

# TOPICS to be covered



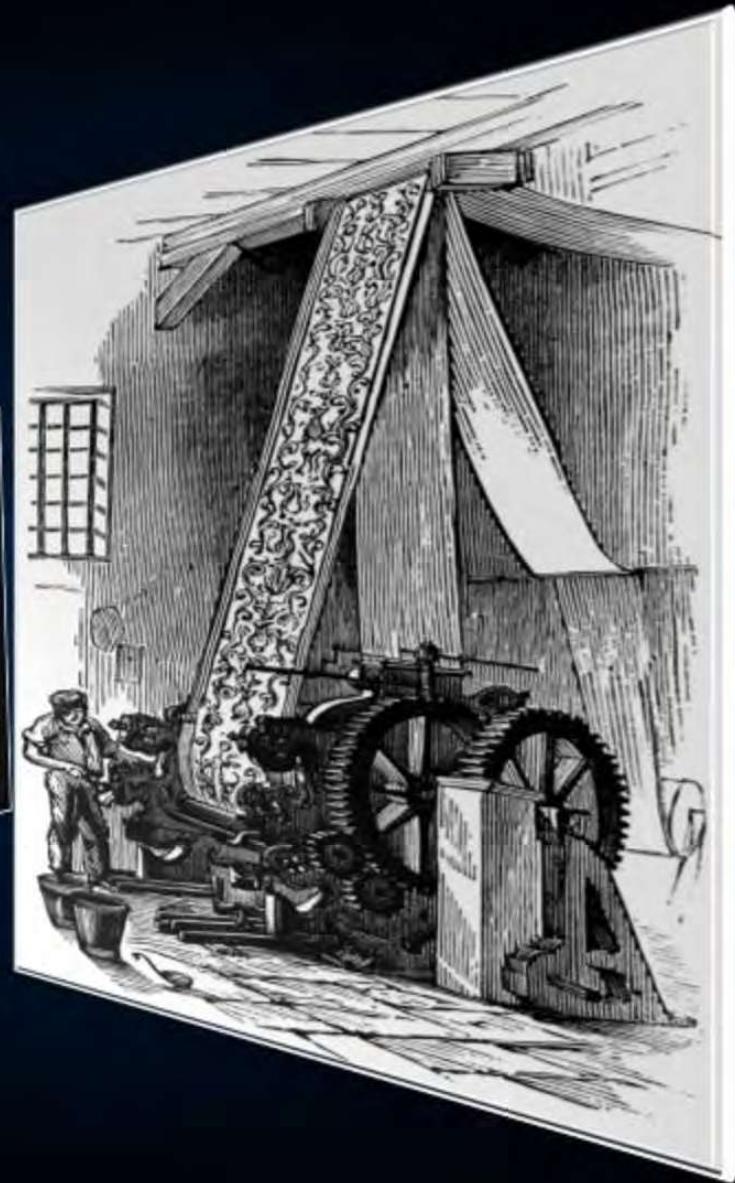
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Print Culture and the Modern World





# Print Culture and the Modern World

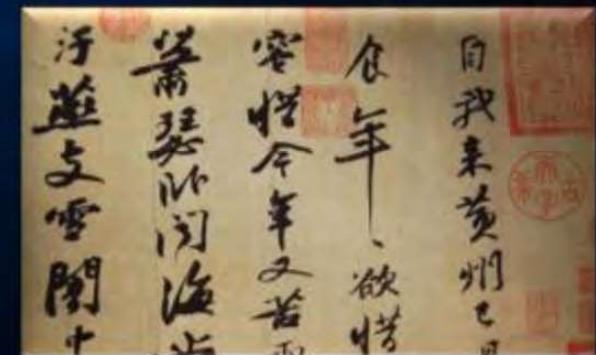




## The First Printed Books



- ❖ Earliest kind of print technology was developed in China, Japan and Korea -a system of hand printing.
- ❖ Books in China were printed by rubbing paper from AD 594 and both the sides of the book were folded and stitched (Chinese 'accordion book')
- ❖ Superbly skilled craftsmen could duplicate, with remarkable accuracy, the beauty of calligraphy.





- ❖ The imperial state in China - major producer of printed material.
- ❖ China started conducting civil service ~~examinations~~ for its bureaucrats and its textbooks were printed in vast numbers.
- ❖ Print was no longer confined to scholar-officials. Merchants used print while collecting their trade information.

- ❖ Reading became a part of leisure activity and rich women started publishing their own poetry and plays. This new reading culture attracted new technology.
- ❖ In the late 19th century, Western printing techniques and mechanical presses were imported.
- ❖ Shanghai became the hub of the new print culture, catering to the western-style schools. From hand printing there was now a gradual shift to mechanical printing



## Print in Japan



- ❖ Buddhist **missionaries** from China introduced hand-printing technology into Japan around AD 768-770.
- ❖ Buddhist **Diamond Sutra** - oldest Japanese book, printed in AD 868 - containing six sheets of text and woodcut illustrations
- ❖ Printing of visual material led to interesting publishing practices.
- ❖ In the late 19th century, illustrative collections of paintings depicted an elegant urban culture and libraries and bookstores were packed with hand-printed material of various types – books on women, musical instruments, etc.





## Print Comes to Europe



### Silk Route:

- ❖ For centuries, silk and spices from China flowed into Europe.
- ❖ In the eleventh century, Chinese paper reached Europe.

- ❖ Marco Polo a great explorer, returned to Italy after many years of exploration in China he brought the knowledge of woodblock printing and soon the technology spread to other parts of Europe.



- ❖ Luxury editions were still handwritten on very expensive vellum, meant for aristocratic circles and rich monastic libraries which scoffed at printed books as cheap vulgarities.
- ❖ Merchants and students in the university towns bought the cheaper printed copies.
- ❖ Scribes or skilled hand-writers were no longer solely employed by wealthy or influential patrons but increasingly by booksellers as well. More than 50 scribes often worked for one bookseller.



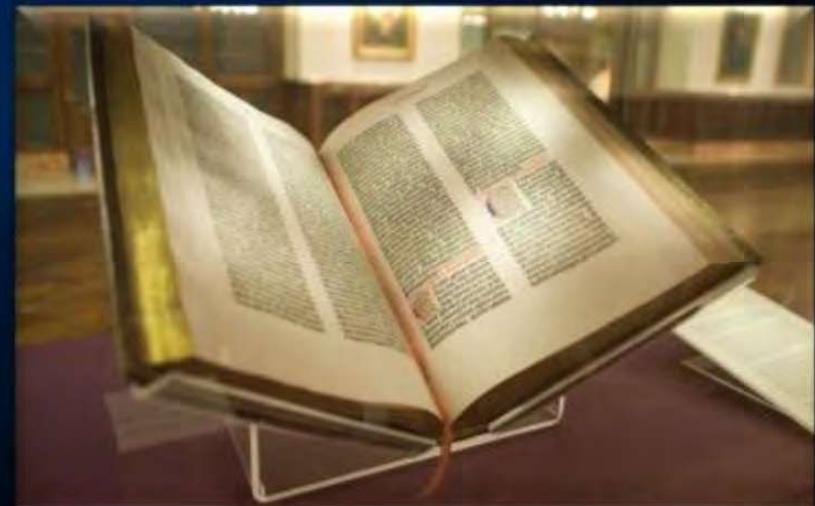
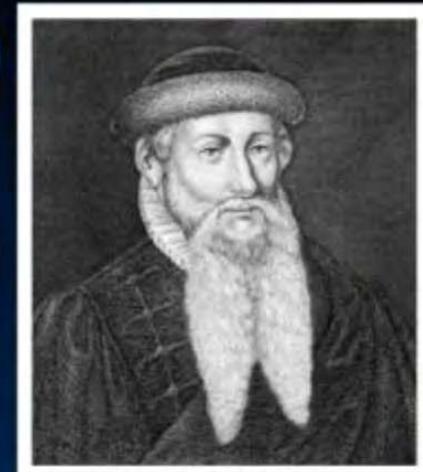
- ❖ Production of handwritten manuscripts could not satisfy the ever-increasing demand for books.
- ❖ Europe widely started using woodblocks to print textiles, playing cards, and religious pictures with simple, brief texts.
- ❖ Johann Gutenberg developed the first-known printing press in the 1430s.



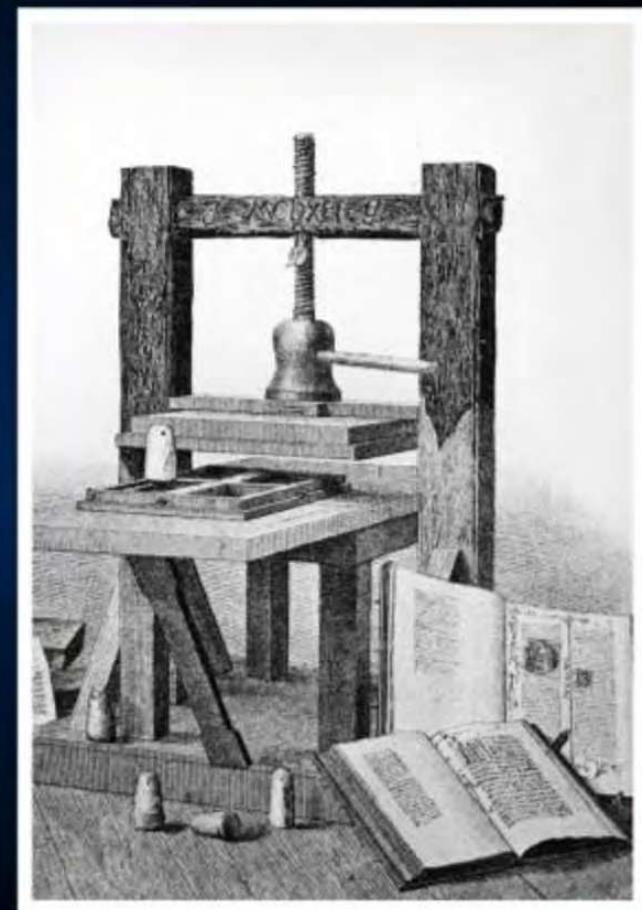


## Gutenberg and the Printing Press

- ❖ Gutenberg was the son of a merchant and grew up on a large agricultural estate.
- ❖ From his childhood he had seen wine and olive presses.
- ❖ The first printed book with the new system was the Bible.



- ❖ With the adoption of new technology the existing art of producing books by hand was not entirely displaced.
- ❖ Books printed for the rich left blank space for decoration on the printed page. ✓
- ❖ In the hundred years between 1450 and 1550, printing presses were set up in most countries of Europe.
- ❖ The shift from hand printing to mechanical printing led to the print revolution.





## Hand Printing

(China, Japan,  
Korea)



Europe

(Marco Polo)

Mechanical  
Printing  
Press

{Johann  
Gutenberg}



## The Print Revolution and Its Impact



### ***A New Reading Public***

- ❖ Printing press - new reading public emerged.
- ❖ Reduced the cost of books.
- ❖ Time and labour required to produce each book came down.
- ❖ Books flooded the market, reaching out to an ever-growing readership.



- ❖ Access to books - a new culture of reading
- ❖ Earlier, reading restricted to elites.
- ❖ Common people lived in a world of oral culture - heard sacred texts read out, ballads recited, and folk tales narrated.
- ❖ Earlier- a hearing public Now- a reading public.
- ❖ Problem in this transition: rates of literacy in most European countries were very low till the twentieth century



## How they dealt with it?

Printers began publishing popular ballads and folk tales, and such books would be profusely illustrated with pictures.

These were then sung and recited at gatherings in villages and in taverns in towns.

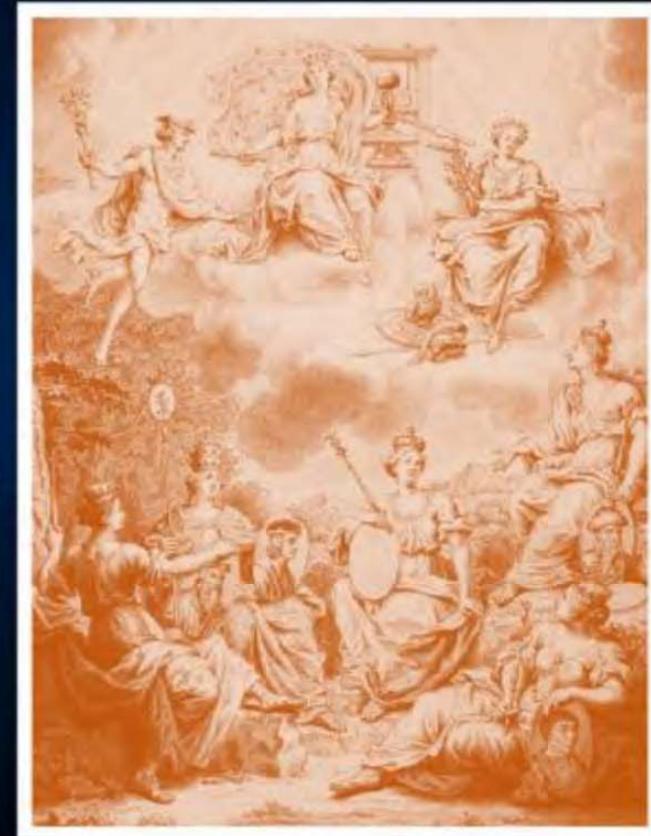




## Religious Debates and the Fear of Print



- ❖ Print - introduced a new world of debate and discussion.
- ❖ Not everyone welcomed the printed book, and those who did also had fears about it.
- ❖ Fear - that if there was no control over what was printed and read then rebellious and irreligious thoughts might spread. The authority of 'valuable' literature would be destroyed.
- ❖ Who feared it?



- ❖ In 1517, the religious reformer Martin Luther wrote Ninety Five Theses, criticising many of the practices and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church.
- ❖ His textbook printed copy led to a division within the Church and to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.
- ❖ Deeply grateful to print, Luther said, 'Printing is the ultimate gift of God and the greatest one'
- ❖ Several scholars, in fact, think that print brought about a new intellectual atmosphere and helped spread the new ideas that led to the Reformation.





## Print and Dissent

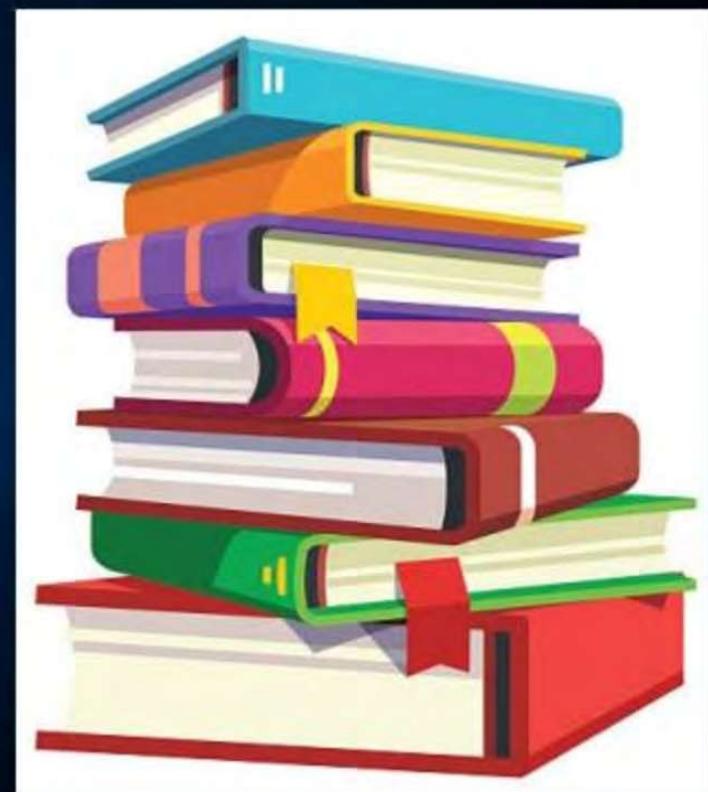


- ❖ In the sixteenth century, Menocchio, a miller in Italy, began to read books that were available in his locality.
- ❖ He reinterpreted the message of the Bible and formulated a view of God and Creation that enraged the Roman Catholic Church.
- ❖ When the Roman Church began its inquisition to repress heretical ideas, Menocchio was hauled up twice and ultimately executed.
- ❖ The Roman Church, troubled by such effects of popular readings and questionings of faith, imposed severe controls over publishers and booksellers and began to maintain an Index of Prohibited Books from 1558.

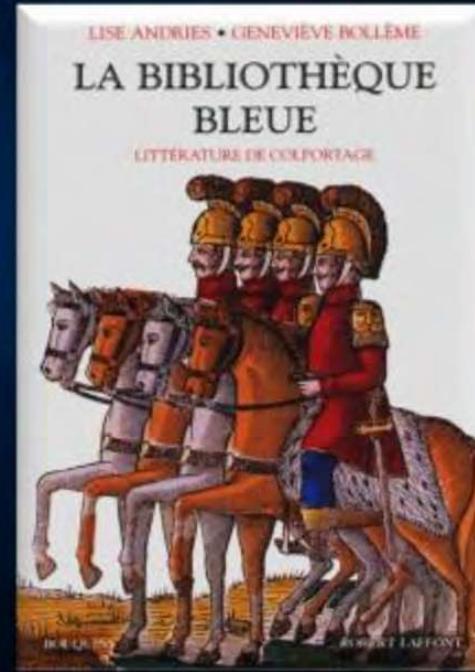


## The Reading Mania

- ❖ In most parts of Europe, literacy rates went up, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. ( 60 to 80 per cent)
- ❖ Churches of different denominations set up schools in villages, carrying literacy to peasants and artisans.



- ❖ New forms of popular literature appeared in print, targeting new audiences.
- ❖ Almanacs or ritual calendars, along with ballads and folktales.
- ❖ England - penny chapbooks were carried by petty pedlars known as chapmen, and sold for a penny, so that even the poor could buy them.
- ❖ France - 'Biliotheque Bleue': low-priced small books printed on poor quality paper and bound in cheap blue covers.
- ❖ Romances, printed on four to six pages, and the more substantial 'histories' which were stories about the past.



- ❖ From the early 18th century, periodical press developed which combined information related to current affairs with entertainment.
- ❖ Journals and newspapers carried information related to wars, trade and developments in other places.
- ❖ Issac Newton discoveries were published which influenced scientifically-minded readers.
- ❖ Writings of thinkers such as Thomas Paine, Voltaire and Jean Jacques Rousseau were also widely printed and read.
- ❖ Thus their ideas about science, reason and rationality found their way into popular literature.





## 'Tremble, therefore, tyrants of the world!'



- ❖ Books were considered as a means of spreading progress and enlightenment by the mid-eighteenth century.
- ❖ According to Louise-Sébastien Mercier, a novelist in eighteenth-century France said that 'The printing press is the most powerful engine of progress and public opinion is the force that will sweep despotism away.'
- ❖ Convinced of the power of print in bringing enlightenment and destroying the basis of despotism, Mercier proclaimed: 'Tremble, therefore, tyrants of the world! Tremble before the virtual writer!'





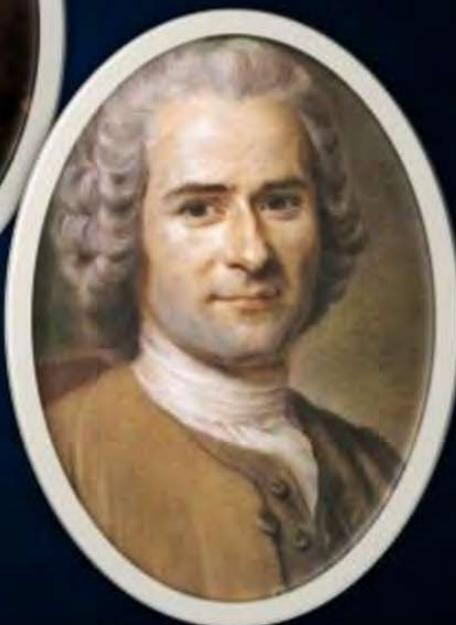
## Print Culture and the French Revolution



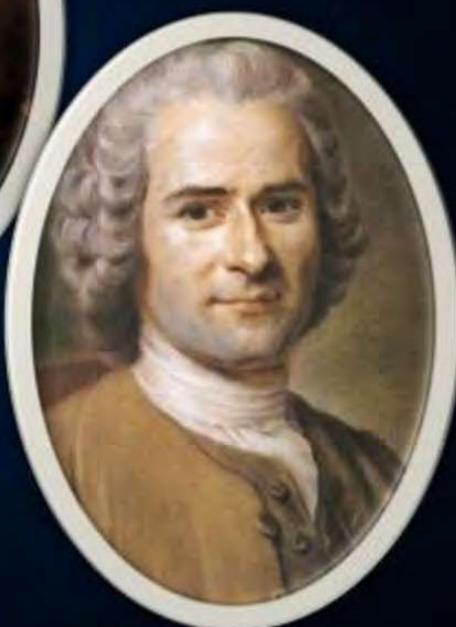
- ❖ Print culture created the conditions within which French Revolution occurred.
- ❖ Three types of arguments have been usually put forward.

**First:**

- ❖ Print popularised the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers. Collectively, their writings provided a critical commentary on tradition, superstition and despotism. They argued for the rule of reason rather than custom, and demanded that everything be judged through the application of reason and rationality. They attacked the sacred authority of the Church and the despotic power of the state, thus eroding the legitimacy of a social order based on tradition. The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau were read widely.



- ❖ **Second:**
- ❖ Print created a new culture of dialogue and debate. All values, norms and institutions were re-evaluated and discussed by a public that had become aware of the power of reason, and recognised the need to question existing ideas and beliefs. Within this public culture, new ideas of social revolution came into being.





### Third:

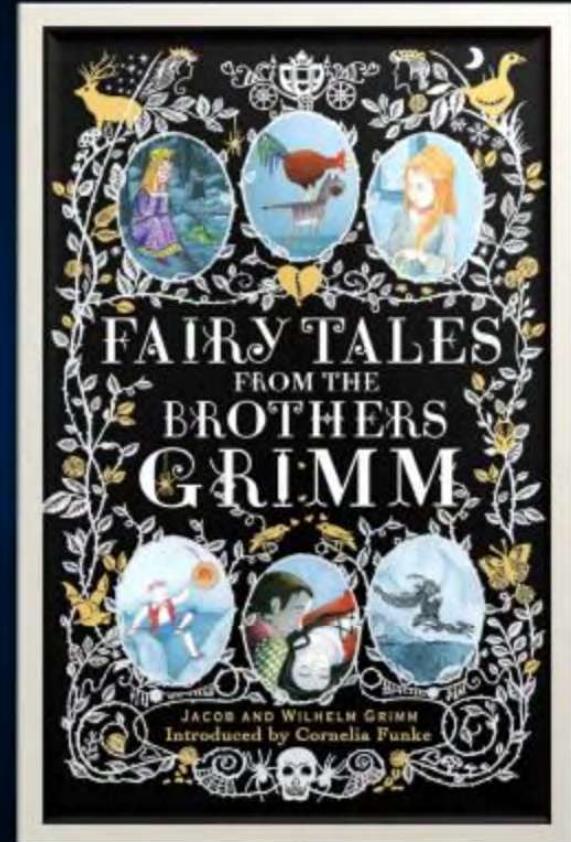
- ❖ By the 1780s there was an outpouring of literature that mocked the royalty and criticised their morality. In the process, it raised questions about the existing social order. Cartoons and caricatures typically suggested that the monarchy remained absorbed only in sensual pleasures while the common people suffered immense hardships. This literature circulated underground and led to the growth of hostile sentiments against the monarchy.



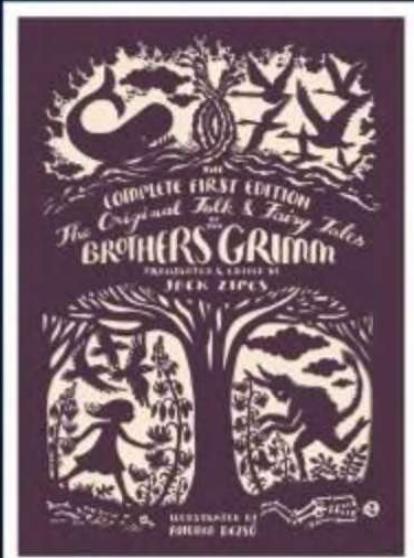
## The Nineteenth Century

### Children

- ❖ Primary education became compulsory from the late nineteenth century - children became important category of readers.
- ❖ Production of school textbooks became critical for the publishing industry.
- ❖ A children's press, devoted to literature for children alone, was set up in France in 1857.

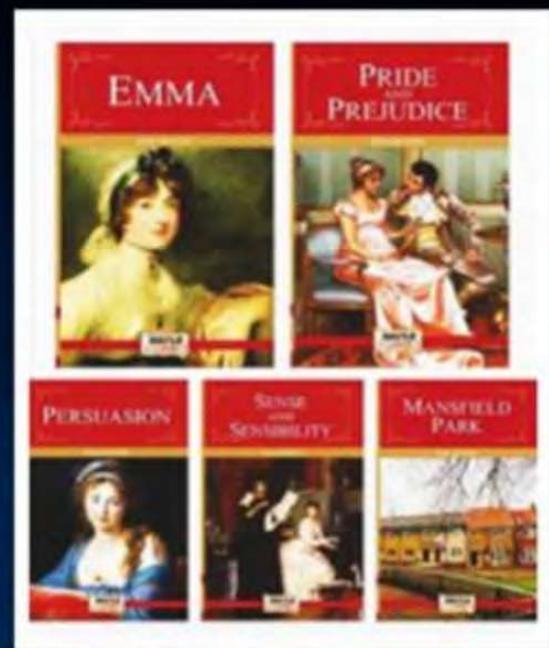


- ❖ The Grimm Brothers in Germany spent years compiling traditional folk tales gathered from peasants.
- ❖ What they collected was edited before the stories were published in a collection in 1812.
- ❖ Anything that was considered unsuitable for children or would appear vulgar to the elites, was not included in the published version.
- ❖ Rural folk tales thus acquired a new form.



## **Women:**

- ❖ Women- readers as well as writers.
- ❖ Penny magazines -especially meant for women, as were manuals teaching proper behaviour and housekeeping.
- ❖ Best known novelists were women: Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, George Eliot.
- ❖ Their writings became important in defining a new type of woman: a person with will, strength of personality, determination and the power to think.





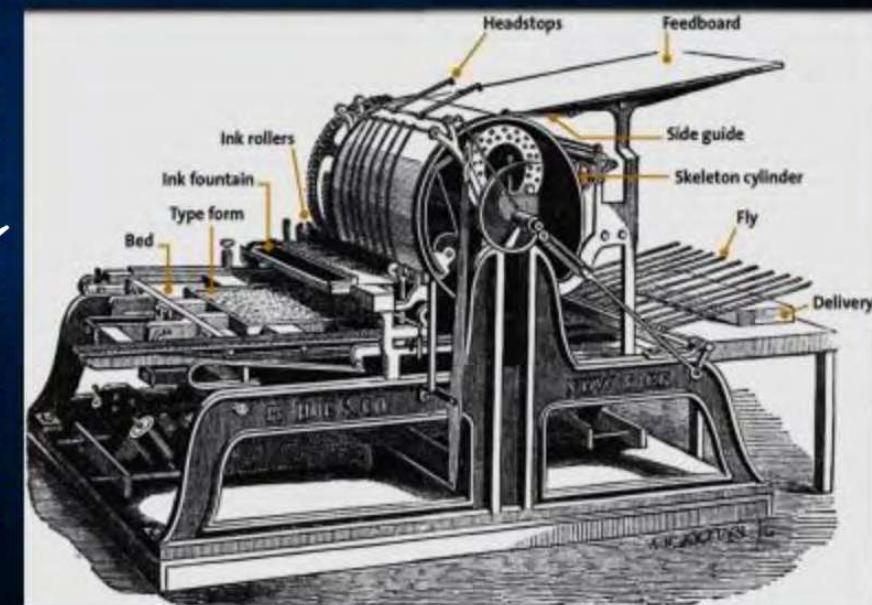
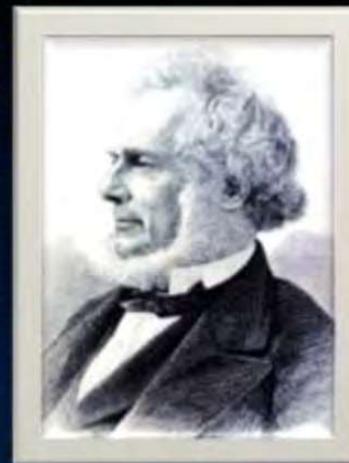
## **Workers:**

- ❖ Nineteenth century - lending libraries in England became instruments for educating white-collar workers, artisans and lower-middle-class people.
- ❖ Sometimes, self-educated working-class people wrote for themselves.
- ❖ After the working day was gradually shortened – Workers wrote political tracts and autobiographies in large numbers.



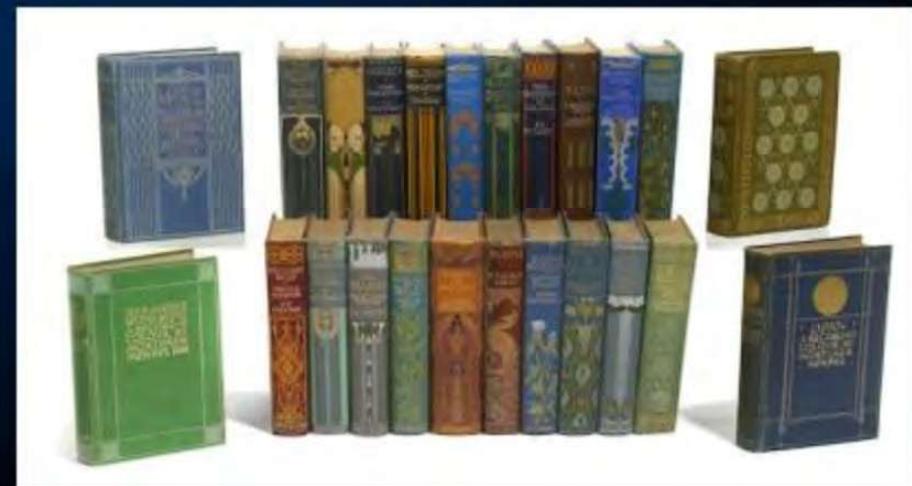
### Further Innovations :

- ❖ Late eighteenth century - press came to be made out of metal.
- ❖ Mid-nineteenth century, Richard M. Hoe of New York had perfected the power-driven cylindrical press - capable of printing 8,000 sheets per hour.
- ❖ Late nineteenth century - the offset press was developed which could print up to six colours at a time.
- ❖ Twentieth century - electrically operated presses accelerated printing operations





- ❖ Methods of feeding paper improved, the quality of plates became better, automatic paper reels and photoelectric controls of the colour register were introduced.
- ❖ In the 1920s in England, popular works were sold in cheap series, called the Shilling Series. The dust cover or the book jacket is also a twentieth-century innovation.
- ❖ With the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s, publishers feared a decline in book purchases. To sustain buying, they brought out cheap paperback editions.



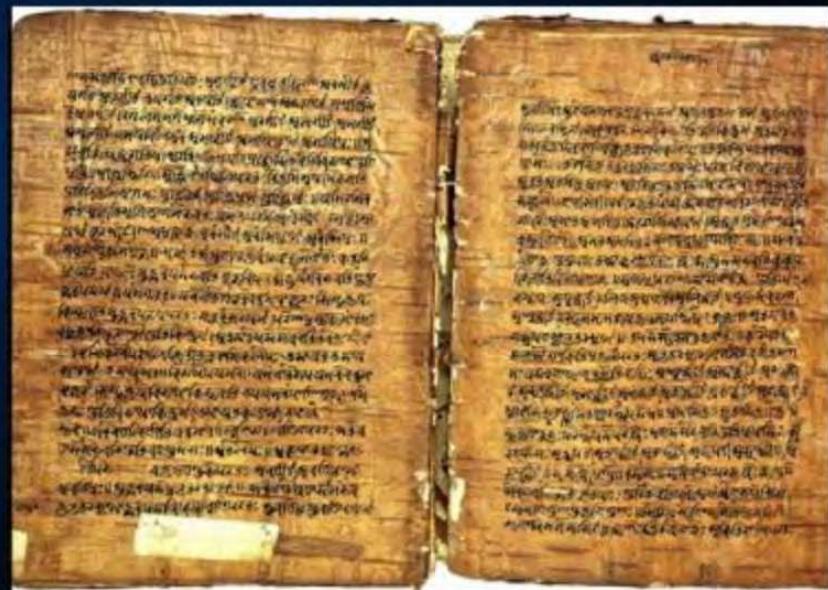


## India and the World of Print



### ***Manuscripts Before the Age of Print:***

- ❖ India had a very rich and old tradition of handwritten manuscripts – in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, as well as in various vernacular languages.
- ❖ Manuscripts were copied on palm leaves or on handmade paper.
- ❖ Pages were sometimes beautifully illustrated.
- ❖ They would be either pressed between wooden covers or sewn together to ensure preservation.



### Problems:

- ❖ Highly expensive and fragile.
- ❖ Script was written in different styles - could not be read easily.
- ❖ Pre-colonial Bengal - extensive network of village primary schools - students only learnt to write.





## India and the World of Print



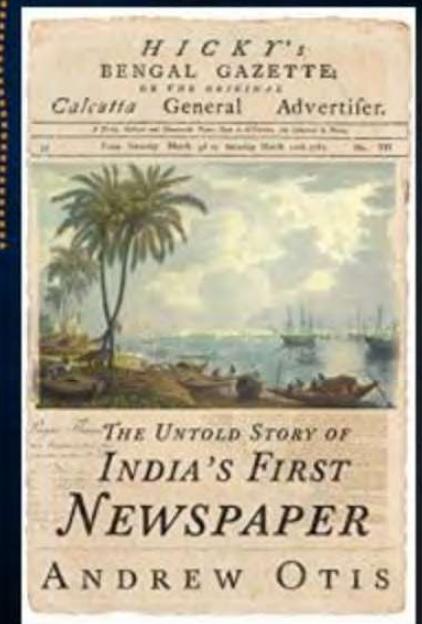
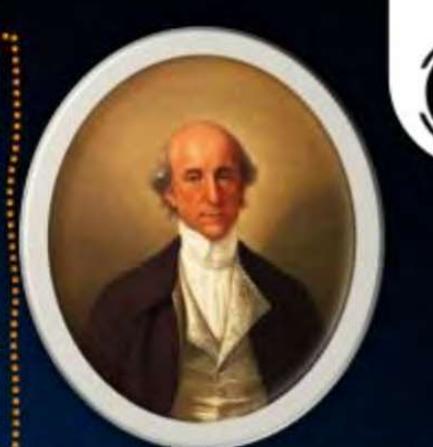
### **Print Comes to India :**

- ❖ In the mid-sixteenth century, the first printing press came to Goa with Portuguese missionaries.
- ❖ Catholic priests printed the first Tamil book in 1579 at Cochin, and in 1713 the first Malayalam book was printed by them.
- ❖ The English press grew quite late in India even though the English East India Company began to import presses from the late seventeenth century.





- ❖ A weekly magazine named the Bengal Gazette - edited by James Augustus Hickey. Advertisements were published by Hickey and he also published a lot of gossip about the Company's senior officials in India.
- ❖ Enraged by this, Governor-General Warren Hastings persecuted Hickey, and encouraged the publication of officially sanctioned newspapers that could counter the flow of information that damaged the image of the colonial government.
- ❖ By the close of the eighteenth century, a number of newspapers and journals appeared in print.





## Religious Reform and Public Debates



- ❖ Early nineteenth century - variety of new interpretations of the beliefs of different religions.
- ❖ Some criticised existing practices and campaigned for reform, while others countered the arguments of reformers
- ❖ Printed tracts and ~~newspapers~~ not only spread the new ideas, but they shaped the nature of the debate.
- ❖ New ideas emerged through these clashes of opinions.



- ❖ A time of intense controversies between social and religious reformers and the Hindu orthodoxy over matters like widow immolation, monotheism, Brahmanical priesthood and idolatry
- ❖ Rammohun Roy published the Sambad Kaumudi from 1821 and the Hindu orthodoxy commissioned the Samachar Chandrika to oppose his opinions.
- ❖ From 1822, two Persian newspapers were published, Jam-i-Jahan Nama and Shamsul Akhbar.
- ❖ In the same year, a Gujarati newspaper the Bombay Samachar made its appearance.

## Reformers vs Hindu Orthodoxy

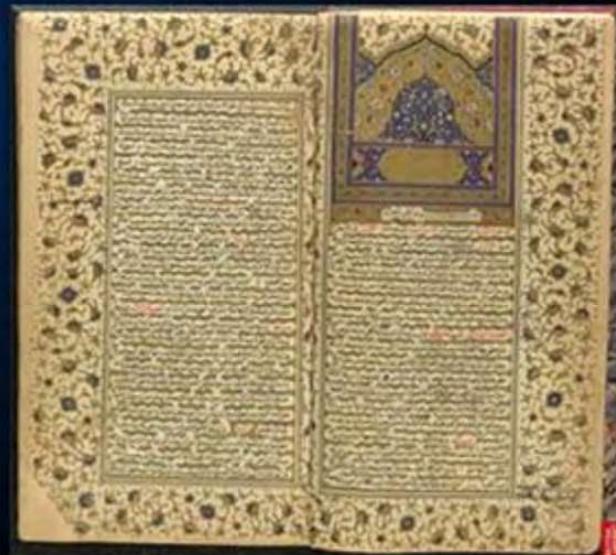


**Sambad Kaumudi**

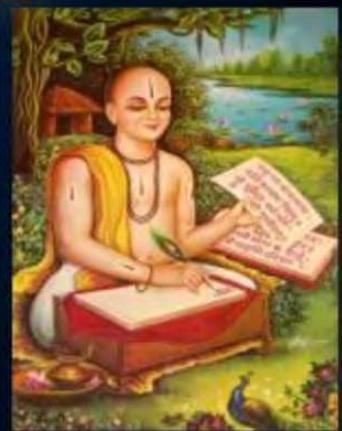
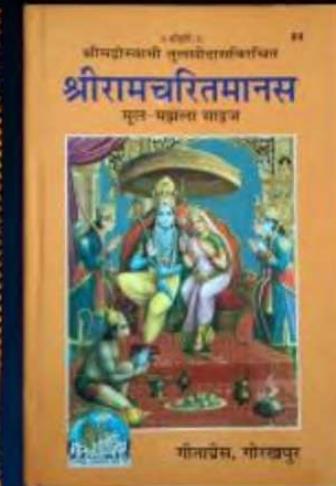
1821ई. में बंगाली भाषा में साप्ताहिक समाचार पत्र 'संबद कौमुदी' का प्रकाशन हुआ। इस समाचार पत्र का प्रकाश राजा राममोहन राय के हाथों में था। यह राजनीतिक नहीं समाजिक समस्याओं को लेकर जननेवाली पत्रिका थी जिसका मुख्य उद्देश्य समाजिक कृतीतियों को प्रियाना, सती प्रथा जैसी सुन्दरीया खण्डन करना था।



- ❖ In north India, the ulama were deeply anxious about the collapse of Muslim dynasties. Fear - that colonial rulers would encourage conversion, change the Muslim personal laws.
- ❖ To counter this, they used cheap lithographic presses, published Persian and Urdu translations of holy scriptures, and printed religious newspapers and tracts.
- ❖ The Deoband Seminary, founded in 1867, published thousands upon thousands of fatwas telling Muslim readers how to conduct themselves in their everyday lives, and explaining the meanings of Islamic doctrines.

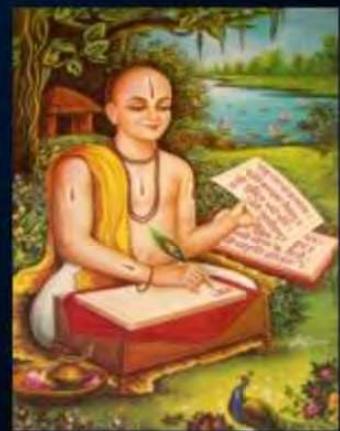
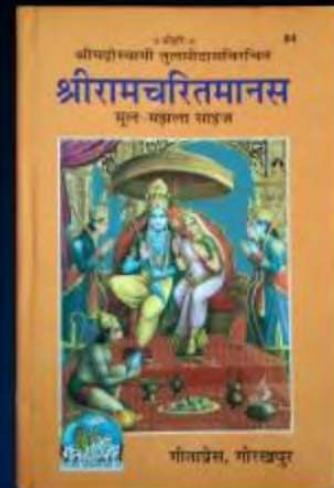


- ❖ Among Hindus, too, print encouraged the reading of religious texts, especially in the vernacular languages.
- ❖ The first printed edition of the Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas, a sixteenth-century text, came out from Calcutta in 1810.
- ❖ By the mid-nineteenth century, cheap lithographic editions flooded north Indian markets.
- ❖ From the 1880s, the Naval Kishore Press at Lucknow and the Shri Venkateshwar Press in Bombay published numerous religious texts in vernaculars.

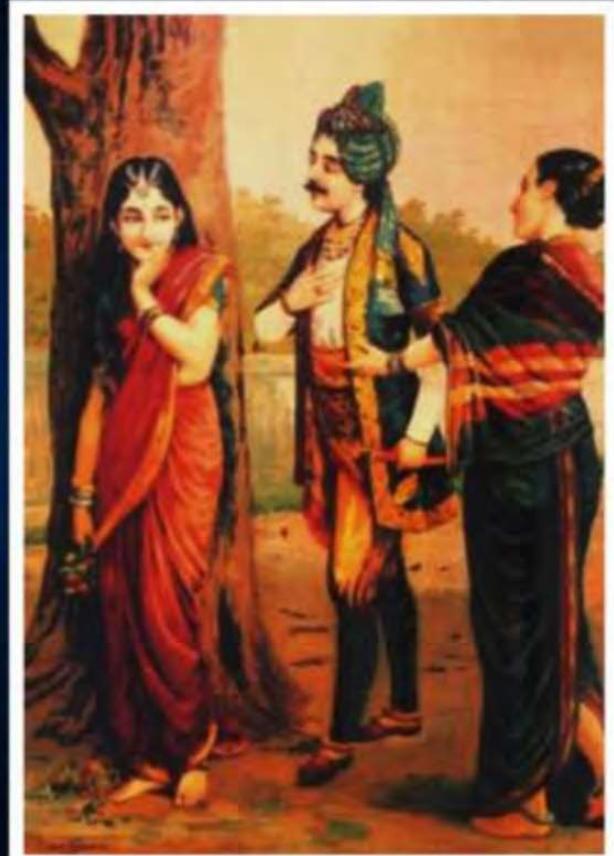


### ❖ New Forms of Publication

- ❖ As more and more people could now read, they wanted to see their own lives, experiences, emotions and relationships reflected in what they read.
- ❖ In Europe, the novel, a literary firm, was developed to cater to the needs of people who acquired Indian forms and styles.
- ❖ New literary forms entered the world of reading such as lyrics, short stories, essays about social and political matters.
- ❖ New visual culture took shape by the end of the nineteenth century.



- ❖ Painters like Raja Ravi Varma produced images for mass circulation.
- ❖ Poor wood engravers who made woodblocks set up shop near the letterpresses, and were employed by print shops.
- ❖ Cheap prints and calendars, easily available in the bazaar, could be bought even by the poor to decorate the walls of their homes or places of work.
- ❖ These prints began shaping popular ideas about modernity and tradition, religion and politics, and society and culture.





- ❖ By the 1870s, caricatures and cartoons were being published in journals and newspapers, commenting on social and political issues.
- ❖ Some caricatures ridiculed the educated Indians' fascination with Western tastes and clothes, while others expressed the fear of social change.
- ❖ There were imperial caricatures lampooning nationalists, as well as nationalist cartoons criticising imperial rule.



## New Forms of Publication



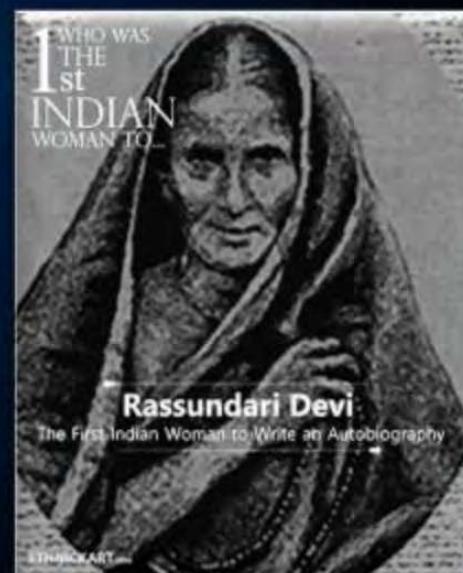
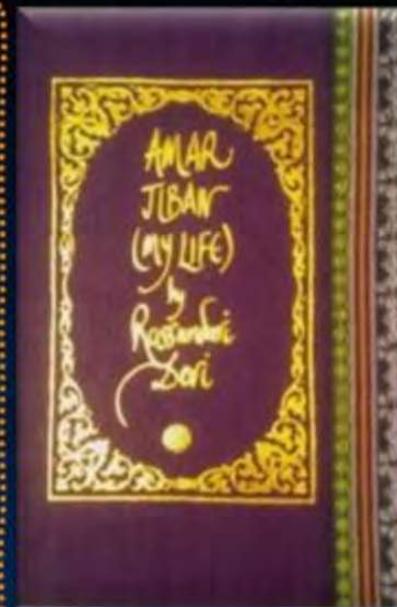
### **Women and Print:**

- ❖ Women's reading - increased enormously in middle-class homes.
- ❖ Liberal husbands and fathers began educating their womenfolk at home and sent them to schools when women's schools were set up in the cities and towns after the mid-nineteenth century.
- ❖ Many journals began carrying writings by women and explained why women should be educated.
- ❖ They also carried a syllabus and attached suitable reading matter which could be used for home-based schooling.





- ❖ Conservative Hindus believed that a literate girl would be widowed and Muslims feared that educated women would be corrupted by reading Urdu romances.
- ❖ In East Bengal - Rashsundari Debi, a young married girl in a very orthodox household, learnt to read in the secrecy of her kitchen.
- ❖ Later, she wrote her autobiography Amar Jiban which was published in 1876.



- ❖ From the 1860s, a few Bengali women like Kailashbashini Debi wrote books highlighting the experiences of women - about how women were imprisoned at home, kept in ignorance, forced to do hard domestic labour and treated unjustly by the very people they served.
- ❖ In the 1880s, in present-day Maharashtra, Tarabai Shinde and Pandita Ramabai wrote with passionate anger about the miserable lives of upper-caste Hindu women, especially widows.





- ❖ A woman in a Tamil novel expressed what reading meant to women who were so greatly confined by social regulations: 'For various reasons, my world is small ... More than half my life's happiness has come from books ...'
- ❖ Soon a large segment of it was devoted to the education of women – journals discussed issues like women's education, widowhood, widow remarriage and the national movement.
- ❖ Some of them offered household and fashion lessons to women and brought entertainment through short stories and serialised novels.



### In Punjab:

- ❖ Ram Chaddha published the fast-selling Istri Dharm Vichar to teach women how to be obedient wives.
- ❖ The Khalsa Tract Society published cheap booklets with a similar message.
- ❖ Many of these were in the form of dialogues about the qualities of a good woman

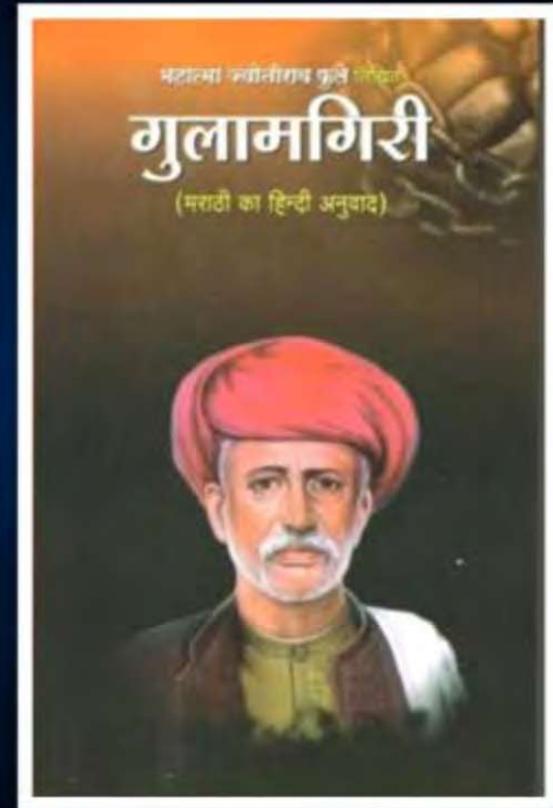


## New Forms of Publication

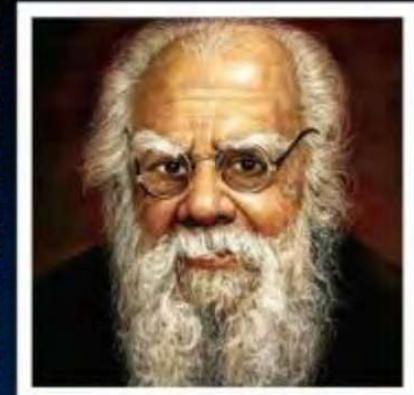


### **Print and the Poor People:**

- ❖ Very cheap small books: nineteenth-century Madras towns and sold at crossroads, allowing poor people travelling to markets to buy them.
- ❖ Public libraries were set up
- ❖ Jyotiba Phule, the Maratha pioneer of 'low caste' protest movements, wrote about the injustices of the caste system in his Gulamgiri (1871).



- ❖ **B.R. Ambedkar** in Maharashtra and **E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker** in Madras wrote powerfully on caste.
- ❖ **Kashibaba**, a Kanpur millworker, wrote and published '**Chhote Aur Bade Ka Sawal**' in 1938 to show the links between caste and class exploitation.
- ❖ The poems of another Kanpur millworker, who wrote under the name of Sudarshan Chakr between 1935 and 1955, were brought together and published in a collection called **Sacchi Kavitayan**.





## Print and Censorship



- ❖ Censorship was not a concern under the East India Company.
- ❖ By the 1820s, the Calcutta Supreme Court passed certain regulations to control press freedom and the Company began encouraging publication of newspapers that would celebrate British rule.
- ❖ In 1835, faced with urgent petitions by editors of English and vernacular newspapers, Governor-General Bentinck agreed to revise press laws.
- ❖ Thomas Macaulay, a liberal colonial official, formulated new rules that restored the earlier freedoms.



- ❖ The freedom of press changed after the revolt of 1857. In 1878, the Vernacular Press Act was passed, modelled on the Irish Press Laws, which provided the government with extensive rights to censor reports and editorials in the vernacular press.
- ❖ Government started keeping track of the vernacular newspapers. Nationalists newspapers grew in numbers all over India.
- ❖ In 1907, Punjab revolutionaries were deported, Bal Gangadhar Tilak wrote with great sympathy about them in his Kesari, which led to his imprisonment in 1908.

