

A pair of black-rimmed glasses with round lenses is resting on an open book. A red bookmark is visible on the left page. The background is softly blurred, showing the pages of the book and a wooden surface.

Introductory Lecture

- Aniket Alam
- **Gutenberg Parenthesis**
 - HS3.304
 - Spring 2023

Course Outline

- The Gutenberg Parenthesis refers to the 500 year long period of modernity, coterminous with print cultures, within a longer stretch of oral civilisations. This parenthesis started with the print revolution in medieval Europe which turned the world textual over the next few centuries. The parenthesis is perhaps closing now with the emergence of the new, post-textual, orality of the digital age. The idea of the Gutenberg Parenthesis suggests that despite its dominance and prestige, print-literacy is an exception in the much longer trajectory of human thought, which is oral. This primacy of the oral may be in the process of being restored through digital modes of speech and instantaneous ephemeral communication, rather than on asynchronous paper-print communication.

Five Parts

1. Orality and Oral Cultures;
2. Literacy and Textual Cultures;
3. Technology of Print and Print Cultures;
4. {Historical Transformations};
5. New Orality.

Orality and Oral Cultures

- The structures and features of oral communications.
- How this, in turn, structures mental categories and thought and thus...
- Social Organisation
 - The specificities of societies based on orality
- How scholars define the terms Oral, Orality, Textual, Print
- The idea of **Primary Orality**

Literacy and Textual Cultures

- Historical rise of script, literacy and text-based civilisations
- What are the features and consequences of this technology, and
- How it restructures society

Technology of Print and Print Cultures

- Emergence of print technology
- ...in Asia and Europe
- Its main product: **BOOKS**
- Definition of print culture and its historical spread.

{Historical Transformations}

- The changes in society, economy and politics consequent to the spread of print technology and print cultures
- Emergence of
 - Capitalism,
 - Colonialism,
 - Enlightenment Rationality, and
 - Scientific Revolution.
- Linkages between printing and new ways of thinking and communicating
- Economic, political, cultural effects of mass literacy and education
- How the world has become textual

The New Orality

- Emergence of digital technologies and
- Re-emergence of orality and instantaneous communications
- The new orality as **Secondary Orality** based on textual foundations
- How is this secondary orality changing our ways of thinking, of communicating and our social/political structures

Readings: Text Books

1. Walter J. Ong: *Orality and Literacy*
2. Elizabeth Eisenstein: *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*
3. Alfred W. Crosby: *The Measure of Reality*
4. Umberto Eco: *This Is Not The End Of The Book;*
5. V. Gordon Childe: *Man Makes Himself*

Readings: Reference Books

1. Lucien Febvre, Henri-Jean Martin: *The Coming of the Book*
2. Fernand Braudel: *Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800*
3. Eric Hobsbawm: *Industry and Empire.*
4. Ernest Gellner: *Nations and Nationalism*
5. Marshal McLuhan: *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographical Man*
6. Neil MacGregor: *The History of the World in 100 Objects*
7. Ruth Finnegan: *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication.*
8. Ruth Finnegan: *Oral Poetry – Its Nature, Significance and Social Context.*
9. Elizabeth Eisenstein: *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of Ending.*
10. Umberto Eco: *Travels in Hyperreality.*
11. Roger Chartier: *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries.*
12. David Diringer: *The Book Before Printing.*
13. David Diringer: *The Alphabet – The Key to the History of Mankind.*
14. Jack Goody: *Literacy in Traditional Societies.*
15. Andre Gunder Frank: *ReOrient – Global Economy in the Asian Age*
16. Bhavani Raman: *Document Raj: Writing and Scribes in Early Colonial India*
17. Tapati Bharadwaj: *Beginners Guide to the Early Realm of Colonial Print Culture in India*
18. A R Venkatachalapathy: *The Province of the Book*
19. Krishna Kumar: *Politics of Education in Colonial India*
20. C.A. Bayly: *Empire and Information*
21. Eric Havelock: *Communication Arts in the Ancient World.*
22. C. K. Ogden, I. A. Richards: *The Meaning of Meaning – A Study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism.*
23. Pierre Maranda, Elli Kongas Maranda: *Structural Analysis of Oral Tradition.*
24. Vladimir Propp: *Morphology of the Folktale.*
25. Benjamin Stolz, Richard Shannon: *Oral Literature and the Formula.*
26. Douglas Boyd, Mary Larson: *Oral History and Digital Humanities – Voice, Access, and Engagement.*
27. Jan Vansina: *Oral Tradition as History.*
28. Max Tegmark: *Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*

Readings: Articles

1. Jack Goody and I. Watt: “The Consequences of Literacy”
2. Thomas Pettitt: “Opening the Gutenberg Parenthesis”
3. Thomas Pettitt: “Bracketing the Gutenberg Parenthesis”
4. The Edge: “What is the Most Important Invention in the Past Two Thousand Years?”
5. Franz H. Bauml: “Varieties and Consequences of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy”
6. John Miles Foley: “The Traditional Oral Audience”.
7. John Miles Foley: “Oral Literature – Premises and Problems”
8. Eric Havelock: “The Alphabetization of Homer”
9. Bronislaw Malinowski: “The problem of meaning in primitive languages”

Grading Plan

Type of Evaluation	Weightage (in %)
Quiz-1	10%
Mid SemExam	20%
Quiz-2	10%
End Sem Exam	40%
Project	20%

Plagiarism Policy

- Strict!
- Project (and any other take-home written work) will be checked for plagiarism
- If Plagiarism Percentage is between 10%-19% then 1/3 marks will be cut in that submission
- If Plagiarism Percentage is above 20% then "0" (zero) will be given
- No Negotiations

What is Plagiarism

“...taking someone else's work or ideas and **passing them off as one's own.**”

- You are expected to take others ideas: Teachers, scholars you read, things you see / hear
- Reference them!
- “As told in class”, “As XYZ argues”, “What we find in PQR”
- If you want to use exact words from someone please put them in “Double Quotations”
- For Project you will have to give proper citation and reference

What Counts as Plagiarism

- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation, or information
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure / substance of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (the issue of “fair use”)

When to Give a Reference

- Quoting
- Paraphrasing
- Summarising an idea or argument
- Fact, Data, Information
- Not Common Knowledge

If In Doubt....

- Ask Me!
- Or the TA
 - Hemant Suresh (hemant.suresh@iiit.ac.in)
- Office Time:
 - Tuesday and Wednesday: 10am to 12 noon.
 - (B3-309, Vindhya)