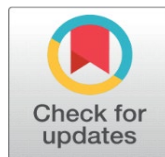
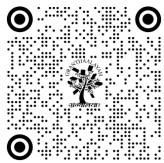


A CRITICAL LOOK AT EVOLUTION OF PRINTING PRESS AND CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Dr. Hrushikesh Behera ¹✉

¹ Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty), Dharanidhar University, Keonjhar, Odisha, India



Received 25 May 2024
Accepted 28 June 2024
Published 30 June 2024

Corresponding Author

Dr. Hrushikesh Behera,
hrushikesh.madhab@gmail.com

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.1830](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.1830)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the process of print and how it influences people's and society's habits and practices. This research is going to talk about some of the technological and historical occurrences that have occurred in the evolution of print media in India. In this way, Western European concerns over printing technology are linked to and related to a global context. Later, the research looked into the difficulties and complications that arose throughout the development of Odisha's print media in the late 19th century and 20th century.

Keywords: Press, Print Culture, Media History, Technology, Imagined Community, and Public Sphere

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the previous few centuries, there have been many developments in various kinds of the media. The study will argue, with reference to the context of print media, that print media played a vital role in the building of a powerful communication pattern. Throughout history, we have observed that it generates information that was generated by the application of technical decision. Therefore, the print culture gradually assists us in comprehending the development of the many forms of media throughout the history of society. Scholars such as Michael Gurevitch say, in this context, that new technologies such as the rotary press developed as the instrument for a massive amount of the media realm that was possible due of industrialization. Within the realm of technological intervention, the print industry has investigated the alteration of messages through a variety of different approaches. These practices were responsible

for the formation of society's socio communicative patterns. As a result, the social pattern of the society was affected by the new medium of the message, just as McLuhan predicted it would be. Within this framework, print media had a significant impact on the development of the communication sphere. In which the field of communication serves as an indicator not only of the development of the media but also of the progression of society.

The moment has come to look into the history of print media and how it has developed. Not only does a print medium disseminate information, but it also helps to raise awareness about the sociopolitical problems that face society. From this vantage point, when we look at the vernacular newspaper of Odisha, then we noticed some topics that were focused on the socio cultural and political growth of the state of Odisha. From the news of the famine in 1866 to 1936 the declaration of Odisha as a separate linguistic province, this timeline covers it all. In each and every issue of the newspaper, the genuine sense of the newspaper's role as a mediator between the individual and the mass has been expressed. As a result, the concept of the public realm was established through the act of assembling. The purpose of the study was to investigate the manner in which the communication sphere developed concurrently with the sociopolitical growth of the society. As a result of this, we came to the conclusion that, as McLuhan predicted, the printing press was an essential component in the transmission of the message. In addition to this, the newspaper was instrumental in the development of the public sphere and the concept of nation-building. It played an important role in the dissemination of information regarding a number of issues, the resolution of which had a substantial impact on the general development of Odisha.

2. THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING OF PRINTING PRESS AND PUBLIC SPACE:

According to Professor Bipan Chandra, "the influence of the Press extended far beyond its literate subscribers. Nor was it confined to cities and large towns. A newspaper would reach remote villages and would then be read by a reader to tens of others. Gradually library movement sprung up all over the country. A local 'library' would be organized around a single newspaper. A table, a bench or two or a charpoy would constitute the capital equipment. Every piece of news or editorial comment would be read or heard and thoroughly discussed. The newspaper not only became the political educator; reading or discussing it became a form of political participation".

According to Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, printing press played a role in the development of the protestant movement. In this way, prints also played a role in bringing the Indian context of the Renaissance to the western world. In addition to this, it had an effect on the politics of the province with regard to the Indian National Movement. In the annals of human history, print was also the catalyst for a new cultural revolution.

According to Stuart H. Blackburn, the written word does not exist in a vacuum but rather interacts with other forms of media such as oral tradition. In the context of Europe, Benedict Anderson argues that the novel and the newspaper supplied the technological means for 'representing' the kind of imagined community that became the country in the eighteenth century.

According to Earnest Cassirer, the substantiality mode of thought is one in which individuals, groups, and institutions are encouraged to interact with one another and develop personal and professional connections. The way in which the novel was analysed played a significant part in the construction of the position, as well as the structural transformation, of society. The literary practise of the society was influenced by the social agents' participation, and this was reflected in the cultural practice of the society. In this manner, the works of literature and literary works reflected, to a great extent, on the human mentality that was shaped via the development of technology. In this light, the study shows that in Odisha, printing technology marks as a revolutionary and evolutionary processor which was probable responsible for moving the oral literary heritage to scriptural engagement inside mass. This transition was brought about by the invention of the printing press.

For Jack Goody, the study of both the past and the present of mankind is predicated, to a significant degree, on the emergence of first language, and then writing, in the course of human history. According to Jack Goody, technological advances led to societal, political, and cultural shifts, and they served as a driving force behind these shifts.

According to Benedict Anderson, a new type of cultural practise emerged inside the arena of the technological sphere after the invention of print and its link with the vernacular style of communication. Anderson refers to this type of cultural practise as "print capitalism." In this way, we are able to track some aspects of the shape and impact of the media and the components associated with it. One of the main notions that arose during the process of the media's encirclement

was the thought of power for Foucault 'knowledge as power'. In this regard, it is possible to assert that the tradition of prints inside the language of power in Odisha's culture and polity constitutes involvement within those two realms.

According to Benedict Anderson, the growth of print with the assistance of capitalism influenced the structural development of both literary culture and public awareness. This was the case since capitalism helped create the printing press. Following the introduction of vernacular language, the printed word began to play an increasingly important role in the process of communication. This may be seen through an examination of Odia newspapers. In this geopolitical settlement, it has played a crucial role towards the flourishing of political consciousness. By analysing the political climate in Odisha in the years leading up to independence, we will be better able to understand the provincialist tendencies of the state's newspapers. These movements contributed to the expansion of the national consciousness in terms of Benedict Anderson's conception of the nation. The connection that exists between the book and the newspaper is the origin of the second source of the imagined tie.

According to Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, the concept of bookish culture is produced by the structural and periodical interaction of the print. According to Anderson, the newspaper, one of the mass produced commodities is in the shape of a commodity. Additionally, Benedict Anderson identifies the newspaper as a product of cultural production. Because of its contact with the field of human behavioural process, which it substantially influenced and which it in turn heavily influenced. During the late nineteenth century in Odisha, printers developed as a communicator between the production of information and community consciousness. This phenomenon occurred within the confines of technological invention. In this respect, the vernacular language method of communication approaches that print media utilised were beneficial to it. Benedict Anderson asserts that the rise of print capitalism gave rise to the concepts of "unified fields of transaction and communication," "image of antiquity as vital to the subjective perception of the nation," and "language of power." These three factors had a tremendous influence and effect on the political consciousness of the general public.

3. INDUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY:

The new audience pattern in the media realm was brought about as a result of the changing structure of technology and the activities associated with it. In this way, the readership flourished alongside specific historical and periodical phenomena, which was something that could be tracked in the culture of print media. The beginning of the era of the Odia literati, which is aided by the invention of the printing press. As a result, it became a significant force in altering the society. Despite the fact that print helped to develop a more conscious society within the confines of the technological pattern mostly dominated by printing technology, As is well known, the widespread adoption of new technologies and people's active participation in cultural activities led to a flourishing of print culture and the public sphere all over the world.

The literary culture was produced in Odisha between second half of the 19th century and 20th century by the establishment of literary and journalistic periodicals. This occurred throughout this time period. At this point, bookish culture emerged not just for the purposes of mobilisation away from old patterns of information exchange and toward the development of modern communication in society, but also it developed the technological communicative sphere in Odisha. In this process the printing press played an important role as a communicator, both in the sense of producing and disseminating information and knowledge during the process of constructing the idea of an information society.

Introduce technology as the agent of change toward the overall evolution of human civilization. In terms of class divide, social status, and political engagement, technology can play an important role. In addition, the productions of knowledge had an effect on the power politics of the time, which is another way in which Foucault argues that knowledge is power.

The advent of printing is a metaphor for the radical shift that took place in Odisha's social structure and cultural activities in the latter half of the 19th century. Because at that time people were able to know the current social and political scenario of Odisha through the print, it was advantageous for the people of Odisha.

The proliferation of printing led to the development of a number of periodical and historical phenomena. People's evolving and developing the discourse of national integration in terms of language, culture, and ethnicity occurred within the context of the tradition of print. After that, the print causes remarkable shifts in the collective consciousness, and it quickly spreads throughout the territory. In this light, we are able to examine the Renaissance movement that took place across Western Europe after the invention of the press, as described by Elizabeth L. Eisenstein. The political, economic, and cultural engagement of the people is reflected in the print culture like a mirror, and the print culture is a reflection

of society. When viewed from this angle, the political consciousness quickly developed in all areas of Odisha. "The newspaper not only became the political educator, but reading it or discussing it became a form of political participation," claims by Bipan Chandra.

This was made possible by periodicals such as the Utkal Dipika and the Sambad Vahika. When we look at these traditional newspapers from Odisha, we are able to discover certain evolutionary phenomena of mankind, including how and in which way they produced knowledge about consciousness back then. It places an emphasis on the beginnings of print as a product for individuals. The subject of knowledge, the subject of information, and the subject of communication were the areas in which a new kind of settlement emerged. This new kind of settlement is known as the literary culture, and it influenced the concept of cultural production and its practice.

Another thing is that when we looked at periodicals published during that time period, we found articles discussing the interaction of cultural practices and technological advancements. Here, we can say that the development of cultural behaviour in some way reflects the structural phenomena that occur in society. The engagement of the people towards the print will create consciousness among them in this manner. In this way, the engagement of the people towards the print constituted an essential component of the process of social ordering and self-representation. In this regard, we are able to observe how the print has influenced or contributed to the entire process of social reformation. The idea of nation building is produced by the vernacular medium of print, which is part of the long-standing cultural tradition of print culture. According to Anindita Ghosh, the image of print in colonial context as a technology of power clamping its vice-like grip on the colonised imagination stands considerably compromised in the light of this evidence, prompting us to reconsider of our social and cultural history.

4. CONCLUSION:

The study found that the advent of printing technology was largely responsible for the flourishing of the reading culture in India. Therefore, the technology of printing reflects the concept of socio-political consciousness in society. Last but not least, in a broader context, we can say that the print was not only an essential organ for disseminating consciousness among the general populace, but that it also played an essential role in the reformer of the traditional age and in establishing the new literary age. At this point in time, the advent of printing technology was responsible for the happening of mass consciousness. This contributed toward the goal of increasing awareness regarding a number of different issues. The ideas of political mobilisation towards forming a common cause were first brought to the attention of Odisha's vernacular newspapers. The first Odia weekly, "Utkal Dipika," under the editorship of Gaurishankar Ray, reached the highest position toward raising the voice against the British rule despite the absence of any political organization.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso books, 2006.
- Bipan, Chandra, et al. *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*. Penguin Books, 1989.
- Blackburn, Stuart H. *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India*. Orient Blackswan, 2006.
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. CUP, 2005.
- Ghosh, Anindita. *Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778 - 1905*. OUP, 2006.
- Goody, Jack, and Ian Watt. "The consequences of literacy." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5.3, 1963. pp.304-345.
- Gurevitch, Michael, et al., eds. *Culture, society and the media*. London: Methuen, 1982.

- Habermas, Jurgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. MIT press, 1991.
- Habermas, Jürgen. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article." *Critical Theory and Society A Reader*. Routledge, 2020. Pp.136-142.
- Johnson, Randal, and Pierre Bourdieu. "The field of cultural production: Essays on Art and Literature." Cambridge: Polity, 1993.
- Michael Gurevitch, et al., eds. *Culture, Society and the Media*. London. 1982.p.6.
- Bipan Chandra. *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947*. Penguin Books, p.103.
- Stuart Blackburn. *Print, folklore and Nationalism in Colonial South India*. Orient Blackswan, 2006. p.7.
- Ibid.,p.8.
- Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, London, 1993. p.25.
- Pierre Bourdieu and Randal Johnson. "The field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature." Columbia University Press, 1993.p.29.
- Jack Goody, and Lan Watt. "The Consequences of Literacy." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 1963, p.304.
- Benedict Anderson. Op.cit., p.37.
- Ibid., p.62.
- Ibid., p.32.
- Ibid., p.61.
- Bipan Chandra. Op.cit., p.103.
- Anindita Ghosh, *Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778 - 1905*. OUP, 2006, p.14.