



INDIA AND MEXICO: CONNECTED HISTORIES

Dr. Indranil Chakravarty



April 5 2024 at 4 p.m.
 (Hybrid), Lecture Theatre, TIFR
 YouTube Live:
<https://tinyurl.com/ASETonApril5>

Though located on opposite sides of the globe, India and Mexico are deeply connected. India and Latin America were accidentally linked through Columbus' delusion that he had discovered the western route to India in 1492. Consequently, the Mayans and Aztecs are still called 'Indians.' In Mercator's 1596 map, Mexico was called 'New India.' Their national costume, la china poblana, is an adaptation of the 'half-sari' worn by an Indian woman who was kidnapped and sold in Mexico in the early 17th century. Mole, the traditional sauce of Mexican cuisine, was derived from India's curry while daily vegetables such as tomato, potato, chilly and even chocolate came from Mexico. Our genda phool, used for worship, were offerings made to the Virgen as 'Mary's gold.' The founder of the Mexican communist party was a Bengali revolutionary, M. N. Roy. The head of Mexico's post-Revolutionary agricultural programme was our rebel leader Pandurang Khankhoje, while Tagore left a deep impact on many Mexican writers. The battle-cry of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 was made with the Bhagavad Gita in hand, and the Nobel Laureate poet, Octavio Paz, found his deepest inspiration in India as his country's ambassador. The seeds of our Green Revolution came from Mexico, and Homi Bhabha was so impacted by his Mexican experience that it shaped TIFR in significant ways.

Indranil Chakravarty did BSc in Statistics from Calcutta's Presidency College, MFA in Filmmaking from the International Film School in Havana (where he studied storytelling under the Nobel Laureate, Gabriel Garcia Marquez) and did PhD in Film from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. He has held professor positions in Film History and Screenwriting at India's premiere film institutions. His book publications include The New Latin American Cinema, India's Audiovisual Market: An Analysis and a book of essays in Spanish, Redescubriendo a Tagore. Currently, he is writing a biography of Octavio Paz's years in India (The Tree Within) as a Homi Bhabha Fellow.



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