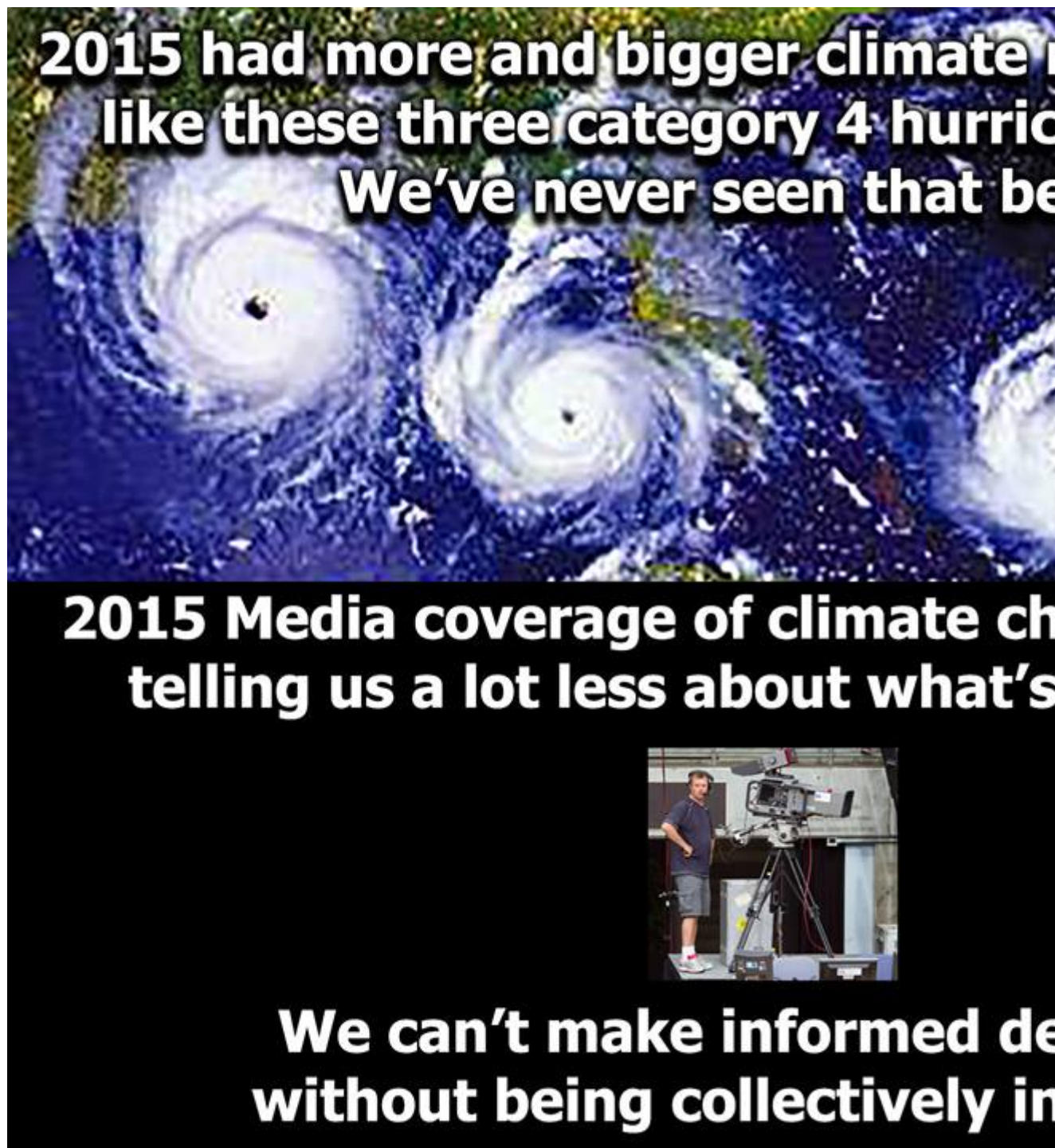


GROWING MISCOMMUNICATION, SHRINKING COMMUNICATION

Description



HOW CORPORATE MEDIA FOOLS AND RULES THE WORLD

Communication is the vital, inseparable part of social man ever since he left the jungle to live as a social group. Therefore the communication is the inalienable right of man, like air and water. However, media hype has reached a stage where, in the name of communication revolution, half-truths of news, data and information have come to be so used, overused and misused that they no more hold any fresh creative potential other than damages to man and society. In *Thoughts in the Wilderness* J. B. Priestley said, “The more we elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate.”

“Americans are the best informed people on earth as to the events of the last twenty-four hours; we are not the best informed as to the events of the last sixty centuries” — WILL DURANT

“The man with power but without conscience, could, with an eloquent tongue. . . put this whole country into a flame” — WOODROW WILSON

“The prime purpose of eloquence is to keep other people from speaking” — LOUIS VERMEIL

“The marvels—of film, radio, and television—are marvels of one-way communication, which is not communication at all” — MILTON MAYER

“Some of mankind’s most terrible misdeeds have been committed under the spell of certain magic words or phrases” — JAMES BRYANT CONANT

“We have made the Reich by propaganda” — JOSEPH PAUL GOEBBELS

“Millions of dollars worth of advertising, shows such little respect for the listeners /readers intelligence that it amounts almost outright insult.” — JANEES RANDOLPH ADAMS

Human society is a social contract of interdependence of collective life. As a group, it exists and develops like a single unit—as a galaxy in the cosmos with millions of different stars and the solar system type groupings, all interconnected and highly interdependent to the minutest details with, of course, certain internal freedom which every individual unit has by remaining within its own trajectory of motion. Here the whole system communicates within and outside the well-controlled system through various types of communications like the individual and collective gravitation, light, heat, energy, motion etc. Here no unit or group does any unusual or abnormal communication so as to gain over the rest or confuse the delicate cosmos balance which every unit follows meticulously.

Similar is the human nerve system that also functions literally as the most complicated and compact communication network of the physical and social functioning of the human body and its evolutionary process. Scientists have even uncovered what they describe as the 'small talk,' the automatic exchange of information between brain and the immune system through the nervous system. That the brain and the immune system have very much in common and that they converse or communicate with each other were demonstrated by a Swiss-based Argentine researcher, Hugo Besedovsky, who showed one way it could be possible by uncovering evidence of immune system to brain signals. For the brain to give intelligent directions to the immune system, it must know what is occurring in the human body, and thus keeps man away from diseases by making the immune system ready and capable of fighting any outside or inside 'enemy' in the human body, apart from repairing the human body from damage or accidents.

The media and electronic age established a global network that has, in theory, much the characteristics of our central nervous system, and the immune system.

The growing interconnection of information processing communication and control technologies throughout the world form the entire 'nervous' system of modern social organization, with the leadership, the government, the groups of nations like the United Nations constituting the 'brain' of modern society. Human society has been a social contract of interdependence in collective life from time immemorial. Man lived socially for millions of years naturally and harmoniously using his sound and signals which he later developed as natural languages.

The moment he began to develop an artificial language called mathematics—logical systems of signalisation—he seemed to come close to the 'secret' of the life process and the 'vitality' of his communication power. By the 16th and 17th century A.D. he began to fully depend on this artificial communication symbols called mathematics and logics, the million years old human life began to look much different.

With discoveries of a world of sophisticated and smart communication gadgets man began to gain control over man by successfully manipulating the communication network, like the manipulation in the nervous system enabling a particular function in the human body to malfunction or 'better' function as the manipulator wants it. He began to perform these feats by monopolizing the artificial communication systems on which man today mechanically depends for his life—for seeing, hearing and even feeling. Thus the middleman slowly began to play havoc with the age-old natural social life process using science in the modern era. And discoveries in science began to end up as negative discoveries for the common man.

This monopolistic trend may be likened to a situation when the nervous system in the human body suddenly becoming 'smart' and commercial and which now would allow only the spreading of data or information for a price or favour which the human body is unable to provide, or like the gravitational and other communication media like light in the cosmos suddenly going commercial holding the whole cosmic balance to ransom.

95 percent of news emanating for the third world are either irrelevant to their social set up or propped up by the developed nations' monopoly mass media, as part of their strategies to increase their influence, for example, to sell their products and services, thereby making the local indigenous products and services as irrelevant or even 'risky'. Here the super market forces are selling the audiences to the advertisers (again the market forces) on the wholesale. It is corporate intelligence and aggressive bidding for TV rights that "allow" us to watch the World Cup live and bless the moneybags and their dastardly commercial ambitions.

MEDIA EMPIRE AND MEDIA 'MOGULS'

Many say we live in an age of 'media empire' and 'media moguls'—emperors! Emperors in the past, however, had at least some freedom of their conscience. Here 'emperors' are sacrificing and strangling truth for a consideration—and, in the process, they are suffering pangs of conscience which is their routines, a sordid situation which is otherwise the fate of slaves.

As the active 'boys of the market', these media 'moguls' are indeed doing a disservice to mankind. There is no other human sector that is doing as much disservice to truth as today's mass media is doing. When it comes in telling the truth, mass media has never been as much spineless as it is today, for truths and realities have become the most inconvenient and unprofitable commodities. As for the writers/journalists of the media, they have little freedom to report on anything that would pose a challenge to the values of the marketplace.

When we say that the world is going wrong, it simply means that those who lead the world are going wrong. When we say that the problem is with the system, it simply means we are adopting the wrong system or the wrong methodology. And because the present leaders are the products of the prevailing system, there is no meaning in changing these leaders without changing the system – the market economy systems. But then why can't man change the system, or at least, tell or demand it in no uncertain terms?

The answer is as simple as it is alarming: man has no voice today; man has no market (value) today. Today he has no other options left. It is because almost all mass media is the voice of the market and almost all modern leaders and celebrities (experts) are the 'boys' of the market. Leaders are found worthy or wanting—conveniently by the corporate media—but the forces behind remain intact and permanent, as the hi-tech systems and the market forces are above the people and above democracy.

As information has become the new material base of modern economy, we are living in an age of shrinking communication and growing miscommunications. It is all a state of virtual communication hold-up and this is the story of modern communication systems having come to be dispensed by market force. Natural human communication is practically on the verge of extinction.

It marks the evolution of an era of lost meaning and defeated purpose in dissemination of human dialogue and communications. No wonder, the dominant global mass media, aided

and abated by the global market forces, is faithfully carrying out its role as the strong arm of market economy.

INFORMATION NARROWNESS

I get not more than 5 percent of the news straight from the 'popular' mainstream mass media even when I go through most of them. I get the main news only through inferences, particularly on matters about which the media is largely silent, either knowingly or unknowingly. I get the real news by reaching out to the whys of such non-reporting. Unless one is ready to discard most of the news that the media is presenting today, one is certain to end up more confused and more ill-informed.

Today, it is also my strong conviction that the media, having long alienated itself from reality, is not able to bring out not more than about 25 % of the real news even when they go 100 % unbiased, non-partisan and truthful in the present juncture. The fact that development of such an eventuality—that is the media going unbiased, non-partisan and truthful—is simply unthinkable for them today is altogether another matter. For, this is also a case of faulty social evolution which the media alone cannot correct.

Rigors of information glut are equally matched by a parallel information narrowness and poverty or information twist towards which the present world conscience must consider as more important. U.S. TV surveys revealed that people sat for hours absorbing every minute detail of the famous American O.J. Simpson murder trial on TV for several months together during 1991-92. So fictitious a vicious circle it created that most of them became TV addicts. "Food summit lacks media attention" was how the Indian national daily Hindu titled lack of coverage of the highest level 1996 Rome summit of the United Nation's world food security and planning. "Shunned too by the developed nations' (mainly western) media, the FAO has been forced to attract public attention by taking out sponsored supplements in some European papers," it added.

FILMS AND TV BLAMED FOR DECLINING MORALS

The cross-party national commission on civic renewal recently warned that the United States is leaning towards becoming a nation of passive observers. The commission spent 18 months investigating what is amiss in the U.S. Their depressing finding was that too many Americans are wasting time watching television while churches, schools and neighborhoods decline and families collapse.

The country that once put more emphasis on a sense of community and neighbourly behaviour than almost any other now risks being overwhelmed by a wave of passivity, cynicism and inferior performance. According to the commission, U.S. popular culture is mostly vulgar, violence-oriented and mindless, with socially acceptable behaviour marked by a corresponding tendency towards unhelpfulness and rudeness.

Americans have not been less interested in playing an active role in civic life since the 1920s, and faith in politicians and political institutions appears to be at a new low, the commission found. The economy is doing fine, but morals are declining. The sudden spurt in teen spirit and juvenile violence in the west, especially America, is closely linked to the culture of violence unleashed by the monster films, TV, and now computer game industry. "Blast your opponent into fragments; wash your way with blood; unleash the psychopath in you. . ." are the types of messages adolescents and even school children are getting who are increasingly getting hooked to violent films, TV, and computer games.

In the race for independence and 'liberalisation' we are only moving away from the inevitable interdependence as a society which is as important as the air and water we breathe and drink. As information is the natural essential feature of evolution from disorder to order, from simple to complex, then this information monopoly is genocide of the society as a whole. It only prevent people from the core of history, it prevents him to understand what he is from what he was.

Artificially and forcefully grouping modern man to the 'global village' by the 'wired globe' the juggernaut of science-business nexus (market economy) seems to hold him to ransom on this vital genetic link transferred to his artificial high tech gadgets. It virtually amounts to a deadly crime on man by man. That the modern mechanical incarnation of information dissemination or man-made high tech communication has come to lose its real purpose, meaning and role is the worst bane of man today. This medium (via media) has come to hazardously usurp the role of leadership and control purely on economical terms using all sorts of last resorts which is indeed a sudden evolutionary throttling, creating dangerous social malfunctioning thereby generating vicious circles everywhere.

Media credibility is eroding fast under increasing influence of politicians of vested interests and manipulation by business tycoons. Because of its monopoly practice and its focus on negative events it is weakening the already fragile democratic structures in the third world, according to even experts. "The situation has come to such a pass that a law is being drafted in South Korea to restrict monopoly, ownership of media by 'Chaebols' business conglomerate," Press Institute of India (PII) chief Ajit Bhattacharjea told a seminar on 'Media and communications in the Third world.'

Citing a recent world-wide survey by International Press Institute, he said in every country, from France to Italy to Thailand, the respondents expressed an increasing lack of trust in the credibility of newspapers.

Market forces are today defining the role of media which is acting as a 'fellow traveller' of the World Bank, the IMF and State-backed multi-national corporations, said Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Ambedkar University, Agra. Media's traditional preference for negative news might threaten the democratic structures of the newly independent nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Nowhere in the modern world was the press totally free. It was a choice between government control and private manipulation. And today as corruption is ruling the roost, the latter has become the sole agency of arbitration in this vital field. The society is held at ransom through media and communication bullying or what can be termed as mechanical/artificial communication hold-up. Prompted by the theory that 'information is control' they sophisticate and monopolize the mass media and the communication technology through widespread corporate mergers and 'links.'

The monopoly press enjoys the status of being the most unanswerable and unreachable press in modern history. It, indeed, has turned out to be the worse communication hold-up

in history. Its postulations on morality and justice sound like the prostitute sermonizing on chastity or like the devil citing scriptures. If anybody or anything be held responsible for the malice of modern age, it is the longer living, larger influencing and more dominating forces of modern society which, like the monopoly media, have to answer. Political leaders may come and go, like the policemen at the traffic stands. But as the sole opinion makers, trend setters and king-makers—and also king-breakers—at least, for the last 100 years, like BBC, Reuter, Associated Press, AFP, Time magazine, New York Times, Washington post, The Sun and so forth that rule the roost as unelected, unchallenged and unchanged.



HOW AND WHY WE ARE IGNORANT OF REAL AND IMPORTANT NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

“The truth about cures without drugs is suppressed, unless it suits the purpose of the censor to garble it. Whether these cures are effected by chiropractors, Naturopaths, Naprapaths, Osteopaths, Faith Healers, Spiritualists, Herbalists, Christian Scientists, or MDs who use the brains they have, you never read about it in the big newspapers.”, writes Hans Ruesch in an essay on the The Drug Story of Morris A. Bealle

In the 30's, Morris A. Bealle, a former city editor of the old Washington Times and Herald, was running a county seat newspaper, in which the local power company bought a large advertisement every week. This account took quite a lot of worry off Bealle's shoulders when the bills came due.

But according to Bealle's own story, one day the paper took up the cudgels for some of its readers that were being given poor service from the power company, and Morris Bealle received the dressing down of his life from the advertising agency which handled the power company's account. They told him that any more such 'stepping out of line' would result in the immediate cancellation not only of the advertising contract, but also of the gas company and the telephone company.

That's when Bealle's eyes were opened to the meaning of a 'free press', and he decided to get out of the newspaper business. He could afford to do that because he belonged to the landed gentry of Maryland, but not all newspaper editors are that lucky.

Bealle used his professional experience to do some deep digging into the freedom-of-the-press situation and came up with two shattering exposes – The Drug Story, and The House of Rockefeller. The fact that in spite of his familiarity with the editorial world and many important personal contacts he couldn't get his revelations into print until he founded his own company, The Columbia Publishing House, Washington D.C., in 1949, was just a prime

example of the silent but adamant censorship in force in 'the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave'. Although *The Drug Story* is one of the most important books on health and politics ever to appear in the USA, it has never been admitted to a major bookstore nor reviewed by any establishment paper, and was sold exclusively by mail. Nevertheless, when we first got to read it, in the 1970s, it was already in its 33rd printing, under a different label – Biworld Publishers, Orem, Utah.

What is happening in the world today is not going to be known in the near future because the capitalist dominated world press which is under the total monopoly of global market forces today is totally and unquestionably 'FREE' – free not for disclosing any truths and realities but in suppressing truth and in duplicating realities. For, doing service to truth will not bring any money and it is the parading of wrong as right or untruth as truth that fetches lots of money, and every industry – including the media industry – is only about making money.



THE GREAT MEDIA DEGENERATION

They may appear in different names, languages, regions, nations or as the mouthpieces of different political parties, religions, groups, class or creed, or be they in the developed world or in the under-developed, but when it comes to the contents and the real messages, which they ostensibly give in so many words, will undoubtedly establish the fact that they are all, by hook or by crook, controlled by the same market forces which have their global controlling forces converging in some global corporate media giant. Today, the mass media, all over the world, has been all but bought out (through stock and other hi-tech financial manipulations or 'tie-ups') by gigantic corporations, which rarely have an interest in carrying coverage of public sentiment for change. Business dislikes uncertainty. And change is a major source of uncertainty.

When no real news about the communist society was not known to the world because of a communist Government controlled press suppressed these news, the more smart capitalist media occasionally 'leaked' these news from the communists society (by the help of intelligence work) and thus the communist Government's monopoly of the press failed at last. But today, as globalization rules the roost in the world with the take over of the whole media world by market force government nearing total, and, as the world goes on globalizing, corrupting and strangling truth, which exactly is what market economy leadership is all about, a worse situation seems to prevail in today's world than what was in the communist world under the communist Governments. For today, there seems the no system capable of 'leaking' the real news to the world where the strangle hold of capitalist press domination is total and unquestionable. And there is no super force to do similar intelligence work in the market-dominated world today. Thus the world literally starves for

almost all the real news for a long time now.

In decades past the mass media played an important part in gauging and amplifying the sentiment of the citizenry. When mass mind-management has become child play for the highly mechanized society, rendering the whole election process as meaningless and literal non sense, when extra constitutional Governments by global powers like IMF, world Bank, Super power intelligence agencies, global currencies, global armys, WTO, etc. literally function inside every individual nations, reducing the national leaders in these nations as mere figure heads or as local agents when almost all important wings of the 'People's Governments' like the executive, judiciary, the press, etc... have all been reduced as mere enterprises of the global agencies through remote controls, when we, the people, for whom these institutions stands, no longer count, except in consumer market surveys, I don't think any 'news' about today's elections and national governments make any sense, and thus any 'NEWS'! This makes even the necessity of 'leak' of the real news, not worth the effort.

So increasingly in modern society, our vote means little, and rarely causes significant change to the status quo. The government has learned new tricks to keep protest movements under wraps and often out of sight. And the increasingly big business-owned mass media is content to go along with government in squelching dissent against the new laws and policies which they helped the politicians on their payrolls to write.

DELUSIONAL REVOLUTION AND THE MEDIA

The delusional revolution is indeed the developed form of sophisticated propaganda techniques in the 20th century (especially a highly emotive, image-based advertising system) that have produced in the bulk of the population (especially in First World societies) a distinctly delusional state of being. Even those of us who try to resist it often can't help but be drawn into parts of the delusion. As a culture, we collectively end up acting as if unsustainable systems can be sustained because we want them to be. Much of the culture's storytelling—particularly through the dominant storytelling institution, the mass media—remains committed to maintaining this delusional state. In such a culture, it becomes hard to extract oneself from that story.

The delusional revolution has prevented us from coming to terms with the reality of where we are and where we are heading. The mass media is mostly under the control of large organizations that are integrated into the system.

Modern mass media is the instrument by which knowledge is passed along in our society. We no longer get knowledge directly from Earth. We're no longer in touch with the sources of our survival. Most of us in modern industrial society—the technosphere—no longer grow our food or take care of our own subsistence or learn directly from our own experience. Basically we're like an astronaut in space, floating around in a metallic, recreated universe, disconnected from Earth. We're dependent completely upon the information, like fast food, that is sent to us from very, very far away sources.

We're now subject to \$500 billion worth of advertising each year. By the time young people enter college they've seen thousands of hours of television, four hours per day on an average. As a result, one study has shown that college students could identify a thousand corporate logos but fewer than 10 plants and animals native to their own place. So we've become not only consumers, but hugely ignorant of the terms by which we live on Earth.

THE CULTURE OF SELLING

How has this occurred? We might look towards the advertising industry to provide a case study that is illustrative of more widespread and general cultural factors that have created a psycho-sociological system of desire, need, and wants and an internal psychological make-up that tends towards the narcissistic. Advertising should be taken to be only one of the forces that has produced our contemporary cultural climate, but it can be seen as a Weberian 'ideal type', and therefore illustrative of some of the influences that have produced cultural change over the past forty years or so.

Advertising is seductive because it bases itself on the evocation of desire, and it deploys every technique and every ideology towards this end. It serves a machinery that is rooted in capital, the market, commercialism and consumerism, and propagandises for these ideologies in an indirect and tangential fashion that is dangerous because it is not obvious and because it bends every alternative message and ideology towards its own purposes and incorporates them within its own universe. Advertising creates a climate within which luxuries have become necessities that men and women alike must acquire lest they lose their status, whether on the competitive market, at work or in their leisure activities.

Despite globalisation, Britain, for example, is reportedly becoming ever more parochial, provincial, and 'Little English'. There is less and less foreign news coverage in the newspapers, and even in the broadsheets there is less and less space devoted to world news. TV coverage is even worse. The Independent Television Commission reported in 2002 that current affairs on terrestrial channels had been cut by 50% and foreign coverage was the most affected. Additionally, fewer and fewer people are learning foreign languages and coming directly into contact with other cultures. The lack of knowledge and understanding of political issues, global and world issues, and of other societies and cultures is creating lacunae of ignorance and emptiness in the minds of individuals that can easily be filled with half-truths, the half-baked, the prejudiced, and the superstitious. This situation, from all the evidence, is worsening year by year.

The 'dumbing down' of the population leads to individuals possessing less knowledge and narrowed perspectives and understandings enables the press and other individuals and institutions to have a much greater influence. This is potentially dangerous for society and for democracy.

There have been many research findings, since the late 1990's that confirm these findings: a 2007 study claimed that 83% of the UK public felt the country was in moral decline. Recently, the European Social Survey claimed that British under-25s have less trust or sense of belonging than in any other country; it was only the more positive attitudes of older age groups—those over 50—that ensured that Britain didn't bump to the bottom of the index below Bulgaria and Slovakia.

THE INDIAN MEDIA: YET ANOTHER COLONIAL TOOL

Today the Indian media (most of them controlled by global corporate) are waging the bitterest war against the present government.

The greatest and the longest lasting colonization is the colonization of the mind. In the initial stages of colonization, the conquered people are enslaved and controlled with the force of arms. The weakness of this form of colonization is that the colonized people can

rise up in revolution and send the colonizer packing permanently. This colonization is transient. However, the colonizer has other weapons in their arsenal and these are used to colonize the minds of the conquered people, since colonization of the mind is more permanent

Today India is reeling under the worst colonial legacy in history. With key sectors like the Indian Constitution, Indian Democracy, Judiciary, Education, Economy, Science and Technology, Media ... all having been deeply entrenched in her colonial legacies and having strong western orientation, 'handling' or dealing with any post-independent government in India has been a child play for the global forces, especially the global corporate owned Indian media.

Within India, the denialism seems to be much stronger because independent India was tethered to the British colonial era. Many of India's leading nationalists were either Macaulayites or devotees of Harold Laski, the British political mind whose ideas of secularism were digested in full by leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon (though Laski himself was a proud Zionist). As a result, India's intellectual development was monopolised from the very beginning by those who, unwittingly or not, embraced the Macaulay idea of 'persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect'. Indeed, the independence movement thinkers rejected British rule but sought to mimic British views and society-building paradigms. Concepts of secularism and religion, sex and sexuality, and even caste and class, were driven almost exclusively by the colonial narrative.

Historian Ramachandra Guha has written about what this sort of intellectual development has done to the study of Indian history, noting it has been encrusted into a rigid partisan and ideological binary: you are either a Marxist or a right-wing Hindu (or, like Guha, a Nehruvian), thereby precluding anyone who falls outside those categories. Not only has this made discourse next to impossible, it has shrunk the potential for debate and turned India's intellectual class into a caricature of itself. Many Indian intellectuals, particularly on the left and living outside of India now, chase a Hindutva bogeyman, in part because they were never able to separate the religion from the political ideology or adapt to the changing discourses on religious identity that have shaped the Diaspora. To them, Hinduism and Hindutva are one and the same, whether you live in India, Bhutan, Bali, Guyana, Sri Lanka, Trinidad, the United Kingdom or the United States.

As Shiv Visvanathan wrote several months ago, India's intellectual class never seemed to accept the fact that religion could co-exist with rationalism.

This is why colonialism remains the zombie gnawing at India's intellectual, social, political and cultural fabric. Very few Indians are appreciative of the expanse of colonialism's influence. Some on the right—particularly Hindu right-wingers—have disproportionately cast blame on colonialism for everything that ails India, while others on the left have framed their own critiques of the Indian state from a Eurocentric binary. It has thus become extremely difficult to have an organic, homegrown assessment of what India is and what it means to be Indian today. Indian independence still seems to be fraught with a sort of Stockholm syndrome when it comes to developing a post-European framework of dialogue.

THE COLONISED MIND

One of the most devastating consequences of colonialism is India's collective failure to tangibly understand its impact, and how virtually every aspect of society has been impacted to the core by the colonial era. Indian bureaucracy, jurisprudence, and its magnificent— and

often decaying—physical structures are all vestiges of the colonial mastery over natives. Ironically, the nearly three centuries of sustained colonialism— whether done indirectly through British, Portuguese or French trade administrators or directly through each country's rule—was not syncretic. Colonial administrators might have borrowed ideas or tried to placate communal disputes, but there was never a semblance of discourse or equal exchange of ideas. Colonial frameworks were imposed upon Indians.

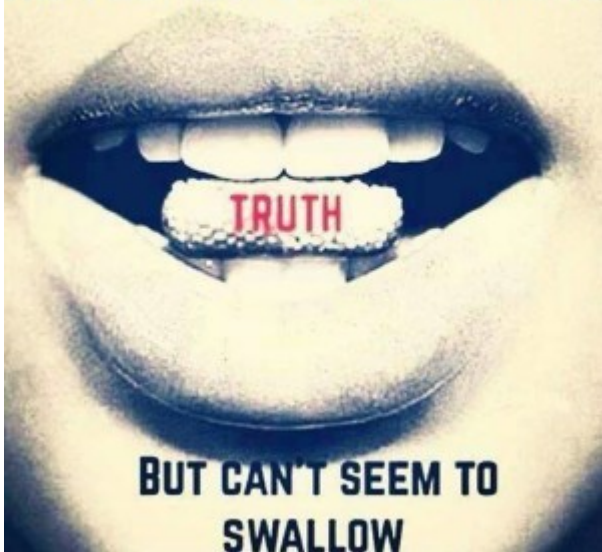
In many ways, Indians became what Frantz Fanon described of the plight of the natives in France's African colonies in the 1960s: perpetually inferior and unable to break away from the psychological bondage of the mandate of French superiority. It's what many scholars later termed 'internal inferiorisation'. Indians were educated in missionary schools, socialised under norms that the British—and, to much lesser, localised degrees, the French and Portuguese—reified through laws of that era. Even India's history, one that is being debated by what Guha calls 'captive ideologues', was written primarily by the British or those schooled by them. The study of Hinduism was defined by missionary frameworks. This isn't to discount the Orientalist perspective as a legitimate view, but it's also ludicrous to downplay the influence such a perspective has had in shaping how Indians understand Hinduism which got conflated with caste and ritualism—two things that Indian independence leaders wanted nothing to do with.

As such, the study of Hindu thought became stunted within India—and lampooned by many intellectuals—and began to flourish outside, which is likely why many Hindus in the West Indies, South Africa and even the United States are much more philosophically versed in Hinduism than their counterparts in India. It's why so many Hindus in India—particularly among the educated elite—are reluctant to identify themselves as Hindu for fear of violating some rhetoric of secularism. Similarly, even the exchange of ideas among Indians of different religions (and non-beliefs) has become essentialised to a narrative of communalism.

And this is the rub of discussions about India's relationship with its colonial past. Like an abuse victim, the country has collectively repressed the extent to which colonialism left a self-sustaining—and traumatic—imprint on the country's psyche and the views of its post-Independence Diaspora. To many, the British continue to be seen as a civilising force that somehow managed and mollified communal tensions, when in fact, the opposite was more often true.

DUMBING DOWN OR THE BANALIZATION OF CULTURE

THE PILL THAT EVERYONE WANTS



Dumbing down is a pejorative term for a perceived trend to lower the intellectual content of literature, education, news, and other aspects of culture. Commentators have expressed concern about the media's potential for diminishing the quality of our culture for many years. In fact, the evidence for 'dumbing down' is everywhere: newspapers that once ran foreign news now feature celebrity gossip, pictures of scantily dressed young ladies, and football; television has replaced high-quality drama with gardening, cookery, and other 'lifestyle' programmes; blockbusters have taken over the publishing world and pop CD's and internet connections have taken over the libraries. In the dumbed-down world of reality TV and asinine soaps, the masses live in a perpetual present occupied by celebrity culture, fashion, a TV culture of diminished quality and range, an idealisation of mediocrity, and pop videos and brands. Speed and immediacy are the great imperatives, meaning that complex ideas are reduced to sound bites, high culture is represented by The Three Tenors and J K Rowling.

There are no great figures in this contemporary world: where are the Beethoven's, the Tolstoy's, and the Russell's? Instead, there is froth and frantic ferment all around, a tidal wave of vapidness. Despite the benefits promised by high technology and mass education and communications, there seems to be a distinct lack of real creativity. Instead, we see only a lacklustre globalised homogeneity and cultural standardisation across the world.

Today, in communication, which indeed is the "force divine", we are not growing but only shrinking, and today at computer speed. Thus natural human communication is virtually on the verge of extinction

CONCLUSION:

Human society is a social contract of interdependence of collective life. As a group, it exists and develops like a single unit—as a galaxy in the cosmos with millions of different stars and the solar system type groupings, all interconnected and highly interdependent to the minute details with, of course, certain internal freedom which every individual unit has by remaining within its own trajectory of motion.

Human existence is communication. Life is a dialogue. The end of human communications is not to command, but to commune. Communication is the aim of philosophy, and in communication all its other aims are ultimately rooted: awareness of being, illumination through love, attainment of peace.

The clue to change, to reform, to healing, to normalizing, to getting back on the correct course, therefore, lies in correcting the deviant communication. If we wish to find our way back to the springs of pristine virtue of character and culture, we have to revive healthy, holistic healing of communication through live DIALOGUE.

Category

- Articles

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