

# CBSE Class 10 Social Science History Notes

## Chapter 5 - Print Culture and the Modern World

CBSE Class 10 Social Science Chapter 5 talks about the development of print, from its beginnings in East Asia, to its expansion in Europe and in India. It also explains the impact of the spread of technology and how social lives and cultures changed with the emergence of print. Class 10 Social Science notes of History for Chapter 5 - Print Culture and the Modern World are prepared by highly skilled subject matter experts. These CBSE notes help students to prepare effectively for their Social Science exam. CBSE notes of Class 10 History for Chapter 5 encompass all the basic concepts in an interactive manner, so that students can understand each topic easily and retain them for a longer time period.

### The First Printed Books

China, Japan and Korea developed the earliest kind of print technology, which was 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. China for a long time was the 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.

### Print in Japan

Hand-printing technology was introduced by Buddhist missionaries from China into Japan around AD 768-770. The Buddhist Diamond Sutra is the 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

Marco Polo returned to Europe after exploring China and along with him, he brought the knowledge of woodblock printing and soon the technology spread to other parts of Europe. Gradually, the demands of books started increasing so booksellers began exporting books to many different countries. But the 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 an expert in the art of polishing stones and with this knowledge, he adapted existing technology to design his innovation. The first printed book with the new system was the

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Bible. With the adaptation 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.

### The Print Revolution and Its Impact

Print revolution is not only a new way of producing books it transformed the lives of people, changing their relationship to information and knowledge, and with institutions and authorities.

### A New Reading Public

The cost of books was reduced due to the print revolution. Markets were flooded with books reaching out to an ever-growing readership. It created a new culture of reading. Earlier, elites are only permitted to read books and common people used to hear sacred texts read out. Before the print revolution, books were expensive. But, the transition was not as simple as books could only be read by the literate. Printers started publishing popular ballads and folk tales illustrated with pictures for those who did not read. Oral culture entered print and printed material were orally transmitted.

### Religious Debates and the Fear of Print

Print introduced a new world of debate and discussion. Printed books are not welcomed by everyone and many were apprehensive of the effects that the wider circulation of books could have on people's minds. There was a fear of spreading rebellious and irreligious thoughts. 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.

### Print and Dissent

In the sixteenth century, Menocchio began to read books 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. Menocchio was hauled up twice and ultimately executed. From 1558, The Roman Church began to maintain an Index of Prohibited Books.

### The Reading Mania

In most parts of Europe, literacy rates went up, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Schools and literacy spread in European countries due to which people wanted production of more books. Other forms of reading mainly based on entertainment began to reach ordinary readers. Books were of various sizes, serving many different purposes and interests. 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.

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‘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-Sebastien 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

Historians argued that print culture created the conditions for the French Revolution. Three types of arguments were put forward.

1. Print popularised the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers. Their writings provided a critical commentary on tradition, superstition and despotism. The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau were read widely; and people saw the world through new eyes, eyes that were questioning, critical and rational.
2. Print created a new culture of dialogue and debate. Within this public culture, new ideas of social revolution came into being.
3. By the 1780s there was an outpouring of literature that mocked the royalty and criticised their morality.

Print helps in spreading ideas. They accepted some ideas and rejected others and interpreted things their way. Print did not directly shape their minds, but it did open up the possibility of thinking differently.

### The Nineteenth Century

Large numbers of new readers among children, women and workers were added to the mass literacy in Europe during the 19th century.

#### Children, Women and Workers

From the late 19th century, primary education became compulsory. In 1857, a children’s press was set up in France devoted to literature for children. Traditional folk tales were gathered by Grimm Brothers in Germany. Rural folk tales acquired a new form. Women became important as readers as well as writers. Magazines were published especially dedicated for women, as were manuals teaching proper behaviour and housekeeping. In the nineteenth century, lending libraries in England became instruments for educating white-collar workers, artisans and lower-middle-class people.

#### Further Innovations

Press came to be made out of metal by the late eighteenth century. Printing technology saw a series of further innovations by the 19th century. During that century, power-driven cylindrical press was perfected by Richard M, which was particularly used for printing newspapers. The offset was

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developed which was capable of printing six colours at a time. By the 20th century, electrically operated presses accelerated printing operations followed by other series of development.

1. Methods of feeding paper improved
2. The quality of plates became better
3. Automatic paper reels and photoelectric controls of the colour register were introduced

### India and the World of Print

#### Manuscripts Before the Age of Print

India is a country rich in old tradition of handwritten manuscripts – in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, as well as in various vernacular languages. These handwritten manuscripts were copied on palm leaves or on handmade paper. The production of the manuscript continued well after the introduction of print. It is considered highly expensive and fragile. In Bengal, students were only taught to write due to which many became literate without ever actually reading any kinds of texts.

#### 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 was 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. By the close of the eighteenth century, a number of newspapers and journals appeared in print.

#### Religious Reform and Public Debates

Religious issues became intense from the early nineteenth century. People started criticizing existing practices and campaigned for reform, while others countered the arguments of reformers. Printed tracts and newspapers spread new ideas and shaped the nature of the debate. New ideas emerged and intense controversies erupted between social and religious reformers and the Hindu orthodoxy over matters like widow immolation, monotheism, Brahmanical priesthood and idolatry. In 1821, Rammohun Roy published the Sambad Kaumudi. In 1822, two Persian newspapers published, Jam-i-Jahan Nama and Shamsul Akhbar. In the same year, a Gujarati newspaper, the Bombay Samachar, was established. 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.

Print encouraged the reading of religious texts, among Hindus, especially in the vernacular languages. Religious texts reached a very wide circle of people, encouraging discussions, debates and controversies within and among different religions. Newspapers conveyed news from one place to another, creating pan-Indian identities.

#### New Forms of Publication

New kinds of writing were introduced as more and more people got interested in reading. In Europe, the novel, a literary form, was developed to cater to the needs of people which acquired

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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. Cheap calendars were available in the bazaar which can 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. Caricatures and cartoons were being published in journals and newspapers, commenting on social and political issues by 1870s.

### Women and Print

Women's reading increased enormously in middle-class homes. Schools were set up in cities for women. Journals also started carrying writings by women, and explained why women should be educated. But, Conservative Hindus believed that a literate girl would be widowed and Muslims feared that educated women would be corrupted by reading Urdu romances. Social reforms and novels created a great interest in women's lives and emotions. In the early twentieth century, journals, written and edited by women, became extremely popular. In Bengal, an entire area in central Calcutta – the Battala – was devoted to the printing of popular books. By the late nineteenth century, a lot of these books were profusely illustrated with woodcuts and coloured lithographs. Pedlars took the Battala publications to homes, enabling women to read them in their leisure time.

### Print and the Poor People

Cheap books were bought at markets. Public libraries were set up mostly located in cities and towns. In the late 19th century, caste discrimination started coming up in many printed tracts and essays. Factory workers lacked education to write much about their experience. In 1938, Kashibaba wrote and published *Chhote Aur Bade Ka Sawal* in 1938 to show the links between caste and class exploitation. In the 1930s, Bangalore cotton millworkers set up libraries to educate themselves.

### Print and Censorship

Censorship was not a concern under the East India Company. The Calcutta Supreme Court passed certain regulations to control press freedom and in 1835, Governor-General Bentinck agreed to revise press laws. Thomas Macaulay formulated new rules that restored the earlier freedom. 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. Nationalist's newspapers grew in numbers all over India. In 1907, Punjab revolutionaries were deported, Balgangadhar Tilak wrote with great sympathy about them in his *Kesari* which led to his imprisonment in 1908.