

## Communicator

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*The editorial team is happy to announce that the editorial board for the Journal has decided to change the periodicity of Communicator from yearly to quarterly publication from the forthcoming issues.*

*Communicator, which has been in publication since 1965, endeavored to make available original works, based on theoretical analyses and empirical studies, for the benefit of scholars, practitioners and policy makers since then. It has published innumerable articles and research papers on various themes. In this special issue, we are presenting articles on “culture and communication” which were published in the earlier issues of Communicator.*



## Gandhiji as a Journalist

A.Ranganathan<sup>1</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi has an honoured place in the history of modern India as an authentic exponent of the tradition of India's non-violence, as a great Indian and as the dominant influence of Indian politics during the final phase of India's struggle for freedom. Although his contribution towards an understanding of the concept of non-violence is clear, no final assessment of his work as a whole is possible until his voluminous writings on political, sociological and economic affairs are analysed in depth. "Mr. Gandhi", observed the famous English historian H.A.L. Fisher "has many qualities which, had his lot been cast in a Western land, would have brought him to the front of political life: great personal charm, ardent patriotism, brilliant dialectical ability, a keen eye for publicity, subtlety in attack and defence, a distinguished command of the English language. Such qualities pertaining as they do to the Western category of political virtues are easily appreciated by Englishmen". And it is also well to note that Gandhiji was not only a distinguished writer of English prose, but also an outstanding journalist whose ability in commanding the allegiance of millions of his countrymen was effected through the medium of the press.

### Home-Spun Simplicity

Unlike the older generation of Indian nationalists who thundered their way to fame, Gandhiji was noted for his home-

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<sup>1</sup> Courtesy: All India Radio  
| Published in Communicator, January 1982 issue.

spun simplicity. Significantly this home-spun simplicity had a creative impact on the Indian journalistic scene. The days of the oracles and tribunes were over. In fact, Gandhiji's distinction as a journalist lies in the fact that he brought about a silent revolution in the world of Indian journalism. Again the Gandhian contributions to journalism were impressive in their variety and bulk. Merely to search his writings out, much less to read them, would demand considerable effort—so scattered are they in the pages of *Indian Opinion*, *Young India*, *Harijan* and the *Gujarati Navajivan*. His journalistic writings ranged from articles and comments to controversies and middles. And some samples of his journalistic writing will be noted here to reveal the quiet moral authority and historical significance of his work as well as his method of writing.

As the Editor of *Young India*, Gandhiji had developed a style to match the substance of his message. Actually his articles conveyed the Gandhian message in a distinctive manner. More importantly, the form and tone of its exposition revealed its distinctive signature and accounted for its resounding success. The issues of *Young India* dated 19 September 1921, 15 December 1921 and 23 February 1922, highlighted three pieces—which were characteristically described as 'seditious articles' by the then bureaucracy. In his first article entitled *Tampering with Loyalty*, Gandhiji proclaimed: "We ask for no quarter, we expect none from the Government." The second article titled *A Puzzle and its solution* made the following declaration: "We want to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people, the Government". And in the third article *Shaking the Manes* Gandhiji warned: "If the present custodians of the British Empire are not satisfied with its quiet transformation into a true Commonwealth of free nation...all the determination and vigour of the 'most determined people in the world' and 'hard fibre' will have to be

Gandhiji's comments on current affairs reflected a capacity to see through as well as across the panorama of the Indian political scene.

spent in India in a vain effort to crush the spirit that has arisen and that will neither bend nor break....I shall only hope and pray that God will give India sufficient humility and sufficient strength to remain non-violent to the end.” Here it is necessary to reproduce a Toynbee perception which is a postscript to the three *Young India* articles as well as a perceptive comment on the Gandhi alchemy of love which transmuted a strained relationship into a meaningful partnership between equals. “I am conscious of the possibility that I may be prejudiced because, in my judgement, Gandhi was as great benefactor of my country as he was of his own. Gandhi made it impossible for the British to go on ruling India, but at the same time he made it possible for us to abdicate without rancour and dishonour”.

Gandhiji’s comments on current affairs reflected a capacity to see through as well as across the panorama of the Indian political scene. For example, his comment on the action of the then Madras Government in seizing 2000 copies of Mahakavi Subramanya Bharati’s *patriotic songs* was a characteristically Gandhian response. This act of bureaucratic mindlessness had invited the wrath of the then Madras Legislative Council and attracted the indignation of the Indian people. Furthermore, the then Government authorities defended their action on the curious plea that they had acted in response to the instructions of the Government of Burma. Actually Gandhiji’s piece entitled *Justice Run Mad* appeared in the December 1928 issue of *Young India*. And here is the first paragraph of this piece which not only blended the personal tone of urgency and cogency of biting argument into a persuasive essay but also reflected his power to lift the entire issue to the level of a truly historic comment.

“I reproduce elsewhere in this issue the first installment of

a sample of the Tamil songs of the late Bharati, the Tamil poet, whose songs were the other day confiscated by the Madras Government acting under instructions, or, it is perhaps more proper to say, orders from the Burma Government. The Burma Government, it appears, in its turn suppressed these songs not by any order of court but by executive declaration. It appears that under that declaration the books of this popular Tamil poet which have been in vogue for the last thirty years and which, as appears from the evidence before the High Court of Madras, were under consideration by the Education Department of Madras for introduction in the school curriculum, are liable to confiscation in any part of India. I must confess that I am unaware of any such wide executive powers being held by provincial governments. But these are days in which we live and learn. This was no doubt a matter falling under the jurisdiction of the Education Minister. But it is becoming daily more and more clear that these ministerial offices are a perfect farce, even as the legislative chambers are and that the Ministers are little more than clerks registering the will of the all powerful I.C.S. Therefore the poor Education Minister could do nothing to save these popular books from confiscation. Probably at the time the confiscation took place, he had even no knowledge or if he had, he was not even told what it was that he was really signing.”

“It hurts me deeply when the cry of rejection against the West rings loud in my country with the clamour that Western education can only injure us. That cannot be true.” So wrote Tagore in a letter which was printed in the May 1921 issue of *The Modern Review*. Gandhiji’s prompt reply titled *The Poet’s Anxiety* was published in the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1921 issue of *Young India*. However, Gandhiji’s reply did not convince the poet. For the poet was fundamentally opposed to the burning of

foreign cloth.

Furthermore, Tagore's objection was even more fundamental. Indeed the dissenting poet had warned the nation against the dangers of obedience. "The urge of the future age," observed Tagore in a celebrated essay published in the October 1921 issue of *The Modern Review* "is towards the unity of man....And we shall exhibit a sorry image of our country if we fail to see for ourselves the vast dimensions of India in its world context." Here are a few sentences from the Gandhian reply titled *The Great Sentinel* which appeared in *Young India*: "True to his poetical instinct, the poet lives for the morrow and would have us to do likewise....On the knowledge of the sin bursting upon me, I must consign the foreign garments to the flames and thus purify myself, and thenceforth rest content with the rough *khadi* made by my neighbours." The controversy ended at this point.

Viewed in the perspective of history, the Gandhi-Tagore controversy was a part of the dialogue between the contextual mind of the actional sage and the renaissance mind of the universal artist who complemented and supplemented each other through spiritual affinities and cultural contrasts. In a sense the psychological distance between the saint-at-work and the poet was as great as the geographical distance between Kathiawar and Bengal. Here it is worth remembering that Tagore's *Viswa-Bharati* symbolising India's dialogue with the world and Gandhiji's "matchless weapon". *Satyagraha* reflecting the urge for truth constituted their major contributions to the evolution of modern India. And yet in the very process of concerning themselves with the evolving concept of human fellowship, the Mahatma and the Gurudeva contradicted and understood each other.

The Gandhi-Tagore controversy was a part of the dialogue between the contextual mind of the actional sage and the renaissance mind of the universal artist who complemented and supplemented each other through spiritual affinities and cultural contrast.

Gandhiji had not only perfected a style admirably suited to the work of a political leader, but also found time for writing occasional middles. It is difficult to choose a particular passage from a Gandhian middle as illustrative of his journalese, but perhaps this extract from his piece on *The Value of Stray Moments* will do: “Some time elapses in merely thinking about a piece of work before it is actually begun. Such time is known as stray moments. We carelessly allow these bits of time to pass. If we add up these stray moments which are thought to be of little account, they make no mean part of our life; and not to make a proper use of them is to waste life itself.”

In fine, Gandhiji not merely sustained a meaningful dialogue with poets and political, business and labour leaders through the pages of *Young India*, *Harijan*, *Harijan Bandhu* and *Navajivan* but also installed the people of India in the market-place of ideas in his capacity as a journalist.

## Media and National Culture: The Indian Perspective

Subrata Banerjee<sup>1</sup>

The media and national culture mean many things to many people. The problem starts with the world culture. It is an embracing concept. One talks of different types of culture – national, regional, elitist, mass, popular, folk, urban, rural, feudal, bourgeois, proletarian, industrial, scientific, traditional, modern, cosmopolitan and so on.

Culture can be an instrument of unification. It can also be divisive. In a plural society, in terms of language, traditions, customs, religious beliefs, ethnicity, the very concept of a national culture can raise apprehensions of a loss of identity. On the one hand this brings closer together groups with threat perceptions, and on the other, it divides the nation.

In the context of the fast emerging interdependent and integrated world, similar apprehensions of loss of identity are justifiably felt by peripheral nations in a metropolitan-peripheral relationship. At the same time, one can also visualise a universal culture, a humanistic culture, a mosaic of different national cultures, that binds together humankind in love and not nuclear self-annihilation. The most scientific expression of such a culture is to be found in Marxism and its visionary expression in the dreams of all great poets and artists.

An eminent social anthropologist and Gandhian activist,

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| Published in Communicator, October 1988 issue.

Nirmal Kumar Bose defined culture thus:

...Culture is a term in anthropology which covers everything from the traditional manner in which people produce, cook or eat their food; the way in which they plan and build their houses, and arrange them on the surface of the land; the manner in which men are organised into communities; to the moral or religious values which are found acceptable, on the habitual methods by means of which satisfaction is gained in respect of the higher qualities of the mind (*Culture and Society of India, Asia Publishing House, Mumbai, 1967*).

The primary meaning of culture is the cultivation of natural growth. Hence, today it is usually associated with the cultivation of the human mind. It is thus something which is not static. It is dynamic, changing with changing times and needs and yet maintains a continuity as the heir of all ages of humankind. It is an integration of many contributing elements.

### **What is culture?**

Culture is everything that humankind has added to nature – education, the creative arts, science, ways of understanding and interacting with and interpreting the world and life, behaviour patterns acquired socially and transmitted socially by means of certain symbols such as language, tradition, customs and institutions and a way of life influenced by production process and relations.

At every stage of social development culture has inevitably expressed the needs and aspirations of the dominant class. Any study of science and society in India will provide ample proof of this.

Culture has thus to be seen as a process of development in the historical context. The concept of a national culture has also to be seen in its historical context. At every stage of social

development culture has inevitably expressed the needs and aspirations of the dominant class. Any study of science and society in India will provide ample proof of this.

The concept of a national culture has been associated with the formation of nation states. It has been a weapon in the hands of the ruling classes to exercise their domination on the rules, particularly in conflicts with other nation states over control of markets and territorial expansion. In the context of world imperialism and colonial or neo-colonial relations today, national culture has a major anti-imperialist edge just as the concept of nation itself.

### **Integration and variety**

In India when we talk of a national culture, it is in the context of nation building against imperialist neo-colonial offensives of destabilisation. We do not talk of homogeneity, of standardisation that wipes out all differences of expression and thought. We talk of integration, which recognises the existence of variety and its development, while coming together to create a whole, through cross fertilisation of diverse experiences of building a nation.

In the task of nation building it is necessary to take great care in determining cultural identities. This calls for a deeper analysis of cultural traditions and symbols. It is necessary to perceive historically contemporary content of cultural forms at the time of their evolution and the changes in their functions over time as a result of both domestic and external developments born of the human being's interaction with the world around.

A medium is the means by which something is communicated. In this sense every component of culture is a medium. Whether it be the production process or food habits or customs, they all communicate a kind of culture.

At the same time it is but natural to seek to clothe the process of change in traditional garb to seek historical legitimacy. If this is not to amount to revivalism, but to a renaissance, we have to choose the cultural form with care, bearing in mind its historical reality so that the choice is such as to legitimise its imprint on the perception of the present. Traditions can thus be used to construct contemporary identities.

A medium is the means by which something is communicated. In this sense every component of culture is a medium. Whether it be the production process or food habits or customs, they all communicate a kind of culture. When we talk of media however, we usually talk of the media of information – the mass media – and the media of artistic expression. Today mass media include really both, as instruments of mass culture. Mass media involve the mass production and distribution of messages, and symbols. Apart from the print and electronic media, education, books, toys and computer software also come within the purview of media today as different art forms.

Systems of values and thoughts historically developed as reflected in cultural expressions and social institutions persist even when India is a member of the exclusive space club. India has developed an infinite capacity to accommodate the new without interfering with the social order or challenging the political order.

### **Global culture**

The revolution in communication and information technology makes possible today the delivery of identical messages across vast distances to large groups simultaneously from one centre, almost instantaneously. It is this that makes it possible to homogenise global culture into a single stereotype. Such centralisation transfers and makes acceptable ideas and images of sterilising conformity. It strengthens the system of monologue and tends to create a monolithic culture which supports and sustains ideologically an imperialist supranational economic and political system.

At the same time this revolution in communication

and information technology has opened up undreamt of possibilities of the integration of different cultures within a nation and interaction between different national cultures towards building a universal humanistic culture consisting of the immense diversity of different cultures. It is possible to take to the remotest individual or community the heritage of the rich culture created by human beings ever since their emergence on earth. It is possible to build a participative culture, and through it, the universal man.

The Indian perspective of media and national culture has to be considered in the present historical context of the international situation and the stage of development in the country. The international situation itself is very complex and so in India's own place in it. India is at the same time a civilisation of the highest complexity. It has shown an astonishing capability to endure through over 5,000 years. Many ancient civilisations have perished and only their memories remain or their ruins. Others have delinked themselves totally from their past. At total transformation has taken place. Not so in the case of India. Possibly China is the only other such country in the world. Pre-industrial India is not just history; it continues to exist even today. A major part of India is even today only marginally affected by industrialisation.

Systems of values and thoughts historically developed, as reflected in cultural expressions and social institutions, persist even when India is a member of the exclusive space club. India has developed an infinite capacity to accommodate the new without interfering with the social order or challenging the political order. All forces of such change have come from the lower order, but have failed to destroy old beliefs which have lived within the womb of the old and in course of time have even subverted the new.

The simple organisation for production and the vast territory created no compulsions for changes in the modes of production. The vast countryside remained virtually untouched by the development of urban manufactories and trading and finance capital. Such an economy sustained the hierarchical social structure of caste.

### **Caste and class**

Caste, sub-caste and sects and sub-sects helped keep the lower order of the hierarchy divided into mutually conflicting groups. This in turn generally prevented class struggles and revolutionarily upheavals. The lower castes not only had an identified place in society but also a role in caste rituals, giving them a sense of belonging.

The caste system is the expression of a culture of systematised inequality. With this hierarchical structure is linked the *jajmani* or patronage system, an economic relationship of unequal dependence. While is the expression of a total socio-economic structure, it also has religious sanction. It is a structure represented, for all time to come, by a dominant caste, in terms of social, economic and political power and other castes of providers of various services.

The joint family system survives in the system of extended family in both rural and urban areas. This is seen particularly in the business community. This is the best example of the assimilation of plurality, absorption of diversity, a duality of existence slipping smoothly from tradition to modernity and back with ease, so basic to Indian culture. This tendency is also a constraint against development and progress, particularly because it provides a sense of security in a fast changing world.

### Foci of power

As in agriculture, so in industry and even in administration, one sees the caste system surviving. Whatever changes in the foci of power, they are taking place within the caste system. In many places the upper castes have been replaced by the middle castes as foci of power expressed in terms of money, status and political power. A study of the power structure in commercial and administrative institutions, as also in agriculture, will reveal the reality.

Enhanced economic activity which has brought about geographical mobility has failed to dissolve caste cohesiveness, except in a small minority at the highest level of affluence among modern management in industry and government, and that too mainly in social relations. Caste cohesiveness and divisions between castes continue to play an important role in securing both political and economic benefits of development. Divorced from conscious efforts at social reforms economic development has helped mainly the traditionally favoured sections of the population. The plurality of Indian religious and ethnic structures makes social mobilisation of motivational forces for change outside the cultural mores difficult.

Advancing technology, as it has been invading Indian society, has been widening the gap between life styles, human thought processes, attitudes, and social behaviour patterns at one level. At another level, while technology has changed social structures and even the organisation and ownership patterns of tools, the speed of the change has played havoc with the capacity of human perception to keep pace. This has led to a disjunction between attitudes and behavior patterns and the changes in social relations brought about by technology.

At the same time, a people carrying the burden of centuries of tradition can be mobilised and changed only when placed in the context of history and tradition.

India, with its historical development, now thrown into a modern world, is subject to psychological pressures to absorb, within the new economic and political structures a culture which is unsustainable in the context of modern technology and its culture.

As a result India today is living in two worlds simultaneously, at different levels of existence, in two societies as it were, with two different experiences, interconnected and in conflict. At one level the complacent flitting between the modern and the traditional, seeking consolation in the traditional Indian philosophy of *maya* acts both as a constraint to change and fusion. At the other level there is bewilderment at the continued sense of “the loss of the old world without the gain of a new”. Thus today’s crisis, particularly the moral crisis, is a reflection of the convulsions of the impact of modernity on tradition, in the context of the urgent need for economic and social change as a continuing process in the space and atomic age.

### Not unique

Such a conflict is not unique, but for the fact of India’s continuing civilisation. In the advanced countries the conflicts of change have been solved over nearly three centuries. The current developments are only creating compulsions for structural changes.

The tradition is not merely the tradition of pre-industrial times. The tradition of the national movement is also equally, if not more, valid.

The crisis that India faces today is a crisis of development and at the same time a crisis of decay, the crisis of a society in transition, at the base a cultural crisis, a crisis of identity. Old Indian civilisation has at last reached a stage when the old hierarchical system based on caste divisions and cohesions, religious divisions and eclecticism, is unable to cope with the

social structures and relations created by advanced technology. At the same time, people carrying the burden of centuries of tradition can be mobilised and changed only when placed in the context of history and tradition.

Gandhi tried to clothe his revolution in accepted traditional myths and in his victory has left behind more problems. The time now is to make the correct choice, the correct balance between yesterday of the ancient and continuing past, some of which has been wrongly discarded, the recent past and the poetry of tomorrow.

### **Gandhi's ingenuity**

Secularism has a weak appeal to emotion. In such a situation caste cohesiveness and religious-ethnic cohesiveness is further strengthened by the competitive tensions caused by uneven economic development and uneven distribution of its benefits. Caught within this structure of development, tribal society is facing total disintegration of its own integrated culture, adding further to the complex problem of nation building and a national culture.

The domination of the market and monetisation of the economy has been breaking down the *jajmani* system of gifts and services, causing further disintegration. At the same time the joint family system in the business community is also facing disruption under the impact of intra-class rivalry resulting from the increasing domination of monopoly capitalism.

India has emerged through history as a multilingual, multi-cultural nation state. The diverse elements were culturally welded together by anti-imperialism. Gandhiji realised the

constraints and was conscious of the traditional process of change. He worked within the system and sought the common denominators in the plurality of ethnicity, religions, caste, untouchability and the emerging socio-economic conflicts within India society and drew all these forces together into the struggle for liberation from imperialist rule. In the process he also laid down some ground rule for the process of change and social transformation, but again without disturbing as far as possible the traditional system.

### **Continuing stream**

To such an India, full of diversity, since the coming of the British technology has come in a continuing stream with its attendant culture. Railway, cable, internal combustion engine, communication in diverse forms covering the waters, land and the skies, all came one after another, followed, even before they could be fully absorbed, by atomic energy, jet propulsion making travel faster than sound possible and instant communication through outer space.

It is necessary to begin with education itself. There is much to be sought in the traditional concept of education in India. It is a concept of the search for knowledge as a direct appreciation of a reality that is transcendent, but not necessarily religious, but certainly spiritual, despite Gandhi's attempt at basic education and Rabindranath's experiments in Santiniketan, we have continued the education system created by the British, which is totally unsuited to the needs of a society in transition.

It is often forgotten that Indian civilisation has always recognised the primacy of knowledge or the *gyan marga*. In

the pursuit of *gyan marga* scientific explanations have been sought for natural phenomena. Unfortunately, the hierarchy of the caste system had repeatedly prevented interaction between the scholar and the craftsman, which alone can help convert *gyan* or knowledge of nature into scientific theory and *karma* or practice.

### Seemingly irrational

Under the circumstances scientific truth has often been expressed through the seemingly irrational. Similarly the seemingly irrational often is an expression of a theory which may no longer be valid because of the extension of scientific knowledge. Education, therefore, must train the individual mind to recognise its superiority over inherited tradition and to be aware of the potential of the human mind. It should be able to work back from effect to cause and from myth to science.

Education must also create an understanding of India in its historical perspective, particularly the question of tradition and change. One of the most crucial expressions of the continuity of Indian thought is the concept of the flux of all things, of continuous dissolution and change of constant movement—*charaibeti*. The renaissance in mind in India has again and again been expressed in the training to perceive the present in the mirror of the past and the past in the mirror of the present providing a vision of the future.

This is not a modern phenomenon. It has found expression repeatedly in what might be termed religious poetry. Its history can possibly be traced back to the songs of the Buddhist nuns in *charja* poetry, through the whole range of *Bhakti* and *Sufi* literature, right down to Ram Mohan Roy, Vidyasagar,

India has emerged through history as a multilingual, multi-cultural nation state. The diverse elements were culturally welded together by anti-imperialism. Gandhiji realised the constraints and was conscious of the traditional process of change.

Rabindranath, Nehru and on to Vikram Sarabhai.

A secular national value system can be inculcated through an educational system which is based on a profound understanding of our common roots and heritage of our attitudes and value systems born of those roots, which also include a tradition of constructive opposition at times of change. This alone will give validity to change and a national foundation and identity.

### **Value system**

The tradition is not merely the tradition of pre-industrial times. The tradition of the national movement is also equally, if not more, valid. It is possible to show, in this context, that the regions or states of India, the ethnic groups, separated by differences of language and creed, share many elements of a common culture, nurtured particularly during the days of the national struggle for freedom. This is a culture with an anti-imperialist content, a culture which balance sectional identities with an overall national identity against a perceived common threat. Even in post-independence India this sense of unity has asserted itself again and again at every time that India's national and territorial integrity has been threatened.

The acquisition of knowledge has never been confined to schools in the Indian tradition. The cultivation of the human mind has taken place through what are known as the arts.

All this must form part of the knowledge of India to be imparted through education. It is on the foundation of this knowledge that one can build a perspective of new India, discarding in the process the dross and the irrelevancies that history has gathered on the way. It is through this process alone that the poetry of tomorrow can be conceived.

The acquisition of knowledge has never been confined to schools in the Indian tradition. The cultivation of the human

mind has taken place through what are known as the arts. As elsewhere, in India too, art in the ancient world primary means by which people saw themselves and discerned their pattern of life. According to ancient Indian tradition the artist or the *shilpi* mediated between the divine artificer, Vishwakarma, and society. Theatre was created to take knowledge to the people. Art, in all its forms—story telling, dance, music, songs, murals and temple architecture, image building and toys—had a socially unifying role in pre-industrial society. Many of these varied art forms were centered on seasonal fairs, which were an integral part of the system of economic relations.

The seasonal fairs and these varied folk forms have continued even to this day. During the national movement they were the natural media for rousing mass awareness and for mass mobilisation for the struggle. This was inevitable in a country in which the folk culture has always been highly socially responsive and where, because of the lack of literacy, the printed word could not reach. In fact the oral tradition is one more instance of the continuing cultural expressions.

### **Fairs and folk forms**

The popular media thus has always had a very high level of audience participation and continues to do so even today. The popular media are really a combination of various art forms—music, dances, story-telling ritual, the audio-visual and the theatre. In many parts, such as the south, the theatre, dance and music and story-telling have combined to fuse the classical and the popular. *Kathakali* is such a form.

The popular media often take recourse to extemporization to help build a collective conscience. This is very much true

of wandering minstrels, as also of some forms of folk theatre such as the *Tamasha* of Maharashtra. Music is the single unifying in cultural force in Indian society. This is where the so-called commercial Hindi cinema scores and breaks the language barrier.

Ancient Indian drama has always had a much wider base than merely the court audience. The recent cultural festivals in India and abroad have revealed the unbroken rich tradition of the media of expression of popular perception. They are rich also in their variety, with distinctive manners of presentation, but they all have common associations with religious beliefs and rituals, drawing upon a wealth of source—legends, history, mythology, religion etc.

Festivals provide suitable occasions for the presentation of these various cultural forms and help restore a sense of unity in a divided society, particularly through popular participation. Festivals are also occasions for petty trade and commerce, as also such sports as wrestling, archery, cart racing, bull fight, and camel fights, and today, the cinema.

With low literacy, the print medium cannot reach the vast population. It is the traditional media and the electronic media which are viable in the search for national unity and a national culture, as part of the process of nation building. Closer attention to the traditional media has become an urgent task, because this element of cultural identity, expression of the people's perception of themselves, is facing a major crisis, a crisis of survival.

Traditional society with feudal patronage of the arts has disappeared and the rural society which nurtured the rural arts

and culture is disintegrating. The cultural workers who used to nurture political consciousness at the grassroots level have been absorbed in the establishment and in the commercialised circuit of culture, particularly the commercial cinema. The arts which were the media of rousing national consciousness did not become the media of mobilisation for national development. As politics took on the narrow struggle for parliamentary seats as the road to special privileges, it lost its roots and got alienated from the people's culture in every sense of the term. Even the traditional social structures got distorted as human relations became a marketable commodity.

The cultural workers who used to nurture political consciousness at the grassroots level have been absorbed in the establishment and in the commercialised circuit of culture, particularly the commercial cinema.

### Market economy

The market economy has converted culture into a commodity. This is now an exportable commodity, possibly earning foreign exchange for some but with no impact on the economic viability of the artistes themselves. At the time when poverty is forcing the traditional artists, musicians, craftsmen and wandering minstrels to seek jobs, attempts are being made to turn the popular arts into museum pieces. There is no effort to create the necessary infrastructure for the rural artistes to survive, develop, interact with the newly emerging social relations and regain their dynamism and vibrancy. Instead, as the traditional artistes are withdrawing, the vacuum is being filled by the vulgar pop which plagiarises the western forms instead of seeking roots in Indian forms and content.

Unfortunately, those radicals who perceive an integral relationship between politics and culture are no better than the Establishment. They only want to use the form to fit in their content of revolution, just as the Establishment wants to use the form as an exportable commodity and as a medium for

projecting such messages as family planning. This leads to cultural poverty and nihilism in culture.

The technological revolution in the communication media, in these circumstances, has aggravated every aspect of the crisis. The transnationalisation of the world economy has also brought with it the transnationalisation of information. Transnational corporations do not sell products, they sell benefits real or imposed, and they sell life styles. The film, the video cassette records, books, periodicals, newspapers, audio cassettes, satellite linkages for a simultaneous broadcast and telecast and even toys and a whole range of consumer products are advertised with the same symbols and messages creating the same value system.

The jeans generation in India has been exposed to fast foods and pepsicola culture. The cultural invasion, the process of mind management, is on in India, a nation in the making, not a socialist society seeking to increase consumption levels and standards, after having established a strong economic foundation for diversification and meeting average consumer needs with better quality products and in abundance.

The mass media in India are already broadcasting mass culture to the detriment of popular culture. The distinction needs to be understood, as it is very relevant for India today.

Between mass culture and popular culture is the distance that separates a system whose legitimacy is founded upon the subjugation of the conscience, and a system in which the 'masses' cease to be the submissive spectators of a representation contrary to their interest and become the active subject of a cultural experience linked to their own project

for liberation. (Michelle Mattelart, International Conference on Cultural Imperialism, Algiers, 1977, *Communication and Class Struggle*, ed. Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelau, International Mass Media Research Centre, Bagnolet).

It is of some significance in this respect that the communication technology and the mass media, in the sense already described, are controlled by the military-industrial complex, mainly of the USA. Thus these have naturally become instruments for not only economic control, but also for cultural homogenisation, stereotypicalisation and cultural domination. In USA commercial television telling the ordinary citizen what to wear, to eat, to read, to listen to, to think about children, education, culture, religion, other countries. This is also happening in India. The real purpose and character of commercial communication has been well described by H. Schiller, an American sociologist:

...The marketing system developed to sell industries' outpourings of largely inauthentic consumer goods is now selling global ideas, tastes, preferences and beliefs. Message, imagery, life style, information techniques are being internationally circulated and equally important, globally imitated.... Communication, it needs to be said, includes much more than messages and the recognisable circuits through which the messages flow. It defines social reality and thus influences the organisation of work, the character of technology, the curriculum of the educational system, formal and informal, and use of free time, actual basic social arrangements of living your way of life.

This is cultural colonialism and is very much evident in India today. At the same time the technological revolution in communication poses both a challenge and an opportunity. Electronic technology can help leap across certain experiences from the individual to the collective, from a monologue to a dialogue, from narrow segmentation to wider interaction. The renaissance need no longer be confined to the intellectual elite, but can become not only the possession of the masses but also their collective creation.

### **Catalytic role**

This is where India's rich cultural heritage, which still survives, can play a catalytic role. It is not a question of injecting modern content into old forms. It is a question of recognising the reality that content and form are integral, as every thought is born expressed in form. Indian cultural forms have responded to social change from time to time. Conscious efforts have also been made in that direction.

Recognising the need to ensure creative interaction between the traditional and the new, artists have not shirked the responsibility of restructuring both the old and the new, the familiar and the unfamiliar, to form a new social configuration.

This Rabindranath had achieved with music and dance. This Udayshankar had done with dance. Dance and music have a universal language, as they are of the rhythm of labour and nature. It is possible to adapt them to the demands of new social content without destroying the basic structure of the language. And what is more, in these areas there is tremendous scope for creative interaction as has been evident from the joint productions of musical and dance recitals and drama, choreography and mime, during the Indo-Soviet festival.

These cannot be foisted on creative artistes, whether of the folk tradition or of the classical tradition. In each case the evolution has to be from within. The outside influence can only help by providing the input of necessary social awareness and understanding of a very complex situation. There has to be exposure to similar experience which can be made available through the video, which is itself the most effective instrument of creative experimentation by the artistes themselves. It is necessary to draw inspiration from historical reality of the changing cultural forms over time.

The awareness of the historical context of a cultural form or an ideological supposition may help us understand that cultural forms change their function over time, but through the internal development of the form and through the imprint of external factors. In other words, cultural forms are embedded in social realities and when we consciously choose a cultural form we should be aware of this reality. It is only then that the choice becomes intelligible. (*Cultural Transaction in Early India*. Romila Thapar, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1987).

### **Evolution from within**

If our cultural forms, particularly the rural forms, the people's art, are to survive, not as museum pieces, not as commodities for export and exhibition, but as media for the expression of the self-perception of the people and for constructing their contemporary identity, society must provide the artistes with the necessary physical and economic infrastructures for them to survive as individuals, families and communities. As before they must be seen as contributing to society and be looked after by it. At the same time they must also be exposed to the

world wide developments in the fields of culture. They must be helped to organise themselves into in situations.

This cannot be done through bureaucratic and administrative methods. This demands the involvement of socially conscious cultural workers who are able to interact with the rural artistes. This is already happening through efforts of scattered groups in different parts of the country. There is, however, no attempt to coordinate these activities and exchange experiences through the use of modern technology and workshops. Neither is there any purposeful support from the government.

And yet it is such a cultural upsurge at the grassroot level and its cross fertilisation within the country that can help bring emotional understanding and integration, breaking across the crumbling barriers of language, caste, religion, whose divisive aspects are no longer socially, economically sustainable, but are kept alive as pawns in a political power game shorn of ideological content.

Finally, the cultural renaissance, as part of the struggle for nation building, cannot succeed in isolation from the wider mass movement for a radical restructuring of Indian society, economy and polity. The beginning of the process has to be made to strip the past of all its superstitions and arrive at our own content and form of the Indian renaissance rooted in its own history but stretching out like mighty trees to the ever beckoning beyond.

## Traditional Media and Development Communication

Durgadas Mukhopadhyay<sup>1</sup>

The urge to express, to communicate, to share something beautiful gave birth to performing arts. In this process, the living progressive impulse to the timeless universal gets a coherent shape in creating designs. Tradition plays an important role in the creative artistic process particularly in the field of folk performing arts. Folk art is functional and spontaneous. Every village has its relevant music, dance or theatre. The folk performing art is changing its structure continuously over centuries modifying itself to the needs of the changing situations making it functionally relevant to the society. Tradition is the process of the transmission of age-old values and the contextual manifestation and interpretation of the universal. Tradition is not only a repetitive behavioural pattern or some persistent symbol or motif in community culture. It is also an assertion of an identity, a revival and regeneration of the life-force of the community. The traditional performing art is an aesthetic object, the concept of belongingness and affinity in a cultural context. In traditional societies art is an integral part of the general life of the people. In primitive societies, there is no real distinction between art and life or between fine arts and applied arts.

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The Indian society is a complex social system with different castes, classes, creeds and tribes. In spite of national adult literacy campaigns, much million remain illiterate, suspect anything in terms of modernity. To them mass media proved too glamorous, impersonal and unbelievable in contrast with the familiar performance of traditional artists whom the villager “could not only see and hear but even touch”. Traditional media can be used to reach these people in the process of change and development of the country. Traditional media in India can be effectively utilised for social developmental adhoc communication.

### **Compartmentalisation**

Compartmentalisation is the peculiar feature of the modern industrial mass society. When applied art is differentiated from fine art and when art itself becomes special intellectual occupation of sophisticated elite, the existence of tradition presents difficulties. If the art becomes specialised vocation, the urge to deny tradition in viewing art as a totality becomes strong and often leads to myopic representation of life in a creative medium. In the process of cultural change, innovation has a special role. The roots are unchanging: the process is continuous, yet the fusion of newer concepts and ideas regenerate newer forms of creative expression. It is the same tree with the same root. It is the sapling which unfolds itself into variety of leaves and flowers. The essence of creative existence manifests itself in many forms. The degree of innovation depends on the degree of the evolution of society and its sense of cultural identity or self-image.

Tradition and its transmission implies the value judgement about the desirability or superiority of some

transmitted elements from the past. Unless there is a strong parameter like religion or social consciousness, the whole process of continuity of culture becomes chaotic. The essentially human element gets lost in the age of industrialisation imposing limitation on the spontaneity, freedom of design and the imagination of the creative artist.

Change in characteristics of all cultures but the rate and direction of change vary considerably. The factors that influence the direction of such changes are the degree to which a culture encourages as well as approves flexibility and the particular needs of the culture at a specific point of time. Even when the cultural changes are supposed to be beneficial it may be difficult for an individual within a culture to accept the change, because an individual in a society is guided by certain norms and beliefs. Hence for screening social change and development what is required is the change in the beliefs and the value systems of the individuals and thus making him more adaptive and responsive to organic development and growth. This is the role of the communicator in the society.

The communication potential of Indian traditional performing art has been proved time and again by many instances of national importance. *Alha*, the popular ballad of Uttar Pradesh and its counterparts like *Laavani* of Maharashtra, *Gee-gee* of Karnataka, *Villupaattu* of Tamil Nadu and *Kavigaan* of Bengal which changed their content and focus depending on the contemporary needs and were effective in arousing the conscience of the people against the colonial rule of the British. The traditional media became effective in many political and social campaigns launched by Mahatma Gandhi. After the independence the Union Government continued to utilise these traditional performing

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arts to convey the message and to generate awareness of the development programmes in the rural areas. In 1940s, IPTA (Indian People's Theatre Association), the cultural front of the Communist Party of India, successfully handled some of the popular regional theatre forms like the *Jaatra* of Bengal, *Bhavai* of Gujarat, *Tamasha* of Maharashtra and *Burra-katta* of Andhra Pradesh to increase social awareness and political education. Mukunde Das and Utpal Dutt used the medium of *Jaatra* for inculcating the spirit of patriotism and political awareness among the masses of Bengal. Shahir Sable and P.L. Despande used it as technique of generating national identity and social awareness among the masses in Maharashtra.

### Composite art

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Unlike in Western theatre, folk performance is a composite art in India. It is a total art with a fusion of elements from music, dance, pantomime, versification, epic and ballad recitation, graphic and plastic arts, religion and festival peasantry. It imbibes ceremonials, rituals, belief and social value systems. It has deep religious and ritualistic overtones and again, it can surely project social life, secular themes and universal values. We will analyse some of the traditional performing arts like *Jaatra*, *Tamasha*, *Nautanki*, *Katha* and Puppet theatre.

*Jaatra* of Bengal is one of the most well-structural crystallised form of folk theatre in India. It is essentially musical and operational in form. It has drawn upon the storehouse of dance and music from different traditions in the region to which an additional dimension of classical music is added to contribute to its richness and variety.

The dramatic element is equally strong with tremendous communication potential. *Jaatra* successfully projects the social and the cultural needs of the people in the region and serves as a vehicle of political education. Historically, the theme of *Jaatra* was morality projecting war between good and evil and this characteristic is well-preserved as well as utilised for specific ends through the decades.

### **Favourite themes**

In the earlier 20th Century a district form of swadeshi *Jaatra* or nationalist traditional theatre came into being in Bengal, Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and the removal of untouchability were favourite themes of these *Jaatras*. The trend has continued in the post-independence period where different types of burning social problems have been treated through this medium. Thus from a small beginning it became a powerful medium with the potential of communicating with the high and the low, the literate and the illiterate, the religious congregation and the popular masses alike.

The most significant character in a *Jaatra* performance is *Viveka* (literally meaning conscience). The *Viveka* is an amalgam of the *sutradhara* and *vidhushaka* of traditional Sanskrit theatre. He could appear when liked and could stand apart and comment on the dramatic action, enter into a dialogue with the actor as if in reply to the actor's internal questioning and conflict and was the voice of justice, moral order and conscience. He lived in the past, present and future and moved freely in dramatic time and space.

During the freedom struggle evil forces were represented

by 'white' men in European clothes whose behaviour was in direct contrast with the native in *dhoti*. Slowly *Jaatra* changed from religious to secular themes and historical and political plays were being presented. They presented plays on the life of Mao-Tse-Tung, Ho-Chi-Minh, Hitler, etc. Class struggle has been projected in a similar fashion by polarising the two types, the oppressor and the oppressed, to bring out the contrast and the conflict. Good and evil have donned a modern garb and speaks the contemporary dialects. The 'good' still wins but it is the some overacting, heavy make-up and loudness that were the unique features of *Jaatra*. A new kind of myth is being created. Innovation demands a proper understanding with the socio-cultural milieu. *Jaatra* has succeeded in keeping with the time and serves as an important medium of communication in eastern India.

*Tamasha* in Maharashtra originated from satirical verses, long winding storytelling and parody based on inter-acting dialogue. The mythological plot is only a pretext for a mixture of satire, humour and ribaldry. Various *Tamasha* plays were produced in the 1920's during the non-cooperation movement in India. For some years the Marathi theatre has seen the evolution of a more sophisticated form of the *Tamasha*. Dramatist and the poets who customarily wrote for an urban educated audience started writing *Tamasha* and incorporating essential elements of the traditional *Tamasha* and eschewing the ribaldry and started a new genre of *Tamasha* theatre. The role of the *Songadya* or the comic character is retained. The urban *Tamasha* is extremely popular. *Tamasha* has become a tool for spreading ideologies, government propaganda and presenting the inner void of urban intellectual.

## Various plays

*Nautanki* and *Swang* of northern India originated from religious and social preaching and mythological *bhakti* plays. Various social themes and value systems were depicted through these plays. These socially-conscious forms of theatre of north India are being reshaped for western system of communication, adult education and family planning. Ironically, the structure of the most popular Hindi commercial film is similar to that of folk theatre in India. Commercial films have been using folk dance and music for a long time. But the essence of folk art is lost in the mechanics of an urban industry. Folk tunes co-exist with the western classical music, dance is just throwing of limbs to suit a hybrid vulgar taste of the urban masses.

Various types of *Katha-Kirtan* or narrative singing exist in different parts of India. It helped to spread the knowledge of an ancient culture to the masses of India. *Katha* had been one of the most influential medium of communication. It created a face-to-face situation between the communicator and the receiver of the message. It also had massive audience participation. With the use of his various talents the *Katha* performer made the medium a veritable one-man theatre. The *Katha* is mono-drama in which a gifted actor represented a whole series of characters' moods and manners. Tilak, the great nationalist leader once said, "Had I not been a journalist, I would have been a *Katha* performer". *Katha* has been successfully used for the purpose of development of communication in independent India. *Katha* was able to remain contemporaneous. It was able to treat the new message properly so as to absorb it in the medium and to communicate it effectively.

Various Tamasha plays were produced in the 1920's during the non-cooperation movement in India.

Puppetry is an indigenous theatre form of India. Since time immemorial, it has been a popular and appreciated form of entertainment in rural India. The stylistic vocabulary of puppet theatre in India carries a relevant message of social awareness, historical and traditional identity and moral value system. Puppet theatre is fully integrated in the ritual observances and the social milieu of rural people in India. The theatre has shown remarkable staying power against vicissitudes. Its relative isolation and distinct style of improvisation made it a powerful medium of communication in the rural areas of India. There are six different types of puppet theatre like string puppets, rod puppets, shadow puppets, glove puppets etc., and are found in different parts of India, the marionettes of Rajasthan are simple, stylised and symbolic string puppets. The age-old value system, the idea of right and wrong is represented by stylised and movements patterns through symbols, fantasy and entertainment. The manipulator is using the puppets like a medium to express and communicate ideas, values and social message. Puppetry is a natural development of story-telling and religious and social preaching prevalent in India. Puppetry in India is a flexible form of traditional communication. It has been successfully used by government departments, voluntary organisations for development communication, adult education, health and sanitation and family planning.

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The Song and Drama Division of the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was set up in 1954. It utilises live entertainment media for creating an awareness among the masses in rural India. Special stress is laid on prohibition, eradication of untouchability, family planning, principles of democracy, fundamental rights, rural health schemes, small-scale industries, agricultural technologies, adult education

and different aspects of socio-economic change. Different departments of Central and State Governments tried to identify, treat and utilise traditional performing arts as vehicles of development communication. Also other public sector enterprises like Life Insurance Corporation of India, Small Savings Directorate and nationalised banks have used successfully some of the flexible performing arts like puppet theatre and *Katha* to propagate their policies.

In sociological terms, the level of society and the nature of the performance can be grouped as being tribal, village and urban. In artistic terminology they are sometimes called folk – which imply community and mean expressions that are participative and spontaneous and classical which indicate highly contextual and codified forms. An analysis of the music, dance and theatre of the tribals in India shows that these tribals make little or no distinction between verbal and non-verbal communication systems and techniques. In the peasant society music, dance and drama had been interwoven into agricultural functions and are integral part of the daily and annual routine of the peasants. Close to the village community but a class apart is a group of professional dancers, musicians and actors, who are differently classified all over India and *Bhats, Nats, Gandharvas, Vairagis, Binkers*, etc. This is a group for whom performance is a vocation, not a social, tribal or agricultural function. They are on the periphery of the society and move from place to place. It is this group of people which has been mainly responsible for the mobility of ideas between the villages and the urban centres. They have also been the vehicles of expressions of protest, dissent and reform. They were motivators of reform movements of socio-cultural change. Thus a large number of interconnected traditional performing art forms involved in

India which continue to be deeply rooted in village and folk culture and evolve a methodology of communication which is strictly regional at one level and universal at another on account of its abstraction. It is old, yet new, timeless yet ever changing, ever renewing manifestation. It is typical in, Indian thought, as its metaphysical as well as mundane levels.

The traditional media in India seems to be used as supplement to the mass media rather than as the centre of communication efforts to reach much of India's population who live in the villages. In India, mass media continue to be limited largely to the urban population.

In India, the message should be treated carefully so that it blends properly with the medium of traditional performing arts. This should be left to traditional performing and it should not be dictated from the top by the city-based urban administrators, policy-makers and advertising agencies. The message could be direct, presenting facts and figures about a theme; it could be a message related to the main theme or it could be even linked to the main theme. Only when the message is properly blend with the natural theme of the medium and the entertainment value, the programme package may be meaningful.

There can be three approaches of using the media for social change. The first approach consisted in trying to inject alien idea into people's mind with the help of foreign communication media. This worked in advertising campaigns. The second approach consists of appropriating popular media for dissemination of alien ideas. The third approach consists of penetrating people's mind in order to

influence them from within and cause people to adopt ideas hitherto alien to them as if they were their own. In India the third approach is the most fruitful. Traditional art forms have survived for centuries and they will survive in future for their flexibility. They could be the media for social change in rural India. Traditional performing arts being functional, inter-personal and having a contextual base would be able to carry the message of change, development and growth. As Rabindranath Tagore puts it aptly: “All traditional structure of art must have sufficient degree of elasticity to allow it to respond to varied impulses of life, delicate or virile, to grow with its growth, to dance with its rhythm”.

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## Indian Theory of Communication

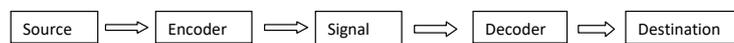
I P Tiwari<sup>1</sup>

The title may appear presumptuous. How can India lay claim to a theory of communication when by almost the close of the twentieth century no advanced country has a sustainable claim to a communication model?

The model of communication was developed only in 1947 by Claude Shanon, a mathematician in Bell Telephone Laboratory in the U.S.A. and explained to the non-mathematician audience by Warren Weaver. The model was picked up by the behavioural scientists who found the Shanon-Weaver model useful in describing human communication.

Communication has its origin in the Latin word *communis*, which means “common”. In communication we are trying to establish a commonness with someone. In other words we are trying to share information, an idea or an attitude. Communication thus, is a process of establishing commonness with another person or group of persons.

This process was presented by Shanon and Weaver in the following model:



What happens when the source tries to build up commonness with his intended receiver? First the source

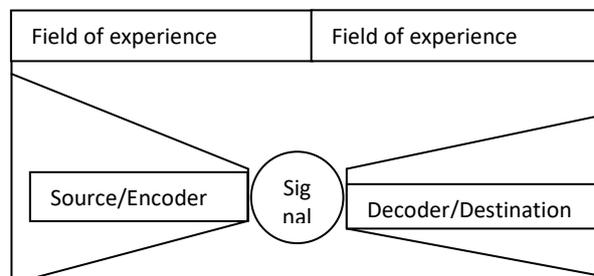
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<sup>1</sup> Former Director, Indian Institute of Mass Communication  
| Published in Communicator, March 1992 issue.

encodes the messages. He takes the information or the feeling he wants to share and puts it into a form that can be transmitted easily and effectively. In order to complete the act of communication the message must be decoded. It is like a telephone or radio circuit.

If you consider the source and encoder as one person and the decoder and destination as another with the signal as language, you have the picture of a human communication situation.

How can the sender and the receiver be in tune with each other? How does a human receiver understand a human transmitter? Wilbur Schramm supplements the Shannon-Weaver model with another model, which has attracted wide notice.



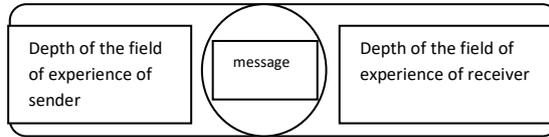
In the above diagram the source can encode and the destination can decode only in terms of the experience each has had. The conclusions in terms of communication that we can draw from this model are that:

1. If both the encoder and the decoder belong to unknown languages i.e. they do not know each other's language they

cannot communicate. The code must be familiar.

2. A tribal who has not seen an aeroplane will not be able to decode the sight of an aeroplane. It may appear to him as a bird.

If the circles have a large area in common, communication is easy. If the experiences of source and destination have been strikingly dissimilar it is difficult to get an intended meaning across from one to the other. If the fields of experience of the sender and the receiver are similar the message becomes the focal point of congruence establishing total communication.



The Indian model of communication forming part of Indian poetics, aesthetics and dramaturgy centre on the word *Sadharanikaran*. It is derived from the Sanskrit word *Sadharan* meaning general or ordinary. *Sadharanikaran* would thus imply generalisation, commonalisation or universalisation. The word has a familiar ring and is equivalent to the Latin *communis* that is communication, meaning commonness of experience.

*Sadharanikaran* has been vividly described in Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, which was discovered in 1876, and has now been established to have its authorship in a period as early as 500 BC.

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### How does *sadharanikaran* take place?

Bharata describes *sadharanikaran* as that point in the climax of a drama when the actor living an experience through his acting on stage becomes one with the audience which starts simultaneously reliving the same experience.

The process has been described as *rasawadan*, i.e., tasting the same flavour or relish. When *sadharanikaran* happens, universalisation or commonness of experience takes place in full form.

*Sadharanikaran* takes place equally when the listener of music or poetry is able to relive the experience codified in the piece that is being sung or read out.

The entire superstructure of Indian aesthetics centres on the act of *sadharanikaran* through *rasaswadan*.

What does *rasa* mean? *Rasa* in ordinary life has many senses—essence, strong liking, decoction, exuded juice, one of the bodily elements. In terms of communication, it has another meaning derived by the metaphor from the idea of tasting or relishing.

*Rasa* has been explained thus: man in his essential characteristics is a bundle of *bhawa* (moods) that constitute his being and form part of his total consciousness. These have been categorised as 50 in number. Of these nine are described as *sthaibhawa* (permanent mood), thirty-three as *vyabhicari bhawa* (secondary mood) and the remaining as *satwik bhawa* (wholesome mood).

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Bharata, having gone into great details in the study of these moods has grouped them all under one all-encompassing expression *bhawa* (moods) for purposes of establishing *sadharanikaran*.

Coomaraswamy describes *bhawa* (moods) as springing from aesthetic emotion, deriving its existence from sensory experience. The moods are capable of arousing a relevant state of feeling/quality of response. The permanent moods and the resultant quality of response, called *rasa* are as follows:

1. <i>Sthai bhawa</i>	<i>Rasa</i>
Permanent mood	aesthetic emotion
2. <i>Snigdha</i>	<i>Sringara</i> (erotic)
3. <i>Bhayanak</i>	<i>Bhayanak</i> (furious)
4. <i>Hrsa</i>	<i>Hasya</i> (laughter)
5. <i>Dina</i>	<i>Karuna</i> (compassion)
6. <i>Vismita</i>	<i>Adbhuta</i> (wondrous)
7. <i>Krodhi</i>	<i>Raudra</i> (odious)
8. <i>Drpta</i>	<i>Veera</i> (heroic)
9. <i>Jugupsita</i>	<i>Vibhatsa</i> (terrible)
10. <i>Sant</i>	<i>Sant</i> (peaceful)

Aesthetic emotion is said to result in the spectator of a drama, the reader of a verse or a piece of prose or the listener to a discourse through to the operation of *Vibhawa* (determinants), *Anubhawa* (consequents), *Bhawa* (moods) and *Satbhawa* (involuntary emotions).

*Vibhawa* (Determinants): the aesthetic problem, plot, theme, etc, that is the hero and other characters and the circumstances of time and place. There are the physical stimulants to *rasaswadan* (partaking of the aesthetic emotion)

which is the point of *sadharanikaran*.

*Anubhawa* (Consequents): Deliberate manifestation of feeling, gestures etc.

### **Moods**

*Bhawa* (Moods): Transient moods (33 in number) induced in the characters by pleasure and pain, e.g. joy, agitation, impatience etc. Also the permanent moods enumerated earlier.

*Satbhawa* (involuntary emotions): Emotional states originating in the inner nature, involuntary expressions of emotions such as trembling etc.

If a work is to evoke *rasa* one of the permanent moods must form a master motif to which all other expressions of emotion are subordinate.

“As a king to his subjects  
As a Guru to his disciples  
Even so the master motif is Lord, of  
All other motifs”

-Bharata in *Natyasastra*

The *sthai bhawa* (permanent mood) has also been described as like the ocean, which may now and then be disturbed by other *bhawas* but always retains its own position. It is that dominant mood which is not broken up by other *bhawas* (moods) and makes other moods subordinate to it.

As stated earlier the permanent or dominant moods that may be aroused by a communicator and brought to a state of

pleasurable relish are nine.

The resultant aesthetic enjoyment and pleasure are called *rasa*. Bharata, author of the *Natyasastra*, explains why this aesthetic pleasure is called *rasa*. Just as a person who partakes of food prepared with many condiments tastes many flavours and feels pleasure and delight, so the audience relishes the *sthai bhawa* (permanent mood) augmented by the accompanying *bhawa* (moods), for instance acting, recitation etc.

Love manifests itself in relations between man and woman. When the love is to be roused it is furthered by such exciting causes moon-rise, spring, flowers, etc. These two, the fundamental determining elements are called *vibhawa*. The former is called *alamban vibhawa* and the latter *uddipan vibhawa*. The external manifestations as movements of the eye and eyebrows, glances, and smiling face convey the working of the emotion of love and are called *anubhawa*.

There are many fleeting or secondary moods that are common to several dominant moods and serve the purpose of completely manifesting the permanent mood such as *Nirveda* (despondency and *Glani* (ennui or fatigue). These may help manifest the permanent mood. These are called *Sancari* or *Vyabhicari* (transients) and as stated earlier are 33 in number. The dominant mood when fully roused by means of appropriate determinants, consequents and involuntary emotions attains to the meditation of *rasa*.

The communicator, however, does not put down any labels. His art lies in referring to appropriate *vibhawa* (hero and heroine and exciting circumstances), the ensuants (such as glances) and the accessory moods. He leaves the spectator

The *sthai bhawa* (permanent mood) has also been described as like the ocean, which may now and then be disturbed by other *bhawas* but always retains its own position. It is that dominant mood which is not broken up by other *bhawas* (moods) and makes other moods subordinate to it.

or reader to enjoy the aesthetic pleasure resulting from such description. It is thus that *rasa* is only suggested (and not expressed). Conversely, even if an author expressly says that there was erotic or compassion *rasa* in a particular piece, still there would be no aesthetic enjoyment of that *rasa* if the appropriate elements were wanting.

*Rasa* can be understood only by the *sahridaya*, the person who alone is capable of *rasawadan* (partaking of the flavour).

Who is a *sahridaya*? It is a person in a state of emotional intensity response i.e. a quality of emotional dimension co-equal to that of the sender of the message or communicator. Both must be *sahridayas*.

The Indian theory of communication lays great stress on the communicator and the communicatee belonging to the same peer group. If they belong not to the same code group and cultural ethos, if sender and receiver of the message are different in their emotional response or intensity, communication will be impeded.

The ability to belong to the same peer group as the communicator is acquired through culture, adaptation or learning. In other words it emphasises that communication is not possible with an individual or group not of the peer group. Those not *sahridaya* may belong to a human group which is away from the pale of the average experience of the communicator. Such a person cannot grasp a symbol.

The relevance of the message, the code, and the experience that the code stands for to the group with which communication is sought to be established is an important

factor in communication.

It must be noted that the concept of *Sahridaya* is not coterminous with predisposition. It only denotes the quality of mind or receptivity. It does not speak of the quality—positive or negative—or attitude of the audience. It denotes only the depth or level of sensory experience that shapes the human personality of the communicator and the communicatee.

Let us apply the theory of *rasa* to the *Ramayana*. The first chapter, *Balkanda* (Valmiki *Ramayana*) says that the sage Valmiki saw a hunter killing one of a pair of amorous birds. The parting of the loving pair by violent means, the fall and death of the female bird and the *Vibhawa* of the *Karuna* (compassion) *rasa* and the lamentation and piercing cry of anguish by the surviving male partner are *Anubhawa* (consequent). These moved the dominant mood of sympathy and pathos in Valmiki's heart, which for a moment beat in unison with the sorrow of the bird. There was an overflow of that powerful feeling in the form of that measured verse *Ma Nisad*.....

As in *Vedanta*, objective experiences are held to be not the ultimate reality but only the manifestation of reality, so words and expressions are to be regarded as the mere external appearance of poetry. The emotional mood which a poem communicates to those who read it is the essence of poetry.

Poetry has, over time, come to be regarded as having a double purpose, i.e., giving the highest delight and also contributing towards a higher mode of conduct and character in a subtle persuasive way. It is akin to Aristotle's dictum that the purpose of all rhetoric (communication) is to persuade.

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In conclusion we may ask: apart from the academic exercise, is it any use wasting so much breath on the study of the Indian theory of communication? In the opinion of this writer, it is not only necessary to do so but the need is pressing for the following reasons:

(A) The Indian model of communication takes a holistic view of man and his psyche in the totality of the natural environment of his living as against the mechanical and quantitative view of man that informs the western theory of communication.

(B) The use of technology has added a new dimension to the use of words as a tool of communication. The printing press, the radio and other audio aids have multiplied words and their use to an immeasurable extent. The knowledge of this Indian theory of communication may help in minimising the use of words to create a greater effect with the aid of visuals.

(C) The emergence and use of a larger number of words has resulted in the distortion of the connotative and denotative meaning of words. The distinction between the language of myth and that of reality has got blurred. The Indian theory of communication alone imparts a sense of urgency to the use of words with a greater intent and purpose.

Words, however, would continue to occupy primacy in human communication in the days to come despite the expanding horizon of TV and other visual aids. "Better than a collection of a thousand meaningless words is one word full of meaning on hearing which one becomes peaceful", says the *Dhammapada*.

(D) The *sadharanikaran* theory underlines the role of an all sided effort at communication. In other words it is a total communication effort including the use of the limbs, gestures and body language like dancing and singing. It is a more integrated approach to communication as a process because it seeks to affect the behaviour of human beings through emotional and psychical response.

We would only be inviting peril in a developing country like India if we ignore the study of the process of *sadharanikaran*, on which rests the Indian theory of communication. If we do not attempt to universalise the experience of development, the people will not accept development and if the process of development is impeded the cost in terms of human suffering may be unmanageable indeed.

**Science Communication and Print Media: Discourse Analysis of Media Frames About Nuclear Energy in India: *Rahul Sudhakar Mane***

In recent times, nuclear energy has been the topic of much debate in India and across the world due to the issues of non-proliferation, deployment of nuclear energy in developing countries for civilian use purposes, the Indo-US bilateral nuclear agreement and Fukushima disaster which accelerated the polarisation of the public opinion about the possible energy mix they could have in their national policy framework. By engaging with the literature of public understanding of science and science communication, an effort has been made to link these debates to that of the role of mass media in engaging scientific and technological issues of nuclear energy. In the second part of this study, the debates about nuclear energy in India are mapped. There is an effort to reflect on these issues in the changing context of “risk society” debates about climate change by situating them in the “media discourse” by understanding how media responds to issues of complex technologies. In conclusion, the implications of the frames for the aspects of energy policy and larger aspects of public understanding of science are discussed. Media discourse is definitely setting the norms for consolidating the debates about the acceptability and rejection of particular technological choices in society. The attempt in this study is to understand how the “perception”

created through diverse frames contributes to that discussion.

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**Governance and Mobiles: Some Indian Initiatives: *Sunetra Sen Narayan & Shalini Narayanan***

Among the various ways in which technology has impacted our social fabric is in the field of governance. Mobile telephony can play a crucial role in this process with its ease of access and low-cost availability. The virtual public sphere and the use of new media were illustrated in the “Arab Spring” that affected countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and others. What is equally interesting is the state’s use of the same technologies to impact governance in a positive way and consolidate its own long term interests. The Anna Hazare movement in India and the “Indian Spring” in 2013 centred on civil society initiatives to fight against corruption. The central research question here is how can the state use mobiles to impact governance in a positive way, aiding the development process. More specifically this study explores how the Indian government has utilised new media and specifically mobiles in the fight against corruption and provision of services to its citizenry, using some case studies. It is thus conjectured that the state in India may be seeking to accommodate and consolidate its own interests in the long run, by allowing participatory processes in governance. Since the participatory paradigm of development also incorporates aspects of good governance and grass-roots

initiatives, these efforts on the part of the Indian State are a move in the right direction.

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**Metamorphosis of Antithetical Notions: Emergence of Literary Adaptations in Cinema as an Inclusive Canon: *Riya Raj & Om Prakash***

Literature and cinema are two different arts of narration having different effects on the audience. As media of entertainment, they seem inseparable. The two film adaptations that constitute our area of study are “Mother of 1084” which is an English translation of Mahasweta Devi’s Bangla novel “Hajar Chaurashir Ma” and “Parineeta” another Bangla novel by Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay. Through this study we intend to delve deep into the reasons that make literature and cinema so essential for each other. According to Heidi Rika and Maria Pauwels (2007), literature and cinema are believed to be two antithetical notions. Stam (2005), talks about the reasons related to the prejudice regarding literature and films. One of such notion is that literature is considered superior to films because many adaptations based on novels turn out to be mediocre. All the criticism related to adaptation, says Stam (2005) is based on moralistic grounds. One can easily see terms like “infidelity”, “betrayal”, “deformation”, “violation” etc. when it comes to the criticism of film adaptations. However this relationship between literature and cinema is fuelling the emergence of an inclusive canon. Looking into the

available theoretical constructs, this study attempts to underline this very fact that the literary adaptations of films as an outcome of metamorphosis of the two domains. This implies that literary adaptations cannot be viewed as a separate entity detached from the source of its adaptation.

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**Impact of Social Network on Relationship between Public and Government: A Case Study of President Hassan Rouhani’s Twitter: *Maryam Vaziri, Masoumeh Esmaili & Nafiseh Zare Kohan***

Social Networks are going to reshape individuals, social and public relationships; it is an opportunity for people to express their ideas about different matters. As of the third quarter of 2015, Facebook had 1.55 billion monthly active users whereas Twitter had more than 307 million monthly active users worldwide (www.statista.com). This large amount of users can give a perspective of public opinion. While Facebook is the most popular network among Persian language users, Iranian politicians are more active on Twitter. In Iran, President Hassan Rouhani is one of the most active politicians on Twitter. He has joined this social network when he stepped into office in August 2013. He has two twitter accounts in English and Persian. This study will analyse the interactions of the President and public via twitter in his first 100 days of presidency; for this purpose the qualitative content analysis method will be used. It is important to mention that this subject is new to investigation.

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