

**MONTHLIES AND EWS PAPERS: THEIR IMPACT ON SOCIAL LIFE OF KATHIAWAD  
(1851-1910)****Dilip Chaudhary**Asst. Prof. P.G.Dept. of History, Sardar Patel University,  
Vallabh Vidyanagar. Dist.:Anand**INTRODUCTION**

Establishment of political agency was done at Rajkot in 1822 A.D. after getting rights of Peshwa and Gaekwad governments to British East India Company in 1820 A.D. <sup>[1]</sup> From this time, British East India Company Government took over management of Kathiawad. Before that, kings, Thakors and Talukadars of Kathiawad – Saurashtra and people under their reign became free from invasions of territory and mutual wars due to walker agreement in 1807 A.D. and they got promise of peaceful development for long time. <sup>[2]</sup> As a result, social disorder, mis-organization and restless wars ended. There was a dawn of happiness, peace and prosperity. <sup>[3]</sup> Now time was changed, works were done by swords and money before, now were to be done by pen and shrewdness. Time was came to do organizational and internal reformations leaving occupying of new regions. Direct reign of British was established after revolt of 187 A.D. Movement of social-religious reformations had also played an important role in impacting wide region of Kathiawad.

Kathiawad peninsula is situated between 20.40<sup>0</sup> to 23.25<sup>0</sup> north latitude and 69.5<sup>0</sup> to 70.20<sup>0</sup> east longitudes. <sup>[4]</sup> Its length from Bhavnagar to Dwarka is 352 kms and breadth from Zinzuwada in North and Div Island in South is 264 kms. Its total area is 35000 Sq. Kms. <sup>[5]</sup> and its population was more than 20 lakhs. British personal area was under reign of 222 princely states except regions of Gaekwad of Baroda, Portuguese and Nawab of Janjira. Reign of Peshwa and Gaekwad was on it. After covering all these areas under British reign, British reign was supreme in Kathiawad.

Agency of Kathiawad was under reign (control) of Bombay govt. in starting, but then Sabarkantha Agency and Kutch-Kathiawad Agency were merged and it was re-named as Western India Agency. It was observed by the Governor General appointed by viceroy. Its main office was at Rajkot. There were two agencies under its control. <sup>[6]</sup>

British govt. established Education Dept. in Kathiawad in starting of second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. <sup>[7]</sup> Starting of new era was happened from this time in real sense. Monthlies and newspapers published at that time had played an important role in Kathiawad. A try has been done here to observe impact

happened on social life of Kathiawad by monthlies and newspapers published with reference to Kathiawad and from Kathiawad.

### **2.1 MONTHLIES**

Monthlies had played an important role in reformations of new era of Kathiawad from its beginning. Booklets of three, four or six ferma's printed were called monthly newsletters. So many such newsletters were printed and published during 60 years i.e. 1851 to 1910 A.D. some remained continued and several were stopped. It will be interested to examine some such main newsletters.

#### **2.1.1 VIGYAN VILAS**

'Vigyan Vilas' was main newsletters published from Rajkot which can be considered as long time monthly. This monthly was published for 20-25 years and it was well known monthly.

Owners of this monthly were not from Kathiawad. They were from Surat-Nadiad and servants in education Dept. In Kathiawad like Manishankar Kikani and Bhanshankar master were editors at beginning of 'Vigyan Vilas', Vithaldas Dhanjibhai Patel was remained its editor for long time. Shri Kikani was writing articles pertaining to scriptures of Vedant, discussion of language and history. Poems were like an imitation of old poets. Poems of new styles of graduate poets were not so famous in people. Moreover, many writers of Kathiawad sent their articles. This monthly was sent to many school of Gujarat and Kathiawad by government. So many teachers read it. Educated or wise person was called Mehtaji in Kathiawad. So its impact was spared in new generation by reading it.

#### **2.2 GUJARAT SHALAPATRA**

Gujarat Shalapatra was published from Rajkot owners-manager of this monthly was from Nadiad. But they were serving in govt. Department of Kathiawad. So many Kathiawadi writers sent their articles in the monthly. This monthly was sent to many schools of Gujarati.

It was an entreaty of the monthly to maintain language in proper form by writing critics on books, articles, leaflets and poems. Critics of scholar editor were considered from one end to another end of Gujarat. It was such a time. Pandit Naval ram Surti was doing the same working in 'Gujarat Shalapatra' as scholar Narsinhrao is seen in minute discussion of philology.

#### **2.3 SAURASHTRA DARPAN**

This monthly was published from Junagadh, the Nawabi state of Kathiawad. Sundarji Rana, head in education dept. of Junagadh state and Acharya Vallabhji Haridatt, a life time servant (employed) in discover dept. of museum, a good writer and good server of language literature and had done a good work of awareness of people by writing his articles on social reformation in 'Saurashtra Darpan'.

#### **2.4 MANORANJAK RATNA**

A Manoranjak Ratna which can be called a powerful monthly was published from Bhavnagar in three languages for shorter times when 'Vigyan Vilas' and 'Gujarat Shalapatra' were published from Rajkot. Its

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beginning was done by Gaga Oza, the chief executive of Thakor Jaswantsinhji from August 1861. It was printed in the printing press of Pestanji Daraji in Bhavnagar. The press was then purchased by Darbar of Bhavnagar.

Discussions of contemporary problems of society, articles on political subjects, stories, poems, description were published in three languages i.e. Gujarati, Hindi and English. It was become very famous at that time that even newspapers have noted it. <sup>[8]</sup> A series of articles in favour of freedom of India was written by Murad Ali in this monthly. <sup>[9]</sup> No one can dare to write in those days. Poet Shri Narmad had also praised 'Manoranjak Ratna'. <sup>[10]</sup>

### **2.5 SATYAPRAKASH**

Karsandas Mulji, a social reformer', native of Mahuva town of Bhavnagar state started the first Hindu monthly newsletter 'Satyaprakash' in 1855 A.D.

### **2.6 SUBODHPRAKASH**

'Subodhprakash' monthly was published from Bhavnagar by Atmaram Naranji Trivedi.

### **2.7 DHARMADARPAN AND JAINDHARMA PRAKASH**

Two monthlies 'Dharmadarpan' and 'Jaindharm Prakash' were published by Jain society. Both the monthlies were having so - so circulation.

### **2.8 SATSANG PRAKASH AND PUSTIMARG PRAKASH**

These religious monthlies were published by poet Botadkar and Sastri Chhaganlal Amarji.

### **2.9 MISCELLANEOUS**

Furthermore, 'Hridaychakshu' monthly which was then published as monthly (later on was published by the name of 'Aryadharm Prakash') from Bombay, 'Swadesh Vatsal' monthly, translations from Valmiki Ramayana, Bhartarth Prakash and other translates from Puran were published as monthlies or leaflets. They got a good support and co-operation from sastris of Kathiawad and Bhagvanji from Porbandar. Bhashamartand, instant poet Pandit Gattulal basically Kathiawadis but living in Bombay has started to published 'Arya Samuday' monthly. Origin of Kundla, Vanmalidas Ladhahai Modi was publishing 'Kapolmitra' from Bombay for a long time. Monthlies of Jain, Nagar, Shrimali, Aaudichya castes' were increasing by the passage of the time.

A monthly named 'Manavdharm' was started from Jamnagar and succession to it a series of Vaidak monthlies was started. Rashesh Dharmacharya, Manishankar Vitthalji etc. had given important contribution in it. Moreover, 'Rasvaidhya Vigyan' monthly was published then Kathiawadi vaidya Jatashankar Liladhar Trivedi who was living in Ahmedabad started to publish 'Vaidya Kalptaru' and run for many years. Durlabhji Ramji Jani was publishing a monthly named 'Khedut' pertaining to agriculture science.

Hiralal Harshadrai Dave started 'Chandra' monthly from Surat which was then published on the name of 'Jatil' under the editorship of Jivantlal Dave of Mahuva.

### 1.3 NEWS PAPERS

Kathiawad was rather at back foot in terms of news papers publishing comparing to monthlies. Fewer members of printing presses can be considered as main reason behind it. There were no sufficient printing presses except state printing presses. It can be also understood that princely states of Kathiawad and their administrators may not give permission as in British state. Kathiawad was remained incomplete in terms of newspapers, in spite considerable increase in education during 1851 A.D. to 1910 A.D.

Kapol Karsandas Mulji, a social reformer of Kathiawad began to publish 'Satyaprakash' from Bombay in 1855 A.D. <sup>[11]</sup> A dispute was happened of 'Bible' case due to blaming on Vaishnavi Pushtimarg in this newspaper. So many articles were published on social reformation and religious reformation in 'Satyaprakash'. This newspaper was merged with 'Rashtragoftar' after some time. <sup>[12]</sup>

The second newspaper 'The Gujarati' was published from Bombay. It was been read in good proportion. Significant impact was happened of safetism and political reformation on people.

Newspapers like 'Hindustan' and 'Rajbhakta' were published for some times and then stopped. At the same time 'Kathiawad Times' was published from Rajkot from long times. Moreover, 'Kathiawad News' and 'Kathiawad Samachar' were published in Gujarati and English language.

Only few newspapers were published in Kathiawad even after its population of 20 lakh people.

No powerful newspaper like 'Amritbazar Patrika', 'The Gujarati' and 'Rashtragoftar' were found. The literate people had shown less awareness in this type of free newspapers in Kathiawad, scholars and writers wrote their articles in newspapers of Bombay and Gujarat in which Shukla Ambashankar Keshavji from Limdi, who was editor of 'Prajabandhu' had earned name and fame. Kavi (poet) Bhavanishankar also from Limdi wrote frequently in 'Prajabandhu' and 'Rashtragoftar'. Shri Mahuvakar published his articles by nickname 'Kathiawadi' and then 'Saurashtri'. When there was any blame against emotions of reformation, Sheth Vallabhdas Popatbhai Mahuvakar replied the blames and in this way he served in favour of emotions.

### 1.4 IMPACT OF MONTHLIES AND NEWS PAPERS ON SOCIAL LIFE

Foundation for important changes in the useful fields of contemporary Kathiawad like society, religion politics and economy was constructed by writers in monthly, leaflets and newspapers published from Kathiawad during long span of sixty years from 1851 to 1910.

Impact of reading was been seen on Hindu society and Hindu religion. It was more on literate young agers than the older ones. It has inspired to movement of religion, belief and social reformation. It has particularly inspired to the matters like construction of mentality against child marriage, inspiring to

widow re-marriage, foreign visits and removal of casteism. In other words, origin of thoughts for such social reforms touching to social life was happened with literature-writing of these sixty years.

People of Kathiawad were suffering from dual slavery of princely states as well as Britishers. Dictatorial reign of princely states was prevailing in Kathiawad. Kings, chief executives and administrators were administrating on their own ways. Administration without participation of people was mostly disliked among people. Proportion of emotion of affection of people and public welfare was very less. There was no organisation like Indian National Congress in Kathiawad in the beginning. So there was nothing to write on political reformations or was not written. These monthlies and newspapers had created an affection of social and religious reformation in absence of political reformation.

Social reformers and scholars like Sheth Karsandas Mulji, Sheth Madhavdas Rugnathdas, Sheth Karsandas Madhavdas, Sheth Laxmidas Khimji, Sheth Mathuradas Lavji, poet Narmadashankar Lalshankar, Sheth or Khusharo Navrojji Kabaraji, Seth Dadabhai Navrojji, Sheth Navrojji Fardunji, Sheth Sorabji Shapurji Bangali, Mr. Malbari, poet Dalpatram Dahyabhai, Rao Bahadur Bholabhai Sarabhai, Rao Saheb Mahipatram Rupram, and Rao Bahadur Labhshankar Umiyashankar were the people who affected on people of Kathiawad. Kathiawadi people followed articles and works of social reformers like scholar Navalram Laxmiram and Rao Bahadur Kantawala.

Subjects like refutation of child marriage, casteism, widow remarriage, Foreign visit, maul to people of caste and removal of old bad traditions can be considered subjects of social reformation. Literatures of removal of bad traditions was affecting to young generation to change such emotions, which was published in monthlies and news papers. Monthlies and newspaper gave a new turn to such kind of thoughts as well as affected on people. People of Nagars, Brahmins, Bania, Luhana and Bhatia visited countries like Europe, America, Africa, and Japan and were established n high status of society. Modh Vanik Chhnglal Haridas Vohra and Saraf Chhotlal Ishwardas Parekh visited Europe for several times. Professor Nathubhai Manchhachand and Virchand Raghavji were not done parlance with a view to undoing sins by Jain Sangh but instead of it, they were honoured with prestige. Vania-Brahmins of Rajkot, Amreli and Morbi visited foreign countries. Among of such persons were done penance and re-entered in their caste. Son of Dr. Tribjovan Motichand Shah and chief executive of Bhavnagar Prabhushankar Dalpatram Pattani and his son Anantrai visited foreign countries. Prashnora caste of Kathiawad was very rigid so they were removed from caste but their children were married in their own caste. They were given meal in caste-meal without touching them. In this way, foreign visitors were suffered rather hardship but they were bold and courageous so they neglected hardship and opened way of foreign visits i.e. Kathiawad had accepted reformations. <sup>[13]</sup>

Thoughts of removing of casteism were in air but they were not so established in society. But discussions of removal of sub-caste and their merging in the main caste were happening in society. Kantawala in

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Gujarat and Shri Gosalia can be considered as the best example of this movement. Persons of different castes are seen doing liberal of such difference of casteism in such atmosphere. Such types of differences were seen decreasing in garden party of third Sahitya conference held in Rajkot in 1909 A.D.

Reform of widow re-marriage was not been accepted by literature of monthlies and weekly who wrote some articles against widow re-marriage, even though it was liked by general group of people. May high caste and old rigid people insist against reformation, even though present day spirit of age will make its way. Some widow re-marriages were held in Kathiawad due to tries of social reformers like Sheth Karsandas Mulji and Sheth Madhavdas Rugnathdas. Modh Vania advocate Damodar Devchand had done re-marriage with the feeling of reformation. Vaidya Sastri Manishankar Govindji from Jamnagar had done re-marriage which was high unnecessary length discussion in news papers. Vallabhdas Pitambar Adalja of Rajkot and Vanmalidas Ladhahbai of Kundla had done re-marriage with Brahma-marriage. These types of marriage were done rarely but such kinds of thoughts were developed, even though couples who did such kind of marriage were treated as outsiders to their caste for entire life span. There was no way to save them from it, so the idea was not supported by the society. Group meals are decreased. It is a good thing. To go with a huge amount of people in marriage ceremony at bride's place and to stay there for few days was stopped. Traditions after death were decreased. Coming of huge amount of people at the time of death was stopped. Even though people go to take meal when a religious head or an aged wise man is dead, but these events are also decreasing.

Tradition of giving clothes, jewellery is seen decreasing. Gatherings were held to decrease such traditions and their reports were printed. Gatherings of Luhana – Bhatia community were held at Bombay, Karachi, and Rajkot in which announcement of reforms was done. Such kinds of gatherings were held at Amreli, Chital and Mahuva and reports were published in which old traditions were rejected. Relations of joint meals and marriage were closed among Kankolia Brahmin caste since last 150 years which was re-started from after-death tradition of Trambakbhai Zina, who was a Nagarsheth (leader of the city).

A great conference of Jain caste was held at Bhavnagar, a capital of Gohils. An open gathering of women society was held. To come of Jain women without curtain and to five lectures by them was a great achievement of those days in Kathiawad because Jain caste was very rigid in their traditions. It can be considered as an important and remarkable reformation. Shrimali Brahmin had constructed a committee to remove differences regarding ancestry – non-ancestry. Not only that, they started a monthly named 'Shrimali Subhechhak'.

Leaders of Aaudichya Brahmins of Dhrol were gathered at Dhrol and done several reformations regarding caste in which discussions was done to leave 'Bhikshavrutti'.

A widow of Shrimali Kandilia Brahmin donated to gather leaders of her caste and put an exclusive example of social reformation.

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Vanik's of Dasha Shrimali arranged some conferences at Ghogha near Bhavnagar and Amreli which was then under Gaekwadi reign, and announced some social reformations. An article written by Sheth Vallabhdas Mahuvakar was read and then it was put in front page of report published later on.

Prince Harbhamji had given an important contribution of preparing a platform for reformation of Kshatriya society and establishing Garasiya society Boardings while people of considerable members in central part of Saurashtra called a conference at Jetpur and created a great discussion.

In this way, various castes like Vania Kshatriya, Kathi etc. had done non-stop striving to give a practical form of feeling which was created by modern literature, monthlies and news papers during 1851 to 1910 A.D. Some of the thoughts of social reforms were remained on papers but even though some were implemented (1) Dowry tradition was discouraged, (2) An oppose was started by bringing awareness by calling meetings against aged rich people who married with little girls of Kathiawad by giving money to their parents. (3) Boys and girls turned towards getting of primary education, (4) Beginning of giving inspiration to higher education by giving scholarship and students boarding (5) Various institutions for educations have been established at Amreli, Gondal, Rajkot, Junagadh and Jamnagar. Doors of higher education were opened in Kathiawad due to establishment of Alfred High School at Bhavnagar in 1872 and Shamaldas College in 1885 at Bhavnagar. Moreover, beginning of Jain school, Shrivika School, Udyog school etc. in Bhavnagar. (6) Importance of gift of education and medicine was also understood by people, alongside the public utility gifts like digging of well for drinking water and free-meal (Sadavrat) and inn were started to pay their obligation towards society. (7) Mutual quarrel between Dave-Jani Brahmins which was originated in Sinhor and then prevailing in Bhavnagar was finished. (8) Kings of princely states of Kathiawad were reformed due to establishment of Rajkumar College in Rajkot. Tradition of curtain was removed in developed princely families like Bhavnagar and Gondal. Queen Nandkuvarba had started so many activities for social reformations. Some kings move their respective queens with open face (without curtain) in train, car and horse-carriage. E.g. Queen of Gondal and princesses remained present in open literature conference open held in 1909 A.D. in the same way queen Nandkuvarba and princess Manharkuvarba of Bhavnagar addressed people in public and accepted gifts. They also prepared some models of drawing and knitting in some exhibitions and obtained awards. <sup>[14]</sup>

### 1.5 CONCLUSION

In this way, new awareness was spread in social life of all regional areas of India due to state education and knowledge of science of western people. In the same way wind of social reformation was flowed in princely states of Kathiawad. For this, monthlies and news papers published at that time played an important role, and has impacted on so many aspects of social life.

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