

# Publishing in the Elizabethan Era

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**Muže, Natalie**

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Sveučilište Jurja Dobrile u Puli  
Filozofski fakultet

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## INTRODUCTION

This work aims to explore the changes that happened in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I due to the invention of the printing press. Books were written only by hand before the introduction of the printing press in 1476, making them expensive. Because of the high cost, books were available only to people of higher classes, while those of lower classes were often illiterate, especially women, and were not even considered as potential buyers. Therefore, due to the use of the printing press in this period, books became more affordable, literacy increased and women's position in society changed. It can be said that the printing press greatly influenced the state of the economy. With the increase of printed books, the demand for paper grew and because of that the paper industry further developed.

This thesis is divided into five parts. The first chapter is about social structure and its most significant influence, religion. Along with religion, the most essential elements connected to the printing industry were education, specifically literacy, and the government. Chapters two, three and four deal with the printing industry, specifically who started it in England and how, and with book production and bookselling. Chapter five discusses the position of women in the industry, how they were treated, and the works they published. Chapter six explains where books were sold and the way their prices were formed. Chapter seven explores regulations of the printing industry and various laws and long-standing monopolies given by the Queen to printers and publishers.



# 1. SOCIETY

## 1.1 RELIGION AND THE CROWN

In the Elizabethan era, government, religion, and economy were all interconnected. Many political changes were undertaken on a religious basis, with the most impactful being Henry VIII's decision to adopt Protestantism in 1534. One of his more important decisions was to authorize English translations of the Bible, previously only available in Latin. This decision directly influenced who could read the Bible, and usually these had been monks, priests, and those of higher classes. People of lower classes were not able to read because they were largely illiterate. Easier access to the Bible sparked a wish among the commoners to learn how to read, which was a monumental change (Brimacombe et.al., 2013; Cartwright, 2020).

However, Queen Mary I temporarily stopped Henry VIII's reformation of religion. During Mary's time on the throne, Protestantism and all other religions except for Catholicism were strictly forbidden and their practice punishable by law. But that did not mean that there was no opposition to the reinstatement of the Catholic religion. Illegal masses were held in parish churches, but people did not try to keep them a secret. Moreover, protests were held by many bishops and preachers along with their followers, but all were later arrested. Within a month, Catholics reclaimed their churches, placed images on walls again, and restored altars and crucifixes (Haigh, 1993, p. 207). Mary might not have known that her half-sister and future queen, Elizabeth, was secretly on the side of Protestantism, but she stayed quiet while Mary was on the throne. After Mary died and Elizabeth assumed power, one of the first things she did was reinstate Protestantism as the country's official religion (Brimacombe and Royston, 2013; Haigh, 1993).

## 1.2 RELIGION AND SOCIETY

Two main factors affected which religion would become official: "A combination of government coercion and individual conversion drove traditional Catholicism from churches, and replaced it with a Calvinistic Protestantism" (Haigh, 1993, p. 3). Religion was an essential part of society. Priests and monks, alongside the Queen, were one of the more influential people in the country. Priests encouraged people to read the Bible, so that they could feel closer to God but also to know that they are not living in sin. This was related to the writers of the period because they were encouraged to write as many religion-based books as possible. Though this pressure of religion on people was maybe quite strong at first, it had good reasoning behind it. Apart from being used to persuade people to read for the sake of getting closer to God, it was also used to increase literacy as much as possible: "One who could read was more likely to be at ease in a world which was increasingly dominated by written instruments and instructions" (Cressy, 2006, pp. 1-3).

The sixteenth century was full of change and progress. One good example of that was the progress of science, which led to the replacement of the geocentric system with the heliocentric one. This resulted in many people losing faith in religion, most of all in the existence of God. Atheism and scepticism appeared for the first time in England. The way the Bible was perceived and read also changed. People who grew up before Elizabeth came to the throne were firm believers in Catholicism, and for them the Bible was the ultimate holy book, which most people could not read or understand because it was in Latin. However, for those who grew up during Elizabeth's reign, the Bible meant something different, as the religion Elizabeth stood for was Protestantism and the Bible was available in English. People were fonder of reading the Bible, and they used it as a source of guidance through life (Forgeng, 2010, pp. 233-234).

Religion was also important in terms of education. Educated people, more precisely those of higher classes, were not as prone to atheism or any kind of suspicion towards religion, which could not be said for those of lower classes (Cressy, 1980, p. 1). Poor people, often women, were occasionally accused of being witches. Whenever a

woman was begging for food or money, she could be suspected of witchcraft. Generally, witches were wives of laborers, tailors, or farmers. Their victims were, however, always people from the upper classes. If a family was suddenly struggling with money, they too might be suspected of being witches. Witches were mostly accused of problems related to agriculture, such as the death of animals, but they were also accused of the deaths of humans (Macfarlane, 2008, pp. 149-154).

### **1.3 GOVERNMENT**

England was at war with the Pope because of the many marriage annulments of Henry VIII, and with France for the territory and influence over Scotland in 1549 (Adams, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, it would have been risky for Elizabeth to be a Catholic queen. From the start, Elizabeth had an interest in law reforms, or more precisely, her new chancellors had that interest (Shapiro, 2019, p. 39). One of her first acts was to replace most of the members of Mary's council with people who had been part of Edward VI's council in order to ensure that her government was Protestant (Haigh, 1993, p. 238).

Elizabeth maintained certain safe methods of governing, the same ones her father had used. She continued governing with a type of council formed under Henry VIII, called the Privy Council. It was "A mixture of peers, officers of state, lawyers, and royal confidants" and "compact enough to facilitate decision-making but broad enough to present a wide range of opinion to the Crown" (Stater, 2002, p. 31). Its function was to advise the Queen and generally keep everything in order, from trade to crime. The queen did not need to attend every council meeting since they were held frequently (Stater, 2002, pp. 31-2).

Another thing she had in common with her father was allowing the Bible and sermons to be in the English language instead of in Latin as they were before. (Brimacombe and Royston, 2013, p. 22). This increased interest among laypeople in reading, and now even girls were being taught how to read. At that time, religion was not just a system of belief; it was also closely connected to education (Haigh, 1993, p. 216).

Although Henry VIII allowed the Bible to be printed in English, women, or half of the population, were not allowed to read it. In fact, it was a crime for women to read the Bible aloud, even at home. Only men were allowed to read it, both in town squares and at home (Sharpe, 2003, p. 102). Laws also regulated the implementation of new religious beliefs in the country. Everything regarding Catholicism had to be removed, but with care. It was against the law to break and smash things because they were sacred to religions other than the Protestant (Haigh, 1993, p. 12).

## **1.4 EDUCATION**

The connection between religion and education (or, more precisely, literacy), was such that priests and other people in service to God were convinced that those who could read and write would have great advantages both in the spiritual and the physical world. Those who could not adjust and did not learn how to read or write would experience misfortune. This belief went even further, as the educated believed that they would be better prepared for the afterlife (Cressy, 2006, pp. 1-2). However, there was a way to access the Bible for those who could not read but wanted to know its content. They could attend holy mass or come to town square when the Bible would be read out loud (Feather, 2006, p. 10). With the increase of literacy by the end of the sixteenth century, commoners were encouraged to read the Bible at home. That tradition remained in place until the nineteenth century. As reflected in the following thought from the seventeenth century: "Alas, the people perish for want of knowledge. And how can they know God's will that cannot read it?" (Swinnock 1663, cited in Cressy, 2006, p.3).

Education was not mandatory, so who was getting an education was solely based on social class and gender. Girls were usually not educated because it was considered unnecessary since they would grow up to be housewives. Formal education was intended for boys whose families were able to pay school fees or a private tutor. Furthermore, with the invention of the printing press and the popularization of printed books, the number of literate people grew significantly. Informal education was carried out by parents when

their children turned six. Even though education and the Church were separate, prayers were still taught in class (Cartwright, 2020).

Several books about religion were used for the teaching of commoners, and one was used in school. The first type was for laypeople who could read; a great example is *A Profitable and Necessary Doctrine* (1554). It illustrated what a Christian should believe, and it also contained some traditional prayers and commandments. The second type of book was intended for the clergy to read to those who could not read, and one such book was called *Homilies Set Forth* (1555). This book was also a manual of sermons to be used during holy mass. The third type were those books that teachers would use in class and one was *An Honest Godly Instruction for the Bringing Up of Children* (1555). It taught children about the elements of faith along with the alphabet and how to respond in mass. This book was different because it was an English translation from Latin (Haigh, 1993, p. 216).

The skill of reading was very desirable, though not entirely necessary. For example, people who lived in the countryside did not need to know how to read or write. In reality, illiteracy was only a problem for those who dealt with scripts and prints. Usually, people refused to read unless they absolutely had to (Cressy, 2006, p. 13). This attitude stemmed from childhood. If a child did not show desire and motivation to learn, or if the parents did not show an incentive towards teaching them, children would hardly succeed in learning. Learning how to read and write took time, patience, and practice (Cressy, 2006, p. 19). Another good thing that came from laypeople's ability to read was the expansion of job opportunities. For example, common people could work in the royal palace in place of a clerk (Haigh, 1993, p. 8).

## **2. PUBLISHING AND PRINTING**

### **2.1 THE BOOK TRADE**

With the invention of the printing press, change was mandatory, and "Within less than a century, the printed word had transformed the intellectual world of the West, and had facilitated political, religious and economic change" (Feather, 1988). Even before the invention of the printing press, books were in circulation. They had their own market, just like any other product. Those books were all written by hand and were relatively expensive, especially for a commoner, so the target audience would always be people of higher financial status, and above all, this market completely excluded those who could not read. Therefore, when the printing press was invented by Johannes Gutenberg, and when books did not take years to be rewritten, the market started to change (Feather, 2006, p.5).

In 1476, William Caxton introduced book trade to England (Feather, 2006, p. 6-9). The way the trade worked was with the scribes first, who wrote manuscripts and sometimes would be hired by a wealthy person to buy a copy of a certain text for them. Apart from the wealthy, the scribes also worked for stationers. Stationers were middlemen between buyers and scribes. They can also be considered the publishers of that era because they were involved with the production of books (Feather, 2006, p. 9). Fortunately, as the number of books grew, so did the number of lay people who owned books or simply knew how to read, though it was never certain what exact percentage of people could actually read. The reason was that at the beginning of the printing industry in England, printing was only done in London, and the rest of the country depended on those who travelled across the country and visited town fairs (Bennet. 1965, p. 2).

By the first half of the fifteenth century, the percentage of literacy in the country had increased. Because book prices were still relatively high, libraries had become the most common buyers, alongside the wealthy. Libraries were an excellent way for a common person to maintain their reading skills if they could not buy books. The Royal

library was founded in the second half of the fifteenth century and held books that were around a century old (Feather, 2006, p. 10). But when a writer wanted to get involved with the book market, they had to keep a few important elements of marketing in mind. Firstly, there was the question of whether anyone was even interested in their book. Secondly, they had to find a sponsor of high status whose name a potential buyer would trust and then purchase the book. Nevertheless, it was quite unpredictable how the market would react to a book, whether there would be any interest and whether the book would be successful. Being a writer was considered difficult, risky and possibly unprofitable until printed books became more relevant (Bennet, 1965, p. 30).

## **2.2 THE PRODUCTION PROCESS**

The Bible, the first printed book, did not use any new objects for its production. On the contrary, the first version of the printing process can be considered quite traditional (Feather, 2006, p. 13). It started with the work of a compositor who would arrange the letters in the right place. His working tool was called type. Hellinga Trapp explains the way type was made:

For each character, a punch was cut in steel, [...]. 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, [...] which in turn could be adjusted to the varying sizes of the matrices. When closed, the mould was filled with hot liquid metal, [...]. A piece of type, a small bar of metal with a letter at its end, would be the result (Hellinga and Trapp, 2000, p. 69).

Soon the process was standardized because each compositor could make different types, and the types could not be mixed when put on a page. A fount of type was the total set of letters and other symbols of the same shape and height. When completed, a fount of type could form fitted lines of text into metal pages. The compositors had to be

very precise in their job. Most importantly, they had to have excellent knowledge of English grammar (Hellinga, Trapp, 2000, p. 69).

After arranging the letters, the work of a pressman could begin. Their job was to press the letters in ink while not spilling the ink on the sheets. Then the job would be passed on to a proofreader. They would look for any mistakes in the spelling or inking. After that, the sheets would go to the person who would arrange them neatly. Only if there were no grammatical or inking errors could the pages be sent to the binding stage. Binding was done with a string or framed by a wedge made of wood. That was also called forms, and they made sure that a single side of paper could be printed. This process required various patterns to combine pages into forms or chases, but keeping in mind the number of times a sheet had to be folded to become a short story or a novel. Afterward, the form would be pressed, and after the required number of copies, the type would be removed from the press. The final person had the creative side of the job: they would decorate the pages, paint pictures, or decorate the headlines, but only if the pages were made of paper. If they were made of vellum, then the job was more demanding as they had to carve the pages (Hellinga and Trapp, 2008; Plant, 1974).

## **2.3 MATERIALS**

None of this would have been possible without paper. In the time of manuscripts, the material used for writing was usually goat, sheep, or calf skin. It was processed in such a way that it was as thin as paper. First, the skin had to be washed until all the hair was removed. Afterward, excess flesh and hair were scraped off. Then the skin would be stretched and dried while additional scraping was done with a special knife. This knife was in the shape of a crescent moon, and to achieve the thinness of paper, holes were often made, and these could be seen in the finished product. The last step was to prepare the skin for writing, and that was done by rubbing chalk onto it. Another type of material used was linen. The preparation of linen rags was similar to the preparation of vellum. The rags had to be washed first, then fermented and beaten, after which they would be



squeezed between multiple layers of wireframes and felt. Lastly, the rags had to be dried and glued so they would absorb the ink less (Morgan, 2008, pp. 75-78).

It was not until sometime during the 1200s that paper reached England. The earliest known document to be written on paper dates from the year 1216. After the introduction of paper, books were made by the combination of both paper and animal skin. The reasoning behind it was the lack of firmness and strength of paper. Usually, the most vulnerable parts were the sewing points (Morgan, 2008, p. 78). Considering the time when William Caxton started his printing business, it can be concluded that paper was largely imported, and thus it was expensive. These high costs of paper resulted in printers avoiding white space to fit as much text as possible on a page (Ford, 2020, p. 31).

### 3. THE FOUNDERS OF THE INDUSTRY

#### 3.1 THE FIRST PUBLISHERS

Some of the most prominent printers and publishers in England were William Caxton, John Lettou, and William de Machlinia. Caxton was the first to start the printing business; the latter were his successors. The book that marked the beginning of publishing was Caxton's translation of a French romance novel. He saw a lack of books for leisure among the upper classes, so he took the offer of translating the *Recuyell of the histories of Troy* (1474), and the first book translated into English was made. He maintained his popularity among the upper classes by translating and printing more romance books and poetry. Both were significant for the amusement of the wealthy. Another way he kept his popularity was by dedicating books to aristocrats, which helped advertise his books. Apart from literary works, Caxton also worked with religious books since his shop was at Westminster Abby (Feather, 2006, pp. 15-16). The first book he printed there was *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer (Ford, 2020, p. 2).

His business was also surprisingly successful when taken into account that Gutenberg himself at one point proclaimed bankruptcy. Caxton was only publishing English translations of books, so he could only focus on the English book market. As he was the first in that business, success could be guaranteed. If Caxton had published books in Latin with a focus on the English market, his success might not be as certain since such books were already being supplied to England from abroad. The only method for success was printing books in Latin specific to England, such as English books of law. Apart from law books, Caxton printed books on poetry, romance, and religion of which the most important were those about saints' lives.<sup>1</sup> Other publishers of these books were Julian Notary and Richard Pynson, who owned the only other two printing businesses in England at that time (Ford, 2020, p. 147).

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<sup>1</sup> One such book was *The Golden Legend*, his most popular edition (Ford, 2020, p.2).

Another reason why Caxton was so important is because he put headlines in his texts. Many printers did not do that, so navigating the text might have been a little complicated. He also included a table of contents, but it is important to say that both elements were still in their beginnings, so the form and the execution were not yet perfect (Ford, 2020, pp. 32-33). Caxton's successor and competitor was John Lettou, and his partner William de Machlinia. The two of them were the first to print an English law book, and law developed into the most lucrative field of printing. Other essential English legal documents were printed soon after the first law book (Feather, 2006, p. 16). Progress in the book printing industry was not equally distributed throughout the kingdom. For example, London was the centre of the industry, whereas printing in Wales was not present until the beginning of the eighteenth century (Feather, 2006, p. 19).

### **3.2 THE FIRST PRINTED BOOKS**

Religion and the publishing industry were closely connected. During the sixteenth century, books about religion made particularly for monks and priests were among the more popular published books. An essential printer of such books was Robert Redman whose *A Work for Householders, or for them that have the guiding or governance of any company* (1530) was the most sold book at that time even though it was not about religion. It was so popular that it was reprinted eight times in six years. Apart from that book, some of his other famous works aimed at priests and monks were *A Work of Preparation unto Communion* (1531) and *The Following of Christ* (1531) (Haigh, 1993, p. 25).

Books that were primarily produced in England and for the purpose of book trade were vernacular books, specifically written in the English language. However, these books were not exported to other countries, whereas books in Latin were imported to England. Vernacular books were essential for the economy's growth because common people represented a significant portion of readers. Religious texts also constituted a notable portion of book production. Apart from books in Latin, other types which were imported were medical books, books on theology, and, in general, books on occupations. Books on occupations were sold in greater numbers because literacy among people

increased, which meant there was a larger market for books on specific professions (with books on farming being the most popular) (Feather, 2006, pp. 20-21).

The reason why primarily produced books in England were vernacular books was because the printing industry was already more developed in the rest of Europe. That means Europe had enough books in the Latin language and England could focus on its own market. One thing that furthered the production of vernacular books was the bubonic plague. During the Elizabethan era, the bubonic plague, or the black death, was still a problem in England and the rest of Europe. However, many doctors then turned to writing down their thoughts and ideas on how to cure the disease, how to protect oneself from becoming infected, and how to stop the plague. They wrote all of this in vernacular books, which were mainly intended for the literate commoners (Byrne, 2006, p. 208): “At least 23 books specifically on the plague were published in English— often with multiple editions— during the Tudor era (1485–1603), and many more general works contained detailed sections on the plague” (Byrne, 2006, p. 212).

One specific, popular kind of book was on astrology, but people knew it under the name calendar. There were two types of astrology, judicial and natural. Natural astrology explored the influences of planets in fields of agriculture and medicine. Judicial astronomy, following natural astrology, allowed astrologers to make predictions on which further almanacs or calendars were based (Capp, 1979, p. 16). They would make predictions about the weather, medical matters, and things of common interest. They would even try to predict an individual's future based on their time of birth and the position of planets at that time. However, these predictions soon included many political comments and even with many censorships were printed until the middle of the sixteenth century (Feather, 2006, pp. 21-22).

## 4.TYPES OF BOOKS

### 4.1 THE MOST COMMON BOOKS

Religion was a factor which greatly influenced what was published in this period. England and Rome did not have the same religious beliefs, and that was the main reason for numerous religious publications. The Bible in the English language was now more accessible, and so were the Book of Common Prayer and the Psalms. However, many people did not want to change their religion to Protestantism, and a bishop, John Jewel, published almost thirty articles on why not to believe in Protestantism, which started the publication of more than fifty religious articles on why that change was necessary (Bennet, 1965, pp. 113-114). The purpose of such articles was to inform parents what to teach their children about Christianity. The most famous author of such books was Andrew Maunsell, who published almost a hundred books on the topic (Bennet, 1965, pp. 146-147).

During Elizabeth's time on the throne, more than a thousand sermons were published, and that is only considering those written in English. Many more were written in foreign languages, but these were still not counted in even though they were translated into English. Many priests refused to write down their sermons because they lasted for over two hours. It was easier to say what came to their mind or to follow some short notes than a written sermon. Sometimes, if people liked what a preacher said, they would convince him to write it down so that they could read the sermon in private (Bennet, 1965, pp. 148-150).

There were also law books, which, as mentioned before, were a crucial part of the book trade. A staple among law books was *Statutes at Large* (1225), published in several volumes during the Elizabethan era. Furthermore, year books were a type of publication vital for the execution of authority. Even though these were essential law books, not many were printed because there was a monopoly in the printing business explicitly given by royal mandate. One man with such a privilege was Richard Totell. He was given the right

to print law books during the reign of Edward VI, and his monopoly continued until the end of the sixteenth century (Bennet, 1965, pp. 156-157). There was only one book that Totell could not print, and that was *Statutes of the Realm* (1236), printed by the Queen's Printer, Christopher Barker (Bennet, 1965, p. 159). Barker was the official printer of the royal court (Plant, 1974, p. 105).

Other types of books were medicine books, and books of information such as reissued versions of *Husbandry* (1523) and *Surveying* (1523). The only encyclopaedia in the English language, from the end of the fifteenth century, was once again published with some additions (Bennet, 1965, p. 189). *Husbandry* and *Surveying* were printed over five times before the Elizabethan era and several times during the era. For this period, multiple publications were common if the book consisted of between 150 and 200 pages, and such were books on farming and agriculture (Bennet, 1965, p. 189). Regarding science, mathematics and astronomy were the most developed. Mathematics became popular through Robert Record's simple yet effective teaching methods. He had published a book on mathematics, which became popular and was reprinted for a century. Geography started developing at this time because of the voyages organized by the Queen. All these developments had a direct impact on the book trade by ensuring that there was a steady income of new books on these subjects (Bennet, 1965, p. 205). History books were another important type of book in circulation. They were relevant because they provided readers with general knowledge about the past and how they should lead their lives. The most considerable number of history books was printed between 1560 and 1570. Richard Grafton and John Stow were the two publishers competing in this field. With each new edition, they would correct and add on to what the other author had written (Bennet, 1965, p. 216). Among leisure books, Robert Green's *Pandosto* (1588) was a popular romance novel which producers and printers would reshape in order to resell it, and so *Pandosto* was published twenty-four times in sixty years (Newcomb, 2001, pp. 21-22).

## 4.2 MAPS

Maps were a common type of publication on the market, even before the invention of the printing press. They were sold easily all around the country and on the continent because they did not require any particular text. However, when the invention of the printing press spread across Europe, the map market became quite competitive. Another way maps were different from books was in the type of machine required for their production. First, they required special ink and paper, as well as different printing plates, called intaglio plates, which could only be used on a rolling-press.<sup>2</sup> The process of selling maps was also different. They could be sold as a single print, as a couple of joined sheets of paper, so that they formed a bigger map, or they would be printed inside of books as well. That meant that they could cater to more buyers. Their sellers were people involved with mapping the land, like surveyors or drafting technicians, and various booksellers and printers (Barnard, 2010, pp. 228-229).

## 4.3 CHILDREN'S BOOKS

When it comes to children's books, Peter Hunt has stated that "The distinction between books published for adults and those published for children is not always acknowledged by their readers, and it could be said that William Caxton was the first publisher of a children's book in England" (Hunt, 2005). Apart from Caxton's connection to children's books, another memorable name did not appear until two hundred years later; that person was John Newbery who wrote and designed many children's books and sold them in his shop (Hunt, 2005, p. 465). At first, children learned using hornbooks, which were small wooden books containing the alphabet and the Lord's Prayer. A type of book used before the hornbook was the primer, which contained the alphabet, the Lord's Prayer, and catechisms. Children of lower social classes used these books and those of

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<sup>2</sup> A rolling press was used for printing pictures where: "the inked plate, the dampened paper, and the cloth blanket were passed between two cylinders of a rolling press, the pressure of the rollers and the blanket transferred the ink held in the recessed engraved line to the paper" (Suarez, Woudhuysen, 2014, p. 142).

higher classes used books of courtesy<sup>3</sup>, which contained much more information and could be used both by parents and tutors (Hunt, 2005, p. 137). Their schoolbooks consisted of grammar books, specifically Greek and Latin grammar, math, and books for spelling. Behind the religious content of hornbooks and primer was expensive production. The publishers did not want to make something valuable and educational just for children but rather something of use to adults as well (Hunt, 2005, p. 264). Another difference between children was that those in lower-income families were only interested in learning the basics, enough to enable them to read. If they wished to learn more, they would have to go to parishes or pay for a tutor, and that was almost impossible (Hunt, 2005, p. 137).

#### **4.4 THE BIBLE**

The Bible and the Book of Common Prayer were two books that every educated family had to have in their home. The first translation of the Bible directly from Hebrew and Greek into the English language was that by William Tyndale. The New Testament, translated by Tyndale in 1522, served as a reference for following translations of the Bible. Most importantly, his version was also the first to be printed as a pocket paperback size (Moynahan, 2002, p. 67). However, Tyndale was soon punished by the law for this very translation because the English language was not yet considered a language worthy of the Bible (Wilcox, 2004, p. 28).

The Geneva Bible was the most popular, but the one allowed by the English Church was called the Bishop's Bible. The Geneva Bible was translated into English and was used by many famous writers like William Shakespeare and John Bunyan. Chapters, numbered verses, and notes for laypeople to understand it better appeared for the first time, which made this Bible different from others (Forgeng, 2010, p. 187). The Bishops' Bible was the version of the Bible allowed after the Geneva Bible. It was written by many bishops, and it was still printed fourteen years after Queen Elizabeth's death (Barnard,

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<sup>3</sup> Books of courtesy or books of behaviour instructed children how to properly behave in society (Hunt, 2005, p. 669).



2008, p. 456). The Geneva Bible was translated by many authors, and it was also a reference Bible for the authorized version, which had to resemble the original Greek and Hebrew Bible as much as possible. After over six years of multiple people translating it, the Bible was finally published by King James' Printer in 1611 (Barnard, 2008, p. 457). The Authorized version was the only version allowed to be printed and published for the next three hundred years. Not even the Bishops' Bible was accepted as the version suitable for referencing during holy mass (Barnard, 2008, p. 458).

## **5. WOMEN IN THE BOOK INDUSTRY**

### **5.1 WOMEN AND SOCIETY**

In this era, women's rights also started to improve. First, they were taught to read and later were allowed to work. In particular, they were allowed to do the work of a person who folded pages and arranged them in order. (Plant, 1974, p. 148). However, learning to read was not easily and equally accessible to all women. Those who belonged in higher classes had better opportunities to learn reading and Latin, which was especially important. It was believed that men who had finished their education and had the chance to learn Latin were open to an entirely new world and a different way of thinking (Cartwright, 2020). Therefore, because women were not as literate, their inclusion in the book trade, book production, and writing could not be as influential and significant (Morgan, 2008, p. 32). Sometimes, books were written for women, yet many of them could not read such books because they did not know how or did not have enough money to buy a copy (Morgan, 2008, p. 341). Other times, even when a woman was a writer, her work would be subtly hidden. That meant, for example, that her work would be published as part of another work written by a man or a group of authors.

It is important to remember that the Elizabethan era was only the start of change regarding women's position in society, in the areas of both education and work. The change was something new, and women struggled to enter the book market and the literary world (Barnard, 2008, p. 433). Romance books and plays were the most read among women readers, but the Bible was also very important, and some women would read it twice a year, using it for guidance in life (Charlton, 1999, pp. 178-9).

## 5.2 WOMEN'S WRITING AND PRINTING

A more significant number of works published by women appeared only around the middle of the seventeenth century (Barnard, 2008, p. 433). They wrote about various topics, from everything about being a housewife to translation and religion. They did not write about only one genre of literature either. They wrote fiction, poetry, plays and manuscripts (Barnard, 2008, p. 434). One interesting topic many women wrote about was called woman controversy. Women would write ballads, satires, and poems but would use them to express their distaste for how they and their works were treated or, more precisely, disregarded. (Barnard, 2008, p. 436)

The book industry was, as previously mentioned, a male industry. Women's writing was not taken seriously, and there was rarely a publisher willing to publish a woman's work. However, some publishers did so. One of the most famous writers of woman controversy was Jane Anger. Her works were a direct response to works by men attacking women (Barnard, 2008, p. 436). A particular pamphlet motivated Anger to write her most known work, specifically a letter called *Protection for Women* (1589). The pamphlet directly attacked women, and Jane Anger made sure she defended them (Martin, 2010, p. 81). Anger used male negativity towards women and turned it into a base for future feminism (Martin, 2010, p. 84). This type of writing was very common because men decided what women could write about and how. Therefore, women wrote responses to such decisions, which was also the most widely read topic among female readers (Knight, White and Sauer, 2018). Apart from those letters, books which interested them were focused on simpler topics. Usually, they would be concerned with themes of relaxation and pleasure. Even though they read books on simpler topics, they had to read them in private. Because men believed that a woman's purpose was to be a good mother and a housewife, it was assumed that she would not need to read any books to improve her knowledge outside of those fields (Knight, White and Sauer, 2018).

When it came to book production, women were not active as much because they were still not allowed to work, which meant they did not have the financial means to finance their own company. However, there are records showing that one woman, Elizabeth Pickering,

was active in the industry. Pickering did not start publishing on her own but inherited the business after the death of her husband, who had printed law books. Coincidentally, her second husband was a lawyer, so she continued her business with his financial support (Kreps, 2003, pp. 11-13)

## **6. BOOKSHOPS**

Bookshops, libraries, book trade, and readers were all connected. Readers' literacy was relevant to the number of books libraries should acquire and what number of books a bookseller should provide for those with more money. Apart from libraries and booksellers, universities and churches also required and kept many books (Barnard, 2008, p. 323). Books were also sold in unusual places such as theatres and on the London Bridge. Any place with many passers-by where a publisher could set up a stand was a potential location for selling books (Plant, 1974; Raven, 2007). Public readings of books were sometimes held in bookshops, which helped their owners with publicity and the selling of books (Plant, 1974, p. 248). However, bookshops were not open every day. Usually, they worked only on the days when a book market was held in town. The most famous place for the book market, St. Paul's Churchyard, was located in London, and it was important for printers and publisher to go there to advertise their business and gain success (Plant, 1974, pp. 82, 253).

### **6.1 BOOK PRICES**

The most important thing for publishers and printers was to know who the book would be aimed at so they would know to set their prices accordingly. A law was passed in 1533 which regulated the prices of books. The members of the Stationers' Company would punish a printer if he charged too much for a book, after which a new price would be decided (Plant, 1974, p. 238). Initially, when there was only one printer whom the Crown allowed to print anything, prices could be unreasonably high. Another reason for the high prices was that a given publisher could issue one or two volumes of a book per year. At most, one publisher could print six works per year, which was possible only for those in a much better financial situation (Plant, 2006, p. 91). But luckily for those of lower income, not only books were published. Plays and magazines were also printed, and at much lower prices. They were not bound, which was the case with many other books,

and that meant that their cost was lower. In this way, lower prices would be ensured (Plant, 1974, p. 41). Books for children were always cheaper because publishers wanted them to be available to as many people as possible (Hunt, 2005, p. 466).

## 7. REGULATIONS

### 7.1 LAW REFORMS

The press in the Elizabethan era can be described as “a crazy quilt of proclamations, patents, trade regulations, judicial decrees, and privy council and parliamentary actions patched together by the sometimes common and sometimes competing threads of religious, economic, political and private interests” (Clegg, 1997, p. 5). For all those reasons, it was believed that control of the press was necessary. Since the beginning of the book trade, press censorship was always present. Not everything could be published. Even during Mary I’s reign, the Crown paid attention to what was published. A year before Mary left the throne, she had decided upon a charter which gave the Stationer’s Company, a group of ninety-seven members who watched over the book market, a monopoly over the publishing industry. Censorship was introduced when king Edward VI allowed only one publisher to print books, and this monopoly remained in place until the very end of the Elizabethan period. All these rules appeared when the Queen and her Council members realized what kind of power the publishing industry had over people (Clegg, 1997, p. 6).

The publishing industry and the law were closely connected for one more reason. During the reign of Richard III, a decision was made as to who was allowed to work in the printing industry. This was related to the economy because many foreigners came to England to import printing material and would then decide to remain in the country, which resulted in foreigners becoming the owners of most printing business. But with Richard’s act, all the printing could be done only by native people. This leads to the conclusion that foreigners were the founders of the book industry in England (Feather, 2006, p. 17).

During the Elizabethan era, the Crown was greatly interested in the publishing industry. In practice, the Crown focused on whether a published piece propagated falsehood or forgery. If a particular book were out of line, the publisher would be punished and the book would be taken off the market, but that decision was not simple. For example,

Catholicism was no longer the primary belief system. Therefore, a book on Catholicism could be accused of spreading lies (Shuger, 2006, p. 3). Furthermore, during this period in Europe “truth was far more likely to be legally irrelevant if the offensive words had been set down in writing or spoken to a crowd than if uttered in a private setting” (Shuger, p.143, 2006).

The next law reform came in the middle of the 1560s when it was decided that any book which was to be published had to be approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury or by the Bishop of London. That meant that for the whole country, only two people had the job of allowing which books were to be printed, and quite soon that became too big of a job for the two of them. They asked and received permission from the Queen to allow twelve more preachers and other members to help them read books before allowing them to go into printing (Bennet, 2006, pp. 56-58). There were, however, some exceptions to this rule. For example, two universities, the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford, were allowed to print without these supervisions (Bennet, 2006, pp. 56-58). A monopoly was established again on the printing market by the end of the 1580s, only this time it was less strict. The new censorship concerned all those printers and publishers outside London. From 1586 onwards, it was forbidden for any printer to take up the printing business if they operated anywhere outside London. Even monks with their smaller private printing press were prohibited from printing (Bennet, 2006, pp. 56-58). It might have seemed a bit excessive that only printers in London were allowed to print, but the fact was that not many printers existed. In the first half of the sixteenth century, forty men possessed the printing press however, in the second half of the century, only half of them were active.



## 7.2 COPYRIGHT

The introduction of copyright law at the beginning of the printing industry was not easy. The main reason was that the first works to be printed were those written by monks, and they surrendered their right to personal possession as the men of God. Further on, it was impossible to claim authorship over books by any classical author because the first copies were presumably lost, and the authors were deceased (Plant, 1974, pp. 98-99). A grammar book written and published by Thomas Linacre at the beginning of the sixteenth century was the first known example of copyright. This publication was the first instance of a monopoly on the market, as Henry VIII had allowed only Linacre to print the textbook (Curtin, 2012, p. 399).

When printing began, publishers tried to protect their work because of the initial amount of money they invested in the production. Without copyright law, a book could be reprinted by different publishers without giving any profit and recognition to the original author or publisher. When manuscripts were written on demand, the stationers would contact a monk, and the exact number of books would be written; rarely was there an extra book left. It also meant that there were no monetary losses. But when books were printed, in a much shorter time many more were made and a more significant amount of money was needed, which led to the law of copyright, or authorship. Handover further confirms this by saying:

When a printer had gone to the trouble of obtaining a manuscript and had [...] set it up with care and procured good white paper, he wished, naturally to have the sole profits. These would be diminished with every copy sold by another printer. The problem of protecting copyright arose as soon as there were any number — let alone a great number — 'cunning and expert' in printing" (Handover, 1960, p. 1).

Furthermore, because of this mass production of books people did not need to personally ask the author for a copy, but then authors did not know how many people were interested in a book and, because of that, could not determine the right number of books to print (Plant, 1974, pp. 98-99). Because authorship was not yet concrete, authors did not mind

others publishing their work, so publishers had to do everything in their power to ensure the most profit. The sole reason of authors not minding other publishers using their work was because most were not original, since they took inspiration from classic works. Therefore, any copyright infringement did not overly concern them (Plant, 1974, p. 98). Another instance when authors would not mind others publishing their work was in the case of religious propaganda. Authors of such works wanted and intended their work to reach as many people as possible, even if that meant that it would be shared without them receiving recognition (Plant, 1974, p. 99). However, it was easier for map sellers, as they did not have to concern themselves with copyright issues because printing plates were very different for every person that made them, so they were their signature and insurance (Barnard, 2010, pp. 228-229). Looking outside England, for example, in Paris and Bologna copyright laws were already in use by the end of the thirteenth century (Morgan, 2008, p. 171). In Venice, stealing someone's work was punishable in the sixteenth century. It can be concluded that progress in advocacy for authorship in England was much slower because it did not appear until the beginning of the eighteenth century (Plant, 1974, pp. 98-99).

## CONCLUSION

The invention of the printing press and its introduction to the English market brought many changes to society. William Caxton was the man behind the introduction when he published *Recuyell of the histories of Troy*, an English translation of a French novel. Afterward, his example was followed by others, and the industry and competition grew. Another good thing resulting from the printing industry was that more people wanted to learn to read, so literacy rates grew among the lower classes. Most importantly, women were allowed to learn to read and write. Educated women, those who belonged in the higher classes, tried to write and publish more, but the industry was predominately male. The most significant female writer was Jane Anger, who managed to get her works published. Anger wrote about the way men treated women and their works. Women were also allowed to work in the process of book production. The book industry offered many new job opportunities, even to women, and such opportunities also positively impacted the economy as it led to an increase in the number of employed people.

The printing press indeed had changed the English society. A new industry developed and included many people in its process. For the printing industry to grow more people had to work and be literate. The rate of literacy started to increase which led to the start of woman's education and their participation in the book-making process. All of these changes advanced England from the Medieval times when only people in higher classes were literate, books were written by hand and women were not allowed to work or read. With the introduction of the printing press into England, a new era started, and those were the early modern times.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The printing press was brought to London in 1476 by William Caxton, who printed a translation of a French novel and thus marked the beginning of the printing industry in England. The printing industry led to many improvements in the English society. Firstly, more people had jobs; secondly, literacy among lower social classes started to increase because of the new interest in reading; thirdly, women were taught how to read and could participate in the production of books. One of the most important elements affecting both the printing industry and the whole Elizabethan period was religion. During the reign of Henry VIII, more precisely in 1534, the change from Catholicism to Protestantism was initiated, but it was not official until Queen Elizabeth ascended to the throne in late 1558. In the period of sixty years, multiple versions of the Bible were printed, and for the first time it was available in English. Apart from the Bible, other types of books were popular, such as vernacular books, agricultural books, books on medicine, and children's books. However, censorship and copyright laws came into use which affected the type of books available on the market. Due to copyright law, a printing company was protected if some other publisher printed a book they had already printed. Another important element of the book industry was the book market, which was essential for publicizing new books and promoting publishing companies.

Key words: censorship, copyright, literacy, printing press, printing industry, religion

## SAŽETAK

William Caxton je stanovnicima Londona predstavio tiskarski stroj 1476. godine. Nakon tiskanja jednog francuskog romana, Caxton je započeo tiskarsku industriju u Engleskoj. Tiskarska industrija je bila razlog mnogim poboljšanjima u engleskom društvu. Prvo, više je ljudi imalo posao; drugo, zbog novog interesa za čitanjem, pismenost među nižim društvenim klasama je počela rasti; treće, žene su također bile podučavane čitanju i mogle su sudjelovati u proizvodnji knjiga. Jedan od važnijih elemenata koji je utjecao na tiskarsku industriju i cijelo elizabetansko razdoblje je bila religija. Kada je kralj Henry VIII bio na vlasti, započeo je reformaciju religije. 1534. godine je pokrenuo prijelaz s katolicizma na protestantizam, no prijelaz je postao službenim tek kada je kraljica Elizabeta I preuzela prijestolje krajem 1558. godine. U razdoblju od šezdeset godina tiskano je više verzija Biblije, od kojih je jedna, po prvi puta bila na engleskom jeziku. Osim Biblije, bile su popularne i druge knjige. Na primjer, knjige na engleskom jeziku, knjige o poljoprivredi, o medicini i knjige za djecu. Međutim, u praksu su stupili zakoni o cenzuri i autorskim pravima. Kraljica je određivala što se smije tiskati te tko što smije tiskati. Na primjer, samo je jedan tiskar imao dopuštenje tiskanja zakonskih knjiga. Zakon o autorstvu se počeo razvijati, te su tiskare imale osiguranje o plaćanju u slučaju kada neka druga tiskara objavi njihovu knjigu. Još jedan važan element u tiskarskoj industriji je bila trgovina knjigama, ključna za promicanje poslovanja i oglašavanje novih knjiga.

Ključne riječi: cenzura, autorsko pravo, pismenost, tiskarski stroj, tiskarska industrija, religija