

History

Print Culture and the Modern World

⇒ first Printed Books

- * The earliest kind of Print technology can be traced to China.
- * it was a system of hand printing.
- * In 594 AD, Woodblock Print System was introduced.
- * Both the sides of thin and porous sheet could not be printed.
- * The traditional Chinese 'accordion book' was folded and stitched at the side.
- * Calligraphy: The art of beautiful and stylised writing.
- * China had a huge bureaucratic system.
- * Personnel were recruited through civil service examinations.
- * Books were printed for the exam preparation.
- * As the no. of the candidates appearing for the test went up, the book also followed them.
- * By the 17th Century, Print was no longer used just by scholars official. Merchants used print in their everyday life, as they collect trade information.
- * Reading became a leisure activity.
- * Merchants used to read books for trade information.
- * Eg fictional stories, plays, stories etc.
- * Rich women start publishing their own writings.

- * Mechanical printing press were imported to China from western nations
- * Shanghai became the hub of New print culture.

Print in Japan

- * Buddhist missionaries who travelled from China to Japan, introduced print culture in Japan. (768-770 AD)
- * Diamond Sutra became the first Japanese book. (868 AD)
- * Famous topics - cooking, travelling, music and women, tea ceremony and flower arrangements.

Print Comes to Europe

- * For centuries, silk and spices from China flowed into Europe through the Silk route.
- * In the 11th Century, Chinese paper reached Europe via the same route.
- * Manuscripts were produced by scribes.
- * Marco Polo, a great explorer introduced the woodblock printing system in Italy in 1295
- * Luxury editions were still handwritten on very expensive Vellum meant for aristocratic circle.
- * Merchants and students in the University town bought the cheaper printed copies.
- * As the demand of book increased, bookseller started exporting books to different countries. and now scribes were no longer solely employed by wealthy patrons but increasingly by bookseller as well.
- * but handwritten manuscripts could not satisfy the ever increasing demand for book. because copies were expensive, labourious, and time consuming business

* With the growing demand for books, woodblock printing became more and more popular.

* But, There was a clearly a great need for even quicker and cheaper reproduction of texts.

* This could only be with the invention of new print technology

* Gutenberg and the Printing Press

* The Breakthrough occurred at Strasbourg Germany, where Johann Gutenberg developed the first-known printing press in the 1430s

* Johann Gutenberg, a German goldsmith invented the mechanical printed system.

* He used the idea of the olive press, his knowledge and technology

* By 1448, he perfected the system

* About 180 copies of Bible were printed it took three years to produce them, this was very fast production. (1455)

⇒ New book

i) Resembled the manuscripts in appearance and layout.

ii) Every page had border.

iii) Space for decoration was provided.

* In the 100 years between 1450 and 1550, printing presses were set up in most countries of Europe.

* As the No. of the printing press grew, book production boomed.

* The second half of the 15th century saw 20 million copies of printed book.

* The No. went up in 16th century to about 200 million copies.

* This shift from hand printing to mechanical printing led to the print revolution.

⇒ The Print Revolution and its impact

- * Print Revolution was not just a development, a new way of producing books. it transformed the lives of people. it influenced popular perception and opened up new way of looking at things.

A New public Reading Public

- * Access to books created a new culture of reading.
- * However, the rate of literacy in most European countries were very low.
- * Till 20th Century which was a major hurdle in spreading of this culture.
- * So printers began publishing popular ballads and folk tales, and such books would be profusely illustrated with pictures.
- * Text was sung by the literate and heard by the illiterate in taverns in towns
- * Oral Culture thus entered print and printed material was orally transmitted. the line that separated the oral and reading cultures became blurred. and then hearing and reading public became intermingled

⇒ Religious debates and Fear of Print

- * Print Created the possibility of wide circulation of ideas, and introduced a new world of debate and discussion.
- * Not everyone welcomed the printed book
- * it was feared that, if there was no control over what was printed and read the rebellious and irreligious thoughts might spread. if that happened the authority of 'Valuable' literature would be destroyed. Expressed by religious authorities and monarchs.

- In 1517, the religious reformer Martin Luther wrote 'Ninty-five theses' criticising many of the practices and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church.
- This led to a division within the church and to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation
- Luther's translation of the New Testament sold 5000 copies within a week and second edition appeared within three months. Deeply grateful to print, Luther said, "Printing is the Ultimate gift of god and greatest one."

⇒ Print and Dissent

- * Several controls were imposed on book seller and publishers.
- * The Roman church began to maintain an index of prohibited books from 1558

⇒ The Reading Mania

- * The 17th and 18th Centuries saw a rapid rise in literacy rate.
- * Churches started setting school in villages.
- * These schools not for the Noble class, but for the peasants and working class.
- * By the end of the 18th Century, literacy rate in Europe was as high as 60% to 80%.
- * Booksellers employed sales persons who went around village carrying book for sale
- * In England penny chapbook were sold. penny chapbook were carried by petty pedlars known as chapmen and sold for a penny.
- * In France were the 'Bibliothèque Bleue' - low priced small books printed on a poor quality paper and bound in a cheap blue covers.
- * Newspaper and journals carried information about war and trade.

- * Scientists like Isaac Newton began to publish their discoveries.
- * Thinkers like Thomas Paine gained popularity.
- * Literate population started to rise against the tyranny and despotism
↓
cruel ruler

Tremble therefore, tyrants of the world!

Tremble before the virtual writer.

Louis Sebastian Mercier

Means: The printing Press is the Most powerful engine of progress and public opinion is the force that will sweep despotism away.

⇒ The cruel ruler will come to an end, when the writer will rise against them

- * Some people believe that French revolution evolved due to the print culture

i) Print popularized the ideas of the enlightenment thinkers.

ii) Print created a new culture of dialogue and debate.

iii) By the 1780s, literature mocked the royalty and criticized their morality were large in number.

⇒ The Nineteenth Century

- * Europe witnesses great leaps in Mass literacy.
- * Primary Education was made compulsory.
- * In 1857, in France, a children press, devoted to literature for children alone was set up.
- * Production of school textbooks increased.
- * Grimm brothers and Jacob were the famous publisher of fairy tales and folk tales.

- * Like children, women became important readers.
- * Proper behaviour and housekeeping were popular among women.
- * Jane Austen and Bronte sisters were the famous women novelists.
- * Penny Magazines ~~for~~ were especially meant for women, mainly teaching proper behaviour and housekeeping.
- * In the 19th Century, lending libraries in England became a medium for educating white collar workers, artisans, and lower middle class people.

Further Innovations

- * By the mid-19th Century Richard M. Hoe of New York had perfected the power-driven cylindrical. This was capable of printing 8,000 sheets per hour.
- * In the late 19th Century, offset press was developed that can print up to 6 colours at a time.

In 20th Century

- * Electrically operated printing Press were introduced.
- * Improvement in feeding paper.
- * The quality of plates became better.
- * Automatic paper reels.
- * Photoelectric control of the color register.