How has technology impacted the making of a poster?

The advancements in the field of technology paved the way to many opportunities and possibilities for not only the making but also the method of printing of posters. Before technology came around, the process of making a poster was to sketch it out on a paper with a pencil and colour it in. It was hence harder to be produced in larger quantities. There are, however, pros and cons to this as there are two sides to a coin. The emergence of computer softwares like Adobe photoshop, Quark Express and Autodesk Maya has helped designers to work more efficiently and has hence made their jobs easier. These softwares have also helped designers get more creative and achieve results that they otherwise could not have. Previously, there were a lot of limitations in the making of a poster but now that is not the case. Designers have been able to create some very scintillating posters due to technology. Typography also experienced the impact of the digital revolution, which occurred in the late 1950s. Designers started to come up with new typefaces and scripts. On the other hand, technology also resulted into the practice of plagiarism. It has stunted the imagination and originality of designers all around the world as they turn to the internet to get inspiration for the theme of their poster. Technology also eliminated the ownership rights to designs as anyone can get prints and it would still be considered as an original. Today, anyone who buys a packet of Chupa Chups can say that they have an original artwork of the renowned artist 'Salvador Dali', as he designed the logo for the brand. Technology has also improved the communication between a designer and the client as the designs can be sent via email and notes can be exchanged.

What is the watershed moment of posters?

Posters have been around for a long time now and have immensely evolved ever since they were first made. Poster making emerged in the early 19th century as a form of visual communication. The initial posters consisted only of text that was bold and readable. It served as a way to convey information and news about political and social movements to the people. These posters were made using the method of lithography. Lithography was invented by a German actor and author 'Alois Senefelder' in 1796. Lithography is a method of printing originally based on the immiscibility of oil and water. This technique, however was too slow and tedious and could not be used for mass production. It also could produce only some colours or design. Of course, technology changed the game of poster making completely but I believe that the major turning point in the making of posters was when 'Chromolithography' was discovered. Chromolithography was invented by a French printer 'Godefroy Engelmann' in 1837. It allowed the designers to achieve multiple colours and designs in their poster. This was done by layering multiple layers of metal sheets on top of each other on a paper to get the desired design. This allowed for the posters to consist of various colourful images as well as text. The addition of images made the posters more appealing to the public and were better received as well. It became easier to grab the attention of the people and to get the message across, to influence the audience. This resulted in the making of many iconic posters that were used for recruitment for the army, political propaganda and advertisement. Chromolithography gave rise to a myriad of possibilities to combine imagery and typefaces and make posters that connect with the people and have impact on them.

How did the posters reflect the various cultures and situations of the olden times?

According to the French historian Max Gallo, "for over two hundred years, posters have been displayed in public places all over the world. Visually striking, they have been designed to attract the attention of passers-by, making us aware of a political viewpoint, enticing us to attend specific events, or encouraging us to purchase a particular product or service." Gallo's words explain the effect and purpose of posters very well. Posters served as a mirror to the political, economical and cultural states of the countries in their particular time periods. Posters made in different countries reflected that country's unique and distinctive culture. France had posters on cafes and cabarets while Italy had posters for the opera. Spain had posters for bullfights and festivals while Germany had posters for trade fairs and magazines. Britain and the United States of America had posters for literary journals and circuses. They all had a unique style in their posters as well. The Dutch posters showed restraint and orderliness, the Italian posters showed drama and the grand scale and the German posters showed directness and medieval influence. These styles found their way across the world due to migration and influenced the posters in every country they went. World War I proved to be the biggest advertising campaign the world has ever seen till date. Posters were widely used for this purpose. They started their new role of promoting propaganda. They conveyed messages to the people about raising money, recruitment of soldiers, boosting volunteer efforts, encouraging production and provoking outrage about the enemy and their atrocities. The Bolsheviks used the art of posters to win the civil war against the Whites, during World War I. Lenin and his followers proved that the poster could be used as a weapon. This shows how posters played an important role in the major movements in history.