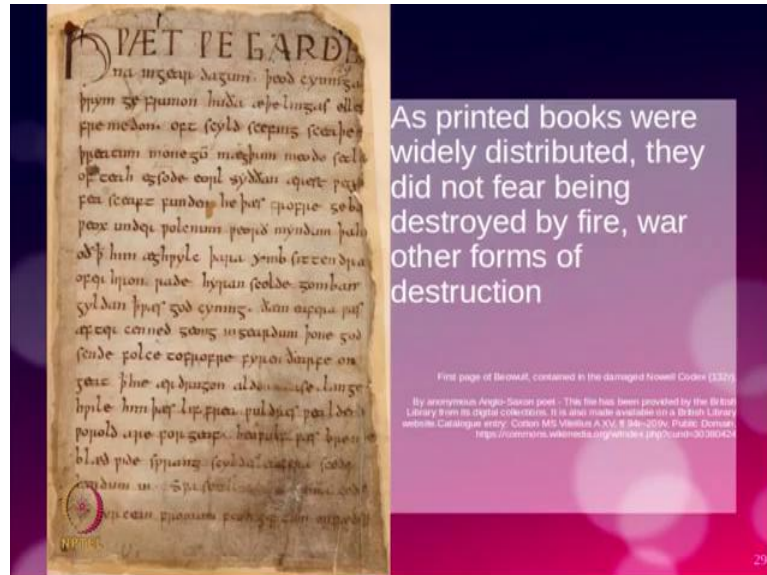**Text, Textuality and Digital Media**
Professor Arjun Ghosh
Department of Humanities and Social Science,
Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
Lecture 11
**Consequences of Print 16 - 17 Century**

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For now another impact of print is that with print because a certain copy of the book, a certain edition of a particular book will have many hundreds of copies which are then distributed across Europe. So certain book will not get destroyed by fire or war or other kinds of neglect. Whereas in the mediaeval era many manuscripts would be destroyed, either moth-eaten or be burned.

We in fact spoke about how books being burned is a very important mechanism through which ideas could be challenged. That is possible when there are finite number of books, copies of a particular book.

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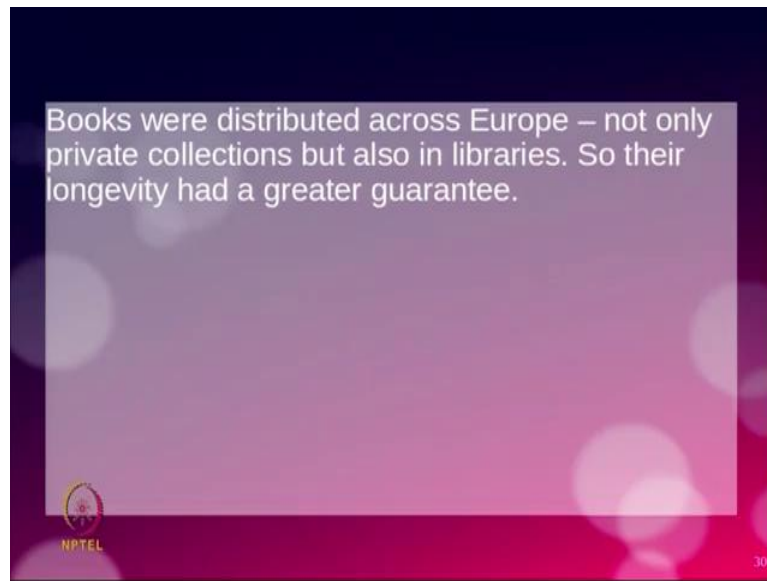
But with print, because the book gets distributed far and wide, they had greater longevity and these books were not only distributed in libraries but also in private collections so had greater longevity, greater guarantee.
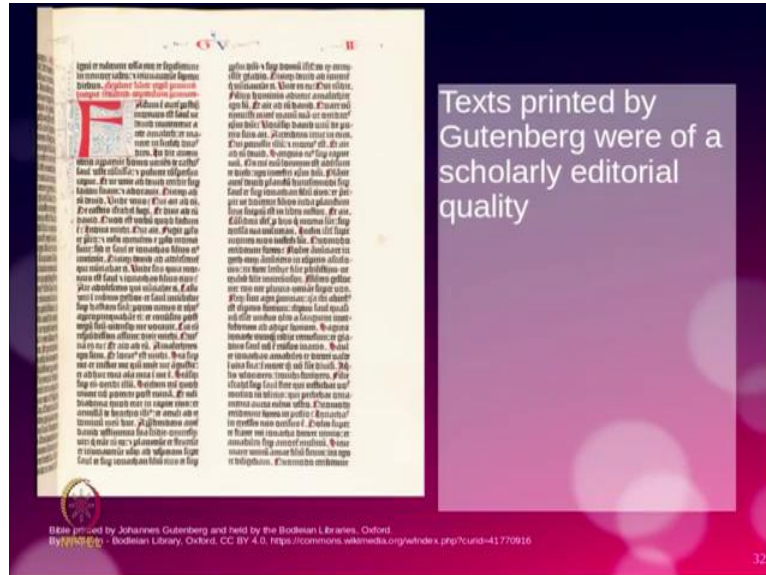
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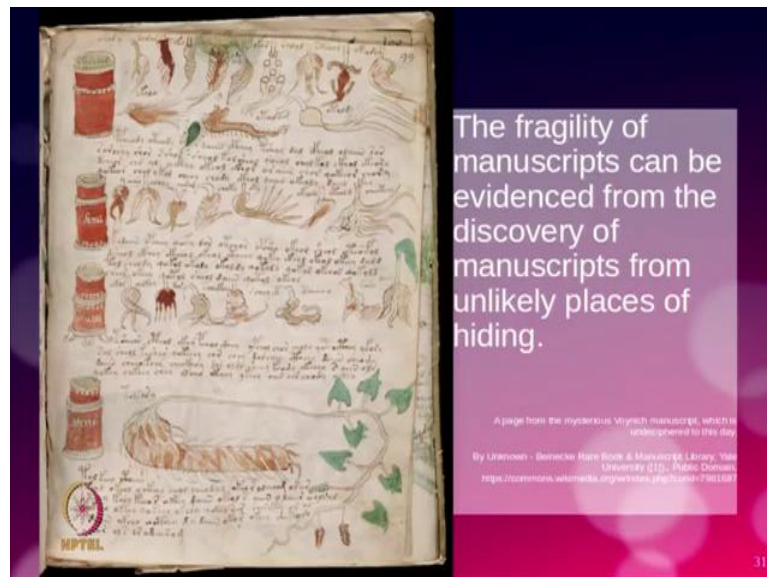
In fact, there is evidence in mediaeval era where through later excavations books would have been discovered from various kinds of unlikely hiding places. So people-- for books as a matter of wealth is something that was supposed to be hidden because a certain manuscript becomes a certain kind of, it has a certain magical character to it, because it contains knowledge within it, it has to be guarded very closely.
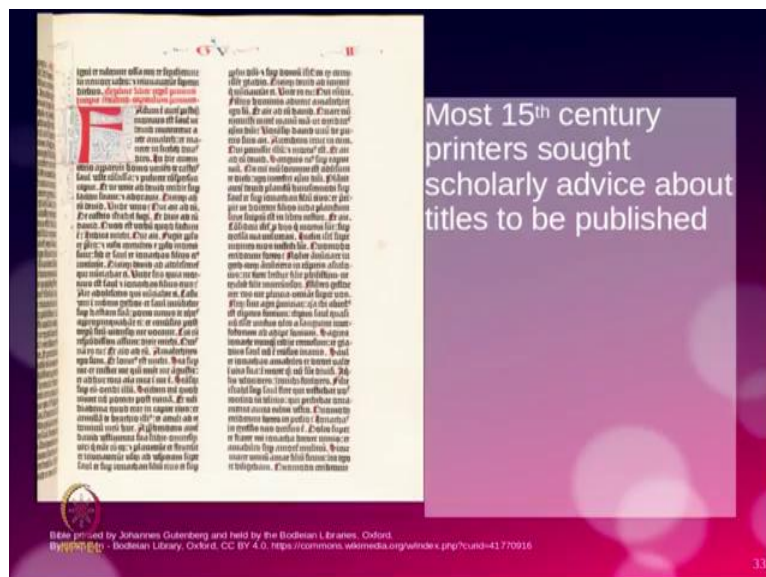
But with the availability of books, because manuscript just has a singular copy or maybe three or four copies, but printed book has many more copies. So, it increases not only the longevity but also reduces the magical value of books.

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Texts printed by Gutenberg were of a scholarly editorial quality

Bible printed by Johannes Gutenberg and held by the Bodleian Libraries, Oxford. By NN - Bodleian Library, Oxford, CC BY 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41770916

And from Gutenberg, this is an image of the Gutenberg's Bible, the first book that got printed, is that is a tradition towards more scholarly editing of works. Printers engage scholars in ensuring that the-- and now it is possible.

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Most 15th century printers sought scholarly advice about titles to be published

Bible printed by Johannes Gutenberg and held by the Bodleian Libraries, Oxford. By NN - Bodleian Library, Oxford, CC BY 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41770916

Whereas in the case of the scribal copying what would happen is that here there could be human error, but with printing it is possible to actually copy edit, the first copy is taken and

then they go and change the lattice, replace the typeset, the typeface, correct it and then print it again.

So, therefore there is a process of copy editing actually begins with printing, it's something that was not possible with manuscript. And has almost disappeared with the coming of the digital we are no longer so much careful about our copies any more or we are constantly, we are in a mode of constantly editing, you can now edit even after publication.

But certainly with print between composition of the typefaces and the printing there was this process of editing, this shadow space of editing and with scholarly advice was sought. Scholarly advice was also sought because printers were trying to sound out the market, to figure out what kind of books could be in demand.

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Various scholarly associations took to print to publish the results of their inquiries, the Royal Society used this journal, the *Philosophical Transactions* to disseminate nature. In fact the Royal Society started a book publishing program which ultimately one of the books had got published was Newton's *Principia*.

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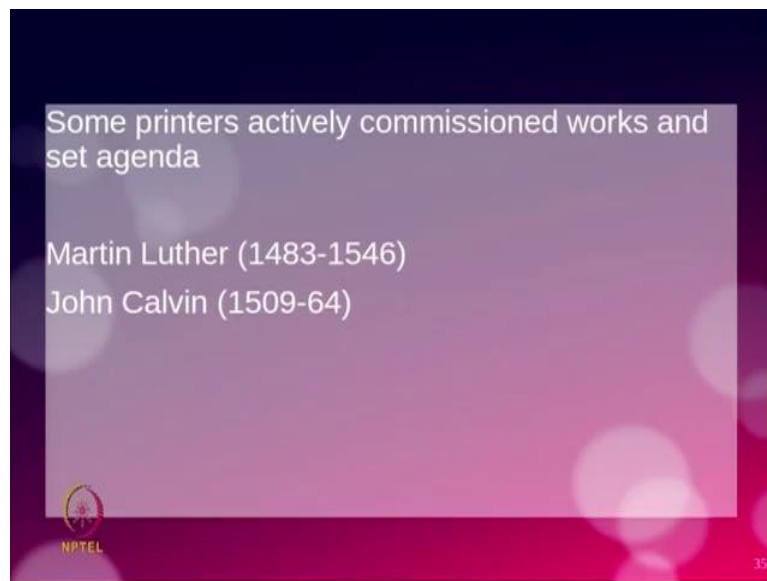
Some printers actively commissioned works, a lot of printers actually did that. And also to set an agenda, that they asked people, can you write a book for me? Can you say whatever you were saying? You gave a speech there, you spoke about this, this is something that I have heard you on, can you write it out, so that I can publish it? So, they were actively setting the agenda, and some of the important scholars, lots of important scholars, two very important scholars were those who challenged the might of the Roman Catholic Church, Martin Luther and the Calvinist also, John Calvin

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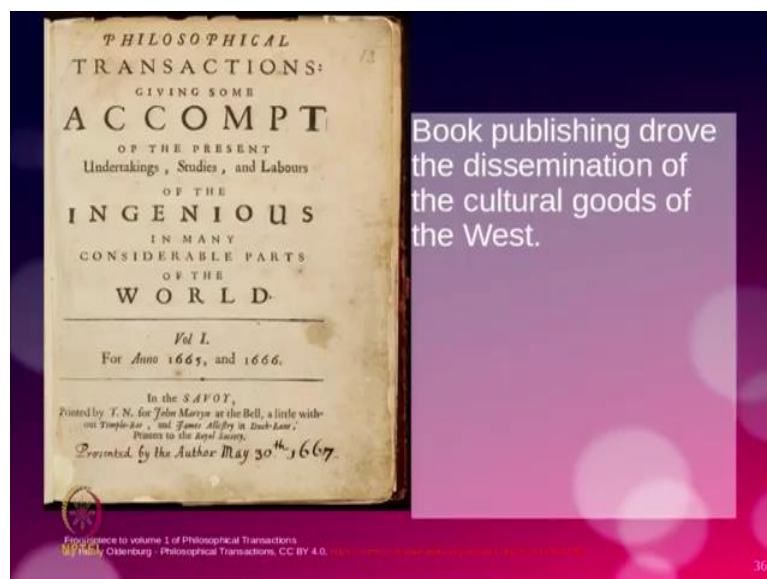
And publishing actually becomes a very important mode now, the new learning that is been generated no longer by the end of the 16th, early 17th centuries no longer are they only

publishing books which were already there in manuscripts. Now books are getting written for print, manuscripts do not get circulated a whole lot, it's not that manuscript circulation stops, manuscript circulation still continues within private circles. But public distribution of knowledge happens through print.

And publishing becomes an important vehicle through which whatever research, whatever ideas that are getting produced within Western scholarship, be it science, technology, medicine, even religious beliefs, literary resources, whatever is getting produced gets disseminated across the West and beyond the West through print.

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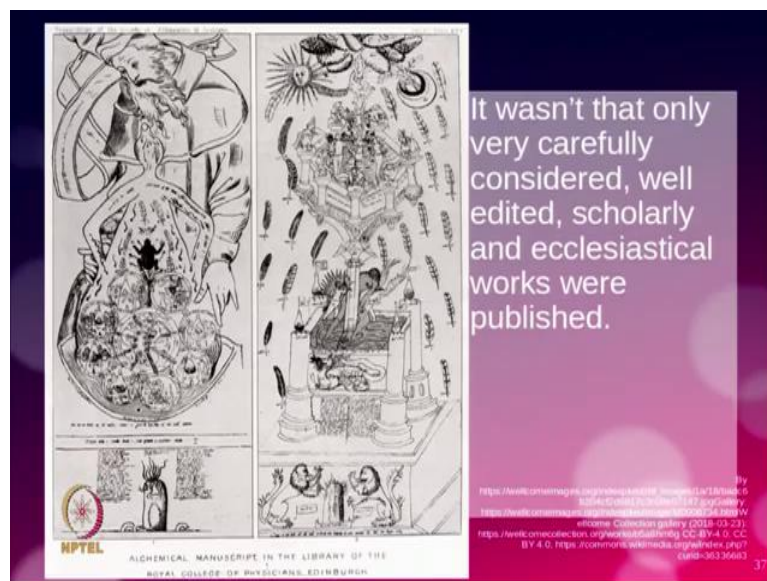
Now, we had already talked about the fact that all the knowledge that was coming in to Europe to burst the bubble of the church circuits, which were breaking in new ideas did created a lot of confusion. But this influx of, we should not lose sight of the fact that this influx of or this avalanche of ideas that are getting circulated through print, the effect of all of it is not only positive but there are certain pitfalls as well, because a lot of spurious stuff is also getting created and getting circulated.

It was not only ecclesiastical and scholarly works that were getting published. And people had to have, they were still finding their feet to assess what is right and what is wrong and what I want to point out today is this is very much similar to what we are seeing around today with the emergence of social media. The kind of memes and stories that get circulated, a lot of fake news and pictures get circulated, people have not yet had come to grips with how to work with this particular media.

There are different considerations of course for the modern day with social media, which is not exactly the same as that which is happening in the 16th century but some similarities of course are there where people cannot figure out whether a particular news is correct or wrong and sometimes they are not even in doubt they forward whatever that comes onto their phones.

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So, similarly in this era of the avalanche of print, people were still coming to grips with the idea of what is to be carefully considered and what is just a false set of ideas.

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And there was not even a clear watertight distinction between the two kind of things because a large number of ideas inundated Europe at that point of time which found lesser and lesser credibility in the later centuries- ideas of Gnosticism, Alchemy, magic, astrology, Cabbalistic writings. And because the printers some of them were after profit they would print whatever sense. So, therefore there was a lot of circulation of less credible, less scholarly, less scientific writings as well.

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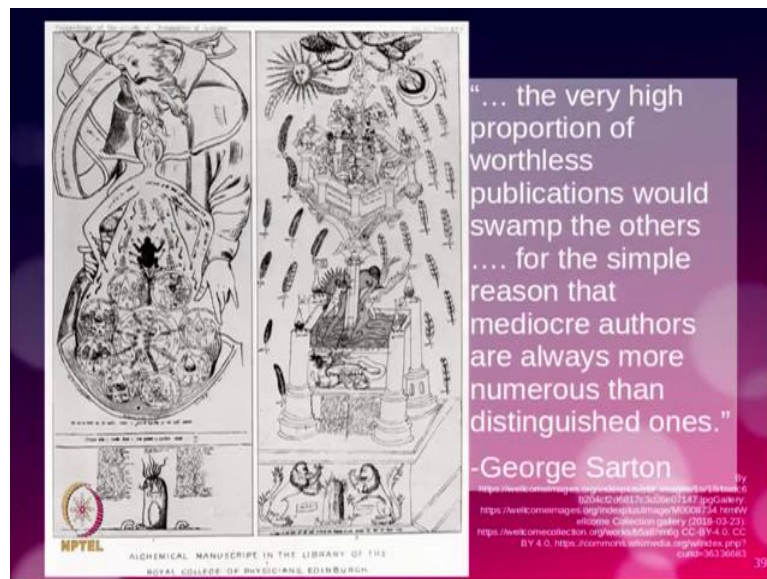
But what I want to stress again is that there is never any clear indication, you cannot say that , at that point of time there is clear understanding of what is scientific and what is nonscientific, what is scholarly, what is non-scholarly, what is academic and what is nonacademic. The distinction was not very clear, George Sarton said "the very high proportion of worthless publications would swamp the others, for the simple reason that mediocre authors are always more numerous than distinguished ones".

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So, you have a situation where this kind of transformation of dealing with how to explain the world took almost 500 years, it was not solved in a day, it was not even solved in a century, it took a lot of time for these ideas to really work around.

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One of the important points to note is that even someone like Newton, Sir Isaac Newton, whom we look upon a very important proponent of modern day physics, the ideas of modern day physics. In his own times he practised, he was deeply interested in Alchemy as well and it was in his journey within that sector that led him to the laws of physics, gravity and other things.

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More about that in a moment. Then other very important earth shattering discovery was the discovery of the Americas that was taken place. Now, the discovery of the Americas was something that was assisted with printing.

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But also accentuated printing, accentuated knowledge because the discovery of the Americas came with a lot of exploration that was happening, it was because people started exploring the world and in order to explore they were creating new branches of knowledge, geography, cartography, oceanography, navigation, zoology, botany, anthropology, people learning about newer places, new kind of plants, new kind of animals, new kinds of peoples, and all these are going to branch out to become new academic disciplines in later times.

When Columbus was motivated to look for a new route towards the Indies by travelling westwards because remember the earlier one, earlier route was through land through the east and what is the reason why they could not travel east now? Earlier they would travel through the Middle East and come to India, Marco Polo, remember? That is the route that he took but now when others come to India they come all around Africa.

And Columbus certainly tried to go across the Atlantic, travelled westwards and when he went and hit Columbia, modern day Columbia. So important question for you, what is the reason that Europe suddenly starts looking for westward route instead of an eastward route? Because travel over land was far easier so to say. So, why is it that people travel westwards? Suddenly start looking for a westward route? Just think about it for a moment.

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But the book that really triggered Columbus's search for India by travelling westwards, was a book called *Imago Mundi*. That is an illustration from that particular book, it is kind of a very crude mediaeval map of the world. This particular book, lead to this idea that one could probably travel westwards and find an India. So, books and printing already start throwing up new possibilities of exploration.

Remember, Columbus's voyages took place in the 1490s and print was discovered, really established by about the 1450s, so that is about 40-50 years by then a lot of, kind of printing activities that we have been discussing were taking place. And once he comes back after his first voyage,

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Columbus comes back and writes a long letter describing it which then gets printed and then gets translated into several European vernacular languages and in Latin, and then goes into 18 additions. A similar description of a voyage by Americo Vespucci was circumnavigated, who actually travelled, sorry that was Magalen, who actually travelled to the northern part of the Americas after whom America really is named.

His book was even more popular than Columbus's. So, already there is a huge circuit of travelogues and printers start asking travelers to come and write about their exploration and because there was a great market Europe was hungry for this knowledge of this New World, it was this big thing, it was like the Discovery Channels of those times.

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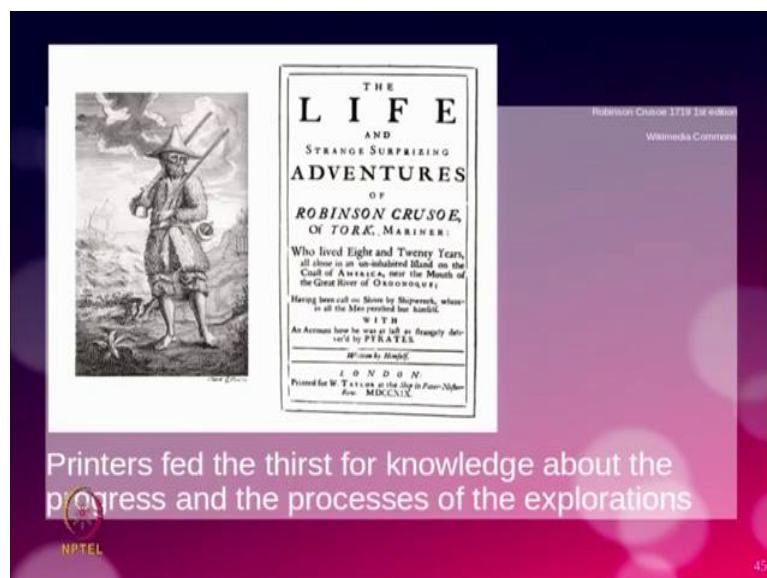
So a lot of printers would publish travelogues but sometimes they would not wait for real travel, there were a lot of fictional travel also which would takes place and one of the very important books that we can think of is, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. And this is the kind of imaginative travelogue which did very well in its own times.

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With invention of printing line engravings printers could print
- Maps
- Diagrams on the construction of ships
- Instructions on the usage of the compass, quadrant, astrolabe and other navigational material

But would also happen is that these-- so it's not merely the travelogues that were getting printed, the act of travel itself would be helped by the possibility that new discoveries were getting made in the art of printing. The new kinds of things were getting printed, it's possible to print maps or plans of how to construct ships or instructions on how to use various navigational equipment, people would learn through this books and take up their own voyages. You may have met this one explorer but you can read about the works or the experiences of many other explorers, shipbuilders, toolmakers, so this kind of things which were getting circulated.

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Soon social and political ideas formulated in mainland Europe were to be tested in the colonies.

And once the Europeans started settling in these new places, a lot of excess population from Europe gets transferred to these-- what is found to be the New World, they are in fact in the early days of colonialism. It will lead to extermination of the local population, clearing of the land, while they clear the land they also clear the land of its population, forcibly takeover of those lands and where the excess population of Europe start settling, a lot of convicts get transported.

And of course it sounds tied to the history of slave trade but that is another story altogether. But many of the political ideas which are formulated in mainland Europe now start getting tested in these colonies. Ideas of liberty get tested, ideas of European supremacy get tested there, and all this dissemination now happens through books certainly there is a book trade across the Atlantic also, slowly developed.

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And along with the fictionalization of these travelogues, a lot of spurious travelogues also get written. There are inauthentic reports of explorations and findings. There are a lot of inaccuracies which keep coming and people take a lot of time to reconcile these differences, a lot of people do not understand what is correct and what is false and these inauthentic ideas base themselves on the assumptions, the biases of people.

The cultural assumptions of the European supremacy and how people from other lands are monstrous and therefore they deserve less, they do not deserve their, any rights, they are closer to animals and therefore can be demeaned. So there is this assumption that Europeans

are supreme because Europeans are human and others are nonhuman, so then it is easy to feed in these kind of images to this kind of a gullible believing population.

Similarly when today day and age, if a certain meme is circulated on social media which plays upon the existing cultural biases of people, looking upon a certain community in a negative light, it becomes believable that yes this person must be a thief, this person must be a kidnapper and we see the rise in hate crime that takes place. Certainly racial violence was at its peak in early modern Europe, within Europe but certainly in these lands where the Europeans were landing up and just exterminating- mass killing- of the natives of the Americas and in Australia.

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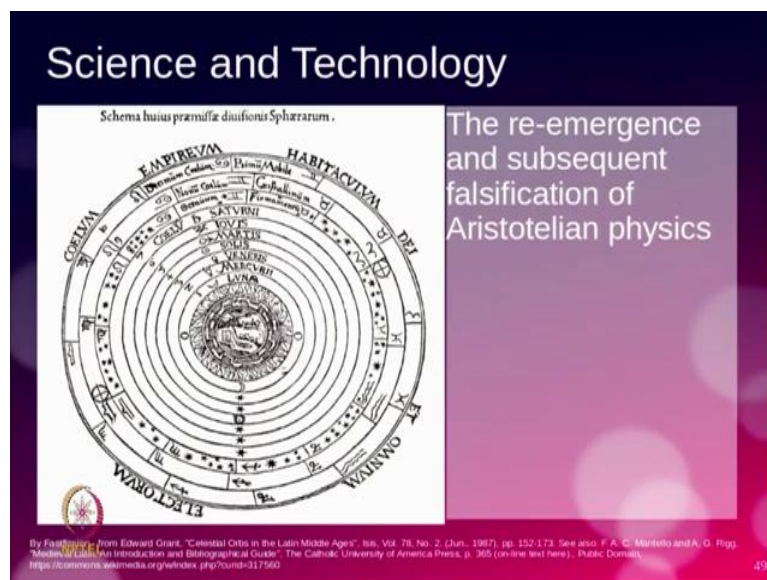
In the world of science, in science and technology these new ideas were leading to falsification and questioning of existing knowledge, so one of the very leading idea of the distribution of the universe was these sense of the Aristotelian world where the four concentric spheres within which the various elements were in place. But these were coming into conflict with what was the new that was coming in and the new kinds of observation that were happening.

People were able to now have a better grasp of what is going on, because they are going beyond the local they have a continental view because of the transportation of printed books across Europe and with their explorations they have a much larger view. So, this dissonance between what was the traditionally acceptable ideas and the new observations is something that brought into question these ideas and lead to further kinds of enquiry.

But beyond scientific thought there were other important technological advances that changed the face of Europe. Gunpowder, compass and printing, compass we have already seen becomes a very important navigational device, printing we already know about, gunpowder becomes very important, because with gunpowder it is now possible to actually shoot without cavalry, so slowly with the coming of gunpowder you have cavalry on its getting replaced and more standing armies coming into being.

Gunpowder was not the only reason why standing armies come into being, there were other reasons for it. But gunpowder makes it possible because with archery and the use of traditional swords and others, the mobility, for mobility required the horse or to be on a particular animal but now it is possible to acquire that mobility, certainly shooting become much easier, shooting on sure ground.

So the coming of the gunpowder certainly increases the firepower and it becomes a very important resource also for the colonization of the world because gunpowder gives the European armies the advantages over the people from the other land which leads to the capture of these new worlds possible.

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All three had Chinese precedent.
But reached fruition in early modern Europe.

17th century compass
By Photograph by Rama - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.0 fr, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6817242

Now very curious we had already seen how printing had been in China, Chinese knew about printing but did not really take on in it.

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Three important technological advances of the age:
•Gunpowder
•Compass
•Printing

All of these three cases of the gunpowder, the compass and the printing, the basic technology was available to the Chinese much before it came to Europe, I mean the Chinese used gunpowder for fireworks but never thought of using it for warfare. The load store who is available to the Chinese was looked upon as some kind of a curiosity but they never used it as a navigational device.

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And the important reason which I had suggested why printing fortified in Europe and not in China was that the basic mode of production was something that did not require that, that did not encourage that kind of an innovation. Capitalism requires that kind of innovation, capitalism is always seeking after more and more capsulation towards profit, towards enquiry, towards an individual growth, taking of risks, questioning of existing knowledge and because of this basic shift in the mode of production that happens in Europe these pieces of technologies from China now become possible for innovation in Europe.

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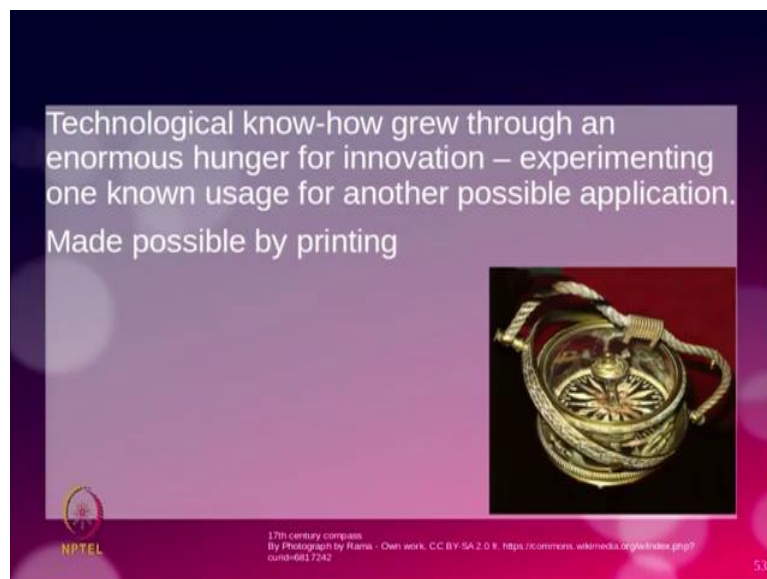
And another important point is that what is happening is that printing is bringing these various kinds of knowledge to the axis of a larger number of people. So each person gets in

road to multiple experiences. So what people were doing, were using technology which is being used by someone in one particular field and experimenting with another kind of field and this is something we saw even with the emergence of printing.

Gutenberg took the knowledge of goldsmiths to create the typefaces that's the kind of innovation that really-- and think of any various kinds of inventions that were there, so the steam engine emerges from the idea of the behavior of steam itself which emerges from the kitchen. So all this possibility of putting one technology for a new kind of use comes with the knowledge base that has been, knowledge network that has been created by modern printing.

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However, we must again go back and understand that this development of science took a lot of time. It was not something that developed unidirectional, that everything now henceforth in Europe develops only through the scientific methods.

Because as I had suggested that mysticism was a very important sort of religion also, was a very-very important subject on which people kept their inquiries going and one of the ways in which that scientific enquiry also assisted by this mystic vision, was that people were looking for greater and greater understanding of the workings of the universe.

Newton was someone who pursued alchemy to a great extent, in order to explain how the universe actually works and in this spirit of enquiry, he discovers all the various laws that of physics, of motion that he does.

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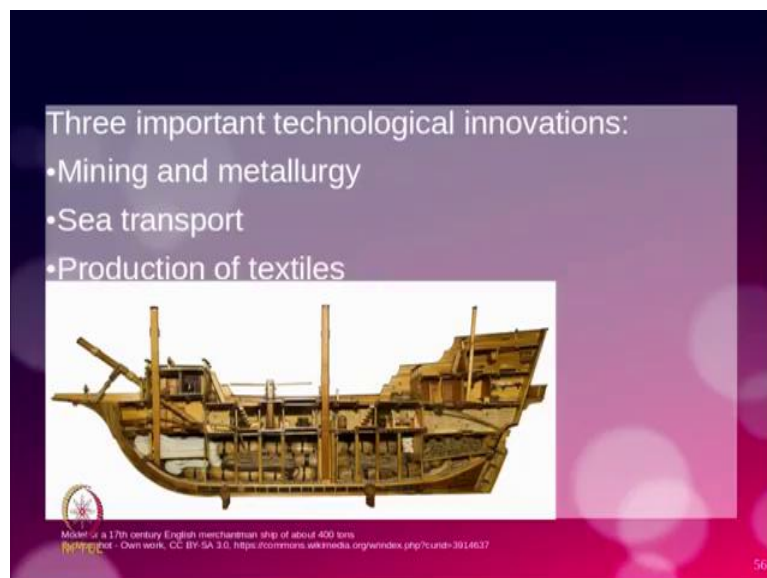
There were various important technological innovations in the 15th century onwards. Mining and then the rapid-- so mining become very important, the use of metal put all these machines into place and certainly all the war machines into place, the canon, the rifles as well as all the printing machine and every kind of machine I mean the spinning wheels, the tools, the mills, everything gets requires a lot of metal so the development of mining and metallurgy is a very important facet of knowledge.

Improvement of the ship, shipbuilding becomes very important because that is where the explorations are taking place, so a lot of innovations, a lot of ideas are getting exchanged at that point of time on development of the ship and textiles.

Textile production becomes very important and this is what turns the tide we know all of us what the importance of textile has been to India, the entire thing about Indigo farming and the exploitation of Indian weavers, sorry, Indian cotton producers. Till this period, till the development of the textile industry in Europe- Manchester is an important center for that-Europe was a net importer of textiles, certainly Indian textiles produced from India was of great value, and one of the things that would really get various travelers and traders would carry into Europe and they would sell at great value.

Europe was a net importer of textiles till this period, it is only in this period that Europe becomes an exporter of textiles but certainly it did not have the raw material to produce. Europe is not a tropical country, and non-tropical countries are not very fertile, so they needed the colonies in order to grow their raw cotton and this cotton was brought into Europe, textile was produced and then they were sold back, that is what led to the wealth creation in Europe.

Today the West is wealthier than the East or the South because of the creation of these technologies. The reason why the dollar or the pound or the Euro is much more expensive than our currencies is because of this historic division where they bought the raw materials cheap because they controlled political power in the colonies, took it away, that was the kind of drain of wealth that really took place, one of the routes through which the drain of wealth took place.

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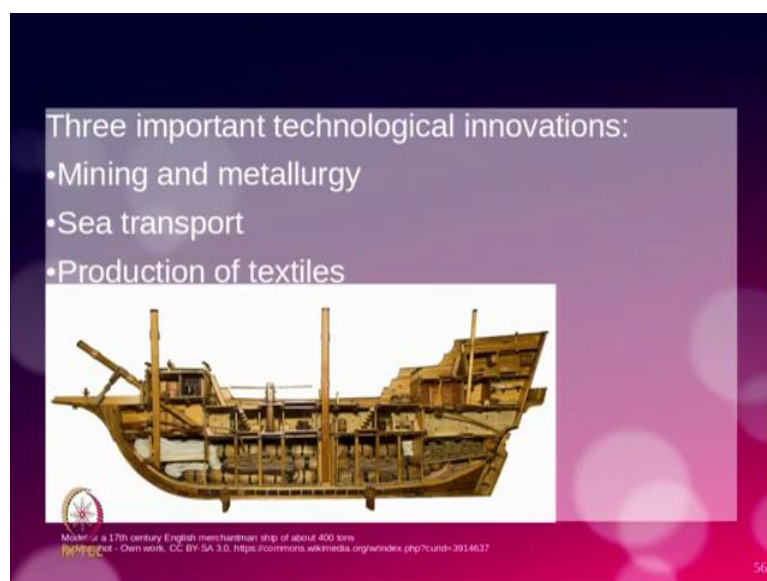
And we bought back the textiles at much much greater expense, total expense actually. Though these textiles were cheaper than what we actually wore but the price, the profit actually got expatriated, the East India company took back the profit.

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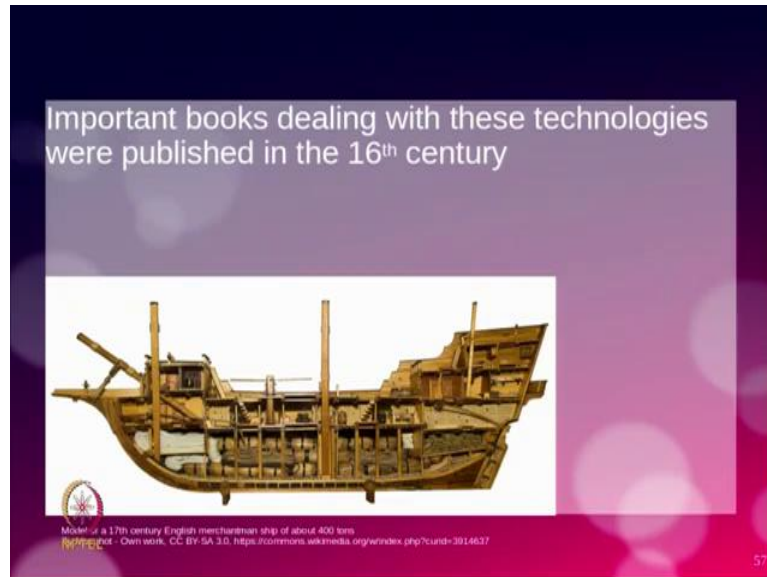
So there were some very important books which were published on these technologies in the 16th century, and printing played a very important role in the development of these technologies.

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Development of music also was something that was important and development of agriculture also led to this food security because printing could print-- now musical scores

could be printed through books and also food security was led to newer techniques of irrigation, agriculture, introduction of new seeds and other kinds of things.

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Farmers learned a lot more about farming.

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Certainly the capitalist farmers learned a lot more about farming through books and improved the food security situation within Europe.

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As I said development of classical music through printing of music is also, is an important role that print played.

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Now coming to beyond science and technology we come to the important role that print played in politics in Europe. Religious conflict started growing when Martin Luther questioned the Roman Catholic Church.
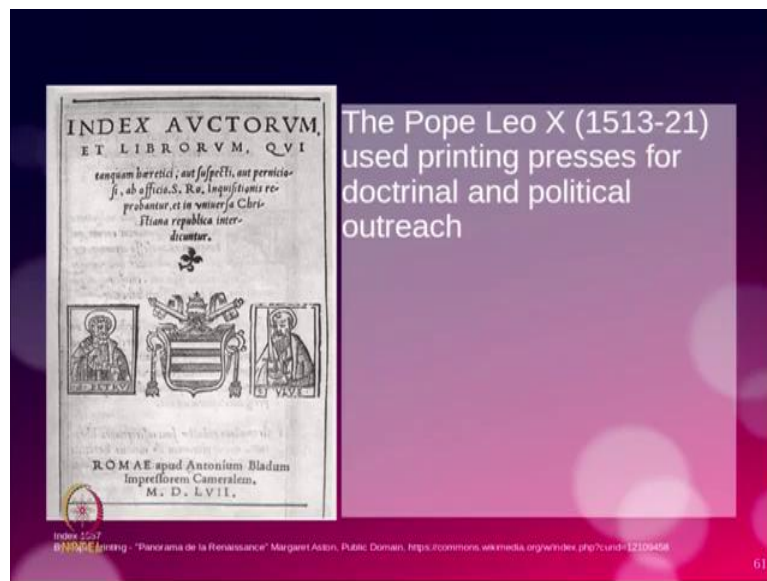
He put up his thesis in Germany and within the space of a few weeks his text- questioning the authority of the Roman Catholic Church- spread across Germany very-very quickly. And this is the institutional advantage that print gives now to a rebel like Martin Luther or the Protestants or the Calvinists. As I had said earlier, that till now it is only the Roman Catholic Church which had the institutional backing to crush rebellions.

But with the coming of print the rebels now have the possibility of reaching out to a wider geography and seeking the support. So what happens, the ideas lead to consolidation of solidarity and support in the rebellion and becomes a much more formidable force for the Roman Catholic Church to deal with, which is why Protestantism really stands its weight and becomes a major challenge to the authority of the Roman Catholic church between the 16th and 17th centuries.
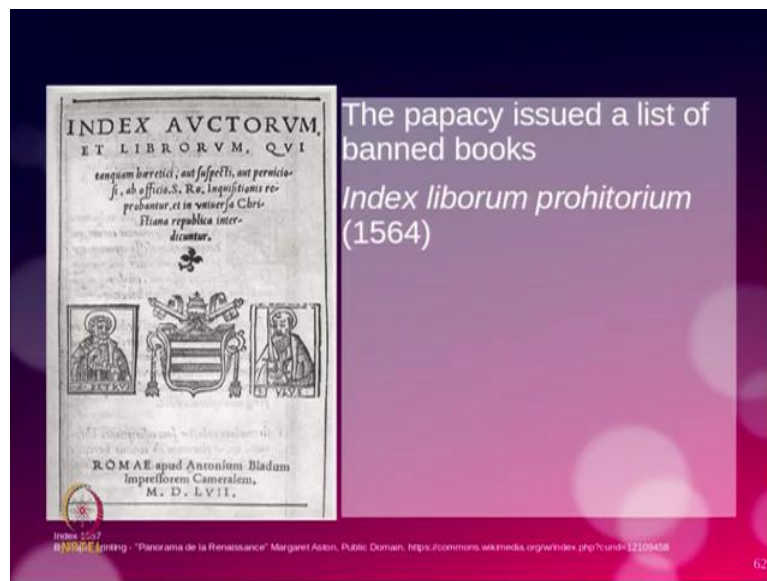
It becomes a major point of conflict within Europe across various regions of Europe what are going to emerge as the nationalities of Europe. And the Church recognizes this very quickly and therefore Pope Leo X issues the index you know of *liborum prohitorium* which actually bans certain books, it's a list of banned books which the Church kept on updating periodically which would be banned.

The papacy itself used printing presses to reach out. So now you had these this commends this mechanism: once they realize that the printing press can be politically very-very crucial, control over the printing press is politically crucial, you see governments now slowly trying to authorize printing presses, certain printing presses are authorized the rest are clandestine, they are unauthorized.
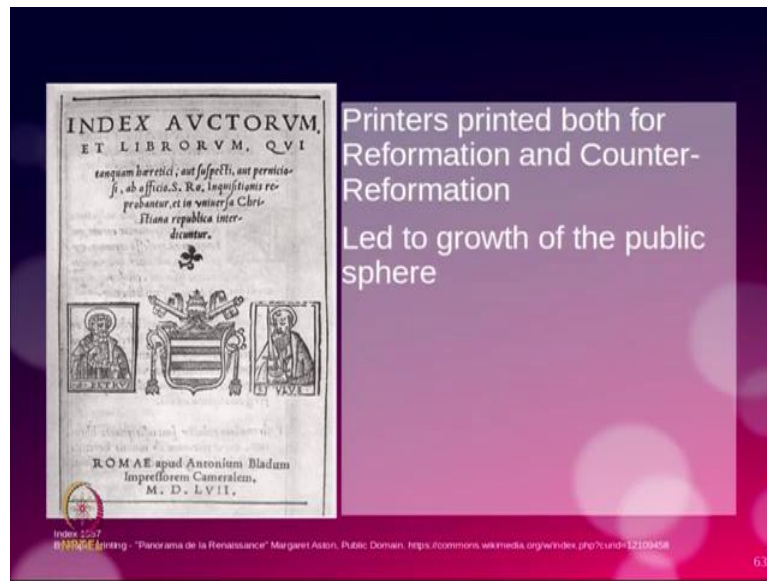
And you begin this reign of book piracy; piracy becomes very important form of gaining profit. Because certainly these were ideas which were popular, what people wanted to read about, so if a book is available in the market they would sell but the authorities may clamp down, so it was a risky affair, but if you are able to carry that risk, they make a lot of profit out of it. Because certainly pirated books would sell at a much better price.

So, there is this incentive on the one hand, profit becomes an incentive to sell Protestant, books of the Protestant Reformation. But that is not the only motivation as I said, there were also ideological motivations, some printers wanted to, they supported the Protestant Reformation.

It would be very interesting that since the connection between church and the state, the ruling authority was not altogether broken it took time to break. So within Europe there would be certain monarchies who supported the Roman Catholic Church, certain monarchs who would oppose the Roman Catholic Church. Importantly, Spain and Portugal continued to support the Roman Catholic Church whereas England opposed it.

So, what would happen is that those countries within Europe, those territories within Europe which are under the influence of Catholicism would try to counter Protestantism in the other countries by pushing in pirated books printed in their own territories into the other territory, the reverse would also be true. So, the borders become very important, the transport of books became riskier.

And printers suddenly printed both kind of books various printers. Both for the Reformation and the counter-reformation, counter-reformation was that which was led by the church.

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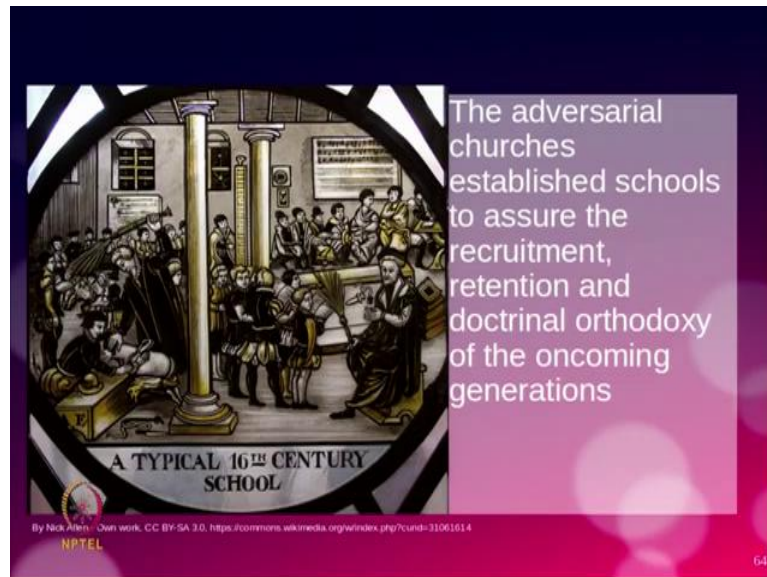
And this led to the growth of the public sphere, that politics was now getting debated in the public, issues of power were getting debated in the public, print becomes an important public sphere.
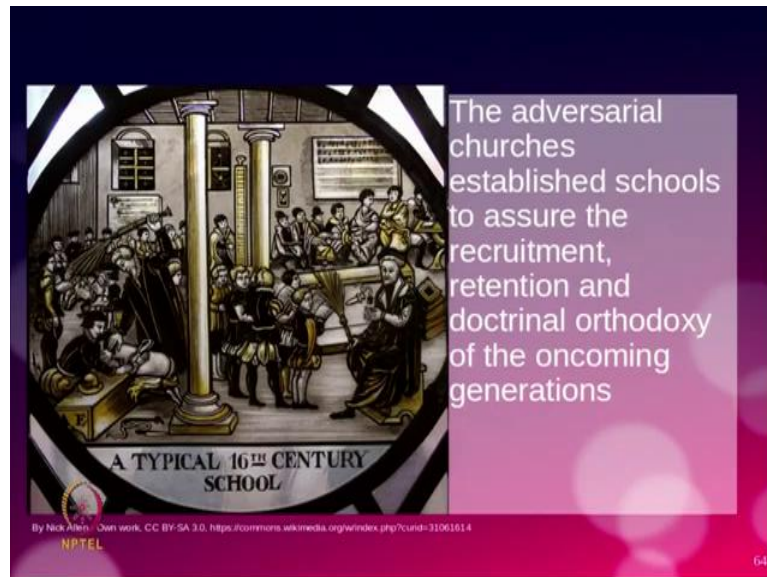
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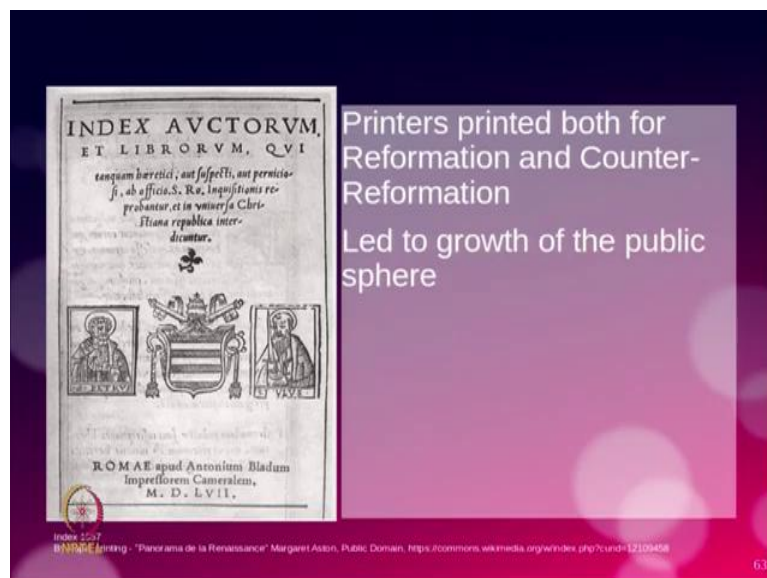
What was till then discussed primarily within courtrooms or within aristocratic circles would now get much widely discussed because print made the book available, if I have access to a

book I can pay and buy a book and get hold of a book I can access a certain idea, so print leads to the rise of the public sphere.

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Which today we understand as, one very important democratic tool and another thing that happens is that since each of the church is trying to whether the Protestant churches or the Catholic churches, they were trying to grow, increase their influence wider over Europe. They were trying to grow the network of churches and because of that and to run churches they needed people and in order to ensure that there is recruitment, retention and doctrinal orthodoxy of the incoming generations of clergymen who will assist the church in maintaining its institutional basis.

Each of these adversarial churches established schools, this gave rise to the schooling system. Once the schools are created, various people would come in to be educated, not all of them would necessarily enter the clergy.
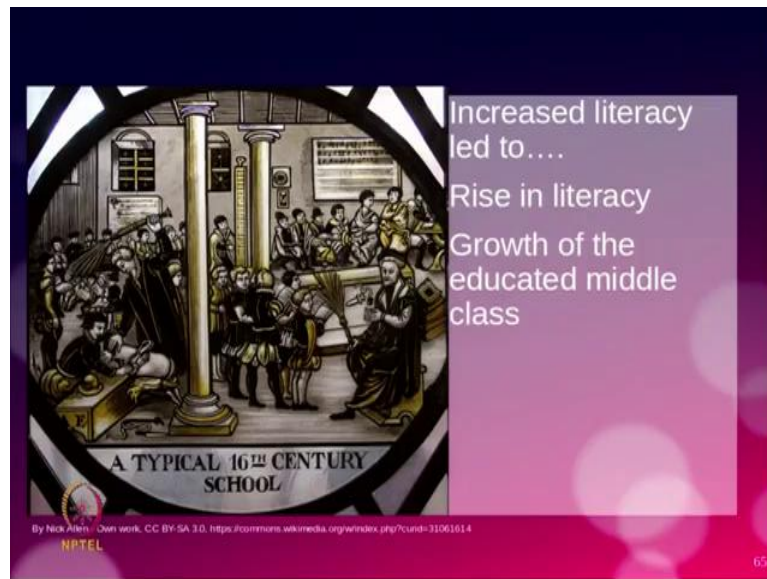
But what would lead to, which is why you that begins the tradition of these monastic schools, it leads to increased literacy and with increased literacy two things happens, one is that so these schools actually leads to 2 kind of things, one is rise of literacy which means that more people can read books, because now more people can read books so therefore the demands of books also grow.

Certainly education itself needs books but once educated people continue their hunger and want to read books. The second thing is now you have a group of people, this leads to the lives of the middle-class, what is the middle-class? Those who are providing, primarily providing services, there is this terminology 'middle-class' can be used in different senses, the predominant sense in which we use the word middle-class is that a middle income group.

But a middle-class is not a middle income group, a middle class is those who provides services, who become doctors, teachers, engineers, clerks, these are the-- or bureaucrats, they are the ones who are the, from the middle classes, they are not the landowning classes and they are not the capitalist classes, they are not the principal owners of the principal means of production but they provide the services to make the production possible, generally associated with capitalism.

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And these then becomes the new knowledge creators of the new era. Created by the schooling mechanism which was brought in by partly by the ecclesiastical authorities, they create new knowledge systems. If you look at the list of the history of the various people who were the knowledge creators of those times, important figures, Machiavelli, who was-- they were lower functionaries, they were not born into aristocratic families, not into royal families, they were certainly not religious ecclesiastical families.

Pico della Mirandola or Copernicus or Calvin none of them were born within the aristocracy and they were self-made people, some of the other important people, like Sir Walter Raleigh, a person who is, who earns his position within society, man of learning, as this is a figure which is there in literature as well, in *Duchess of Malfi* the figure of Antonio, he is someone who is educated, who is capable beyond his specific social class of birth. You move from privilege to ability, someone who acquires quality. So this it is the story of individual, a person who is able to move beyond one's status of birth, the status in society.

Now, another thing that happens with, and print has a major influence in creating this, is the emergence of the territorial state. Slowly the boundaries of Europe are getting resolved to the common day man. Till now what you do you would have is kingdoms, monarchies, you still have by the 16th or 17th century you still have monarchies, but that means monarchies are becoming more territorial, territorial in the sense there is greater uniformity of laws or applications of law across a particular territory.

So, the French king rules France with a far greater uniformity than earlier, because laws now can be disseminated and the arbitrariness with which local baron or other feud-a-tares would decide upon cases or issues would be reduced, there will be a more uniform set of loss. We will be studying the growth of nationalism in a later lecture where we would be looking at the work of Anderson.

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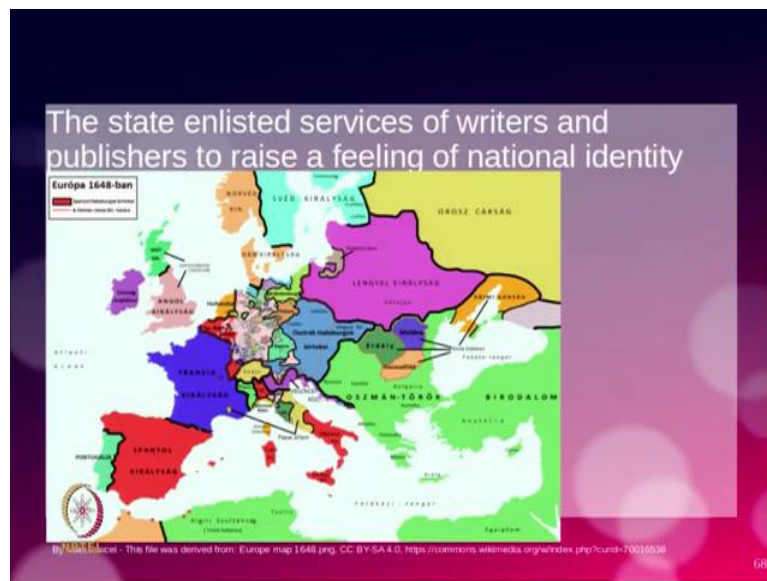
But what is happening is that the monarchs were ruling less through the authority of the Church any further. They were ruling through the authority of being the best representative of a particular nationality, a particular group of people and they enlisted the services of writers and publishers to increase, raise that feeling of national identity.

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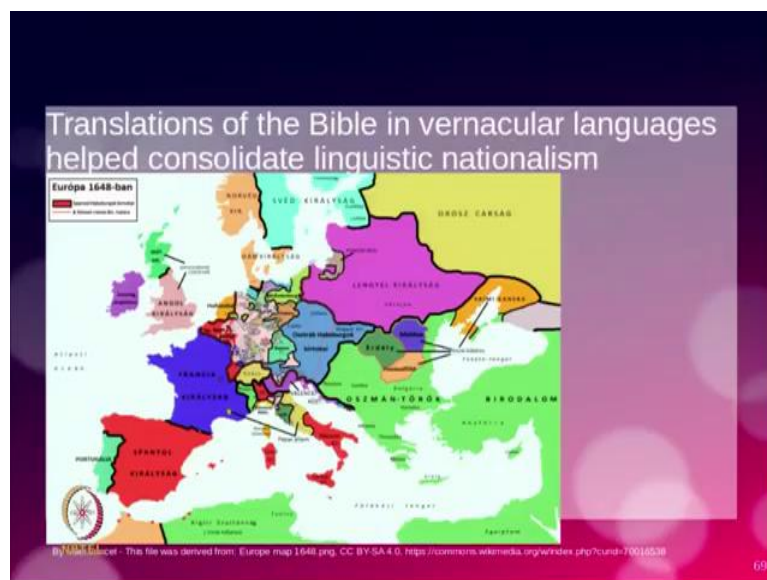
One change that, important change that happens is the change of the medium of communication from Latin to the vernacular. So now within the territory of France or within the territory of England more books are getting printed in English or in French than in Latin and were actually helps consolidate that change interestingly of the reduction of the

importance of religious authority is precisely the translation of the Bible into vernacular languages.

Because that was the territory within which there was the greatest spread of the French Bible, French translations of Bible, this helped consolidate linguistic nationalism. Now language becomes a very important source of this national identity.
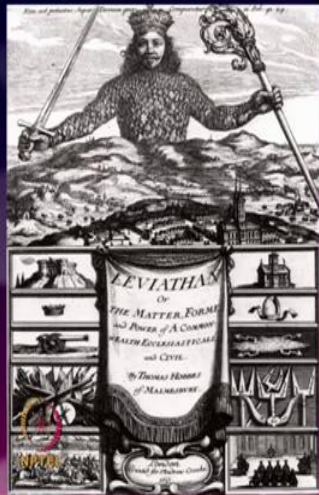
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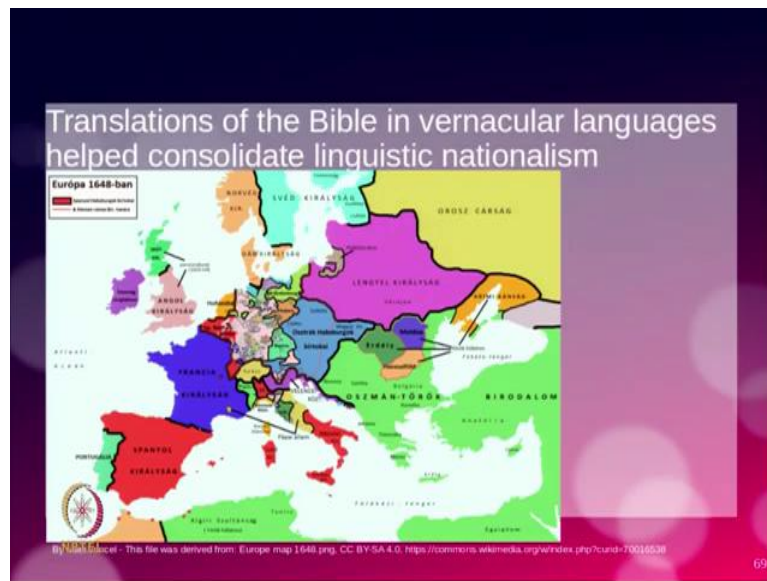
So, the French king tries to consolidate that through encouraging writers and publishers to publish in French and publish texts or write texts which produced that feeling of nationalism. So, this is something that is very important.
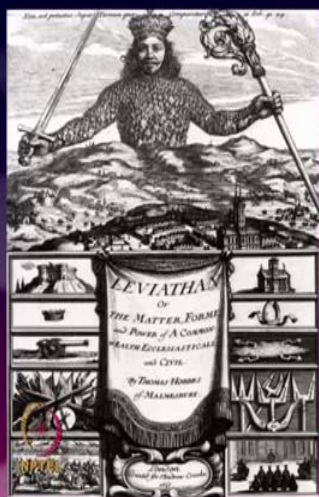
The other thing that happens is while at the same point of time you now have the possibility that because you have a monarch who rules on his own, does not require the support of the church, the monarch become absolutist. There is a possibility that the monarch becomes absolutist for a moment, you had monarchs who would decide everything but that starts getting questioned because you already had one part of the given which was the authority of the Roman Catholic Church which is questioned and once that is questioned that skepticism about the prevailing institutions leads to further questionings and leads to a more substantive foundations of freedom and liberty, ideas of freedom and liberty.

Marsilio of Padua, he wrote a very important text which gets circulated in printing and further down from the 14th century, which importantly stresses that political power was derived not from the church head or from the person of the ruler but political power derived from the citizens, this idea of the citizen is very different from the idea of the subject. Monarchies or kingdoms have subjects they do not have citizens.

The idea of the citizen is someone who is equal on the with every other citizen in the eye of the law. It questions privilege, it questions authority or fate according to birth. No matter which family I am born into or which class, which strata of society I am born into, I am an Indian and the Constitution of India, the laws of India, the laws of the land apply equally to everybody, I maybe whoever.
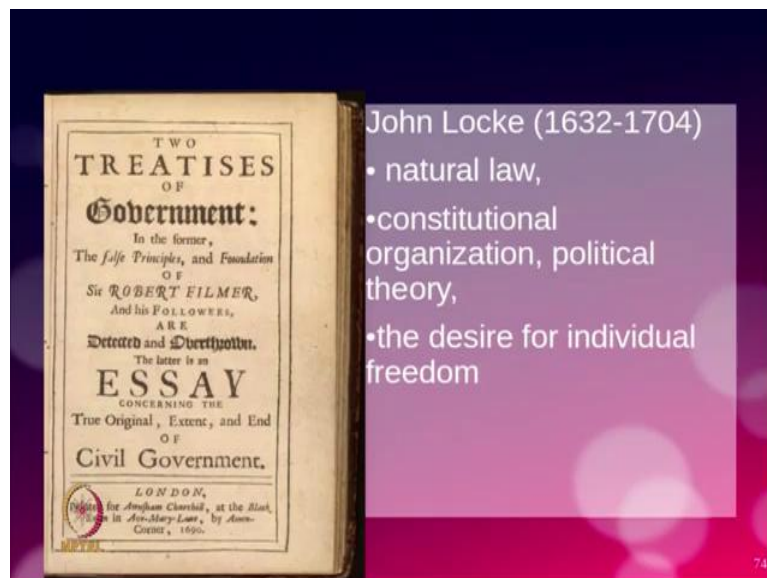
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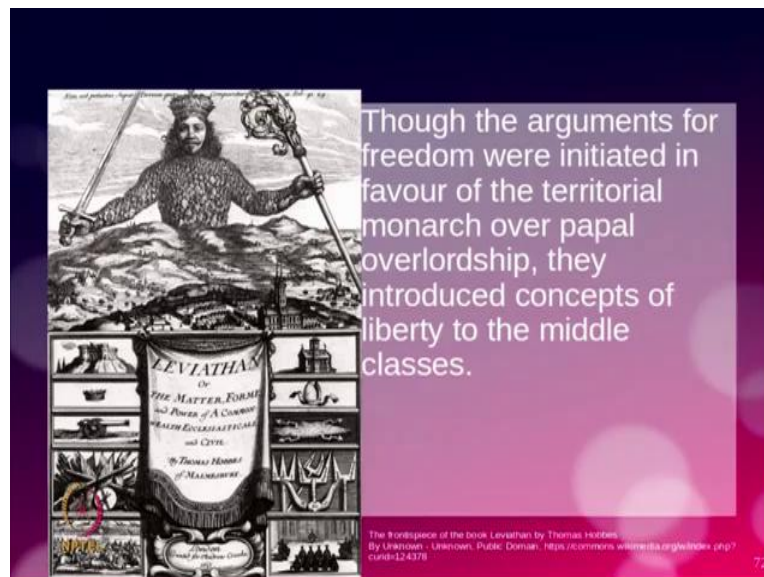
That is the idea of citizenry and these arguments initiated ideas of freedom which questioned not only the papal over lordship, though it sought to question papal over lordship and these ideas of freedom tried to bolster the territorial monarch, but it ended up questioning the monarchs as well because once ideas of liberty start getting into people's heads they do not stop at the middle point they want complete liberty and that led to the rise of the middle classes and greater democracy.

Even Machiavelli in his argument on how the modern prints should behave, he was talking about these how the individual would sort of decide on things.

And John Locke's contribution to the natural law, the way Constitution could be organized, the issues of political thinking led to a certain degree of aspirations of the human kind.

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And what we had also is one very important example is that the revolution in England, we talked about the revolution in France but we very often miss that England also underwent a certain series of revolutions. The 17th-century, the English press played a very important role in transmitting various kinds of ideas, it became a very-very important public sphere.

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Those of you who have learned of the *Spectator* papers of Addison and Steele, you would know about, but before that we talk about the Interregnum, between 1642 to 1660 when the Republicans took over, the Parliamentary forces took over the political reins of England, the ruler, the monarch, Charles the First was beheaded and his son Charles the Second was exile to France for a long period of time.

And both the monarchy and the Parliamentary forces used the press to create support among the citizenry, no longer could you actually alter political power by merely controlling the elite- the aristocrats- you had to create popular support for yourself.

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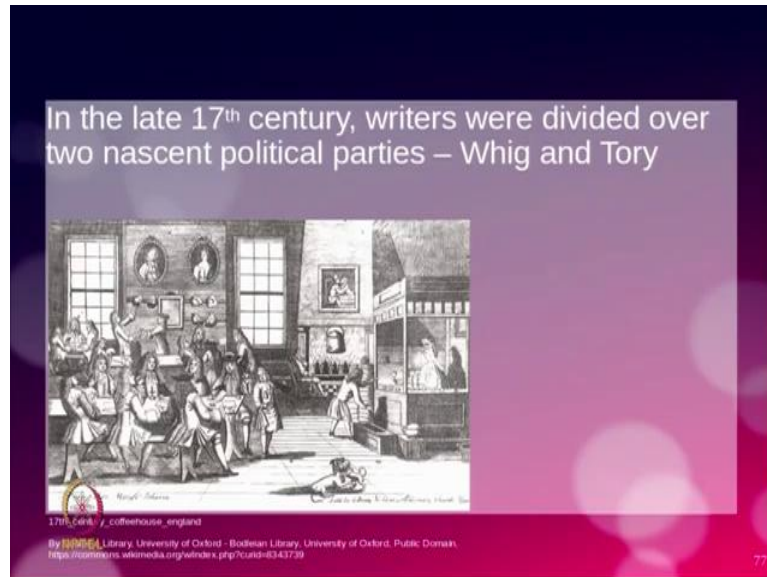
Later in the 17th-century slowly these various political opinions gets consolidated into form of two political parties, the Whigs and the Tories- the Liberals and the Conservatives- and various writers took positions along these political times those who wanted more powers for the monarchy, those who wanted lesser power, and more powers for the Parliament.

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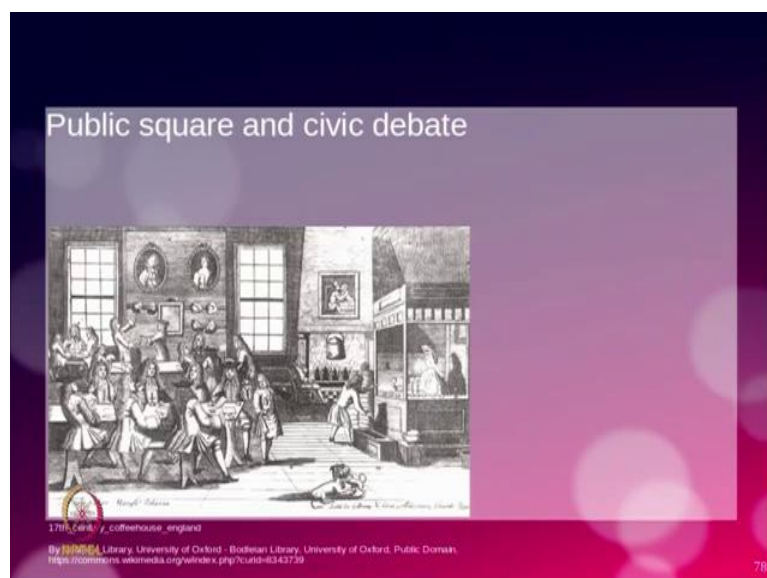
And the coffeehouses, the London coffeehouses become a very important place in which debates, political debates take place. People would be writing various things, there would be newspapers, broadsheets in which these kinds of political satire and battle-- we will be looking at this poem *MacFlecknoe* in our next lecture which will tell us a lot more about this.

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But for the moment I leave you with this. With all this debate, with all this circulation of ideas through the press, a few important tenets of democracy was getting settled in England and elsewhere in Europe. The toleration of contrary ideas- that it is possible now to subscribe to ideas and beliefs which contradict the state or the ruler. Till now, if you had a contrary belief, if you questioned the state, if you questioned the predominant thinking of the times, you would be thrown into gallows, you would be burnt at the stakes are put into the Tower of London till the end of your life.

Lot of prisoners were rotting in the Bastille till the revolution set them free. So this toleration of contrary ideas, that I may have ideas which are contrary to what you believe, but you would not hit me for it. This toleration is the bulwark, is the important basis of democracy and the freedom of the press to print ideas across the board which leads to this--

And we see that through this freedom and and merely political ideas we know the life of Galileo, we know the life of Giordano Bruno- people who questioned ideas of how the planets are organized- they were prosecuted, they had to face persecution. So it is not merely political ideas that require freedom, every kind of ideas require freedom and freedom in

general helps bring in newer kinds of ideas and that is where Europe actually gained its supremacy across the world because it practiced a certain kind of freedom.

I am not at that moment; Europe did practice freedom within itself but it did not practice that freedom in the colonies so that is a critique of your open practice of freedom and liberty. But the point to understand is that if any society wants to, in a globalized world, wants to rise as an international power or international center of thought, if I talk in terms of soft power, power may not only be described as military power but in soft power earn the respect of the people of the world, then these essential freedoms, these essential tenets of democracy become very important.

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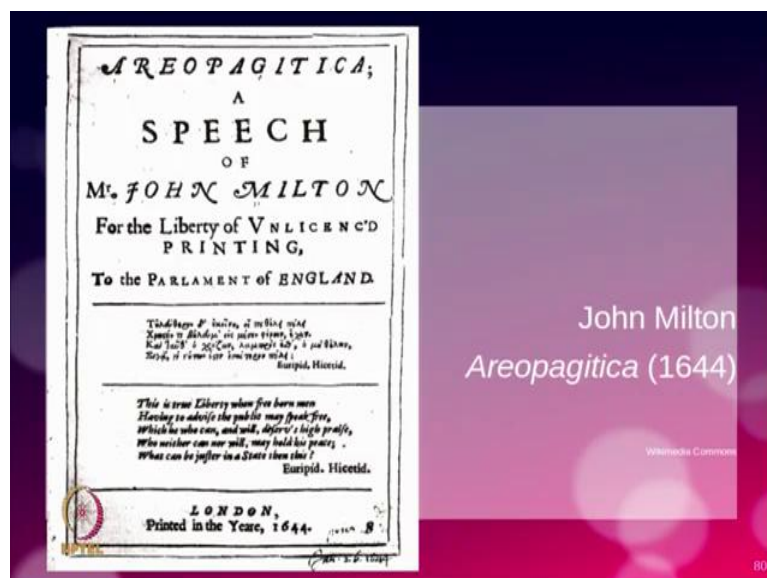
And one of the important figures is John Milton who wrote in *Areopagitica*, he spoke about the freedom of press, he argued for the freedom of press because it was always the aim of the rulers of those times that if they could they would have the printing press should print only things that they believe in, any alternative ideas should not enter into the press at all and that is something that John Milton, he himself was a supporter of the Parliamentary forces but he wrote, he's hailed up as a very important figure and his book *Areopagitica* is looked upon as a very important tenet of upholding the freedom of the press. Thank you.