

From the Printed Word to the Moving Image

BY ELIZABETH L. EISENSTEIN

I was asked to discuss how the changes wrought by the advent of printing might be related to the likely consequences of current innovations in communications technology. As is so often the case, no sooner had I accepted the invitation than I began to have second thoughts. First of all, I was uneasy about the title that I'd been assigned. "From the printed word to the moving image" seems to imply that the one thing was superseded by the other—an issue to be discussed later on. Second, I am poorly equipped to deal with recent communications technology. When it comes to playing with computers, my grandchildren are more expert than am I. Third and finally, I have always tried to steer clear of speculating about the possible consequences of current developments. As is true of most historians, I am skeptical about efforts to divine the future and feel sufficiently challenged by the problematic task of understanding the past.

On the other hand, I do think historians have an obligation to place current concerns in some sort of perspective. When I saw the conference announcement that recent developments have left us "in a world dramatically different from the one inhabited by previous generations," I couldn't help thinking that this very conviction serves to link our own generation with many that have gone before. To go back no further than the 1830s, Alfred de Musset described how his generation experienced the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars: "behind them, a past forever destroyed . . . before them . . . the first gleams of the future; and between these two worlds . . . a sea filled with

flotsam and jetsam . . . the present, in a word" (Musset, n.d., p. 5). Later on, Henry Adams wrote about being abruptly cut off from the experience of his ancestors by the Boston and Albany Railroad, the first Cunard steamer, and the stringing of telegraph wires (Adams, 1918, p. 496). Still later, Samuel Eliot Morison said the same thing about the internal combustion engine, nuclear fission, and Dr. Freud (Morison, 1964, p. 24).

Is the idea that a new age has dawned with the advent of new media also embedded in our past? To place current speculations in perspective, I've been surveying reactions to previous changes affecting media, with a focus on developments in England and France.

Many predictions were made after the beginning of the past century, which saw paper-making industrialized and wooden hand presses replaced by steam-powered iron machines. Even while printing industries were flourishing and output was rising to meet increasing demand, nineteenth-century observers began to speculate that the end of the book was on hand. According to Thomas Carlyle, the replacement of book by newspaper had already begun in the age of the hand press, with the sharp rise in the number of newspapers being distributed in the streets of revolutionary Paris (Carlyle, 1837, pp. 21-25). Carlyle's description of revolutionary journalism was taken over by Louis Blanc, whose history of the French Revolution was written after the author's career as a journalist-turned-deputy had come to an end. In a much-cited chapter on the emergence of journalism as a new power in human affairs, Blanc paraphrased Carlyle. Books were suited to quieter times, he wrote, but we are now in an era when today devours yesterday and must be devoured by tomorrow. And then comes the celebrated formula: the age of books is closed; the age of the journal is at hand (Blanc, 1852, p. 122). In mid-century also, John Stuart Mill expressed concern that most people were no longer taking their opinions from churchmen or statesmen. Nor, he wrote, were they being guided by books. Their thinking was being done for them by men much like themselves

through newspapers (Mill, 1947[1859], p. 66). After the century's close, Oswald Spengler summed up the gloomy prognosis: just as the age of the sermon had given way to the age of the book, he wrote, so too the age of the book had given way to that of the newspaper (Spengler, 1928, p. 463).

Taking advantage of hindsight, we may now agree that nineteenth-century observers were right to assign special significance to the emergence of a periodical press. It restructured the way readers experienced the flow of time and altered the way they learned about affairs of state (Rétat, 1985). It created a forum outside parliaments and assembly halls that allowed ordinary readers and letter-writers to participate in debates. It provided ambitious journalists, from Marat to Mussolini, with pathways to political power (Eisenstein, 1991). It gave a tremendous boost to commercial advertising. It served to knit together the inhabitants of large cities for whom the daily newspaper would become a kind of surrogate community.

Moreover, although early gazettes and newsletters had resembled books, the later dailies developed a distinctive size and format so that they had to be placed in a separate category by archivists and librarians. The front-page layout of the modern newspaper was unlike any earlier printed product. The patchwork of unrelated items containing the first paragraphs of chopped-up stories each to be continued in some other place (section B or C or D) disproved in spectacular fashion the often cited McLuhanite notion that print encouraged linear sequential modes of thought. As McLuhan himself observed, "the modern newspaper presents a mosaic of unrelated scraps in a field unified only by a dateline" (McLuhan, 1964, p. 219). Twentieth-century painters experimenting with collage techniques may well have been influenced by the front-page layout. Daily exposure to newsprint has probably accustomed successive generations to the disjunctions and discontinuities that seem to characterize much modern art and modern fiction.

But although observers were right to sense that journalism had significant transformative effects, they were wrong in assuming that the advent of the newspaper “had completely expelled the book from the mental life of the people” (Spengler, 1928, p. 461). As it turned out, book and newspaper were interdependent, their fates closely intertwined. Book sales came to hinge on newspaper advertisements and on reviews in the periodical press. Press laws usually encompassed both forms of printed output. To be sure, publishers were less likely to be prosecuted for costly volumes aimed at elites than for cheap papers that presumably stirred up the rabble. Yet efforts to control all printed output characterized authoritarian regimes in the past and still mark totalitarian regimes in the present century. Nineteenth-century liberals objected to the Index of Prohibited Books as well as to censorship of periodicals and newspapers. (A difficult book, not a readable pamphlet, has led to the recent death sentence imposed upon Salman Rushdie.)

Coexistence and interdependence were especially apparent during the age of Mill and Carlyle. For the nineteenth-century novel was often conveyed in serial form by newspapers; its chapter endings were artfully composed to keep readers in suspense until the next installment arrived. The soap opera of today and the serial novel (roman-fleuve) of yesterday had much in common. It is true that until the advent of the radio, there was nothing quite like that interruption of narratives by commercials that gave the “soaps” their name. Nevertheless, as early as the 1830s, fiction writers were complaining about the intrusion into literature of vulgar commodities for sale. In his 1834 preface to *Made-moiselle de Maupin*, Théophile Gautier expressed savage indignation at the idea of seeing his work advertised together with such items as elastic corsets, crinoline collars, patent-nipple-nursing bottles, and remedies for toothaches (p. 39).

Gautier’s other complaints also strike a familiar note. The public’s appetite for scandal was being so whetted by news reports of sensational trials, he wrote, that “the reader could only be caught

by a hook baited with a small corpse beginning to turn blue. Men are not as unlike fishes as some people seem to think" (p. 15). As is true of television producers today, many writers expressed disgust at the vulgar sensationalism of others, but few could afford to abandon the hope of creating a sensation themselves.

Novelists were not alone in expressing concern about the effects of sensational journalism. Doctors became alarmed over the deterioration of the nation's mental health. A physician named Isaac Ray published a book entitled *Mental Hygiene* in 1863 in which he noted, among other worries, the adverse effects of crime reporting on the national psyche: "The details of a disgusting criminal trial, exposing the darkest aspects of our nature, find an audience that no court-room less than a hemisphere could hold" (Ray, p. 237).

On such issues, nineteenth-century opinions and present-day attitudes do not seem to be far apart. Although different mass media are being targeted, the complaints are much the same—which is not to say that they were or are invalid. The ubiquity of sex and violence; intrusive commercials and sycophancy to mass taste seem to present a steady-state crisis that is no less troublesome for being so persistent. The "tawdry novels which flare in the bookshelves of . . . railroad stations" offended Matthew Arnold more than a century ago (Altick, 1963, p. 310). Similar material seems no less offensive when displayed on the shelves of the airport shops of today—if, indeed there are any books placed there at all.

Still, the newspapers that are piled up in airport shops probably do not seem as threatening to book lovers at present as they did to those in the past. Disdainful remarks about sound bites often go together with respectful comments about print journalism. In view of the defects of newscasts, book and newspaper are now often coupled in nostalgic reminiscences of that golden age when print culture reigned supreme. However, librarians and archivists are less likely to be nostalgic. They still have good cause to worry

about the relentless pressure exerted by the ever-increasing output of printed materials on available shelf space.

The advent of the electronic church shows how the sermon, once thought to be outmoded, was capable of being resuscitated. The paperback revolution of the 1960s came as even more of a surprise. In the present decade, chain stores opened by Barnes and Noble and by Borders compete with Amazon, which claims to be the world's largest bookstore and is located on the World Wide Web. Most recently, Oprah Winfrey's television book club showed how the use of a new medium may dramatically increase markets for an old one. The death of the novel also seems somewhat less likely at present than in previous years. There is even renewed demand for nineteenth-century novels by such authors as Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Victor Hugo, thanks to recent filmed, televised, and staged versions of their works.

These examples may suffice to indicate that the last two centuries have witnessed not a succession of deaths—not the death of the sermon, the book, the novel—but, rather, a sequence of premature obituaries.

In his introduction to an essay collection entitled *The Future of the Book* (1996), Geoffrey Nunberg takes note of this phenomenon which he describes as the doctrine of supersession. This doctrine, he notes, underlies expectations (false ones it seems at the moment) that photography would put an end to painting, movies would kill the theater, television would kill movies. To be sure (Nunberg does not point this out but it is worth noting), the doctrine is not always at odds with reality. The age of the hand-copied book, like that of the horse and buggy, did come to an end. Yet, hand-copied books were still being produced in Western Europe more than a century after Gutenberg. At this point it should be noted that I'm offering a Eurocentric view throughout this discussion. There are many non-Western regions that still offer employment to scribes. Even in the West, as Curt Bühler noted many years ago, the scribe long outlived the manuscript book and was not superseded until the advent of the typewriter (Bühler,

1960, p. 26). One thinks of all those clerks plying quill pens in nineteenth-century law offices. And although the manual typewriter may now be on the verge of obsolescence, its keyboard, transferred to the word processor, has received another lease on life.

The advent of printing is seen to outmode not the manuscript book but the Gothic cathedral in the most celebrated case cited by Nunberg to illustrate the supersession doctrine. It comes from the chapter in Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* where the archdeacon first points to the great cathedral and then stretches out his right hand toward a fifteenth-century printed book and announces "*Ceci tuera cela;*" *This* (the printed book) will kill *that* (the cathedral, which had served for centuries as an encyclopedia in stone). Nunberg does not pause over the ironic implications of Hugo's making this pronouncement while living, as he did, in the midst of a Gothic revival. Nor does he comment on the building of Gothic cathedrals in the present century—witness the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York and the National Cathedral, which my children watched being completed near our home in Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, he argues persuasively about the fallacy of assuming that new artifacts and styles must always supersede old ones.

Of course there are significant differences between medieval cathedral building and Gothic revival architecture just as there are between the experience of nineteenth-century readers of Hugo's original novel and that of recent viewers of Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. To complicate matters (and these issues are remarkably complex), one must also allow for the difference between the way Hugo's novel would have been received in a French-language version as against a translated one; by a nineteenth-century reader as against a twentieth-century one. And then as bibliographers remind us, one must also allow for the way the presentation of the same text varies from one edition to another.

For printed editions do supersede each other. David Hume thought the fact that he was able continually to improve and correct his work in successive editions was the chief advantage conferred on an author by the invention of printing (Cochrane, 1964, p. 19n). Although defective early editions might be superseded by improved later ones, early editions, however defective, might also be regarded as becoming ever more valuable to rare book collectors. (Indeed, defects may even enhance the value of a printed product as in the case of a mistake in printing a stamp.) It is characteristic of our culture that markets for antiques flourish alongside demand for the latest designs. Even the horse and buggy has reemerged as a fashionable acquisition along with the antique car. Very soon, it will be the turn of the manual typewriter (but perhaps not of the mimeographing machine?).

The doctrine of supersession is much too coarse-grained to make room for such complications. Indeed, it makes no more allowance for revivals than it does for survivals. It thus encourages us to overlook what I think is most characteristic of our own era—namely the coexistence of a vast variety of diverse styles and artifacts reflecting different spirits of different times. Even the New York skyline tells the same story. Skyscrapers are certainly modern structures; yet, as others have noted, their tops bear a marked resemblance to chateaux, temples, and mausoleums. What applies to the ever-more-eclectic melange of styles and artifacts also pertains to media. That is to say, we confront an ever-more-complex mixture of diverse media: painting, woodblock, engraving, lithograph, photograph, drama, film, television, radio, video tape, walkman, phone, fax, word processor, copying machine, computer, and so on and so forth—none of which has been superseded, all of which confront us in a bewildering profusion at the present time.

The title assigned to this article, "From the Printed Word to the Moving Image," makes me uneasy because it seems to deny coexistence and implies the supersession of printed word by moving image. That the printed word is, or is about to be, superseded by

something else seems most unlikely to me at present—especially when I am preparing a copy of this very article to appear in print.

Mention of preparing a copy reminds me that the photocopier has been undeservedly neglected in recent accounts. Perhaps some of you recall the television commercial for Xerox, with a monkish scribe taking a text into a monastery, reemerging with a stack of copies and proclaiming “it’s a miracle”? (This reminded me of an anecdote about Gutenberg’s partner, Johann Fust, arriving in fifteenth-century Paris with a wagon load of Bibles, which the doctors of the Sorbonne then examined. Finding that each copy was exactly like every other one, they set upon Fust and accused him of black magic. The anecdote gains added resonance from the frequent misspelling of Fust’s name as Faust and the resultant confusion between the legendary magician and Gutenberg’s partner.) The Xerox commercial has lost ground. Newer miracles are now being hyped. Nevertheless, the copier is still indispensable to all of us who frequent archives and rare book libraries. It has dramatically changed my own working habits. I used to make sure before setting off for a library that I had pen and paper on hand to take notes and copy citations. The era of the hand-copied book had ended long ago, but the hand-copying of passages from printed books was still going strong. I recently learned that DeWitt Wallace spent hours in the New York Public Library transcribing printed passages by hand for early editions of the *Readers Digest*. Probably he developed writer’s cramp as I used to do. Now, of course, I worry more about carpal tunnel syndrome. In any case, I’ve now abandoned pen and paper but must check to be sure I have enough coins on hand to put in the library copier. Researchers have ceased to serve as their own scribes even while they line up to endow printed pages, placed face down in a machine, with a longer lease on life.

Much as medieval universities were surrounded by stationers who farmed out pieces of texts to lay copyists for reproduction, so too late-twentieth-century universities are now surrounded by shops containing copying machines. When I was a faculty mem-

ber at Michigan, it was common practice to take sections of books to the shop to be duplicated and then have the selections bound together, thus producing special anthologies of readings for certain courses. Medieval *florilegia*, common in the thirteenth century, thus reemerged in the late-twentieth century as “course packs.” The publishing revolution that was set in motion by the copier has recently been arrested by lawsuits brought by publishing firms objecting to infringements on copyright and setting limits on fair use. Whatever the outcome of pending cases, the continuing struggle indicates that vital interests are still believed to be at stake in the printed word.

Of course, litigation over course packs represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the destabilizing effect of very recent technologies on structures designed in an age of print to safeguard intellectual property rights. I have no idea how the control of texts by authors (and/or publishers) can be maintained in view of the floodgates that stand wide open to all the information, news, and views that are carried on the Web. Nor do I feel competent to speculate about the effects of electronic mail, the Internet, and other forms of paperless publishing on scientific research. What will happen to peer review and priority claims? I look forward to hearing from other speakers about ways of safeguarding the reward structure that has encouraged scientific innovation until now. I must confess to becoming less and less certain about the desirability of an entirely unregulated flow of information in view of those special Web sites that enable conspiratorial theorists to share their paranoid fantasies. After hearing a few snatches of hysterical commentary by people who shall remain nameless, I’ve even begun to question the desirability of uncensored talk radio.

Mention of talk radio brings up yet another problem about going from printed word to moving image. The spoken word is left out of consideration. I’ve already alluded to the revitalization of the sermon in this century. In view of the excitement generated earlier in this century about movie actors being enabled to

speak, perhaps the talking image deserves attention along with the moving one. (There is also the singing star in the musical film, but I am arbitrarily setting aside all references to music and to the recording industry throughout this article). To turn back to the issue of the spoken word: although printing is silent and radio broadcasts are not, the two still have some significant features in common. In 1946, after speaking on the BBC to some twenty million people, Harold Nicolson wrote in his diary that he had no real feel for his audience. "To whom am I talking?" he asked. Although an audience of readers had been replaced by one of listeners, the sense of distance between author and invisible public remained.

Before printing, powerful lungs had been required by orators and preachers who hoped to gain a popular following. After printing, a new rather paradoxical figure emerged: the silent demagogue or the mute orator. The latter phrase was actually used to describe an influential deputy to the French Constituent Assembly in 1789. The deputy had issued an incendiary journal called the *Sentinel of the People* on the eve of the Revolution, but he was said to whisper like a woman when called on for a speech (Eisenstein, 1989, p. 193). Many of those who became prominent on the eighteenth-century political scene were notably deficient in traditional oratorical skills. In England in the 1760s, John Wilkes was an indifferent public speaker, and when he had to respond extemporaneously he fumbled his words. Tom Paine never swayed a colonial legislature with a single memorable speech. Paine's friend Brissot had a sonorous voice, but he disliked public speaking, was untrained in oratory, and timid before crowds. Camille Desmoulins stammered when he spoke. It was solely the power of their pens that gave such men a metaphorical "voice" in public affairs (Eisenstein, 1991, p. 152).

With the advent of radio and the electronic amplifier, the phenomenon media analysts call "reoralization" was greatly reinforced. Powerful lungs are still not needed (except perhaps by coaches engaged in quarrels with umpires and teachers or par-

ents subduing noisy children), but certainly the human voice has regained lost ground. Groups gathered around radios or television sets also suggest that some of the isolating effects of individual absorption in reading materials may be mitigated. But it would be a mistake to carry this thought too far. Individual absorption in cyberspace and virtual reality is just beginning to pose new problems. A seventeenth-century writer expressed regret at the loss of conviviality in coffee houses where, he wrote, everyone now sat in "sullen silence" reading newspapers (Brewer, 1976, p. 148). One is reminded of the many fellow travellers now seen on planes or trains with earphones clamped on their heads. At least one could catch the attention of the "sullen" silent reader by making a noise, whereas nothing seems to disturb the listener wearing earphones. (Although I had planned to stay clear of the recording industry, it is too omnipresent to avoid completely: the introduction of tapes and cassettes does require more attention when considering the fate of the printed word. Perhaps another article should be entitled: "From Printed Word to Talking Book.")

But there is also the printed image to be reckoned with. After all, it is only a short step from fixed image to moving one. As a youngster I played with little books where images were arranged in sequence so that if I flipped the pages rapidly I had the illusion of watching something move. (I recently saw my six-year-old grandson playing with a similar little book he called a "flipper.") Such little books were not irrelevant to the development of animated cartoons and to the early movie industry. If we take the moving image to allude to movie and television screens then, as already noted, the newer medium not only coexists with the older one, but actually helps to boost sales of the latter. In the case of Jane Austen and company, we go from printed word to moving image and then, in reverse motion, back to increased sales of printed word.

In such disparate fields as bird watching and art history, the printed image was and still is of enormous consequence. As

recently as October 1996, a Metropolitan Museum of Art ceremony marked the publication of a thirty-four-volume *Dictionary of Art*, containing fifteen thousand images and twenty-eight million words. "Only in the age of the jet plane, the photograph, the fax and the computer has a work like this been possible," wrote the reviewer in *The Washington Post* (October 16, 1996, p. B8). No mention of printed words or images. Yet this dictionary probably owes more to cumulative results obtained by the old media than it does to jet, fax, or computer. It represents the culmination of a tradition that originated with Vasari's sixteenth-century illustrated collective biography of artists—a tradition that also encompassed Diderot's eighteenth-century *Encyclopédie*, which was subtitled *A Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* and which contained seventeen folio-sized volumes of text and eleven volumes of plates—eleven folio-sized volumes, that is, devoted exclusively to pictures.

It is too often forgotten that images replicated on wood and metal were introduced at more or less the same time as Gutenberg's invention. As William Ivins insisted, "the exactly repeatable pictorial statement" was at least as significant an innovation as was letterpress printing (Ivins, 1958, p. 2). On this point we ought to follow George Sarton's advice and think of a double invention: typography for the text and engraving for the images (Sarton, 1957, pp. 116–19). Otherwise we are likely to reinforce the mistaken notion that printing entailed a one-way movement from image to word.

To be sure, there was such a movement, in Protestant regions at least. As is implied in Victor Hugo's account, Bible stories presented by stone portals and stained glass went out of favor even while Bible stories conveyed by printed chapter and verse were being translated into vernaculars and published far and wide. Some iconoclastic Puritans insisted on lay Bible reading while smashing graven images.

But although newly printed Bibles and austere white-washed churches did replace sculptured stone portals and stained glass in some regions, in others, religious imagery was exploited by all

available means. Especially in Catholic regions, Baroque illustrations of angels, saints, and martyrs were multiplied in diverse media and circulated among the faithful as they still are being circulated even now. Nor did Puritans object to the use of printed images for didactic purposes. Indeed, picture books for children came into vogue under Protestant auspices.

Moreover, use of the printed image was by no means confined to religious, moralistic, and didactic purposes. Pornography found a large audience in sixteenth-century Europe with the publication of Aretino's verses accompanied by those graphic presentations of copulation known as "Aretino's postures." The same era saw frequent resort to political propaganda by means of printed imagery as is shown most vividly by Lutheran caricatures and cartoons. The French Revolution produced prints of peasants with pikes and the storming of the Bastille that still resonate in the modern American imagination (witness Pat Buchanan's campaign oratory). Image-driven foreign policy did not originate with television pictures of starving African children; there were newspaper wars before there were television wars. Cartoons of Belgian babies being bayoneted by brutal Germans played a part in winning support for American entry into World War I. Later, the discrediting of anti-German propaganda during World War I would encourage an unjustified skepticism about atrocities being committed in World War II.

To the historian of early modern science, probably the most important aspect of the double invention is that it led to a greater reliance on image and symbol and less reliance on words. Once it became possible to duplicate precisely rendered drawings of natural phenomena together with exactly repeatable diagrams, graphs, equations, and the like, scientific communications became less dependent on ambiguous texts whether in Greek, Arabic, Latin, or the vernaculars. Identical maps, charts, and log tables fixed on printed pages made it possible for observers located in different regions to coordinate their findings and to trace

the paths taken by moving objects such as planets and comets with unprecedented precision.

The remarkable advances that were made after the discrediting of the ancient authorities, such as Galen on anatomy or Ptolemy on astronomy, help to account for the widespread acceptance of the doctrine of supersession. I'm going to sidestep current debates among historians of science about paradigm switches and simply note that to almost all nineteenth-century observers, it seemed obvious that the ancients had been surpassed in science and technology.

Among many Victorians, the doctrine of supersession (together with its counterpart, the idea of progress) was so widely accepted and fully orchestrated that it was applied to all phenomena—not just to Ptolemy and Galen or dinosaurs and dodos but to the entire course of human history and to all cultural artifacts. “In every department of life—in its business and in its pleasures, in its beliefs and in its theories, in its material developments and in its spiritual convictions—we thank God that we are not like our fathers. And while we admit their merits, making allowance for their disadvantages, we do not blind ourselves in mistaken modesty to our own immeasurable superiority” (Froude, cited by Hartwell, 1960, p. 416). I often wonder what such commentators would have made of the counter-cultural trends at work today when the march of medicine is being countered by a vogue for homeopathy and acupuncture or when reports of a moon landing are coupled with astrologers casting horoscopes in daily papers. Even now, quite a few of my contemporaries are taken aback by the resurgence of literal fundamentalism and the advocacy of “creationism” more than fifty years after the Scopes Trial in Tennessee.

Such phenomena might seem less surprising if we were not so entranced by the advent of all the new communications technologies that we failed to consider the preservative powers of print. Recently, *The Sunday Telegraph* (July 23, 1995, p. 5) announced that the Church of England was launching itself into

cyberspace to enable churchmen to surf a World Wide Web of biblical information. This announcement came to mind when I saw the conference brochure refer to a trend toward globalization and assert that "the world was more homogeneous." The existence of a Web that is world-wide certainly seems to support this assertion. Its usage to spread information about the Bible, however, gives rise to other thoughts. Not only is the world still divided by adherence to different faiths, but within Latin Christendom itself Bible printing undermined the use of a single religious tongue. The Gutenberg Bible, of course, was in Latin, but the Lutheran Bible was not. Vernacular Bibles produced by Luther's followers balkanized the common Latin culture of the Western Church. New editions of modernized versions have scarcely helped to put Humpty Dumpty back together again. "English was good enough for God; it should be good enough for Texas" remarked a Texan opponent of bilingual education. Efforts to bring the Gospel to everyman are still being undertaken on a global scale and the Bible continues to be translated into hundreds of new tongues. Even now, new literary languages are being created and then fixed in print by missionary societies. The tower of Babel is growing ever higher alongside the expanding Web.

After this final example, let me offer a brief conclusion. Print culture no longer monopolizes modern communications and now shares the stage with a bewildering variety of new media. Nevertheless, the printed word has not been superseded. To understand the chaotic state of contemporary culture, we have to take into account the unsettling effects of new communications technologies. But this should not distract us from also acknowledging the continuing, ever-cumulative effects of a double invention that is now five hundred years old.

References

- Adams, Henry *The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography* (Cambridge, Mass: Houghton Mifflin, 1918).
Altick, Richard, *The English Common Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix edition, 1963).

- Blanc, Louis, *Histoire de la Révolution Française* (Paris: Langlois et LeClercq, 1852), 12 vols., iii, Ch. 6.
- Brewer, John, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- Bühler, Curt, *The Fifteenth Century Book: The Scribes, the Printers, the Decorators* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960).
- Carlyle, Thomas, *The French Revolution a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1837), 3 vols., ii, Book I, Ch. 4.
- Cochrane, J. A., *Dr. Johnson's Printer* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964).
- Dudek, Louis, *Literature and the Press* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1960).
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth L., *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 2 vols.
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth L., "Le publiciste comme démagogue: La *Sentinelle du Peuple* de Volney," *La Révolution du Journal 1788-1794*, Pierre Rétat, ed. (Paris: CNRS, 1989), pp. 189-97.
- Eisenstein, Elizabeth L., "The Tribune of the People," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation, 1991), 145-59.
- Gautier, Théophile, Preface (1834) to *Mademoiselle de Maupin, Texte Complet (1835)*, A. Boschot, ed. (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1966), pp. 1-39.
- Hartwell, R. M., "The Rising Standard of Living in England 1800-1850," *The Economic History Review* 13 (1960-1961): 397-416.
- Ivins, William, *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953).
- McLuhan, Marshall, *Understanding Media* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964).
- Mill, John Stuart, *On Liberty*, A. Castell, ed. (New York: F.S. Crofts, 1947[1859]).
- Morison, Samuel Eliot, *Vistas of History* (New York: Knopf, 1964).
- Musset, Alfred de, *La Confession d'un Enfant du Siècle* (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, n.d.).
- Nunberg, Geoffrey, ed., *The Future of the Book* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), Introduction, pp. 9-21.
- Ray, Isaac, *Mental Hygiene* (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1968[1863]).
- Rétat, Pierre, "Forme et Discours d'un Journal Révolutionnaire," *L'Instrument Périodique: La Fonction de la Presse au XVIIIe siècle*, Labrosse and Rétat, eds. (Lyon: Presses Universitaires, 1985), pp. 139-78.

Sarton, George, *Six Wings: Men of Science in the Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957).

Spengler, Oswald, *The Decline of the West*, Charles F. Atkinson, trans. (New York: A. Knopf, 1928), 2 Vols., ii.

Copyright of Social Research is the property of New School for Social Research. The copyright in an individual article may be maintained by the author in certain cases. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.