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Capturing the Self: Memory, Spatiality, Temporality, and the Reproduction of Power in *Bramayugam*

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Abstract: Rahul Sadasivan's, Malayalam neo-genre film, *Bramayugam* (The Age of Illusion) has received critical attention for its nuanced representation of caste hierarchy, Brahminical authority, the uncanny *mana* (mansion), spatial confinement, and supernatural power. Building on these established interpretations, this article examines hegemony as a process of subjective dispossession through which domination reconfigures selfhood, memory, knowledge, temporality, and spatiality. It observes that Kodumon Potti's or Chathan's *mana* embodies not a site of physical captivity, but a temporal-spatial regime that progressively disrupts the *adiyan's* [captive's] spatial identity and temporal experience. Chaathan's subversion of ordinary temporality and appropriation of spatial relations produce disorientation, mnemonic erosion, and epistemic dependence. Thevan enters Chathan's *mana* with a coherent identity, caste history, memory, love of his mother, and desire for home; but prolonged entrapment gradually severs these coordinates, rendering him dependent upon the interpretive structures imposed by his Chathan, *thamburan* (lord). It analyses *Bramayugam's* deployment of magical realism as a narrative mechanism through which historically embedded hierarchy of caste and servitude become perceptible through the supernatural traces. Chaathan occupies contesting temporal positions as servant and master, oppressed and oppressor, captive and captor. His enslavement by the Brahminical Potti household transforms the supernatural into an allegory of spatial servitude, while his temporal appropriation of Kodumon Potti's corporeality subverts without dismantling the hierarchy that engendered his subjugation. The article contends that *Bramayugam's* insidious horror remains not in spatial captivity itself but in the transformation of the captive into a potential carrier of the power that produced his temporal captivity. Drawing on Foucault's conceptualisation of power/knowledge and transforming power relations, Ricoeur's conceptualisation of narrative temporality, spatiality, and identity, and Butler's observation of subject formation through subjection and recognition, the article observes how temporal and spatial traces of domination generate hierarchical subject formation and enable the reproduction of hegemonic power.

Keywords: Power, Horror, Memory, Captivity, Temporality, Spatiality

Rahul Sadashivan's *Bramayugam* has emerged as an explorative site of aesthetic allure and critical intrigue for its representation of seventeenth-century South Malabar, Kerala folklore, caste hierarchy, supernatural horror, and the decaying *mana*. Existing studies have examined these aesthetic dimensions through multifaceted approaches. Among them, Sukanya V. Mohan and Gigy J. Alex, in "Reimagining the Mana: Uncanny Aesthetics, Caste Histories, and Folkloric Counter-Narratives in *Bramayugam*," reconfigures the *mana* as an uncanny Brahminical space whose architecture, folkloric counter-narratives, and monochromatic aesthetics, destabilise caste and feudal hierarchies. Amala Kurup, in "A Comparative Study on Rahul Sadasivan's *Bramayugam* and Robert Eggers' *The Lighthouse* through Archetypal Lens," employs Jungian archetypal perceptions to interpret the films' shared horror configurations and the operation of the collective unconscious. Other related studies problematise *Bramayugam*'s anti-caste assertions by examining how its aesthetics of decay, hygiene, bodily impurity, and social exclusion may engender caste-configured associations of defilement even as it critiques caste authority.

Bramayugam occupies a distinctive cinematic aesthetic experience within Malayalam cinema through its neo-genre synthesis of magical realism, folkloric horror, psychological horror, historical reimagination, and austere black and white cinematography. Although Malayalam cinema embodies a substantial tradition of supernatural dramatisation, folkloric representation, and horror films, the sustained configuration of these generic and aesthetic strategies in *Bramayugam* converges a substantially different mechanism of horror. The film neither conforms entirely to premediated supernatural horror nor remains within the representational rationale of historical realism. Instead, Sadasivan creates a hybrid cinematic aesthetics in which folklore, supernaturalism, psychological disturbance, historical temporality, and spatial reality inextricably intersect. *Bramayugam*'s neo-genre configuration is significant not because it revisits recognisable genres but because it blurs the boundaries separating them, constructing an aesthetic continuum in which no distinct representational paradigm can fully contain the events unfolding within Chathan's *mana*. The historical setting, folkloric reimagination, supernatural agency, and psychological disorientation consequently become reciprocally constitutive rather than independent narrative components. Through this generic hybridity, Sadasivan articulates an aesthetic spatiality, in which the perceived sequences of horror are amalgamated towards the gradual destabilisation of the captives' temporary perception and corporeal reality.

Magical realism is significantly pertinent to *Bramayugam*'s mise-en-scene because it structures supernatural phenomena to reconstitute the quotidian world of the *mana* without being consistently separated from spatial reality or subjected to a definitive interpretative paradigm. Chaathan's presence and absence are embedded within the spatiality and temporality of the *mana* rather than functioning as

an external monstrous threat. This ontological ambiguity and uncertainty enable Sadasivan to produce insidious horror, in which pervasive horror develops through disorientation, repetition, uncertainty, and the gradual erosion of the captives' confidence and courage in Kodumon Potti's *mana*'s spatiality. The horror is not exhausted by Chaathan's capacity for violence or supernatural manipulation. The neo-genre mode becomes an epistemic and psychological strategy when Sadasivan destabilises the distinction between the temporal and the spatial, and between the natural and the supernatural. *Bramayugam* contextualises Thevan, the Cook, and the spectators within an uncertain and blurred experiential field in which the boundaries of the real, the remembered, and the transcendental become increasingly unstable.

This instability and unpredictability are compounded by Sadasivan's sustained employment of black and white cinematography, which configures not as an atmospheric evocation of seventeenth-century South Malabar but as an aesthetic strategy for disrupting spatial and temporal orientation. The monochromatic cinematography produces a visually claustrophobic environment in which shadows, thresholds, corridors, courtyards, enclosed chambers, ominous pond and the surrounding landscape resist unambiguous differentiation, transforming the *mana* from a stable architectural location into a temporally ambiguous and mutable spatial regime. Familiar spatiality ceases to guarantee orientation, while enclosure acquires a psychological as well as physical dimension. Temporality creates an asymmetrical destabilisation through protracted confinement, waiting, repetition, altered perception, and the difficulty of measuring duration. And time no longer ensures continuity; their mutual subversion consequently transcends into memory, knowledge, and selfhood. The convergence of monochromatic visuality and magical realism pivotal to Chaathan's mode of domination. Sadasivan transforms genre and visual manifestation into mechanisms of subjective dispossession, reimagining *Bramayugam*'s insidious horror not corporeal captivity, but the gradual conversion of spatial and temporal disorientation into mnemonic erosion, epistemic dependence, and the potential reproduction of the power that produced the captive's subjugation.

These interventions embody the significance of folklore, spatial confinement, Chaathan's contested configuration, and the circulation of domination in *Bramayugam*. This study seldom claims that these dimensions have remained critically unexplored. Rather, it foregrounds its interpretative focus from what manifestations of hierarchy the film portrays how power operates upon and transforms the captive within that hierarchy. Sadasivan represents power as a process that systematically reconfigures the spatial, epistemic, temporal, mnemonic, and psychic manifestations, through which individuals recognise themselves. Thevan's trajectory embodies the perpetuated structure for power dynamics. He comes to Chaathan's *mana*—Kodumon Potti's *mana*—as a fugitive with a recognisable personal history. Identifying himself as a *Paanan* (low caste itinerant folk singer)

before Potti (Chaathan), Thevan remembers his mother and village and retains a desire to go back home. After reaching the *mana*, these coordinates gradually disintegrate. Thevan loses temporal orientation, forgets his mother's name, becomes dependent upon the Cook for knowing things, and dispossesses his own identity. Thevan's trajectory can be interpreted as a transformation from spatial entrapment to temporal captivity, temporal subjugation to mnemonic erosion, and mnemonic erosion to incorporation into the mechanism of supernatural power.

Sadasivan's representation of temporality is constitutive to this projection of *Bramayugam*. When Chaathan demands "Your Time" from Thevan in the game of *pakida* (traditional Kerala dice game), associated with gambling and wagering (00:39:06–00:39:12), he reconfigures time something that can be possessed, wagered, and appropriated. The pawn is substantially significant because Thevan perceives his existence within a religious paradigm in which time is grounded in divine providence. Chaathan reconstitutes this sacred existential dimension into a trajectory of domination. His *mana* subsequently dismantles perceived temporal rhythms. Months and years pass while Thevan feels that only days have elapsed when he has reached the *mana*. Relentless rain destroys his distinction between day and night; and prolonged captivity produces mnemonic disruption. Temporal distortion becomes more than an aesthetic motif when it emerges as the mechanism through which the Cook's and Thevan's relationship with their identity and history are insidiously eroded.

The article examines how *Bramayugam* portrays domination as subjective dispossession of Thevan and the Cook. Power appropriates not merely the corporeality, but the epistemic, mnemonic, temporal, and symbolic repertoires through which the *adiyan* [slave] maintains continuity with his subjectivity. Chudalan Potti's magical ring eventually embodies this temporality and transmissibility of supernatural power. Chaathan possesses the ring, the Cook seeks to get it back because it is his ancestral possession, but Thevan ultimately acquires it. Each transfer appears to alter the spatial and temporal configuration, yet the hierarchy of domination remains. The concluding visual sequence of Chaathan supplanting Thevan's reflection transforms the unsettling narrative of the oppressed becoming the oppressor into a disrupting temporal linearity. The oppressed is transformed, through whom the structure of domination survives.

Spatial Captivity and Subjective Dispossession

Thevan's precarity appears temporarily and spatially determined. As a *Paanan* singer fleeing enslavement, he enters the *mana* estranged from his mother and succumbed to physical danger. Chaathan's welcome—"Welcome to my *Mana*" (00:14:40–00:14:52)—eventually appears to offer a haven to him. Chaathan's hospitality gradually becomes Thevan's dependency. Chaathan provides food and shelter, but demands recognition as its source, asking Thevan why he thanks God when Chaathan

itself has provided him food. The duality between guest and captive consequently collapses; hospitality becomes ownership, protection becomes obligation, and obligation becomes captivity. Chaathan's *mana* reinforces captivity through temporal transformation rather than immediate entrapment. Thevan initially retains his capacity to interpret temporality and spatiality, but as his confinement extends, the circumstances through which he exercises these capacities deteriorate. Sadashivan shifts Thevan's captivity from a temporal condition to a mechanism of subjective dispossession. The underlying concern becomes not simply whether Thevan can escape from Chaathan but whether he can remain as the dispossessed subject while remaining within the *mana*.

Mana and Temporal Captivity

The *mana* is introduced as a physical structure, but its supernatural power reserves in its transformative power to reorganise ordinary temporality. The Cook asks, "Which is the right month now?" (00:12:59–00:13:05), prompting Thevan to identify the transition from *Kanni's* harvest to the *Thulam* monsoon [Malayalam months]. The Cook's response anchors temporality and spatiality in the agricultural and seasonal rhythms of the external reality outside the *mana*. His observation that the river flows "like time itself, winding, turning relentlessly" (00:13:15–00:13:26) initially associates temporal passage with natural continuity. Yet, the *mana* precisely dismantles this continuity. Seasons become unpredictable, rain becomes relentless, and day and night dispossess their distinction.

The temporal and spatial distortion becomes explicit when the Cook reveals that months have elapsed although Thevan believes he has been inside the *mana* for a few days. He describes the *mana* as an overwhelming trap in which a "mystical knot" gradually erases memory over time (01:19:10–01:19:22). The spatial and temporal disturbance operates as a mechanism of subjugation. The longer the captive remains inside the *mana*, the less securely he can measure its duration, reconstruct his past, or anticipate his future. The experience of the *koothkaaran* [folk performer/ court dancer] exacerbates this temporal rationale. Entrapped inside the *mana*, he experiences oppressive darkness and three years of relentless rain, eventually forfeiting the ability to distinguish day from night, erosion of memory, and descending into incoherence (01:04:17–01:04:48). His eventual slaughter because he can no longer perform *kooth* [dance] exposes the violence of Chaathan's temporal regime that destroys agency by severing the captive from the quotidian rhythms through which action conceives meaning. Chaathan's supernatural control extends beyond spatial temporality; he appropriates the temporal conditions through which the captive experiences existence.

Temporality and Captive Self

The disruption of temporality and spatiality in Chaathan's *mana* becomes, in account of Paul Ricoeur's narrative temporality, a disruption of identity. He observes that "time becomes human time" insofar as it is articulated through narrative (*Time and Narrative* 3). Human subjectivity is sustained through the capacity to configure present consciousness, past experience, and anticipated future into an intelligible temporal sequence. When Chaathan subverts that intelligible sequence, it threatens the narrative continuity through which the captive recognises himself.

This manifestation is apparent in Thevan's transformation. He initially possesses a coherent existence, he knows his mother, village, caste identity, and journey. After his time is appropriated by Chaathan, he can no longer determine how long he has been confined within the *mana*. Consequently, he forgets even his mother's name, then his own identity. The temporal and spatial disruption becomes mnemonic disruption and mnemonic disruption becomes Thevan's subjective dispossession. Ricoeur's distinction between sameness and selfhood defines this process; personal identity depends upon the continuing premeditation between what remains recognisably the same and the changing experiences through which selfhood is constituted (*Oneself as Another* 140). The *mana* blurs this mediation by disrupting the captive from the temporal continuity that connects past with present and present with future. The real Kodumon Potti endures a coextensive dissolution. After Chaathan's sorcery entraps him, Potti dispossesses his identity, original purpose, and temporal orientation, and becomes a chained and affectively broken captive. The *mana* never destroys only particular captives. Instead, it reproduces a temporal structure of dispossession that progressively severs captives from the narratives through which they recognise themselves.

Time and Possession of Temporality

The concentrated articulation of this spatial and temporal domination occurs when Chaathan asks Thevan to play *Pakida*. Possessing any money or gold to pawn, Thevan admits that he does not have anything except his *dhoti*. Chaathan reacts by demanding "Your Time" (00:39:10–00:39:12). Time is eventually reconfigured from an intangible manifestation of existence into a resource that can be wagered and possessed.

Chaathan's demand becomes substantial in the light of Foucault's account of disciplinary temporality. Foucault observes that "Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power" (*Discipline and Punish* 152) and corresponds disciplinary power as seeking "to extract, from time, ever more available moments and, from each moment, ever more useful forces" (154). Sadashivan radicalises this appropriation when Chaathan seldom regulates what Thevan does within

time but claims time itself as the object of possession. Chaathan's arcane knowledge of Thevan's enslavement, escape from a merchant ship in Ponnani, wandering through the forest, failed attempt to cross the river, and arrival at the *mana* suggest that he possesses an uncanny control over of the captives' past, present, and future. Wagering sequence consequently transforms Thevan's future into an object of supernatural authority. When Chaathan orchestrates Pakida, and subsequently manipulates the rain and threatens to prolong it for years, temporal control becomes spatial control. Thevan can never flee because Chaathan controls his temporal conditions under which escape becomes foreclosed. Chaathan's *mana* becomes a repressive apparatus that confines by surveilling and controlling where the subject can move and how he can experience the passage of time.

Temporality and Epistemic Captivity

Chaathan's temporal domination is embodied by an asymmetry of knowledge. Chaathan knows Thevan's past, his mother's name, the circumstances that led his arrival to the *mana*, and the histories of previous captives, while Thevan remains ignorant of Chaathan's sorcerous powers and the temporal and supernatural order governing the *mana*. Chaathan's epistemic authority controls ordinary temporal distance; the past that remains partially inaccessible to *adiyan*. Foucault redefines the relationship between power and knowledge. He observes that power operates through "the effects of truth that this power produces and transmits, and which in their turn reproduce this power," while people "are subjected to the production of truth through power" (*Power/Knowledge* 93). Chaathan's authority depends not only on controlling Thevan's present existence, but also on determining what Thevan knows about his own past and future. When Chaathan recalls Thevan's mother's name, Thevan perceives knowledge not as empowerment but as manifestation of supernatural authority. Chaathan, who possesses knowledge, becomes the authority, potential of redefining reality for the person deprived of it.

The Cook interrupts Chaathan's monopoly by redistributing the concealed knowledge. He discloses Chaathan's imposture, the history of the enslaved Chaathan, the fate of real Kodumon Potti, and the occult chamber containing the eternal lamp corresponding with Chaathan's eternity. Knowledge consequently embodies the material basis of Chaathan's apparently transcendent temporal power. Yet the Cook's resistance remains eroded because he withholds knowledge while pursuing the magical ring. Knowledge can thus dismantle domination without invariably eradicating his desire to possess its power.

Recognition and Temporal Repositioning

Bramayugam's hierarchical narrative demonstrates how domination produces captives through recognition. Thevan calls Potti *thamburan* [lord] and considers himself *adiyan* [subaltern] while identifying himself as a *Paanan*. The Cook initially occupies a subaltern position but later invokes his Brahminical lineage, asserting, "I am not a mere lowborn. The blood coursing through my veins is that of Kodumon Potti" (01:48:52–01:48:58). His claim to ancestry drives him to reposition himself within the privileged temporal hierarchy. Butler's observation of subject formation illustrates this trajectory because the subject is often reconstituted through relations of subjection rather than existing wholly outside them. The diverse identities produced within the *mana*—*Thamburan*, *Adiyan*, *Paanan*, *Brahmin*—operate as recognitional positions through which people become hierarchically intelligible. These social configurations are temporally dynamic.

Memory and Dissolution of the Self

The *mana*'s consequential assault on subjectivity occurs through the captives' memory. The Cook's description of the "mystical knot" that "gradually wipes away memories over time" (01:19:10–01:19:22) configures the mechanism through which spatial captivity becomes psychological and temporal captivity. Thevan enters Chaathan's *mana* cherishing memories that anchor him to a spatiality beyond it. As time elapses uncertain inside the *mana*, memories become progressively inaccessible to him. The real Kodumon Potti experiences the same inaccessibility. Chaathan's sorcerous power erases his identity, purpose, and temporal orientation until he becomes a fettered captive dispossessed from the person he once was. The convergence elucidates that Chaathan's *mana* operates through a reproducible mechanism. Protracted spatial entrapment produces Thevan's temporal disorientation, temporal disorientation produces his mnemonic erosion, and mnemonic erosion erodes his subjectivity.

This sequence foreshadows *Bramayugam*'s evolving resolution. Thevan's acquisition of the magical ring is seldom a distinct supernatural event. It is the synthesis of a mechanism through which his stable distinction between self and other, captive and master, mortality and eternity has already been deteriorated. Chudalan Potti's ring makes visible the transformation that the *mana* has progressively engendered.

Possession and Transmission of Power

Bramayugam recurrently represents power through possession. Chaathan first exists within the magical box rewarded by goddess Varahi to Chudalan Potti, who enslaves him and attempts to appropriate his supernatural power. Unable to suffer Potti's physical torture, Chaathan subsequently reverses the temporal and spatial relation by absorbing Potti's soul and assuming control over the *mana*. Power

transmits from Potti to Chaathan and from spatial identity to temporal identity. Chaathan's assumption of Kodumon Potti's appearance is pivotal because it allows supernatural power to operate through a spatially authoritative Brahminical configuration. Chaathan's supernatural possession consequently intersects with caste and temporal recognition. The Cook asserts this temporal rationale differently by invoking inherited Brahminical blood and then reclaiming the magical ring. His aspiration is twofold; he pursues both spatial legitimacy and supernatural power. The ring materialises the Cook's transmission. Chaathan possesses it, the Cook desires it, and ultimately Thevan acquires it. Thevan's admonition to the Cook that "Whoever wields the ring, will be corrupted" (02:04:35–02:04:41) illustrates the object as carrying the structure of domination itself, while the Cook's response—"This is rightfully mine" (02:04:47–02:04:49)—exposes his vaulting ambition to inherit rather than dismantle that structure. Power and possession thus persist through temporal succession. Though its bearer changes, its supernatural constitution survives.

The Cook's eventual trajectory illustrates the difference between defeating a master and eradicating his mastery. His experience initially enables resistance, but his resistance culminates in the declaration, "From now on, I am your new master" (02:03:48–02:03:52). The temporal phrase "from now on" becomes significant because it reinstates a future foregrounded on the continuation of the existing hierarchy of power. Foucault's conceptualisation that power relations are not static distributions but "matrices of transformations" (*Power/Knowledge* 99) embodies this succession precisely. The destruction of one bearer of power never terminates it; it transforms its trajectory and transfers its spatiality to another subject. Chaathan paves way to the Cook, and the Cook is defeated before Thevan becomes the ring's possessor. The succession of power bearers is not a series of sporadic revolutions but a continuous temporal mechanism through which mastery reproduces itself. *Bramayugam* consequently distinguishes between shifting who possesses power and reconfiguring the mechanism through which power operates.

Paradox of Escape and Mortality

The concluding sequence of *Bramayugam* appears to restore Chaathan to spatiality, mortality, and ordinary temporality. Chaathan's regime collapses, the mana is consumed by fire, darkness gives way to sunrise, and Thevan crosses the shadowy river into the spatiality of ordinary temporality. The Cook, dispossessed of the ring and its supernatural power, is shot by the Portuguese soldiers and becomes mortal, who interpret him as a madman. Thevan alone survives with the ring, reserving the possibility of bearing power and immortality. Yet, Sadashivan is reluctant to equate survival with liberation. At the river, the boundaries between time and timelessness, spatial captivity and spatial freedom, and mortality and immortality collapse when Thevan looks into the river and finds Chaathan's/Potti's

laughing reflection rather than his own. Butler's observation that "the master, who at first appears to be 'external' to the slave, reemerges as the slave's own conscience" through the "transmutation of the master into a psychic reality" (*Psychic Life of Power* 3) illustrates Thevan's temporal transformation.

Though Thevan has estranged himself from the physical spatiality of the *mana*, the *mana* has not necessarily estranged him. Its supernatural temporality and spatiality of possession have configured into the surviving subject. Thevan is physically liberated and potentially immortal, yet he may now encumber Chaathan's occult power and eternity. Spatial freedom fails to ensure temporal normality and mortality.

From the Captive Self to Incorporation

Thevan's concluding reflection acquires its broader significance when placed alongside his earlier dispossession of temporal and mnemonic continuity. At the beginning, he is found in the uncanny forest and exposes a coherent possessive self. Within the *mana*, his temporality is disrupted and spatiality becomes confined. His knowledge is controlled, memory is erased, and spatial identity is reconfigured. By the end, the demarcation between his self and Chaathan's self has become blurred.

Chaathan's ring does not simply confer supernatural ability; rather, it completes a transformation initiated through temporal captivity. Thevan traverses from the *mana* into natural space, but carries its possibility of eternity with him. He retreats to the spatiality of mortality while potentially escaping mortality itself. This sequence becomes more than a conventional representation of cyclical oppression. Thevan does not transform into another Chaathan. Rather, the temporal and spatial mechanism that once acted upon him becomes empowered of acting through him. The master has become internalised as possession, power, and identity. The concluding horror sequence is ontological; the concern is not merely who controls the *mana*, but the *mana* is transformed to relationship of time, memory, and mortality.

From Liberation to Incorporation

Bramayugam complicates premediated ideas of liberation when it presupposes the recovery of agency after the erasure of an oppressive power. Sadashivan demonstrates that spatial and temporal escape may coexist with incorporation into the mechanism of domination. Thevan leaves the *mana* but can never leave behind its supernatural power. He crosses the foreboding river and comes back to worldly temporality, yet possesses the ring and the possibility of Chaathan's immortality into that spatiality. The supernatural entity may extinct as an individual manifestation while its mechanism reserves through another subject. Power operates not simply through preconceived immortality but through transmission. The sorcerer master dies, but his spatial structure remains. The captive escapes; but the

sorcerous power enters the captive. Mortality may be imposed to one bearer while potential immortality is transferred to another. In this context, *Bramayugam*'s unsettling trajectory is not from oppression to freedom but from external domination to internal incorporation.

Concluding Song and Persistence of *Bramayugam*

The concluding song amplifies *Bramayugam*'s uncanny interpretation through its imagery of violence, blood, blackness, and fire. The song evokes hunters, elephants, Chamundis [goddesses of protection and destruction], and an age resembling a funeral pyre. These images configure the cinematic projection to the cultural reimagination of Kali and *Bramayugam*, which Chaathan explicitly redefines as a Kaliyugam into an epoch of madness, violence, and divine abandonment, declaring, "This is Bramayugam, the age of Madness, a worsened era of the most degenerate age, the Kaliyugam!" (01:05:12–01:05:47). By configuring *Bramayugam* into *Kaliyugam*, Sadashivan transforms the former from a delimited historical or supernatural period into a recurring temporal era in which violence, domination, and the disruption of divine intervention. Pottis and the Cook die, Chaathan's manifestation is defeated, and Potti's *mana* is consumed by fire; yet *Bramayugam* persists through Thevan. The final sequence broadens the significance of the film's title. *Bramayugam* is not simply a supernatural or historical period but a mechanism in which hegemony perpetually reconfigures itself through those it governs.

Transmission of Power Through Temporality

Bramayugam has been embodied as a critique of caste hierarchy, hegemonic masculinity, Brahminical authority, spatial confinement, and folkloric appropriation. This study extends these interpretations by reimagining the *mana* as a mechanism of subjective and temporal disposition. Chaathan's *mana*'s sorcery transcends spatial confinement; it reconfigures perceived temporality, engenders memory dispossession, and subverts narrative identity. It circumscribes epistemic autonomy and redefines power between subjectivities through possession. Chudalan Potti's ring encapsulates the succession of this hegemony across spatiality and temporality. *Bramayugam*'s narrative temporality illuminates how the disruption of temporal continuity threatens identity and epistemic power reconceptualises how domination persists through shifting relations and successive bearers. Sadashivan's reimagining of subjection defines how mastery becomes progressively internalised within the *adiyan*.

Thevan enters the *mana* with a memory, history, caste identity, and desire for home but gradually dispossesses temporal orientation, epistemic autonomy, and sustained selfhood. His acquisition of the ring does not restore what captivity has destroyed; it reinforces epistemic power into the structure of hegemony. The Cook's declaration that from now on, he will be Chathan's new

thamburan [master] (02:03:48–02:03:53), exposes that mastery is reconstituted rather than abolished. In the final sequence, Thevan’s vision of Chaathan rather than himself signifies the *mana*’s transformation from spatial prison into an internalised mechanism of subjective, esoteric, and temporal power. Although he escapes its material architecture, he bears its potential for eternity beyond it. *Bramayugam* concludes not in expected liberation, but in ritual incorporation. Its uncanny horror remains in domination reproducing itself by transforming its victims into its future bearers. Genuine emancipation requires not merely replacing the bearer of power but dismantling the subjective, temporal, and epistemic mechanisms through which domination persists.

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