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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION THROUGH PRISON LITERATURE: THE STUDY OF L.K. ADVANI'S "A VIEW FROM BEHIND THE BARS"

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ABSTRACT

Prison writing is an unconventional genre, which reflects the shades of Autobiography and Biography. Generally, writing of any author is largely autobiographical in nature, reflecting his/her beliefs and perceptions. L.K. Advani wrote a diary in Indian Prison during the Emergency (1975-77) that is *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book*. The present paper deals with the first part of *Scrap-Book* that is "A View from behind the Bars" which reflects the personal perceptions of the author and his method of expression. During his imprisonment, he wrote a series of four talks on political developments and the decline of democracy which he delivered within the jail. The paper explores how the four talks of L. K. Advani in "A View from behind the Bars" shows his effective communication through writing and speaking.

Keywords: emergency-diary-prison experiences-four talks -social-political issues-effective communication--writing.

Writing and speaking are expressions of inner voice of human being. People generally express themselves either through speaking or through writing. They however, do not express through writing all the times, which is a more formal way of expression than speaking. This is because the language used for writing is different from the language used for speaking. Meanwhile, the subject matter for writing is different from the subject matter for speaking.

Since the ancient days, people have communicated through writing and speaking. When they do through writing it gives sufficient time to think, consolidate, shape and present them keeping in mind what actually they want to convey. In contrast, it is not possible to speak out at all the times. But in some cases of speaking too, they have the liberty to plan what to express based on with whom they are going to have interaction,

presentations, discussions, debates, lectures, interviews, or talks. They have to be a little extemporaneous. They also cannot take back their words once spoken.

In fact, Communication both in writing and speaking is so rich and varied, that it differs from person to person. The communication of every individual has its own style, words, perceptions, expressions, observations, information, and ideology. But everyone cannot present their experiences before the audience or the readers. The effective communication depends upon the art of presentation if the intended message is to be successfully delivered, received and understood. The oral communication includes not just the way the words are used but also covers several other skills such as, non-verbal communication, ability to understand their own emotions as well as those of

the audience, to listen empathetically and ability to speak assertively.

The written communication represents the process of conveying a message through the written symbols which is always a deliberate action with a clear purpose. The purpose of writing is to communicate ideas, facts, impressions, analysis, synthesis, thesis and conclusions. There are two reasons to write books. First, some people pass their time through writing. Second, they purposefully create awareness on concerned issues among the readers. The writers who wrote books outside the prison mostly concentrated on depicting beauties of nature, moral values and matters of body and soul. They transcended the typical barriers in imagination. In contrast, prison writers wrote mostly of social conflicts arising out of exploitation of man by man. The scholar examines that there is a huge difference between the common writer and the prison writer and between the Prison literature and the common literature of any language or genre.

Prison writing is generally a broad term which includes an account of the social, political, economical, cultural, ideological and spiritual events inside and outside the jail. Prison writers share their experiences in their books that use their thinking.

Prison writing is ultimately the writing that dove in incarceration and includes genres like diaries, memoirs, autobiographies, poetry, pamphlets, notes and letters. Even though the genres of writing are different, there is a unity and consistency of thought among all the writings. During the Emergency from 1975 to 1977, there were many leaders in Indian Prisons.

Many prisoners felt hopelessness, frustrated and isolated during their incarceration. But some prisoners did not feel isolated, because their thoughts are companions, their ideologies are intellectuals, and their dream is the welfare of the people. The prisoners always talk to their inner thoughts and celebrate every minute by sharing their views on issues. They spoke in a multiplicity of voices and wrote in a multiplicity of modes using constitutional amendments, democratic values, human rights and societal transformation to create new vision for the welfare of the people. Basically, the objective of these writings of the source is to

provide motivation to young minds and awareness to intellectuals for taking a purposeful role and involving themselves in the political struggle as responsible citizens so that they could achieve of restoring democracy.

Literary-nonfiction is a type of prose that employs the literary techniques usually associated with different genres to report on persons, places, and events in the real world. The paper deals with the analysis of the events and contents in the Advani's jail diary popularly known as *Scrap-Book* but its *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book*. It was divided into four parts. The part one dealt with "A View from behind the Bars" The second part dealt with "Underground Literature" in which various issues of constitutional and individual rights were discussed. The third part "Letters and Notes" which consists of various letters to underground workers. The fourth part, "Appendices" is a fact file of the case that was framed against opposition leaders.

L.K.Advani's intention was seemingly clear in writing this *Scrap-Book* that was to record the then contemporary history through firsthand account and to pass on the description of the black days and excesses of the Emergency by the powers that be at the centre. He was of the opinion that the popular mandate and greater popular support would not mean that the person in the power had a license to override the constitutional propriety. Dictator would survive by confiscating the fundamental rights of the people who would never be happy and would end it in an abrupt tragedy.

The second part of the diary is "Underground Literature" which appeared serially in five pamphlets of the contemporary social, political, historical, and constitutional issues during the Emergency. These pamphlets were written by Advani in jail and were distributed through the *Lok Sangharsha Samiti*. They were inspired by the necessity to classify the social and political face of India which was enshrouded in the mists of confusion created by Indira Gandhi. The pamphlets constitute a coherent whole having a logical expression and structure. They are enlisting of details regarding the past of India and world. It is an organic whole having a beginning, middle and an end. Advani's builds an edifice before the eyes of

Indians by elucidating democratic ideas in lucid prose style.

Apart from the diary and the pamphlets, Advani had written some letters to the M.P. friends, Rajyasabha Members and friends from jail during the Emergency. These letters discuss what happened then politically and how the situation was looked upon from jail. Advani and other leaders were keeping abreast of the news bulletins of the Emergency and its impact. The news bulletin Akashvani presented the news of arrest of JP and Morarji Desai and other under MISA (Maintenance of Internal Security Act). He mentions here "Following the proclamation of the Emergency, some persons have had to be taken into preventive custody under MISA (*Scrap-Book* 15). According to MISA, the state had the authority to curb individual freedom without showing proofs (except right to constitutional remedies) and stringent Press censorship was imposed.

The paper deals with the first part of *A Prisoner's Scrap-Book "A View from behind the Bars"* covering the period between June 26, 1975 and March 12, 1976 which were written in Bangalore, Rohtak and Ahmedabad jails. During the time, he was invited to speak on the contemporary issues, which helps to create awareness among inmates, and he recorded those talks in the diary. The present paper mainly deals with the four talks of Advani during his incarceration at Bangalore jail. He delivered all the four talks on the contemporary political issues, JP movement and the blue print of political standards. This in two ways, one by giving oral communication through which there could be a closer intimacy with inmates and the second by written communication which keeps a watch on autocratic rule and the contemporary condition. There is a difference between the spoken word and the written word. In contrast to the written text, the delivered lecture is history as soon as a statement is proclaimed.

During the Emergency era, the political prisoners set a few tasks for them to retain a positive spirit. For this they used various tactics, figurative presentations, presentation of reflections, caricatures, satire, literary discourses, mythological and fabulous presentation, and presentation by

editorial and historical reviews. They invited people especially youth to fight against the Emergency by using literary quotations and slogans. So, most of the political prisoners often read news papers especially editorials and books which enabled them to use the information in their writings and speeches.

The prison writers generally focus their writings and speeches on life, liberty and rebellion which make possible social, political and economic freedom. But they had their own space in the dictatorship regimes too. Artfulness and skill play a vital role in prison writing during that time. Prisoners of liberal democracies too face problems just as those in dictatorial countries. They face threats from autocratic governments and politicians. But many leaders had enough artifice to leave their footprints and their literature had remarkable value in the history of India and World.

People are aware of the power of well chosen words, slogans and the impact of **powerful speeches** can be seen all the times. Throughout history of the world, public speaking inspires people like nothing else and many great leaders have managed to leave their mark behind through their oratory. On various occasion, people have also managed to change the way of history itself using the power of words, the role of commitment and the sincerity of activities. When this happens, the speeches have become unforgettable along with the speakers themselves. Most of the times, those speeches have either become songs or poems, or have been turned into inspirational stories. When people talk about politics and its speeches, it has always been an arena for public speaking and it is examined that many great speakers of various fields have managed to shake the entire world with their vision and intellectuality. It is necessary to look at some of the most powerful political speeches ever delivered.

Oliver Cromwell was well known to be a powerful as well as a controversial figure in the history of Britain. His vehement dismissal of the "rump" English Parliament was and still is one of the greatest political speeches that the world has ever heard. Besides that he was also known to be a military leader of the first order.

Jawharlal Nehru, the first Indian Prime Minister of India delivered his famous speech at the stroke of midnight when Indians gained freedom from the British after more than two hundred years. The speech was made immortal with the phrase 'Tryst with destiny' and is still memorizing throughout the world as a display of great public speaking.

Socrates was certainly the greatest and the most well known Greek philosopher of his time and all times. He was known to have great oratory skills and his ideas were of a great influence among the youth. He was charged with corruption and misleading the people and his speech seeking not an apology but the honor of a dignified death is one of the most inspiring incidents in the history of world.

General Charles De Gaulle delivered his speech on English soil only days after fleeing from France post the Nazi occupation of Paris. His heart touching appeal to the people of France not to lose hope and to rise up against the tyranny is considered to be one of the greatest speeches in history. The speeches were printed and circulated throughout France and the speech is fixed on many monuments across France even today.

Winston Churchill was one of the most gifted public speakers of his time. He has delivered many speeches to the English people and more so to the House of Commons. One of his speeches sought to rouse his countrymen to rise up and face the struggles that were at hand during Second World War

In what is known as the Gettysburg Address, the President of United States of America, Abraham Lincoln addressed the nation with regards to the civil war seeking the support of the people to put an end to the unrest. Lincoln had delivered many great speeches and his speeches became the most powerful political instruments ever.

Mahatma Gandhi's speech was to rouse the upper class of people in the country who were the dominant force in the freedom movement against the British. Citing the submissive nature of the struggle and the slack displayed by the ones responsible, his speech sought to bring the common Indian man into the struggle.

Nelson Mandela was a champion of the South African struggle against white domination and he was imprisoned for many years without reason. He delivered the speech at his trial and it is known to be one of the greatest speeches that no one has ever heard or delivered for that matter.

Martin Luther King Jr was in bringing about racial equality for the African American people. His speech which begins with the words I have a dream is one of the most well known speeches in history. The speech has changed the course of the history of American and was the nail in the coffin of racism in the United States of America. These remarkable speeches are noticed not only in the field of politics, but also in the field of education, science and technology and so on.

Similarly, Michael Faraday was an English scientist could actually obtain a job by attending a lecture. In 1812, at the end of his apprenticeship Faraday was presented tickets to attend four lectures to be delivered by the eminent professor of chemistry, Humphry Davy and John Tatum, founder of the City Philosophical Society, at the Royal Institution, by William Dance. Faraday, in an attempt to thank Davy, sent him a three-hundred pages book which contained notes taken during the lecture. Later, Faraday bagged a temporary job as a secretary to Davy, when the latter damaged his eyesight in an accident. In March 1813, Davy appointed Faraday as Chemical Assistant at the Royal Institution. It is understood that how lectures play an important role in the life of people. Here, Advani attains the power to motivate his inmates to do something, stop doing something, or reach their objective. He was able to excite and enliven his co prisoners with his series of political speeches.

Advani conveyed his first talk on April 5, 1976 on the period commencing February 1966 when Indira Gandhi was inducted in to the office of the Prime Minister and the end of 1973. The second talk on April 6, 1976 covers the years 1974 and 1975 up to the proclamation of the Emergency on June 25, 1975. He also analyzed at some length the implications of JP movement in Bihar, the Janata Morch in Gujarat and the Allahabad High Court judgment in Indira Gandhi's case. The third talk on April 7, 1976 is focused on the issues of legal and

political implications of the proclamation of Emergency and the steps taken thereafter to destroy democracy in India. The last talk delivered on April 8, 1976 attempted to deal with the possibilities for the future. He chalked out an ultimate strategy for the future of the political journey and of the development of the country. He also highlighted the importance of unity and the stamina for fighting against authoritarian rule.

On April 5, Advani started a series of talks on political developments during the Emergency. The first lecture was on the period when Indira Gandhi became the as Prime Minister of India. It also tells a broad overview of the misuse of the Constitutionality.

I deal with the period commencing from February 1966 with the induction of Indira Gandhi into the office of Prime Minister to the end of 1973 when mounting discontent among all sections of the people erupted sharply in the form of a student agitation in Gujarat. It is during this period that Indira Gandhi engineered the split in the Congress party for purely personal reasons, but succeeded in covering it up by an ideological veil. The abuse of governmental machinery and mass media for party ends that took place in the 1971 elections brought about a qualitative change in political style and functioning. It was during this period that serious erosion of democratic values and norms really began (*Scrap-Book* 120).

Advani discusses the past, present and future of India. According to Advani during the 1971 elections, the governmental policies and agenda reached a new height in the demoralizing and abusing governmental machinery and mass media in favor of the government. With this there was a wide spread erosion of democratic values in the country. The talk encourages critical thought, challenging opinions and changing the contemporary political condition of India.

On April 6, in his second talk, Advani dealt with the developments between 1974 and 1975. The talk takes a look at the JP movement and the situation that necessitated the proclamation of the

Emergency on June 25, 1975. Further maintained that the government had debilitated the democratic system considerably and considers how to respond the changes of strategies.

I dealt with the years 1974 and 1975 up to the proclamation of the Emergency on June 25, 1975. I tried to analyze at some length the implications of the J.P movement in Bihar, the formation of the Janata Morcha in Gujarat and of the Allahabad High Court judgment in Indira Gandhi's case. The J.P movement and the coming together of opposition parties had no doubt a very invigorating effect on the debilitated democratic institutions in the country. The victory of the Janata Morcha in Gujarat coming simultaneously as it did with the Allahabad verdict became a clear threat to the political future of Indira Gandhi (*Scrap-Book* 120).

Advani goes the roots of the Emergency and dwells on how it has developed over time, how students agitated against the government and how public perceived the Emergency. When, how and why did the Emergency become such a controversial topic in India? The government proclaimed the Emergency to counter the effect of JP movement on youth and to nullify Allahabad High Court judgment against Indira Gandhi. As a result, the democratic system was weekend and Janata Morcha party emerged as stronger alternative to the Congress party. It has emerged as a good political force in Gujarat. The talk can be used to give broad contextual information, to highlight the important aspects of the public demands and to discuss the nature of conflicts.

On April 7, in his third talk, Advani tried to analyze the legal and political implications of the Emergency. As matter of fact, the proclamation of the Emergency was not at all justified either practically or legally.

I tried to analyze the legal as well as the political implications of the proclamation of Emergency and the steps taken thereafter to destroy democracy in the country altogether even while preserving the trappings of democracy. There was a disturbing similarity between the steps

taken by Indira Gandhi during this period and the steps taken by Adolf Hitler to convert Republican Germany into a dictatorship (*Scrap-Book* 120).

Advani shows the difference between constitutional and unconstitutional rules. By proclamation of the Emergency, the government tried to destroy the basic institution of the government. There is a similarity between Indira Gandhi who destroyed democracy to pave the way for dictatorship and Adolf Hittler who converted Republican Germany into dictatorship. These lectures are an effective means of encouraging public learning and stimulate motivation and creating interest, which lead to deep understanding levels.

On April 8, Advani's last talk concentrated more on the future of India and political parties. It explores the history of the Emergency and addresses the ways in which the flourishing of new media is transforming political views through jail. He also explains why contemporary political ambiance looks a lot like the pre-independent India. The talk reflects on the nature of political campaigns, the serious role of the leaders of opposition, and the agitations of the activists and people. The talk also tells about the relative strengths of two sides of political controversy.

I attempt to deal with the possibilities for the future. Despite reports of hesitation among some colleagues outside, a unified political party of the democratic opposition would certainly come about. But in the ultimate analysis, the future would depend not only upon the unity but also upon the stamina of those waging a battle against authoritarianism (*Scrap-Book* 121).

The last lecture visualizes the vital role India may play in the coming years in confronting changes. Advani deals with the idea that in present situations unified political force was sign-qua-non for the revival of the democracy. He was of the opinion that the future of the democracy of India would depend upon not only the unity of the political parties but also on the stamina of the parties in waging a war against authoritarian rule. Advani explains what people really need to know to understand this drastic condition. He succeeds not only in making

the best use of his time for oral presentation but also in presenting his thoughts and reflections in his diary for future record.

In that way these writings make a niche in the genre of prison literature and the diary writing. It is examined that his art of writing replete with metaphors, satire and irony can be considered as an effective communication.

The main theme in the paper of the four talks is critical analysis of contemporary political crisis and moral degradation of some leaders through speech and writing during the Emergency in India. The direct impact of the people's suffering on the prisoners was an important aspect that shaped the various interactions in prison during their captivity. In the writings, one can see the constant questioning of misuse of constitutionality.

The paper analyzed four lectures given by Advani in his incarceration to the inmates in the Emergency. The speeches of the prisoner reflect on critical issues of political-economic conditions of the country. Connecting with inmates can be a great reminder that people have valuable insights and opinions to share with the world. The communication can unite people and bring about great change both positive and negative. The process of writing a speech exercised and strengthened his critical thinking during the incarceration. When lectures were presented in the written form they communicate to future generation from what dire conditions India was saved and restored.

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