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PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION IN MODERNIZATION OF RURAL SOCIETY

A Survey Report on Two Burmese Villages


by

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PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION IN MODERNIZATION OF RURAL SOCIETY:

A Survey Report on Two Burmese Villages

by

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This paper is one of a series to be presented by the Department of Research of the Institute of Economics which has undertaken to carry out a research project studying various aspects of modernization of Burmese rural society. It relates to aspects of communication and development in the two Burmese villages of Thayagone and Thitchopin which have been studied by the department in 1970, prior to its launching a comprehensive survey covering sixty villages in upper and lower Burma. These two villages were chosen because these villages, having been previously studied by the Economic Research Project of Rangoon University in 1950, offered a unique example depicting the process of change likely to have taken place in the last fourteen years.

We attempt here to describe processes and patterns of communication in the villages and evaluate the significance of these processes and patterns in the process of social change taking place in these communities. Conclusions derived from the study of these two villages should be considered tentative since the research on these two villages was intended as an exploratory study and consequently, findings from these two villages need to be interpreted in the light of more extensive data forthcoming from the comprehensive survey. However, because these villages were more frequently visited due to their proximity to Rangoon, and the opportunities the researchers had to observe and investigate social processes in these villages over a prolonged period of time, the data collected from this exploratory study is considered significant by itself so as to warrant the report of the findings in a separate paper.

Problem and Approach

The importance of the study of communication in rural society stems not only from the fact that communication is an essential process in any on-going social group, but also from the knowledge that it serves as a means by which social change in village society.

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is brought about. Communication is defined here as "a procedure or system by which an individual or a group transmits stimuli which solicit the response of, or modify the behaviour of, another individual or group." No social group can function and endure without the process of communication, and only through it, can social intercourse among members of the group take place and activities of the group be co-ordinated and directed.

Communication is pervasive in all interactions of human groups, whether these be formal and goal-oriented or informal and without conscious purpose. Patterns and processes of communication in any social grouping, however, will vary according to the purpose each group sets out to accomplish, the functions each needs to perform, the technical and social arrangement each utilizes, and the environment within which each operates. In other words, any pattern of communication that emerges in any social group reflects the very scheme of interactions existing in that group; the system of communication, in fact, can be considered as the other side of social structure itself.

Modernization, the broader problem to which the present enquiry is addressed, is generally understood as a transformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated social organization that characterize the industrially advanced nations; more specifically, it is a process of uplifting a society with backward technology and economic institutions, simple and diffuse social relations, and traditional values to a new stage in which modern technology and appropriate economic institutions, more differentiated social relations, and more rational values prevail. In the context of rural society, modernization is the changing of a self-sufficient peasant economy into a technologically advanced farming society with capacity to generate self-sustained economic growth: that is, the village economy, highly monetized, technically advanced, market-oriented, structurally differentiated, and with enough accumulated resources to grow on its own.² However, traditionalism and modernism can be taken as extreme points of the continuum with many subtypes of varying intensity of modernity in between. Villages on their path to modernism will be undergoing or adjusting themselves to changes in various aspects of social arrangement such as in values, institutions, and organizations, and patterns of their adjustments and accommodations to change will vary according to the nature of their traditional social relations, their level of development, and the types of forces impinging on them.

1 Wilbert E. Moore, Social Change, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1963), p.89.

2 Manning Nash, Primitive and Peasant Economic Systems, (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1966).

The purpose of this paper is to explore the functioning of communication in the process of change in two Burmese villages assumed to be passing through varying phases of change.

Theoretically, communication serves two important functions in the process of change: one as a prerequisite for planned or unplanned changes in other facets of social system to take effect, and another as an independent factor by itself initiating change. Without going into the chicken and the egg problem of which comes first, that is, communication or other social pre-conditions such as entrepreneurship, in the process of change, we could easily agree that, just as certain economic or social arrangements are necessary before the introduction of extensive changes in communication, certain minimal communication should exist for important changes in other areas to take place;¹ before farmers could use improved seeds and fertilizers, they must first be informed that these things are available and also be convinced that these new techniques work; before farmers could avail themselves of opportunities offered by expanded markets, they must be informed that such opportunities exist. And for a market economy to take root in rural society, there must be a net work of communication facilitating the exchange process. In other words, communication at least performs the function of providing information necessary for social innovation or change to take place.

The important role of communication as a primary agent of change is well illustrated in research works done in other developing countries.² While modernization is often equated with technological improvement, the fact that this change in techniques must be preceded, or at least should be supported by the fundamental changes in values and attitudes of individuals is often overlooked. The change in values and attitudes is again largely a function of a socialization process including education, exposure to mass media, and contact with other changing social systems such as urban centres. Here again, mass media and other communication processes promise great potential as promoters of change, not only because techniques of mass media, unlike the educational process whose impact could be felt only after a generation, is a fast acting agent in imparting the knowledge of new technology and inculcating modern values, but also because it is a means by which the widest possible audience could be reached at a given cost. It is well recognized that modern mass media such as radio, television, press and movies expose individuals to the whole new experience or conditions of life possible or conceivable under different situations: that is, individuals will be informed of material things to come, better methods of doing things, and the life and work of other people. Intended or unintended, this new experience disseminated by mass media invariably, though imperceptibly at times, evokes new wants and desires,

1 Wilburt Schram, "Communication Development and the Development Process", Communication & Political Development, ed. Lucian W. Fye, (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1963), p.35.

2 Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society, Glencoe: Free Press, 1958, Y.V. Lakshmana Rao, Communication & Development, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966).

and broadens the individual's horizon in looking either at life around him or at life in general.

Lerner has postulated that transitional or modern man is the one capable of imagining himself in other people's shoes or thinking in terms of varied situations.¹ This quality, which he called empathy, is considered indispensable for people if they are to move out of traditional settings. Inkeles's conception about modernization of man is a parallel formulation defining the characteristics essential for individuals to operate effectively in a modern industrial society.² Posited as important attributes of a modern man are readiness for new experience and openness to innovation, capacity to hold a wide range of opinions or ability to imagine varied roles, emphasis on the present or the future, ability to think in terms of a long term objective, and confidence in the calculability of the environment. Though we could not be certain of the relative significance of each of these attributes in affecting the process of change, we could at least cautiously surmise that these attributes as a group form a set of traits, the accommodation of which will better prepare individuals to facilitate and handle effectively the process of change.

Modern mass media, though not a sole determinant of all these attributes, could greatly facilitate the individual's learning of appropriate attitudes or acquiring skills necessary for handling the change process. At minimum, mass media can provide information useful for adapting new technology. Knowledge about new ways of life or methods of doing things differently will widen the individual capacity to empathize. Though the changing of attitudes by mass media alone is an uncertain process, it could be accepted that the whole complex of mass media, properly arranged and operated, could very well trigger off the process of transforming traditional man to a transitional one.

Along the theoretical lines already discussed, we plan to investigate two areas considered to be essential for understanding the functioning of the communication process in modernization of rural society. We wish firstly to unearth the existing patterns of communication and secondly to appraise the adequacy or effectiveness of the existing arrangements in facilitating the change process. Since the present scheme of the communication results from the interplay of traditional processes, the existing socio-economic structure, the influence of external forces, ^{and} the dynamics of communication in relation to these factors must be studied.

1 Lerner, *Ibid.*, pp. 47-54.

2 Alex Inkeles, "The Modernization of Man", *Modernization*, ed., Myron Weiner, (New York: Basic Books, 1966), pp. 138-150.

To evaluate the effectiveness of various communication processes from the point of view of whether these provide information necessary for understanding and appreciating intended changes, we utilized a number of questions which test the level of information, graded from local to international affairs, as imbibed by adult population of the village. The functioning of communication as a primary promoter of change, especially in the area of changing attitudes and values, is studied with the use of instruments measuring motivation and empathy of the villagers.

Scores on these instruments, both the indices of attitudes and information by adult villagers are crosstabulated against various types of communication media and socio-economic factors. This analysis, however, needs to be interpreted in terms of dynamics of change taking place in two communities. In considering whether the existing arrangements conform to a certain level of efficacy minimal for the social system to accommodate changes, we do not have any one definite set of standards to refer to. Contrasting and comparing the processes existing in two villages will be fruitful though these two villages do not conform to the classic experimental type of control and experimental groups, and they may not differ in any appreciable degree in some important characteristics. It is, therefore, inevitable that we shall be making value judgements about what should be the appropriate scheme of communication in terms of existing situations. The formulation of what is appropriate, in turn, will be derived from what is theoretically meaningful or what could be learnt from other studies.

The Setting

The village of Thayagone is situated on the side of one of the railroad tracks branching out from Rangoon to up-country towns. The length of the village runs perpendicular to the rail tracks, and the other end of the village adjoins a dirt road connecting a suburban town of Rangoon with a large village three miles away. Although the village is only three miles from the outskirts of Rangoon, communication between the village and the town is rather poor. There is an old rickety bus, converted from a surplus army truck after the Second World War, plying between the village at the other end of the road and the suburban town. During the rainy season the bus services stop because the road becomes very muddy. Two trains running from Rangoon to other towns stop at the village, but there is no building or structure to house the waiting passengers. A man from the village comes out and sells tickets to the passengers and is paid a commission on the sale proceeds by the railroad. The layout of the village is as typical as any other village in Burma. Houses, mostly wooden structures with thatched roofs are spread on both sides of a creek, no longer servicable for boats. The village

has 148 households out of which 83 households are listed as agriculturists, 40 as industrial labour, 31 as agricultural labour and 30 as other types of labour. Though the village had a fairly prosperous weaving industry in the fifties, the weaving industry is no longer in existence because of non-availability of cotton yarn and other raw materials. So, the economy of the village depends almost entirely on paddy farming. The village has 1,008 acres of paddy land and the average size of a paddy farm is 11.85 acres. The increasing number of population living on the fixed cultivable area has diminished the size of the farm from 14.6 in 1954 to the present size in 1970. Since this village is near to Rangoon, truck farming poses a possibility for a second crop. However, the village land does not retain sufficient water for the second crop. The village itself is short of water for drinking and household use during the summer months and has to depend on a few ponds located at the end of the village.

Like in any other village the political structure of the village consists of the rural security and administrative committee, the peasant council and the land committee. The village security and administrative committee is headed by a 60-year-old-man related to the deceased headman. An ex-army sergeant who was politically active during the previous governments is the leader of the peasant council while the land committee is presided over by a retired railroad worker now settling as farmer in the village. While the man heading the administrative committee belongs to the old family which used to wield power in the village, the other two men are younger and more progressive. Though there is calmness on the surface and outward amicability between them, there seems to exist a tussle for power between the old and the new leadership. Villagers, however, accommodate both the parties and stand apart from the power struggle.

In contrast to the village of Thayagone, the village of Thitchopin is located on one of the two main highways spreading out of Rangoon towards upper Burma. Close to the village is a small town, the township headquarters and the village itself is about 30 miles away from Rangoon. Since there are buses and trucks coming to and from Rangoon all day long, the village has an easy access to Rangoon. This village, a definitely much larger village than Thayagone, has 618 households and a population of 2,281. The main occupation of the village is paddy farming, but a substantial number of households, 147 out of the total of 600, is engaged in other occupations. The average size of the paddy farm in 1956 was about 20 acres, but has decreased to 10 acres since the number of cultivating paddy farmers has also increased from 180 in 1956 to 225 in 1970. This indicates that there exists the same pressure of increasing population on a limited land area

as in the other village. This village, however, has two important economic advantages over the other; it is conveniently situated on the highway and also possesses about 180 acres of garden land. As a result, truck farming is a thriving occupation in the village and a number of new occupations as truck drivers, trishaw men, and bazaar hawkers are open to its residents; whereas in the other village, the only other important occupation available to the villagers besides farming is working as semi-skilled labourers in factories around the suburban Rangoon areas. In addition, there exists in the second village a number of residents economically far above the average family: these include bus owners, truck owners, and shopkeepers of the village. Our first impression of the economies of the two villages is that Thitchopin not only has more potential but is also economically better off even at present.

Another interesting aspect of Thitchopin village is that its population includes two groups of racial minorities besides the Burmese Buddhist community which forms the majority. There are 190 Burmese Moslem and 80 Karen households. Burmese Moslems are occupationally differentiated from the Burmese majority; they work mostly as fishermen or poultry farmers while Burmans specialize in farming occupations.

*The political structure of the village, is therefore more complicated than in Thayagone, reflecting the more varied nature of its social system. The head of the village administrative committee is in a feud with the head of the peasant council who was recently dismissed from his other post as the president of the village co-operative society over the alleged misuse of co-operative funds. Burmese Moslems form a cohesive social group, and the more prosperous members of the village live almost aloof from the rest of the community.

Dynamics of Change

In the past fourteen years the internal economic conditions in Thayagone village have improved very little; while the population of the village, especially in the age group between 10 and 20 years, has increased appreciably, the mono-crop economy of the village remains, resulting in an increasing pressure on the limited land available. There is no appreciable improvement in the economic conditions of rice farmers in spite of the fact that the government has provided greatly expanded credit facilities from 6,550 kyats in loans to village farmers in 1956 to 34,230 kyats in 1968. The reasons for the static conditions in paddy farming are to be sought in the low fertility of the land, non-availability of water for a second crop, and poor transport facilities. But to this challenge, some villagers have responded in a positive fashion while many

others have sought their salvation outside the village: that is, a few villagers have ventured into a new and prosperous business, namely dairy farming, while most young men of the village have taken jobs as labourers in industrial establishments in the nearby urban centre. In addition, the weaving industry of the village, a thriving business in the fifties, is almost extinct now as the village weavers could not obtain raw materials upon the failure of the village industrial co-operative.

The village of Thitchopin is rather fortunate in this respect. Not only has it enjoyed more varied types and larger areas of land space, but also its easy accessibility and being situated on the trunk road enable its residents to venture into such new businesses as truck farming, bazaar peddling in the town, and operating lorries and passenger buses in the case of the more wealthy residents. Truck farming has greatly expanded in the village and at present 75 households, compared with 26 households in 1954, are engaged in this occupation. In 1956, the majority of these farmers grow sweet potatoes in a traditional fashion, but today truck farmers have learnt to grow new vegetable crops and also to use fertilizers. The number of truck and bus owners also has increased from 5 in 1956 to 9 in 1970 and their prosperity also has increased substantially. Their technical know-how has also progressed, and they now operate diesel-engine trucks.

In spite of this seeming well-being, we should not place this village far above an average village nor consider this village to be in a take-off stage. Table I gives the comparative economic performance of various occupations in two villages. In paddy farming, the average farm income in the village of Thitchopin is slightly higher than that of Thayagone, K.593.76 against K.502.55. Per acre average income, however, is higher in Thayagone. This is because the average size of the farm is higher in Thitchopin, while the productivity per farm is higher in Thayagone.

We have already observed that many younger members of the families in Thayagone are working now in various industrial establishments as labourers and semi-skilled workers, earning as high an average income per person as K.1,500 per year. Consequently, per family income of the average farmers in Thayagone is raised to a level considerably higher than that of farmers in Thitchopin. In the case of truck farming, per family income of an average farm amounts to K.484. Though truck farming is a fairly prosperous business, because of the smallness of the farm size (i.e. 1.9 acre per farm), those depending totally on this occupation are not as well off as might be expected. Motor vehicle owners in the village of Thitchopin, in fact, are an economic elite of the village; their income per family is about K.7,600-K.8,700 per year, more than ten times higher than that of an average farming family in the village.

The expansion of this business may add new job opportunities such as working as drivers but the great majority of the villages are

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Table I

Comparative Economic Performance of Various Occupations

	Paddy Farming		Paddy & Truck Farming Thitchopin	Truck Farming only Thitchopin	Motor Vehicle Owners' Income Thitchopin	Side Car Owners Income Thitchopin	Paddy Farming & Vehicle Owners' Income Thitchopin	Industrial Labourers' Income Thayagone	Agri. Labourers' Income		Dairy Farming Thayagone
	Thayagone	Thitchopin							Thayagone	Thitchopin	
1. Average farm size (acre)	10.20	23.13	15.00	1.90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Average farm income	502.55	593.76	620.25	320.83	-	-	-	-	-	-	4701-75
3. Per acre income	48.68	29.49	41.35	161.76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Per working person income	387.68	273.68	338.46	353.13	-	-	-	1245.38	-	-	3134.50
5. Per family income	781.94	552.50	620.25	484.06	7642	639	8751.81	1477.37	336.92	547.24	4701-75

The expansion of this business may add new job opportunities such as working as drivers but the great majority of the villages are still engaged in the farming occupations with diminishing returns.

All these facts suggest that though there is an improvement in economic conditions of both the villages, this economic progress is derived not from the addition or improvement of village-based occupations but from taking up new occupations unconnected with the mainstay or the potentials of the village economy itself. An increase in the number of villagers working outside the village as industrial labourers may improve the earnings of their families, but this will not alter the depressed state of paddy farming in Thayagone unless, of course, savings from new occupations are re-invested in new ventures such as dairy farming. But a more likely case is that these workers, used to working in secured occupations as wage earners and becoming urbanized in both outlook and tastes, are not likely to go back to more risky and demanding occupations like dairy farming.

While changes in the economic conditions of these two villages are rather slow or not easily noticeable, progress in the social sector is clearly visible. Table II indicates the indices of change in the two villages. One of the striking achievements of the social revolution is the improvement in an overall rate of

Table II

Indices of Social Change

	<u>Tnayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
1. Per cent of population between the age of 18 and above literate	93.5	75
2. Those in schools as per cent of those in school going age	64.0	53
3. No. of high school graduates	1.0	4
4. Per cent of households in non-farm occupations	33.15	14.6

literacy in both villages: in 1954, 73 and 60 per cent of those above the school going age were literate in Tnayagone and Thitchopin respectively whereas the percentage of literacy in 1970 has risen to 93.5 and 75 per cent respectively in both

villages. The percentages of children in school among those of school going age are also comparable in the two villages. Since the national average for this type of data is not available, we could not judge the relative advancement of the two villages in this field in comparison with other villages. The access of village children to higher education is still limited: so far, there exists only one high school graduate in Thayagone and four in the case of Thitchopin.

The percentage of households in non-farming occupations is higher in Thayagone than in Thitchopin, thus indicating the relatively higher occupational differentiation in Thayagone owing to the accessibility of urban industrial occupations to the villagers.

Table III is another useful indicator highlighting some improvement in the area of the acceptance of technology in the two villages. In both villages, there seems to be a fairly large percentage of farmers using fertilizers and pesticides. However, in line with our earlier discussion on the economic structure, there is still much improvement to be desired in the areas of second cropping, use of water pumps, use of improved seeds and tractors and adaptation of other modern methods of farming. From our discussions with the villagers, we even suspect that the use of fertilizers, though prevalent, is not directed towards the end for which these are distributed, that is, for I.R. 5 or 8 cultivation. To break through the present depressed conditions of farming, a radical change in the patterns and methods of farming will be necessary.

One of the favourable conditions of social life in the Burmese villages is the absence of such a rigid and crippling social practice as the caste system in India. Neither religion nor social mores restricts anyone to go into any honest occupation so long as it conforms to the religious principle. Individualism in pursuit of economic gain or of pleasure is highly valued. While the former characteristic is favourable for economic change, the latter, that is, individualism, coupled with contentment in life as inculcated by Buddhism, probably inhibits the emergence of social organizations at the village level. These social organizations, however, are necessary for the village society since only through such a mechanism can communication between town and country be mediated, economic exchanges be effectively organized, and political demands be articulated and coordinated.

The hypothesis that the villages lack this mechanism is substantiated again by our observation in these two villages. In both villages there is no social organization internally generated or initiated. Co-operatives societies are there, but formed out

of necessity to buy goods from the state distribution system. These societies in both villages are fraught with irregularities and misuse of funds. The control of this society is the bone of contention which further divides the village into factions.

Table III

Indices of Technical Adoption

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopia</u>
1. Percentage of farmers growing I.R.(5) or (8) rice	11.1	7.14
2. Percentage of farmers adopting line transplanting	-	14.70
3. Percentage of farmers using fertilizer	55.5	35.70
4. Percentage of farmers using fertilizer for second crops	-	-
5. Percentage of farmers using improved seeds	11.1	28.56
6. Percentage of farmers using pesticides on crops attacked by pests	55.5	28.56
7. Percentage of farmers using irrigation	-	7.14
8. Percentage of farmers using the services of tractor	22.2	14.28
9. Percentage of farmers using modern plough	-	35.70
10. Percentage of farmers using pumps	-	-
11. Percentage of farmers using weeding machine	22.2	7.14
12. Percentage of farmers growing planned crops	11.1	-
13. Percentage of farmers growing second crops	-	-

It was also witnessed in these two villages that the traditional system of village authority is no longer operative; the influence of the monks is dwindling rapidly and the village headman is no longer accepted as the natural leader. To our questions as to whether the respondents have ever consulted the monks in connection with personal and social problems, an overwhelming large majority of respondents replied that they have never done so. We asked in one of the questions who is the most influential person in the village. The majority mentioned the head of the Village Security and Administrative Committee as the most influential. But indications are that other persons in the villages, better informed, younger, and politically oriented, are challenging the village leadership. In addition, the division in the village is so extensive that various factions exist, holding their allegiance to various groups on the basis of monasteries attended, the residence or the blood relations that tie them.

Patterns of Communication

We have discussed above the changes in the economic, social and technological conditions of the two villages. We now proceed to an evaluation of the relation between exposure to various mass media and the level of information and of empathic capacity, thus acquired by the respondents.

On account of their proximity to the city, both villages indicate high exposure to urban centres. In both villages a fairly large number of residents visit the nearby towns on business, for purchasing the necessities at the bazaar, or for social and religious purposes. Table IV indicates the frequency of visits made by the respondents during a month. In both villages, the percentage distribution of those who had never visited the nearest town, those who visit occasionally and those who visit frequently is comparable. It is also known from the data that 88 per cent of the residence of Thitchopin and 90 per cent of those of Thayagone have visited Rangoon and other large towns.

Table IV

Frequency of visits to the nearest town

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
1. Never visited	17	16
2. Sometimes	52	38
3. Frequently	21	46
4. Non-response	10	-
Per cent	100	100
Numbers	107	100

We have already discussed the importance of modern mass media in both providing information required for technical adaptation and also creating a mechanism for transformation of a peasant society to a market economy. Penetrating the rural areas are such modern mass media as radio, press, and movies among which the radio is the most important and pervasive because of its daily contact with a wide audience. Thayagone and Thitchopin both have 20 and 25 radio sets respectively, having the average, per radio, of 91 and 41 persons respectively. This ratio of radio ownership is not only comparable to the ownership in other developing countries but also could be quite sufficient as a medium of information since radio owners usually play their radio loudly, and neighbours can hear it easily.

Table V shows the number of radio listeners among which there exists almost the same percentage of listeners against non-listeners among the respondents in both villages. However, in terms of what respondents listen to as shown in Table VI, there are some variations between the two villages: while 19 per cent of Thitchopin respondents listen to traditional opera (zat), orchestra (saing) and dance songs (anyein), only 9 per cent of Thayagone respondents listen to the same, and respondents in Thayagone rather show a stronger preference for modern music.

Table V

Listening to the radio

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
1. Yes	61	63
2. No	37	37
3. Non-response	2	-
Percent	100	100
Numbers	107	100

This probably suggests that traditional operas and orchestras still wield a hold on villager's interest though some, probably more urbanized as in the case of Thayagone, are shifting their preference to modern music. According to the same table, news-casts and speeches are listened to by a much smaller percentage of respondents, and a fairly large percentage of respondents, 39 per cent, does not have any answer to the question. It could be surmised on the whole that radio, even when listened to, serves mostly as a form of entertainment rather than as an educational medium.

Table VI

What is most listened to in the programme

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
1. Modern Songs	29	22
2. Burmese Orchestral Music	9	19
3. News and announcements	10	10
4. Speeches	5	2
5. Any programme	4	9
6. Football	3	1
7. Religious sermons	1	0
8. Do not listen	39	37
Percent	100	100
Numbers	107	100

Table VII adds further information on the preference of the listeners, taken from the question of whether respondents listen to the rural educational programme of the Burma Broadcasting Service. Woefully, only a very small percentage of respondents answers in the affirmative. Another interesting fact, likely to be important in interpretation of the effectiveness of the radio programme as mass media, is that 84 per cent of respondents in Thayagone and 73 per cent in Thitchopin say that they do not discuss with anyone what they have listened to from the radio. This is shown in Table VIII.

Table VII

Respondents who listen to the rural educational programme of the B.B.S. (in per cent)

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
Listen	11	4
Do not listen	83	77
No response	6	19
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

Table VIII

Discussion with others on what the respondent has
heard in the radio (in per cent)

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
Discuss	16	17
Do not discuss	84	73
Non-response	-	10
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

The newspaper readership is much more selective and limited: it is shown that only a fraction of respondents, 3 per cent of respondents in both villages replies that they have regularly bought newspapers, and in Table IX it is indicated that 36 per cent of respondents in Thayagone and 35 per cent of respondents in Thitchopin say that they read newspapers regularly or occasionally. The readership in magazines and books is still restrictive: only 22 per cent of respondents of Thayagone report that they read Forward, a magazine with a mass circulation, published by the government while almost the same percentage of affirmative replies to the question occurs in the

Table IX

Newspaper readership and regular or occasionally
(in per cent)

<u>Newspaper Readership</u>	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
Yes	36	35
No	64	65
Non-response	-	-
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

other village. The readership in other literature is shown in Table X: magazines, story books and religious literature are among the most popular, but their consumption is still small. Only 39

per cent of respondents in Thayagone and 40 per cent in Thitchopin reply that they read various types of literature and 60 per cent in Thayagone and 58 per cent in Thitchopin say that they read nothing at all.

Table X

Readership in other literature

	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
Do not read anything	60	58
Read journal, magazine and novels	20	17
Read religious literature	12	17
Read political literature	1	2
Read books of general interest	6	4
Non-response	1	2
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

Movies are another important medium of mass education. Though they may not directly instruct the audience in substantive knowledge, ideas about the styles of life pursued by others, the variety of roles possible in different situations, and knowledge about other places of interest and new articles or things available may improve the individual's empathic capacity or increase his desire to attain a better life. It is reported in Table XI that 46 per cent in Thayagone and 47 per cent in Thitchopin reply that they have seen movies during the past year. Against this, a higher percentage, 65 per cent of Thayagone's respondents and 58 per cent of Thitchopin's report that they have seen traditional opera (pwes) and music dance (anyein) during the past year. This strongly suggests that the traditional plays and opera still retain their importance among the village communities.

Table XI

Having been to movies or have seen the opera (zats) during the last year

	<u>M o v i e s</u>		<u>Z a t s</u>	
	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
Yes	46	47	65	58
No	54	41	35	30
Non-response	-	12	-	12
Per cent	100	100	100	100
Number	107	100	107	100

To the modern means of communication mentioned above, must be added informal and personal channels of communication, such as visiting officials, villagers working as wage earners or white-collars in town, and village leaders usually in extensive contact with the town. Since both villages exist near urban centres, it is to be expected that an assortment of officials will visit the villages all the year round. Thayagone village has been recently visited by health research teams investigating the intestinal parasitisms among the villagers. Other health teams also often visited the village of Thitchopin, since it is situated in a township selected as an experimental model area for rural improvement. Other civil officials such as land record clerks and extension workers also visit Thitchopin every year either for estimating the village agricultural production or for propagating the use of fertilizers and improved seeds. But the village of Thayagone does not enjoy the same opportunity: having a limited agricultural potential, the village is not included in the planned crop scheme. This scheme determines the acreage to be grown in each village tract, and also under the scheme, the government sells seeds and fertilizers at a subsidized price. Township administrative officials also have occasionally visited Thitchopin either in connection with planned crops or security problems. Again, Thayagone has had fewer occasions of visits by such officials because this village, having been now re-defined as part of the Rangoon metropolitan area, is no longer under the district administration. A constant contact with urban life is, however, established through either the villagers working in industrial establishments in urban areas or the bazaar hawkers, trishawmen, and bus drivers who visit the town on their daily rounds of business. Village leaders who are required to visit towns on official purposes are also an important source of contact with the towns.

In spite of the importance of the informal process of communication in village social life, we could not be assured that the extensive informal contacts with urban life, currently existing in these villages, are effectively functioning for the process of change. Unlike villages in other underdeveloped areas, Burmese villages do not exhibit any strong informal organizations such as sitting and discussing news in a teashop as in a Turkish village or listening to the radio in a regular group. As a matter of fact, one of the important characteristics of Burmese villages is its singular lack of social organization beyond the family. In both our questionnaire interviews and observations, we found that the village informal social organization which could channel and distribute information effectively is lacking: each individual usually goes his own way and he may tell a few friends or neighbours what he has heard or seen in the town, and that is all there is to it. Village administrative heads wield authority in villages, and often their power is derived from their knowledge about how to deal with officials or how to handle one's legal problems in judicial

courts. Yet the interaction between these people and the villagers seems to be infrequent and only for official purposes. These observations are borne out by the questionnaire survey also: to our questions "whom do you consult" or "who consults you on various questions regarding health and medical matters, farming, marketing," modelled after a similar research in Indian villages, most respondents reply that they have not consulted others nor have others consulted them. This situation probably may have resulted from the known tendency of the Burman to protect his own individuality since he is always noted for his fierce individualism. One may, however, contend that because of this individualism, he does not want to admit that he has consulted others on his own problems, though he might actually have done so, looking upon such an act as a sign of weakness. Even if this contention is true, we could still surmise that Burmese individualism at least inhibits one's taking an active initiative to seek help from others.

On the other hand, other evidence further corroborates our supposition that an effective informal communication network among Burmese villagers is lacking. In our question on radio listening we have already discovered that there exists practically no discussion among listeners on what they have heard from the radio programmes. This whole hypothesis also fits in with our observations in the previous paper¹ that one of the problems of Burmese rural society is its lack of effective social organization above the household level to initiate and sustain the common co-operative efforts of the village.

We will now proceed to study the functioning of communication in terms of the changes that have taken place in these two villages. It is already assumed that mass media influence the listener, reader, or viewer at both the unconscious and conscious levels. For an individual to be able to imagine himself in different roles, he must know that these roles exist. For him to be able to deal with different situations, he must first realize that many conditions of life, different from his, exist. In the same way, the acceptance of new technology by the farmer must be preceded by his acquaintance with new ways of doing things and his belief in their effectiveness. In our questionnaires, we have included a number of questions testing the respondents' level of information acquired through the various channels. Some questions mentioned important international figures and asked who they are, what they do, and in which country they live.

¹ Khin Mawng Kyi and associates, "Thayagone Revisited: A Study of Social Change in a Burmese Village", 1970, April, Burma Research Congress.

Others inquire whether respondents have heard of anything about such organizations as the United Nations or such programmes as improved seeds distribution by the government. Some questions also asked whether respondents know the names of such persons as the agricultural organizer of the township party or the veterinary assistant. Table XII shows the pattern of responses to these questions in the two villages. Questions are classified at three levels: general and world level, national level, and local level. This classification also agrees with the idea that individuals comprehend the world around him at the various levels of concreteness: some, with limited knowledge, could only see local events whereas others, better informed, would hold a larger view of the world. The general and world level includes questions on such persons as Mao-Tse-Tung and Nixon and such organizations as the United Nations. At this level, the patterns of responses in the two villages do not differ. In the same way, respondents in both villages show the same level of knowledge with regard to national questions.

Table XII

Level of information indicated by responses
in two villages

<u>Information</u>	<u>Thayagone</u> <u>Positive</u> <u>Answers %</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u> <u>Positive</u> <u>Answers %</u>
<u>General and world level</u>		
1. Mao Tse Tung	55	30
2. Nixon	15	6
3. U Thant	58	31
4. Government in Russia	8	5
5. Vietnam War	30	22
6. United Nations	40	50
<u>At National Level</u>		
7. Agricultural Minister	9	4
8. South East Asia Peninsula Games (SEAP) held in Rangoon (1969)	36	56
9. Government seeds distribution	47	48
10. Agricultural Rural Development Corporation (ARDC)	21	12
11. Ohn Daw (Sagaing District)*	20	10
12. U Ohn Maung Rice	17	5
13. Ngwe Toe Rice	23	26
<u>At Local Level</u>		
14. Party Agricultural Organizer/Village Level Extension Worker	7	0
15. Veterinary Assistant	3	0
16. Township Security & Administrative Council (SAC) Chairman	6	10
17. Health Assistant	47	0
18. Township Peasant Council Member/Chairman	31	6

* Peasants' Day Seminars were held in Ohn Daw, 1963.

As to the questions inquiring whether respondents know the names of local officials, organizers, and extension workers, expected to be in close contact with the village, the pattern of responses throws us into doubt about the actual working of the rural development programme: disappointingly, in Thitchopin, not a single respondent knows the name of the village level extension worker, veterinary assistant, or health assistant, and only a few, an almost negligible number, can recall the names of the township security and administrative council chairman and the township peasant council chairman. In the same vein, the data tends to show that there is also a lack of effective contacts between villagers and local development officials in Thayagone. Except for the health assistant whom most villagers know by name and the peasant council member who is also from the same village, the names of other development officials and organizers are almost unknown to the villagers, and personal relationships between development workers and common villagers do not seem to exist. This finding goes rather contrary to our prediction that at least Thitchopin, being situated in close proximity to the township centre considered to be a model for activating rural development programme, should have had the benefit of intimate contacts with development personnel. But we have, on the other hand, already discovered from our general interview with village elders that the visits of development officials even to Thitchopin were rather spasmodic and the official contact with the village was mostly conducted through village leaders. In the case of Thayagone we have already noted that the visit of the development officials, especially extension workers, to that village was non-existent.

From our interview with the village level extension organizer, we are able to detect also the sign of other problems facing the actual working of extension work. The extension organizer was found to be much discouraged about his work. His version of the problem is that farmers are lethargic and unresponsive to his good efforts. He told tales of woe about how farmers resold fertilizers or improved seeds bought on credit from the government to other farmers for ready cash, how they failed to report about the attack of pests on their crops while they were willing to procure pesticides to kill bed bugs, or how the village leaders put off taking any action about the allotted acreage for IR (5) or (8) for the coming season.

Since this paper is mainly concerned with the effects of communication process rather than with the total performance of the agricultural development programme, we are not in a position to give definitive answers to the problems of extension work. Whatever may be the reasons for the present status of sluggish performance in this field, whether these be the results of the indifference and lethargy of the villagers or the sequel of the

incorrect attitudes of the officials, the evidence available tends to suggest that with the present scale of operations and the present methods of approach, the break-through into the static conditions of rural economy will be difficult; and more vigorous efforts to bring the technology and modern knowledge closer to the villages will be required to make head way in this field of rural development.

In Table XIII the same information is cross-tabulated against various social indices such as sex, leadership, age, occupations and also against various types of media such as listening to the radio, going to the movies, newspaper readership, and visits to town. We have also calculated Yule's Q and X^2 (Chi-square) values to test the association of each pair of dependent and independent variables.

Among the social economic indices, sex, leadership, and occupations, are associated with acquiring of the general and national level knowledge. As might be expected, a significantly greater percentage of male respondents know international and national events. Leaders again are depicted as those having acquired information at all levels. This association between leadership and informational level is much more pronounced and persistent in the case of Thayagone with almost every information item known better by leaders than non-leaders. Almost all associations between leadership and different informational levels are statistically highly significant in this village. Among the various occupational groups, respondents in non-farm occupations are better acquainted with the information at the general and national level than the respondents in the farming occupations. This association is found only in Thitchopin village. Among the respondents in both villages literacy and age have no significant association with the type of information acquired.

In studying the effects of various media, we find that there is practically no significant relationship between whether one listens to radio or not and the level of information acquired. It is surprising to find this information in contrast to what we have already learned from Lerner about the existence of close association between radio listening and modernization in the Middle East. However, we have already noticed, in replies to our earlier questions about the media consumption habits, that radio listening is very superficial in these villages and the interest of the listeners in both the villages lies in traditional orchestral music. It is also further noted that there exists no follow-up discussion among the villagers over what they have heard on the radio. In spite of the great potential of the radio as a mass media, its effectiveness rests with the ability to organize programmes, intelligible and interesting to the masses and also to arrange for face-to-face or

Table XIII

LEVEL OF INFORMATION INDICATED BY RESPONDENTS BY TYPES OF
MEDIA AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICES IN THAYAGONE AND THITCHOPIN

Degree of association by Yule's Q
Test of Significant $2 \times 2 \times 2$ (Chi-Square)

x significant at 5%
xx significant at 2%
xxx significant at 1%

INFORMATION	Male vs. Female		Leaders vs. Non-Leaders		Old (over 30) vs. young (under 30)		Farmers, farm workers vs. others		Radio listeners vs. non-listeners		Educational Movie goers vs. non-goers	
	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin
I GENERAL WORLD LEVEL												
1. Mao Tse Tung	.28	-	.70	.84	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Nixon	xxx .51	-	xxx .65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. U Thant	-	-	-	xxx .83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Govt. in Russia	-	-	xxx .81	-	-	-	-	-	.45	-	-	-
5. Vietnam War	-	-	xxx .77	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. U.N.	-	xx .42	xxx .91	-	-	-	-	xxx .91	-	-	-	-
II AT NATIONAL LEVEL												
7. Agri. Minister	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. SEAP Games	-	-	xxx .67	-	-	-	-	xxx .89	-	-	-	-
9. Govt. Seeds Distribution	-	xxx .61	-	-	-	-	-	xx .60	-	-	-	-
10. A.R.D.C.	-	-	xxx .78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Ohn Daw	-	-	xxx .84	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. U Ohn Mg Rice	-	-	xx .61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Ngwe Toe Rice	-	-	xxx .85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
III AT LOCAL INFORMATION												
14. Township Party Agri. Secretary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Vet. Assistant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16. Township SAC Chairman	-	xx .78	-	xxx .94	-	-	-	-	-	xx 1	-	-
17. Health Assistant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18. Township Peasant Council Member	-	-	xxx .77	-	-	-	.35	-	-	-	-	-

Table XIII

LEVEL OF INFORMATION INDICATED BY RESPONDENTS BY TYPES OF MEDIA AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICES IN THAYAGONE AND THITCHOPIN

INFORMATION	Movie goers vs. Non-goers		Have visited city vs. Have not		Newspaper reader vs. Non-reader		Radio owner vs. Non-owner		Literate vs. Non-literate	
	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thitcho-pin	Thayagone	Thitchopin
I GENERAL WORLD LEVEL										
1. Mao Tse Tung	-	-	-	xxx .87	x .62	-	-	x .49	-	-
2. Nixon	-	-	-	xxx 1.00	xxx .50	xxx 0.66	-	-	-	-
3. U Thant	-	x 0.46	-	-	xxx .85	xxx 0.83	-	xxx .76	-	-
4. Govt. in Russia	-	-	-	-	xxx .56	xxx 0.66	-	-	-	-
5. Vietnam War	-	xx 0.42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. U.N.	-	xxx 0.81	-	-	xxx .80	xxx 0.54	-	xxx .55	-	-
II AT NATIONAL LEVEL										
7. Agri. Minister	-	-	-	-	-	xxx 0.60	-	-	-	-
8. SEAP Games	xxx 0.81	-	xx 1.00	-	-	xxx 0.61	-	-	-	-
9. Govt. Seeds Distribution	-	xxx 0.67	-	-	-	xxx 0.67	-	-	-	-
10. A.R.D.C.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Ohn Daw	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. U Ohn Mg Rice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Ngwe Toe Rice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
III AT LOCAL INFORMATION										
14. Township Party Agri. Secretary/Village Level Agri. Worker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Vet. Assistant	-	-	-	-	-	0.67	-	-	-	-
16. Township SAC Chairman	-	-	-	-	0.37	-	-	-	-	-
17. Health Assistant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18. Township Peasant Council Member/President	-	-	0.76	-	0.72	-	-	-	x	-

Table XIII

LEVEL OF INFORMATION INDICATED BY RESPONDENTS BY TYPES OF MEDIA AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICES IN THAYAGONE & THITCHOPIN

INFORMATION	Reading all Literature vs. Non-reading		Reading Modern Literature vs. Non-reading	
	Thayagone	Thitchopin	Thayagone	Thitchopin
I <u>GENERAL WORLD LEVEL</u>				
1. Mao Tse Tung	xxx 0.74	xxx 0.66	xx 0.46	xxx 0.77
2. Nixon	x 0.63	-	-	xxx 0.91
3. U Thant	-	xxx 0.66	-	xxx 0.72
4. Govt. in Russia	-	-	-	-
5. Vietnam War	x 0.53	xxx 0.64	xx 0.50	xxx 0.72
6. U.N.	x 0.26	xx 0.52	-	xx 0.56
II <u>AT NATIONAL LEVEL</u>				
7. Agri. Minister	-	-	-	-
8. SEAP Games	x 0.36	x 0.35	xx 0.53	xx 0.47
9. Govt. Seeds Distribution	xxx 0.58	xx 0.47	xx 0.58	xxx 0.54
10. A.R.D.C.	xxx 0.74	x 0.41	xxx 0.70	xxx 0.61
11. Ohn Daw	-	x 0.48	-	xxx 0.66
12. U Ohn Mg Rice	xxx 0.65	-	xxx 0.60	-
13. Ngwe Toe Rice	xx 0.47	x 0.18	-	x 0.53
III <u>AT LOCAL INFORMATION</u>				
14. Township Party Agri. Secretary	-	-	-	-
15. Vet. Assistant	-	-	-	-
16. Township SAC Chairman	-	-	-	-
17. Health Assistant	-	-	-	-
18. Township Peasant Council Member	-	-	-	-

informal organization at local levels to digest and disseminate information gathered from the media. It is highly questionable that Burma Broadcasting Service (BBS) broadcasts including rural programmes, clothed in sophisticated urbanized language, could at all convey what the government intends to do to the masses in rural areas. Of course, the lack of social organization at the village level is already noted. But we wonder whether there is a fundamental defect in the language used and contents programmed by the BBS.

In addition, it is also found that seeing educational movies is not significantly related with levels of knowledge acquired by the villagers while there exist significant associations between going to the movies and acquiring some general and national knowledge such as U Thant, United Nations, and A.R.D.C. The non-existence of association between seeing educational movies and the level of knowledge acquired is probably not due to any inherent lack of value of the educational films, but due rather to the likely fact that respondents see this type of movie very infrequently, and as a result, there is not enough contact with this media to produce results in desirable directions. The entertainment movies, however, are more frequently viewed by a large number of villagers. It is quite probable also that those who frequent the entertainment movies are already more modernized in their tastes than others who do not go to this type of movie, and they (movie goers) have had other means of acquiring knowledge also. Possibly, this factor is partially responsible for the prominence of some associations between the exposure to this media and knowledge acquired.

The frequency of visits to town, newspaper readership and radio ownership are significantly related with the extent of information acquired. Among these three variables, the relationship between the newspaper readership and the extent of knowledge acquired about international and national events is very much pronounced and persistent; significant associations exist among the respondents in both villages. This strongly suggests that the newspaper is superior in providing a broader frame of knowledge to the masses. One may, however, query whether newspaper readership is contingent upon being leaders in the village, and also whether leadership, not newspaper readership, is a primary condition. This supposition is tenable when we have already seen a very strong and persistent association between leadership and knowledge acquired, in addition to a significant association between newspaper readership and the same dependent variables, in the case of Thayagone. Though our samples in both villages are small, only 107 observations in Thayagone and 100 in Thitchopia, we are able to single out the leadership factor. ~~The number of leaders also being small, we could still have a sufficient number~~

We have a sufficient number of non-leaders and are able to test whether the same relationship remains in this group. This partial analysis is carried out for the village of Thayagone only, since only in this village, two independent factors, both leadership and newspaper readership, present strong parallel associations with the dependent variables. Partial associations are shown in Table XIV. Contrary to the earlier contention, the relationship between newspaper readership and information acquired remains significantly strong in all 5 items in which the association between these two variables had existed previously. This point confirms our hypothesis that newspaper reading as one of the most effective media in implanting modern information in the minds of the masses.

The association between radio ownership and the extent of information acquired is probably largely contributed by other social characteristics of radio owners since these radio owners could very well be an economically well-off group in the village. However, we do not attempt to apply partial analysis here since the association is not so strong.

Table XIV

Association Between Newspaper Reading and Level of Information

<u>Information</u>	<u>Before Control</u> (All respondents)	<u>After Control</u> (Only non-leaders)
<u>I General World Level</u>		
1. Mao Tse Tung	x 0.62	x 0.42
2. U Thant	xxx 0.50	x 0.46
3. Vietnam War	xxx 0.85	xxx 0.62
4. United Nations	xx 0.56	xx 0.44
<u>II At National Level</u>		
5. SEAP Games	xxx 0.80	xxx 0.75

The degree of association shown in Yule's Q .
The significant test by X^2 .

- x X^2 significant at 5%
- xx X^2 significant at 2%
- xxx X^2 significant at 1%

Another important medium closely associated with the extent of information is reading of books, magazines, and other literature. Table XIII indicates that reading of modern types of books and magazines is highly significantly associated with various types of information acquired. More importantly, this association remains true even when those respondents who read religious literature only are also included among the readers of literature. This finding suggests that reading of all literature including religious literature has improved one's capacity to assimilate modern information and has also created keen interest in knowledge. This probably is the explanation for the association between reading all literature and the extent of information acquired. The nature of this relationship, however, is to be reconciled with the negative finding between literacy and the extent of information that we have already noticed earlier. We do not think that these two findings are contrary to each other; but we consider that they are rather complementary. We interpret that the negative finding between literacy and informational level only suggests that mere rudimentary learning of the 3Rs is not sufficient to stimulate the desire to read more. It probably also indicates that only with rudimentary literacy, one is not equipped to further pursue modern knowledge even if one desires to do so. In support of this contention, we have already noted that 60 per cent of respondents in both villages read nothing at all while the literacy rate in both villages is very high, 93 per cent in Thayagone and 75 per cent in Thitchopin. We think that it is not a rudimentary literacy but functional literacy that counts. Mere literacy is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the acceptance of modern knowledge. In other words, a person must have had enough literary skill as well as fundamental general knowledge so that he can understand modern events and apply modern technology to his problems. It is quite probable that most respondents who are classified as literate are barely functionally literate in fact, and most do not have enough literary skill for effective use.

We have already noticed that forces of change are operating in both economic and social affairs of these two villages though the present status of these village societies have not reached a satisfactory level of development or a stage of self-sustaining growth. We have seen how people in these villages have struggled to counteract the limitations imposed by natural conditions, either through seeking employment elsewhere or expanding into new ventures. Our questionnaires include questions on how one feels about the present situation or what one intends to do about the future; there are also questions asking what one would do in various situations. The latter are included with the purpose of examining the empathic capacity of the people in the village.

In response to our questions whether the respondents are happy in the village, most of them, 90 per cent in Thitchopin and 93 per cent in Thayagone say that they are happy in the village. In reply to the questions of whether the respondents want to move to other places, 67 per cent of the respondents in Thayagone against 24 per cent of the respondents in Thitchopin answer that they do not want to move to other places. Thitchopin's residents seem more willing to move to other places. This probably reflects that villagers of Thitchopin are better prepared to deal with the new situations and new places, assuming that the economic conditions of the two villages are comparable, and therefore, villagers of Thitchopin are no more compelled by the economic forces to move out of the village than those of Thayagone.

One of our questions asks whether one intends to do anything to improve his present social economic status. A comparable proportion of positive answers to this question is obtained in both villages: 68 per cent of respondents in Thitchopin village and 59 per cent of respondents in Thayagone village reply that they intend to do something about improving their status. The next question is concerned with, if they intend to do something about improving their status, what they intend to do. Here again, 51 per cent and 49 per cent of respondent in Thitchopin and Thayagone respectively could give a definite answer of what they want to do. This pattern of responses indicates that there exists strong motivation on the part of the villagers to improve their present conditions of life. In line with these findings, the responses to the empathic questions of what one will do, if one were the head of the village or the country, indicate that in both villages some degree of sophistication and imagination is shown by the respondents in their answers. Table XV shows the pattern of respondents' answers to what he will do for the village if he were the head of the village. 51 per cent of Thayagone's respondents and 49 per cent of Thitchopin's say that they have no answer to it. However, a fairly large percentage of respondent, 37 per cent in Thayagone and 48 per cent in Thitchopin, can list a few things they will do as a leader for the village. Only 10 per cent and 3 per cent of the respondents in Thayagone and Thitchopin respectively can answer how they would go about it in addition to what they intend to do. With regard to the question as to what the respondent will do for the country if he were the head of state is shown in Table XVI, the same pattern of answers follows, though there is an increasing proportion of respondents' replies that they do not know what to answer or what to think. This is what could be expected since the second question is more difficult and a greater imagination is required to answer it.

Table XV

What respondent will do for the village if he were the head of the village.

<u>Answers</u>	<u>Thayagone</u> %	<u>Thitchopin</u> %
1. Do not know what to answer	51	49
2. Can only list a few things to do for the village	37	48
3. Can also answer how he will do	10	3
4. Can also think on a long term basis	2	0
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

Table XVI

What respondent will do for the country if he were the head of the state.

<u>Answers</u>	<u>Thayagone</u>	<u>Thitchopin</u>
1. Do not know what to answer or what to think	62	51
2. Can only list a few things to do for the village	27	43
3. Can also answer how he will do them	7	0
4. Can also think on a long term basis	4	0
Per cent	100	100
Number	107	100

In Table XVII, answers to the above questions are cross-tabulated against various social indices and types of media with the purpose of examining the relative importance of these variables. As in the case of the level of knowledge acquired tabulated against other variables, newspaper readership and readership in other literature are positively related both with the motivation and empathic questions: in other words, readership in newspaper as well as other literature seems to increase the respondent's intention to improve his present

Table XVII

Motivation and empathy as represented by answers to four questions
by various social indices and types of media shown in X^2 values

X^2 Chi-Square
x significant at 5% level
xx significant at 2% level
xxx significant at 1% level

Question	Leader vs. Non-Leader		Male vs. Female		Agri. Occupations vs. Others		Radio Listeners vs. Non-Listeners		Have visited to the nearest town vs. Have not visited		Newspaper Readers vs. Non-Readers		Other Literature Readers vs. Non-Readers		Middle Class & above vs. Primary & below		Entertainment Movie Goers vs. Non-Goers	
	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin	Thaya-gone	Thit-cho-pin
1. Whether the respondent has intention to improve his present socio-economic status.	.47	-	.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.33	xx .74	-	.57	-	-	-	.30
2. What respondent will do to improve his present socio-economic status.	.49	-	-	.32	-	-	-	-	x .52	-	.34	-	-	-	-	-	-	.36
3. What the respondent intends to do for his village if he were the head of the village.	.30	x .70	-	-	-	-	-	.37	-	.42	-	xx .49	-	xxx .60	-	-	-	.36
4. What the respondent intends to do for the country if he were the head of the state.	.27	xx .76	-	x .40	-	.37	-	xx .47	-	-	-	xxx .62	.32	x .42	.77	-	xx .46	-

social economic status and his capacity to imagine himself in important roles. Having visited the towns frequently is also significantly related with the intention towards improving one's socio-economic status. Among the social indices, sex and leadership also are significantly related with these variables in both villages. Surprisingly, we found that among the respondents' radio listening is significantly related with the capacity to imagine oneself in different roles in contrast to an earlier observation on the non-existence of relations between radio listening and the level of knowledge. We do not think these findings are inconsistent. It is quite probable that radio listening by unsophisticated masses may not have expanded their technical and general knowledge appreciably. However, listening to radio programmes, even if imperfectly understood, could have unconsciously improved one's capacity to imagine many roles.

Problems of Technical Diffusion and Change

In our report we have already described that the development process of two village communication is restricted to a large extent by the limitations of natural resources such as limited land space, lack of water, unsuitability of land for a second crop, at least in the case of Thayagone, on the one hand, and the increasing pressure of population, backwardness of existing farming technology coupled with slowness of technical diffusion, and lack of capital, on the other.

We have also posited the view that the fundamental solution to the problem lies not in growing dependent on urban centres as a source of new employment, but in the structural development of the village economy itself using its own potentials in accordance with national needs and demands. We have also learnt from the experiences of other countries that the emigration of younger members of rural communities to urban centres, leaving the basic agricultural structure unchanged, would only reduce the productivity of the farms themselves and further depress the village economy.

Though these villages are by no means considered as typical of Burma, too small a farm size without capacity to accumulate enough capital of its own, backward technology and inadequate resources to venture into new methods of cropping, the binding force of religious and social customs conveniently favouring inertia and indifference are the signs of what one might call "low-productivity trap" within which most Burmese farmers have suffered for generations under colonial rule.

An important ray of light, however, has begun to shine in on the field of social development. It is heartwarming to note that headway has been made by the Revolutionary Government in social development, and encouraging results are being shown especially in the field of health and education. The rapidly increasing availability of primary education to village children, and easy accessibility to high school education greatly improve the rate of literacy in village communities. In spite of some slowness in the acceptance of technology, the people's general desire to improve their lot has begun to rise. We deduce this from responses to our questions on motivation as well as from some villagers' effort to struggle out of the present depressed economic trap, even if these be attempts to seek employment elsewhere. However, with the present level of productivity of their farms, coupled with lack of capital and know-how, their desires will not be fulfilled unless the laudable schemes of the government are really brought to the doorsteps of the people in the villages and also unless their active participation is sought. Mere wishes unfulfilled for long will dissipate in our circumstances and we shall revert again to the apathy and lethargy which have reigned in our village society for a long time.

All this is, of course, easier said than done.

The problem of social revolution in rural society is the crux of the socio-economic development itself in Burma. And, we realize in our course of study that many problems besetting the development process are inherent in the nature of the existing social system itself.

The purpose of this paper is to study the process of communication and to evaluate its effectiveness in village society. Though we grant that modern mass media is considered as a spearhead of the modernizing process, its effectiveness could not be fully realized without the support of face-to-face social relationships as well as local social organizations at the village level. The existence of such an organization or relationship which could act as a medium of communication between the planners or promoters of social change living in towns on one hand and the common villagers facing and struggling with problems on the other, is fundamental to the acceleration of technical diffusion and change, or the effectiveness of mass media and the success of other dissemination of new technology in rural areas. Only through constant interactions with villagers, could any change be effectively initiated. At present, we have already observed that contacts between local officials and the village community is rather perfunctory and sporadic, the results having been shown in responses to our interviews. Direct face-to-face relations

between promoters of change--at present, local development officials---and the villagers have never been effectively established. Even the mediation of change through the village leadership is a doubtful proposition when we realize that rift and factionalism are still rampant in the villages, and a social fabric weaving all villagers together beyond the family is found wanting in these communities. The passing away of traditional authority such as local monks and elders is lamentable, though it may have been the natural course of social change. In the past, the village monk could very well be an informal leader from whom new ideas and news from the towns could be spread, since he was more literate than the villagers and had had opportunities to visit places. But gone are the days of monks presiding over the social affairs of the village or influencing the local leadership. We have noted in our survey that the monks no longer play an important role as mediator or leader of the village. Instead, there emerges a new breed of leadership, younger, more well-informed, and more energetic, challenging the traditional authority. Yet the discontinuity of leadership along with the apathy and individualism of villagers, and the lack of social organization lessen the effectiveness of the new leadership. In many ways the gap between the new leadership and the common villagers is just as wide as that between urbanized officials and villagers. Their style of language, sophistication and their urban orientations probably make them stand apart from the rest of the community. They are probably as isolated from the community they were to lead as the urbanized are from rural dwellers.

Our study of the effectiveness of various mass media throws further light on the problems of diffusion and change. In spite of a great promise of the radio as an instigator of change in rural communities, the performance of the radio as a mass medium does not seem to warrant any self-complacency.

The difficulty of programming in an all-embracing mass medium like the radio is obvious: certain propriety required to be observed by radio programmers with regards to the style and manner of language set the limits on how far radio programming can be made intelligible to the masses in the rural areas. The radio programming as it exists now is more urban-biased and urban-directed than anything that could effectively promote change in rural communities. It is satisfying to find a significant association between newspaper readership, another mass medium, and the level of information. Yet our interpretation about this finding must be qualified to a large degree when we realise that newspaper reading is still very much restricted in the villages.

More copies of newspapers or more radio sets may be made available to villages, and the radio programmes may be improved. Because of the existing gap between the rural dwellers and urbanized in the capacity to absorb modern knowledge, massive efforts to uplift the general education level of the village communities will be necessary before they could appreciate what the radio can impart or what modern literature can teach about modern technology. In support of this, we have already stated that while literacy is not associated with the extent of knowledge required, readers of all literature, that is, those with the interest and enough skill to read, have acquired significantly higher levels of knowledge. We would like to reiterate that literacy is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the uplift of rural society.

In addition we have learnt from the experience of other countries that both informal face-to-face social groups and village-wise organizational machinery are indispensable either for the effective uses of media or for the acceptance of new technology. We shall have to endeavour in this direction. Because of centuries of neglect perpetrated against villages, massive, concerted and continuous efforts are demanded for the successful implantation of social revolution in the country in Burma.

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