

BEYOND THE MARKET:  
BOOKS AS GIFTS IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY  
FRANCE

*The Prothero Lecture*

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I

'SINCE he isn't able to sell his books,' Erasmus said of a fellow scholar in 1518, 'he goes about offering them as gifts to important people; he makes more that way than if he had sold them.' Erasmus's shrewd observation to his friend Tunstall has considerable currency among historians today, anxious as we are about the book market. But writing his *Colloquies* a few years later, the great humanist also envisaged other purposes for giving books. At the end of a banquet, during which the gifts of God and human charity have been discussed, the host presents books to his guests, suiting each one to their learning, piety or vocation. His friends thank him not only for the gifts, but for the advice and compliments that went with them. 'It is I who thank you,' the host insists, 'for being so good about my simple style of living and for refreshing my mind with your conversation.'<sup>1</sup>

These two examples suggest the ways in which printed books could be part of systems of gift and obligation in the sixteenth century, passing beyond the transactions of buying and selling. Up to now, historians have been more interested in the owning of printed books than in their being given away. We have concentrated on the book as commodity rather than on the book as bearer of benefits and duties, on copyright rather than on common right. And this is understandable: the number of books now sold was so many times greater than the number of manuscripts vended by the late medieval stationer that other means of spreading books have seemed unimportant. Apart from library bequests, the only kind of present that has received much

<sup>1</sup> *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, ed. P. S. Allen, H. M. Allen and H. W. Garrod (Oxford, 1906-58), iii, 424, ep. 886. 'The Godly Feast', in *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, tr. C. R. Thompson (Chicago, 1965), 75-6. I am grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities and to the Council for the Humanities of Princeton University for gifts which have supported this research.

scholarly attention is the dedicated book in search of patronage—the gift seeking immediate return—and this too is understandable: the evidence is readily available on the book's opening pages and the trade-offs in patronage relationships are familiar.<sup>2</sup> Still, by this limitation, we may have been missing some significant elements in the intentions of authors and publishers and in the experience of readers and book-owners. The printed book may be able to tell us more than we have realised about property and possessiveness, markets and gifts.

Such relations have been central in the anthropological reflection on gifts. Marcel Mauss set his great study of *Le Don* in the context of primitive exchange and reciprocity: every gift created the obligation for a return gift and the event of giving and receiving had many meanings embedded in it, such as the affirmation of peaceful solidarity and the establishment of rank. Though Mauss still saw features of that social form in the 1920s when he was writing (and indeed hoped they would expand), on the whole he thought gift exchange was in tension with market economies and Economic Man. Sir Raymond Firth, while pointing out that the distinction was not a rigid one, has insisted that 'the patterned differences between market process and the passage of gifts are considerable'. So too, the notions that maintained gift-systems were in tension with the ideas of absolute property and with beliefs that disconnected people from their objects and their things. Rather objects carried with them something from the givers—Mauss called it a spirit animating the gift, Annette Weiner sees it as a symbolic representation of kinship obligations—which kept them moving or guaranteed that an equivalent return or replacement would eventually come back to the donors or their children. Marshall Sahlins formulates it as a potentiality for benefits, for fecundity in the given object, which it would be immoral for the recipient to profit from at others' expense.<sup>3</sup>

The question to ask here, then, is what kind of gift is a printed book in the sixteenth century? Is it in tension with buying and selling? Did book-producers and book-owners have any sense of a mixed or qualified property in that object which restrained them from disposing of

<sup>2</sup> Among many studies on the practice and theory of patronage, see E. Rosenberg, *Leicester, Patron of Letters* (New York, 1955); F. Haskell, *Patrons and Painters. Art and Society in Baroque Italy* (2nd edn., New Haven and London, 1980); and *Patronage in the Renaissance*, ed. G. F. Lytle and S. Orgel (Folger Institute Essays, Princeton, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> M. Mauss, *The Gift*, tr. I. Cunnison (1969). Sir Raymond Firth, 'Symbolism in Giving and Getting', in *Symbols, Public and Private* (1973), 368–402. A. B. Weiner, *Women of Value, Men of Renown. New Perspectives in Trobriand Exchange* (Austin, Texas, 1976), chap. 9, and 'Reproduction: A Replacement for Reciprocity', *American Ethnologist*, vii (1980), 71–85. M. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago, 1972), chap. 4.

it in just any way they saw fit? Did the book carry with it something that generated the need to keep it moving or to pass on the benefits received from it? And if so, to whom? to the donor in Mauss's gift-counter-gift, or rather to someone else in less reciprocal fashion? In answering these questions we will want to consider both how gifts of printed books resembled gifts of manuscripts in the later Middle Ages and how they fit into other systems of gifts in their own day—that is, compare the present of a book in 1540 with the present of a manuscript in 1400, and also with, say, the partridges and hares offered by a seigneur to the royal officer who had granted him the right to hold a weekly fair in his village.

In medieval society, learning was believed to come as a gift and this had implications for what one did with it and how one should be rewarded for it. In the village, most lore was inherited and collective, passed on by the storyteller, whose recompense was gifts of food and a place of honour near the hearth. In the castle, the poet Marie de France spoke of the obligations and returns of knowledge:

To Whom God has given science  
And the eloquence of good speech  
Must not be silent or conceal it  
But willingly show it.  
When a great good is heard by many  
Then it begins to seed  
And when it is praised by many  
Then it bursts into flower.<sup>4</sup>

In the university, where the store of learning was constantly enlarged by new manuscripts, disputations, commentaries, concordances and reformulations, it was still believed in the thirteenth century that 'knowledge is a Gift of God and cannot be sold' ('Scientia donum dei est, unde vendi non potest'—it has the ring of a proverb). This Greek ideal, fortified by Christ's injunction 'Freely ye have received, freely give' (Matt. 10:8) and now firmly entrenched in the canon law, was applied not only to professors, who were to take no fees for their teaching, but even to the sale of notarial and scribal productions. (Walter Map told the story of an imprisoned Archbishop of Hungary, who refused to accept the papal letters ordering his release because the copyist had been paid one shilling. The Lord then freed him by a miracle.) Fortunately for the teachers and scribes, many of whom had no benefices, the text from Luke that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire' (10:7) was finally used to justify some payments; but the ban-

<sup>4</sup> Marie de France, *Les Lais de Marie de France*, ed. J. Rychner (Paris, 1973), Prologue. See also the Biblical and classical *topoi* given by E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. W. R. Trask (New York, 1963), 85–9.

quets, fruits, sweets and wine presented by students to their professors at Paris and Montpellier in the sixteenth century after examinations and disputations attest to some continuing vitality of the old ideal.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile the belief that copying manuscripts was a meritorious and godly act (rubrication was compared to the blood of martyrs) and lending a manuscript an act of mercy, lingered on long after monastic scribes had been supplemented by university stationers, who rented out manuscripts for copying, and by busy lay scribes, who were paid salaries for their work by authors and would-be owners. The careful regulation of rates for the rental and sale of manuscripts was in part a recognition by university authorities that knowledge was a gift of the Holy Spirit and should not be too dearly sold. When the fixed prices were thought too low, buyers would have to supplement them with presents, not with money. In the early fifteenth century, a few decades before the invention of movable type, the theologian Jean Gerson was reminding princes that they must collect books not just for themselves, but for their companions, 'nedum pro te, sed pro consortibus tuis'.<sup>6</sup>

The point of all this is that sixteenth-century authors, book-producers and book-possessors inherited not only patterns of gifts, but also a belief that property in a book was as much collective as private and that God himself had some special rights in that object. By this argument, the book was at its best when given, should not be sold beyond a just price and never be hoarded.

Could such a cultural ideal survive the sixteenth century? Could God's share, already somewhat eroded, survive the desacralising technology of the printing shop? His gifts were certainly not mentioned when the profit-minded merchant-publisher begged the king for an exclusive privilege to publish an edition for a number of years, but only the *libraire's* own efforts and expenses in finding, preparing, editing and/or illustrating a correct text. And what happened to God's

<sup>5</sup>G. Post, K. Giocarinis and R. Kay, 'The Medieval Heritage of a Humanist Ideal: "Scientia Donum Dei est, Unde Vendi non Potest"', *Traditio*, xi (1955), 195–234. J. Le Goff, *Les Intellectuels au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1962), 104–8. J. W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants. The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and his Circle* (Princeton, 1970), i, 121–30, ii, 83–6. J. K. Farge, 'The Faculty of Theology of Paris, 1500–1536: Institution, Personnel and Activity in Early Sixteenth-Century France' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1976), 37–80. L. Dulieu, *La Médecine à Montpellier* (Avignon, 1975–9), ii, 67–8.

<sup>6</sup>G. H. Putnam, *Books and their Makers during the Middle Ages* (New York, 1962, reprinted from the 1896–7 ed.), i, chaps. 2–4. J. Destrez, *La 'Pecia' dans les manuscrits universitaires de XIII<sup>e</sup> et du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1935). Curtius, *European Literature*, 315. The tight prescription for payments for letters from royal chancelleries was intended to prevent bribery and injustice, but it also stemmed from the notion that what comes as a gift, here a gift from the king, should not be sold (H. Michaud, *La Grand Chancellerie et les écritures royales au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1967), 113, 335–45). R. F. Green, *Poets and Princepleasers. Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages* (Toronto, 1980), 99.

share in the multiplication of trivial or silly books, the kind that Rabelais made fun of in the Library of Saint Victor—*Les Pétarrades* of Copyists and Scribes, to give one of his odoriferous titles—the kind that ended up being sold as scented paper at stalls near the Paris bridges?<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, there were now many more books to give if one wished to, and with increased literacy more people to read them and read them aloud; possibly the printed book could have more varied use as a present than the rarer illuminated manuscript. However unequally the profits from an edition were divided, the evidence for collective work on it was more manifest than in the manuscript, as both the publisher's and the author's name were prominently displayed on the title page, and throughout much of the sixteenth century that of the printer might be found in the colophon, if he or she were different from the publisher. (Only the journeymen were ignored.) The enhanced sense of self-consciousness of the Renaissance author might be expressed more effectively and honourably in a gift than in a sale.<sup>8</sup> And perhaps the Lord's share could be remembered when tradespeople were bringing out religious texts of all kinds. The printed book could retain some of its privileged status as a gift, a product of 'the divine art'. The reformulation of the medieval saying might be: 'The gifts of God can be sold and given, it depends on the circumstances.'

## II

What then of the circumstances for giving books? We can sort them out for purposes of this essay into three categories: the dedicated book, that is, the public gift; the book given to others in the course of one's lifetime; and the book bequeathed at death. The initial diffusion of late-medieval writings was, as we know, through a gift, that is, through the sending of the treatise, the poem, the translation or the freshly corrected text to a person, ordinarily more powerful and wealthier than oneself, who might have commissioned it; who would send one back a gift of money or some other precious object; and who, through his or her reputation, would add to the lustre of the work and defend it against the malicious criticism of the jealous. The manuscript might

<sup>7</sup>François Rabelais, *Pantagruel, Roy des Dipsodes*, chap. 7 in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. P. Jourda (Paris, 1962), i, 253. *Discours non plus mélancoliques que divers, de choses mesmement qui appartiennent a notre France* (Poitiers, 1557), chap. 15. On the impact of printing, see E. L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge, 1979), i, chap. 2.

<sup>8</sup>On this general question, see S. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, 1980).

include an illumination of the author on bended knee presenting the book and a dedicatory letter, which was often included by later copyists, thus making the praise of the patron a part of the text. Nor was one limited to making a single gift of a work: in 1400 Christine de Pisan sent dedicatory copies of her *Epistre qu'Othea . . . envoya a Hector* to the Dukes of Orléans, Burgundy and others.<sup>9</sup>

With the printed book in the sixteenth-century context, the character of the dedicated gift changed. More kinds of people dedicated books: authors, relatives of authors, translators, editors, publishers, printers. It is the translator of Alciato's *Emblems* into French who dedicates that work to a Scottish count, not Alciato. It is the printer who dedicates the French translation of Biringuccio's metallurgical work to a military man, not the translator. The learned publisher Guillaume Rouillé dedicated his editions as often as did his authors and translators, his epistles representing himself as a *giver* rather than a seller of books, publishing New Testaments to help a Cardinal defend the faith and Italian books to celebrate the glory of Catherine de Medici's ancestors.<sup>10</sup>

Now more kinds of people receive dedications than before and the return gifts and consequences hoped for are more diverse. The quest for patronage continued to be important, or course. Authors and translators were compensated by publishers by copies of their books, by salaries or by a combination of the two. The books were used mostly as presents, as medieval writers had done, but the sixteenth-century transaction had a somewhat different quality to it. The printed epistle now carried the patron's praise far and wide, both adding to the value of the gift to the recipient and taxing the donor's ingenuity in finding ways to multiply patrons for the same work. Erasmus was able to get away with specially prepared dedications for the same book; his recipients were either unsuspecting or were so flattered by the gift from the admired humanist that they did not care

<sup>9</sup> H. J. Chaytor, *From Script to Print* (Cambridge, 1945), chap. 6. G. Mombello, 'Per un' edizione critica dell' *Epistre Othea* di Christine de Pizan', *Studi Francesi*, viii (1964), 401-17, ix (1965), 1-12. I am grateful to Sandra Hindman for this reference.

<sup>10</sup> *Emblemes d'Alciat, De nouveau translatez en François* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1549), Dedication of Barthélemy Aneau to Jacques, Conte d'Aran, 3-4. *La Pyrotechnie ou art du feu . . . Composée par le Seigneur Vanoccio Biringuccio . . . traduite . . . en François par feu Maistre Iaques Vincent* (Paris: Claude Frémy, 1556), Dedication by Claude Frémy to Jean de La Marche, Seigneur de Jametz, Capitaine de cinquante hommes. *Il Nuovo Testamento di Giesu Christo* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1552), Dedication of Rouillé to the Cardinal de Tournon, 3-4. *Prima parte del Prontuario de le Medaglie de Piu Illustri et fulgenti huomini e donne* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1553), Dedication of Rouillé to Catherine de Medici, f. a2<sup>r-v</sup>. N. Z. Davis, 'Publisher Guillaume Rouillé, Businessman and Humanist', in *Editing Sixteenth Century Texts*, ed. R. J. Schoeck (Toronto, 1966), 72-112. Also see M. Lebel, 'Josse Bade, éditeur et préfacier (1462-1535)', *Renaissance and Reformation*, n.s., V (1981), 63-71.

about their competitors. Other authors simply changed the dedicatee with a new edition, while the mathematician Pierre Forcadel of the Collège Royale inserted a fresh dedication at every break in his texts—four for his *Arithmétique* and six for his translation of Euclid. So common were these practices that a late sixteenth-century explicator of the proverb ‘D’une fille deux gendres’ (‘From one daughter two sons-in-law’) gave as an example ‘learned men who dedicate their works to several princes and seigneurs for the presents they hope for’.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever their hopes, the dedicator now chose among a wider range of identities *vis à vis* the patron and (as befitted a century when there was much reflection on Seneca’s treatise on *Benefits*) the language of gratitude was more varied. At one end of the scale, in 1570, printer Antoinette Peronet dedicates the translation she has commissioned of Marcus Aurelius to the noble Governor of Lyon, whose protection she wishes not only for the book but also for her person, poor widow with orphans, against the dangers of civil war; despite her ‘petitesse et ignorance’, the simplicity of her writing and the ‘unworthiness of her gift’ compared to his grandeur, she hopes that he will accept the book because of its useful instruction on governance and her good will.<sup>12</sup> At the other end of the scale, Ambroise Paré, the royal surgeon, presents his *Oeuvres* to King Henri III in a volume replete with the author portrait which has long since replaced the kneeling donor picture,<sup>13</sup> with poems from the court poet Pierre Ronsard and others honouring Paré; and with a dedicatory epistle which reviews his own service for three previous kings before he put this, ‘his masterpiece’, at Henri’s feet. In between these examples are dedications like that of the royal

<sup>11</sup> A. Parent, *Les Métiers du livre à Paris au XVIe siècle* (Histoire et civilisation du livre, 6; Geneva, 1974), 100–4. Jean Hoyoux, ‘Les moyens d’existence d’Erasmus’, *Bibliothèque d’humanisme et renaissance* v (1944), 29–59. *Arithmétique entière et abrégée de Pierre Forcadel* (Paris: Charles Perier, 1565), dedications to the Count of Bothwell, Charles de Thelligny, Jean de Morel and Georges Aubert. *Les Six Premiers Livres des Elements d’Euclide, traduits et commentez par Pierre Forcadel* (Paris: Jérôme de Marnef and Guillaume Cavellat, 156— [sic]), dedications to Charles IX, Gaspard de Coligny, Charles de Thelligny, François de La Noue, Pierre de Montdoré, and Monsieur Guetauld. ‘Explications morales d’aucuns proverbes communs en la langue francoyse’, in *Thresor de la langue francoyse* (Paris, 1606), 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Institution de la vie humaine, Dressée par Marc Antonin Philosophe . . . Traduit, par Pardoux du Prat* (Lyon: Widow of Gabriel Cotier, 1570), dedication of Antoinette Peronet to Governor François de Mandelot.

<sup>13</sup> R. Mortimer, *A Portrait of the Author in Sixteenth-Century France* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1980). In one of Dr. Mortimer’s illustrations, the donor, rather than kneeling, is striding energetically, book in hand, up to a seated recipient (Fig. 6). The traditional kneeling position was used by the humanist Guillaume Budé in the portrait for his manuscript *De l’Institution du Prince*, presented to François Ier around 1519. In a work focused around the importance of royal patronage for the new learning, the older style of gift-presentation may have been essential, lest the author appear too self-interested. It was not included in the posthumous printed edition, Arrivour, 1547.

geographer Nicolas de Nicolay to Henri II: it is at the king's command that he has travelled the seas and translated this Spanish work on the *Art of Navigation*; may these galleys and brigantines extend Henri's dominion not only as far as Caesar's and Alexander's, but communicate his light throughout the universe. Here the geographer's gift does not humbly 'venture out under the shade of the wings of the patron', to quote the older but still current phrase, but proudly reflects the patron's glorious sun.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, there are straightforward dedications quite without the language of deference. The jurist and *Parlementaire* René Choppin sends Henri III his commentary on the customs of Anjou with a dedication talking only of royal interest in that duchy; this does not deter the king from sending him 1000 *écus d'or* in return. The Protestant artisan Palissy dedicates a scientific work to a nobleman and simply evokes their philosophical and mathematical discussions together. A certain Jean Massé offers his book on the *Veterinary Art* to a master of the royal stables and after informing him that a horse is the most noble animal after man, tells him of his own skills and that his last employer is now dead.<sup>15</sup>

As interesting as this proliferation in the style of the donor-patron relationship is the appearance of dedications which have quite different purposes. First are those in which a publisher uses the public gift to entice or reward copy from an author or translator. Already Aldus Manutius had tried this in Venice in the opening years of the sixteenth century, and in France Guillaume Rouillé was a master of the art. To a theologian in Spain he dedicates a book, asking him to send him more manuscripts as 'gifts'. To the literary Domenichi in Italy, he dedicates the author's own works: 'Accept this book with the same good heart in which you sent it. You presented it to me in a beautiful script and with pictures made by hand. I return it to you printed in beautiful characters and with engraved illustrations. Think of me,' the rich merchant-publisher says to his author, dissolving the commercial

<sup>14</sup> *Les Oeuvres de M. Ambroise Paré* (Paris: Gabriel Buon, 1575), Dedication of Paré to Henri III. *L'Art de Naviguer de Maistre Pierre de Medine, Espagnol ... traduit de Castillan en François, avec augmentation ... par Nicolas de Nicolai ...* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1554), Dedication of Nicolay to Henri II. 'Un essay souz l'ombre de voz fortes ailes' used by the jurist Jean de Coras in the dedication to Henri II of *Des Mariages Clandestinement et irreveremment contractes par les enfans de famille ...* (Toulouse: Pierre du Puis, 1557).

<sup>15</sup> René Choppin, *De Legibus Andium Municipalibus Libri III ... Ad Henricum. 3. Regem Franciae et Poloniae* (Paris: Nicolas Chesneau, 1581). 'Dons du roi Henri III', *Archives historiques, artistiques et littéraires*, ii (1890-1), 329-30. Bernard Palissy, *Discours admirables, de la nature des eaux et fontaines* (Paris: Martin Le Jeune, 1580), Dedication to Antoine de Ponts, Capitaine de cents gentils-hommes. Jean Massé, *L'art veterinaire, ou grande marechalerie* (Paris: Charles Perier, 1563), Dedication to François de Knevenoy, chevalier de l'ordre du Roi.



relationship into another kind of reciprocity, 'as your friend and brother.'<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, a significant number of printed books were dedicated to friends, that is, to friends with few of the business ties that linked Rouillé and Domenichi. In the first generation of French humanism, from 1490 to 1520, Eugene Rice has found that the literary men dedicated more of their works back and forth to each other and to university colleagues than to powerful patrons. Erasmus explains why in a 1514 dedication to Pieter Gillis:

Friends of the commonplace and homespun sort, my open-hearted Pieter, have their idea of relationship, like their whole lives, attached to material things; and if ever they have to face a separation, they favour a frequent exchange of rings, knives, caps and other tokens of the kind, for fear that their affection may cool when intercourse is interrupted or actually die away . . . But you and I, whose idea of friendship rests wholly in a meeting of minds and the enjoyment of studies in common [a slight exaggeration, since Gillis helped Erasmus sell his books], might well greet one another from time to time with presents for the mind and keepsakes of a literary description . . . Any loss due to separation in the actual enjoyment of our friendship should be made good, not without interest, by tokens of this literary kind. And so I send a present—no common present, for you are no common friend, but many jewels in one small book.

Erasmus then went on to discuss the similes and metaphors from classical authors which he had collected for this edition of his *Parabolae*.<sup>17</sup>

Such gifts continued throughout the century, and in contrast with what is often thought about Renaissance dedications, rival in importance those seeking and rewarding patronage. In 1531 Charles de Bouelles dedicates his collection of *Popular Proverbs* to a friend who was a jurist in Paris; the epistle discusses Erasmus's *Adagia* and other proverbs, that is, it suggests a literary setting for the subject of the book. For the poet and mathematician Jacques Peletier, his *Arithmetique*

<sup>16</sup> M. Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius. Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, 1979), 221–2. *Francisci Sanctii Brocensis . . . Commentarius in And. Alciati emblemata* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1573), Dedication of Rouillé to Martin Azpilcueta Navaro. *Dialogo dell'Imprese Militari et Amoroze di Monsignor Gioivo . . . Con un Ragionamento de Messer Lodovico Domenichi* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1559), f. a2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> E. F. Rice, Jr., 'The Patrons of French Humanism, 1490–1520', in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, ed. A. Molho and J. A. Tedeschi (Dekalb, Ill., 1971), 687–702. Hoyoux, 'Les moyens d'existence d'Erasmus', 51–2. *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto, 1974– ), iii: *The Correspondence of Erasmus*, tr. R. A. B. Mynors and D. F. S. Thomson, no. 312.

of 1552 was a testimonial to his years of intimacy with Theodore Beza in Paris. Each of its 'proems' to him raised an important issue in regard to mathematics, music and the French language, making known to readers the educational program which they and their circle had talked about late into the night.<sup>18</sup>

The public gift could also be used to give expression to the intimate relations among members of a family, while still calling attention to wider cultural values. Uncles dedicate books to nephews and nephews to uncles. Fathers dedicate instructional works to daughters, urging them to be virtuous and obedient; daughters dedicate works to virtuous fathers showing their obedience. Laurent Joubert, royal physician and chancellor of the University of Montpellier, dedicates his translation of a medieval work on surgery to his elderly mother, Catherine Genas. It was not so much her twenty children and eighty grandchildren he wished to praise, he said, but her role as a practical healer, creator of remedies and salves for the poor and the sick. Her ointment for maladies of the breasts was now known in several provinces. Why should she have no reputation after her death? This remarkable text not only celebrates Joubert's mother, but was also his way of showing his readers the best of folk practice, the best of that practice which he had tried to correct in his widely read *Popular Errors in Regard to Health and Medicine*, the best one could hope for when female skills were kept in their proper domain.<sup>19</sup>

In short, these dedications to friends and family establish a context for the subject of the book, the kind of circle where and the spirit with which the book should be read and its contents discussed. The book

<sup>18</sup> Charles de Bouelles, *Proverbiorum Vulgarium Libri tres* (Paris: Galliot Du Pré, 1531), dedication to Joachim Michon. *L'Arithmétique de Jaques Peletier du Mans, departie en Quatre Livres, A Theodore De Besze* (Poitiers: Jean de Marnef, 1552). On the withdrawal of Beza's name in a subsequent edition when their friendship had cooled, see N. Z. Davis, 'Peletier and Beza Part Company', *Studies in the Renaissance*, xi (1964), 188–222.

<sup>19</sup> Antoine de Masso, *Orationes Duae, Comitibus Consularibus, Lugduni habitae* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1556), Dedication by de Masso to his uncle François Grolier, a Consul. Juan Luis Vives, *L'Institution de la femme chrestienne . . . traduite en langue Française par Pierre de Changy Escuier* (Lyon: Jean de Tournes, 1543), Dedication to Changy's daughter Marguerite. *Epistre consolatoire de Messire Jean Boccace, envoyee au Seigneur Pino de Rossi, traduite d'Italien en François par Damoiselle Marguerite de Cambis* (Lyon: Guillaume Rouillé, 1556), Dedication of Marguerite to her father Louis de Cambis. Jean de Coras, *De Iure Emphyteutico* (Lyon: Guillaume de Rouillé, 1550), Dedication by Coras to his father Jean de Coras. Jean de Coras, *Arrest Memorabile du Parlement de Tolose . . . Item, Les Douze Reigles du Seigneur Jean Pic de la Mirandole . . . traduites de Laten en François par ledit de Coras* (Lyon: Antoine Vincent, 1565), Dedication of the translation to Coras' daughter Jeanne. *La Grande chirurgie de M. Guy de Chauliac . . . Restituee . . . par M. laurens Ioubert* (Lyon: Etienne Michel, 1579), Dedication of Joubert to his mother Catherine Genas; on Joubert's concerns here, see N. Z. Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, 1975), 224, 258–61.

must seem to come not only to the dedicatee but also to the buyer as a gift, a service.<sup>20</sup>

The turning of the dedication away from the preoccupations of patronage into more general social or religious uses is one of the most striking features of the sixteenth-century book. Erasmus himself made this distinction in a letter to Cardinal Riario, which he had printed not long after he had sent it; should he dedicate his forthcoming edition of Jerome to William Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'to whom I owe everything', or to Pope Leo X, where the most important return would be the encouragement of peace, 'the nurse of literary studies'? Erasmus finally opted for Warham, making his *New Testament* a gift to Leo, with an epistle which, while including praise for the archbishop's work in England, stressed how the pope could channel the text to the whole world.<sup>21</sup>

The book in fact had an advantage over the traditional gifts from city governments to monarchs and high officials from whom they sought public benefits. Golden statues, cups, capes and barrels of fine wine did not necessarily carry with them the message about the hoped-for reform or action, and were more likely to be given away or returned than was the presentation copy of a book. In the book, everything could be made explicit and the dedications themselves could draw heavily on the language of gifts and responsibilities. So the town lawyer of Lyon sends his commentary on the privileges and immunities of that city to the Governor: 'you represent in this *pays* the king, who has made the gift of these privileges to us'. I now give the *Privileges* back to you in book form, begging you to protect them and allow the Lyonnais to enjoy them and live in peace. A Catholic canon dedicates his book on *The Providence of God over the kings of France* to Charles IX, pointing out that he, like Clovis, was king by the gift of God. He had the gift to cure scrofula, and in return had the obligation to defend sacred religion, in this particular instance by exterminating the heretics. Protestants, of course, could use the book in a similar way, as in Calvin's dedication of his *Institutes* to François Ier, a gift intended to soften the king's heart toward the evangelical cause. Characteristically, Calvin, with his theological worry about the whole matter of reciprocity, talks less of gift and obligation, than of ministry, office and the duty to serve God's glory.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Sometimes authors talk of their publications as a gift to all their readers (Joachim du Bellay in the 'Au lecteur' of *L'Olive* of 1550 says, 'Je te fay' present de mon Olive'). Prefaces from publishers stress their 'service' to the public, even while the title page may be set up to advertise the virtues of the book to potential buyers.

<sup>21</sup> Erasmus, *Correspondence*, no. 333, no. 384.

<sup>22</sup> Claude de Rubys, *Les Privileges, Franchises et Immunités Octroyées par les Roys ... aux Consuls, Eschevins, manans et habitans de la ville de Lyon* (Lyon: Antoine Gryphius, 1574), Dedication of de Rubys to François de Mandelot, Governor of Lyon. Gabriel de

The most novel Protestant dedication, however, is that of Robert Olivétan for his translation of the Bible, the beautiful folio edition printed by Pierre de Vingle at Neuchâtel in 1535. He will not follow Dame Custom and trot about here and there to a most liberal Maecenas, to a most attentive Patron. This book needs no Very-illustrious, Very-excellent, Very-magnificent Name; it is not of the stuff which Authors exchange craftily for rich gifts and copious grants. Rather he dedicates it to 'the church of Jesus Christ, poor and little, made up of the true faithful', to whom it properly belongs. He gives them what is theirs, but still remains his. This gift has a different nature from any other: 'it is made only to be given and communicated . . . it enriches those to whom it is given, but does not improverish in any way those who give it'.<sup>23</sup>

Fed by new sources, the notion that God's gift must be passed on is here restated; the contrast made, however, is not between giving and selling, but between right giving and crafty giving.

As the last test of some of the things I have been claiming about the book as public gift, let us consider which kinds of editions are rarely thought suitable to include a dedication. In the decades when Protestant polemics were too dangerous for the name of the author and the printer, they were also too dangerous for a gift. But could it be that all other works which are not dedicated are simply regarded as too modest, trivial or ephemeral in content and appearance to have the status of a gift—fit therefore only to be objects of commerce? For example, little pamphlets about meteors, floods and monstrous births have no dedications. But this explanation appears inadequate when one reflects on other categories of books which are virtually never dedicated: royal edicts and decrees of other governmental bodies; Shepherd's Calendars, those unchanging repositories of rural lore, though the editions are of substantial size and illustrated; Books of Hours, even when the publisher has adorned them with new woodcuts; and collections of popular plays, farces and songs, even when they appear for the first time.<sup>24</sup> Here, quite apart from God's share, are texts

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Saconay, *De la providence de Dieu sur les Roys de France* (Lyon: Michel Jove, 1568), Dedication from Saconay to Charles IX. Jean Calvin, *Christianae Religionis Institutio . . . Praefatio ad Christianissimum Regem Franciae, qua hic ei liber pro confessione fidei offertur* (Basel, 1536).

<sup>23</sup> *La Bible. Qui est toute la Sainte escripture . . .* (Neuchâtel: Pierre de Vingle, 1535), ff.\* ii<sup>r-v</sup>: D. Robert Olivetanus lhumble et petit translateur a Leglise de Jesus Christ Salut.

<sup>24</sup> For example, of the many Books of Hours which I have examined the only edition which has a dedication is the *paraphrase* in French by Gilles Cailleau, that is, one that departs from the usual texts: *Paraphrase sur les Heures de nostre Dame . . . traduictes de Latin en François, par frere Gilles Cailleau* (Poitiers: Jean and Enguilbert de Marnef), 1542, Dedication to Anne de Poulignac, Comtesse de la Roche Foucault. News reports sometimes have the form of a letter, but not a dedicatory letter.

which are so much common property, so much part of the *res publicae*, so much part of the currency of everyday discussion, that no one has the right to appropriate them even long enough for a gift. Rabelais said in his dedication of a scholarly work in 1534 that a book without a dedicatory epistle was acephalous, a book without a head. Yet there is not even a mock dedication in his pseudonymous *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, printed not long before, but only prologues to the readers. Was Rabelais ashamed of what he was publishing, as some have claimed? or was it rather that he wanted the stories he had authored to have this quality of common property?<sup>25</sup>

### III

In addition to the public gift of a dedicated book, there was the personal gift of a book, by the author or printer, but more especially by a book-owner during his or her lifetime to another person. The evidence for this is scattered through letters and journals, or caught in the bindings, flyleaves and title-pages of the books themselves. Such informal giving was found with medieval manuscripts, as when books were brought by high-born women to their husbands as part of a dowry, but it became much more common with the more easily replaceable printed book. Sometimes these gifts are part of the world of obligation: in 1519, a publisher of Caen presents the University library with six volumes in hopes that he will be forgiven the late payment of a tax, and in 1542 Nicolas de Herberary, translator of the *Amadis de Gaule*, finds he must provide a secretary at the chancellery with two bound volumes of the series if he wants the privilege delivered for his new editions. (In principle, secretaries were paid their salaries by the king and were to take no fees from petitioners for the simple signing of letters.)<sup>26</sup>

Other times, as with the host's gifts at the end of Erasmus's *Godly Banquet*, they are part of the improvised back-and-forth of friendship and intimacy. Montaigne formed the resolution to send a certain Mademoiselle Paulmier his book quite freely from the first hour he saw her, for as he wrote her, 'I felt that you would do it much honor.' Between the learned Protestant judge Jean de Coras in Toulouse and

<sup>25</sup> Dedicatory epistle of Rabelais to Jean du Bellay for *Topographia antiquae Romae* by G. B. Marliani (Lyon: Sébastien Gryphius, 1534) in Rabelais, *Oeuvres*, ed. Jourda, II, 528.

<sup>26</sup> S. G. Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture', *Signs*, VII (1982), 763–5. L. Delisle, *Catalogue des livres imprimés ou publiés à Caen avant le milieu du XVIe siècle* (Amsterdam, 1969), II, xvi–xvii, 85–6. Parent, *Les Métiers du livre à Paris*, 108–9. Michaud, *La Grand Chancellerie*, 112–13.

his wife Jacqueline in their country home, there was a constant exchange of gifts and compliments: partridges and homemade garters from the wife and from the husband 'a naughty dress', spices, two pens ('well cut to my taste, just like you') and three books: the Psalms translated into Gascon, his own tale in French of a memorable case he had judged, and Nostradamus's predictions for the next year, foretelling bloody things especially against the Catholic clergy. 'Use each of these books for your recreation, while waiting till I come.'<sup>27</sup>

The arrival of such gifts in the countryside was important because in the absence of well-developed routes for peddlers of books, this was a means of their circulation. So we see noblewoman Anne de Laval exchanging fruits and peas with her sister-in-law from their manor houses in the Poitou and then being asked by Claude for the Sixth Book of *Amadis de Gaule*; Anne cannot give it to her yet because her children's tutor has not sent it from Paris. In the Cotentin of rural Normandy, where an active gift exchange went on in food, game, fish, honey and hunting dogs, books were one of the few presents that a *curé* could offer a local landowner like Gilles de Gouberville. Visiting one priest in Cherbourg, Gilles is given Machiavelli's *Prince*; another brings a law book with him when he comes to dinner at the manor house; with a third Gouberville lends the editions of publisher Guillaume Rouillé back and forth, and then makes a gift of one of them to his cousin not far away.<sup>28</sup>

Giving books rather than other presents allowed one a certain flexibility, so long as the recipient was a reader or part of a household where someone read aloud. One could give a new book, but if one did not wish to wait for it to be bound, one could give one's own copy without it being taken at all amiss (indeed, a personal copy may have had more value as a gift in the sixteenth century than a new one). The printed book also had a sexual and especially a social neutrality about it that many other gifts lacked in that world of encoded objects: for instance, the same book could move from parish priest to seigneur to seigneur in Normandy, while a rose could go only from parish priest to seigneur, and a deer only from seigneur to seigneur to duke.<sup>29</sup> It

<sup>27</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. M. Rat (Paris, 1962), 1396, letter 32. Montaigne distinguishes between this gift and the obligation he has toward Mlle Paulmier's father. Archives départementales de la Haute-Garonne, Eg16; *Lettres de Coras, celles de sa femme, de son fils et de ses amis*, ed. C. Pradel (Albi, 1880), 12, 15, 17, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Archives Nationales, 1AP251, nos. 67, 98. *Le Journal du Sire de Gouberville*, ed. E. de Robillard de Beaurepaire (Caen, 1893), 28, 136, 231. When Jean de Coras is in the country and his wife in Toulouse, she sends him printed news accounts (*Lettres de Coras*, 31).

<sup>29</sup> Based on an analysis of Gouberville, *Journal*. This relative neutrality gives books some advantage as objects to steal, so long as they have no signatures or distinctive binding on them. See B. Lescaze, 'Livres volés, livres lus à Genève au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Cinq siècles d'imprimerie genevoise*, ed. J. P. Candaux and B. Lescaze (Geneva, 1980), 140-50.

could be given at different times of year, unlike the Christmas cake or eggs of Easter. While New Year's Day had been a favoured moment for the presentation of manuscripts in the Middle Ages, dedications and informal gifts of printed books in France were distributed throughout the year. People knew that the royal surgeon, François Rasse des Neux, was a passionate collector, so whenever there was an occasion for a gift for him, as when he got married or had taken good care of a royal patient, he could simply be offered a book. And a book was a durable good: it would last long after the rabbit and deer had been eaten, bearing witness to the intentions of its donor.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, we have some glimpse of the ritual associated with the gift, the inscription by the new owner. This form of taking possession became common in the fifteenth century,<sup>31</sup> when manuscripts were a more plentiful item of trade, and then was developed in the printed book. The buyer might record the place, date and cost of purchase; the recipient might describe the source of the gift. 'These Hours [printed in Paris in 1491] belong to Jeanne Peltre by gift from her Aunt Damoiselle Hilleiry de Faulx, Widow of the late Hugues des Moynes. Nancy, July 7, 1565.' Jeanne then adds religious sayings in Latin and French and draws a skull. The book is appropriated, but not so strongly that it cannot move on and be signed for once again. A particularly interesting form of sixteenth-century signature, first appearing in an Italian manuscript before 1466, suggests this balance between possessiveness and generosity: this book belongs to Jean Grolier [the celebrated collector] and his friends, 'Joannis Grolieri et Amicorum.' A law student in Toulouse signs his textbook 'Guillaume Maillarde et Amicorum' and writes a list of all the books he has lent out—his *Pantagruel* to one friend and so on. The inscription which best illustrates the mixed sentiments I am describing here begins with a little poem:

<sup>30</sup> Lebeuf, 'Remarques sur les dons annuels faits anciennement aux rois de France de la seconde race', in C. Leber, *Collection des meilleurs dissertations, notices et traités particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1838), vii, 400–2. Examples of books in France dedicated and/or presented on New Year's Day: Laurent Joubert, *Traité du Ris* (Paris, 1579), dedicated by Joubert to Princess Marguerite de France, Jan. 1, 1579; Jean Vostet, *Almanach, ou Prognostication des Laboureurs reduite selon le Calendrier Gregorien* (Paris, 1588), dedicated by Vostet to the Prior of Flammerécourt Jan. 1, 1588; Pierre de L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, ed. G. Brunet et al. (Paris, 1888–96), X, 107. Books may have continued to have a more important place in New Year's gifts in England than in France: H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers, 1475–1577* (Cambridge, 1952) 48–9; L. A. Montrose, 'Gifts and Reasons: The Contexts of Peele's *Araygnement of Paris*,' *ELH* 47 (1980), 451–2. J. Veyrin-Forrer, 'Un collectionneur peu connu, François Rasse Des Neux, chirurgien parisien', in *Studia Bibliographica in Honorem Herman de la Fontaine-Verwey*, ed. S. vander Woude (Amsterdam, 1968), 393, 402.

<sup>31</sup> N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford, 1969), I: London, 67–9, 154–5 and *passim*.

Who finds me should return me  
 To the one written below, for I am his ('je suis sien')  
 Reason wishes it, God command it  
 In the goods of others, you have nothing ('vous n'avez rien')  
 Jean de Beaujeu, architect  
 and his friends.<sup>32</sup>

There are also indications among these informal gifts of the broader social purposes already noted with dedicated books. People sometimes gave books away to strangers with no expectations of personal return. There was no counter-gift, no eventual reciprocity; it can just be called 'gratuitous', in the Stoic or Christian language of the sixteenth century. Most of the examples are religious ones. In 1560, the Jesuit Possevino came to a Lyon swarming with heretics; he had catechisms printed up at his expense and distributed them in the streets. In 1574, satirical books attacking Catherine de Medici, the king and his council were published by Protestants and in the words of one observer, 'were strewn about as far as the wine cellars of Avignon, where the chambermaids and valets going to draw wine for their masters often found them at their feet. So great was the fervour of those who escaped the [St Bartholomew's Day] Massacre to make known the innocence of the slain, the cruelty and perfidy of the killers and the injustice of the councillors.'<sup>33</sup>

Finally, schemes were worked out by publishers to combine the selling and giving of God's gifts: the profits would go to the poor. The ordinances of the Aumône-Générale of Lyon were published on that basis in 1539, as was a Geneva Bible of 1588. The latter was subsidised by '*gens de bien*, who wanted only to serve God', and other merchant-publishers and printers were advised that it would be especially dishonest and uncharitable to pirate the book. In fact, selling seems often to have dominated over giving: the Aumône-Générale of Lyon found it strange in 1562 that Antoine Vincent had not yet turned over his profits from the Reformed Psalter—surely he had met expenses after two or three years—and the deacons of the Bourse de Pauvres Etrangers in Geneva had to remind certain French publishers in 1567 of their promise to pass on their profits from Calvin's *Sermons*. 'It is

<sup>32</sup> *Horae beate Marie Virginis ad usum ecclesie romane* (Paris, 1491), copy at Cambridge University Library, Inc. 5. D. 1. 19 [2530] (I am grateful to Virginia Reinburg for this reference). Jean de Coras, *De Impuberum* (Toulouse, 1541), copy at the Bibliothèque municipale de Toulouse, Rés. C xvi 60. A. J. V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Recherches sur Jean Grolier, sur sa vie et sa bibliothèque* (Paris, 1866), 87–8. G. D. Hobson, 'Et Amicorum', *The Library*, 5th ser., iv (Sept. 1949), 87–99.

<sup>33</sup> *La Chronique lyonnaise de Jean Guéraud, 1536-1562*, ed. J. Tricou (Lyon, 1929), 150. Pierre de L'Estoile, *Journal pour la règne d'Henri III (1574-1589)*, ed. Louis-Raymond Lefèbvre (Paris, 1943), 56–7.



shameful that those who profess the Gospel, who . . . receive the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus . . . care so little about paying what they owe.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV

The giving away of booklets in the streets was an unlikely event during the centuries before printing, but in our last example of books as gifts—the bequest—the pattern was firmly in place during the Middle Ages. Bequests of books are found in Anglo-Norman wills of the eleventh and twelfth century; the library of the Sorbonne was constructed from them in the thirteenth century; legacies of religious books, service books and grammars by chaplains and lay commoners in the city of York in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were very numerous indeed. A recent study of the wills of some 978 English peers and peeresses in the late Middle Ages found that forty-two per cent of the men and fifty-eight per cent of the women made gifts of books. The beneficiaries of the peers were mostly their kinfolk; those of the commoners were divided among clerical institutions, schools, family and friends.<sup>35</sup> Since books were movables and not part of the legal patrimony, heirs could then decide whether to keep them or sell them. In fact, sometimes they did sell their gifts, while presumably holding back Books of Hours and the like as special family property. An instructive example is found in the library of more than two dozen manuscripts, most of them legal books, belonging to a local judge in the County of Foix in the late fifteenth century. Seven books came from bequests, including a Bible from an uncle; thirteen manuscripts he had purchased, six of them from heirs selling them after their parents' death; three manuscripts the judge had ordered copied himself; and one set of books on grammar and logic had been given to him by a friend. When he died he divided them equally between his two sons.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *La Police de l'Aulmosne de Lyon* (Lyon: Sébastien Gryphius, 1539); H. de Boissieu, 'L'aumône-générale de 1539 à 1562', *Revue d'histoire de Lyon*, viii (1909), 267. *La Bible, qui est toute la sainte écriture* (Geneva: Jérémie des Planches, 1588), *Advertisement aux Marchands libraires et Imprimeurs*. Archives de la Charité de Lyon, E10, p. 443. *Sermons de M. Jean Calvin sur le V. livre de Moïse, nommé Deuteronomie* (Geneva: Thomas Courteau, 1567), ff. \* v<sup>v</sup> - \* vi<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> M. Sheehan, *The Will in Medieval England* (Toronto, 1963), p. 284. R. Rouse, 'The Early Library of the Sorbonne', *Scriptorium*, 21, no. 1 (1967), 42-51. J. H. Moran, *Education and Learning in the City of York, 1300-1560* (Borthwick Papers, no. 55; University of York, 1979), 14-38. J. Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic Cultural Patronage and Book Bequests, 1350-1500', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 64 (Spring 1982), 522-48.

<sup>36</sup> C. Barrière-Flavy, 'Jean de Roquefort, juge-mage du Comté de Foix, 14 . . . - 1474', *Bulletin périodique de la Société Ariégeoise des sciences, lettres et arts*, xiv (1914-16), 11, 26-9.

Bequests of books continue, of course, all through the sixteenth century, with the changes introduced by the economy and culture of printing resembling those we have discussed above. To begin with, a wider social circle could now make such gifts as the library of the single book—the printed Hours, the printed Bible, the Psalms, the craft manual—appeared in the families of tradesmen. The beneficiaries still included relatives, religious institutions and schools, but legacies were made to friends as well. A missal printed in Lyon in 1510 passed down from one priest to another, all associated with the same chapter or parish, over 167 years. A more unusual set of Protestant bequests was made in 1556 by Demoiselle Jacqueline de Duaizie, a refugee in Geneva from Anjou. She disposed of 108 books, but they represented only three titles, a Bible and other religious works from the presses of the pastor, Philibert Hamelin. Presumably she had bought them in the first place to assist him in his godly work. Her recipients were the Bourse de Pauvres Etrangers and four neighbours—a shoemaker, a purse-maker, a ribbon-maker, and ‘a poor girl from Anjou’—and she said explicitly that the books could be sold and the money used in a suitable way.<sup>37</sup>

Demoiselle Jacqueline’s bequest is an example of a new flexibility in the use of the book as gift and also of a gift without immediate hope for return, that is, without expectation of prayers for the repose of her soul. It also expresses insouciance about the border between giving and selling even in the case of religious books. It seems likely (though only extensive research could establish it) that the willingness of heirs to sell books they had received increased with the expanded book market and calculating family strategies of the sixteenth century. On the one hand, Montaigne bequeathed his library to his daughter, who in turn bequeathed it to the vicar-general of Auch, and the jurist Claude Dupuy bequeathed his to his sons, who added to it and then bequeathed it to the Royal Library, of which they had been guardians. On the other hand, the many books so lovingly collected by the surgeon François Rasse Des Neux were sold by his son and heir to a Parisian bookseller, and the library of 700 volumes put together by a young Lyon pastor in the late sixteenth century was sold by his heirs to the Reformed Church of Lyon and not bequeathed to it<sup>38</sup>. And to

<sup>37</sup> On the size of libraries at death, see A. Labarre, *Le Livre dans la vie amiénoise du seizième siècle* (Paris, 1971), Part II. *Missale ad usum lugdunensis ecclesie* (Lyon: Claude Davost dit de Troyes for Jean Huguetan, 1510), signatures in copy at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés. B2665. Archives d’Etat de Genève, Notaires, J. Rageau, II. 65<sup>r-v</sup>; on the printer-pastor Philibert Hamelin, see P. Chaix, *Recherches sur l’imprimerie à Genève de 1550 à 1564* (Geneva, 1954), 194.

<sup>38</sup> J. R. Marboutin, ‘La librairie de Michel de Montaigne léguée à un vicaire général d’Auch’, *Revue de Gascogne*, xxi, n.s. (1926), 60–6. A. Franklin, *Précis de l’histoire de la bibliothèque du Roi, aujourd’hui Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1875), 127–37. Veyrin-Forrer,

move back to 1525, Erasmus in his old age did not follow the example of his *Godly Feast* and give away his books to his friends. Instead he sold his library to the admiring Polish humanist John à Lasco for a good price, while keeping the use rights over it till he died ten years later.<sup>39</sup>

With Erasmus's gifts and sales, let us stop and see what conclusions we can draw about books beyond the market. First, in a century in which the book was being produced by one of the most capitalistic industries in Europe, it continued to be perceived as an object of mixed not absolute property, of collective not private enterprise, despite the unequal distribution of monetary rewards. This happened not only because the facts of collaboration were displayed upon the title page, but because of the persistence of a powerful tradition for understanding what a book was and what it embodied: something not just created by us, but inherited, given by God, given by others. The book was a privileged object that resisted permanent appropriation and which it was especially wrong to view only as a source of profit.

Buying and selling did not, then, automatically obliterate God's share as strict evolutionary schemes would have us expect, nor did markets in books simply replace gifts. If anything, the number of gifts increased and the kinds of donors and recipients multiplied. The spirit and practice of the gift did change, however. At one end of the spectrum, there was a great porousness between the world of commerce and the world of gifts, as publishers used gifts to entice authors, get privileges and enhance sales and as they presented themselves as both givers and sellers. Buying and giving jostled each other in charity projects and authors savoured both presents and sales.

At the other end of the spectrum, the world of gifts expanded as an alternative to the market and market values. Relations between donor and patrons were represented in a wide variety of ways, and books were dedicated or given for broad social purposes that went beyond strict reciprocity. The Olivétan Bible challenged not only those who were preoccupied with profits, but those who wanted return from their gifts. Meanwhile for persons with only a few books on their shelf or living in remote areas, the given book may have loomed larger in their lives than the purchased one.

The philosophy of the gift survived beyond the distinctive circumstances of the sixteenth century. It affected concepts of how the great

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'François Rasse Des Neux', 414–5. 'Inventaire des Livres de feu M<sup>r</sup> de Brunet fait en Decembre 1603 ... Depuis acheptez par l'Eglise reformee de Lyon', Bibliothèque de l'Académie des Sciences de Lyon.

<sup>39</sup>F. Husner, 'Die Bibliothek des Erasmus', in *Gedenkschrift zum 400 Todestage des Erasmus von Rotterdam* (Basel, 1936), 228–59.

private libraries of the seventeenth century were to be used. Symbols of status or power though they were, these collections of books were not to be hoarded. In his *Advice on Establishing a Library* of 1627, Gabriel Naudé said that the collection was to be built up by gifts enticed from friends and by purchases, but then was 'not to remain hidden under a bush, but rather be consecrated to the usage of the public and so far as practicable, be accessible to the least of men'. Even John Locke, who went quite far in questioning God's share in individual property and who during his lifetime seems to have made presents of no more than fifty books in his library of 3000—each one carefully registered in his catalogue—affectionately bequeathed the library to his cousin and dearest friends. To jump to our own century, Walter Benjamin talked of his own library in the language of gifts. Unpacking his books, he comes upon some picture albums which had been made by his mother and inherited by him, the start of his library. 'Actually, inheritance is the soundest way of acquiring a collection. For a collector's attitude toward his possessions stems from an owner's feeling of responsibility toward his property. Thus it is in the highest sense the attitude of an heir, and the most distinguished trait of a collection will always be its transmissibility.'<sup>40</sup>

The interesting question, however, may not be the persistence of the idea, but the strength of its critical function. The wings of the Prince beat fast; the engine of the 'block-buster book' smokes. Can the spirit of the gift generate change or is it just infinitely adaptable?

<sup>40</sup> Gabriel Naudé, *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque. Présenté à Monseigneur le Président de Mesme* (Paris, 1627), 98–115, 151–61. K. Pomian, 'Entre l'invisible et le visible: la collection', *Libre*, 3 (1978), 3–56. J. Harrison and P. Laslett, *The Library of John Locke* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1971), 7–8, 44–5. W. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, tr. H. Zohn (New York, 1978), 59–67, 'Unpacking My Library, A Talk about Book Collecting.'