ONE

INTRODUCTION.

EVERY SOCIETY EMPLOYS DIFFERENT MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION.
Such media range from the pre-verbal ones such as gestures to
the audio-visual ones such as the motion picture and the tele-
vision. They include as intermediate ones other communication
media such as speech, writing, printing and the radio. The
emergence of these media depends upon the conditions obtaining
in a society. Their employment and consequent growth also vary
according to the requirements of the different groups of that
society. For instance, among the pre-literate people we find,
besides gestures and speech, the use of multitude of things
for communication purposes. These include, as C.H. Cooley[1] has
enumerated, the red arrow (suggesting war), the pipe (for peace),
signal fires, notched sticks, knotted cords, totems and so on.
They emerged because the pre-literate man was much occupied
with tribal feuds. As his tenor changed and as new groups em-
erged in his society, the existing media were supplemented by
other ones such as drum-beatings, symbolic cries and so on.

That interplay of communication needs and their fulfill-
ment brought in its train at a certain stage writing as a

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[1] Cooley C.H.: Social Organisation (New York, 1913) p.64 ff., Cf. also
Edward Sapir on COMMUNICATION in the Encylopaedia of Social
Sciences, Vol.IV, p.78. (Published from new york, reprint, 1930.)

medium of communication. Now this novel medium, that is writing, proved to be a turning point in the process of communication. Writing gave permanance to ideas. The same ideas can be referred to again and again and can be transmitted from generation to generation precisely and accurately, written as they are. Besides giving permanence to ideas, writing gave them spatial expansion. Written things can travel in a vaster ambit than can gestures, symbols or spoken words.

The history of writing runs through centuries and has several facets with which we are concerned, but slightly. Hence the saga of writing should be ushered in to depict a further change that was brought about by printing. The history of printing dates back to the year 868 A.D. when 'block-printing'[*] was employed in China.[2] That was changed further by about 1041 A.D. when movable types were used for printing purposes in that country.[3] In Europe printing is believed to have emerged independently of China in 1440 A.D. In Britain in particular, it is reported to have been made use of by William Caxton in 1476 A.D.[4]

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[*] The matter to be printed was engraved on a wooden block and multiple impressions were taken out from that.

[2] Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 16, p.334. (U.s.A. Reprint: 1957)

[3] Ibid.,

[4] Ibid.,

In China as also in Europe, printing was employed for publishing books. That was the beginning of the use of printing as a means of mass-communication. It took a further turn when newspapers were published during the first two decades of the 17th century in Europe.[5] That was the early beginning of the press as a medium of mass-communication. In course of time other media such as radio and the television emerged for mass-communication purposes. These are being employed today along with the press to that effect.

Among all the media of mass-communication, however, the press is a distinct one. That is so because the press employs the prited word. That can be referred to repeatedly at any time unlike in the case of the radio or the television which preclude such repeated references. Again, the press can provide at cheaper costs ideas, information and entertainment to the people than can the radio or the television which call for larger investments. Larger investments prohibit the employment of the radio or the television as a communication medium by those who want to use it as a relay point. The press on the other hand would not prevent a group or even a single individual from using it as such, the costs being comparatively lesser. The distinct features of the press among all the media of mass-communication can be enumerated still more. But, the point worth noting for us is that among these media of mass-communication, the press is the oldest and the most popular one.

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5 Ibid.,

Several attempts have been made to study the press. The political scientists have studied it as an index of freedom of expression which they have termed as a fundamental right. They have studied it as a vehicle of public opinion and have called it the 'fourth estate'. Their study of the press has stressed the relations between the former and the government and has given us the concept of the freedom of the press as an adjunct to democracy. The writings of political scientists have verged, also, on the ethical side of the working of the press as they expect it to adhere to certain norms and so on. The social psychologists have in no way lagged behind in studying the press. Much of the research of the social psychologists in that regard has struck upon the two ends of the press — (i) its being the communicator and, (ii) its having the communicant or the recipient (of the communication i.e. the reader). As regards the former, that is the communicator, they have studied psychologically the motives or intentions of the communicator in transmitting one matter or the other. As regards the recipient they have examined his predispositions and perceptions in selecting one matter or the other. Social psychologists have also examined mass-persuasion and propaganda by analysing the psychological processes such as attention, suggestion, comprehension and the like, involved in the larger process of mass-communication.

One additional and perhaps a more comprehensive approach to such studies has been suggested by Harold D. Lasswell. Lasswell's formulation is to analyse :

"Who says, what, in which channel,
to whom and with what effect".[6]

Who in this formulation stands for the communicator; what for the message, that is, the theme or symbol communicated; channel for the medium viz.,books, press, radio, motion picture or television; whom for the recipient of the message, that is, the audience or the public, and lastly, effect stands for the end product of the communication done.

We cannot review all the contemporary trends in communication research in general or in the study of the press in particular. It is not possible for us to do so because we cannot get for perusal the whole of the existing material on these subjects.[7] We suggest, however, one more approach to the study of the press. We propose to give it a sociological orientation.

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[6] Lasswell H.D., in 'The Structure and Function of Communication in Society' in Lymen Bryson (ed.), The Communication of Ideas, p.37. (Institute for religious & Social Studies- 1948)

[7] According to a recent research paper on the subject, '------ the precise nature and effects of mass-communication are little understood, despite burgeoning of research approaches and the multiplication of empirical findings-----. The traditional view does not take fully into account ongoing processes of interaction of which the single communicative act is merely one component'. Riley John W. (Jr.) and Riley Matilda W., in 'Mass-communication and the Social System' in Merton R.K. et el (ed.), Sociology Today : Problems and Prospects, p.537. Basic Books Inc N.Y. 1960.

For that purpose we have taken the Gujarati press[*] as
an instance.[**] But, we were handicapped in the beginning as
we had no model to proceed with for a sociological study of
the press. We had before us an overemphasised and equally
accepted dictum that the press is a part of the society, and,
that it exists because of and in relation to other social fac-
tors obtaining in the larger social system. But, which social
factors should we take for consideration in particular and
with what aspects of the press should we correlate them, posed
a further problem. We could not take for granted any ad hoc
factors in that regard. Hence we decided to make a preliminary
exploration of the Gujarati press to start with.

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[*] The term 'press' in the present context would include
any printed journal with whatever periodicity (daily, tri-week-
ly, bi-weekly, fortnightly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly,
half-yearly or yearly) sold or distributed gratis at large,
containing news, comments, literary, political, religious or
any other matter which is meant for regular communication from
one end to the other. In the pages that follow the words
journal, magazine, periodical, newspaper and paper have been
used interchangeably because it was not possible to give a
precise connotation to any of these terms, the nature of the
Gujarati press being such.

[**] We decided to study the Gujarati press because our
mother tongue being Gujarati there would be greater facility
in studying it, though we are equally at ease in Marathi and
Hindi, languages which are current in Western India.

During that preliminary exploration we found that the
Gujarati press can be correlated with the following social
factors viz.,

I-   Technological :

    1. Technique of printing (which means the technique
       of obtaining multiple impressions on paper by li-
       thography and by type-setting and operating the
       latter with hand-propelled or power-driven machi-
       nes).

    2. Employment of methods as well as means of getting
       and transmitting news and other matter used for
       publication purposes.

    3. Emergence and employment of auxiliary media of
       communication such as the post, telegraph, tele-
       phone and teleprinter.

    4. Employment of means of transport, railways e.g.

II-   Educational :

    5. Spread of literacy and increase in formal —
       higher — education.

    6. The establishment of libraries and reading rooms.

    7. Emergence of ideas and ideologies.

III-   Commercial :

    8. Trade and Commerce.

IV-   Governmental :

    9. The form of Government, the rules made by such a

government pertaining to printing and publishing
in general and with reference to the press in
particular.

One more, the 10th factor that we have taken for consi-
deration is,

10. Emergence of certain groups with divergent life-
    patterns, divergent aspirations and divergent in-
    terests (e.g. commercial interest, political inter-
    est, literary interest and so on).

For demonstrating the operation of these social factors
on the Gujarati press, we have decided to correlate them with
the Nature and Growth of the latter. The term Nature in this
case can be explained as follows :

The press has several dimensions, e.g. the communica-
tion of information about happenings is one, communication of
information about trade and commerce or about purchase and
sale of commodities is another, communication of views pertain-
ing to social and political reform is the third. Again, as
regards other dimensions of the press we can say that it enter-
tains, instructs and changes the views of the people on several
matters. From time to time one of these dimensions becomes
more predominant and more frequent than the rest. The one that
becomes more predominant (in terms of space occupied in the
papers) and which becomes more frequent than the others is taken
as indicative of the nature of the Gujarati press. For instance,

it was found that during the initial stages (from 1822 to 1852
approximately), the Gujarati press was communicating informa-
tion, predominantly and more frequently, pertaining to trade
and commerce while, later (say from 1852 to 1864) it was commu-
nicating predominantly reformist views. The other matter though
contained in the Gujarati press was given a secondary place and
was not so frequently appearing as compared with the matter men-
tioned above during these periods. In the present context,
therefore, commercial matter and reformist views can be taken
as indicative of the Nature of the Gujarati press during these
periods and so on.

By the term Growth of the Gujarati press we mean here
the increase in the quantum of matter contained in the jour-
nals, in the varieties of matter included in these journals,
in the frequency of the publication of journals, in the size
of the journals, increase again, in the number of journals,
in the number of places of publication of the journals, in the
circulation of the journals, increase also, in the number of
places of circulation as well as in the readership of the Guj-
arati journals.

We have observed in this dissertation that both the
nature and growth of the Gujarati press are interrelated
through the operation of the social factors mentioned above.
We have shown that in the initial stages the size and the num-
ber of Gujarati journals was small and several dimensions were
contained together in the few existing Gujarati journals. That

is, the same and again the few Gujarati journals served the
varied interests. (It may be noted here that this characteri-
stic continues to be at all times though any one of them may
predominate at one time or the other). Now, since the press
responds to the needs of the society and as the divergent
interest groups in the society grow in strength, there is also
a corresponding specialisation in the press by way of separate
journals for specific interests or by way of predominance given
to such a specific interest (along with the inclusion of the
other interests) in one journal or the other, and, there is
corresponding increase in all other aspects of the Gujarati
press ensuring thereby its growth.

The argument that we have developed in this study is
that :

1. The Gujarati press originated to fulfil the needs
of a particular interest group of the society. New dimensions
were being added to it in response to the other interest groups
which were emerging in Western India.

> As we have shown in chapter two, the emergence of the
> Gujarati press was related to trade and commerce and
> to the existence of commercial interest groups compris-
> ing of Parsis, Hindus (Banias, Bhatias etc.) and Mohmmed-
> ans (Kuchhi Memons, Khojas and Bohras). Information
> pertaining to trade and commerce was published predomi-
> nantly in the Gujarati press at that time. Later began
> to appear reformist views as shown in chapter three.

That was after the emergence of a group of persons, including Dadabhai Naoroji, Mangaldas Nathubhai, Karsandas Mulji, Mahipatram Roopram, Narmadashanker Kavi and others, who propounded such views. Still later, the Gujarati press became a vehicle for expressing the needs and grievances of the people regarding local municipalities, the railway facilities and the postal arrangements. It became so after certain sections which were dissatisfied with these things emerged in Western India, as shown in chapter four. And again, the Gujarati press became a carrier of political views. That happened after the emergence of a group of persons in Western India (The Bombay Association for instance) with political aspirations and similar views, as demonstrated in chapter five and onwards.

2. The emergence of the different interest groups (mentioned above) and their association with the Gujarati press latter, with varied and wider clientele in the different parts of Western India and that led to the growth of the Gujarati press.

That is, (a) the number of different Gujarati journals increased from one in 1822 to hundreds at present; (b) their size increased lengthwise and breadthwise and also as regards the number of pages in them; (c) their circulation was augmented from barely 250 copies a week to thousands of copies a day as mentioned in chapter four and onwards, and (d) their varieties increased

as shown in the tables given in the Appendix.

3. The emergence of such interest groups, their asso-
ciation with the Gujarati press and the growth of the latter
were due to, (a) the introduction and spread of formal educa-
tion; (b) the increase in literacy, and, due to (c) the growth
of rival ideas and ideologies in social and political reorgani-
sation and in political power. The rival ideas and ideologies
in the former case were put forth by (i) traditionalists who
were supporting certain beliefs and practices regarding widow
— remarriage and so on, and (ii) the moderners who were ex-
horting people to bring about reform ('Sudharo' as it was call-
ed). While, the rival ideologies in the latter case were re-
presented by (i) the foreigners who ruled the country, and
(ii) the Indians who wanted to shoulder that responsibility.

4. The growth of the Gujarati press was facilitated,
also, by (a) technological developments in printing, (b) the
introduction of mechanised means of transport, and (c) the
introduction of means of communication such as post, telegraph,
telephone and teleprinter.

We have shown that the early Gujarati newspapers were
lithographed or were printed with manually set types
on a hand-press which could print just few small sheets
per day while, the present day giant rotary machines c
can turn out bigger size journals by thousands per hour.

We have shown, again, that the introduction of mechanised

means of transport such as the railways or motor-cars helps the speedy distribution of thousands of newspapers at distances far flung in Western India. We have also demonstrated that the postal facilities helped the Gujarati press similarly, and, that the modern means of communication such as telegraph, telephone and the teleprinter have facilitated the transmission of hundreds of messages in a matter of moments to feed the larger-size journals.

It may be submitted here that the present study in which the Gujarati press has been taken as an instance, is an attempt to detect and analyse the operation of the social factors on the press and to show their distribution and significance. Though no claims are advanced to 'measure'* the effect of these factors on the press, the fact that the nature as well as the growth of the Gujarati press had been affected mainly after the emergence of these factors from time to time in Western India is tendered as proof of the close connection between

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* In such a case it is not possible because the sales of certain newspapers fluctuated seasonally. Besides, one journal may exist under one name for some period and would merge with another and the third at times. Therefore, the exact number of copies of one journal or the other cannot be ascertained. Again, as regards the readership of the press it must be remembered that the copy of a newspaper which is seen by only one reader is likely to be an exception rather than a rule. The different journals invariably change hands in homes, clubs, hotels, trains and buses. During working hours, journals are circulating restlessly from one hand to another. To add to that are the libraries and reading rooms and the street corner newspaper stands. It is not possible to determine therefore, the number of persons who read one and the same journal in schools, colleges and other institutions.

the press and these social factors. Again, the fact that the growth of the present day Gujarati press is brought about by the developments of some of these factors and that the limitations that the Gujarati press faces are due to the lacuna in some of them, substantiates our contention regarding the connection between the press and the social factors. We would like to mention here that it is rather difficult to observe the press as a whole——more so when the time factor is added to the already multiplying periodical press. This is not mentioned to indicate the difficulties we had to face in preparing this dissertation but to suggest that any ommission in this study is due to non-availability of some material rather than due to any deliberate choice any way.[**]

Now about the data:

The data for the study have been collected from:

(1)   Original Gujarati journals——dailies, tri-week-
        lies, bi-weeklies, weeklies, fortnightlies,
        monthlies —— bi-monthlies, quarterlies, half-
        yearlies —— published since 1822 and which

[**] When we moved from one press establishment to the other or from one library to the other, the persons in charge readily helped us in getting the material. But mostly it was lying in some neglected corner in a moth-eaten, dust-layden condition. It was so brittle that it crumbled on mere touching it. That prevented us from persuing through some of the journals.

have been preserved in the respective press esta-
blishments, by government, in different libraries
and by some individuals, at different places in
Western India and, obtained in some instances,
from paper-scrap dealers in Bombay, Surat, Broach,
Baroda, Nadiad and Ahmedabad;

(ii)　(In cases where the journals said above were not
available, from) Special or Jubilee Numbers of
those journals available from the above sources;

(iii) Life accounts, memoirs and diaries of individuals
who conducted some of those journals or who worked
with them;

(iv)　Governmental Records, Reports and Secret documents
on the Press and on the different political move-
ments and on other happenings in Western India;

(v)　The Gazetteers, Annual Registers, Press Year Books
and other Directories;

(vi)　Life-accounts, diaries and felicitation volumes
of personalities which lived during the period
under reference (in Gujarati, Marathi and English);

(vii) Travellogues of Western and other travellers who
moved in Western India and;

(viii) Through informal interviews with persons who
worked with the journals during the period under

reference and who are still associated with the Gujarati press directly or indirectly or who were associated with the different happenings in Western India during the period under reference. (Their names have been mentioned in the Appendix).

Finally it may be submitted that in addition to the demonstration of the close relation between the press and other social factors, the originality of the study lies in the fact that the information obtained from the above sources has been put in relation to the social factors obtaining in Western India during the period under reference, and, in the fact that the study reconstructs the history of the Gujarati press in relation to the changing scale of the Gujarati society from the year 1822 to 1947.

The study is, therefore, a very humble attempt providing a new angle to view the press which is attaining a significant place among the media of mass-communication at present.