Print, Culture & Modern World

THE FIRST PRINTED BOOKS

In China

The earliest printing technology was developed in China during the Tang dynasty (618-906 AD). By the seventeenth century, as urban culture bloomed in China, the uses of print diversified. Printed materials included books, maps, calendars, and government documents. In the late nineteenth century, western printing techniques and mechanical presses were imported as Western powers established their outposts in China. Shanghai became the hub of the new print culture.

In Japan

Woodblock printing was introduced to Japan from China in the late 8th century. The oldest Japanese book which was printed in AD 868 is the Buddhist Diamond Sutra. In the Edo period (1603-1868), the rise of popular culture led to a boom in print publishing. Books, magazines, and newspapers were published on a
wide range of topics, including literature, art, history, and science. In the late nineteenth century, western printing techniques were introduced to Japan. This led to a further expansion of the print industry and the spread of literacy.

PRINT COMES TO EUROPE

Chinese paper reached Europe in the 11th century via the Silk Road.

Marco Polo, an Italian explorer, returned to Italy from China in 1295 and brought printing knowledge back with him.

Italians began producing books with woodblocks, and soon the technology spread to other parts of Europe.

The demand for books increased, and booksellers all over Europe began exporting books to many different countries

However, the production of handwritten manuscripts could
not satisfy the ever-increasing demand for books because:

a.Copying was an expensive, laborious, and time-consuming business.
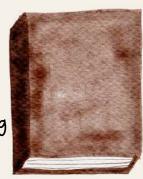b.Manuscripts were fragile and awkward to handle.

GUTENBERG AND THE PRINTING PRESS

- Johannes Gutenberg was born in Mainz, Germany, in the early 1400s.
- He was a goldsmith and metalworker with a strong interest in mechanics.
- In the 1430s, he started experimenting with movable type for printing.
- He developed a system of individual letters that could be arranged to form words and sentences.
- Gutenberg invented a printing press that applied pressure to type and paper, creating sharp impressions.
- By 1448, he perfected his printing system and produced the Gutenberg Bible, a landmark work.
- The Gutenberg Bible, printed in Latin with 42 lines, spread literacy and knowledge across Europe.
- Between 1450 and 1550, printing presses were established across Europe, leading to increased book availability.
- Printed books played a vital role in spreading ideas about science, philosophy, politics, cultures, and religions.

THE PRINT REVOLUTION & ITS IMPACT

Printing ki vajah se kya revolutions ae?

- The Print Revolution led to the emergence of a new reading culture.
- Books became more accessible, encouraging people to read.
- However, low literacy rates in Europe until the 20th century hindered widespread adoption.
- To address this, printers published illustrated books featuring popular ballads and folk tales.

Mnemonic

BOOK PAGE

B - Books more accessible
O- Outspread reading culture
O- Overcoming low literacy
K - Knowledge dissemination
P - Popular illustrated books
A - Ancient ballads and folk tales
G- Growing literacy rates
E - Encouraged reading

Religious Debates & Fear Of Print

Belief in the power of printed ideas sparked fear of rebellious and irreligious thoughts. In 1517, Martin Luther, a religious reformer, wrote 'Ninety Five Theses' criticizing Roman Catholic Church practices. Luther's writings caused a division in the Church and marked the start of the Protestant Reformation.

The Reading Mania

By the late 18th century, some parts of Europe had high literacy rates, ranging from 60% to 80%. In England, "Penny chapbooks" were sold for a penny by traveling peddlers called chapmen. In France, the "Biliotheque Bleue" offered low-priced small books with poor quality paper and cheap blue covers. Newspapers and journals provided information on wars, trade, and developments in other regions.

Print Culture & the French Revolution

Print culture played a significant role in shaping the context of the French Revolution.

It helped spread the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers to a wider audience.

Print culture fostered a culture of discussion and argumentation.

By the 1780s, numerous pieces of literature emerged that ridiculed the monarchy and critiqued their moral values.

The 19th Century

Children, Women, and Workers

A children's press dedicated to children's literature was established in France in 1857.

Women gained significance as both readers and writers. processes.

"Penny Magazines" targeted women and included manuals for proper behavior and housekeeping.

Lending libraries in 19th-century England became educational platforms for white-collar workers, artisans, and lower-middle-class individuals.

Further Innovations

- In the mid-19th century, Richard M. Hoe perfected the power-driven cylindrical press.
- The late 19th century saw the development of the offset press capable of printing up to six colors simultaneously.
- Electrically operated presses in the 20th century accelerated printing processes.

Print Revolution's Impact In India

India and the World of Print

- Before the print era, manuscripts in India were copied on palm leaves or handmade paper.

Print Comes to India

- In the mid-sixteenth century, the printing press arrived in Goa through Portuguese missionaries. By 1674, around 50 books were printed in
- Konkani and Karana languages. In 1579, Cochin witnessed the printing of
- the first Tamil book by Catholic priests.

- The first Malayalam book was printed by Catholic priests in 1713.
- Dutch Protestant missionaries printed 32 Tamil texts by 1710.
- From 1780, James Augustus Hickey initiated the Bengal Gazette, a weekly magazine.

Religious Reform & Public Debates

- In the early 19th century, vigorous debates emerged concerning religious matters.
- Diverse groups presented fresh interpretations of various religious beliefs.
- Rammohun Roy released the Sambad Kaumudi in 1821.
- In 1810, the first printed edition of Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas, a 16th-century text, was published in Calcutta.

NEW FORMS OF PUBLICATION

The novel, which initially originated as a European literary form, underwent a transformation to incorporate distinct Indian styles. Alongside this, a range of novel literary formats emerged, encompassing lyrics, short stories, and socio-political essays. In addition, artists such as Raja Ravi Varma played a role in producing visual images that could be widely distributed to the masses.

Women and the World of Print

- Progressive husbands and fathers started educating women within the household.
- Conservative Hindus worried educated girls might become widowed.
- Muslims feared literacy might corrupt women exposed to Urdu romances.

Print and the Impoverished

- In the 19th century, extremely affordable small books entered markets.
- From the late 19th century, caste discrimination issues appeared in numerous printed essays.

PRINT & CENSORSHIP

British Government ke against hone wali printing ke saath kya hua?

- Before 1798, during the colonial era under the East India Company, censorship of print materials was not a significant concern.
- During the 1820s, the Calcutta Supreme Court introduced regulations aimed at controlling press freedom.
- Following the 1857 revolt, the approach towards press freedom shifted.
- In 1878, the Vernacular Press Act was enacted, granting the government broad authority to censor reports and editorials in vernacular press publications.
- Despite these repressive measures, nationalist newspapers continued to proliferate across India.

Mnemonic

FREE ACT

Free press before 1798
Regulations in the 1820s
Evolving after 1857
Enactment of Vernacular Press Act (1878)
Authority for government censorship
Continued proliferation of nationalist newspapers
Transformation in press freedom