Komal Gandhar opens with the title cards. The beginning of the film with the title cards is important in terms of sound, editing, light and movement. The music of the title cards is composed of six pieces that flow, following one another without any cut. This form of a musical composition as relay occurs twice in the film: first in the Padma/Lalgola sequence and then in the final piece of the last sequence. The title cards begin with the first musical notation which along with the second and the third, will occur in the Shakuntalam performance in the ensemble X.d. The second and the third piece here are placed intermittently, giving way to the fourth that denotes a note of finality. The fifth piece, a thematic index, is marked by a cry of anguish and occurs just once. The sixth piece, a song, begins with marriage drums, conch shells and the sound of 'ullu', a cultural code. It is continued by the folk marriage song, a significant son-sign that condenses the discourse. The use of cymbals, tambourine, and drums predominates in the pieces. The sequence is also important in terms of light composition. On a light surface, movement is created through the movement of the shadows. This light movement composition is a significant visual movement-light-image in Ghatak, especially in Komal Gandhar. The surface is marked by crisscrosses that further create an impression of movement. In terms of editing, just as music flows on the sound track without any cut, the images of the title cards dissolve into each other without any cut.

II. Sequence II is divided into eight signifying ensembles that set the pace for the discourse of the film. The entire
sequence is self-reflexive. Referring to theatre, it refers to film space, modes of acting, use of light, actors, props, music, which all get foregrounded here. Theatre here is used both as metaphor and as space, metaphor because it reflects the split within the groups, which signifies the split within IPTA and obliquely the split of a people; and space because it is here that the major action of the film takes place. Moreover intertextuality operates extensively through a direct use of intertext and through the sound-track. Music in this sequence situates itself as both metaphor and space: metaphor as it further condenses the discourse of the film and space for a legendary, mythic discourse that opens the film purely on mythic time, thus leading towards the formation of a time-image. Throughout the sequence there is an interplay of film and theatre, the theatre problematising the formation of the refugee, the film exposing the discord among the groups and simultaneously developing the discourse of the refugee, with the sound-track emphasizing unity but exemplifying the theme of exile. Thus the sequence builds metaphor over metaphor and creates an over-tonal montage of division and partition not in terms of shot composition but in terms of dispersing the discourse across multiple discursivities.

II.a The first ensemble II.a begins with a comprehensive proposition where the notion of the refugee, the central concern of the film, acquires significance. Besides this the film opens with the introduction of the second act of the play, "we are about to begin the second act of the play," thus problematising the notion of beginnings in the film while it formulates it in the epic mode as well as serving as a partial signifier referring to one of the major thematic configurations, that of theatre. Reference is made to river Padma, a cultural code. It serves as
an infix, a proposition in comprehension for the fourth subensemble. In terms of technique light is used very effectively; the descending shadows in the background denote the arrival and hence the creation of more and more refugees, placing the film in its socio-historical context.

II.b II.b is a proposition in extension as it refers to the rivalry among the groups, Niriksha led by Bhrigu and Dakshinapath led by Shanta. In terms of shot composition and character movement there is the simultaneous turning of all three faces as voices off-stage are heard. Reference is made to spectators, a self-reflexive signifier, denoting art and its reception and, of course, obliquely to folk theatrical traditions where the spectator is a part of the performance. News is brought that Anasuya, a member of Dakshinapath has agreed to perform for the rival group. There is an interval for ten minutes with the camera tilting up and coming to a halt composing the theatre roof amidst its spatial components.

II.c The ensemble II.c is an infix, a proposition in comprehension, another major prospection, which sets the theme of the film. This ensemble refers to the first encounter of Anasuya with Bhrigu, but this encounter is a veiled encounter. They meet each other as actors in a defined role and yet this defined role reinforces their actual identity as refugees. Besides this, the use of light, forms of acting, creation of a play are brought forth very self-consciously in this ensemble. Significantly verticals that run as a visual motif throughout Ghatak's work are first introduced here as a prop for the performance. The frame composition is diagonal. lighting as a technique is foregrounded. Bhrigu expresses his views about Dakshinapath. At this moment of discord the sound track sings of Sita-Ram marriage. The song of
unity serves as a counter-point to the visual of discord. Moreover it also situates the film in mythic time and connects the present crisis with the mythic configuration of exile. From the right of the frame Shanta removes the curtain; from the left, Shanta’s face composed in a diagonal profile moves along with the faces of two others. Light moves along the frame as Bhrigu hands a bundle of clothes to Anasuya, and finally it forms a halo around his head, lighting his hair and back completely. His head gradually turns, and blends a dramatic iconicity to the image. Anasuya’s movement forward frames her in a mid close-up. The camera remains static, the foreground turns immobile with Anasuya’s face slightly tilted while the movement within the frame, at the depth persists. A man with a traditional lighted torch hands the light to Bhrigu. The light, absolutely stark, masking Bhrigu, bleaches the mid-background out. Just as at the visual level light is used extraordinarily, similarly at the level of dialogue Rishi self-reflexively refers to the use of light in the play within the film to compose Bhrigu. A micro image in extension connects with a similar use of and reference to light in ensemble xvi.c. The frame opens onto the performance.

II.d II.d, a proposition in extension, continues the action of the ensemble II.a. The play within the film opens on the third act, with sharp tones of light against the dark frame. The composition is marked by verticals, reference is made to the East-West divide. The railway platform and the Rail-signal, like the river Padma, are signs in conjunction and disjunction denoting arrival and departure. The railway platform first introduced here serves as a partial signifier of the existence of the people pushed to the margins. The form, though self-reflexive and intertextual, turns referential emphasizing the
ironic situation of homelessness despite owning land and cattle. In terms of frame composition, we have the decentred image of Anasuya, a micro subensemble that works as a visual motif throughout Ghatak’s oeuvre. The decentred image of the central characters signifies the literal recession of space and reflects the creation of an exile. Anasuya’s face assumes the dimension of an icon in addition to becoming space, as happens so often in Ghatak. The face or any blank light surface becomes the space for a certain shadow-light-movement, as also happens in the title cards. Here Anasuya’s face reflects the shadow of Bhrigu’s hand. Bhrigu’s comment on "the sky being full of smoke, whichever way I turn I find everything hazy with smoke," is an infix which will be later recalled in III.b by Anasuya and later still in the Kurseong sequence. As Bhrigu’s head turns, the frame opens onto the spectators, and in a corner we see Bijon Bhattacharya as Gagan standing, a significant self-reflexive referential infix.

II.e II.e, another proposition in extension, refers to the ensemble II.b. Anasuya faces hostility from her group members. She is made aware of the existing tension but is unable to understand why her group does not appreciate commitment or passion. As Anasuya speaks to Prabhat the frame gradually tightens composing Anasuya and Prabhat in a diagonal.

II.f The subensemble II.f, further refers to the professional theatre of Bengal, the use of improvised forms and the need to do away with elaborate stagecraft. It is here that Anasuya and Bhrigu meet not as actors but as themselves, a proposition in extension of the ensemble II.c.

II.g It is a micro ensemble in extension as it explicitly explains the reason for the tension among the groups. It develops the major thematic configuration of the Anasuya-Bhrigu
relationship, and in this, it is a proposition in extension. The micro image of Anasuya is important for herein we are first introduced to the characteristic tilted head mid-close-up of Ritwik Ghatak.

II.h The micro ensemble continues with the introduction of Bijon Bhattacharya as Gagan in II.d. Bijon Bhattacharya serves as a very significant link that connects this self-reflexive discourse with the referential fact of actual theatre presentation in the context of IPTA. For it was Bijon Bhattacharya who wrote Nabanno the 'bombshell' according to Ghatak and Komal Gandhar directly refers to Nabanno and its epic structure. Interestingly Bijon Bhattacharya as Gagan guides Kunal within the film and together they write an epic play with polyphonic patterns, thus reflecting the very structure of Komal Gandhar. This subensemble serves as an infix that will later be integrated with the micro image IV.d, the subensemble XV.a, and finally all these will blend in the comprehensive proposition XVII.b. Further, this infix refers to the spectator response and the effect a performance can have on a spectator. The ensemble II.h also refers to the sound track of the film; to the use of IPTA songs that contextualise and localize Komal Gandhar within its time and milieu. This particular IPTA Number is based on 'Batyali' (the boatman's song) signifying the incorporation of folk music and folk theatrical forms by IPTA to convey the exegesis of the historical moment.

III. A sequence of reconciliation, is divided into five ensembles and subensembles denoting a proposal for a joint production. It is in this sequence that Anasuya and Bhrigu will begin to work together. The sequence lays bare the process of a theatrical creation, it refers to rehearsals, to acting and to
modes of walking. Here, reference is also made to Anasuya's mother, an important referential signifier. Sequence III also opens the film onto one of its major thematic configurations, that of "Shakuntalam." The play focusing on the pain of Shakuntala at having to leave her land, her people gets foregrounded. It further establishes connections and extends the discourse of exile to the patriarchal discourse wherein a woman is perpetually either in a state of exile or in preparation for a life of exile. Moreover, Komal Gandhar decentralizes Kalidas's Abhijnanasakuntalam by placing Anasuya as Shakuntala. The process of decentring the main text blends an epic structure in the film. Further, the development of Anasuya in post-independence India as Shakuntala refers to the formation of condensed, highly charged metaphors in Ghatak. In terms of image composition, the sequence is marked by the use of verticals, low angle shots, and the slow gradual movement of the body. The sound track introduces the hammer-strokes, a significant marker, which at the level of discourse connects with the Padma-Rail-sign configuration. Children who will recur intermittently as signifiers of Anasuya's accountability towards her nation are first introduced here.

III.a A prefix, begins with the micro image of a thought for a joint production. Anasuya and Pakhi discuss their mother and her diary, a displaced digetic insert here will serve as an infix and will be integrated later with ensembles V.b, XIV.a and XIV.c where the mother's diary becomes a partial signifier of the pre-Independence turmoil. This ensemble further refers to creativity, the origin of Geeta, to philosophy and to modes of acting. As Bijon Bhattacharya joins the group, the sound of hammer-strokes begins and continues throughout the subensemble.
III.b is an ensemble in reconciliation. Anasuya comes with a proposal for a joint production, a proposition in extension. As the image refers to unity, the sound track as a counter-point is marked by hammer-strokes, joining and dismantling. Anasuya’s entry is marked by the stark use of light on her face, so stark that her face is almost bleached with light and she then instantly moves back. Light assumes an important dimension here and this interplay with extreme tonalities of light [that completely bleach the characters] and shadows [that become overwhelming] recurs throughout Komal Gandhar. Her proposal is accepted and the group decides on Kalidas’s Abhijnanasakuntalam. As Anasuya and Bhrigu move out, the hammer-strokes give way to the marriage song, Anasuya recalls Bhrigu’s lines, ‘The sky is full of smoke’. This signifies the moral, political vacuum. Anasuya’s statement connects this subensemble with the micro image in II.d, III.d and later in IV.a where these words attain significance.

III.c III.c a, paradigmatic infix in the syntagmatic chain, connects the narrative structure with one of its major thematic configurations. The group decides to perform Kalidas’s Abhijnanasakuntalam. The intertext of Shakuntalam here denotes the pain of having to leave one’s home and people and refers to the subsequent unforeseen exile. Ghatak in the process of incorporating this text cuts across history and legend, disperses the discourse across patriarchy and history that is smeared with the trauma of eviction, and thus lends contemporaneity to Kalidasa’s text. III.c, also serves as an infix that will be integrated in the signifying ensemble VIII.a, IX.b, X.d, XVII.a, XIX.a, and finally in XIX.b where all these units will merge together to form a comprehensive proposition and Anasuya/Shakuntala will become the metaphor of the divided land.
III.d A proposition in extension is significant in terms of the use of the low angle, and the movement of the character. As Anasuya visits Bhrigu’s house, she gradually moves to the window, marked by verticals. The shot composition is very interesting. Anasuya’s body, up from the waist composed through the low angle, moves to the window; she looks up, and then slowly the entire body, together with the camera, moves towards Bhrigu with the verticals lining the ceiling. The camera, the music—soft sitar, and Anasuya’s movement all work together in complete harmony. This slow movement of the head and the body, together with the use of the low angle and verticals, is characteristic, a peculiar visual marker orchestrating in Ghatak’s oeuvre. This composition will recur again in the subensemble VI.a. Anasuya refers to the dearth of natural beauty in the metropolis, saying, "Calcutta is nothing but bricks, wood and smoke, still the birds sing." The sharp note (Ghandar referring to Calcutta as a heap of bricks) and the soft one (Komal referring to the song of birds) are composed together here as elsewhere in the film, exemplifying the meaning of the title of the film. Bhrigu self-reflexively refers to several forms of walking. Outside, the children here a displaced diegetic insert, watch Anasuya. It is only towards the end that they will acquire significance, enhancing Anasuya’s dilemma, serving as an index of her responsibility, and connecting this subensemble with ensembles IV.c, VIII.a, and finally XIX.b where connections become explicit.

III.e There is a call from Lalgola: the money has been accepted but Jaya is unable to participate because of her orthodox family. Jaya’s pain serves as a referential signifier denoting the problems that the IPTA actors faced. Anasuya accepts Jaya’s role. Shanta approaches Bhrigu and offers her house in
Kurseong for rehearsals. This connects the present ensemble with V.a, the Kurseong sequence. Besides it localizes the film in terms of places. This ensemble of unity is merely a semblance of unity that will soon be disrupted.

IV. Divided into four signifying ensembles, it is the most significant in terms of sound exploration and in terms of developing a sound relay, wherein one sound sequence gives way to another without any cut as such in music. The Padma ensemble brings together the discourse of exile with several sonsigns and visual signs, moving in different directions but achieving a homogeneity of discourse. The sequence also refers to Anasuya's relationship with Samar, the group gossip, to Kunal-Gagan's attempt at writing a play, and to Kurseong.

The Lalgola and hence the Padma sequence, a proposition in extension of II.a develops into a comprehensive proposition. Like the proposition II.a, it refers to the railtrack as a sign in conjunction and disjunction, it further continues the concept of the rail-track in the image of the river Padma that joins but also separates East from West Bengal. The entire ensemble is an ensemble in conjunction as it is here that several signs merge and are brought together at the level of discourse. The ensemble begins with the micro image of Rishi and the group singing one of the significant IPTA songs by Kazi Nazrul Islam referring to the need for all artists, workers and visionaries to come together and break the fetters of darkness. As the song dissolves, the group arrives at Lalgola. Anasuya comes rushing, effulgent with joy. She holds Bhrigu's hand. At this image of united hands, the sound-track breaks open with the sound of conch shell and marriage drums and sings of Sita-Ram union. Rishi and the group rush to the boats, singing another 'Batyali' number. From a
corner Bansi and Gagan pay their respects to mother Padma, a cultural insert. Singing the Padma song, they refer to it as a sign of unity that joins the two sides. It is from the Padma song that the music in this entire ensemble becomes a relay in terms of sound, as there is no cut in music, an innovative form of sound editing. One sequence gives way to another and many a time two sound sequences operate simultaneously. As the Padma song continues the camera pans left, a descriptive syntagma depicting the landscape along the river Padma. In a corner stand Anasuya and Bhrigu framed in extreme long shot. As the camera cuts, the Padma song gives way to the folk marriage song. This song of unity here works as a counter-point to the visual, for Anasuya and Bhrigu are standing at the dividing line, the railroad track that separates East from West Bengal. Similarly Padma which had earlier served as a symbol of unity now becomes the symbol of separation. Anasuya refers to the fact that there is no smoke here, a proposition in extension connecting with the subensembles II.d and III.b. The homeland of both Anasuya and Bhrigu lies somewhere across but has now become inaccessible. Padma thus becomes symbolic of a division which, though apparently it can be overcome, is yet so rigid that it is impossible to get through it. The image shifts to Rishi and the group singing the Batyali. It is here that in terms of visual composition, there is a montage within a shot. For as Rishi and the group move right, from a corner Bansi and Gagan singing the Padma song move left<--<--thus forming a visual montage within a shot. The Batyali gives way to the folk marriage song. Though the song is of marriage, yet it is a song that sings of Sita’s departure reflecting Shakuntala’s departure in the inter-text. The folk song of marriage operates simultaneously with the distant sound of the Batyali. As Anasuya and Bhrigu refer to the
division of the nation, the song sings of unity, a counter-point to the visual. It connects the past, the myth with the contemporary present. In a moment everything was lost, they became outsiders, as Anasuya and Bhrigu reflect on their realities, the folk song of Ram-Sita marriage instantly is followed by the song of becoming an ascetic, of going far away, of leaving, of abandoning. As the song in the background continues, Bhrigu refers to his home, and his mother. He refers to the rail-track as a sign of unity; now suddenly it represents division. The country has been severed in two. Overnight they have become destitutes. Speaking of his father, Bhrigu refers to the fact that before his death, he had said, "I had began my life on such a pure note, should it have ended thus?" The Komal note gives way to the Gandhar both literally as well as metaphorically. As Bhrigu reveals his loneliness, the shot cuts to Anasuya, her face assuming long shadows. The music suddenly changes, and then a cry of anguish is heard twice, thrice. The camera becomes static on Anasuya's tilted head, composed with the mesh behind it. Bhrigu looks lost, the camera pans to the left, the sound of the breeze with the image of the bamboo leaves swaying, trembling in the wind is depicted. On the sound track the Batyali is heard, and then the sound 'Duhahi Ali' reverberates as the camera pans to the left, to the railtrack. The pan is followed by the camera tracking the deserted track which is composed through the wide angle lens, and then the camera abruptly fills the entire screen with the shot of a barrier. A cultural, political, geographical barrier imposed on the people by the two nation states. The movement ends with the sound of a plane taking off, accompanied with the sound of 'Duhahi Ali', a displaced diegetic insert here, but it will acquire significance in the ensemble XIX.b. Just as there is no
cut in sound, similarly the visuals too are composed of long takes. The few cuts are smooth, it is only when Anasuya and Bhrigu refer to their lost homes, the camera begins to cut abruptly.

IV.b A micro subensemble, beginning with a blank, denotes the passing of time. Bhrigu expresses his confused feelings for Anasuya to Shibunath who interrogates him. Bhrigu is also told in passing about Anasuya’s feelings for Samar. This is an infix which will be taken up later in the ensemble XIV.b.

IV.c Opens with a blank. This ensemble begins with a music that will recur intermittently, besides recurring at the end of this very sequence. Anasuya visits Bhrigu in his house who has been depressed given Anasuya’s relationship with Samar. Anasuya refers to a letter, a displaced diegetic insert, an infix to be recalled later in XIV.b. Both Anasuya and Bhrigu are composed from the point of view of the children, an important composition. The children seeing Anasuya begin to demand from her, a proposition in extension connecting with the previous ensemble III.d, VIII.a, and later with XIX.b.

IV.d Opens onto the cafe. Gagan is training Kunal to write a play, a self-reflexive insert, an infix in extension that will later develop into a comprehensive proposition in the signifying ensemble XV.a, XVII,b. It also connects with the previous subensemble II.h. Anasuya reveals to Bhrigu the fact that the group is discussing them. Jaya refers to Kurseong and to Rishi already singing the Tagore song; Anasuya for a moment recalls her mother. Her face, as her look turns upward, acquires the space of an icon. As Anasuya speaks of her mother, Jaya refers to the words of the song, in the background the song as alaap is heard, a subjective insert.
V.

Sequence V, is further divided into four segments. In terms of space the entire sequence takes place in Kurseong. Beginning with the Tagore song it extends to Anasuya’s mother. It is here that we get a glimpse of Jaya’s feelings for Rishi. The sequence also refers to the Bengal landscape. In terms of visual composition it connects us with the micro image of boats in the comprehensive proposition IV.a. The subensemble V.d is one of the first instances of a visual rupture in the film that leads to the violation of the cinematic apparatus itself. The rupture is developed in terms of camera movement across two shots that pan in two opposite directions destroying the 180° eyeline match. Interestingly within one shot composition there is a rupture between the camera movement, the placement of character and the direction of his look. As Bhrigu looks to the left, the camera pans to the right. The camera here works against the subjective/point of view shot which is a significant ingredient of Hollywood cinema. Bhrigu’s look is subverted, the camera opens to the point of view of the absent subject.

V.a

Revealing the beauty of the Bengal landscape, Rishi sings in ecstasy in Kurseong with Jaya and Anasuya sharing his joy. The Tagore song of "stars, sun and the universe throbbing with life" connects with the other two Tagore songs that occur in subensembles XIII.a and XX.b. In terms of visual composition the entire segment is composed of long takes, the camera pans to the left and to the right. These extreme long shots, form an explanatory insert of the beauty of the landscape, and further serve to exemplify the words of the song. The visuals and the music enhance each other and operate in harmony. As the song ends, Anasuya, her eyes turned upward, refers to her mother who too, like Rishi, would start in wonderment at the words of this particular song. The song in the form of an Alaap, occurs again
as a subjective insert; Anasuya and Jaya walk with the camera panning to the right revealing the mountains, house-tops and trees.

V.b A proposition in extension. Anasuya speaks of her mother to Jaya, who along with Gandhi was at Noakhali during the riots in 1946. Contextualising the film, this referential insert serves as an index of turmoil in pre-independence, pre-partitioned Bengal. Observing Bhrigu, and his passion Anasuya is reminded of her mother. The visual composition comes close to the Micro image of the boats in the comprehensive proposition IV.a. Here too within the same shot Anasuya and Jaya stand parallel to each other looking in two opposite directions, -J A-. Rishi's entry into the frame at this moment, a displaced diegetic insert, serves as a flash forward to the Jaya-Rishi relationship. Suddenly the sound of the train whistle, the first and the only image of the train, a non-diegetic insert here, serves as a proposition in extension connecting this micro image with the Rail-Padma-Hammer sound configuration.

V.c A micro ensemble in extension continues the image in V.b. As the train passes, Bhrigu and Shibunath are seen discussing Anasuya. Shibunath warns Bhrigu about Anasuya. Just then Rishi enters the frame. Looking at the landscape he compares it to a "tender green girl lying still," a prefix to the subensemble XIV.a where Bhrigu too will draw a similar comparison. Rishi's reference to the dust and smoke of Calcutta comes as a direct contrast to the serenity of the rural landscape. This further enhances the significance of the title Komal Gandhar.

V.d Significant in terms of rupture in camera movement, it destroys the 180° eye line match. Within a single frame
composition the rupture operates through the camera panning in
the opposite direction to the placement of the character and
direction of his look. Thus the point of view shot is dispersed
and subverted.

VI. Sequence Six is divided into two signifying ensembles.
The first ensemble self-reflexively refers to art, creativity and
passion. The second subensemble, an infix to be integrated in
the comprehensive proposition XVI.d, is a proposition in
extension referring to the group rivalry and referentially to the
conflict in IPTA, related to the drama squad and the ballet
squad.

VI.a The sequence begins with a blank, denoting the passing
of time and a change of place. In terms of its visual
composition the micro image of Anasuya feeling the rain at the
window is a micro-image-movement in extension connecting this
image with the micro image of Anasuya besides the verticals in
the subensemble III.d. Here too, Anasuya is composed along the
verticals in a low angle, with her face turned upwards. Like in
the subensemble III.d, here too Bhrigu is detached. Anasuya,
referring to the rain, speaks of art, passion and creativity.
Both this micro image and the one in III.d refer to a significant
thematic motif in Ghatak's oeuvre, of the gradual encroachment of
space. Metropolitan space is claustrophobic, is all along marked
by bars as opposed to the open landscape and yet, there is also a
suggestion about the need to search for beauty amidst these
enclosed spaces.

VI.b A narrative proposition in extension, it connects with
the comprehensive proposition in XVI.d. Shanta and Raman
complain about the Anasuya-Bhrigu relationship, thus threatening
an unsettled Pakhi with a scandal.
VII Sequence seven, composed of three subensembles, is actually a relay in terms of both visual and sound continuity. The sequence is marked by two significant IPTA songs bracketing the reference to art and artistic integrity. Besides, it refers to finances, and this reference lays bare the very process of theatre production and hence of film production.

VII.a The sequence is marked by verticals that predominate the set as the camera pans in an upward movement together with the crescendo of the song. Bansi, Jaya, Rishi all sing with full vigour with Gagan leading them. The song, one of the IPTA numbers, refers to the process of invasion and colonial dominance but ends on a positive note, celebrating victory.

VII.b Shanta's entry interrupts the song. Her reference to theatre sets, setting the date for the performance, besides serving as a self-reflexive insert, is a prefix to X.c, where her group will finally sabotage the performance. Gagan asserts the need for pride in art and for artistic integrity; Bhrigu refers to finances and details such as booking in advance, stage rehearsals, etc.

VII.c Camera shifts to the previous segment. Bansi in joy, hands spread out, sings another IPTA number based on a Batyali and is followed by the group. The song is of victory, of unity. The set is marked by verticals composed against a mesh. The composition is significant as the frame is decentred to the right, with Jaya, Shibunath and Bansi forming a triad, all standing in a circular row. The camera shifts with the movement of the characters, and then settles on the verticals.

VIII A significant sequence, a proposition in extension, continues the 'Shakuntalam' configuration. It is here that the
film text and the intertext intermingle. This proposition continues from the subensemble III.c where the rehearsal for the Shakuntalam performance is going on. It refers to Shakuntala’s departure, the fawn tugging at her dress and the creeper entwining around her. It is in this sequence that the significance of the intertext becomes explicit as the past in the form of the legend is contemporarised. As Anasuya speaks to Bhrigu about her hesitation regarding her role, the sound of the slogans is heard together with the image of the approaching procession and of a child constantly begging. The sound-track is both a referential insert and a subjective insert, for it on the one hand denotes the crisis in post-independence Bengal and on the other refers to Anasuya’s dilemma, whether to leave her land or to stay on and work. Bhrigu drawing parallels wants Anasuya to remember 1947 and its aftermath, what she had felt while leaving her home or what she would feel if she were to leave Calcutta now. Inter-cutting across time Bhrigu refers to the procession as the creeper, the beggar girl as the fawn; "wouldn’t everything wind around your feet like a creeper if you were to leave Bengal forever?" Besides superimposing the past in the form of the Shakuntalam legend on the present, this particular micro image of Anasuya leaving Bengal for ever serves as a narrative infix to be integrated in the comprehensive proposition XIX.a, where Anasuya will actually become Shakuntala. Thus, this image operates at three levels, that of Shakuntala, of partition, and of Anasuya’s narrative. Bhrigu leaves Anasuya alone and perturbed. The sound of the slogans is foregrounded, which on the one hand enhance her dilemma and on the other serves as an index of the turmoil in Bengal. The child beggar tugging at her dress, an index of her responsibility, is a proposition in extension to be integrated in comprehensive proposition in XIX.b.
In terms of sound the sequence is significant as three sound tracks operate simultaneously, though intermittently. The sound of slogans denoting turmoil is inter-mixed with the music (oh, oh), that refers to a political uprising and this is followed by (Ah, Ah), a subjective insert denoting Anasuya’s state of mind together with the sound of the child begging, enhancing her dilemma. The image of the procession, along with its music, is a significant marker in Ghatak’s oeuvre. It connects this ensemble to that of the procession in Nagarik and to the ‘Dalhousie square’ sequence in Meghe Dhake Tara. In all these films the procession is inserted at the most crucial moments, accompanied either by the music of the ‘Internationale’ or by any fast music or song. The camera, in these sequences, focuses on the marching legs, builds up an image of collectivity, thus objectifying individual suffering, and reaches a level of analysis. This ensemble also refers to the artist as a social, political being. In terms of visual composition, we have the child slowly emerging amidst the procession. The sound track is marked by the child’s music and with the sound of the procession. As Anasuya turns, the child tugs at her saree, framing Anasuya in a front profile, standing at the forefront, with the procession moving in the background. Thus it develops the image at three levels, the procession, Anasuya’s movement and the child’s movement.

IX  Sequence nine is composed of three interrelated images, extending each other. It refers to some significant details regarding theatre production. Shanta’s presence denotes a note of discord. The third subensemble refers to the arrangement for finances and also extends connection to Shakuni and to The Mahabharta.

IX.a  The musical relay in the form of a song connects the
first two ensembles. As the song begins, the camera pans right, revealing theatre props required for production. Shanta enters, a proposition in extension of the ensemble VII.b. Her promise to arrange for the money in ensemble VII.b is subverted here. Rishi, Bhrigu and the group discuss the details for the performance, such as finances, press, publicity, the need to be in time for the performance, make-up, etc. A self-reflexive insert is thus foregrounded. The wooden horses, here a non-diegetic insert, will acquire significance in the comprehensive proposition XIX.a.

IX.b The subensemble continues the theme of the previous subensemble, which is further reflected through the continuation of the same song. In the vacant theatre auditorium framed in a mid long shot, Anasuya insists on selling her gold bracelet for the group, requesting Prabhat to do the needful, while Bhrigu passes by. Anasuya's proposal, a referential insert, is an oblique reference to the contribution and the sincerity of individual artists associated with IPTA. This vacant theatre auditorium is a prefix to the subensemble X.e, where once again after the fiasco of the 'Shakuntalam performance' Bhrigu and Anasuya will pass by.

IX.c Visually this subensemble is marked by verticals, while on the sound track hammer-strokes predominate. It refers to the need for arranging finances for performance, thus self-reflexively referring to the need for money for a film/theatre production. Bhrigu, Mahavir, Gagan visit the money-lender. The ensemble takes us back to *The Mahabharata* and to Shakuni. Reference is made to raag Gandhar, a sharp raag and to the shrewed money lender who too is from Gandhar (a subtle dig at Shakuni). Ghatak continues to include new strands, while
dispersing the title of the film across multiple discursivities. Technically this ensemble is marked by dissolves that denote the passing of time which is developed in terms of spatial continuity.

X. Though Komal Gandhar, throughout, lays bare the process of production, this particular sequence is overtly self-reflexive. It is here that through the juxtaposition of modes of production and the performance that the process and production of theatre are laid bare. Simultaneously and many a time through cross cutting Ghatak shows the way the lights are being used, the curtain being lifted, the sound system being operated, the performance being performed. Ghatak, though he does not focus on the spectators, yet through the use of a long shot, establishes their point of view. Spectator, a non-diegetic, off-screen entity, here is foregrounded purely through the camera movement and distance. While the performance is on, the camera alternately cuts across close-ups and long-shots. The close-up foregrounds the camera and the cinematic apparatus and its modes of viewing whereas the long-shot reflects the theatrical modes of viewing wherein besides angular fixities the performance has to be viewed from a distance. The sequence, divided into five subdivisions, depicts the performance and the way it is being sabotaged by Shanta and her group.

X.a A proposition in extension begins with a dissolve and establishes a correlation with the previous sequence. The ensemble takes place at the back stage. Rishi operating the lights is framed through the low angle. The mechanism for a performance is laid bare here. Bhrigu walks in, dressed as Dushyanta, as Rishi bends to speak to him; (the point of view is Rishi’s) the frame is composed through the top angle that blends
a diagonal tilted angle to Bhrigu/Dushyanta. Shanta is late, the performance is already delayed by one hour. Bhrigu approaches her but she refuses to co-operate. Besides she has failed to collect money as promised in the ensemble VII.b., a prefix to the sabotaging that is to take place in this sequence. The make-up of the characters refers to the technique of the mask, an oblique reference to folk theatre. Shanta’s eye movement, as she moves to the forefront, foregrounds stylistics and acting. The sound off-screen denotes the restlessness of the spectators.

X.b The performance begins. The notion of the sutradhar, of beginnings, and the discussion regarding which play to perform make the 'Shakuntalam performance' self-conscious and self-reflexive. It is here that through the camera distance that constantly varies, Ghatak establishes modes of viewing juxtaposing theatre viewing with film viewing. The shadows of the moving horses remind us of the descending shadows of the refugees in the ensemble II.a. It visually as well as stylistically connects the two inter-plays. As the curtain is lifted diagonally, the screen shifts to reveal the backstage where Rishi is operating the lights. This lifting of the curtain within the performance is Brechtian in essence as it simultaneously shows the performance and the way it is being produced. The shadows of the moving horses lead us to the middle of the play, "... his mind had wandered". As Dushyanta is about to kill the fawn, the chorus is superimposed, "Oh Rajan, don't kill." This sonsign, a displaced diegetic insert, is an infix to be repeated in XIX.a, where the Shakuntalam configuration will develop into a comprehensive proposition. The screen shifts, revealing Shakuntala with Anasuya and Priyanavada. The reference to Anasuya, a friend of Shakuntala's within the play is significant, as Komal Gandhar decentres Kalidas’s play,
and situates Anasuya, a side character in Abijannashakuntalam as the central character in the film. Operating within the epic structure and tradition Komal Gandhar brings to the fore the multi-layered latent interpretations of an epic. The music refers to Shakuntala’s discourse; like the chorus, this sign too will be repeated in XIX.a. The long shot composes two different spaces simultaneously, and lends spatiality to the visual construct. To the right are Shakuntala and her friends, to the left stands Dushyanta.

X.c The gramophone like the process of using lights is foregrounded here, it further reinstates the performance as self-conscious. This constant foregrounding of the theatrical apparatus refers to the process of film-making, thus foregrounding the very material of cinema/theatre. Given the conspiracy of Shanta and her group, the gramophone fails to operate. The laughter of the spectators off-screen, the agitation in the group, Shanta posing innocence but Anasuya silently understanding, are all an index of the forthcoming group disintegration.

X.d The performance continues; the music is here of the title cards, connecting this ensemble purely through sound with the title cards and with the subensemble. This subensemble refers to the last act of the play, and to Shakuntala’s reunion with Dushyanta.

X.e As the play is about to end, Mahavir enters with his spectacles, which further contributes towards the failure of the performance. The performance is a fiasco; Shanta and Raman complacently walk out. Rishi in anger tries to hit Mahavir but is stopped by Bhrigu. As Rishi announces the end of the joint production, the rail-whistle, here a symbol of dispersal, is
heard. In the vacant auditorium Anasuya stands; this ensemble is a flash backward to the ensemble IX.b. As the curtain is lifted, Bhrigu dressed as Dushyanta silently removes his crown and walks out. The movement of Anasuya, slow, gradual turns, with the camera opening space for Bhrigu is a characteristic movement-image in Ghatak.

XI The performance proves to be a complete fiasco. The idea of a joint production has come to nought. The group, under heavy debt, has also earned a bad name for itself. This tension has created a discord among the members. At this moment of crisis something remarkable happens in terms of music for it sings of the approaching dawn. Amidst acute despair and failure, the song serves as a reminder of hope in struggle. It upholds the idea of the survivor, the most significant notion in Ghatak. The sequence is further marked by two significant sonsigns, of the hammer-strokes, and of train whistle. Light foregrounds itself through flickering, assuming a subjective dimension to convey tension. Besides, the use of cut in motion suggests and indicates a visual rupture. The sequence is of reunion. Anasuya returns to the group and the group decides to perform another play. The sequence is thus divided into two sub-divisions: the first is suggestive of discord, the second conveys union. As the sonsigns in conjunction and disjunction mark the sequence, the image impression of disjunction is followed by that of union.

IX.a The ensemble begins with a song, a significant marker, an optimistic note in an otherwise dismal atmosphere. The song is about the crest of dawn, about the need to go far despite all difficulties. It thus significantly indicates the notion of the survivor, the struggle to persist despite all odds dominant throughout Ghatak’s œuvre. The ensemble focuses on post-
production problems, those of finances, of press and publicity, thus self-reflexively referring to the production of a film and the role of money and publicity. It refers to the fact that the appreciation of a work of art depends more on external factors than on its creative potential (a dilemma that all artists face). Rishi and Shibunath are presented as sitting composed through a long-shot. As the ensemble begins the frame tightens, composing them now through a mid-close-up. In the back stage action continues depicting several things as Gagan and others move around. As Rishi and Shibunath fight over a cigarette, the sound of a train whistle is heard, and the light begins to flicker dramatically. It is at this instant that Ghatak uses a cut in motion. Just as the sound of the hammer-strokes and of the train-whistle convey disruption similarly the cut in motion at the level of the image, a visual rupture, is suggestive of discord. The cut in motion violates the 180° eye line match which leads to the violation of the cinematic apparatus and to the formation of an active alert spectator. While Rishi and Shibunath fight, Gagan and others discuss the debt to be paid, and they refer to their family problems. A referential insert refers to the problems faced by the artists. The landlord demands the rent for the theatre. Amidst all this crisis there is proposal for a performance at Birbhum, a flood-hit area; the collections would go to the victims. This concern for the flood victims alludes to the several undertakings of IPTA. Besides, it contextualizes the film in time and milieu. Jaya proposes Ananga Das's one act play. But without Anasuya, who now belongs to the other group, the performance is not possible as it requires two women characters.

XI.b An ensemble in unity, this blends a soft note (Komal) into the sharp note (Gandhar) of the post-production crisis.
Anasuya returns to the group and to Bhrigu, a prefix to the final reunion in the comprehension proposition XX.b. The music is of joy, the lights flicker, on the faces of Anasuya, Bhrigu and Pakhi assuming a subjective dimension. Pakhi has accompanied Anasuya; this further reflects Anasuya-Pakhi relationship.

XII. The sequence opens onto the third major performance, an intertextual proposition in extension. The performance connects itself to the first performance, wherein the creation of the refugee is brought to the fore and to the Shakuntalam performance, in the ensemble X.h and X.d, wherein the notion of the exile is further developed in the context of the myth and the legend. Both the first and the third performance begin from the middle. And in all the three performances the spectator acquires an important status. But it is in this particular sequence that the spectator as an entity is foregrounded. The intervention of the spectator within the performance on the one hand develops the film within the socio-historical context of IPTA and on the other brings to the fore the notion of the implied spectator. Identifying with the play she, the spectator, refers to her son who too like the absent protagonist of the play had died during the war. She thus implicates Bhrigu, who in turn refers to his mother and confesses his guilt abandoning her; in this further develops the notion of the ‘exile’ that is marked either by the pain of being deserted or by the trauma and the guilt of abandoning one’s homeland and people. The sequence is divided into two subensembles: the first refers to the performance, the second, to the effect it can have on the spectators.

XII.b Is a continuation of the previous segment. It refers to the spectator and exemplifies Ghatak’s statement that it is through the intervention of the spectator that a work of art
acquires significance. It also posits theatre as a social
artifice reflecting the trauma of the times. The medal that the
old woman passes to Bhrigu is an index of the spectator's
appreciation and participation. Bhrigu in turn refers to his
mother and his guilt towards her. It also brings to the fore the
issue of caste, a significant discourse theme in Ghatak and
refers to the post-Second World War trauma. The ensemble ends
with a mid-close-up of the old woman to the right of the frame,
acquiring a central subject position. The image impression
highlights the spectator on the one hand and on the other, the
separated, the lost, the abandoned, the homeless which is an
important thematic motif in Ghatak's oeuvre. Reference is made
to the pre-independence folk revolutionary poet/singer Mukunda
Das (who was held in high esteem by the IPTA artists) who
performed in the tradition of 'Charan Kubi,' a narrative
performance by a single person.

XIII In terms of spatial markers the film is centered in
Calcutta. Yet intermittently it is situated in the outskirts
and the surrounding areas. Thus in terms of spatial movement,
there are four significant markers: the Lalgola sequence, the
Kurseong sequence, the Birbhum/Shantinketan sequence and the
Bujbuj sequence. Each of these sequences is significant as it
works as a major narrative marker. In the Lalgola/Padma sequence
Bhrigu and Anasuya, besides coming close to each other, center
the problematics of the discourse in terms of the creation of the
refugee and the trauma of being torn apart. In the Kurseong
sequence, Anasuya, while speaking of her mother, contextualizes
the film by referring to the riots at Noakhali. In the Birbhum
sequence, though Anasuya and Bhrigu further develop intimacy yet
the sequence is marked by discord. The mother's diary, here a
significant insert, refers to the crisis of partition, the people
running amuck and to the call for unity. The Bujbuj sequence is the sequence of reunion, of coming to terms with one's self and of accepting the urgency of the times. At the level of sound too all the four sequences are significant. In the first Lalgola sequence there are several sonsign that operate simultaneously and follow one another without any cut in music. Similarly in the Bujbuj sequence too music is used as a relay. Both the Kurseong and the Birbhum sequence are marked by Rabindra sangeet: the first celebrates nature, the second is expressive of waiting. Both the songs are used as subjective inserts as they eventually become expressive of the mood of several characters. The absence of Anasuya, the singer in the Birbhum sequence, is especially significant as it leads to the objectification of the notion of waiting. The song expresses Bhrigu's waiting for Anasuya, Jaya's for Rishi, Shibunath's for Jaya and Anasuya's for Samar/Bhrigu. The notion of dispersing the song onto several characters is suggestive of the epic as a form. The song is of waiting for someone who may have forgotten and thus it connects with Shakuntala's discourse of waiting for Dushyanta who had forgotten. Yet it sings of faith, of rebellion, of waiting despite everything. The sequence stands out for its sheer ecstasy and as a celebration of nature. Besides, all these four sequences spatially mark the landscape of Bengal, open, free, pure as against the claustrophobic enclosed space, marked by ceilings, bars and the din of the metropolis. In terms of visual composition, verticals, with Jaya's face as an area for shadow movement, mark the sequence. The sequence obliquely refers to Jaya's feelings for someone. Moreover, Anasuya's reference to the letter is an infix that is developed in the forthcoming sequence.

XIII.a As Bhrigu walks in after the performance, Jaya and the
group insist on a walk with him. The time is late evening, the place 'Amar Kutir' in Shantinketan. Bhrigu is feeling lost and overworked. Anasuya is busy writing a letter, a significant infix and a proposition in extension of the ensemble IV.c, which connects with the sequence XIV.b and finally XIX.a, an index of her relationship with Samar. Besides, the 'letter' always serves as a note of discord. As they walk, the 'da da' music becomes more audible. In the moonlit night amidst the cacti, rocks, and the lake Jaya dances in ecstasy, in exuberance, becoming a part of nature while the others also join her. The sound track shifts to Anasuya’s song of waiting. Jaya turns reflective and stops dancing as others become silent. For the song tells not merely of Anasuya’s waiting but gets dispersed on several characters waiting for someone who does not care. Visually once again Jaya’s face becomes an area, a space for movement of shadows, a visual image-impression that connects itself with similar image-light-movement in ensembles I, II.c, IV.d, X.b and XIII.a. Shibunath expresses his feelings for Jaya, an infix to be integrated in sequence XVI where it will become one of the major reasons for the group’s disintegration.

XIII.b Is visually marked by verticals. It is morning, Jaya comes and wakes Bhrigu and informs him regarding Anasuya’s waiting for him. In passing she tells him about Shibunath’s feelings for her and indirectly refers to her feelings for someone else. As Bhrigu moves out, the camera composes him along with the crisscross of the shed like ceiling in a tilted low angle shot towards the extreme lower right of the frame.

XIV Sequence XIV can be divided into three segments that flow into each other and are connected visually, spatially, temporally and through sound. In terms of visual composition and
of editing this is perhaps the finest example of a cut in motion. The first subensemble works through a number of dissolves, superimpositions, and cuts in motion but maintains a visual continuity. Thus there is fluidity between the shots within the sequence. The initial few cuts, though they violate continuity, yet create an aura of movement. The sequence refers to Anasuya’s mother, her diary, and to Anasuya’s relationship with Samar. The title of the film is further foregrounded by adding a new strand to it. The sound track is composed of two pieces, the latter a composition of Tagore’s "Santhohon Janamo Amar Janmashi Ai Deshi" will be repeated as the final piece in ensemble XX.b, which marks the end of the film-discourse.

XIV.a The entire segment can be classified as a movement continuum. The movement is composed of nine cuts, three in motion and a dissolve. Though the cuts and cuts in motion denote break, yet the camera along with the character movement creates an impression of a continuous movement. Many a time the camera remains static, the movement forward and backward through a dissolve and the turns of the characters persist and blend a certain movement within the frame composed through the static camera. The mise-en-scene of Anasuya’s body, the movement of her head, its slow turns, to the left and to the right, despite cuts within the turns maintain an aura of continuity. As Anasuya speaks of her mother the use of extended shots maintains an extreme temporal continuity; and composes her in a near low angle medium shot. Anasuya looking into the camera moves forward, Bhrigu behind her composed in a profile looks left: A - B. This visual composition of dispersed looks comes close to two similar compositions: in sequence IV, of the boats moving in opposite directions (the depth and the foreground moving away); and in sequence V, where Jaya is composed looking to the right,
and Anasuya to the left. This movement image constructions refers to the formation of a visual dialectics within a single shot composition. As Anasuya gives her mother’s diary to Bhrigu the camera pans left to reveal the rocky landscape. Bhrigu’s voice reading the diary becomes disembodied, and gets dispersed onto the landscape that has been a witness to the strong vicissitudes of partition. Anasuya’s and Bhrigu’s pain is thus objectified onto the landscape. The long pan of the camera culminates into the dissolve of joined hands to the extreme left of the frame, which is but an index of the discourse of union. Thematically, this segment is an extension of one proposition and two configuration. The mother’s diary, a proposition in extension, reveals Anasuya’s relationship with her mother, and indicates the active participation of women during the national movement. The diary refers to the partition of India and to the call for unity. It connects this ensemble with ensemble II.a, V.b, and to XIV.c where Bhrigu will further read the diary. Anasuya’s giving the diary to Bhrigu is a gesture of complete faith. It is an extension of the Anasuya-Bhrigu configuration. The segment also refers to the title of the film; and adds further dimensions to it. Bhrigu referring to Rabindranath’s poem ‘Komal Gandhar’ says, "Nam Rachi Kamal Gandhar Mon Mon". ‘Komal Gandhar’ in the poem refers to a girl who, amid stormy vicissitudes of life, is like a sad, sweet melody. In one of his interviews, while referring to the title of the film, Ghatak had said that the idea had originated basically from Tagore’s poem but the development of the poem into a metaphor of Bengal was conceived while reading Bishnudev’s poem of the same name. Bishnudev, (a significant poet of the IPTA period) had further developed Rabindranath’s idea. It was at this point of its metaphorical development that Ghatak had
intervened and had further condensed the metaphor. At the level of sound the final musical note of the film, Tagore's "Janmayo Deshe" is introduced here merely through its music. In addition, the sound 'Ah Ah' and the soft, harmonious melody are also inserted here.

XIV.b Spatially, temporally and thematically the segment is a continuation of the sequence. After a long pan, the camera becomes static. To the extreme left Anasuya and Bhrigu, composed through a long shot are sitting. The camera cuts disrupting visual continuity, violating the 180° eye line match. Anasuya and Bhrigu are now composed to the other side. This ensemble is a continuation of the Anasuya-Bhrigu-Samar configuration and blends the discourse of Miranda and Ferdinand into it. While speaking of Samar, Anasuya reveals her feelings for him. She had met him only for three days but gradually through an exchange of letters they had committed themselves to each other. Anasuya is confused. Samir, after leaving for France has been extending his stay and now wants to further extend it by another five years. Anasuya's pain, an infix to be integrated in ensemble XIX.a, disturbs Bhrigu. As Anasuya shows to Bhrigu the letter she has written to Samir, Bhrigu is disturbed and instantaneously walks away. Anasuya is left alone. The frame darkens. Anasuya's face acquires long shadows as the music turns dramatic, to mark her subjectivity. The camera movement, the frame composition, the music and the light all mark Anasuya's subjectivity. The camera pans ahead of Anasuya as she moves, and despite her movement it composes her throughout to the extreme right of the frame. The composition frames her to extreme lower right with only her face moving against the open sky. The sky is a blank space and the movement of the face against this blankness denotes her loneliness. This composition in the context of a
different mis-en-scene will be repeated in sequence XX. The sequence also brings to the fore the issue of caste and religion.

XIV.c A segment in continuation, it refers to Anasuya’s mother. The mother’s diary covers the entire frame diagonally, and acquires the central position just as it contextualises the film, developing its basic theme of the division of the nation. The diary is dated 15th November, 1946, Noakhali camp. It refers ominously to the apocalypse of partition and to the call for unity. As Bhrigu reads, his voice gets disembodied; for a moment the present is suspended and through the disembodied voice we recede into the present moment of the past, 1946. Bhrigu closes the diary, the camera cuts in motion, and then becomes static as Bhrigu moves to the depth within the frame. The music, an extension of the ensemble, ends the sequence.

XV. A highly self-reflexive sequence, it is a proposition in extension, extending the ensemble IV.d where Gagan and Kunal discuss the construction of a play and the need to rearrange ideas. This sequence will finally culminate in the ensemble XVII.b where Bhrigu, while reading the finished play, will draw its connections with the present film. It also refers to all the self-reflexive inserts within the film. This intertext, though it serves as a self-reflexive unit, turns highly referential. Gagan and Kunal are constructing a play related to the ‘Bango-Bango Andolan’ of Bengal. The play refers to the 1905 Bengal partition and to Curzon’s strategy to divide Bengal as it then was the center of political uprising. In a letter dated 2nd February, 1905 to John Brodrich, Secretary of India, Curzon had written:

Calcutta is a centre from which the Congress party operates with full force and has a powerful influence on the high court, it has the power to force a weak government to bend. Hence if the Bengali speaking population is divided, first the lawyers will be divided.
The Congress will be split into small independent weak units and Calcutta will be dethroned from its place as the centre of successful intrigue.

The British move was also aimed at disrupting the Hindu-Muslim unity by convincing upper class Muslims that the newly created province with its Muslim majority was in their interest. On 19th July, 1905 Curzon announced the partition of Bengal. However, it only served to arouse and bring in all sections of people in Bengal into an unprecedented mass movement which soon spread to many other parts of the country. The anti-partition agitation assumed a militant form on 7th August, 1905 when thousands of people at a meeting in Calcutta resolved to boycott British goods until the partition proposal was withdrawn. The partition came into force on 16th October 1905, which was observed as the day of national mourning throughout Bengal. It was during this movement that swadeshi, the use of Indian goods and boycott of British goods, became an integral part of the freedom struggle. Curzon and the British rulers, in order to crush the rising tide of nationalism, unleashed naked terror.

When Gagan, the playwright within the film, says, 'Curzon had his fun', he is referring to the repression that was unleashed by the government, as well as to the division and disruption caused by the Britishers. Ironically Gagan says, "Fun and frolic fill the divided Bengal, Curzon had his fun, now we will have ours." These lines are given to an old cynical peasant teacher in the play who is to provide the commentary on the action of the play. The issues of providing commentary, of the choice of characters and of how to create a play are all brought to the fore. Besides, at the discourse level this sequence continues the segment XIV.a. As Bhrigu reads the diary of Anasuya's mother, the reference is made to 15th November, 1946, Noakhali camp. Both the day and the place are significant as
they obliquely refer to the decision regarding the partition of India and consequently to the riots that took place. The diary refers to the apocalypse, to the people running amuck, and this reference further connects Komal Gandhar to Ghatak's short film Yeih Kiun (1970) wherein he deals with issues related to communalism and to the division of the nation. Segment XIV.a refers to the 1946 riots, sequence XV to the 1905 division, to the first attempt to divide. The two sequences thus inter-cut across time and create a dialectics of analysis. Besides, these two segments connect with sequence XVI.a. As Gagan talks of fun, suddenly on the sound track we have Sukunto Battacharya's song of bloodshed and the subsequent revolution and the need to write the chronicle of this repression and the struggle against it. Thus XIV.a, through the opsign of dissolve, continues sequence XV, which, through the use of a fade-in, continues sequence XVI.a. This continuity is achieved in spite of the fact that the three sequences are temporally and spatially discontinuous: the first takes place in Birbhum, the second in a cafe where Gagan and Kunal are writing the play; the third in the theatre where Gagan, Bansi and Jaya are rehearsing Sukunto Bhattacharya's song. The subsequent presence of Gagan in the second and the third sequences marks a rupture in terms of temporainity. Yet the three sequences are interwoven at the level of themes as well as technique. Although the three sequences refer to three different points in history yet they lead to a homogeneous discourse at the level of analysis. The issue of writing commentary for the play in sequence XV connects with the need to write down the chronicle of bloodshed and revolution as expressed in Sukunto Bhattacharya's song in segment XVI.a. Both the units serve as self-reflexive inserts, for Komal Gandhar itself is an attempt at documenting the chronicle of Bengal division. The film is
overtly a reconstruction of history from the margins, from the point of view of common people as well as artists and revolutionaries.

XVI. Sequence sixteen marks disjunction by introducing discord. It is divided into four ensembles. The thematic disruption is dispersed across the plane of the cinematic apparatus itself. Throughout the sequence the sound is of hammer-strokes and subsequently of a procession, marked by the sound of slogans. At the level of sound there are three jump cuts. There is a visual rupture too. The extended use of verticals serve as the symbol of the communication barrier. At the level of narrative the group disintegrates. Shibunath's feelings for Jaya lead to the ultimate disintegration of the group. The segment refers to Sukunto Bhattacharya's song of revolution, to Jaya's feelings for Rishi and of course self-reflexively to the use of light in theatre. The visuals are marked by huge angular doors.

XVI.a This is a discourse continuation of sequence XV with its reference to 1905, and of XIV.c with its reference to 1946. This ensemble begins with a fade-in to Sukunto Bhattacharya's song of bloodshed, of revolution and the need to document its chronicle. Historicizing the film, it refers to hunger, pain and suffering under British rule, to the resultant voices of dissent and revolution and to the subsequent construction of a new history. The song refers to a certain point in history, the point when the nation had almost witnessed a revolution, and thus it develops the film purely at a temporal zone. It also reconstructs the notion of a time-image in cinema. Komal Gandhar thus is a query into post-independence India, an attempt to document its chronicle, especially in terms of people's displacement and its
consequences. Sukunto Bhattacharya's song "I was born into this land to be kicked around, and I am here to write down its chronicle", takes us back to the statement of the old man in the first inter-text of the film, "I have land and cattle, I am not a refugee." Both these inter-textual statements are self-reflexive and inversely turn the discourse of the film text onto a referential axis. In terms of the visual composition as Bhrigu enters, Jaya is framed to the right, facing left, singing "the book of accounts as I pick up I find." The camera shifts to Bansi completely engrossed in singing, his face slightly lifted, with his look turned upward, "bloodshed debited therein...". As Bansi, Jaya and Gagan all sing the song of revolution, the camera tilts up, turns almost Eisensteinian as it becomes static on the mural of a rising lion. The beginning of the song is marked by a fade-in to Bhrigu. The light composes Bhrigu and Shibunath above the knee through the use of the low angle, against the dark background and the verticals. As Shibunath refers to the disturbance within the group, Bhrigu senses Shibunath's feelings for Jaya and promises to probe into her feelings. Bhrigu's entry into the room is marked by the tilt-up of the camera that composes Bhrigu against the angular doors. The song recedes to the background, the hammer-strokes, here an index of the group's disintegration, predominate. The sound of the hammer-strokes is eventually followed by a song.

XVI.b A proposition in extension, this continues the sequence. Bhrigu's entry into the room interrupts the song. Bansi and Gagan leave. The sound of the hammer-strokes predominate. Bhrigu sits. As his hand moves towards Jaya's shoulders, the camera cuts in motion; a rupture in movement and then the hand shifts a little. Jaya composed in a profile, slowly turns, leans on Bhrigu and reveals Rishi's name.
Anasuya's and Prabhat's entry inside the room disturbs Jaya and she leaves. Bhrigu is left sitting to the forefront, Anasuya enquires after Jaya and refers to the Birbhum money that has been passed over to Mahavir. The Birbhum money, a displaced diegetic insert, will acquire significance in the ensemble XVI.d. Light as source is visible in the background.

XVI.c At the level of narrative the ensemble is marked by a confrontation which is objectified in the very placement of the characters. Shibunath, Bhrigu and Rishi enter the frame, from opposite directions projected through three different shots. Shibunath enters from the extreme front right, Bhrigu from the left. As Bhrigu reveals Rishi's name, Rishi enters the frame from the depth middle. The placement of the characters forms a visual triangular. The image is marked by huge angular doors. The hammer-strokes persist until they give way to a curious sound, as the camera frames Shibunath. The sound is a subjective insert and, together with the visuals, serves as a flash-forward to the tension that will lead to the group's disintegration in the next ensemble. Light with its sharp tonalities of light and shade marks the edges as it also turns subjective, highlighting the tension within Bhrigu, Rishi and Shibunath. This effective use of light is further foregrounded in Rishi's reference to the fact that he had gone to Sheoraphuli to do lights for a play. This ensemble is thus connected with the ensemble II.c where a similar use of light combined with the modes of using light was self-reflexively foregrounded. Besides, Rishi refers to the theatre movement (Natya mandal) of Bengal. By referring to the fact that the people of Bengal are performing brilliant plays, this ensemble contextualizes Komal Gandhar in its cultural milieu, especially in the context of IPTA.
XVI.d An ensemble in disintegration, it is a proposition in extension, and refers to all the previous ensembles that are marked by the group’s tension. Niriksha, the group, almost collapses. The ensemble begins with a fade-in to angular doors. As Bhrigu enters, the camera opens onto the group. Shibunath begins his accusations by referring to the Birbhum money, an infix in ensemble XVI.b. He accuses Anasuya and Mahavir. Mahavir refers to Bhrigu’s involvement. Bhrigu’s refusal to answer agitates Shibunath who questions the Anasuya-Bhrigu relationship on moral grounds, as Anasuya is engaged to someone else. Exposing Bhrigu’s feelings for Anasuya, Shibunath leaves the group and is followed by the others who leave one by one. The character placement and the camera movement are significant. The frame composes Shibunath as the reference point. As he confronts the group the camera pans to the left and right as it intermittently pauses on the face of the characters accused. Jaya and Bhrigu, composed in a profile, turn together. As she gets up and sits in the process of defending the Anasuya-Bhrigu relationship, Jaya’s movement is marked by a rare cut in motion. Anasuya’s movement across the frame, as she leaves, is intercut with Bhrigu’s face. Her face acquires a central position as she turns and moves in anguish and as she gets up to leave. Verticals in the form of a staircase when combined with the sound of the hammer-strokes denote disjunction. The ensemble obliquely refers to the several problems that artists face, especially those related to money and family responsibilities. Eventually Rishi and Bhrigu are left alone. The hammer-strokes persist until they give way to the sound of the protesting workers outside. The group’s disintegration thus disperses itself along two significant planes. By obliquely referring to the split within IPTA it forms itself into a metaphor of division within
the nation. Secondly, by opening the film onto the political sound track at this juncture of the group's disintegration, it refers to the turmoil and unrest caused by the division of the nation. The ensemble further refers to Kunal and Gagan: Kunal, composed through the low angle, hands over the completed play-text to Bhrigu. It thus is a proposition in extension of the ensemble IV.d, sequence XV, to be integrated in the comprehensive proposition XVII.b. Kunal's gesture at this point serves as a testimony of faith and an index to the group's union. As Rishi sits the camera while violating the 180° degree eyeline match cuts in motion. This connects us to the use of a similar cut in the ensemble XI.a after the fiasco of the 'Shakuntalam performance' and the disintegration of the group. Rishi emphasizes the fact that 'the leaders of men' must cultivate humility.

XVII Sequence XVII can be divided into two sub-divisions. Though spatially and temporally the segments flow into each other, the sequence is composed of two propositions, the first an extension of the Anasuya-Bhrigu-Samar relationship, the second a comprehensive proposition where ensemble IV.d and sequence XV finally culminate and turn the text of the play self-reflexive. Light and music, when combined with the visual composition that is marked by verticals, turn subjective to mark Anasuya's and Bhrigu's pain. The sequence ends with Anasuya's and Bhrigu's feelings of effulgence on reading Kunal's and Gagan's play.

XVII.a The sequence opens with a dissolve. The music of the previous sequence continues and blends spatial continuity. Besides, it opens the film purely on time. Bhrigu is sitting in the same place but the enhanced shadows denote the passing of time. In terms of light composition the ensemble is significant. Verticals in the form of window bars predominate, lining the two
sides of the frame. The shadows of the verticals almost fall on Bhrigu composing his subjectivity. To the left the frame is lighted, whereas to the right it is almost dark. Light enters through the open door and composes the mid-left-frame almost in a diagonal. From this door a shadow long and teeming moves forward and then we see Anasuya. The frame being divided through light, on the right-mid Bhrigu continues to sit, while Anasuya sits to the left-mid of the frame. Anasuya is in pain and feels divided, making the sequence a configuration in extension. As she speaks, her face is almost darkened, marked by shadows, light now turns absolutely subjective. Bhrigu stands composed against the Mural and the angular doors. No longer thinking of his pain he refers to Kunal-Gagan’s play which is a proposition in extension. In excitement Bhrigu refers to the subject of the play, the ‘Bango-Bango Andolen’ of 1905, the movement against the division of Bengal. The shot cuts to Anasuya who excitedly reads the play and points to its references which range from Kshudiram to Rabindranath. This reference to Kshudiram is significant as it connects Komal Gandhar to Suberna Rakha (1962) wherein Sita’s death is developed in the context of Kshudiram who died a martyr sacrificed at the alter of India’s independence just as Sita too dies a martyr sacrificed at the alter of the consequence of this independence. Secondly the reference to Kshudiram is a referential insert recalling the independence movement, the sacrifice made by people and the inherent betrayal inlaid in this independence that saw its genesis in the partition of the nation. Besides the reference to Kshudiram and Rahindranath in Kunal and Gagan’s play points to a certain combination of art and politics that referentially was significant both in the context of IPTA and in the context of Ritwik Ghatak’s world view.

XVII.b The blank denotes a break. Though the sequence
continues yet it is here that the Kunal-Gagan inserts develop into a comprehensive proposition. Bhrigu’s face composed along the Mural is only partially visible as it is turned to the front left. He refers to the Kunal-Gagan play and it is in this reference that the very essence of the epic structure is brought forth as he draws its parallels with music. The reference to the stage is developed in the context of the people. The composition of art and life is referred to as an orchestration of myriad notes that assumes different patterns given their varied combinations and permutations that are developed through several experiments related to speed, light and movement. The same notes, the same art work, when given a different permutation and combination, assume a different pattern. Referring to Bijon Bhattacharya’s Nabanno, Bhrigu refers to its epic structure and then refers to the epic form of Kunal-Gagan’s play, thus self reflexively commenting on Komal Gandhar’s structure and referentially commenting on the significance of the form, structure and theme of Nabanno that had revolutionarised the Bengal stage. Bhrigu’s movement as he speaks is marked by the slow turn of his head, which eventually settles into a profile to the left of the frame. The camera cuts abruptly on his face; his eyes sparkle and they are intercut with Anasuya’s movement marked by slow sways, turns of her body, and this is developed in the context of Bhrigu standing with his back to the camera moving to the depth within the frame. Bhrigu refers to the vibrant speed of the Kunal-Gagan play, its form that is experimental and to the effect it will have on the people. Moreover, it is this play that will later reunite the disintegrated group.

XVIII This sequence refers to the passing of time; a month has passed. Anasuya is busy stitching costumes, as Kunal’s and Gagan’s play is to be performed the next day. This raises the
issue of time: if the performance is on the next day, then the entire action of sequence XIX is to take place on this very day, thus bringing forth the issue of film time and real time. The place is Bujbuj, the fourth significant spatial marker in the film. Besides, the performance obliquely refers to the group's reconciliation. The sequence opens onto Anasuya's house, a proposition in extension of the Anasuya-Pakhi relationship. Pakhi's reference to the teacher's demonstration, a displaced diegetic insert, will eventually serve as an index of turmoil and unrest in Calcutta and will situate the film in its sociological context. There is also a reference to spectators, final rehearsals, Rishi's leaving for Bujbuj for preparation, etc.

XIX. It is in sequence XIX that the film reaches its climactic moment. The text and the inter-text mingle and arrive at a level of analysis. This assimilation takes place, primarily through sound that serves as a connecting link. The heterogeneous discourse levels come together and form a homogeneous discourse. Thus this is a point of convergence where not only do several narrative levels converge but even technically the discourse that has hitherto remained dispersed across the cinematic plane comes together and coheres itself into a dialectics of argument. The specific codes of character movement, sound, light, camera angle, distance, movement and duration converge to form and explore a certain plastic composition where the very material of cinema constructs itself. For a moment the image gets suspended in time. The sequence can be divided into two units: the level of narrative movement, and the level of discourse movement. It is at the discourse level that the units merge and form themselves into a comprehensive proposition. In terms of narrative, the reference is to the Anasuya-Samar-Bhrigu relationship, while at the discourse level,
the Shakuntalam text is superimposed, thus transforming Anasuya into Shakuntala, a metaphor of the divided land.

XIX.a The 'Shakuntalam' proposition in extension forms itself into a comprehensive proposition giving way to a major paradigmatic configuration. On the image track the wooden fawn, a prop for the Shakuntalam performance in ensembles IX.a, X.b, serves as a connecting point. The ensemble subtly, through sound, brings together the text and the intertext. As Anasuya speaks to Bhrigu about Samar’s letter and her decision to leave for France, on the sound track, the sound of ‘Oh Rajan don’t kill’ is superimposed on Bhrigu’s near close-up, reflecting the discourse of Dushyanta as superimposed on Bhrigu. The superimposition of the Dushyanta onto Bhrigu here and onto Samir elsewhere reshuffles the central discourse of Dushyanta in Kalidasa’s text and brings to the surface Ritwik Ghatak’s intervention within the narrative text of Kalidasa’s Abhijanasakuntalam. By drawing on The Mahabarata, Komal Gandhar, exposes the patriarchal politics of Kalidasa’s text. The film is an attempt to restate Shakuntala’s innocence and demands accountability of Dushyanta for deserting Shakuntala, for an act that is too easily rationalized in Kalidasa. Abhijanasakuntalam admits that Dushyanta forgot Shakuntala but throws the entire blame for this amnesia on Shakuntala, whereas the original narrative, as in The Mahabharata, clearly states the patriarchal reason for Dushyanta’s refusal to accept Shakuntala and their child. As Anasuya further refers to her pain and guilt of abandoning, leaving her country and people, the sound of Shakuntala’s departure in the ensemble III.c, VIII.a and X.a is superimposed on her. Anasuya becomes Shakuntala. The past and the present converge as the legendary space is reworked to encompass the contemporary. What would Anasuya, the decentre
protagonist of Kalidasa’s *Abhijanasakuntalam*, do given Shakuntala’s dilemma? While at the level of sound Anasuya becomes Shakuntala and coheres into a metaphor of division, at the level of image, the icon of the mother goddess covers the screen. This is a condensed metaphor that encompasses the pain of Anasuya and Shakuntala as women, within the patriarchal order which essentially constructs women as exile. The few initial compositions are marked by verticals in the form of bars. Reference is made to Shibunath’s restlessness, which is a flash forward to his return. The sound of a shot which is an index of the political upheaval is heard. Anasuya’s movement as she speaks to Bhrigu about Samar’s letter is marked by a jump cut, a cut in motion. Throughout the ensemble light is used very effectively. It almost lends a certain plasticity to Anasuya’s upturned face composed against the icon of the goddess. Moreover, as Anasuya stares at Bhrigu in anger, the light almost transforms her into a mask as it bleaches her face completely. Anasuya’s pain: ‘...does he have no pity?’ connects the ensemble with the ensemble XIV.b.

XIX.b Is an ensemble in convergence. At the level of sound the ensemble seeks to unify several sonsigns hitherto dispersed across the narrative. A heightened effect of sound is achieved by the amalgamation of several sonsigns that resonate together. Here connections, are established purely through sound across several syntagmatic and paradigmatic units. Continuing the metaphorical convergence of the previous ensemble, Anasuya and Shakuntala merge together as Anasuya experiences the pain of separation. The sound of the child persistently begging alms mingled with the sound of the plane taking off, is insightful in terms of Anasuya’s dilemma. The former persistently reminds her of her responsibility as well as cross-cuts across Shakuntalam’s
narrative; it equates the child as the fawn tugging at Shakuntala’s dress. The plane sound reflects Anasuya’s desire to leave for France. The sound of shots being fired establishes the locale, the context of unrest, the state of turmoil that characterizes post-independence, post-partitioned Bengal. The unifying sound of the bells is herein mixed with the sound of shots being fired, the plane taking off, and the cry of the demanding child. These four sounds resonate together to form a single condensed sonsign that not only reflects Anasuya’s state of mind but when combined with the scales of light, camera angle, camera movement, camera duration and Anasuya’s movement acquires a plastic effect, a composition wherein the image gets almost sculptured in time and in space. The final recurring sound of ‘Duhahi Ali’ connects this ensemble with the Padma/Lalgola sequence and hence with the discourse of division. Here, through this sonsign, Anasuya becomes the split image of the rail track. But while in the Padma sequence this recurring sound of ‘Duhahi Ali’ superimposed on the railway track through the shot of the absent train tracking the railtrack had abruptly halted on the image of the barrier signifying disjunction, here it cuts on Anasuya, a sign in conjunction.

On the narrative level Anasuya, unlike her textual counterpart Shakuntala, finally decides to reject Samar who had almost forgotten her. The School master’s intervention and the reference to demonstrating teachers help Anasuya in realizing her mistake and in her decision to remain and work in her own land along with Bhrigu. It is at this moment that Pakhi informs her of Samar’s arrival. The shot cuts on Anasuya, composing her face alone to the extreme lower right, amidst the blank space, a diagonal composition. The composition which is almost a tribute to Dovzhenko’s Earth connects this micro image of Anasuya to a
similar composition in the ensemble XIV.b, where too the agitated face of Anasuya had been projected as moving alone, composed against the blank sky, a cinematic metaphor denoting her loneliness. In terms of combination of light composition, sound, camera angle, movement and character movement, the ensemble is perhaps the most significant of all. As Anasuya leaves in anger, Shibunath tries to stop her, and the second gun-shot is fired, which is an index of unrest in Calcutta. The camera cuts to a dark door, almost an arch with only the edges lighted. It is at this point that another gun-shot is heard, followed by the sound of breaking glass. Anasuya enters this arch door, looks straight, then abruptly looks right, the sound of a lash cuts across. She moves right, the camera pans along with her, the frame is absolutely dark except for Anasuya's face and the upper part of her body which are starkly lit. Gradually within this fast movement only the starkly lit face moves, and on this face is superimposed the persistent cry of the child 'didi, please give.' Anasuya turns, looks straight, her body is to the right, her face is absolutely lit. The camera cuts to the child, and to the sound of the child, a micro sign in extension connecting this ensemble with VIII.a. Along with this sound is the sound of a plane taking off, connecting this ensemble with the Padam/Lalgola sequence where this sound was first heard along with the sound of 'Duhahi Ali' and the sound of the train superimposed on the barrier. The composition turns plastic as the shot cuts on Anasuya's tilted face composed against the arch. The composition is diagonal and the very sharp tonalities of light set a sharp contrast of complete darkness against the starkly lit arch edges and Anasuya's face. The persistent sound of plane taking off; mingled with the resonating sound of 'didi please give' is now superimposed onto Anasuya and the child
composed together. As a man’s voice is heard, off-screen, Anasuya turns. The camera cuts in motion. Anasuya’s face is now composed diagonally to the extreme lower left. The school master enters the frame, as the depth becomes mobile, with the persistence of the movement within the frame. The master composed in a diagonal moves back, turns, the camera cuts in motion as he turns again. As he refers to Anasuya reminding him of his dead sister, the shot cuts to Anasuya, tilted to the right, the composition lends a certain plasticity to the image as the sound of a plane taking off is heard. Camera cuts to the master, tilts up, pans left to the demonstrating teachers, cuts to the child to the right looking left, cuts to the master to the left and then cuts to the previous plastic composition. The master leaves. The plane sound is now mingled with the sound of bells, of the child recurrently demanding, and pulling at her Saree. Anasuya turns, holds the child’s face in her hands, the stark light lends plasticity to the image as the sound of the plane taking off off-screen is heard. Anasuya turns, walks with great speed to the right, the Camera moves along with her, as she moves out of the frame, the camera movement continues but now traces the movement of the child following, as the child too moves out of the frame, the camera tracks the movement of the child’s toy as it drags itself in a diagonal across the frame. Superimposed on this image of the child’s toy is the amalgamated sound of the plane taking off, the unifying sound of bells, the sound of the shots being fired and the resonating sound of ‘didi, o didi.’ The several sonsigns converge and resonate imparting plasticity to the image and are also an exploration into the creation of a certain plastic sound composition independent of the image. As Anasuya opens the door, the sound fades into the sound of gun-shots being fired. As Pakhi announces Samar’s
arrival, Anasuya sits down. The descending shadow of the staircase falls on her forming her into a split image; as the sound of 'Duhahi Ali' that is superimposed onto her transforms her into the divided image of the railtrack.

XX. Sequence XX, a comprehensive proposition, is a sequence of union. The rail-sign here, together with the image of united hands, serves as a sign in conjunction. Shibunath returns to the group, who are now united. Anasuya re-unites with Bhrigu as Rishi and Jaya also come together. The discourse of union and separation continues. The music once again is composed of several pieces and towards the end it flows without any cuts.

XX.a Ensemble XX.a is marked by the group's union. As the ensemble begins the sound of the harmonium denotes harmony. The group despite all complications has once again reunited to perform Kunal and Gagan's play. This is the fourth significant reference to a performance, though in this case the performance will not take place within the film space. Shibunath has returned. Jaya brings the news that Anasuya has left for the airport with someone who had come from abroad. The sound of the 'Shakuntalam' performance is once again superimposed on Bhrigu's face. The sound continues along with the sound of a plane taking off. The shot cuts to a taxi in order to maintain suspense. The frame is composed diagonally, as a man on a cycle crosses the frame from left to right against the huge hoarding of an airplane. Anasuya along with Pakhi crosses the frame in a taxi as the sound of the 'Shakuntalam performance' continues.

XX.b The Bujbuj ensemble is marked by the fourth performance which is yet to be performed. Besides, it serves as the fourth major thematic and spatial marker in the film. The ensemble opens on a railway station, here a sign in conjunction.
Verticals compose the frame. As Gagan apologetically refers to Anasuya, the group is told about Anasuya’s arrival. Jaya jumps with joy. The shot opens to a rail-track. Anasuya along with Pakhi is standing to the left. Jaya and Rishi walk together. The shot cuts to Shibunath standing alone. The cinematic composition of framing him single in a shot denotes his separation. Rishi with ecstasy announces Jaya’s feelings for him. Anasuya and Bhrigu come together. The film ends with the image of joined hands, a micro image in extension of sequences IV.a and XIV.a. At the level of sound this ensemble comes close to the Padma sequence. The sound track here is composed of several pieces though it is towards the end that the music flows without any cut like it did in the Padma/Lalgola sequence. The ensemble begins with the sound of the train whistle along with the image of the rail track. It moves to the sound of the birds, a significant micro sound image in extension that connects this ensemble with ensemble III.d where Anasuya refers to the fact that "Calcutta is nothing but smoke, bricks and wood; still the birds sing." This is a proposition in extension of enclosed spaces vis-a-vis the open landscape of Bengal. Gagan and Bansi sing of the prophet Sulemain; the song ends with the sound of the Boatmen mingled with the bird sound. As Rishi in ecstasy announces Jaya’s feelings, the sound is of harmony and happiness. As Anasuya speaks to Bhrigu, the sound of the boatmen in the background persists giving way to the song of the ‘golden hued chaitnya’. It is from this song onwards that music once again flows without any cut as such. The ‘chaitnya’ song is continued by the folk song of marriage that is followed by the final piece, the tune of Tagore’s ‘janmanyo ae deshe’ that connects this ensemble with the ensemble XIV.a. The Tagore song also reflects Anasuya’s feelings towards her motherland, her commitment to stay
and work if not in her own land, from which she has been
displaced, then at least in a land that has a semblance to the
lost home. At the level of image, as music flows, the camera
pans left, then pans right for a long duration followed by
another long pan to the left of the frame. A descriptive
syntagma follows revealing the beauty of the landscape. The pan
finally gives way to a tilt-up to compose the city space amidst
the blank sky. This is a micro image in extension of ensemble
IV.a. This juxtaposition of space, the landscape and the city
space, continues the proposition in extension of open space as
against the enclosed spaces. But here the image of the two
spaces composed together denotes a certain reconciliation, as the
image of the united hands serves as a symbol of unification of
the two Bengals, the central theme of _Komal Gandhar_.

II

Image, Sound, Metaphor:
The Paradigmatic Conceptual Order in _Komal Gandhar_

When the entire group has collapsed and the ideals have failed,
Bhrigu in desperation picks up Kunal-Gagan’s play. Referring to
the play, he speaks of art and creativity. Connecting it with the
people’s movement, he comments on how through different formal
constructs the same art work can acquire different meanings
altogether. Drawing parallels with music, Bhrigu refers to the
rhythm of man’s movement which is like an "orchestration, harmony
of many notes, polyphonic patterns" and how by increasing,
reducing or freezing the speed for a moment one can create a
pattern. It is through these lines that Ghatak subtly brings to
the fore the very essence of the epic structure he so much dealt
with as well as talked about in almost all his works. For, an
epic is constructed not with one note, nor with a single plot or
character protagonist; rather it is a structure marked by polyphonic patterns. It is in an epic structure that several things happen at the same time at several different levels; with several significant characters threading and unthreading the narrative; weaving stories within stories but culminating into an apparent homogeneous discourse. Bhrigu himself asserts self-reflexively that Kunal-Gagan’s play, the drama within the film, will be the first to attempt an epic play after Bijon Bhattacharya’s Nabanno. Besides he comments on the very structure of Komal Gandhar, the musical note with varied combinations containing the very essence of dialectics within it. In one of his essays on the epic form, Ghatak refers to the epic mind that is not much involved in the story intrigues, but likes to retell the same myths and legends again and again. He further states, "we, as a people, are not much sold on the ‘what’ of the thing, but the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of it. This is the epic attitude. And hence Komal Gandhar retells Kalidasa’s AbhijnanaSakuntala.

The film is broadly structured in this epic essence, in the sense that it takes after Kalidasa’s AbhijnanaSakuntalam and begins by transforming this intertext into an epic structure. It develops a story along the lines of Shakuntalam’s story, but decentres the legend, using Anasuya, a friend of Shakuntala’s in Kalidasa’s AbhijnanaSakuntalam, as the central protagonist. It picks up the story at a particular point of time, and then transposes Shakuntala’s dilemma and anguish onto Anasuya. Komal Gandhar problematizes the discourse of Kalidasa’s text by exposing its patriarchal structure before it begins to develop a perspective grounded in the feminine gender. It asks what Anasuya would do, at this point in time, given Shakuntala’s predicament. Would she too like Shakuntala follow the man who has rejected and insulted her or would she exercise her choice in
rejecting this man like Sita did and then rethink her commitments? Komal Gandhar thus does two very interesting things with Kalidasa’s narrative: one, it decentres the text and blends an epic element to it by continuing the narrative from the point of view of a side character, thus dispersing and opening the narrative to multiple discursivities; and two, it places Kalidasa’s Shakuntalam as an intertext within the film so that Shakuntala’s predicament as Shakuntala acquires the central place, transforming her into a metaphor of division. While thinking of the performance, Anasuya, who is to play Shakuntala in the play within the film, hesitates about her role. Bhrigu is surprised at her hesitation and instantaneously draws parallels between Anasuya’s present state and Shakuntala’s, thus intercutting across history/tradition and the contemporary. Anasuya, is nervous regarding Shakuntala’s departure and the fawn tugging at her clothes. Bhrigu, helping Anasuya, cries, "Use your emotion, it shouldn’t be a problem for a Bengali girl - go back to 1947 - when you had to leave your home or why don’t you imagine Calcutta as your heritage. Look at that procession, that’s your creeper, your flames, imagine a beggar girl begging alms—just like that fawn if you have to leave Calcutta, this Bengal forever, wouldn’t everything wind around your feet like a creeper." And suddenly there is a procession, and the turmoil of the divided Bengal becomes vivid. Abhijnanasakuntalam is thus contemporarised. A dialogue with the past and the present comes through this abstraction of partition and exile. Anasuya thus becomes a metaphor of the divided land unable to resolve the division within. Whom does she love, Bhrigu or Samar? Further extending the parallels, Ghatak connects Shakuntala with Shakespeare’s Miranda, for Samar is Anasuya’s Ferdinand, signifying all that is remote, distant and supposedly romantic,
whereas Bhrigu signifies commitment, passion and revolutionary fervour. Samar has asked her to reach France immediately. Anasuya becomes Shakuntala; the inter-text of *Abhijnanasakuntalam* now gets superimposed on her, for leaving for France means leaving one's home, one's country, people and commitments. She has to make a choice. It is at this moment that something very interesting happens in terms of pure signifiers. As Anasuya refers to her predicament to Bhrigu the sound track is that from the inter play of *Shakuntalam*’s performance. This establishes a connection exclusively on the cinematic plane through visual and auditory inter-cuts, and creates a new form of montage purely through the dialectics of sound and image. *Shakuntala* within the inter-text and Anasuya of *Komal Gandhar* become representative of all those who have undergone the pain of division, of being separated from one’s roots. The inter-text of *Shakuntalam* is connected with several other inter-texts employed by the film, so that the refugee, an otherwise peripheral being, acquires the central space in a narrative discourse that attempts at coming to terms with the trauma of partition and division. It is here that the entire screen is filled with the image of the mother earth/goddess incorporating Sita, Miranda, Shakuntala, Anasuya, all condensed in one being who for centuries has witnessed the trauma of exile and of being torn apart. In anger Anasuya walks out amidst riots but then she suddenly decides to stand by her commitments. It is at this moment that Pakhi reveals the news of Samar’s arrival. Once again the sound track carries the sound of the railtrack; the sound of the ‘Duhahi Ali’ in the Lalgola/Padma sequence that was initially superimposed on the railtrack now gets superimposed on Anasuya, with the checkered image of vertical descending on her, forming her into a split image. She is once again transformed into a symbol of division, neither here
nor there. But while in the Lalgola sequence the shot suddenly
cuts at the image of the barrier, dividing East from West Bengal,
here the shot with the same intensity cuts on Anasuya, no longer
a barrier.

The second major thematic prospection the film uses is that
of the theatre groups. Theatre here becomes a spatial marker
where the film’s major action is performed but it also becomes a
metaphor signifying the split in a people and a culture. The
narrative revolves around two theatre groups Niriksha and
Dakshinapath, the split within them, their attempts at
reconciling, and their subsequent disintegration due to internal
politics. The film in its own way traces the theatre movement of
Bengal, the personal lives of the actors, their dilemmas,
conflicts and crises and their involvement with form. Moreover
the use of several folk theatrical devices employed by IPTA to
tackle contemporary issues are brought to the fore, including a
changed conception of theatre to convey the exigencies of the
historical moment to the mass audience. Theatre becomes a
platform, the forum of the people, where the spectator response
and the need to learn theatre from the people become the main
concern. The film deals with the need to oppose commercial
theatre groups and to incorporate the dialect of the people.
Besides directly referring to Bijon Bhattacharya’s Nabanno, to
Anaga Das, Mukunda Das, Rabindranath, Sukunto Bhattacharya, Kazi
Nazrul Islam, and Bishnu Dev, it self-reflexively refers to the
very creation of Komal Gandhar. The film uses the split within
the two groups to symbolize the split in IPTA and as a metaphor
to signify the split within a nation and a culture. The theatre
space no longer manifests the crisis merely in itself but further
condenses the discourse of the film, using IPTA once again as the
metaphor of the divided land. Moreover, the employment of
several inter-texts further reinforces and problematises the formation as well as the notion of the refugee.

Using several visual and sound images, Komal Gandhar further abstracts contemporary reality "with its innumerable and unwieldy patterns and cross-currents of forces." Many a time this abstraction is achieved purely through apparently distinct images but with similar undertones. The river Padma becomes symbolic of a division which, though can apparently be overcome, is yet so rigid that it is impossible to get through it. It is across the river Padma that the homeland of both Anasuya and Bhrigu lies. For the first time in the film both reveal their true selves to each other; it is through this revelation that Bhrigu comes to terms with the repressed anguish lying buried within him. His home lies somewhere across the Padma but he is unable to locate it. In a moment they were dispersed, they lost everything at one stroke, became outsiders. In the distance we can vaguely hear the sound of the Padma song where the Padma lies here and there. A sacred sign of connection now has become a symbol of separation. Connected to this image of the Padma is the image of the railtrack that symbolizes arrival and departure. While speaking to Anasuya, Bhrigu realizes that the old railtrack was a sign of union. A sign of additions and multiplications, now it represent subtraction. The country has been split into two. And suddenly we have the wide angle here tracking the absent train for a long duration on a deserted railway track and then abruptly filling the entire screen with the shot of a barrier. The shot is a semiotic comment on the political, cultural, geographical barriers that two nations impose on their people. Throughout the film, especially through the entire theatre sequences, on the sound track the constant sound of hammer-strokes predominates. A sign like the river Padma and the rail track is another sign
in conjunction and disjunction. It joins but it also dismantles, signifying the desire to be connected but also the forced reality of being torn apart. Conceptually these three signs form a unit and are conceived in the very structuring of the film. For the title of the film takes after a musical note, 'Komal Gandhar', a combination of a soft note and a sharp note. Throughout the film Ghatak works with this combination, structuring the film in terms of these two notes. For when the Padma connects, it denotes the soft side of 'Komal Gandhar' but when it separates, the sharpness, the Gandhar, predominates. Similarly the character of Anasuya is created through the combination of the soft and the sharp. While conceptualizing the film Ghatak refers to Anasuya "as a soul so soft, so lofty, so ecstatic as the musical half note which pervades the whole music by its intermittent presence." While speaking of his father Bhrigu recalls how he had said, "we began our life on an even rhythm, should it have ended thus?" The film begins with the creation of the refugee, the sharp note predominating, but instantly the soft note comes through the relationship of Anasuya and Bhrigu and this presence of the half note, the soft signifying unity, the sharp dispersal orchestrates in the very structuring of the film.

Another significant thematic configuration is that of the Sita-Ram myth. This prospection once again is blended through the musical structure of the film. Ghatak here uses sound as a counter-point to the visual, thus opening the film directly onto mythic time. He also disperses the discourse across the cinematic apparatus, blending a polyphonic pattern, where the image operates in one direction pointing to the contemporary, the sound in the other, connecting us with myth and history. In one of his articles, while referring to sound in film, Ghatak comments: "The central theme for Komal Gandhar was the unification of the two
Bengals. This accounts for the persistent use of old marriage songs. Even during scenes of pain and separation music rings of marriage. Thus while all along we witness separation on the visual level, on the sound track the theme music of the union of Sita and Rama is synchronized. This suggests on the one hand, reconciliation and, on the other, it further mythicizes and hence connects the contemporary theme of partition with the myth of exile and abandonment. The film at the visual level operates synchronically; at the acoustic level it connects with diachrony. The present is seen in the context of the past as the dialectics between reality and abstraction, between the concrete and the ideal, get established, lending meaning to reality. Anasuya is not merely Anasuya but Sita-Miranda-Shakuntala. The theatre groups, the river Padma, the rail-track, the hammer-strokes, Sita-Miranda-Shakuntala-Anasuya, Anasuya-Bhrigu, Anasuya-Samar metaphorically create the discourse of exile, eviction and rootlessness. The discourse, though operating at the political level, extends to an existential situation of an eternal state of exile and hence an eternal search for a home. This one film thus extends into Ghatak's entire oeuvre, transforming his oeuvre into an epic structure where stories within stories interconnect and form a discourse. Thus though Komal Gandhar historically belongs to post-Independence India, for Ghatak it was necessary to link it to past myths and legends. The ideological world of Sita and Shakuntala belongs to a different socio-historical context. The thematic reconstitution and linkage of these myths and legends by Ghatak at this juncture of Indian ideology and time transforms mythico-historical discourse into a synchronic discourse.
NOTES


3. Reference is to Ritwik Ghatak’s personal notes related to the conception of *Komal Gandhar*.