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Book Value Categories and the Acceptance of Technological Changes in English Book Production

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Buchwissenschaft ist selten eine Garantie für eine erfolgreiche Karriere, die zum ökonomischen Reichtum führt. Glücklicherweise gab es zwei Menschen, die niemals meine Entscheidung anzweifelten oder mich von meinem Weg abbringen wollten. Ihre Unterstützung war die wesentlichste. Daher möchte ich dieses Buch Barbara und Werner Rosenberg, meinen Eltern, widmen.

Contents

Introduction

Throughout history, the book as a medium underwent multiple changes, even ignoring the earliest forms of written communication like clay tablets, papyrus scrolls or cave paintings. From the first handwritten codices, the book developed towards a mass-produced industrialized combination of cultural object and commercial commodity all the way to e-books readable on a computer screen, a smartphone or a tablet computer. Seemingly everything changed: the structure and the layout of writing, the shape, the materiality and the power application of production, which turned from manual labour to steam power and eventually to electricity. Even though the differences between cuneiform writing on clay tablets and, say, an English novel on an e-reader are staggering, it needs to be stressed that most transitions in the development of those book forms were more defined by continuity rather than clear and decisive breaks. Depending on the respective definitions, it could be argued that it is accurate then to speak of 'evolutions' rather than 'revolutions.'[1]

Developments towards a more digital-orientated society and a growing acceptance by readers of electronic publications may foster the assumption that the book is again in a transitional phase. These observations fuelled discussions about whether the printed book is an obsolete medium headed towards extinction. Heidi Brayman Hackel, for example, even argues that this is the reason for many scholars to turn to book history.[2] There is no denying that the discipline cannot ignore digital publishing, even though its beginning, under the name of 'analytical bibliography,' was based on the material aspects of (early printed) books. Don F. McKenzie famously stated as early as 1985 that "there is no evading the challenge" posed by defining text as "verbal, visual, oral, and numeric data, in the form of maps, prints, and music, of archives of recorded sound, of films,

1 For a more detailed discussion concerning these terms in media studies, see Matthias Bickenbach, "Medienevolution - Begriff oder Metapher? Überlegungen zur Form der Mediengeschichte," *Die Medien der Geschichte: Historizität und Medialität in interdisziplinärer Perspektive*, eds Fabio Crivellari and Sven Grampp (Konstanz, 2004), 109–136.

2 Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge, 2005), 15–16.

videos, and any computer-stored information, everything in fact from epigraphy to the latest forms of discography."[3]

Though it is hardly imaginable that McKenzie could foresee the importance and the huge impact the internet and world wide web would play just 15 years later, he was certainly aware of what a huge challenge that would be. In the early stages of the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, he already voiced concerns as series editor about the planned seventh, and final, volume which was supposed to cover the years 1914–2000. When it was finally published in 2019, the editors summarized McKenzie's concerns in their introduction: he worried about the "imprecise terms of references" and stressed the fact that the book shares more and more functions with other media. He also pointed out the vast amount of archival resources for the time frame and saw a weakening of the premises of a national history due to technological developments and a multinational publishing industry.[4]

If one accepts that digital publishing has to be addressed by book history, one way to approach the question of a possible transition is to isolate earlier patterns that determined the transitional phases of the book in history as well as the acceptance of the new form. Such patterns can shed light on more recent developments in the digital age.

The Death of the Printed Book?

Predicting the death of the printed book is not a recent phenomenon. Among the earliest comments about the possible end of the book date back as far as the late nineteenth century.[5] More serious considerations about the possible end of

3 Don F. McKenzie, "The Book as an Expressive Form," *The Panizzi Lectures, 1985: Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (London 1986), 1–20, 3.

4 Andrew Nash, Claire Squires and I. R. Willison, "Introduction," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume VII: The Twentieth Century and* Beyond, eds Andrew Nash, Claire Squires and I. R. Willison (Cambridge, 2019), 1–38, 1.

5 Adriaan van der Weel, *Changing our Textual Minds: Towards a Digital Order of Knowledge* (Manchester, 2011), 211–213. Van der Weel refers to Octave Uzanne, who published an article in *Scribner's Magazine* titled "The End of Books" in August 1894. Uzanne's prediction about the obsolescence of the book is based on the new technology of phonography.

the book were voiced in the now classic *L'Apparition du Livre* (1958)[6] in which Lucien Febvre stated that "its future is no longer certain, threatened as it is by new inventions based on different principles."[7] Four years later, in 1962, Marshall McLuhan was already talking about an 'electronic age' that would be the end of the so-called *Gutenberg Galaxy*:

> In the electronic age which succeeds the typographic and mechanical era of the past five hundred years, we encounter new shapes and structures of human interdependence and of expression that are 'oral' in form even when the components of the situation may be non-verbal.[8]

In his monograph, McLuhan argued that the electronic age will lead towards a development from visual culture, shaped by typography and individualism, towards an oral culture with a social organization he termed 'global village.'

In the 1990s, the progress of technology, especially the development and improvement of personal computers and desktop publishing software, led to a renaissance of the discussion of the relevance of the physical book. Geoffrey Nunberg's 1996 compilation, *The Future of the Book*, offers a vivid portrait of the concerns about the printed book. One of the articles that specifically addresses the possible end of the book, "Material Matters"[9] by Paul Duguid, elaborates on the ideas of 'supersession' ("this will kill that"[10]) and 'liberation' ("information wants to be free"[11] and must not be limited to and because of its carrier). Ultimately, Duguid finds faults in both of these approaches and concludes that the book will not become outdated anytime soon if people will "not permit the burial of what yet has useful life."[12] In other words, as long as the printed book will not have competitors which offer superior qualities to perform their functions, it is unlikely that this system of communication, which has been serving Western culture for centuries, will be superseded by other technologies. However, he does imply that it might happen eventually.

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6 Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *L'Apparition du Livre*, Paris, 1958. In the following, the English translation will be used: Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800* (London, 1997), 10.

7 Febvre and Martin, *Coming of the Book*, 10.

8 Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto, 1962), 3.

9 Paul Duguid, "Material Matters: The Past and Futurology of the Book," *The Future of the Book*, ed. Geoffrey Nunberg (Berkeley, 1996), 63–101.

10 Duguid, "Material Matters," 65.

11 Duguid, "Material Matters," 73.

12 Duguid, "Material Matters," 90.

Opinions like these are growing in number. In his monograph *The Book is Dead: Long Live the Book* (2007),[13] Sherman Young even goes one step further and declares that books are no longer dying but are already dead. Young fosters his assumption with the allegedly vast superiority and omnipresence of other media competing for attention: "Look around next time you're on a bus or train and count how many books are being read. Compare that number with the tally of (mostly white) headphones dangling out of ears."[14] After this impressionistic assessment, Young concludes that the cultural impact of books has become, more or less, insignificant compared to popular music, television, Hollywood movies or the internet. Although he tries to support his assumptions with sales figures of books, comparing them to the ratings of soap operas or spectators of sport events, his approach cannot be labelled as methodologically adequate. He elaborates on the competition between texts and music and live events as entertainment, rather than the printed book with new ways to offer textual information beyond mere entertaining functions. In other words, he does not question the future of the book but rather the future of reading. Furthermore, it is revealing to note Young's definition of a book. In his opinion, it is mainly the entertaining content that the object 'book' contains, and it is not to be confused with the object itself.[15] He even declares the materiality of the book as the main reason for the book's ultimate demise: "The book is dead because the book trade is about selling objects, not ideas."[16]

Jeff Gomez argues in the same direction in his monograph *Print is Dead* (2008)[17]:

> While print is not dead, it is undoubtedly sickening. Newspaper readership has been in decline for years, magazines are also in trouble, and trade publishing (the selling of novels and non-fiction books to adults primarily for entertainment), has not seen any substantial growth in years. More and more people are turning away from traditional methods of reading, turning instead to their computers and the Internet for information and entertainment. Whether this comes in the form of getting news online, reading a

13 Sherman Young, *The Book is Dead: Long Live the Book* (Sydney, 2007).

14 Young, *The Book is Dead*, 5.

15 Young, *The Book is Dead*, 10.

16 Young, *The Book is Dead*, 10. Ironically, even though the author keeps predicting the death of the printed book, his publishing house refused to offer his text in an electronic format for years. It is now available in Kindle format. On his website *The Book is Dead* <http://shermanfyoung.wordpress.com> (accessed: 03.07.2019), he offers "a blog about a book about books." The latest entry is from March 2015.

17 Jeff Gomez, *Print is Dead: Books in Our Digital Age* (London, 2008).

> blog, or contributing to a wiki, the general population is shifting away from print consumption, heading instead to increasingly digital lives.[18]

Gomez and Young attribute the 'death' of the printed word not only to the growing importance of digital technologies, but also to the ever-growing media competition in general. They both assume that new entertainment technologies will replace the printed book by taking over the same or similar functions that the printed word has been performing for centuries. However, it is also alluded to that some specific book functions, such as being a symbolic object, are less important in "our digital age," as Gomez' title puts it.

Even though the argumentations of Young's and Gomez' monographs may at times remind one of the literary and arts sections of newspapers rather than academic contributions, they at least indicate a strong awareness of change in book culture in general. Around the same time, a concept called the 'Gutenberg Parenthesis' (2010), formulated by Lars Ole Sauerberg and elaborated by Tom Pettitt, was focussing on the effects of the so-called 'print culture.'[19] It claimed that the age of the printed book (for convenience, its time frame is roughly set to 1500–2000 for the western culture and consequently ignores the first fifty years of printing in Europe) has significantly dominated and defined our cultural understanding, but that it merely was an interruption of oral culture and is being challenged by digital culture today:

> This new revolution started in the 20th century with sound recording and film, moved next to television and radio and today takes the form of the internet. [. . .] There is a common theme when people consider these changes – that they are not simply something new but also the end of something old. Today, Pettitt sees these changes as a challenge to print and the book.[20]

Even though the Gutenberg Parenthesis had no clear predictions concerning the implications of digital culture on printed books, it indicates that the book as an everyday object, with sheets of paper bound or glued together in codex form as a carrier of typographic signs, will become gradually less important.

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18 Gomez, *Print is Dead*, 3.

19 For a discussion of the term 'print culture,' see, for example, Joseph A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto, 2003).

20 *The Gutenberg Parenthesis: Oral Tradition and Digital Technologies*. <https://commforum.mit.edu/the-gutenberg-parenthesis-oral-tradition-and-digital-technologies-29e1a4fde271> (accessed: 04.12.2019).

The Book as an Evolutionary Process?

In the late 1990s, librarian Frederick G. Kilgour had a different approach. He discussed evolutionary developments of the book in his *Evolution of the Book* (1998):

> [O]ver the last five thousand years there have been four transformations of the 'book' in which each manifestation has differed from its predecessors in shape and structure. The successive, sometimes overlapping, forms were the clay tablet inscribed with a stylus (2500 B.C.–A.D. 100), the papyrus roll written on with brush or pen (2000 B.C.–A.D. 700), the codex, originally inscribed with pen (A.D. 100), and the electronic book, currently in the process of innovation. There have also been three major transformations in method and power application in reproducing the codex: machine printing from cast type, powered by human muscle (1455–1814); nonhuman power driving both presses and typecasting machines (1814–1970); and computer-driven photocomposition combined with offset printing (1970–).[21]

The intriguing aspect of Kilgour's approach is that he tries to analyse the 'evolution of the book' with ideas borrowed from a theory about organic evolution from Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould (1972).[22] According to this theory, species in paleontological time endured over a long period of time with no or only minor modifications interrupted by sudden bursts of change indicated by the punctuations. Similarly, Kilgour claims that the evolution of the book underwent a comparable development and witnessed seven so-called punctuations of equilibria: 1) the clay tablet around 2500 BC, 2) the papyrus roll around 2000 BC, 3) the codex form around 150 AD, 4) the printing press in Europe around 1450, 5) steam power application to printing in the industrial age, 6) Offset-printing in the 1970s and finally 7) the e-book, interestingly dated with the year 2000 as the last punctuation.[23]

The term 'punctuation' in Kilgour's theory implies a rather decisive break from previous conditions. Indeed, Eldredge and Gould's theory does suggest fast developments during punctuations. However, one must take into consideration that their theory discusses geological time frames spanning millions of years. Kilgour's work 'only' looks at 5,000 years of the history of the book. The term 'fast' needs to be seen in relation to this.

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21 Frederick G. Kilgour, *The Evolution of the Book* (New York, 1998), 3–4.

22 Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould, "Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism," *Models in Paleobotany*, ed. T. J. M. Schopf (San Francisco, 1972), 82–115.

23 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 5.

Kilgour offers five concurrent elements that are, in his opinion, necessary preconditions for each of the major innovations of the book:

1. societal need for information,
2. technological knowledge and experience,
3. organizational experience and capability,
4. the capability of integrating a new form into existing information systems,
5. economic viability.[24]

Unfortunately, he does not elaborate further on these conditions in detail. Especially "organizational experience and capability" seems vague. When he later lists these conditions again to attempt a prediction about his last punctuation, that is the electronic book, he even rewrites these preconditions as "users' needs, adequate technology, new organizations, successful integration with existing systems, and cost effectiveness."[25]

Kilgour's ideas and elaborations are tempting because they seem so straightforward and almost simple. Indeed, his arguments seem, at times, flawed. The question remains: how relevant, for the history of the book, is a comparison with biological evolution? Further, the inclusion of clay tablets in his work (Kilgour boldly titles a chapter "Incunables on Clay") reveals his rather unspecific definition of 'book.' Overall, his approach is a simplification of complex procedures; the difficult mixture of sociocultural and economic features and aspects make the medium 'book' difficult to analyse. If one takes into consideration that, for example, the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*-series spans seven volumes with thousands of pages, it seems somewhat naïve to offer a monograph that attempts to illustrate and discuss the complete evolution of written communication on a mere 180 pages. Consequently, a review of Kilgour's monograph concluded with the notion that, before the electronic book will be successfully introduced, "one hopes that someone will write a more successful brief account of the book's evolution."[26] Kilgour's attempt shows the dangers involved when discussing the development of the book over long time spans. To prevent similar criticism, this study avoids Kilgour's main pitfalls by looking at the transitional phases only and therefore focussing on much smaller time units. It will also use

24 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 5–6.

25 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 9.

26 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, rev., "Frederick G. Kilgour, *The Evolution of the Book*, New York, 1998," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 30 (2000), 635–636, 636.

the concept of book value categories as a theoretical framework to help explain these transitions without neglecting sociocultural aspects.

The Book

Obituaries for the printed book like the ones presented above come and go. Most of these hypotheses have, to some extent, valid arguments and should not be entirely neglected. Nevertheless, all of them, until now, have one crucial flaw: they were and still seem premature. One of the main weaknesses these predictions and hypotheses have seems to be the lack of a proper definition of what is actually meant by 'book.' If definitions are offered, they are usually rather restrictive or seem wanting due to impreciseness, just like Young's statement that a book is in essence the text, not the material. His definition is either naïve, ill-informed or meant to be provocative. Even more provocative was William Mitchell's now famous statement that for most people, books are primarily "tree flakes encased in dead cow" and thereby ridiculing the importance of the material aspects as well as the willingness to pay for those objects.[27] For centuries, however, books have been complex objects carrying more than just information. Indeed, the materiality that makes up books performs further functions itself and must not be underestimated. Several physical aspects seem as vital for the existence of the book as the content itself. In fact, sometimes, certain books may perform functions for which the content is essentially irrelevant.

Glaister's *Glossary of the Book* from 1979 defines the book as follows:

> For statistical purposes the British book trade assumes that a book is a publication costing sixpence or more. Other countries define a book as containing a minimum number of pages, but have not agreed on a standard number. At a UNESCO conference in 1950, a book was defined as "a non-periodical literary publication containing forty-nine or more pages, not counting the covers."[28]

At first glance, it seems somewhat ironic, if not even tongue in cheek, that a subject-specific dictionary labelled *Glossary of the Book* seems so unhelpful and vague for defining "book." This, however, might have been the intention. As Martyn Lyons concluded: "[D]efining the book itself is a risky operation."[29]

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27 William J. Mitchell, *City of Bits: Space, Place, and the Infobahn* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 56.

28 Geoffrey Ashall Glaister, *Glossary of the Book: Terms Used in Papermaking, Printing, Bookbinding and Publishing with Notes on Illuminated Manuscripts and Private Presses*, 2nd ed. (London, 1979), 37.

29 Martyn Lyons, *Books: A Living History* (London, 2011), 12.

Glaister's definition, however, reveals more than a cursory glance might detect: as is mentioned right at the beginning, this definition is intended, and therefore practical, for statistical purposes for the book trade. Therefore, in the most basic sense a book is something that is produced to be sold on the market. This reveals the book as a commodity. The latter part of his definition refers to the form of the book (number of pages, covers). And, finally, it demarcates the book from published commodities like newspapers and magazines (non-periodical).

Possibly the most helpful definition is offered by Leslie Howsam writing in her *Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*. Introducing readers to the concept of book studies, she argues that the book, from the perspective of a book historian, is a) a text b) a material object c) a cultural transaction and d) an experience.[30] Based on the text and the materiality, the book can experience different developments in cultural transactions and experiences. Even though books in codex form may have the same features in, say, structure and form, the functions vary according to the content: a dictionary and a novel may have the same dimensions and number of pages. Both objects would be adequately described by the *Oxford English Dictionary*-definition for book: "A portable volume consisting of a series of written, printed, or illustrated pages bound together for ease of reading."[31] Still, both are entirely different objects, in function as well as in usage. This is already noticed in everyday parlance, because a novel is "read" and a dictionary is "used." The term 'book' is too simple and almost too dangerous because it will lead to imprecise conclusions. To avoid such simplifications, it is necessary to think of books as rather diverse publications in their various genres, or categories of publication as will be discussed below.

Publishing

Material books as published texts are characterized by their dual nature as cultural object and commercial commodity. Fixed book price systems like Britain's now defunct 'Net Book Agreement' or the German 'Buchpreisbindung' stress the special status of this commodity. Similarly, the reduced value-added tax (VAT) rate on printed books in Germany or no VAT whatsoever in Great Britain show, at least from the point of view of publishers, booksellers and governments, that

30 Leslie Howsam, "The Study of Book History," *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the* Book, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge, 2015), 1–13, 4–6.

31 "book, n.," *OED Online*, March 2014 <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21412> (accessed: 04.12.2019).

"books are different."[32] But despite its special status, the implications of the book also being a commercial commodity has gained significantly more weight since the introduction of the printing press as it became almost a mass-produced commodity in comparison to the unique character of the manuscript.[33] Therefore, the book market changed completely as the bespoke trade turned to a trade on speculation. Even in times when publishers did not exist per se, their functions and tasks did.

A helpful step towards a more distinguished approach to the question how different publishing categories might evolve is offered by Rachel Malik in "Horizons of the Publishable" (2008).[34] Malik starts her essay by lamenting that there is no adequate definition of 'publishing' available, which would allow a full analysis of the act of publishing itself. While discussing the three main roles of publishers (gatekeeper, mediator between author and reader, publicity agent), she comes to the conclusion that 'publishing' needs to be redefined and adapted to every period, every cultural environment and every "category of publication."[35] Unfortunately, Malik does not focus on digital publishing. Overall, however, her essay is a valuable contribution towards a better understanding of the changes of the book focussing on specific publishing categories, albeit a contribution that initiates a more laborious approach to analyse it adequately.

In his monograph *Content Machine* (2013),[36] Michael Bhaskar offers a theory of publishing that tries to capture the essence of publishing and is further applicable to early printed books as well as to digital publishing. In order to achieve this, he breaks down the tasks of publishing into the four steps framing and modelling as well as filtering and amplification.[37] Frames refer to the forms in which the publications are released (for example, paperback, hardcover, e-book), models address the incentive of the publisher to produce the

32 A discussion about the book's special status offers Alison Baverstock, *Are Books Different? Marketing in the Book Trade* (London, 1993). It is noteworthy that customers of electronic publications had to pay the full value-added tax rate for a long time.

33 The term 'mass production' for the output of early printing presses would be an anachronism as it refers to the production of goods with automated processes since the late nineteenth century.

34 Rachel Malik, "Horizons of the Publishable: Publishing in/as Literary Studies," *English Literary History*, 75 (2008), 707–735.

35 Malik, "Horizons of the Publishable," 713.

36 Michael Bhaskar, *The Content Machine: Towards a Theory of Publishing from the Printing Press to the Digital Network* (New York, 2013).

37 Bhaskar, *Content Machine*, 6, 79–102, 137–165.

publication in the first place (for example, financial gain or enlightenment), filtering refers to the selective progress and amplification includes marketing strategies to increase the desirability of the publication. Bhaskar concludes that "[this approach] allows us to view digital and analogue media on a spectrum rather than unbridgeable islands, to see how not only do highly divergent forms of published material all require delivery systems but how those systems present works in different ways."[38]

Adriaan van der Weel further argued that the function of the publisher to filter and select (sometimes referred to as "gatekeeping"[39]) can be seen as an "unintended corollary" resulting from economic constraints.[40] Depending on the time frame and the publishing category, these implications may be more or less pronounced. But even if economic reasoning is less important (or even unimportant), it remains a fact that the creation and production of texts, physical or digital, still needs considerable investment of time and money. Since the production of physical books is more expensive than mere digital texts (i.e. content only), it is important to observe the shifting values attributed to the various aspects of books, both material and immaterial.

Robert Darnton suggested in his influential essay "What is the History of Books?" (1982)[41] that it is the publisher in collaboration with the author who starts the life cycle of the book. Darnton, propelled by the chaotic interdisciplinarity of the history of the book, created a circuit with several nodes which the book in its life cycle passes:

> [The Communications Circuit] runs from the author to the publisher (if the bookseller does not assume that role), the printer, the shipper, the bookseller, and the reader. The reader completes the circuit, because he influences the author both before and after the act of composition.[42]

Initially, Darnton stated that his model, with a few alterations, could be applied to all periods of the printed book. In a later article, however, he clarified that the model is only useful "during the period of technological stability that stretched

38 Bhaskar, *Content Machine*, 88.

39 For the aspect of gatekeeping in publishing, see, for example, Lewis A. Coser, "Publishers as Gatekeepers of Ideas," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 421 (1975), 14–22.

40 Adriaan van der Weel, "The Communications Circuit Revisited," *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 8 (2001), 13–25, 20.

41 Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" *Daedalus*, 111.3 (1982), 65–83.

42 Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" 67.

from 1500 to 1800."[43] The bibliographers Thomas Adams and Nicolas Barker welcomed Darnton's attempt to illustrate the life-cycle of the book and offered an updated model from the bibliographer's, rather than the historian's, perspective. In their "New Model for the Study of the Book" (1993),[44] the decision to publish a text, rather than the physical production of it, is the start of the life cycle of a book:

> The decision to publish, not the creation of the text, is, then, the first step in the creation of a book. The nature of the text and, in some but not all instances, the intention of the author are factors in this decision, but other forces control it that have little to do with the intrinsic merit of the text.[45]

By this change, the relevance of the publisher is stressed even more. The importance of the stage of publishing suggests the need to pay close attention to it when discussing the transitional phases of the book in history, especially the current one. The growth of digital publishing is undeniably creating ruptures in traditional publishing. After all, the idea of the publisher has been shaped by paper books for centuries. The traditional model of the value chain, where the publisher is 'adding value' by selecting, developing and marketing the text as well as investing in the physical production of the book, is of limited use when gauging the value of digital publications. Adriaan van der Weel even predicts a "value network rather than a 'value chain.'"[46] Will publishers lose power? Will other agents in the life cycle of a book become more important? It seems necessary to re-evaluate how publications gain value when content is no longer bound to one specific container. Equally important, it is essential to analyse what is valued by book users.

In 2001, van der Weel briefly assessed the gatekeeping function of publishers: "In retrospect, it is possible to recognise that the role of the publisher has been edging in that direction for a long time. Especially since the nineteenth century the publisher's role as gatekeeper – to guarantee quality – has gained increasing significance."[47] However, in his concluding remarks he predicts a

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43 Robert Darnton, "'What is the History of Books?' Revisited," *Modern Intellectual History*, 4.3 (2007), 495–508, 504.

44 Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, "A New Model for the Study of the Book," *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society*, ed. Nicolas Barker (London, 1993), 5–43.

45 Adams and Barker, "A New Model for the Study of the Book," 18.

46 Adriaan van der Weel, "Van waardeketen naar waardeweb," *Schakels in de keten van het boek: Boeketje boekwetenschap II*, eds Arianne Baggerman et al. (Amsterdam, 2012), 29–35. These terms will be discussed in chapter 1.

47 Van der Weel, "Communications Circuit Revisited," 20.

diminishing power of the publisher as gatekeeper. He argues that, in the digital age, other institutions or factors like peer reviews may sufficiently take over this function.[48]

The stage of publishing affected changes in the form, format, production and layout of all publishing categories as physical objects. This does not render the remaining stages in the life cycle of the book unimportant. Changes within the manufacture, distribution and reception processes are all contributing towards the changes of publications overall. However, it can be argued that the publishers had to assess the overall situation. This could change with digital publishing; other forces might be of more importance in the digital world. This all depends on how book users will regard the different values that are inherent in books.

Structure

This book starts with a detailed discussion of the terms 'value' and 'added value,' primarily based on concepts offered by Karl Marx, Jean Baudrillard and Pierre Bourdieu. It continues with a brief overview of the aspects of 'acceptance' and 'preference' before it addresses the functions of books as a medium and as symbolic objects. Afterwards, the connection between values and the book is discussed. The chapter introduces the concept of the value chain of publishing and discusses its advantages and weaknesses. It concludes with the notion that basically three main values are important concerning the book: economic, content and symbolic value. Economic value refers to the idea that a book is an object that was produced to be sold and remains a commodity after it has been purchased. Content value refers to the function of the book as a container of content with various purposes, for example, education or entertainment. Symbolic value, finally, addresses the idea that books can be signs themselves and therefore stand for certain convictions or beliefs of the owner who displays these books. These different values are extensively introduced and elaborated on with examples to form the overall basis of this study. They help us understand the prevalent factors that shaped the acceptance of new production methods within the book market. Depending on the sociocultural circumstances and the publishing category, the degree of importance of these values is shifting. These changes of value perception will help understand the acceptance of new technological possibilities in book production.

48 Van der Weel, "Communications Circuit Revisited," 24.

Since the introduction of the printing press, the book market has turned from a relatively bespoke trade in manuscript production, where the number and often also the identity of buyers were generally known, to a risky business on speculation with an unknown and highly unpredictable market. The perspective of the publisher raises the question of the value of the product and how that value can be maintained or even enhanced (usually called 'added values') to incentivize the purchase of the commodity. Book buyers, on the other hand, express acceptance by paying money for the new commodity.

John Thompson discusses the value chain of publishing in his *Merchants of Culture* (2010, revised in 2012)[49] to illustrate which stages in publishing 'add value' to the book. Using the same terminology, he also elaborates on how publications might benefit from different potential advantages of the digital revolution and analyses some categories of publications which are more or less amenable for each of these values.[50] While traditional novels, for instance, mainly have the advantage of ease of access, reference works basically unfold their whole potential in a digital environment with the possibility to combine multimedia, searchability and intertextuality. Unfortunately, Thompson does not offer a definition of 'added value' and fails to explain what exactly is added to what. Nevertheless, his approach implies that certain possible advantages of new technologies in textual transmission and reception might be the impetus for the complete acceptance of the new form of the medium as the primary form.

After chapter 1, these book value categories are applied to two prevalent eras in which book production witnessed vital changes: the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both chapters will predominantly focus on English book production. Even though there are general tendencies that overlap with other countries and cultures at that time, England has a unique history and development of its book culture. Chapter 2 ("The Gutenberg Age") addresses the first decades after the introduction of the printing press in Europe, which immensely altered the stage of manufacture and transformed the book into an almost mass-produced object. The chapter starts with a concise survey of the introduction of printing in Europe before some basic considerations for the book trade in England are introduced. Afterwards, it provides a profound analysis of England's early printing presses with a focus on William Caxton's oeuvre as a printer-publisher[51] and the work

49 John B. Thompson, *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, 2010; 2nd ed. 2012).

50 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 312–368.

51 Though the term 'publisher' is, strictly seen, an anachronism, this study will use the term nonetheless for people or institutions taking over the main functions of publishers

of his successor Wynkyn de Worde, along with his main competitor Richard Pynson. In contrast to Westminster's and London's successful printing presses, the following part is dedicated to the failure of early presses in England and concentrates on the provinces St Albans, Oxford and Cambridge. Whereas St Albans represents a small city, which nonetheless was famous for its book production,[52] Oxford and Cambridge represent cities with universities, institutions with a high demand for texts. Their failures are therefore equally important to find answers for the eventual success of the printed book in England. The final part of this chapter offers arguments on why the printed book was accepted as a successor of the manuscript, despite the fact that not every value category could be translated onto the new medium. A key to this question lies in a shift of the book value categories and how printers evaluated what was important for their customers. Using the value categories introduced in chapter 1, this chapter concludes with how early printers in England had reacted to the changed needs of their customers with the new technology for book production at their disposal.

The time frame for this chapter is 1470–1535 with necessary occasional transgressions.[53] 1470 roughly stands for the date that William Caxton acquired the knowledge of the art of printing in Cologne. 1535 denotes the death of Wynkyn de Worde, which symbolizes the end of the second generation of printers in England and, according to Henry Robert Plomer, "marks the second milestone on the highway of English printing."[54] This date also coincides with the downfall of Papal supremacy in England, which affected English textual production. Further, due to this limitation, the impact of the Act of Supremacy of 1534 by Henry VIII on the English book trade, which effectively exposed English printers to continental competition, does not need to be considered in this chapter. It is generally accepted that by the 1530s, the printed book had been established as a new medium with its own characteristics and had mostly replaced the handwritten book, albeit not everywhere and in all textual productions. The

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in modern times, that is the choice of texts to be printed and financing their production as well as marketing.

52 "St Albans had been a major centre of manuscript production for centuries." John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 2nd ed. (London, 2006), 18.

53 For example, the short introduction of the spread of printing in Europe will also address changes in the 1450s and before. Several important issues concerning the development of the book as a medium happened after the 1530s due to the upheavals of the Reformation.

54 Henry Robert Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries from the Death of Caxton to 1535: A Chapter in English Printing* (London, 1925), 7.

discussed time frame can therefore be labelled as the 'transitional phase' from manuscript to printed book.

Chapter 3 is situated in the midst of the industrial age and discusses implications on all stages of the life cycle of the book. During the industrialization, the book trade witnessed developments which Geoffrey Nunberg called "delayed consequences of the printing press."[55] However, the industrial age did not only affect the British book market with technological advancements like Stanhope's, and later Koenig's, press, improved ways of papermaking, stereotype plates and type-casting machines. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Britain also witnessed further sociocultural developments: apart from the multiplied production abilities of the above-mentioned inventions, railways and canal systems greatly improved trade connections,[56] the novel as a genre reached its golden age in the literary world, newspapers became more and more important and, due to enhanced education and the emancipation of the working classes, a new readership emerged.[57] The phenomenon of the so-called three-decker novel, which shaped book culture in Britain throughout the nineteenth century, is a telling example and serves as a case study which illustrates that the form of the book was also steered by economic interests of publishers and other influential institutions. In this case, commercial lending libraries, especially Charles Mudie's "Select Library" were a vital factor that will be discussed in detail before the chapter closes with a concluding analysis using the book value categories.

Analysing these two eras with the book value categories yields distinctive patterns that may help us understand transitional phases of the book. Chapter 4 is different from the preceding two chapters as it is only partially historical. Furthermore, changes in publishing throughout the digital age are so drastic and reveal more discontinuities rather than continuities. Therefore, the aim of chapter 4 is to address current transitional aspects in our so-called "digital age" and point out the breaks within the publishing industry. It will start with a very brief overview of the development of digital publishing and will set the actual starting date at the year 2000, which not only symbolizes a new millennium but also signifies a time when the internet became omnipresent. It also refers to two famous online publishing experiments by bestselling US author Stephen King.

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55 Geoffrey Nunberg, "Introduction," *The Future of the Book*, ed. Geoffrey Nunberg (Berkeley, 1996), 1–20, 10.

56 Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, 2009), 121–130. Briggs and Burke also comment on the social implications of these inventions.

57 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 71–96.

Both experiments shed light on the reasons why digital publishing could not take over then. During the last two decades it also became apparent that the global book industry was (and is) more and more influenced and even shaped by technology companies like Google, Amazon and Apple. Therefore, this chapter focusses on the year 2011 with the introduction of Apple's tablet computer, the iPad. Using statistical analyses offered by the *Futurebook Digital Census* before and after the iPad introduction, this chapter shows the impact new technology can have. Points of reference in this chapter will be the years 2000 and 2011.

This investigation concludes with a discussion about the found patterns during the transitional phases of the physical book and the relevance of the book value categories for both production and reception. It will also point out continuities as well as breaks from the patterns found in the historical chapters. It will be shown that the book had, to some degree, developed towards a more convenient medium: primarily, easier access and cheaper to acquire. Further, the transitional phases were characterized by either conscious or unconscious imitations of the previous form of the medium (for example, distinctive manuscript characteristics in incunables or "turn the page"-features in digital books). These imitations suggest continuity. Whether this was necessary or added by producers to ensure acceptance by book users is a matter of speculation. After having gauged the acceptance of innovations and the book value categories in two historical chapters, the study discusses looks at breaks and continuities of patterns in acceptance in the digital age.

Approach of This Study

Media changes seldom offer clear-cut boundaries but are rather characterized by transitional phases. Therefore, it is necessary not to overestimate periodizations in such analyses. A fixed boundary between the transition from manuscript to the printed book, for example, would be, to some degree, untidy (chronologically, commercially, materially and socially).[58] Indeed, handwritten documents continued to be created after the introduction of the printing press and are still being created in the twenty-first century. The fact that printed matter did not completely replace handwritten texts at once supports Rudolf Stöber's theory of media evolution: "[The theory shows that] new media are not a consequence of technical inventions, but derive from a two-stage process of inventing and 'social institutionalizing' these new technologies. The process of 'social institutionalization'

58 David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order* (Cambridge, 2004), 12.

changes the media themselves."[59] In other words, technological advancements alone do not suffice to trigger media evolutions. This change depends essentially on the social conditions and the need for information and communicating it. Indeed, as this investigation will show, a delay of implementing new technologies in book production in the fifteenth, nineteenth and twenty-first centuries can be observed.

This study deals with various distinct and quite different eras to try to locate patterns in acceptance of new book production methods and trace similar developments in current impulses of digital publishing. It will rely on up-to-date, secondary literature and apply the book value categories to come to convincing conclusions. The scope of this study is macroscopic and consequently bound to be superficial in some regards. However, its findings offer valuable insights and can contribute to prospective case studies concerning the acceptance of different book forms in different sociocultural contexts. Considering the huge differences of the individual chapters, the question remains whether this will lead to solid, convincing answers. Roger Chartier, for example, expressed his scepticism about macroscopic research, but still stressed the benefits of such a comparative approach:

> Contrary to the claims of historians in search of legitimacy, the backward glance is of little help in predicting what the future will bring. Because it is comparative, however, that backward glance can enable us to measure more accurately the changes that are revolutionizing our relations with written culture.[60]

It is not the intention of this investigation to predict the future of our book culture. Assessing and understanding the current situation is challenging enough. There is no question that it is problematic to compare today's transformation of the written word with any other media change, simply because it has not yet come to completion. Digital publishing has not substituted all the functions of printed publications, and it remains to be seen whether it will do so. According to Tom Pettitt, Western culture is just on its way out of the parenthesis. The outcome is yet unclear. However, this study shares the optimistic view of Peter Shillingsburg who firmly believes that "[c]ertainty is not and never was an option [...]. Despair is not inherent in the discovery of uncertainty. The discipline of verification is

59 Rudolf Stöber, "What Media Evolution Is: A Theoretical Approach to the History of New Media," *European Journal of Communication*, 19 (2004), 483–505, 484–485.

60 Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia, 1995), 5.

compatible with acknowledgment of fallibility."[61] In other words: just because some questions are unlikely to offer certain and clear results, it does not mean that one should not employ them.

It has oftentimes been discussed whether the 'digital revolution' can be compared to the 'printing revolution.' In their introduction to a compilation on print culture studies dedicated to Elizabeth Eisenstein, the authors explained the continuing relevance of Eisenstein's *Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (PPAC) precisely because of the similar impact of both the Gutenberg and digital age:

> [. . ..] our present proximity to a media revolution and the wake of the dot.com crash allow us to understand better the apparently uncontrolled agency of media and how their technological platforms operate as intellectual, cultural, political, and economic catalysts than could scholars encountering Eisenstein's work in the pre-Internet-explosion world of 1979. What has perhaps contributed most to PPAC's [*Printing Press as an Agent of Change*] continuing vitality and frequent application – especially to trends and phenomena not explicitly rooted in the western European Renaissance and Enlightenment – is undoubtedly its interdisciplinarity.[62]

According to this optimistic view, it is the interdisciplinary character of both Eisenstein's work and book studies in general that provides the impetus for on-going comparisons for two very different time frames. In fact, this study will not only allow us to explore the current media change, but current developments might also help us understand the previous ones even more by offering a different angle. We know the printed book. We were literally surrounded by print products all our lives and we take them for granted. But for book users in the fifteenth century, the printed book was new, just like the tablet computers and their different possibilities were for the generations that were born before the twenty-first century.

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61 Peter L. Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts* (Cambridge, 2007), 198.

62 Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist and Eleanor F. Shevlin, "Introduction," *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, eds Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist and Eleanor F. Shevlin (Amherst, 2007), 1–12, 9–10.

1. Basic Concepts: Value and Acceptance

Abstract: The acceptance of technological innovations as well as new production methods are always dependent on the acceptance subject, acceptance object and acceptance context. It is further shaped by the various perceptions of value concerning the acceptance object. Therefore, a concept of value in connection with the book as a) a commodity, b) a medium and c) a symbolic object is helpful to better comprehend the changes of 'the book' throughout the centuries. This chapter proposes three 'book value categories' (economic, content and symbolic value) to help understand the transitional phases of the book, especially during the fifteenth (from manuscript to print), nineteenth (from hand press to mass production) and twenty-first (from print to digital) centuries.

Keywords: acceptance theory, value concept, book values, capital

1.1. Value

In order to detect patterns in transitional phases of the book, it is helpful to discuss these phases with the 'acceptance' and 'preference' of the new production methods and the end product according to their 'value.' As these terms are the foundation of further argumentation, this chapter will elaborate on them in more detail. It starts with a general understanding of the terms, then a more specific understanding as connected to commodities, based on concepts offered by Karl Marx, Jean Baudrillard as well as Pierre Bourdieu and Göran Bolin. Afterwards, the stages acceptance and preference will be addressed before these issues will be connected to the concept of the book. Books can fulfil several functions. Most importantly, they act as mediums as well as symbolic objects. Therefore, both aspects will be addressed as well. Finally, this chapter proposes 'book value categories' that will prove useful to explain the acceptance of new book production methods throughout this study.

'Value' is one of the most problematic terms in cultural studies. Often, it is equated with other terms like 'norms' or 'wishes' that seemingly imply the same or similar concept. In academic discussions, however, precise definitions of such abstract terms are necessary. Hans Joas, for example, emphasizes that 'values,' 'categories' or 'norms' imply different concepts; he suggests differentiating between them and that they should not be used interchangeably. He stresses that it is not helpful to simply equate values to 'wishes' because values are already the abstraction of wishes. As a result, the inherent rules of values last longer since they are embedded in social groups like families and, more importantly, they

have a very strong emotional element. Values define the individual and are also used to distinguish oneself from other individuals or other groups.[63]

The difficult character of this term is frequently exacerbated by the inflationary use in the media, precisely because a detailed definition is lacking. The *Oxford English Dictionary* entry states that 'value' either expresses worth with regard to exchange ("Worth or quality as measured by a standard of equivalence") or "worth based on esteem; quality viewed in terms of importance, usefulness, desirability, etc."[64] Whereas the first definition can be clearly recognized as an economic term and is fairly easy to understand (X is worth Y), it is the second reading that causes problems, because it depends largely on an emotional subjective estimation. This emotional quality gives further cause for concern because it is easily (and thus frequently) abused by rulers, political parties or instigators as tools for political legitimization, social or cultural distinction, for example, by justifying acts of terror or other unjust deeds to protect or symbolize 'values.'[65] Also, military actions are frequently labelled necessary to defend the 'values of our country.' As Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger stresses in her essay "Die Historiker und die Werte" (2004),[66] values are, in contrast to interests or wishes, inherent to specific groups and are consequently only seldom negotiable by individuals. They constitute group-specific value systems. Therefore, they are prone to lead to antagonistic intensification of cultural, religious or international differences perceived as a clash of, for example, so-called Western values with non-Western values or Christian values with Islamic values.[67] Stollberg-Rilinger concludes that the term 'value,' from a modern perspective, does pose problems for cultural studies:

> Der Begriff Werte, so wie er heute in der öffentlichen Debatte weithin gebraucht wird, ist alles andere als ein analytischer Begriff, sondern ein Konsens heischendes und zugleich

63 Hans Joas, "Die kulturellen Werte Europas: Eine Einleitung," *Die kulturellen Werte Europas*, eds Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt (Frankfurt, 2005), 11–39, 15.

64 "value, n.," *OED Online*, September 2011 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/221253> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

65 Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Einleitung," *Wertekonflikte - Deutungskonflikte: Internationales Kolloquium des Sonderforschungsbereichs 496 an der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster, 19.-20. Mai 2005*, eds Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger and Thomas Weller (Münster, 2007), 9–21, 9.

66 Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte," *Eule oder Nachtigall? Tendenzen und Perspektiven kulturwissenschaftlicher Werteforschung*, ed. Marie Luisa Allemeyer (Göttingen, 2007), 35–48.

67 Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte," 36.

> Abgrenzung stiftendes Etikett für Bekenntnisse, und Belehrungen unterschiedlicher Art; er verschleiert in der Regel eher, als dass er Erkenntnis ermöglicht. Die Vagheit, Beliebigkeit und die Interessenabhängigkeit, mit der der Begriff verwendet wird, scheinen seinem analytischen Wert für die Kulturwissenschaften Grenzen zu setzen.[68]

Nevertheless, the concept of value has been of growing interest within the field of cultural studies recently, precisely because of its problematic character. One pitfall would be to isolate the two different readings, economic value and value in esteem, too sharply from each other. Rather, it is helpful to keep in mind their possible direct connection as well as their correlations. What also becomes clear is that most discussions about values refer to social values rather than individual values.

Elaborating on this, Stollberg-Rilinger uses Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'capital' that he introduced and extended beyond its meaning of simply expressing economic properties but also including cultural, social and symbolic elements as certain resources for individuals or groups.[69] As this study is also relying on Bourdieu's ideas of 'capital,' it is necessary to summarize the most important aspects: according to Bourdieu, several institutions and agents contribute to the accumulation of different forms of capital within the 'field of cultural production.' **Economic capital** is straightforward: it is the possession of economic assets (property, money and so on). **Social capital** refers to the social connections and networks (for example, family, school and so on) of an individual or groups, which can be a value in themselves. **Cultural capital** refers to education and cultivation of a person (for example, various forms of knowledge, aesthetic preference and so on) and is further subdivided into three states: embodied, objectified and institutionalized cultural capital. The embodied form of cultural capital requires work and time, as it cannot be bought, given or achieved by another person: "The work of acquisition is work on oneself (self-improvement), an effort that presupposes a personal cost [...] an investment, above all of time [...]."[70] Education, general knowledge or the ability to play the piano or the classical guitar are examples of embodied cultural capital. Therefore, this form of capital is dependent on the physical as well as mental abilities of the individual. Just as it cannot be instantly acquired, it cannot be instantly passed on. Also, since

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68 Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte," 38.

69 Pierre Bourdieu, "Ökonomisches Kapital, kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital," *Soziale Ungleichheiten*, ed. Reinhard Kreckel (Göttingen, 1983), 183–198; Bourdieu, *Sozialer Sinn: Kritik der theoretischen Vernunft* (Frankfurt, 1987), 205–221.

70 Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York, 1986), 241–258, 244.

time, and, more often than not, money is necessary to achieve these cultivated abilities, embodied cultural capital is oftentimes dependent on economic capital. Objectified cultural capital refers to the possession of cultural goods: material objects connected with a cultivated lifestyle, such as (prestigious) books, works of art, musical instruments and so on.[71] In contrast to embodied cultural capital, it does not necessarily require a large amount of time to acquire, depending on the economic capital at one's disposal. The investment of economic capital shows appreciation of these objects. If, however, such objects are not purchased but acquired through gift-giving or inheritance, it can still be regarded or used as objectified cultural capital, as the person is showing appreciation for them by keeping and maintaining them, and by using physical space for storage and display of these objects. Finally, institutionalized cultural capital refers to academic qualifications which confirm the individual's embodied cultural capital.[72] At the same time, these qualifications distinguish people with institutionalized qualifications (certificates, university degrees and so on) from individuals who achieved their embodied cultural capital by self-education (autodidacticism). This form of cultural capital is also mainly dependent on economic capital (directly and indirectly). Institutionalized cultural capital can be turned into economic capital by having the qualifications for better-paid employment. Usually, it also enhances social capital as success and reputation in academic institutions opens the door for relevant relationships which might again prove helpful to acquire further economic opportunities. Accordingly, cultural capital can be a means to social mobility and is inextricably linked with economic capital. **Symbolic capital**, finally, can be defined as "things that stand for all of the other forms of capital and can be 'exchanged' in other fields, e.g. credentials."[73]

The concepts of capital and value alike are both important for this study but need to be distinguished. The main difference is that whereas all forms of capital can be seen as a specific resource, values denote the significance and relevance of, for example, ideas or commodities. They guide decisions and therefore shape preferences. As Stollberg-Rilinger points out, value is mainly effective in symbolic form, albeit in a similarly vague way as the single idea of values.[74] Collective

71 Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 246–247.

72 Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 247–248.

73 Patricia Thomson, "Field," *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, ed. Michael Grenfell (Stocksfield, 2008), 67–81, 69.

74 She gives the examples of the Statue of Liberty as a symbol for freedom, Justitia (Lady Justice) as a symbol of justice and the crucifix as a symbol of the Christian faith. Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte," 47.

symbolizations create a belief of content and their convergences of value and meaning become apparent through discursive interpretation.[75] Values and their symbolic representations are prone to merge and become almost inseparable. Therefore, scholars should not only search for values as such but also for their value-based cultural practices and symbolizations, like Japanese tea rituals, dedication scenes of book gifts or ceremonial book burnings.

The important characteristic of Bourdieu's field of cultural production is the dichotomy between small-scale and large-scale productions. Whereas the former is interested in creating art for art's sake, the latter is primarily concerned with making profit. The small-scale field is part of the large field and is also dependent on economic profit, but it is not its main objective. In Bourdieu's terms, then, the small-scale field produces mainly cultural capital with small chances of economic profit and the large-scale field creates products with low cultural capital but higher chances of economic capital. As a result, the small-scale field is not dependent on current tastes or customer demand and is therefore largely autonomous. The large-scale field on the other hand depends very much on current tastes because it aims at satisfying a large market. It is heteronomous because it is dependent on the demand of customers. Bourdieu labels this situation "two economic logics"; the "anti-'economic' economy of pure art" and the "'economic' logic of the literary and artistic industries [...] which are content to adjust themselves to the pre-existing demand of a clientele."[76]

Finally, the whole field of cultural production is influenced by the field of power, which in itself is defined by the social space, which is further shaped by political, economic and educational/academic factors. Bourdieu especially underlines the importance of the latter factor:

> [T]he most determining [change] is no doubt the growth (linked to economic expansion) of the educated population (at all levels of the school system) that underlies two parallel processes: the rise in the number of producers who can live by their pen or draw subsistence from the small jobs offered by cultural enterprises (publishing houses, papers, etc.); and the expansion of the market of potential readers who are thus offered to successive pretenders [...] and their products.[77]

Every agent and institution within the field is interested in acquiring (or producing) all or some forms of capital. This usually requires time, money and/or

75 Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte," 47.

76 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (Cambridge, 1996), 142.

77 Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 127.

labour. The different forms of capital are usually interconnected. Economic capital, for example, can be used to acquire cultural capital (an expensive education, a rare book, a highly esteemed painting, an instrument), and cultural as well as social capital might be converted into economic capital under certain conditions and so on.

Bourdieu's different forms of capital are relevant for all agents (individuals as well as institutions, like publishing houses) within the field of cultural production.[78] However, one should be careful when applying Bourdieu's concepts. It would certainly not be accurate to generalize all different sorts of capital for all periods or sociocultural groups. Since Bourdieu applied his field theory mainly to nineteenth-century France, it is helpful to recognize Göran Bolin's approach to examine cultural production and consumption in digital media. In his monograph *Value and the Media* (2011),[79] Bolin bases his model on Bourdieu's idea of the field of cultural production and adds terminologies established by Marx[80] and Baudrillard.[81] Furthermore, Bolin stresses the misleading terminology of large-scale and small-scale fields: just as products in the large-scale field might be, economically speaking, unsuccessful, so it is possible that products in the small-scale field may turn out to be successful commodities. This problem, however, might be resolved with the concept of belief: as long as consumers *believe* that certain products are not aimed at making a profit, it stays in the small-scale area, even if it turns out to be an economic success.[82]

The concept of commodity values originates from the eighteenth century. Already there was a distinction between the cultural and the economic, art and commodity. Based on notions previously introduced by Adam Smith

78 See Pierre Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, or: The Economic Field Reversed," *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, eds Pierre Bourdieu and Randal Johnson (New York, 1993), 29–73.

79 Göran Bolin, *Value and the Media: Cultural Production and Consumption in Digital Markets* (Farnham, Surrey, 2011).

80 Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy.* Vol. 1, London, 1839, Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (London, 1939).

81 Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London, 1970); Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St Louis, 1972; repr. 1981); Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production* (St. Louis, 1973); Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (London, 1976).

82 Bolin offers the example of Bob Dylan albums, which, in his view, can be considered small-scale products but enjoy a huge economic success nevertheless. Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 35. Dylan winning the Nobel Prize in 2016 certainly strengthens Bolin's argument.

and David Ricardo, Karl Marx differentiated between 'exchange value' and 'use value.'[83] Whereas the first term refers to the economic understanding of value, the second term refers to both intended as well as unintended functions of the product in question. It is important to note that a product becomes a commodity only if it has a price on the market and thus has an exchange value. Later on, Jean Baudrillard built on this and further introduced the idea of 'sign value' that addresses the symbolic dimension of the commodity. According to Baudrillard, this symbolic dimension "is the result of the development of the fetish character of the commodity."[84] It gives status to the consumer when they own, display or use the commodity. Therefore, this value is of importance to guarantee social distinction and should not be underestimated. At the same time, sign value can also be use value, since it fulfils certain functions, for example giving joy.[85] Marx, however, based his ideas on the production of physical commodities. Therefore, value is the result of raw material, means of production and labour. In times where commodity production happens without raw material, such as, for example, digital products, setting value gets more complicated as it is more dependent on labour and belief.[86]

The idea of value for commodities primarily refers to the economic worth, the ability to fulfil one or more purposes as well as a symbolic role. Addressing these notions of value with commodities in mind, the term 'added value' becomes interesting. Producers of commodities are dependent on selling as many units of a production run as possible and are eager to increase the desirability of their products. The idea of the 'value chain' has long been used to explain how each step in the production of a commodity 'adds value.' The concept of the 'value chain' in businesses stems from the economist Michael E. Porter in his work *Competitive Advantage* (1985)[87] and focuses on commodities in general. 'Added value' initially referred to certain qualities added to a product which hopefully resulted in a higher incentive (in some cases addressed to a particular class) for customers to purchase the good. As commodities are usually in competition

83 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 17. Bolin refers to John Guillory's preface in his *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago, 1993), vii-xiv.

84 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 34. Baudrillard also suggests the terms 'utility value,' 'commercial value' and 'statutory value' in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, 125.

85 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 34.

86 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 17.

87 Michael E. Porter, *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance* (New York, 1985).

with other products, it is hoped by the producer that these 'added values' result in a higher esteem than the products of the competitors. They may be real for the customer or just perceived. What counts is the increase in desirability. The term 'added value,' however, is misleading as it is euphemistic in character. Even though the goal is to increase the desirability of the product for the customer, the enhanced feature mainly adds value for the producer through the possibility of increased consumer and therefore higher sales figures or willingness to pay more for the product. In other words, the added value for the producer is mainly economic in character. Values can be added in various ways by the producer. The product itself may be altered by changing the design or improving its functionality. It may also be affected by enhancing its reputation through advertisements.

In conclusion, 'value' in general has two different, albeit connected, meanings: the straightforward economic definition as well as the more complex meaning which is based on a subjective estimation of an individual in correlation with the agreed-on estimation made by the majority of the group (or one of the groups) to which the individual belongs or desires to belong. The latter sort of value has an emotional quality. It oftentimes appears in symbolic form and then might unfold its potential more effectively. Both concepts of value are, in most cases, inextricably linked and should not be analysed individually but always in accordance with each other. When applying Bourdieu's ideas of the field theory and his concepts of capital, everything that strengthens or improves the position of an agent or institution within their specific field has value.

1.2. Acceptance

Since the production of commodities usually changes over the years and is also almost always in competition with other commodities, the ideas of 'acceptance' and 'preference' play an important part, too. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'acceptance' as "the action or fact of receiving something favourably; (of a situation, action, or thing) the fact of being received favourably; positive reception, approval."[88] For this investigation of new book production methods, then, acceptance would mean that customers approve of the product created with the new possibilities as an adequate replacement (meaning it is fully accepted) or at least substitute (meaning it is tolerated, but the predecessor would still be

88 "acceptance, n.," *OED Online*, December 2011 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/1011> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

preferred) for the previously produced object. At the same time, producers must also accept new production technologies for their commodities.

One reason for the complex nature of the phenomenon of acceptance is the fact that it can be applied to almost every object, material or immaterial. But even within the specific field of 'technology acceptance,' various approaches and models are offered. The most important aspects to consider for this study are the dimensions of acceptance as well as the main elements of subject, object and context of acceptance.

Acceptance research differentiates between the attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of acceptance.[89] The attitudinal dimension defines acceptance merely as a positive attitude towards an innovation. This dimension is usually influenced by values and norms of individuals and groups. The behavioural dimension is further concerned with actual, observable behavioural actions that are the results of acceptance (or, respectively, unacceptance). Behavioural actions include buying and using the new technology or even supporting the spread of it. In the case of unacceptance, behavioural actions could include demonstrating against the innovation or even sabotage. (It is important to note, though, that the lack of observable behavioural actions of resistance does not necessarily prove acceptance.) In order to systemize acceptance, some researchers suggest specific levels of acceptance. Sauer et al., for example, suggest a scale ranging from active opposition (level 1) to active support (level 8).[90]

In its most basic sense, acceptance means that someone (subject) accepts something (object) under specific circumstances (context). The subject can be an individual, a group or a whole society. Further, it can refer to consumers who are supposed to accept a new commodity as well as producers who may accept

89 Martina Schäfer and Dorothee Keppler offer a third dimension ("Wertedimension") but state that this could also be part of the attitudinal dimension. Schäfer and Keppler, "Modelle der technikorientierten Akzeptanzforschung: Überblick und Reflexion am Beispiel eines Forschungsprojekts zur Implementierung innovativer technischer Energieeffizienz-Maßnahmen," (discussion paper 34, Zentrum Technik und Gesellschaft) Berlin, 2013, 14. <https://www.tu-berlin.de/fileadmin/f27/PDFs/Discussion_Papers/Akzeptanzpaper__end.pdf> (accessed: 12 March 2020).

90 The levels in between are, in order of acceptance, 'rejection,' 'discord,' 'indifference,' 'tolerance,' 'conditional acceptance' and 'approval.' Schäfer and Keppler, "Modelle der technikorientierten Akzeptanzforschung," 23–24. This is based on Alexandra Sauer et al., "Steigerung der Akzeptanz von FFH-Gebieten," *BfN-Scripten*, 144 (Bonn, 2005). <https://www.bfn.de/fileadmin/BfN/service/Dokumente/skripten/Skript144.pdf> (accessed: 12 March 2020).

new technology for producing their commodity. The object of acceptance can be material or immaterial, individual people, groups, politics, attitudes and so on. Subject and object are both influenced by the acceptance context, that is the social and cultural framework in which the acceptance is supposed to take place. This includes all factors and circumstances that are neither the subject nor the object, but that are still relevant for the process of acceptance.[91]

In conclusion then, acceptance is the outcome of a process of perception, evaluation and decision which results in a specific attitude and sometimes also observable behaviour. The outcome is dependent on the overall context. In other words, as Schäfer and Keppler put it, acceptance is an unstable construct.[92] The subject is influenced by already existing attitudes, individual norms and values, emotions and sociodemographic factors (for example age, gender, education). The object is primarily (but not solely) influenced by an economic cost-benefit analysis. However, it is also dependent on the potential for offering profit or social status (for example as objectified cultural capital). It is further affected by the general usability and its suitability to perform the fulfilling/supposed tasks. Finally, aesthetic aspects may influence the level of acceptance of the object, as well.

Phase models are helpful tools to analyse acceptance by breaking down the phenomenon into several steps. In 1995, Everett Rogers offered his "Diffusion of Innovations"[93] model, in which he broke down the acceptance of innovations into five stages that each individual of a social system has to go through to reach acceptance: 1) knowledge, 2) persuasion, 3) decision, 4) implementation and 5) confirmation. Starting with the awareness of a new technology and a basic idea about this innovation (1), the individual forms a first favourable or unfavourable attitude towards this innovation (2). Afterwards, a decision is made whether to reject or accept the innovation (3). If accepted, the process continues with buying/ paying for the innovation and putting it to use and maybe even promoting it (4). Finally, each individual evaluates the results of the decision they have already made (5). This either leads to a confirmation of the acceptance or a cancellation of the acceptance process and consequently to rejection.[94]

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91 Schäfer and Keppler, "Modelle der technikorientierten Akzeptanzforschung," 17–23.

92 Schäfer and Keppler, "Modelle der technikorientierten Akzeptanzforschung," 25.

93 Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (New York, 1995).

94 Schäfer and Keppler summarize Rogers' phase model in "Modelle der technikorientierten Akzeptanzforschung," 38–41.

Once a commodity has competitors on the market or exists in different forms (for example alternative design or materials), the customer has a choice. This choice is determined by preference. Preference, then, may indicate value and is in turn influenced by several factors. Even though preferences are subjective, they must be regarded as genuine evaluations. In his monograph *Preference, Value, Choice, and Welfare* (2012),[95] Daniel M. Hausman argues from a philosophical perspective that some economic approaches to the topic of preference are flawed. The claim he most criticizes is that preferences are seen as arbitrary "matters of taste, concerning which rational criticism or discussion is impossible."[96] First, he distinguishes between four different concepts of preference: 1) *enjoyment comparisons*, the most subjective preferences, which merely compare overall enjoyment (for example, colours or flowers) 2) *comparative evaluations* which (ideally) take into account all further factors that will or might be affected by the decision 3) *favouring*, a preference based on certain decisions or legal situations, for example, affirmative action or preference of female or disabled applicants for a job position if the qualifications are equal and 4) *choice ranking*, which is a preference that is made when a specific choice is offered, for example selecting from a set dessert menu in a restaurant.[97] Hausman stresses that these four senses can sometimes come apart and even contradict each other. A person might prefer red wine over sparkling water (enjoyment comparison) but as a designated driver, the person takes into account that alcoholic beverages are not an option (comparative evaluation). Throughout the monograph, preferences are defined as "total subjective comparative evaluations" and Hausman stresses that a preference for one thing over another needs to be distinguished from a non-comparative desire for just one thing. In a situation of choice, one can desire two or more options, but one cannot prefer all of them. A preference is a total evaluation because it takes into account everything that matters to the agent that forms the preference: It "depend[s] on beliefs, desires, emotions, intentions, reasons, and values [...]."[98] When confronted with a choice, the agent arranges the different choices according to the overall individual desirability and also takes into account certain constraints, like high price, lack of availability or other reasons

95 Daniel M. Hausman, *Preference, Value, Choice, and Welfare* (Cambridge, 2012).
96 Hausman, *Preference, Value, Choice, and Welfare*, 8.
97 Hausman, *Preference, Value, Choice, and Welfare*, 1–2.
98 Hausman, *Preference, Value, Choice, and Welfare*, xii, 3.

which precludes the agent from choosing a specific option.[99] The idea of preference, then, might shed light on the understanding of the agent's values.

The stage of complete acceptance signifies that a new product or new production methods of commodities have replaced the previous methods as the standard. A clear indicator of this stage would be if producers still use the previous methods but have to justify the decision to do so.[100]

As stressed before, the book not only has competition from other media, but also new production methods result in customers suddenly having the ability to choose between books produced in different ways, such as handwritten or printed, hardcover or paperback, or even printed or digital. Therefore, the notion of preference becomes important during the transitional phases of a single medium, such as the book. Preference is an important indicator of value concerning the acceptance of either new technological possibilities of book production or new mediums altogether: if the majority of customers prefer the newer commodity over the older, it can be labelled as completely accepted and becomes the standard medium for its primary function. The superseded medium, however, does not disappear, but still co-exists and performs either the same or other functions the new medium is not (yet) able to perform. This will continue until either the new medium is capable of fulfilling this function or the function has become obsolete (or its importance has significantly decreased).

1.3. Value and the Book

With these preliminary ideas of value, acceptance and preference discussed above in mind, it is now possible to discuss the value of the book more effectively. The book as a research subject is as complex as the difficult terms discussed above. From a book studies perspective, as has been addressed in the introduction, the book can be treated as a text, a material object, a cultural transaction and/or an experience.[101] Indeed, the book is, on its most basic level, a material object ready to be sold as a result of a production process. Consequently, it is most often conceived of as a commercial commodity produced to be sold on a market. However, this is only one aspect of many that defines the book.

99 Hausman suggests four "sources of preferences": means-end reasoning, attribute-based valuation, emotional influence and physiological needs. *Preference, Value, Choice and Welfare*, 118.

100 Some acceptance models call this stage 'adoption.'

101 Howsam, "Study of Book History," 2–6.

The book is usually, although not exclusively, also a communication system which can fulfil many and diverse functions, for example to entertain, educate or edify. From today's perspective, the primary function of most books is the dissemination of textual and other information that can be displayed (in print, handwriting or digital images). The material aspects of the book are mostly of secondary importance, as long as it is legible and relatively easy to use. In other words, the book is a medium. A medium, literally meaning 'centre' or 'middle' in Latin, is, among other things, the cause as well as the prerequisite for communication.[102] Mediums transport signs and are signs themselves as the mediating authority. The term medium can also refer to the technical precondition for communication (such as sound waves) as well as to the artefact of communication (such as radio).[103] Communication, then, is usually subdivided into the three steps of coding, transmitting and decoding. Within the now classic distinction of mediums by Harry Pross, mediums can further be subdivided into primary, secondary and tertiary mediums, depending on the necessity of technology in coding, decoding, both or none.[104] The manuscript and printed book, for example, are secondary mediums as only the coding requires technology, either pen or printing press, but not the side of decoding, meaning reception. The e-book, however, is a tertiary medium as the decoding also needs technology in the form of dedicated reading devices, computer screens or smartphones.

A detailed elaboration on the notion of the book as a medium would take the perspective of media studies which is beyond the scope of this book. However, some aspects of media studies are relevant, especially for chapter 4, which addresses the digital age and is consequently different from both of the historical chapters. To offer this, some general aspects by media theorist Siegfried Schmidt will be summarized in the following section.

Being aware of the manifold, and sometimes even contradicting, approaches to the concepts of mediums, Schmidt tries to join systematically different approaches to mediums (both technology- and anthropology-based) to offer an integrative concept of media ("integratives Medienkonzept.")[105] Within his conceptualization, he differentiates between four aspects of the term 'medium':

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102 Ursula Rautenberg, *Reclams Sachlexikon des Buches: Von der Handschrift zum E-Book*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart, 2015), 278.

103 "artefact, n.," *OED Online*, December 2008 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/11133> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

104 Harry Pross, *Publizistik: Thesen zu einem Grundcolloquium* (Neuwied 1970), 129.

105 Siegfried J. Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination: Medien, Kultur, Wissenschaft in der Mediengesellschaft* (Weilerswist, 2000), 93–104.

> Mein Vorschlag geht dahin, am Kompaktbegriff >Medium< folgende Aspekte zu unterscheiden, die als konstitutive Komponenten von Medien interpretiert werden können: semiotische Kommunikationsinstrumente, das technisch-mediale Dispositiv beziehungsweise die jeweilige Medientechnologie, die sozialsystemische Institutionalisierung eines Mediums sowie die jeweiligen Medienangebote.[106]

Schmidt determines natural spoken languages to be the prototype of his idea of 'semiotic communication tools' (the first aspect) and stresses that he does not consider spoken languages to be a medium but merely a communications tool.

The second aspect, media technologies, witnesses, according to Schmidt, a growing connection to communication tools. Consequently, this affects the production and reception of available media. The use of media technologies needs to be learned via socialization and thereafter becomes an integral part of competence of the individual. To ensure this, Schmidt labels his third aspect "sozialsystemische Komponente" and refers to schools, publishing houses or television broadcasters as institutions that are responsible for this. The last aspect Schmidt mentions is the "Medienangebote," the available media on offer within a society, whose production, distribution and reception are heavily influenced by the three previous aspects, for example by available technology, infrastructure and education.

Schmidt stresses the complex processes at work that play out during the adoption of new mediums in a society and thereby warns scholars to assume simple, linear causalities.[107] Looking at the historiography of mediums, Schmidt offers a hypothesis arguing that the social acceptance of a new media technology (for example printing press or photography) is accompanied by certain constants ("Entwicklungskonstanten").[108] The most important constants for this study will be briefly summarized in the following:

First, Schmidt hypothesises that new mediums lead to a disciplining of perception ("Disziplinierung der Wahrnehmung") according to specific needs of the medium. He gives the example of radio and television shows that forced listeners and viewers to consume the programmes at a specific time instead of choosing the time themselves (as one could, for example, with reading a novel). Schmidt argues that such a "disciplining" becomes more likely when the chances of gaining cultural capital are higher.[109] Current developments, however, contradict

106 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 94.
107 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 177.
108 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 185.
109 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 185–188.

Schmidt's claim. Video-on-demand streaming services (for example, Netflix or Prime Video) have reversed the disciplining element of television and it is up to the viewers when to access content. A similar impact can be witnessed with digital books concerning access: Book users are no longer limited to opening hours of libraries or bookshops.

New mediums, according to Schmidt, further promise (or are hoped to offer) a boost of democratization in the sense of fairer participation in the new cognitive and communicative possibilities of the new medium. The radio became an instrument of transmitting information, education and culture; video technology made fleeting television programmes fixed; and, above all, the internet has facilitated instant communication worldwide, access to countless information pools and creativity through interactivity.[110]

Schmidt also hypothesizes that a new medium will only be accepted if it promises or already proves to be economically viable ("Kommerzialisierung"). This aspect of commercialization prompts Schmidt to offer an indicator for the social acceptance of a new medium based on the quantitative and qualitative use of a medium by the advertising industry.[111] This hypothesis is also very similar to Kilgour's precondition of "economic viability" for major innovations of the book.[112]

As soon as a new medium has established itself, Schmidt argues, its use as well as its offered content is slowly diversified ("Individualisierung"). Though not specifically addressing it, Schmidt, as an example, refers to the (contested) 'reading revolution' proposed by Rolf Engelsing, which argued that there was a rise in diverse reading material during the eighteenth century accompanied by a change from intensive to extensive reading (that is, from reading few texts again and again to reading many texts from different genres just once and then discarding them).[113]

The availability of a new medium also further detaches the stages of experiencing, acting and communicating ("Entkopplung"). Oral cultures act and experience at the same time whereas cultures with access to writing have the

110 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 188–190.

111 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 190–191.

112 See Introduction; Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 5–6.

113 See, for example, Rolf Engelsing, "Die Perioden der Lesergeschichte in der Neuzeit," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 10 (1970), 945–1002 and Reinhard Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century?" *A History of Reading in the West*, eds Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst, 2003), 284–312.

option to detach acting and experiencing from communication both chronologically and spatially. Schmidt suggests a general development from "Präsenz" (corporal- and situation-bound mediums) to "Telemedialität" (writing, radio) to "Teleinteraktion" (phone, internet) to "Telepräsenz und Teleeffektivität" (cyber technologies).[114] E-books would confirm this development since it is not even required to interact with booksellers or librarians.

Finally, Schmidt broaches the issue of intermediality ("Intermedialität, Reflexivität des Mediensystems und Autologie der Medienforschung"). He stresses that media competition does not function as a predatory competition. Rather, new mediums might take over the functions of older mediums only if they are much better suited for those functions. The intensity of intermediality rises with a higher complexity of a media system within a society ("Mediengesamtsystem"). Sometimes, a re-evaluation of a medium is the result of such a development. Schmidt offers the example of e-mail: it clearly imitated the traditional letter, which in turn lost its everyday function. Now, letters have greater value for special messages, for example wedding invitations, while e-mail has become a tool for spontaneous messages. This development was also witnessed with messaging apps on smartphones replacing e-mails for spontaneous messages beginning around 2009. The original purpose of the mobile phone, to talk to each other when away from a hard-line phone, has become almost obsolete. It remains to be seen whether the printed book as a medium will witness a similar development.

Books are also cultural objects and can have a symbolic quality. Ursula Rautenberg elaborates:

> Die soziokulturelle Funktionalität des Buches bestimmt dessen repräsentativen >Wert< als Kulturobjekt in gesellschaftlicher Kommunikation, beispielsweise als Leitmedium, das seit der griech.-röm. Antike bis in die Gegenwart institutionalisiert ist: Bildung, Wissen und gesellschaftliche Teilhabe beruhten jahrhundertelang auf dem literaten Umgang mit dem Buch, und auch illiterate Gruppen kannten die Wichtigkeit von Schrift und Buch. Als kulturelles Objekt ist das Buch – jenseits der primären Funktion des Lesens – Konstruktionsmaterial für vielfältige Zuschreibungen, soziale Handlungen und kulturelle Praktiken. Die Repräsentationsfunktion der Zeichen im Sprachsystem wird überdeckt durch neue semiotische Systeme uneigentlichen, symbolischen Buchgebrauchs.[115]

The symbolic quality of books is affected by sociocultural developments. A good example is the importance of books as gifts during the time of the early printing

114 Schmidt, *Kalte Faszination*, 192–193.
115 Rautenberg, *Reclams Sachlexikon des Buches*, 67.

presses. In her essay "Das Buchgeschenk zwischen *largesse* und Buchmarkt," (2005)[116] Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser examines the value of book gifts in this transitional phase. The example of Anthony Woodville, second Earl Rivers to King Edward IV, stresses the complexity of value concepts concerning the book.[117] Woodville, a devout man and a brother of the Queen of England, had close connections to the court and became Governor to the Prince of Wales in 1473.[118] In 1477, he translated the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* from French into English and commissioned William Caxton to print it.[119] Written in prose, this compilation of biblical and classical words of wisdom derived from an Arabic original that was translated into several languages. It became one of the earliest books printed in English in England. King Edward IV received a copy of the translation, possibly as a Christmas gift. It is interesting to note that, in all likelihood, a manuscript was given (completed on 24 December 1477) and not a printed version. The manuscript that is believed to be the dedication copy (London Lambeth Palace MS 265) is most probably a transcript of the Caxton edition. Consequently, it must have been created *after* Caxton had already printed the text. Müller-Oberhäuser concludes that despite the obvious advantages of the printing press (fast production method to supply a large group with the same text) the material aspects and especially the symbolic value of printed books were too limited in some cases to be an adequate replacement for *de luxe* manuscripts as presentation copies, especially for members of the aristocracy.[120] Even though the book already existed in printed form, Woodville spent time and money on a lavish manuscript to be presented to the king.[121] Apart from the limited ability to recreate material features of the manuscript, the great advantage of printing books was also one of the greatest elements of

116 Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser, "Das Buchgeschenk zwischen *largesse* und Buchmarkt im spätmittelalterlichen England," *Wertekonflikte - Deutungskonflikte,* eds Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger and Thomas Weller (Münster, 2007), 123–143.

117 For an overview of Woodville's role as a patron to Caxton, see Lotte Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England* (London, 1982), 84–94.

118 Michael Hicks, "Woodville, Anthony, second Earl Rivers (*c.*1440–1483)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2011) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29937> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

119 STC 6826, Westminster 1477, folio, 78 leaves. Lotte Hellinga elaborates on this print in *Caxton in Focus*, 77–80.

120 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Das Buchgeschenk zwischen *largesse* und Buchmarkt," 134–137.

121 It should be noted that this example of the book as a gift is further complicated by the complex situation at the English court, partially due to the Wars of the Roses between the Houses of Lancaster and York. See chapter 2 "The Gutenberg Age."

decreasing their esteem: since the printing press turned books into almost mass-produced objects, the book as an object lost its unique character and thus some of its value.[122] In certain circumstances, the more readily available an object, the less it contains inherent elements of prestige. In other words, scarcity may enhance the value, mostly in economic and symbolic form. In the case of a dedication copy of a late medieval author to his king, this was most likely the case. Further developments of book production from few and expensive to many and cheaper copies over the centuries, up to digital copies with virtually no limit of downloads, exacerbate this shift of values. It might be argued, for example, that e-books in the early twenty-first century are less suitable as, say, Christmas presents, and is reminiscent of the limited use value of a printed book as a presentation copy in the fifteenth century.

The Value Chain of Publishing

As a medium, books can potentially fulfil very different functions. Books with religious content can edify; books with short stories or cartoons can entertain; dictionaries can enlighten, teach or educate and so on. Books are also commodities and are therefore in competition: not only with other books but also, albeit in a different way, with other media like radio, television or internet, depending on the intended function of the respective book. Books have an exchange use because they have an economic value in a market. It is not relevant whether people purchase the object with the intent to use it according to the producer's intention or not. The primary function of a book may be to store and offer access to information, but this may not necessarily be the basis by which customers assess the amount of money they are willing to pay for it.

Because of the complex nature of the book, one can conclude that the complexity of the value concept is multiplied within the world of the book. Whereas in some regards a book works within that framework just like any other commodity, there are other aspects that make it unique: the idea of added value, for example. Changes concerning the preparation and promotion of the book may indeed make the book more valuable. The main factors that influence the quality of the book are content, material aspects, marketing and distribution. The author of a book therefore enhances the quality by creating a text deemed satisfactory according to its function by the publisher. They may further develop

122 On the value of book gifts in both manuscript and printed form, see the contributions in Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser (ed.), *Book Gifts and Cultural Networks from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (Münster, 2019).

and thus enhance the text through suggestions regarding content and assure textual accuracy with copy-editing to satisfy the reader. Publishers may also decide on or at least suggest the material aspects of the book. Factors like the quality of the paper, the chosen typography, the design of the book cover and the type of binding all influence the quality of the book. Depending on the publishers and their position within the literary field, such decisions can also be made by the authors or the editors, but traditional publishers are normally involved in such decisions, as they are interested in making a profit as well as maintaining their house-styles and reputations. Finally, efficient distribution increases possibilities of sales.

John B. Thompson illustrates the idea of the "publishing value chain" in his *Merchants of Culture*.[123] The chain starts with the author creating content and ends with the consumers/readers. Some steps in the middle of the chain may be taken over by freelancers (for example, proofreading or copy-editing), but most steps are primarily performed by the publisher: from content acquisition to development and quality control, all the way to design and marketing. One glimpse at Thompson's visualization of the value chain of publishing reveals that technological innovations can have a vital impact on the overall value of books. At the centre of this model, the publisher is one of the most important agents, defined as someone who exploits access to information.[124] The three main tasks are the selection of texts, the investment of capital in publishing processes, and, generally, to add value to the product in the several ways discussed above. As already addressed in the introduction, Michael Bhaskar suggests the four steps framing and modelling as well as filtering and amplification as the major functions of publishers.[125] In order to analyse publishing both in the digital age and before, Bhaskar suggests that publishing needs to be treated as a "comprehensible, continuous but nonetheless changing *system*."[126] At the core of his approach are two main concepts: 'content' and the 'network of publishing.' Bhaskar further subdivides content into 'frames,' which stands for the various forms that the content can take (manuscript, printed book, audiobook, but also paperback, hardcover, e-book and so on) and 'models', which addresses the motivations behind the content production and dissemination (for example economic profit or enlightenment). Finally, Bhaskar subdivides 'network of publishing' into,

123 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 16.
124 Van der Weel, "Van waardeketen naar waardeweb," 29.
125 Bhaskar, *Content Machine*, passim.
126 Bhaskar, *Content Machine*, 34.

seemingly contradicting, 'filtering' and 'amplification,' addressing the issues of both selection and marketing. Since this approach views publishing in different formats on a spectrum rather than separate systems altogether, it is useful for this study.

The model of the value chain of publishing, as helpful as it is for visualizing the many steps of publishing, has three main shortcomings for this investigation: first of all, as van der Weel points out, it is only of limited help for the digital world, because texts can be transmitted without the physical production of books.[127] Further, the use of the term 'value' seems vague and it remains unclear what exactly is added to what and for whom. The notion 'added value' also insinuates that 'value' is only added. However, as will be discussed in this study, certain changes in book production may devalue individual characteristics of the book as well, either in handwritten, printed or in digital form. Finally, it needs to be noted that it would be dangerous to generalize the role of the publisher as a businessman purely interested in profit. Depending on the publishing house, the acquisition and subsequent distribution of highly regarded intellectual property might be of equal or even more importance than economic profit. The main concern of a publishing house might instead be the production and dissemination of religious or educational material without primarily thinking about profit. The Oxford University Press, for example, claims that they never made a profit from publishing the (now) prestigious *Oxford English Dictionary*.[128]

It becomes clear from these examples that the exceptional position of the book as a commodity originates from the fact that it is also a cultural object. Due to this duality, in comparison with other commodities, it is more complex to gauge its value or to analyse which processes increase or decrease the value of the book. Since the early days of the printing press, printer-publishers almost exclusively carried the financial risk and handled the publishing policy. They needed to strike a good balance between the number of copies of a text produced and the number of buyers, so as to at least break-even for as many publications as possible. The expensive preparations to set up a text to be printed were only financially viable if enough copies could be sold. Thereafter, an important task for printers was to assess their market and estimate what readers expected from

127 Van der Weel, "Van waardeketen naar waardeweb," 31.

128 Alastair Jamieson, "*Oxford English Dictionary* 'Will Not Be Printed Again,'" *The Telegraph*, 29 August 2010 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/booknews/7970391/Oxford-English-Dictionary-will-not-be-printed-again.html> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

the book for which they were paying. With the sentiments about value discussed above, it needs to be stressed that the value of the book cannot be simply integrated into the object by new technology, be it a completely new production method or smaller changes to the same method. Only if the majority of book buyers and readers agree upon certain functions and elements as desirable will new characteristics of the book increase the group-specific value. Innovations due to new technology must be accepted both by producers and consumers in order for the new technology to be fully accepted.

Defining specific value categories for the book is necessary because a book works not only as a commodity, but also as a medium and a cultural object. Sometimes, different sorts of value may even stand in opposition to one another. High literary quality, for example, adds cultural capital to the publication but might damage the economic value because of a possible reduction of readership and therefore potential buyers.[129] In this case, the position of publishers in the literary field and their values decide if the high literary quality justifies the publication or not. If the text is received favourably by high-brow critics, then the publishing house will gain cultural capital. The example of the manuscript dedication copy by Earl Rivers shows that new production methods are not only capable of improving the quality of the book, they may also entail disadvantages, depending on the functions the book should fulfil. In such a case, the new features (for example typographical fixity,[130] standardization of spelling or legible typography) and consequences (for example lower price of the individual product, higher distribution rate) have to compensate somehow for the loss of these qualities to ensure the acceptance of the new production method and the emerging new medium, an important notion, especially concerning the current developments in digital publishing.

1.4. Book Value Categories

One of the main purposes of this study is to establish categories that stipulate the different values of books. More specifically, it addresses the values of book possession and book use (for example, reading or the use of the physical object as objectified cultural capital) primarily from the perspective of reception. However, since this study deals with the question of acceptance of innovations within production, the perspective from the producers' side is important, too, because they

129 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 2.

130 For the concept of 'typographical fixity,' see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2005), 46–101.

have to assess both the technological possibilities as well as the changing priorities and value perceptions of the customers. The publishers, too, are affected by value changes. They try to help bring them about since they need to profit from them. Finally, the importance of the book customer and consumer is obvious as they express acceptance by paying for the new product. These deliberations aid the finding of patterns in acceptance and preference innovations.

Since it is particularly difficult to gauge values objectively - even if only judged from an economic perspective - the emotional element, as stated by Joas, gains importance in the desirability of the product. More often than not, the 'perceived value' by the consumer plays an equal if not a superior role. The situation of the e-book around 2005 illustrates this problem. As John Thompson has stated, one reason why the acceptance of e-books was still low in 2005 was the fact that prices were too high in relation to the perceived value of consumers:

> [T]he savings involved in delivering book content in electronic formats were not as great as some of the early champions of ebooks had suggested - all the development costs were still there, as were the royalties, the marketing costs, the publisher's overheads, etc. But this does not go down well with consumers, for whom the perceived value of an ebook is significantly lower than that of a print book. So the prices of ebooks would have to come down significantly before there would be any substantial increase in sales.[131]

In other words, consumers did not agree with the proposed exchange value because they did not see or accept the possible added value of the new product. They certainly did not rank it higher compared to other features of the previous book form that were apparently lost in the process of digitization. Most likely, e-books were simply seen as a possible cheap alternative to the printed version. The price for them, however, remained too high. This situation in turn seemed to have hindered a faster acceptance of the new technology.

The above introduced concepts of exchange, use and sign value are helpful to distinguish the different functions for commodities. For books, however, it is necessary to formulate more specific concepts as they can have various functions and deviate slightly from other commodities. From a consumer perspective, the incentive to buy something is determined by the various values the commodity represents. This study will look more closely at three distinct sorts of value to the owner or user: economic value, content value and symbolic value.

131 John B. Thompson, *Books in the Digital Age: The Transformation of Academic and Higher Education Publishing in Britain and the United States* (Cambridge, 2005), 317.

Economic Value

Economic value reflects the idea that a book is a product created to be sold and also *remains* a commercial commodity after it has been purchased. Book owners retain the possibility to resell their books. This value must not be underestimated despite the fact that, usually, it is not the primary function of books. They are, generally, not bought to be sold again. But the important role of the second-hand book trade during the Middle Ages and during the industrialization stresses that it needs to be taken into consideration. But also in modern times, second-hand books may have an astonishing increase in economic value. This seems surprising because, usually, mass-produced books quickly lose their economic value. Novels from the 21st century, for example, can be found for a fraction of their initial recommended retail price after only a couple of months, sometimes even weeks or days. However, certain books might increase their economic value with the passing of time as collector's items or rare books. In 2014, William Caxton's translation of Raoul Lefevre's *History of Troy* was sold for GBP 900,000.[132] But also more modern books see intriguing rises of their economic value: Abebooks, an online marketplace for books, offers a monthly list of their most expensive sales. Leading the list in April 2014, for example, was a signed first edition of John Le Carré's *Call for the Dead* (London, 1961) for USD 22,500. This illustrates that modern novels may also retain the possibility to become cherished (and costly) collectors' items.[133] In the above-mentioned examples, the text (or content value, see below) is obviously not the primary value for the customers as the texts themselves could be purchased or accessed much more easily and for a significantly lower price. Rather, the customers were interested in the material objects because of their rarity. In the case of Caxton's *History of Troy*, it is a more than 500-year-old book with a special significance because it is one of only 18 extant copies of the first printed book in the English language. In the case of Le Carré's *Call for the Dead*, the book as an object gained economic value because it is a copy from the first edition of a novel (albeit mass-produced) signed by its famous crime-fiction author John Le Carré, who had experience working for the British Secret Intelligence Service.

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132 After the added commission for Sotheby's, the buyer had to pay GBP 1,082,500 in total. "First Printed Book in English Sold for over £1m," *BBC Online*, 17 July 2014 <http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-28344300> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

133 "Most Expensive Sales in April 2014" <http://www.abebooks.com/rare-books/most-expensive-sales/april-2014.shtml> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

It is important to note that, overall, economic value loses its importance for the customer in the digital age. As mentioned above, mass-produced books rapidly lose their exchange value once they are published. But the decrease in economic value becomes more drastic with e-books: first of all, they are generally cheaper than their physical counterparts and have less economic value for the publisher.[134] More importantly, though, they are content without any material aspects. Their functions are stripped down to a communication system. Legally speaking, customers of e-books merely purchase a licence that allows them to access and display a file with one or several accounts or devices, for example an e-book-reader or a smartphone. Since they do not buy a physical object, they are unable to resell an artefact.[135] It also has limited abilities (if any) to become objectified cultural capital. The e-book, however, has the potential to become embodied cultural capital, as the content is primarily relevant for this.

Content Value

Content value primarily, and especially in modern times, addresses the "utility" or "use value."[136] It focuses on the main function of a book: the container of texts and illustrations (in the case of digital books the container is external from the e-book itself, but can also offer multimedia content) that can educate, entertain or edify the reader. The book functions as a tool in various specific capacities

134 The price difference depends on the country. Germany, for example, has a much smaller price gap compared to the United States.

135 The difference between printed book and e-book is also underlined by the long-lasting differences in taxing. In Germany and the UK, for example, printed books had a reduced tax rate (no taxes for the UK). E-books, however, were fully taxed. In Germany, e-book taxes adapted to the reduced tax rate in December 2019. The UK plans to abolish taxes for e-books in December 2020.

136 For the term 'utility value' and especially the different understandings of *utilitas* in the Middle Ages and 'utility' in modern times, see Ann W. Astell, "On the Usefulness and Use Value of Books: A Medieval and Modern Inquiry," *Medieval Rhetoric: A Casebook,* ed. Scott D. Troyan (New York, 2004), 41–62. Further useful contributions to the discourse of *utilitas*, albeit mainly on medieval and early modern books are Klaus Schreiner, "Bücher, Bibliotheken und gemeiner Nutzen im Spätmittelalter und in der Frühneuzeit," *Bibliothek und Wissenschaft*, 9 (1975), 202–249; Hagen Keller, "Einführung zum Kolloquium," *Der Codex im Gebrauch: Akten des internationalen Kolloquiums 11.-13. Juni 1992*, eds Christel Meier, Dagmar Hüpper and Hagen Keller (Munich, 1996), 11–20, and Natalie Zemon Davis, "Beyond the Market: Books as Gifts in Sixteenth-Century France," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 33 (1983), 69–88. The relevant aspects will be discussed in chapter 2 "The Gutenberg Age."

depending on the genre (entertainment, education and so on). Throughout the years from the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century, more publishing categories were established (novels, self-help books, self-published fanfiction and so on). This ultimately led to a more complex situation on the book market (something which proves Schmidt's idea of the accompanying constant of diversification).

Content value is affected by several factors. In medieval times, for example, paratextual elements and bibliographical devices modern readers take for granted now, like the index or the title-page, had only just been introduced to enhance the content value of the book.[137] The importance of authors' names rose during the first decades of printing as well. Whereas approximately 30 per cent of incunables were attributed to a specific author, this figure rose to 80 per cent in printed books in the sixteenth century.[138] Content value is further affected by improvements made by proof-reading, copy-editing and so on, that is, the traditional functions of the publishing house.

The format of the book may also enhance the pragmatic quality. Smaller books are portable and therefore tend to be read in a greater variety of locations. Larger books on the other hand are more suitable for depictions of detailed maps. Illustrations may further improve the content value if they help the understanding of the text. A sensible use of typographic features also increases usability, especially in reference works like dictionaries.[139]

Apart from these direct influences, there are also more indirect impacts. When we recognize the book as a communication system, then the availability and affordability of the content itself affects the content value: the faster and cheaper a medium carrying the content can be acquired, the greater the potential circle of readers and the more effective the communication. Even though the content value itself stays the same, the potential impact of a book can be much bigger, and offers, according to Schmidt, a better promise of democratization.

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137 Alexandra Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and Their Books, 1473–1557* (Oxford, 2006), 2.

138 Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author*, 3. On the authority of authors as a value for books in medieval times, see also Pollie Bromilow (ed.), *Authority in European Book Culture, 1400–1600* (Farnham, Surrey, 2013).

139 For a brief history of the use of typography in English dictionaries, see Simon Rosenberg, "Van aflevering naar scherm: De presentatie van informatie in de *Oxford English Dictionary* in de negentiende en eenentwintigste eeuw," *Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis*, 19 (2012), 163–175.

Symbolic Value

Symbolic value addresses the function of books to represent certain ideas, convictions and beliefs of the owner. Books are objectified cultural capital. The primary function of a book might be to produce, disseminate and store ideas in form of signs to be understood by readers. However,

> the concept of media always needs to be linked back to the social and material dimension of media. Seen from this perspective it also becomes obvious that media do not simply carry signs, that is, they are not simply the tools of communication; rather, they are themselves signs, both in their symbolic and their material dimension.[140]

In 2005, Ursula Rautenberg examined the status of the printed book in depictions of books in various settings.[141] Rather than focusing on the function of the book as a communication system, she elaborates on how books are used symbolically. Although she admits that her approach is not strictly methodological, she still offers the conclusion that books in modern times are almost exclusively used to signify something that is generally accepted as being positive:

> Im Spiegel der Buchzeichen ist das Buch an vorderster Stelle "Kulturgut." In dieser Eigenschaft eignet es sich als Imagefaktor und Werbeträger für Radiosender, für den Klavier-Kaiser, für Teebeutel, Autos und Zigaretten und, dies ist wohl der am stärksten vertretene Produktbereich, für Mode. Für "Kultur," im Sinn von "Wissenskultur," stehen Buch und Bibliothek noch immer als mächtige Symbole für das Gedächtnis einer Gesellschaft.[142]

As a result, books can provide good opportunities for self-fashioning. The desire to signify one's lifestyle with one's book collection has often resulted in portrait photos depicting a person in front of a filled bookshelf to signify knowledge and erudition or at least wealth. Photographer Arnold Genthe remembers in his autobiography that Henry Edwards Huntington, famous American railroad entrepreneur and avid collector of art and rare books, asked for the book he had paid USD 30,000 for, so he could hold it in his hand in a portrait. It turned out to be the first edition of Shakespeare's sonnets. This example stresses that Huntington,

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140 Christian J. Emden and Gabriele Rippl, "Introduction: Image, Text and Simulation," *ImageScapes: Studies in Intermediality*, eds Christian J. Emden and Gabriele Rippl (Bern, 2010), 1–18, 8.

141 Ursula Rautenberg, "Das Buch in der Alltagskultur: Eine Annäherung an zeichenhaften Buchgebrauch und die Medialität des Buches," *Buchkulturen: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Literaturvermittlung. Festschrift für Reinhard Wittmann*, eds Monika Estermann, Ernst Fischer and Ute Schneider (Wiesbaden, 2005), 487–516.

142 Rautenberg, "Das Buch in der Alltagskultur," 515–516. It will certainly be interesting to see how fast this might be changing.

at least in this situation, was not interested in the content of the books but rather in the symbolic value that was illustrated by the book. He remembered the book for its costliness, not for its content or special significance within the history of literature.[143] Similarly, a bookshelf filled with leather-bound classics and highly esteemed encyclopaedias signifies that the owner is a literate, intellectual and wealthy person, despite the possibility that he or she may just have inherited the books and may have never shown an interest in their content. This stresses that symbolic value is very much a group-specific value.

Symbolic value, much like Bourdieu's symbolic capital, pervades all other forms of value. A high economic value of a commodity may also result in high symbolic value precisely because of its costliness. Therefore, price itself can be seen as a value. If a commodity is expensive, it can (or is intended to), for example, indicate that it is superior to competitive commodities on the market.[144] Ownership of an expensive commodity can also symbolize that its owner is wealthy. The symbolic and the economic value in this example become inseparable, as is often the case.[145] This, however, needs to be seen in relation to the content as well. If the owner has spent a large amount of money on a text that is not accepted in a specific group in the literary field, then the economic value does not increase the symbolic value. It can even be argued that the individual is losing cultural capital as money has been spent on a book that has low, if any, cultural capital.

Symbolic value may represent intellectual content or high economic value, if not both. It may also immensely rely on the materiality of the book. The importance of content, however, must not be underestimated as it may reflect more symbolic value, even if it is unimposingly produced. The famous penguin paperbacks revolutionizing the British book industry in the 1930s, for example, signified with their distinctive and unmistakable design an interest in highbrow literature throughout the decades in certain social circles. Nevertheless, in other circles, a very cheap paperback edition of a highly esteemed text may devalue its symbolic worth as it might indicate ignorance of the book's importance. On the other hand, a text with low esteem will only marginally increase its symbolic value, if at all, when in a more expensive edition. Though a high-priced

143 Arnold Genthe, *As I Remember* (New York, 1936; repr. 1979), 153.

144 Hermann Simon, *Preisheiten: Alles, was Sie über Preise wissen müssen*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt, 2015), 148: "Der Preis trägt sowohl zu diesem Prestigewert als auch zur Qualitätsindikation bei."

145 Schmitt, "Welche Geschichte der Werte?" 25.

book may indicate economic value, it may even result in a contrary effect if the text in question is deemed inappropriate in the group-specific value system, for example, a very cheesy or pornographic novel. Spending a lot of money on an unaccepted text may therefore nullify the added value achieved by a high economic value. Symbolic value highly depends on the agreed-on values within the value system of a social group.

Symbolic value can almost never be accumulated. Bolin uses the example of owning one very expensive car, which might have more symbolic value than owning four relatively cheap cars, even if their total economic value is equal to or greater than the single car. In book-related terms it could be said that the possession of a Gutenberg Bible offers more symbolic value than owning a great amount of modern printed bibles. Bolin argues that this is the case because symbolic value is mainly a quality and less a quantity.[146] However, as stressed above, the book is a different commodity. Whereas cars have primarily two functions (transport and prestige), the book is also a medium and a cultural object. Even though Bolin is certainly right that it is not possible to measure symbolic value as precisely as, for example, economic value, a larger quantity of books can indeed result in higher symbolic value: even the possession of many small and cheap books might result in an equally high symbolic value, as this ultimately results in a multifaceted book collection which indicates erudition and a keen interest in books and reading. The comparison obviously does not work because different cars may have different prestige, but their primary role, transport, stays the same. Different books may also carry different symbolic value, but they always offer different content too.

Symbolic value seems to be the most difficult value to gauge, but concerning the digital age, in which digital texts are offered as yet another option for one text, it might be the most notable. The main question that e-book publishers faced and may still be facing is if and how the symbolic value of the printed (or handwritten) physical book can be transferred to e-books.[147]

For the book market, the categories of economic, content and symbolic value are further affected by the factors which establish the value of the book itself: the agents within the life cycle of the book. Authors as well as publishers

146 Bolin, *Value and the Media*, 43.

147 Adriaan van der Weel, "e-Roads and i-Ways: A Sociotechnical Look at User Acceptance of E-Books," *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 21.3 (2010), 47–57, 54. Van der Weel quotes research proving that the mere presence of physical books in a household has a positive effect on school success of children. It is unlikely that a solution to that problem will be found by enhancing soft- and hardware.

may have a certain amount of symbolic value. The text itself may acquire value by favourable reviews of established quality newspapers, book prizes and so on.[148] A famous controversy illustrates the complex character of these book value categories. In 2001, the novel *The Corrections* by American author Jonathan Franzen was included in Oprah Winfrey's Book Club selection. While inclusion usually results in a huge increase in sales for the work, Franzen publicly expressed his doubts about whether he really felt grateful for this accolade. Seeing himself in the highbrow literary tradition, he felt that his readers would be turned off if they saw his novel discussed in Winfrey's book club, which allegedly addressed a low- to middlebrow female audience. In other words, Franzen feared a loss of symbolic value both for his novel and himself as an author and did not wish to accept the short-lived economic value he was about to enjoy. He stated that he may lose his faithful readership, and only briefly win a new audience which ultimately may be overstrained with his novel.[149] A more recent incident within the British publishing industry further stresses the complexity of the logic of the field. In April 2013 the crime novel *Cuckoo's Calling*, written by a certain Robert Galbraith, was published. The novel earned praise and overall good reviews, but it hardly achieved excessive visibility. After several months, approximately 1,500 printed copies had been sold. Even though this is a rather moderate sales figure, it was quite impressive for a first-time author. Then, in July, the *Sunday Times* revealed that "Robert Galbraith" was actually a pseudonym used by Joanne K. Rowling, bestselling author of the Harry Potter series. In the course of the following week, over 17,000 copies had been sold. But even though this meant more profit, Rowling expressed distress that she had been outed so soon as she had enjoyed working without hype or expectation and receiving totally unvarnished feedback. In this case, her name meant symbolic value that quickly turned to economic value for both publisher as well as the author, even though the content of the novel stayed exactly the same. However, Rowling's disappointment over

148 For the role of literary book prizes as agents in the literary field of cultural production, see James F. English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).

149 Theodore G. Striphas, *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control* (New York, 2009), 130–137. The controversy lasted for years even though Franzen apologized soon after his initial comment that started the controversy. Winfrey refused to accept his apology. Ironically, this media attention might have supported *The Corrections* becoming a huge success. Winfrey's and Franzen's dispute officially ended when she included his successive novel *Freedom* in her Book Club selection in 2010.

the revelation in the *Sunday Times* indicates that she wanted her work to be positioned within the literary field of cultural production without her name involved, which is already placed in the large-scale production.[150]

Conclusion

These categories of book value can also be used to assess the acceptance of new book forms. Based on these different sets of values, consumers may assess the changed circumstances of values surrounding a new medium and can decide the levels of acceptance of that new medium. Even if the new medium is partially accepted at first, the previous form may still be preferred, both mediums may be regarded as equal or the new medium may be regarded as superior. Ultimately, it is up to the assessment of consumers to decide whether the new medium will be fully accepted, whether it offers 'added values,' or whether it actually devalues the content and is thus rejected.

The significance of each value differs depending on the assessed time frame along with its socioeconomic context, the existing publishing categories, and the individual background of the owners based on their economic and cultural capital. In the late twentieth century, for example, a worn-out paperback copy of a large print run of a detective novel might hold limited symbolic value, and probably even less economic value. However, it can still have high value in content if the text still has the capability to entertain the owner in the desired way. On the other hand, a luxuriously bound and designed multi-volume edition of a history of English literature can be of high symbolic value as well as economic value, whereas the owner is not interested in the content at all.

Establishing book value categories for three distinct time periods (fifteenth, nineteenth and twenty-first centuries) can run the risk of lacking depth due to its broad scope and consequent occasional generalizations. However, including all aspects and exceptional cases would defeat the purpose of these categories. They are intended to simplify and illustrate complex and abstract problems and interrelated processes. With the help of these categories, it is possible to assess how various technological developments affected the above-mentioned values for books. It needs to be distinguished, however, between what technological

150 Liz Bury, "Cuckoo's Calling by JK Rowling: did you know?" *The Guardian*, 15 July 2013 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jul/15/cuckoos-calling-jk-rowling-did-you-know> (accessed: 10.12.2019). Even though the novel is still sold with the pseudonym Galbraith, stickers sometimes indicate that Galbraith is the pseudonym of "bestselling author JK Rowling."

innovations were possible and what was actually demanded, or at least partially accepted, by customers.

The term 'value' is used in this study to gauge the esteem of the book as a medium primarily from the side of reception (book buyers, users and owners alike) throughout the book's various changes due to technological developments. For the side of production, the innovations of book production methods are relevant as well. With the book value categories established here, this study looks at the transitional phases of the introduction of the printing press, the age of industrialization and the digital age. These eras represent turning points in production methods for the book because of technological inventions. The speed of complete acceptance, however, as will be shown, varies.

Apart from the socioeconomic influences, economic, content, and symbolic values are also affected by further factors like materiality, design, layout, accessibility, textual quality and so on. Consequently, all technological developments within the field of book production might affect these value categories. This study claims that certain patterns can be detected in the historical chapters and are helpful to further understand developments during the digital age by stressing the continuities and discontinuities of these patterns.

Since the respective eras are quite different, it is necessary to further elaborate on the specific settings for the book: early printed books in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, deliberately or not, imitated manuscript features and are oftentimes characterized by book historians as a hybrid form of printed and handwritten book. The eventual abandonment of such features in the 1530s signifies that the printed book was completely accepted as a fully-fledged new medium by their users.

The age of industrialization introduced manifold technologies into the book market that also had an impact not on output alone but also on physical aspects of the book itself. It became a mass-market commodity, and, with growing availability, the value of the individual copy eventually decreased significantly. Aspects of distribution also had a decisive impact on the book market, at least partially on the materiality of the book. The circulating library system in Britain artificially slowed down a quick establishment and consequently complete acceptance of cheaper book production methods, primarily for novels. Instead, it favoured the three-decker format which, from an economic perspective, was more convenient for circulating libraries. Ultimately, however, the economic viability of cheaper books prevailed. This led to a more convenient (in the sense of being favourable to one's comfort[151]) and cheaper medium for the reading public.

151 "convenience, n.," *OED Online*, 1989 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/40691> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

Because of the, at times, active opposition against some innovations, acceptance was relatively slow.

The so-called digital age and the acceptance of digital distribution of texts reveal several discontinuities of the patterns and offers a break to many factors of the book trade. In certain respects, digital publishing might offer even more convenience for users by offering more ease of access, greater availability, and, again, cheaper prices. But even more than a decade after the introduction of satisfactory e-readers (Sony Reader, Amazon Kindle), for many publishing categories, paper books still seem to be the more important format. There is no obvious trend yet that indicates a complete acceptance of digital books and supersession of paper books.

The following chapters will elaborate on the book value categories within these respective time frames. The point of departure will be the introduction of printing to Europe in the middle of the fifteenth century.

2. The Gutenberg Age

Abstract: Printing as an innovation of book production in Europe in the fifteenth century spread over the continent in just a few decades. This indicates a relatively fast acceptance. The case of England during that transitional period is unique. Among other things, book production in England predominantly focused on English texts, and not on Latin, Europe's *lingua franca* at the time. It also offers examples of both successful and unsuccessful printing businesses. A closer look at the success and failure of English printers during this transitional phase sheds light on the complex context of acceptance of innovations in the early modern book trade. Therefore, the examples of William Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde and Richard Pynson will be juxtaposed with the early printing presses of the university towns Oxford and Cambridge as well as St Albans, a town famous in medieval times for its prestigious abbey and manuscript production.

Keywords: acceptance of the printed book, print culture, printing press, incunabula period, Gutenberg, printing revolution

With the possibility and economic need to produce hundreds of copies from a set text, the newly introduced printed book in fifteenth-century Europe adopted aspects of a commercial commodity that were unknown to this degree in manuscript production. This early impact of capitalism on the book trade meant that the economic success of the printed book depended on its relatively fast acceptance by book users.

According to the phase model introduced in the previous chapter, the acceptance of printed books during the early days of printing means that readers (and book users in general) would have to acknowledge, tolerate and, finally, approve of the innovation. Either the book users regard the printed book simply as an adequate substitute for the manuscript or they even prefer it due to functional advantages, lower cost and so on. Lacking functions may be neglected if the innovation offers features the old medium did not have. Either way, since books (printed or hand-written) are usually commodities as well, book users indicate acceptance of the new medium if they are willing to pay to possess it and access its inherent qualities and functions. Consequently, it is the main argument of this chapter that a multitude of successful printing presses indicates a complete acceptance of the new medium by its users. Success in this regard means that the income from the printing press is high enough for the printer to maintain the activity of his enterprise. This was never guaranteed for early printing presses,

no matter how promising the context of acceptance was in the respective cities or towns.

This chapter discusses the developments of early printing in England, which is decisively different compared to the history of early printing on the continent. In contrast to continental presses, early English printers primarily focussed on texts in the English vernacular and were therefore almost exclusively interested in the local market. The special situation of early printed books in England makes it a useful case study for the question of acceptance of the printed book after the introduction of printing. As will be shown through the examples of William Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, Richard Pynson as well as the early printing presses in Oxford, Cambridge and St Albans, the primary concern of printer-publishers was their choice of texts, that is, content value, to satisfy the local market and, at the same time, distinguish themselves from their national as well as international competitors. Apart from the choice of texts, printer-publishers were also aware of other possibilities to enhance the desirability of their commodities, for example with woodcut illustrations or paratextual elements. The successful printers' decisions to make their products more desirable ensured the acceptance of the printed book on the English book market and shaped distinctive characteristics of the different values of the book.

2.1. Context: Introduction of the Printed Book

The idea to produce texts mechanically had been conceived earlier than Gutenberg's printing press. The oldest completely printed book, the so-called Diamond Sutra, was printed (albeit with woodblocks) in China in 868. Movable type made from ceramic, wood, and later metal, was also first conceived of in China and Korea beginning in the eleventh century.[152] Gutenberg's major achievement was the combination and coordination of multiple technologies that enabled the speedy production of books: the creation of type material, the manufacture of paper, the technology of the press, the elements of composition and imposition, the printing process itself and the correct assembling of the individual printed sheets to create a coherent text.[153]

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152 A concise overview is offered in J. S. Edgren, "The History of the Book in China," *The Book: A Global History*, eds Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), 573–592.

153 Eva-Maria Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen: Die technischen Aspekte des Druckens mit vielfachen Lettern auf der Buchdruckerpresse," *Gutenberg, Aventur*

Type Material

The most important element in Gutenberg's business venture was the idea of movable type to set and print the pages. Afterwards, the type material would be redistributed to set up new pages. With a limited supply of type material, the possible pages were unlimited. Consequently, the hand-mould, usually attributed to Gutenberg himself, that enabled a speedy production of individual types can be regarded as the most prevalent element within the establishment of the printed book. This way of producing type material was made possible by the advanced improvements of metallurgy in the early fifteenth century in Southern Germany.

> For each character, a punch was cut in steel, the hardest available metal. The steel punch was used to stamp the character in a copper matrix of fixed dimensions. The matrix was carefully adjusted to fit exactly into a mould, an instrument – in itself a sophisticated invention – which in turn could be adjusted to the varying sizes of the matrices. When closed, the mould was filled with hot liquid metal with a low melting point, an alloy of lead, tin and traces of other metals. A piece of type, a small bar of metal with a letter at its end, would be the result.[154]

With this technology, once a character had been cut, which took about one to two days, a large number of identical types could be reproduced efficiently. On average, a type-caster could produce 3,000 individual letters.[155] In this way, a complete set of letters and numbers and other symbols in matching design could be produced to make a fount of type that could be sold to printers.

Paper

Before papermaking was introduced to Europe in the early twelfth century, parchment, that is specially prepared animal skin, was the primary material for books. Its production was slow and costly. But paper did not replace parchment use immediately. Despite its costly disadvantage, the longevity of parchment was deemed more suitable for texts that were used extensively and needed to endure many readings. It also tended to carry larger esteem with its beauty and preciousness.[156] The older writing support then offered both practical advantages

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und Kunst: Vom Geheimunternehmen zur ersten Medienrevolution, eds Eva Maria Hanebutt-Benz and Wolfgang Dobras (Mainz, 2000), 158–189, 158.

154 Lotte Hellinga, "Printing," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 65–108, 69.

155 Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 163–164.

156 Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT, 2010), 18: "The shiny surface of parchment continued to be preferred."

as well as more symbolic value than paper. In the long run, though, the enormous costs and limited availability, especially for the upcoming print runs in the fifteenth century, made using parchment as the main raw material impossible and it remained to be used only occasionally. With the steep rise of print output Europe-wide, the use of paper quickly spread with the advent of printing.

Paper production, in essence, stayed the same until the nineteenth century, with only minor improvements, especially in the paper makers' equipment.[157] The main component of paper was undyed linen or hempen. The material was cut into small pieces and then hammered to pulp. The resulting compound was put into a large vat with tepid water. The paper maker dipped a framed wire-sieve into the pulp and with great skill created the basic shape of one sheet of paper. A complete post of paper was then processed with a hand press several times to press the water out of it. Afterwards, the paper was strong enough to be handled and was hanged to dry. To improve the surface of the paper to write or print on, it was "dipped by handfuls into hot size, a solution of animal gelatine made from vellum or leather shavings boiled in water"[158] before it was pressed and dried again to be sold in quires or reams. Depending on the size of the sheets produced and the number of workers in paper mills, a paper maker could produce roughly 3,000 to 5,000 sheets of paper a day, minus the faulty sheets that were produced due to human or material failure.[159] Despite the cost advantage compared to parchment, paper was still the most expensive element in the printing business. The spread of printing presses around Europe further led to scarcity of paper. In contrast to type material or ink, paper was very delicate to handle. It could tear easily, burn immediately and, obviously, could only be printed on once.

Printing Process

A decisive difference to manuscript production were the elements of imposition and composition. The printer needed a precise estimate of the length of the book to order the right amount of paper. Apart from the number of words, further factors like type, book format and layout influenced this decision. Once all these decisions had been made and the text was cast off, printing could start with

157 Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography: The Classic Manual of Bibliography* (Oxford, 1972), 57.

158 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 59.

159 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 59–60. Paper to write on was smoothed afterwards. For printing purposes this was superfluous since paper was damped before printing and would thus lose its smooth consistency again.

setting the sheets by formes so that first all pages of one side of the sheet could be printed, then dried, before the other side could be printed.

Compositors set up a page in a frame and fixed the type material with strings. The formes were placed on the press and coated with an oil-based ink, consisting of approximately 65 per cent lead, 23 per cent antimony and 12 per cent tin. Since tin was about ten times as expensive as lead, the proportion of tin was sometimes less, which led to inferior printing results.[160] Paper (or, less frequently, parchment) would be placed on the forme before a platen would be pulled down via a lever. Each printing needed re-inking of the type material. Once the desired number of copies had been printed, the type material would be cleaned, redistributed to the cases, and then the next page would be composed. The average output of pressmen in the hand press period was roughly 200 sheets in one hour. This depended on the sizes of the forme and the type material. Extra features like two-colour printing affected the output of the press as well.[161]

In contrast to manuscripts, pages could not be created in running order. Printed sheets were folded, depending on the format (folio, quarto, octavo and so on) of the book. This emphasizes the importance of accurate casting off. Inaccurate imposition usually led to a change of layout to ensure the continuity of the text. Correct imposition consequently meant a reduction of press time and material costs. However, these pre-printing preparations were complex, time-consuming and expensive. After all, typesetters and proof-readers were the best paid jobs within the printing office.[162] Still, the complexity and importance of the preparations for manuscript production must not be underestimated. They were laborious as well, especially for *de luxe* manuscripts. Preparations for a simple copy or transcript of a text with no decorations were much less laborious for a scribe than for a printer.[163] However, with the ability to create

160 Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 162. The ink used for manuscripts was water-based and thus did not stick on the type material to create satisfying print results. Further, specially made ink balls were used to apply the ink on the type material. Ian Gadd, "Introduction," *The History of the Book in the West, 1455–1700*, ed. Ian Gadd (Farnham, Surrey, 2010), xi-xlii, xvi. See also Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 125–126.

161 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 139–140.

162 Leonhard Hoffmann, "Die Gutenbergbibel: Eine Kosten- und Gewinnschätzung des ersten Bibeldrucks auf der Grundlage zeitgenössischer Quellen," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 39 (1993), 255–317, 294–295.

163 Christine Jakobi-Mirwald offers a good overview of manuscript production in *Das mittelalterliche Buch: Funktion und Ausstattung* (Stuttgart, 2004). It must be noted though that an adequate comparison for print and manuscript preparations is

hundreds of copies once the composition was completed, the potential economic profit was incentive enough for printers to engage in this initially very slow and cost-intensive production process.[164] Printer-publishers needed to find a balance between their print run and selling enough copies to make a profit or at least reach the break-even point. It is difficult to estimate average print runs in the earliest days of printing. Too much relies on where, when and what was printed, and by whom. Print runs of less than 100 copies were clearly the exception, as were print runs of around 1000 copies. Based on sources primarily from Italy, Konrad Haebler carefully argues that 100 copies were the lowest print runs, 200 to 300 the norm, which increased to approximately 400 to 500 in the latter years of the incunabular period.[165] Small print runs effectively meant a high price of unit costs, so for both publisher and customer alike, bigger editions were more attractive as long as the edition could be sold. Consequently, the sixteenth century saw a rise in print runs to around 1,000 to 1,500 copies.[166]

Gutenberg's B42

With these basic considerations of the early printing process in mind, it is revealing to look at the production of the first larger work printed in Europe, the Gutenberg Bible (B42). Gutenberg did not intend to quickly produce a cheap alternative to manuscript bibles. Rather, the B42 is a prime example of a hybrid book mixing print technology and hand-finished elements. Whether the symbolic value of the manuscript features was necessary for the acceptance of the new commodity remains speculation. Gutenberg might have been aware of their importance. From today's perspective, it may seem surprising that the B42 used 47 different capital letters and 243 lower-case letters, even though it would have sufficed to have two 23 letter sets (upper- and lower case). Reasons for the huge variety of lower-case letters primarily allowed printers to have a "page of text free of distracting white patches, while maintaining the desired emphasis on verticality."[167] Other features like ligatures, however, imitated manuscript

difficult. The acquisition of type material, for example, would also have to be taken into consideration.

164 Hellinga, "Printing," 70.

165 Konrad Haebler, *Handbuch zur Inkunabelkunde* (Leipzig, 1925), 142–145. Ferdinand Geldner argues that print runs were a little higher in *Inkunabelkunde: Eine Einführung in die Welt des frühesten Buchdrucks* (Wiesbaden, 1978), 155–157.

166 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 160–163.

167 Stephan Füssel, *The Gutenberg Bible of 1454: With a Commentary on the Life and Work of Johannes Gutenberg, the Printing of the Bible, the Distinctive Features of the*

characteristics that do not necessarily make sense from an economic point of view. The extra costs for an already expensive production method signify the importance, and indeed some sort of added value, of the product.[168] It would be a fallacy, though, to assume that it had been a conscious decision to include manuscript features. After all, the press was supposed to produce books, and manuscripts shaped the idea of what a book was. The concept of printed books along with the features of standardization and reduced use of letter sizes obviously did not yet exist. Merely 30 years after the B42, printing presses had spread all over Europe. Whether or not this fast acceptance would have happened without the adoption of 'unnecessary' manuscript features remains speculation.

The first question to be raised is why Gutenberg chose the bible as his first big printing project. In the nineteenth century, Charles Knight, publisher and author of the *Penny Magazine*, mused that Gutenberg chose to print the bible as his first major work because it promised to be a success.[169] Later evaluations of the book market in Gutenberg's time, however, tone down the economic safety of the bible as a printed commodity. In fact, production of manuscript bibles had already reached its peak in the thirteenth century. The demand for bibles in Europe was mainly satisfied or, at least, not as high as presumed. Andrew Pettegree claims that the demand for liturgical texts, missals and lectionaries was much higher.[170] Further, those texts would have been much easier and cheaper to produce. A more detailed look at the production of the B42 reveals that the production was very costly indeed.[171]

Assuming that Gutenberg produced 180 copies of his B42 on two printing presses, Eva-Maria Hanebutt-Benz has calculated that Gutenberg would have needed approximately 150,000 pieces of individual type, which would have

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Göttingen Copy, the 'Göttingen Model Book' and the 'Helmasperger Notarial Instrument,' (Cologne, 2018), 44.

168 For a detailed analysis of Johannes Gutenberg and his work, see Albert Kapr, *Johannes Gutenberg: Persönlichkeit und Leistung* (Munich, 1987). For an extensive analysis on the print of the B42 based on contemporary sources, see Hoffmann, "Die Gutenbergbibel." Hoffmann's elaborations and methodologies are contested though.

169 Charles Knight, "The Commercial History of a Penny Magazine: Printing Presses and Machinery-Bookbinding," *Monthly Supplement of the Penny Magazine*, 112 (1833), 505–512, 505.

170 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 27.

171 Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 184–188. It needs to be noted though that only few primary sources exist that shed light on specific facts on Gutenberg's press and the production of the B42.

needed approximately 100 days to produce. Altogether, the B42 used 290 different sorts of type and the creation of these would have taken at least 200 days. Finally, the time for the actual printing process must have been enormous considering that the B42 consists of 1275 printed pages. It is estimated that printing all copies took around two to three years.[172]

Arguably, the most important element of printing the B42 was the compositional stage. When examining the B42, it becomes obvious that almost nothing concerning the whole layout was by accident. Hanebutt-Benz demonstrates this by elaborating on the change from 40 lines per column to 42 lines that occurs after page 9. Reasons for the change itself are still not satisfyingly explained. Some scholars exclude economic reasons. According to them, the saved material and time reaches only approximately 5 per cent. But no matter what the reasons behind the change to 42 lines are, it is still important to note the minimally reduced line-spacing. Due to this layout change, the type area remains exactly the same, resulting in identical page borders. The reader will thus not notice the change from 40 to 42 lines. It is also worth stressing that hyphens were printed outside the type area which resulted in an even more harmonious layout of the pages.[173]

The production of the B42 added three further characteristics that reminded the reader of a *de luxe* manuscript. First, the golden ratio, referring to the spatial relationship between the text and white space surrounding the text, was applied. It had further been decided that a certain amount (30 copies) would be printed on parchment instead of paper. Though much more expensive than paper, parchment was still considered to be more durable and arguably also carried the greater prestige. Third, the copies of the B42 included an ample number of hand-finished elements: illuminations, border decorations and initials ornamented the pages to different degrees by professional illuminators. Even more telling is the fact that even though Gutenberg had experimented with printing in red to take over the task of rubricators, early experience showed that it was a laborious and tricky task to achieve excellent results. Hence, highlighting certain parts of the text was left for experienced rubricators.[174]

The overall quality of the B42 copies was immediately noticed by contemporaries. Probably the most prominent primary source that offers an early

172 Hoffmann argues that it did not take longer than 32 months. Hoffmann, "Die Gutenbergbibel," 264.

173 Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 184–188.

174 Füssel, *The Gutenberg Bible of 1454: Commentary*, 44.

glimpse at the evaluation dimension of reception of the B42 is a letter by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II, to Cardinal Juan de Carvajal.[175] Piccolomini wrote in March 1455 that he had come across copies of a bible with a very clean text that was legible without glasses and allegedly consisted of no textual errors. It is noteworthy that the letter not only comments on the textual quality itself (something which would have been almost impossible to evaluate completely at the fair anyway), but also on the enhanced features of typographic quality. The letter indicates that the impact of the printed book might have been immediate and that clerical individuals were far from being critical. Piccolomini also mentions two figures concerning the print run, which led some scholars to argue that initial demand was so high that more copies were printed than originally planned. This might indicate a surprisingly fast acceptance of the printed book. The hypothesis about the changed print run, however, remains speculation.[176] Despite Piccolomini's praise of the textual quality of the B42, however, modern textual research has argued that Gutenberg used different sources for his B42, most of them of inferior quality.[177] Content value, in other words, would have seemed less important than other factors for the first big work printed in Gutenberg's shop.

Pettegree summarized such undertakings as Gutenberg's B42 with the credo that "large complex projects carry the greatest risk, as well as the greatest renown."[178] Indeed, Gutenberg's B42 carried enormous financial risk that eventually led to Gutenberg's loss of his press and printing material after the business struggle with his financial partner, Johannes Fust. However, he seemed to be aware of the importance of awing his customers in order to have a palpable impact on the book trade. His decision to produce about 30 copies on parchment, much more expensive than paper, emphasizes this hypothesis. Printing the B42 was most probably not only about the financial profit from printing and selling many copies, but also about showing the capabilities of the invention. Gutenberg's main idea was to establish trustworthiness and prestige to the

175 Lotte Hellinga, "The Gutenberg Revolutions," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 379–392, 379. The article in the first edition unfortunately mixes up the persons.

176 Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 188.

177 Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, 30. Pettegree argues that despite relying on inferior translations from Greek into Latin dating from the 5th century, the B42 enormously influenced bible culture for centuries by being the major reference for new bibles.

178 Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance*, 29.

printed book or, rather, the printing technology in general. Even nowadays, more than 550 years later, the B42 is still described as one of the most beautiful books ever produced with a printing press. A high level of detail was necessary to guarantee a convincing result in the hope of further acceptance of Gutenberg's innovation. In the case of the B42, it is revealing to see that much more effort went into the physical production of the book compared to the level of accuracy of the Latin translation of the bible. It is fair to assume that Gutenberg, as a craftsman, was not capable of evaluating the accuracy of the manuscripts he used. Maybe he even deemed the use and/or consequential acquisition of better sources as too expensive or unimportant. In other words, content value of the B42 via textual accuracy was probably only of limited importance for Gutenberg. The choice of the bible itself seemed strong enough. This significance was stressed by the high quality of materiality, the partial use of parchment and the inclusion of hand-finished elements. The decision to include these costly manuscript features helped to translate the symbolic value of the manuscript to the printed book to ensure acceptance and, ideally, preference, as well.

Incunables as Transitional Books

The transition from manuscript to the printed book was not a sudden change:

> Es ist eine Binsenweisheit, daß der Buchdruck nicht schon mit der Erfindung der Werkzeuge und der Ausarbeitung der technischen Verfahren zur Wirkung gekommen ist. Es hat seine Zeit gebraucht, bis die neuen Möglichkeiten zur Verbreitung von Texten - in einem mehrfachen Sinne - ‚wahrgenommen' wurden und ihr Potential in der Umgestaltung des literarischen, religiösen, politischen Lebens, der Wahrnehmungs-, Denk- und Schreibgewohnheiten entfalten konnten.[179]

Incunables "represent the bridge between manuscripts and the printed books of the sixteenth century [...] and as such they partake in the problems of both."[180] In the incunabular period, a printed book bore many similarities to a manuscript. The most obvious likeness is the type, which was copied from handwriting styles. Specific characteristics of the manuscripts like diacritical marks and abbreviations (which were common in formal writing of Latin) were adopted

179 Klaus Grubmüller and Gerd Dicke, "Vorbemerkung," *Die Gleichzeitigkeit von Handschrift und Buchdruck*, eds Gerd Dicke and Klaus Grubmüller (Wiesbaden, 2003), 3–4, 3.

180 William Kuskin, "Introduction: Following Caxton's Trace," *Caxton's Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing*, ed. William Kuskin (Notre Dame, IN, 2006), 1–31, 3.

by early type material, too.[181] Resemblances like this led Lucien Febvre to label incunables as "unusual manuscripts."[182] In the 1470s, it became obvious that printing might replace handwritten books and that the number of printed pages would soon exceed the number of those written by scribes.[183] As early as 1480 "it had become clear that printing would soon replace manual reproduction as an efficient and cost-effective means of multiplying texts."[184] Manuscripts did not disappear with the introduction of the printing press: "There is a continuity between the manuscript culture and the production of early printed books, and there was co-operation between those who produced the written and the printed word."[185] As Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp put it, the fifteenth century witnessed a huge increase in the production of books "largely as a result of the arrival in England of the new invention of printing and a flourishing import trade in both manuscripts and printed books, in which supply – as ever – partly satisfied and partly created demand."[186] This co-existence made the stage of preference for the printed book even more important. The influence on the book trade was evident. The printer especially could not confine himself to just producing the printed books:

> The further perfection and spread of printing demanded (in addition to craftsmanship) intelligence and an acute business sense, involving daring as well as a shrewd assessment of the taste and the prejudices of the actual and potential book-buying public. Printers faced numerous problems of an economic nature for which parallels did not exist in the production of manuscripts and which they had to solve if they wanted to succeed.[187]

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181 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 13.

182 Febvre and Martin, *Coming of the Book*, 9.

183 Uwe Neddermeyer, *Von der Handschrift zum gedruckten Buch, Schriftlichkeit und Leseinteresse im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit: Quantitative und qualitative Aspekte*, vol. 1 (Buchwissenschaftliche Beiträge aus dem Deutschen Bucharchiv München, 61) (Wiesbaden, 1998), 309–330.

184 John Flood, "'Volentes sibi comparare infrascriptos libros impressos...': Printed Books as a Commercial Commodity in the Fifteenth Century," *Incunabula and Their Readers: Printing, Selling and Using Books in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Kristian Jensen (London, 2003), 139–151, 141.

185 Norman F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London, 1991), viii.

186 Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp, "Introduction," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 1–30, 5.

187 Rudolf Hirsch, *Printing, Selling and Reading 1450–1550*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden, 1974), 27.

Even though manuscript production was almost exclusively a bespoke trade, the late Middle Ages saw cases where manuscripts were produced for stock, which had other economic risks. These risks were multiplied by the printing press. The printer was dealing with the speculative trade and "the exclusive nature of the relationship between producer and client or patron is lost within the advent of printing."[188] Early printers relied on a rather conservative publishing policy: they chose mainly texts that had been in circulation in manuscript form and proved successful. This turned out to become a reoccurring pattern within the book trade. Since money from sales of printed books trickled in slowly, a bold publishing policy could have easily meant bankruptcy.[189]

In all likelihood, printed books were simply seen as an improved means of textual production and not a new medium altogether.[190] The distinguishing aspect of the printed book and a manuscript is not the fact that it is printed but rather the vastly increased output due to print runs. Printed books and manuscripts coexisted for centuries with no specific hierarchical order for book users, even though manuscripts tended to be, at least initially, regarded in higher esteem. The sharp distinction between manuscripts and printed books that exists nowadays partially developed in the eighteenth century when manuscripts and printed books were stored separately in libraries. Sometimes, even handwritten parts in printed books were removed and stored elsewhere.[191] According to Lotte Hellinga, this development influenced and conditioned the thoughts and research of scholars.[192] Such a sharp distinction did not seem to exist during the transitional phase from manuscript to the printed book, where handwritten copies were made from printed books and where manuscripts in libraries were

188 A. S. G. Edwards and Carol M. Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books in Late Medieval England," *The Library*, 6th ser., 15 (1993), 95–125, 96.

189 Flood offers an example where "sixteen years after [a printer] had originally published the books, 574 copies still languished on the shelves of agents throughout Europe, and furthermore even when copies had been sold payment had often not been received." Flood, "Printed Books as a Commercial Commodity," 144–145.

190 David Scott Kastan, "Print, Literary Culture and the Book Trade," *The Cambridge History of Early Modern English Literature*, eds David Loewenstein and Janel M. Mueller (Cambridge, 2004), 81–116, 81.

191 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 16–17. He blames overzealous nineteenth-century librarians.

192 Lotte Hellinga, "Manuscripts in the Hands of Printers," *Manuscripts in the Fifty Years after the Invention of Printing: Some Papers Read at a Colloquium at the Warburg Institute on 12–13 March 1982*, ed. Joseph Burney Trapp (London, 1983), 3–11, 9.

disposed of once a printed edition had been acquired.[193] In these cases, the content of the book had higher or at least equal value as the material aspects and the underlying symbolic value embedded within the materiality.

The fast spread of printing after Gutenberg's innovation proved him right. From 1460–1470, presses were established in Germany and Italy. By 1480, further printing shops were founded in France, Spain, Poland, the Low Countries and England: "Altogether, presses were set up in more than 100 towns between 1471 and 1480, in almost 90 further places between 1481 and 1490, and in approximately 90 more towns between 1491–1500."[194] Prospects for economic profit must have been prevalent for printers to engage in such a risky endeavour. Books were, after all, not new to Europe. Manuscript production had already established channels of trade throughout Europe and books were in demand in many places. England was no exception.

2.2. Early Printing Presses in England

2.2.1. Preconditions in England

The introduction of the first printing press in England in 1476 was not a risk-free venture. Books were no scarcity in England at that time. Not only was England blessed with a thriving manuscript culture, but the English book trade also drew its books, printed and handwritten, from the continent through established channels of trade. Manuscript books of hours, for example, were specifically produced for the English market in the Netherlands.[195] Further, vital printing material like paper and type was only scarcely produced in England, if at all.[196] This disadvantage might explain why

> [s]cript was absolutely central to the administrative and bureaucratic culture of the period, the basic instrument of record-keeping in the late Tudor and Stuart state and Church and the chief means of issuing executive instructions. [. . .] For at least two centuries, the procreative pen and its many different and individual offspring complemented and at times rivalled the press's more uniform products. Far from a

193 McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order*, 16.

194 Cristina Dondi, "The European Printing Revolution," *The Book: A Global History*, eds Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), 80–92, 82.

195 Margaret Lane Ford, "Importation of Printed Books into England and Scotland," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 179–201, 179.

196 Hellinga, "Printing," 71.

> 'curious' anachronism, scribal copying remained a competitive technology for transmitting texts even after 1700.[197]

At least for administrative functions, script was still acknowledged as an adequate technology with no immediate need to change to print.

Several factors determined the success of a printing press in that day and age. In order to understand the business of the early English printers, we "must divorce ourselves from a romantic understanding of the fifteenth century as offering a simplified literary culture free of a 'capitalistic system', or given to extremely close 'subject-object' relations and a 'general sharing of ideas.'"[198]

When William Caxton established the first printing press in England, such a venture shared many functions and challenges of any other business, even though printing with movable type in Europe was only twenty to thirty years old.[199] A newly invented business was bound to be confronted with problems: "Printing from movable types, like many other inventions, was the product of an uneasy consortium of inventor, capitalist, and manager [...]."[200]

In the middle of the fifteenth century, England was slowly recovering from the Hundred Years' War, which had resulted in the loss of most of England's territories in France. A domestic instability followed, the so-called 'Wars of the Roses.' During these uncertain years, Edward IV tried to restore order and establish political reforms. The poverty of the crown and the growing discontent of merchants and the aristocracy posed a huge impediment for his efforts.[201]

But despite the poor economic conditions, the demand for Latin books in England was constantly increasing. To ensure access to Latin works as well as the support for the new invention in England, King Richard III, successor of Edward IV, passed an act in 1484 which, in essence, gave total freedom to alien printers, binders and scriveners to exercise their trade in England.[202] Resulting from the

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197 Alexandra Walsham and Julia Crick, "Introduction: Script, Print and History," *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300 - 1700*, eds Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge, 2005), 1–28, 7–9.

198 William Kuskin, *William Caxton and the English Canon: Print Production and Ideological Transformation in the late Fifteenth Century* (Madison, 1997), 14.

199 Gutenberg had experimented with printing between 1440 and 1444 in Strasbourg and from 1448 on in Mainz. Hanebutt-Benz, "Gutenbergs Erfindungen," 159. See also Kapr, *Johannes Gutenberg*, 150.

200 Nicolas Barker, "Books and Readers, 1475–1640," *Book Collector*, 19 (1970), 439–454, 439.

201 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 14.

202 Bennet, *English Books and Readers*, 30.

Act of 1484 was a majority of foreign printers in the early days of printing: except for William Caxton in Westminster and possibly the printer in St Albans, all printers in England until 1513 came from abroad.[203] English book production picked up almost immediately. When the Wars of the Roses witnessed its decisive conflict with Henry VII's victory over Richard III in the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, the new king supported a gradual restoration of the financial and political powers of the English monarchy. However, Richard's Act of 1484 was still valid. It took another fifty years until Henry VIII's Act of 1534 made it

> [...] unlawful for any person or persons 'resiant,' i.e. resident, or inhabitant within the realm 'to buy or sell again any printed books, brought from any parts out of the King's obeysaunce ready bound in boards, leather or parchment, upon pain of loss and forfeit for every book 6s. 8d.'[204]

This Act, in other words, eliminated Richard III's Act of 1484 and protected the English book trade from foreign competition.

In his essay "Der frühe Buchdruck und die Stadt," Severin Corsten examines the conditions for the establishment of printing presses in cities in the earliest days of printing. Corsten's first observation is that most (German) cities with printing presses were diocesan towns: "Für die ältesten deutschen Druckerstädte kann man die Mitwirkung des Ortsbischofs oder doch der bischöflichen Behörde wahrscheinlich machen."[205] This points towards acceptance of the new production methods by clerical institutions. Once the printing press had been established, the production of (almost) identical texts at a low price was possible. Apart from that, manuscript production was too slow and hence not efficient enough to compete with a printing press in the long run. Therefore, a bishop must be considered as a major support for the introduction of a printing press in a town. However, once the desired texts had been printed, the printer was basically on his own:

> Zusammenfassend kann man sagen, daß die kirchlichen Instanzen allen Anlaß hatten, die Schwarze Kunst als nutzbringend und hilfreich einzuschätzen. Sie waren darum bereit [...], den in der Regel ortsfremden Druckern bei der Einrichtung einer Offizin finanziell unter die Arme zu greifen und ihnen zu helfen, die besonders schwierige

203 Bennet, *English Books and Readers*, 30.

204 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 37.

205 Severin Corsten, "Der frühe Buchdruck und die Stadt," *Studien zum städtischen Bildungswesen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit: Bericht über Kolloquien der Kommission zur Erforschung der Kultur des Spätmittelalters 1978 bis 1981,* eds Bernd Moeller, Hans Patze and Karl Stackmann (Göttingen, 1983), 9–32, 13.

> und riskante Anfangszeit zu überstehen. Allerdings muss man konstatieren, daß die Anteilnahme bald wieder erlahmte, wenn die benötigten Texte vorlagen. Nun mußte sich der Typograph nach anderen Aufträgen umsehen.[206]

Corsten also reflects upon universities as a precondition for a printing press in cities. He concludes that no sooner than the late sixteenth century did universities in Germany become an incentive for printers to set up a press. Even less promising, the works printed for universities were hardly interesting from a commercial perspective: "Mit dem, was sie zu drucken hatten, war auch kaum Staat zu machen. Disputationen, Dissertationen, Carmina zu festlichen Anlässen hatten ebenso wenig einen Markt wie Promotionsordnungen und ähnliche amtliche Verlautbarungen."[207] According to these arguments, the lack of a university and a bishop in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in a city should not be regarded as a decisive disadvantage for a printing business. Indeed, book production boomed in some late sixteenth-century cities without a university, while other cities with universities failed to keep presses running. John Feather, however, rightly distinguishes between the German and English situation of the influence of such local institutions:

> Until the middle of the sixteenth century it seemed that the trade in England might develop as it had on the continent, where printers established themselves in many cities under the patronage of a local institution such as a monastery or university. In Germany and Italy, lacking central political structures, this was a widespread phenomenon and so, briefly, it became in England. [. . .] but in England, the enterprise proved hopeless.[208]

Evidently, the different political and economic structures of the country influenced the importance of local institutions for provincial printers. Such institutions in England, namely the universities in Oxford and Cambridge as well as the Benedictine Abbey in St Albans, were the impetus for early provincial printing presses that ultimately succumbed to the economic problems described by Corsten, as will be shown in chapter 2.2.4.

Overall, Corsten sees the city itself as the most important factor for assessing the possible viability of printing businesses. After all, establishing a print shop and acquiring the raw material for book production required a lot of capital and the necessary infrastructure. In the long run, what made business for a

206 Corsten, "Der frühe Buchdruck und die Stadt," 16.
207 Corsten, "Der frühe Buchdruck und die Stadt," 19.
208 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 18.

mass-produced commodity viable were good trade connections and access to economic capital.

In England, London has always been the centre of the book trade. Within the city limits it was especially the area around St Paul's Cathedral that drew attention to book-oriented artists like illustrators, bookbinders or rubricators.[209] "As attested by a variety of property records, including rental lists for shops and tenements [...], the area surrounding old St Paul's Cathedral had already, by the 1390s, emerged as a book-craft neighbourhood [...]."[210] England had a commercial book trade by the fourteenth century and the area around St Paul's Cathedral was the most suitable location for the book trade in the fifteenth century, since it offered a proximity to important organizations like educational institutions and London's lawyers.

Apart from this location, there were further possibilities to purchase books: "Every town in England had one or more large fairs in the course of the year. [...] There is ample evidence that books were sold at these fairs."[211] Apart from retail sale in their own shops and on the markets, there was also the possibility for printers to wholesale their books to retailers in the City of London and provincial towns. However, such distribution methods became uninteresting for English printers because the revenue from selling their books in their shops was higher.[212] Additionally, the early importers of books were pioneers of a distribution system that used the existing channels of trade in England.

The second-hand book trade was also an important part of book culture in late medieval and early modern times. Clayton Paul Christianson points out that it would be a fallacy to apply the modern distinction between old and new books to the fifteenth century:

> Books already a century or more old were still considered authoritative and directly useful, and one can argue that the notion of an out-of-date book would have been considered novel, if not extravagant. A worn book in need of repair or refurbishment remained a prized possession.[213]

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209 Colin Clair, *A History of Printing in Britain* (London, 1965), 105.

210 Clayton Paul Christianson, "The Rise of London's Book-Trade," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 128–147, 129.

211 Graham Pollard, "The English Market for Printed Books," *Publishing History*, 4 (1978), 7–48, 11–12.

212 Pollard, "English Market for Printed Books," 12.

213 Christianson, "The Rise of London's Book-Trade," 132–133.

Christianson admits that the precise portion of used books for the overall book trade remains unclear, but he stresses that it could not have been negligible.

Readers

Apart from trade connections and money, trade cities also offered immediate access to possible customers: "The market for books is essentially determined by two factors: the number of those able to read and who wish to do so, and their ability to obtain reading matter."[214] Unfortunately, statistics of literacy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are not readily obtainable:

> That books large and small were produced is beyond dispute. That there was a reading public for them, varying in size from one person to many [...] is therefore equally certain. Who composed that public, what gender, occupation, profession, social class and so on, and what proportion of their lives, private and public, individual and institutional, was occupied by writing and reading is largely imponderable.[215]

Even though there are contemporary comments available about the reading ability of the English society, those accounts are rarely helpful, especially due to widespread estimates of those days. Whereas Thomas More, for example, believed that about half of the English population was able to read, a contemporary of his estimated that only ten per cent of the population was literate.[216] Measuring literacy is problematic, especially in historical times, not least because of varying definitions that do not always distinguish between the ability to read and the ability to write, nor do they distinguish these competences in Latin, Greek or the vernacular language. Some studies on historical literacy rates in medieval times have next to no sociological data, and, rather crudely, merely extrapolate.[217] This is problematic because medieval ideas about functional literacy deviated from a modern understanding. M. T. Clanchy also complains about early modern humanists and their elitist approach of disregarding societies before the printing press as illiterate.[218] Generally, it can

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214 Feather, *History of British Publishing,* 10.

215 Joseph Burney Trapp, "Literacy, Books and Readers," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 31–43, 31–32.

216 Richard Daniel Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800–1900*, 2nd ed. (Columbus, OH, 1998), 15–16.

217 M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1993), 12.

218 He calls humanists "successful propagandists." Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 15.

be assumed that in medieval England far more people could read than write.[219] Two further developments seem certain: literacy rates were rising slowly since the late Middle Ages, and that the ability to read was no longer solely a clerical activity.[220] Richard Altick stresses the relevance of bureaucracy and business for this continuing development in early modern times: "It is at least certain that the growing commercial life of the nation required men of the merchant class to read and write English in order to transact business, keep records, and interpret legal documents."[221] The opportunities for education increased in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and schooling was no longer limited to those destined for the religious life. However, educational facilities were less available in the country than in the towns, which most probably resulted in more illiteracy in those places.[222]

Summarized, literacy in England was rising in the time of the first printing presses. Arguably, Caxton's press gave the demand for English books a decisive push since it issued books in the vernacular on an unprecedented scale. The introduction of printing in England may not have created a new audience, but it certainly made existing reading audiences want to read more.[223]

Publishing Categories

The biggest part of printed texts produced in the fifteenth century consisted of religious texts, especially books of hours, "which assumed an extraordinary

219 Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 13.

220 "Mit der zeitlichen Ausrichtung auf die Frühdruckzeit befinden wir uns in der Phase der Entwicklung einer ausgeprägteren Laienlesefähigkeit, die die im Frühmittelalter definierte Kluft der Stände nach dem Kriterium von Weihe und Profeß zusammen mit der durch die Kenntnis des Lateinischen bestimmten Bildungskluft zwischen Klerus und Laien im Sinne von eindeutigen Gleichungen wie *litteratus=clericus* und *illiteratus=laicus* weitgehend überwunden hat." Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck: William Caxton und die Tradierung der mittelenglischen Courtesy Books," *Laienlektüre und Buchmarkt im späten Mittelalter*, eds Thomas Kock and Rita Schlusemann (Frankfurt, 1997) (Gesellschaft, Kultur und Schrift. Mediävistische Beiträge, 5), 61–107, 61.

221 Altick, *English Common Reader*, 15.

222 Altick, *English Common Reader*, 16–17.

223 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 100.

centrality in popular culture."[224] To stress the popularity of the genre, Erler points out that at least 760 editions of Latin books of hours were published between 1485 and 1530: "Were we to guess conservatively that each edition comprised 300 copies, about a quarter of a million printed *horae* would have been published by this half-century."[225] Before the introduction of the printing press in England in 1476, all such books had to be imported. Most copies came from France or the Low Countries.[226] Even after the first presses had been established in Westminster and London, there was still a huge number of imported books, especially Latin texts.[227] Service books for the churches in particular were a big market in the early days of printing. The most important one was the Missal, which offered the instructions and liturgical texts for Mass throughout the year. Since hardly any English printer was capable of printing such books in an adequate quality, the clerical institutions preferred to buy those books from the continent.[228] In other words, the content value needed to be reflected by the quality of the material aspects of the book. Inadequate execution of the product would diminish the overall value of the book. Lucien Febvre even points out the unpredictability of the book market, in which the church book seems to be the "only item which would be sure of sale at a time of crisis."[229]

Apart from religious texts, the humanist movement, which flourished during the fifteenth century, also created demand for new texts. The advantages print technology offered were obvious. Standardizations of the text and of references were a huge benefit for scholarship. It primarily resulted in a growing demand for schoolbooks, especially grammars. However, scholarly publishing, which was written in Latin, developed much later in England since demand in the early years was mainly satisfied due to the imported books from the continent.

There was also a significant demand by English readers for French literature, either in the French original or translated into the English language. The reading group of French literature was not limited to the court and upper nobility, but also included the professional and merchant class.[230]

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224 Mary Carpenter Erler, "Devotional Literature," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 495–525, 495.

225 Erler, "Devotional Literature," 496.

226 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 54.

227 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 1.

228 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 54–55.

229 Febvre and Martin, *Coming of the Book*, 9, 115.

230 Hellinga and Trapp, "Introduction," 7–8.

> Another profitable field was the printing of English law books,
>
> for the uniqueness of the English common law meant that the Roman law books printed in great quantities on the Continent were of little use in England. English law depended largely on precedent and statute; it was a field in which the changeover from manuscript to print was to be both rapid and comprehensive.[231]

Finally, there was also a significant demand for English literature with Geoffrey Chaucer and John Lydgate being the most prolific writers. Both poets enjoyed a huge demand. The first 50 years of printing in England saw five editions of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* alone (two by William Caxton and Richard Pynson each and one by Wynkyn de Worde). This indicates the growing importance of publishing texts in the English vernacular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Patronage

For artists, authors and scribes alike, the organization of patronage was still very important after the invention of the printing press.[232] They were dependent on the financial assistance of a patron since art was mainly a bespoke trade.[233] When the printing press was introduced to England, early printers, most prominently William Caxton, initially adopted the idea of patronage. However, even though this form of patronage derived from artistic patronage, it was different. It developed from a literary patronage to a patronage of book production. Financial assistance was no longer a priority.[234] In some cases, printers hoped that mentioning an important person in paratextual[235] elements might be support enough since it could potentially add symbolic value through the prestige of the person

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231 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 16.

232 Samuel Moore, "General Aspects of Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages," *The Library*, 3rd ser., 4 (1913), 369–392, 374.

233 Joachim Bumke, "Einleitung," *Literarisches Mäzenatentum. Ausgewählte Forschungen zur Rolle des Gönners und Auftraggebers in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, ed. Joachim Bumke (Darmstadt, 1982) (Wege der Forschung, 598), 1–32, 1.

234 In his prologues, Caxton mentions financial assistance by patrons only twice. Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 97.

235 A seminal study of paratexts is still Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Threshold of Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1997), originally published as *Seuils* (Paris, 1987). A helpful study for paratextual elements in incunables, albeit mainly German prints, offers Bettina Wagner, "An der Wiege des Paratexts: Formen der Kommunikation zwischen Druckern, Herausgebern und Lesern im 15. Jahrhundert," *Die Pluralisierung des Paratextes in der Frühen Neuzeit: Theorie, Formen, Funktionen*, eds Frieder von Ammon and Herfried Vögel (Berlin, 2008), 133–155.

and consequently enhance the desirability of the book. In addition, a patron might also encourage a printer to print certain works or to keep up the work, as was the case with William Caxton and Margaret of York, who allegedly helped Caxton continue his translation of the *History of Troy* from French into English.[236] However, in the course of the first decades of printing in England, patronage for printers became slowly obsolete. Partially responsible for this development is the change from the bespoke manuscript trade to the speculative trade with printed books. Caxton led his business in these transitional years. Later printers had to satisfy a different, more complex market. Printing 10 or 50 copies of a text would have been a nonsensical decision since initial costs for setting up the press were too high. A patron alone would neither have bought a complete print run, nor have offered enough potential customers. Mentioning patrons in paratexts was not deemed a good enough added value for the printed book. As will be seen, the system of patronage was becoming more and more outdated.[237]

2.2.2. William Caxton

The first printing press in England followed a decidedly different publishing policy compared to the early successful presses on the continent. Whereas the continental presses focussed mainly on humanistic or religious texts, which were almost exclusively printed in Latin, Europe's *lingua franca* in the fifteenth century, William Caxton thought of a market niche that made him the most popular figure in the history of early English publishing: vernacular texts for the English middle class and aristocracy.[238] Before Caxton, the continental presses had been supplying the English book market with Latin texts. Caxton was the first to think of printed books in the English language. Indeed, many scholars stress Caxton's limited printing quality, especially compared to continental printers, but they also address the astute approach towards his publishing policy: his choice of

236 STC 15375.

237 Henry Borrowes Lathrop, "The First English Printers and Their Patrons," *The Library*, 4th ser., 3 (1922), 69–96, 89–96.

238 In England, Caxton is oftentimes erroneously seen not only as the man who brought the art of printing to England, but also as the inventor of printing itself. Norman F. Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London, 1991), 5, originally published in *From Script to Book: A Symposium,* eds H. Bekker-Nielsen, M. Borch and B. A. Sorensen (Odense, 1987), 107–126. Nicolas Barker also quotes the Sunday Times, which mentions that "half the population [of England] or more think that Caxton 'invented the printing press.'" Barker, "Books and Readers," 260.

texts ensured the survival of his printing business.[239] Since publishing policies are oftentimes affected by the publisher's biography, it is necessary to briefly deal with Caxton's background.[240]

It is assumed that Caxton was born between 1420 and 1424 in the Weald of Kent.[241] Even though next to nothing is known about his parents, it is believed that they had been merchants or officials since Caxton soon became an apprentice to Robert Large, an important member of the Mercer's Company and, in his later life, Lord Mayor.[242] This apprenticeship shaped Caxton's whole career as he became associated with influential and wealthy friends. Later, he became involved in some of the political and diplomatic events of the time.[243]

In the late 1440s, Caxton went to Bruges for the first time. Flanders was an attractive destination for English merchants due to its international markets, and since the Mercer's Company dealt with cloth and silks, Bruges was a very attractive destination. It was also a centre for expensive manuscripts.[244] Here, Caxton started translating *Recueil des histoires de Troies* (later titled *History of Troy*) in 1469. The text had been compiled just five years earlier by Raoul Lefèvre for the then duke of Burgundy, Phillip the Good.[245] By the time Caxton started his translation, his experiences so far had made him an established businessman:

> He was a merchant who had moved on the periphery of aristocratic society in the years before becoming a publisher. He was familiar with the tastes of the upper echelons of late fifteenth-century society since he had a hand in supplying them with the manuscripts they wanted. He was familiar therefore with the book-buying tastes of a secular audience,

239 Blake states that it is "more as a publisher and to a lesser extent as a bookseller that he deserves to be remembered." *William Caxton and English Literary Culture*, x.

240 For impacts of publishers' biographies on their policies in the nineteenth century, see Sandra Simon, *Verleger als Leser und als Vermittler von Lesekultur: Britische Verlegerkarrieren zwischen 1800 und 1926 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung lesebiographischer Ansätze* (Berlin, 2019).

241 John Goldfinch, Lotte Hellinga and Margaret Nickson, "Introduction," *Catalogue of Books Printed in the XVth Century now in the British Library* (MS 't Goy-Houten, 2007), 1–84, 1–7.

242 Norman F. Blake, "William Caxton: The Man and His Work," *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London, 1991), 19–36, 24, originally published in *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, 11 (1976–1977), 64–80.

243 Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 10.

244 Although there is no proof for it, Blake believes that there is no reason to doubt that Caxton was involved in the import of such manuscripts to London. Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 2.

245 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 7.

> though with his religious inclinations, it would not be surprising if he were not also acquainted with current religious ideals and writings.[246]

The decision to translate the *History of Troy* shows Caxton's sense of business. Blake argues that Caxton had no other reason to translate this work than publishing it, presumably through printing.[247] If this is the case, Caxton must have had established a kind of publishing policy even though he was not in the possession of a printing press at that time.[248] *History of Troy* celebrates the tradition that the dukes of Burgundy were descendants of mythological heroes of ancient Greece. Since the English aristocracy saw itself in that same tradition, it was a fitting text for enticing aristocratic patronage in Burgundy as well as in England. It was aristocratic reading matter and, in the eyes of Caxton, suitable for an important group of his clients. Since he started the translation less than a year after the wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York, Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson assume that Caxton might have wanted to "flatter her and her entourage."[249]

In 1471, Caxton went to Cologne, where he presumably met and worked with Johannes Veldener, a successful printer.[250] Assuming that Caxton translated the *History of Troy* with the plan to print it, it is quite probable that he already made contact with Veldener prior to his visit to Cologne. There, Caxton was involved in the production of three Latin works, among them Bartholomaeus Anglicus's *De proprietatibus rerum,* a highly esteemed encyclopaedic work of the thirteenth century that was, due to its length, very difficult to produce, even for experienced printers.[251] The type used reflected the design known (and expected) in Cologne but not in England. Hellinga argues that the books Caxton helped Veldener print were not targeted at an English audience: "It is as if Caxton wished the best of English writing to this part of the world, in the language in which it was accessible

246 Norman F. Blake, *Caxton: England's First Publisher* (London, 1975), 171.

247 Norman F. Blake, "A New Approach to William Caxton," *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London, 1991), 51–56, 54–55, originally published in *The Book Collector*, 26 (1977), 380–385.

248 Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 3.

249 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 7.

250 On Caxton's stay at Cologne, see especially J. G. Birch, "William Caxton's Stay at Cologne," *The Library*. 4th ser., 4 (1924), 48–52, and Severin Corsten, "Caxton in Cologne," *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, 11 (1975/1976), 1–18.

251 Blake notes that *De proprietatibus rerum* is the largest work printed by Veldener and the biggest book produced in Cologne by that date. Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 3.

there."[252] Even during his earliest encounters with printing, Caxton seemed to be aware of the importance the choice of typography might have, since it potentially influences symbolic value.

Early 1473, he returned to Bruges and set up his own printing press to print his *History of Troy*. For this work, Caxton used a type now known as his 'Type 1,' a specially created type, probably modelled on David Aubert's handwriting, an esteemed and successful French calligrapher who was also responsible for exquisite manuscripts commissioned by Margaret of York. Hellinga assumes that Caxton demanded this type fount to make the text more fitting for Margaret of York and her entourage, because it reproduced English scribal conventions like terminal flourishes or looped ascenders.[253] Again, Caxton seemed to be cognizant of the potential symbolic value of typography, albeit for a limited group.[254] 'Type 1' is a rather complex and elaborate type fount and must have been very tricky to produce. After *History of Troy*, Caxton printed a few more books in or close to Bruges: his translation of the *Game of Chess*, the original French text of the *Recueil des histoires des Troies* and another French text, *Méditations*, were all published in 1474 and printed with 'Type 1.'[255] In 1475, Caxton used a new type, now known as 'Type 2,' "a remarkably elegant typeface of generous size, clearly inspired by the scribal traditions of the ample, luxury manuscripts produced for the court of Burgundy."[256] With this type, Caxton printed his first Latin text, the *Sarum Hours*, and the French *Cordiale*. It can be assumed that Caxton's French editions were printed for local use rather than for a bigger market.[257] In late 1475 or early 1476, he left Bruges (and Type 1) for good and established his printing press in Westminster.[258]

For a printer, this location was not the most obvious choice. As previously mentioned: the main location for the English book trade prior to the printing

252 Hellinga, "Printing," 67.
253 Hellinga, "Printing," 73–74.
254 For a detailed analysis of the semiotic quality of typography, see Susanne Wehde, *Typographische Kultur: Eine zeichentheoretische und kulturgeschichtliche Studie zur Typographie und ihrer Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 2000).
255 Lotte Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London, 2010), 51.
256 Hellinga, "Printing," 74.
257 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 8.
258 It is by now established that Caxton set up his printing press at Westminster already in late 1475 or early 1476. Lotte Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England* (London, 1982), 80–83.

presses was the area around St Paul's Cathedral.[259] But Caxton's decision to set up a press in Westminster reveals more about his idea as a printer:

> Caxton's decision to locate in Westminster reflected a perception on his part that the future of printing would rest on jobbing and on jobbing-like patronized book production. The generally bespoke trade in manuscript books and other verbal instruments flourishing in England already at the time had been built in this manner, on articulate customer demand in advance production.[260]

This perception is also reflected in his very first printed work in England, an indulgence.[261] This shows that Caxton was keen on keeping his press busy. Printing indulgences was a risk-free business and "from the seller's perspective, the benefit of having the indulgences printed was a stunning efficiency, whereby the commissary might raise more money at significant lower cost."[262] However, indulgences are merely a small part of Caxton's publishing policy. They were simply a commodity to keep his press occupied.[263] Blake even argues that most of the Latin books Caxton printed were mostly bespoke assignments and hence not part of his publishing policy.[264] Caxton's main idea was to create a new market: "His mercantile experience told him that the vernacular market could be exploited."[265] Caxton also narrowed his choice of texts considerably and judged the demand of his audience. In the very early days, Caxton, with a few exceptions, confined himself to print only small, less risky works like John Lydgate's poem on table manners for children called *Stans Puer ad Mensam*.[266]

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259 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 81.

260 David Richard Carlson, "A Theory of the Early English Printing Firm: Jobbing, Book Publishing, and the Problem of Productive Capacity in Caxton's Work," *Caxton's Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing*, ed. William Kuskin (Notre Dame, IN, 2006), 35–68, 59.

261 On this indulgence, see Alfred William Pollard, "The New Caxton Indulgence," *The Library*, 4th ser., 9 (1928), 86–89 and K. Povey, "The Caxton Indulgence of 1476," *The Library*, 4th ser., 19 (1939), 462–464. Pollard's essay offers a photography of the indulgence. Blake estimates that Caxton printed at least seven indulgences in Westminster. Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 6.

262 Carlson, "A Theory of the Early English Printing Firm," 40.

263 "He did not choose to publish them, he simply printed them." As a matter of fact, nearly all Latin texts Caxton produced fall into this category. Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 7.

264 Norman F. Blake, "The Spread of Printing in English During the Fifteenth Century," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 62 (1987), 26–36, 33.

265 Barker, "Books and Readers," 260.

266 STC 17030.

Such texts were comparably easy and cheap to produce and had a broad audience as they were also used for early reading lessons.[267]

Caxton predominantly provided vernacular material for the nobility and for the middle classes in English, primarily courtly poetry and historical prose.[268] But since this kind of material was limited, Caxton was forced to either find or create new material. It is noteworthy that he did not choose to patronise new writers to write for him but to translate already existing texts into English himself and pass them on to his audience.[269] According to Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp, "Caxton aimed to improve the quality of English life by translating into his mother tongue works embodying the lively and more widespread literary ambience he had come to know in Flanders."[270] Whether or not this assessment is accurate, his interest in financial profit can hardly be denied.[271] To achieve this, he lay utmost importance on the content he offered.

From his first printed book onwards, Caxton used his prologues and epilogues as a marketing device: "Colophons and prefaces were never so chatty and informative again after Caxton's days."[272] Probably the most famous example is his second edition of Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, which he printed only six years after his first edition.[273] Rather than being a simple reprint of the first edition, Caxton offered several changes. The most obvious one is the use of woodcut illustrations depicting knights and pilgrims to signify the start of a new tale. The prologue Caxton wrote for the second edition states that this edition is superior to the previous one. Caxton tells a story in which a gentleman talked to him about the flaws of the first edition. The father of this gentleman owned a far better copy with a much more accurate text and promised that if Caxton planned a second edition, he would give him the manuscript.[274] Even though

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267 "Hinzu kommt sicherlich noch, daß solch kurze, preiswertere Texte, die nicht viel Kapital banden, im Erstleseunterricht in der Muttersprache ihren Platz fanden und auch auf einen entsprechenden Absatz hoffen ließen." Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 80.

268 Of course, Caxton's choice of texts was also influenced by practical reasons like availability of manuscripts via trade or acquaintances. Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 83.

269 This decision is where he differs a lot from his successor Wynkyn de Worde, which will be shown in chapter 2.2.3. Blake, "Spread of Printing," 33.

270 Hellinga and Trapp, "Introduction," 3.

271 Hellinga and Trapp, "Introduction," 4.

272 Barker, "Books and Readers," 263.

273 STC 5083.

274 Blake, "William Caxton: The Man and His Work," 28.

some scholars argued that this was merely advertising,[275] Barbara Bordalejo concluded in 2005 after close textual analysis that the manuscript source for Caxton's second edition was in fact the best possible extant source for the *Canterbury Tales*.[276] In that case, Caxton tried to improve content value to his second edition by omitting textual inaccuracies. Whether or not Caxton's customers appreciated the improved version of the text, Caxton's story in the prologue in which he quite obviously addresses his own values as a printer-publisher is so elaborate that one could hardly resist to buying the second edition. The prologue probably added as much desirability of the second edition as the actual (possible) enhancement itself.

Apart from justifying his texts and translations, Caxton also used his prologues and epilogues to mention influential patrons. Even though patronage became less important for printers, it was still a factor for printers in the early days of printing. However, whereas many printers were artisans who sought financial aid in a patron, Caxton was more a merchant than an artisan or printer. He was his own financier and was therefore not necessarily dependent on monetary support.[277] In contrast to manuscript times, Caxton's paratextual elements make the changes in patronage visible, since he mentions concrete economic considerations only twice. After the Wars of the Roses, finding financial aid from aristocratic patrons was difficult since most of the nobility were dead.[278] Rather, Caxton sought the prestige of the connections to the court to add symbolic value to his books. Seemingly, this was more significant for him. Margaret of Burgundy's name in the prologue to the *History of Troy* already hints at this idea. Evidently, patronage itself was no warranty for success. However, mentioning aristocratic names added prestige and trustworthiness and hence value to the books. Caxton sometimes even mentions people in his texts who most probably were not involved in the creation of the edition at all. The *Book of the Ordre of Chivalry*[279] offers a very interesting example. Within the epilogue, Caxton

275 Blake even argued that the second edition is inferior. Blake, "William Caxton: The Man and His Work," 26.

276 Barbara Bordalejo, "The Text of Caxton's Second Edition of the Canterbury Tales," *International Journal of English Studies*, 5.2 (2005), 133–148. Bordalejo bases her study on Dunn's dissertation and used latest computerized collation technology. Thomas Franklin Dunn, *The Manuscript Source of Caxton's Second Edition of the Canterbury Tales.* Diss. University of California 1939.

277 Barker, "Books and Readers," 260.

278 Barker, "Books and Readers," 262.

279 STC 3356.7.

dedicates this book to King Richard III, but at the same time, the text almost reads like an urgent plea to the king to give this book to all his knights for education. The epilogue is ambiguous. On the one hand, Caxton might just have had in mind to mention the King of England. He may have even hoped that this kind of command might boost the sale of this book. On the other hand, from a more non-economic point of view, Caxton might have seen himself as an author of a mirror for princes to fully support the King and his army by giving him good advice.[280] Such strategies to enhance the desirability of his works were clever, albeit not risk-free as it is unlikely that he officially asked for permission to use Richard III's name.

Another example is *Game of Chess*, which Caxton printed in two editions.[281] The first edition was dedicated to Clarence, the brother of Margaret of Burgundy and King Edward IV. After the printing of the edition in 1474, Clarence was executed for treason in 1478.[282] His name in the prologue therefore suddenly became counterproductive to Caxton's initial purpose. Consequently, the name vanishes in the second edition in 1483. The whole character of propaganda within the epilogue vanishes and is substituted by genuine information about the text.[283] Mentioning persons of the nobility could, especially in uncertain political times, quickly decrease the symbolic value.

Caxton's most important patron in his early printing years in Westminster was Anthony Woodville, second Earl Rivers.[284] Both worked closely together. Caxton did not only print Rivers' translations, most notably the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* (as discussed in chapter 1), but also at least suggested corrections of the texts. Rivers also encouraged Caxton to print various books and probably provided the manuscripts. Recent research suggests that it was Rivers who gave

280 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 90. On mirrors for princes in late-medieval England, see Ulrike Graßnick, *Ratgeber des Königs: Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherideal im spätmittelalterlichen England* (Cologne, 2004).

281 STC 4920 and 4921 respectively.

282 "It appears, however, that he was neither hanged nor beheaded, as was normal, but was drowned in a butt of malmsey wine (sweet wine imported from Greece)." Michael Hicks, "George, Duke of Clarence (1449–1478)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10542> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

283 Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 12.

284 Michael Hicks, "Woodville, Anthony, second Earl Rivers (*c.*1440–1483)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2011) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29937> (accessed: 10.12.2019).

Caxton Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*, on which his 1485 edition is based.[285] The connection with Earl Rivers must have been highly valuable for Caxton and his books, as Rivers had flawless court credentials. Rivers' name in Caxton's books probably added symbolic value to them for his aristocratic readership. However, Rivers' fall from grace and eventual execution in 1483, due to the planned usurpation by the Duke of Gloucester, must have been a severe blow for Caxton, as he lost one of his most important connections to the Court.

It was because of this political turmoil and the changes in royal influence of the previous years, as well as the growing import of books from the continent, that made printing in England, from an economic perspective, less attractive. Caxton's business was shaped by this as his press remained idle during the mid-1480s.[286] Another change started with Henry VII who apparently noticed the usefulness of the printing press for his benefits. Since at that time, Caxton was the only printer in England, he was responsible for several official royal publications.

The final years of the Caxton press were shaped by reprints of successful publications, such as *The Mirrour of the World*, *Dicts of the Philosophers* and John Mirk's *Festial*, the latter even an improved edition.[287] After printing a few texts that, rather fittingly, dealt with the topic of death (for example *Ars Moriendi*), Caxton started translating the hagiography *Vitae Patrum* from French into English. This was, in all likelihood, Caxton's last job in the publishing business: according to the colophon of de Worde's *Vitae Patrum* from 1495, Caxton died on the day he finished the translation.

William Caxton was a careful businessman. He had chosen to print mainly English texts, that is works that continental printers were not interested in producing. This influenced the whole history of early printing in England.[288] Apart from being a wealthy merchant, it certainly had helped Caxton that by 1476 no Englishman or any foreigner had introduced printing to England.[289] More importantly, his success was mainly due to his publishing policy: "[His publications] show that the chief (though not the sole) emphasis of his enterprise

285 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 68.

286 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 99. Hellinga assumes that Caxton focussed on importing books.

287 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 105–106.

288 Flood, "Printed Books as a Commercial Commodity in the Fifteenth Century," 143.

289 Paul Needham, *The Printer & the Pardoner: An Unrecorded Indulgence Printed by William Caxton for the Hospital of St. Mary Rounceval, Charing Cross* (Washington, 1986), 15.

was placed on providing vernacular literary texts for a lay readership, rather than learned reference texts in Latin or Law French for the professional use of clerks and legists."[290]

Later, continental printers seemed to be aware of Caxton's successful publishing policy and the potential of the English book market. After Caxton's death, Antwerp printer Gerard Leeu, instantly reprinted Caxton's editions of *History of Jason*, *Paris and Vienna* and the *Chronicles of England* to sell them in England.[291]

Norman Blake emphasizes that Caxton made a flourishing business out of his venture unlike most of his competitors.[292] Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser agrees and states: "Caxton hat die technischen Möglichkeiten des Buchdrucks genutzt und eine erfolgreiche Druckerei in Westminster etabliert."[293] She also believes that Caxton's influence in general is more enduring than that of his successors: "Caxton hat mit seinen Drucken die englische Frühdruckzeit nachhaltiger geprägt als de Worde oder St Albans oder Oxford."[294]

Caxton was a salesman as well as a man interested in literature. Consequently, he was aware of the literary taste of his contemporaries. This distinction between being a printer and a printer-publisher and merchant is vital. In his early life, he dealt in many goods, while he later restricted his goods to printed books and manuscripts.[295] He still worked as a merchant when his press was already running.[296] If the new business did not prove profitable, he could always go back to being a merchant.[297] While Edwards and Meale describe Caxton's choice of books as "his most significant marketing decision,"[298] Clair even points out the average printing quality of Caxton's works. This stresses the fact that Caxton's "greatness lies in what he printed and not how he printed."[299] Evidently, his

290 Needham, *The Printer & the Pardoner*, 16.
291 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 3.
292 Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture*, ix.
293 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 105.
294 Müller-Oberhäuser, "Buchmarkt und Laienlektüre im englischen Frühdruck," 62.
295 Blake, "William Caxton: A Review," 18.
296 Kerling discovered that Caxton's name appeared in the Port of London accounts after he settled in Westminster. Nelly J. M. Kerling, "Caxton and the Trade in Printed Books," *The Book Collector*, 4 (London, 1955), 190–199, 197.
297 Norman F. Blake, "William Caxton: His Choice of Texts," *Anglia*, 83 (1965), 289–307, 302.
298 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 95.
299 Clair, *A History of Printing in Britain*, 24.

business strategy, to "capitalise on the novelty of the material as well as on its sophistication"[300] paid off.

Especially his background was important. After having spent thirty years in Burgundy, his taste of literature was influenced by its culture, which can be seen in his choice of texts he translated and printed. The primary reason for Caxton's success was his astute sense of content value for his clients of the aristocracy and upper middle class. However, he also carefully used a form of patronage, less to seek financial assistance, but to advertise his texts with symbolic value. Since the traditional form of patronage did not work in a business of speculation with hundreds of copies to sell, Caxton sought other possibilities to make use of influential people. By mentioning powerful people in paratextual elements, Caxton sought to increase the symbolic value of his books. Even though his primary customers belonged to the aristocracy, he did not disdain a more popular market.[301] Finally, Caxton showed his extraordinary sense of business with his choice of location for his printing shop at Westminster. There "he was in touch with the court and would be able to cater to what might be termed the luxury trade."[302]

2.2.3. Wynkyn de Worde and Richard Pynson

When Caxton died in 1491 or early 1492, it was Wynkyn de Worde who eventually took over the printing shop. De Worde did not pick up printing activities directly after Caxton's death. Early bibliographers argued that this can be ascribed to de Worde's lack of vigour and enterprise. Recent studies have shown that most probably legal matters were the reason:

> There is not a single document known that records the transaction that must have taken place between the executors and Wynkyn de Worde. Nixon notes that owing to the claims of Crop, probate had taken several years. Nevertheless, De Worde continued printing after an interval of no more than a year, possibly less. It therefore seems probable that in the first years he cannot have been the outright owner of the business, but had to acquire possession over a period of years. In the absence of any documents, this has to remain entirely a matter for speculation.[303]

300 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 34.

301 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 20.

302 Blake, "His Choice of Texts," 307. Blake refers to printing rather low print runs of a selection of books which caters for a specialized market, rather than making full use of the economic possibilities of the printing press by addressing a larger market.

303 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 12.

Once the legal situation of Caxton's estate was settled, de Worde started working at an enormous speed as he printed more than a hundred editions by the end of the century.[304] His activity gained momentum after 1495, and the differences between Caxton and himself are reflected in their publishing policies. This creates an intriguing situation for the analysis of the values of books in the early days of the printing press:

> Since de Worde inherited the printing presses and the business, it might be supposed that the policy of the house would be maintained. But whereas printing is a technical matter in which there is little scope for individual preferences, publishing has always been, and still is, a very personal profession in which the output of a particular house reflects the taste, education, and outlook of the proprietor.[305]

De Worde did not completely ignore Caxton's published works. Apart from printing Caxton's last translation, the above-mentioned *Vitae Patrum*, de Worde also reprinted several popular editions of Caxton, which still promised a good sale. However, he seemed to have a specific preference: for example, de Worde reprinted only one of Caxton's chivalry works, namely *King Arthur*.[306] Apart from that he reprinted mostly religious or moral writings, like *Festial*, *Quattour Sermones* or the *Golden Legend*.[307]

Overall, the output of the Westminster press did change decisively, both in quantity and publishing categories. What shaped de Worde's output the most was his background that was decidedly different from Caxton's. De Worde was probably born in Woerden, close to Leiden and Gouda.[308] Since de Worde did not master the French language, he was not able to produce translations of his own as Caxton did. And even if he had been able to translate French texts into English, his style might not have been accepted in England since he was a foreigner. In contrast to Caxton, he was not a member of a powerful guild, nor had he been in contact with the English aristocracy. Neither did he have mercantile experience even though he most probably gained at least some experience through his work with Caxton. Due to this different background, some avenues, which Caxton pursued, were closed for de Worde. And these differences are represented in his

304 Plomer emphasizes that de Worde printed more than 100 books before the turn of the century. Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries,* 45–47.

305 Blake, *England's First Publisher,* 171.

306 STC 803.

307 STC 17973.5, STC 17972, STC 24880.

308 Since Woerden was located in the Burgundian Netherlands, Hellinga assumes that de Worde and Caxton might have met in Caxton's days on the continent. However, this remains speculation. Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 12.

publishing policy. It is unlikely that this difference was purely based on the availability of material. Caxton, for example, did not completely ignore the market for religious books, but it was not his prime market. De Worde on the other hand initially seemed to have almost a preference for religious works. Whether this is because of his personal beliefs or not remains speculation. Since the demand for religious texts was high, it could have simply been a business decision rather than a sign of devotion.

Norman Blake examined de Worde's publishing policy concerning reprints to weaken the accusations of scholars like Plomer that he was a printer who preferred reprinting mainly cheap, small books instead of more expensive, original editions.[309] He concludes that de Worde did in fact print smaller reprints. However, since de Worde's printing career is stretched over 40 years (compared to Caxton's 17 years) it is not surprising that he did produce such reprints. Blake argues that those reprints were usually "intended for a specialised audience and most of them had their length and format well established by tradition."[310] De Worde did not print those reprints because they were cheap, but because there was a great demand for those books. Apart from that there can be no doubt that he was willing to print or reprint long works.[311] It was not de Worde's responsibility that the texts in demand in his times were of smaller size. Therefore, these examples do not emphasize de Worde's laziness or inability to print larger works, they only stress his sense for the book market. Julian Notary, a contemporary printer in de Worde's lifetime, is a prime example that absence in originality in a publishing policy might also end up creating economic success: even though Notary printed only about 40 items and primarily focused on reprints, his income provided him with a reasonable living.[312]

De Worde has always been described as a successful businessman, albeit with different connotations. One important decision de Worde made was the move from Westminster to Fleet Street, London in 1500.[313] Early scholars suggested

309 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 60.

310 Norman F. Blake, "Wynkyn de Worde: The Later Years," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 47 (1972), 128–138, 137.

311 Blake, "Later Years," 137.

312 H. R. Tedder, "Notary, Julian (*b. c.*1455, *d.* in or after 1523)," rev. Norman F. Blake, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20367> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

313 The modern association with Fleet Street and journalism originates from the early eighteenth century, when the first newspaper settled there. In fact, before de Worde, the printer William de Machlinia settled on Fleet Bridge as early as 1484. (H. R. Woudhuysen, "Fleet Street," *The Oxford Companion to the* Book, eds Michael Felix

that he decided to sell more popular and cheaper books and needed to be closer to the people who were to be his new clientele. Therefore, de Worde was oftentimes accused of being the "popular printer." John Feather labels de Worde as the printer "who really began the commercialisation of the production of printed books in England."[314] Westminster may have been the perfect location for de Worde's master, but without the financial backing that Caxton had with his merchant business, de Worde had no future in Westminster. Not only did he have to cater to a different market, he also had to deal with competition, whereas Caxton had next to none. For printers, London was the place to be:

> More and more presses were being established in London though no further ones were set up at Westminster, so that it would be easier in London to find out what others were printing and how successful they were [...]. No doubt it was also easier to recruit helpers, both technical and professional, in London than at Westminster; and since we can identify many of his helpers while he was at Fleet Street, the ability to recruit assistants may have been an important consideration for his move.[315]

De Worde's business flourished at the new location. For the first time he printed English translations from French texts, though not translated by himself, but by his newly employed apprentices, mainly Robert Copland.[316] Even though Copland's relationship with de Worde is not clear, it is certain that Copland translated texts for him between 1508 and 1514. Afterwards he is known to be a printer who issued books with de Worde's printer's device, a trademark that was supposed to establish the printer's identity.[317] However, even though de Worde decided to print translations after 1500, it was still a very small proportion of his whole output.

He also printed works of contemporary English poets. Special attention needs to be paid to the close connection to Stephen Hawes. Whereas de Worde printed single works by contemporary poets such as John Skelton or William Neville now and then, he was the first printer of all of Hawes' poems.[318] This

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Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen [Oxford, 2010], 724.) Despite that, de Worde is also known as "father of Fleet Street."

314 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 24.

315 Blake, "Later Years," 128–129.

316 For further information about Robert Copland, see Frank Charlton Francis, *Robert Copland: Sixteenth-Century Printer and Translator* (Glasgow, 1961).

317 Mary C. Erler, "Copland, Robert (*fl.* 1505–1547)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6265> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

318 A. S. G. Edwards, "Poet and Printer in Sixteenth Century England: Stephen Hawes and Wynkyn de Worde," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 55 (1980), 82–88, 82.

collaboration between poet and printer is unusually close. Not only is it possible that de Worde himself decided to print Hawes' poems instead of being asked by a patron or the poet himself, de Worde even illustrated Hawes' poems with woodcuts which oftentimes show details of Hawes' verses. Such close correlation between the visual and textual level of a text is unprecedented.[319] No matter why de Worde decided to add illustrations, they probably enhanced the desire of potential buyers and consequently added content value to de Worde's books.

He also printed poems by Lydgate, even some of those that were not issued by Caxton. Particularly interesting is de Worde's publication of Skelton's *Bowge of Court*.[320] Even though Skelton was an established poet by then, the work itself was not. Publishing a new poem before its popularity was confirmed in manuscript form was seen as a risky business decision. This does not only emphasize de Worde's eagerness to support contemporary English authors, but stresses even more his willingness to make financially risky business decisions.[321]

One of the largest shares of de Worde's publications, however, consists of schoolbooks, especially grammatical texts by the English grammarians Stanbridge and Whittington.[322] De Worde may have even co-operated with Whittington and acted as his publisher. The colophon to the 1526 edition of Whittington's *De heteroclitis nominibus*[323] is complimentary in character.[324] According to A. S. G. Edwards, the surviving output of such grammatical texts amounts to about a third of his material.[325] Even though he had been printing grammars now and then, a considerable increase of such publications by de Worde can be observed around 1512. This publishing policy had probably been influenced by his main competitor, Richard Pynson:

> He may have realised from Pynson's success with these works that there was a good market for them, but since he intended most of his publications for a clerical audience

319 Edwards, "Poet and Printer in Sixteenth Century England," 83.

320 STC 22597.

321 Norman F. Blake, "Wynkyn de Worde: The Early Years," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 46 (1971), 62–69, 65. It should be stressed, though, that de Worde cross-subsidized such risky prints with his religious output.

322 Clair emphasizes the amount of financial profit de Worde made with such publications. Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 29.

323 STC 25459.5.

324 Blake, "Later Years," 136. The close cooperation with contemporary authors represents another departure from Caxton's publishing policy.

325 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 117.

> and since the predominant buyers of grammatical and scholarly works were clerics, their publication may have followed on naturally from his publication of religious works.[326]

Peter W.M. Blayney stresses in his account of the Stationers' Company that the second generation of printers in England was in fact spearheaded by Richard Pynson.[327] Plomer shares this opinion. Although Pynson was falling behind de Worde with his output (estimated to be about 600 items), he was "in the whole, [...] superior as a workman, and produced many books, which, like the *Morton Missal*, were far in advance of anything that had been produced by any other printer in England."[328] In fact, the *Morton Missal* is considered to be one of the most beautiful books produced in England in the incunabula period.[329]

Richard Pynson was born around 1449 in French Normandy. He mastered Norman French, which was a decided advantage for a printer in England.[330] He was probably educated at the University of Paris where he may have developed an interest in books.[331] It is unknown where Pynson acquired the art of printing. Before his printing career he was a pouch-maker. Since he was later also responsible for bindings, Hellinga assumes that he found his way into printing via his leather business. Neville-Sington speculates that the London printer and Caxton contemporary William de Machlinia might have been Pynson's master, but Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson rightly refuse Machlinia's wastepaper in

326 Blake, "Early Years," 66.

327 Peter Blayney, *The Stationers' Company Before the Charter, 1403–1557* (Cambridge, 2003), 23.

328 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 9.

329 For a detailed description and history of its production, see Katja Airaksinen, "The Morton Missal: The Finest Incunable Made in England," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 14.2 (2009), 147–179.

330 Pamela Neville-Sington, "Pynson, Richard (*c.*1449–1529/30)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22935> (accessed: 11.12.2019). A detailed account of Pynson's biography and work is still Stanley Howard Johnston's dissertation "A Study of the Career and Literary Publications of Richard Pynson," Diss. Univ. of Western Ontario, 1977. Another seminal study is Pamela Ayers Neville, "Richard Pynson, King's Printer (1506–1529): Printing and Propaganda in Early Tudor England," Diss. Univ. of London, 1990.

331 E. G. Duff, *Century of the English Book Trade: Short Notices of all Printers, Stationers, Book-Binders, and others Connected with it From the Issue of the First Dated Book in 1457 to the Incorporation of the Company Stationers in 1557* (London, 1905), 126.

Pynson's bindings as sufficient proof.[332] It is interesting to notice that Pynson's name does not appear in the Custom Rolls. This suggests that he was not a bookseller, but solely a printer, which would distinguish him from his main competitors.[333]

Starting his printing business around 1490, Pynson worked outside Temple Bar in St Clement Danes. In 1502, he moved to Fleet Street, partially because of a xenophobic attack. But like de Worde, Pynson must have known that this area of London was a more interesting place for printers. Carlson states that Pynson's move embodies "a recognition of the proper nature of the only foundation on which a local printing industry could be securely built."[334]

Throughout his printing career, Pynson showed a consistent cautiousness in his publishing policy. In his early days, he primarily, though not exclusively, sought to enter risk-free markets. His output was either connected to a direct subvention or at least to a good promise for a market. Edwards and Meale calculate that about half of Pynson's surviving output was printed with "various kinds of institutional encouragement."[335] In the year 1498, for instance, Pynson printed over a hundred indulgences, which is about one sixth of his surviving output. However, Pynson was not solely working in risk-free areas. Apart from reprinting Caxton's second edition of the *Canterbury Tales*[336] as early as 1492, he was also willing to print an English version of Sebastian Brant's German satire *Narrenschiff* in 1509.[337] At that point he knew that de Worde was working on an English translation (by Henry Watson) at the same time.[338] This offers a rare opportunity to assess how printers might have added value to their product because they came in direct competition. De Worde's quarto edition was published just before Pynson's translation was finished. Pynson, however, did not discard his edition, probably because he already had put so much effort into this work. He also may have been confident that his edition was superior because it was a translation of the poet Alexander Barclay, who was linked by his

332 Neville-Sington, "Pynson, Richard" and Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 17.
333 Christianson, "The Rise of London's Book Trade," 140.
334 Carlson, "A Theory of the Early English Printing Firm," 54.
335 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 114.
336 STC 5086.
337 STC 3545.
338 STC 3547.

contemporaries to Chaucer, Lydgate and Skelton.[339] Carlson states that Barclay suggested to Pynson to place woodcuts into the text to illustrate the stories.[340] Their close connection is also revealed in the last stanza of Barclay's *Ship of Fools*, where Pynson's printing shop is mentioned:

> Our shyp here levyth the sees brode,
> By helpe of God almyght, and quyetly
> At anker we lye within the rode.
> But who that lysteth of them to bye,
> In Flete strete shall them fynde, truly,
> At the George, in Richa<r>de Pynsonnes place,
> Prynter unto the Kynges nobles grace.
>
> Deo gratias[341]

This name-dropping was probably supposed to work both ways: Pynson was connected to the prestige of the respected translator and poet Barclay, and Barclay emphasized that his translation was printed by Pynson, who had by then assumed William Faques' position as *regius impressor*, the 'King's Printer.' This position was created by Henry VII in 1504, probably based on the French model of Charles VIII who had appointed Pierre Le Rouge as his printer from at least 1487 until 1493.[342] The exact motivation for creating such a post by Henry VII is not entirely clear. The advantage for both printer and ruler might be mostly symbolic in nature. The position of King's Printer did not grant a monopoly for printing statutes or other government documents. In fact, it was not Pynson but de Worde who was busy printing such documents between 1506 and 1510.[343] This raises the question why Pynson was appointed King's Printer and not de Worde. Neville assumes that Pynson, like Faques before him, was chosen because of his superior printing abilities. If Henry VII really modelled his *regius impressor* after the example of Pierre Le Rouge, who was a renowned calligrapher, then choosing an accomplished printer who created the finest prints in the country was the logical conclusion:

339 Nicholas Orme, "Barclay, Alexander (*c.*1484–1552)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1337> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

340 David Richard Carlson, "Alexander Barclay and Richard Pynson: A Tudor Printer and His Writer," *Anglia*, 113 (1995), 283–302, 293.

341 Quoted in Carlson, "Alexander Barclay," 291.

342 Neville, "Richard Pynson, King's Printer (1506–1529)," 32.

343 Neville, "Richard Pynson, King's Printer (1506–1529)," 34.

> Although Henry VII took advantage of the press to disseminate the law of the land and his propaganda, he seems to have valued the office of King's Printer much as he did his library solely for the prestige it brought him. Perhaps he still had the example of the French *imprimeur du roi* too much in mind.[344]

For Henry VII, having the best printer of the country at his disposal seemed reason enough for this position. The printer gained likewise from such a post, albeit not in many commissioned works, but in symbolic form. However, it might not have helped him in the *Ship of Fools* competition. If reprints are a sign of demand, then Pynson had to admit defeat: de Worde reprinted his Watson translation already in 1517, whereas Pynson did not usher a reprint at all. Barclay's translation, for which Pynson was responsible, was first reprinted in 1570.[345]

Overall, Pynson's output was hugely influenced by his title of King's Printer. He may even have been limited in pursuing new outlets for his work because of his position. Since being the King's Printer kept his press busy, it explains why he rarely engaged in printing risky publications. It is also telling to see how unaccustomed he was to competition. In his later years, Robert Redman was not only reprinting Pynson's editions, but he also had contrived means to publish statutes before the King's Printer.[346] Apart from *Ship of Fools*, Pynson had never officially been in direct competition with Wynkyn de Worde. Edwards and Meale see a system in this:

> It may more plausibly reflect a movement from opportunistic diversification on the part of early printers to forms of consolidation and specialization involving a pragmatic approach to sharing and developing particular markets according to differing commitments (such as Pynson's as royal printer) and differing technical capacities.[347]

Pynson proved to be successful due to his competent and risk-averse publishing strategy. The output of his press may have been varied, but it was still narrowed in scope, especially in comparison to de Worde. Pynson was very careful of his business, as he mainly chose to print books which were intended for a fixed market.

Wynkyn de Worde had support from the upper classes as well. Even though he did have occasional patrons from the nobility, his patrons were mainly religious in nature, like the Bishop of Durham or the Prior of St Anne's.[348] However,

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344 Neville, "Richard Pynson, King's Printer (1506–1529)," 34.

345 Carlson, "A Tudor Printer and His Writer," 296; Orme, "Barclay, Alexander."

346 Pynson's complaints can be seen in his edition of Thomas Littleton's *Tenures* (STC 15726). Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 123.

347 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 118.

348 Blake, "Early Years," 68–69.

one of the most influential persons in de Worde's life was Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VI:

> At the centre of these networks stands the figure of Lady Margaret Beaufort who, it would seem, through her own developed literary and devotional preoccupations became a means of stimulating new publishing initiatives, and hence new market for early printed books.[349]

Edwards and Meal suggest that she provided the "impetus for de Worde to establish new markets for religious books."[350] In fact, it can be argued that Margaret's as well as the King's devout attitude may have reinforced de Worde's conviction to focus on the trade of religious works.[351] Still, even though de Worde styled himself as Margaret's printer, its meaning should not be overestimated. Margaret Beaufort had by no means an exclusive relationship with Wynkyn de Worde. Pynson, for example, printed her translations first. Whether de Worde chose to call himself "printer to the Princess Margaret" to oppose Pynson's role as King's Printer remains speculation.[352] According to the extant material, he did not use this title before and after 1509, the year of Margaret's death. Since this title was mentioned in only a few select editions printed in 1509, it might be possible that Margaret herself chose the titles where de Worde was allowed to use it. In his 1525 reprint of John Fisher's *Fruitful Sayings of David*,[353] he states that he had once been the printer to the Princess Margaret by inserting a "sometime" before the title.[354] If the title had been used primarily as symbolic value, it seems careless to not have used it more often. However, patronage in general became less important for the book trade during the sixteenth century.[355] Rather than being dependent on patronage, printers started becoming patrons. As Edwards and Meale put it: "Indeed, patronage itself undergoes a sea change."[356]

Wynkyn de Worde's case shows other vital factors for a successful printing enterprise. His policy was important for the acceptance of the printed book. When he took over Caxton's press in 1491, circumstances for printers were different than they had been in Caxton's days. At the beginning, de Worde

349 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 115.
350 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 116.
351 Blake, "Early Years," 66.
352 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 101.
353 STC 10906.
354 His 1509 edition of the text was probably the first time he used the title in his books. Blake, "Later Years," 131–132.
355 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 19.
356 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 96.

established a connection with his successful predecessor by using Caxton's printer's device as symbolic value. This reference to Caxton could attract more customers. His move from Westminster to Fleet Street illustrates the indispensable changes that were necessary due to the changing market conditions. He lacked Caxton's connections to the court and therefore was forced to seek a different clientele.[357] This had not only been a prerequisite for de Worde, but for all printers following Caxton. Richard Pynson and William de Machlinia moved from Westminster to London as well, which only confirms the importance of this location.

One of de Worde's most significant divergences from Caxton's policy also developed at Fleet Street. He chose to print contemporary English poets, which Caxton had hardly done. De Worde must have known that he was not capable of producing adequate translations on his own or he was not interested. Therefore, he hired translators and printers. His use of patronage also diverged from Caxton as it became less important. Even though de Worde did have a few patrons within the nobility and the merchant-class, he focussed on clerical patrons in his later years.

Richard Pynson represents a different character of a successful printer. He seldom went out of his way with his publishing policy and therefore hardly operated outside his risk-free market-niche. Most of his prints were undertaken with some sort of security, for example jobbing printing like indulgences, of which he printed a great deal. When Pynson was appointed Printer to the King around 1508, he was not forced to constantly assess the speculative trade as he printed many commissioned texts. Because of his unique position he was not used to competition. Pynson's output is interesting as he was responsible for texts that neither Caxton nor de Worde printed. This suggests some arrangement between the printers. They seemed to have shared the market. Pynson may not have had the most daring publishing policy, but his success proves that a stable market for printers was available. The support by political institutions further leads to the conclusion that printed books were regarded as a necessity. The position of King's Printer clearly indicates that the new production method was widely accepted. Overall, it can further be concluded that, more often than not, it was the economic value that was of importance for the printers.

357 Blake, "His Choice of Texts," 307.

Comparing Caxton, de Worde and Pynson

Printing in London became more competitive during the sixteenth century. While in the year 1500 London had merely five printers, the number grew to 33 in 1523.[358] Whereas Caxton might have had the opportunity to lead public taste, it was different for his successors. They needed to follow public taste or speculate what might be fashionable. This raises the question how Caxton, de Worde and Pynson's businesses can be evaluated in comparison. All of them showed an astute sense of business. This demonstrates that success in the early days of printing largely depended on publishing decisions. But, when necessary, printer-publishers had to react to the changing acceptance context, as the examples of printers with their move to Fleet Street have shown.

Caxton's printing abilities were no match for the experienced presses on the continent. Caxton himself must have been aware of his wanting artistic printing talents. In 1487, he was ordered to print a *Sarum Missal*.[359] However, Caxton must have felt that he was not capable of printing this work adequately: instead of losing the order, he commissioned William Maynal, a printer in Paris, to print this service book. Caxton instructed the printer to mention in the colophon that he was printing it for Caxton. Afterwards, he added his printer's device to the sheets when they arrived at Westminster.[360] However, since his competitors in England were few, with Johannes Lettou and William de Machlinia in London as well as the St Albans printer and the short-lived Oxford press (see chapter 2.2.4), the quality of his prints could be neglected. Caxton was astute enough to make a profitable business out of a new technique to produce books. He planned his business carefully and chose his audience and texts wisely. Caxton also used the established distribution channels in his days. His business may have been medieval and built on aristocratic patronage, but he already realized that the old system of literary patronage would not apply for him. His use of important names in his prologues along with his oftentimes fictitious stories and explanations to make a text more desirable shows that this man was above all a merchant who knew how to add value to his commodities.

In comparison, Plomer argues that de Worde was also delivering a good product, even though he accuses him of being "careless at times."[361] When de Worde got hold of a copy of *The Horse, the Sheep, and the Ghoos*[362] to reprint it,

358 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 105.
359 STC 16228.
360 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 28–29.
361 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 50.
362 STC 17020.

he did not notice a missing leaf and printed it exactly as he found it. Another example is his 1496 reprint of *Dives et Pauper*,[363] a work which had been previously printed by Richard Pynson in 1493. Compared to Pynson's edition, de Worde's work seems more clustered. Even though the text is based on Pynson's edition,[364] the layout was not. Pynson's use of more white space, especially between chapters, and bigger type size overall result in a more legible and harmonious page design. However, it also increases the number of pages.[365] Even though both editions use the folio format and two columns (except for the tabula, for which Pynson uses only one column), Pynson's edition counts no less than 464 pages, de Worde's edition only 390 pages. De Worde added three woodcut illustrations to his edition: one as a title-page, one before the tabula, and again the title-page illustration separating the tabula and the main part.

De Worde and Pynson were different printers on several levels. De Worde's business seemed to be more successful from an economic perspective.[366] This can partially be explained by de Worde's specialization on grammars. Whereas Pynson hardly printed educational books, de Worde established his wealth with exactly such texts. Alternately, Pynson refused to focus on religious texts, which gave de Worde more possibilities to widen his choice of material.[367]

The use of illustrations was to become a trait for de Worde's output. Over half of his output contains woodcuts.[368] Edwards and Meale assume that those illustrations

> [...] provided a visual accompaniment to texts with nationalistic bias, principally as a means of making [de Worde's] books a more attractive prospect [and] it may be noted that it was de Worde who most comprehensively responded to the challenge posed by the sophisticated design and iconography of the books issued by continental printers[.][369]

363 STC 19213.

364 The manuscript Pynson used for his edition is now in the Bodleian Library. See Margery M. Morgan, "Pynson's Manuscript of *Dives and Pauper,*" *The Library*, 5th ser., 8 (1953), 217–228.

365 The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München offers a high-quality scan of their Pynson copy: <https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/0007/bsb00070466/images/> (accessed: 05.12.2019).

366 Plomer, *Wynkyn de Worde & His Contemporaries*, 145–149.

367 Pynson produced fewer than 50 religious works while de Worde created more than 170. Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 117.

368 Clair, *History of Printing in Britain*, 51.

369 Edwards and Meale, "The Marketing of Printed Books," 112.

Probably, de Worde may have been aware of some of his deficiencies as a printer and used the illustrations as an effective marketing device as added content value.[370] Further, he used illustrations to stress his connection to Caxton. Following his master's death, he initially kept adding Caxton's original printer's device at the end of texts.

> Such marks were not found in manuscripts, and scribes rarely revealed their names. Printed books, however, needed to be actively sold, and printers therefore needed to be known and recognised by the public. By identifying the maker of a book for prospective customers, the printer's mark functioned as both a label and an advertisement.[371]

De Worde seemed to be aware of these functions and heavily used them. Most notably, he even printed his device in red ink in his edition of the *Book of Hawking, Hunting and Heraldry*.[372] Later, de Worde changed from his master's to his own printer's device, which still resembled Caxton's version. De Worde probably used it as a symbol of continuity between the two businesses and thereby added symbolic value to his books.

De Worde is also known as the first English printer to use title-pages regularly, thereby establishing and standardizing them. He subsequently expanded on this idea in further publications, as his first title-pages are rather "crude and perfunctory."[373] His title-page of St Jerome's *Vitae Patrum*,[374] for example, simply consists of the short title (albeit incorrectly spelled as "Vitas Patrum") in xylographic printing. Later title-pages further elaborated on the author of the work and added elements of decoration as well as portraits or other illustrations. For example, Martha Driver mentions several title-pages which are, in all likelihood, depicting the religious author Richard Rolle.[375] Further, the depiction of Margaret Beaufort's badge on title-pages (for example, in *The Remedy Against the Troubles of Temptations* from 1508 or de Worde's 1522 edition of *The Mirroure of Golde for the Synfull Soule*)[376] hints at a connection between text and Margaret

370 Martha W. Driver, *The Image in Print: Book Illustration in Late Medieval England and its Sources* (London, 2004), 34.

371 Driver, *Image in Print*, 77.

372 STC 3309.

373 Driver, *Image in Print*, 82. For further information about the title-page in general, see Margaret M. Smith, *The Title-Page: Its Early Development, 1460–1510* (London, 2000).

374 STC 14507.

375 Driver, *Image in Print*, 83.

376 STC 20875.5 and STC 6895 respectively.

and can be assessed as advertising on de Worde's behalf.[377] All these elements added symbolic value for his commodities.

William Caxton is oftentimes labelled as a rather conservative figure within the book trade partly because of his rare use of woodcuts as well as the clear influence of manuscript practice on his books.[378] Caxton's first use of woodcuts was included in his *The Mirror of the World*, printed in 1481.[379] Before that publication, Driver assumes, Caxton did not have access to the necessary expertise in Westminster.[380] Though woodcuts produced in England were generally described as inferior to the European counterparts and much more so in contrast to manuscript miniatures, the inclusion of illustrations seemed necessary for Caxton, as competitors used them frequently to entice more customers. Despite their inferior artistic quality, their content value nevertheless gained importance due to their functional qualities: "They were used more methodically to divide and organize text, to make text and meaning more accessible."[381] In fact, Caxton mentions in his introduction to *The Mirror of the World* that the text needs illustrations so it can be understood.[382] Wynkyn de Worde's ample use of woodcut illustrations as well as the prominent use of the title-page to market his books are generally seen as impulses away from the manuscript towards an independent medium with inherent features along with further implications on the book trade:

> With printing, not only did perceptions of the book change, but there is a decided shift in the relationship between the producer of the book and his audience. The printer is a step away from the presumably close connection between scribe and patron. Labelling the book, advising a prospective buyer of its contents, makes good business sense, an integral aspect of selling the product.[383]

In this sense, Wynkyn de Worde is a vital part of the emancipation of the printed book from the manuscript in England.

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377 Driver, *Image in Print*, 84.

378 Martha W. Driver, "Ideas of Order: Wynkyn de Worde and the Title Page," *Texts and Their Contexts*, eds Vincent John Scattergood and Julia Boffey (Dublin, 1997), 87–149, 88.

379 Hellinga describes them as "crude but charming." Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 72. Overall, Caxton's attention to detail in woodcuts is cursory, with the exception of his illustrations in *The Golden Legend*. Driver, *Image in Print*, 33.

380 Driver, *Image in Print*, 8

381 Driver, *Image in Print*, 1.

382 Driver, *Image in Print*, 8.

383 Driver, "Ideas of Order," 104–105.

2.2.4. The English Provinces

While Caxton, Pynson and de Worde essentially set up successful printing businesses in Westminster and London, respectively, other parts of the country, at least seemingly, offered promising locations for print production, too. As Elizabeth Eisenstein argued in her seminal work *Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, printing affected European history on many levels with quantitative as well as qualitative aspects. It facilitated comparisons, criticism and communication and was able to speed up scientific progress to an enormous degree. However, it is a fallacy to assume that cities with universities or clerical institutions would be almost guaranteed success as locations for printers. Still, such institutions were sometimes the impetus for printing businesses. In England, Oxford, Cambridge and St Albans stand out as places of early provincial printing that, ultimately, failed.

Oxford (1478–1519)

The demand for Latin texts in England in the early days of printing was sufficiently satisfied by imports from the continent. Hardly any presses in England printed them. However, as Hellinga and Trapp put it: "Exceptions to this are all the more intriguing."[384] Oxford operated as a place for printed book production between 1478 and 1483 by at least two different printers and then again for less than a year between 1517 and 1518.[385] The history of the first Oxford printing press is concise but revealing and it is famous for one of the most controversial misprints to be found in an early printed book: according to the colophon of *Exposicio sancti Ieronimi in simbolum apostolorum*, the first printed book in Oxford left the press in 1468, thus making Oxford one of the earliest cities with a press and beating William Caxton by eight years.[386] Oxford, being a university city, had a book trade before the establishment of the early printing presses.[387] In all likelihood it was James Goldwell, bishop of Norwich from 1472 to 1499, who was responsible for setting up the first press in Oxford. This suggestion seems

384 Hellinga and Trapp, "Introduction," 8.

385 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 76.

386 STC 21443. For a detailed analysis of this print, see Albinia C. de la Mare and Lotte Hellinga, "The First Book Printed in Oxford: the Expositio Symboli of Rufinus," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 7.2 (1978), 184–244.

387 A short survey offers Graham Pollard, "The University and the Book Trade in Medieval Oxford," *Beiträge zum Berufsbewusstsein des mittelalterlichen Menschen*, ed. Paul Wilpert (Berlin, 1964) (Miscellanea Mediaevalia; 3), 336–344.

tenable, since the bishop had been a student at Oxford's university and was a renowned book lover.[388] Hellinga has established that at least the choice for the first printed work in Oxford can be traced back to Goldwell.[389] With Goldwell's links, it should have been possible to persuade a printer to establish a business in Oxford. If Goldwell was indeed the impetus for the Oxford printing press, the situation is similar to different printing presses on the continent, as Blake suggests: "A printer of German origins, who was trained in one of the major printing centres there, was encouraged to move to a city with a university in another country under the prompting of an eminent churchman and man of learning."[390]

Though it has been assumed that Oxford's first press was occupied by Theodoric Rood, it was later established that he arrived and worked in Oxford only from 1481 onwards. The previous printer remains anonymous, and the quality of his prints is wanting. Kristian Jensen points out that the type used in the first Oxford print is identical to the type used by Cologne printer Gerard ten Raem and called the first Oxford press a "'branch office' of a Cologne printing enterprise."[391] Describing the quality of the first Oxford print, Hellinga concludes that "the typesetting was far from expert, leaving gaps or compressing text where the counting had failed to produce a realistic estimate. Experienced compositors know how to avoid such irregularities."[392] It is also noteworthy that this text, as well as the second one, was not part of the Oxford university curriculum. According to Hellinga, the third book printed in Oxford is different for two reasons: first, the printer apparently acquired a more sophisticated press, being now able to print two pages at the time. Second, the printer was "now meeting the requirements of the university curriculum."[393] Jensen disagrees and summarizes the three works from the first Oxford press as follows:

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388 Rosemary C. E. Hayes, "Goldwell, James (*d.* 1499)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2011) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10926> (accessed: 11.12.2019). Goldwell is also known for being one of the first Englishmen to own a printed book.

389 A manuscript owned by Goldwell served as printer's copy, Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 76.

390 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 27.

391 Kristian Jensen, "Printing at Oxford in its European Context, 1478–1584." *The History of Oxford University Press: Volume 1. Beginnings to 1780*, ed. Ian Gadd (Oxford, 2013), 31–48, 40.

392 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 78.

393 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 78.

> [T]he three books produced by the same unidentified Oxford printer are similar in that they were all suitable for study by senior members of colleges or religious houses with access to institutional collections. They were not for student use or teaching, nor were they produced to promote the reputations of their authors.[394]

In any case, after this print, no further works were printed in Oxford for two years until Rood took over. The precise reason why he settled in Oxford is not known. It is believed that Rood was sent by a Cologne consortium to establish a "successful printing operation at the long established University city of Oxford."[395] This is not surprising because Cologne did have twelve years of experience with the art of printing at that point. Further, the import of books from Cologne was staggering. But sending someone from Cologne to a location that needed Latin texts was by no means a guaranteed commercial success.[396]

At first glance, the textual output of Rood's press can be described as well-chosen.[397] As opposed to Caxton's press, it is not clear whether Rood's press was a speculative business or whether he was asked by the university to print specifically on demand. The latter seems probable since none of the books by Rood show any signs of local patronage, which would have been unusual for a speculative printer in the early days of printing.[398] The output was furthermore clearly orientated towards the academic market. However, there is no evidence that Rood was officially working for the academic institution.

The number of reprints emphasizes the quality of the publishing policy of Rood. For example, his 1483 print of John Anwykyll's *Compendium totius grammaticae*[399] was reprinted in the next fifty years no less than forty times.[400] The *Explicit opus ... super constituc[i]ones prouinciales*,[401] which is Rood's largest book, printed around 1483, was also reprinted at least six times in London.

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394 Jensen, "Printing at Oxford," 41.

395 In one of Rood's later printed works, it is mentioned that he was "sent from the city of Cologne." However, Sessions is aware that this sentence is ambivalent. It could also just mean that Rood was from Cologne. William Kaye Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen: The First British Printing Centres to 1557 after Westminster and London* (York, 1983), 2.

396 Jensen, "Printing at Oxford," 37.

397 Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 4.

398 Nicolas Barker, *The Oxford University Press and the Spread of Learning, 1478–1978: An Illustrated History* (Oxford, 1978), 3.

399 STC 696.

400 "It would appear that London printers in particular were better able than provincial centres such as Oxford, to withstand competition of book imports from the continent of Europe." Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 5.

401 STC 17102.

The Oxford press was also responsible for the first print of a classical text in England with Cicero's *Oratio pro T. Annio Milone*.[402] The printing of this work is a sign of Oxford being open to modern influences: "A consequence of the growth of the New Learning was that bad Latin was ceasing to be a second language and good Latin, based on the classical authors, was becoming a school subject, as revealed in this grammar inspired by Nicholas Perotti's book of 1473 [...]."[403]

The 1486/1487 edition of John Mirk's *Liber festivalis*[404] has for a long time been connected to Rood as well. However, this publication deviates from the previous Oxford texts since it is, despite its Latin title, the only text in English. Speculation about this choice ranges from awareness of the competition in Latin texts from the continent to simply trying to imitate Caxton's enormous success with vernacular texts:

> The Oxford printer could see that Caxton was active in Westminster and that his press was flourishing. The bulk of his books produced by him were in English, and the publication of the *Liber festivalis* looks like a desperate attempt to change direction to prevent bankruptcy by imitating a policy that was already well established elsewhere. Even the book chosen was one which had already been published at Westminster.[405]

Rood indeed could have been under financial pressure. The academic market was mainly satisfied, and he may have been looking for a different market to keep his business running. Mirk's collections of sermons, after all, was a very popular text at the time, being the most printed English text in the fifteenth century. However, the *Liber festivalis* was most probably not printed by Rood, but by an anonymous printer using one of Rood's type. If this is true, it is not certain that it was printed in Oxford either.[406] After its publication, Oxford printing ceased for thirty years. John Feather comes to a definitive conclusion: "[W]e may take it that the first Oxford press was a commercial disaster."[407] The press was probably established to satisfy the market of the university of Oxford. Although this might have been a successful strategy on the continent, it was bound to fail in England. Competition from the continent was still too strong for Latin texts printed in England. The experience from continental printers could not be matched easily

402 STC 5312.
403 *Printing and Publishing at Oxford: The Growth of a Learned Press, 1478–1978* (Oxford, 1978), 4.
404 STC 17958.
405 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 28.
406 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 21.
407 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 18.

by relatively unpractised printers. Also, printing for institutions was only viable for a while. Books were usually used carefully and were not exposed to destructive circumstances, therefore lasting extensively.[408] As soon as the demand was satisfied, there were hardly chances of developing a new market. Finally, Richard III's Act of 1484, which encouraged the importation of books from abroad, dampened chances of success of a small press in Oxford.

Rood was not able to maintain his business, although he was an able printer (especially compared to his predecessor in Oxford) and had a decent publishing policy. Apart from showing his understanding of the market by his choice of texts, he also sometimes offered variations within an edition, as is the case for Lathbury's *Liber moralium super threnos Jeremiae*.[409] For this work, Rood also produced a few *de luxe* copies printed on vellum. Other copies have extensive woodcut borders on their opening page showing boughs and birds. For this and possible other works, Rood was further supported by Thomas Hunte, the university's stationer, with whom he had a business association.[410]

It is not known where Theodoric Rood went after he had left Oxford. Since a printer named "Theodoric" started printing in Cologne in 1485, Duff suggests that Rood may have returned to Cologne.[411] In any case, thirty years passed before another printing press was set up in Oxford. This emphasizes that the university did have access to books and did not rely on a printing press on their premises. The brief resurgence of printing in Oxford lasted about six months around 1517 and 1518 under John Scolar,[412] with a short revival around 1519 by Charles Kyrforth.[413] Nicolas Barker even judged that "there is no evidence to explain the brief appearance of the second Oxford press [...]."[414] The market of Latin books was satisfied. Being responsible for nine editions overall (Scolar eight, Kyrforth one), what stands out most is that all editions have a clear focus on university use.[415] In fact, John Scolar was apparently recognized by the university. This makes him the first printer officially privileged and approved by a

408 Carlson uses this argument for religious texts, but it can also be applied for the academic institutions. Carlson, "A Theory of the Early English Printing Firm," 54.
409 STC 15297.
410 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 79.
411 This assumption might be disregarded if the *Liber festivalis* was actually printed by Rood in Oxford.
412 Duff, *Century of English Book Trade*, 144.
413 Ibid, 87.
414 Barker, *The Oxford University Press*, 5.
415 Jensen, "Printing at Oxford," 42.

university, six months before an English king made a similar grant.[416] Both Scolar and Kyrforth used a printer's device showing the university's coat of arms to demonstrate their connection to the academic institution.[417] A printed notice under the colophon of *Questiones moralissime super libros Ethicoru[m] eruditissimi viri Ioannis Dedicus*[418] emphasizes the first idea of monopoly for an Oxford print:

> It is forbidden by edict under the seal of the Chancery for anyone during seven years to print this excellent work, or sell it in form paid for by another person in the University of Oxford or within its precinct, on pain of losing all the books and five pounds sterling for every copy sold, wherever the books were printed, in addition to the other penalty provided by the edict. Don't think you can blind the crows.[419]

However, it is unclear whether this was actually enforced.[420] By focussing on academic use, the Scolar/Kyrforth printing venture does stand out as rather conservative. Their printed works included books by famous Oxford scholars of the fourteenth century and a book to calculate dates with Roman numerals. There is evidently a focus on the traditional education and not a sign of humanistic work.[421] Despite catering to the more obvious local market, it is very likely that the Scolar and Kyrforth businesses succumbed to financial insolvency. The university, in any case, did not feel obliged to support the two printing presses financially. In fact, this only happened 64 years later for the first time.[422]

Cambridge (1520–1522)

Further printers tried to set up flourishing businesses in the English provinces. Johannes Siberch, a native of Siegburg near Cologne, settled in Cambridge around 1520 and was responsible for at least nine editions in his house near Caius College. The impetus for Siberch's printing career in Cambridge is most probably the humanist group which centred around Richard Croke, a Greek scholar from London.[423] It is believed that Croke entrusted Siberch with the reprint of

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416 *Printing and Publishing at Oxford*, 7.
417 Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 8.
418 STC 6458.
419 Translation in *Printing and Publishing at Oxford*, 7.
420 Jenson, "Printing at Oxford," 43.
421 Barker, *The Oxford University Press*, 5.
422 *Printing and Publishing in Oxford*, x.
423 Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 62. Croke was also in touch with Thomas Berthelet and several printers on the continent. When visiting Paris, Croke met Gilles de Gourmont "with whom he worked on the publication of the first edition of Erasmus's *Moriae encomium*; the author would later complain that the edition was shoddy." Jonathan

his *Introductiones in rudimenta graeca*,[424] since no other English printer possessed a fount of Greek type.[425] Siberch seemed to be an obvious choice. Apart from already having printing experience, Siberch had studied at the university in Cologne, had a kinship with a famous publishing family in Antwerp and was an experienced bookseller, who had, prior to his job in Cambridge, travelled to England and other countries.[426]

Siberch's exact role in Cambridge is not clear. Even though he is sometimes mentioned as the university printer, there is no evidence that he was officially appointed. However, it is known that between 1520 and 1521, he received 20£ from the university, which must have been payment for his printing activities.[427] However, there are no sources that state that such an imbursement was repeated.[428]

Siberch's printing output was clearly orientated towards the academic market. Nevertheless, he ceased his printing activities after only two years, gave up his printing business and joined the church.[429] He returned to the continent where he lived his last years as a priest in his hometown.[430]

The geographical position of Cambridge, on the edge of the moors and at the head of a navigable river, gave it many advantages in an agricultural economy, but offered few to the development of any manufacturing that would depend on London as its principle market for raw materials.[431] Hence, the printing press relied solely on the demand of the Cambridge university. However, it still obtained books from London or from abroad.[432] Even after the Act of Henry

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Woolfson states that "[h]istorical opinion has been decidedly negative about Richard Croke." Jonathan Woolfson, "Croke, Richard (1489–1558)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6734> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

424 STC 6044a.5.

425 E. G. Duff, *The English Provincial Printers, Stationers and Bookbinders to 1557* (Cambridge, 1912), 73.

426 Duff, *English Provincial Printers,* 62.

427 Duff, *English Provincial Printers,* 75.

428 Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 62.

429 Duff, *Century of English Book Trade*, 147.

430 Sessions, *A Printer's Dozen*, 67.

431 David McKitterick, *A History of Cambridge University Press, Vol. 1: Printing and the Book Trade in Cambridge 1534–1698* (Cambridge, 1992), 14.

432 David McKitterick, "University Printing at Oxford and Cambridge," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. IV, 1557–1695*, ed. John Barnard (Cambridge, 2002), 189–205, 190.

VIII in 1534, which intervened with the importation of books from abroad, no printing press in Cambridge was established until 1583.[433]

The early presses in Oxford and Cambridge shared similar problems: "The idea of a university press was a new one. Though universities had indeed, and for centuries, been accustomed to provide books for teaching, there was no tradition of publishing learned works or editions of manuscripts in the college and university libraries."[434] In other words, university presses lacked the experience of publishing. McKitterick argues that universities underestimated the complex procedures of publishing and just focused on producing the books while neglecting equally important tasks like marketing and possible ways of distribution. The idea of the printed book becoming more a commodity and therefore gaining more economic value might have been alien to universities at the beginning.

St Albans (1479–1486)

The wealthy abbey of St Albans in Hertfordshire, roughly 25 miles northwest of London, had been a centre for learning in England and was famous for its important library in the Middle Ages.[435] It was also known for its important manuscript production for centuries with a focus on historiography.[436] Establishing a printing press within a location which is renowned for its business with books seemed promising. The people responsible for the establishment of the printing press in St Albans and who the printers were, remains a mystery. When Wynkyn de Worde reprinted the last two books printed in St Albans in the fifteenth century, he labelled the printer as "sometyme scole master of saynt Albons."[437] Therefore, the printer is generally described as the 'schoolmaster printer.' Current research, however, suggests that this is more likely a misunderstanding and misleading.[438]

In a rather short amount of time, three founts of type were cast in the abbey, two of them representing an English script style, now known as the 'St Albans hand' and one modelled on Caxton's large bastarda type he used until 1484. The printing

433 The first proper university press of Oxford was established in 1585.
434 McKitterick, "University Printing at Oxford and Cambridge," 203.
435 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 90.
436 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 18; Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 90.
437 STC 10000.5 and STC 10001 respectively. Julian Notary also refers to a schoolmaster in his edition of the *Chronicles of England* from 1504, STC 9998.
438 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 10–11.

activities in St Albans in the fifteenth century can be divided into two phases: the Latin phase from 1479–1481 and the English phase in 1486.[439] Hellinga evaluates the works printed during the first phase as "all expertly typeset and printed."[440] The first edition, content-wise, was no exceptional choice as it had been previously printed many times. It was the *Elegantiolae*[441] by the Tuscan writer Augustinus Datus, a small work aiding in letter writing and composition.[442] The print itself has no date and the colophon simply reads "[Impressum fuit op[us] hoc apud S[an] c[tu]m Albanu[m]."[443] However, it is by now generally accepted that this work was printed around 1479 or 1480, just a little later than Oxford's first print.[444] The type of this print is described by Blake as an "elegant gothic letter which looks to have links with Italy [. . .]"[445] Hellinga describes the type as "elaborate and delicate"[446] and speculates that more works may have been printed with such a type with no extant copies. The second edition from this press, the *Nova Rhetorica*[447] uses a type reminiscent of Caxton's type 2, probably to establish a connection to the respected printer in Westminster and thereby creating symbolic value. The choice of this book also seems to be derived from Caxton's success, as he had printed this work earlier. The last texts printed by the St Albans press were rather large works, all in Latin and either of an academic or a religious nature. After the last three works were all printed in 1481, printing ceased in St Albans until 1486.

The second phase of the St Albans printing venture only consists of two works, both printed in the English vernacular, and both editions offer colour printing (blue, red, gold/yellow), unique for England at that time. Whether this may indicate an attempt to entice more buyers is speculation. Hellinga at least mentions the possibility that a different printer was responsible.[448] The first of the English texts was the *Chronicles of England*,[449] a popular work that had already been printed twice by Caxton by that time.[450] This title continued

439 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 90.
440 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 95.
441 STC 6289.
442 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 91.
443 *English Short Title Catalogue* <http://estc.bl.uk/S110708> (accessed: 05.12.2019).
444 "The Press at St Albans," *Catalogue of Books Printed in the XVth Century*, 301–306, 301.
445 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 29.
446 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 94.
447 STC 24190.
448 Goldfinch, Hellinga and Nickson, "Introduction," 18.
449 STC 9995.
450 Blake notes that the St Albans edition is not a reprint of Caxton's edition. Blake, "Spread of Printing," 29. Hellinga even assumes that Caxton offered an annotated

the abbey's tradition of focussing on historiography, albeit not in Latin. The last edition from the second phase of the early St Albans press, the *Book of Hawking, Hunting and Blasing of Arms*, now also known as the *Boke of St Albans*,[451] stands out not only because it is a work in the vernacular: it was also directed at a secular market instead of an academic or religious one.[452] It is a small folio of ninety leaves and consists of two parts. The first deals with the art of hawking and hunting, while the second part is an account of "the blasing of arms to enable people to distinguish gentlemen from other people."[453] This print did not go unnoticed by more successful printers in England. In fact, Wynkyn de Worde produced a reprint ten years later, with an added part on fishing to increase its content value.[454] However, the appeal of the *Boke of St Albans* did not help the St Albans press. It was the last print of the early print venture in the province:

> Although the texts in Latin produced by the St Albans press are not so insular as those emanating from Oxford, we may assume that the market for them was not great enough to keep the press solvent. Equally the competition from foreign presses for books of this type was likely to be severe. St Albans did not even have the benefit of an academic community on its doorstep, though both Oxford and Cambridge were within easy travelling distance. It may well be, though, that the trade routes from St Albans to these two universities were not well established, and the number of people who visited St Albans was perhaps not sufficient to make the press economic.[455]

Just like the early presses in Oxford and Cambridge, the market for printed books in St Albans was not large enough to keep the business running. The publishing policy may have been astute, the printing quality acceptable and the *Boke of St Albans* may even have been the first print with colours in England, even though its execution may have been average at best. However, the main disadvantage

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edition of his to the St Albans printer. Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 98.

451 STC 3308.

452 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 29.

453 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 29.

454 Later, in 1533, de Worde even reprinted the added part separately, only after he had issued a new edition of the complete set, now in quarto format, which indicates the changing demand of the book market around that time. By then, de Worde had already printed several quarto editions. George R. Keiser, "Practical Books for the Gentleman," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 470–494, 470–472.

455 Blake, "Spread of Printing," 29–30.

and the consequential economic failure of the St Albans press lies in the geographic location: it was not viable since no good trade routes were established in the late fifteenth century. The market that the press could reach did not produce enough demand to keep the press afloat. The final prints in the vernacular may show an attempt to change from a specialized publishing policy to accommodate a wider market. However, even though the press turned to books where foreign rivalry would not be felt, it was again beaten by the already available vernacular texts printed by Caxton.[456]

In hindsight, it is not surprising that the first presses of Oxford, Cambridge and St Albans succumbed early on. Caxton, de Worde and Pynson had found their ways to bypass this drawback, the provincial printers did not. Printing may have sped up book production, but the success of printers still depended on, and, at the same time, was threatened by, the existing channels of trade. The publishing policy of the printer-publisher was vital, especially regarding competition, local as well as international. The book market was risky, especially in the early days of printing. Caxton's decision to establish a new market for vernacular texts with prose translations helped to establish the printing press in Britain. However, it must be emphasized that in some cases a prudent publishing policy would not have sufficed either. Caxton and de Worde may have been shrewd businessmen. However, their shrewdness would probably not have made much difference if their presses had been established in Oxford or St Albans with limited access to customers. John Feather's estimate concerning the provincial printers is adequate:

> The monasteries and universities and cathedrals of England, great institutions as they were, could not themselves provide a sufficient market, and were not equipped to reach markets elsewhere. In retrospect, these presses can be seen not so much as the harbingers of the new age but rather as the last heirs of the medieval tradition of localised book production for local use.[457]

2.3. Acceptance of the Printed Book in England

The occasional economic failures of early printing presses in England are no sign that the printed book itself was not accepted by readers. The case studies have demonstrated that there are certain key factors which can be taken into consideration when evaluating the economic stability of printing presses. The existing acceptance context in England was not ideal for starting the new business of

456 Duff, *English Provincial Printers*, 42.
457 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 19.

printed books. However, since English manuscript production was rising at that time, one can conclude that there was a growing market for the written word.[458] Literacy rates in England were increasing. A growth, albeit slow, of readership and potential customers was existent. However, the advantage of technical experience on the continent led to fierce competition from abroad.

In her monograph *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), Elizabeth Eisenstein discusses the question whether the consequences of the introduction of the printing press were revolutionary or evolutionary.[459] Eisenstein was in favour of the former and promulgates her view that the introduction of the printing press demarcates the shift from medieval to early modern times in Western Europe. She established her idea of a "print culture" which is shaped by the advantages of standardization, dissemination and textual fixity of printed works in contrast to manuscripts. Over the course of several years, she received a fair amount of criticism, mainly for her lack of using primary sources along with several generalizations and the overall deterministic conclusions deduced from her approach. Her arguments indirectly suggest that manuscripts were inferior as a medium. Eisenstein ignored the fact that fixity in manuscripts did, to an extent, exist. The overall assumption that the printing press enhanced the book as a medium also obscures the fact that manuscripts offered advantages the printed book could not. Rüdiger Schnell, for example, stresses the directness of manuscripts in contrast to printed books. The latter, according to Schnell, due to the amount of people involved in the printing process, pass through a medial filter from the initial idea to the text to the actual printing process.[460] However, it cannot be ignored that Eisenstein's work was the stimulus for a heated debate

458 Clayton Paul Christianson, "London's Late Medieval Manuscript-Book Trade," *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375–1475*, eds Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge, 1989), 87–108, 89.

459 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1979). After the initial publication of her thesis about print culture, her work was reworked and published as *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1983). The work is an abridged version of *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. The first edition was aimed at the general reader with the footnotes being withdrawn and illustrations added. The second edition in 2005 reintroduced the footnotes.

460 Schnell, however, ignores the fact that the scribe can also be a medial filter and may effectively influence the content of the manuscript. Rüdiger Schnell, "Handschrift und Druck: Zur funktionalen Differenzierung im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert," *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 32.1 (2007), 66–111, 67–72.

over the issue "bringing bibliography out of its ghetto into the larger world of intellectual and social history."[461]

Adrian Johns' monograph *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (1998) uses Eisenstein's theory as a starting point and comments on it accordingly. Apart from his claim that "printing itself stands outside history" in her work, he also suggests that it is not the printed book alone that creates aspects like fixity, but rather the people recognizing it and acting correspondingly.[462] In other words, the acceptance of printed books offering fixity and standardization took centuries to develop. Whereas Eisenstein lists the value of the printed book for the development of Europe, Johns analysed it from a different perspective by asking what the people actually using the book saw as added value within the printed book.

Eisenstein commented on her *Printing Press as an Agent of Change* in the afterword in the second edition of her *Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (2005).[463] She also indirectly responded to her critics in her monograph *Divine Art, Infernal Machine* (2011). By gathering contemporary comments on early printing she defended her idea of fixity and argues that contemporaries did acknowledge fixity and standardization as a quality of the new invention.[464] She agrees with Paul Needham that the idea of equal positive and negative attitudes towards printing feels too artificial. Still, she labels his assessment that the printed book was immediately recognized as equal or even superior to manuscripts as "too sweeping."[465] Drawing from several contemporary comments on the new medium, she comes to the conclusion that absolute rejection hardly existed. Renaissance humanists, Protestants and the Catholic Church alike were aware of the danger of spreading harmful and incorrect texts. What is worth noting, though, is that most comments evaluate the ability of producing many copies rather than the materiality and consequent changes of format, layout and design of printed books. Further, it seems prudent to acknowledge the continuity of

461 Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Linquist and Eleanor F. Shevlin, "Introduction," *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies After Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, eds Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Linquist and Eleanor F. Shevlin (Amherst, 2007), 1–12, 3.

462 Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998), 19.

463 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 2005), 313–358.

464 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of an Ending* (Philadelphia, 2011), esp. 1–33.

465 Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine*, 6.

scribal production after the introduction of printing. Since printing obviously did not replace manuscript production all at once, it is worth asking when printing became standard and the scribal production of a text became something to be justified.

It has oftentimes been stated that printers up to the year 1500 made sure their printed books resembled manuscripts as much as possible: early typography looked like handwriting, hand-finished elements like initials as well as rubrications and miniatures were added after printing by scribes and illuminators and sometimes, printers decided to do two-colour print runs.[466] This was supposed to make printed books for readers familiar with manuscripts "thrillingly new and reassuringly familiar."[467] The initial imitation of manuscript characteristics also hints at printers being aware of the obligation not to overstrain their customers with too many changes. Andrew Pettegree even surmises that printers needed to teach readers to accept books printed with just one colour after it had turned out that two- or even three-colour printing, as tried by several printers, was not viable at all.[468] Until such imitations had been omitted, however, printers apparently accepted the additional costs for several decades. These resemblances of manuscript characteristics led Curt Ferdinand Bühler to label incunables "manuscripts not written by hand."[469]

It is generally accepted that early typography copied the aesthetics of calligraphic handwriting.[470] The choice of different type has been used to emphasize importance, languages and content. However, it also hinted at the pragmatic possibility that sometimes type material was not always chosen to signify content. Type material was, next to paper, the most expensive investment for printers. Its acquisition was dependent on chance and therefore not always easy. Nevertheless, an awareness of the importance of typography can be detected. Caxton's early prints on the continent demonstrate this. However, rather than using typography to stress the text itself, it seems that Caxton was aware of its appeal to the potential customers and changed it according to what was fashionable

466 James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450–1850* (New Haven, CT, 2007), 10.

467 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 33.

468 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 33–34.

469 M. D. Reeve, "Manuscripts Copied from Printed Books," *Manuscripts in the Fifty Years after the Invention of Printing: Some Papers Read at a Colloquium at the Warburg Institute on 12–13 March 1982*, ed. Joseph Burney Trapp (London, 1983, 12–22), 12.

470 James Mosley, "The Technologies of Print," *The Book: Global History,* eds Michael Felix Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), 130–153, 140.

in the area, as has been shown. In the long run, however, such strategies did not persist. The spread of the printed book consequently led to a curious change from manuscript culture to what could be called part of a gradual realization of the logic of print culture and its economy: some scribes, especially in the early Middle Ages, tended to go from place to place and, at least partially, adapted to accepted scribal aesthetics. Caxton seemed to imitate that peculiarity at the very beginning. He did not take his type material for the *History of Troy* with him to Westminster. Rather, he had ordered another type with a Flemish look that might have been more suitable for the potential clients in England that he had in mind. However, printed books and typographic material could reach far places through the established channels of trade. Consequently, readers had to adapt to the design of texts and no longer vice versa.[471]

There are also cases where the striving for imitation went too far: Colard Mansion's efforts to offer as many manuscript characteristics as possible in his printed products turned out to be too costly to produce:

> "[T]o do in print what was being done by hand in manuscript yielded products more and more fabulous in design but so unremunerative to produce – too costly in production, and consequently too costly to distribute – that Mansion soon failed, last heard of fleeing creditors.[472]

Such efforts were highly risky and prone to economic failure. It is possible that Caxton also executed or at least planned a *de luxe* edition of *Ovide Moralisé*, a very popular adaptation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with added glosses. Caxton did translate the text, probably commissioned by an unknown patron, and completed it in April 1480. A luxurious manuscript was created by professional scribes, but a printed edition is not extant. It is doubtful that Caxton ever published it.[473] The manuscript simply was more suitable for a presentation copy than a printed book.[474]

According to acceptance theories, manuscript characteristics in printed books could be explained with printers trying to achieve acknowledgment and, at least, tolerance for the new commodity. However, there is no valid proof that these imitations had been conscious decisions. When printing was introduced to Europe, the codex form of the book was already over 1,000 years old. Manuscript production and dissemination had been established for centuries across national

471 Hellinga, "Printing," 72.
472 Carlson, "A Theory of the Early English Printing Firm," 50.
473 Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*, 72–74.
474 Carlson, "Theory of the Early English Printing Firm," 52–53.

and cultural borders. Therefore, it can also be true that such imitations were simply seen as characteristics of a book as such and were integrated because they were deemed as part of a book in general:

> The first printed books could hardly be distinguished from the manuscripts that they replaced. However, neither is a case of conscious imitation. Rather, it is a matter of involuntarily following familiar conventions and continuing along a known road. It is inevitable that the possibilities the new medium offers are not always fully recognised at the time, even though they may look obvious in retrospect. There are always people with enough imagination and originality to sketch that kind of potential, but if their thinking connects insufficiently with what is usual at the time their ideas will not be recognised.[475]

Conventions in manuscripts such as ligatures, contractions and variant forms of the same grapheme were in the interest of economy because they sped up manuscript production and relieved the scribes.[476] For printing, this meant casting unnecessary type material. Whereas a scribe could simply write a variant form of a grapheme, the printer would have needed various forms of the grapheme in stock. Consequently, such manuscript-specific graphemes were eventually excluded to cut down expenses and to speed up the production process. The exclusion of such features signifies the moment when the printed book became a fully-fledged medium with characteristics of its own.

Whether early printed books were designed to resemble manuscripts or not, there are examples where printers at least wanted to awe their customers with exquisite books. Contemporary sources exist that praise the Gutenberg Bible as an astounding piece of work. Piccolomini's letter discussed at the beginning of this chapter is a convincing example. Even though it can be argued that Gutenberg did not use the best possible texts that were available, the book as a material object seemed to radiate something that impressed book users.

For a long time, the shift from folio to quarto editions (and their acceptance) has been explained with economic reasons. Wynkyn de Worde has been accused by scholars of offering cheap prints and commercializing the book trade. Such allegations are currently being contested since the format of books is only one factor of many that comprise the overall extent of a text. Other factors like layout and type size play an equally important role. Therefore, "[. . .] folio editions of texts need not be expensive, but may, in fact, be cheaper than quarto editions

475 Van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds*, 138.

476 Hellinga, "Printing," 70. Hellinga also claims that the imitation of these conventions in printed books was aimed at making the printed text more acceptable.

of the same text."[477] If this was the case, de Worde's shift to the smaller format was not intended to save money. Rather, it was a reaction to the needs of his customers who seemed to prefer more portability. It was a feature of new books that pupils and students valued and consequently demanded. Moreover, a general trend towards smaller formats in England is noticeable, as David Carlson has pointed out. Even though de Worde stands out with about 73 per cent of his output in quarto format, his main competitor Richard Pynson is close behind with approximately 63 per cent. Carlson's statistics also reveal a focus on octavo format towards the middle of the sixteenth century.[478]

The humanist movement was not only quick to accept and prefer the inherent features that print offered, it also had a vital impact on the printed page. Paul Oskar Kristeller describes humanism as "that broad concern with the study and imitation of classical antiquity which was characteristic of the period and found its expression in scholarship and education and many other areas, including the arts and sciences."[479] Wakelin adds that it is a "self-conscious commitment to return to the classics, or *ad fontes*, as did the advocates and teachers of the studia humanitatis."[480] If, then, the desire of humanists is to have access to precise scholarly versions of rediscovered texts, the features of printed books like standardization, typographical fixity and errata slips could all be considered added values for humanism that not only led to tolerance of the new medium, but to complete acceptance and preference.[481] Consequently, it is worth noting that European

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477 Joseph A. Dane and Alexandra Gillespie, "The Myth of the Cheap Quarto," *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning*, ed. John N. King (Cambridge, 2010), 25–45, 40. The essay is a plea against the derogatory term of "cheap quarto" because it alludes to inferior textual quality and less prestige compared to folio editions. Dane and Gillespie argue that contemporaries did not depreciate quarto editions.

478 David Richard Carlson, "Formats in English Printing to 1557," *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*, 2 (1988), 50–57, 52. To ensure reliability of these statistics, Carlson excluded broadsides and indulgences consisting only of one sheet.

479 Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Humanism," *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt (Cambridge, 1988), 113–137, 113, quoted in Daniel Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature: 1430–1530* (Oxford, 2007), 8.

480 Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature*, 8.

481 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 20–21. See also Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 65: "[P]ublishing errata sharpened attention to error within the printer's workshop[.]"

textual production in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was heavily affected by Renaissance Humanism. The impact on English literature, however, is limited in this era.[482] As has been stated, John Siberch was imported to Cambridge to encourage humanistic text production in England. The result, however, turned out to be an economic failure despite the university offering potential customers. Occasional attempts of English printers at Latin texts had similar disappointing results: "When Wynkyn de Worde printed the oration delivered to Henry VII in 1506 by Louis XII's envoy, Claude de Seyssel, he botched the job so, according to Seyssel himself, that the text had to be handed over to Badius Ascensius in Paris to be reprinted in an acceptable form."[483] Obviously, de Worde's printing abilities for Latin texts were of inferior quality and thus deemed unfitting for such a publication. Examples like these emphasize Trapp's evaluation of the humanist book market in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In contrast to textbooks for schools and universities, it was small, difficult and unprofitable.[484] William Caxton printed a mere 15 humanist texts and as a result was labelled by scholars as medieval and ignorant.[485] According to Carlson, the primary interest of early printers was the marketing of their commodities. Since the potential market in England was too small, it was not incentive enough to produce more humanist texts. Often, humanist books were produced on demand, mainly by scholars, and often in quarto format, which suggests usage in school due to their handier features. However, influences on the printed book were palpable in Europe. These influences affecting the layout of texts stem from the developments in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when university textbooks adopted a new style to enhance work with them. Gothic script was substituted by a more legible fount based on Carolingian models, the choice of using smaller books, the abandonment of abbreviations and the exclusion of extensive commentaries

482 Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature*, 4. Wakelin criticizes the assumption that there was hardly any influence at all and convincingly argues for a more balanced view.

483 Joseph Burney Trapp, "The Humanist Book," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol III, 1400–1557*, eds Lotte Hellinga and Joseph Burney Trapp (Cambridge, 1999), 285–315, 289.

484 Trapp, "The Humanist Book," 290; STC 22270.5.

485 David Richard Carlson, *English Humanist Books: Writers and Patrons, Manuscript and Print, 1475–1525* (Toronto, 1993), 130–135.

within texts were all developments which were later taken over by printed books.[486] Reference elements like pagination, headlines and chapter sections made the book more efficient for scholarly use. Even though such elements were not altogether unfamiliar to the manuscript, their application was only standardized in printed books and became an added value that ultimately led to preference of the printed book.[487]

The impact of humanism on the printed page must not be neglected. It is noteworthy, however, that even early humanist printers needed to cater to their clients by adhering to certain conventions still cherished:

> Sweynheim and Pannartz attempted to reproduce the sort of books acceptable to cultivated Italian taste. This naturally also involved the hand-finishing which Italian buyers expected – book and chapter headings written in red, hand-painted initials at major divisions of the text, vine-stem borders on the first page and so on – often carried out in the printer's office.[488]

2.4. The Book Value Categories Applied

In the late fifteenth century, the book trade had already been in many respects an international business. Latin was the universal language of scholars and the clergy. Consequently, national or even linguistic borders did not define the market for books. A larger readership and potentially large circle of customers was guaranteed, which was, especially at the beginning, satisfied with established texts that had been in demand before the introduction of printing in the form of manuscripts. What seems prevalent during the early years of printing is a tension between economic and content value. Initially, the possibilities of printing did only slowly stimulate the creation of new texts. Most printers concentrated on established texts due to economic considerations. Content value was the most important asset of printers, and established texts were a less risky commodity than new texts.

However, if the manuscript elements in incunables are regarded as conscious imitations of printers, then the implementation of these manuscript characteristics implies that they were necessary for the printed books to be accepted by

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486 Jean-François Gilmont, "Printing at the Dawn of the Sixteenth Century," *The Reformation and the Book*, eds Jean-François Gilmont and Karin Maag (Aldershot, 1998), 10–20, 14.

487 Martin Davies, "Humanism in Script and Print in the Fifteenth Century," *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. Jill Kraye (Cambridge, 1996), 47–62, 56.

488 Davies, "Humanism in Script and Print," 55.

readers. The additional costs for rubrications, initials and illuminations were steep.[489] The acceptance of the printed book was of vital importance for printers. Eventually, printers replaced decorative elements by illuminators with ornamental woodcuts, which reduced the costs, but not to a large extent.[490] Hence, they hazarded the consequences of additional costs. However, printers did not disguise the fact that these books were not manuscripts. Rather, many printed books stressed the novelty of production methods in their colophons.[491]

Gutenberg's decision to print a Latin bible as his first major work supports the idea that early printers wanted to win over the established book users. It was Gutenberg's plan to impress them with his innovation. Even though it would have been economically more prudent to focus on smaller texts that were in greater demand and, accordingly, would have guaranteed a great turnover, those texts would not have had the symbolic value of a text such as the bible. Even with the unmatched importance of the bible aside, it was even more important to produce a voluminous work of high quality to awe and impress. The decision to print several copies on parchment further stresses this idea. The materiality further added manuscript characteristics to the printed book. The additional costs for the material, however, was immense. A paper copy of the B42 was sold for 20 gulden, which was about the annual salary of a master craftsman. A vellum copy was with 50 gulden more than double the cost of the paper edition.[492]

With the gradual omission of manuscript characteristics, the printed book established a border between itself and the manuscript and became a distinguished medium of its own in the 1530s, when presses were excessively used during the Reformation.[493] It was then when printing presses gradually relied more on printing new material rather than just already established texts. The theological disputes during the Reformation created an incentive for more new printed material, albeit mainly for pamphlets and broadsheets, especially on the continent.

Early book production in the British Isles was insofar special in that it concentrated very much on national identity. No other country produced so many texts, percentage-wise, in the vernacular in this era.[494] By opening a new market

489 Although it is not clear who and how hand-finishing was executed in the early days of printing, most scholars deem it realistic that they might have been done in the printing house. See, for example, Driver, *Image in Print*, 6.

490 Febvre and Martin, *Coming of the Book*, 111.

491 Hellinga, "The Gutenberg Revolutions," 380.

492 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 29.

493 Gilmont, "Printing at the Dawn of the Sixteenth Century," 11.

494 Hellinga, "Printing," 68.

for the lay readership, Caxton and his successors paved the way for a fast and increasing acceptance of the printed book in England. Consequently, the early printing presses in England offer a decisive demarcation from early presses on the continent, where humanistic and clerical texts along with more mundane publications formed the basis for a sound printing business before they engaged in producing new texts. The focus on literary and historical texts in England, however, was not necessarily by choice. Competition from the continent by prolific printers was too strong to prevail. Printing expertise in England was, compared to experienced printing centres in Antwerp, Cologne or Venice, rather limited.

European presses initially relied on established texts because they had more prestige and were therefore less risky commodities. With the enormous amount of preparation before a text could finally be printed, this was the most decisive factor for the acceptance and success of the printed book. However, the example of Gutenberg's B42 has shown that printers deemed it necessary to prove the ability of the printing press possibly to redeem the loss of aura of handwritten texts.[495] Ironically, mundane texts like almanacs, catechisms, pamphlets and prayer books turned out to become the book trade's foundation of the early printing presses.[496]

Manuscript properties, whether consciously applied or not, were an integral part of the early printed book and had an inherent symbolic value. In the 1530s, when printers, with occasional exceptions, finally ceased these imitations, the printed book was fully embedded in European culture. The extensive use of printing presses during the Reformation certainly helped the new technology to become almost ubiquitous. Neither manuscript imitations nor a focus on old texts were necessary. The key feature of the printing press was the possibility to create many more copies to enable a much more efficient and far-reaching dissemination of books and facilitation of communication. In other words, symbolic value was relevant for acknowledging and tolerating the innovation, but content value was the deciding factor for the complete acceptance and preferences of the printed book.

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495 Jan-Dirk Müller, "Der Körper des Buches: Zum Medienwechsel zwischen Handschrift und Druck," *Materialität der Kommunikation,* ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Frankfurt, 1988), 203–217, 205.

496 Alexis Weedon, "The Economics of Print," *The Book: A Global History*, eds Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), 154–168, 155.

The English situation in the history of early printing was, as previously stated, decidedly different from the continent. William Caxton filled a market niche with his approach to focus on lay readership with historical and literary texts in the vernacular. While Caxton also used manuscript characteristics, especially in his first printed book on the continent with a richly decorated frontispiece as well as typography based on a respected scribe, Caxton slowly focussed on content as the primary value for his customers. While occasional use of woodcuts (albeit of rather crude quality compared to woodcuts from the continent) in his works, his success was mainly guaranteed with his publishing policy of vernacular texts for his audience. By mentioning his aristocratic patrons in his prologues, Caxton established prestige and symbolic value for his books on which he based his success. He knew that his texts were unlikely to be read on the continent and therefore produced for a domestic market rather than an international one by focussing on English.

His successor Wynkyn de Worde initially copied Caxton's publishing policy, and in his later years turned towards devotional literature. The focus on religious publications and grammars is not surprising since they dominated the English book market in the years after 1500.[497] However, lacking the same connections to the aristocratic circles, de Worde rather used his connection to Caxton, benefitting from Caxton's prestige. It is no coincidence that de Worde initially used Caxton's printer's device and later designed a new one which strikingly resembled Caxton's. When it became apparent that de Worde could not keep up with imitating Caxton's policy due to his inability to translate French texts, he decided to use contemporary authors. The acceptance of new texts hints at the fact that the printed book was finally accepted even without the added value of prestige and trustworthiness by established texts, manuscript characteristics or aristocratic patronage. Such transitional aspects of early printed books in England became slowly less important and first steps towards a commercialized book trade became apparent.

As Hellinga points out, "selling books, printers discovered, takes as much ingenuity as printing them."[498] Early printers, in their role as publishers, adapted their policies and the material object to satisfy their clients. Technology alone did not drive that transformation. Sociocultural elements played a vital part in the shaping of the printed book as well. A small example offered by Martin

497 John N. King, "Introduction," *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning*, ed. John N. King (Cambridge, 2010), 1–14, 6.

498 Hellinga, "Gutenberg Revolutions," 390.

Davies concisely sums up the overall development of the printing press on the book market:

> Thanks to his good connections, with the Medici in particular, the Florentine scholar Angelo Poliziano had access to priceless manuscript treasures from the past; but when he wanted a text on which to enter collations, or simply to read, he would buy a printed book – convenient, legible and cheap.[499]

The old medium and its specific features were still cherished and admired and highly valued. In some cases, it was even preferred, as, for example, book gifts. But convenience in the sense of easier and cheaper access to content became a stronger value for the book. By the 1530s, the printed book was fully established both in England and on the continent. The advantages of much faster production were noticed and accepted, both by producer and consumer. Three centuries later, these steps came to full bloom after further technological and sociocultural developments.

499 Davies, "Humanism in Script and Print," 56.

3. The Industrial Age

Abstract: The age of industrialization was not only shaped by technological innovations, for example improvements in paper production or the application of steam power for printing. It was also affected by many sociocultural developments like, for example, urbanization or the steep rise of literacy rates, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century. Both types of development had direct and indirect effects on the book trade and therefore affected the overall acceptance context of innovations. Whereas some new methods were accepted almost immediately, other inventions took decades to manifest themselves in book production. Surprisingly, despite many innovations toward a cheaper production of books, the three-volume-novel, an expensive (and obsolete) publication format specific for Great Britain, remained the preferred form of publication for many publishers until the end of the nineteenth century. Reason for this artificial hindrance of acceptance for cheaper book formats was, among other things, the successful system of commercial circulating libraries, especially Charles Edward Mudie's "Select Library."

Keywords: acceptance of mass-production, industrialization, industrial revolution, urbanization, circulating libraries, print culture, mass-production, publishing industry

Some historians claim that the nineteenth century revolutionized the book publishing industry in Europe, especially in Great Britain. Others merely see a logical continuation of the impulse set off by Gutenberg's press in the fifteenth century. It can be observed throughout the centuries following Gutenberg's invention that the same basic technology to produce books was used and only slowly improved in minor ways. The first major innovation in book production – stereotyping – was initially conceived in the eighteenth century, but it needed much more time to finally become routine procedure despite its practical and economic advantages. Book printers also neglected the application of steam power for decades after it had become available to produce printed material. Only the second major improvement, the development of faster methods and new materials for paper production, was accepted relatively fast and set new standards in the printing business.

Still, when considering the lack of changes during 300 years of hand press printing, there actually is a panoply of changes in the book industry, especially in Great Britain.[500] David McKitterick suggests the year 1830 as a turning point in

500 Jean-Yves Mollier and Marie-Françoise Cachin, "A Continent of Texts: Europe 1800–1890," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 485–497, 485.

which revolutionary dynamics become apparent due to technological and economic changes.[501] Stephen Colclough labels the effects of industrialization as a second book revolution after the introduction of printing in the fifteenth century and adds that "simply the increased output of the industry created a greater diversity in quality, formats and prices to attract audiences."[502]

It needs to be pointed out, though, that the impetus for changes in the book industry are not necessarily technological advances, even in a time of drastic technical changes like the nineteenth century. As will be shown, many important changes during the nineteenth century were actually invisible. Although the age of industrialization is primarily equated with technological advancements, the sociocultural transformations in this era must not be neglected. Adriaan van der Weel speaks of a sociotechnical spiral

> in the dialectic between social and technological factors, in which, however, technology acts as a catalyst. It both contributes the initial driving force and represents the conditions enabling change, initially as well as later. Technologies are usually created without a clear view of their full ultimate deployment. They usually suggest social uses *after* they are made available.[503]

This perspective, even though not specific for the industrial age, is necessary to fully understand the development of the material aspects of the book during the nineteenth century and the changes of the book value categories.

3.1. Context: England During the Industrialization

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Great Britain was, as John Feather puts it, "truly a world power, with a functioning system of representative (although far from democratic) government, an efficient infrastructure for business and a

501 David McKitterick, "Introduction," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. VI, 1830–1914*, ed. David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), 1–74, 3–4. With this argument, McKitterick also justifies the chosen time frame of the sixth volume of the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*. He also adds to his justification the political unrest in Europe during that time as well as the publication of several important works and the death of a whole generation of printers during the 1830s.

502 Stephen Colclough, "Introduction," *The History of the Book in the West. A Library of Critical Essays. Vol. IV: 1800–1914*, ed. Alexis Weedon (Farnham, Surrey, 2010), xi–xxviii, xxv.

503 Van der Weel, *Changing our Textual Minds,* 5.

broadly equitable system of law."[504] In other words, being an economically and politically stable country, it offered a fertile ground for growth and changes even for the – then comparatively small – business of the book trade.[505]

While various industries in England rather quickly accepted innovative technological improvements, the field of book production lagged behind considerably in some cases. Changes in society, however, had a first subtle but still palpable impact on the world of the book. As Simon Eliot has examined, the population grew about 77 per cent from 1861 to 1911. At the same time, the output of the printing presses rose by 154 per cent.[506] Even more significant for the publishing industry was the factor of urbanization, the growing importance of towns and the founding of new ones. People moved from the countryside to the cities to find work. The 1881 census showed that more than twice as many people lived in cities than in the countryside. Only three decades before, the number of people living in towns was just slightly in the majority.[507] This development expanded and slowly transformed the market for reading material. Still, neither urbanization nor the increase in population explains the increase in literacy rates. Since many children were forced to contribute to the family income, they were unable to attend school and therefore were not able to profit from the educational system.[508] However, industrialization and modernization created new kinds of jobs that required a literate workforce. The 1870 Elementary Education Act, also known as Forster's Act, was a direct result.[509] The desire to become literate developed not only because of the state but also in opposition to

504 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 72.

505 Even though Britain was an economically stable country, at least the years of monetary crises, 1825 and 1864–1866, ought to be mentioned. McKitterick, "Introduction," 4. Especially the bank crisis in late 1825 resulted in harsh repercussions on the British publishing business. Most notably, the leading publisher Archibald Constable (Walter Scott's publisher) had to declare bankruptcy. Many contemporaries, like Samuel Smiles, Charles Knight and Frank Arthur Mumby, commented on this. John A. Sutherland, "The British Book Trade and the Crash of 1826," *The Library*, 6th ser., 9 (1987), 148–161.

506 Simon Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends in British Publishing, 1800–1919* (London, 1994), 3.

507 McKitterick, "Introduction," 23–24.

508 McKitterick, "Introduction," 43.

509 Patrick Jackson, *Education Act Forster: A Political Biography of W. E. Forster (1818–1886)* (Madison, 1997); Allen Warren, "Forster, William Edward (1818–1886)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9926> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

it. Political participation of the suffering and suppressed workforce was a logical appeal. The encouragement and pursuit of self-improvement in the Victorian age could best be satisfied by the book trade. Indeed, throughout the industrial age, the whole society became more and more dependent on printing so that "illiteracy was no longer merely a social stigma, it was a fundamental economic disadvantage."[510]

Throughout the late nineteenth century, book production was still a rather small part of the printing industry.[511] That in itself is a little surprising because the printed book, as a medium, was supposed to be in its heyday: even though books were still copied by hand in some places, especially in Ireland, manuscript production was rarely a threat to the printed book business.[512] Further, other means of communication, information and entertainment that would compete with the dominance of the printed word in the future, like radio broadcasting or television, did not yet exist.[513]

With this basic context of the book trade in mind, this chapter addresses the most important developments of production, distribution and reception of books. Since many factors that shaped the book industry are interdependent, there is no obvious sequence in which they ought to be discussed. Following Thomas Adams and Nicolas Barker, this chapter chooses the stage of publication, "the initial decision to multiply a text or image for distribution,"[514] as the starting point. This stage addresses not only the situation for publishers but also the situation for authors, who gained in importance throughout this time frame. The next part elaborates on the developments of technological possibilities of printing from plates, paper production and the new presses. It will, however,

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510 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 86.

511 Simon Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap: The British Book Market 1800–1890," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 471–484, 475–476. Periodicals were the biggest item in print production and circulation.

512 James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor, "Introduction: The Practice and Representation of Reading in England," *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, ed. James Raven (Cambridge, 1996), 1–21, 7: "The proportion of available manuscript texts compared to printed matter varied, as did the types of text produced by hand or print, but even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the sovereignty of print was on occasion challenged by written communications."

513 Leslie Howsam, "The History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," *The Book: A Global History*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013), 300–310, 300.

514 Adams and Barker, "New Model for the Study of the Book," 15.

exclude the development and breakthrough of mechanized typesetting in the late 1880s/ early 1890s with the Linotype and Monotype machines.[515] The mechanization of typesetting, as John Feather argues, was probably the most complex change for printers. However, it was initially required in newspaper and magazine production, and not book production.[516] Monotype machines were only commercially used from 1897, and effects on the price of books can only be seen when "the First World War pushed both prices and wages higher."[517] Therefore, it will be neglected for the present study as their implementation and acceptance take place in modernity.

The distribution chapter, even though it comes before reception in the sequence of the book's life cycle, will conclude the analysis. Not only does it emphasize the significance of the much-neglected part of distribution within book history, it also underlines the special role of commercial lending libraries, especially Mudie's "Select Library." Borrowing books instead of buying them was an accepted alternative in the second half of the nineteenth century. Apart from guiding literary taste with its economic power as an important customer of publishers, Mudie's immense control also led to the establishment and perseverance of the so-called three-decker (or triple-decker) novel. The success of circulating libraries discouraged possible developments and acceptance of other publishing strategies that would make use of cheaper production methods. It thereby artificially slowed down changes of the book form in England for several decades. The triple-decker is a unique example in England that illustrates the complex interdependence of social and cultural developments in connection with book value categories. Mudie's "Select Library" was a decisive agent

515 Allan Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England* (Charlottesville, 1992), 5–6. Allan Dooley uses the same time frame with the same argument: the introduction of mechanical composition is such a fundamental change in book production that it would be unwise to integrate the years afterwards in a chapter concerning the changes in Victorian times. The basic idea of mechanical typesetting with Linotype was that the operator enters a whole line on a keyboard. The line would be cast by the machine as a single piece, called a "slug." In comparison, the monotype system did not combine the elements of composing and casting. The operator entered a text which was encoded on a roll of paper with holes. The paper was then inserted in a second machine which cast the whole line, but in individual pieces. This enabled easy correction if necessary. Errors with Linotype could only be corrected by casting the whole line again. Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 274–296.

516 Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 88.

517 Alexis Weedon, *Victorian Publishing: The Economics of Book Production for a Mass Market, 1836–1916* (Aldershot, 2003), 78.

in the context of acceptance for cheaper, smaller books. For decades, novels in three volumes added value to the publication and remained the more prestigious publication form.

3.1.1. Publication

The nineteenth century was affected by the continuation of the slow separation of the roles of printer, publisher and bookseller into three distinct professional activities, a progress in development since the seventeenth century:[518] Whereas William Caxton, for example, was occasionally publisher, printer, author (either as translator or writer of paratextual elements) and bookseller at the same time in the late fifteenth century, authors in the nineteenth century only seldom published their own works and therefore had to rely on publishers, who then negotiated with printers and booksellers. Added to that, with the growing importance of publishers, their self-perception affected the publishing business even more. The book business became more and more complex during the industrial age. Reading material of manifold categories was written to be published which created the need for professional publishers' readers to maintain the literary quality of the publishing houses. On the other hand, authors, for the same reason, slowly became dependent on literary agents who, for their part, negotiated with the publishers since, as Feather summarizes, "authors were writers, not businessmen."[519]

Authors

In its most basic sense, an author is someone who writes a text in order to be published. Whether or not they get paid for it and whether or not they see themselves as authors is irrelevant. This activity might be entrepreneurial, artistic, political or intellectual, or a combination of these.[520] While Feather rightly laments that the author is oftentimes the "forgotten figure in the history of publishing and the book trade,"[521] the importance of the author in the publishing

518 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 82.

519 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 140. For the roles of publishers' readers and literary agents in Britain, see, for example, David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, *An Introduction to Book History*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2013), 86–100.

520 Patrick Leary and Andrew Nash, "Authorship," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. VI, 1830–1914*, ed. David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), 172–213, 172–173.

521 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 132.

industry gained weight throughout the nineteenth century. In his monograph *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters*, John Gross even argues that the years between 1880 and 1914 represent the time in which the interest in authors had been as strong as never before and since.[522] There are several indicators proving this rise of importance: one indicator is the Copyright Act of 1842 even though the act itself was not as important as its successors in 1911, 1958 or 1988.[523] Whereas previous copyrights protected the publishers rather than the authors, the 1842 Act extended the copyright to 42 years or seven years after the death of the author, thus creating more incentive for authors to write.[524] As a consequence, many authors saw their position strengthened and felt the incentive to produce more works in order to make more money. New texts became more interesting for publishers so that they were willing to pay authors more money.[525] According to Simon Eliot, writings submitted to publishers increased drastically at this time although the economic success was seldom divided equally between authors. While most authors were unable to live from writing alone, only some were not merely becoming wealthy, but furthermore gained the status of true celebrities.[526] Writers were finally becoming respected artists and being an author was recognized as a profession in the 1860s.[527]

The 1870s again saw a rise in the numbers of authors. This time, the impetus for this development was the expansion of journalism.[528] Newspapers and magazines, affordable for almost everybody (in contrast to books), became the most popular form of publication and more writers were needed to provide texts.[529] The increase in newspaper and magazine production in turn, as Laurel Brake argues, encouraged the act of reading in society, enhanced the professionalism of journalism, literature and authorship in general and helped separating

522 John Gross, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters: Aspects of English Literary Life Since 1800* (London, 1961), 216.

523 Raven, *Business of Books*, 321. For a succinct overview of the most important changes in copyright during the nineteenth century, see Catherine Seville, "Copyright," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. VI, 1830–1914*, ed. David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), 214–237.

524 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 474.

525 Mollier and Cachin, "A Continent of Texts," 489.

526 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 476–477.

527 Mollier and Cachin, "A Continent of Texts," 494.

528 Leary, Nash, "Authorship," 194.

529 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 137.

journalism from literature.[530] Whilst contributions in periodicals initially were mostly anonymous, they were later "revealed and commodified in book publication,"[531] signifying a "public thirst for the named individual that nineteenth century reader/consumers exhibit[ed]."[532] Readers slowly became interested in authors and not only in texts. This is an important observation concerning the value of books: authors themselves add value to the product.

While newspapers and magazines were looking for journalists and their contributions, publishers became aware of the growing economic opportunities of novels in the second half of the nineteenth century. More stories were needed and therefore, more authors. In order to obtain good writers to satisfy a growing market of readers, publishers were, albeit slowly, offering better conditions for authors.[533] This is noteworthy if one considers that publishers traditionally preferred to turn to cheap reprints of successful texts in financially uncertain times since publishing new texts was always a risk.[534] Added to that, no copyright payment was required, which enhanced the possibility to make a profit.

Income of authors was highly uncertain. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed several authors who became true celebrities. Goethe, Zola, Twain, Carroll and Tolstoy fall into that category. Charles Dickens is an especially popular example of an author of the Victorian age who had become a wealthy celebrity during his lifetime. However, his achievements, his fame and his relationships with his publishers, no matter how fascinating they are, are far from being representative of the common author in the nineteenth century.[535] As James Raven puts it: "The fortune-making of the few did nothing to improve the general lot of writers."[536] Usually, a publisher would commission an author to create a work with specific information about the topic and the length of the text.

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530 Laurel Brake, "The 'Trepidation of the Spheres': The Serial and the Book in the 19th Century," *Serials and Their Readers, 1620–1914: Papers Originally Read at the 14th Annual Conference on Book Trade History at the Birkbeck College, Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, University of London, November 1992*, ed. Robin Myers (Winchester, 1993), 83–102, 84.

531 Brake, "'Trepidation of the Spheres,'" 91.

532 Brake, "'Trepidation of the Spheres,'" 93.

533 Mollier and Cachin, "A Continent of Texts," 488.

534 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 175.

535 Mollier and Cachin, "A Continent of Texts," 493–494. The seminal study on Dickens's life and work and his publishers still is Robert Lowry Patten, *Charles Dickens and his Publishers* (Oxford, 1978).

536 Raven, *Business of Books*, 333.

A fee would be fixed beforehand. Additionally, the agreement might also include further information about the number of copies and payment in the event of a reprint and so on.[537] Once an author had, for example, written a successful novel, his or her income was basically safe. But even then, writers were never protected against a sudden decline in sales.[538]

The three most common contracts between author and publisher during the Victorian age were publishing on commission, half-profits and outright sale of copyright. Publishing on commission, that is the agreement of the author paying for some or all the costs of the publication, existed throughout the century. However, it was only seldom applied for novels but rather for poetry, and especially legal works and medical books since these required constant revisions.[539]

Half-profits, the agreement to share the profits between publisher and author, naturally bore the risk that the authors might get nothing or just little in case their novel did not sell well. Also, authors had to rely on the honesty of the publisher, a virtue, which was in places (but certainly not always) justifiably questioned. Leary and Nash quote Besant's suggestion to confront publishers with "wholesome suspicion," just like one should deal with businessmen.[540]

The outright selling of copyright on the other hand guaranteed an immediate income for the author. But this in turn bore the risk of not benefitting from a huge success. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, authors and their agents pressed for royalties to be able to participate in the assets of profits. In 1877, Anthony Trollope wrote a letter to Thomas Hardy advising him that the royalty system was best and that he should try to get his publisher to pay him royalties in case he was not in need of immediate money.[541] Interestingly enough, this advice must have been born out of bad experience since Trollope sold most of his works outright to his publishers. He is, however, notorious for having changed his publisher no less than 16 times.[542] Nevertheless, such a royalty agreement, though popular in the United States of America by then,[543] became custom in Britain only after the 1901 Net Book Agreement, which, in essence, fixed book prices

537 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 133.
538 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 178, 187. Especially playwrights had a hard time since the audience's interest focussed more and more on the actors and managers, not on the playwright.
539 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 177, 207.
540 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 208.
541 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 207.
542 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 189, 207.
543 Howsam, "History of the Book, 1801–1914," 304.

and thus offered a fair basis on which royalties should be paid. The acceptance of these royalties, and the emergence of literary agents by publishers in general both symbolize the progress in recognizing the author as a vital and respected element in the publishing trade.[544] Authors consequently added more value to the book. The establishment of the Society of Authors in 1884 also helped to reinforce the sense of authorship as a professional activity. It instructed authors concerning literary property and contractual agreements with publishers and generally fought for their rights.[545]

A final indicator of the growing acceptance of authorship as a profession is the official recognition of the government: "In 1861, the official government census listed 'author' for the first time alongside medicine and law as profession, thus formally recognizing the migration of authorship from the realm of skilled workers to the realm of professionals."[546]

Indeed, authors were now deemed important enough to be funded. Consequently, state supports of authors were established. Institutions like the Royal Literary Fund, the Royal Society of Literature and the Civil List all tried in their way to encourage the creation and production of sophisticated literature. Yet, those institutions were commonly criticized by the Society of Authors for being too arbitrary in their decisions. And relying on state support oftentimes carried the stigma of charity.[547]

Most authors during the nineteenth century were dependent on other occupations. Starting in the late 1870s, newspapers offered more permanent positions for writers. Before that, and even for several authors afterwards, writing was seldom the primary but rather just an additional income. In his 1962 study "The Sociology of Authorship," Richard Altick analysed the social background of authors in the nineteenth century and came to the conclusion that "[t]he church, the arts, and government obviously were the three institutions which helped subsidize the production of literature in the nineteenth century."[548]

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544 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 141. For further examples of contractual agreements between authors and publishers and examples, see Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 175–178. More detailed information is offered in Charles Clark (ed.), *Publishing Agreements*, London, 1980.

545 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 209.

546 Mary Ann Gillies, *The Professional Literary Agent in Britain, 1880–1920* (Toronto, 2007), 18.

547 Leary and Nash, "Authorship," 210.

548 Richard Daniel Altick, "The Sociology of Authorship: The Social Origins, Education, and Occupations of 1,100 British Writers, 1800–1935," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 66 (1962), 389–404, 401.

While in the first half of the nineteenth century writers were mainly occupied as clergymen, government officials or civil servants, writers in the latter half were mainly teachers and professors.[549]

But despite these grim prospects for a literary career, the number of writers, according to the official census returns for England and Wales seems to be rising steadily from 626 authors in 1841 to 13,786 in 1911.[550] Even though one should use these figures with caution, the general trend seems obvious enough: authors were on the rise.

Publisher

All the developments during the industrial age had to be assessed by the publisher in order to make economically viable decisions. Even though publishers were not solely interested in economic profit, it was of paramount importance to reach enough sales to avoid bankruptcy.[551] The selective process of publishers decidedly steered the shaping of the book trade on all levels during the nineteenth century. Even though publishers whose primary goal was to make money existed, most publishers had a self-conception that was characterized by an awareness of cultural duty. The analogy of "gatekeeper of ideas," first used by Lewis A. Coser on the primary role of publishers, is a fitting description.[552] Gerald Gross summarizes the self-image of publishers in the nineteenth century as follows:

> Out of the ethos of social Darwinism and the Industrial Revolution emerged the individual publisher of the nineteenth century. He was his own man in every sense of the word. He carried on personal publishing when that type of publishing was at its peak. In short, he believed in what he published. Thus, his personal character was symbolized in the books on his list and the honesty of his relations with authors and his publishing colleagues. The two were inextricable. This individualistic publishing makes a dramatic contrast with today's trend towards depersonalized merger and amalgamations, with the substitution of the personal publisher for the editorial board.[553]

549 Altick, "The Sociology of Authorship," 401.

550 Altick, "The Sociology of Authorship," 400.

551 A striking example of bankruptcy is analysed in Bernard Warrington, "The Bankruptcy of William Pickering in 1853: The Hazards of Publishing and Bookselling in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Publishing History*, 27 (1990), 5–25.

552 Lewis A. Coser, "Publishers as Gatekeepers of Ideas," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 421 (1975), 14–22. The concept of "gatekeeping" initially stems from communication and social sciences concerned with selection of newsworthy material.

553 Gerald Gross, *Publishers on Publishing* (New York, 1961), xii.

Still, economic safety was a precondition to ensure the future of the publishing house. John Feather expresses this in his slightly exaggerated style with claiming that "[f]or some nineteenth-century publishers books were a crusade or a cultural duty; for others, however, and they were in the majority, books were a product, authors were suppliers and booksellers were customers."[554]

The publisher's influence on authors concerning content is demonstrated in the following quote from publisher Longmans addressing author Eliza Acton[555] after she had handed in a poem for publication: "It is no good bringing me poetry; nobody wants poetry now. Bring me a cookery book, and we might come to terms."[556] Even though Acton had already written a text, Longmans refused to publish it because its chances for economic value was, according to his assessment, not high enough in "those days." The readers' taste was constantly changing. After all, Acton's publisher laments that readers do not want poetry "now." Indeed, poetry has been very popular in the eighteenth century. Instead, Longmans is quite certain of what will sell instead: cookery books, which was another speciality of Acton. When she later handed in *Modern Cookery for Private Families* (1845), it became a considerable success.[557] Thus, it was the publisher responding to and estimating the fluctuating demand of the market that visibly influenced the categories of texts that were being published.

To complicate things further for publishers, the amount of texts and different genres was growing. Even though there is a minimum print run under which the use of the printing press would not be viable, there is also the danger of overprinting. Therefore, it was prudent of the publisher to produce more texts rather than just more copies to distribute the risk over many titles. Printing output expanded as well as the diversity of the publishing categories. Considering this boost of new texts, the market became harder to assess for publishers. Even though the growth of new readers initially meant more potential customers, it still had to be assessed what kind of reading material was wanted, not unlike in Caxton's time. In the late eighteenth century, publishers like John Bell

554 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 141. He also offers several examples such as Macmillan, Cassell and Murray to point out the variety of new publishing in the nineteenth century.

555 Elizabeth Ray, "Acton, Eliza (1799–1859)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/73> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

556 Quoted in Frank Arthur Mumby, *Publishing and Bookselling* (London, 1954), 254.

557 Ray, "Acton, Eliza (1799–1859)."

represented the future of the trade, focussing on reprint series.[558] Bell's concepts of his series *British Theatre* and *The Poets of Great Britain* were innovative and ground-breaking in his days. The volumes have a universal design so that the sets appear as a unit. The books were produced in a small duodecimo format that fit easily in one hand. However, the printing quality may be wanting, and the paper appears to be rather thin. Instead, Bell focused special attention on his title-pages, which were uniformly designed. Every book was embellished with a portrait of the author and further illustrations. The inclusion of a portrait of a significant poet had been common practice since the sixteenth century, but Bell expanded on this idea: it was important to him that the portraits were done after paintings or busts that were (allegedly) very close to a truthful depiction of the poet. Indeed, this was usually stated underneath the portrait (for example "From the Original Statue. . ." or "Engraved after an Original Picture. . .") To ensure realistic portraits, he employed highly esteemed artists like Thomas Cook,[559] John Thornthwaite or Charles Grignion[560] and invested a great deal of money into these frontispieces.[561] Bell's innovative features of his publications were also commented on a few decades later. Charles Knight, for example, described Bell as "the mischievous spirit – the very Puck of booksellers" and derogatorily remarked on Bell's cheap production methods as well as modern approaches to typography.[562]

The appeal of reprint series was a direct consequence of the ruling in the case "Donaldson v. Becket," which effectively ceased perpetual copyright on texts. It became economically reasonable to reprint old texts since no one had to be

558 Stanley Morison, *John Bell, 1745–1831: Bookseller, Printer, Publisher, Typefounder, Journalist* &c. (London, 1930). Sadly, Bell has been a neglected figure in English printing history, and after briefly being rediscovered by Stanley Morison in 1930, only few works have focused on Bell's career since.

559 Cook worked for other publishers as well and was famous for his reproductions of Hogarth works. For some examples of Cook's engravings, see "Thomas Cook," *National Portrait Gallery* <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp14556/thomas-cook> (accessed: 05.12.2019).

560 See "John Thornthwaite," *National Portrait Gallery* <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp53034/j-thornthwaite> and "Charles Grignion," *National Portrait Gallery* <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp94760/charles-grignion> respectively (both accessed: 05.12.2019).

561 Thomas F. Bonnell, *The Most Disreputable Trade: Publishing the Classics of English Poetry, 1765–1810* (Oxford, 2008), 108.

562 Charles Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers* (London, 1865), 276–278.

paid. This led to lower prices and a larger market.[563] Stereotyping, cheaper paper as well as the development of the working classes as a reading group further supported a focus on reprints. In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, it was no longer sufficient to do just that. More and more, reprint series encountered rigid competition and it was only a matter of time until the market was satisfied. It became inevitable that publishers needed new texts to satisfy the demand of a growing market. Bell already added value to his reprint series in the late eighteenth century with enhancing the presentation of his works. Content as well as materiality of the book tended to signify social distinction: due to their cheapness, most reprint series were mainly directed at working class readers with the intention of self-education. Middle class readers, on the other hand, tended to read new texts which were in their first editions produced in a more elaborate fashion. Consequently, manifold topics and genres were gaining momentum even in the early nineteenth century. Especially the novel was rising in importance for the publishing industry.[564]

3.1.2. Manufacture

Printing from Plates

The first major innovation of the printing process – stereotyping – needed much time to finally become the main procedure to be used in book production, despite its ostensibly logistical and economic advantages for the publisher. Stereotyping is the practice of creating metal plates from whole set pages. The initial invention and the following processes towards a viable implementation of printing from plates is highly representative of initial resistance to innovations in the production of books and eventual acceptance. After all, printing from plates was obviously a threat to type founders. This necessitates a closer look at its history.

In the late eighteenth century, paper was still the main factor that made printing a risky business. Its production was very expensive, and an incorrectly calculated print run could have meant bankruptcy for the printer. On the one hand, publishers lost money if only a fraction of the print run had been sold. On the other hand, demand that exceeded the print run meant a lost opportunity for profit. Such successful texts could of course be reprinted. However, resetting

563 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 134.

564 Leah Price offers a useful analysis of how publishers adapted the novel as a commodity from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. She focuses, among other factors, on gender-specific marketing and the emerging book reviews: Leah Price, *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel: From Richardson to George Eliot* (Cambridge, 2000).

the type had to be done manually at the time and was very time-consuming and thus expensive. Using standing type to overcome this drawback required ample backup supplies of type material so that the printing press could still operate and print other material. This tied up significant equipment and hence financial capital without knowing whether additional copies were ever going to be needed. Using standing type was therefore only viable for printers with a huge set of type material, ample storage space and sufficient financial reserves. This procedure was mainly used if the necessity for a reprint was quite certain and was clearly the exception for printing houses.[565]

After more than three hundred years of manual typesetting, the invention of stereotyping seemed to be a consequential breakthrough in book production for larger print runs and effectively smaller prices per copy to reach new customers. But stereotyping, invented in the early eighteenth century by the German pastor Johann Müller in Holland, and basically re-invented by William Ged in Edinburgh, did not become a standard procedure for book production until the middle of the nineteenth century. Most book historians usually declare the 1840s as the breakthrough of stereotyping. Dooley argues that it may well have become established then but only really became the norm by the 1880s.[566]

The basic idea was initially conceived much earlier to create plates from woodcuts and wood engravings. To create stereotype plates, pages were typeset by hand and plaster was poured onto the forme. After the plaster had dried, the mould was retrieved and then baked. After it had cooled off, the mould could be used to pour molten metal into it to cast a plate. These plates would then be stored and used again when a new print run was required. Consequently, the complex, lengthy and therefore expensive task of resetting the pages by hand for further editions would no longer be necessary. Printing books from plates ultimately meant saving time and money and ensured free type distribution. In theory, the technology of stereotyping allowed printers to print a small edition, evaluate further demand through its initial sale, and, if viable, quickly reprint from stereotype plates.[567]

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565 Mosley, "Technologies of Print," 142–143; Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 116–117.

566 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 55; Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 73; Rob Banham, "The Industrialization of the Book: 1800–1970," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd. ed (Chichester, 2020), 453–469, 459.

567 Banham, "The Industrialization of the Book," 459.

Stereotyping had further advantages concerning textual quality control. Complex texts that needed accurate settings such as math tables and other scientific texts were constantly jeopardized by accidental alteration when they were reset for a new print run. Though compositors were generally educated men, they were usually not educated in all fields of science. Stereotyping effectively made texts immune to inadvertent changes. Once an accurate text was set and a plate cast, it would not run the risk of accidentally being compromised by sloppy resetting.[568] As Keighgren, Withers and Bell put it: "[T]he text was more 'fixed' than it had ever before been."[569]

Finally, stereotype plates were made from sturdy material that lasted longer than standard type material. According to Allan Dooley, standard type in average wore out after about 25,000 impressions. Stereotype plates, on the other hand, endured approximately 60,000 impressions before a new plate had to be created.[570] Plates also endured the increased pressure of steel presses better than type material.

Creating plates with plaster moulds, however, had drawbacks inherent to the material being used. The plaster tended to stick to the type material and made its removal quite an elaborate task. The cleaning of the type was also tedious work that most printers strongly opposed since they were paid by impression and not for extra work until the middle of the nineteenth century.[571] This certainly explains the active opposition towards this innovation. Taller lead spaces had to be used to minimize the clogging of the type material. These taller lead spaces made it impossible to print from these set pages because they were too close to the printing surface and would result in blackened areas throughout the page. In other words, the decision to create stereotype plates had to be made beforehand as it involved a different composition method. It did not suffice to create a mould only and wait for the actual demand of the text. The printing had to be made from the plates.

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568 James Mosley, "The Technologies of Printing," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. V, 1695–1830*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge, 2009), 163–199, 198.

569 Innes M. Keighren, Charles W. J. Withers and Bill Bell, *Travels into Print: Exploration, Writing, and Publishing with John Murray, 1773–1859* (Chicago, 2015), 194–195, 187.

570 After 1900, stereotype plates were hardened with nickel and endured more than 100,000 impressions. Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 71.

571 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 61.

Also, the plaster mould shrank discernibly while cooling off and the created plate was consequently smaller than the set type.[572] Creating the mould was a delicate task where many individual operations could go wrong. Large stereotype plates made from plaster moulds tended to flex and crack while being used for printing. Therefore, it was only possible to create rather small plates in the beginning.[573] Finally, the production of stereotype plates from plaster moulds was expensive, and with two hours to create a single plate excluding the time to bake the mould, it was also relatively slow. If a mould turned out to be of inferior quality or even broken, the whole process needed to be redone. Also, due to the fragile nature of the mould, it could only be used once to create a relatively small plate, thus limiting its initial main advantage.[574]

The idea of printing from plates was a step forward in book production, but it was not fully convincing in its early execution in respect to desired economic and physical outcomes by using plaster moulds. Consequently, new possibilities were researched to enhance this method. The solution lay in an invention even older than plaster moulds: paper moulds. Creating stereotype plates from paper moulds was much cheaper, easier and faster. The mould created with laminated paper (the material was called "flong") was very tough and thus easy to remove from the type. In contrast to plaster moulds it was possible to use standard size lead spaces. Consequently, the imposed pages for stereotyping could already be used for printing, meaning that an edition could be printed without having to cast the stereotype plates (as opposed to the plaster mould technology). Instead, paper moulds would be created, the type instantly distributed back to the cases and the moulds would be stored and only used for making stereotype plates if deemed viable.[575]

A seminal improvement for book production was the fact that paper moulds could be used to produce curved stereos. As a result, these plates could be mounted directly onto the cylinder and rotary presses, which would eventually replace the hand press in the late eighteenth/ early nineteenth century. Even

572 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 62. Dooley estimates that the plate shrinks up to 3 per cent compared to the actual set page.

573 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 60.

574 Banham, "The Industrialization of the Book," 459.

575 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 65–67. Dooley argues that this in itself had a small impact on the title-page of Victorian novels. Since it was realistic that a potential reprint was going to be produced months or even years later, several printers decided to omit the date of publication. However, printing new title-pages was not uncommon, especially because they could suggest a new edition.

though rotary machines were mainly used for newspapers and magazines (and became a necessity for them in the middle of the nineteenth century), books continued to be mainly printed on flat bed presses for a long time.[576]

However, paper moulds also had disadvantages: they shrank even more than plaster moulds due to the moist characteristic of the flong.[577] The crucial disadvantage of paper moulds was the inferior quality of the plates created from them. They could not match the print quality of plaster-mould plates as they were less sharp and clear.[578] Further, the plate metal needed to be softer than the type metal in order to create good plates. This resulted in a diminishing quality of prints off the plates. Therefore, minor faults in later copies of stereotype printed books were common during the nineteenth century: "Stereotype plates were liable to weaken, sink, and break at their edges, a problem caused and exacerbated by the mounting nails and catches. As a consequence, letters and words at the margins occasionally printed faintly or disappeared altogether."[579]

Examinations of early and late copies of the same impression from stereotype plates document developing scratches and other faults progressing, and only seldom was a faulty plate replaced so that the print might have returned to a fresh look. Some plates were even worn down to the brink of legibility. The refusal of printers to create new plates with the moulds can only be attributed to economic awareness.[580]

Even though the text in plates was essentially fixed, there were still possibilities to change it: single characters or words could be cut out and replaced with type material. Even complete lines or paragraphs could be replaced. Larger emendations, however, were typeset, a new, small mould and plate were created for such occasions. Such alterations, however, were almost always visible because the inserted type material was either higher or lower than the plate itself. Accordingly, the affected text passages were then printed darker or lighter

576 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 66.

577 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 204. In fact, Gaskell and Dooley are in disagreement on this. Dooley argues that paper moulds shrank far less. Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 66. Gaskell, however, states that the shrinkage of plaster moulds was negligible and was even used "for the deliberate reduction of type areas; but the additional shrinkage of the wet-flong mould was merely a nuisance, which was eventually overcome by the general use of dry-flong moulds from about 1910."

578 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 65.

579 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 73.

580 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 75.

respectively.[581] Further, due to the shrinkage of the mould, new inserted type appears larger on the printed page and the whole type area of the page looks fidgety. Finally, corrections made plates even more prone to damage due to the added heating while soldering the corrected passages onto the original plate.

Even with these drawbacks, creating stereotype plates, when executed correctly, was a viable technology for publishers. But they did not solely create plates to print from them. They were oftentimes sold to or hired out to other printers and plates in stock were oftentimes listed in printers' catalogues. In other words, plates became accepted commodities of their own.[582] This oftentimes resulted in conflicts when authors changed their publishers.[583]

A related technology to produce plates was the usage of wax, graphite, a copper sulphate solution and electric current. Electrotyping, as it was labelled, was invented in 1839 and created very hard metal plates, which lasted approximately ten times longer than stereotype plates.[584] Furthermore, electroplates produced much sharper and more detailed images. Subsequently, it was particularly useful for printing illustrations in contrast to the rather crude woodcut method. The quality of the prints was essentially as good as the original.[585] However, this technique also held several disadvantages for printers. Apart from the very unhealthy working conditions for printers working with poisonous chemicals and fumes during the creation of electroplates, it was also unfeasible to create typographic pages via electrotyping. The very firm characteristic of the material also made correcting or amending plates extremely difficult. However, throughout the nineteenth century, some printers soldered small electrotypes of illustrations into typeset stereotype plates, because they offered a much better quality. The distinct difference in quality of clearness and sharpness of the two different plate technologies was thus easily perceptible on the printed page.[586]

Electrotyping, despite its superior quality of the print, was deemed to be too expensive and dangerous in the middle of the nineteenth century. Eventually, however, improvements of this technology ensured it becoming

581 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 63–64.

582 Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 205; Lyons, *Books*, 106.

583 Charles Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson are well-known examples.

584 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 69.

585 Michael Twyman, "The Illustration Revolution," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. VI, 1830–1914*, ed. David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), 117–143, 136; Bamber Gascoigne, *How to Identify Prints: A Complete Guide to Manual and Mechanical Processes from Woodcut to Ink Jet* (London, 1986), 5, 47, 72.

586 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 69.

standard procedure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, at least for illustrations. Depending on the publisher and the estimated print run and consecutive editions, the whole text could be electrotyped.[587]

Paper

> Rags make paper, paper makes money,
> Money makes banks, banks make loans,
> Loans make beggars, beggars make rags.[588]

The very first element of book production which had been affected by industrialization was in fact the carrier of typography: paper. The availability of paper in the fifteenth century had been a vital precondition for the establishment and success of the printing presses in Europe. It continued to be important for the development of printing procedures in the nineteenth century. In fact, paper proved to be the bottleneck for book production. Without advances in its manufacture, other improvements within the printing industry might not have happened.

As has been discussed, paper, next to type material, was the most expensive element in book production. The scarcity of paper was acknowledged even in the seventeenth century, when, according to a law enacted in 1666, it was forbidden to use wool suitable for papermaking for funerals.[589] Obviously, a revolutionary increase of output in printed material needed an equally revolutionary increase in paper production. But just as the basic method of printing had not been altered for over 300 years, the procedure of making paper as well as the sourcing and composition of its raw material had not progressed far. Hand-made paper

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587 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 74; Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," 302. Gaskell, however, mentions the Harper publishing house in New York to be a remarkable exception, which almost exclusively printed their whole output on electroplates even in the 1850s. Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 206. The Harper publishing house was renowned for its excellence in technology. A contemporary work, though primarily intended for children, confirms this: Jacob Abbot, *The Harper Establishment: How the Story Books Are Made* (New York, 1855), 67: "In the Harper Establishment almost every thing at present is electrotyped." Further information can be found in Joseph Henry Harper, *The House of Harper: A Century of Publishing in Franklin Square* (New York, 1912).

588 Unknown author, quoted in Richard L. Hills, *Papermaking in Britain, 1488–1988: A Short History* (London, 1988), 45.

589 Scott D. Noam Cook, "Technological Revolutions and the Gutenberg Myth," *Internet Dreams: Archetypes, Myths, and Metaphors*, ed. Mark Stefik, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA, 2001), 67–82, 74–75.

could not keep up with the potential increase of print output. Consequently, more efficient ways to produce paper were vital to facilitate a sufficient supply.

Until the end of the seventeenth century, Britain was dependent on paper imports, mainly from France. It was during the eighteenth century that Britain finally developed enough skill and production know-how to become independent from imports.[590] Nevertheless, paper production remained a slow process. Several inventors approached the idea to mechanize paper production around 1800. Of these, it was the invention of the French engineer Nicholas-Louis Robert which provided the necessary impetus and eventually prevailed. After having patented his machine in France in 1799, Robert went to England where he found the necessary preconditions, capital and technical skill, to further develop his idea. His machine was financed by the British stationers Sealy and Henry Fourdrinier and eventually patented in England in 1801.[591] The basic principle of the Fourdrinier machine was that most steps of paper production would be mechanized. Instead of manually sieving individual sheets of paper from a paper-pulp filled vat, an endless moving wire would retain the fibres from the water in the vat and at the same time drain the superfluous water so that the paper could dry. Apart from being much easier to produce paper this way, it also had one further advantage: the paper produced with the machine was only limited in proportion to the size of the wire. Manually sieved pages were restricted by the size of the mould the papermaker could hold steadily to create a sheet. The machine, however, could, in theory, produce paper in infinite length, only restricted by the width of the vat and the moving wire.[592] Six years after the patent had been granted in England, the machine had become viable and could produce as much paper in one day as a team for hand production in a whole week. By the 1830s, newspapers, as well as books, were chiefly printed on machine-made paper signifying a complete acceptance of the innovative production method.[593]

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590 John Bidwell, "The Industrialization of the Paper Trade," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. V, 1695–1830*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge, 2009), 200–217, 200.

591 Donald Cuthbert Coleman, *The British Paper Industry, 1495–1860: A Study in Industrial Growth* (Westport, CT, 1975), 180–181.

592 For an elaborate description of the mechanism and development of the paper machine as well as competing inventions during the same time, see, for instance, Coleman, *British Paper Industry*, 256–278; Hills, *Papermaking in Britain*, 92–104; Dard Hunter, *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft* (New York, 1943), 257–278.

593 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 454.

The introduction of the Fourdrinier machine thus immensely sped up the production of paper and reduced the cost of the product. In the early nineteenth century, around two-thirds of the cost of book production derived from the cost of paper.[594] The introduction of the Fourdrinier machine initially reduced the rate down to one quarter in 1851.[595] A hindering element in the acceptance context for the new production method were paper duties. In 1861, the abolition of these 'taxes on knowledge' further aided the printing business.[596] In addition to such economic advantages, the greater production speed for paper also helped to reduce stock, as now fresh supplies could rapidly be ordered from the paper mill – much in contrast to the times when hand-made paper was scarce and much slower to produce. Reduced stock meant less financial capital tied up in the printer's business and – as a very practical advantage – the reduced risk for his inventory to catch fire, which was not an uncommon danger of printing shops.[597] The newly produced paper could also be bigger in size, which enabled printers to use bigger presses to print on larger sheets, which sped up the printing process accordingly.[598] Finally, machine-made paper tended to be of higher quality concerning durability and resistance to damage because the pulp was spread more evenly on the sieve.

However, as with most technological advancements in book production, the application of the new possibilities to produce paper took its time. As McKitterick points out, even though the technology was first introduced around 1800, the paper that was used before the 1830s was mainly hand-made.[599]

Sourcing of Material

The other big problem in paper production, namely the sourcing of the material to produce paper, had not been solved by the time the Fourdrinier machine was introduced. The chief raw material used for creating paper was rags. Consequently, the publishing industry was depending on the textile industry. This dependence became obvious when external factors like the blockade of

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594 Lee Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form: English Literature and the Industrialization of Publishing, 1800–1850* (London, 1996), 7.

595 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 66.

596 H. Dagnall, "The Taxes on Knowledge: Excise Duty on Paper," *The Library*, 6th ser., 20 (1998), 347–363.

597 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 64.

598 Weedon, "Economics of Print," 161.

599 McKitterick, "Introduction," 3.

ports diminished the import of textiles, or financial crises made people cling to their old clothes. Situations like these restricted the availability of rags. To illustrate the importance of ample supply of raw material, the late eighteenth century, which witnessed a publishing boom, should be mentioned. Because people were able to afford larger robes, the result was more raw material for paper mills and essentially lower paper costs.[600] Paper was a commodity in its own right and was not exclusively used for text production, hygiene and packaging being two other important usages in the nineteenth century. Other developments during the industrialization created the need for even more paper. New transport methods for example required goods to be safely wrapped in paper, and travellers began writing postcards.[601] An instant rise in paper costs was the result.[602] Increased paper demand for book and newspaper production eventually played its part in creating a severe paper shortage. Rags as the main raw material for paper severely limited the potential of paper production in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The incentive to find a new material for paper, however, was not provided by the book industry, but by the newspaper industry, which depended even more on paper. In the 1850s, the newspaper *Times* offered a 1,000-pound reward "for the invention or discovery of a cheap substitute for cotton and linen rags."[603] The solution was eventually found in esparto grass, which was introduced by Thomas Routledge in 1857[604] after a few dissatisfying problems that were eventually overcome.[605]

Esparto grass, also known as alfalfa, was mainly imported from Spain and North Africa but its use in the production of paper was limited to British papermakers because of established British trade routes. Alfalfa was convenient since the production methods were similar to rag paper after unwanted elements had been removed and the grass had been boiled, washed and bleached.[606] It was

600 Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form*, 6–7.

601 Stephen Colclough and David Vincent, "Reading," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. VI, 1830–1914*, ed. David McKitterick (Cambridge, 2009), 281–323, 291. For a classification of paper, see also Dagnall, "The Taxes on Knowledge," 355.

602 Erickson, *Economy of the Literary Form*, 170–171.

603 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 454.

604 Robert Henderson Clapperton, *The Paper-Making Machine: Its Invention, Evolution and Development* (Oxford, 1967), 191. Clapperton refers to the introduction of esparto grass as "epoch-making for the paper-trade."

605 Coleman, *The British Paper Industry 1495–1860*, 342.

606 Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books*, 3rd ed. (London, 1974), 336.

subsequently used as the main raw material for paper until the First World War. The quick acceptance of esparto grass becomes evident when looking at the phenomenal increase of grass import alone. In 1861, the early days of esparto grass, only 16 tons had been imported to Great Britain. Nine years later, the figure rose to 104,870 tons and reached its climax in 1890 with 217,028 tons. The quick acceptance of the new material is obvious and the preference of esparto grass over rags can be seen in comparing the import figures. Marjorie Plant picked the year 1884, which shows that esparto grass was imported fivefold compared to rags, with only 36,233 tons of rags compared to an impressive 184,005 tons of grass.[607] In this case, the instant acceptance of an innovation can be explained with the urgent economic need to satisfy the demand.

Other materials to produce paper were tested as well. The use of wood pulp became viable in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as did straw celluloses and the use of sawdust. These alternatives furthered the decline of paper costs. Not only did these substitute materials ensure a much cheaper production, it also offered an unlimited supply of raw material through multiple sourcing opportunities.

The quality of paper made from new materials, however, suffered in contrast to paper made from rags. It became weaker and, especially due to the use of chemicals in paper made from wood, the durability of paper produced from the late nineteenth century onwards diminished.[608] The solution of the problem of quantity resulted in inferior quality. The book industry was aware of the diverging quality aspects of the different papers and paper made from various raw materials coexisted throughout the nineteenth century. A committee of the Society of Arts assessed the durability of the different papers and concluded that the best quality was still offered by rag paper, followed by wood, esparto and straw paper. The lowest quality, and hence best excluded from book production was paper made from straw.[609] In essence, publishers and printers had a variety of paper to choose from, which differed in price and quality. These developments led to a further reduction of the percentage of paper making up the cost of book production. Whereas by the time mechanized papermaking was established in the mid-1800s and paper accounted for roughly one quarter of the cost of book production, this ratio was halved to merely 1/8 in 1891 by the introduction of new raw materials.[610]

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607 Plant, *The English Book Trade*, 336.
608 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 454.
609 Plant, *The English Book Trade*, 338.
610 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 66. It further dropped to 1/10 in 1930.

New Printing Presses

As with most technical parts of book production, the press itself took a long time until it saw considerable improvements. The first significant enhancement is embodied in Charles Stanhope's invention of his iron hand press around 1800. It is interesting to note that Stanhope's invention was rather altruistic:

> At no time did Stanhope expect to derive a profit from these inventions, and over a long period they proved costly to him. That cost, however, may serve as evidence of his genuine commitment to scientific and technical advance, and of his restless and widely dispersed energy.[611]

Similar iron presses like the Columbian or Albion presses followed shortly after.[612] Despite the fact that merely the material of the press was different, and the principles of printing had not changed, iron presses offered some advantages in comparison to the 350-year-old wooden printing press. They needed far less physical effort to handle, yet they applied more pressure, more evenly, with a larger platen. As a consequence, printers not only saved strength while printing, they also could print from larger formes with only one pull whereas wooden presses on average needed two.[613] While the common press had a type-area of about 49x39 cm in average, early Stanhope presses could print a type-area of 58x45 cm and later iron presses in the 1820s even managed 98x58 cm.[614] However, in comparison to other advancements in technology, the iron printing press did not provide a significant improvement in speed. Contemporary publisher Charles Knight[615] praised the new and unprecedented quality of the prints, but dampened the enthusiasm: "This invention [the Stanhope Press] undoubtedly enabled printing of a better quality to be produced; but it added very slightly to the speed with which impressions could be thrown off."[616] Jobbing printers,

611 G. M. Ditchfield, "Stanhope, Charles, third Earl Stanhope (1753–1816)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26241> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

612 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 454–455.

613 Colclough, "Introduction," xvii.

614 James Moran, "The Columbian Press," *Journal for the Printing Historical Society*, 5 (1969), 1–23, 12. Quoted in Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography*, 199.

615 Rosemary Mitchell, "Knight, Charles (1791–1873)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2008) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15716> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

616 Charles Knight, "The Commercial History of a Penny Magazine: Printing Presses and Machinery-Bookbinding," *Monthly Supplement of the Penny Magazine*, 112 (1833), 505–512, 507.

however, were pleased with the new press because they could print large posters with less effort.[617]

A stronger effect on printing output was the introduction of the printing machine, even though it merely improved existing concepts and replaced human power with steam power. They either imitated the press with a flat plate or relied on the turning of cylinders.[618] Even though printing machines were initially used for newspapers only, the new technology along with its unprecedented possibilities was perceived as a watershed.[619] Contemporaries saw the first use of a printing machine, namely the Koenig machine printing the *Times* in 1814 as a noteworthy change.[620] The acquisition of a Koenig's press was very expensive and they were tricky to use, costly to run and increasingly complicated compared to the rather simple hand presses. Even though the Koenig's press offered tremendous efficiency and speed, book printers initially refrained from using them. Average book print runs in the early nineteenth century, in contrast to popular newspapers, were not high enough to justify the huge start-up costs along with its further costs and complicated handling. Further reasons made printers hesitate:

> For most book printers, the cost of machinery, the need to overcome employees' resistance and to retain them, the physical confines of the printing house, and the slow return on outlay, meant that investment in new equipment was always cautious, even slow. Partly because of the extra care required by them in make-ready, the new machine presses tended also to be more suited for long runs. It was partly for this reason that expensive new machinery tended to be introduced first in the newspaper trade.[621]

The output of platen machines like the Wharfedale machine reached 600 to 1,000 impressions per hour, a vast improvement compared to the 250 to 400 impressions per hour of the hand press. Further, machines were able to press larger platens, which effectively increased the number of pages per hour.[622]

The output of printing machines, however, was inhibited by taxes. Paper was taxed by sheet. Therefore, it was indispensable to feed paper into the machines sheet by sheet. The abolishment of the paper stamp act in 1860 eventually led to a more efficient paper feeding procedure as paper could now be

617 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 455.
618 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 79.
619 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," 301.
620 Knight, "The Commercial History of a Penny Magazine," 507.
621 McKitterick, "Introduction," 2.
622 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 80.

fed on a continuous roll, a much more efficient procedure made possible by the Fourdrinier machine.[623]

Eventually, printing machines were enhanced step-by-step to further satisfy the growing needs for newspaper production. By the 1850s, a printing machine, based on Koenig's invention, was specifically built by Cowper and Applegath for book printing.[624] The application of cylinder machines, however, proved to be problematic because of the enormous amount of pressure they applied. Printers called cylinder machines "type smashers" and rejected the innovation. Even when this problem was solved in the 1880s, many printers still needed to be convinced that the new technology was no longer a danger to their type material.[625]

Despite individual distrust in innovations, by the end of the nineteenth century, most printers worked with machines, even though many still kept iron hand presses. The advantages of machine presses eventually proved too important to neglect. As Allan Dooley summarizes: "Speed was what British printers and publishers wanted from the machines, and speed they got."[626] Speed, or rather speedy production, almost seemed to become a value of its own.

3.1.3. Reception

For publishers, readers are potential customers, either directly or indirectly via libraries. As a target audience, their importance and an understanding of a general reading culture must be acknowledged. Reading (or reception) in book history models like Darnton's is unquestionably the most complex and difficult stage to analyse. The problems of adequately answering the most important questions about reception lies in the nature of reading itself. Reading is an abstract and internal process that does not necessarily leave behind traces for the scholar to analyse. The most common traces and sources generally used in the field of reading research have the drawback that they can be easily misinterpreted. Autobiographical writings like diaries, letters or journal entries, for example, are prone to self-fashioning and only seldom mention reading of ephemera. Lists of

623 Maureen Green, "Paper," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 65–80, 76–77.

624 Banham, "Industrialization of the Book," 456–457.

625 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 81–82.

626 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 83. Another increase in speed was brought by rotary presses. However, they were not used for book production in the nineteenth century and are therefore not mentioned in this chapter. Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 81.

booksellers do not reveal books that have actually been read but only those that have been sold. Further, attempts to gauge literacy levels are executed with relatively uncertain methods.[627]

In his essay "First Steps Toward a History of Reading" (1986), Robert Darnton suggests the primary questions "who," "what," "where" and "when" to find the more difficult answers to the "whys" and "hows."[628] In the scope of this study, it is not necessary to answer all these questions for this chapter's time frame of roughly 1780 to 1890. In fact, a clean periodization of reading development might even run the risk of misinterpretation - not least because "human beings do not observe tidy periodization but stubbornly live and read beyond our literary and historical paradigms."[629] However, general developments can be spotted since they are oftentimes consequences of the age itself: "Both the reading and the print cultures of the Romantic period in England were greatly affected by the political, economic, and industrial transformations that occurred in the country at that time."[630]

One general observation during the eighteenth as well as the nineteenth century is the steady growth of literacy among the British public, which is distinctive of the period.[631] According to John Feather, the move towards near-universal literacy began in the early eighteenth-century and was completed around 1900.[632]

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627 The most common way to estimate literacy rates in previous centuries is counting signatures in marriage certificates. Whereas most book historians agree that this is a rather crude way of analysis for several reasons, there is general consent that with the lack of better options, these sources should not be neglected either. Simon Eliot, "The Business of Victorian Publishing," *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*, ed. Deidre David, (Cambridge 2001), 37–60, 42; Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 52; David Franklin Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* (Philadelphia, 1992), xvii; Colclough and Vincent, "Reading," 310.

628 Robert Darnton, "First Steps Toward a History of Reading," *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 23 (1986), 5–30, 5–7.

629 Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England*, 12; Colclough and Vincent, "Reading," 282.

630 Diana Chlebek, "Romanticism and the Nineteenth Century," *Cultural History of Reading*, ed. Gabrielle Watling (Westport, CT, 2009), 197–226, 202.

631 In fact, this phenomenon is to a large extent applicable to the whole of Europe. Mollier and Cachin divide the continent into the "literate north-west and less literate south-east." Incidentally, this roughly reflects the development of industrialization. Mollier and Cachin, "A Continent of Texts," 485.

632 Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 108.

The fastest increase can be detected in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.[633] Whereas there has been a decisive difference in literacy gender-wise at the beginning of the nineteenth century with 60 per cent of the male public being literate compared to only 45 per cent of the female public, the results were more balanced at the end of the century with 94 and 93 per cent, respectively.[634] The rising rates are especially noteworthy in themselves, but considering the enormously growing population these figures are all the more impressive. Reasons for the steep rise of literacy are manifold and distinctive for the period. The eighteenth century witnessed a rise of literacy as well, and the impressive 50 per cent around the 1750s had, rather surprisingly, not been achieved with the help of public efforts to enhance education. David Mitch concludes an "initial presence of some combination of wide-spread popular demand and local philanthropic support for mass education."[635] Consequently, the next generations would esteem literacy more highly so that, ultimately, this skill would become a common desire.[636] Literature like the hugely popular *Self-Help: With Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (1859)[637] by Samuel Smiles shows that the working classes were eager to educate themselves and ultimately expected more from life.

The most obvious difference to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is the widening of readership. In addition to general literacy levels, different target groups for reading were also established – namely the gradual development of the working classes as a potential reading group,[638] which had become a target group

633 Helen Small, "A Pulse of 124: Charles Dickens and a Pathology of the Mid-Victorian Reading Public," *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, ed. James Raven (Cambridge, 1996), 263–290, 273.

634 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 473.

635 Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England*, xvi.

636 Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England*, 208.

637 See, for example, Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help: With Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London, 1859). The text sold 20,000 copies within the first year and almost 300,000 copies until 1905. H. C. G. Matthew, "Smiles, Samuel (1812–1904)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2009) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36125> (accessed: 11.12.2019); Kenneth Fielden, "Samuel Smiles and Self-Help," *Victorian Studies*, 12.2 (1968), 155–176; Asa Briggs, "Samuel Smiles: The Gospel of Self-Help," *Victorian Values: Personalities and Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Society*, ed. Gordon Marsden, 2nd ed. (London, 1998), 101–114 and David McClay, "Samuel Smiles and 'Self-Help': A Nineteenth-Century Bestseller," *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, 3 (2008), 63–69.

638 Martyn Lyons, "New Readers in the Nineteenth Century: Women, Children, Workers," *A History of Reading in the West*, eds Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst, 2003), 313–344.

in its own right during the 1840s.[639] Reasons for the working classes evolving towards a reading class are the increasing ability to read as well as a slow development towards more leisure time. Further, access to reading material improved significantly during the nineteenth century[640] – albeit mostly to second-hand books or cheap reprints of texts for which the copyright had expired. This had repercussions on the book market as it now even more reflected the social-class hierarchy of readers: on the one side the restricted production of prestige objects for privileged individuals and on the other side a large-scale production for the "unashamed creation of economic capital" for the masses.[641] At least in the first half of the nineteenth century, the increase in real wages had not changed the fact that workers were not able to purchase novels by new authors, making them an exclusive commodity for wealthy people.[642]

A distinct development can be detected in which more people were looking for reading material, either buying it or borrowing it from a library. In fact, the period of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century

> saw the mounting importance of a distinction between renting and reading and owning and rereading books, with the emergence of an oppositional culture of rereading by the few as the means of transforming literary value into selective salvation.[643]

As in other centuries, owning books acted as a social indicator during the industrial age, as well, signifying both cultural and economic capital. In higher circles, book borrowing might even be frowned upon, depending on the reading material.

A much-debated occurrence in the late eighteenth century is the so-called 'Reading Revolution.' Initially formulated by Rolf Engelsing in 1970, the concept claims a revolutionary shift of reading habits in the middle classes.[644] Instead of reading and re-reading a small amount of the same texts, primarily consisting of devotional literature, readers began to develop a huge interest in a variety

639 Colclough and Vincent, "Reading," 302.

640 Colclough, "Introduction," xxiii.

641 Keighren, Withers and Bell, *Travels into Print*, 194–195.

642 James Raven, "The Book as a Commodity," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. V, 1695–1830*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge, 2009), 85–117, 100.

643 Kathryn Sutherland, "British Literature, 1774–1830," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. V, 1695–1830*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge, 2009), 667–683, 683.

644 Rolf Engelsing, "Die Perioden der Lesergeschichte in der Neuzeit," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 10 (1970), 945–1002.

of texts, mainly fictional literature. Engelsing's 'Reading Revolution' was heavily debated and is now commonly regarded as an exaggeration of facts.[645] A shift from intensive to extensive reading, as Engelsing has formulated, might well have happened, but the accounts of a 'reading mania' or 'reading fever' must be regarded in a careful way. It can be attributed to the concern of possible outcomes similar to the French Revolution. Therefore, contemporary sources commenting on these developments should be interpreted cautiously and not taken at face value. Engelsing's theory does, however, foster the argument that readers became interested in more genres and that reading itself became more widespread. This can be seen in the drastic surge of printed material. According to James Raven, who quotes Peddie's *English Catalogue of Books*, 25,000 book titles were published from 1800–1835 and 64,000 from 1835–1862. The numbers even quadrupled from 1846 to 1916 with prices eventually halved.[646] Statistical research indicates that not only readership grew but also the diversity of texts. Manifold topics and genres were gaining momentum beginning in the early nineteenth century. When from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century religious and edifying literature was clearly dominating the publishing industry, a much greater diversity of reading material was available during the nineteenth century. Despite the strong impact of fiction on readership during the late eighteenth century, this publishing category took until the end of the nineteenth century to become more important for the book trade than religious texts. Religious titles were dominating publications with 20 per cent in the first half of the nineteenth century while fiction and juvenile literature made up only 16 per cent of the total output.[647] Genres like travel or history, as well as works on geography, were lagging behind religious texts.[648] Scientific studies on mathematics, as well as arts and illustrated works were equally (moderately) successful with just nine per

645 Wittmann, "Was there a Reading Revolution?"; Joost Kloek, "Reconsidering the Reading Revolution: The Thesis of the 'Reading Revolution' and a Dutch Bookseller's Clientele around 1800," *Poetics*, 26 (1999), 289–307.

646 Raven, *Business of Books*, 324.

647 Eliot used the stock of the "Bibliotheca Londoniensis" as a fixed point to compare further developments. The categories in his statistics are somewhat ambiguous and further include "Poetry and Drama," "Geography, Travel, History and Biography," "Education," "Medical," "Politics, Social Science, Economics, Military and Naval." Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends*, 44–46.

648 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801 -1914," 306–308.

cent. Medicine and law texts were even less significant with six per cent and four per cent respectively.[649] In contrast, fiction climbed to 26 per cent in the 1880s, while religion stagnated at merely 15 per cent according to the material of the *Publisher's Circular*.[650] What is even more interesting is that the vague category of "miscellaneous" had risen to 19 per cent. This yet again emphasizes the rise of new material since even more texts which were unable to be categorized were being produced.[651] A closer look at the development of the publishing industry, however, reveals that the increase in publications is not a steady one. Production of titles surged in the 1840s and early 1850s with surprising, significant drops from the late 1850s to the early 1870s. Eliot further puts his findings into perspective with a significant drop in book prices from the 1850s on. "Literature" remained very expensive in comparison to other subjects and only saw a decline in prices from the 1870s onwards.[652] These figures have to be used carefully though since they are based on counting titles, not considering print runs or text length. Leslie Howsam, who also uses Eliot's statistics, still suggests that these figures might at least be used as general markers.[653] Indeed, at least Eliot's statistical research shows that more texts, and not only more copies, were printed. The circles of readers grew and preferences for reading material changed.

Another conclusion of Eliot, though not properly investigated by him due to the restricted possibilities of working with the sources, implies that periodical publishing became "of the first importance both culturally and economically"[654] in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Serialized reading matter was introduced in Britain in the seventeenth century, gained importance during the eighteenth century and finally became increasingly popular in the 1830s. Eliot states that the Victorian age is not characterized by the book but by the newspaper and magazine trade if one considers that even in 1907, printed books merely contributed 5.3 per cent to the total net value of the printing industry,

649 Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends*, 44–46.

650 Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends*, 46–58. This development progressed further: the decade 1910–1919 offers 24 per cent of fiction publishing compared with 8 per cent of religious publishing.

651 Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends*, 46–53.

652 Eliot, *Some Patterns and Trends*, 106–108.

653 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," 307. She also points out the rather useless and arbitrary combination of genres in statistics like "politics, social science, economics, and military and naval," which altogether represents four per cent of the printed material in the said time frame.

654 Eliot, *Patterns and Trends*, 4–5.

and magazines and newspapers an impressive 28.2 per cent.[655] Serials reached a larger and socially more heterogeneous target group. Magazines like *Bentley's Miscellany* indicated its broad readership by "its format, appearance and content."[656] Consequently, the abundance of serials or part-issues made reading material cheaper and thus easier to access. This situation was perceived critically by contemporaries. British journalist and author Innes Shand commented on that development that "everybody has become something of a reader," which can clearly be read as derogatory.[657]

The steep growth of readership and the increasingly diverse interest in reading material forms one important part for the enormous changes in the publishing industry during the nineteenth century. However, new novels were luxury items and commercial lending libraries became the main customers of publishers. Since both circulating libraries and publishers profited from this system, novels continued to be a luxury item for decades. Further on, several publishers even became dependent on the commercial libraries. The aspect of distribution affected the book trade in England in the nineteenth century in an astounding way and consequently affected the context of acceptance.

3.1.4. Distribution

Even though research in book distribution has been of particular and growing interest for the last years only,[658] already in 1982, Robert Darnton has proposed that "[t]he wagon, the canal barge, the merchant vessel, the post office, and the railroad may have influenced the history of literature more than one would suspect."[659] In other words, influence of aspects of transport and distribution in general must not be underestimated for the publishing industry. As Adams and Barker have stressed, the element of distribution is the most crucial moment in the life cycle of a book. It marks the moment in which the book enters its dynamic phase:

655 Eliot, "The Business of Victorian Publishing," 48–49.

656 Bill Bell, "Fiction in the Marketplace: Towards a Study of the Victorian Serial," *Serials and Their Readers, 1620–1914: Papers Originally Read at the 14th Annual Conference on Book Trade History at the Birkbeck College, Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, University of London, November 1992*, ed. Robin Myers (Winchester, 1993), 125–144, 135.

657 Innes Shand, quoted in Brake, "'The 'Trepidation of the Spheres,'" 94.

658 Colclough, "Introduction," xix.

659 Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" 77.

> [W]ithout it the book cannot perform its essential function, to communicate. On the most fundamental level it consists of four elements: the initial impetus, the consequent moving of books, the destination, both intentional and unintentional, and the momentum that carried the process along, which may last a long or a short time and move fast or slow.[660]

Developments in this field consequently have a vital effect on the book trade.

Railways

Simon Eliot distinguished between a distribution revolution and a production revolution during the industrial age. The expansion of England's infrastructure gradually adopted the distribution network which in turn proved to be beneficial for the publishing industry in several ways. Roads in England at the end of the eighteenth century tended to be of inferior quality.[661] Their gradual improvement alone showed a palpable advancement for the publishing industry: books reached more people with faster speed in a better condition at lower prices.[662] Paper is a heavy commodity. However, in the form of books it is easy to be stored and, with the help of powerful transport methods, easy to distribute. As a consequence, the introduction and development of the railway system exponentially increased the ability to distribute books and newspapers, but also other goods related to the publishing business like printing presses, stereotype plates as well as raw materials.[663] During the Victorian age, books were distributed by vans within London, by train to the provinces and in tin trunks overseas.[664] Throughout the nineteenth century, the railway system improved in speed and density. In 1820, travelling from London to Liverpool by stagecoach took approximately 30 hours. In 1845, trains took around six to eight hours and by 1910 Liverpool was reached in only four hours.[665] Britain's railway system was ahead of its time.[666] Trains

660 Adams and Barker, "New Model for the Study of the Book," 22.

661 Raven, *Business of Books*, 332.

662 Michael Felix Suarez, "Introduction," *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Vol. V, 1695–1830,* eds Suarez and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge, 2009), 14–15. Suarez also notes that the improvement of canals hardly affected the English book trade.

663 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 473.

664 Kate Flint, "The Victorian Novel and its Readers," *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*, ed. Deirdre David (Cambridge, 2001), 17–36, 21. The British colonies were a growing market for the publishing industry as well.

665 Michael Maurer, *Kleine Geschichte Englands* (Stuttgart, 2007), 366–372.

666 Colclough, "Introduction," xiii. Especially compared with the railway of France it becomes apparent how advanced England became during the industrialization compared to other European countries.

became faster, commuting progressed and more travellers discovered reading as a pastime on the train, not least because train travels were annoyingly loud and the possibilities for conversations were limited.[667] Shafquat Towheed also argues that women were advised to read during train rides to avoid being inappropriately accosted by men.[668] With the growing importance of reading material on trains, further developments like railway book editions, the establishment of railway circulating libraries or bookshops like W. H. Smith had a profound effect: "It is not until the railways that the British mass-produced book, newspaper and print market so readily and effectively permeated all social ranks."[669]

Finally, with the booming development of England's railway system, the importance of Britain's provinces grew. Despite some contemporaries' criticism, the availability of recent novels was guaranteed in the provinces as well.[670] Consequently, printing larger editions slowly became less risky because the number of potential customers rose.

Libraries

Still, nineteenth century booksellers in England ran a risky business and few of them were able to sell books only. Other goods like stationery, newspapers and fancy goods offered the bookseller a steady income.[671] The selection of books in bookshops was limited. The range of customers was even more restricted by the still very high price of most books. The price of a three-volume novel, the established standard format for new novels, was approximately the weekly income of an average worker's salary and therefore, in fact, unaffordable.[672] The place where most readers encountered their books until the late nineteenth century was libraries. For several decades, they were the most powerful customers of publishers and shaped the British publishing industry in a profound way.

The main function of libraries is the collection and preservation of texts and making them available for the individual. Since the use of libraries is not

667 Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855–1914* (London, 1976), 38.
668 Shafquat Towheed, "Locating the Reader, or What do We do With the Man in the Hat? Methodological Perspectives and Evidence from the United Kingdom Reading Experience Database, 1450–1945 (UK RED)," *Primerjalna Knjizevnost*, 34.2 (2011), 205–218, 216–217.
669 Raven, *Business of Books*, 370.
670 John Feather, "The Merchants of Culture: Bookselling in Early Industrial England," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 217 (1983), 11–21, 11–13.
671 McKitterick, "Introduction," 58.
672 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 471–472.

obligatory, the services and content they provided have over time been adapted to the public that used them.[673] There were further goals that libraries were set to achieve. An example was the Public Libraries Act in 1850, which funded the establishment of public libraries. Supporters of them envisioned to steer the literary taste for the lower classes.[674] Public lending libraries were set up under the optimistic principle that reading was the best form of self-education and that once readers were exposed to good reading material, they would disapprove of inferior texts. The success of these plans is heavily debated. While Simon Eliot concludes that "despite these attempts, readers refused to fit into the educational pattern planned out for them,"[675] Martyn Lyons is more favourable and states that

> liberal philanthropy of this kind seemed to be working in Britain and the United States. Continental observers were impressed by the apparent quiescence of Lancashire operatives during the cotton famine; liberal philanthropists believed there was a lesson to be learned here. Perhaps popular libraries could contribute towards social stability.[676]

The opening of libraries to everybody was not generally seen with benevolence, as James Raven concludes:

> For many commentators the most appropriate representation of the library was that of a sanctuary. In a library, even at its most domestic, the book was housed within a symbolic and designated environment. Whether in silent study or in shared performance, reading locations were to be selected with discrimination. For, as both radicals and conservatives emphasized, knowledge was power. Print and books and book furniture and libraries were the protectors of that power - a power not to be abused and not to be widely shared.[677]

In the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century, reading for most people was restricted to texts that were offered in libraries.[678] And growing

673 Wayne A. Wiegand, "Libraries and the Invention of Information," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 827–840, 827.

674 Alistair Black, "The People's University: Models of Public Library History," *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Vol. III: 1850–2000*, ed. Alistair Black (Cambridge, 2006), 24–39.

675 Eliot, "Business of Victorian Publishing," 59.

676 Lyons, "New Readers in the Nineteenth Century," 334.

677 James Raven, "From Promotion to Proscription: Arrangements for Reading and Eighteenth-Century Libraries," *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, ed. James Raven (Cambridge, 1996), 175–201, 201.

678 Stephen Colclough and Edmund G. C. King, "Readers: Books and Biography," *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed.

acceptance of public libraries combined with the Public Libraries Act resulted in offering more books for users.[679] However, the genre of fiction was discouraged by public libraries as it was deemed inappropriate reading material. Consequently, the institutions that profited from this were commercial lending libraries (also referred to as "circulating libraries").[680] These subscription libraries provided books for England's middle and upper classes.[681]

Mudie's "Select Library"

The first loose forms of circulating libraries, that is the lending of books for money, came into existence in the seventeenth century. However, circulating libraries are mainly a phenomenon from the eighteenth century onwards and their economic high point was the latter half of the nineteenth century. Reason for this peak is the rise of the novel.[682] Among the most prominent and successful circulating libraries in England were the "Minerva Library" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century,[683] W. H. Smith's circulating library and Charles Edward Mudie's "Select Library." Especially the "Select Library" and its founder Charles Edward Mudie[684] are oftentimes referred to as having shaped and even dominated the British publishing industry in their time. Indeed, manifold examples can be found that Mudie's subscription library did, at least to a certain degree, exert an impressive amount of power. Bill Bell concludes as follows:

> Not only did the lending library exercise immense control over the price, size and distribution of novels by mid-century, but, acting on behalf of what Thackeray referred to as "my squeamish public," even dictated to a considerable degree the actual subject matter of fiction.[685]

(Chichester, 2020), 157–171, 158. The article mentions the idea of "censorship of price."

679 McKitterick, "Introduction," 49.

680 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," 306.

681 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 478–479.

682 Charlotte A. Stewart-Murphy, *A History of British Circulating Libraries: The Book Labels and Ephemera of the Papantonio Collection (*Newtown, 1992), 13. Samuel Fancourt was the first to use the term "circulating library" in the first half of the eighteenth century.

683 Dorothy Blakey, *The Minerva Press. 1790–1820* (Oxford, 1939).

684 David Finkelstein, "Mudie, Charles Edward (1818–1890)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19492> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

685 Bell, "Fiction in the Marketplace," 128.

Astonishingly, Mudie's influence went so far that it supposedly became a common question of publishers what Mudie might think of a story, in order to assess the economic viability of novels.[686] Reasons for not circulating a novel in Mudie's library included sexual frankness, criticism of British marriage laws, prostitution, female infidelity, divorce, homosexuality and lay baptism.[687] Some publishers allegedly even refrained from publishing a novel altogether if they feared Mudie's disapproval, as this would render the novel unmarketable and the print run a dead stock.[688]

Mudie started his business in 1840, selling newspapers as well as stationery and the lending of books.[689] It was common for subscription libraries to earn extra money with other activities, which were more profitable than lending books.[690] Two years later, Mudie's focus eventually shifted towards lending books. His success was mainly based on his reasonable charges: for one guinea a year, a person was able to take one interchangeable volume at a time for a whole year. For two guineas, Mudie allowed four volumes at the same time.[691] The notion of a "Select Library" already hinted at a system of choice concerning the texts he preferred to distribute.

> As evidenced by the word "select" in the name of his library, Charles Edward Mudie exercised caution in circulating any novel deemed of questionable morality or poor taste, and his purchasing or declining a novel could make or break any author, especially those who pushed the boundaries in their depictions of sexual relationships. Hence, authors and publishers acquiesced, sometimes grudgingly, sometimes happily, to the demands of the libraries.[692]

However, Mudie refused to directly acknowledge a systematic selection process based on religious, political or moral ideals. When, in 1850, Thomas Carlyle

686 Altick, *The English Common Reader*, 296: "Mudie paid the piper, and on behalf of his large clientele he called the tune."

687 Helge Nowak, *Literature in Britain and Ireland: A History* (Tübingen, 2010), 263.

688 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 127.

689 Finkelstein, "Mudie, Charles Edward (1818–1890)."

690 Simon Eliot, "Circulating Libraries in the Victorian Age and After," *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Vol. III: 1850–2000*, ed. Alistair Black (Cambridge, 2006), 125–146, 126.

691 Guinevere L. Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library and the Victorian Novel* (Newton Abbot, 1970), 39. There are further subscription rates, also for clubs and other organizations.

692 Troy J. Bassett, "Circulating Morals: George Moore's Attack on Late-Victorian Literary Censorship," *Pacific Coast Philology*, 40.2 (2005), 73–89, 73.

accosted Mudie about being the man that divided the "sheep from the goats" in his library, he simply responded that his decisions were based solely on a commercial standpoint, even though he could not deny the fact that he preferred to circulate good books rather than bad books without elaborating on this distinction.[693] Nevertheless, his growing success over the following years proved him right. His business grew steadily and became the leading distributor of new literature throughout the country. In 1850, his library counted approximately 25,000 subscribers, and only two years later, he opened further branches in Manchester and Birmingham, while his London branch had to relocate to a bigger building from Upper King Street to New Oxford Street.[694] Richard Altick quotes the Authors' Society, which estimated in 1894 that there were overall approximately 60,000 subscribers to circulating libraries, 25,000 of them belonging to Mudie's "Select Library" and W. H. Smith, his biggest competitor, lagging behind with 15,000 subscribers.[695]

The importance of Mudie's library for the publishing industry is illustrated by a crisis of Mudie's business. In the early 1860s, Mudie had enormous financial problems, mainly for two reasons: first, a fierce competition developed around the business of circulating libraries. W. H. Smith expanded across the country and offered reading material in almost every train station. Even more threatening was the establishment of the "Library Company Limited," which demanded only 6s. per year and thus undercut Mudie's charge by 50 per cent. The second reason for Mudie's financial difficulties was the enormous costs of renovating his business premises on New Oxford Street. Eventually, Mudie's monetary problems were solved by a network of British publishers, Smith and Elder, John Murray, Longmans, Blackwood and Bentley among others. It is noteworthy that this consortium referred to Mudie's financial crisis simply as "the secret," fearing that, if the wrong people knew that Mudie's library was about to collapse, repercussions on the whole publishing industry would be incalculable.[696]

Simon Eliot summarizes the reasons for Mudie's success to four important innovations: the low annual subscription rate, conducting the library on a large

693 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 35.

694 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 19–20.

695 Altick, *English Common Reader*, 312.

696 David Finkelstein, "'The Secret'": British Publishers and Mudie's Struggle for Economic Survival 1861–64," *Publishing History*, 34 (1993), 21–50. The financial aid was concluded in 1864 with Mudie's "Select Library" becoming a limited company with Mudie being the shareholder of 50 per cent. The rest was shared between the publishing houses of the publishers' network.

scale, choosing the titles carefully and therefore offering morally acceptable literature and heavy advertising.[697] Mudie's business strategy was as simple as it was efficient: he ordered as many new texts as possible in large quantities and therefore guaranteed a broad range of texts and the availability of copies at the same time. Between 1853 and 1862, for example, Mudie ordered no less than 960,000 volumes for his warehouse.[698] A letter from Annie Edwards's publisher makes it possible to put Mudie's acquisition policy into perspective: when Edwards's novel *Leah* was published in 1875, the "Mitchell Library" ordered six copies, the "Day and Cawthorn Library" 13, W. H. Smith ordered 25 and Mudie's "Select Library" 125 copies. Even though these figures are not necessarily representative of every acquisition, it is intriguing that Mudie did order five times as many copies as his main competitor, W. H. Smith.

The success of circulating libraries, especially Mudie's library, can mainly be explained with the high costs for books, especially novels:

> Its artificially high price, supported by a market dominated by circulating libraries for whom three volumes meant thrice the income that could be obtained from just one, remained a retail benchmark long after it could no longer be justified by the ordinary costs of production. Copyright books were usually liable to higher costs for publishers than those that were out of copyright, but books of all kinds tended to rise in price in the years after 1815.[699]

The steep rise of interest in novels and the consequential growth of audience can mainly be attributed to urbanization, the development of overseas readership in the colonies, improvements of distribution networks, and also advertisements and promotion of books.[700] During the 1850s, a novel was primarily and preferably in three volumes rather than just one. The term three-decker alludes to the British Royal Navy warships. The British Empire was in its peak at that time and the term 'three-decker' carried a high symbolic value as the naval supremacy was the main reason for Britain's successful expansion. Publishing novels in three volumes became standard most probably because of Walter Scott's tremendous success of his novel *Waverley*, which was published in three volumes simply because it was too expansive to issue it in two or even one volume.[701] The price of a new novel in three-decker format was 31s. 6d., or 10s. 6d. per

697 Eliot, "Circulating Libraries in the Victorian Age," 133.
698 Finkelstein, "'The Secret,'" 22.
699 McKitterick, "Introduction," 7.
700 Flint, "The Victorian Novel and its Readers," 19.
701 Feather, *History of British Publishing*, 122.

volume. Considering that the average weekly income for a teacher was 17s., for a skilled builder 21s. and 27s. for a printer, there can be no doubt that a new novel was a luxury commodity only very few people could afford.[702] Novels published in monthly instalments were cheaper. On average, the reader would have to spend £1 for a complete set of instalments, albeit not bound, instead of 31s. 6d. for a whole novel. But not only was that still a considerable amount of money for a leisure commodity, the readers also had to wait until they had the complete novel. Even if the novel was initially published in monthly instalments, a three-decker edition was usually available before the last instalment was sold.[703] Further, reading fictional texts in instalments hinted at a lower income and thus potentially could stigmatize the reader. On the other hand, these variations of publications made it possible for publishers to address various reading classes and readers were able to establish social distinction with the format of their choice. They expressed their cultural capital and position in the field of cultural production with the materiality of the reading matter.

Circulating libraries made it possible for readers to read many novels for a comparatively small fee. The 1850 Public Libraries Act was briefly feared as possible competition, but it soon became clear that the circulating libraries' main clientele, the middle classes, would not be affected that much by it. The Act, encouraging the growth and new foundations of local libraries, was mainly aimed at working class readers.[704] Also, the provision of fiction was initially discouraged by the public libraries. Circulating libraries filled a market niche as they did offer novels.[705] However, the majority of texts within the circulating system was non-fiction. Simon Eliot analysed Mudie's catalogue and concluded that in 1857, 75 per cent of the pages of the catalogue were devoted to non-fiction and only 25 per cent for fiction. Even though the balance is shifting to 58 per cent for non-fiction and 42 per cent for fiction in 1899, it can be concluded that Mudie either stocked more non-fiction or was at least advertising non-fiction more heavily.[706] This hints at an attempt to maintain a serious image in the public eye. Fiction, however, was the main incentive for Mudie's subscribers.

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702 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 471–472.

703 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 52.

704 Alistair Black, "Introduction: The Public Library in Concept and Reality," *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland: Vol. III, 1850–2000*, eds Alistair Black and Peter Hoare (Cambridge, 2006), 21–23, 21.

705 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain, 1801–1914," 306.

706 Eliot, "Circulating Libraries in the Victorian Age," 134.

When Charles Mudie established his "Select Library," he quickly dominated the lending library market with his low subscription rates of one guinea a year for one volume or two guineas a year for four volumes. No competing library was able to undercut him for long without going bankrupt. Therefore, the low subscription rates were the mainstay of Mudie's success. This system clarifies why Mudie was supporting the three-decker format. First, the publication of novels in three volumes kept the artificially high prices up and decreased the incentive for readers to purchase novels. Further, if a subscriber intended to read a whole novel, they had to borrow three volumes instead of one. This way, the library's stock was efficiently dispersed since one novel could be distributed to three persons at the same time. The incentive for Mudie's and other commercial libraries to back publications in three volumes was clear. For publishers, circulating libraries were the main purchasers of their products and had even become dependent on their business. Libraries and publishers made money and middle class-readers accepted borrowing instead of owning.

Throughout the years, the triple-decker even gained a reputation which Guinevere Griest describes as an "aura of dignity and worth which tended to obscure those works unfortunate enough to be issued originally in a meagre one volume."[707] In fact, novels first published in only one volume were easily equated with dubious railway novels or cheap reprints and were thus deemed inferior.[708] This stigma slowed down chances of acceptance of cheaper book formats. Over the decades though, novels became shorter: while a novel consisted of about 250,000 words during the time of Walter Scott and even Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray, the average length of a novel dwindled down to 150,000 words in the middle and even 80,000 words towards the end of the nineteenth century.[709] Publishers initially used various strategies to still justify a publication in three volumes. There was a certain amount of leeway to produce a three-decker with layout. One of the shortest three-deckers published in the English language was Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* in 1818, which consisted of 67,150 words. Thomas Hope's *Anastasius* on the other hand, one year later, was also published in three volumes but consisted of 273,996 words.[710] Methods to blow up a text to fill three volumes included the type size, very big

707 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 46. This did not only concern novels, but nonfiction such as autobiographies as well.

708 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 48.

709 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 45. A development partially owed to the more and more popular way of publishing serialized novels in magazines.

710 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 45.

headlines, large margins and lavish spacing. Publishers also urged authors to use textual tricks like lavish and extensive scenery descriptions to reach higher word count. A more blatant trick is the case of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*: it was issued in combination with her sister Anne's *Agnes Grey* in a three-decker, a fact that was revealed to the reader only in the third volume.[711]

In the final years of the nineteenth century, however, the importance of the three-decker dwindled down. Readers became weary, complained about the boring second volume, and started assuming that novels were blown up to justify an expensive publication in three volumes.[712] Authors also complained because of the evident restriction of content, as the following example of George Moore demonstrates: Moore's first novel, *A Modern Lover* from 1883, gained favourable reviews in journals like the *Spectator*. But despite these reviews, Mudie refused to circulate his novel on moral grounds. Even an interview between Moore and Mudie did not reach a satisfying conclusion.[713] As a result, Moore wrote another novel to spite Mudie, this time almost ensuring that the "Select Library" would not accept it for circulation. The author decided to publish it in a cheap one volume format for 6s. As he had hoped, his second novel earned favourable reviews again and the novel became a success. With this momentum, Moore decided to publicly protest against the power of the circulating libraries with an open letter entitled "A New Censorship in Literature" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1884.[714] The author hoped to find influential support by other authors and publishers to eventually break the circulating library system with its approach to select literature and thereby effectively committing censorship. However, despite the initial success of Moore's strategy, he eventually failed in his undertaking.[715]

Further developments in the publishing trade made it difficult for the three-decker to survive. On average, the purchase of a three-decker was profitable for a circulating library after nine to twelve months.[716] The gap of time elapsing until a cheap reprint of a novel was published, however, became smaller and smaller. By the 1880s, technological improvements in book production had been firmly established. Cheaper book production methods were completely accepted

711 Both novels were published under their respective pseudonyms, Ellis and Acton Bell. Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 55.
712 Griest, *Mudie's Circulating Library*, 127.
713 Bassett, "Circulating Morals," 75.
714 Tom Hubbard, "I Hate You, Mr. Mudie," *Library Review*, 27.3 (1978), 160–164, 160.
715 Bassett, "Circulating Morals," 84–87.
716 For a breakdown of how much Mudie earned per subscriber and volume, see Eliot, "Circulating Libraries in the Victorian Age," 129.

both by publishers and readers. Technology finally permitted publishers to break away from the interdependence of circulating libraries, as cheaper reprints had become a lucrative income for them. Consequently, a one volume reprint might even be published only three months after the first three-volume edition was printed. It became almost impossible for a library to profit from three-deckers anymore. Mudie's success model became outdated and eventually the "Select Library" stopped supporting this form of publication altogether.[717]

3.2. Acceptance of Industrialized Book Production

The continuous growth of a literate public was enhanced by the optimization of distribution with the development of railroads. Both developments led to an increase in potential customers for publishers. More readers alone did not automatically lead to a general increase in sold copies. The potential of a big market was the incentive to develop, and eventually enhance, stereotype and electrotype printing. Creating plates was still expensive but far less expensive and thus less economically dangerous than to print large editions which might not sell well enough and take up valuable storage space and bind capital. Despite the possibility of having a relatively cheap way to reprint (texts which may turn out successful during the first edition), printers initially preferred creating plates from texts which were almost guaranteed to be reprinted, namely classics and textbooks. The American market proved very promising for British publishers. The US market only printed its own literature beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century whereas before, imports of British books as well as stereos had previously satisfied the American market.[718] New texts, such as the rising genre of the novel, were initially printed from movable type rather than plates. Texts produced from plates had the disadvantage that their typographic style was locked, disabling them from adapting to new impulses in typographic design, despite the possibility to cut out short passages and include corrections. This initially resulted in an overall larger production of books, albeit with more of the same texts. The increased production led to another consequential limitation: the scarcity of paper. The subsequent attempts to find cheaper replacements

717 Eliot, "Circulating Libraries in the Victorian Age," 136. For a more detailed analysis of the declining three-decker, see Simon Eliot, "The Three-Decker Novel and its First Cheap Reprint, 1862–94," *The Library,* 6th ser., 1 (1985), 38–53.

718 Aileen Fyfe, *Steam-Powered Knowledge: William Chambers and the Business of Publishing, 1820–1860* (Chicago, 2012), 79–87.

for rag resulted in a variety of different paper qualities. The diversity of raw materials entailed a diversity of physical quality.

Circulating libraries like Mudie's "Select Library" had a much more noticeable effect on the book trade. Some authors tried to write according to Mudie's taste or values and at the same time, write a text long enough to justify a three-decker. Circulating libraries first and foremost tended to supply the middle classes. The working classes, though steadily growing as a reading audience, were forced to limit themselves to either reading cheap reprints of classics or instalments of texts in newspapers or magazines. The book as a commodity became affordable only in the late nineteenth century when manifold developments were finally accepted and preferred by printers and publishers and thus turned the luxury item book into an affordable everyday object.

The developments of magazine publishing and of the newspaper business was immensely important for the acceptance of innovative print production. Magazine publishing almost immediately profited from the multiple changes within society, technology and economy of the age.[719] Though, in essence, serials offer reading material as well, the differences between the book publishing and magazine and newspaper publishing industries are staggering. Whereas the book industry in the nineteenth century tended to be a rather conservative publishing environment, Norman Feltes describes the serial publishing industry as potentially disruptive.[720] Serial publishing implemented technological possibilities sooner, as they, to a degree, even relied on them. Folding and binding machines were initially invented for serials and only later applied to book production. The improvements of printing machines were also driven by serial publishing, as was the search for cheaper raw material for paper.[721] Also, the layout of newspapers changed immensely. The early nineteenth century offered newspaper title-pages that did not attract much attention and mainly offered advertisements. At the end of the century, illustrations and lavish headlines with dazzling typography dominated the front-pages.[722] The implementation and consequential improvement of illustrations led to a wide appeal of newspapers throughout the century.[723]

The development of serial publications led to a more standardized way of producing books. Publishers wanted their books and series to be recognized and

719 Howsam, "History of the Book in Britain: 1801–1914," 304–305.
720 Norman N. Feltes, *Modes of Production of Victorian Novels* (Chicago, 1986), x.
721 Green, "Paper," 78–79.
722 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 472–473.
723 McKitterick, "Introduction," 20–21.

therefore decided on one paper and typographic design. Further, it slowly became the rule that books were bound before they were sold, using the edition binding as a further element in the corporate design of the publisher. These bindings reflected the publishers' prestige and trustworthiness signifying symbolic value.

The economic success of serials encouraged many authors to write even more, leading to an "army of writers,"[724] as John Feather puts it. Authorship itself was established as an accepted occupation. Fictional texts were published in instalments and were afterwards sold in book-form. Book production benefited from the enormous success of serials. Eventually, serials forced a reduction of book prices enabling a broader social group to acquire books by the end of the nineteenth century.[725] In many respects, serial publishing was the precursor of several elements. It stirred an interest in reading, aroused fascination with novels, pushed technological limitations and induced inventors to develop cheaper production possibilities for printed matter. Book publishers remained sceptical and cautious of new possibilities, partly because bankruptcy was easily the result of false predictions. Potential new readers refrained from becoming new customers because they were not willing to accept the high prices for books. It was only after the significant lowering of book prices that book publishing could finally take off as a mass-market.

In the late nineteenth century, the first edition of a book, now usually in a standard publisher's cloth binding in a single volume, was a third of the price compared to a century before. An even cheaper edition was published just several months later and a paperback edition for just 6d was possible if the text proved to be successful after a couple of years. As Robert Louis Stevenson put it: "to get into cheap editions means being popular."[726] Within a hundred years, Britain's book publishing industry witnessed a vital transformation, even though some innovations were only slowly accepted. Simon Eliot is certainly right when he states that, concerning publishing, the nineteenth century was merely "a dress rehearsal for the twentieth century."[727]

Most technological developments of book production during the industrialization were about speed and increase of print runs. With almost all developments, the symbolic value of the printed book suffered. Just like the

724 Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 132.
725 Brake, "'Trepidation of the Spheres,'" 84.
726 *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson: Vol. III, August 1879-September 1882*, eds Bradford A. Booth and Ernest Mehew (New Haven, CT, 1994), 129.
727 Eliot, "From Few and Expensive to Many and Cheap," 483.

printing press, innovations in book production during the nineteenth century encountered critical voices: "Thomas Carlyle (and cultural pessimists around the globe) denounced the new machinery as mechanizing minds, devaluing literature and learning, and replacing craftsmanship (in writing as well as in publishing) by the robotic and the mass-produced."[728]

Counter-movements against the devaluation of cultural objects due to mass production started to grow. A famous example is William Morris, leading member of the Arts and Craft movement in the second half of the nineteenth century. In his later years, Morris focussed on his Kelmscott Press, which applied the printing technology of early printing presses. The type mimicked medieval handwriting and the texts printed included, among other things, medieval and early modern English texts. Morris's idea was that the produced books had to be a pleasure to look at and work with.[729] Indeed, the results of his works are impressive. His famous Kelmscott Chaucer, but also smaller works, such as Thomas More's *Utopia* or the Dutch fable of *The History of Reynard the Foxe* (Caxton's translation) are all created with utmost care: from the high quality of the paper, the very dark ink that created an astonishing contrast to the paper and calfskin binding are all material aspects that give the Kelmscott publications the characteristics of a *de luxe* book. Morris even imitated further medieval book elements like foliation, decorated initials, colophons and a printer's device. Apart from that, the layout of the pages adheres to the golden ratio formula, it offers ample white space as well as printed marginalia.[730]

Nevertheless, such counter-reactions against, in Walter Benjamin's terms, the loss of aura[731] of art objects due to mass production have to be regarded as

728 James Raven, "The Industrial Revolution of the Book," *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge, 2015), 143–161, 143.

729 Fiona MacCarthy, "Morris, William (1834–1896)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2009) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19322> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

730 See, for example, William S. Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: A History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Berkeley, 1991).

731 Benjamin's essay was first published as "L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 5 (1936), 40–68. The following quote is from Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Production* (London, 1936; repr. 2008), 1–50, 7: "We can encapsulate what stands out here by using the term 'aura'. We can say: what shrinks in an age where the work of art can be reproduced by technological means is its aura. The process is symptomatic; its significance points beyond the realm of art. *Reproductive technology, we might say in general terms, removes the thing reproduced*

isolated cases which at most only briefly interrupted the developments towards more efficient production possibilities. In Morris's case, his Kelmscott Press, established in 1891, started printing when the book trade had already been almost completely industrialized. However, the acceptance of new technologies during the nineteenth century was slowed down by various reasons. This becomes strikingly obvious in comparison to the newspaper industry, which was far more open to technological advancements, sometimes even being the precursor or initiator for such developments.

Iron presses represented a minor improvement in the technology for book production, and their effects only added little value for printers as well as readers. Printing was essentially made a little faster and the print quality improved. However, these effects were only minor in comparison to other developments during the industrialization. Printing machines, although introduced in the early nineteenth century, were not standard in book production until the late nineteenth century. Initial rejection stemmed from printers who were unsure about the new technology and feared for their jobs. When John Walter II, founder of *The Times*, planned to use steam-driven printing machines for his newspaper in 1814, he dreaded an uproar of his workmen similar to the Luddites in early nineteenth century that smashed the machines in the textile industry. Consequently, he secretly set up the machines in a warehouse nearby and paid people off to stay quiet about it.[732] This example stresses the reservations of people within the printing industry. Active opposition would have been a crucial enemy of acceptance. Still, printing machines for newspaper production were established pretty early in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, the expenses for a machine were too high for book production. The market was not big enough for high print runs that would eventually make up the initial investment in the new technology. This would only change at the very end of the nineteenth century.

The complex tax situation on paper in Great Britain limited the speed possibilities of the printing machines, which, however, only affected the newspaper

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from the realm of tradition. In making many copies of the reproduction, it substitutes for its unique incidence a multiplicity of incidences. And in allowing the reproduction to come closer to whatever situation the person apprehending it is in, it actualizes what is reproduced." Even though Benjamin focuses more on film and photography, the main concept of the loss of aura can, to an extent, also be applied to the mass production of books in the late nineteenth century.

732 Richard D. Fulton, "Walter, John, 1776–1847," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28637> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

production. The new production methods of paper introduced in the nineteenth century initially saw not only an increase in speed, but also an increase in quality. The Fourdrinier machine produced much more durable paper. However, cheaper raw material in the form of Esparto grass did not meet the quality of rag paper and therefore devalued the book as a material object. Again, printers and publishers gained the most from the enhanced production methods by saving production costs. Logistics were made easier with constant supply and the financial risks were lower as not as much capital had to be invested in paper.

The most prevalent change in book production during the industrial age was the introduction of plate technology. It vitally affected the British book, albeit in a slow way. The fear of compositors that they might not be needed any longer led them to oppose the new technology. This turned out to be a short-sighted reaction. Due to the enormous success after a few decades, a larger reading audience could be reached and more compositors were needed than ever before.[733] Nevertheless, one of the possible reasons that inspired the creation of printing from plates, the scarcity of paper, was also keeping printers from creating plates for new texts. Paper was still an expensive factor for book printing until the 1850s. The breakthrough of stereotyping was dependent on cheaper paper production. In the meantime, only established texts were chosen to be produced by new technologies. In other words, old texts were initially printed with new technology and new texts initially with the old and established technology.

The drawbacks of plaster moulds described above may explain why stereotyping did not become standard procedure for book production until the middle of the nineteenth century. It is revealing to see that paper moulds, a cheaper production with limited printing quality finally superseded plaster moulds. In theory, using the technology of stereotyping would be a prudent choice for printers with all the advantages discussed above. However, it took decades until it was indispensable for printers to have a full understanding of the technology.[734] The question remains why the book industry took so long to exploit it. Ultimately, it might have become standard practice sooner. Dooley quotes Thomas Curson Hansard, a master printer in Britain, who published several manuals on printing. In his paragraphs about stereotyping, he did not cease pointing out the inferiority

733 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 61.

734 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 59. Dooley quotes a handbook tip from 1877 that says so.

of this technology due to its lack of quality in prints and the unpredictability of the plates themselves.[735]

This and the previous chapter have discussed the introduction and acceptance of new technologies in book production in the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both time frames have shown that acceptance of new technology was not immediate. However, whereas printing was accepted rather quickly, the acceptance of new production technology in the nineteenth century took much longer and had to overcome opposition from the stages of production and reception alike. Both eras led towards a broader selection of content as well as a more convenient form of the book. A pattern which stands out the most is that new production possibilities were initially used to produce established texts. After a while, however, these new possibilities strengthened new forms of content in the long run. The latter stage is an important one for the acceptance of the new form of the book.

3.3. Book Value Categories Applied

Apart from quality concerns, the decision for which titles to create plates remained a crucial one for a long time. Estimating which works would warrant a reprint was still risky due to the very high price of paper. Even with the cheaper, faster and less complex paper mould stereotype technology, it was still more expensive and needed more logistical steps and much storage room for the moulds and plates. Therefore, most printers played it safe by printing works that more or less guaranteed a safe demand: standard texts of reference works and inexpensive popular classics.[736] Ultimately, as Martyn Lyons labels it, a "two-tier market" was created:

> As a result, ordinary readers were fed not the exciting romantic writers who were at the cutting edge of literature, but the old canon of Chaucer, Milton, Pope, Spenser, Defoe and Goldsmith. This created a two-tier market. Wealthy readers demanded new expensive works, but less well-off readers were sold cheap reprints of uncontroversial pre-Enlightenment worthies.[737]

735 For example, Thomas Curson Hansard, *Typographia: An Historical Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the Art of Printing* (London, 1825), 829–845. Hansard extensively elaborates on alleged advantages of stereotyping for printer, bookseller and the public and sees flaws in most arguments. Contemporary handbooks on printing procedures are generally a very good source, despite the occasional subjective slants.

736 Mosley, "Technology of Printing," 100.

737 Lyons, *Books*, 106.

It has to be taken into consideration that stereotype plates were frequently sold or hired out to other printers who could produce the same text in different edition styles to appeal to various markets and consequently different price segments.[738] In the middle of the nineteenth century, new texts were only seldom deemed worthy of being stereotyped. Contemporary authors might have found it a "crowning honour" to be stereotyped, as the publisher assessed their text worthy of being reprinted sooner or later.[739] Finkelstein even maintains that authors in the industrial age esteemed the technological advances as the "ultimate symbol of progress" and that authors might "accrue valuable cultural capital and financial profit from harnessing this new power."[740] Other authors, however, had ambivalent feelings about these new technologies. Even though the prospect of enhanced economic value from potential reprints of their novels was certainly noteworthy, the very limited potential of revising their work in consecutive editions diminished the economic chances decisively for several authors. Dooley quotes George Eliot who laments on the fact that she will not be able to correct some mistakes in *Middlemarch* since it had been stereotyped and consequently would have needed new plates to be created.[741] This, in essence, means a loss of content value since this new technology had "the inevitable effect of reducing the authorial control that had previously allowed writers to make significant changes to their texts as they were recomposed for a new impression or later edition."[742] This disadvantage, however, could prove an advantage for complex texts which might run the risk of faulty resetting and therefore lose content value.

A final disadvantage of creating plates was that not only was the extent of a text only very slightly modifiable, it was the layout itself which was locked. This proved to be a drawback in a time when ideas and tastes of design and typography changed quickly.[743]

The introduction of printing from plates can be regarded as having initially little "added value" for customers of books. Unfortunately, detailed comments from readers about books printed from plate technology are wanting. It seems

738 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 75.

739 Percy Russell, *A Literary Manual: A Complete Guide to Authorship* (London, 1886), 129. Quoted in Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 58.

740 David Finkelstein, "Publishing and the Materiality of the Book," *The Cambridge History of Victorian Literature*, ed. Kate Flint (Cambridge, 2012) 15–33, 19.

741 Dooley, *Author and Printer in Victorian England*, 76.

742 Keighren, Withers and Bell, *Travels into Print*, 187. However, it is doubtful whether readers were aware of this.

743 Mosley, "The Technologies of Printing," 198.

unlikely that readers noticed the changes in the first place. And if they did notice, it remains hard to establish what their reactions would have been. The *Reading Experience Database*, in any case, offers no results of readers commenting on books printed from stereotype plates for this time frame.[744] Other sources exist, but have to be used with caution. An entry in Jon Bee's (aka John Badcock[745]) dictionary *Slang* (1823)[746] defines the term "stereo" as "abbreviated from stereotype; one of the cheap-and-nasty manufactures in this country, the pages being usually left incorrect and blunderous, in pursuance of the saving plan which first suggested casting them in stereo. Originally done by Glasgow Foulis."[747]

Even though this definition is probably written tongue in cheek, it can still reveal a certain resistance to this new technology. In fact, Bee refers to Robert Foulis,[748] who went into partnership with Alexander Tilloch,[749] who re-invented stereotyping in the 1780s. To limit possible competition, Tilloch created inferior plates with bad texts with his new technology on purpose. This is a striking example because Foulis was known for high quality prints. If Bee refers to these plates created to discourage possible competition, it is still not clear whether he knew about Tilloch's idea and jokingly refers to this or whether he truthfully depreciates stereotype plate printing.

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744 *UK RED: The Experience of Reading in Britain, From 1475 to 1945* <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/search.php> (accessed: 22.04.2019). For more information on the database, see Rosalind Crone et al., "The Reading Experience Database 1450–1945 (RED)," *History of Reading: A Reader*, ed. Shafquat Towheed (London, 2011), 427–436.

745 W. P. Courtney, "Badcock, John (*fl.* 1810–1830)," rev. Dennis Brailsford, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1014> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

746 Jon Bee, *Slang: A Dictionary of the Turf, the Ring, the Chase, the Pit, of Bon-Ton, and the Varieties of Life, Forming the Completest and Most Authentic Lexicon Balatronicum hitherto Offered to the Notice of the Sporting World* (London, 1823). Both the title as well as other titles by the publisher lead to the assumption that this publication is not necessarily to be taken for serious reading.

747 Bee, *Slang*, 166.

748 Richard Ovenden, "Foulis, Robert (1707–1776)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9991> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

749 John Burnett, "Tilloch, Alexander (1759–1825)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2006) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27448> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

Plates became commodities in their own right for publishers, as did the implementation of edition binding during the nineteenth century which were both used as "added value" in the economic sense:

> Publishers traded in stereotype plates, buying and reissuing old editions in a new dress. Copyrights of classic series, encyclopaedias and popular science works were passed from hand to hand in stereos, each successive publisher-owner giving the books a boost with a fresh look and new title-page.[750]

However, printing from plates in combination with cheaper paper production had the effect that more copies were printed and sold at a lower price and more books were distributed. This helped the book as a medium become more effective and can therefore be considered as added content value.

Distribution changes during the nineteenth century affected the values of the book in several ways. The introduction of the railway system enhanced the possibilities to transport books which in turn affected the availability of reading material and therefore content value. The role of circulating libraries, especially Mudie's "Select Library" must not be underestimated. His success shaped British literature and book production and makes Britain, again, a unique case for book values. Mudie profited from the initial high symbolic value of novels produced in three volumes, a standard form for novels unique to Great Britain. Cheaper formats of novels, especially part-issue publications, were deemed inferior as they signified low income, the possibility to read straight through a novel on the other hand indicated wealth.[751] The choice of format therefore offered a form of social demarcation. Mudie essentially thwarted a development towards cheaper book production for several decades. The three-decker now represented high symbolic value because it was equated with Mudie's moral values. The format of the book signified impeccable content. The overwhelming importance of Mudie and his competitors for publishers resulted in a common agreement to keep the three-decker format alive. Eventually, technological improvements allowed publishers – and consequently readers – to become independent of circulating libraries as cheap reprints had become an economically viable alternative to solely relying on the approval of novels by the circulating library. The publication strategy of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* indicates that some publishers were even trying to circumvent the dependence on circulating libraries earlier. Simon Frost, in his study *The Business of the Novel: Economics, Aesthetics and the Case of*

750 Weedon, *Victorian Publishing*, 159.
751 Bell, "Fiction in the Marketplace," 125–144, 137.

Middlemarch (2012),[752] examined the publishing procedures of Eliot's novel and comes to the conclusion that John Blackwood was weary of the dependence on commercial libraries:

> In 1871, when George Eliot pondered how to write Middlemarch and John Blackwood wondered how best to secure rights in a profitable form, they both turned to the publishing market for a solution. At that point, the Dickens shilling monthly was all but extinct. The penny weeklies were too cheap for Eliot's high art. The dominant three-volume triple-decker still cost a staggering thirty-one and a half shillings (approximately half a month's wage to a labourer). Furthermore the Blackwood's firm wanted to escape financial restriction imposed via the private libraries' bias towards three volumes, and to access new markets of book *buyers* instead of book *borrowers*. The solution hit on by the Eliot-Lewes-Blackwood's team was an innovative collaboration, a four-volume novel published in eight book-length parts at five shillings per part. Each part would look and feel like a luxury triple-decker volume, with similar typography, spacing and paper quality, but be sized to fit a jacket pocket. With its cheap(er) five-shilling purchase price, it would be distributed through retail outlets, which included railway stalls such as Smith's rather than through commercial libraries.[753]

The trend seemed clear as publishers hoped for more buyers and estimated that cheaper book prices might entice enough readers to purchase books that might compensate for the loss of bulk purchases from commercial lending libraries. Nevertheless, as this example shows, certain characteristics like paper and typography were kept so the symbolic value of the bought book would not be deemed lower than the circulating library novel. In this regard, the publication of *Middlemarch* in many respects represents the transitional phase from the dominance of the three-decker to the much cheaper one-volume novels that would become the norm in the twentieth century. The aim to copy certain elements of the circulating library novel by Blackwood emphasizes the perceived high value of the triple-decker during the mid-nineteenth century. The prediction of publishers that buyers would become more important than borrowers was eventually fulfilled by the further acceptance of technological improvements and reduction of paper costs and the eventual focus on shorter novels that no longer necessitated the multi-volume form. The development towards a commodity culture and a consumer economy (of which all agents of the life cycle of the book were part) was in full bloom in the late nineteenth century. The material quality of the book may have suffered after most technological innovations had

752 Simon Frost, *The Business of the Novel: Economics, Aesthetics and the Case of Middlemarch* (London, 2012).

753 Frost, *The Business of the Novel*, 3.

been accepted by the book industry, but a broader, faster and cheaper distribution of texts overall resulted in higher content value as more people, not only in a geographical but also in a social sense, were granted access to and ownership of books. The steep rise in literacy rates and indeed people who wanted to read could not be neglected by publishers. This trend continued until the book was, yet again, facing revolutionary changes in the digital age.

4. The Digital Age

Abstract: Despite several potential advantages like, for example, ease of access, multimedia or affordability, digital publishing has not yet completely replaced traditional publishing and physical books. In fact, it might never do so. A look at the major developments of the last 20 years reveals several aspects that not only supported, but also hindered a complete acceptance of digital books. Stephen King's online experiments with *Riding the Bullet* and *The Plant* were probably too early to create the revolutionary effect that would have made King the "publishing industry's worst nightmare." Almost ten years later, it became apparent that rather than big author names it might be big tech companies that could have a much stronger impact on the possible complete acceptance of technical innovations within the book industry. A look at statistics both before and after the introduction of relevant gadgets like e-readers and tablet computers stresses this correlation.

Keywords: digital age, digitization, digital publishing, digital revolution, print culture, digital culture, e-books, publishing industry, acceptance of e-books

The book in codex form has developed over centuries, and it still consists of "lines of black words [. . .] placed on white paper, arranged in a sequence of pages, and made up into a book that can be placed at a comfortable distance for reading."[754] Therefore, a complete acceptance of the e-book and preference over the printed book would be the first dramatic change since the transformation from scroll to codex. The aim of this chapter is to discuss general developments and trends in digital publishing. It offers a succinct overview of the development of digital forms of the book and critically discusses possible advantages and disadvantages of developments towards digital content and creating the choice between digital and print books. It is not a biased attempt to defend the quality, importance and value of the printed book in codex form. As Adriaan van der Weel has stated about new technologies: "A scholar's task is not to resist, but to observe and analyse the developments and their potential consequences dispassionately."[755] Neither is this chapter intended to be an instruction for publishers to ensure a successful transition from printed book to digital text. Its aim is to analyse the current situation and stress the differences of this possible transitional phase compared to the previously discussed phases. Rather than showing

754 Mosley, "The Technologies of Print," 106.
755 Van der Weel, "e-Roads and i-Ways," 48.

similar patterns pointed out in chapters 2 and 3, the digital age offers more discontinuity within these patterns.

The "digital age" stands out from the previous parts of this study for several reasons. First of all, in comparison to printed books, e-books are tertiary mediums since technology is needed to decode the text. This is an important distinction, especially because tech giants influenced (and still influence) the acceptance and possible preference of digital books with their reading devices.

Another problem for this chapter is the fact that the time frame can only be roughly set. Whereas the introduction of printing and the impact of the industrialization on the book market in the West are time frames that can be located more clearly, this chapter approaches a time which is much harder to pinpoint. Chapters 2 and 3 discussed technical changes that led to supersessions of the previous production processes and their power applications for the book. Now, in the year 2020, it is not foreseeable when, or even if, physical books will be replaced by digital alternatives. The current simultaneous existence of printed books and e-books may be a permanent situation. In other words, the digital age might not necessarily be a transitional phase with a complete acceptance and preference of a new technology and supersession of an older one. A similar possibility was true in the fifteenth century, when the supersession of the manuscript by the printed book was entirely unsure.[756] Since this transitional phase has not seen its completion, the approach to the topic here is not a historical one as in the previous two chapters. Rather, this chapter argues from a media studies perspective.

Finally, the previous two chapters both focussed on the English book market. The same narrowing of national boundaries for this chapter would be unnecessary and, indeed, a non-sensical decision. Still, English as the *lingua franca* of the twenty-first century, is one of the most relevant languages for digital publishing as the global market for English texts is huge.

As uncertain as the end of the transitional phase of the digital age is, so is its beginning a blurred boundary. As John Thompson has pointed out, the publishing industry turned digital long before the introduction of popular e-readers and tablet computers. In other words, publishers accepted digital technology very early on. Thompson calls it the "hidden revolution" and speaks of the implementation of electronic and digital technology within the publishing industry from operating systems and content management to sales, marketing and content delivery.[757] Van der Weel's monograph *Changing Our Textual Minds* (2011),

756 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 4.

757 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 321–330.

though approaching a broader scope of the impact of the current influence of technological developments, offers helpful impulses for this chapter. For a start, van der Weel's notion of the 'universal machine' offers an apt starting point for the time frame. He makes out the computer as a 'universal machine,' because it runs digitally and electrically and therefore converges all possible modalities of mediums (text, illustrations, video and sound) and runs in a network (in this case the World Wide Web).[758] What is taken for granted nowadays has had a huge impact on the way textual processes could take place:

> The Internet – and later the World Wide Web – is just one of the many things that the computer has been deployed to create. The printing press could do only one thing: multiply text. The computer, by contrast, is the most versatile machine ever devised by humans. Even just with regard to medial applications, its possibilities are limitless. Besides text, it now also processes still images, sound, and moving images digitally. The Internet may be regarded as the 'ultimate' medium. Unlike any other medium, the computer-in-a-network connects not only all links in the communication chain of production, distribution, and consumption but also other modalities, and so allows the ultimate convergence of all traditional mediums. It unites virtually all properties of all existing mediums.[759]

Rather than taking the term 'digital' too literally for a time frame of this period, it will exclude the first changes of digital technology within the publishing industry and will focus on the moment when texts reach the reader in a digital format. The year 2000 seems like a valid starting point. Not only because of its neatness and because it symbolizes a new age, but also because it saw the enormous rise and acceptance of the World Wide Web and offered a new way how people could encounter textual information. Stephen King's online-only publication in that year, the novella *Riding the Bullet*, offers another good reason for the year 2000 as a beginning for a time frame. Due to the enormous success by using a, then, new distribution possibility, King hoped to become the "publishing industry's worst nightmare" and was hailed (and feared) as a harbinger of a new age in publishing.

Until then, the printed book never seemed to be threatened by digital alternatives. In general, it was seen as the superior format of textual information: the physical book is extremely user-friendly because nothing seems easier than turning the pages and reading a clear black text on white paper. A printed book never runs out of batteries, it is unlikely that it breaks when it is dropped on the floor. It is almost a work of art with an overall attractive design. Most

758 Van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds*, 143.
759 Van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds*, 139.

importantly though, the physical book is a social object which can be borrowed among friends and displayed to everybody to signify what matters to you.[760] None of this, especially the symbolic value, seemed even remotely possible with a digital book. It is physically not existent and merely offers content. With the printed book, the form and the content are inseparable. These were the usual reasons given in the literary and arts sections of newspapers and magazines why the preference of digital books may never come.

However, these arguments might also be labelled as a naïve and short-sighted assessment of the overall situation. The medium 'book' seems to be an emotionally charged artefact that is prone to subjective assessment. In fact, some of those arguments praising the printed book are quite similar to the critical comments about print in the fifteenth century. Indeed, the attempts to establish digital publishing are readily compared to the age of the printing press, even in academic works. George Bornstein and Theresa Tinkle for example "agree with the proposition that the shift from print to digital culture has analogies in scale and importance to the shift from manuscript to print culture beginning in the Renaissance."[761] The main parallel in those developments would be the broader distribution of texts, which might ultimately lead to further democratization of knowledge. Eisenstein's *Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, for example, is seen by many as a useful read to try to understand how current digital developments might shape and change civilization nowadays.[762] Alan Liu argues that developments towards digital publishing also bear similarities with the age of industrialization. Apart from the rapid social, economic, political and cultural developments that both centuries share, the rapid development of technology especially for storing and managing information makes it worthwhile to compare them.[763] Rachel Ablow also sees similarities between the Victorian book trade and the digital age: "Like the Victorians, we are witnessing a vast shift in popular practices and conceptions of reading. In an age of Web, text-messaging, Twitter, and Kindle, many have asked how changing protocols of reading will affect our culture more generally."[764] Kate McDonald

760 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 316.

761 George Bornstein and Theresa Tinkle, "Introduction," *The Iconic Page in Manuscript, Print, and Digital Culture*, ed. George Bornstein (Ann Arbor, 1998), 1–6, 2.

762 Baron, "Introduction," 9.

763 Alan Liu, "Imagining the New Media Encounter," *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*, eds Raymond George Siemens and Susan Schreibman (Malden, MA, 2007), 3–26, 16.

764 Rachel Ablow, "Introduction," *The Feeling of Reading: Affective Experience & Victorian Literature*, ed. Rachel Ablow (Ann Arbor, 2010), 1–10, 9.

and Marysa Demoor even argue that "[t]he reprinting of novelette fiction can be viewed as the Victorian equivalent of a television programme's rerun, with repeats as a selling-point."[765] The enhanced school system of the Victorian age also led to children teaching parents how to read just like the so-called digital natives were (and to some extent still are) teaching their parents how to cope with modern technology.[766] These arguments have valid points. However, it should be stressed again that acceptance of innovative technologies in the nineteenth century was, at times, rather slow and faced opposition, especially from the side of production.

What follows will be a brief survey of the most important steps in the history of the e-book along with a basic introduction of relevant terms concerning digital publishing. With the passing of time, hardware, as well as digital publishing formats have become multifarious and a clear distinction is necessary because different formats allow different possibilities. This is followed by a brief account of Stephen King's first steps in digital publishing, which caused a sensation within the publishing industry. When King's digital publishing project failed with his serialized work *The Plant*, digital publishing seemed to have been a passing craze. King's experiments were also an impetus for John Thompson to discuss the situation of digital publishing a few years later in 2010. His arguments for advantages and disadvantages of digital publishing are critically reflected here. Coincidentally, the year 2010 also saw the introduction of the iPad, Apple's tablet computer, which also had a vital impact on the context of acceptance of digital publishing. Summaries of *The Bookseller*'s digital census results from 2010 and 2013 shed light on the mood within the publishing industry before and after the iPad release, respectively. All these considerations will be connected to the book value categories.

4.1. Context: Introduction of the E-Book

The first idea of storing and accessing texts in a way that resembles what digital computers do nowadays was conceived by Vannevar Bush in 1945. In his now

765 Kate Macdonald and Marysa Demoor, "Borrowing and Supplementing: The Industrial Production of 'Complete Story' Novelettes and their Supplements, 1865–1900," *Publishing History*, 63 (2008), 67–95, 86.

766 Colclough and Vincent, "Reading," 294.

famous article "As We May Think" (1945),[767] Bush is lamenting about the limited possibilities to handle the ever-growing amount of information, especially in science. His solution was a fictional instrument he labeled "memex" (short for memory extender):

> A memex is a device in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanized so that it may be consulted with exceeding speed and flexibility. It is an enlarged intimate supplement to his memory.
> It consists of a desk, and while it can presumably be operated from a distance, it is primarily the piece of furniture at which he works. On the top are slanting translucent screens, on which material can be projected for convenient reading. There is a keyboard, and sets of buttons and levers. Otherwise it looks like an ordinary desk.[768]

Even though admittedly, the physical description of his memex machine is not similar to current e-readers or smartphones, the basic idea behind his machine is surprisingly close to what the digital age offers nowadays. The memex is fast, flexible and offers a large amount of storage, albeit with the technology of microfilm.

The first real attempt to store texts digitally and eventually distribute them digitally was executed in December 1971, when Michael S. Hart, from the University of Illinois, manually entered the United States Declaration of Independence into a Xerox Sigma V mainframe computer.[769] The project, labelled "Project Gutenberg," gradually took on more and more volunteers as the scope grew. The idea was to digitally archive texts that were out of copyright and thus in the public domain. Until 1989, all texts were manually entered into the system. From then on, imaging equipment with optical character recognition (OCR) became available and helped the project.[770] Project Gutenberg offers most works in plain text using US-ASCII and can be considered one of the earliest stages of e-books.

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767 Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think," *Atlantic Monthly*, July 1945 <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1945/07/as-we-may-think/303881/> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

768 Bush, "As We May Think."

769 Jalobeanu Mihai Stanislav offers a good overview of the project in his conference paper "A 43 years history, passing from the Gutenberg project initiative to the Open Educational Resources movement." < https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266200676> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

770 Project Gutenberg was sued by German publishing house Springer. Since it offered texts by Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann and Alfred Döblin that were still under copyright under German law (until 2020, 2025 and 2027 respectively), it was ruled that the Project should make these texts unavailable in Germany. Instead, the Project decided to make the complete website unavailable in Germany. For further information, see

A more sophisticated (and commercial) approach to texts in digital form was included in the Macintosh application *If Monks had Macs*, programmed by Brian Thomas and Philip A. Mohr, Jr. in 1988. The programme is hard to categorize as it offers elements of computer games as well as serious features. The user could solve puzzles and enjoy interactive games, but also access out of copyright full texts to read on screen as, for example, Thomas à Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ*. *If Monks had Macs* was initially released on 800K diskettes, which were, due to their very limited storage space, bound to be a transitional medium to store data.

In the early 1990s, the introduction of the CD-ROM with its 650 MB storage capacity offered many more possibilities for digital content. Free titles on CD-ROM were distributed to encourage consumers buying CD-ROM drives. Apparently, with success:

> By 1993, 4 million CD-ROM players had been sold in the US market; large publishing firms, which had hesitated to enter the market as long as e-books were diskette-based and limited in size, now jumped in. CD-ROM book sales reached nearly $1 billion by 1994, with more than 8,000 titles, ranging from the Bible to reference and business books, and from fiction to children's literature. Bookshop chains were encouraged to set aside CD-ROM sections for the new e-books, and the industry began to float the first of many pronouncements of the end of print.[771]

A consequential transition of books from print to CD-ROM, however, was not achieved: the stagnating user base of computer owners with CD-ROM drives made it difficult for the CD-ROM market to grow efficiently. Librarians also inhibited the distribution of texts on CD-ROM as they allegedly found it hard to catalogue them as books. The CD-ROM was eventually used to return to oral traditions by functioning as an audio book, on which the spoken words of a text were stored rather than in typographical form. Since audio CDs could only store about 74 minutes of recording (before the introduction and wide acceptance of compressed audio coding formats), they were also cumbersome since audiobooks consisted of several discs.

Eventually, the introduction and growth of the World Wide Web enabled computers to become what van der Weel calls the 'universal machine.' It is this moment when the digital age really takes off. Digital files were available via the

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the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation website <https://cand.pglaf.org/> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

771 Eileen Gardiner and Ronald G. Musto, "The Electronic Book," *The Book: A Global History*, eds Michael Felix Suarez and Henry R. Woudhuysen (Oxford, 2013) 271–284, 274.

internet and consequently, the digital text was freed from its carrier (diskette, CD-ROM).

The e-book is a relatively young medium, and it is difficult to come up with a clear definition, since the term does not describe one definite form. Further, the term has been used in various ways during the last decades and needs to be clarified to avoid confusion. The *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, offers a broad definition: "A hand-held electronic device on which the text of a book can be read. Also: a book whose text is available in an electronic format for reading on such a device or on a computer screen; (occas.) a book whose text is available only or primarily on the Internet."[772]

The term 'e-book' therefore commonly refers to both the text in digital form as well as to the portable devices manufactured to read them. Gardiner and Musto argue that the reading of the word 'e-book' as the reading device has been forced in the late 1990s by their manufacturers: "This effort emanated from a 'book as object' perspective, particularly 'the book as commercial object', weighing mass and price against cultural practice."[773] This attempt would have indicated the strong connection of the word 'book' with physical aspects and potential symbolic values. However, the first quotation of the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates from 1988 and thus contradicts this statement, as 'e-book' even then already described the technology rather than the text: "Things to come. . . The E-book, a small, hand-held, flat recording device able to replay text as a portable cassette player replays sound."[774] Further confusion is caused by the continuing development of various formats publishers choose to distribute digital content. In the widest sense, an 'e-book,' no matter which format, is a digital file and has a "monographic character," as Daniela Zivkovic suggests.[775] However, for a satisfying analysis, a typology of e-books is necessary. For the arguments offered below, it does make a difference if an e-book is the text in PDF-format emulating the page design, or whether it is a text that is displayable on a dedicated reading device and hence is able to adjust to screen sizes and so on. It also makes a difference if the e-book was formatted and programmed to be used on a tablet computer and thus has the ability to use all multimedia

772 "e-book, n.," *OED Online*, September 2001 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/254154> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

773 Gardiner and Musto, "The Electronic Book," 169.

774 "e-book, n.," *OED Online*.

775 Daniela Živković, *The Electronic Book: The Change of Paradigm for a Changing Bookmarket* (Berlin, 2005), 115.

functions this technology offers, which is not possible with current dedicated e-readers.

1) 'e-texts': works in plain text based on character encoding standards (for example US-ASCII/UTF-8). Examples can be found in the Project Gutenberg database.
2) 'PDF-ebooks': e-books in "portable document format," developed by Adobe in the 1990s, that emulate the page design of the material book.
3) 'Standard e-books': e-books in epub, mobi or AZW-file formats (usually in XML) that are recognized by most e-book-readers, tablets and smartphones. Such files usually have the ability to add a "Digital Rights Management" (DRM) layer.
4) 'Enhanced e-books': dedicated to tablet computers that support multimedia elements not supported by standard e-books (sound and video, display of colour). IBA, the format of Apple's programme "iBook Author" is one example. However, usually, enhanced e-books are written as programmes and downloadable as an "app," that is, an application to be used on tablets or smartphones. Therefore, those digital publications have to be written specifically for every operating system.

The importance of the reading device was also stressed by Padmini Ray Murray and Claire Squires, who offered a revised communications circuit for the digital age based on Darnton's model. In fact, Murray and Squires offer several versions of the Circuit for the digital age with different focal points: digital publishing in general, self-publishing in the digital age and readers in the digital publishing communications circuit. All three offer a box on the left side dedicated to the "device" and connecting it to the reader and thereby echoing Darnton's box for the binder in the eighteenth century.[776]

Further, to avoid confusion, a few preliminary elaborations on terminology are necessary. This chapter will use the following terms and meanings:

- '(dedicated) e-reader' for devices specifically designed to display electronic texts as, for example, Amazon's Kindle.
- 'tablets' or 'tablet computers,' which are mobile computers based on an operating system with touchscreen technology. They can function as e-readers as well but can also be used to surf the web, check and write e-mails, play music files, watch videos and so on.

776 Padmini Ray Murray and Claire Squires, "The Digital Publishing Communications Circuit," *Book 2.0*, 3.1 (2013), 3–23, 6, 8 and 16 respectively.

- 'smartphones' are, in essence, small tablet computers with the added component of being a phone.

4.2. Publishing in the Digital Age

4.2.1. The Early E-Book-Market

In his *Evolution of the Book*, Frederick Kilgour claimed in 1998 that the electronic book will play a vital role from the year 2000 onwards. This implies, according to his theory, that the e-book will fulfil societal needs that had not been covered by the printed book or periodicals.[777] He comes up with six specifications necessary for the e-book and e-readers to be adopted: he stresses the importance of the legibility of the text, the dimensions and quality of the screen, the haptic comfort ("it should be possible to hold, manipulate, and read with one hand"), low cost of the reading device and constant access to millions of texts.[778] It has to be acknowledged that twenty years later, the demands by readers, publishers and booksellers are not too far away from Kilgour's assessment.

Early noteworthy developments towards publishing in a digital format happened in the year 2000, coincidentally the same year Frederick Kilgour puts the electronic book in his illustration about "punctuations of equilibria." Stephen King, bestselling author known for horror stories like *Pet Sematary* or *Carrie*, decided to experiment with a new form of publishing and distributing his stories: instead of having a short novella published in a printed format, he asked his publisher, Simon & Schuster, to publish it exclusively online. Amazon and Barnes and Nobles were commissioned to sell the PDF-file containing his latest novella, *Riding the Bulle*t, a 67-"page" story about a hitchhiker who ends up being driven by a living dead man. The electronic file was priced USD 2.50 and it became a huge success: it was reported that within the first 24 hours, it was sold over 400,000 times.[779] King was immensely satisfied, but he emphasized: "While I think that the Internet and various computer applications for stories have great

777 "Other adjuncts, including audio signals, such as pronunciation of words in electronic dictionaries, impossible to conceive of in printing and hand-produced technologies, will surely follow." Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 10.

778 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 152.

779 "The Business of E-Books," *PBS Newshour*, 16 March 2000 <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/media-jan-june00-e-books_03–16> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

promise, I don't think anything will replace the printed word and the bound book." "[780]

Nevertheless, he decided to try another experiment in digital publishing that can be seen as a test of acceptance of the new technological possibilities in the year 2000. A few months after the success of *Riding the Bullet*, King worked on the chapters of an unfinished story called *The Plant*, which he had started writing in the early 1980s and found no proper ending in the fourth chapter. This time, King planned digital publishing without his publisher, Simon & Schuster, much to their chagrin. Instead, he uploaded the first chapter of *The Plant* to his website in various formats like PDF, ASCII, HTML and further e-book formats. Using the honour-system payment, King tried at the same time to assess his readers' acceptance of digital publishing: he invited his readers to access his website and download the text for free. The readers could decide afterwards whether to pay the suggested price of one dollar or not. King had set up only one rule: at least 75 per cent of the downloads would have to be paid. Otherwise, he would stop writing *The Plant* and uploading chapters. Initially, his second online-experiment continued the success of *Riding the Bullet*: more than 150,000 people downloaded the first chapter, and, according to King, 76 per cent of the downloads were paid for.[781] It looked like King was successfully freeing authors from their dependence from publishers and the printed book at the same time. However, the willingness of King's readers to pay for his digital instalments dropped significantly to 50 per cent for the third part. Hoping that this would be only a temporary setback, King kept uploading the next two chapters anyway. But ultimately, after the fifth part, King declared on his website that the sixth part, being made available on December 2000, would be the last part of *The Plant*.[782]

The success of *Riding the Bullet* (and, to some extent, of the first chapters of *The Plant*) might be interpreted as a mere curiosity of King's enormous fan base. It was, after all, a true novelty that an internationally successful and bestselling author offered texts, new material even, in a digital, and thus new format, only. In the long run, however, this did not encourage his readers to support this new way of textual distribution. It is a question of debate whether this was due to the

780 M. J. Rose, "The King of E-Books," <http://www.spark-online.com/april00/printhappy7.0/rose.htm> (accessed: 21.10.2014).

781 Stephen King, "Messages from Stephen," <http://www.stephenking.com/stephens_messages.html> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

782 *The Plant* is still unfinished and its completion doubtful. The published parts are available for free download on his website: <https://www.stephenking.com/library/other_project/plant_zenith_rising_the.html> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

digital format or due to the low content value of his instalments.[783] King in no uncertain terms blamed his readers not being ready for the digital environment of books while King's fan base criticized the mediocre quality, especially of *The Plant*. Apart from that, being digital had several effects on the actual reading experience: readers were limited to reading the text on the computer screen or on early e-readers which offered poor quality as they used rather inadequate LCD-displays. An alternative was to print out the text and read it on paper. The digital book revolution, at any rate, had to be postponed, even if economists like William A. Fischer insinuated in 2002 that "for traditional publishers the relief of a happy ending may well be short-lived."[784]

According to the charts of the US sales revenue of all books delivered electronically over the internet or to hand-held reading devices, one can point out the stagnation of the importance of e-books for the publishing industry between 2002 and 2005. However, there are also two points of increase: the first, if quite moderate, beginning in late 2005, and the second, much more significant, beginning in late 2007. Both increases indicate a steady growth.[785] These surges in e-book sales are probably in connection to the introduction of Sony's e-reader and Amazon's Kindle (in the US) in 2006 and 2007, respectively. In any case, Thompson's chart for the US market hints at an e-book breakthrough signifying a growing acceptance of the new format.

A potential supersession of the material book by the digital book is oftentimes equated with the death of traditional publishing. John Thompson comments on this in the preface of his monograph *Merchants of Culture* as follows:

> But on the rare occasions that the publishing industry itself comes under public scrutiny, more often than not it is because another journalist is eager to announce that, with the coming of the digital age, the publishing industry as we know it is doomed. Few industries have had their death foretold more frequently than the book industry, and yet somehow, miraculously, it seems to have survived them all – at least till now.[786]

In other words, the book publishing industry (and the book culture as we know it) is supposed to be under attack by the so-called digital revolution. Ten years after King's first attempt at using the digital medium, the printed book was supposedly facing the competition of its digital surrogate again. This time,

783 King, "Messages from Stephen."

784 William A. Fischer, "Stephen King and the Publishing Industry's Worst Nightmare," *Business Strategy Review*, 13.2 (2002), 1–10, 1.

785 Thompson, *Merchants of* Culture, 321.

786 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, xiii.

however, the impetus for a new age in the publishing industry has not been an established and widely successful author, but a hugely successful and popular producer of entertainment gadgets, namely Apple. The launching of the iPad in March 2010 was eagerly awaited by technophiles and e-book proponents alike. Previous reading devices primarily facilitated access to digital texts. As a multifunctional tablet, the iPad offered all the possibilities of multimedia, and a steep rise in embracing digital products, also in the publishing industry, was expected.[787] Celebrated by the media and consumers alike, this tablet computer truly seemed to offer all that technophile consumers wished for. Even though it was quite expensive (about EUR 500–800, depending on the configuration of the equipment), it offered a computer with an impressive colour touchscreen. The usability was intuitive and is even understood by people who had never before worked with touchscreen technology. Compared to dedicated e-readers that just display texts and images in black and white, the iPad let consumers watch videos or even movies, play games, surf the world wide web, receive and write emails, just in a portable format. The incentive to purchase this device was much higher since it basically offered a portable multimedia computer. The fact that Apple was known to be a very sophisticated company with dyed-in-the-wool followers added to the tremendous success of the iPad. In June 2011, a little more than a year after releasing the first iPad, Apple revealed that they had sold more than 25 million units.[788] Like iTunes for music, Apple offers a digital bookshop with iBooks, trying to repeat their enormous success as a distributer of digital content. After a couple of months refusing to do so, Apple eventually offered an application making it possible to purchase and read Kindle texts, the format of its biggest competitor Amazon.[789]

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787 An early scholarly reaction to the launch of the iPad is Alan Galey, "The Enkindling Reciter: E-Books in the Bibliographical Imagination," *Book History*, 15 (2012), 210–247. Galey uses Steve Jobs' speech as the starting point to a more elaborated discussion about the repercussions on Book Studies. His title refers to Coleridge's phrase in which he distinguishes performance from text. Similarly, Galey sees a distinction between text and reading device.

788 Neil Hughes, "iPad Sales Reach 25M Milestone, Apple on Track for 8M+ this Quarter," *Apple Insider*, 07 June 2011 <https://appleinsider.com/articles/11/06/07/ipad_sales_reach_25m_milestone_apple_on_track_for_8m_this_quarter> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

789 Apple's iPad is not the first tablet computer. Previous tablets were released by Microsoft, Nokia and Fujitsu Siemens, among others. However, the iPad is the first mass-market tablet to achieve widespread popularity.

In order to gauge how the introduction of new reading devices changed the mood in the publishing industry, the following passages will first summarize the findings of the *Bookseller*'s Futurebook Digital Book Census from 2010, that is, before the iPad was introduced. This is followed by elaborations on advantages and disadvantages of digital publishing. Afterwards, the mood of the publishing industry is gauged with results from the Digital Census from 2013, two years after the iPad and the introduction of the Amazon Kindle on the European market.

Executed by the weekly magazine *Bookseller*, the census provided answers from more than 2,000 people about the future of the book.[790] Most participants of this survey were associated with the book trade (authors, publishers, librarians and so on). But non-related groups like students and journalists took part as well. The scope of the survey is international, but most of the participants are from the UK, followed by participants from the USA and from the rest of Europe. Unfortunately, there is no information concerning the age of the respondents. Also, since the study was based on an online survey, one has to take into consideration that the respondents are primarily people used to the digital environment.

In general, the results of the survey showed that tendencies towards an acceptance of the digital book were palpable, albeit weakly. Taking all data into consideration, the survey came to the conclusion that the market for digital books was still small but was growing and publishers should be optimistic that investing in digital publishing will prove to be economically viable. This development was seen in the fields of production, distribution and reception. Asked about their opinion whether e-book sales will at one point overtake sales of printed books, more than 50 per cent of the respondents answered with yes, more than a third disagreed. Almost two thirds of those people were sure that this would happen before the year 2019. On the other hand, only two per cent believed that printed books will vanish completely.[791] Both groups were wrong.

According to the 2010 survey, about 78 per cent have read a book or a journal in a digital format. This figure is even more important if one takes into consideration that in the previous survey from 2009 only 47.2 per cent said so. An even more relevant indicator for acceptance (and preference) is the willingness to pay for digital content. This figure also rose significantly from 18.2 to 46.9 per cent. While, on the one hand, this clearly states that more people were ready to pay for digital texts, on the other hand, this also signifies that still more than half the people that do embrace digital reading in general were actually not willing to

790 *The Bookseller Futurebook Digital Book Census 2010*, 2010.
791 *Futurebook Census 2010,* 11.

pay for the content.[792] However, both publishers (57.3 per cent) and booksellers (35.7 per cent) indicated that customers were not yet ready to use and read e-books.[793] Other hindrances to selling more e-books mentioned included technology, accessibility, availability and price, DRM, retailer resistance, poor marketing and quality. But despite this plethora of hindrances, publishers were more willing to publish in digital formats as well. According to the 2010 census, more than four in five publishers were willing to do so. This is not surprising, since according to the figures, digital publishing is a growing market, albeit a small one: nearly half of the publishers put their digital sales at about one to three per cent of their total sales. However, asked about their prediction for the year 2020, 35.3 per cent believed that digital sales will account for 21–50 per cent of all the sales, 27.9 per cent even predict more than 50 per cent.[794] In conclusion, despite all the hindrances and relatively insignificant amount of digital sales in 2010, booksellers and publishers alike had no doubts in 2010 about the growing acceptance of the electronic book.

4.2.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Content

Book publishing is not the first industry which encountered difficulties with digitizing their analogue content. Beginning in the 1990s, a similar situation occurred in the industry of recorded music entertainment. It is helpful to look at this development and its parallels to the publishing industry.

From its very beginning in the late nineteenth century to the first decade of the twenty-first century, the carrier of music information underwent several changes. The most important transitional stages were the phonograph, 78 rpm records, the microgroove LP, the stereo LP, the compact disc (CD) and the compressed MP3-file. Eric Rothenbuhler has pointed out in his essay "The Compact Disc and Its Culture" (2012)[795] that up to the development of the CD, every subsequent medium was mainly about the enhancement of the sound quality. The introduction of the MP3-format, however, saw a discernible reduction of sound quality. Further disadvantages of the digital file are apparent since the MP3 file has no materiality and therefore cannot be handled or looked at. In other words,

792 *Futurebook Census 2010,* 8.

793 *Futurebook Census 2010*, 17.

794 *Futurebook Census 2010*, 14.

795 Eric W. Rothenbuhler, "The Compact Disc and Its Culture: Notes on Melancholia," *Cultural Technologies: The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*, ed. Göran Bolin (London, 2012), 36–50.

the MP3 resulted in a decline of symbolic value ("no presence," "cannot be looked at") as well as content value concerning the sound quality. Nonetheless, it has superseded the CD as the main format chosen by customers of music. Rothenbuhler concludes that the CD is the reason for this development: "The paradox of the CD is that its success led to its decline."[796] It did not only offer the best sound quality for recorded music to date, it was also, in contrast to LPs, highly portable and eventually playable in cars and transportable players. The freedom of listening to music anywhere was esteemed higher than the possible high sound quality. According to the market analysis, convenience had superseded the value of sound quality. For the majority of the market, listening to music became less and less a leisure activity which needed or encouraged much attention to (sonic) detail. Rather, listening to music developed more and more to an activity *en passant*. This trend was extended by the MP3 file. Though the compression results in a poorer sound quality, this loss is only perceivable with (usually expensive) high fidelity (hifi) equipment and by paying closer attention to the music. Since hifi amplifiers and loudspeakers are not designed to be portable (as opposed to MP3 players), the loss of sound quality could therefore be neglected.[797] Alternative digital formats with lossless compression exist but are rarely applied to the mass music market. However, the music industry and several record companies invested in high resolution mediums that offered even higher sound quality than the CD and further offered surround sound mixes like the Digital Versatile Disc-Audio (DVD-A) or the Super Audio Compact Disc (SACD). Later on, similar products were offered on BluRay discs, as they offered much more storage than average DVDs. This counter-reaction, however, is, to this day, a niche product with an uncertain future.

Ironically, the CD is, in recent years, not only losing to the MP3 format, but also to its predecessor, the stereo vinyl record. Audiophiles invest in hifi equipment which has led to a continued production of new turntables and the respective equipment. This does, however, not change the fact that "low price, small size, portability and convenience have largely displaced quality, fidelity, beauty or truth as primary terms of evaluation in the world of consumer audio playback media and devices."[798] In a rather ironic twist of technological development, the

796 Rothenbuhler, "The Compact Disc and Its Culture," 49.

797 Rothenbuhler, "The Compact Disc and Its Culture," 45–46. Rothenbuhler hints at the irony that listening to an MP3 with a hifi set-up actually punishes the listener who has invested in good hardware as the inferior quality becomes apparent.

798 Rothenbuhler, "The Compact Disc and Its Culture," 39–40.

CD, once the shiny symbol of digital possibilities, nowadays seems to represent a medium which offers neither enough symbolic value, nor enough convenience for music entertainment. For the occasional music experience, streaming services like Spotify or Prime Music have largely displaced ownership of CDs.

A similar development can be witnessed in the motion picture industry. Despite the increasing improvements of audio-visual quality of movies with high storage mediums like the Blu-Ray disc and HD television sets, the success of streaming services like Netflix stresses that audio-visual content (like movies or TV series) needs to be convenient, mobile, direct and fast. Possible limitations in picture and (especially) sound quality seem negligible.[799] Convenience supersedes quality and seems to establish itself as a new value in itself.

Music, movies and texts are of course different mediums and a comparison, though tempting, needs to be undertaken cautiously. Recorded music has always been a tertiary medium. No matter in which format, it is listened to via some form of loudspeaker. In a physical book, as a secondary medium, the content is inseparable from its carrier. With digitization, content can change its carrier and thereby acquire a different look based on size and quality of the screen. This in turn affects the actual reading experience. Also, listening to music is usually passive and does not necessarily require much attention if music is considered to be merely background noise and listening to it merely a secondary activity. Reading always needs at least minimal attention. The success of the MP3 format for music has demonstrated that an economically sufficient number of customers shifted their values for music consumption. Whereas sound quality might be the most obvious value for recorded music, it is convenience on many levels that became prevalent.

The digital possibilities for texts offer similar advantages, but in theory, they also offer further possibilities of which the printed text is not capable. Thompson elaborated on these opportunities. His *Merchants of Culture* was heavily discussed after its publication. Though most reviews were rather favourable, Claire Squires's review lists several flaws, among others that Thompson is not using a sound methodology.[800] Thompson answered with an extensive reply:

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799 Mats Björkin, "Peer-to-Peer File-Sharing Sytems: Files, Objects, Distribution," *Cultural Technologies: The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*, ed. Göran Bolin (London, 2012), 51–63, 61.

800 Claire Squires, rev. "John B. Thompson, *Merchants of Culture. The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge, 2010," *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 21.1 (2010), 140–142.

> As a social scientist, I take the view that if we wish to understand these worlds we have to immerse ourselves in them. It is not enough to sit back and reflect abstractly on what might or might not be happening in these worlds - armchair speculation is undoubtedly much easier, but it tells us very little about what is actually going on in the world we wish to understand.[801]

Later on, Thompson directly refers to Squires:

> Although she is not explicit about this, Squires's discomfort may stem from the fact that her background is in literary studies and she appears to have little sympathy for, and little understanding of, the kinds of research methods commonly used in the social sciences.[802]

The most helpful criticism about Thompson's monograph stems from Charles Levine, who pointed out that Thompson's chapter about the digital revolution already looked dated on the day of publication.[803] Thompson agrees and justifies this with the fact that "one great risk that any researcher faces when they are working on a contemporary industry is that they are shooting a moving target."[804] Even though his data is not up to date, he still claims that he would not change his main argument which basically states that the digital revolution is still a process with no clear outcome.

He lists nine aspects possible within the digital environment that might 'add value' to their content: ease of access, updatability, scale, searchability, portability, intertextuality, affordability, flexibility and multimedia.[805] Unfortunately, Thompson does not offer a definition of 'added value,' nor does he state what is added to what and who gains from such an added value. However, one can assume from his reasoning that he argues from the perspective of the customer and therefore lists possible reasons for their further acceptance of digital publications.

The term 'added value' derives from economic sciences rather than from the humanities. In essence, the term implies that within the production chain of a product, each step adds something, an 'added value,' to the product that makes the commodity more attractive for the customer (see chapter 1). The 'added

801 John B. Thompson, "A Reply," *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 21.1 (2010), 143–147, 143.

802 Thompson, "A Reply," 147.

803 Charles M. Levine, "Introduction to the *Logos* Reviews of John B. Thompson's *Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century*," *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 21.1 (2010), 137–138.

804 Thompson, "A Reply," 144. With this analogy, Thompson also points out the challenge of this chapter.

805 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 339–343.

value' for the customer, then, is an increase in desire for the product. Whether this 'added value' is merely perceived by the customer or really adds to the quality of the product in measurable terms (for example longer life, efficiency and so on) is less relevant than the fact that it increases the probability that the producer will sell more units of his product or earn more with a higher price. Thompson's idea of 'added values' has the specific difference that it relates to advantages for publications in a digital format compared to print format.

Thompson's elaborations discussed above certainly need to be regarded carefully. Adriaan van der Weel points out possible problems when talking about categories like advantages and disadvantages:

> Speaking in terms of advantages and disadvantages always carries the danger of limiting one's perspective, since they are inevitably advantages and disadvantages compared to a standard, which often remains implicit. Moreover, such a standard is usually not fixed, because humans are inclined to view advantages and disadvantages mainly in the light of their present circumstances. Also advantages often have an unpleasant and not very predictable tendency to turn into disadvantages in the longer term. (The opposite happens as well, but unfortunately that seems less often the case.)[806]

With Thompson's approach to label certain possibilities of digital texts as 'added values,' he clearly means this as an advantage in comparison to print. The perspective, however, seems a bit vague. Van der Weel, however, also decides to name advantages and disadvantages for the current situation and states that he will do so as openly as possible from his perspective as a *homo typographicus*, that is from a person who grew up "relying on typographical 'markup' as one of the chief methods to convey structure and meaning."[807] These views, consequently, have to be seen from this perspective. Younger generations might already have a different one.

Support of Acceptance

The following list of 'added values' is suggested by John Thompson in his *Merchants of Culture*.[808] These abilities of digital publishing show the possible advantages of e-books in general (but depending on the format). The relevance of these aspects is further dependent on the publishing category, as will be discussed below.

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806 Van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds*, 148.
807 Van der Weel, *Changing Our Textual Minds*, 19.
808 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 339–343.

Ease of access refers to the almost unlimited and simple availability of e-books, access to internet provided. It is neither necessary to approach an institution like a library or a bookstore, nor is access limited to opening hours. With digital content, the reader has, at least in theory, access to texts all the time.

Updatability stresses the option to change the content of a work without the need to produce the whole print run again. These opportunities might be as profane as correcting spelling mistakes or formatting errors in novels to more vital changes such as updating encyclopaedic entries in reference works. One vital drawback, especially for scholars is the problem of unstable texts. Quoting texts that can, in theory, change at any time, is a problem within the academic world.

Scale emphasizes the amount of content the reader has access to. In fact, there are so many works available that no individual could store it in a physical collection. The scale of available e-books can never be matched by a physical library. The almost limitless availability of content, however, also bears a noteworthy disadvantage. Readers in the digital environment must orientate themselves in the ever-growing scale of content.[809] Nowadays, as internet users are already used to basically limitless scale, it seems less impressive. It is worth reminding though that access to content had never been that easy and copious, either due to restricted access or limited amount of content in general.

Searchability offers the reader the ability to scan the texts for words, names, phrases or illustrations. This does not, however, make table of contents, indices and bibliographies obsolete. A good index, for example, offers the editor's assessment of what terms are important for the reader and further considers synonyms and related concepts of the main term.[810] A simple text search cannot replace this function. However, the option to scan a text for a specific term within seconds can be a very efficient tool. It certainly gets more efficient the larger the scale and most probably will even improve with the development of machine learning algorithms.

Portability stresses the small dimensions of e-readers and the huge amount of texts that can be stored on a device. The widespread production of the paperback beginning in the early 20th century was very appealing because the format was more portable, but it is nothing compared to the amount of content an e-reader can store. Portability is connected to 'scale': more e-books on an e-reader will not affect the portability, but rather prove the added value.

809 Andreas Henrich, "Lesen digital," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 75 (2000), 339–345, 344.
810 Liu, "When E-Books are the Only 'Books,'" 125.

Flexibility addresses the ability of e-texts to adjust to different screen properties. It also refers to the possibility to change the size as well as the style of the fount. In 2015, Amazon has offered a fount called "Bookerly" that is allegedly superior for e-readers, increases the speed of reading and is causing less eye-strain.[811] Flexibility is a feature that does not apply to PDF-e-books, since the page design is locked in this format.

Affordability takes into account that, in general, digital versions of publications are usually cheaper than the printed editions. This, however, depends on the country. The US, for example, offers much bigger price gaps for digital content than Germany. The German novel *Stern 111*, winner of the "Preis der Leipziger Buchmesse 2020," for example, was EUR 24,- in hardcover and EUR 20,99 as a Kindle e-book a few weeks after its publication.

Intertextuality refers to the possibility to switch back and forth between texts, mainly with the use of hyperlinks. Rather than using further (physical) books to look up definitions or references, a click on a hyperlink will offer access to the content in question. Some e-readers offer services like dictionaries which will offer concise definitions of words, if the user wishes to do so.

Multimedia, finally, is probably the most obvious new feature of digital publications. Printed books may offer illustrations, but digital books, depending on the format, can offer videos and sound files as well. Again, this feature would only partially work for PDF e-books, even though colour illustrations are relatively expensive to produce in printed books. For PDF-only publications, these extra costs do not exist.

It can be concluded that most 'added values' potentially offer more convenience. Further, the possibility to add content value to publications due to digitization can hardly be denied. Still, digital publishing is not as important as predicted by the majority of the industry in the 2010 census summarized above. One reason for the slow acceptance and, indeed, preference of e-books and their advantages by readers is that 'added values' seem to lie in the eye of the beholder. A closer look at recent developments in publishing reveals that different publishing fields have reacted differently to the digital revolution. Scholarly journal publishing, for instance, is already preferring digital publishing for various reasons. This market is mainly based on institutions and not

811 John Brownlee, "The Kindle Finally Gets Typography That Doesn't Suck," *Fast Company*, 27 May 2015 <https://www.fastcompany.com/3046678/> (accessed: 07.12.2019). Brownlee points out the similarities to the over 200-year-old Baskerville type but is overall satisfied with Bookerly.

individuals. Subscriptions to print journals can easily be enhanced with access to digital versions. Also, the use of journal content seems rather digital-friendly: for example, most articles are not longer than 20 to 30 pages and can therefore either be read on a screen or can be printed out. Printouts of digital content obviously lose their other potential 'added values' like searchability or portability. In that case, mainly 'ease of access' and 'scale' would be the most striking feature. In a scholarly environment, a user with access to the institution's database might have a huge scale to choose from and has instant access to the latest articles. Scholarly articles are usually offered as PDF-documents mimicking the physical counterpart and thereby making use of the page structure for referencing. Other formats that adapt to screen size and specific wishes from the user make traditional referencing tricky and would decrease its usability for academic use.[812] According to Thompson's 'added values' then, ease of access, scale, and searchability are the most important issues in that publishing field. Affordability can be neglected in this argument since both the printed and the digital versions would be provided by an institution. In other words, the context of acceptance for this particular publishing category was ideal.

An even more obvious genre which gains from these added values is encyclopaedic reference works. Here, the impetus was already felt in the early 1990s, when electronic works like Microsoft's *Encarta* were published. These reference works were specifically programmed for a digital environment and not just transferred from print to screen. Consequently, it made use of digital opportunities, especially multimedia. Sales for multivolume reference works like *Encyclopaedia Britannica* dropped significantly due to the enormous success of the digital competition.[813] The reason for this is that reference works are used differently as they primarily perform different functions. Users are predominantly interested in individual entries or even in parts of entries. The ample use of videos, illustrations and sound files further enhance the qualities (and desirability) of digital reference works. Basically, the more information a reference work offers, the more value it has for the user. In the printed format, more information means more pages, possibly more volumes and hence not only a decline in usability but also an increase in price because of additional production costs. In a digital environment, however, usability is not negatively affected by scale. More importantly, the need to constantly update entries in reference works is warranted

812 Amazon's Kindle, for example, uses an abstract system of 'location numbers' to allow the individual settings of fount sizes. Liu, "When E-Books are the Only 'Books,'" 125.

813 Gardiner and Musto, "The Electronic Book," 166.

with digital texts, and multimedia applications also enhance content and therefore the overall quality. Therefore, reference works might gain from all 'added values' of digital publishing, which might explain the immediate acceptance of CD-ROM editions by users in the 90s. The digital environment almost seems like a natural habitat for reference works. Cases in point are, for instance, the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Both reference works use the digital environment to offer functions that the printed format could not offer as efficiently. These reference works become full-fledged databases in their digitized versions.

In contrast, longer linear texts that are supposed to be read from cover to cover, like novels or academic monographs, are much less amenable to these potential 'added values.' And because of the lesser felt impact of the advantages, the disadvantages of digital publishing are felt more strongly.

Hindrances of Acceptance

Piracy

Unauthorized reproduction of texts has been an element in the world of publishing for centuries. However, with digital texts, the ability to illegally distribute copyrighted works is raised to a level never known before. Theoretically, a text protected by copyright could be sent to a large number of people simultaneously or could be uploaded to a server for every person with an internet connection to be downloaded. Publishers are aware of these possibilities as they endanger their revenue. They frequently refer to the devastating effects the music industry witnessed in the 1990s, especially with peer-to-peer file sharing services like Napster.[814] As the enormous popularity of Napster and similar services have proven: if there is a way to get a digital file for free, even if it is illegal, and the probability to get caught is (allegedly) quite low, then the incentive to spend money on that content seems to be low as well. A famous advertisement against piracy proclaims that "You wouldn't download a car!" The idea behind this ad is to create awareness that a digital file may be an abstract commodity encoded in zeros and ones but is still a commodity that has been created by people who depend on monetary transaction just like with any other commodity, physical or

814 Bengt Carlsson and Rune Gustavsson offer a good summary of the early years of Napster in their 2001 conference paper "The Rise and Fall of Napster – An Evolutionary Approach," <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/30499478> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

not. But since it is not a physical product, it somehow makes it feel less of a crime to download a file without paying for it.

Publishers argue that their intellectual property has to be protected in some way, since it is their commodity. According to the *Futurebook Census 2010*, more than 50 per cent of the publishers are aware of instances where their digital content is multiplied and distributed illegally. The reactions, however, seem to differ. Points of view range from indifference because one cannot stop this (just as one cannot stop people from lending and borrowing books) to using this as an incentive to reach a sensible price policy to make texts convenient to buy. Some comments are even downright optimistic and praise the positive effects. It is almost seen as effective and cheap marketing since their works are being spread, which creates awareness of the product, the author or the publishing house. However, the majority of publishers had strategies in place to deal with this issue.[815] The most common way to deal with digital piracy is the application of Digital Rights Management, a method which aims at controlling access to proprietary content (in short: DRM). Access to files with DRM is restricted, mainly to a limited amount of reading devices and/or user-accounts. Worst case scenario: an e-book can only be accessed on one reading device. The application of DRM is an attempt by publishers to secure the legal distribution of digital content and restricting unauthorized copies. Such decisions are, at the same time, also inhibiting acceptance of e-books as it signals that the "copyright holder wants to keep their content from the same people they are giving it to."[816] DRM essentially limits the functions of the book as a social object: it is impossible to lend e-books to other people. Therefore, this measure made the purchase of e-books less desirable. Ironically, publishers are very much aware of this. Approximately 20 per cent of publishers and booksellers believe that DRM is putting customers off from purchasing more e-books.[817] In fact, DRM is seen by many readers as a limitation of their rights as customers which sometimes leads to drastic counter-reactions: tech-savvy DRM opponents seek ways to circumvent DRM and publish the 'liberated' works online for free. The idea behind this is less to hurt sales but rather as a sign to publishers to stop mistrusting their customers.

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815 *Futurebook Census 2010*, 15.

816 Gigi Sohn and Timothy Schneider, "Who Controls Content? The Future of Digital Rights Management," *Media, Technology, and Society: Theories of Media Evolution,* ed. W. Russell Neuman (Ann Arbor, 2010), 179–211, 187.

817 *Futurebook Census 2010*, 17.

Price Policy

The second major problem inhibiting sales of digital texts is price policy. How much can a publisher ask for an electronic version of a text? How much is a consumer willing to pay? Are digital texts worth paying as much for as the physical product? These questions are the crucial questions for digital publishing as they address the complex interrelations of the book value categories: how much economic value can publishers appoint to content-only products so that customers are still willing to pay for a product, especially when they also have the option to choose a physical book that potentially may offer more symbolic value precisely because of its materiality? Further, book users argue that publishers save a lot of money with e-books since no paper, printing, binding, delivery or storage is needed. Still, expenses for the mass-production of a printed book play a marginal role.[818] But authors still have to write the books, the text still has to be set or programmed by professionals, editors are still revising and restructuring the text to enhance it and, last but not least, the publisher, taking the biggest financial risk of all, still has to perform his duties in marketing. Even if consumers are confronted with these reasons, and even if the digital environment 'adds value' to the content, readers are still adamant that the digital text should cost less. From this perspective, consumers seem to perceive the digital version of a text as less valuable in economic terms since it offers less. They are not willing to pay the equal amount of money for the digital version. There are more devaluing consequences for the customer: legally, an e-book is, strictly speaking, not bought since there is no transfer of ownership. Instead, a licence is purchased which only allows the reading of the digital text. This in turn renders the option of reselling e-books impossible. Consequently, e-books have no economic value for the customers whatsoever. Because of the reduced amount of symbolic and economic value of e-books for the customer, the perceived value of the physical book is esteemed higher. According to the *Futurebook Census 2010*, more than 20 per cent of booksellers and publishers believe that e-book prices were still too high to guarantee a higher acceptance of e-books.[819] However, publishers did not have a lot of leeway in their price policy.

A sales strategy of Amazon made publishers aware of the risk of too low prices for e-books: in late 2007, Amazon announced that it would offer all *New York Times* bestsellers, as well as new releases, for only USD 9.99 in the Kindle format. Publishers were surprised since this price had never been talked about or agreed

818 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 337–338.
819 *Futurebook Census 2010,* 17.

upon. Amazon had not been required to agree on a price for which the e-books were to be sold (only the amount to be paid to the publisher had been agreed upon beforehand). In fact, Amazon lost money with every e-book sold in that sales strategy. Depending on the novel, Amazon lost up to eight dollars per unit.[820] However, Amazon incentivized the purchase of their reading device for readers interested in the *New York Times* bestsellers. According to this strategy, the purchase of a Kindle would be viable already after a few discounted e-books. More importantly for Amazon, they could build their customer base and bind them to their Kindle-system. Provided that Amazon would take care of a good selection of texts and provided that the hardware would not disappoint, chances were good that customers would not change to competitors with e-book platforms of their own.

As sensible as this strategy might seem for Amazon, it was dangerous for publishers. On the one hand, however, they got paid the agreed upon price and the distributer was paying the difference. On the other hand, consumers may quickly adapt to the new price structures. If Amazon kept up its USD 9.99 policy for too long, people might perceive new novels to be worth only ten dollars. This, according to publishers, would be catastrophic to the whole industry.[821]

Formats

The video and audio entertainment industry, as well as their customers, are very familiar with so-called "format wars." The competition between Betamax and VHS in the late 1970s and early 1980s, or the more recent one for high definition films between Blu-Ray disc and HD-DVD around the year 2008, should create awareness for publishers of digital content. Consumers can be undecided and hesitate to accept a new medium in general. When several formats are available that offer basically the same service, it is not likely that all formats will continue to coexist. Investing in the new technology might turn out to be a dead end after a few years. For example, people who had bought an HD-DVD-player in 2006 witnessed the defeat of their format to the Blu-Ray system two years later. As a consequence, movies in high definition were no longer produced for HD-DVD players. The entertainment device which had been purchased as the latest technology ready for the future became useless in just a couple of years. A similar situation existed for years for e-books. Readers that were willing to try an e-reader had to choose from a panoply of formats: Sony Reader, Amazon Kindle, Acer Lumiread, Aluratek, Oyo,

820 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 369.

821 Thompson elaborates on this "spectre of price deflation" in *Merchants of Culture*, 368–376.

the iRex, nook, Trekstor and many more. Their content was not always interchangeable across different devices. If a customer has bought the rights to read a text on e-reader A, they might not be able to read it when they later decide to buy e-reader B. The incompatibility between systems is still palpable today, if not as confusing as in the booming years for e-readers around 2005. The situation gets more complex when the producers of the e-readers are also responsible for e-book-distribution. Since the competition for the e-book-market was fierce, customers suffered from rigid strategies of their e-reader producers. This was felt especially in the first days of the iPad. It took several months until Apple finally agreed to make it possible to read Kindle-books, offered and sold by and via Amazon, on Apple iPads. Back then, Apple still tried to establish their e-book store "iBooks," hoping to mimic their huge success with iTunes for digital music distribution.

Reading Devices

Digitization within the publishing industry means a separation from content and its material carrier. In late 2012, the Swiss *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (*NZZ*), a rich-in-tradition daily newspaper, launched an advertisement series to promote their digital counterpart to the printed product. The main claim of the campaign reads "*NZZ*-Leser brauchen kein Papier," emphasizing that their service is about content and not about the material of the medium. The ad shows a supposed reader (depending on the version of the ad, a man in his 50s, a man in his 30s, and a woman in her 20s) from the point of view of a reading device with touchscreen technology. The depicted reader is pointing towards the camera. The first impression is that the individuals are pointing at the observer and thus reminding observers of the 1917 "I want you for U.S. Army" campaign by 'Uncle Sam.' However, on closer inspection one notices that the fingertip is touching an invisible barrier. They are choosing something on a touchscreen. The observers of this ad find themselves within the reading device and witness this reading situation. The background of the ad, despite being out of focus and blurry, reveals further information. The three individuals reading on a smartphone or tablet computer are currently located at a train station, probably waiting for a train. An interview with Peter Hogenkamp, editor-in-chief for the digital department of the *NZZ*, explains that the Zürich main station was chosen as a location. A train station implies mobility, an element which is oftentimes connected with modern reading devices and praised as an important advantage.[822] If one ignores the

822 "*NZZ*-Leser brauchen kein Papier," *persoenlich.com*, 06.11.2012 <http://www.persoenlich.com/news/werbung/nzz-leser-brauchen-kein-papier-233138#.UT-VlzcrKHg> (accessed: 11.12.2019).

Fig. 1: "*NZZ*-Leser brauchen kein Papier" (Jung von Matt/Limmat)[823]

823 I would like to express my gratitude to Jung von Matt/Limmat, especially to Nina Bachmann and Stefanie Tasovac, for permission to reprint the ad. Photography by Maurice Haas.

obvious suggestion that the people portrayed in the ads are reading the advertised newspaper, it can also be assumed that they may just pass the time with reading a novel, checking their mails or even booking connecting trains. It is not clearly stated that the depicted readers are reading the advertised *NZZ* itself. This can be seen as an ironic take at the famous German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (*FAZ*) ad campaign with the claim "Dahinter steckt immer ein kluger Kopf": In these ads, a newspaper reading situation is shown with the newspaper fully unfolded partially obstructing the view of the reader. Though the readers cannot be seen, the ad always reveals the name of the reader in small letters. Usually, the readers are well-known people connected to high cultural capital like politicians, authors or celebrities. In terms of the *NZZ* ad campaign, it is not necessary to see what the readers are reading. Rather than showing people reading the advertised product, it suggests that these readers are able to use modern reading devices and are aware of their advantages. They have completely accepted the new medium and use it in everyday situations. Consequently, these people signify the reader of the future.

For the newspaper industry, those readers also signified a new (and important) customer group: readers who are not only willing to pay for news on paper, but also in a digital format. In December 2012, the German *Financial Times Deutschland* went out of business. The well-established *Frankfurter Rundschau* also declared bankruptcy (but was eventually saved by the publisher of the *FAZ* in 2013). One of the reasons for those papers' financial problems was (allegedly) the lack of focus on the digital environment. The *NZZ* ad campaign tries to convince their readers that reading on digital devices can actually have advantages: speedy ease of access as well as portability. A paper-based newspaper cannot easily be held in one hand. The finger touching the invisible barrier also hints at further functions of touchscreen technology: touch on a picture in a digital article and the picture is full scale, a video might be played, a hyperlink may be activated opening a new window with further information about the chosen topic, changing fount sizes and so on.

With this interpretation in mind, it might be concluded that the ad not only suggests, as the title implies, that paper is not necessary. It really implies that paper is holding back all those useful possibilities that finally arrived due to technological advancements. (After all, touching a picture in a printed newspaper will lead to nothing.) Inadvertently, the ad addresses the most crucial element of the concurrent existence of print and digital publishing. The acceptance of reading on a screen seems wanting, albeit growing. Therefore, it stresses that paper is not a necessity to enjoy newspapers, but it really limits the possibilities of useful reading. Markus Spillmann, editor-in-chief of the *NZZ*, however, phrases it more diplomatically, stressing the continued relevance of print:

> Die gedruckte Zeitung wird es auch weiterhin geben, wie lange, wissen wir alle nicht. Wir wollen mit dem Werbeslogan betonen, dass es die Qualität, die wir heute vor allem noch in Print abbilden, künftig verstärkt auf allen digitalen Vertriebsformen geben wird. Es ist keine Kampagne gegen Print, sondern eine umgedreht positiv besetzte Kampagne für die Qualität im digitalen Raum der NZZ.[824]

Granted, publishing newspapers is very different from publishing books. They satisfy different needs and perform different functions. Nevertheless, the insinuated advantages in this ad campaign may also be applied to the book. In the nineteenth century, the newspaper industry had already been the impetus for technological advantages of which some were eventually adopted by the book industry. It is not altogether impossible that a similar trend might appear in the digital age: newspaper and magazine publishing might need to push technological (and software) possibilities. The *NZZ* advertisement demonstrates that the reading device seems to be a very important factor in digital publishing. During the time of the ads in the year 2012, they were, at the same time, one of the most problematic factors that inhibited a successful breakthrough for digital publishing. In fact, around a third of publishers and booksellers believed that it was the technology behind e-books that put readers off.[825] Early reading devices were quite expensive: readers like the I-Rex were about EUR 600,- in 2006. A year later, Amazon launched its Kindle onto the US market for USD 399,- which was quite an investment for a gadget that only lets the customers read texts. Around 2013, similar readers cost around EUR 150,- which is, albeit much cheaper, still around the price of 15 paperback novels.

Apart from the high price, screens were relatively small. Early devices even suffered from an inadequate resolution. Electronic paper (or e-ink)[826] technology was designed and enhanced to mimic the effect of print on paper, but it could not achieve the contrast of pure black on pure white, which is still one of the best ways to read.[827] Electronic paper is usually offered on dedicated e-readers (the iLiad reader was one of the earliest mass-produced readers with e-ink). This technology, however, is incompatible with tablet computers. Further, those displays are shiny and reflect external sources of light. Ironically, the reading experience with a tablet under the sun can be as annoying as reading a printed

824 "*NZZ*-Leser brauchen kein Papier."

825 *Futurebook Census 2010*, 17.

826 Though sometimes also called "e-ink", "electronic paper" is the correct term as "e-ink" refers to the company.

827 Mosley, "Technologies of Print," 103.

book in the dark. It must seem almost ridiculous for aficionados of the printed book that a new technology like electronic paper needed to offer the added value of reading texts in sunlight. Finally, reading devices were quite bulky and heavy, some even heavier than a hardcover book. It was not the same to turn the page like in a codex book. Skipping several pages was also tricky.[828]

What also possibly put readers off, especially those new to IT equipment, were the growing options of equipment (Wi-Fi, 3G, on-device storage, USB-port and so on). Even the Kindle is offered in various sizes, display qualities and additional equipment. Compared to the printed book, for which readers had maybe the choice between hardback and paperback, sometimes cheaper mass-market paperbacks or film tie-ins. But no matter the choice, the text was always accessible. There was no need to worry about incompatibility with something else.

All in all, e-readers were quite expensive for a gadget that only displays text and images. The screens were rather small and inadequate, and the haptic advantages were still with the codex book. Thompson's findings have emphasized that hardware is a crucial factor for digital publishing. The rise in e-book sales in late 2006 and 2007 are certainly in connection to the introduction of Sony's e-reader and Amazon's Kindle in 2006 and 2007, respectively.

The *NZZ* ad campaign emphasizes that the shift to digital texts implies many more changes compared to the Gutenberg and industrial age. It implies a complete change in the form of the medium. The most basic unit of the physical book is the page, and this idea has structured textual transmission for almost 2000 years. With digital texts, pages are not required. Nevertheless, they oftentimes offer conceptions of page-like entities, something which is oftentimes criticized:

> It might be argued that what we are seeing in much contemporary web design is a failure of imagination, a case of what sometimes is called 'the horseless carriage phenomenon' – the tendency to conceive of a new technology in terms of the old, and therefore to reproduce the features of the old technology even when these features are no longer functional.[829]

This view, however, implies that the new technology can potentially offer some sort of improvement for textual presentation compared to former technologies. It also ignores the possibility that the unit of the page, which has developed over

828 Thompson, *Merchants of Culture*, 317.

829 Peter Stoicheff and Andrew Taylor, "Introduction: Architectures, Ideologies, and Materials of the Page," *The Future of the Page*, eds Peter Stoicheff and Andrew Taylor (Toronto, 2004), 1–25, 9.

centuries, might not need improvement for textual information. Consequently, Stoicheff and Taylor conclude that there are "good reasons for doing things the same old way and that it will be exceedingly difficult to do things differently."[830] The latter argument clearly touches upon the aspect of acceptance of the new technology: readers have been accustomed to this format for two millennia and the acceptance of a new format would be hard to establish. Bonnie Mak argues that "we are drawing upon rich traditions in the design of our scripts and typeface, the layout of text, image, space, and the paratextual devices of title-pages, headings, tables, and indices."[831] This path dependence does not need to hinder developments in the digital age. It needs to be assessed, however, which publishing categories profit from imitating such features, and which profit from different structuring.

4.3. Acceptance of the Digital Book

In 2013, the iPad had been established as a mass-market tablet computer, along with competing products, for example Samsung's Galaxy Tab. Likewise, Amazon's Kindle was firmly established. Still, e-books had not superseded the printed book as a primary means to entertain, educate or inform readers. In 2011, Dong-Hee Shin assessed the acceptance of e-books and e-readers. His elaborate research, which combines the Uses and Gratifications Theory, the Expectation Confirmation Theory as well as the Diffusion Theory, confirms the sentiments about the rather slow acceptance of e-books around this time: emotional factors as well as usability have inhibiting influences on the continuance intention:

> One finding that attracts attention is that consumers like e-books that feel like paper books, but still have functional advantages of advanced digital devices. From this perspective, the study was successful in its attempt to integrate emotional (affective) and cognitive factors.[832]

The study further revealed that content and service quality were highly expected then and played a vital role in the future of digital publishing:

830 Stoicheff and Taylor, "Introduction," 9.
831 Bonnie Mak, *How the Page Matters* (Toronto, 2011), 4–5.
832 Shin, "Understanding E-Book Users," 271.

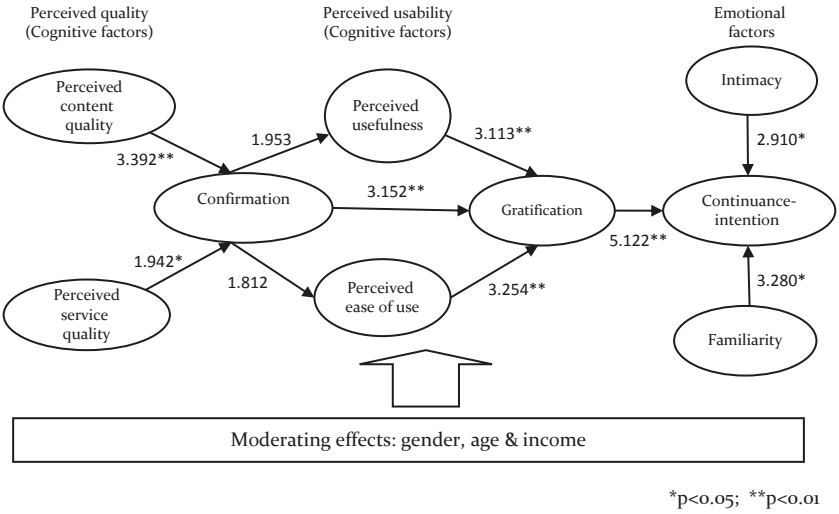

Fig. 2: Dong-Hee Shin's acceptance model of e-books and e-readers.

> This study confirms the importance of usability and further clarifies that usability can be enhanced by perceived service and content quality. These findings raise a need for e-books to provide quality content as well as excellence of service to customers. As Kang et al. (2009) argue, the perception of e-book quality by customers is a major factor in achieving market breakthrough. [. . .] It has been argued that the most significant weakness of e-books is the lack of content. As people increasingly turn to the web for the sort of content they used to get from books, their expectations for that content will change. Those changing expectations will undoubtedly have an impact on the development of future e-readers, not to mention future e-books. In this study, the users' perception of quality shows a much stronger impact on intention than previous studies on IT use have indicated.[833]

The findings of Shin's research, even though they seem outdated in 2020 (especially the argument of 'lack of content'), were largely confirmed by the results of the 2013 *Futurebook Digital Book Census* (by then renamed as *Digital Census 2013*).[834] A comparison with the 2010 results shows a continuity of the previous

833 Shin, "Understanding E-Book Users," 271.

834 *Digital Census 2013: The Annual Tracker of How the Book Business is Managing the Shift to a Highly Digital Culture*, 2013.

trends. However, several interesting shifts in perception become apparent.[835] The responses were collected in late 2012 and the respondents are broken down as 37.1 per cent publishers, 10.2 per cent librarians, 9.8 per cent published authors, 9.6 per cent booksellers/retailers, and 5.3 per cent self-published authors.[836] The scope of the survey is again international in accordance with the previous surveys.[837]

90.4 per cent of the respondents have read a book or a journal in a digital format. This speaks for a steadily increasing acceptance of (or at least curiosity about) digital texts. However, as the analysis states: "Perhaps it should be more a surprise to find that one in ten (9.6 per cent) of our respondents has not yet read digitally."[838] An interesting development is the commonly used device to read digitally. Despite the enormous success of tablet computers, hailed as an all-rounder for everything digital, the dedicated e-reader jumped from 48.1 to 57.1 per cent. The PC expectedly lost six percentage points and is in second place with 45 per cent, followed by the tablet computer with 44.2 per cent. The smartphone, after rising from 31.5 per cent to 37.5 per cent, slightly dropped to 36.5 per cent.[839] It can be assumed that Amazon's aggressive (and successful) Kindle marketing is responsible for these results. However, the respondents also estimated that by 2015, tablets will prevail. Another estimation by respondents is that it is less about choosing one device but rather about flexibility and use across various platforms.[840]

Another topic touched upon by the survey was the question concerning how much digital content has been sold and in which format publishers chose to sell it. While digital sales were continuously growing in 2013 (the survey labels it

835 *Digital Census 2013* reflects the results at the end of 2012. The skipped year is explained with the idea to be a conduit between "where the industry was at the end of 2012 and where they hope it will get to in 2013." *Digital Census 2013*, 3.

836 Further respondents are broken down into consultants, agents, distributors, students, start-ups and other, *Digital Census 2013*, 5.

837 The breakdown of the 2013 census is as follows: UK 64.2 per cent, US 13.2 per cent, rest of Europe 10.5 per cent, Australia/ New Zealand 5.3 per cent, Asia 2.2 per cent, rest of the World 4.6 per cent. *Digital Census 2013*, 5.

838 *Digital Census 2013*, 8.

839 *Digital Census 2013*, 8. Further devices are subsumed under "other including gaming devices, PDAs etc."

840 *Digital Census 2013*, 8: "A third (33.0 %) of people forecast a habit of reading across all these platforms, which highlights the importance of cloud-based systems and digital flexibility among publishers and retailers."

"current digital sales soaring"), the choice of format became rather complex. Sales of PDF-files were dropping, whereas e-books, enhanced e-books and apps were rising, indicating a development away from digital texts completely mimicking the printed page.[841] It is rather telling, though, that 18.8 per cent of publishers stated that they do not know their percentage of current sales in digital formats. It can only be guessed whether this is merely a reluctance to disclose such information or whether it signifies that digital publishing was not seen as relevant enough by publishers. This, however, remains speculation.

Publishers were also asked what, from their perspective, caused hindrances towards selling digital formats. They answered that their digital products were not easy to discover and that customers were not used to paying for digital content and hence demanded it for free (32.4 per cent and 31.8 per cent respectively). More generally, it was also stated that customers were not ready for digital formats (23.8 per cent). Interestingly, "piracy" (14.9 per cent), "technology" (13.6 per cent) and "DRM putting people off" (10.4 per cent), usually factors that have been constantly named when dealing with problems of digital content, were listed surprisingly low.[842] After all, besides the limitation of usability, it also symbolizes that publishers distrust their customers. As one respondent from publishing put it in the *Digital Census 2013*: "DRM is worse than useless. It tells your customers that you don't trust them. It restricts honest and non-technical users without stopping anyone with even a small amount of technical ability."[843]

A final noteworthy finding concerning publishers is the number of growing start-ups like Unbound, ReadSocial, Ten Pages or Small Demons. Rather tellingly, only a few publishers had been aware of this trend.[844] Such start-ups, among other things, organize crowdfunding of publications. The concept of crowdfunding basically reshapes the traditional value chain in publishing. As van der Weel illustrates in his value chain as value network for crowdfunding: consumers, at least partially, take over the primary functions of publishers with marketing, funding and publicity.

It remains to be seen whether crowdfunding will become an important opponent to traditional publishing, or whether it will continue to support niche products. In the music business, however, crowdfunding has already witnessed

841 *Digital Census 2013*, 11–12.
842 *Digital Census 2013*, 15.
843 *Digital Census 2013*, 26.
844 *Digital Census 2013*, 16.

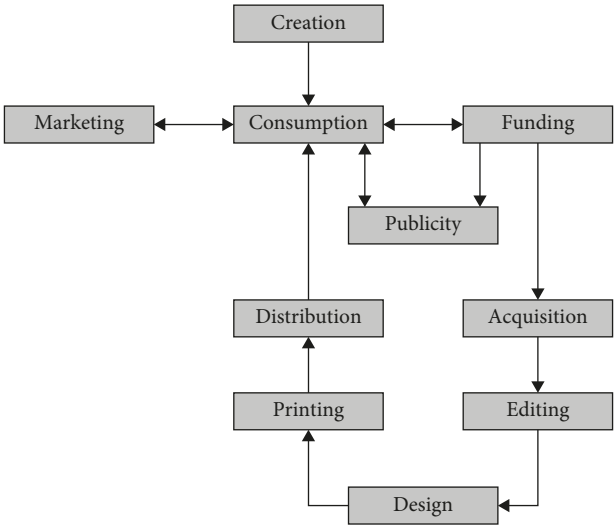

Fig. 3: The value chain as value network in the case of crowdfunding[845]

several success stories. British progressive rock band Marillion, for example, fell out of favour with their record company because the band refused to focus on writing radio friendly music. Lacking the financial support of a big record company, the band was unable to tour to promote their music. Initiated by American fans, online crowdfunding eventually made it possible for the band to tour in the US in 1997.[846] Astonished by this concept, the band asked their fan base if they were interested in pre-ordering their next album before it was even written. Subsequently, more than 12,000 fans pre-ordered and thus funded the recording of the album *Marbles*, which was eventually released in 2001.[847] Similar situations also happened in the movie industry and could still become a bigger force within the publishing industry.

845 Van der Weel, "Van waardeketen naar waardeweb," 33. This version has been translated into English and slightly edited for teaching purposes by Adriaan van der Weel.

846 Dean Golemis, "British Band's U.S. Tour Is Computer-Generated," *Chicago Tribune*, 23 September 1997 <http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1997–09–23/features/9709230071_1_music-fans-newsgroup-marillion> (accessed: 25.08.2019).

847 Tim Masters, "Marillion to the Rescue," *BBC News Online*, 11 May 2001 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/1325340.stm> (accessed: 11.12.2019). The band has financed three further albums this way until 2013.

All developments in the digital publishing sector, especially since 2013, point to an increasing influence of global tech companies. This is already hinted at within the *Digital Census 2013* survey, which also shed light on the problematic situation of selling digital content. Despite the fact that more and more booksellers offered digital books, their sales of digital content were only growing slowly, with the exception of Amazon. This was a general trend in the business of digital publishing: "As the digital revolution shakes down, who stands to gain and who will miss out? Our survey makes it abundantly clear: hi-tech content intermediaries are the winners and longstanding professions who built their empires on print are the losers."[848]

The assessment of the respondents was clearly stating that Amazon (98.7 per cent), Apple (92.3 per cent), hardware and device companies (89.3 per cent) and Google (87.7 per cent) were the winners at the end of 2012, whereas traditional booksellers were considered to be the losers with 95.8 per cent of the respondents thinking so.

Amazon's Kindle strategy was undoubtedly a success. When the Kindle store opened in 2007 (for the US market), it offered merely 90,000 titles. Ten years later, it had risen to over five million different titles and its estimated share of UK e-book sales is around 90 per cent.[849] At the same time, however, the predictions of an unstoppable rise of e-book dominance were taken back. In 2017, traditional publishers were estimating a levelling-off, or even contracting, of the market share for their digital publications. These statements were confirmed by a Nielsen survey called "Books and the Consumer." According to the results, e-book sales dropped in 2016 to 88.9 million from 92.9 million in 2015 (these figures even include self-published titles not available in print format).[850] This trend is further stressed with another statistical revelation: 2015 saw the first rise in physical book sales since 2007, the year Amazon released its Kindle.[851] Based on that deceleration of digital publishing, publishers were more careful when asked by the *Futurebook Census* again at the end of 2017 which format they think will be dominant by the year 2025: 58 per cent agreed on print, with

848 *Digital Census 2013*, 17.

849 "Kindle - A Decade of Publishing's Game-Changer: Trade Figures Reflect on a Decade of E-Reading," *The Bookseller*, 24 November 2017, 6–7.

850 Results quoted in "Kindle – A Decade of Publishing's Game-Changer," 7.

851 Tom Tivnan, "Print's Seven-Year Itch Scratched," *The Bookseller*, 8 January 2016, 14–16.

e-book as second place with only 30 per cent.[852] This prediction is probably partially based on the finding that for 37 per cent of publishers the format with the biggest growth was the printed format, but the e-book was still strong with 35 per cent. Perhaps the most telling figures about the future of digital publishing are offered by the questions whether publishers anticipated "significant digital transformation across the book business" within the next five years: 53 per cent agreed, 47 per cent disagreed.

4.4. The Book Value Categories Applied

The electronic book is a medium with possible advantages and disadvantages in comparison to the printed book that shaped and will further shape the context of acceptance. Stephen King's early attempt to publish stories online, his initial success and eventual failure, showed that it takes more than the loyal readership of a bestselling author to assert a new medium for publishing. Nevertheless, digital possibilities in publishing can enhance content and thereby add value to it. Some areas in publishing have already been relying heavily on digital distribution for years now, namely scholarly journals and reference publishing. Nowadays, in accordance with the book value categories, content value for scholarly institutions is the most important function of publications. Symbolic value of the materiality can be neglected. For academic publications, symbolic value is offered by prestigious publishing houses, renowned academics and positive reviews by established and renowned scholars. Reference works can also increase their potential in digital form with the manifold multimedia possibilities. Digital reference works have been accepted very early on, and the added values can hardly be denied. Initial counter-developments, like the production of lavish encyclopaedias in print, resemble to a degree the counter-reactions during the industrial age like the Kelmscott Press.[853] Such developments, may stress the awareness of symbolic value of physical aspects. However, due to its almost nostalgic character, this may also indicate that a transition has (almost) come to its completion at the same time.

E-books in trade publishing are less important but are certainly an important part of the overall revenue by publishers: "Across UK publishers, on average 63 % of revenues comes from print, 32 % from digital and 5 % from

852 *Futurebook 2017*, n.p., 4. Over the course of years, the extensive "Futurebook Digital Census" surveys offered by the Bookseller have been, unfortunately, reduced to key findings published in the conference pamphlet.

853 See chapter 3.3.

audio."[854] It is important to note that, in contrast to scholarly publishing, trade publishing is relying much more on individual customers rather than institutions. For now, symbolic value may be more important in that field, but the overall success of the Kindle indicates a growing acceptance of texts without materiality. It seems hard to imagine that the purchase of a licence to access an e-book file offers any symbolic value. So, the question remains whether this symbolic value inherent to author, publisher and text will suffice or whether the category itself becomes less important.

Novels hardly seem to gain from added values apart from ease of access and portability in the sense that many texts can be stored on a reading device. Since they are usually read in a linear way, the important feature of a novel is mainly the text. Therefore, an e-book-version of a novel would simply display the texts on a screen, which is not an improvement. Johanna Drucker even claims that when readers see a literal book, they are already constrained by the idea that it has to be a static and formal origin.[855] She elaborates: "Rather than think about simulating the way a book looks, we might consider extending the ways a book works as we shift into digital instruments."[856] In other words, readers are restrained in accepting new possibilities if novels will not adopt new possibilities of the new e-book-technology. Alan Liu even goes so far as to expect some sort of promiscuous development, in which literary elements are mixed with music, film, TV, animation and so on "to concoct an evolutionary stew of hot bits fighting against, and with, each other to create the new media ecology."[857] Indeed, some publications like the 'digi-novel' *Level 26: Dark Origins* by Anthony Zuiker or the webnovel *Apocalypsis* by Mario Giordano already show this mixture of computer game, film and novel, and break the traditional convention of linear reading in novels. A trend towards such publications, however, cannot yet be detected. Until now, publications like these seem to remain a niche product. Rather, a development in the video and computer games industry is noticeable in which games include more and more text to be read

854 *Futurebook 2017*, 4. Note that the census does not list specifically what kind of publishers answered the questions, so these results do not necessarily reflect trade publishing only.

855 Johanna Drucker, "The Virtual Codex from Page Space to E-Space," *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*, eds Raymond George Siemens and Susan Schreibman (Malden, MA, 2007), 216–232, 217.

856 Drucker, "The Virtual Codex from Page Space to E-Space," 217.

857 Liu, "Imagining the New Media Encounter," 19.

and become bookish.[858] A noticeable trend with rising numbers, however, is the field of self-published novels. This trend, also supported by services like Kindle Direct Publishing, has become a vital part of digital publishing.[859]

No matter which format, the vital drawback remains that e-books almost exclusively offer content value. Symbolic value is hardly offered, at least not in the traditional sense by showing books on the bookshelf or the coffee-table. Social networks like Twitter, Read Social or GoodReads might be a way to re-instate symbolic value: online shops like Amazon already offer to share information on social networks about a recently bought item after a purchase has been completed.[860] In other words, those websites offer the possibility to show erudition. Other social networks dedicated to reading further make it possible for users to discuss novels or poems and even get in touch with the author, if they wish to do so. In other words, the digital environment offers the opportunity to illustrate what people have already read, what they are currently reading and what they are planning to read. As Andreas Henrich had already anticipated in 2000, within the digital environment, readers develop from passive recipients to active users.[861]

Economic value is not offered for customers since e-books are not physical objects. The customer of an e-book merely opts for a licensing agreement and pays for the right to read the text on a reading device. This inhibits the possibility for customers to resell their books. However, with datamining possibilities of the big tech firms, customers reveal several of their preferences and reading practices by using e-readers. This revealed information can potentially be exploited by firms for effective marketing, like personalized ads, and other goals can also be seen as extra economic value for the distributor of digital publications.[862]

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858 See, for instance, Oliver Holmes, "Detroit: Become Human Review, Meticulous Multiverse of Interactive Fiction," *The Guardian*, 24 May 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/games/2018/may/24/detroit-become-human-review> (accessed: 07.12.2019).

859 Angus Phillips, "Does the Book Have a Future?" *A Companion to the History of the Book*, eds Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, 2nd ed. (Chichester, 2020), 844–855, 851–852.

860 Obviously, Amazon is also profiting from such disclosure within social networks. Personal suggestions of books and other entertainment commodities are prone to be more efficient than impersonal advertisements by companies.

861 Henrich, "Lesen digital," 345.

862 Patrick Smyth, "Ebooks and the Digital Paratext: Emerging Trends in the Interpretation of Digital Media," *Examining Paratextual Theory and its Applications in Digital Culture,* eds Nadine Desrochers and Daniel Apollon (Hershey, PA, 2014), 314–333, 318.

Fig. 4: QR-code example

It should be noted that digital content is oftentimes used to augment printed publications. Journals and magazines, but also printed advertisements, more and more include so-called 'Quick Response-codes' (QR-codes), two-dimensional barcodes which can be scanned with tablet computers or smartphones:

The QR-codes are decoded by the device and open hyperlink that usually offers further information: a movie review in a magazine might offer a QR-code linking to the trailer of the film or an interview with the director, an advertising poster might link to an interactive website which further praises the promoted commodity. For the time being, print and digital are less to be seen as competitors but rather as publishing formats co-existing side by side.

Conclusion

Whenever the book was on the threshold of a new development, there was seldom a shortage of scepticism from the side of reception. When the printing press allowed a speedy creation (or rather multiplication) of books and texts on a bigger scale than ever before, this development completely changed the production of books and gradually replaced handwritten books. But this innovation was not immediately accepted by everyone. Nor was it hailed as a long-awaited means of speedy text multiplication. Some contemporary comments, especially from the clergy, stress that this new technology was also viewed critically. Despite all the features now deemed vital for print culture, it was also claimed that these texts were not trustworthy. Trustworthiness could only be achieved by handwritten texts.[863] An often-quoted passage that stresses this sentiment is the notorious warning by Abbot Johannes Trithemius in his *In Praise of Scribes*:

> Who is ignorant of the difference between writing and printing? A manuscript, written on parchment, can last a thousand years. How long will print, this thing of paper last? It is quite a lot if it can last two hundred years in a volume of paper. [The Scribe] should copy the usable prints and thereby give them longevity, since otherwise they would not last long. In so doing, the scribe grants stability to unstable writings.[864]

From a modern perspective, it seems obvious that Trithemius confuses the materiality of the book with the means of production. His main argument seems to be the assumption that printed books are primarily paper books, whereas manuscripts use parchment as their writing support. Trithemius' main concern seems to be the limited lifespan of paper which makes archiving writings unstable. Of course, one could easily counterargue that, even by that time, paper manuscripts had existed for centuries and that printers also used parchment for *de luxe* editions. 500 years after this statement, the predictions about the limited lifespan of paper books seem inaccurate, too. Trithemius' praise for the scribe, however, does reveal a very important notion: the concept of the book was not only connected to its form and content, but also to its materiality; and materiality could signify trustworthiness. The printed book and the printing business were

863 Müller, "Der Körper des Buches," 207.

864 Johannes Trithemius, *De Laude Scriptorium* (Mainz, 1494). Translation from Jan-Dirk Müller, "The Body and the Book: The Media Transition from Script to Print," *The Book History Reader*, eds David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, 2nd ed. (London 2015), 182–189, 184.

new, and both seemed to replace long-established ways of textual transmission, a key element in clerical life. Therefore, it is not surprising that mechanical reproduction did create distrust. In 1482, the Bishop of Freising ordered a comparison of each printed copy of a liturgical text with the handwritten original, one by one. And Fillipo di Strata, a Dominican monk, working as a scribe in the monastery of San Cipriano in the fifteenth century remarked in a letter to Nicolò Marcello, then Doge of Venice: "Est virgo hec penna, meretrix est stampificata" ["the pen is a virgin, the printing press a whore"][865] and thus criticized the new means of book production, not only because they potentially facilitated the speedy multiplication of corrupt texts, but also because this was mainly driven by profit-oriented intentions. Distrust of the printed book allegedly went so far that some book users had printed books hand-copied by a scribe to get a manuscript again, just to make sure they had a trustworthy book.

Still, these examples are just individual reports that do not reflect the actual acceptance of the printed book in Europe in the fifteenth century. Alexandra Walsham and Julia Crick even claim that the artificial and modern distinction between manuscripts and early printed books is partly institutionalized due to the separation of manuscript and rare book reading rooms in libraries.[866] Several other examples suggest that the printed book was seen much less sceptically by other users: scholars and compilers often put books together from printed and handwritten pages, obviously regarding them as equal and trustworthy objects.[867] And readers in the fifteenth century treated printed books just like manuscripts, reading with pen in hand, leaving comments in the margin, augmenting and adapting the text whenever they felt like it. Printed books were gladly accepted and even preferred by book users, not only because of the cheaper prices. Renaissance Humanism, for example, relied on the inherent features of print like standardization and typographical fixity that at the same time also shaped the printed book. The printing press undoubtedly was also an effective instrument for the Protestant Reformation throughout the sixteenth century, which effectively used the technology for the first media event:

> An authoritative estimate suggests that something in the region of 10,000 pamphlet editions issued from the presses of German-speaking lands between 1520 and 1530.

865 Fillipo di Strata, *Letters*, Venice Marc. Lat III 170, fol 1r. Quoted in Walsham and Crick, "Introduction: Script, Print and History," 20.

866 Walsham and Crick, "Introduction: Script, Print and History," 4.

867 Pettegree, *Book in the Renaissance*, 16–17.

> Of these almost three-quarters appeared between 1520 and 1526, the high point of the pamphlet exchanges stimulated by Luther's reform movement.[868]

The overall fast spread of printing presses in Europe and their economic success signify a fast acceptance of the innovation in book production. Even though there were certain functions where the manuscript was still preferred, for example, presentation copies for patrons, the advantages of printing, predominantly in the shape of reduced prices and textual stability, added enough value to the new product that its acceptance was rather quick.

Similar reasons apply to the acceptance of innovative production methods and power application during the industrial age: a bigger market necessitated larger editions which in turn required faster production. But scepticism existed as well. In the nineteenth century, limited acceptance on the side of production slowed down the establishment of industrialized book production. Innovations like stereotype plates and printing machines took decades until they were implemented in book production. Since jobs in the industry were threatened by these innovations, for example, typefounders and setters, active opposition was feared. It is thanks to the newspaper and magazine industry that these technologies were invented and improved, since they, in contrast to the book publishing business, could almost immediately profit from these innovations. A final factor that shaped the context of acceptance, and was particular for Britain in the nineteenth century, was the established three-volume novel format and the success of circulating libraries. This successful system perpetuated an obsolete and artificially expensive book format for decades and hindered adoption of cheaper publications.

Innovations will only assert themselves if they are accepted by the majority. And these developments are influenced by the different book value categories this study suggests. The critical responses in the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries to the new book production methods are similar and yet different to the scepticism that accompanied the early stages of the digital revolution in book publishing. Books in the twenty-first century are still symbolically charged objects in many cultures, and this symbolic value is, to a large degree, inherent to its materiality. The transition to digital text would mean not only a change within production and power application but would, for the first time since the physical change from scroll to codex, mean a decisive transformation in the overall structure of a book including the disappearance of materiality. This change would be more drastic than any previous one in the history of the book. This might

868 Andrew Pettegree, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford, 2002), 98–99.

partially explain why opposition against a complete transition to e-books and e-readers still exists. Arguments against such a scenario reach from profanities like inferior haptic features, user-unfriendly control, unsuitable to be read on the beach or, rather ironically, in well-lit places, or simply because of the dependence on electricity. Peter Shillingsburg admits that "the electronic representation of print literature to be undertaken in the twenty-first century will significantly alter what we understand textuality to be."[869] Other approaches to this subject even see a development towards a decline in democratic structures despite the fact that the digitization of textual distribution promises the opposite: if information, at one point, will be distributed only in a digital form, societies without internet access or people unable or unwilling to use digital technology will not only be discriminated but also excluded from social, cultural and political participation.[870] A digital-only culture would also be very vulnerable to attempts of censorship. Concerns like these might also be a reason for a hesitation towards a life that is predominantly or exclusively shaped by digitality. China, for example, limits publishing as well as accessing content online and further uses the internet to monitor individuals.[871]

Whether innovations in the publishing industry will succeed depends on several factors and is seldom a monocausal development. In 2010, the publishing community saw itself already at a pivotal moment anticipating a viable digital business "[. . .] built on reality and opportunity, rather than hype and hope."[872] Ten years later, however, digital publishing, though firmly established in publishing, has not replaced printed books, certainly not in every publishing category. Even though in some publishing categories, for example academic papers, a preference for digital is growing, the current mood about the dominant publication form of the future is one of uncertainty, as chapter 4 displayed.

Several instances in the history of the book are labelled as revolutionary. It has oftentimes been insinuated that these instances are comparable since they are readily connected or juxtaposed in order to discuss and explain similarities and developments. This study has shown that there are limitations to such attempts.

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869 Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google*, 3.

870 Jim Macnamara, *The 21st Century Media (R)evolution: Emergent Communication Practices* (New York, 2010), 60–65.

871 Elizabeth C. Economy, "The Great Firewall of China: Xi Jinping's Internet Shutdown," *The Guardian*, 29 June 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/jun/29/the-great-firewall-of-china-xi-jinpings-internet-shutdown> (accessed: 15 March 2020).

872 *FutureBook Census 2010*, 3.

Patterns of developments from the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries witness rather strong breaks with the digital age.

Gutenberg Age

The introduction of the printing press in Europe resulted in the book becoming a full-fledged commercial commodity. In the long run, the printed book also became an almost mass-produced object. Books were no longer unique but existed in hundreds of nearly identical copies. It was no longer a unique piece of manufactured art and thus lost a vital component of its aura, prestige and trustworthiness. However, incunables retained certain characteristics of uniqueness.

With the economic need to find new readers, printers had to adapt their publishing policies to meet the demand of a larger market that was at least partially interested in other texts than the aristocracy, scholars or clerics. Hence, it was an economic necessity to create new publishing categories for a bigger market. In England, William Caxton was a printer in the early years of the transitional phase from manuscript to print. His biography shaped the profile of his book business. He was a man interested in literature and translations. Apart from the occasional jobbing printing, he primarily focused on established texts, sometimes in a new translation, either by one of his patrons or by himself. Caxton's successor Wynkyn de Worde also needed to adapt the policy of his business only 15 years after Caxton started it in Westminster. The overall circumstances changed and de Worde's non-English background further closed opportunities for him that had helped Caxton. He also had to cope with much stronger competition in England. He successfully adapted, mainly by focussing on grammars, but also partially by catering to a new customer base that was interested not only in medieval authors like Lydgate and Chaucer, but also in contemporary English authors as well. His ample use of woodcuts and title-pages also shows his sense of business: he implemented illustrations to attract more customers and used the title-page as an advertisement tool. This illustrates the economic necessity of printers to add value to the books in the light of growing competition.

It might be argued that from the earliest days of printing in England, the symbolic value of the printed book was of utmost importance to make readers accept the printed book. Some scholars argue that this is illustrated by the early attempts to imitate manuscript features. It is uncontested that these similarities do exist. But since those characteristics were features of books in general in the fifteenth century, one cannot conclude that early printers decided against omitting these manuscript-specific elements. After a few decades, however, printers understood

that most of these attempts proved to be uneconomic and had to be dropped to remain commercially healthy. In any case, content value gained in importance. The growing market of readers demanded a more versatile production of literary texts. Since only print runs of at least 300–500 were viable, printers had to assess their market in order to succeed economically.

Industrial Age

The impetus of the various developments of book production during the nineteenth century is mainly based on severe restrictions of profitability of the book trade. Assessing the number of customers for a text remained a difficult task and an assessment gone awry often meant bankruptcy. Ironically, this led to a continuing strategy to print smaller editions and at the same time to technological developments, making it less costly to reprint editions if the success of the first edition assured a good sale of the reprint. Nevertheless, printing from stereotype plates remained to be used for texts which had been regarded as steady sellers. The inferior quality of prints from stereos, therefore, also signified a less valuable text as it was produced many times in contrast to the then rising genre of the novel. Novels were mainly printed from type material because it was difficult to estimate the buying public, and thus it was safer to reset entire novels than to create plates for books that might not sell. This only changed in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The age of industrialization saw even more effective book production methods and larger print runs, which resulted in an even greater devaluation of the individual copy of an edition in comparison with the introduction of the printing press. Consequently, it faced problems similar to the fifteenth century. Technological developments increased the production possibilities that again were only viable if the market was expanded. This was mainly accomplished by the establishment of the novel as a publishing category. The century was also marked by the further rise of the middle classes and their urge for social distinction. To no small extent was this done with literature and the format it was offered in, as the British example of Charles Mudie's "Select Library" and the three-decker novels has shown. The content and, apparently, even more so the material aspects of novels were charged with symbolic value, impracticality notwithstanding. This unique case shows that external factors may well interrupt seemingly logical developments in technological progress. Due to Mudie's strict moral convictions and his economic shrewdness, the three-decker itself symbolized Victorian values like dignity, restraint and morality, which helped Mudie's success. This hindered efforts towards less expensive books for decades, since

both publishers and circulating libraries profited from this established system. Because of the acceptance context, it was an outdated publishing format that was preferred, especially for novels.

In the late nineteenth century, however, technical advances created other lucrative solutions for publishers. Affordable books in large editions for more and more people was the decisive incentive for most publishers to focus on the production of inexpensive books: cheaper books for new readers. Overall, the value of materiality lost significance. Despite individual movements against it (most prominently William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement), the deterioration of material quality was accepted, and the new aspects of the book were established. The Public Libraries Act in 1850 was based on the idea of offering public knowledge and education. Consequently, the Victorian age witnessed the rise of a culture of autodidacticism and self-help. Affordable books were the best tool to satisfy this need for self-education of the working classes. The availability of texts was the most important factor. The cheap production of books was a tolerated loss of symbolic and economic value. Content value drove the desire to own books.

Digital Age

From 2010 to 2019, the market for digital publications fluctuated. In 2013, the trend seemed to suggest the growing importance of digital works. This trend first decelerated, then stagnated. In 2015, printed books saw their first rise in sales since 2007, the year of the introduction of Amazon's Kindle in the US. Current developments, however, yet again show a further increase in the acceptance of the e-book. Readers are still sceptical about the loss of materiality. E-books may offer many advantages, predominantly in convenience, but the lack of symbolic value seems to be one of the main drawbacks in this development. Even though Thompson labels these potential advantages as values, they can only be described as such if the majority of readers accept these new possibilities and regards them as sufficient to tolerate the loss of other qualities inherent in the printed book.

No added value, however, changes the fact that e-books almost exclusively rely on content value. The economic value for readers is not available. Purchasing an e-book means buying a licence to read the digitally reproduced text on a reading device. Neither the intellectual property of the text nor a physical product is being purchased. Re-selling the book is impossible. Lending e-books to friends and family, on the other hand, is possible, depending on the e-book system. Symbolic value in e-books can only exist within the text. Established authors or novels, for example, have symbolic value as an inherent quality, even without

materiality. Added to that, the reading devices themselves might further offer symbolic value: protection covers for tablet computers and dedicated e-readers are sometimes designed to mimic the aesthetics of luxurious bindings. In 2010, Adriaan van der Weel further hinted at the possibility that social networks might be used to overcome the lack of symbolic value for e-books. It remains to be seen whether digital interaction in social networks like this will adequately replace the filled library shelves. After all, if this can be considered symbolic value, it only takes place online and will therefore only be recognized by people that use the same networks. It seems more likely though that now, ten years after van der Weel's argument, readers regard symbolic value functions of printed books as less important. The digital book may not have replaced the printed book overall, but it has become an important part of the publishing industry. Digital publishing is accepted, but which format is preferred is too much dependent on the publisher, the publishing category as well as manifold sociocultural conditions.

Even in the twenty-first century, the accurate assessment of the economic viability of a new text can still be hazardous. In his monograph *The Long Tail* (2006),[873] Chris Anderson claims, for example, that about 98 per cent of new publications in the United States of America in print are not profitable and need to be cross-subsidized.[874] Anderson gives no sources for his figure and it should consequently be taken with caution. Miha Kovač, however, points out that if Anderson is right, even to some extent, it is striking that all developments towards cheaper book production did not help to make smaller print runs profitable.[875] The possibility to distribute and sell new texts without creating a physical product should then minimize the risk of economic failure. However, the current changes in publishing books in a digital format progressed differently. The introduction of the printing press and the subsequent developments towards printing from stereotype plates were specifically designed for book production. The technical requirements to sell books in a digital format had been developed long before publishers saw a potential further enhancement of publishing. No shortage of raw material had been the incentive to try to establish digital publishing. In fact, producing books has never been cheaper than in the twenty-first century. Book prices are at an all-time low. They are far from being the

873 Chris Anderson, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More* (New York, 2006).

874 Anderson, *The Long Tail*, 6–7.

875 Miha Kovač, "The End of Codex and the Disintegration of the Communication Circuit of the Book," *Logos: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 22.1 (2011), 12–24, 17.

luxury commodity that they once were. It is telling to see that during the early developments in the digital age, the publishing industry initially even refrained from using digital technologies altogether to sell their commodities. In the long run, however, it was eventually deemed to be a lost opportunity if they did not make use of the accelerating developments of gadgets like tablet computers or e-readers.

If current statistics are to be believed, the step towards focussing on digital publishing was, economically speaking, the right choice. After an initial scepticism by readers, digital texts have become a vital part of the publishing industry. According to a statement from Amazon, for example, they had sold more e-books than printed books in the USA in 2011. Eight years later, it can cautiously be argued that this (if it has been a true statement and not just a marketing strategy) was a passing craze. Readers were curious about the new technologies, Amazon fought for the market of e-books and offered relatively cheap e-readers to counter the attention Apple's iPad garnered. Whether those devices will lead to consequential changes in reading habits is still to be seen. Undoubtedly, technology will not stand still: reading devices may improve in the coming years and some obstacles which still prevent some readers from using them might soon vanish. But nearly ten years after the introduction of the iPad, the printed book has not been killed by its alleged successors.

Predictions about the developments and acceptance of new technologies must be regarded with caution. One of the most famous faulty predictions concerning technology came from Ken Olson, co-founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, who doubted as late as 1977 the relevance of computers both for individuals and as a business opportunity in the form of personal computers.[876] In the early years of the new millennium, however, a computer with internet connection could virtually be found in every household in the Western world. Another example are netbooks (light, small and inexpensive laptops), that were seen as the future of computers. Though there were increasingly popular from 2007 onwards, their market suffered immensely around 2011, the year Apple's tablet computer was introduced. By 2013, most producers discontinued production of netbooks.[877]

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876 Jack Scholfield, "Ken Olson Obituary," *The Guardian*, 9 February 2011 <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2011/feb/09/ken-olsen-obituary> (accessed: 15 March 2020). The famous quote "There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home" is, however, slightly taken out of context, as he was referring to computers that control houses.

877 Charles Arthur, "Sayonara, Netbooks," *The Guardian*, 31 December 2012 <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2012/dec/31/netbooks-dead-2013> (accessed: 15 March 2020).

Continuing debates about the possible supersession of the printed book by e-books point out that books, for many people, are more than just the text. Books fulfil several functions, depending on the respective field of publishing. Whether digital books will eventually replace (or displace)[878] printed books may also depend on further technological innovation. Available reading devices are already showing huge improvements compared with their predecessors. Digital storage space will grow, display technology and software may evolve to further meet the demands of readers, making acceptance and preference more likely.

In the twenty-first century, the book has become an affordable everyday object. Owning books is no longer special, partially because of the aspects of mass production: if the scarcity of a commodity enhances its value, then the abundance devalues it. The differentiation of hardcover books and paperback editions played a similar role (it probably still does), but with e-books, the format of the cheap (mass-market) paperback may slowly vanish. After all, price differences of hardcover and paperback editions are not based on higher production costs but rather on novelty. Trade publishers usually release their new novels in hardcover first. Prices for an e-book edition are, more often than not, somewhere between the price of the hardcover edition and the eventual published paperback edition.

A bought book does not necessarily equal a book that is actually being read. Consequently, statistics that indicate a rise in the sale of books do not mean a general increase in reading. The desire to own physical books might not only be connected to the functions of the content value, but also to its symbolic value and, in some instances, even the economic value. With digital texts, both values are almost completely excluded. If digital publishing will rise again, this might, at first glance, signify more interest in the content value and at the same time less importance of symbolic value. The peak of e-book sales in 2013, however, does not state that those digital texts were actually read. This is inherent in what John Thompson labels the 'added value' of 'accessibility' and what Adriaan van der Weel explains with his idea of the 'universal machine' that works in a global network: the convenient and almost too easy way to gain access to digital texts may entice owners of e-readers or tablet computers to spontaneously carry out a purchase on the spur of the moment.

878 For a short overview of the different concepts of replacement and displacement, see William Uricchio, "Replacement, Displacement, and Obsolescence in the Digital Age," *Cultures of Obsolescence: History, Materiality, and the Digital Age*, eds Babette Bärbel Tischleder and Sarah L. Wasserman (New York, 2015), 97–109.

For publishers, digital publishing might take away the possibility to use their publications to embed certain characteristics of the publishing house. With the physical aspects of their commodity removed, all that is left of their products is the digital representation of the text. As a consequence, typography seems to be the last element the publisher can use to integrate at least a minimum amount of publishing house conventions. Most e-readers, however, are equipped with a limited number of founts that can also be changed in size. Some publishers, like Alfred A. Knopf, are famous for adding elements like "A Note on the Type," elaborating on the typeface of the respective novel. In some e-book systems, Knopf loses the opportunity to add value with this feature in digital publishing. It remains to be seen whether readers will deem flexibility concerning choice of type face and type size more important than trusting the typographic style chosen by the publishing house.[879]

Prognosis?

> Above all, publishers must now accept that theirs is an industry dependent upon the ability to produce what the end-user wants rather than what the publisher can give to them.[880]
>
> -Bill Martin and Xuemei Tian

We tend to overestimate technological change in the short run but fail to acknowledge its potential for the future. It is not rare that introductions of innovative technologies are readily hailed as revolutionary (especially by technophile groups). When, however, revolutionary consequences fail to show up immediately, we are quick to dismiss those predictions as a hoax, only to find out later that the innovation did lead to important changes, albeit much slower than anticipated. Technological innovation is seldom defined by the technology itself but it is rather socially constructed.[881] While the telephone, for instance, was invented in 1876, universal usage of this technology as we know it today was

879 Further ideas about typography are offered in Simon Rosenberg, "The Appearance of Writing and its (Disappearing?) Authority," *Powerful Pages: The Authority of Text*, ed. Erika Herrmann (Leiden, 2016), 60–66. Open Access: <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/42722/Rosenberg.pdf> (accessed: 08.12.2019).

880 William J. Martin and Xuemei Tian, *Books, Bytes, and Business: The Promise of Digital Publishing* (Farnham, Surrey, 2010), 2–3.

881 W. Russell Neuman, "Theories of Media Evolution," *Media, Technology, and Society: Theories of Media Evolution*, ed. W. Russell Neuman (Ann Arbor, 2010), 1–21, 2.

only achieved more than 70 years later. The initial idea of the telephone technology was broadcasting speeches and concerts.[882]

When comparing the introduction of the printing press and the technological developments during the industrialization, four patterns become visible:

1. The acceptance of innovations in book production was rarely imminent. Hindrances came not only from the side of reception but also from the side of production.
2. New possibilities to produce and distribute texts were initially used to produce older established texts. Afterwards, the new possibilities triggered a development of new texts, sometimes leading to new genres altogether.
3. New forms of production initially tend to imitate their predecessors. These imitations might be practical or purely cosmetic in character without actual functional need. Further, these imitations might be conscious or unconscious.
4. The symbolic value of the newly produced medium is initially lower compared to its predecessor.

As tempting as it is to use these patterns to draw conclusions and formulate prognoses for the further development of e-books and digital publishing in general, it is a dangerous undertaking. Too much depends on further developments in all factors of the publishing industry. One unexpected development might render the whole prognosis useless. Between the first ideas of this study and the eventual completion, trends for digital publishing shifted every few years. It is also telling that in early drafts of some chapters of this study, social networks like MySpace or Google+ played a significant role. By the year 2020, both networks were either discontinued (Google+) or changed fundamentally since their inceptions and no longer function the way they were initially intended. Prognoses that use arguments based on these networks would have made these predictions almost useless.

The printed book and its industry seem to be in good shape. The physical book in codex form is not just a means to store information, even though this might be its primary function. It is also a cultural good as well as a social and symbolic object. E-books and e-readers alike have certainly been accepted, but they are not always preferred for reading. This indicates that they have not fully replaced all functions of physical books. What needs to be taken into consideration, however, is the difference between generations: recent sociological studies show that the younger generation may be less interested in traditional

882 Neuman, "Theories of Media Evolution," 3.

status symbols like cars and so on. Electronic gadgets, on the other hand, seem much more appealing. A case in point would be Apple products. Their iPhones and iPads continue to have a strong customer base, releases of new products constantly result in masses waiting in front of stores to be one of the earliest owners of the latest iPhone/iPad-generation. In that case, the symbolic value of the individual physical book would move to the chosen container for digital publications. If this development keeps progressing, it might be just a matter of one or two generations until downloading a novel or textbook to a tablet computer is always preferred compared to a visit to a book shop or library. After all, the latter was unimaginable for most people 200 years ago.

It is indisputable that technology plays a vital part in society today:

> In cultures of technology, then, cultural praxis and expression are centred on technology. Technology becomes the overarching value that sets the agenda for all spheres of society. Technology becomes teleology, the ultimate goal and the unquestioned positive value - and all who question this value are considered technophobic and backwards striving, resisting the progress of technological advancement and development.[883]

Whether this assessment is applicable to digital technologies designed to read texts remains to be seen. Printed books themselves still carry values that are held dear by readers and are not offered in electronic texts. From today's perspective, one of three scenarios will happen: 1) e-books will completely replace printed books, 2) e-books will become extinct or 3) both forms will co-exist.

1) Reading culture witnesses a shift of values comparable to the music industry: rather than quality and symbolic value, customers value convenience. This would be in accordance with the patterns found in this investigation. In that case, Thompson's list of 'added values' is a good indicator of what might be regarded as valuable for customers of texts. If so, compared to the music industry, the introduction of the paperback would be the equivalent of the introduction of the CD, inasmuch as it offered greater portability and thus convenience. This scenario, however, also requires what Mats Björkin has established for the motion picture industry: since a digital file is neither scarce nor physically tangible, a re-recognition of the relationship between economic transaction and the event (in this case the pleasure of reading rather than the pleasure of watching a movie) is necessary, and

883 Göran Bolin, "Introduction: Cultural Technologies in Cultures of Technology," *Cultural Technologies: The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*, ed. Göran Bolin (London, 2012), 1–15, 3.

not just with the individual physical object. In other words, the content and especially the act of reading (as incorporated cultural capital) must be valued enough in itself to encourage readers to purchase a digital file.[884] In any case, the year 2020 offers all the preconditions for Kilgour's e-book-punctuation as suggested in his *Evolution of the Book*:[885] the users' needs for textual information is constantly growing, technology has vastly improved compared to the late 1990s, existing systems have been successfully integrated and costs for both publishers and readers are acceptable.

2) The scenario that e-books will be merely a passing craze seems to be unlikely. As the statistics over the last two decades have shown, e-books have been well-established, especially in English-speaking countries. Even though some optimistic predictions about the importance of digital publishing have been indeed too optimistic, it is still hard to argue against the fact that e-books are firmly established in publishing. Apart from that, technology may be improved and offered for less money and the acceptance of the new way of reading is perceptible.
3) The third scenario is the one that this study proposes based on its findings. Rather than a supersession of the printed book by e- books (or an absolute disappearance of it), the digital age introduced a new medium for textual information that will, for the time being, coexist alongside the printed book. As Thompson has argued, some publishing categories are more amenable to digital possibilities than others. Despite the obvious gain in convenience in a digital format, other values for some publications will be held high. The printed book might follow the development of the stereo LP in the music industry: from dominant medium, to obsolete medium as such, to highly esteemed collector's item. LPs are mainly bought and used by audiophiles. To this day, however, it seems rather unlikely that the printed book will only be cherished and owned by bibliophiles in the future. As Ken Liu puts it: "Ultimately, new technologies succeed because they bring advantages that we could not even conceive of under the old technologies, but some of the benefits of the old technologies will never be replicated in the new."[886] Further technological improvements might enable further possibilities which may

884 Mats Björkin, "Peer-to-Peer File-Sharing Systems: Files, Objects, Distribution," *Cultural Technologies: The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*, ed. Göran Bolin (London, 2012), 51–63, 53.

885 Kilgour, *Evolution of the Book*, 9.

886 Liu, "When E-Books are the Only 'Books,'" 124.

trigger a vital impulse for digital publishing. This would be, however, mere speculation.

In any case, to ask if the printed book will be replaced by e-books might be the wrong approach. The question should rather be what publishing categories will be preferred in digital form? Indeed, reference works like the *Oxford English Dictionary* or the *Dictionary of National Biography* have transformed in their online environment to full-fledged databases with so many possibilities the printed book could never offer. Consequently, the Oxford University Press doubts that the third edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* will ever appear in printed form.[887] Texts that need to be read linearly, however, hardly profit from digital possibilities and are even devalued by still unsatisfactory reading devices and the manifold potential sources of distraction. At least for these publications, the printed book, with its limited abilities for distraction, might continue offering value for a much larger market, precisely because reading always needs a certain amount of attention. The competition in what sociology calls 'attention economy' by media like video, music or video games might be a real danger to texts, handwritten, printed or digital. However, only handwritten and printed texts prevent readers from being easily distracted by multimedia applications. From the perspective of digital texts, this is one of the most prevalent disadvantages of the printed text, whereas it may well be the most obvious advantage for a text that needs to be carefully studied in order to entertain or inform. If people are not willing to offer attention to reading a text, the whole text becomes useless and consequently the content value of the book as well, no matter in which form or shape. In Germany, according to the latest statistics offered by the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels in their annual publication *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen*, this does not seem to be a mere dystopian prognosis for the distant future. Asked about their leisure activities, "reading books" is in fourteenth place with approximately 18 per cent stating "regularly" and 28 per cent "occasionally." The list is led by "watching TV" (84 and 13 per cent), "listening to radio" (62 and 23 per cent) and "surfing the internet" (58 and 20 per cent).[888] Over the years, "reading a book" regularly decreased in importance in the category leisure activities. Even though the numbers were steady the last ten years with approximately

887 Jamieson, "*Oxford English Dictionary* 'Will Not Be Printed Again.'" The article quotes a spokesperson of the Oxford University Press who states that a print version is not ruled out in case there will be sufficient demand.

888 Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels (ed.), *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2019* (Frankfurt, 2019), 33.

18 per cent, "watching TV" manifests itself as the most popular leisure activity and especially the huge growth of using computer and internet (only 27 and 29 per cent for the year 2010)[889] seems indicative of the digital age. A recent study from the British National Literacy Trust confirms a decline in both daily reading and reading enjoyment for children and young people.[890]

Even worse, the "Stavanger Declaration on the Future of Reading" raises concerns about reading from screen. In a meta-study from 2014 to 2018, conducted by COST E-READ, that included 54 studies with over 170,000 participants, the overall result was that the transition from paper to digital poses problems and is not neutral. "Readers are more likely to be overconfident about their comprehension abilities when reading digitally than when reading print, in particular when under time pressure, leading to more skimming and less concentration on reading matter."[891] Surprisingly, the study also reveals that the generations labelled as "digital natives" suffer the most from these consequences. The Stavanger Declaration is far from demonizing reading on screens. However, it stresses the dangers of a complete acceptance and preference of digital reading material. It urges schools and libraries to keep encouraging students to read *paper* books. If further studies should confirm the results by E-READ, this would lead to active opposition which would make it harder for digital books to become the preferred medium. If schools focus on using print materials, this would oppose Siegfried Schmidt's third aspect of 'medium,' the social-systemic component, which stresses the relevance of educational institutions' support of new mediums. Further, if the Stavanger Declaration is right, digital texts cannot fulfil all functions that printed matter serve, so according to Kilgour's theory of the evolution of the book, the "capability of integrating a new form into existing information systems," is at least only partially warranted.

The previous chapters looked at specific case studies to show the usefulness of book value categories. The Gutenberg Age chapter focussed more on production

889 Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels (ed.), *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2011* (Frankfurt, 2011), 22.

890 Of roughly 57,000 participants between the ages of nine and 18, merely 53 per cent stated they enjoy reading and only 25.8 per cent state that they read daily in their free time. "Children and Young People's Reading in 2019," *National Literacy Trust*, March 2020 <https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2019/> (accessed: 19 March 2020).

891 "The Stavanger Declaration on the Future of Reading," Stavanger, 2019 <https://ereadcost.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/StavangerDeclaration.pdf> (accessed: 15 March 2020).

and the Industrial Age chapter paid closer attention to distribution and reception. Since the digital age seems to be primarily about content value, it would be intriguing to pay closer attention to the reception part. Statistics like the *Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen* or the studies performed by COST E-READ and the National Literacy Trust are a first step. The book value categories are shaped by socialization. Therefore, research on applications used for teaching to read might find helpful results that lead to a further understanding of the recent development in digital publishing.

List of Illustrations

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