Surrogate Surfaces, Day 5

A broadcast by Surfatial, the collective of Satya Gummuluri, Malavika Rajnarayan and me, 13 December 2014. Watch on YouTube

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I made this transcript by machine from the recording and corrected it against the recording's description and my own records. I have not checked the words by ear. I checked a sample of the speaker names by ear, and corrected those I heard differently. [?] marks a word still in doubt and [unclear] a passage that could not be made out. A speaker is named only where the broadcast's screen or the recording's own words say who is speaking. Fillers such as "uh" and "um" are left out. Times are from the start of the recording.

A name followed by (?) was read from the screen at a moment when it changed from one speaker to the next, so the turn may belong partly or wholly to the speaker before or after.

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00:05 PRAYAS Hello. welcome to the fifth day of Surrogate Surfaces. We'll just wait for a few minutes to see if others are joining us, else we'll just continue.

00:42 So the first trigger for Day 5—

00:46 MALAVIKA Yeah.

00:47 PRAYAS —is where we arrived at yesterday.

00:51 MALAVIKA Okay.

00:52 PRAYAS So if we if we know the play between the actor's search for the face and the act of the interface—so we figured yesterday that instead of fumbling around words—

01:10 MALAVIKA Haan.

01:11 PRAYAS (?) — for the mask, act, surrogate surface, and all of those things, if we, if we just call it the interface, it might be simpler. So if we know this play between the face and the interface the—

01:32 MALAVIKA What is the interface?

01:37 PRAYAS Yeah, so if we know this play, then what is the narrative?

01:43 SATYA Yeah, I want to echo what Malavika said, how are we defining the interface? Is it a mixture of the actor and the act that they are playing, and how it is being acted out?

01:55 PRAYAS Yeah. So we are approaching it from —so what we arrived at yesterday was that unlike what we had positioned on the first day, that you know, the surface, the surrogate surface, the surface of the act is flat and that we cannot probe into it—that kind of fell apart yesterday, because what we were talking about is that the act is a multiple and not a singular, in the sense that the actor's search for his own self, and in that sense the actor's search for his own face—

02:45 MALAVIKA Mhm.

02:46 PRAYAS —and the shape that the act takes to kind of reflect that search—

02:56 SATYA Right.

02:56 PRAYAS —both are part of the act. So in that sense, the face, the search for the face, and the act of the interface.

03:08 SATYA Right, and it, and also I suppose the feedback from the audience probably feeds into it also.

03:15 PRAYAS Yeah. So it's not—yeah, it's not the singular process we were thinking —

03:25 *[a recording plays in the background: "[unclear] of music lovers."]*

03:27 —it to be.
03:28 *[a recording plays in the background: "[unclear] plays the music they want, when they want it."]*
03:32 *[musical chimes and metallic clinking]*
03:37 And they have a play, a play between them. there's some noise. Just a second.
03:52 SATYA And so the question was—
03:54 PRAYAS Yeah.
03:55 SATYA —what is the narrative?
03:57 PRAYAS Yeah, so if the, if the— we know this play now, we know this play from yesterday, so and this play itself seems to have its own internal drama, you know, it has a kind of movement of sorts, where the actor is searching for his own face, and the intensity or whatever of the, of the search is kind of reflected in the interface. So we have this—
04:29 SATYA Right.
04:30 PRAYAS —kind of play happening, we have this drama happening, so which is, which seems to be maybe complete in itself.
04:39 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.
04:40 So then what is the narrative? What is the broader curve of what's happening on stage? Or, you know, in the, in the—what's happening in the environment?
04:58 MALAVIKA I'd like to understand what you're calling the face, also. Because from what I understood of yesterday's discussion are you—are you referring to the self as the face? Because that was largely what the discussion was about.
05:15 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah. Yeah.
05:17 The fact that during the moment of enactment, there is this ambiguity of where the self is located.
05:28 PRAYAS Yeah.
05:28 Yeah.
05:29 MALAVIKA (?) Whether that moment of enactment is actually what you're talking of, the interface.
05:36 PRAYAS Right. so yeah, both —yeah, both are true. In the sense we are looking at the face as a more pragmatic understanding of the self, as something which is, you know, something which is more closer to us and that we can refer to more easily.
06:01 MALAVIKA (?) So, but face again becomes—I mean, the way I understand it—becomes a projection of the self.
06:09 PRAYAS The face—yeah, it becomes—so, in the sense you know, so what I found interesting in what Inder was saying yesterday basically, is that all that we have is a search for the self. You never have—you are— I mean, it's not that you're ever able to fix the idea of who you are perfectly.
06:40 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.
06:41 PRAYAS (?) So it's always a kind of chase, a kind of seeking.
06:49 SATYA (?) And so the face is also changing.
06:52 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, exactly. So because it's always a pursuit, but never a —there's, it's always a journey and never a, you know, arriving—
07:02 SATYA Yeah.
07:03 PRAYAS —it has its —yeah, the face is a projection, but like Sam was saying earlier, it is a, it is a current projection of your maybe understanding of who you might be.
07:21 SATYA But at the same—but also there is an understanding that is not the self. Like, which is what I was—I tried very briefly to say yesterday, that there is something behind the face, too.
07:37 PRAYAS Right. So what is that?

07:40 SATYA So for example, the inter—and maybe it's not useful at the moment, but it feeds into the creation of that face slash interface.

07:51 PRAYAS Yeah, so what is that? That which is behind the face?

07:57 SATYA And to me, that was a self. I feel like there are various selves.

08:07 PRAYAS Right. Right. So you're saying one of the elements of what the self might be to the actor might be reflected in the face, but there are other elements of that—

08:21 SATYA Yeah.

08:22 PRAYAS —self which might actually not be reflected in the face. Yeah.

08:25 SATYA Correct, which are not necessarily needed or appropriate at that moment to be reflected in the interface.

08:32 PRAYAS Right. Or which basically have no way of being reflected in the face. So, you know, it's —they're basically they have some other form which might not —yeah, they don't reflect through.

08:50 SATYA Yeah, I mean, it's not needed. Like, I may be a person who's a glutton, but that doesn't need to come out in my act. I don't know. I could be somebody who's very angry, but I could put on a different face where the anger doesn't necessarily [unclear].

09:07 SATYA (?) Yeah.

09:08 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

09:09 But the—but Satya, the are you kind of mixing together the face—

09:18 SATYA Mhm.

09:19 PRAYAS —and the act? So, or the interface? So are you mashing both of these together?

09:26 SATYA So, the face is not—no, I don't think they—there is a mash, but the interface is consisting of more than just the face, is what I'm feeling now.

09:39 PRAYAS (?) True. True. Yeah.

09:40 SATYA The inter—right? Yeah. I mean, the interface includes what the audience is perceiving. The interface is also built upon—it's the borderline between the actor and the externality.

09:54 SATYA (?) Right.

09:58 MALAVIKA (?) So what is the narrative you're—

10:00 ... trying to find because for me the narrative would be the play itself is the narrative because—

10:10 PRAYAS No, so I mean you have—

10:12 MALAVIKA (?) You're looking to [unclear] that self. [?]

10:16 PRAYAS Yeah, no, I mean you have elements of external narrative, right? Which in the sense sometimes you are part of a story and so your act has a specific role in the story.

10:33 MALAVIKA (?) Right.

10:35 PRAYAS (?) And so that becomes another factor to deal with for rendering your interface in the sense.

10:46 MALAVIKA (?) So are there different—

10:47 [unclear] narrative then. The reality or the context, wherever you're situated, whether it's your home or your surrounding, your environment, that, won't that become the narrative? Or wouldn't that determine the narrative?

11:00 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean, yeah, so you know, traditionally the narrative is understood to be that which makes the actor move, you know gives the actor motivation to change the interface, right? So why does the, yeah, exactly. So the narrative determines the act traditionally.

11:26 Yeah.

11:29 So I mean I'm just holding on to the traditional idea. I'm not—

11:35 SATYA But you know, to me I feel like there's parallel narratives going on at the same time. There's parallel, I mean, there's one which is I mean there are various things at the same time. So which narrative?

11:56 PRAYAS (?) Okay. So—

11:58 Like—

11:59 —parallel narratives will mean that there is at least one.

12:06 SATYA (?) Oh yeah, okay. Yeah.

12:10 PRAYAS And does this, and this narrative, if at least one of the narratives has some way of moving the actor out of his own inertia—

12:27 NU (?) Yes.

12:30 PRAYAS —right? And —

12:32 NU Yeah.

12:33 PRAYAS (?) —and moving the actor out of his inertia is the objective of the environment, because if the actor just sits around doing nothing—

12:47 SATYA Does the environment—

12:47 NU That could also be perceived as the act.

12:49 SATYA —have an objective? The environment neces— I mean, the environment is the one who's sitting around.

12:57 NU (?) Environment sets the conditions, but the act—

12:59 SATYA Right, so it's just sitting around. It's not acting.

13:00 NU —is determined by [unclear].

13:04 But it influences the act, so it's—

13:06 SATYA Yes, it influences, yeah.

13:07 NU (?) —participating, yeah.

13:08 SATYA Yeah.

13:09 SATYA (?) It's not just sitting around, it's actively—

13:12 No, act is something which is done deliberately. Is that something we agree on?

13:18 PRAYAS (?) R-right. But not deliberately—

13:20 NU Or—

13:22 PRAYAS —I mean, I would say not deliberately to satisfy some internal motivation, but deliberately to satisfy at least the compulsion which is arrived at through, you know, which is stated by the environment or stated by other actors or, you know. So I'm not sure if that is deliberate in the sense that you know, there is an intention and agenda of the actor—

13:54 SATYA Right. Exactly. Because you had mentioned the word agency earlier.

13:58 PRAYAS Yeah.

13:59 SATYA And I feel like, who has agency?

14:02 PRAYAS Right.

14:05 SATYA So in that sense the actor, we are assuming that the actor and the audience, they have agency, or does the, does even the viewers have agency?

14:15 PRAYAS I mean, at this point I would actually go back and withdraw that.. I mean, I'm not sure if either one of these entities that we're talking about have— I mean, we don't have any reason to believe that they have agency so far.

14:34 SATYA Okay.

14:35 PRAYAS I mean, it seems. And, but to respond to your environment sitting around— I mean, you said that the environment sits around, the environment doesn't do anything. But the environment owns the act, right?

14:49 SATYA Yeah, it does, it does. But what I'm trying to say is if the environment, by, it's like —

14:58 MALAVIKA It contains—

14:59 SATYA —it's not choosing. Yeah, it contains everything and it doesn't choose to, it's not choosing to do anything. It's, it just is. So what is the act? I guess I'm confused now. What is the act?

15:12 PRAYAS Yeah, so the, I mean okay. But, I mean, I would think—

15:16 NU (?) Act is propelled intent. Could be.

15:19 SATYA Act is what?

15:20 NU It's propelled intent.

15:22 SATYA Right, so propel and intent both have a lot of something behind it.

15:32 SATYA (?) .. what could that be?

15:36 PRAYAS I mean, I was going on to say that the environment might be a container, might be something that owns the act, and in that ownership, in that containment, it has its own biases, in the sense that it has its own desire because you know—

16:00 SATYA Yeah, it's like water flows, that the ground has gradient, so water flows in a particular direction. That's— is that intent? I don't know, but there is a bias.

16:10 NU I don't know if environment has a bias, because bias is something that [unclear] direction. [?]

16:13 PRAYAS No, environment—

16:15 NU Environment contains everything that you want to look at or what—

16:19 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, but the environment definitely has a bias.

16:25 SATYA And bias is not positive or negative, it is just a leaning. It's just, you know, the construction—

16:33 NU I think it contains everything, so bias is basically bent towards a certain aspect. So—

16:41 SATYA Yeah.

16:42 NU —saying that environment has a bias is to say that environment is incomplete in some way.

16:48 PRAYAS No, that's just another way of saying that different entities or actors or you know, whichever other units, need different need a different environment. But because just you know, because they all happen to be present in—

17:08 SATYA Yeah.

17:09 PRAYAS —one particular environment, it's obvious that—

17:12 SATYA Yeah.

17:13 PRAYAS (?) — it's more suited for certain actors than the others.

17:18 SATYA Yeah.

17:23 So does that mean that then the environment is providing the narrative?

17:28 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean that's that seems to be where we are headed right now, in the sense that the environment also the environment tailors the narrative and determines the act, because if, for example, you want to replace one act from another, or you know, one act with another—

17:59 SATYA Yeah.

18:01 PRAYAS —so if you make a series of changes in the environment you could determine that act in a different way.

18:14 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

18:23 MALAVIKA (?) I was just thinking whether it's, you take the example of acting as a you know, whether it's a theatrical setting or whether you're talking of acting as life. I mean, I think this whole discussion came from the crux of, you know, trying to locate where the self is in this process of enactment. And like when you take on a role or a persona, or where exactly, what becomes the self and what becomes the persona, you know? So I just keep feeling that even

when you talk of the environment, the play between the self and the persona and the self and the environment is persistent. You cannot have one, you cannot look at one without the absence of the other.

19:19 SATYA (?) Yeah.
19:21 So there's—
19:22 PRAYAS (?) The play between the environment and the—
19:25 MALAVIKA Self, and the environment, and the persona. And—
19:28 PRAYAS Okay.
19:29 MALAVIKA —so if you take these three, it's like a triangular relationship, you know? You have a self and you have the persona and you have the environment. That is, there seems to be—
19:44 MALAVIKA (?) How do you differentiate— sorry. How do you differentiate the self from the persona?
19:49 NU (?) You can't!
19:50 MALAVIKA So how is it two different things?
19:52 MALAVIKA (?) Because there—
19:53 NU (?) How is it a triad?
19:54 MALAVIKA (?) —I would say that it— there are two different positions.
19:58 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, I mean so—
20:00 New it seems to be the in terms of what you were talking about yesterday, the face and the interface. So the
20:08 SPEAKER 2 The face is one of the, well, face is also the interface.
20:12 PRAYAS (?) No, it's not. I mean, that's not what you were talking about yesterday.
20:17 SPEAKER 2 That's what we, I thought we established the face is one of the interface. Well, interface is a more neutral word for the face or the mask. But essentially they are surfaces through which you communicate.
20:31 PRAYAS Yeah.
20:31 SPEAKER 2 It's a medium.
20:33 PRAYAS (?) Right.
20:34 SPEAKER 3 But if they were the same, you would you wouldn't want to give them two different names.
20:39 PRAYAS Yeah. So, I mean the way that the face and the interface were different to begin with was that the interface is actually there. The, you know, the act is actually rendered into an act, whereas the face is only your seeking. you know, so yourself is only something that you're seeking. It's not there. What is there is the nature of the desire with which you seek it. And so
21:17 SPEAKER 4 One of the manifestations of the that search is an interface.
21:22 PRAYAS Yeah.
21:26 Which takes us to the trigger two, which is
21:33 Is the narrative, which we have now understood to be provided by the environment is a is a mass with necessary structural elements? do you agree and or o- or not?
22:02 SPEAKER 4 I mean, what is a mass?
22:03 PRAYAS Is it a mass
22:04 SPEAKER 2 Sorry, I missed that.
22:05 PRAYAS (?) I mean, is Yeah, is it a mass with some necessary structural elements? and the mass here would be, I mean, the nature of the narrative. The narrative itself.
22:20 SPEAKER 2 So, mask is very carefully crafted and it's pure intent and it has to look a certain way and it's well thought through, it's no coincidence.
22:32 PRAYAS Yeah, not the mask. Mass. Mass.

22:35 SPEAKER 2 Oh, mass. Sorry. Okay. Sorry.

22:35 SPEAKER 4 M-A-S-S.

22:39 SPEAKER 3 The mass of what?

22:41 PRAYAS (?) Of the narrative. Is the texture is the texture of is the nature of the narrative does it does it have necessary structural elements in the sense, you know for example, the ping- the beginning, middle, and end or whichever other structural elements? are they necessary or not?

23:16 SPEAKER 2 I don't know if it's necessary.

23:16 SPEAKER 4 So structure is a construction.

23:19 SPEAKER 2 Surely it has a structure, but whether we know of the structure beforehand or not as we go along is the question really, but certainly it has a structure.

23:32 PRAYAS Yeah, so

23:33 SPEAKER 2 That's how we determine it's a narrative, right?

23:36 PRAYAS Right. So what

23:38 SPEAKER 2 Apart from the environment, right? I mean, you can see that separately, can you not?

23:45 PRAYAS Yeah. No, so where does that structure emerge from? And if in every form that it emerges, does it betray this similar kind of structural elements?

24:04 SPEAKER 4 Just, is there a pattern to the structure?

24:07 PRAYAS Yeah. So is structure a necessary element of narrative, or is narrative without structure, without structural elements, also a narrative?

24:32 SPEAKER 4 I think a

24:33 SPEAKER 3 Yes, go ahead.

24:35 SPEAKER 4 I think a narrative without even a random thing can be looked at as something that has structure, and something that is has a structure can also be looked at as I think it's the frame you're looking through.

24:53 SPEAKER 3 Yeah.

24:55 PRAYAS So what's the frame?

24:58 SPEAKER 2 Well, it doesn't have to logically follow or continue this con- Well, does it have to have continuity? Is that what you're asking? Because a narrative could be very abstract also. Right?

25:17 PRAYAS Yeah, so, but does it at whichever level of abstraction and distortion or, you know, whatever, does it need to have some necessary structural elements?

25:33 SPEAKER 3 Yeah, I would imagine so because if you're looking for something, if whether you're looking for the character or the self or you know, a story or a situation, it one way or another it will have to have a few props.

25:57 SPEAKER 2 Well, even if it doesn't, we try to give meaning by trying to connect certain events and that's how it becomes a narrative. Right?

26:06 SPEAKER 3 Yeah.

26:07 SPEAKER 2 That's essentially that's the definition of a narrative. You connect it all together and perhaps make it cohesive. So it may not make sense at the end of it, but and it could also. And it's about seeing it as a whole. What makes it a narrative. You pick certain elements out of it and you try to make sense of it.

26:28 SPEAKER 4 So we make narratives out of nothing and we make nothing out of patterns. It could be both ways.

26:34 SPEAKER 2 Make narratives out of everything. And we It's a process of subtraction.

26:36 SPEAKER 4 Yeah.

26:39 SPEAKER 2 And then we try to knit it together into one cohesive whole.

26:45 SPEAKER 4 Like you have a bunch of data points which could mean something or they could mean nothing or it's just the frame.

26:51 SPEAKER 2 [unclear] Yeah.

26:57 So the structure is necessary for a narrative. I would think.

27:01 PRAYAS Smile. [?]

27:02 SPEAKER 2 Yeah.

27:02 PRAYAS So it is. Okay. But if it doesn't have that, so for example the narrative of a of a dream or of a of a psychedelic experience it is a narrative because you remember it as such.

27:26 SPEAKER 2 Right.

27:27 PRAYAS (?) But

27:27 SPEAKER 2 Perhaps a non-communicable experiential narrative.

27:32 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean, we can qualify it in different ways, but so what are those entities then? If they're not Because they seem to lack a structural basis of seem to lack structural elements of any kind. Like dreams seem to lack structural elements most of the time.

27:55 SPEAKER 2 No, it does have a structure

27:56 SPEAKER 3 Not necessarily.

27:58 SPEAKER 2 Can be communicated orally or something, through words. Maybe we need different mediums to relive that narrative, right? But certainly it has structure.

28:13 PRAYAS (?) No, the structure which, you know, why I'm saying this, it sometimes doesn't seem to be there in a dream is becau- simply because you know, you are

28:25 SPEAKER 2 Memory is tricky, yeah. You can't recollect everything you dreamt of.

28:30 SPEAKER 4 You know, if you define structure very simply such as beginning, middle, and end, then everything could be put into that format. Like there's a beginning of a dream, it's the dream happens, and there's an end to the dream. So that seems like a very simplistic definition of a structure.

28:47 SPEAKER 2 That's like a Bollywood narrative. Start, middle, end.

28:53 *[laughter]*

28:55 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean, that's not that's I mean, I would not say that's a

28:57 SPEAKER 2 Sorry [unclear]

29:00 PRAYAS No, I wouldn't say that's a definition of a structure, but that's a simplest kind of structure.

29:08 SPEAKER 4 Exactly. I'm saying the most simple way of looking at it.

29:11 PRAYAS Yeah. But so in a dream I don't know if the dreams with which actually end while you're sleeping

29:24 SPEAKER 4 Right.

29:25 PRAYAS I don't know if we even remember them. the kind of dreams which we have we seem to remember more are which end with our waking up.

29:38 SPEAKER 4 Right, and the question is has it really ended or not? We don't know.

29:42 PRAYAS Yeah.

29:43 SPEAKER 3 See, one way or another, I see that the mind is central to the dream or any narrative. So even if there is nothing and you are creating a narrative out of it, your imagination is at play.

29:57 PRAYAS Right.

29:58 SPEAKER 3 So the moment the imagination comes to play how you define structure is again, it becomes fluid because you the imaginative sense is always trying to break any kind of rational

structure. Or, you know, or follow it. So it's fluid. You can make a meaningful story up or you can make something that has more obscure

30:00 PRAYAS The..... You know, but I mean I'm saying that the point of [unclear] changes in such a way in a dream that, you know, it's you're not look— you're not on the outside looking in, but you're on the inside looking— you're not looking out.

30:13 You don't necessarily need to look out. You're...

30:15 I think it's looking within, if anything, really.

30:19 Yeah, I mean, you are actually in the... you're the actor in your dream most often.

30:26 Yes.

30:26 Right? So you are not really... So in that sense, the narrative yeah, what kind of structural elements exist in the narrative for I mean so in that sense we can actually look at the dream as a simple theatrical production of a narrative which, in which, you know, not looking at it from the audience's point of view, but from the actor's point of view.

30:42 SPEAKER 4 Tangential kind of.

30:44 SPEAKER 3 Yeah. But one way or another, you move from one entity to another and you try to make meaning.

30:58 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, but here I would say that this aspect of intention is not strong, because the subconscious functions very differently from the conscious deliberation. So I...

31:12 MALAVIKA But if you look at it abstractly, like, if you, if you look at abstract definition of the act and the actor and the viewer, even if the subconscious is acting differently...

31:25 SATYA Right.

31:28 SATYA (?) I mean, there is an observer here, there is a viewer, there is an actor, there is an act going on, there is even a narrative...

31:37 SATYA (?) ...in the dream.

31:39 PRAYAS (?) But who is the observer?

31:41 SATYA The self, or whatever that, I mean, whatever that thing that is aware is.

31:49 SATYA (?) But isn't the awareness or yourself or you who or whoever you might be, doesn't that identify with an actor?

32:02 PRAYAS I mean, you... then we go into the lucid dreaming, we can go into that, but the point is, there is still...

32:10 SATYA (?) ...when you wake up, you are aware of the dream that happened, many times. Who is, who is the one who is aware of that dream? So is that the observer? Is that the viewer?

32:23 Or is that the environment?

32:29 PRAYAS (?) I mean, if we, if we spoke of the environment as that which contains the act, then your mind very literally is the container for the dream.

32:41 PRAYAS (?) Correct. Yeah. It is the environment, yeah, and the environment contains the actor and the and the viewer.

32:51 SATYA Yeah, I think we... can we say the actor is less active and more passive there?

32:58 The actor is less passive?

33:00 MALAVIKA No, more... the actor becomes passive in a kind of subconscious state, because you're not consciously acting or doing anything consciously when you are sleeping or you're in a subconscious state.

33:18 MALAVIKA (?) But it is a projection. I mean, even on stage, the actor, if we just take a literal stage, the actor is not supposed to have a consciousness. The actor is only playing out the narrative. And in the, within a dream, the actor, which is that character, is just playing out whatever the environment is sending it, any information. Right?

33:42 SATYA Yeah. I mean it's a, it's a similar kind of scenario actually. I mean so the actor inside your dream world...

33:55 SATYA (?) ...in that sense doesn't have an insight.

33:58 PRAYAS Yeah.

34:01 No, the actor in, when you're dreaming is still you. So it's the... I mean...

34:07 SATYA (?) What about lucid dreaming?

34:10 SATYA (?) Yeah, I mean, I want to keep that aside for this. I just, as I said earlier, like in this situation, if you don't think of lucid dreaming, there is somebody who's acting out. But how is this relate, relating to the question, which is: does the narrative has, have a mass with some necessary structure elements?

34:35 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, so I mean I brought in the dream only as an example of a narrative which doesn't seem to have the same kind of structural elements that we are that we expect from narratives and we observe in narratives around us. Because either we never have the chance to actually have a closure in the dream, or we don't remember it completely, or whatever. But I just brought it in as an example to see if it holds up to the structural element discussion.

35:24 SATYA (?) I feel like it does, as I think Malavika also said earlier, there are structures of narratives which can be pretty abstract. So it could fit into... it's upon us if we want to, you know, like you have dream interpretation: why did this happen, then why did that happen? So you're like trying to put a structure on top of it. So, or we're trying to make a narrative out of it. So it's possible to say that there is a narrative.

35:54 Yeah, it's really hard to say, I mean, structure doesn't exist because we fail to see it. I mean, because there are a lot of things that we won't understand. Doesn't mean there's no structure.

36:03 PRAYAS (?) That's true. Yeah.

36:06 NU Sam, would you like to add something?

36:09 MOSES SAM Yeah, in a bit. Sorry.

36:12 PRAYAS (?) Okay. So we, I think at this point we move to our third trigger which is : is friendship only possible between actors who agree with each other's act? and is this agreement necessary, or is there some other minimum condition for friendship?

36:49 SPEAKER 2 Why friendship? I'm just curious.

36:51 MALAVIKA My question too.

36:53 NU (?) Yeah, same here. What is friendship?

36:55 MALAVIKA (?) What is friendship?

36:57 SPEAKER 3 Why not a relationship between the actor and the stage, or the actor and the other actor?

37:03 PRAYAS No, so I mean, okay, yeah. I mean, why friendship? Because if we have we have actors and, you know, we have thought of actors as..

37:16 MOSES SAM How about harmony?

37:17 PRAYAS ...as projections of certain kind and all that. no, so I'm just explaining why friendship. It's so... would actors really sympathize with other actors and form a bond, be it of friendship or something else, if not determined by the narrative? Or would actors really do that in terms of you know, if the act of another actor is in agreement, so with their own?

37:55 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah, go ahead, go ahead.

37:58 MOSES SAM (?) But that's a little more complex, right Prayas, what you just said, than what the question is asking?

38:06 PRAYAS (?) .. No, I mean, I just described the question more elaborately, which is...

38:15 Okay.

38:16 PRAYAS (?) Is agreement a precondition for actors...

38:20 PRAYAS (?) To.. Yeah, so what is the bond that actors form between each other, and is that bond and I'm just referring to that bond as friendship, is that bond determined by the narrative or is it...

38:37 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

38:38 ... some form of agreement that happens in some other way?

38:43 MALAVIKA See, disagreement can also build a relationship between two actors, because you know the polemic opposite. So you're always aware of that polemic opposite of what you have as an opinion or something. So I don't see how it's only based on agreement.

39:13 PRAYAS No, but even if you disagree and if you, even if you're aware of the you know, the different, difference in positions unless you're you have an agreement in at least your motivations —let's say there are actors who want to achieve similar political ends, and they might not have any other agreement.

39:42 Yes.

39:43 PRAYAS (?) So that is a type of agreement.

39:44 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah.

39:48 PRAYAS So agreement, is agreement necessary? The question is...

39:53 SATYA Yeah.

39:53 ...the agreement may be necessary for that bond to

40:02 PRAYAS Yeah. So is agreement is ag- is agreement necessary for this bond to form between actors or is there something else which can all also allow for this bond to exist?

40:17 MALAVIKA He just communication's enough. [?]

40:20 PRAYAS (?) What is enough?

40:22 MALAVIKA Communication.

40:23 PRAYAS (?) Communication is enough.

40:25 NU So agreement essentially opens channels for communication and then you can build on that. Perhaps a bond could form at the end of it, perhaps not. But at least it opens channels for communication. And unless that happens, I don't know how one can be friends or something.

40:41 MOSES SAM No, I think what Malavika's saying is correct because communication is the basic thing. Like look at a movie, right? Like a hero can't exist without the existence of a villain and these guys don't even agree on anything.

40:55 But they still communicate, right?

40:58 NU But that's not true.

40:59 PRAYAS How did you get it?

41:01 NU No, their relationship defines them, right? I mean, if not for the villain, we won't have a hero. So they define each other in some way.

41:10 NU (?) No but

41:11 MOSES SAM The relationship it's not the other way around. It's not that relationship defines them, it's these two poles

41:17 NU Yeah, their roles in it.

41:20 PRAYAS No, but doesn't communication emerge from agreement? So in the sense

41:25 NU No, I'm not sure.

41:26 MOSES SAM Yeah.

41:28 PRAYAS (?) No, if you agree to be the hero at least, and if someone agrees to be the villain and you agree to play these roles

41:42 SATYA Oh.

41:42 No, I think it only emerges by affinity. It's a chance that happens out of affinity. You put two actors together or five actors together and if there are certain things that there is handshaking happening between each of these actors. And if one of those is in line with the actors agenda, it may be disagreement, it may be agreement, but there is an exchange happening, which could be communication.

42:13 PRAYAS So this affinity this affinity that you mentioned what I mean affinity, you know, seems to be really something supernatural, right?

42:24 SATYA Oh no, I mean by affinity just proximity maybe, just you're around.

42:30 PRAYAS Okay. So not as in some really design in the broader cosmos.

42:39 SATYA I mean the only design I could see is that two objects having a relationship the cosmos has designed it in such a way that if this A exists and for A to have a particular relationship it needs to have B in the other person. If that happens to come to each other then they have a relationship. That's the cosmic design. that could be one way to look at it.

43:08 NU Well debates bring about more clarity than agreement because if we agree on everything there's nothing left to be said.

43:15 SATYA (?) Great.

43:15 SATYA (?) I'm looking at agreement not as a positive thing, I'm looking at the word agreement as a handshaking, there is an exchange, there is a communication.

43:23 PRAYAS Yeah, so I mean what you're saying is also starting from a point of agreement which is let's say we agree to at least consider each other.

43:37 Right.

43:38 NU Agree to disagree.

43:40 SATYA Exa yeah, something like that. Or anything. I agree to acknowledge that you exist.

43:46 PRAYAS Need to acknowledge, consider whatever and from that point there is a criteria check and if that is passing you can like consider some kind of a bond formation. But so the I mean this agreement is then necessary, right? So I mean do we come to that or Sam you want to come in with something else?

44:13 MOSES SAM Okay. So the di when you guys were talking about the cosmic design you know, the design that I was thinking about was the ontological design. Now there's this whole concept of how the art or the tools that we create in turns creates us, you know, it designs us you know, it dovetails back, it talks back to us as whole concept of Internet of Things and everything. So this agreement or this relationship not just between the actors who is acting, but it's also between the actors and the tools, the actors and the environment and the actors and the self itself. You know, so this is this multiple layers of relationship lines happening and it also depends on from which layer it establishes this relationship to the another layer within another actor. So let's say you know the distance between myself and the surrogate surface or the past memory that I have left behind. So there are these two layers that I'm thinking of. And these two layers communicate or establish relationships in the terms that we are talking here. It really it establishes relationship with the layers of the other actor. Right. So there are one, two, three these four types of relationships that's happening. so I think the most sustainable one would be where the actor as in the self and the surrogate surface the distance is zero then the surrogate surface becomes the actor itself, which is the self becoming the complete actor, right? And if that establishes a communication with the other self which distance between that surrogate surface is zero, then that relationship is sustainable. That's how I see it.

46:08 SATYA So the conditions at a given time determine the rela establishment of a relationship.

46:17 MOSES SAM Can

46:17 Yeah. The time and the space.

46:23 SATYA The coordinates basically.

46:24 MOSES SAM Yeah. I mean not the environment but more about the time and space, right? Like so let's say I'm this self

46:34 NU What time it's case?

46:36 MOSES SAM (?) Yeah, but there's gravity also involved it.

46:43 No what I

46:51 PRAYAS Yeah something.

46:54 NU We've lost him, have we?

46:56 PRAYAS Have we some right?

46:58 NU Yeah, I can't hear Sam.

47:01 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, I can't hear him as well.

47:03 SATYA I asked when you wor use the word agreement, w did that have any connotations to you?

47:09 PRAYAS No I mean I basic

47:12 NU Yeah, we he's back.

47:14 PRAYAS Yes, Sam, you want to continue what you were saying?

47:20 MOSES SAM Yeah. Can you guys hear me?

47:22 NU Yeah, we can hear you.

47:24 MOSES SAM Okay. So I was basically saying I don't know where environment Huh, so then sorry. No, I was basically saying so if you are vibrating at this level where your self and the act is in complete harmony, right? And that establishes a relationship with another person who might be at the same level or who might have these two surfaces, right? Like the self and the surrogate surface. which is still okay. You know, at least one person should be at the level where the distance between the surrogate surface and the self is zero.

48:04 SATYA Why should that be? I don't see why that should be.

48:07 PRAYAS I don't think s agree with this either because yeah

48:13 SATYA Because I mean I feel like there are so many so many actors who have no clue of what they really are or whatever. They're not even close. Yeah.

48:23 MOSES SAM One person who should be completely aware of what's happening, then it's a conscious, sustainable relationship. Okay. Otherwise it becomes a the relationship itself becomes an act.

48:36 SATYA No, but then you're preconditioning that one pers one of the actors has a certain kind of growth or a level. But I disagree with that. I feel like anything can have a relationship with anything else.

48:48 PRAYAS Yeah, it can.

48:49 MOSES SAM (?) Happen I'm talking about this sustainable relationship, right? Like something that can

48:54 SATYA Sustainable relationship. I'm sorry, even in a s even to have a sustain like a serial killer has a sustainable relationship with the victims.

49:04 You know what I'm saying?

49:05 MOSES SAM Right.

49:05 Okay, so let's talk about that, right? So the serial killer is in harmony with his true self, which he knows that he's a serial killer, okay? What do you then have?

49:18 SATYA But that's not a good example actually. I mean I don't think it's

49:22 MOSES SAM It's a it's a good example of a sustainable relationship, I guess.

49:25 PRAYAS Yeah, that's a good one.

49:26 MOSES SAM (?) Yeah.

49:27 PRAYAS Yeah.

49:31 NU (?) Mm-

49:32 PRAYAS Who have no idea of who they are, like Satya just said. And but they have somehow managed to mount surrogate. Yeah s somehow m manage to you know mount and work away at other constructed selves on the surrogate surfaces with such attention to detail that their projections are very convincing and very consistent.

50:02 Yeah.

50:03 No. so what would be the problem? Let's say if your constructed selves, so your surrogate surfaces are really mature what does it matter if your selves are diluted or distorted or ambiguous or

50:20 NU Distance between the surrogate and the selves.

50:22 PRAYAS Yeah, because or does it matter? I mean, I don't know.

50:27 SATYA I feel like it's possible to have a relationship. Like you're in a local train and there are all these people with you every day going. You have no there's no connection but you're still there in that train with these people. There is a bond.

50:38 NU (?) Yeah.

50:40 NU (?) Right.

50:42 MOSES SAM Yes.

50:42 Yeah, but like okay, so then I think I have to kinda explain what the not I we have to explain what a sustainable relationship, I guess. You know I'm not saying it's not possible to have a relationship, you know, without one being aware. But all I'm saying is you would have that relationship, okay, but then it's again an act. The relationship itself becomes an act, you know, like the example that you gave, the l person standing next to you in a local train, probably you're interacting with them in some ways, but then it's not a sustainable relationship. And you know you're just assuming or the other person also assumes that there is this connection you're seeing every day, you know, but you know, at the end of the day it's an act.

51:25 SATYA But is it an act? I mean it's very real for me. Like if I'm sorry, if it is real for me what I feel for those that I don't even know.

51:37 NU So acts could be real too, but it's doing that you're falsifying things. A acts are real also.

51:46 MOSES SAM (?) No, I'm not looking at that aspect actually. I'm looking at see when I say act it

51:57 PRAYAS I mean we I think we are looking at we are stuck with these two things right now. One is that what we had from our you know from previous days. Essentially, if the surface of the act is flat, if the surrogate surface is basically if the act doesn't betray any self, if the act doesn't betray the self of the actor, then this might not be true. What Sam is saying might not be necessary. you know, it might not be necessary that your act and your surrogate surface your self and your surrogate surface need to be in close resonance for forming a stable or a relationship or a or a bond of whatever kind with another actor. But if we are going by what we where we paused yesterday with what Inder brought in that you know it's a multiplicity and it's not just the flat

53:07 Surface of that it's also

53:10 About it.

53:11 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, it's the face and the interface. Then it actually makes sense what you're saying, Sam.

53:19 I mean it makes sense to me. I don't know. Satya you might still have your points to

53:25 SATYA (?) St I still feel like there is a d distinct distance between the self and the actor, even if they are coming close to each other.

53:37 SATYA (?) Because there are multiple acts. There are multiple faces.

53:41 PRAYAS Yeah, but y you know I mean what I what I just basically tried to say was that you basically have some kind of equation in which one of the variables is definitely the act and one of the variables is the self. So even if it's a minor variable which doesn't have too much of a bearing on the final you know, what the l equation leads to, but it is a s it is it plays a part. And if it does

54:14 Then I mean you understand.

54:20 SATYA Yeah.

54:23 PRAYAS So I mean do you do you think so? do you think we can go with that you know the

54:33 The distance between the act and the self might even if it's enormous. Even if it's enormous, they both play a part in the in the

54:47 In the experience of some other actor who's getting to know you.

54:52 SATYA (?) Definitely.

54:54 MOSES SAM No then w what is the other person seeing? Is he seeing the self or is he seeing the act? So if you say the distance is too much, you know, if the other person is seeing the act or the facade that you're putting up there, then he's not getting to know the real you know, which is not sustainable, that's what I mean.

55:13 SATYA No, I don't think that's necessary for a sustainable relationship is what I'm saying. And other person is also two acts might be meeting each other. Two selves might not be meeting each other. One act may not be meeting another self. But two acts may also be meeting each other and have a relationship.

55:31 PRAYAS Yeah, because I mean think of

55:34 NU (?) This whole the true you is overplayed. I think it's all a matter of

55:39 MOSES SAM Yeah.

55:40 NU (?) Mixing the rasas and what elements you connect to and what you put together and emphasize more. And that's association basically, that's how people connect to each other. As opposed to the real you. I don't see what the real per you is. I don't know how it is.

55:56 PRAYAS No, but if you consider these two things that you know Sam that you were talking about these and i if you consider both of these being in a constant flux, which means the you know they're they are not stable positions. Neither your act nor your seeking for your for yourself or whatever, these are constantly in flux even if the actor who's trying to get to know you and even if the distance between the notion of yourself and your act is enormous, these are fluctuations. So they would at some point have a bearing on what the other actor knows you as.

56:53 NU (?) No.

56:55 MOSES SAM (?) No, that's okay, that's true.

56:57 [unclear]

56:58 MOSES SAM (?) That's agreed. Yeah.

57:03 INDER I mean I haven't I think at this point I'm only substantiating your point.

57:09 SATYA (?) Let's talk about agreement, right? Like we let's talk about what does it mean to agree.

57:13 SATYA (?) Yeah. What is the agreement?

57:17 MOSES SAM (?) When Prayas says something and we don't have anything else to say back then.

57:23 Dream.

57:24 INDER [unclear]

57:27 I think.

57:29 INDER (?) Agreement is deciding on a playground, basically. So where do we play?

57:33 NU In the

57:37 PRAYAS I think

57:40 PRAYAS (?) And just is yeah, higher. Yeah.

57:48 INDER (?) Yeah.

57:49 INDER (?) This point of discussion I don't know what has happened earlier. I would like

57:53 Introduced one

57:54 Term card.

57:54 Imbrication.

57:56 PRAYAS (?) Sorry.

57:58 INDER I would like to one term here.

58:00 NU If you could type it out this voice isn't very clear to

58:04 Yeah

58:05 NU (?) No.

58:07 INDER Can you hear me?

58:08 SPEAKER 1 Yes, we can hear you, but sometimes

58:12 INDER Yeah. So the term is imbrication. Imbrication is a medical term because when you have some surgery then the when the stitches happen, and after that the skin actually creates a new kind of formation on the surface, right? So for me, so which was not there before. So that is actually how we might introduce this term in our understanding of what is surface and what is the act, because there must be constant imbrication kind of a surgery happening while the new kind of surfaces keep on emerging. So that is how we can deal with this you know understanding of surface and the act as two different you know areas. So there must

59:04 PRAYAS How would you spell this word? I'm trying to get it.

59:07 INDER I am I am

59:08 NU (?) I spelt it out, I spelt it out. I have D R I C A T I O.

59:12 NU (?) Okay. Imbrication.

59:14 INDER But I'm just introducing it here.

59:15 INDER (?) Yeah.

59:16 The other thing is I would introduce here is the double burial. No double burial. Double burial was happening in Mexico and in ancient Kashmiri also. Where the where the earlier you know ancient people used to retrieve the bones of the dead, and once they retrieve the bones from the grave, then they would paint the bones with the with the red pigment or the white pigment, eat again. So that was that's basically the moment when we go into the mind or the idea of what the content of thought is, we kind of retrieve it back from and then when we lay down on the surface and to bury that again, everything changed. The process actually changed the second burial. That must be happening in theatre also. Because the moment we want to go and dig into the first thing happens in the mind. When something happens in the mind, we bring the content out, lay it on the surface, paint it and then when we bury it again after the during the theatre of it, things keep on changing. [?]

01:00:28 PRAYAS Read after which point you said? we bury it again after B. [?]

01:00:33 INDER (?) We after we paint the bones with some pigment, red or white. That was the ancient practice. The double burial is used in understanding of theatre.

01:00:45 PRAYAS Okay, but no, I missed the connection. Actually you said that in theater you bring things onto the act into the surface and

01:00:55 INDER Yeah, first something happens in the mind, then you bring it out of the mind, you when you lay it on the ground on the surface, you arrangement of the bones or of the or the ideas. We paint them with certain kind of a masks or language or pigment, and when we bury it again, when we after the theater or while the theater is on, things change. They are not buried in the same way when they were before in the mind. So this process of retrieving and burying again is also happening somewhere in the world of theater also, because we're talking about act also. So this is how because the surfaces and the because that way also we can talk about what is what is surrogate surface.

01:01:44 INDER (?) Good day. [?]

01:01:45 Because the moment we retrieve the bones from the grave, the moment we leave we lay bare on the ground, that becomes a surrogate surface. And to bury it back again in the grave. That is how we can keep on understanding the surrogate as well. I'm just I'm just because I joined late so I'm just introducing these two things.

01:02:06 PRAYAS (?) Right.

01:02:13 NU (?) Concepts are ever changing and it's futile to perhaps quote from something that's a hundred years old as well.

01:02:22 NU (?) Oh, cool.

01:02:23 INDER Ideas are constantly changing.

01:02:26 Yesterday also I also introduced this term called trick. Let us say Shakuntalam the first trick happened when the when the Dushyant and the Shakuntalam met. Right. The second trick happened when she was when she was constantly thinking of the king, her lover, and the ring fell down from her hands and went into the sipping and the fish and devoured the ring and that's how she got separated. Because no because the because this the sweet king, the city queen asked for some alms. So she was again tricked again. So there are t there are twice. One is when the king tricked her, and the second is when his when his memory tricked her. So the both times something is happening twice. It's not on the first time. [?]

01:03:20 Right.

01:03:21 So the so something is happening something is happening again, but then the same thing happens again. It doesn't remain the same thing.

01:03:29 PRAYAS So that I think connects to what we were talking about yesterday or day four. I think in the context of the loop, the repetition, yeah. I think that we were both we were all three of us, I think, yeah.

01:03:47 SATYA Yeah, that's right. Yeah.

01:03:49 PRAYAS Yeah. So I think the any anything further that anyone would like to add. so we are wrapping up this session and I think and also this season of surrogate surfaces. So if anyone has anything to add or we'll just conclude and conclude here, yeah.

01:04:13 NU Yeah, if you could say what I say.

01:04:17 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean I wouldn't want to summer I mean try to I don't think I'll attempt a summarization, but yeah just to introduce the next talk show and to float some in indefinite dates for that at this point as all of us are here and to and then to just thank everyone for being here and can wrap it. So the next study group I figured you know would I had this idea of resonance you know, so of resonant surfaces in the sense that you know we have all of these of we have had these discussions about ways of being and in these ways of being you might have you know, might have had refraction and you might have been able to mount a surrogate and all of that. But what ac actually enables you to

01:05:26 To

01:05:28 You know, to transfer, to break out or emerge, to in a way escape the gravit gravitational pull as Sam was talking about gravity. But really yeah so you know s get into this notion of how we intervene and not and in that sense emerge out of this I think introspective moment and really think about how do we act.

01:06:09 NU Your projections.

01:06:10 PRAYAS Yeah, so what is what is the projection, what is the what is the act, how do we how do we resonate with the wider set of events? that's something which if I had in mind for the next study group. But if anyone else would like to propose something for some other thing for the study group, please feel free to just send a message to the Surfatial page on Facebook and you know it this is just an idea that's floating, but if there's some other idea we can definitely mount that as well. And thinking of the March first week.

01:06:56 SATYA Sounds good.

01:06:58 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah, March first week is good. Thanks everyone for joining in and

01:07:03 MOSES SAM (?) Good job, Bus. [?]

01:07:05 MOSES SAM (?) Yeah, thank you for organizing.

01:07:07 PRAYAS (?) Thanks for joining in. Yeah. Great. Good night.

01:07:11 Thank you all. Goodbye.

01:07:13 SATYA Happy New Year.

01:07:15 SATYA (?) All right.

01:07:16 PRAYAS Yeah.

01:07:17 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

01:07:18 NU [unclear]
01:07:18 You don't care that.