is being lost in some aspects.

In this sense, another very important scene is when the trial was being held. The Sanskrit playwrights wrote complex scenes that happen simultaneously, and in order for a play to be full length, it needs to contain at least more than 10 acts. The heavy theme of finding true wealth lies in the playful title. The lines in the play are composed of alternating verse and prose. By disregarding the unity of time, space, and plot, Sanskrit playwrights contracted a demonstration of a technique that was more explanatory regarding the context and progression of the play.

This will ultimately relate the audience to the characters through a tactic referred to as Rasa by the Sanskrit playwrights and breaks the fourth wall between these two mildly.

The idea of Rasa, by Bharata Muni, represents the emotions, sentiment, mood, and aesthetic experience (appreciation) that performers should evoke in their audience members, and 41 emotions that performers should embody. Sanskrit drama is metaphorical, and heavily grounded on the rasa theory. There are 8 Rasas (later 9): Shringara (erotic), Hasya (cosmic), karuna (sorrowful), Raudra (angry), Veera (heroic), Bhayanaka (fearful), Vibhatsa (odious), Adbhuta (wondrous), plus and extra Shanta (peace). The effects of the play will be a mix of the Rasas in performer, performance, and audience. Because again, the audience kind of felt omniscient, since they know who attempted to commit the murder. In other words, when it comes to Charudatta's execution, the audience is exactly like the witness in the scene, assembled by the enthusiasm of the headsman "Listen, good people, listen!", and they would behave the same as the playwright had planned, thus creates an involvement of both the actors and the audience. Henceforth, when the murderer is being revealed, "And then my master, Sansthānaka, found that she would not love him, and it was he, not this gentleman, who murdered her by strangling", the audience participated as part of the crowd, as their wills of justice are being fulfilled; they empathized with the character-crowds. It is very alike to Oresteia, as the Watchman began his speech with the context of the story and the memories of the audience.

In Agamemnon of the trilogy Oresteia, the Watchman talked about the ten years that had passed since the departure of king Agamemnon, and implicitly revealed the situations at that current time. For example, the omniscient elderly crowd also spoke of the truth and hideous things that had happened under the reign of queen Clydemnastra. This demonstrated how the past and causality are brought on stage in Greek tragedies. Moreover, the audience in this case is more educated in the sense that they are consciously aware of the stories of the Oresteia, and the fate of Agamemnon and

Cassandra. It is a very challenging way to build connections because it requires every audience member to be educated about the mythical stories of the gods. However, this could be easily achieved by the Greeks because their special culture required education in mythology and rituals. Specialized cultural knowledge of the audience facilitates understanding of the story. Thus, when the Chorus (omniscient crowd as characters on stage) discusses and elaborates on the plots and rituals, it facilitates the recall of information from the audience crowd. They function to facilitate the recalling of cultural knowledge. In Agamemnon, the Chorus is the group of elders who had witnessed both the secrets within the city and the arrival leading to the death of Agamemnon. In the Libation Bearer, the Chorus is the maid of Electra who accompanied her in the discovery of Orestes and performed the ritual chants and dances on the altar of Agamemnon. The Furies in the Eumenides are the Chorus itself, who was consistent in persecuting prince Orestes.

The Chorus is not a simple narrative, instead, it often has its own purpose in context, characteristics, storyline, point of view, and emotions. It is always a group of people who share similar identities that represents a massive force, either in society, in abstract form, or in context. It provides guidance to the fictional world. Such identity reconciled with the audience group, thus in most cases, the Chorus also acted as a transition for the Greek audience from themselves to the characters. The chorus as a mirror of the audience, catalyzing the transition from themselves to the characters, functions very similarly to the prologue in the Sanskrit Plays, where it guided the play into its own reality.

In the Agamemnon, the past was brought on stage by the Watchman, who revealed the stories that happened within the ten years Agamemnon went to Troy; it is fairly similar to the case in Oedipus Rex, where Tiresius reveals the old tales and oracles. The story in Agamemnon still goes on in chronological order, it happens along the straight timeline and doesn't bend back with Montage.

The story jumpstarts at the end of the ten years of war, starting with the watchman seeing the fire is lit. It is the first transition pulling the memories of the educated audience about the stories of the family. With this detailed introduction, the attention is rather focused on the later parts of the story than the Battle of Troy itself. It ends with the coronation of Clydemnastra. Soon it switches perspective and time but not space.

It starts with Orestes at the altar of Agamemnon, the altar and the death of Agamemnon make the connection between the first and second play of the trilogy, and it ends with Orestes being chased by the furies after he had killed his mother, leaving bloodstains on his hands. At last begins the last of the trilogy, starting with the priestess' vision of Apollo's altar. It seems less relatable, however, it is actually using the vision of a third character, showing a film-like opening scenario of Orestes, Apollo, and the sleeping furies.

Moreover, Orestes mentioned the bloodstains on his hands getting less visible. This time, it is a switch in time, and space, but not perspective/character.

Thus, in Greek theater, one possible way of transitioning between plays can be preserving one of the three (mainly the first two): Perspective/Character, Space, and time. This is also a technique used by the playwrights of antiquity in order to guide the audience through the trilogies to better understand and align with the plot itself. The flow of the trilogy continues perfectly by performing all three plays within the same day, while the separation and distinction between the tragedies were done by breaks from performances, interfered by other events happening in the carnivals.

This convention that agitates the audience in sensation and recollection was also a technique being used by the Noh theater in Japan. The Japanese incorporate this choral element into their narration characters in which the characters helped explain the meaning and significance of a certain action or line in the play. Interestingly, Noh theater also focused on recalling memories and stories of the audience. In most situations, the audience was required to be aware of the story plot and purpose of the play in order to fully enjoy the art. Just like the ancient Indians and Greeks, noh theater preserved this pre-constructed relationship with its audience. A lot of noh inspirations came from existing tales of Japanese warriors and the legendary period of Samurai domination. These topics became more preferable because of their pervasiveness.

Nevertheless, many Japanese tales and cultures were adopted from the Chinese. For example in the Chinese play Snow in Midsummer, another technique the Chinese used to break the fourth was and reconstruct the connection between the characters and the audience was to openly reveal the conspiracies through duologues between antagonists. This will let the audience be aware of the coming events and help them better understand the root of conflicts and the reason for struggles. In the first act, Dr. Lu confessed to the audience directly how he is making unethical money with fake medicines and mistreatments. Or in this scene, the father and son of Zhang, as they hijacked Old Lady Cai for two marriages. In both scenes, the audience knew the secrets of many conspiracies way before the other characters. Moreover, Chinese plays also tend to use rather well-known tales and moral stories in constructing the plots and characters of the plays too. This effort will be attributed to the tendency to accentuate the teachings of these stories and appeal to the tastes of the majority of the audience. Many actions will be predicted before acted out in a character's speech, or in some other ways, the audience will be warned of the outcome. This was shown in Snow in Midsummer with the defense of Dou e, that if she is not guilty of accusation her blood will spill on the white clothes, and snow will fall during midsummer. When she was beheaded, what she claimed would happen all occurred one after another from the spilling of the blood,

snow in midsummer, to three years of extreme drought. The language used by the main character varies, but they often sing, especially the main female character, who sings most of the time. However, when the main character sings, or when the old lady talks about the background or Dou Tian Zhang summarizes the case, they are all speaking to the audience. And the main purpose of the play was to educate the crowd, thus, there will always be some fourth wall broken between the actor, character, and audience.

The change in location and time in this play is different from other ones. This story seemed to be describing a handful of people, and the Old lady can act as a co-main character, this story was like a biography for the character Dou e. It starts with her childhood and how she ends up in Cai's house, in the prologue. Then, introduced by a less important character, Old lady Cai talks about the time lapsed and things that happened. In this act, Dou e's life changed because of the Father and Son of Zhang. Then in Act 2, it seems to be something very specific, however, this event marks the literary turn in Dou e's life, even though it was rooted in act 1. The play discussed another situation in which Dou e 's life could've been different if the governor wasn't so egotistical. Dou e's death was the most important mark in act 3 and in the entire play, the fantastic magical swear she had sworn for her innocence. Then in Act 4, she was given justice by a re-judgment by her father, after the three years of drought she had cursed.

Each time-lapse was planned ahead somehow, so it's smooth, moreover, we don't feel weird because it discusses the life of one character, while we kind of stand in the point of view of a third person, thus we can see before and after the event. Such foreshadowing prepared the audience through the complete openness of plots in Chinese theater.

The language used by the main character varies, but they often sing, especially the main female character, who sings most of the time. However, when the main character sings, or when the old lady talks about the background or Dou Tian Zhang summarizes the case, they are all speaking to the audience. Such endeavor would be attributed to the essence of educating the crowd about either the ethical issue, or the political or social issue, thus, there will always be some form of a broken fourth wall between the actor, character, and audience.

Same accentuating tactics were used in the Spanish play Life is a Dream. Where the expectations were fulfilled in the discussion about good and vice, life and death. Different from the Chinese theater, the Spanish *autosacramentale* used extremely long monologues to explain the context and background of a character by themselves, and all the senses felt by the characters were expressed directly through words of descriptions, and the audience was given the ability to empathize and imagine along with the characters (At the beginning where woman heard the prince). These long monologues were ruptured by pieces of dialogue to make the discussion less tedious for the audience. In this case, the monologues were rather an opposite use of soliloquy, which is more similar to the duologues in Spanish plays. These duologues are more decisive and get the attention of the audience. Started off with a horse on the run, and while addressing her dissatisfaction with the horse, Rosaura had also addressed her state and dissatisfaction with Poland. Everything is shown in the conversation: as they tease each other, they also dress where they came from, and also what they are currently seeing, pushing the plot to proceed. Very detailed, vernacular, and expressive in words. These conversations are full of confrontations and questioning. The position in romance seemed to be different in Spanish plays (at least in Life is a Dream), usually, it's the female character falling involved with males who had shown support and understanding when they are struggling. So much imagery, every emotion was turned into a kind of imagery: affects the audience to evoke the same feeling from those images, instead of sympathy, it aroused glory and dignity. Female characters in this play seem to deeply embody some strength and attitude. In the design of his work Life is a Dream, Calderon had included multiple historically based elements in his era and milieu, such as Machiavelli and Secularism, also the court and its complexity of power. Thus reflecting the issues in the society while setting in eastern Europe, a place that was recognized as barbaric by western Europe. The usage of desengano (revelation or epiphany) for each of his major characters at the end of the play provided stylistic continuity and further cohesion between the overlapping narratives. The female characters Calderon had also related to the Italian Novella of avenging females: Calderon had set a style of drama that pulls inspiration and elements from surrounding and conflicting cultures. These relatable inspirations and fractions of surrounding culture would better relate the audience to the characters. The actions are also magical, the characters will be heard when they want to, and not by each other when they don't. This is similar to the Little Clay Cart. There are logic and thoughts in the story and very vivid characterization, instead of solely in plots. This is different from the Little Clay Cart.

A torn between court tradition and beyond court (retrains vs freedom; culture vs violence; civilized vs barbaric.) Everything felt like a dream at first, so it was sudden and unexpected, and he kind of lost control of himself like how you would lose it in dreams. This is the ultimate strategy taken by the Spanish playwrights, they present stories that are relatable and understandable for the current audience population. These debatable topics woven through the play raise a shared mental cognition between the characters and the audience, and among the audience themselves. This conspicuous element of its timeliness made sure that its audience thought about the same topic of debate during the performance, and even after the performance, thus reaching a shared mental state.

Using relatable social issues as the gist of plays was also

done by Henrik Ibsen in Norway, he addressed the bourgeois struggle in his plays, and displayed many familiar conventions from the society of his audience. By discussing the social and political issues in his plays, he gained the conscious attention of his audience.

However, the technique of gaining attention and communication with the audience is vastly different from the Spanish and the Sanskrit playwrights, not only by duologue or monologues but by realistic small talks. Henrik Ibsen, in Hedda Gabler, portrayed different conversations between characters in a private setting — the living room of the new house of the Tesmans. These specific Tete a tete engaged the audience in the position of listeners of these conversations and constructed a cryptic atmosphere for the revelations of secrets about other characters in the play. The history and the contexts of many characters were often kept unknown to the audience, thus, while they felt like they've participated in a private conversation, they also feel the need to investigate deeper into the truth, which in the case of Hedda Gabler, is what Henrik Ibsen was trying to manipulate the audience to do: to mimic the action of recalling memories of other people or event. It created a subjective plot line that is filled with uncertainties, lies, and constant failures in the depiction of the rightful memories.

In the play Hedda Gabler, there are four Acts in total. The first act introduced the entrance of the main character Hedda and her husband George Tesman, it builds up a social circle that will be the core of this play, introducing more characters.

Just like with Mrs.Elvsted: there are many pre-existing opinions being given to the audience by the playwright through family conversations between the husband and the wife. It made the audience part of the tete a tete, which they are introduced to with ready-existing perceptions of the characters, like in actual social circles. Moreover, it also reveals the little talks behind others' back in every household. When Mrs.Elvsted hadn't arrived yet, his conversation with Hedda revealed more secrets about their pasts.

In the third act, there were only Berta, Hedda, and Thea in the entire house, and between Hedda and Thea, there was no complete frankness, and they each hid something from each other. In this scene, the audience and the characters keep hearing information about one another from other characters, and this information is basically manipulated rumors. Ibsen captured the turmoil in bourgeoise society of nobody being completely sincere, and they all hold some snobbish thoughts about the other. In the fourth act, there is quite a large rumor about the death of Lovborg, first, the signs of him being dead were very ambiguous, then as Hedda invests deeper from the words of Judge Brack, she learns more about Lovborg's death. However, this perfectly showed the theme of this play, in which every information given was through the words of other people during these small conversations. There were never solid proofs of anything. In Hedda Gabler, Ibsen portrayed the essence of social cycles,

because everyone seemed to have so much information from those conversations, but do they? Nobody necessarily owns the truth to every issue. All the secrets in this play take roots in the unexplained past, which were briefly mentioned by each characters. We can consider Hedda Gabler as a memory play. Though this technique seems unprecedented, in Oedipus Rex, the secrets lied in the past with the Shepherd, and in Agamemnon, the secrets are held by the watchman.

This is very different from the Greeks who used mysterious languages but was rather direct on the revelation and objectiveness of the secrets, since god was the arbitrator of justice and the focus was not on the tumultuous confusion of human mind and society. In another word, neither the audience nor the characters is omniscient while they seem to possess many knowledge of secrets of others. However, which such opposite approach, both the Greeks and Ibsen had successfully broken the imaginary fourth wall.

This seemingly coincidental effectiveness and convergence of goals of playwrights in different time and place will propose a question regarding the basic requirements of constructing a fourth wall, and the essence of such barrier. Moreover, was it necessary to break the fourth wall? and was it only to appeal to the audience and facilitate the audience to empathize with the characters and stories that the fourth wall was broken?

Many of the questions will be indirectly answered by the famous epic theater playwright Bertolt Brecht. In his work Mother Courage and her Children, he used a tactic that physically ruptures the nuance and the flow of the play: planning a person to come up on stage and fix the lightbulbs in the middle of a sentimental scene. For example, when Mother Courage just lost her second son Swiss Cheese, "...but if your anger's short one best leave right away...I changed my mind. I ain't complaining". The dark humor also penetrates the fourth wall, though this technique is rather antiquated, dating back to the comedies (Komoidia) in the Greek theatre. Many of the techniques Brecht used to break the fourth wall were not at all appealing to the audience but rather disturbing. Mother courage sang songs with cacophonous tunes that are hard to mimic and enjoy. However, these voices constantly reminded the audience of their separation from the characters themselves in order for them to reflect on current political and social issues and unsettlement, which Brecht wished to address implicitly. This technique served Brecht's purpose well since it does not evoke duty and arouse the need for certain changes, but rather calls for reflections and consciousness on these topics.

The arts and literatures of the time are changing, from an old school history to landscape, and come-backs of old literature styles. As said by Zola in the Preface to Therese Raquin, these are all results of the environment, many cliches of drama are dying their natural death because of their unrealistic-ness. And this is also because of the audience are getting tired of old plots and techniques and they crave for newer styles.

It is a very slow process for literature to evolve, exceptionally

with theater literature, thus it takes a long time for people to accept and appreciate new styles. Theatre literature never stay out of influence completely from its genres, because though old forms of drama had been seemingly replaced, the elements of these theaters remained in new works. The reason why it takes so long for literature to evolve is this: literature doesn't evolve completely, so it's hard to define the border line. Playwrights learn from playwrights, play from play. This is also why the ideology of the fourth wall is solidly establishing itself as a defined concept after existing for such a long period of time, it was learned through works of theater. This is how the technique of maneuvering the fourth wall survived and developed across culture and across time.

The shared pursuit of achieving some kinds of audience-actor relationship, thus, can not be merely concluded as an useful technique to gain the attention of the audience, but rather the unstable presence of the fourth wall and the shared emotional state as building the audience-actor relationship being a fundamental and foundational element of any form theatre art. The turning-in and turning-out action in between interacting characters shall bring forth each artifice. Being very theatrical, turned to a partner shutting out the audience, a moment of switch in the fourth wall by the actors can simply carry out this element. Even in shamanist performances, the rituals and the endeavor taken was not always serving the audience but the gods and spirits, the audience's presence were just as its witnesses, but the focus was not on the audience. However, the audience crow still receives participatory experiences but not directly given by the shaman. Such connection facilitates the understanding of plots and characters and assists the playwrights to expound

the central message of their works. Thus the oscillation between the fourth wall and the fourth wall, in another word, the change between the addressing subject, fabricates the slippage into fiction.

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