

CBSE Class-10 Social Science
NCERT Solutions
Chapter - 7
History - Print Culture and the Modern World

Write in Brief

Question 1. Give reasons for the following:

- (a) Woodblock print only came to Europe after 1295.**
- (b) Martin Luther was in favour of print and spoke out in praise of it.**
- (c) The Roman Catholic Church began keeping an Index of Prohibited books from the mid-sixteenth century.**
- (d) Gandhi said the fight for Swaraj is a fight for liberty of speech, liberty of the press, and freedom of association.**

Answer: (a) Woodblock print was invented around the sixth century in China. It came to Europe, along with Marco Polo, an Italian explorer who stayed for several years in China. In 1295, he returned to Italy. Thereafter, the Italian began producing books with woodblocks, and soon the technology spread to other parts of Europe.

(b) Martin Luther was a great religious reformer of Germany. He was deeply grateful to print. He considered print as the ultimate gift of God. It was through print that people could be induced to think differently and motivated to take action.

In 1517, Martin Luther wrote 95 theses, he criticized many practices and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. Through the publications of his protestant ideas, Martin Luther challenged the orthodox practices and rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. . Luther's writings were immediately reproduced in vast numbers and read widely.

This led to a division within the Church and Protestant Reformation gained momentum. In this way, print culture gave rise to a new intellectual atmosphere and helped in spreading new ideas. Therefore, Martin Luther was in favour of print and praise it tremendously.

(c) The Roman Catholic Church had to face many dissents from mid-16th century onwards.

People had written many books that interpreted the God and the creation in their own ways or as they liked. Therefore, the church banned such books and kept the record of such banned books. It was called the Index of Prohibited Books.

(d) Gandhi considered that the liberty of speech, liberty of press and freedom of association were three most powerful vehicles of expressing and cultivating public opinion. Therefore, he said the fight for Swaraj was a fight for liberty of speech, press, and freedom for association. No nation could ever survive in the absence of these liberties.

Question 2. Write short notes to show what you know about:

(a) The Gutenberg Press

(b) Erasmus's idea of the printed book

(c) The Vernacular Press Act

Answer: (a) The Gutenberg Press: The first printing press was developed by Johan Gutenberg in 1430s. It was a developed form of the olive and wine presses. By 1448 Gutenberg perfected this system. The Gutenberg Press had a long handle attached to the screw. This handle was used to turn the screw and press down the platen over the printing block that was placed on the top of a sheet of damp paper. The lead moulds were used for casting the metal types for the letters of alphabet. The first book he printed was Bible. He produced 180 copies of Bible in 3 years, which was much faster by standards of the time, at the time.

(b) Erasmus's idea of printed book: Erasmus was the Latin scholar and a Catholic reformer. He criticized the printing of books. He believed that if there was no control over what was printed and read, it would result in spread of religious and radical ideas. Also, the significance to valuable literature would be lost.

(c) The Vernacular Press Act: Earliest newspaper in India were started by the British for themselves. During the course of the 19th century, a powerful Indian press grew, both in English and Indian languages. Therefore, the British wanted to take measure to control them. Modelled on the Irish Press Laws, it was passed in 1878. This law gave the government rights to censor reports and editorials in the vernacular press. If a 'seditious' report was published and the newspaper did not heed to an initial warning, then the press was seized and the

printing machinery confiscated. This was a complete violation of the freedom of expression.

Question 3. What did the spread of print culture in nineteenth century India mean to:

- (a) Women**
- (b) The poor**
- (c) Reformers**

Answer: (a) The spread of print culture in 19th century India benefited Indian women through learning and education. Many journals printed articles written by women. There was a strong movement in supports of women education. Reading matter was made available which could be used for home-based schooling. as a result, education among women spread widely. Some literate women started to write books and their autobiographies. Rashasundari Devi, a young married girl wrote her autobiography “Amar Jiban” which was published in 1876. Overall, the print culture in 19th century India helped in spread of the feeling of self-reliance among Indian women.

(b) The poor people benefited from the spread of print culture because of the availability of books at a low price. The readership among them increased due to the publication of low priced books. Public libraries were also set up from the early 19th century, expanding the access to the books where all people could gain knowledge. Encouraged and inspired by the social reformers, the people like factory workers too set up their libraries and some even wrote books. Kashibaba, a Kanpur mill worker wrote and published ‘Chote aur Bade Ka Sawal’.

(c) Indian reforms of 19th century utilized print culture as the most potent means of spreading their reformist ideas and highlight the unethical issues. They began publishing various vernacular and English and Hindi newspapers and books through which they could spread their opinions against widow immolation, child marriage, monotheism, Brahmanical priesthood and idolatry to the common people of the country. In this way the spread of print culture in the 19th century provided them a space for attacking religious orthodoxy and to spread modern social and political ideas to the people of different languages across the country.

Discuss

Question 1. Why did some people in 18th century Europe think that print culture would bring enlightenment and end despotism?

Answer: Before the invention of the printing press, access to print was limited. It was restricted to upper classes. Common people largely learnt from oral culture. Books were expensive and produced in insufficient numbers. However, with the advent of print culture, a new reading public emerged.

- It contributed to the spread of knowledge.
- The cost of books was reduced. The time and labour required to produce each book also reduced. As a result, the market were flooded by books for all kind of readers.
- Social reformers like Louise, Sebastian Mercier, and Martin Luther felt that the print culture is the most powerful engine of progress and public opinion and hence, it would definitely bring enlightenment and an end to despotism.

Question 2. Why did some people fear the effect of easily available printed books?

Choose one example from Europe and one from India.

Answer: Some people especially from upper class and powerful class feared the effect of easily available printed books. Their cause of fear was that due to the spread of literacy among the common people they may loose their position or authorities. Some people feared that this may lead to the spread of rebellions and irreligious thoughts. For example -

- In Europe, the Roman Catholic Church tried to curb the printed books through the Index of Prohibited Books.
- In India, the Vernacular Press Act imposed restrictions on Indian press and various local newspapers. Also, some religious leaders and some people from upper castes expressed their fear.

Question 4. What were the effects of the spread of print culture for poor people in nineteenth century India?

Answer: The effects of the spread of print culture for poor people in nineteenth century India were:

- The poor people benefited from the spread of print culture in India on account of the

availability of low-price books and public libraries.

- Enlightening essays were written against caste discrimination and its inherent injustices. These were read by people across the country.
- On the encouragement and support of social reformers, over-worked factory workers set up libraries for self-education, and some of them even published their own works, for example, Kashibaba and his "Chhote Aur Bade Ka Sawal".

Question 5. Explain how print culture assisted the growth of nationalism in India.

Answer: The print culture immensely helped the growth in the growth of nationalism in India in the following ways -

- In the 19th century, huge quantity of national literature was created. Revolutionised minds of people inspired them to throw away the British yoke.
- India Mirror, Bombay Samachar, The Hindu, Kesari-Indian newspapers exerted deep imprint on the minds of people.
- Nationalist press reported on colonial misrule and encouraged nationalist activities. For example, when Punjab revolutionaries were deported in 1907, Balgangadhar Tilak wrote with great sympathy about them.
- Gandhiji spread his ideas of Swadeshi in a powerful way through newspaper. Many Vernacular newspapers came up in India to spread nationalism.
- Various novels on national history Many novels written by Indian novelists like 'Anandamath' written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, created a sense of pan-Indian belonging. Munshi Premchand's novel, 'Godan highlighted how Indian peasants were exploited by the colonial bureaucrats.
- Various images of Bharatmata Painters like Raja Ravi Verma and Rabindranath Tagore drew images of Bharatmata which produced a sense of nationalism among Indians. The devotion to mother figure came to be seen as an evidence of one's nationalism.