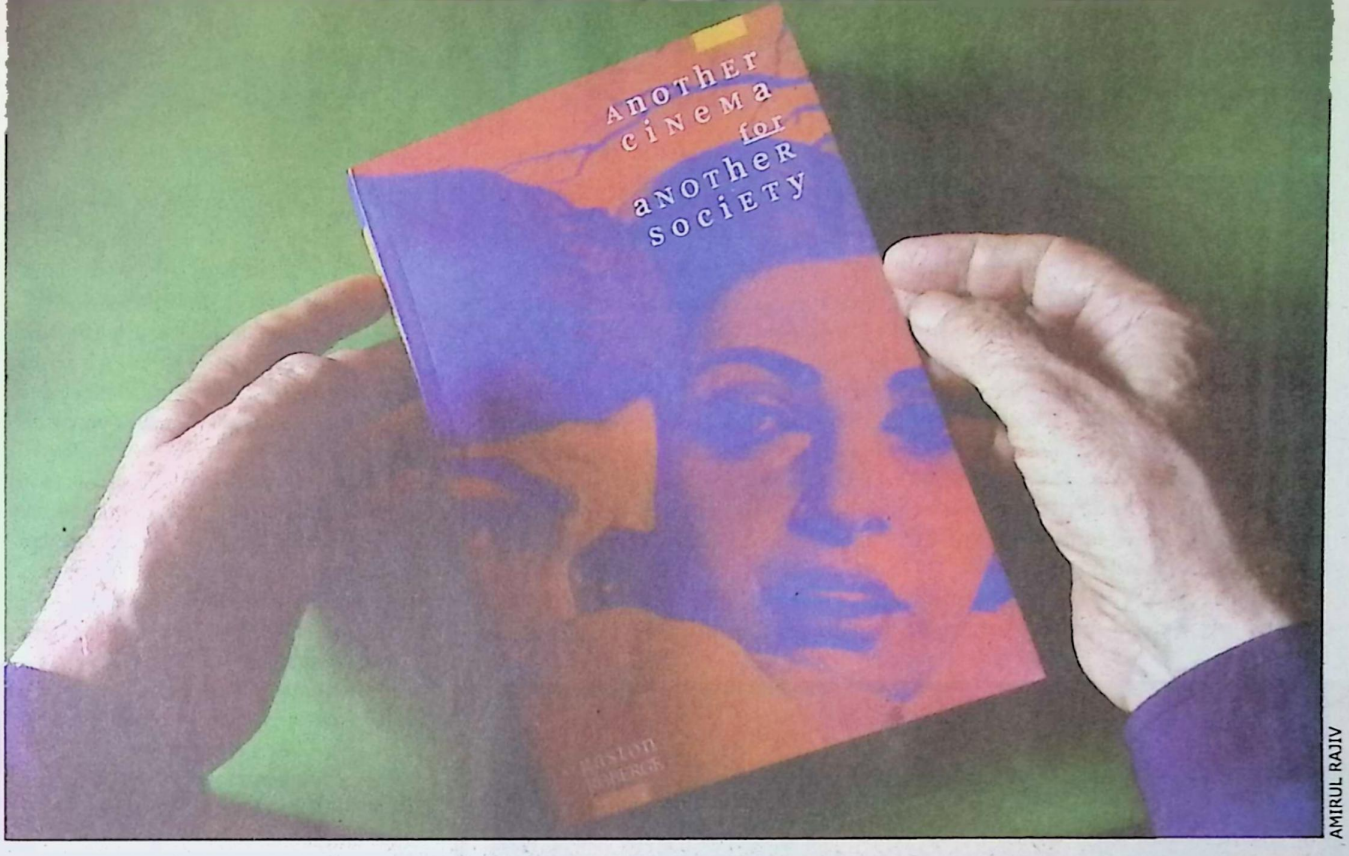


AMIRUL RAJIV

I take an unbalanced view to tackle the negative aspect, well aware that there is a positive aspect.

What you want to mean by the term "media-oppressed" in your writing?

Well, the "balanced view" of the world is that now all the nations have more or less achieved independence, there are no empires any more. But some of us are waking up to the fact that there have never been so powerful empires as to date and the empires are difficult to locate, they are transnational -- beyond national limits. The power is partly military, partly economic and partly legal. Power used to be exercised through administration, as in that of the British Empire in India, in Bangladesh. No more. Now they control the minds of the people directly by means of the media. If you control the media then you control the news that reaches the people.

This is one of the, I would say, problems of our time -- we do not know if we know what we should know. However, something new has happened, what you might call, parallel news broadcast through the Internet. While on the one hand the elite who control the media can to an extent control the knowledge that we have, we have now for the first time in human history, the means to resist false information. But it's not so easy; a lot more has to be done to educate our people as to the possibility of resisting and the duty of doing so. If we want to be free, we have to fight for it without hatred, quietly but efficiently.

For instance, when George W. Bush declared war on Iraq, in a few hours, they say they say that over 10 million people worldwide went to the streets to protest. Ten million people, it is incredible. Of course they did not stop the war, but they can never say that they were not told. The very weapon -- if I may say that -- used by the power can be used against the power. If they can use the media, the people also can use the parallel media through the Internet.

The media environment has been structured in such a way that it divides people into those few who do/act and those many who watch/consume. How much space can the new media environment make for resistance to the present order?

The source of the power of the ruling class is also the source of their weakness: through the very technologies that make some of us so powerful, all humans can work out their own liberation. And freedom is first of the mind. The communication media that can spread worldwide the lies, slogans, allurements of the empire of mind can also spread instantaneously around the world true information and calls to mobilisation.

Self-education for liberation is an attempt to regain the freedom of mind. You can regain your freedom of mind any day you want. You are only to want it and do a little effort. Only those who are free can bring freedom to the world.

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