

A Cognitive Model of Mythopoetic Sanskrit and Bengali Contexts.

Keywords: mythopoetic, implied, cognitive, Sanskrit, Bengali

This paper analyzes the implied meaning of mythopoetic language that transcends the structure of metaphorical networks defined within Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Conceptual Blending Theory. The research critically examines CMT and CBT to determine the conceptual boundaries of cognitive models based on their assumptions. The thesis is that complex Sanskrit and Bengali texts possess structures whose deepest meanings are more than blends resulting from their metaphorical conceptual networks but arise from mythopoetic correspondences within and beyond the semantic layers of the texts. The research is inspired by Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* (*The Light of Suggestion*).

While the cognitive model of conceptual metaphor rightly directs attention to thought, it does not address the problem of meaning implied beyond metaphor. The cognitive framework of amalgams goes further, recognizing metaphorical blends and offering an interpretation resulting from the emergent structure. However, CBT does not develop the framework of the implied meaning, which although emerging within the blend, goes beyond it, encoding a complex mythopoetic context.

To illustrate the limitations of CBT, it suffices to compare the metaphoric blend "the surgeon is a butcher" and the mythopoetic context evoked by the Sanskrit word *haṃsa*, "swan". The implied meaning within the emergent structure of "the surgeon is a butcher" is "incompetence". The word *haṃsa* evokes the image of a bird flying far to the other shore of the sea to its nest. This image, rooted in Sanskrit poetry, has the mythopoetic power to evoke analogies between a flying bird and the soul leaving the body on its eternal journey. The CB model of this metaphorical context leads to *samsāra* in the emergent structure as an implied meaning. However, it does not exhaust the full semantic structure, for it is here that the deepest meaning awakens. The soul leaving the body means death but also implies the taking of one's last breath, represented by the mantra *so'ham*, where *so* is inhalation and *ham* is exhalation, which is conveyed through a reversed *sandhi* of *haṃsa*.

This example demonstrates the need for a three-layered, distinct model in which the word/concept/phrase is the source of the image, evoking metaphorically thought that leads to the encoded deep meaning of the text. Thus, the three-layered cognitive model of mythopoetic context consists of: surface concept structure-imagery/metaphoric context-deep implied conceptual layer. This model exhausts the potential of the semantic structure of the mythopoetic contexts and is complementary to the cognitive model offered by CBT.

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Singh, Ajay. 2022. 'Ānandhavardhana's Theory of Dhvani. An Introduction', *International Journal of English Literature*, (8).