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State Patronage and India's New Cinema

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INTRODUCTION

'Film India', an extensive collection of Indian films, toured art museums and universities in the U.S.A. in 1981-82. During the course of the tour, film maker Shyam Benegal surprised an academic audience which was probably accustomed to hearing about India in terms of scarcity, and about its cinema as "the biggest and the worst in the world." "India," Benegal said, "is the best place in the world to be a film maker right now. For a young film maker with passion, the situation is very alive - he can make a film, he will get support."¹ Benegal, who in 1979 was named one of the five "directors of the year" by Peter Cowie's *International Film Guide*, is a leader of India's 'New Cinema', a loose movement of film makers who have brought creative diversity and social criticism to India's screens.

Another major New Cinema director, Girish Karnad, expressed this increasingly optimistic Indian perspective when he relayed a conversation between several New Cinema directors and film maker Bill Douglas from the United Kingdom. Douglas had been "amazed to find all of us discussing our next films so casually. He said he could never be so sure that he would be able to carry on making films, because its very much more difficult there to make serious films than it is in India."²

India's serious, 'independent' film makers are indeed able to make films, they do get support. They are supported by the state, and their work is promoted at festivals and markets in India and abroad. These efforts have begun to improve the stature of Indian cinema in the international critical arena. But domestically, India's New Cinema faces an uncertain future, its viability yet to be established. Like many other 'new cinema' movements, it has to contend with distribution and exhibition channels blocked by established commercial interests. Unlike many Third World film makers, however, India's New Cinema directors have not had to contend with foreign domination of their nation's screens. Instead, they face the internal domination of a market-based cinema which is also India's dominant cultural force.

With an audience averaging twelve million a day, the commercial cinema is generally assumed to be the most influential mass medium in India. The fact that there are only about eleven thousand cinemas for a population of seven hundred million (and for a steadily climbing production that reached 742 feature films in 1980), means that much of India's largely rural population is still out of cinema's reach, and that the vast potential audience has only begun to be tapped.³ Nevertheless, the cinema's popularity rivals Hollywood's at its height, and the popularity of its stars is phenomenal. Film stars may be India's 'new gods' or 'new maharajahs', and sometimes even its new political leaders. In the sixties, in the large southern state of Tamilnadu, a new political party, the D.M.K., rose and established itself in power through the deliberate use of entertainment films. When the party's first cabinet took office, all but one member came from the film industry. M.G. Ramachandran, who has been the state's Chief Minister since 1977, is a 'film hero' whose screen image as a "champion of the oppressed" helped to get him elected.⁴ At the national level, retired film stars have been rewarded with appointment to the upper house of Parliament, and the possible political future of Amitabh Bachchan, the top 'superstar' of the all-India, Hindi-language cinema, has been the subject of much speculation.⁵

The cinema's extraordinary hold on its audience is widely acknowledged, often with concern, and its influences are seen reflected in changing modes and mores. Thus, not only the size of its audience, but also the nature of the commercial cinema's relation with its 'seminal audience', make it, according to one definition, a "true national cinema (which) prospers in a feedback loop with its massive audience response, in which audience and cinema seem to have been waiting for each other."⁶ Given the success of this popular national cinema, where did an alternative movement, opposed to the popular cinema, and concerned with social issues, find its impetus? Where did India's 'New Cinema' find its 'seminal audience?'

This study examines the role of the state vis-a-vis the New Indian Cinema, the conditions that led to state intervention and its consequences.

STATE AND INDUSTRY

In India the state has traditionally played a major role with regard to the mass media. Radio, television, newsreels and documentary films are under direct state control through central government monopolies. The press and the feature film industry are in private hands. The cinema is regulated and taxed at both central and state levels in a problematic system of 'dual control' inherited from the British Raj. The British set the pattern for stringent state regulation and censorship of the cinema, whereas state patronage, both support and protectionism, of the feature film industry, began only after independence. On the other hand, since independence in 1947, India has seen a proliferation of cinema controls - numerous licensing requirements, taxation at multiple stages of the production process, duties and restrictions on import of films, raw stock and equipment.⁷ Among other consequences of this proliferation has been growing interdependence between the film industry and the state.



The Indian film, *Nishant* (Night's End) - 1975
by Shyam Benegal



The Brazilian film, *Xica* (1981) with Zeze Motta

The steady growth of the film industry's output and revenue has made it one of India's ten largest industries.⁸ As the world's biggest film producer, India turns out more than one-third of all the films produced in the world each year. The industry derives substantial income from exports, but it is not dependent on foreign markets for its survival. Nor is it threatened domestically by imported films or television competition. Less than one per cent of theatres show imported films, and television and video cassettes reach an even smaller fraction of homes. Despite this unusually fortunate situation, the Indian film industry has been virtually in a perpetual state of crisis since the independence of India in 1947.

Socio-economic changes brought about in India by World War II and by developments following independence had a profound impact on the film industry, still in evidence today. The influx of illegal war profits into film finance, and of peasants to the cities changed the character of the film industry, its product, and its audience. Swelling numbers of migrants changed the cinema audience from the pre-war, educated middle-class audience into what may be called a true 'mass audience'. Newly rich speculators who invested their 'black money' in films changed the terms of finance and production. Studios gave way to individual entrepreneurs, many of them part of a 'floating population' of producers who tried their luck on one film, and then disappeared. With the collapse of the studio system, the industry became highly fragmented and disunited.⁹ The increase in the number of theatres did not keep pace with rising production, and this growing imbalance further intensified the speculative nature of the film business. Trade sources have estimated that two-thirds of films produced do not recover their costs. Yet the visions of box-office bonanzas and of the glamour associated with the industry continue to attract investment of illegal profits from other sectors of India's 'parallel economy'. 'Black money' - unreported, and therefore, untaxed, payment continues to inflate film budgets, as does the hyperbolic and high-priced star system. The instability of the post-war industry has been perpetuated by the lack of access to bank loans, due to the high risk and lack of collateral of film ventures. Bank nationalization did not change this basic position. Successive governments of the seventies refused to recognize the film industry as an industrial activity, despite its size, thus leaving it ineligible for institutional finance. (The state loses substantial tax revenue on unreported film industry income and profits. But, it is said that if institutional finance made the industry accountable for all its financial dealings, not only would the industry lose its 'black' investments and profits, but political candidates would also lose substantial contributions from the industry.) Films are financed with private loans at astronomical rates, and most are pre-sold to distributors against advance payment. The primary power in the industry is in the hands of money-lenders, distributors, and exhibitors.¹⁰

The way these entrepreneurs responded to post-war changes in India's industry created a situation not unfamiliar in other market-based film industries under pressure of severe competition. The greater individual risks became, the greater the financiers' insistence, therefore, that the producer provide what seemed to be the ingredients of box-office success - stars, directors, and music directors of proven track record, and variations of the

evolving dominant formula. Under such circumstances, diversity and range of expression did not flourish. Film makers wanting to deviate from the dominant formula of the omnibus form which provided something for everybody - song and dance, fights, action, comedy, romance, and melodrama - stood little or no chance of obtaining funding or distribution.

The way India's ruling elites responded to the commercial cinema's post-war evolution is exemplified by comments such as these:

It has universally been admitted that the majority of Indian films are produced with an eye on box-office success with emphasis on sex and violence, dance and songs without any plausible story etc.¹¹

The artistic standards and the moral consciousness of the Indian cinema, instead of improving, have deteriorated considerably ... Vulgarity is no longer confined to an odd sequence here and there, it is becoming the very stuff of the mass cinema.¹²

In a nation whose middle-class and official cultures are strongly puritanical, the film industry has been sharply and frequently condemned - for being "vulgar, trivial, reactionary, tasteless and exploitative."¹³ It is charged with projecting a distorted picture of Indian life, imitating Hollywood, and corrupting Indian youth by introducing the worst of western ways. Exhortations calling on the industry to reform itself have often been accompanied by calls for government intervention. These have included calls for more stringent controls, even for nationalization, as well as calls for a variety of positive support measures.

PATRONAGE AND PROMOTION

With the decline of India's traditional patronage culture in the arts, the state gradually took on the role of arts patron. In the case of a new art form such as the cinema, however, no direct precedent for state patronage existed. When state support for the cinema began after independence, it was modest and sporadic. It remains more tenuous and ambivalent than state support to those arts which are more unambiguously in the realm of high culture, rather than of mass culture and commerce.

A comprehensive state policy for cinema was developed by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the central government arm which is primarily responsible for cinema, in 1969. The Minister did not succeed in getting the government to adopt this policy, nor has any subsequent government adopted a national film policy. In the absence of formal policy documents, we must look to policy statements that are explicit or implicit in other official statements. Judging from such evidence, the general aim of the post-independence government toward the film industry was reform. As stated in the terms of reference assigned to various central government-appointed film enquiry committees, and in government testimony before parliamentary committees, the government seemed to want the industry to make more 'wholesome', 'purposeful' and indigenous films. In a 1949 statement, for example, the government wanted "this important industry (to) be

put on a sound footing" in order to "enable films in India to develop into an effective instrument for the promotion of national culture, education and healthy entertainment."³⁹ Key phrases that recur again and again express such goals as the creation of "purposeful films", and "wholesome entertainment for the masses", and of "good and socially more useful films".⁴⁰ Implicit in most reform-orientated discussions outside the film industry were several assumptions. First, Indian films were assumed to be inferior to some international (presumably Western) standard. Second, their quality would improve if harmful Western influences as well as the industry's financial instability were removed. Finally, it was up to the state to ensure that the industry improve its functioning and its product.

We may speculate that the task of transforming the industry's economics, ethics, and aesthetics would have been herculean at best, that the political will for substantive reforms may have been lacking, that no government saw the reform issue as salient enough to pay the necessary price, or that the interdependence of the film industry and government enabled the industry to thwart reform efforts. Be that as it may, exhortations addressed to the industry continue, and state intervention has not so far succeeded in reforming the industry. It has, however, almost inadvertently at first, created conditions for a serious, alternative cinema which exists largely outside the commercial industry. Although no comprehensive film policy was adopted, policies had to be formulated as the need arose, often on an *ad hoc*, piecemeal basis. Thus, starting in the early 1950's, a series of state support measures were put into effect by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (and later by state governments as well), which resulted in encouraging a 'new' cinema and an alternative film culture.

These state support measures were threefold, consisting of patronage, film promotion and promotion of film culture. The state assumed the role of patron to the cinema by providing film finance and training. It promoted the cinema by awarding annual prizes, holding international film festivals in India, and sending films abroad to festivals and 'film weeks'. It fostered the spread of an alternative film culture by encouraging film societies, and by sponsoring festivals, a training institute, an archive, and national awards.

State film finance, in the form of low-interest loans without collateral, was no doubt the single most significant support measure. The national Film Finance Corporation (FFC) was set up with government funds in 1960. At first it made only 'safe' loans to established industry figures. An exception was Satyajit Ray, who by then had established himself internationally as a major director. The FFC began supporting new, 'off-beat', low-budget films as a matter of policy in 1969, after the popular success of the FCC-funded *Bhuvan Shome* (Mr. Shome, 1969) by Mrinal Sen. Sen's film was a fresh, satirical comedy about the 'humanizing' of a rigid, pompous bureaucrat by a spunky, disarming village girl. *Bhuvan Shome* was followed by several other FFC-funded, 'off-beat' films which turned out to be popular with audiences and were well-received critically. They marked the beginning of the New Cinema as a movement.

Between 1969 and 1979, the FFC made loans to fifty-five feature films. Lacking 'bankable' stars (or directors), songs, dances, and other box-office ingredients, these films had little or no chance of finding finance within the industry. The fact that some of these films made a good showing seemed to help attract new private finance, and a number of New Cinema directors have been able to finance their films without the aid of the FFC. For most, however, especially newcomers and avant garde directors, FFC loans have been essential. The majority of New Cinema careers launched since the 1969 turning point in FFC policy were started with FFC loans.¹⁶

State aid helped unconventional directors to break the barrier of financing, but the distribution and exhibition barriers largely remain. Exhibitors are often unwilling to take risks on 'small', unconventional films which are considered likely to fail. As a recent report stated:

Excessive pressure on available theatres is the single most important factor for pushing up theatre rentals and has resulted in squeezing out better type of films which cannot compete commercially with high budget, star-cast films. This is one of the main reasons that good films either do not get released at all or find release only on morning and noon shows.¹⁷

When such 'small' films do manage to obtain release, they lack the massive publicity budgets of conventional films, and they are often withdrawn before word-of-mouth publicity can reach the potential audience. Thus, although some of the FFC-funded films have done well at the box-office and have repaid their loans, many have not broken into release. Most loans are still outstanding, and have in effect become subsidies. A parliamentary committee reporting in 1976 found that out of the twenty-five feature films funded by the FFC between 1969 and 1975, only sixteen had obtained release, and only six of those were considered successful at the box office.¹⁸

The New Cinema's dependence on the industry has long been discussed as a major obstacle to financial viability. New Cinema proponents have called for government aid, most often in the form of a chain of 'art cinemas'. In fact the FFC, since 1980 part of a new, wide-ranging National Film Development Corporation, has now finally embarked on direct film distribution. It has also begun giving loans for the construction of a network of low-cost theatres in rural as well as urban areas.¹⁹ It is too early to judge whether such programmes will actually extend the New Cinema's reach beyond its present urban audiences, giving it a broader base, or will simply create a parallel exhibition chain of urban 'art houses'. Given the size of India's population, either alternative may lead to an added degree of financial viability for the New Cinema. For its survival, the minimum supports the New Cinema now seems to require are some guarantee of access to exhibition outlets (preferably including theatres small enough to allow for longer runs), and continued access to some combination of central government loans, state government subsidies, and/or institutional finance. As the 1980's began, indications were that central and state government willingness to provide such supports was greater than at any time in the past.

Among the younger generation of New Cinema directors, many of whom made their first films with FFC loans, a significant proportion studied film making at the national Film and Television Institute of India. The government of India began its programmes of film finance and film training at about the same time. The first graduates left the Film Institute in 1963. By 1979, almost eight hundred students had been trained in direction, writing, acting, editing, sound and cinematography. The Film Institute, with the help of the adjoining National Film Archive, exposed students to the classics of world cinema. The aim was to orient students to cinematic values beyond those of the commercial cinema so that they would go out into the industry and become 'catalysts of change'.²³

Understandably, the film industry was not interested in being changed. Although Institute-trained technicians and actors have been absorbed into the industry quite readily, and have had some impact, directors have not been welcomed. The competence of Institute-trained directors has not been at issue, but rather their ability to conform to the demands of the star system, and to make other compromises that would be expected of them. A recent report stated that:

There is no doubt that in the course of about two decades of its existence the FTII (Film Institute) together with the National Film Archive and the Film Finance Corporation have made a significant contribution to the development of the art of cinema in the country.²⁴

There is also no doubt that the Film Institute has been a major force in fostering the anti-commercial orientation of the New Cinema. The Institute has had an official commitment to cultivating "a consciousness of the social responsibility of the artist,"²⁵ and has perhaps to some degree contributed to the New Cinema's social concerns.

The Film Institute, in collaboration with the Film Archive, has also performed a broader educational function through its short-term film appreciation courses. These have served a more diverse population than the regular film courses, which cater primarily to young, middle-class urban males.²⁶ Since India's colleges and universities have not taught film studies courses, and since serious film criticism has been rare, the Institute and Archive together have become the fulcrum of Indian film culture. Their opposition to the current commercial cinema has thus become an influential component of India's emerging alternative film culture.

The chief instruments for the spread of this alternative film culture have been film societies. Film societies played an important educational role in the development of film makers, critics, journalists, actors, and other film professionals. Many New Cinema directors learned about the potential of the cinema at film society screenings, and a large number were active members, or founders, of film societies. Summing up the role that the film society movement played in the growth of the New Cinema, film critic Kobita Sarkar noted that "some of the best film makers in the country have acknowledged their debt to film societies," and she concluded that the movement's "stimulus to film makers cannot be overrated."²⁷

Commercial producers have traditionally explained the conformist content of their films by blaming India's rigorous censorship which, they said, kept them from treating social or political problems 'realistically'. The potential scope of state control over film content has, or course, been extended by state film finance. FFC loans, awarded on the basis of film scripts, have been decided by script committees, subject to final approval by the FFC's governing board. Indirectly, therefore, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has gained informal pre-production censorship powers over FFC-funded films, in addition to existing, statutory post-production censorship. Thus, it is striking that in the seventies, FFC-funded films were among these which were on the cutting edge of social criticism. To some degree, these films helped extend the boundaries of the allowable.

An interesting example was M.S. Sathyu's *Garm Hawa* (*Hot Winds*, 1973). The title refers to the hot winds of violence which swept the sub-continent in the aftermath of its partition into the independent nations of India and Pakistan. *Garm Hawa*, the first film to deal frankly with the potentially explosive subject of deep-rooted prejudices between Hindus and Muslims, tells the story of a Muslim family who chose to stay in India following the upheavals of partition. This was to be Sathyu's first feature film. It was "the sort of subject long considered out of bounds for Indian films", and Sathyu approached the FFC only after his commercial producer "became fearful and backed out".²⁰ Sathyu's film, a powerful, sympathetic portrayal of tragic personal dilemmas evolving out of wider political and economic events, ends on a suggestion of hope through collective action. The Muslim family fails to make a life in India, and finally giving up, sets off for Pakistan. On the way, they encounter a red flag-led protest demonstration. As the film ends, the son, and then the father too, join the march. Sathyu's film became controversial even before its release. Fearing that it might provoke riots and violence between Hindus and Muslims, the censor board banned the film. After concerted protests and appeals, a Cabinet decision led to the film's release.²¹ The feared rioting did not ensue. Several years later the FFC was willing to fund another film by Sathyu, even though it was set in a chronically drought-stricken area, and the film maker was trying to expose political interference with efforts to bring food to a famine-hit area. Released in 1980, the film was titled *Baxa* (*The Famine*).

In the late seventies, the FFC extended loans to several other films dealing with social or political themes formerly considered 'untouchable'. Two of these films, *Aakrosh* and *Chakra*, were completed in 1980 and received a good response from audiences. *Aakrosh* (*Cry of the Wounded*) was cameraman Govind Nihalani's first feature. The film unravels the complicity of India's legal system (and of the rural power elite which is shown to place itself above the law) in the exploitation of tribal people. It is noteworthy that not only did *Aakrosh* share the major prize at the 1981 New Delhi International Film Festival, but the film was also promoted in the Cannes Festival Film Market by India's National Film Development Corporation. *Chakra* (*Vicious Circle*, 1980), the other FFC-funded film, was also sent to Cannes in 1981. Directed by R. Dharmaraj and set in the slums of Bombay, this was also a first feature film. A critic who saw *Chakra* at Cannes described it as "a merciless document on the need for social change in the large cities on the sub-continent."²²

Film societies, begun in 1947, are private organizations, but they grew into a movement only after state support was extended to them in the early sixties. In fact, state support was needed in order to save film societies from the state. Given the extensive nature of Indian cinema taxation and censorship regulations, film societies were almost killed in their early years by governmental obstacles such as entertainment tax, censorship and import license requirements. Since film societies were run by volunteers, such requirements made the cost and paperwork necessary for each society screening prohibitive. Once the central government acknowledged that film societies serve an essentially cultural rather than commercial function, and exempted them from regulations governing commercial movie houses, the movement grew from six societies in 1959 to several hundred two decades later.²⁸

Together with international film festivals, film societies opened a 'window on world cinema', although it was only for a small minority in India's cities. Given the narrow range of imported films and the lack of alternative channels such as 'art theatres' or commercial 16 mm circuits, film societies and festivals both filled and created a demand for wider access to foreign films. Festivals and film societies primarily present film as an 'art form' (which, of course, translates for some into a chance to see uncensored, sexually explicit films). Emphasizing foreign films, and usually ignoring India's commercial cinema, they have fostered the international orientation of India's alternative film culture and of the New Cinema. In the film society and festival context, 'international' has generally meant films from West and East Europe, the United States, and Japan. Interest in Third World cinemas has not been significant until recently. Since Europe and the United States provide the main cultural reference points for India's urban elites, film has probably gained in status among these groups as a result of the orientation that film societies and festivals gave to the emerging alternative film culture. This may have contributed to creating a favourable climate for subsequent policy changes, such as the provision of state finance for unconventional, 'artistic' films, or for the liberalization of censorship which took place in the seventies.

India was the first nation in the Third World to hold film festivals. They began in 1952, but they were organized sporadically until 1975. Since then they have been annual events. New Delhi, which has no film industry, is the site of the more glamorous competitive festivals which alternate each year with the non-competitive festivals held in various film production centres. It is unlikely that any festival has matched the impact of the 1952 festival, which ended India's isolation from the international cinema, and was an extraordinary eye-opener for film enthusiasts in the major cities which it toured. Satyajit Ray, Shyam Benegal, Mrinal Sen and many others in the New Cinema speak glowingly of the twenty-odd films they managed to see during one festival week, although that week was thirty years ago.²⁹ The Italian neo-realist films shown at that festival struck a resonant chord which still resounds in today's New Cinema.

Since 1978, India's festivals have included a successful new feature, a 'Panorama of Indian Cinema'. The 'Panorama' presents a selection of about twenty new films each year, from various regions of India, subtitled in English. In effect, the 'Panorama' represents not the work of 'Indian Cinema' but of 'New Cinema'. It presents a selective

'window' on Indian cinema for foreign critics and other delegates, and has been well received by them. It has also led to increased invitations to foreign festivals as well as foreign sales for the New Cinema.³⁰

Generally, many of the 'Panorama' films are selected from among the previous year's National Award-winning films, thus making the National Awards a first step toward much-coveted international recognition. The awards programme, instituted in 1954, has played an important role in focussing attention on innovative developments in Indian cinema, on the work of new film makers, and on regional film production. The awards provide an annual ritual for reaffirming the importance of "films of aesthetic excellence and social relevance," and for appreciating "the film cultures of different regions of India."³¹ The awards provide recognition, publicity and cash prizes to films in all of India's major languages, and have contributed in some measure to nurturing the New Cinema's aesthetic and regional diversity. The list of films that have been given National Awards since the late 1960's reads like a New Cinema catalogue. The films of the commercial industry, on the other hand, are not to be found among award-winners, except in certain categories such as music direction, singing, acting or cinematography. Thus the awards, like film societies and festivals, contribute to deepening the schism between the New Cinema and the mainstream commercial industry.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The forms that India's state patronage and promotion took influenced the directions of the New Cinema's opposition to the commercial cinema. In contrast to the commercial cinema's hybrid, but basically indigenous, narrative form (which is rooted in Sanskrit drama, by way of the folk theatre), the New Cinema looks to Western models, towards the conventions of the classical Hollywood narrative or of the international (largely European) 'art cinema'.³² On the other hand, the New Cinema attempts to be more authentically indigenous in its search to express "the truth of Indian realities", and its naturalistic *mise-en-scene*. These New Cinema characteristics make it more respectable and appealing to urban, elite audiences accustomed to foreign films, but they are probably also self-limiting in terms of its accessibility to wider audiences.

State support activities such as the Film Institute, the Film Finance Corporation, and film festivals fostered a new film ethos, which became the 'New Cinema' ethos - an orientation to international cinema and especially to 'art cinema', a vision of film as an art and a means of communication, and a concern with exploring India's social problems. From the nucleus of film enthusiasts which existed after independence, new audiences were cultivated by film festivals, the national awards, and the film society movement. These audiences, primarily consisting of urban, educated middle- and upper class people, are small compared to the commercial cinema's mass audience, but in the Indian context they are potentially large enough to support an alternative cinema, given continued state support. These audiences rejected the excesses of the commercial cinema and were receptive to an Indian 'art cinema', although not to its more avant garde manifestations.

At the same time, in response to state support activities, a new

generation of film makers grew up, along with a small supporting network of critics, journalists, and government officials sympathetic to their work. Just as the commercial cinema and its 'seminal audience' flourish in a symbiotic relationship, which nourishes the vitality of India's national cinema, so the New Cinema is nourished by its 'seminal audience' - of urban elites and the state. As an alternative, oppositional cinema, the New Cinema is, in Solanas' and Gettino's terms, a 'second cinema'. It is part of a process of internal decolonization, to be sure, but it is also quite readily assimilable by the state.³³ In fact, the New Cinema seems to be serving a number of useful functions for the state. It provides an unofficial voice demonstrating the nation's progressive, modern outlook, as well as a metacommunication regarding the nation's democratic liberalism. By allowing a greater degree of critical expression in New Cinema films, the state may also gain the ability to contain critical tendencies within tolerable limits.

Whereas the commercial cinema was an aesthetic and moral embarrassment for both the state and the nation's elites, the New Cinema has become, in effect, a kind of *second* national cinema. It seems to be considered more suitable to represent India internationally, it is aesthetically diverse and vital, and it presents "progressive solutions to urgent problems (from) a modern, humanist perspective", showing a "faith in the ultimate movement of man towards change".³⁴

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- ¹ Madison, October 13, 1981: Wisconsin, U.S.A.
- ² Rizvi, Ahmed and Amladi, Parag R. July 1980: "Is there a New Cinema Movement?", *Cinema Vision India*, Vol 1, No 3, p 13
- ³ Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi 1982: "Indian Cinema - Statistical Digest", *Indian Cinema 1981/82*, pp. 6 - 7
The Indian commercial cinema is discussed here as a single entity, although there is production in 16 languages, with accompanying regional variation. For many years the all-India, Hindi-language cinema has been dominant and much imitated in the 'regional' cinemas. It is no longer numerically dominant. The regional film phenomenon is an important aspect of India's cinema, especially of the New Cinema, that is beyond the scope of this study.
- ⁴ Barnouw, Erik and Krishnaswamy, S. 1980: *Indian Film*, Oxford University Press, New York. pp 177 - 183, 280 - 281
- ⁵ See Bachchan's recent disclaimer in *The Times of India* 30 August 81.
- ⁶ Dermody, Susan. "Second Cinema: First Principles", presented at the Society for Cinema Studies 1982 Conference, p. 29
Dermody was drawing on a position elaborated by John Hinde in *Other Peoples Pictures* (Australian Broadcasting Commission 1981, Sydney). Dermody's description of the classical 'seminal audience' certainly seems to fit India, containing as it does a "sizeable population who have been culturally and economically displaced, needing mediating fictions to

help recover lost or alienated traditions and social equilibrium. This 'seminal audience' is seen as the "source of the 'feedback loop' that nourishes and gives vitality to a national cinema".

- 7 Report of the Working Group on National Film Policy - "Karanth Report" 1980: K.S. Karanth (Chairman), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi. pp 25 - 26, 38ff
Aside from central revenues, the cinema provides a major source of revenue for state governments by way of entertainment tax. About 43% of box office collections go to entertainment taxes, leaving 57% for the exhibitor, distributor, and producer. (p 17)
- 8 Hurley, Joseph Winter 1980: "Satyajit Ray and the Great Indian Dream Machine," *East-West Perspectives* Vol 1 p 22
- 9 The concern of both industry and government with the industry's instability was reflected in the appointment of the first of several post-independence enquiry committees, the "Patil Committee". Although recommendations calling for fundamental changes were not implemented, many of the Committee's recommendations served as the basis for state support and institution-building during the fifties and sixties. See *Report of the Film Enquiry Committee 1951*, S.K. Patil (Chairman), Government of India Press, New Delhi
- 10 "Karanth Report" *op. cit.* pp 16 - 30
- 11 Chidananda Das Gupta, "In Praise of Stuntmen," paper delivered at the Symposium on Parallel Cinema, Fifth International Film Festival of India, 1975, (mimeo.) p 6
- 12 Estimates Committee (1973-74), *Fifty-Eighth Report: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Films - Part I* 1974: Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, p 6
- 13 Meta, Vinod 1981: "The Greatest Show-Biz on Earth" in Uma Da Cunha (ed) *Film India - The New Generation 1960-1980*, Directorate of Film and Festivals, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p 24. See also Estimates Committee *op. cit.* pp 6 - 7, and "Karanth Report" *op. cit.* pp 10, 18
- 14 "Patil Report" *op. cit.* p 1
- 15 The first two descriptions are taken from goals expressed in Estimates Committee *op. cit.* pp 2, 8; the third is from I.K. Gujral, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, in a statement to Parliament, April 30 1969, quoted in *Close-Up* No 5 - 6 (1970) p 37
- 16 Based on analysis of *Annual Reports - Film Finance Corporation Limited*, various years to 1979, Bombay
- 17 "Karanth Report" *op. cit.* p 25
- 18 Committee on Public Undertakings (1975-76), *Seventy-Ninth Report: Film Finance Corporation Limited* 1976: Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, pp 189 - 192

- ¹⁹ Ministry of Information and Broadcasting 1980: *Annual Report 1979/80*, New Delhi, p 35
- ²⁰ Barnouw and Krishnaswamy *op.cit.* pp 256, 258
- ²¹ Interviews - R.K. Karanjia (former Chairman, Film Finance Corporation, Bombay) March 1980; M.S. Sathyu, Bombay, September 1979
- ²² Holloway, Dorothea 1981: "The World Discovers the New Indian Cinema", *Media Development* No 28, p 25
- ²³ "Karanth Report" *op.cit.* p 81
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ Murari, Jagat 1965: "Film Institute of India", *Indian Cinema 1965*, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, pp 77 - 80
- ²⁶ The tiny percentage of women students who are preparing for film careers (in fields other than acting) has started to grow slowly. Demographic information was provided by the research officer, Film and TV Institute of India, personal communication, March 1980
- ²⁷ Sarkar, Kobita (Rita Ray) 1975: *Indian Cinema Today: An Analysis*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, p 15. See also Barnouw and Krishnaswamy *op.cit.* pp 245 - 250
- ²⁸ "Karanth Report" *op.cit.* pp 13 -14. Also Dey, Ajoy Winter 1979: "The Films Society Scene" (sic), *Indian Film Culture*, No 9 p 43
- ²⁹ Interviews - Satyajit Ray, January 1980; Mrinal Sen and Shyam Benegal, March 1980
- ³⁰ "Karanth Report" *op.cit.* p 62
- ³¹ Ministry of Information and Broadcasting: *Regulations: Twenty-Seventh National Film Festival 1980*, Directorate of Film Festivals, New Delhi
- ³² The distinctions between classical narrative cinema and 'art cinema' are analyzed in a special issue of *Film Criticism*, edited by David Bordwell, and specifically in Bordwell's article in that issue, "The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice", *Film Criticism* No 4 (Fall 1979), pp 57 - 63
- ³³ Solanas, Fernando and Gettino, Octavio "Towards a Third Cinema" in Bill Nichols (ed) 1976: *Movies and Methods: An Anthology*, University of California Press, Berkeley
- ³⁴ Raina, Raghunath "Foreword", in Uma Da Cunha (ed) *Film India - The New Generation 1960 - 1980* *op.cit.* p 5