

# Making Marriage Work: Daughters, Wives, and Widows in the Sixteenth Century Parisian Print-Trade

Apolline C. Goddard



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Frontispiece: Fedor Hoffbauer, *Plan de Paris sous le règne de Henri II*, reproduit en fac-similé d'après l'exemplaire unique de la bibliothèque de Bâle, par Olivier Truschet et Germain Hoyau 1550-1552 (1877).

## ABSTRACT

Philippe Renouard's *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens* (1898), the most complete repository of sixteenth-century Parisian printers, provides an exceptional opportunity to gain insight into the daughters, wives, and widows of the book-trade and new ways of thinking about labor, marriage, and its intersection both within and without the bounds of domestic space. This thesis seeks to understand the extent of the socio-economic role marriage played in the sixteenth century Parisian print-trade: how might a marriage have influenced a printer's commercial or economic prospects? What might have been the labor expectations for his bride? What kinds of marriages took place in the print-trade? What did the juxtaposition of the household and the professional workshop mean for printer's wives? With a focus on their social origins, marriages, children, and widowhoods, this study of over four hundred women offers a series of new statistics to view both the trade and the women in it from a new perspective. Ultimately, it argues for a reconsideration of marriage with an emphasis on its labor aspects and the specific social, labor, and economic capital possessed by printers' wives.

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## INTRODUCTION

There is currently abounding interest in early modern women at work. Recent studies done on book-trade women in Europe (especially in England, the Netherlands, and Germany) have centered around new questions of agency, authority, and the place of women in guilds and how that changed throughout time.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have expanded on their profusion across labor circles overall, and in the print-trades, on the variety of roles they undertook as bookbinders, mercuries, hawkers, etc.<sup>2</sup> The topic of marriage and women as brides in the book-world however has seemingly not been paid sufficient attention.

It is well-known the book-trades operated largely on kinship networks.<sup>3</sup> Marriage and family ties lay behind many of the apprenticeships, business dealings, collaborations, print-house successions, etc. observed in the historical record. Brothers-in-law put out publications together, sons-in-law took over their fathers-in-law's firms. As brides, wives, and widows, women embodied these bonds, their marriages playing a quintessential role in the business dealings of their kinsmen. Women also had their own affairs to consider: an indebted widow might wonder whether selling the family firm was a better gamble than taking on the financial risk of succeeding her husband at the head of the print-house herself. For some help, she might eye a journeyman wanting to elevate himself to master-printer through marriage to her, but would have

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<sup>1</sup> See Clare Crowston, "Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research" in *International Review of Social History* 53 (2008). Scholarly approaches to gender and the division of work between the sexes in guild studies have since evolved: to complement Crowston's article see Ariadne Schmidt, "Labor Ideologies and Women in the Northern Netherlands, c.1500–1800" in *International Review of Social History* 56 (2011); Danielle van den Heuvel, "Guilds, Gender Policies and Economic Opportunities for Women in Early Modern Dutch Towns" in *Female Agency in the Urban Economy* (2013); Hannie van Goinga, "Silhouettes: Women in the book trade in the early modern period, a new field of study" in *Verantwoording over Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis* 12 (2005).

<sup>2</sup> See the work of Alastair Mann, Felicity Hunt, Raymond Waddington, Margaret Spufford, Margaret Hunt, and Adrian Johns.

<sup>3</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, "Ghosts, Kin and Progeny: Some Features of Family Life in Early Modern France" in *Daedalus* (Spring 1977): 89–101; van Goinga, "Silhouettes: Women in the book trade in the early modern period, a new field of study": 18; Rudolph Rasch, "The Daughters of Estienne Roger" in *Verantwoording over Jaarboek voor Nederlandse Boekgeschiedenis* 12 (2005): 65.

to contend with the effect on her children a remarriage would bring.<sup>4</sup> A young printer's daughter might debate marrying into or outside her father's profession, knowing the law made it difficult for girls to access their inheritance if they were not married to a printer themselves.<sup>5</sup> With such consequences in mind, deciding on a marriage partner — whether by the woman's own choice or her parents' — came with a certain weight: it would alter the circumstances in which she could manage her finances, access her money, and ensure her and children's living. Pressured by guild ordinances, social norms, and economic limits due to their gender, these women were likely very constricted in their decision-making. Assigning them too much agency is problematic, but so is stripping them of any agency at all.

Even with their names stamped black-on-white, much work was necessary to prove the presence of women in the book-trade and demonstrate their place alongside their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons. An expansive tradition of labor and urban history in France had already allowed for the careful contextualization of female book-trade activities, and the 1980s to early 2000s in particular saw a great flurry of interest in the topic: Sylvie Postel-Lecocq established the regularity of women's presence in the book-trade when a mere two decades before some scholars could still be found 'correcting' feminine names on imprints with their masculine form.<sup>6</sup> Beatrice Beech identified a 'golden age' (1540-1570) when widows appeared as heads of Parisian print-houses in exceptionally high numbers due to a combination of local guild custom, French inheritance law, and the period of life in which these women were widowed.<sup>7</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis characterized women's labor in a seminal text specifically concerning craftwork

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<sup>4</sup> Susan Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation in the Print Trades in Sixteenth-Century France" in *Parergon* 18 (2001): 65.

<sup>5</sup> Beatrice Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century" in *Medieval Prosopography*, vol. 10, n° 1 (1989): 84.

<sup>6</sup> Sylvie Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, quelques exemples" in *Le Livre dans l'Europe de la Renaissance. Actes du XXVIII<sup>e</sup> colloque international d'études humanistes de Tours* (1988): 254.

<sup>7</sup> Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 88.

in sixteenth-century Lyon, and Annie Parent-Charon elaborated on the diverse forms female work might take in the Parisian book trade.<sup>8</sup> In 2001, Susan Broomhall argued the print-trades were not especially more likely to allow women to exploit opportunities compared to other trades, a view which directly contradicted ones long-held by many scholars.<sup>9</sup> She pointed to the superior numbers of surviving sources in which book-trade printer-widows appeared as giving that impression, and urged for a greater awareness of such biases in the historical record. Indeed, widows, with their ability to sign contracts, dispose of assets as they wished, and publish under their own names, stand out as hyper-visible compared to other women in the print industry, which, in turn, the scholarship reflects.<sup>10</sup>

Though scholarly interest did not subside (a register of female booksellers in France was published by Roméo Arbour just two years later), since then the field has been smaller and for the most part more case-study oriented.<sup>11</sup> Some scholars have sought to rectify this: recently Heleen Wyffels examined female work in Antwerp, Douai, and Leuven family printing firms, and many case studies on notable printer-widows across Europe have naturally examined the period in which these women were wives.<sup>12</sup> But scholarly understanding of the role of printer's wives should not be restrained to exceptional cases. In doing so, we miss a vital perspective that

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<sup>8</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons" in *Feminist Studies* 8 (1982): 46-80; Annie Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre dans le Paris de la Renaissance" in *Des Femmes et des livres: France et Espagne, XIVe-XVIIe siècles* (1999): 148.

<sup>9</sup> Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation".

<sup>10</sup> Barring some serious trouble, the only time a woman would come into the legal record was at the time of her marriage contract and her last will and testament. Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 255.

Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation": 63, 73.

<sup>11</sup> Printer-widows remain at the forefront of the field of women's book-trade activities. See Beatrice Beech, "Madeleine Bourssette: femme d'imprimeur et veuve" in *Veufs, veuves, et veuvage dans la France de l'Ancien Régime* (2003): 146-156; Rasch, "The Daughters of Estienne Roger"; Rémi Jimenes, "Pratiques d'atelier et corrections typographiques à Paris au XVIIe siècle l'édition des œuvres de saint Bernard par Charlotte Guillard" in *Passeurs de textes : Imprimeurs et libraires à l'âge de l'humanisme* (2012): 215-38 and *Charlotte Guillard, une femme imprimeur à la Renaissance* (2017).

<sup>12</sup> Heleen Wyffels, "Women and Work in Early Modern Printing Houses: Family Firms in Antwerp, Douai and Leuven (1500-1700)", PhD diss. KU Leuven (2021). See Saskia Limbach's work on Katharina Rebart and Madgalena Morhart in Germany, but also her "'Darzu mancher Mann sich viel zu schwach unnd zu wenig Befinden wu[e]rde.' Buchdruckerinnen und ihre Tätigkeiten im Alten Reich, ca. 1550 -1700" in *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 49.3 (2022): 399-440.

expands on female contributions: that of marriage and its influence on the print-house. Our focus must widen to include women before their widowhood, as well as to women who were never widowed at all, as much as possible. Much remains to be said about the status of the printer's wife, the expectations that might have come with that title, and the kind of role it played in the book-business.

Surprisingly, the topic of marriage, especially in the print-trades, is relatively understudied. The historiography of marriage and the family in the sixteenth-century Parisian context is overall quite limited. There has been much study done on early modern marriage: Lawrence Stone's groundbreaking *Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500-1800* opened up the field in 1977, which was then bolstered by several remarkable studies done by Keith Wrightson and Martha C. Howell, among others.<sup>13</sup> While these works focused on England, Suzanne Desan and Jeffrey Merrick were able to offer a more recent discussion centered on France with their *Family, Gender, and Law in Early Modern France* (2009). Overall however, the sixteenth century is less represented in marriage studies than the following ones, particularly for Paris, and particularly for the common people.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, marriage tends to be studied conceptually: the historiography is angled towards the 'rise of sentiment', generational tensions (or the absence of them), and questions of love in partnerships from the medieval period all the way through to the Enlightenment.<sup>15</sup> I propose a more socio-economic approach influenced by gender and labor

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<sup>13</sup> See the overview of work given in Raymond Waddington, "Marriage in Early Modern Europe" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 34, no. 2 (2003); Keith Wrightson, "Chapter Four" in *English Society 1580-1680* (1982); Martha C. Howell, *The Marriage Exchange: Property, Social Place, and Gender in Cities of the Low Countries, 1300-1550* (1998); Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household, and Sexuality* (1979).

<sup>14</sup> To understand the city's "thorny problems" in this regard, see Jean-Noel Biraben and Didier Blanchet, "Essay on the Population of Paris and Its Vicinity Since the Sixteenth Century" in *Population: An English Selection* 11 (1999): 155-88.

<sup>15</sup> See also Jeffrey Watt, *The Making of Modern Marriage: Matrimonial Control and the Rise of Sentiment in Neuchâtel 1550-1800* (1992). On marriage in areas surrounding Paris see Jean-Marc Moriceau, "Mariages et foyers paysans aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles: l'exemple des campagnes du sud de Paris" in *Revue d'Histoire Moderne & Contemporaine* 28-3 (1981): 481-502. For marriage in Nîmes, see Allan A. Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents: Marrying for Love in an Early Modern French Town" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44, no 3 (2013): 713-38.



studies, one where the focus is less marriage *per se* but women's agency, work, and the socio-economic value assigned to them as wives. This re-consideration of marriage intends to complement the interpretation provided by earlier marriage historians. Much excellent work in this area has been done appraising the domestic sphere and the women at work both in and out of its bounds, but at the moment, much of it still concerns England and is often rooted in a more literary perspective.<sup>16</sup>

In this frame of mind, there is much to be gained from a re-examination of the women of the Parisian book-trade in line with new ways of thinking about labor, marriage, and its intersection both within and without the bounds of domestic space. What this thesis ultimately seeks to understand is the extent of the socio-economic role marriage played in the sixteenth century Parisian print-trade. How might a marriage have influenced a printer's commercial or economic prospects? What might have been the labor expectations for his bride? What kinds of marriages took place in the print-trade? A comparative study of these marriages using statistical analysis will pull out any visible patterns and be able to confirm previously-held ones by scholars, while also contributing to a better understanding of women and their labor in this community.

Renouard's 1898 register of all sixteenth century Parisian printers comes as a remarkable resource for historical investigation.<sup>17</sup> Each entry contains a summary of all known archival information about the printer: period of activity, addresses, profession (printer, printer-bookseller, bookseller, bookbinder, engraver, etc.), frequent collaborators, as well as their wives and children. Though considerable in age, it remains a trusted resource of book historians, particularly its 1965 edition spearheaded by the Archives Nationales. A handful of numbers have

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<sup>16</sup> See for example Cait Coker, "Gendered Spheres: Theorizing Space in the English Printing House" in *The Seventeenth Century* 33, no 3 (May 2018): 323-36; Wendy Wall, *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama* (2002); Valerie Wayne, ed., *Women's Labor and History of the Book in Early Modern England* (2020).

<sup>17</sup> Philippe Renouard et al, *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens : libraires, fondateurs de caractères et correcteurs d'imprimerie : depuis l'introduction de l'imprimerie à Paris (1470) jusqu'à la fin du seizième siècle* (1898: 1965).

already been pulled out from Renouard's register: the number of wives, the number of which are daughters of men in the book-trade, the numbers of women whose husbands' succeed their fathers, the number of wives who succeed their husbands, and the number of widows who remarry into the book-trade.<sup>18</sup> I argue that these numbers need to be pushed much farther: if two-hundred and forty-eight book-trade daughters married within the trade, in what other professions do the rest marry? Of the one-hundred and sixteen widows who succeeded their husbands at the head of the family firm, were they more or less likely to be originally daughters of the book-trade themselves? Ninety-six widows are noted for remarrying into the book-trade, but the percentage given (roughly 12%) is out of all women in the register (eight-hundred and five) rather than widowed women overall (as for right now, unknown). How does our perception of this number change then? How many rose their new husbands to the rank of master of the print-house? These are but some of the questions that remain to be answered.

With the truly incomparable number of Parisian print-trade wives found within it, Renouard's register provides an exceptional opportunity to gain insight into the daughters, wives, and widows of the book-trade. Moreover, with forty years since Postel-Lecocq first presented her findings, it feels necessary and essential to return to this source in light of all the developments in the field. Indeed, since 1988, there has yet to be a statistical study that expands and elaborates on Postel-Lecocq's initial numbers, especially considering not only the excellent work of Parent-Charon, Beech, Broomhall, and Zemon-Davis, but also developments in marriage history as well as the new ways in which modern scholarship engages with questions of gender and labor. Moreover, working with the digital versions of these archival sources enhances their accessibility: information can more easily be cross-referenced and sifted through.

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<sup>18</sup> Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 257-258, 261-262.

This thesis offers a re-organization of the *Répertoire des imprimeurs parisiens*, this time with the wives, daughters, and widows of printers placed firmly at the forefront. As Renouard's meticulous and expansive register is over four hundred pages, for fault of time and ability, it has been necessary for this thesis to refine its focus on the wives, daughters, and widows of printers specifically, setting aside those only listed as booksellers, bookbinders, etc.. The distinction is made on the basis of whether they printed or not, as the term publisher (or, *éditeur*) did not exist in the sixteenth century.<sup>19</sup> Men listed in the register as solely booksellers (meaning they only sold or commissioned books) are thus not included. Some printers did invest in, commission and sell their own books, and are thus subsequently titled as printer-booksellers. Renouard mentions when a man did not print himself or had all the printing done for him, meaning we can reasonably assume the remaining men listed as printers were all either master printers or journeymen, or in any case, that they did not outsource their printing.<sup>20</sup> When inputting data into the record, it has been important to cast as wide of a net as possible, as much of the information available about the wives, daughters, and widows of these men is sparse and varied, even in a source as rich as Renouard's. Thus an admittedly extensive list – with many entries proliferated with 'Unknown' – has been necessary to be able to include as much useful information as possible.<sup>21</sup>

In a first part, I will argue towards integral role marriage played in the 16th century Parisian book-trade, supplemented by a brief summary of the legal, economic, and social context

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<sup>19</sup> Those who we would consider publishers today could have been either booksellers or printer-booksellers. Roméo Arbour, *Les Femmes et les métiers du Livre en France de 1600 à 1650* (1997): 15-16.

<sup>20</sup> See the entries for Jean I Petit, Adrien Turnèbe, and Antoine I Verard. Renouard, *Répertoire*: 340, 416, 424.

<sup>21</sup> To contrast my findings with the CERL Thesaurus: very few of these women have their own entries, and some are mentioned in passing in their husbands' entries if they later published under their own names. For the women where this is not the case, they are simply absent. This was expected: the CERL Thesaurus takes information from imprints and other printed material to build its record, where these women would not be present. By design, these women are outside the bounds of where information is typically collected: part of the goal of this thesis is to go beyond this manner of observing activity to the book-trade. See <https://data.cerl.org/thesaurus/>.

surrounding women's participation: with or without inky fingers, women found themselves at the very heart of the trade as nexuses through which processes central to the book-trade took place. The marriages of both men and women not only influenced their family's financial prosperity, but also facilitated arrangements for future marriages and career trajectories. The book-trade, as was habitually the case for sixteenth century artisan trades, operated primarily within kinship networks: marriage also served as a mode of commercial exchange and transmission within family firms, as well as cementing business relationships between collaborators.

The second chapter will examine the initial findings of my database in order to draw out general, statistical observations on the sixteenth-century print-trade from the marriages taking place within it. Supported by evidence gathered from the register in form of charts and percentages, they will be elaborated on with relevant findings from secondary literature, and set against the development undergone by the book-trade across the sixteenth century. Particular interest is paid whether the replication of the numbers put forward by Beech and Postel-Lecoq is possible.<sup>22</sup> Can the long-held view that printer-widows are more likely to remarry into this community be confirmed? If they do, do they remarry printers specifically rather than booksellers, binders, etc.? With what regularity? A closer analysis of a handful of families and individuals will complement these findings in case studies throughout.

The third chapter will consider importance – or not – of origin. By that is meant the question of the role an individual's family and the professional environment they grew up in played in their professional trajectory, as can be observed in the record. Obtaining a wife with skill, experience, and connections within her husband's profession was of undoubted value for any printer, but some historians have argued the degree to which this is true has been overstated. "Increased

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<sup>22</sup> Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 80.  
Postel-Lecoq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 253-63.

proximity,” argues Broomhall, “did not coincide with increased opportunity to learn.”<sup>23</sup> Do the percentages support this view or not? Do, for example, the daughters born into printing families exhibit greater likelihood of taking over as publisher widows, compared with those who married into the trade? The reason behind the enduring success – or not – of certain widows during their tenure as the heads of their family firms has long been sought after. While wealth, education, and individual exceptionalism have all been pointed as possible answers, no consensus has been made. For second-time brides, did being the daughter of a printer incite a woman into staying within the printing community during subsequent remarriages, or no? Finally, the chapter will take a look at the print-house and the girls and women at work within its walls in closer detail. The activities which would have been accessible to them will be considered, as well as the context in which they performed these tasks. Finally, the juxtaposition of ‘workshop’ and ‘household’ in a print-house will be raised: the physical space of the print-house itself will be examined for a discussion on the boundaries of domesticity and the place of the printer’s wife within it all.

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<sup>23</sup> Postel-Lecocq, “Femmes et presses à Paris”: 257; Zemon Davis, “Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons”: 127. The quotation comes from Broomhall, “Re-Assessing Female Representation”: 56-7.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE WIFE AS AN ACTIVE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTOR

In 1544, the printer Guillaume Dubouis found himself with some family business to organize. His daughter Geneviève had just died, leaving behind a young daughter, Pasquette de Brouilly. The girl's father was still living, but the particularity of the circumstances at hand meant Dubouis found himself involved, as his granddaughter's inheritance included some properties around St-Denis that had once belonged to his own wife. On her death, they had been passed to Geneviève and her sister Nicolle, and now they belonged to Pasquette. Guillaume Dubouis set to arranging things. Women were unable to sign contracts or initiate court proceedings ("ester en justice") without the permission of their fathers or husbands, so Dubouis and Pasquette's father represented their respective daughters at the notary's office.<sup>24</sup> Even if Pasquette had been an adult, she would not have been able to dispose of her property as she wished: sixteenth-century women went from being under the legal tutelage of their fathers to that of their husbands – only as widows would they gain full legal autonomy.<sup>25</sup> Even so, the St-Denis properties remained unequivocally Pasquette's – as they had been her mother's and her grandmother's before that — because the only other circumstance than widowhood in which a woman possessed full legal control over her assets was death. A woman's last will and testament was her own, and barring cases of family pressure, she could dictate whatever she owned to whomever she wished.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre dans le Paris de la Renaissance": 138; Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (1873-1874).

<sup>25</sup> Women only reached full legal capacity at twenty-five on the condition they were married: as Parent-Charon puts it, emancipated from their fathers, they were incapacitated by their husbands ("à la fois émancipée et frappée d'incapacité"). Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own. Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre dans le Paris de la Renaissance": 138.

<sup>26</sup> Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 255.

Pasquette's father and grandfather elected to rent out the properties while they waited for her to be a little older, with a clause in the contract that stipulated the lease could be terminated the day Pasquette would be provided for ("pourvenu") by marriage or religion.<sup>27</sup> In a single line, Pasquette's father and grandfather sketched out the broad strokes of the life a sixteenth-century woman could be expected to lead: she could either enter religious orders or get married. But what the latter could look like could vary vastly depending on wealth and status, even within the artisan trades, and particularly in the book-business.<sup>28</sup>

Printing had first come to the city in the 1470s, but the Parisian book-trade was much older. The presence of the Sorbonne, the city government, and the royal court meant Paris had always had not only a great need for books, illuminators, and scribes, but also that a great many people there were able to provide those services. Women were occasionally found among their numbers: even if their work as scribes or illuminators was, as Susan Broomhall demonstrated, more likely to be occasional and informal; theirs was an established presence at the margins of the trade.<sup>29</sup> That meant that by the time Ulrich Gering, Michel Friburger, and Martin Crantz arrived in Paris from Germany to found what would be the first printing house in France, a tradition of female participation was already in place, even if it was only as complements to their male kinsmen. From the 1470s, the print-trades rapidly expanded. Without a guild to oversee them, only royal edicts could provide regulation, and for the most part did not do so until the 1560s.<sup>30</sup> Before that, "anyone could set up as a master printer in France" – so long as they had the funds.<sup>31</sup> But even without guild laws to curtail who had the right to become a printer, it is important to remember

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<sup>27</sup> Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/29 (1544).

<sup>28</sup> Denis Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)* (1976): 21.

<sup>29</sup> For an overview on the late medieval commercial manuscript production of Paris, see: Susan Broomhall, *Women and the Book Trade in Sixteenth-Century France* (2002): 45-50. For some examples of women in this community across Europe, see: Martha Driver, "Women Printers and the Page, 1477-1541" in *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 73 (1998): 139-40.

<sup>30</sup> Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation": 61; Colin Clair, *A History of European Printing* (1976): 165.

<sup>31</sup> Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation": 61.

printing was a highly skilled trade associated with the intellectual elite: it required literacy, specialized materials and instruments, workers to operate them, and patrons and investors able to take those expenses on.

Indeed, while printing had a reputation for being lucrative – the wealthy, learned printer was certainly a popular fantasy for many young men – the reality could be quite different.<sup>32</sup> Simply put: there were many kinds of printers. Some were able to put out volume after volume filled with beautiful, intricate decorations for a dedicated clientele, curating new never-before published texts just as easily as another firm would have to rely on reprints of familiar editions guaranteed to do well. Others might boast much-sought after contracts to print for the university, city government, or the Church, promising a steady stream of work. The simplest presses could put out pamphlets – fast, inexpensive, with a shorter guarantee of profit and without any of the risky investment that came with extensive volumes that could take months to print and years to sell. Printers varied between high-status and affluent to middling to financially precarious – a couple of printers in Renouard’s register had their possessions seized for non-payments of debts.<sup>33</sup> Marrying a printer did not guarantee a life of prosperity for all the women who married one. Even within the same print-house, the master-printer would be able to offer his bride a very different lifestyle from that of the journeymen-printers who worked under him.

But what may a printer have expected of a prospective bride? The marriages of both men and women not only influenced their family's financial prosperity, but also facilitated arrangements for future marriages and career trajectories within their families. The book-trade, as most other Parisian artisan trades, operated primarily within kinship networks, meaning marriage also

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<sup>32</sup> As it was for Thomas Platter and Marino Sanudo, for example. Rémi Jimenes, *Charlotte Guillard, une femme imprimeur à la Renaissance* (2017): 27.

<sup>33</sup> See Hennequin de Bréda and Nicolas I Chesneau: Renouard, *Répertoire*: 53, 80. See also for Chesneau: Archives Nationales, S 904, f° 222 v° (1586); for Bréda: Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/14 (1529).



served as a mode of commercial exchange, transmission, and collaboration between family firms with women as the nexus through which these socio-economic processes took place.

## I. The Dowry

So who made these high-value matches, and how much were they really worth? Traditional French historiography has long affirmed that parents arranged their children's marriages in the interest of both families, and that this was the case amongst all social classes.<sup>34</sup> However, a 2013 study of marriage contracts in mid-sixteenth century Nîmes challenged this perception when it found that parental authority over spouses was in fact largely tied to the value of the dowry, whether it was made up of money, land, or goods.<sup>35</sup> In the case of meager or nonexistent dowries, young people arranged their marriages themselves.<sup>36</sup>

For some printers' daughters, the size of the dowry could be quite substantial. Possibly the largest dowry in my corpus remains that of Josse Badius' daughter Perette, worth 1000 *livres tournois* (l.t.), with 600 to be paid the day of her wedding, and the rest divided between the bridal trousseau (equivalent to 200 l.t.) and volumes and printed works chosen by the groom (Robert Estienne), to make up the remaining 200 l.t..<sup>37</sup> To understand the astounding size of this dowry, a

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<sup>34</sup> See for example Jacques Dupâquier, *Histoire de la population française*, vol. 2 (1988): 300; Jean Gaudemet, *Le mariage en occident: les mœurs et le droit* (1987): 355.

<sup>35</sup> Allan Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents: Marrying for Love in an Early Modern French Town" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44, n°3 (2013).

<sup>36</sup> Women of the poorest of backgrounds could dowry themselves by saving their wages if they worked as servants, for example, or hope that their employers might contribute, as was sometimes the case. Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents": 726.

<sup>37</sup> *Livre tournois* (l.t.) was the numerical system used to express the values and prices of goods; it was made the official standard monetary unit for accounting in France in 1549, but had been in use since the thirteenth century. The accounting unit was briefly switched to the *écu d'or* in 1577 before the *livre tournois* was brought back in 1602. Dominique Lacoue-Labarthe, "Livre Tournois" in *Encyclopédie Universalis* [online], accessed 24/05/2024, <https://www.universalis.fr/encyclopedie/livre-tournois/>.

Archives Nationales MC/ET/XXXIII/11 (1526): "Josse Bade gives 1000 l. t., namely six hundred in cash, on the day of the wedding, two hundred in volumes of books and printed works of Badius as the aforementioned Estienne elects and chooses at market price, and two hundred in clothing for the bride; receipt of the 1,000 l. t." ("Josse Bade donne 1,000 l. t., savoir six cents en deniers comptants, le jour des épousailles, deux cents 'en volumes de livres, des sortes et impression dud. Badius, telz que led. Estienne voudra eslire et choisir et au pris des marchans', et deux cents en habillements de la mariée ; reçu des 1,000 l. t.").

printing press could be bought for 50 l.t..<sup>38</sup> Such an infusion of funds surely had a substantial effect on the groom's commercial prospects – indeed, seven years after his wedding he paid 361 l.t. in rent, a considerable sum which ensured the lease for him and his descendants for the next 99 years.<sup>39</sup> Most printers' leases in Renouard's register appear to range from 20 l.t. to 40 l.t. on average – a rough estimate as they range widely in terms of property sizes and the length of the leases (multiple years), but they can be taken as an indication of a sum ordinarily payable by many members of the book-trade. Even a sum of 80 l.t. could put a printer “in great pains”, as Pierre Menier complained to his papermaker.<sup>40</sup> Book-trade dowries I have come across in the register more commonly ranged between an overall worth of 50 l.t. and 300 l.t. during the sixteenth century.<sup>41</sup>

The amount of money at play in Perette Bade's dowry almost surely obliged a more restrictive approach to her match to Robert Estienne. But even in cases of exceptional wealth aside, matches where the dowry would not be paid immediately but instead (as was more common) doled out over several months or even years, still made parental authority paramount.<sup>42</sup> For many women entering or from the book-trade, the size of their dowries suggests they navigated the marriage market with more restrictions than their poorer equivalents across the artisanal trades.

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<sup>38</sup> In the absence of an archive number for the 1599 bill of sale, I refer to Pichon and Vicaire, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de Paris* (1895): 186.

<sup>39</sup> Archives Nationales X 1 A 1553, fos 283, 464 v° (1533).

<sup>40</sup> “Le metterait en grande peyne”: Bibliothèque Nationale XVII 108 (21 June 1588).

<sup>41</sup> Some examples: Claude Guillain (m. to a bookseller) with a 300 l.t. dowry: Archives Nationales, ZZ/i 303, f° 414 (1565); Denyse Cavellat (m. to a bookseller) with a dowry consisting of library merchandise valued at 333 and a half *écu d'or*: Archives Nationales, Y 123, f° 333 v° (1581); Marguerite Chocquet (m. to a bookseller) with a dowry of 33 and a third *écu*: Archives Nationales, Y 127, f° 79 (1583); Marguerite Loutrel (m. to a bookseller) 33 and a half *écu d'or* along with furnishings, linens, and clothing for the bride: Archives Nationales, Y 125, f° 520 v° (1584); Jeanne de Varenne (m. to a bookbinder) with 300 *écu d'or*: Archives Nationales, Y 132, f° 351 v° (1591). In comparison, wages for Parisian construction workers in the mid-sixteenth century are estimated at 52 to 65 l.t. annually. See Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 726. His estimates are based on Micheline Baulant's numbers, found in her “Le salaire des ouvriers du bâtiment à Paris, de 1400 à 1726” in *Annales ESC* 26, no. 2 (1971): 467, 470-71.

<sup>42</sup> Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 726.

Moreover, social historian Olwen Hufton attested to considerable dowry inflation in France from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries in the upper classes, a phenomenon which Allan Tulchin later demonstrated held true for urban artisans as well: bride prices soared in comparison to the cost of grain and wages, making it not only more expensive for parents to dower their children, but left young women with increasingly little choice but to depend on their parents.<sup>43</sup> Thus, in addition to large dowries, parental authority over matches in the print-trades – like in all of France – would have actually increased over the course of the sixteenth-century overall.

The generous and detailed dowry of Richarde Nicolas provides another insight into how costly it was for newlyweds to begin their lives and why such expense was warranted, and reiterates why it was in a young person's best interest to wed according to their parents' wishes. The bride's father (a seemingly well-off Parisian master waterman) promised a sum of 50 l.t., numerous pieces of clothing for his daughter, a bed, linens, blankets, curtains, towels, tablecloths, a bench, a table, a chair, trestles, a chest, a dresser, andirons for the fireplace, a rack, and "all other housekeeping items required to furnish a room" ("tous autres menus messages qu'il convient pour amesnager une chambre").<sup>44</sup> Not all young newlyweds could hope to receive such a lavish dowry, but Nicolas' case goes to show the material extent to which young men and women with no or little money of their own were reliant on their parents: for many, it might be the only way to collect the necessary funds to properly begin their adult lives.<sup>45</sup> Thus, even if canon law made the bride and groom's consent the necessary factor in the fulfillment of the marriage contract,

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<sup>43</sup> Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents": 715; Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe, 1500-1800* (1995): 66-68.

<sup>44</sup> Archives Nationales Y 86 - Y 93 fol. 278 n°166 (1537).

<sup>45</sup> The earnings of many young grooms would not have been enough to sustain a household. See James B. Collins, "The Economic Role of Women in Seventeenth-Century France" in *French Historical Studies* 16, no 2 (1989): 469.

without parental approval (and mostly parental funds), a young couple might not have so much as a bed to sleep in.<sup>46</sup>

Postponing a discussion of the fact that many marriages were in fact *remarriages* for later, I draw attention to the high immigration rates in Nîmes attested to by Tulchin – which, as Parent-Charon has demonstrated, were also in place in Paris during this period, wielding a considerable effect the book-trade.<sup>47</sup> Tulchin asserts that these individuals, whether men or women, would be less burdened by the necessity of parental approval (and he proves that the notary often had lax attitudes towards the necessity of parental consent, especially in regard to grooms).<sup>48</sup> But in Paris many provincial immigrants joined uncles, aunts, or siblings already present in the city, and their influence may have manifested as a form of parental authority in its absence. So while parental consent was consequential, it has been interpreted by scholars as more of a “general benediction than a specific legal requirement” – true for both French Protestants and Catholics in this period – and its absence could render the newlyweds more or less destitute, but would not make the union invalid.<sup>49</sup> Legally, it was not strictly necessary until 1556 when the age of majority was raised to twenty-five for women and thirty for men.<sup>50</sup> From then on, children who married without the permission of their parents risked disinheritance. In 1579, the King ordered that a minimum of four witnesses and a proclamation of the bans would

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<sup>46</sup> Such might be the case of another young bride who went to the notary to urge her uncle to send her the furniture he had pledged to her dowry: one can imagine the frugality of their furnishings in the meantime. Archives Nationales MC/ET/XXXIII/188 (1573). Regarding the laws concerning what made the validity of marriages, see Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 721-723.

<sup>47</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle 1535-1560* (1974): 175.

<sup>48</sup> Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 722.

<sup>49</sup> Though Protestants in other parts of Europe may have disagreed. Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 722, 734.

<sup>50</sup> Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 729.

be necessary in addition to parental consent, but to what degree this was enforced appears unclear.<sup>51</sup>

## **II. Marriage in the Book-Trade**

Understanding the economic, social, and especially commercial stakes at hand within the marriages taking place in the sixteenth century Parisian book-trade evidences its importance for printers specifically. Within the trade, marriages provided the chance to obtain rank and specialized printing materials, as well as to gain access to established 'brands', while also solidifying business partnerships and securing legacies for future generations. For printers, familial aspirations and business pragmatism likely converged in these unions – whether it was their own or that of their children's, marriage is deeply involved with economic imperatives of the family firm.

Unlike other artisan guilds in Paris, master-printers were not required to be married: until 1571, ascension to the rank of master was completely unregulated. The only thing stopping anyone from starting up as a printer was having the means to do so: opening his own shop – even for an experienced journeyman – necessitated the procurement of presses and other specialized materials, as well as rooms to put them in. The costliness of such an endeavor – as well as the fear of financial ruin – likely subdued the ambitions of many a journeyman. Marriage, particularly to a wealthy widow or a bride from a book-trade family, thus presented an enticing opportunity for professional advancement. A printer's widow would allow a journeyman to consolidate resources, acquire specialized equipment, further sweetening the deal with the inheritance of a ready, established clientele, thereby mitigating some of the risk in striking out as

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 723, 731. See also: Sarah Hanley, “Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France” in *French Historical Studies* 14, n° 1 (1979): 4-27.

a master-printer for the first time.<sup>52</sup> Even a first-time bride – especially if her family was already in the book-trade – could offer a young printer materials and other invaluable assets such as familial connections via her father (if the young man was not already associated with him, as Robert Estienne was with Josse Bade), even more so if he was not from Paris himself originally. Her dowry could provide property, furnishings, printing merchandise, or even cash, depending on her family's wealth, and in any case, the bride's own expertise, gleaned from familial involvement in the trade or other small-time work, could be a welcome asset. Lest such an impression is given, these features would not have been unique to the book-trade: any profession which needed specialized equipment would see them traded and passed around as part of dowries, inheritances, or marriage gifts.

Beyond material acquisitions, another currency in which print-trade marriages dealt was that of rights to *enseignes*. *Enseignes* were, quite literally, the signs that hung above the shops by which a printer could be identified. They functioned as markers of quality, reliability, and prestige within the industry, as well signaling the location of the print-shop on the street. They were sometimes the same sign as the printer's device found on the imprint of a volume, but not always. In any case, they were clear and recognizable identifiers: we run into several cases of people mimicking other's devices or *enseignes*, usually to the great frustration of the original owners.<sup>53</sup> These rights to *enseignes*, reminiscent of modern-day 'brand', could be and were often transferred or acquired through marriage (though they could also be gifted or purchased), not only bolstering the commercial standing of the printer who accessed them, but also for the printer wishing to ensure the survival of his firm across generations. Some firms — like Germain Barroys' – continued well into the 18th century, a testament to their enduring legacy and the

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<sup>52</sup> Susan Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation": 65.

<sup>53</sup> William Roberts, *Printers' Marks: A Chapter in the History of Typography* (1893): 2.

potential in building a recognizable brand and fostering loyalty – or at least recognition – in their clientele.<sup>54</sup> But even the enduring influence of print-houses such as the Soleil-d’Or, one of the oldest in Paris and famously under the helm of the widow-printer Charlotte Guillard who worked there for almost half a century, underlines the significance of marital alliances for these firms and its role in the creation, safekeeping, and transmission of their commercial reputations.

Additionally, marriages served as conduits to solidify business relationships between collaborators. Out of the 353 women who had at least one marriage to a printer, 90 had surviving evidence of some sort of commercial partnerships between her family and her husband (25.5%), usually in the form of shared editions or succession arrangements, wherein husbands succeeded fathers or previous husbands of their wives, or were themselves succeeded by step-sons or even step-sons-in-law. Securing an heir in this way allowed printers to ensure the continuity of their businesses with greater control, but it also allowed them to safeguard the economic interests of their families even after their deaths by making sure the family firm would continue to benefit his daughter even if she could not inherit the business on her own.

Marriage converged a printer’s economic pragmatism, his social aspirations, and foresight for the provisioning of his family. It could have been an opportunity to secure material or economic resources his financial status might have not permitted him otherwise, either grow his own or access and benefit from other established commercial brands, as well as shape the future of his firm across generations. Moreover, marriage emerges as part of a parental endeavor to shape and assure the future career trajectories of his children, encapsulating the intricate interplay between familial and professional concerns.

Any girl entering the market for a husband would have had certain things to offer: girls like Pasquette de Brouilly could bring property into a marriage, others might bring items like

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<sup>54</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 22.

furniture, bed linens, or even curtains as part of their dowry for the purpose of helping establish or supplementing the marital household as the husband became the 'legal administrator' of his wife's property.<sup>55</sup> He had full authority over their communal property and anything acquired during the marriage, but without his wife's consent, could not dispose of her lineage properties (received from her parents and meant to be passed onto blood relatives); however neither could she without his authorization, as any contract signed by a wife required her husband's consent to be valid.<sup>56</sup> But a woman's economic contribution to her household went beyond what she – or for a first time bride, what her parents – could offer her spouse in her dowry: she herself was an important source of labor, whether inside the home or outside of it. Without diminishing the importance of a traditional trousseau, especially vital to the commencement of newlywed, adult life for a young couple, what brides had to offer — and what grooms certainly expected — went beyond the material possessions promised in their dowries: women came in ready to work.

### III. Bridal Labors

The economic viability of a household could hinge upon the multifaceted roles taken on by the wife as both domestic caretaker and laborer – and in a trade that confounded press and hearth into one print-house, marriage unveils itself as a vital actor in the book-trade.

It goes unsaid that each bride brought their own particular skill-set to their new households, things either taught to them by their parents or in a formal apprenticeship — though the latter

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<sup>55</sup> Such explanation is provided for the generous and detailed marriage contract of Richarde Nicolas, a young printer's wife whose dowry her father hoped would furnish her room with everything necessary to maintain her and her new husband's lives ("tous [...] menus mesnages qu'il convient pour amesnager une chambre"): Archives Nationales Y 86 - Y 93 fol. 278 n°166 (1537). Pastel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 255.

<sup>56</sup> Sometimes conflict arose between husbands and wives – Broomhall cites a case where a Lyon woman denounced the legal actions her husband had taken in her name during the marriage due to his mistreatment of her (Broomhall, *Women and the Book Trade in Sixteenth-Century France*: 60-61; Henri and Julien Baudrier, *Bibliographie Lyonnaise, recherches sur les imprimeurs, libraires, relieurs et fondeur de lettres de Lyon au XVIe siècle* vol. 3 (1895): 77-83). Barbara Diefendorf, "Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris" in *Journal of Family History* 7, n.4 (Winter 1982): 382.



case was rare for girls, and tended to be in the absence of a parent, particularly the mother, to make up for the missing education that would have otherwise been provided by her.<sup>57</sup> Part of this education would include her experience in her father's trade with any small tasks he might have assigned her (in a print-shop she might have hung printed sheets up to dry, colored woodcut images by hand, worked as a corrector if she was literate, etc.), alongside additional skills in sewing, bonnet-making, laundry or anything else which might allow her to take on extra work to supplement her family's income. Even without being included in formal marriage contracts, such skills were considered in the selection of a bride, and an ability to aid her husband could have made her a more attractive choice for other printers.<sup>58</sup>

Any discussion of marriage concerning tradespeople cannot ignore the expectation of economic contribution of the wife as a laborer, either inside or outside her home. Here I do not refer to the physical limits of the house, but rather whether the labor is apart of her ordinary chores, the running of her household, or in immediate service to her husband: she might go to the market and purchase food to feed her husband's journeymen, or go and collect money, services, or products for him as part of her duties. Meanwhile, though she might take on her neighbor's needlework for a small fee and do the work inside her house, it would be outside of the immediate bounds of her domestic responsibilities.

Wifely help was considered — and rewarded — as genuine labor by their husbands: men often thank their wives for all their “good labor” to them over the years in their wills and for that work reserve some money beyond the traditional amount of the inheritance that a wife received (half of the estate went to the widow, with the other half was divided between the surviving children

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<sup>57</sup> Zemon Davis, “Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons”: 170.

<sup>58</sup> Broomhall, “Re-Assessing Female Representation”: 57.

of the deceased).<sup>59</sup> Solely confining a wife's responsibilities to housework and child-rearing, overlooks the undeniable reality of the economic situation of many printers, especially journeymen. A wife could supplement the family income with an independent, professional activity of her own, no matter how small or occasional. Scholars have shown women were engaged in the work available to them as seamstresses, laundresses, market-vendors, bonnet-makers, or other low-paid and often informally taught jobs.<sup>60</sup> Annie Parent-Charon makes the case that it was especially the journeymen printers who could not do without the additional income brought in by their wives, as their salaries were necessarily smaller than that of the master's.<sup>61</sup>

There are too few listed journeymen printers in Renouard's register (45 to the 673 men listed as printers, so 6.7%) for any statistic in their regard to be representative. Additionally, we are alerted to the existence of many individuals in the register only through a single surviving document, sometimes in which they are only witnesses: in those cases, their wives would not have been mentioned even if the men were married; moreover, it is possible the notary referred to their general profession (printing) and withheld their status as journeymen.

Out of the four hundred and forty-six wives, daughters, and widows of printers in the register, only nine are listed with an additional, independent profession, and of those, only four are the wives of journeymen. This should not be taken to indicate that Annie Parent-Charon is wrong however, as the impression given by this number is deceiving. The proportion of the two categories is unequal – as previously mentioned, only 45 printers are named as journeymen, with

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<sup>59</sup> These 'gifts' can also be interpreted as signs of affection, as they were also made to friends, godchildren, etc. who were not immediate descendants (and thus not natural inheritors). See Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents": 713. For the division of the inheritance, see Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 256.

<sup>60</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons"; Broomhall, *Women and the Book Trade in Sixteenth-Century France*: 60; Merry Wiesner Wood. "Paltry Peddlers or Essential Merchants? Women in the Distributive Trades in Early Modern Nuremberg" in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 12, no. 2 (1981): 4, 10, 12.

<sup>61</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 178; Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre dans le Paris de la Renaissance": 141-142.

the 673 others are listed as either printers or some combination of printer-bookseller, printer-typefounder, etc. Taking this into account, 8.9% of journeymen have wives who appear with listed professions (4/45) compared to 0.7% of printer's wives (5/673), which lends credence towards Parent-Charon's view (though, I reiterate, with the numbers from Renouard's register being so few, they should not be taken as evidence on their own).<sup>62</sup>

Additionally, the nature of women's work as periodic and changing to fit the needs of their families over the course of their lives (as argued by Zemon Davis) makes it certain that with the way Renouard's register works (as in, being based in notarial records and title-pages where the wives of the legal parties don't always appear) most cases of women with independent professions would have gone unrecorded, and likely a great many more women took on work outside the home than the register appears to show.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the wife of a master printer does indeed seem to have been less likely to hold an independent profession than that of a journeyman printer. While it is certain that her household would have been more financially prosperous than those of her husband's employees, that does not necessarily mean her or her family were particularly affluent or without the need for additional income themselves. More likely the emerging distinction between the wife of a master-printer and those of her print-house's employees is that the former already possessed a commercial work-place inside her home where her husband could benefit from her free labor, a topic which I will elaborate on later.

While her primary duties revolved around housework and childcare, a woman's role as her husband's helpmeet would extend the domestic sphere into the print-house — which, for the wives of master-printers, was already located inside their homes. A bride already well-versed in

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<sup>62</sup> Nine women in total appear with known professions. For the five who are wives of master printers, see Renouard, *Répertoire*: 24, 56, 287, 392, 418. The remaining four are married to journeymen printers: Renouard, *Répertoire*: 29-30, 37, 94, 234. Additionally, though Renouard does not mention her by name, the only printer's daughter placed in a formal apprenticeship is that of a journeyman's: Renouard, *Répertoire*: 37; Archives Nationales MC/ET/XXXIII/30 (1545).

<sup>63</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 174.

the printing trade held an undeniable appeal for printers: her familiarization with small tasks her father might have trained her in offered her husband an unpaid and ready-made asset to print-house operations. Parent-Charon argues that a woman's professional activity would have been welcome or even essential, especially for the most modest print-houses; Zemon Davis' characterization of "wifely help" as more occasional and molded around the husband's needs than the wife's abilities still reiterates its vitality to the household.<sup>64</sup> Simply put, families of a certain mean could not support a dependent unable to contribute to the family's economic livelihood.<sup>65</sup>

Women went into marriages with the expectation that they would contribute to their household economically, surpassing their designation as vehicles for the transmission of material possessions and funds that made up their dowries. As both formal and informal laborers, either inside or outside the home, women worked in addition to their domestic chores and child-rearing. Balancing the three explains Zemon Davis' assignation of their "weak work identity" with labor that often consisted of mostly low-paid work that was likely done on-and-off in order to fit in with their husband's and family's needs.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, such work would have been integral to their family's economic livelihood, and for many less than affluent households, simply impossible to do without. For many printing firms, the influence of a marriage on the economic viability — and ultimately, the survival — of a business would have been powerful.

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<sup>64</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 172, 174.

<sup>65</sup> Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre dans le Paris de la Renaissance": 141.

<sup>66</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 187.

## CHAPTER TWO: STATISTICS

With such context in mind, let us now turn to the patterns emerging from the reorganization of Renouard's register. Archives have a tendency of resisting categorization. Many circumstances are singular to the individuals who experienced them, and many women are known from only a single line in a notary's record. With scarcely any information about many of their lives, marriages, and children, it is at times tempting to question the usefulness of producing such numbers at all. Ultimately, they are representative only of the historical sources who happened to survive onto the present day, and of the monumental scale of the efforts made by scholars for the past two centuries to collect and organize them – as well as the historian's own luck in (digitally) sifting through the archives. 'Unknown' makes up the largest percentile of most of my statistics, an important fact to consider in order to properly understand what my current results represent. It is likely much more can still be found about these women and their families in the depths of the French archives, either waiting to be digitized or hiding in plain sight under an alternate spelling of a name neither Renouard nor I caught. But even with such caveats, we push on with our work. In order to properly caution the reader, the statistics produced in this thesis are accompanied by limitations and addendums which (though wordy) I defend as necessary to be able to demonstrate to the reader how I have come about these numbers and exactly what they are indicative of.

The information recorded was as followed: name, date of marriages, husbands, professional family origin, whether some professional collaboration between the woman's family and that of her husband could be inferred (succession, shared editions, a transfer of address, etc.), the

address of the printing business in Paris, whether she had been widowed, whether she had children and whether they grew up to be part of the book-trade, whether there was any print output in the period of her widowhood, period of activity, successor, as well all relevant primary and secondary sources where I could find them to confirm Renouard's work (see Figure 1 below).

By cross-referencing with modern secondary literature as well as the digital Archives Nationales and Bibliothèque Nationales databases, I was able to not only track down a parent of many a printer's bride (information which was less relevant to Renouard) but supply extra information (and often, daughters) Renouard did not know the existence of. I also made several corrections – third wives which were in fact daughters-in-law, incoherencies across different entries where the same woman was mentioned, and other mistakes which I will list in the appendix.

Such a reorganization of the original *Répertoire des Imprimeurs Parisiens* provides a new perspective on the Parisian print-trade. Using marriage as a lens through which book-history can be observed, the industry's development across the period unfolds as one of rapid growth and socio-economic and cultural transformation, reflected in the kinds of marriages and remarriages taking place within it. By the end of the tumultuous sixteenth century, the economic, marital, and labor practices of women in the print-trade would find themselves much changed.

**Table 1:** Sample register entries (reformatted for legibility). Pink designates wives, orange daughters, and white for women who were both. A total of 446 women were logged.

	1	2	4	5
<b>Name</b>	Charlotte Guillard	Geneviève Dubouis	Richarde Nicolas	Marie Hopyl
<b>Date Married</b>	1. c. 1507 / 2. 1519-1520	Before 1536	7 April 1537	1. Unknown / 2. before February 1524 3. c. 1538
<b>Husband 1</b>	Berthold Rembolt	Nicolas de Brouilly	Pierre Gaultier	Narcisse Brun
<b>Husband 1 Profession</b>	Printer	Carpenter	Printer	Printer
<b>Parent Profession</b>	Unknown	Printer	Master Waterman	Printer
<b>Parent Information</b>	Jacques Guillard	Guillaume Dubouis	Robert Nicolas (father) Gauthière Bonhourt (mother)	Wolfgang Hopyl
<b>Evidence of Family Collaboration?</b>	Yes	No (but her husband's brother was a bookseller)	No	Yes (husbands succeed her father)
<b>Address of the business in Paris</b>	Rue St-Jacques at the the Soleil-d'Or	N/A	Rue des Augustins at the Autruche (1543), Rue St-Jacques at the sign of the Vigne (from 1547)	Rue St-Jacques at the sign of St-Georges
<b>Widowed?</b>	Yes 2x	No	Yes	Yes 2x
<b>Age when widowed (approximate)</b>	1. 30s / 2. Middle-aged	N/A	Middle-aged or elderly	Unknown
<b>Children</b>	No	Yes (Pasquette de Brouilly, still a minor in 1544)	Unknown	Yes (Hélène Brun, m. bookseller Henri I Paquot; Marie the elder and Marie the younger.)
<b>Children in Booktrade?</b>	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	Yes
<b>Remarried?</b>	Yes 1x	N/A	No	Yes 2x
<b>Remarried to a Printer?</b>	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes 2x
<b>Husband 2</b>	Claude Chevallon	N/A	N/A	Nicolas Prévost / Jean Davyn
<b>Husband 2 Profession</b>	Printer	N/A	N/A	Printer 2x
<b>Print-Shop Output When Widowed</b>	Yes (2 years; 20 years)	N/A	Yes (1 year)	No
<b>Years Active</b>	b. 1480s - d.1557	d. by 1544	m. 1537; until 1562	1520s-1540s
<b>Successor</b>	Nephew-in-law	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Primary Sources</b>	Arch. Nat., J 1027.	Arch. Nat. MC/ET/XXXIII/29 (1544).	Arch. Nat. Y 86 - Y 93 fol. 278 n°166 (7 April 1537); MC/ET/XXXIII/21 (1545).	Arch. Nat., S 30865 (1532).
<b>Secondary Sources</b>	Renouard 1898 (1964), p.82, 189-190; <i>Documents</i> ; Remi Jimenes, <i>Charlotte Guillard femme imprimeur à la Renaissance</i> (2017).	Renouard 1898 (1964), p. 58, 122; Coyecque t. I and II.	Renouard 1898 (1964), p.165; <i>Documents</i> ; Coyecque t. II.	Renouard 1898 (1964), p.59, 108, 207, 354; <i>Documents</i> ; Coyecque, t. I; Claudin, <i>Hist. de l'Impr.</i> II p.365.

## I. Wives

In her seminal 1988 study, Postel-Leclerc had affirmed that roughly 30% of the wives of booksellers, printers, bookbinders, engravers, etc. originated from the booktrade themselves.<sup>67</sup> That number can be confirmed for printers: 27% of printer's wives were daughters of men working in the booktrade (83/308 women). It is important to remember, however, that the vast majority of the professional origin of the families most women came from is unknown (59.4%). But if a bride was from the book-trade, she does appear more likely to marry (and remarry) into the same profession as that of her father rather than any other closely-allied trade: of the five women who had three marriages, three married printers three times, and were themselves printer's daughters (Marie Hopyl, Anne Gromors, and Jeanne Bridier).<sup>68</sup> Another woman who married three printers successively was the sister of a bookseller (Guyonne Viart).<sup>69</sup> The last woman with three marriages, Anne Cremyllier, was of a particular set of circumstances: she first married a draper, then a printer, but when he died a few months after their wedding, she remarried his cousin, also a printer. Her father's profession is unknown.<sup>70</sup>

Forty-five wives are daughters of printers, and including stepdaughters and wards of printers (5 additional women) raises this number to 60%. Several women had no known parentage, but their brother or only known kinsmen on the contracts where they figure are named as printers (four and five women respectively): of the number of printer's wives originally from the book-trade those with close familial ties to printers (rather than booksellers, typefounders, etc.) is at 71%. These men were possibly standing in as legal guardians in the absence or death of the parents; in any case, these numbers demonstrate the huge importance of family connections in the

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<sup>67</sup> Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris": 257.

<sup>68</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 59, 108, 207, 354; 26, 185, 188, 199-200; 56.

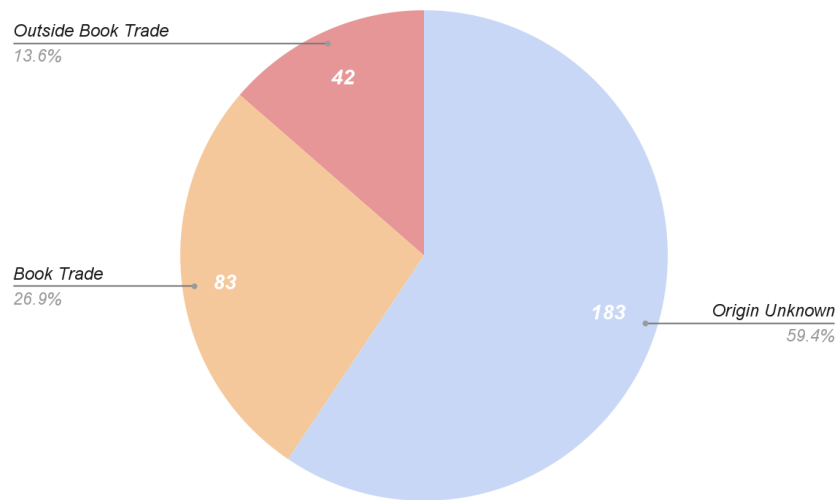
<sup>69</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 88-89, 140-1, 204, 428.

<sup>70</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 78, 205.



match-making processes of both printers and the women who married them. This can likely be attributed to the opportunity of transmission for material, equipment, and knowledge specific to the trade.<sup>71</sup>

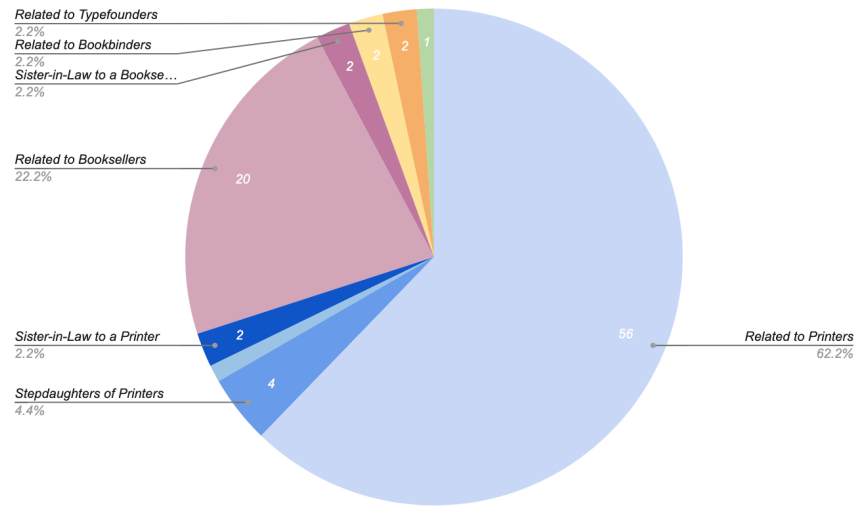
Only 16 women are daughters of booksellers: they make up 19.27% of all printer's wives from the book-trade. Adding the four girls whose parentage is unknown but whose brothers are booksellers raises this to almost a quarter. Two women are daughters of typefounders (2.4%). The last two women are daughters of bookbinders (2.4%), but because many bookbinders in Renouard's register are also listed as booksellers, the true number may in fact be a bit higher.



**Figure 1:** Origin of Printer's Wives (308 women).

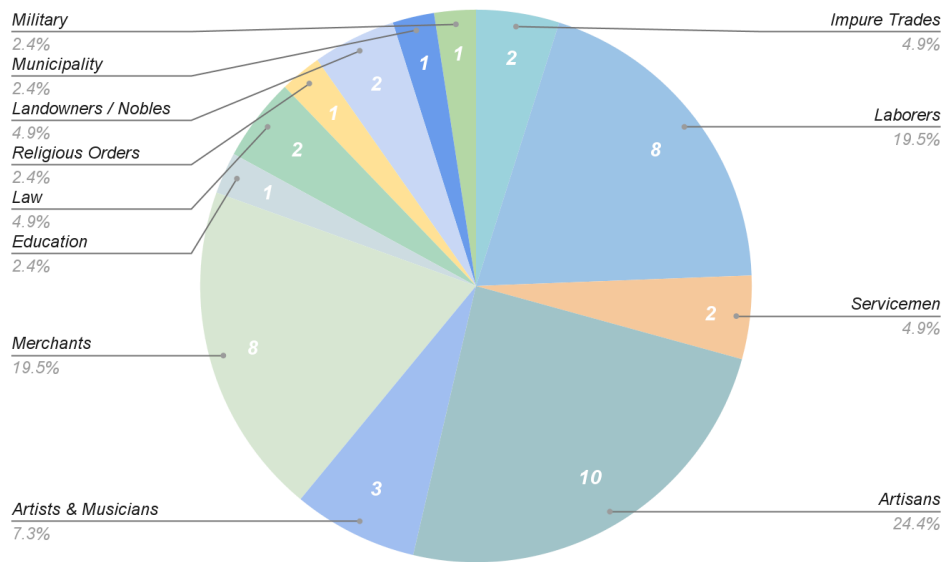
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<sup>71</sup> This number does not include the many nieces of printers, or women whose siblings had already married a printer or bookseller, if it did, the number of women with such connections would make up 29% percent of all printer's wives (90/308).



**Figure 2:** Wives With Book-Trade Ties (90 women).

Now what of printer's wives from outside the book-trade? Their origins lie in a myriad of different professions: merchant (5), stonecutter (3), apothecary (2), baker (2), embroiderer (2), laborer (2), lawyer (2), mason (2), sculptor (2), barber-surgeon (1), butcher (1), cobbler (1), draper (1), goldsmith (1), hosiery-maker (1), King's sergent on horseback (1), King's organist (1), landowner (1), leather-dyer (1), lord (1), 'marchand étuvier' (1), master waterman (1), messenger (1), metalworker for copper and bronze (1), painter (1), priest (1), professor at the Collège Royal (1), roof-tile layer (1), and valet (1). For the most part, these women were from families of similar status: other artisan trades, or from merchant or laboring families, depending on the affluence of the printer they married. These marriages concern roughly half of all printer's wives from outside the book-trade. The remainder come from many different professions, but notably, a majority can be linked back to the print-trades: arts, education, law, but also lesser status trades such as leather-dyers, who could supply bookbinders with the material with which to cover books.



**Figure 3:** Printer's wives from outside professions (42 women).

Both domestic and international immigration played a large part in explaining these numbers. Parent-Charon's study of four hundred apprenticeship contracts for the 1535-1560 period shows an overwhelming number of apprentices not from Paris.<sup>72</sup> While the study did not differentiate printers from booksellers, typefounders, etc., it demonstrates that nearly 60% of apprentices in that period came from outside the city, nearly all from the northern regions of France. This phenomenon would have clearly affected the book-trade marriage scene in sixteenth-century Paris. Even with many boys (roughly a quarter) being sons of printers or booksellers themselves and thus more likely to return to their hometown once they had completed their training – as did one Rouenese printer who attested to having been an apprentice in Paris as a young man – it would have still meant an impressive influx of teenagers and young adults into the city.<sup>73</sup> The twenty-five-year period studied by Parent-Charon showed four hundred apprenticeships initiated,

<sup>72</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle: 175-179*.

<sup>73</sup> Édouard Gosselin, *Glanes historiques normandes à travers les XV<sup>e</sup>, XVI<sup>e</sup>, XVII<sup>e</sup>, et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (1869): 118; Renouard, *Répertoire*: 359 (Théodore Reinsart).

with the vast majority (336) concerning boys aged between twelve and nineteen years old, meaning they would have been at or close to marriageable age upon its completion.<sup>74</sup> As we have seen, a bride from the book-trade would have been a welcome asset to their professional ambitions, but with such numbers, it would have been impossible for all of these young men to be able to marry into the desired *milieu*. In any case, many families of such brides probably hoped for a more advantageous marriage for their daughters than one to a young journeyman of modest salary and origin.<sup>75</sup>

Many young printers foreign to France also came to establish themselves in the city: the industry there had after all begun with the arrival of three German printers, they were far from the last to make their way to Paris, and Parisian women certainly had no qualms about marrying them.<sup>76</sup> Several notable Parisian printers had originally come from abroad and settled down with local women who did not systematically belong to the book-trade: Thielman Kerver of Koblenz married Yolande Bonhomme, grand-daughter of Pasquier Bonhomme, one of the city's most prominent booksellers, and became hugely successful himself.<sup>77</sup> He must have come neither inexperienced in the trade nor been of small means in order to secure such a match, though he had spent around a decade establishing himself in Paris as a printer before they were married, greatly benefiting from the network of German printers already present in the city (especially Georges Wolf).<sup>78</sup> Another immigrant, Wolfgang Hopyl, of Dutch origin, married Jeanne Lasne

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<sup>74</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle*: 177.

<sup>75</sup> The professional origins of most book-trade apprentices, though varied, remained modest, and their journeymen's salary hardly allowed them to support their families. Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle*: 177, 179, 182.

<sup>76</sup> Ulrich Gering, Michael Friburger, and Martin Crantz.

<sup>77</sup> His integration of the Parisian book trade is the subject of an excellent library conservator's thesis which corrects several mistakes about the Kerver-Bonhomme genealogy, notably that Yolande was not the daughter of Pasquier but the daughter of his son Jean: Thierry Claerr, "Imprimerie et réussite sociale à Paris à la fin du Moyen Âge: Thielman Kerver, imprimeur-libraire de 1497 à 1522", mémoire d'étude de l'École Nationale Supérieure des Sciences de l'Information et des Bibliothèques, Lyon (2000).

<sup>78</sup> Kerver arrived in Paris in the 1490s and his marriage to Bonhomme is thought to have taken place between 1508 and 1510. Claerr, "Imprimerie et réussite sociale à Paris à la fin du Moyen Âge": 2-3, 13.

(her parentage is unknown) in around 1490 and began a dynasty of printers and booksellers in Paris which would continue all the way into the eighteenth century.<sup>79</sup> Such examples lend support for applying Tulchin's findings for marriages in the city of Nîmes to Paris: there was no particular tendency for immigrants to marry other immigrants.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, for a young printer looking to set himself up somewhere, it would have certainly been – if not somewhat contrary to his commercial interests – a missed opportunity to better cement his establishment in the city.

A last point of consideration in the matter of immigration is the case of printer's daughters. As a reminder, 27% of printer's wives were originally from the book-trade (83/308 women). But from the total number of printer's daughters, nearly half were found to have married within the book-trade: 99/219, so 45.20%. This can only be explained if the numbers of men in the industry outnumbered that of the girls born into it. Not only does this evidence show how swiftly the print-trade grew in size during this period, but it also affirms the clear impact immigration had on the social community of this profession, with marriages within the trade a clear reflection of the industry's development.

## II. Daughters

Let us now examine the marriages of printers' daughters in closer detail. I recorded 190 daughters in Renouard's register. There are certainly many more, but their names (and thus, our

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<sup>79</sup> In a missal printed for the diocese of Utrecht in 1497, Wolfgang Hopyl declared his affection for his native region: the Hague, whose coat of arms feature in his printer's marks, was until 1589 in the diocese of Utrecht. Marieke van Delft has otherwise theorized that Hopyl was a misspelling of the original Hodenpijl, and that Hopyl was from the village of the same name, but this cannot be confirmed. See Anatole Claudin, *Histoire de l'imprimerie en France au XV et XVIe siècle* vol. 2 (1901): 73-74; Marieke van Delft, *Van wiegendruk tot world wide web* (2015): 39. For the Hopyl genealogy, see: Philippe Renouard, *Documents sur les imprimeurs, libraires, cartiers, graveurs, fondeurs de lettres, relieurs, doreurs de livres, faiseurs de fermoirs, enlumineurs, parcheminiers et papetiers ayant exercé à Paris de 1450 à 1600: Recueillis aux Archives nationales et au Département des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale* (1901): 134-135.

<sup>80</sup> Tulchin, "Low Dowries, Absent Parents: Marrying for Love in an Early Modern French Town" (2013): 717.

ability to trace them) are not always included in the notary documents in which they feature. For example:

Declaration by which Jean de la Roche, printer of books, in the suburb of Saint-Marcel, rue de Copeaux, and his wife, Gillette Pyet, widowed in her first marriage to Christophe Anguelart, printer of books, at the said place, release Marin Ducliesne, printer, rue Sainte-Geneviève, appointed surrogate guardian of the Anguelart minors, acknowledge that they hold the minors' property and undertake to render the minors an account of their guardianship.<sup>81</sup>

This 1543 document is the only one which mentions the Anguelart children. Afterward, they vanish from the record, and without names or ages, any daughters among them go unrecorded. For 31 girls, we know of their existence but have no information on any marriage; this accounts for 16.31% of cases. It is possible some of these girls did not survive into adulthood, or perhaps, like one of the daughters of the aforementioned Yolande Bonhomme and Thielman Kerver, they entered a religious order.<sup>82</sup> For an additional eleven girls, a marriage is known to have taken place, but the groom's profession is unknown (5.78%).

Of the 190 daughters, 48 married printers (25.26%), and if we include the six girls who married journeymen printers the number rises to 54 (28.42%), nearly identical to the rate found by Parent-Charon in her study of marriage contracts in the 1535-1560 period.<sup>83</sup> In my register, I also found that a high number of printer's daughters married booksellers: 41, so 21.57%. Once more, other professions of the book-trade are found in much smaller numbers: two printer's daughters married bookbinders (1.05%), and in a singular case a printer's daughter married an illuminator/engraver (0.52%). Similarly, there is one case of a girl marrying a papermaker.

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<sup>81</sup> "Déclaration par laquelle Jean de la Roche, imprimeur de livres, aux faubourgs Saint-Marcel, rue de Copeaux, et sa femme, Gillette Pyet, veuve en 'premières noces de Christophe Anguelart, imprimeur de livres, audit lieu, dégageant de toute responsabilité Marin Ducliesne, imprimeur, rue Sainte-Geneviève, nommé subrogé tuteur des mineurs Anguelart, reconnaissent détenir les biens des mineurs et s'engagent à rendre à ceux-ci un compte de leur tutelle." Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/28 (1543).

<sup>82</sup> Yet Marguerite Kerver seems to be the only case of this happening. A sister at the Filles-Dieu convent, she received a donation from her mother in 1545. Archives Nationales, Y 90 f° 255 v° (19th of February 1545).

<sup>83</sup> Parent-Charon had found that 27.61% of brides married into the same profession as their fathers. Parent-Charon, "Les Métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle": 257. In Lyon, Zemon Davis found a third of marriages in the 1553-1560 period between people of allied trades. Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts": 176.

Overall, as stated, 99 girls married within the book-trade (52.10%).<sup>84</sup> Zemon-Davis' findings that daughters of artisans did not generally marry with men in the same professions as their fathers seemingly does not apply to printers.<sup>85</sup>

Only a quarter married outside the trade: 46 girls, or 24.21%. In more than one instance they married merchants (4), grocers (3), drapers (3), hosiery-makers (3), apothecaries (2), clerks (2), regents at the Sorbonne (2), tailors (2), lawyers (2), butchers (2), bakers (2), and metalworkers specialized in copper and bronze (2). Like the professions seen in the origins of printer's wives, printer's daughters marry into professions of similar status: high numbers of artisans and merchants, though they appear to marry fewer laborers. Several professions re-appear: hosiery-markers, drapers, apothecaries, specialized metal-workers, etc.

Table 2: Professions printer's daughters married into.

Printers	56	Clerks	2	Examining Commissioner	1
Booksellers	41	Tailors	2	'Compagnon d'Estrille'	1
Bookbinders	2	Butchers	2	Wool dyers	1
Papermakers	1	Bakers	2	Grinders	1
Illuminators / Engravers	1	Specialized metal-workers	2	Writers	1
Merchants	4	Poets	1	Woodworkers	1
Hoisery-makers	3	Candlemakers	1	Chancellerie Wax-Heater	1
Drapers	3	Carpenters	1	Silk-merchant	1
Grocers	3	Surgeons	1	'Monoyer de la monnaie'	1
Apothecaries	2	Tapestry-makers	1	N/A (Nun)	1
University Regents	2	Magistrates	1	Professions Unknown	11
Lawyers	2	Bailiff Clerks	1	No Marriage Known	31

<sup>84</sup> However, two additional girls complicate our numbers: one married a wine-merchant turned printer, and the other a musician who briefly printed alongside her father. Including these brings the number of girls marrying printers to 56 (29.47%) and the overall total of girls remarrying within the book trades to 101 (53.15%).

<sup>85</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts": 176.

Professions related to the law are found in greater numbers: a magistrate, clerks of various kinds, an examining commissioner, the official wax-heater of the court – their fathers might have printed for the justice courts at the nearby Châtelet or in the Chancellerie Royale, an example of how printing families may have used their professional connections to secure matches outside the trade. Indeed, though technically ‘outside’ the trade some matches had everything to do with the printing house: Pierre Attaignant’s daughter married a musician who was the longtime collaborator of her father (the King’s printer for music), and even printed himself for a six-year period.<sup>86</sup> Some decades later, Lucrece Dugue, the daughter of the King’s Organist, would marry the King’s printer of music, Robert Ballard.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, not all printers would have sought to establish stronger links within the trade: it might have been in their best interest – in the print-house’s best interest – to cultivate stronger relationships elsewhere. Nor should we operate under the assumption that all families *wanted* to continue as printers. The marriages of the Bonhommes-Kerver children and grandchildren (a majority of which not included in my register due to their transition into booksellers) illustrate a genuine desire to “renounce merchanthood” and integrate the aristocracy.<sup>88</sup>

Though such an ambition would have been reserved for the wealthy, family strategies in marriages overall were not. For both men and women, siblings are shown to be an instrumental part of finding their match. This is not just a print-trade phenomenon, but it is a huge part of understanding the social environments printers traversed through. A marriage, both in or out of the book-trade, would influence the prospects of an individual’s whole family, and that of the printing firm’s as well. Take the Noyau-Lesmère family, for example: Perette Lesmère, a

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<sup>86</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 8, 222.

<sup>87</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 17.

<sup>88</sup> The children “renoncent [...] à la condition marchande” and “pren[nent] rang parmi la noblesse de robe”: François Marin, “Jacques Kerver: Libraire Parisien Du XVIe Siècle 1535-1585”, Thesis of the Ecole Nationale des Chartes (1980): 8.



carpenter's daughter married Julien Noyau, a printer with whom she had no children; her brother, Pierre Lesmère, a stonecutter, married Noyau's sister Marie, and all their daughters married printers.<sup>89</sup> The three brothers-in-law – Nicolas Fossé, Pierre II Chevalier, and Rolin Thierry – became partners with the motto “how good and delightful it is for brothers to be united”.<sup>90</sup> Thierry and his wife would later inherit Noyau's shop.<sup>91</sup> It isn't uncommon to find people who marry into a sibling's family-in-law or into their extended social circle in such a way. Marriage integrates a bride or groom into a new social group, opening a new route of access for the rest of the family (and the print-house) too.

In his in-depth study on the life and work of Charlotte Guillard, Remi Jimenes theorized she was likely from a family of small officers of justice or among corresponding administrative professions.<sup>92</sup> Seemingly the first to access the printing world (how is unknown), Charlotte Guillard helped almost all of her siblings' children and grandchildren integrate the book-trade: half her sixteen nephews became booksellers, and five of her nieces married printers or booksellers, one of whom – in the absence of any children of Guillard's own – would succeed her at the illustrious Soleil-d'Or.<sup>93</sup> Oppositely, the Chaudières, a family already well-established in the book-trade, did something similar but with butchers: once one sister married a butcher, another sister did the same, and their brother's son was later apprenticed to a butcher.<sup>94</sup> A glance at the notice of death of one of the sisters shows the extent of her family's social integration with

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<sup>89</sup> Curiously, while Julien Noyau's father had been a printer, his grandfather was a carpenter. Archives Nationales, MC/ET/LXXIII/17 (1551); Y 124 - Y 127 fol. 207 v°, n° 5966 (1585); Renouard, *Répertoire*: 127, 327, 409.

<sup>90</sup> “Quam bonum et quam jucundum sperare fratres in unum.” See *Thresors de la Renaissance*: “1608 - Trésor politique - Thierry Rolin”, Anne Réach-Ngô (UHA, IUF) ; EMAN (Thalim, CNRS-ENS-Sorbonne nouvelle), accessed 08/07/2024 on the EMAN website: <https://eman-archives.org/ThresorsRenaissance/collections/show/525>

<sup>91</sup> Renouard, *Répertoire*: 409.

<sup>92</sup> Jimenes, *Charlotte Guillard, une femme imprimeur à la Renaissance*: 24, 25.

<sup>93</sup> See the genealogy: Jimenes, *Charlotte Guillard, une femme imprimeur à la Renaissance*: 24.

<sup>94</sup> Marguerite and Denyse Chaudière both married butchers (Denys Pisson and Jacques de la Place). But Renouard is mistaken when he assigns “N. du Pressouer” as Marguerite's second husband and Miles Lombard as the husband of her niece (also named Marguerite). A 1605 inventory made after Marguerite I Chaudière's death done by Lombard (her widower) clearly states her first husband was “Denys Pinson” (Denys Pisson). See Archives Nationales MC/ET/XXXIII/42 (1557); MC/ET/XVIII/212 (10th of January 1605); Renouard, *Répertoire*: 77-78.

butchers, interspersed between scores of printers and booksellers.<sup>95</sup> Family ties to professions could thus be maintained over generations, especially through the maternal line. The previously mentioned Hopyl family is an enlightening example of female transmission of a craft in such a manner.<sup>96</sup> The family tree starts with Wolfgang Hopyl and Jeanne Lasne and among their children (the second generation) is their son Georges Hopyl, printer; one of their four daughters, Marie Hopyl, marries three printers successively. In the third generation, one of Georges' sons is a printer, and his daughter marries a printer, while two of Marie's sons are printers, and one of her daughters weds a bookseller. By the fourth generation, only Marie Hopyl's daughter H  l  ne Brun has a printer for a son, and another of her daughters marries a printer whose own child marries a bookseller (fifth generation), a situation repeated for the sixth generation. Of that daughter of the sixth generation are born two boys who grow up to be booksellers (generation seven). They have children of their own: a bookseller, and a daughter married to a bookseller (generation eight). In 1701, the son of the eighth-generation bookseller is made a bookseller himself, with a family line of booksellers and printers capable of being traced back 221 years to the fifteenth century, in the earliest days of the Parisian printing industry.<sup>97</sup>

The Hopyls are somewhat exceptional in terms of their well-preserved genealogy, as most transmissions of professions, especially through the maternal line or if they skipped a generation, is in most cases rarely traced. In my reorganization of Renouard's register, I found that 25.7% of printers' daughters had children of their own in the book-trades, a number which comes seemingly at odds with the fact that over half of all printers' daughters married into the trades. But it must be kept in mind that for the vast majority of the girls (61.57%), the professions of their children are simply unknown – only 4.2% of printer's daughters had no children in the

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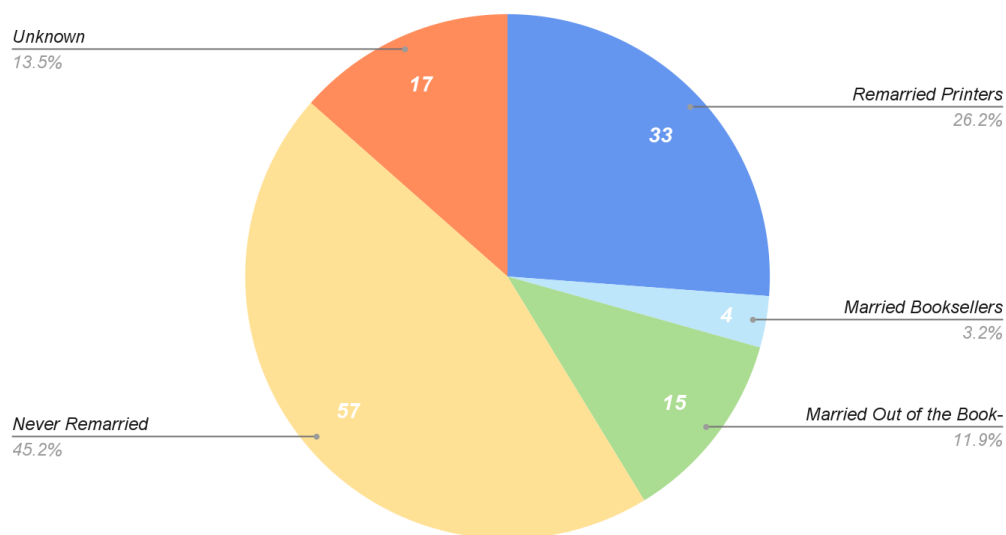
<sup>95</sup> Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XVIII/212 (10th of January 1605).

<sup>96</sup> Renouard, *Documents sur les imprimeurs*: 134-135.

<sup>97</sup> I have rendered a visualization of the genealogy for clarity. See Appendix A.

book-trade. This is largely due to insufficient data and the fact that such an investigation is ill-suited to a base of information provided chiefly by Renouard. But even in such circumstances, the role played by women and marriage in the transmission of knowledge can clearly be inferred.

### III. Widows



**Figure 4:** Printers' wives after widowhood (126 women).

Out of over 300 printers' wives, 126 were widowed at least once in their lifetimes (40.9%). Of that number, 41.26% were remarried (52/126). Among the widows who remarried, 27 remarried printers, and adding the six women who printed independently for a time before remarrying a printer brings this number up to 33 (26.2%). Four printers' widows were remarried to booksellers, while another 15 married out of the book-trades. Thus, in total 52 widows were remarried (41.26%).

There were 60 cases of widows who chose not to remarry or who died before they could do so; taking out the 3 women who had previously remarried printers (as they had 2 or more

widowhoods), this number comes down to 57 widows (45.23%). For the remaining 17 widows (13.49%), there is insufficient data. Thus we can quite confidently affirm the following: first, that printers' widows remarried or stayed single in more or less equal numbers, with only a 4% difference in favor of the latter. Second, that the widely-cited number which first appeared in Postel-Lecocq's 1988 paper claiming that only 12% of women remarry into the book-trade is misleading.<sup>98</sup> While the difference between the two corpus sizes is considerable, the real difference to explain the discrepancy between the numbers is that Postel-Lecocq's 12% (96 women) comes out of the total number of women in Renouard's register (805), which includes women who were never widowed at all.<sup>99</sup> As Postel-Lecocq unfortunately never provides the known number of widows across all the print-trades (rather than just for printers, as I have done here), I would contend that the impression given by her percentage is unreasonable, and misleading. The fact that the number in my findings more than doubles her initial result underlines how starkly so. Thus, 12% of all women in Renouard's register remarried within the same profession, but 29.36% of printers' widows remarried into the book-trades.

Let us examine those numbers a little further. Widowhood gifted women with full legal control over their assets for the first time: likely they were reluctant to give it up again so soon. Indeed, Barbara Diefendorf found that wherever possible, Parisian widows across all social groups preferred to keep an independent household: in the university neighborhood where printers resided, 9% of households were headed by women, and their households contributed 15% of the neighborhood's taxes (a startlingly high percentage in comparison to other European cities at the time) as women of a more precarious economic condition were "more often forced to take up

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<sup>98</sup> See Note 29 in Parent-Charon, "A propos des femmes et des métiers du livre"; Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, quelques exemples": 262.

<sup>99</sup> Postel-Lecocq, "Femmes et presses à Paris au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, quelques exemples": 262.

residence with other members of their families”.<sup>100</sup> Proportionally, there were more “female-headed households at the top than at the bottom of the economic scale”.<sup>101</sup> This preference comes into play with other reasons why widows might not have chosen to remarry: their advanced age (several women were likely elderly and died shortly after their husbands), a dowry large enough to comfortably enjoy retirement, or the ownership of enough properties to be able to live off their rent.<sup>102</sup>

Thus the reasons for having a remarriage in the first place appear primarily economic: younger widows often had small children to support, with sons that would soon need apprenticeships and daughters who would require dowries. A dead husband’s unpaid debts would have also been the source of many a widow’s anxiety – selling the printing equipment might not have been enough to appease debtors.<sup>103</sup>

Without sufficient funds, a widow alone would struggle to support herself and her children: printing was, to put it lightly, not the most reliable or financially risk-averse of professions, and she might have been uncertain of her abilities to helm the printing-house herself (though an examination of the women who did do so will follow). In any case, it therefore is relevant to consider that of the 52 widows who *chose* to remarry, a little over half remarried printers: 27 women, or 51.9%. Including the 4 women who married booksellers, we find that of all the widows who elected to remarry, 59.61% remarried into the book-trade (31 women). We have already seen how marrying a widow might benefit a journeyman or a young master, but what this

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<sup>100</sup> The opposite was found for Florence, for example. David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “Les Toscans et leurs familles: une étude du catasto florentin de 1427” in the *Annales de Démographie Historique* (1978): 489; Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 382.

<sup>101</sup> Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 381.

<sup>102</sup> Antoinette Le Noir and Catherine Ruelle both died a few months after their husbands, see Renouard, *Répertoire*: 66; Pichon and Vicaire, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire des libraires de Paris 1486-1600*: 91-92.

As a widow, Jeanne Lasne was in the possession of many properties: Renouard, *Répertoire*: 412.

See the description of Blanche Marentin’s impressive wealth in Marin, “Jacques Kerver Libraire Parisien du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle 1535-1585”: 29.

<sup>103</sup> As it was for Jeanne Poullas. Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/8 (21st of August 1523).

last number indicates is how a remarriage to a printer or bookseller could stand to benefit the widow herself. Just like a bride, the groom could bring funds, materials, and expertise of his own into a marriage, providing a welcome boost to the family's commercial prospects. Moreover, any unfinished editions, contracts, or commissions in the print-house which had been ongoing at the time of her first husband's death could be finished, sold, and profited from without too much delay. Her children could continue to learn their father's trade and upkeep their social ties within the same professional community.

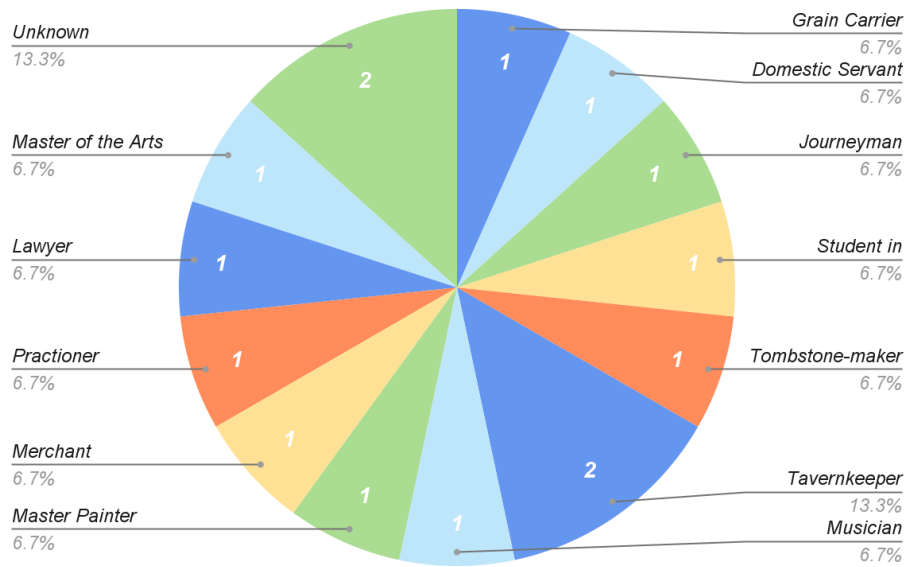
Out of the women who chose to remarry, 28.84% did so outside the booktrade in a variety of professions. The widows of journeymen printers remarried a student in medicine, a tavernkeeper, and a journeyman furrier, respectively. It is important to separate them, as they would not have had a press in their homes to benefit from by either sale or use, nor any privileges inherited from their husbands to allow them to print.<sup>104</sup> The widows of printers were generally more likely to marry up or equal to their station, but in any case, after 1579, they were obliged to, explicitly forbidden from "madly marrying people unworthy of their status".<sup>105</sup> Indeed, printer's widows married above or equal to their station in 7 instances: a tavernkeeper, a musician, a master painter, a merchant, a practitioner, a lawyer, and a Master of the Arts at the Sorbonne. The three instances where, based on the groom's profession, they might have married below their station (to a tombstone maker, a grain carrier, and a domestic servant), all took place before 1579.<sup>106</sup> The professions of the two remaining grooms were unknown.

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<sup>104</sup> Denis Pallier, "Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)": 33.

<sup>105</sup> Article 182 of the *Ordonnance de Blois* (1579) sought to ban "femmes veuves qui se marient follement à des personnes indignes de leur qualité". See the analysis done by Joël Moyaux, "Des lois civiles et ordonnances ecclésiastiques aux actes d'état civil de Valenciennes depuis les premiers actes jusqu'à ceux de l'an XI" in the *Association généalogique et historique Flandre-Hainault* n°125 (undated): 19.

<sup>106</sup> Jaquette Pire remarried a tombstone maker in 1529; Gillette Barrault a grain carrier in 1578; Nicole Prune a domestic servant in 1578. Renouard, *Répertoire*: 5, 47, 335.



**Figure 5:** Remarrying out of the print-trades (15 women).

A tension had always existed between the need of the widow to provide for herself and the property rights of the heirs: the first time customary laws in Paris were officially codified (1510), it was ruled a widow could enjoy the use of her children’s property (to make up for the cost of their upkeep) so long as she did not remarry.<sup>107</sup> In the event of a remarriage, the rights of children of the *premier lit* superseded that of a second husband, with widows barred from donating all of their assets to the latter. From 1560 (the year of Charles IX’s ascension), a flurry of royal edicts and ordinances sought to further reform marriage and inheritance laws: the *Edit des deuxièmes nocés* made a widow unable to give her second husbands any assets worth more than the smallest portion her children or grandchildren received.<sup>108</sup> The *Edit des mères* followed in 1567 to ensure that any lineage properties of a deceased child did not go to their widowed mother.<sup>109</sup> Reforms such as the article 182 of the 1579 *Ordonnance de Blois* were thus among decades of efforts to

<sup>107</sup> Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 389.

<sup>108</sup> Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 390.

<sup>109</sup> Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 390.

limit the freedom widows had over the authority of their estates.<sup>110</sup> They coincide with the end of what Beech named the “golden age for widow printers” (1540-1570) whereon the number of widow-printers declined “both in terms of annual production and in number of years of activity”. Rather than being their result, they appear borne out of the same causes that had brought about such incentive for reform in the first place.<sup>111</sup>

Years of economic strife and civil war compounded the bad harvests of the 1570s and the epidemics of dysentery and plague since 1578.<sup>112</sup> We are reminded, additionally, of the issue of dowry inflation, a symptom of a wider ongoing economic crisis.<sup>113</sup> Within the book-trade, a thrice-iterated ban on the practice of printing abroad for cheaper (often, Flanders, Geneva, or the Plantin presses in Antwerp) and placing a Parisian address on the imprint in 1572, 1577, and 1579 demonstrate the level of competition raised by other major European centers of printing.<sup>114</sup> The same declaration by Charles IX fixed salaries at a certain rate and set a maximum number of apprentices in a print-shop to attempt to ease the high tensions between journeymen and masters.<sup>115</sup>

As a reminder, to the exception of most of Europe (and amongst other professions in the city itself), Paris had no printer’s guild. The book-trade instead fell under the authority of the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne. Though officially the King was the only dispenser of printing authorizations, including all privileges, a gradual formalization of many long-standing practices

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<sup>110</sup> Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 394.

<sup>111</sup> After 1570, “the number of women publishers declined steadily both in terms of annual production and in number of years of activity”. Beech, “Women printers in Paris in the sixteenth century”: 88.

<sup>112</sup> Pallier, “Recherches sur l’imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)”: 3.

<sup>113</sup> Beech, “Women printers in Paris in the sixteenth century”: 89; Tulchin, “Low Dowries, Absent Parents”: 715; Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe*: 66-68.

<sup>114</sup> Pallier, “Recherches sur l’imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)”: 6.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*; *Edict du Roy sur la réformation de l'imprimerie* (1571). See also: Paul Chauvet, *Les ouvriers du livre en France* (1959): 51-58, Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIIe siècle*: 50-52.



increasingly congregated authority around the university.<sup>116</sup> Those publicly sworn to the university (called *libraries jurés*, even when they were printers) were exempt from certain taxes, tolls, and other levies.<sup>117</sup> Similar privileges were accorded to the *imprimeurs du roi*, a public office obtained by patent-letter from the King. Aside from the obvious honor and authority of such a title, the king's printers enjoyed the lucrative ability to print any "ordinance, edict, and other acts of the authorities" for a certain period of time without any special permission. They did not have to be sworn to the university (though some men were both). What the *libraries-juré* and the *imprimeurs du roi* represent is those most well-off in the print-trades. Their office was transferred, often between (male) family members or close associates, at the printer's death or retirement, as the number of seats were limited, removing the need for a widow to serve as an interim figure in the first place.<sup>118</sup>

So while marriage reforms did restrict widows in their decision-making, it was a wider economic crisis and the increasing formalization of the printing industry which contributed to the gradual sunset of their "golden age". Ultimately, their declining numbers is less a question of gender than of greater economic difficulties faced by all but the richest printers.<sup>119</sup> While wealthy bookseller-printers (and especially booksellers) continued to be found at the end of the century, the number of printers (and, on their deaths, their widows) in "a precarious position" grew numerous.<sup>120</sup> It is, simply put, as the old aphorism goes, a case of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Moreover, the 1560s also well and truly marks the end of a era: the generation of humanist printers had all passed by this date, and the death of Henri II in 1559 and the start of the civil and religious conflict that would soon engulf the whole country with 1560

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<sup>116</sup> The *Edit de Moulin* (1566) formalized this practice. Pallier, "Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)": 6.

<sup>117</sup> Jean-Baptiste-Louis Crevier, *Histoire de l'Université VI* (1761): 82.

<sup>118</sup> As observable in Renouard *Répertoire*.

<sup>119</sup> Pallier, "Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)": 29.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

made for decisive political and cultural change.<sup>121</sup> This alongside the deaths of many other literary and religious figures led Parent-Charon to declare it the end of an age.<sup>122</sup>

What all the reforms and regulations rolled out over the course of the sixteenth century ultimately demonstrate is shared emphasis on the widow’s responsibility to the property rights of her children and the “conservation of houses and families”.<sup>123</sup> Women of the print-trades, it appears, took this duty seriously. In the *Répertoire*, printers’ widows were most likely to transfer the print-house to a second-husband. But those who worked as printer-widows (even if only for a couple years) were most likely to be succeeded by their sons or another younger kinsman. It is the affirmation of an ideal: the widow’s (and thus the wife’s) primary concern as the home, her place in the household, with her role firstly one of safeguarding and transmission.

Table 3: Succeeding widows at the print-house.

	Worked as Widow-Printers	Never Worked as Widow-Printers
Second Husbands	8	26
Sons	15	3
Sons-in-law	6	7
Nephews	2	1
Other relation (grandson, daughter)	5	1
Other printers	8	0
Husband had retired / changed profession before his death	0	2
Unknown	10	37

<sup>121</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle*: 53.

<sup>122</sup> “C’est un âge qui disparaît.” Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> While a 1578 arrêt de Parlement did prohibit widowers from gifting their second wives any properties given to them by their first wife, the language of earlier documents illustrate that the primary concern of these reforms were widows. The fear was that a widow’s desire to please her new husband would overwhelm her duty as a mother, setting the fatherless children of the first marriage at a disadvantage. Diefendorf, “Widowhood and remarriage in sixteenth-century Paris”: 391-393.

## **CHAPTER THREE: WOMEN AT WORK**

Even if both Parisian custom and regulation place women in a firmly domestic context, the economic and cultural reality of sixteenth-century artisan life would nevertheless expect and oblige a certain level of industriousness on their part. Labour, as we have seen, was a presupposition for women in the print-trade of all ages and stages of life. The proximity of the workshop to that of the household redefines boundaries of domesticity and professional space, and more broadly, gender expectations – especially concerning married women.

### **I. The Question of Origin And The Origin of Experience**

Though this thesis has endeavored to focus more on women in the book-trade during their time as wives, it would be remiss not to devote a more detailed discussion of the all-stars of book-history scholarship. Examining printer-widows with the added consideration of their social origin may inform larger patterns of female involvement in the printing industry. Determining the extent of the influence of social origin on these women's decision to begin printing, we may start to gain some initial answers into how they developed their managerial abilities and their understanding of the workings of the printing business, of which there is little record. Indeed, it is unreasonable to view wives as inactive agents in the print-house for the duration of their marriage only to suddenly and successfully spring into action at their husband's passing, sometimes for as long as thirty-five years.<sup>124</sup> This point has been made many times, but its logic

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<sup>124</sup> As Yolande Bonhomme did, for example.

bears repeating.<sup>125</sup> While my line of questioning cannot provide a complete answer, it hopes to introduce a new point of consideration within a larger conversation.

As previously mentioned, 34% of widows became widow-printers: these are 43 of the 57 widows who never remarried. The remaining 14 women never remarried nor worked as printer-widows, for any number of possible reasons, which have previously been elaborated on. There are an endless amount of factors at play for what a printer's wife might decide to do with her widowhood – the age of her children, her own, her health – before even considering her financial situation: the value of her estate, her husband's debts, the economic viability of the print-house, etc. The answer is likely in the individual circumstances of each woman, and her own character, interests, and abilities in printing – a unique combination in each case that is impossible to retrieve in its specificity and idiosyncrasy. Nevertheless, which women became printer-widows, how, and why, remain at the forefront of the scholarship of the subject. It may not necessarily have been a matter of means – if fortunate enough, who would not take the opportunity to retire?<sup>126</sup>

Historians have put forward a few theories, the most interesting of which is the characteristic of female management running through families over several generations: if there had already been a woman at the helm of the firm, it was more likely for another woman to serve as the interim head of the business later on.<sup>127</sup> Beech rightly outlined the cases of Madeleine Boursette (succeeded by her widowed daughter, Barbe Regnault, herself succeeded by her own daughter Madeleine Berthelin); Charlotte Guillard (succeeded by her niece Michelle Guillard; another of her nieces, Edmée Tousan, also briefly headed her husband's firm on his death, and Tousan's

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<sup>125</sup> See, amongst others, Maureen Bell, "Women in the English Book Trade 1557–1700" in *Leipziger Jahrbuch zur Buchgeschichte* 6 (1996): 18; Helen Smith, *Grossly Material Things* (2012): 109; Valerie Wayne, "The Labours of Jacqueline de Thuit Vautrollier Field" in *Women's Labour and History of the Book* (2020): 19.

<sup>126</sup> See Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 80-87.

<sup>127</sup> Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 84.

own daughter, Perette Bogard, later took over for her own husband); and the Trepperel widows (a mother and daughter who concurrently headed their husbands' respective printing houses).<sup>128</sup> When the Trepperel daughter's own daughter-in-law, Jeanne de Marnef, succeeded her husband, she would have known her mother and grandmother-in-law, as well as her own sister (Denyse de Marnef, widow-bookseller) as examples of female heads of businesses. If Beech's theory that Blanche Marentin attempted to become a printer-widow but was blocked by the company of printers holds true, we may also add Yolande Bonhomme to that list.<sup>129</sup> An analysis of the successions in the Ballard family does similarly for Lucrece Dugué.<sup>130</sup> Clearly, women not only transmitted printing through their families, but female management as well.

Interestingly, many of the most successful widow-printers (Boursette, Bonhomme, Guillard) were all active in the same thirty-year period (1540-1570), during the aforementioned "golden age" of printer-widows. The act of having each other as examples may yet be another reason for the comparatively large number of printer-widows in Paris compared to London, for example.<sup>131</sup> With that in mind, a link may be able to be drawn between the unnamed widow of Guillaume I Nyverd and the widow who her husband had originally obtained his printing house from, Marion de Malaunoy, called 'La Carronne', who had helmed seven years (from 1500 to 1507).<sup>132</sup> When considering the fourteen widows with a career over eight years, half had another female relative

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<sup>128</sup> Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 77. Renouard, *Repertoire*: 51, 102, 362 (Madeleine Boursette); 30, 363 (Barbe Regnault); 30-31 (Madeleine Berthelin); 82, 189-190 (Charlotte Guillard); 111-112, 190 (Michelle Guillard); 40, 322-323 (Edmée Tousan); 40, 261-262 (Perette Bogard); 218-219, 413-414 (the widow Trepperel); 217-219, 413-414 (Macée Trepperel); 185, 217, 296-297 (Jeanne de Marnef); 172-173, 298, 427-428 (Denyse de Marnef).

<sup>129</sup> Beech, "Women Printers in Paris in the Sixteenth Century": 96.

<sup>130</sup> Laurent Guillo, "Women in the Ballard dynasty of music printers (1550–1825): a tale of five widows" presented at the USTC conference: Gender and the Book Trades at the University of Saint-Andrews (June 2021), available on the HAL Archive (ID: hal-04263949): 15-19.

<sup>131</sup> Though the present numbers for London (4 printer-widows) are thought to be "at best a bare minimum". See Helen Smith, "'Print[ing] Your Royal Father Off': Early Modern Female Stationers and the Gendering of the British Book Trades" in *Text* 15 (2003): 166-168.

<sup>132</sup> Renouard, *Repertoire*: 251, 291; Adrienne Fried-Block "Timbre, texte et air; ou: comment le Noël-parodie peut aider à l'étude de la chanson du XVIIe siècle" in *Revue de Musicologie* 69, n° 1 (1983), p.32.

operating in the book-trade as a widow.<sup>133</sup> I found that out of the seven women who were the single known case of female management in their families, only one had a daughter who married into the book-trade and was subsequently widowed. The example of Gillette Chaudière, daughter of Gillette Haste, will be discussed in detail later on, but for now it is worthwhile to note that while never a printer-widow, she was evidently capable enough for her husband to authorize her to act and sign contracts on his behalf.<sup>134</sup> While participating in the book-trades as the head of the business remains exceptional – as Sylvie Postel-Lecocq had shown, only 12% of all women in the register did so – these were women clearly led by example.

In addition to these previous theories, my reorganization of Renouard's register in these thesis prompts a new consideration: whether the question of the social origin of these women could have played a role. As always, the question of the ratio of widows must be raised: of the 126 women, 31 were book-trade daughters, while 95 women were not.<sup>135</sup> Such numbers make a separation between those originally from the book-trade and those not from it necessary for a re-examination of the activities in the widowhood period.

First, the amount of women whose life after their widowhood is unknown reaches an equal number in both groups. Some key differences are observable: printers' widows originally from outside the book-trade were more likely to stay single and out of the book-trade than their book-trade counterparts: there are 20 cases for the former and only one for the latter (21.05% vs. 3.22%). Both groups remarried printers or booksellers in equal numbers.<sup>136</sup> Interestingly,

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<sup>133</sup> These would be, in no particular order, Yolande Bonhomme, Charlotte Guillard, the widow Trepperel, Macée Trepperel, Lucrece Dugué, Marie Lescalloppier, and Madeleine Baudeau.

<sup>134</sup> Archives Nationales, MC/ET/II/115 (4th of April 1625).

<sup>135</sup> This includes all women whose parents' professions are unknown, which stands as the majority, with 79 women in this situation. I have treated these women as being from 'outside' the book-trade, though perhaps further archival research may unearth documents which may yet reveal some parents in the book-trade. For now, however, the number of widows who grew up in the book-trade is not too far from the number of printer's wives in the same situation (24.21%).

<sup>136</sup> 25.80% of widows originally from the book-trade remarried into the book-trade overall; for widows originally from outside the book-trade, the number is 24.21%.

printers' daughters seemed more likely to marry *out* of the book-trade in a remarriage. This can perhaps be attributed to printers' daughters marrying above or of a similar status to them, as seen in Chapter 2.

Table 4: Post-widowhood activities separated by social origin

	Printer's Daughters (31)	Not From The Book-Trade (95)
Worked as Printer-Widows	13 (41.93%)	32 (33.68%)
Remarried Printers	9 (22.58%)	24 (25.26%)
Remarried Outside the Book-Trade	5 (16.12%)	10 (10.52%)
Remarried Booksellers	1 (3.22%)	3 (3.15%)
Did Not Remarry, Did Not Become a Printer-Widow	1 (3.22%)	20 (21.05%)
Unknown	4 (12.90%)	13 (13.68%)

If this trend extended into remarriages, this may have been a slightly more attractive option for this group. Eleven out of 31 printers' daughters turned printers' widows took the helm of their family firm, while 28 of 95 widows from outside the book-trade did the same, making women originally from the book-trade slightly more likely to become printer widows (41.93% versus 33.68%).<sup>137</sup> By far, working as a printer-widow stands as the most common decision for both groups, along with a remarriage to a printer.<sup>138</sup> What this number demonstrates is that while being a printer's daughter may have had some influence over their decision to take over the

<sup>137</sup> Of widows originally from the book-trade, 35.48% became printer-widows, 6.45% were printer-widows then remarried printers, meaning 41.93% worked as widow-printers overall. Of widows originally from outside the book-trade, 29.47% became printer-widows, 4.21% were printer-widows then remarried printers, meaning 33.68% worked as widow-printers overall.

<sup>138</sup> Though printers' widows originally from outside the book-trade remarried printers in near-equal numbers as they did staying unmarried without becoming printer-widows.

business – as the numbers suggest – the majority of the experience necessary to run a print-house was gained over the course of the marriage.

## II. Extending the Domestic Sphere

Gender plays an important distinction to understand the kind of work wives engaged in. Of particular interest are the ideas recent Dutch scholarship has proposed on the subject: rather than shape gender relations, custom and formal regulation are both thought to instead reflect “long-existing patterns in the division of work among the sexes”.<sup>139</sup> The line was drawn at the door: domestic-coded work inside the house was acceptable for women to engage in — their industriousness was even praised — but work outside the home was, at least in theory and according to the literary ideal of conduct books, preferably reserved for men.<sup>140</sup> At first glance, in the context of the book-trade, this reasoning seems to offer women little advantage: printing was a masculine-coded endeavor, primarily characterized by the physical effort of the pressman at the bar. But if that were so, our critical eye should be turned to the master-printers first. Accusing the masters of profiting off of their work and blaming them for the struggling state of the book-trade at the start of the 1570s, the journeymen of Paris and Lyon took to the press (what else!) to demand change.<sup>141</sup> Quite strikingly, they declared themselves to be the “true printers”, as when a firm grew large enough, the master printer often tended to assume a more managerial role, with a journeyman taking over his habitual duties.<sup>142</sup> Henri IV, for one, was convinced enough to grant

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<sup>139</sup> This view is shared by Ariadne Schmidt, Hannie van Goinga, and Danielle van den Heuvel. For an overview of the ideas preceding this turn, see Clare Crowston, “Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research” in *International Review of Social History* 53 (2008): 19-44. Van Den Heuvel, “Guilds, Gender Policies and Economic Opportunities”: 121.

<sup>140</sup> Ariadne Schmidt, “Labour Ideologies and Women in the Northern Netherlands, c.1500–1800” in *International Review of Social History* 56 (2011): 57.

<sup>141</sup> See *Remonstrances & Mémoires pour les compagnons imprimeurs, de Paris & de Lyon: Opposans contre les libraires, maistres-imprimeurs desdits lieux* (1571); Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue*: 5; Chauvet, *Les ouvriers du livre*: 51-58.

<sup>142</sup> Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue*: 5; Guillo, “Women in the Ballard dynasty”: 13; Chauvet, *Les ouvriers du livre*: 311-312.



some of the journeymen's requests, despite the many protests from the masters.<sup>143</sup> Clearly, not all the work was done by heavy lifting at the press.

Let us examine the print-house and its workshop under closer lens. We had briefly seen that women and children did tasks in the printing-house to help the printer: hang up sheets to dry, color in illuminations or woodcut images (such work was done by hand).<sup>144</sup> As a representative of her husband, the printer's wife would also collect money, services, or products for her husband, as well as purchase, make, and serve food and drink to the workshop's journeymen, apprentices, and collaborators herself or if she were wealthy enough, oversee the servants doing so.<sup>145</sup> If literate, both women and children could work as correctors, reading texts aloud to help catch any mistakes.<sup>146</sup> Roméo Arbour lists further tasks accessible to women in the book-production process: ruling luxury copies, folding quires, assembling and sewing them before binding, and the binding work itself.<sup>147</sup> Utilizing a woman or child in this manner to save on expenses such as the pay for a professional binder would have certainly increased the print-house's profits. Moreover, if the printer sold some of his goods himself, as many did, then he had a shop that needed to be manned even while the presses turned or while he traveled for his business.<sup>148</sup> Displays had to be organized and cleaned daily, clients needed tending to with account books that would subsequently have to be kept up to date.<sup>149</sup> In this manner, that "the wife of a master artisan played an integral role in the success of the business" was dictated by

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<sup>143</sup> Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue*: 6.

<sup>144</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 172; Caroline Zöhl, "Jean Pichore: Buchmaler, Graphiker und Verleger in Paris um 1500" in *Ars nova* 8 (2004): 27.

<sup>145</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 174; Cait Coker, "Gendered spheres: theorizing space in the English printing house" in *The Seventeenth Century*, 33:3 (2018): 326.

<sup>146</sup> Broomhall, "Re-Assessing Female Representation": 57.

<sup>147</sup> Arbour, *Les Femmes et les métiers du Livre*: 30.

<sup>148</sup> Jean-Dominique Mellot, *L'édition rouennaise et ses marchés (vers 1600- vers 1730): dynamisme provincial et centralisme parisien* (1998): 54.

<sup>149</sup> Arbour, *Les Femmes et les métiers du Livre*: 30.

custom.<sup>150</sup> The importance of this unpaid labor which Laurent Guillo calls “hidden work” should not be understated.<sup>151</sup>

However, this kind of labor did not always go unacknowledged. It has been mentioned, of course, that men often thanked their wives for their “good services” in their wills, but that is not necessarily specific to their businesses.<sup>152</sup> Though few, a much more concrete example is the mention of female activity that can be found in formal invoices – and very high-profile ones at that.

In 1518, Louise de Savoy, Duchess of Angoulême and mother of François I, commissioned the printer and illuminator Jean Pichore for an exceptional work of the *Chants royaux du Puy Notre Dame d’Amiens* including 48 fully colored miniatures and a breadth of various motifs and ornaments woven throughout the text.<sup>153</sup> According to the invoice, Pichore received 80 l.t., as well as 50 sous for his “effans et serviteurs” and another 24 sous for their wine.<sup>154</sup> To Caroline Zöhl, who studied both the *Chant royaux* and the invoice itself, it is clear the children and assistant are named for their collaboration (“mitarbeit”) on the work.<sup>155</sup> Indeed, her study of the miniatures found them diverse in terms of “colorfulness and the skill with which they had been executed” and attributes this directly to the children who worked on them.<sup>156</sup> We find Pichore’s three underage daughters, Marguerite, Catherine, and Gillette, represented by their father in a civil court hearing three years later: the “effans” assisting their father were young or teenage

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<sup>150</sup> Mellot, *L’édition rouennaise*: 54.

<sup>151</sup> Zemon Davis names the “married woman an unpaid artisan”. See Zemon Davis, “Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons”: 57-58; Guillo, “Women in the Ballard dynasty”: 9.

<sup>152</sup> The will of Antoine Maltraict thanks his wife for her “agreeable services [...] and for the love which she bears him” (“les agreables services [...] et pour l’umour que luy porte”): AD Gard IIE37, 297 fol. 277 (1558); Tulchin, “Same-Sex Couples Creating Households in Old Regime France: The Uses of the Affrèment” in *The Journal of Modern History* 79, n° 3 (September 2007): 637.

<sup>153</sup> Bibliothèque nationale fr. 145.

<sup>154</sup> Archives de la ville d’Amiens, CC 95 fol. 151v and 152.

<sup>155</sup> Zöhl, *Jean Pichore: Buchmaler, Graphiker und Verleger in Paris um 1500*: 28.

<sup>156</sup> “In der Farbigkeit wie auch in der Sorgfalt der Ausführung so divers.” Zöhl, *Jean Pichore: Buchmaler, Graphiker und Verleger*: 27, 41.

girls.<sup>157</sup> Of Pichore's wife, little is known. Marie Le Roux was already deceased by 1521, and there is no indication that she had been living in 1518.<sup>158</sup> If she had, it stands to question whether she would have been listed among Pichore's "serviteurs" or set in her own class as the master's wife.

In any case, two things are to be learned from this example: first, that the "hidden work" of women and children did not always go uncredited or unpaid: though the money was Pichore's, his royal patron had expressly reserved an additional sum for his assistants and children. A wider study of similar invoices could reveal the extent to which this practice was commonplace, as for now that remains unknown. Second, and most significantly, that the prestige of this commission – Louise de Savoy had been the regent of France from 1515 to 1516 and would be again from 1524 to 1526 – did not inhibit the acknowledgement of the children's contribution in any apparent way. That they were named separately from the other assistants rightly sets them apart from those in the workshop that were formally trained. But Marguerite, Catherine, and Gillette's presence in sight of such an important and high-status client nevertheless demonstrates itself as evidently permissible, accepted, and entirely unexceptional.

My view on marriage, throughout this thesis, has been informed by economic and labor-centered concerns. Even with the superior legal authority granted upon a woman's widowhood, formal rules *and* long-standing customs reflect long-standing work patterns that above all emphasize her as the guardian of her children's property rights. It is clear that the wife's domain is the home. But was this as clear-cut as it seems to us? Women engage in domestic-coded work, but where do we draw the line of what counts as domestic labor?

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<sup>157</sup> Archives Nationales X A 1523 f°315 (5th of August 1521).

<sup>158</sup> By his wife, Jean Pichore was brother-in-law to the sworn bookseller Jean Bloimestre, and kin to Jacques Le Roux, a merchant who dealt with the metals necessary for the production of type. Ibid.; Renouard, *Repertoire*: 357; Zöhl, *Jean Pichore: Buchmaler, Graphiker und Verleger*: 160.

As his “procuratrice”, Gillette Chaudière negotiated a printing contract on her husband’s behalf while he was away on a trip, possibly to Reims.<sup>159</sup> As the notary writes:

Agreement between Balthazar Dessay, *maître d'hôtel* of Honoré d'Urfé, established from the procuration the latter, passed the 11th of March 1625 in front of Bal, notary at Virieu-le-Grand, and Gillette Chaudière, wife and *procuratrice* of Robert Fouet, merchant *libraire juré*, residing Rue Saint-Jacques, in the parish of Saint-Benoît, at the sign of the Occasion, by which Dessay delivered to the said Chaudière the manuscript copy of the Fourth part of 'l'Astrée', containing 12 books, “one written to the lord of Urfé by some *potentatz* of Germany with the response to [the said manuscript]” and the manuscript copy of another book titled 'La Silvanire ou la Morte vive' to be printed within two months, after having obtained the King's privilege, on condition the author be supplied with 50 copies of each of the two works, 10 bound in *maroquin du levant* [Levantine leather], 10 in vellum, and the others in parchment. Gillette Chaudière also promises to print the four parts of 'L'Astrée', containing 12 books each, in a single folio volume within four years, failing which the *seigneur d'Urfé* may have them printed by whomever he sees fit. This transfer is made for the sum of 3650 *livres*, namely 2190 *livres* in cash and the remaining 1460 *livres* on Saint-Jean-Baptiste next year. Dessay undertakes to supply Gillette Chaudière with the four parts for printing in folio, corrected by the author's hand.<sup>160</sup>

Chaudière appears well-aware of necessary legal steps in the publishing process (the granting of the King’s privilege), highlighting the need to account for the time the administrative procedure would take. A variety of different materials (parchment, vellum and the pricier Levantine leather) are named in the order, and instructions for the act of printing itself are specified: the commission is for Chaudière (and her husband) to print all four parts of the manuscript in a single folio volume within a specific time frame (four years), after which the author would be free to take his manuscripts and his business elsewhere. To strike such a deal would have necessitated an extensive and realistic knowledge of the print-house’s capabilities in taking on Dessay’s commission amongst their other orders, ever-mindful of the rampant competition running up and down the Rue Saint-Jacques.

The notarized agreement concluded, Chaudière left with 2190 *livres* in cash and the promise of the remaining 1460. Neither official subject of the contract was present. Most likely the deal had already been

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<sup>159</sup> Archives Nationales, MC/ET/II/115 (7th of April 1625).

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

struck between the two men some time before, but the fact that the contract is officialized between two intermediaries — the printer’s wife and the author’s *maître d’hôtel* — is interesting nonetheless. We know Robert Fouet had made Gillette Chaudière his “procuratrice” just three days before, assuredly for this specific occasion.<sup>161</sup> Either this was not a task that required lengthy preparation, despite its financial importance to the firm, or it was one that Gillette Chaudière’s experience would have given her little or no trouble in achieving. At this point, Chaudière and Fouet had been married nearly thirty-one years to the day.<sup>162</sup> She had also grown up in the book-trade: her own father had been a printer, and she would have had her own mother’s example to look up to. Though deceased five years before, Gillette Haste had been a widow-printer of “considerable wealth” for the prior fourteen years, with whom Robert Fouet had shared three publications with in 1602, 1603 and 1609.<sup>163</sup> In any case, Fouet’s trust in his wife to not only finalize the contract herself, but also carry a huge sum of cash, speaks for itself – certainly she had gone and collected money or services for him before. There is no mention of an additional member of Fouet’s print-house being present, such as a journeyman or corrector, in order to help her.

Acting as her husband’s “procuratrice”, Gillette Chaudière was well within the bounds of her ordinary domestic responsibilities. Both modern scholarship and French custom would agree, and yet maintain the stark line between the workshop and the home.<sup>164</sup> But where exactly do these borders lie? Where is the print-house just a house? Ultimately, what this thesis argues is for an extension of the domestic sphere within the print-house. We already saw how the act of marriage and wifely labor could impact the survival of a business, and the many tasks they could and did take part in.

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<sup>161</sup> Archives Nationales MC/ET/II/115 (4th of April 1625).

<sup>162</sup> Their marriage contract survives: Archives Nationales, MC/VII/145 (17 April 1594).

<sup>163</sup> Claudien, *Opera serio emendata [...] cum annotationibus perpetuis St. Claverii* (1602); Jean Chalon, *Notables et singulieres questions du droit* (1603); Marcos de Lisboa, *Chronique et Institution de l’Ordre de St. François* (1609). See Arbour, *Dictionnaire des Femmes Libraires en France 1470-1870* (2003): 131-132; *Les Femmes et les métiers du Livre*: 134-135.

<sup>164</sup> Broomhall, “Re-Assessing Female Representation”: 68; Schmidt, “Labour Ideologies and Women in the Northern Netherlands”: 57; Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises, or, the doctrine of handy-works applied to the art of printing: the second volume* (1683): 9.

The printing-house itself is a space that defies the strict delineation between home and workshop that has so often been impressed on it, both in the scholarship and in the early modern period. Naturally, these spaces blur – even outside of procurations and royal invoices. The domestic sphere itself is not bound to the household. An immediate and everyday example would be that of food and drink: in order to feed their household, any wife would have had to interact with sellers, merchants, go to the market or at least direct the servants who did. As hosts, printers’ wives would have had to contend with the apprentices, journeymen and collaborators coming, going, or even residing in their homes – as, indeed, some printers working in collaboration also resided with each other for the duration of their contract.<sup>165</sup> They put not only their molds, types, matrices, presses, and other material resources together, but also “the responsibility of the house’s upkeep, their families, and servants” (“l’entretien de la maison, de la famille, des serviteurs”), sharing their lease as well as their wives’ food (“[ils] partageront le loyer de leur maison, la nourriture de leurs femmes”) in a true welding of their domestic and professional activities.<sup>166</sup> Examining the print-house as a physical space engenders a new reconsideration of how domestic and professional spheres interacted within it.

### III. The Physicality of the Print-House

In 1534, the lucky recipient of Perette Bade’s exceptional dowry, Robert Estienne, printed a few editions for a young scholar of little fortune, welcoming him into his home and treating him kindly.<sup>167</sup> The time the young man spent in the Estienne household would form the basis of a

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<sup>165</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle*: 139.

<sup>166</sup> Parent-Charon cites the case of Jehan Cheffart and Marin Deschiers, associated for six years, who shared no family relation to the other. Due to a lack of access to the original document, I cite her translation of the original Middle French. See Archives Nationales, MC/CXXII/1252 (16th of November 1543); Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle*: 139-140.

<sup>167</sup> Commissioned by Junius Rabirius, who later found success as a lawyer, these were an edition of *De generibus vestium libellus* (1534) and an edition of the St. Paul’s grammar, *De octo orationis partium constructione libellus*,

Latin poem composed by humanist Jean Dorat in praise of Estienne and his workshop four years later, translated by Elizabeth Armstrong by virtue of being “the nearest thing [...] to a first-hand description of Estienne at work”.<sup>168</sup> I will not replicate the entirety of the fifty-four line poem here, but highlight the interest it suscitated in Susan Broomhall, and subsequently, me. Broomhall says:

A visitor to Robert Estienne's household and workshop clearly distinguished between the household space occupied by 'his wife, his handmaids' and a 'lively band' of children, and that which opposed it: the professional male realm of the printer's workshop.<sup>169</sup>

Indeed, the intellectual and professional nature of the workshop is emphasized, with lengthy descriptions of “volumes open lying round” and of Robert Estienne (counseled by Athena herself), busy with his “Errors to purge and lines to punctuate”.<sup>170</sup> Taken into the house, the young scholar is served food and drink at a “social hearth” amidst “men of learning and authority”.<sup>171</sup> Estienne’s family – Perette Bade and little Henri, Robert II, and François – seemingly only appear after the day’s hard “labors [are] done” with the scholar astonished at the “purity of Latin speech / In rev’rend elegance pronounc’d by each”.<sup>172</sup> Clearly, if the children are speaking to visitors in Latin like “Terence or [...] Plautus in a play”, the print-house has already overspilled its bounds.<sup>173</sup> But under further scrutiny, the distinction between “household space” and “professional male realm” grows more uncertain.

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revised by Erasmus (1534). Elizabeth Armstrong, *Robert Estienne, Royal Printer: A Historical Study of the Elder Stephanus* (1954): 59-60.

<sup>168</sup> Armstrong, *Robert Estienne, Royal Printer*: 59-60.

<sup>169</sup> Broomhall, “Re-Assessing Female Representation”: 68.

<sup>170</sup> Jean Dorat, “Ut ergo talis conscius voti mihi...” (1538), first printed by Michael Maittaire, *Annales typographici* II, pt.2 (1722): 446-52. The translations are from Armstrong’s *Robert Estienne, Royal Printer*: 59-60.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> The literacy (or not) of printer’s daughters was the subject discussed by Broomhall, who rightly argued that increased proximity to books did not necessarily coincide with an increased opportunity to learn. It largely depended on the family custom, and was not a question of means. Broomhall, “Re-Assessing Female Representation”: 56.

Firstly, Robert Estienne belongs to the highest of elites in the printing industry, and should be treated as such. His wife, as I have stated earlier, possessed one of the most expensive dowries of any printer's daughter in the sixteenth century. Second, and of greater interest, is that the emphasis on this 'division' between Estienne's home and workshop can also be read the opposite way — in the sense that it does not reflect a division, but specifically imposes one because of the absence of such a boundary in the first place. Helen Smith argued for such a reading in her study of female presence in the English book-trade, disavowing the view that the juxtaposition of domesticity to the professional space placed a "corresponding moral emphasis upon the domestic ideal" which "conditioned both life and work".<sup>174</sup>

Efforts to impress such boundaries can be observed elsewhere. The English printing manual *Mechanick Exercises, or, the doctrine of handy-works applied to the art of printing* informs the reader of "Printers Language":

A *Printing-House* may admit of a twofold meaning; one the Vulgar acceptance, and is relative to the House or Place wherein *Printing* is used; the other a more peculiar Phrase Printers use among themselves, viz. only the *Printing Tools*, which they frequently call a *Printing-House*: Thus they say, Such a One has set up a *Printing-House*, when as thereby they mean he has furnish'd a House with *Printing Tools*. Or such a one has remov'd his *Printing-House*, when thereby they only mean he has remov'd the Tools us'd in his former House.<sup>175</sup>

Moxon, the manual's printer, draws a far starker line than Jean Dorat. Introducing considerations of spatial theory as set out by Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau to the subject, Cait Coker demonstrated how the workshop could be "implicitly gendered" and elaborated on the role it played in both modern and early modern conceptions of the English printing-house.<sup>176</sup> Moxon's manual, under Cait Coker's analysis, sought to dispel all "domestic connotations" from the print-house.<sup>177</sup> But Moxon's definition of the print-house as a physical space feeds his own

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<sup>174</sup> Smith, *Grossly Material Things*: 124.

<sup>175</sup> Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises*: 9.

<sup>176</sup> Coker, "Gendered spheres: theorizing space in the English printing house": 324-326.

<sup>177</sup> Coker, "Gendered spheres: theorizing space in the English printing house": 326.



contradiction. Consider his argument that the print-house refers to the printing tools themselves, capable of being moved in and out of the home at will. As Parent-Charon has shown, this was – at least, in Paris – quite common. Printer’s wives could take on extra jobs, but so could the printers themselves, especially those of smaller means, and increasingly so towards the end of the sixteenth century as the city underwent a period of economic instability. They often took secondary jobs as wine merchants or guardian-doormen of churches, chapels, or of the Porte Saint-Jacques, conveniently located at the end of their street.<sup>178</sup> Furthermore, in between commissions, it was common for Parisian printers to lease their presses out to each other while they gathered funds for the costly purchases of ink, paper, etc. necessary for their next order.<sup>179</sup> Did these printers also say they had ‘moved’ the *imprimerie* or *atelier* out of their homes when the presses were out on loan? We have no such manual specific to the Parisian print-trade.<sup>180</sup> The language and country might be different, but the idea not so farfetched. One struggles to imagine an empty room sitting idle and gathering dust while the family pinched their pennies. Instead, what this supports is an increasingly flexible vision of the “professional realm” of the print-house and its (fluctuating) boundaries, despite a clear effort and willingness to enforce or impose them. Placed *within* the household, the printing-house was capable of being taken out at will, disavowing us of the vision of a strict, constantly successfully-upheld separation from the rest of the home. This can be less certain for the wealthier printing firms, but would surely have dictated the reality of the smaller, more ordinary ones.

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<sup>178</sup> The majority of the examples cited by Pallier and Parent-Charon date from the second half of the sixteenth-century (only one is not). See Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue*: 29; Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris*: 183.

<sup>179</sup> Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris*: 94.

<sup>180</sup> The earliest I have been able to find is Martin Dominique Fertel’s *La Science pratique de l'imprimerie, contenant des instructions très faciles pour se perfectionner dans cet art* (1723); its focus is primarily technical, discussing composition methods, press correction, special characters and punctuation marks, as well as the mechanics of the press itself than the space of printing.

Gleaned from leases or inventories drawn up by notaries for the purpose of establishing successions, surviving descriptions of the houses of the Rue Saint Jacques attest to the exact place of the workshop inside the household's physical layout. Remi Jimenes' transcript of one such document informs us:

Like the Soleil d'Or the house [the Rouet, located across the street] consists of two main buildings. The first comprises a store, a back store and another room on the first floor, a cellar, a storeroom, two upper floors, each with a bedroom and an anteroom, and an attic. Behind is a courtyard, leading to another building with a stable on the first floor, a bedroom upstairs and an attic. A gallery crossing the courtyard joins the two buildings.<sup>181</sup>

The building in question had been purchased by Claude Chevallon in 1526 to house his employees and to serve as his store. Its layout could not have been much different than that of the Soleil-d'Or, where he and Charlotte Guillard, his wife (and later successor), resided a stone's throw away.<sup>182</sup> They were certainly on a level comparable to the Estiennes, perhaps with the same set-up: the printing equipment downstairs and the family's living quarters upstairs. Another inventory made following the death of Oudin Petit's wife, Léonine Le Houx, shows a similar organization of space at the Fleur-de-Lys-d'Or: the shop is found at the forefront of the house, and the house's principal room (the furniture and art pieces found within make this certain) said to be situated directly behind the workshop.<sup>183</sup> Again, the family's bedrooms are found on the second floor, and the third has two rooms for the family's servants. The kitchen is situated in the room above the stable. With the furniture estimated at 875 l.t. in total, the Petit household was

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<sup>181</sup> "Comme le Soleil d'Or, la maison se compose de deux corps d'hôtel. Le premier comprend une boutique, une arrière-boutique et une autre salle au rez-de-chaussée, une cave, un cellier, deux étages comprenant chacun une chambre et une antichambre, un grenier. Derrière se trouve une cour, qui débouche sur un autre bâtiment comportant une « grande escurie » au rez-de-chaussée, une chambre à l'étage et un grenier. Une galerie traversant la cour joint les deux bâtiments." Archives Nationales, Y 3495 f. 503 (26th of November 1598); Jimenes, *Charlotte Guillard*: 42.

<sup>182</sup> Jimenes, *Charlotte Guillard*: 42.

<sup>183</sup> Archives Nationales MC/LXXIII/42 (15-19th of February 1542).

well off.<sup>184</sup> But even in these wealthy, elite households, the trip from the print-house to the home was only a matter of taking the stairs, or, as at the Fleur-de-Lys-d'Or, opening a door.

Perhaps there were other ways to gain entry to the family's living space (or for the family to exit) than through the workshop: another door, a second set of stairs.<sup>185</sup> They are not mentioned in these documents, so we cannot be certain. Typically, however, French residences of this time were built in *enfilade*: houses of this period had no hallways, meaning rooms simply opened up into one another.<sup>186</sup> Entering a room at the furthest end of the house necessitated crossing through all the others first. The order was determined by the needs of those who had to access them, a principle clearly observable in the Chevallon-Guillard and Petit households: the store (if there was one) was placed at the front, then the workshop, the principal room, with antechambers and bedrooms situated upstairs.<sup>187</sup> Impressing such an organization on print-houses more generally is not so unreasonable: the workshop would have required convenient access for the ease of customers and deliveries that were constantly coming and going, as well as granting the house's inhabitants a little more quiet when they retreated further inside.

Visiting the premises of the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp today invites guests to step through a succession of rooms, effectively a surviving example of the *enfilade* style in a printing-house. Of course, it can be argued that the workshops there were restricted to specific buildings or parts of the house, but the number of Parisian printers wealthy enough for that kind

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Stairs were one of the principal ways of restricting access to the different spaces in a house. Judith Flanders, *The Making of Home: The 500-Year Story of How Our Houses Became Our Homes* (2015): (np).

<sup>186</sup> Inspired by medieval cloisters, the oldest recorded hallway/corridor was built in a house in Chelsea, England in 1597. While it rapidly became the norm there, it did not become the standard in France until much later, with Englishmen astonished by the *enfilade* style well into the nineteenth century. See Robin Evans, "Figures, doors, and passages" in *Translations from drawing to building and other essays* (1997): 70; Flanders, *The Making of Home*: (np).

<sup>187</sup> We can find this layout in other professions in the book trades: see the homes in the inventories of Guillaume Godard, papermaker, and Pierre Roffet, bookbinder, in Parent-Charon, *Les métiers du livre à Paris*: 206-207, 209-210.

of arrangement were few. In fact, most people in the sixteenth century lived in two or three rooms, even with large families.<sup>188</sup> One Parisian architect resided in such circumstances with his wife and seven children, and by all accounts, he was not poor.<sup>189</sup> Leases found in repositories of notary archives often show printers renting or buying a handful of rooms in which both the print-house and their families had to fit.<sup>190</sup> For those without the means to possess a home with several buildings, or who rented, as many did, only parts of one, gaining entry to the family's living space would have not only necessitated crossing through the workshop, but a constant coming and going of people, material, and merchandise. The threshold between the two spaces was blurred, liable to change. The printer's children could be put to work; his wife would come and go on his business or her own. Ultimately, the physical reality of sixteenth century homes defies the view of a printing workshop in its own separate, professional realm.

This is further reflected in workshop customs themselves, with the difference between certain domestic and commercial activities becoming uncertain. Sometimes as young as ten years old, apprentices came with all the ordinary needs of growing children, and their parents were anxious they be looked after: their apprenticeship contracts often stress they are to be given new shoes and clothes during their training.<sup>191</sup> Similarly, journeymen, hungry and thirsty from their labors, required feeding.<sup>192</sup> Such banal issues could nevertheless upset the balance of the print-house

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<sup>188</sup> Flanders, *The Making of Home*: (np).

<sup>189</sup> Working for Henri IV, this architect was "at the top of his trade". Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Such as Jean Grenet, a printer who rented a house containing a shed, room, and an attic ("estable, chambre et grenier au-dessus") for him, his wife, and several children. Browsing Renouard's *Documents sur les imprimeurs* reveals many more similar cases. Archives Nationales, S 6357 (25th November 1521); Renouard, *Répertoire*: 183-184.

<sup>191</sup> The standard formula had printers promise to provide room and board for their apprentices ("fournira le gîte et le couvert"), and a small sum of money at the end of the apprenticeship, but many contracts elaborate: the master of twelve-year-old Jean Colleau promised to maintain the boy's shoes ("l'entretiendra de souliers"); eleven-year-old Jean Fresnel was similarly promised "linens, bedding, shoes and the rest" ("l'entretien linge, drap, chaussure et le reste"). See Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/26 (1541); MC/ET/XXXIII/35 (1550).

<sup>192</sup> At least until 1544, after which they were not obligatorily fed at the master's expense (likely to discourage them from forming associations and striking as they had since 1539). On the journeymen's strikes, see Chauvet, *Les ouvriers du livre*: 19-47.

with negligible effects on the business. One printer's wife's refusal to open the wine cabinet for a journeyman (she alone had the key) prompted a severe conflict, which produced notarized documents attesting to the incident.<sup>193</sup> Food and drink in the print-house appears as a recurring topic of interest which I feel merits further study. Indicative of women's presence, industry, and their movements in, around, and out of the home, it begs the question of how printer's wives experienced the reorientation of such domestic tasks into professional ones. Further inquiry into negotiations of authority taking place in spaces also demonstrate a sense of ambiguity that individuals like Dorat and Moxon sought to correct. The vision of the print-house within a purely masculine, intellectual, and professional sphere, a world apart from the material concerns of the day-to-day and of women, children, and domestic life, is unsustainable. What both the physical space of the print-house and the activities of its inhabitants and employees make clear is that in the print-trade, the domestic sphere was not absent of its fair share of professional and commercial responsibilities and activities. Women – as wives, daughters, and widows – were immediately concerned.

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<sup>193</sup> Zemon Davis, "Women in the Crafts in Sixteenth-Century Lyons": 174.

## CONCLUSION

Marriage well and truly had its role within the Parisian book-trade. Re-examining the brides and the offspring of their unions uncovers not only its influence as a vehicle of material goods, properties, and professional reputations, but also the extent of female transmission both in families and amongst other book-trade women. It is a worthy tool to study female contributions to this trade. That women were involved in the making and selling of books is well-known: of them, widows left behind the most visible traces. The involvement of wives in the printing business, whose husbands' signatures featured on every contract, is more difficult to trace. Their activities – in the words of Roméo Arbour – are a matter of “unrecorded history”.<sup>194</sup> Indeed, if the patterns which suggest printer-widows were significantly influenced by the other women around them are any indication, it was likely a matter of family custom. Making generalities about women and their work in the book-trades becomes a difficult task.

Examining the information we do have, however, is a good start. Statistics in this field will always be complex and thorny due to the size of ‘Unknown’ slices of our pies, but lest they are not taken at face value, statistics do not have to be *reckless*.<sup>195</sup> Well-placed within their contexts, they allow greater understanding of the knowledge we do possess. Maureen Bell once observed that the “episodic and irregular pattern of the records of women’s involvement in the book-trade [...] must not prevent us from looking beyond it in order to discern the routine (and therefore “hidden”) work of women day to day”.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Arbour, *Les Femmes et les métiers du Livre*: 39.

<sup>195</sup> Arbour, *Dictionnaire des Femmes Libraires*: 23.

<sup>196</sup> Maureen Bell, “Women in the English Book Trade 1557–1700”: 16.

With approximately eight hundred women – a little over half of which were married to or daughters of printers and thus included in this thesis – Renouard’s *Répertoire des Imprimeurs*, as the most complete repository of sixteenth-century Parisian printers, gives us ample ground to work with. Moving the scholarship beyond the case studies of individual women or firms which have dominated it for the past couple decades, the reorganization of Renouard’s *register* around the women in it brings a new consideration of larger patterns of female involvement in the print-trade. It is the basis on which this entire work rests.

A total of 446 women were raised from the register, with their social origins, marriages, children, and widowhoods carefully collected to produce a series of statistics. These confirmed some previous numbers found in surveys of a smaller scale – that roughly a third of printer’s wives were from the book-trade, and that the women who weren’t were primarily of similar status in other artisan, merchant, or laboring trades. Some statistics contrasted previous findings: the number of girls marrying a man in the same trade as their father was higher for printer’s daughters than in other artisan trades, favoring an interpretation of rapid growth and high immigration rates into the Paris print-trade which has been discussed. With fewer marriages to laborers, the study into the marriages of printers’ daughters demonstrates that an entry into the book-trade was a step-up, socially. It was also an opportunity for commercial enterprise even when the groom was not another printer: even when they married outside of the trades, some matches could have everything to do with the commercial or economic interests of the printer and his family. This seems to hold true for re-marriages as well, wherein printers’ widows, needing to provide for themselves and their children, tended to remarry men of equal or higher status when they did not have the means to remain independent. The examination into who inherited the print-house after the printers’ widows found in Renouard’s register also affirmed

the widow's (and thus the wife's) place as the guardian of her household and the legal authority of her and her children's property rights until they came of age.

The work is far from over. An inquiry into the same patterns must be done for the wives, daughters, and widows of booksellers, typefounders, bookbinders, and engravers in order to gain a more complete picture of the book-trade, as well as be studied across Europe more generally. Bringing marriage to the forefront of the scholarship brings a new perspective to the history of the book in its social, economic, and gendered aspects and as a product of “overlapping webs of commerce and exchange” in which women were immediately involved.<sup>197</sup>

The sight of a woman at work was common enough to be found all over Paris.<sup>198</sup> One printer and his wife paid a lease for a year for her to sell fish on the Petit Pont.<sup>199</sup> The level of financial investment – 20 l.t. — is small, but for only “half a stall” (“moitié d'un estail”), was not negligible, and more importantly evidences a professional activity which might have been significant for her husband's printing business. Were his books and pamphlets among the “other goods” (“autre marchandise”) Marguerite Bazin sold with her fish? We may yet uncover more about the place of these female professionals amidst their husbands' presses. Working on such a large scale to identify general patterns has opened up a breadth of new avenues for research. Our knowledge of women with independent professions would benefit greatly from new surveys across several artisanal trades – not just the printing industry – in order to gain a more developed understanding of this phenomenon. How did they – as Bazin must have – navigate domesticity with labor outside the home?

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<sup>197</sup> Smith, *Grossly Material Things*: 88.

<sup>198</sup> Mellot, *L'édition rouennaise*: 54.

<sup>199</sup> Marguerite Bazin and Adam Saunier paid for a “half a stall and shop to sell fish and other goods” (“moitié d'un estail et boutique à vendre poisson de mer et autre marchandise”). Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/34 (1539).



Comparatively, women in the print-trades might offer a vantage point from which the influence of guilds may be observed – as the print-trades did not have one, and thus it could not limit women from participating as the Stationer’s Company did in England, or the printer’s guild in Amsterdam, for example, or even in other professions in Paris.<sup>200</sup> Regardless of the absence of a guild, custom, law, and the Faculty of Theology increased the formalization of the trade and emphasized the primary duty of widows to their children’s property rights, reinforcing the wife’s domain as the home. But the printing workshop was to be found there as well.

Further analysis into the business collaborations which resulted in or were cemented by a marriage would only be possible through deeper archival research into several case studies rather than a survey, as I have done here. Did these collaborations survive without the individual who embodied their association? In the event of a wife’s death, did her kinsmen and husband continue to work together? Much is to be gained from further insight into the family dynamics of printing families.

Of particular interest to this thesis has been the juxtaposition of the domestic space of the household to that of the professional workshop. While this exploration of gendered spaces in the book-trade has begun for English book-history, it stands, at the moment, as absent from discussions taking place within book history scholarship concerning both Paris and France as a whole. It is, in my view, the start of an exciting new frontier in the study of early modern questions of gender and labor.

Marriage has its place within the commercial enterprise, both as an institution, but also through the subsequent consideration of the women *in* these marriages. An ambiguity exists in the doorway between the workshop and the rooms in which the family lived: law and conduct books

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<sup>200</sup> Van Den Heuvel, “Guilds, Gender Policies and Economic Opportunities”: 121; Wayne, “The Labours of Jacqueline de Thuit Vautrollier Field”: 16-18.

profess the home as the woman's domain, and as wives and widows even more so, with the added responsibility of preserving their husband's succession placed against with their newfound independence and authority. But domesticity itself could be reorientated into professional means, and with a specific social, labor, and economic capital which took them beyond their role as interim figures in the event of succession, they undertook their own work to keep their households afloat and their husbands' business running. Placed amidst a larger effort to determine the true boundaries of the business of the printing firm (Heleen Wyffels emphasized managerial importance in the business, for example) what comes into being is a new consideration of marriage itself, with a particular emphasis on its labor aspects, which in my view, have not been given sufficient attention.

The domestic sphere must be extended out further, into the professional one – or rather, we must acknowledge that the professional, commercial, and masculine sphere did not exist independently of the print-house's domestic context. How could it? All the figures inside – master printer, journeymen, apprentices, servants, children – constantly crossed between the spaces which have been delineated as professional and domestic; commercial and familial. Their activities confounded the two, oftentimes thoughtlessly. The printer's wife lingered on the threshold, the keys knotted on her belt. The study of hundreds of marriages across an entire century has impressed on me a multifaceted vision of her role. As her husband's helpmeet, financial partner, the mother of his children, and in some cases, his successor, she embodies the ever-fluctuating boundary between print-shop and print-house. Marriage is hard work, they say. My study has shown it is in more ways than one.

## APPENDIX A

### REGISTER OF PRINTER'S WIVES, DAUGHTERS, AND WIDOWS

Due to its size, the register cannot be included in its entirety here. I invite the reader to consult the version available online [here](#).<sup>201</sup> Pink cells designate the wives of printers, orange the daughters of printers, and white the women who were both. The few women whose cells have a purple border had a named, independent profession.

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<sup>201</sup> <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MfwZ5vHcPncZd9ZOeF-LJyx4MEEtnKPisGiQm9S33t8/edit?usp=sharing>

## APPENDIX B

### THE HOPYL GENEALOGY

Based on Renouard's list of the Hopyl descendants, I have attempted to render a visualization of the information given in Chapter II (Figure 6) to demonstrate the importance of female transmission in one family.<sup>202</sup> Printers or booksellers are in blue, their wives are in pink. Marie Hopyl's descendancy is pictured separately from the rest of her family for visibility (Figure 7).

I invite the reader to consult the complete visualization of the genealogy, available online [here](#).<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> See pages 40-41. Renouard, *Documents sur les imprimeurs*: 134-135.

<sup>203</sup> <https://www.famlyecho.com/?p=DPVG2&c=wsbagg5pb4z0vt8e&f=167293071135679632>

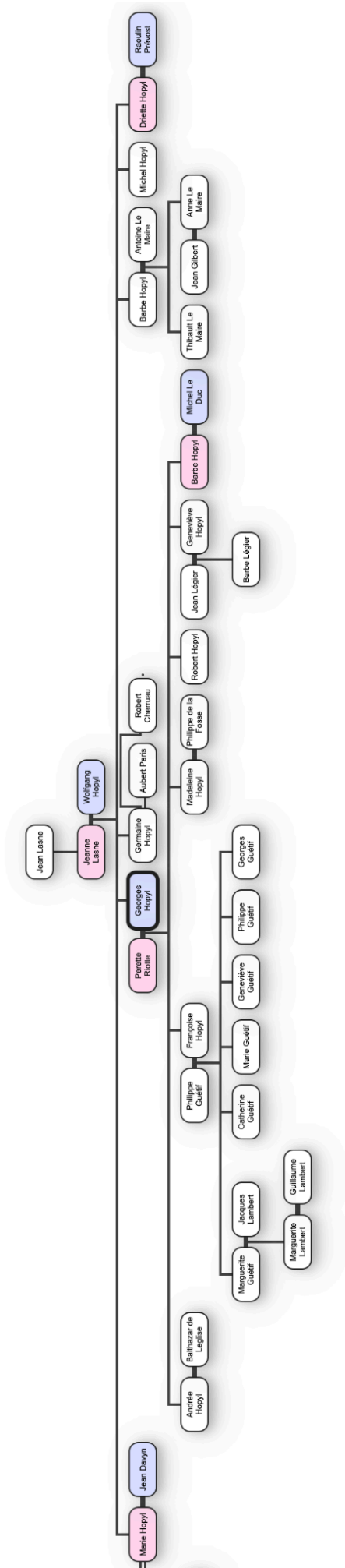


Figure 6: The Hopyl Genealogy (1)

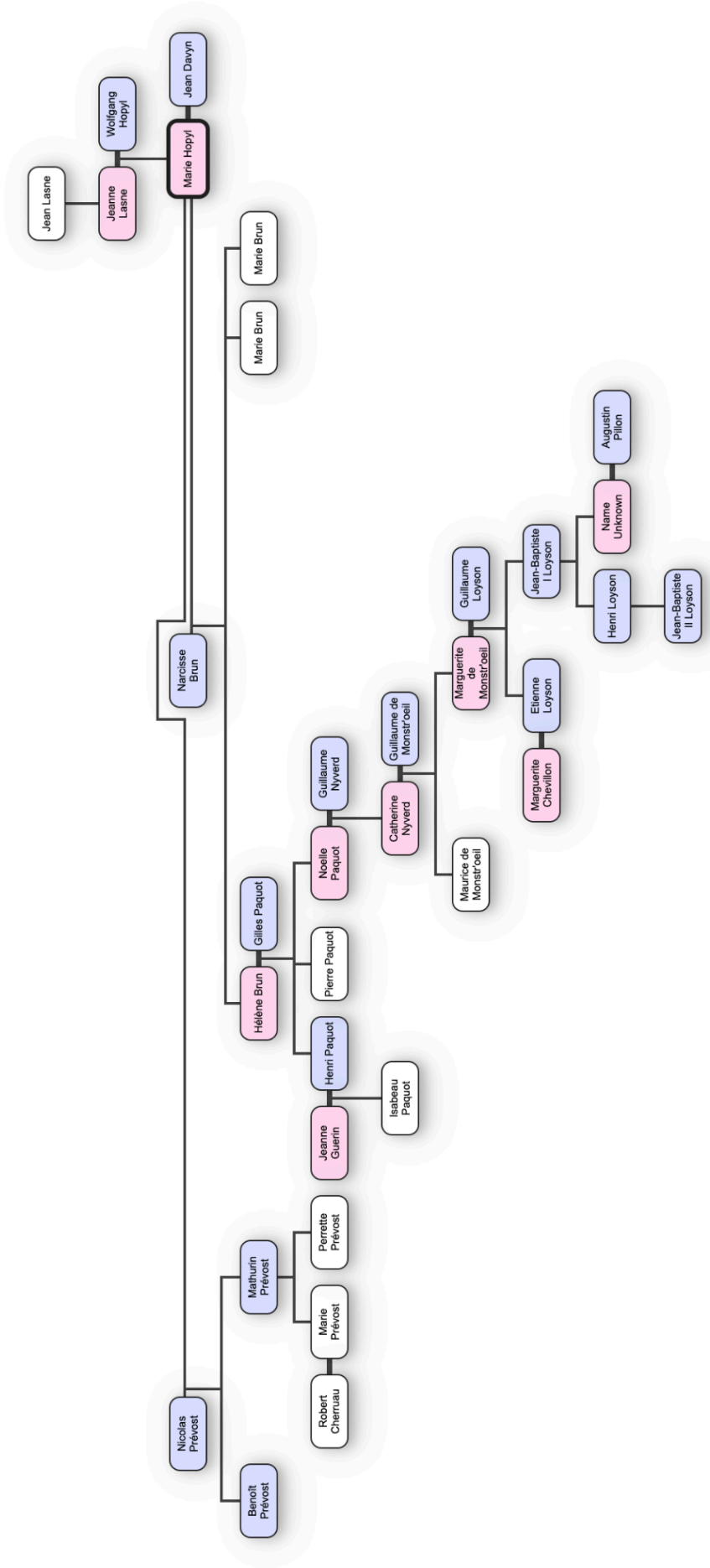


Figure 7: The Hopyl Genealogy (2)

## APPENDIX C

### CORRECTIONS

Note: in the interest of clarity and for the sake of brevity, this list is limited to the correction of errors and incoherencies I came across. The discoveries of further remarriages, social origin, and additional children I made which Renouard was unaware of are not included, but can be found throughout my register.

#### Hostelye Philippot

Wife of printer Josse Bade. Renouard mistakenly lists her as Hostelye Trechsel: the printer Jean Trechsel was her stepfather, her father was the printer Nicolas Philippot (both working in Lyon). In her daughter Marie's marriage contract, cited by Coyecque, she is correctly named “Ostelye Phillippes” or “Philippot”. The mistake was first corrected by Albert Labarre.

See Josse Bade's entry in *Imprimeurs et libraires parisiens du XVIe siècle d'après les ms. de Philippe Renouard*, vol. II, eds. Albert Labarre, Brigitte Moreau, Sylvie Postel-Lecocq and Jeanne Veyrin-Forrer (1969); Coyecque vol. II, n°3693; Renouard, *Répertoire*: 14.

#### Guillemette Macée

Renouard doesn't appear to be sure who is her second husband and who is her first: firstly he says she was widowed in her first marriage to the printer Jacques Ferrebouc (“veuve en premières nocés de l'impr. Jacques Ferrebouc”); later on he names her as the mother in a first marriage to the bookseller Jean II d'Alençon (“mère en première nocés du libr. Jean II

d'Alençon”). But her first marriage was surely to Nicolas d'Alençon because she was married to Ferrebouc in 1530 when her son became a printer as early as 1539.

Renouard, *Répertoire*: 3, 150.

### Barbe II Hopyl

The wife of Michel Le Duc is listed as Barbe Légier in Renouard's *Documents* (1901); in the *Répertoire* he merely contests La Caille's claim that it was Catherine Eschart (indeed, this cannot be so). Where his own claim that she was Barbe Légier (a granddaughter of Georges Hopyl) originated is unclear.

However, I discovered a 1589 document wherein the deceased wife of the printer Michel Le Duc is named Barbe Goupil. This likely makes her one of Georges Hopyl's daughters (see the Hopyl genealogy above) as Goupil and Hopyl were both known variant spellings that the family employed.

This cannot be the same woman as Barbe I Hopyl, daughter of Wolfgang Hopyl and Jeanne Lasne, who would have been 83 at this date and on her third husband. Moreover, born in 1556, Michel Le Duc would have been too young to be Barbe I Hopyl's husband in the first place.

Archives Nationales, MC/ET/V/16 (21st of July 1589). Renouard, *Répertoire*: 207-208, 256-257; *Documents*: 134-135.



### Katherine Marais & Gillette Lemercier

Both wives to Jacques I Kerver, Renouard was not aware of their existence. He mistakenly attributed Kerver's marriage to Jean Petit's widow to Guillemette de la Vigne when, as François Marin first evidenced, this was not so. A widow of Jean Petit did marry Jacques I Kerver, but it was not Jean II Petit but his father, Jean I, whose widow was Katherine Marais.

Renouard, *Répertoire*: 226; Marin, "Jacques Kerver: Libraire Parisien Du XVIIe Siècle 1535-1585" (1980): 188.

### Jeanne Boucherot

Renouard mistakenly names her as the first of Thomas Sevestre's two wives, the second being Marguerite Petit. No such woman exists. Likely Renouard confused her for Marguerite Petit-Pas, a printer's sister and the wife of Sevestre and Boucherot's son Charles. Jeanne Boucherot was present at their wedding in 1605. Moreover, Boucherot was never outlived by her husband, whose widow she is named in a 1609 document.

Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XVIII/R 139 (2nd of February 1605), MC/ET/XXIII/118 (1609);

Renouard, *Répertoire*: 398.

### Jeanne Gromors

Renouard suggests she was likely the sister of the bookseller Pierre Gromors. I am less inclined to think so. Other than her name, there is nothing linking her to Pierre Gromors or his sister Anne. Jeanne Gromors must have come from another family of the same name: she had a

brother, Philippe, who was a laborer, and a sister, Guyonne, who was married to the bookseller Pierre de la Motte. Their father was named Jacques.

Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/4 (30th of November 1518); Renouard, *Répertoire*: 185, 406.

#### Catherine and Guillemette Vidoué

Renouard mistook Catherine with her sister Guillemette: Catherine was the one married to the metalworker Jean Ruelle. Guillemette was at the time still a young child.

Archives Nationales, MC/ET/XXXIII/37 (1552); Renouard, *Répertoire*: 428.

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The list of primary sources consulted to form my register would double the length of the bibliography in their entirety. As such, they are not listed here. They can all be found under the tab “Primary Sources” or “Secondary Sources” (in the absence of an access to the document itself) in my register. See Appendix A.

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IIE37, 297 fol. 277 (1558)

#### **Archives de la ville d’Amiens (Amiens)**

CC 95 fol. 151v and 152

#### **Archives Nationales (Paris)**

Collège de Sorbonne:

S 6357 (25th November 1521)

S 904 f<sup>o</sup> 222 v<sup>o</sup> (1586)

Juridiction de Sainte-Geneviève-du-Mont:

ZZ/i 303, f<sup>o</sup> 414 (1565)

Minutier central des notaires de Paris:

MC/ET/XXXIII/4 (30th of November 1518)

MC/ET/XXXIII/8 (21st of August 1523)

MC/ET/XXXIII/11 (1526)

MC/ET/XXXIII/14 (1529)

MC/ET/XXXIII/26 (1541)

MC/ET/XXXIII/28 (1543)

MC/CXXII/1252 (16th of November 1543)

MC/ET/XXXIII/29 (1544)

MC/ET/XXXIII/30 (1545)

MC/ET/XXXIII/34 (1539)

MC/ET/XXXIII/35 (1550)

MC/ET/LXXIII/17 (1551)

MC/ET/XXXIII/37 (1552)

MC/ET/XXXIII/42 (1557)

MC/ET/XXXIII/188 (1573)

MC/LXXIII/42 (15-19th of February 1542)

MC/ET/V/16 (21st of July 1589)

MC/VII/145 (17 April 1594)

MC/ET/XVIII/212 (10th of January 1605)

MC/ET/XVIII/R 139 (2nd of February 1605)

MC/ET/XXIII/118 (1609)

MC/ET/II/115 (7th and 4th of April 1625)

Registres des insinuations au Châtelet:

Y 86 - Y 93 fol. 278 n°166 (1537)

Y 90 f° 255 v° (19th of February 1545)

Y 123 f° 333 v° (1581)

Y 124 - Y 127 fol. 207 v° n° 5966 (1585)

Y 125, f° 520 v° (1584)

Y 127, f° 79 (1583)

Y 132, f° 351 v° (1591)

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X 1 A 1553, fos 283, 464 v° (1533)

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