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TRAVELLING CHRONICLES

News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century

Edited by Siv Gøril Brandtzæg, Paul Goring and Christine Watson

BRILL *Series edited by* Andrew Pettegree

Travelling Chronicles

Library of the Written Word

VOLUME 66

The Handpress World

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Edited by

Siv Gøril Brandtzæg
Paul Goring
Christine Watson

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The Trondheim-based editors – Siv Gøril Brandtzæg and Paul Goring – want to express extreme gratitude to the Humanities Faculty at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology which for several years has supported a research project, 'Enlightenment News', concerning the history of news and the archives by means of which that history is written and rewritten. The Humanities Faculty has provided both funding and great encouragement, and those of us involved in 'Enlightenment News' have greatly appreciated the support of our Dean, Anne Kristine Børresen, while the project has been developing. 'Enlightenment News' has provided a milieu in which this volume has evolved, and the work of four of the project members is represented here. A further member – Yuri Cowan – does not have a direct contribution in the volume, but he has generously provided valuable feedback throughout and we are very grateful for his input. William Warner, the author of the first chapter, has provided a guiding hand since before the inception of 'Enlightenment News' and he has offered us many exemplary demonstrations of what can be achieved by recognising the porousness of the boundaries between literary studies and media history. He has continued to support our work and his contribution to this volume goes far beyond the first chapter. We wish also to thank our colleagues in the Department of Language and Literature in Trondheim, and the leadership of the department, not least for providing additional funding for 'Enlightenment News'. Finally we would like to thank Elinor Brandtzæg Goring for providing distraction and entertainment while the volume has been underway. As her surnames may suggest, the volume is not the only area of collaboration for the Trondheim-based editors, and we hope she has not been too neglected due to the demands of editing.

Some of the chapters in this volume (5, 6, 9 and 12) have grown from papers presented at a workshop in Uppsala, which was organised as part of the research project 'Cross-Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Translations of West-European Newspapers into Russian (c. 1600–1725)'. The Uppsala-based editor, Christine Watson, wishes first and foremost to thank Ingrid Maier, who is the head of the project and was the main organiser of the workshop. Her long-standing interest in early modern newspapers in general, and the Russian translations of Western news in particular, has been a source of inspiration to many scholars, including myself. The funding for the project was provided by the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (Riksbankens jubileumsfond) and the Department of Modern Languages at Uppsala University, and the Royal Society of the Humanities at Uppsala (Kungl. Humanistiska Vetenskaps-Samfundet i Uppsala) supplied additional funding for the workshop. I also wish to thank my colleagues at the Department of Modern Languages at Uppsala University for their support and for many interesting discussions. Last but not least, I want to thank Olof Jönsson for his support, and for not complaining about my late nights in front of the computer.

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Siv Gøril Brandtzæg, Paul Goring and Christine Watson

Notes on Contributors

Siv Gøril Brandtzæg
is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the research project 'Enlightenment News' at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), in the Department of Language and Literature. Her postdoctoral project focuses on advertisements of novels in eighteenth-century newspapers, the main result of which will be a book to be published in 2019, as well as some already published articles on newspaper advertising and the use of digital resources. Her PhD in Comparative Literature from 2012 was an investigation of eighteenth-century British sentimental fiction and its critical reception in contemporary periodical criticism. She has written several articles and book chapters for Scandinavian journals and three articles for Oxford University Press, including a bibliography of criticism concerning the epistolary novel for Oxford Bibliographies, and an article on periodical criticism for *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. She is currently developing a major research project on Scandinavian broadside ballads.

Heiko Droste
is Professor of History and head of the Institute for Urban History at Stockholm University. He studied at the universities of Cologne, Münster, Hamburg, and Kiel; he has also worked at the latter two as well as at the universities of Oldenburg, Kassel, Darmstadt, and Marburg. He moved to Sweden in 2007 and worked at Södertörn University, Stockholm, between 2007 and 2015. His research concerns German, Swedish and Baltic history between the fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries. His dissertation, completed in 1994, analysed the town historiography of the Northern German Hansa city Lüneburg between 1350 and 1639. Subsequently he has worked on different projects concerning early modern Swedish-German history and has produced, among other publications, a book on Sweden's diplomats and their interests in the seventeenth century (2003). Other research interests concern court history, friendship and patronage, cultural transfer, early modern hospitals and early modern media history, including the post, printed and handwritten newspapers, and diplomatic correspondence. He is currently working on a book about the news market in the seventeenth century, with a focus upon the Swedish Baltic and German provinces.

Paul Goring
is Professor of British Literature and Culture at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim. He began working in Norway in 1997

having studied at the University of London and the University of Wales. He specialises in eighteenth-century studies and has particular interests in theatre history, news and its connections to imaginative literature, and the lives and works of Laurence Sterne and the actor-playwright Charles Macklin. He is the author of *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), *Eighteenth-Century Literature and Culture* (Continuum, 2008) and has edited many volumes including *Lives of Shakespearian Actors: Charles Macklin* (Pickering & Chatto, 2008) and, for Penguin Classics, Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* and Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*.

Malte Griesse
leads a research group on 'Early Modern Revolts as Communicative Events' at the University of Konstanz whilst currently replacing the chair of early modern history at Humboldt University, Berlin, where he also holds a senior fellowship at the Centre Marc Bloch. He is particularly interested in communication history in early modern, modern and contemporary Europe, with a focus on Eastern Europe and Russia. He has written a monograph that reinterprets the seventeenth-century crisis from the perspective of transnational media flows in a pan-European perspective (to be published in German and English), and a PhD dissertation at the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris on different levels of communication from the intimate to the public, and their impact on the formation of opinion and the development of critical capacity under Stalin. Published in 2011 in French as *Communiquer, juger et agir sous Staline: La personne prise entre ses liens avec les proches et son rapport au système politico-idéologique*, the book has also been translated into English. For two years he has been working a broader project on Life-Stories in Motion, where he examines the transnational horizons and mobilities of subaltern 'ego-documents' in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Marius Warholm Haugen
is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), in the Department of Language and Literature. He holds a PhD in French literature and specialises in eighteenth-century novels, travel writing, and periodical culture. He is the author of *Jean Potocki: esthétique et philosophie de l'errance* (Peeters, 2014), as well as several articles on French and Italian literature, including most recently "'Half Sign, Half Ad': Literary and Commercial Functions of Paratextual and In-Text Titles in the Novels of Pietro Chiari" (*Italian Studies*, 72 (1), 2017) and "Re-viewing the world: appropriations of travel writing in the French periodical press (1780–1820)" (*Studies in Travel*

Writing, 21 (2), 2017). His postdoctoral project deals with the remediation and appropriation of travel writing in the French periodical press. He is also interested in theoretical and methodological issues related to digital scholarship, and is currently a member of the research project 'Enlightenment News'.

Rachael Scarborough King
is Assistant Professor of English at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She earned her PhD from New York University and BA from Columbia University. Her research concerns the literature and media of the long eighteenth century, with particular interests in letters, periodicals, and newspapers. Her articles have appeared in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, *Book History*, and *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, and her book *Writing to the World: Letters and the Origins of Modern Print Genres* will be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in Spring 2018.

Ellen Krefting
is Professor in the History of Ideas at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas (IFIKK) at the University of Oslo, where she also gained her PhD in 2005. She has published widely on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century intellectual history and media history in Europe and Denmark-Norway. Lately she has worked particularly on *Spectator* journalism, censorship and ideas of freedom of expression as well as on the genre of 'secret history' in eighteenth-century Scandinavia. She has co-edited and contributed to the volume *Eighteenth-Century Periodicals as Agents of Change: Perspectives on Northern Enlightenment* (Brill, 2015).

Johanne Kristiansen
is a PhD candidate in the Department of Language and Literature at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. She comes from an interdisciplinary background in history, comparative literature and English studies, and works within the field of eighteenth-century British print culture and political history. She wrote an MA thesis on the politicisation of book reviewing in England during the Revolution Controversy. Kristiansen is a member of the research group 'Enlightenment News'. Her doctoral dissertation explores the relationship between news infrastructure and newspaper management in England in the late eighteenth century, with a particular focus on the role of news culture and its impact on the British response to the French Revolution. In 2015, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship, which financed archival work at the Huntington Library and a seven-month research stay at the University of Santa Barbara, California.

Ingrid Maier
has been a Professor of Russian at Uppsala University (Sweden) since 2000. She has published extensively on seventeenth-century newspaper translations into Russian ('Vesti-Kuranty'), mostly from German and Dutch sources, focusing on the linguistic properties of this text corpus and on its cultural and historical background. She has also co-edited the last two volumes of the Moscow-published *Vesti-Kuranty* series (2008–2009 and 2017). Her main contributions to the series are her editions of the foreign sources (printed newspapers and pamphlets) and a monograph-length introduction to newspaper translations made in Moscow, mainly during the 1670s, published in the sixth volume of the series (2008). Her other scholarly interests include hitherto unknown manuscript sources concerning the 1671 execution of the Cossack leader Stepan Razin and the early history of the Russian theatre, on which she has published – together with Claudia Jensen – two major articles in English (2013 and 2015) and a small monograph in Russian (2017). Maier is an international consultant of the Russian State Archives of Ancient Documents (RGADA) in Moscow, a member of the advisory board of the German research institute *Deutsche Presseforschung* in Bremen, and a honorary doctor of the Institute of the Russian Language at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow.

Andrew Pettegree
is Professor of Modern History at the University of St Andrews and Director of the Universal Short Title Catalogue. He is the author of over a dozen books in the fields of Reformation history and the history of communication including *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), *The Book in the Renaissance* (Yale University Press, 2010) and *The Invention of News* (Yale University Press, 2014). His most recent book, *Brand Luther: 1517, Print and the Making of the Reformation* (Penguin USA) was published in October 2015. His new projects include a study of the book culture of the Dutch Golden Age for Yale University Press and 'Preserving the World's Rarest Books', a collaborative project with libraries funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Andrew Prescott
is Professor of Digital Humanities at the University of Glasgow. He trained as a medieval historian at Westfield College and Bedford College in the University of London, where he completed a thesis on the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. He was, from 1979 to 2000, a Curator of Manuscripts in the British Library, where he was involved in some of the Library's first digitisation projects, including *Electronic Beowulf*. He was Director of the Centre for Research into Freemasonry at the

University of Sheffield from 2000 to 2007. He has also worked at the University of Wales Lampeter and King's College London. From 2012–2018, Andrew was Theme Leader Fellow for the Arts and Humanities Research Council strategic theme of 'Digital Transfomations'. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. His many publications include *English Historical Documents* (1988), *Towards the Digital Library* (1998), *The British Inheritance* (2000), *The Benedictional of St Æthelwold: A Masterpiece of Anglo-Saxon Art* (2002), *Marking Well* (2006) and *London and the Kingdom* (2008), as well as articles on the 1381 revolt, the history of the British Library's collections and the history of Freemasonry.

Daniel Reed
is Assistant Archivist at the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History. He graduated from the University of Hull in 2008, and is currently a PhD candidate at Oxford Brookes University, conducting research towards a thesis entitled 'Patronage, Performance, and Reputation in the Eighteenth-Century Church'. His interest in historical newspapers and the manner in which they are archived has led to him authoring an introductory essay for the online '17th and 18th Century Nichols Newspapers Collection' launched in 2017 by Gale Cengage. Beyond his doctoral research, Daniel is an active member of the International Laurence Sterne Foundation, an Assistant Editor of *The Shandean*, and he is the author of an article on a newly discovered letter by Sterne.

Kaarel Vanamölder
is currently the Associate Professor of Communication and Practical History at Tallinn University, Estonia. His main areas of research include early modern press/media and communication history and the history of earlier Baltic historiography. His special interest lies on the history of early newspapers printed in the Baltic provinces of the Swedish Empire, about which he wrote his thesis 'Communication field in Swedish Baltic Sea provinces in the end of the 17th century: Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung as an early modern information vehicle' (Tartu University Press, 2012, in Estonian). He is also involved in a project on the climate history of Estonia at Tallinn University.

William B. Warner
is Professor of English at the University of California, Santa Barbara. His research and teaching focuses on the long history of mediation, from eighteenth-century print culture to twentieth-century media. His work in the eighteenth century has focused upon understanding how the novel emerged, over the course of the century as the dominant form of print entertainment, his most

notable publication on which is *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain (1684–1750)* (University of California Press, 1998). He has worked on the media history of Enlightenment, and, together with Clifford Siskin, is the editor of *This is Enlightenment* (Chicago 2010). More recently he has published *Protocols of Liberty: Communication Innovation and the American Revolution* (Chicago, 2013), winner of the 2014 Gottschalk Prize, given by American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies. Most recently he is exploring the relationship between reality and the novel.

Christine Watson
is a graduate of Uppsala University, Sweden, where in 2012 she defended her PhD dissertation 'Tradition and Translation: Maciej Stryjkowski's Polish Chronicle in Seventeenth-Century Russian Manuscripts'. During the following years, she was associated with the research project 'Cross-Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe: Translations of West-European Newspapers into Russian (c. 1600–1725)', publishing several articles on philological topics connected with the Russian manuscript translations of Western news made chiefly in the seventeenth century. She takes a particular interest in the translation technique and genre-specific traits of news translations.

Daniel C Waugh
is Professor Emeritus of History, International Studies and Slavic at the University of Washington (Seattle, USA). He has published extensively on the translated literature of Muscovite Russia and on pre-modern Russian libraries, with monographs on Muscovite polemics about the Turks and on book culture and the articulation of regional identity in the time of Tsar Peter I. His contribution to this volume is part of an ongoing book project with Prof. Ingrid Maier (Uppsala) on foreign news in Muscovy, and he is a contributor to a project (with Claudia Jensen, Maier and Stepan Shamin) which is rewriting the history of the early theatre in late Muscovy. Waugh's interests also extend to the history of 'The Great Game' in Central Asia and the historic 'silk roads', concerning which he has edited for more than a decade a substantial annual. He has participated in archaeology of early nomad graves in Mongolia and he translates Russian scholarship on that material. While teaching courses on the 'silk roads', he was the founding director of the educational internet project 'Silk Road Seattle'. His extensive photographic archive from travels along the silk roads has contributed to several internet projects, with a significant collection currently being added to ArchNet, the website of the Aga Khan Program in Islamic Architecture at MIT.

Arthur der Weduwen
is a researcher at the University of St Andrews specialising in the history of media, news and books in the Dutch Republic. He is the author of *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century* (2 vols., Brill, 2017), and he has published several articles on early modern news culture, newspapers and advertising, most recently in *Quaerendo*, *Media History* and *De Gulden Passer*. His PhD is a study of state communication in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic, focussing especially on the influence of printed placards and ordinances. He is a long-term associate of the Universal Short Title Catalogue project in St Andrews. He is now engaged (with Andrew Pettegree) to write a study of the book culture of the Dutch Golden Age for Yale University Press, to appear in 2019.

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PART 1

Introduction

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A Network of Networks: Spreading the News in an Expanding World of Information

Paul Goring

News has become such a familiar and everyday element of modern societies that the complexity of the systems which lie behind news and which produce it rarely attract more than passing reflection. News is experienced literally every day; it has become 'the news' – the phenomenon has become a definitive presence and normalised as a basic fact of existence. The forms through which we consume the news may change, and we quickly adjust to the periodical and ongoing alterations in the ways in which news is mediated: the Nine O'Clock News becomes the Ten O'Clock News, newspaper titles come and go, online news sites gradually take the place of print publications, and so on. But the fundamental existence and importance of news has become a given: we would not readily adjust to the end of news; the fact of there being 'the news' in some easily accessible form has become an ingrained part of how societies function and of how individuals relate to the wider world. In this situation, it is worth reflecting upon what an extraordinary phenomenon 'the news' is and also how that phenomenon evolved, and the purpose of this volume is to probe moments in the early phases of the evolution of the news and, in the process, to illuminate the intricacy of the systems of knowledge exchange upon which the news depends.[1] The essays in the volume look back to the early modern period and into the eighteenth century in order to consider how the news came to be what it is, how news came to penetrate societies so deeply, how the news of the past was gathered and spread, how the news gained respect and influence, how news functioned as a business and interlocked with other businesses, and also how the historiography of news can be conducted with the resources available to scholars today.

News has origins in relatively simple forms of communication – a messenger carrying a single news item to a single recipient, for example. In its modern form, it involves a mass and multiple transit of information (some reliable, some not, some downright false), with manifold points of origin (shifting according to where events deemed newsworthy occur), to manifold outlet points

1 A philosophically inclined account of the defining role of news in modern culture and the common absence of self-consciousness regarding its consumption is given in: Alain de Botton, *The News: A User's Manual* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2014).

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(publishers and broadcasters, often via news agencies) and thereafter to manifold consumers. The sophistication and internationalism of the systems underlying the news are, though, by no means new, and in the early modern period news rapidly became a highly developed enterprise, involving vast numbers of agents and communication routes. By the eighteenth century, news networks had extraordinary complexity and geographical reach – Samuel Johnson was not alone when he imagined "observation with extensive view" surveying "the world from China to Peru" (and perhaps that famous line is a response of sorts to the expanding information culture in which Johnson was living).[2] The period saw a major proliferation of regular printed newspapers – mainly across Europe, but also beyond – and no media product at the time was more complex in terms of production and more fundamentally collaborative than a newspaper. Mass, long-distance cooperation was crucial to news production, and it also shaped news as a reading experience, as consumers, through the act of reading, became drawn into a far-reaching network of knowledge exchange – one involving thousands of contributors, almost all of whom were anonymous so far as the reader was concerned. The expansion of news can be seen as a propagation of human relations – in the form of knowledge of others – across a growing number of increasingly distant locales, but in the process of expansion the news media themselves necessarily become more systematised, less personal and increasingly corporate. The single messenger of the past (a cliché, but one with a basis in reality) evolved into a dispersed army of news workers, some professional but most more incidentally connected to the business of news, such as merchants or sailors who might take on a type of 'foreign correspondent' role. Such contributors to early modern and eighteenth-century news were not all knowingly connected – far from it – yet they were associated by strands within what was a complex and growing network of news. Indeed, given the scope and internationalism of news, it is probably erroneous to use 'network' in the singular – a 'network of networks' is more appropriate. But however we term the mass collaboration that made news happen, one thing that is clear is that it defies easy mapping, description and enquiry. Indeed if we consider a single news publication as a type of entry point into the world of news, it becomes an immensely challenging and even bewildering object of analysis if it is considered not as a source for 'what was happening at the time' (a perfectly valid way in which historical news documents are often used) but as a node within the networks from which it emerged and to which it in turn contributed through its own distribution, consumption and remediation.

2 Samuel Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (London: 1749), p. 3.

Let us, in a spirit of introduction, delve into a single historical newspaper and take an issue of, say, the *London Evening-Post* from, say, the 1760s, and consider just some of the agents and communication channels that made it possible to produce this paper. The *London Evening-Post* was a thrice-weekly newspaper, produced (at this time) as a four-column, four-page folio publication; it had wide distribution in London and the provinces, and had a history of being oppositionist in terms of its political outlook.[3] The British Library's Burney Collection includes many well-preserved issues, and that for 3–5 January 1764 (see Figure 0.1) is as good as any for considering the type of infrastructure within which this publication existed.

Compared with a twentieth- or twenty-first-century newspaper, a striking feature of the *London Evening Post* is the sheer number of the news reports it carries and the manner in which they are crowded together. News is presented together with an array of advertisements and announcements – filling around a quarter of the paper – and more than two columns are given over to letters to "*the Printer of the* London Evening Post", but the paper's densely printed columns are devoted primarily to news reports: well over a hundred of them, mostly very short (in paragraphs not much longer than a modern tweet), and organised in a largely miscellaneous fashion, without headlines other than for certain categories such as 'PORT NEWS' and 'AMERICA'.

The issue begins its rapid-fire offering of news with a report from Madrid, taken from another paper – the *London Gazette* – and this internationalism and the derivative nature of the report are characteristic of much of the news printed in the issue. A large proportion of the text is comprised of remediated reports from other publications: from London and provincial papers, from "all the Evening Papers *of last* Tuesday", from the *South-Carolina Gazette*, and more. For a good deal of its content, then, the *London Evening Post* was drawing upon information which had already been published and absorbed into a type of news 'commons' – an ever evolving pool of reports which were copied and recopied in an environment without restrictive protocols concerning proprietorship. The news business had seen some disputes concerning the ownership of news writing, but distinct copyright legislation had not become operative in relation to news, and, as Will Slauter has written, 'ownership claims were rare with respect to most of the texts that filled eighteenth-century newspapers

3 For an account of the paper's politics and readership/distribution, see Bob Harris, 'The London Evening Post and Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Politics', *English Historical Review*, 110 (439) (1995), pp. 1132–1156.

The London Evening-Post. Numb. 5643

From TUESDAY JANUARY 3, to THURSDAY JANUARY 5, 1764. [Price Two-pence Half-penny.

From the LONDON GAZETTE.

Madrid, Dec. 12.

YESTERDAY the Earl of Rochford had his audience of the Catholic King, and was treated with all the honours and reſpects, that are ſhewn here to the Embaſſadors of crowned heads.

On the ſame day his Excellency had his audience of the Queen Mother; and this morning of Don Lewis, brother of his Catholic Majeſty; and was received by both in the moſt diſtinguiſhed manner.

BANKRUPTS *required to ſurrender.*

William Towley, of Feſtchurch ſtreet, Hoſier, Jan. 14, 21, Feb. 14, at Guildhall.

John Wilkinſon, of Whitehaven, in Cumberland, Merchant, Feb. 9, 10, 14, at the Poſt-office in Whitehaven.

John Atkinſon, of Liverpool in Lancaſhire, Merchant, Jan. 24, 25, Feb. 14, at the Golden Lyon, in Liverpool.

DIVIDENDS *to be made to Creditors.*

Jan. 17. Thomas Chalmer, of Liverpool, in Lancaſhire, Merchant, at the Golden Lyon in Liverpool.

Feb. 2. Benjamin, otherwiſe Gabriel Benjamin Maſſiemeuve, of Craven-ſtreet in the Strand, Jeweller, at Guildhall.

CERTIFICATE *to be allowed.*

Jan. 23. John Andrews and John Kinnaird, of Halingball ſtreet, Taylors and Copartners.

COUNTRY NEWS.

Plymouth, Dec. 29. On Monday laſt a cruel murder was committed by one Maunder, a labourer, who has ſome time worked in his Majeſty's dock-yard, on the body of Mr. Couch, who has had the care of the figure thrown out from the rower there, to denote the ſhipping paſſing by, &c. The ſaid Maunder was taken into cuſtody on Tueſday, on ſuſpicion, and carried before Frederick Rogers, Eſq; Commiſſioner, where, it is ſaid, he confeſſed that he had it in his thoughts to murder this Mr. Couch, for ten days paſt, thinking he had a great deal of money about him. It ſeems he loitered away great part of the day before he could find an opportunity to accompliſh his bloody ſcene. He was ſeen by the centre with Mr. Couch for ſome time, then came down and lay in wait; when Mr. Couch came down, this villain gave him a blow with a large ſtick, which brought him to the ground, and then with more blows beat out his brains, and cut his throat. After this he ſtript him of his breeches, ſtockings and ſhoes, and put them on himſelf, and was taken in them. He was diſcovered by a ſailor belonging to the *Faver*, who ſaw him lurking along the church. He was ſent to gaol this morning.

Newcaſtle, Dec. 31. Monday the annual charity given by Sir Walter Blackett, Bart. was diſtributed to upwards of 600 poor houſekeepers, recommended by the churchwardens of the ſeveral pariſhes here, when to each was given ſix pounds of beef, a ſixpenny loaf, and ſix-pence in money.

Monday died, at Oroſby, in Cleveland, Yorkſhire, in an advanced age, Ralph Robinſon, Eſq; one of his Majeſty's Juſtices for the counties of York and Durham; in which capacity he ſerved his country with honour, and was much eſteemed. His eſtate devolves on Marſhal Robinſon, of Harrington in the county of Durham, Eſq; his nephew.

Monday as ſome Kethens were rejoicing, on account of their binding, and firing ſome pateraroes, one James Fall, being in liquor, ran in the fence of them, was ſhot in the breaſt by ſome wad, and ſo much wounded by it, that he died on Thurſday.

On Tueſday laſt John Upton, Eſq; Member of Parliament for the county of Weſtmoreland, was married at Jarrow church, to Miſs Noble of this town; an agreeable young lady, with a fortune of 2,000l.

Glouceſter, Jan. 2. A few days ago died here, Benjamin Saunders, Eſq; one of the four Aldermen of our corporation, and an eminent Wine merchant in this city.

Bath, Jan. 2. Wednesday laſt died at Marſhfield, Mr. Daniel Oland, an eminent Attorney at Law, of that place.

On Thurſday laſt died Thomas Lempriere, Eſq; late Captain of his Majeſty's ſhip the Centaur.

On Monday laſt Mr. Street, Apothecary and Chemiſt, was elected a Member of this corporation.

LONDON.

Letters by the laſt French mail from Genoa, dated the 14th paſt, mention, that the 22d was fix'd for the departure of his Royal Highneſs the Duke of York from thence for Turin, from whence his Highneſs deſign'd to viſit Venice, Rome, Florence, and other parts of Italy.

Tueſday his Royal Highneſs the Duke of Cumberland had a numerous levee at his houſe in Groſvenor-ſquare, to compliment his Royal Highneſs on the new year.

The Earls of Sandwich and Halifax are gone to pay a viſit to his Grace the Duke of Bedford, at Woburn Abbey, in Bedfordſhire.

On Monday night the Earl and Counteſs of Fife arrived in town from Scotland, at their houſe in Charles-ſtreet, Berkeley-ſquare.

Tueſday the Right Hon. the Earl Gower came to town from his ſeat at Trentham-Hall in Staffordſhire, to his houſe in Arlington-ſtreet, St. James's.

They write from Rome of the 10th paſt, that the proceedings of the law proceſs about the double election of the Prince and Biſhop of Liege, were publiſhed that day. They add, that Cardinal Corſini was ill of the ſmall-pox, but of a favourable kind.

We hear from Quebec, when the definitive treaty of peace was received there, the dec-aration therein, relative to the debts due from the French King to the Canadians, was far from giving them ſatisfaction, as it was worded in ſo obſcure a manner that they could not underſtand it; wherefore, conceiving the iſſue of their property to be doubtful by it, a general deſpondency and murmuring took place among them. The Governor perceiving this, had it proclaim'd in all the churches, and likewiſe by ſound of trumpet throughout all Canada, that he had orders from the King of Great Britain, his, and now their lawful King and maſter, to declare to them, that he would take care that all their paper money ſhould be punctually and juſtly paid. It is amazing what a general joy diffuſed itſelf thro' the whole country upon this occaſion. Great numbers of the principal Canadians are now in London, with their paper property along with them, which, when in caſh, they will exchange for the manufactures of Great Britain. The Canadians in general are a ſober induſtrious people, and are extremely well pleaſed and ſatisfied with the Engliſh Government; but if they are to be robbed of all their property, after being aſſured by the Governor, in the name of the King, it ſhould be ſecured to them, no one can anſwer for the event, if they are drove to deſperation.

Extract of a letter from Portſmouth, Jan. 2.

"Yeſterday arrived at Spithead the Enterprize, Capt. Houlton, from America, laſt from Liſbon....

"The ſame day ſailed into harbour the Pallas, Capt. Clements.

"Capt. Falkener has got the Eſſex, in the room of Capt. Obryan, who has changed for the Juno, for the voyage he is going."

His Majeſty's ſhip Pearl, commanded by Capt. Saxton, and Terpſichore, by the Hon. John Ruthven, are arrived from their reſpective ſtations, the Gulph of St. Lawrence and Newfoundland.

The Princeſs Auguſta Indiaman, Capt. Baddeley, outward bound, having ſprung a leak, is put back to Plymouth to refit.

Capt. Harriſon, Commander of the Engliſh man of war the Centurion, has hired a houſe at Genoa for three years, being the time he is to cruize in the Mediterranean.

His Majeſty has been pleaſed to appoint Thomas Davenant, Eſq; to be a Captain Lieutenant in the Corps of Yeomen of the foot-guards, in the room of James Craig, Eſq; promoted.

His Majeſty has alſo been pleaſed to appoint William Bowyer, Eſq; to be a Lieutenant in the ſaid regiment, in the room of Thomas Davenant.

A diſpenſation is paſſed the great ſeal to enable the Rev. Mr. Cabel to hold the rectory of Worton, in the county of Oxford, together with the rectory of Blunſdon, in the county of Wilts, being preſented to the former by William Cartwright, Eſq; of Ayno, in the room of Dr. Bolton, deceaſed.

A few days ſince the Rev. Mr. Alſton, jun. of Manchelter, was choſen Fellow of the Old Church, in the room of the Rev. Mr. Downes, lately deceaſed.

Mr. Alſton is appointed one of the Gentlemen of the King's chapel, in the room of Dr. Buſwell, deceaſed.

Yeſterday ſe'nnight the lady of Sir John Thomas Stanley, Bart. was ſafely deliver'd of a daughter, at his ſeat at Alderley in the county of Cheſter.

Tueſday was married, at Illington, Mr. Thomas Cogan, one of the Common-council-men of the Ward of Cornhill, to Miſs Stephens, of the ſame place.

Letters from Paris, on Monday, brought advice of the death of Mr. George Wallace, aged 112 years, who was formerly an eminent merchant in London, but died there on account of ſome illicit tranſactions upwards of ſixty years ago.

Monday night, about ſeven o'clock, died after a ſhort ſickneſs, —— Dawſon, Eſq; in partnerſhip with Mr. Croſts, who got the 10,000l. in the laſt lottery.

Letters from different parts of N. Wales, mention, that the ſnow is from eight to ten foot deep in ſeveral places, and the roads in ſeveral places impaſſable.

Monday night laſt, at about a quarter after eleven, a ſervant of Mr. Tatham's, Merchant, in Pater-noſter-row, in returning of a meſſage, was knocked down behind Middle-row, Holborn, and robbed of three ſhillings and ſixpence, by a man dreſſed in a brown coat, and ſlapped hat with narrow brims, who ruſhed out of a court upon the ſervant (ſuppoſed to be the Tennis-court) with a large ſtick in his hand, with which he beat and bruiſed the young man very much.

Monday laſt, between the hours of three and four in the afternoon, the Exeter ſtage coach was ſtopped upon Bagſhot heath, in its way to London, and ſeveral paſſengers in it robbed of conſiderable ſums, by a ſingle highwayman, viz. a ſtout well-made young man, of middle ſtature, dreſſed in a blue ſurtout coat, brown cut wig, a black crape or maſk over his face, mounted upon a bright bay gelding, about 15 hands high, of genteel carriage, cock'd tail, the off hind foot white.

ARTICLES of INTELLIGENCE, *&c. from the* POSTSCRIPTS *of all the Evening Papers of laſt* Tueſday, *that were not in our own.*

We are informed that Mr. Wilkes has ſent a letter to the Speaker of an auguſt aſſembly, aſſuring him of his return before the 16th of this month.

They write from Paris, that the morning after Mr. Wilkes's arrival there, a great number of Engliſh gentlemen waited upon him to congratulate him on his arrival and ſafe recovery of his wound.

We hear that the 19th inſtant is the day fixed for the marriage of the Prince's Auguſta.

They write from Rome, of the 24th paſt, that the old Chevalier de St. George lay at the point of death when thoſe letters came away, and that he had received the Extreme Unction.

The King and Queen of Pruſſia, with all the Princes and Princeſſes of the blood, a great number of the nobility of both ſexes, and alſo the Turkiſh Envoy and his principal officers, were on the 26th paſt, at the repreſentation of a new Opera, called, The Surpriſing effects of Nature.

The Turkiſh Envoy has the liberty of hunting, with ſeveral of his officers, in his Pruſſian Majeſty's parks, which ſeems to afford him great pleaſure.

They write from Hamburgh, that the Turkiſh Envoy to the King of Pruſſia is expected to embark at that city for Holland, from whence he will proceed, by the way of Antwerp and Lille, to Paris, where he is to go afterwards to Marſeilles, to take ſhipping there for Conſtantinople.

Letters from Holland adviſe, that the court of Denmark are putting all their forces, by its laſt account, in a formidable poſture: both the horſe and foot are to be augmented, and orders are already iſſued for raiſing recruits, not only throughout all the King's dominions, but alſo in ſome parts of Germany.

The Ottoman Miniſter has ſent to Prince Henry of Pruſſia a fine Turkiſh horſe, being a preſent from the Grand Signior to his Royal Highneſs; with a rich furniture, gave the Equerry a gold watch, and a purſe of 100 ducats to the Interpreter.

The Ode, which was to be performed on New Year's day, was omitted, on account of its being Sunday, and is not to be performed this year at all.

Since the peace the price of beaver is advanced from 27 s. to 34 s. per pound; owing, in a great meaſure, to the number of French and Dutch agents who attend the ſales, to purchaſe that commodity.

By letters from Liſbon we are told, that it was not without great murmuring that the low people had been made to quit, by the King's order, the barracks built without the gates of that capital ſince the fatal earthquake of the 1ſt of November 1755. Thoſe barracks were hardly found a ſufficient ſhelter, and ſome of them ſerved as a retreat to robbers in the night.

An odd affair happened lately at Watford: A young man, who was an Uſher to a ſchool there, had occaſion of calling to his miſtreſs's daughter; but not meeting with encouragement, he behaved ſo extremely rude, that they diſmiſs'd him, and was fixed with another Uſher in his place: A few days ſince he took it into his head to go down there again, and went directly into the ſchool, and behaving extremely odd, the new Uſher took an opportunity of locking him into the ſchool-room till he got ſome aſſiſtance to turn him out. The Uſher was no ſooner gone, than he heard the report of a piſtol, and looking through the window, diſcovered that he had ſhot himſelf in the belly. He lived till Saturday laſt, and then expired, ſaying he had left a narrative behind him of the reaſon of his committing this raſh action.

GENERAL POST-OFFICE,
Dec. 26 to 31, 1763.

PUBLIC Notice is hereby given, That, *all ſuch Letters for Germany, and for Turky, by Vienna, as are intended to paſs through Holland, muſt be directed accordingly*, viz. Letters; *otherwiſe they will be ſent by the Way of Holland.*

Letters for the Levant are tranſmitted from Vienna, twice every Month, on the ſeveral Wedneſdays or Saturdays to the 8 and 11th Days of the Month, without being confined to the Courſe of any Correſpondent at Vienna. If on the ſaid Days of the Month happen on a Tueſday or Friday, the Letters for Turky ought to be ſent from London ſo as to reach Vienna within the Twenty-ſix; but, if the 8th or 11th ſal not on any other Days of the Week, the Letters ought to depart from hence a Poſt ſooner.

By Command of the Poſt-maſter General,
ANTHONY TODD, Secretary.

GENERAL POST-OFFICE,
December 31, 1763.

THE Poſt-Boy bringing the Bye Mail to this Office, having, between Four and Five o'Clock this Morning, unprudently ſtopt at the Horſe and Groom, a Public Houſe in Kentiſh-ſtreet, to take ſome Refreſhment, found, upon his Return to his Horſe, aſleep at the Door that the ſaid Mail, containing the following Bags of Letters, was cut off and carried away, viz.

Bye, Stonecrouch, Cranbrooks, Tunbridge, Haſtings, Battle, Cruſtbrook, Biddenden, Tenterden, and Hoothgreen.

This is therefore to give Notice, That whoever ſhall apprehend and convict, or cauſe to be apprehended and convicted, the Perſon or Perſons who ſtole and carried off the ſaid Mail, ſhall be intitled to a Reward of FIFTY POUNDS; or, if any Perſon or Perſons, whether Accomplice in the ſaid Robbery, or knowing thereof, ſhall make Diſcovery, whereby the Perſon or Perſons, who committed the ſame may be apprehended and brought to Juſtice, ſuch Diſcoverer or Diſcoverers ſhall, upon Conviction of the Party or Parties, be intitled to the ſame Reward of FIFTY POUNDS.

By Command of the Poſt-maſter General,
ANTH. TODD, Secretary.

BRENTFORD Turnpike.

THE Truſtees of the Brentford Turnpike meet at the Three Pigeons, in this Town, on Saturday next, the 7th of January, at Ten o'Clock in the Forenoon.

J. PERROW, Cl.

NEW-CROSS Turnpike

A General Meeting of the Truſtees for Repairing the Roads from the Stones-End in Kent and Bermondſey Streets, in Southwark, to the Town of Deptford, and for the Roads in the Pariſh of Lewiſham, near Bromley and Beckenham to the County of Kent, is appointed to be held on Saturday next, at the Globe Tavern, in Deptford, by Ten in the Forenoon; there not being a ſufficient Number of Truſtees preſent to act at the laſt Meeting.

To all COUNTRY TAYLORS.

THE Maſter Taylors of London and Weſtminſter, for the Encouragement and Protection of ſuch Journeymen as will come to London, have, at their own Expence, appointed the undermentioned private Houſes for Journeymen to reſort to, where more than one thouſand may enter into immediate Employment, and be fully rewarded according to their Merit, in ſuch Shops where no Strikers are kept viz.

Mr. Littleford, in Shoe-lane's Yard, Great Minories.

Mr. Heen, at the Adam and Eve, New Round, St. Martin's Le Grand.

Mr. Beech, at the Twelve Bells, St. Saviour's, Church-Yard, Southwark.

Mr. Richards, in Angel Court, near Norfolk-Street, Strand.

Mr. Pugh, near the Golden Leg, Leg-Alley, Long Acre.

Mr. Miles Hart, next Door to the Houſe due to Labour in Vain Court, Old Fiſh Street.

Mr. John Quinby, Taylor, next to the Rifing Sun in Faſhion Street, Spital-Fields.

Mr. William Bowen, at the White Lion and Star in Broad-Street, Old Gravel-Lane, Ratcliff-Highway.

To be LETT,

And enter'd upon immediately,

THE old well accuſtomed Apothecary's Shop of the late Mr. Taylor; ſituate in the High-Street in Leominſter, near the Market Hall; with the Dwelling, and Shelf of the Shop.

The ſaid Houſe is held by Leaſe of one Life; and the Reverſion is to be ſold on the 19th Inſtant.

This Day was publiſh'd, Price 1 s.

LIBERTY and FREEDOM: A Bookſeller ſpeaks on the preſent Times.

I care not tho' I'm unmention'd;
I only mean my Country's Good:
And (let who will my Freedom blame)
I wiſh all Countries did ſo too. GAY.

Printed for J. Fletcher and Co. at the Oxford Theatre in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

This Day was publiſh'd,
In ONE VOLUME FOLIO,
Printed on Writing-Paper, and containing forty-two Sheets, Price 1 l. 1 s. bound,

THE MERCHANT's and TRADESMEN's DAILY REGISTER; Or, An accurate Aſſiſtant for the Counting-houſe, Shops, and Warehouſe.

Containing a Map or Chart of all the Eaſtern Part of the Globe, and of all the Days in the Year.

Together with many Things neceſſary to be known by Merchants and Tradeſmen, or their Agents and Aſſiſtants.

For the Year of our Lord 1764; being Biſſextile or Leap Year, and the Fourth of the Reign of King George the Third.

Printed for the Author, and ſold by J. Newbery, St. Paul's Church-Yard.

FIGURE 0.1 *Front page of the* London Evening Post, *3–5 January 1764, reproduced from the digital Burney Collection.*

and magazines'.[4] Copying was standard practice, and the *London Evening Post* makes no pretence of originality. It cites many of its published sources – a form of acknowledgement as well as a way of deferring the responsibility for the accuracy of the reports – and this was the norm for the papers of the day, which are peppered with brief signals of their dependence upon the wider, collective enterprise of news transmission. Readers at this time were clearly not expecting swathes of original in-house journalism, but rather a gathering of the latest information from whatever sources their chosen paper had available to them. The *London Evening Post* was itself contributing to the 'commons' with the original reports that it could offer, but for the most part it was selecting and marshalling the information available from a well-developed news network. In this way, three times a week, it could present a dense offering of stories from London, the British provinces and from the wider world. Alongside the story from Madrid, this issue presents reports from Italy, Holland, Germany, France, Denmark, Prussia, the Ottoman Empire, Poland, Ireland, Portugal, Antigua, Canada and the American colonies. Concerning Britain, the paper includes reports, in no particular order, from Cumberland, Liverpool, Plymouth, Deal, Newcastle, Cleveland, Gloucester, Bath, Bedfordshire, Portsmouth, Oxford, Wiltshire, Manchester, Chester, Watford, Harwich, Hereford, Caernarfon, Lincoln, Falmouth, and other locations. The paper also includes more local news from London and the immediate environs – the issue has two sections headed 'LONDON' – but for more than half of its reports it is gathering intelligence from farther afield (and, indeed, the 'LONDON' sections include various accounts which have little or nothing to do with the capital at all). With its numerous, short reports, it offers a brisk tour around the happenings of the world and it does this in large part by operating as a gatherer and remediator within the evolving international information networks.

Almost all newspapers were skimming off their fellows, but a constant injection of original information was, of course, needed to keep the news industry circulating, and at this time, for all but local news, this typically arrived in the form of letters, and here again the channel was made explicit in how papers presented their news offering. The *London Evening Post* prefaces numerous reports with a declaration of origin: "Letters by the last French mail from Genoa, dated the 14th past, mention …", "They write from Rome of the 10th past …", "*Extract of a letter from Portsmouth*", "Letters from Paris, on Monday, brought

4 Will Slauter, 'Upright Piracy: Understanding the Lack of Copyright for Journalism in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Book History*, 16 (2013), pp. 34–61 (55). For an examination of journalism, borrowing and copyright legislation across a longer time-span, see Slauter's *Who Owns the News?*, forthcoming with Stanford University Press.

advice of …", "Letters from different parts of N. Wales, mention …", "By letters from Lisbon we are told …", and so on. For a reader at the time, these declarations could have an authorising effect, offering the assurance that the reported information actually came from somewhere, but at the same time they sound a note of caution: the report is not guaranteed to be factual but rather can be taken as factual *according to* the author of the letter, whoever that may be. What these signs also do, though, is point to the intimacy at the time of news and the national and international postal systems, the major channels of which had been in place since the seventeenth century.[5] This connection would have been a given for original readers: news reporting was inseparable from the post; news was recognised as being, in large part, the collective outpouring of a far-flung network of letter writers – or, to use the term that has endured within news culture, of *correspondents*.

Indeed, the postal service was so important to news that any significant development concerning the post or a disruption to its regular operation would typically become a part of the news itself. The *London Evening Post* has a title which, of course, suggests that news and the post are not just related but are parts of a singular information organism, and this paper, like others, carried regular news of the postal service itself in announcements under a 'GENERAL POST-OFFICE' heading. On the front page of the 3–5 January issue, one such announcement instructs the public how they should address letters to Germany and Turkey ("via Flanders; *otherwise they will be sent by the Way of Holland*"), while another announcement from the Post Office reports that the "*Post-Boy bringing the* Rye *Mail*" has been robbed of his bag of letters having stopped at a public house for some refreshment. A reward of fifty pounds is offered to anyone who can bring the culprits to justice. Here, in fact, the thrice-weekly nature of the *London Evening Post* lends a curious narrative quality to the news it carried, since, collated and typeset over a period of around two days, a single issue could include updates in its later sections to the news presented in the earlier sections. On the final page of the issue it is reported that:

> Yesterday the Rye bag … stolen in Kent-street on Saturday morning last, was found by a ditch near Tottenham-court, by a young man who was shooting thereabouts, and brought to the Post-office … the letters were so wet that they would take four or five hours drying, so could not be delivered out 'till this day.

5 An up-to-date account of the early European postal system is given in Jay Caplan, *Postal Culture in Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2016).

What we see in this story, complete with its happy ending, is the premium placed upon the regular mail, and in turn the value that was attached to the transit of information – a value which is literalised in monetary terms here in the huge, fifty-pound reward. In the same way that any rupture in the workings of the internet becomes big news today (usually conveyed via the internet itself), any problem with the post – when the post was the prime means of long-distance communication – was a partial system breakdown, and it became a priority to inform users of the disruption.

The two primary channels through which the *London Evening Post* was garnering its copy, then, were the postal service and already-published news (which, aside from the London papers, would have reached the paper's premises via the post). These channels do not account for how more local news was gathered – a process about which the paper is largely reticent. There are few prefatory pointers to sources for the paper's reports from London and the surrounding counties, which are presented as simply factual – presumably because there could be greater confidence in the accuracy of less travelled reports. Readers of the 3–5 January issue are simply told, for example, that "On Monday night the Earl and Countess of Fife arrived in town from Scotland, at their house in Charles-street, Berkeley-square" (with the plainness of the prose leaving little doubt that this paper's priority was to inform rather than entertain). By whatever means the paper was receiving its more local news – via its own news gatherers, or regular informants, or through letters and messages sent through local channels – it does not show a need to frame the reports with qualifications and caveats drawing attention to those sources, but the stories themselves point to the existence of an extensive local network of news providers. The paper presents reports from all corners of what is now Greater London: reports of crimes and accidents, announcements of deaths and births, news of the court and of the comings and goings of the aristocracy, reports of legal trials and judgments, and so on. There is news from the major institutions of the capital, from private dwellings and from the streets – all pointing to the *London Evening Post* having developed a sophisticated local information gathering system.

Focusing purely on the *London Evening Post*'s acquisition of news, this relatively cursory examination of a single issue immediately begins to suggest the immeasurability of the information networks of which it was a part. Those networks, of course, begin to expand and multiply when other factors underlying the paper's existence are taken into consideration. There are the material aspects of the paper's production: the manufacture of paper, ink, presses and type, the transportation of materials, together with the actual typesetting and printing. The economic set up of the paper is another multifaceted area,

with income generated through a combination of the two-pence half-penny cover price and revenue from a long list of advertisers, which was needed to balance the outgoings involved in production and news-gathering, the Stamp Tax, and the costs of distribution both locally and further afield. How the paper was distributed opens up further questions, and leads in turn to perhaps the most important questions that can be asked of a single news product and of news culture more broadly: who were the consumers, in what ways were they consuming news, and what were the effects of news upon individuals and the wider communities of which they were a part? Was the paper an instrument of education, enlightenment and liberation, or of propaganda, passification and control – or was its prime purpose the filling of leisure time? Did it combine several of these functions, all of which have been seen at different moments and in different contexts in the long history of news?

A basic point that emerges here – and this is a rationale for this collection of new contributions to news studies – is that contact with a historical news document immediately begins to point outwards into byzantine realms of news production and consumption about which much can be known but much remains remarkably obscure, despite the very many outstanding studies of news which have been produced over many decades. The *London Evening Post*, like most papers, allows us to glimpse its workings and its possible effects, but it is suggestive rather than explanatory. "They write from Rome of the 10th past …"? Who are 'They'? Why did they write? Did someone pay them to do so? Why did they choose to write about this rather than that? What might readers have made of this information sent from Rome? Was the information of any use? Did readers find it credible, and if so how had the news media earned this trust? When probing the mass collaboration of news, such questions soon begin to multiply, and at the same time they reveal that, in order to understand more about how the news of the past worked and evolved, it is necessary to complement analysis of news documents themselves with explorations of contextual factors which are not necessarily explicitly pointed to or revealed by the news product.

The essays in this volume are very deliberately diverse in terms of their objects of investigation and approach, and an aspiration of the volume is to present a series of detailed, analytical snapshots of different aspects of international news history together with considerations of a number of more philosophical and methodological overarching issues. The diversity is in part a result of three basic principles which have governed the direction of the volume – principles of openness which have emerged from the nature of news itself and from the manner in which it is now available, in archival terms, as a field of study.

1 News is an Intrinsically International Field of Study

From its very beginnings, news has allowed people to stretch the horizons of their knowledge of the world; it has fed a craving for information about what lies beyond the literal horizon, allowing men and women, in Andrew Pettegree's words, "to experience the fascination of faraway events".[6] News, in other words, has always been an international enterprise. The reporting of foreign news has been prioritised throughout history, at times even without much regard for comprehensibility. Writing on 'the Duty of a Journalist' in 1758, Samuel Johnson complained that it was

> common to find passages in papers of intelligence which cannot be understood. Obscure places are sometimes mentioned without any information from geography or history. Sums of money are reckoned by coins or denominations of which the value is not known in this country.

Johnson's objection was to journalists who misjudged their readers' capabilities: newsmen should be better acquainted with "the lower orders of mankind", he insisted, and be more explanatory for that audience.[7] But his observation can also be taken as a pointer towards the elevated status of foreign news, with its suggestion that an obscure gesture to the wider world – a blurry squint towards the exotic – was at the time deemed worthy of printing even if, for most readers, it conveyed nothing that amounted to actual knowledge.

The international diffusion of news and how this has changed over time are, as suggested above, complicated topics, and for some projects within the study of news it is clearly wise to keep the lids on those cans of worms in order to perform more locally focused analyses. Dedicated studies of news enterprises within a national context, such as Victoria Gardner's wonderfully detailed *The Business of News in England, 1760–1820*, clearly need to avoid becoming enmeshed in the wider international networks of news in order to maintain their concentration on a national scene.[8] The current volume, however,

6 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 13.

7 Samuel Johnson, 'Of the Duty of a Journalist' in Donald Greene (ed.), *The Oxford Authors: Samuel Johnson* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 545–546 (545). The essay was first printed in 1758 in *Payne's Universal Chronicle*, the weekly paper in which Johnson's *Idler* essays would appear.

8 Victoria Gardner, *The Business of News in England, 1760–1820* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

purposefully avoids a geographical delimitation and opens up the consideration of different ways in which news has crossed international borders, with essays which give attention to the motivations, the means of transmission and the agents involved in the international transit of news, as well as to issues of medium, language, and translation. There is nothing new in embracing a cross-cultural approach to news, and much excellent scholarship on the internationalism of news has been performed, as is seen in the immense collection of essays on *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (2016), edited by Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham.[9] But there remain numerous under-explored border-crossing lines in the history of news, as well as new possibilities for examining them due to the discovery of new sources and, perhaps most significantly, the rise of searchable digital archives of news publications (about which more below). The transit of news in and out of Moscow in the early modern period has been a particularly obscure area (one not treated in Raymond and Moxham's collection) and this is explored in three of the chapters in this volume, while other chapters address international aspects of French, British, Dutch, American, Baltic and Scandinavian news cultures, as well as more fundamental issues concerning the status of information which was valued because of its geographically distant origin.

The opening chapter by William Warner is an interrogation of how newspapers came to gain the trust of their readers, and the spatial distance between the site of a reported event and the site of a reader's consumption of the report is central to that problem. How could newspapers convince a reader of the truth of a report of something which that reader was distant from and had therefore not witnessed? The spatial distance might actually be small – from one side of a town to another – but news culture, as has been suggested, was preoccupied with far-flung events and so trust had to become embedded in the international network of knowledge exchange. Warner shows different ways in which the newspapers built credibility so as to gain a status, in readers' eyes, as "the most timely, varied, flexible source of information about events occurring in places remote from the paper's production" (p. 46). Warner focuses upon the Anglophone newspaper and pursues a case study of the *Boston Gazette*'s reporting of the Boston Massacre of 1770, but the claims of his essay have pertinence to the wider culture of news production and consumption, and the

9 Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham (eds.), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016). For a much earlier study which explores news beyond the bounds of a single national context, see, for example, Stephen Botein, Jack R. Censer and Harriet Ritvo, 'The Periodical Press in Eighteenth-Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23:3 (1981), pp. 464–490.

questions of reliability and trust enter into the other chapters concerned with the international spreading of news.

In Chapter 5, Heike Droste and Ingrid Maier offer a micro-historical account of news transmitted in the seventeenth century from Moscow to Sweden and its Baltic territories by one man: Christoff Koch (1637–1711). The chapter shows the evolving infrastructure which, from the mid seventeenth century, was enabling a growing culture of correspondence with Russia, and the authors' research reveals much about the key role of individuals within the business of news. Koch was not a full-time professional newsman; he worked primarily within commerce, but as a well-connected resident in Moscow he was well placed to function as an informant for the Swedish crown and government, and he proved to be a key agent in the transmission of Moscow's cultural and political news for many years. Chapter 9, by Malte Griesse, furthers the interrogation of the early diffusion of news from Moscow, but where Droste and Maier focus upon a particular agent in the business of news, Griesse takes as a case study a single event – the Moscow Salt Uprising of 1648 – and explores the different narratives of the event which were generated as the news spread south-westwards into Sweden and thereafter into France. Griesse shows a transformation in the tellings, uncovering a series of adaptations whereby the facts of the event were successively altered so as to be made palatable for the intended readers within the foreign culture in which the news would be consumed. The chapter is a reminder of the narrative nature of news – of the gap between phenomena and the language which describes and distorts them – and it shows the role of international borders in the refraction of truth which can occur in remediation.

Chapter 6, by Daniel Waugh, also examines the transit of information in early modern Russia but with a focus upon how Muscovites acquired intelligence of events abroad as a basis for diplomatic policy making. How, Waugh asks, did the *Posol'skii prikaz* (the Muscovite Diplomatic Chancery) gain useful and reliable international news? The answer to this – typically for news studies – involves consideration of multiple channels, and Waugh shows how these shifted and evolved over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and included public channels such as newspapers as well as more clandestine and unofficial information suppliers.

The chapters described above are all concerned with the development of international systems of knowledge exchange during a period in which the geographical scope of news was expanding due to European colonialism, to increasing international trading, and to the voyages of discovery dedicated to charting and exploring the world's unknown territories. Chapter 7, by Marius Warholm Haugen, shows that global exploration was itself an important part

of the news and remained so well into the eighteenth century and beyond. His chapter is a study of remediation which, focusing on the French periodical press of the late eighteenth century and Napoleonic period, examines how travel accounts from around the globe reached Europe and were disseminated through news channels. The chapter explores how news outlets shaped the European perception of distant lands and cultures, and how remediation expanded access to knowledge, since a news publication could reach a wider reading public than a travel account published in book form.

Chapter 8, by Johanne Kristiansen, considers the same period and investigates several of the issues described above in an examination of the British reporting of the French Revolution. Her study shows the significance of a particular individual in the international transmission of news in relation to the transformation of narrative in the process of remediation. The chapter focuses on the work of James Perry (1756–1821), a politically progressive editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, who travelled to Paris to report on the revolution – and was thereby among the earliest professional foreign correspondents in an industry which had continued to rely primarily upon the dispatches of part-time news workers, such as Christoff Koch in seventeenth-century Moscow. When published in the *Morning Chronicle*, Perry's reports were, as was typical, treated as fair game by other newspapers, but the chapter shows how in the process of borrowing the reports were reworked before their further publication to suit the political orientation of the appropriating newspaper. By tracing the afterlife of Perry's reports, Kristiansen shows how passages from the radically inclined *Morning Chronicle* were edited and reinflected to serve more conservative news outlets such as the *St. James's Chronicle*. The chapter further demonstrates how a major event such as the French Revolution could bring about changes in the workings of the news industry, as rivals to the *Morning Chronicle*, such as the *Times*, came to recognise the necessity of more regularised and reliable foreign reporting and began a professionalisation of journalism that would be further developed in the nineteenth century.

Warner's discussion of how newspapers built up readerly trust in reports of distant events, therefore, serves as a foundation for a number of studies which show how the news in which trust was invested was always determined by and contingent upon the nature of its source and upon what happened to the report between its point of origin and its point of reading – and collectively the chapters show that this issue pertained within the long history of news, not only in that of the newspaper. Christoff Koch retained his position because his contacts in Sweden trusted his reports; it was a version of this type of trust in an individual that had to become a part of the world of newspaper publication – even if in diluted or fragmented form – as communication

between personal contacts grew into the more impersonal networks of international news transmission.

There has, of course, long been mistrust of news alongside the craving for it. News stories, for example, were dubbed "Those Lyes that do our Passions move" by Edward Ward in his burlesque poem *St. Paul's Church* (1716), and assaults upon the truth claims of the news industry continue in such projects as Donald Trump's blustering attempts to discredit media institutions as purveyors of 'fake news'.[10] But without a basic, tacit agreement between news providers and consumers that their transactions revolve around narratives based in truth, the very concept of 'the news' would collapse. Truth is clearly put under pressure within news, but the idea of true narration is the kernel of the industry.

A systematic manipulation of truth can be seen at historical moments in which censorship has been imposed upon the circulation of news, and this is shown in this volume in Chapter 12 by Kaarel Vanamölder. This chapter examines the Swedish-controlled Baltic provinces in the late seventeenth century and it demonstrates how the move towards absolutism in the Swedish empire after 1680 led to new controls upon the news media with the appointment of a state newswriter. Vanamölder focuses upon the news market in Riga, a hub in the postal networks at the time and therefore a key connection between eastern and western Europe. The management of international news in Riga, Vanamölder argues, was central to the Swedish crown's strategies of control, and those who held the royal privilege, in order to maintain their monopolies on news, were required to select and edit foreign news to render it favourable to Swedish imperial policy. Regarding international news, cross-border remediation and the epistemological transformations that it can entail are seen *in extremis* in this episode. But censorship has not always targeted truth; in other cases, not far removed from Sweden, censorship has been aimed at curtailing the opinionated spin that might be published alongside the report of an event – not at the truth but at what interpretations might be laid upon it. Chapter 13, by Ellen Krefting, examines the controlling mechanisms at work in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. She explores the consequences of a decree from the Danish monarchy in 1701 which censored 'reasoning' and discussion around factual reports, and ruled that the news should be a narration of events that had occurred without the dressing of commentaries on those events. If censorship derives from authoritarian fear of the circulation of text, what is seen in this case is a fear not of news *per se* but of the power of thought and argument for which news is a prompt.

10 Edward Ward, *St. Paul's Church; Or, The Protestant Ambulators* (London: 1716), p. 24.

What Krefting's essay also shows is how the appetite for news had spread. The Danish colony of Norway may, as the chapter suggests, have been geographically peripheral but by the beginning of the eighteenth century it had a news culture which was active and extensive enough to be worthy of the imposition of a censorship order. Like the other chapters described here, Krefting's study makes very clear that early modern news networks stretched far and that news was an inherently international business.

2 In the Age of Print, News was More than Printed News

Much of the discussion above has focussed upon the newspaper, but this volume is concerned with news rather than any particular medium which has transmitted news, and overall it points to the ways in which different news media have overlapped and complemented one another. There have been tendencies within the historiography of news, as Joad Raymond observed in *The Invention of the Newspaper* (1996), to plot the development of news media within an overarching narrative of progress as a series of displacements whereby new media arrive and supplant their less technologically sophisticated forebears. Raymond writes:

> Traditionally historians of the news have taken a telescopic view of the development of news media in the early-modern period, and identified a long-term development and increase in communication. The story has all the properties of the classic Whig model of history: it tells of the move from an oral culture through a manuscript culture to a culture of print.[11]

The expansion of print is undoubtedly the major media development of the period, and the proliferation of printed news products certainly lends a seductive quality to the Whig narrative. Yearly newspaper sales in Britain, for example, are estimated to have been around 16 million by the 1790s; surely, we might assume, it was within the world of the newspaper that news was happening. But print did not briskly sweep away pre-existing means of news transmission and, just as radio has survived television (contrary to the predictions of the 1920s following television's invention), manuscript and oral forms of news transmission survived healthily alongside printed news. Printed newspapers were largely modelled on manuscript news products: the commercial *avvisi*

11 Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 4.

of the sixteenth century, which were produced principally in the news hubs in Italy and provided privileged customers who could afford the service with reports of the most important happenings around Europe.[12] In terms of format and style, the printed newspaper owed much to the *avvisi*, but the mechanically produced offspring did not oust the handmade parent, and *avvisi* were still being produced well into the eighteenth century, offering a news service of a more elitist character than that provided by the cheaper printed papers. In this volume, this issue of different media types existing in parallel within news culture is addressed directly by Rachael King in Chapter 4, 'The Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Newsletter', which explicitly challenges the 'rise of print' narrative of the period's news history and demonstrates the endurance of handwritten news in the marketplace. King shows that, as today, a tangle of media were involved in the transmission of news, and that, when print became the preeminent means of mass reproduction – and in the process changed and expanded the audience for news – it was a major augmentation of news culture rather than an all-consuming transformation of the means of transmission. Other essays are also concerned with the interaction of different media in the business and consumption of news.

Chapter 3 by Daniel Reed is a close study of the relationship between a particular profession – the English clergy – and the news press. The chapter demonstrates the importance of the eighteenth-century newspaper as a mediator of events and of changes in the world of the Anglican church, but it also points to the newspaper's status as one among several channels of communication concerning church business. Church preferments, for example, were made public in newspaper announcements, but these, Reed points out, "were a secondary channel of information to the flurry of epistolary and oral exchanges of intelligence that accompanied the vacancy of a position in the Church" (p. 80). Reed provides here a pointed reminder that scholars should consider not only the *avvisi* but also private, personal letters as constituents of a strand within news culture. The news that was exchanged in oral encounters has, of course, been lost to time, but in the private letter we often find the sending of news – derived from newspaper reports or elsewhere – as well as personal commentaries upon it.

The chapters concerning the flow of news into and out of Russia are similarly concerned with the private letter as a means of transmission and with the ways in which information contained in letters connected with that expressed in the more public form of the newspaper. Droste and Maier's study of Christoff Koch is an examination of elite correspondence between Koch and

12 See Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 110.

the Swedish monarchy and government as well as agents in Sweden's Baltic territories – handwritten news for a select audience. Griesse's study of the reporting of the Moscow Salt Uprising similarly explores the private reports produced by diplomats and ambassadors while also tracing the transformation of the story when it reached the pages of the *Gazette de France*. Waugh's research into the foreign news available to the *Posol'skii prikaz* suggests that the diplomats in Moscow were interested in whatever they could access: they were multi-media consumers, hungry for trustworthy reports of all kinds whether they came in printed, handwritten or oral form.

But as well as seeing news as something bigger than any single form of transmission, with regard to print there is another way in which this volume considers news documents as part of a wider media landscape. Two of the chapters presented here point to the intimacy of the news press and the book trade, showing how, economically and technically, there was an interdependence between news and book publication. Both chapters are focused on newspaper advertisements – those fiscally charged meeting points between the news press and a whole range of other trades. Chapter 10 by Arthur der Weduwen examines Dutch newspaper advertisements – and shows that the Dutch were pioneers, using advertising as a means of funding the news from the early seventeenth-century, long before other nations. In the first phase of Dutch newspaper advertising, the main products that were advertised were other printed products, notably didactic books. Around half of all Dutch booksellers, der Weduwen's research reveals, had made use of newspaper advertising by the 1640s. In the second half of the seventeenth century, a wider range of luxury goods came to be advertised in the Dutch press, but books remained an important part of the business – and so they continued to fund the news, whilst in turn the advertisements helped the book trade grow. By the eighteenth century, advertising had become a part of the news cultures of other nations, including Britain, where, as in the Dutch Republic, books figured prominently among the advertised goods. The connection between the British trade in newspapers and in books – particularly novels – is examined in Chapter 11 by Siv Gøril Brandtzæg, who points to the layered nature of the interdependency of books and news print. The relation was partly economic and infrastructural: newspapers were often produced on the same presses as books; they were often sold and delivered together; booksellers were sometimes also newspaper proprietors. But in terms of audience, there was also a symbiotic relation: the rise of the newspaper was a factor in rising literacy; the newspapers raised awareness of new books; both print forms fostered cultures of reading and helped popularise reading beyond the metropolis in the British provinces. Brandtzæg's chapter, with its particular attention to novels, also

provides a reminder of how the writing of fiction – a growth industry in the eighteenth century – also had a relation to news in terms of content. Indeed, it has long been a claim within the broad 'rise of the novel' story that 'the novel' (a clue is in the name) was in part the progeny of the news, and that the diverting tales of contemporary life that the novel offered were appealing to readerly desires which had been stoked by the spread of news.[13]

The long story of the news, then, clearly embraces many different media and genres. The period under scrutiny in this volume was that which saw how, as Andrew Pettegree writes in the final chapter here, "a fully articulated network of public news media reached its first climax" (p. 322) and the newspaper was essential to that peak. But the newspaper existed within a cluster of media involving letters, pamphlets, books, speeches, conversations, songs and more, all of which could carry the news.

3 Digital News Archives Have Revolutionised News Studies but Sources Stretch beyond These Archives

This volume has been produced at a time of major transformation within the field of news studies due to the development by both libraries and commercial online publishers of a series of major digital databases of historical news documents.[14] Such resources began to have an impact on the field around the turn

13 The news-novel connection has been put forward influentially by J. Paul Hunter in *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992) – see particularly Chapter 7: 'Journalism: The Commitment to Contemporaneity'. See also Doug Underwood, *Journalism and the Novel: Truth and Fiction, 1700–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

14 Regarding Anglophone material, many early newsbooks and pamphlets – i.e., one-off news publications, catalogued by a single title – have been available digitally since the launch of *Early English Books Online* (*EEBO*) in 1998 and *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (*ECCO*) in 2003. Regarding periodically published material (not included in *EEBO* and *ECCO*), the British Library's digitisation of its Burney Collection – launched in 2007 – was both pioneering and inspirational. The British Library itself has developed *British Newspapers 1620–1900*, and has collaborated with the commercial genealogy service findmypast to produce the growing *British Newspaper Archive*. Notable among other commercial academic resources are Chadwyck-Healey's *British Periodicals* and Adam Matthew's *Eighteenth Century Journals*. Most recently at the time of writing, Gale Cengage has digitised the Bodleian Library's 'Nichols Collection' and launched, in 2017, its *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Nichols Newspaper Collection*. Beyond the Anglophone world, there are numerous digitisation projects, completed or underway, which are focused upon or include news publications. The French National Library and its

of the century, since which time scholars have been exploiting the increased access to primary sources as well as exploring how the resources allow for the asking of new questions and the development of new methods of analysis. Uriel Heyd, the author of *Reading Newspapers: Press and Public in Eighteenth-Century Britain and America*, noted the fundamental turning point within news studies in 2012. Introducing his book, Heyd suggested that his own work was "probably one of the last pieces of research on eighteenth-century newspapers to be conducted through the examination of newspapers in their original or microfilm form" and he saw that digitisation would "revolutionise the study of the press, both by changing methods and scope and by opening the material to a much wider community". He was writing, he suggested, at a "watershed moment" for the field and he pointed to a "particular need for historians to continue studying newspaper culture in its historical context".[15] The studies presented in this volume have been undertaken after this 'digital turn' (mostly with the contextualising drive Heyd calls for) and many of the authors have drawn primarily on digital resources and have explored the new research possibilities that have been opened up by them – particularly by the searchability of digitised news documents. Marius Warholm Haugen's chapter on the reporting of travellers' discoveries in the French periodical press, for example, exploits digital searching to detect paths of textual remediation that would, in practical terms, be undiscoverable by means of traditional archival research. Here, and in other chapters, the new resources allow the scholar to trace the journeys of snippets of news texts – to compare and connect different publications – and thereby to better understand the nature of what was pointed out above as one of the key features of news culture: its collective investment in appropriation and remediation as a means of dispersing the news. Searchability can also expand the ambition of research involving the surveying of large swathes of material, as is seen in Siv Gøril Brandtzæg's chapter on advertising in British

partners have provided access to eighteenth-century periodicals published in France (or published in French outside France) through *Gallica – bibliothèque numérique*, while *Le gazetier universel: Ressources numériques sur la presse anciennce* has been established as a virtual library of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French periodicals. In Norway, the National Library has included newspapers within a broad programme of digitisation, and has made many issues of the earliest Norwegian newspapers available online. The National Library of Germany has established a portal – *Zeitungsinformationssystem* (ZEFYS) – giving access to historical German and Prussian newspapers. A valuable list of newspaper digitisation projects is maintained online by the International Coalition on Newspapers (ICON) at http://icon.crl.edu/digitization.php.

15 Uriel Heyd, *Reading Newspapers: Press and Public in Eighteenth-Century Britain and America* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2012), p. 4.

eighteenth-century newspapers. Her project has involved the searching in the period's papers for *all* known eighteenth-century novel titles (more than 2000 of them), allowing her to advance the new claim that, almost without exception, every new novel was advertised in the papers of the time – a discovery of importance in its own right, but one which is also further revealing of the intimacy of the news press and the world of imaginative literature in the period.

The studies presented here have capitalised on the new resources but the volume aims to avoid being a wide-eyed celebration of the digital, and the authors have also considered the challenges and limitations of the new newspaper archives as their work has proceeded. One basic consideration concerns what digital archives do not include. An aura of comprehensiveness can easily be projected upon certain digital archives – their gaps are rarely displayed, and commercial publishers in particular place great emphasis upon what the resources they offer contain rather than what they do not. The Burney Collection has become for many scholars the 'go to' resource for investigations into the eighteenth-century British newspaper, but the collection – vast and exceptional though it is – is far from a comprehensive gathering of the papers printed in the period. Based on the collection of one late eighteenth-century news print enthusiast, the Reverend Charles Burney (1757–1817), the runs of individual titles in the archive include many gaps, and overall the collection has a strong bias towards the metropolitan papers. This issue is considered here in Daniel Reed's chapter on newspapers and the clerical profession, which highlights the fact that many papers held in British regional archives are not represented in the Burney Collection; basing research purely on the Burney archive, the chapter suggests, will produce history which is skewed by the collecting habits and opportunities of Charles Burney. At this point it should also be remembered that news publications have long been treated as the most disposable of all print products – destined to become bumf, kindling or chip wrapping – and that a great deal of news print has simply been lost to history. The digital archives do not offer access to the news of the past; they offer access to a number of partial collections of what has survived of the news products of the past.

Here, of course, we also return to the issue of the multi-mediality of news, since the digital archives are predominantly archives of *printed* material. Research libraries are increasingly digitising their manuscript collections – and in this way handwritten *avvisi* are becoming more available to a wider scholarly community – but digitised manuscript texts are, as yet, not electronically searchable, and so cannot be explored *en masse* by means of the techniques used to explore large bodies of digitised printed materials. So while scholars such as Rachael King are, by means of research within manuscript

archives, uncovering new chronologies for the history of manuscript news, as described above, there is a danger that digitisation projects are privileging printed news and again obscuring the modes of manuscript transmission that existed alongside print. The need sometimes to cast a wide archival net is demonstrated in Daniel Waugh's chapter on the *Posol'skii prikaz*. In part a 'state of the field' review, Waugh's study provides a vivid demonstration of how some news studies need to range across a variety of different archives: if the aspiration is to uncover a sense of the totality of information accessible at a particular time and place – including information supplied by spies and secret agents – then the search clearly has to range far beyond the digital archives of printed materials.

Furthermore, the idea of the searchability of digitised historical texts can be misleading. This issue is addressed directly and at length by Andrew Prescott in Chapter 2 of the volume on 'Pre- and post-digital newspaper research' as he explores the levels of accuracy of the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) mechanisms which transform the visual image of a printed page into a file of searchable text. Historical newspapers present a whole range of challenges to OCR: close typesetting, unclear printing, 'bleed through' from one side of a page of print to the other, the long 's', poor preservation, and so on. Prescott shows that the strike rate of a keyword search in the Burney Collection can be remarkably low. His essay – which takes to task certain scholarly studies based on blithe keyword searching of digital archives – provides a stark warning to scholars within news studies, and is a timely pointer towards the need for greater awareness of what electronic searching can reveal and of what it might conceal. Prescott's chapter is that which most self-consciously addresses these methodological issues within contemporary studies of news, while the book as a whole has been conceived as one which should capitalise on the research possibilities opened up by the digital archives whilst attending to their limitations and the partial access to the field which they provide.

Did the expansion of news culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bring about positive developments for the people living at the time? Did the increasing availability of regular newspapers contribute to an 'Enlightenment' of the world – particularly Europe – towards the end of the eighteenth century by spreading knowledge, the ability to think and to behave rationally and, thereby, to contribute to a more advanced society? In the final essay of the volume, a sceptical view of any association between the newspaper and a widespread European Enlightenment is put forward by Andrew Pettegree, whose *The Invention of News* (2014) informs several of the chapters presented here. Pettegree's essay suggests that if the newspaper is seen as an agent in the

creation of a newly informed, critical public, then that development should be dated earlier than the eighteenth century, the period in which the idea of a 'public sphere' is typically placed. But the scepticism goes beyond chronology and questions the basic idea of the progress of news: more news came to reach more people, but did it inform and improve individuals and society, or was it rather an instrument of partisanship, commercialism and vulgarity? William Warner's essay at the beginning of the volume points to positive effects of the evolution of the newspaper and the information it dispersed. Pettegree is persuasively unconvinced. The editors hope that the poles of this debate – one which is still operative with regard to contemporary news media – may hover over the reading of the volume as a whole.

PART 2

Exordium

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CHAPTER 1

Truth and Trust and the Eighteenth-Century Anglophone Newspaper

William B. Warner

Newspapers carry accounts of events that have happened, but which are not yet known to the reader. How did the early readers of the newspaper come to trust these accounts as true? We can open some of the complexity of that question by noting that there are at least five constituents for the news: novelty, mediation, spatial transport, temporal lag, and truthfulness. News draws on two senses of *novelty*. News is novel because it is newly known. Although it can include the banal, the routine and the everyday, the most compelling news is 'novel' in another sense: rare, surprising and improbable. Secondly, to become news there must be some form of *mediation that fixes and records* an event, whether as words written or printed upon paper, as a memory in the mind of the messenger, as signals of some kind. Thirdly, news implies *spatial transport*. Recorded in some form, a told event is transported through space, from the place of its formulation to where it is received. Fourthly, in the era before electronic media, spatial transport entailed a *temporal lag* between the time of recording and reception. Finally, to become news, the communication must satisfy the recipient's expectation that it is *truthful*.

I use the word 'truth' advisedly. The truth that one can find in a newspaper account is not the truth of speculative philosophy, where one might ask, with a certain carefully developed scepticism, '*what is Truth?*' Instead, newspapers engage a truth that is more prosaic, close to the ground, and contextually embedded, as in, 'is it *true* that this or that happened then and there?'. If we avoid the word 'truth' and instead emphasise the credibility of the newspaper we miss a critical point: we do not want the newspaper to be credible, believable or 'probable/possible' as we do with fiction; we want it to be true or truthful. Though both fiction and newspapers require extensive mediation to deliver a believable account, newspapers need *more* than what goes on in the head of the reader. Their truth depends upon instituted systems for news gathering, and an emphasis upon truth can be heard in justifications of even the most implausible news items: 'this truth is stranger than fiction', 'you can't make this stuff up!'. Therefore, every newspaper must satisfy questions like the following. Have events been recorded accurately? Have they been transmitted

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through space and over time without distortion? Because translating events into news involves this intricate set of mediations, news is vulnerable to scepticism about its truthfulness. For newspapers to emerge as the most robust and inclusive and persistently available source of news on matters of public concern, they had to earn the newspaper readers' trust that their accounts of the news were true. How did the early developers of the newspaper succeed in establishing that trust?

To explore these related questions, I will need to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of newspaper history. Two grand narratives explain the rise of the newspaper by idealising and simplifying that history. The *progressive narrative* understands the newspaper as an engine that promotes the rise of literacy, an informed public, a public sphere of private citizens, and popular participation in government. This narrative sidesteps the question of truth and trust by assuming that both are the inevitable by-products of the newspaper's steady improvement. Like all Whig narratives, it knows where history is headed and is therefore rigorously teleological: it interprets early developments in the light of later achievements. This narrative, by pointing, for example, to the pivotal role that newspapers played in the American and French Revolutions, becomes a vector that points towards (without yet getting to) the liberal democratic societies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because such an outcome is claimed to depend upon the free circulation of diverse opinions, this progressive narrative promotes the freedom of the press as an idea that slowly emerges in the eighteenth century, becomes enshrined in law by the First Amendment of the US Constitution (ratified in 1791), and serves as a keystone of the claim for other kinds of freedom (including the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, and union organising).[1] This classically liberal account is

1 While the progressive narrative gets its fullest development in the nineteenth and twentieth century, the struggles around press censorship in Britain in the 1770s present early examples of a rights-based argument for press freedom. Sometimes these arguments are reprinted in the newspaper. The *Virginia Gazette* of 24 December 1772 (printed by Purdie) reprinted a long speech by John Wilkes, insisting that "Our right, as constituents, to be fully informed of the proceedings of our representatives in Parliament, has been clearly demonstrated". *The Virginia Gazette* of 8 January 1776 (printed by Gaine) reprinted extracts from the 'Association' founded at the Globe Tavern on Fleet Street devoted to protecting the 'Liberty of the Press'. To justify their Association, the members offered general principles defending press freedom: (a) that "freedom of the press is indispensable to ... free government"; (b) "that by a judicious exercise of the freedom of the press, the minds of men are enlightened" and "knowledge, both civil and religious, is diffused"; (c) "the people are taught to prize, as inestimable, those political rights secured by the REVOLUTION [of 1688]".

given an especially idealised turn when it is argued that the newspaper's glory is realised upon those occasions when it speaks (capital-T) Truth to Power.[2]

An alternative history of the newspaper begins by pointing out that the early newspapers were not started to embody Truth, but to support two more prosaic activities: commerce and governance. The *propaganda narrative* throws the rise of the newspaper into a more sceptical light by emphasising the essentially commercial underpinnings of the newspaper's origins, and it links newspapers' rise to the expanding political power of governments, which sponsored, censored or shaped many early newspapers. The power of economic elites benefited from the services that newspapers provided to the expanding global commercial empires that emerged during the years between 1600 and 1900. In this sceptical narrative, the newspaper has always been an instrument of propaganda, in its twentieth-century sense as the mendacious manipulation of the opinion of the less informed. Although Lord North did not have the twentieth-century concept of propaganda available to him, his characterisation of the newspapers anticipates later scepticism about the truth claims of the newspaper. In a speech to Parliament in April 1776, where he introduced a fundraising bill to double the tax on newspapers, he characterised newspapers this way: the newspapers circulate the idea "that the liberties of this country were in danger from cruel, ambitious, and tyrannical ministers," and their falsehoods "were propagated and repeated in the course of a year, in no less than 12,230,000 newspapers".[3] In the propaganda narrative, newspapers feign truth to win trust in whatever ideology is most useful to those who control the media. So, for example, the early newspapers' claim to neutrality and disinterestedness is the ruse that conceals the ideological agendas that it promotes, most especially the notion that the newspaper sustains its readers as free and rational subjects. Within the propaganda narrative, the early newspaper's coverage of spectacular events – violent wars and revolutions, crime, scandal and disasters – anticipated the later emergence of the news as a form of entertainment with an appeal far beyond its early audience of political and economic elites. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Marxist, fascist and liberal critics – from Karl Marx and Adolf Hitler to Walter Lippmann, Edward Bernays

2 Michael Schudson, *The Power of News* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). In the essay 'Watergate and the Press' (ibid., pp. 142–165), Schudson offers an account of how the heroic agency of the newspaper gets a boost from episodes like the Watergate affair.

3 *New York Gazette*, 18 November 1776. For a more sympathetic discussion of the newspapers' tradition of "documenting public criticism of established governments" see Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac's* Gazette de Leyde (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 15.

and Noam Chomsky – developed this sceptical account of the newspaper as a vehicle of propaganda, which offers an 'ad for the status quo'.[4]

Neither of these narratives – one, too idealistic, and the other, too sceptical – is simply wrong. Both emerge from and offer insights into the newspaper's complex history. But to understand how the eighteenth-century newspaper of Britain and its colonies developed into *a trustworthy source of public information*, it is essential to avoid the synthetic simplification of the progressive story of newspapers' inevitable rise as well as the resolute scepticism of the propaganda narrative's ideology critique. By pursuing a historical and formal analysis of the Anglophone newspaper that emerged in the eighteenth century, I will explore the means by which the early newspaper earned their readers' trust in the truthfulness of the information that they transmitted. A detailed analysis of the rhetorical and formal means by which newspaper editors strove to win the trust of readers will help us avoid the bias of developmental models, which assume that the newspaper necessarily improved with the passage of time. The eighteenth century was the middle epoch of the modern newspaper: *after* the early seventeenth-century manuscript newsletters and the first printed gazettes, as formulated most successfully in the Netherlands and copied elsewhere, but *before* the nineteenth-century development of the newspaper editor as the conductor of the newspaper as a vehicle of party politics. Although the printers of the eighteenth-century newspaper often strove for impartiality, they were very far from the modern reporter, who, writing in the first person from a particular place and time, underwrote the newspaper's claim to present the news objectively.[5]

The expanding influence of the Anglophone newspaper over the course of the long eighteenth century was neither a plan of government nor the preconceived design of commercial interests. More like emergence within a complex system, it resulted from the combined effects of a series of independently motivated developments between 1665 and 1800. Each contributed to enabling the newspaper to emerge as the most flexible and authoritative way to transmit news across distances. First, there was a steady improvement in the reliability, scope and speed of the postal system, which supported the global distribution of the Anglophone newspaper. Secondly, the improvements in the physical

4 See Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1982), especially 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception', pp. 120–167.

5 Jeffrey L. Pasley, *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2001), pp. 2–3; Schudson, *Power of News,* pp. 108–109, 141.

and human infrastructure for the circulation and sharing of newspapers – which included turnpikes and packet ships, clubs and coffeehouses, and the growth in literacy – expanded newspaper readership. Thirdly, while successful newspapers became more vulgarly popular, their increased wealth and autonomy enabled them to have recourse to the law to protect themselves against government censorship as seen in the trials seeking to punish John Wilkes and suppress the Junius papers.[6] Fourthly, over the course of the century, newspapers became more numerous, larger in paper size and print-run, and published with greater frequency. These very significant increases in number and quantity enhanced the scope and extent of the newspaper's influence. Finally, it became a commonplace to say that the newspaper encouraged appeals to the "tribunal of the public".[7] In spite of the limitations of Habermas's account of the public sphere, the wide distribution of newspapers – carrying detailed accounts of politics, war and revolution – invited private citizens to exercise their independent judgment on matters of public concern. Whether or how often readers availed themselves of the critical independence that the newspapers afforded was, and still is, a matter of lively debate.

Building Credibility: The Early Newspaper as an Inchoate Mixture of News Items

The newspaper was the ugly duckling of early print media. Compared with books, systematic treatises, and even topical and polemical pamphlets – that is, any genre of writing that has a through-narrative that blends and reconciles parts into the whole – the eighteenth-century newspaper appears as an unblended mixture of differently sourced news items. The gathering of the discrete and different is the most distinctive formal feature of the newspaper. The same page might juxtapose a reward for an escaped slave, an advertisement for books and the king's speech opening Parliament. Letters, articles, advertisements, and grain prices are assembled in an additive, disconnected fashion and organised with such a weak principle of subordination that their rhetorical

6 See Troy O. Bickham, *Making Headlines: The American Revolution as Seen through the British Press* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009). Bickham documents the way the enormous profits of the big London newspapers meant that the *Public Advertiser* (one of the 9 dailies among 19 London newspapers) could afford, with its circulation of over one million in 1771, to offend government by publishing the *Junius Papers* and still successfully protect themselves from the legal prosecution (ibid., pp. 22–23).

7 Popkin, *News and Politics*, p. 42.

effect is paratactic.[8] Even the general principles of the gazette layout – the distant goes before the near; the earlier before the latest news – had to be reconciled with a typesetter's imperative, whereby the front and back page carried what the printer received first, and the middle pages carrying the 'freshest' news.[9] When compared with the newspapers of the nineteenth and twentieth century, the eighteenth-century newspapers lacked the indirect formal means that editors later developed to organise the news: putting the most important news items on *the front page*; reducing a news item to a kernel and shouting it to the reader with a *headline*; and separating opinion from fact, so as to sequester opinion on *the editorial page*. In short, when compared with the newspapers to come, the eighteenth-century newspaper had a list-like lack of order. In a sense, every newspaper was a 'magazine', in the literal sense of a collection or gathering, where diverse items were linked and separated by the thin black lines of the column dividers.

Though mixture was a challenge to the newspaper's coherence, and it has no overt bearing upon the newspaper's truthfulness, by accommodating variety, mixture became a source of strength. In *The News-Paper: A Poem*, George Crabbe celebrates mixture and variety as a trait that explains the newspaper's appeal to diverse readers:

> This, like the public inn, provides a treat,
> Where each promiscuous guest sits down to eat;
> And such this mental food, as we may call,
> Something to all men, and to some men all.[10]

The promiscuous mixture of the commercial eighteenth-century newspaper not only meant that it had the potential to accommodate whatever news items and writings pleased its subscribers. By reprinting diverse news items in a routine fashion, newspaper editors could deflect suspicion of their bias.

'The Uncertain Medium'

Historians of the book like Elizabeth Eisenstein and Adrian Johns have shown that belief in the 'intrinsic reliability' and truth-value of the printed book,

8 William B. Warner, *Protocols of Liberty: Communication Innovation and the American Revolution* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 2013), p. 126.

9 Popkin, *News and Politics*, Chapter 5.

10 George Crabbe, *The News-Paper: A Poem by Reverend George Crabbe, Chaplain to His Grace the Duke of Rutland* (London: 1785), pp. 15–16.

especially early modern science books, could not be assumed but had to be '*made*'.[11] This could be done through printing practices, like standardisation and fixity,[12] or through the patronage of the great, the carefully constructed persona of the author, elaborately staged polemics, or institutional support.[13] To establish the newspapers' truthfulness, the printer of commercial newspapers had few of these resources. In fact, the early newspaper had an explicitly discussed credibility problem. For example, in 1773, two years before the beginning of the American War, Richard Henry Lee wrote to Samuel Adams requesting information regarding the British commission appointed to investigate the burning in Rhode Island of the customs ship HMS Gaspee. Lee despairs of ever having "a just account of this affair … at this distance, and through the uncertain medium of the newspapers".[14] The request implies that the gold standard for credible news was the news transmitted by private letter between trusted correspondents.[15] In fact, the credibility of the newsletters that thrived during the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, may have benefitted from having been written in manuscript by a news gatherer with a reputation for reliability. By contrast, *The Edinburgh Evening Post* of 4 August 1783 published this satiric mediation on the unreliability of the printed newspapers: "the four winds (the initials of which make the word NEWS) are not so capricious, or so liable to change, as our public intelligences". No wonder, this observer concludes, the newspaper must qualify the truthfulness of its information by reminding readers of the newspaper printers' dependent relationship to scattered news sources: "we hear; they write; it is said; a correspondent remarks, with a long list of ifs and supposes". Doubts about the truthfulness of newspapers' accounts were difficult to put to rest. However, over the course of the eighteenth century, printers of Anglophone newspapers, working within a competitive and inventive media environment, developed a number of ways to enhance the credibility of the newspaper.

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11 Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 2–3.

12 Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

13 Johns, *Nature of the Book*.

14 James Curtis Ballagh (ed.), *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee, Volume 1: 1762–1778* (New York: MacMillan, 1911), p. 82.

15 Richard Henry Lee was in fact writing to the Boston Whig best connected to timely information. Samuel Adams was in correspondence with the Deputy Governor Sessions of Rhode Island about how best to respond to the formation of a Royal Commission to investigate the burning of HMS Gaspee.

Trust 1: Distributed Responsibility

If questioned as to the accuracy of a news item in their paper, most printers had a ready reply that qualified their personal responsibility: 'I just reprint the news items from the papers delivered to me by post'. This is an alibi in the most literal sense of 'being elsewhere'. It displaces responsibility for the truth of an account from the local newspaper printer to the distributed newspaper network from which it has been copied. The free posting (i.e. franking) of copies within the newspaper cultures of Britain and America, along with an absence of copyright produced a de facto news commons from which newspaper printers could freely select. This is why, with the notable exception of local advertising, the vast majority of newspaper content consisted of reprinting of writing penned elsewhere. The trustworthiness of each newspaper depended upon the truthfulness of the whole network of newspapers. The accuracy of the account of the birth of an heir in St. Petersburg, of the battle in the Netherlands, of the hurricane in Jamaica, or of the riot in Boston would necessarily depend upon the accuracy of the first newspaper that printed the news item. The structure of the news network meant that inaccurate accounts were submitted to an analogue form of error correction. Before the newspaper had developed, false news could thrive for extended periods of time. Thus, the Spanish Consul in Rome spread false news that the Spanish Armada had prevailed over the English fleet in the summer of 1588.[16] However, if we entertain the counterfactual existence of the eighteenth-century newspaper network in the sixteenth century, the Spanish Consul version of events would have been quickly challenged by very different newspaper accounts. The existence of the eighteenth-century newspaper's distributed news network meant that readers could gravitate to newspapers that offered the most timely and accurate news sources. While newspapers often collaborated with each other, they published in a competitive environment where consistently unreliable news sources and newspapers would wither. Therefore, from the earliest newsletters and newspapers, a concern for the truthfulness of the news became embedded in guild values and practices. Long before the modern era, it was accepted that "[t]he most valuable asset a paper has is its credibility".[17]

16 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 151–163.

17 Twentieth-century editor of the *Baltimore Sun*, quoted in Schudson, *Power of News*, p. 5.

Trust 2: The Neutral Tone or the Mask of Character

The newspaper editors of the eighteenth century consciously avoided an earlier use of news to discredit the doings of the 'great': the cruelty and innuendo of political satire and the sexual licentiousness of the gossip-mongering scandalous chronicles, such as Delarivière Manley's *The New Atlantis* (1709). Instead, the earliest printed gazettes stuck "closely the model of the manuscript news-letters",[18] where brief, factual news items, which were gathered from diverse locations, could be distributed to subscribers. Newspaper editors, like Jean Luzac of the *Gazette de Leyde*, assumed the sober posture of an historian, whereby "journalist and reader became partners in the difficult discovery of the truth about contemporary history".[19] Eschewing the spectacular and the hyperbolic, the news writer gravitated to the plain style which Bacon advocated for the New Science. In an article entitled 'Gazetier' for the *Encyclopédie*, Voltaire described the valuable restraint of the newspaper writer: "a good gazetteer should be promptly informed, truthful, impartial, simple, and correct in his style; this means that good gazetteers are very rare".[20] A similar point is made somewhat later by Baron Jacob Friedrich von Bielefeld: gazette writers should limit themselves to "a clear, truthful and succinct narration of public events. … A gazetteer who comments is a vulgar person. … [He should] leave to his readers the business of making reflections".[21]

While newspapers of the eighteenth century accurately reported facts, they also trafficked in a broad spectrum of opinion. For this vein of writing, rather than imitating the list-like structure and stylistic restraint of the manuscript newsletters, newspapers drew upon more literary models of satire and essay to develop the lively opinion conveyed by compelling authorial personae. This enhanced the credibility of the moral and political writing that has been part of the newspaper since the early eighteenth century. From the moral essays of Mr. Spectator (wise, knowledgeable and witty) to the political engagement of *Cato's Letters* (fierce in his defense of liberty and public virtue) to John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (with its calm, urbane and gentlemanly scholarship), readers were invited into an informal conversation, where the trustworthiness of ideas was enhanced by the charismatic persona who 'spoke' them. During the agitation that led to the American Revolution,

18 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 184.

19 Popkin, *News and Politics*, p. 98.

20 Ibid., p. 127.

21 Ibid., p. 127.

one Whig leader, Samuel Adams, published under many different pseudonyms. Each name implied a specific intellectual posture and supported a different style of address. As 'Cotton Mather' and 'Puritan', Adams recalled Bostonians to their earliest religious values; as 'Vindex' or 'Cato' or 'Valerius Poplicola', he conjured the austere republican virtues of early Rome; as 'Candidus' and 'Determinatus', he challenged the tyranny of British officials.[22] The anonymity of much of the writing published by the eighteenth-century newspaper taught readers to sift and evaluate the ideas of strangers.

Trust 3: Openness and Inclusiveness

The surest way to convince readers of a paper's disinterestedness was to be inclusive. At least three colonial American newspapers used the same words on their masthead: "*Open to all PARTIES – not under the influence of ANY*".[23] A paper run on an 'open' system asserted a brave independence from 'influence', contempt for the narrowness of faction, and an assumption that discovering truth was a collaborative enterprise. As Crabbe's poem suggests, newspapers were open and public in the same way that stage coaches and public houses were. This placed a practical limit upon the printer's control of the truthfulness of the words he prints. He, like the innkeeper, must stay open to many speakers of diverse opinion. In an 'Apology for Printers', Benjamin Franklin describes the openness of the operational protocols that he observed in his print shop and now invited newspaper readers to accept. First, it was "unfair for the reader to expect to be pleased by all that is printed". Printers were trained that when men differ, "both sides ought equally to have the advantage of being heard by the public" because, in an echo of Milton's *Areopagitica,* "when truth and error have fair play, the former is always an overmatch of the latter". Secondly, because of the detachment from partisanship their profession required, printers of opinion "naturally acquire[d] a vast unconcernedness as to the right or wrong opinions contained in what they print". Cultivating phlegmatic neutrality, they printed "things full of spleen and animosity, with the utmost calmness and indifference". Finally, if they were to print only what they themselves believed and approved, "an end would thereby be put to free writing"; and alternatively, if they "determined not to print any thing …[but what] would offend

22 Ira Stoll, *Samuel Adams: A Life* (New York: Free Press, 2008), p. 59.

23 This identical language is used in the pre-revolutionary period by Isaiah Thomas's *Massachusetts Spy* [Boston], the *Connecticut Current* [Hartford], and, with a slight variation in language, Rind's *Virginia Gazette* [Williamsburg].

no body, there would be very little printed".[24] Franklin never quite says what his operational protocols imply: on matters of truth and lies, readers of the news had to judge for themselves. Scholars of the early American newspaper, like Charles Clark and James Green, have shown that the openness and tolerance that Franklin advocates was often motivated by a canny commercial strategy: it avoided driving away advertisers and, as a general repository of all essential news, inclusive reprinting discouraged readers from subscribing to rival papers.[25]

Weakness become Strength

There are several paradoxes evident from the development of the eighteenth-century newspaper. The first was the success of the commercial papers – with their messy plurality, variety and abundance – over the well-ordered messaging of the court gazettes. In this competition for the faith of readers, court gazettes like the *Gazette de France* and the *London Gazette* started with many advantages: access to state information, ample subsidies, capable writers, the authority to publish their nation's newspaper of record and immunity from censorship. But, because their news expressed a pro-state bias, because their evident aim was to glorify the monarch and secure the loyalty of subjects, and because they censored facts and opinions that failed to support these purposes, the court gazettes earned the scorn of readers.[26] By contrast, the very qualities of the eighteenth-century commercial newspaper that seemed to vitiate its credibility broadened its influence. Its mixed and heteroclite principles of (dis)organisation, and its resulting lack of conceptual unity, enabled the

24 Apology for Printers, *Pennsylvania Gazette,* 10 June 1731.

25 See Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture 1665–1740* (New York: Oxford University Press 1994), and James N. Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', in Hugh Amory and David D. Hall (eds.), *A History of the Book in America, Volume 1: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 248–297.

26 *The Gazette de France* did not see fit to publish an account of the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789. Of course it is not difficult to imagine why the government would be reluctant to use its communications apparatus to spread this inflammatory news. But both the *Gazette de France* and the *London Gazette* also declined to report upon the ceremony, held in September 1791, when the King Louis XVI signed the French Constitution. See Kristiansen in this collection. Active censorship like France's discouraged publication for there, as a contemporary complained, a "journal [is] reviewed, corrected and castrated by the Paris censors" (Popkin, *News and Politics*, p. 41).

commercial newspaper to grow into a broad and accommodating channel for news and opinion. The periodicity of the newspaper afforded the same paradoxical blend of weakness and strength. While the newspapers' special claim was to "give the first report" of the news,[27] these reports – because of strict deadlines and limitations of space – were often incomplete, of dubious accuracy, and uncertain significance. But precisely because of its periodicity, the newspaper made the implicit promise that each account is oriented toward the more correct, complete and meaningful account to come. The news of an unfinished event drew readers into a very lifelike suspense as to how a news story would end. Finally, "by giving [readers] a sense of the movement of the wider world", newspapers often transmitted surprising and unsettling events. But, by promptly naming and recording them, the newspapers also provided a "comforting framework" for the reader.[28]

A Case Study: The Boston Gazette *Transmits a True Enough Account of the Day after the Boston Massacre*

When the American Crisis opened in 1765 with the organised resistance to the Stamp Act, the newspaper proved to be a supple and resilient medium for the transmission of public information. The political crisis that unfolded over the following decade offers a test case for assessing the accuracy and truth-value of the Anglophone newspaper. It is an old adage of newspaper history that customary standards of neutrality quickly fade in times of revolution and civil strife. Thus, one might assume that the Whig-Patriot sympathies of the *Boston Gazette* would lead that newspaper to offer a one-sided view of the aftermath of what is later called 'the Boston Massacre'. On 5 March 1770, a platoon of British regulars came to the aid of a sentry, who was being harassed by a crowd of angry apprentices and seamen. The confrontation escalated until the troops fired their muskets, leaving four of the inhabitants of the town dead, and at least seven others seriously injured. British officials were sure it was self-defence, while the members of the Boston Town Meeting quickly called it 'a massacre'. The *Boston Gazette*'s account of the deliberation on the day after the event was restrained by the narrative conventions of the eighteenth-century newspaper: a reliance upon official documents; avoidance of the swirl of partisan opinion; and provision of a spare and accurate presentation of persons, places, and events. On Monday 12 March, the *Boston Gazette* printed the most

27 Popkin, *News and Politics*, p. 7.

28 Ibid., pp. 6–7.

complete and coherent public account of the massacre that was published at the time. It included a brief history of the eighteen-month occupation of Boston by British troops as well as accounts of the deaths on King Street (on 5 March), of the deliberations leading to the troops' removal (on 6 March), and of the huge funeral procession held in honour of the victims (on 8 March).[29] This detailed account contrasts with the previous Thursday's issue of the Tory *Boston News-Letter,* which had carried only a short three-paragraph account that asserted the fact of a shooting on King Street, offered a list of victims, and quoted Governor Hutchinson's reassuring words to the crowd assembled outside the Town-house "promising to do all in his power that justice should be done".[30] By contrast, the *Boston Gazette*'s intricate synthetic narrative required two full pages, which was secured by publishing a two-page supplement to their standard four-page paper.

The *Boston Gazette*'s coverage is balanced between an explicit expression of sympathy for the victims of 5 March and a restrained citation of the words exchanged in debating what should be done on 6 March. Thus, the columns recounting the events were published with a special border in mourning black (see Figure 1.1). In addition the four victims were further honoured with an engraving of the four funeral caskets. To secure the reader's sympathy for the victims, the coverage begins by pointing to the indelible residues of British violence: "Tuesday morning presented a most shocking scene, the blood of our fellow citizens running like water through King-Street and the merchants Exchange … Our blood might also be track'd up to the head of Long Lane, and through divers other streets and passages". The use of the possessive pronoun 'our' draws the reader into a shared predicament. If this blood on the streets of Boston is *our blood,* then the town is one body to which we all belong. While the blood evidences British brutality, it also sanctifies the town's unity.

This beginning makes quite explicit that the *Gazette*'s basic point of view coincides with that of the Boston Town Meeting, rather than the Governor or the soldiers who had occupied the town eighteen months earlier. Yet this issue of the *Gazette* quickly mutes the pathos of its coverage, reflecting the confidence, embedded in newspaper writing, that sticking to what happened and focusing upon the dramatic uncertainty of the rush of events was the surest way to establish the interest and authority of its account. So the *Gazette* does not offer first-person testimonials of what happened on 5 March, nor does it publish essays explaining the political implications of the violent deaths. Instead, the *Gazette* avoids obvious bias with an elegant solution: it interweaves

29 *Boston Gazette*, 12 March 1770.

30 *Boston News-Letter*, 8 March 1770.

I. Bleeding Body of the Town: "a most shocking scene, the blood of our fellow citizens running like water through King-Street and the merchants Exchange…Our blood might also be track'd up to the head of Long Lane, and through divers other streets and passages."

II. The Town Meeting Takes the Initiative (11AM Meeting): a "vote" is passed and carried by "a committee of 15 respectable Gentlemen" to "the Lieutenant Governor in Council" : *"THAT it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting…that nothing can rationally be expected to restore the peace of the town & prevent further blood and carnage, but the immediate removal of the Troops;…"*

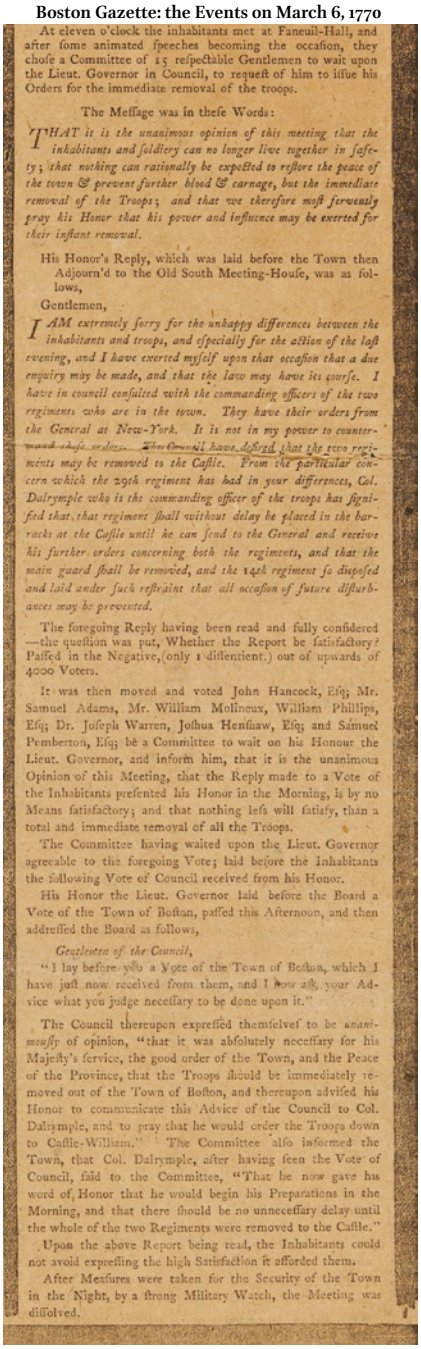
III. His Honor's Reply: *"I AM extremely sorry for the unhappy differences between the inhabitants and troops, I have exerted myself upon that occasion that a due inquiry be made, and that the law may have its course …* [*Since the regiments*] *have their orders from the General in New York. It is not in my power to countermand those orders. …"* However, the 29th Regiment will be moved to the Castle and the main guard removed from King Street.

IV. Town's response (3PM Meeting): "the question was put, Whether the Report be satisfactory? Passed in the negative, (only a dissentient) out of upwards of 4,000 votes. It was then moved and voted that a committee of John Hancock, Esq.; Mr. Samuel Adams, Mr. William Mollineux, Williams Philips, Esq.; Dr. Joseph Warren, Joshua Henshaw, Esq.; and Samuel Pemberton, Esq. be a committee to wait on his Honor the Lieut. Governor, and inform him, that it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that" the reply of His Honor "is by no means satisfactory; and that nothing less will satisfy, than a total and immediate removal of all the Troops."

V. The Council deliberates and finds a Solution (3 voices):
1: The Lieutenant-Governor lays before the Council the 'vote' of the Town of Boston;
2: The Council is "unanimously of opinion, 'that it was absolutely necessary for his Majesty's service, the good order of the Town, and Peace of the province, that the Troops should be immediately removed out of the Town of Boston.
3: Col Dalrymple "now gave his word of honor that he would begin his preparations…" for the "removal of both regiments to the Castle."

Epilogue: the Town Meeting savors its Victory and takes charge: The Inhabitants express "high satisfaction;" & "for the security of the Town in the Night" they set a "strong Military Watch."

Boston Gazette: the Events on March 6, 1770



At eleven o'clock the inhabitants met at Faneuil-Hall, and after ſome animated ſpeeches becoming the occaſion, they choſe a Committee of 15 reſpectable Gentlemen to wait upon the Lieut. Governor in Council, to requeſt of him to iſſue his Orders for the immediate removal of the troops.

The Meſſage was in theſe Words:

THAT it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that the inhabitants and ſoldiery can no longer live together in ſafety; that nothing can rationally be expected to reſtore the peace of the town & prevent further blood & carnage, but the immediate removal of the Troops; and that we therefore moſt fervently pray his Honor that his power and influence may be exerted for their inſtant removal.

His Honor's Reply, which was laid before the Town then Adjourn'd to the Old South Meeting-Houſe, was as follows,

Gentlemen,

I AM extremely ſorry for the unhappy differences between the inhabitants and troops, and eſpecially for the action of the laſt evening, and I have exerted myſelf upon that occaſion that a due enquiry may be made, and that the law may have its courſe. I have in council conſulted with the commanding officers of the two regiments who are in the town. They have their orders from the General at New-York. It is not in my power to counter-mand thoſe orders. The Council have deſired that the two regiments may be removed to the Caſtle. From the particular concern which the 29th regiment has had in your differences, Col. Dalrymple who is the commanding officer of the troops has ſignified that that regiment ſhall without delay be placed in the barracks at the Caſtle until he can ſend to the General and receive his further orders concerning both the regiments, and that the main guard ſhall be removed, and the 14th regiment ſo diſpoſed and laid under ſuch reſtraint that all occaſion of future diſturbances may be prevented.

The foregoing Reply having been read and fully conſidered —the queſtion was put, Whether the Report be ſatisfactory? Paſſed in the Negative, (only 1 diſſentient.) out of upwards of 4000 Voters.

It was then moved and voted John Hancock, Eſq; Mr. Samuel Adams, Mr. William Molineux, William Phillips, Eſq; Dr. Joſeph Warren, Joſhua Henſhaw, Eſq; and Samuel Pemberton, Eſq; be a Committee to wait on his Honour the Lieut. Governor, and inform him, that it is the unanimous Opinion of this Meeting, that the Reply made to a Vote of the Inhabitants preſented his Honor in the Morning, is by no Means ſatisfactory; and that nothing leſs will ſatisfy, than a total and immediate removal of all the Troops.

The Committee having waited upon the Lieut. Governor agreeable to the foregoing Vote; laid before the Inhabitants the following Vote of Council received from his Honor.

His Honor the Lieut. Governor laid before the Board a Vote of the Town of Boſton, paſſed this Afternoon, and then addreſſed the Board as follows,

Gentlemen of the Council,

"I lay before you a Vote of the Town of Boſton, which I have juſt now received from them, and I now aſk your Advice what you judge neceſſary to be done upon it."

The Council thereupon expreſſed themſelves to be *unanimouſly* of opinion, "that it was abſolutely neceſſary for his Majeſty's ſervice, the good order of the Town, and the Peace of the Province, that the Troops ſhould be immediately removed out of the Town of Boſton, and thereupon adviſed his Honor to communicate this Advice of the Council to Col. Dalrymple, and to pray that he would order the Troops down to Caſtle-William." The Committee alſo informed the Town, that Col. Dalrymple, after having ſeen the Vote of Council, ſaid to the Committee, "That he now gave his word of Honor that he would begin his Preparations in the Morning, and that there ſhould be no unneceſſary delay until the whole of the two Regiments were removed to the Caſtle."

Upon the above Report being read, the Inhabitants could not avoid expreſſing the high Satisfaction it afforded them.

After Meaſures were taken for the Security of the Town in the Night, by a ſtrong Military Watch, the Meeting was diſſolved.

FIGURE 1.1 *The* Boston Gazette*'s account of the events of 6 March 1770.*

official documents of the meetings into a lucid and suspenseful dialogue between the Governor, the Town Meeting and the Council. Rather than engage in narrative *diegesis* (by telling), the *Boston Gazette* offers a narrative *mimesis* by showing what happened on 6 March. Because this reproduces the presentational mode of drama, I will describe this newspaper coverage as a five-act play, where each exchange between Whigs and Royal Officials appears as a deed in the form of words, that is, a speech act with performative force (see Figure 1.1).

Act 1: To respond to this crisis, the Town Meeting, gathered in large numbers at Faneuil Hall, appointed a committee of fifteen respectable gentlemen to carry the resolution to Governor Hutchinson, who was meeting nearby in the Town House with the Council. The Town Meeting's resolution is presented by the committee to the Council:

> *THAT it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting that the inhabitants and soldiery can no longer live together in safety; that nothing can rationally be expected to restore the peace of the town & prevent further blood and carnage, but the immediate removal of the Troops; and that we therefore most fervently pray His Honor that his power and influence may be exerted for their instant removal.*

Notice that this resolution lacked any reference to the event (the deaths on King Street) that occasioned it. The Town Meeting apparently knows that any reference to or denomination of the previous night's event will become an occasion for dispute and delay. Instead there is a blunt statement of an *opinion* – "*that the inhabitants and soldiery can no longer live together in safety*" – plus a *prediction that carries a threat*: that only "the immediate removal of the troops" can "prevent further bloodshed and carnage". The resolution ends on a pragmatic note: knowing the Town Meeting does not have the authority to remove the troops, they cast this resolution into the form of a petition to the Governor "we therefore most fervently pray … for their instant removal". Because it succeeded in setting the terms for the day's debate, this resolution had enormous influence.

Act 2: The Governor's reply expresses sorrow for the previous night's conflict (which he sagely refuses to characterise), makes a commitment to the law, but then rejects the resolution's request, insisting that as Governor, he does not have the "power" to order the removal of the troops.

> *I AM extremely sorry for the unhappy differences between the inhabitants and troops, I have exerted myself upon that occasion that a due inquiry be made, and that the law may have its course …* [*The regiments*] *have their*

> *orders from the General in New York. It is [therefore] not in my power to countermand those orders.*

However, the Governor fashions this compromise: he tells the troops' commander, Colonel Dalrymple, that he would not object to the removal from Boston of one of the two regiments.

Act 3: Reconvening the Town Meeting in the afternoon, in the larger space of Old South Church, the Meeting quickly responded: all but one of the four thousand in attendance voted that the Governor's response is not "satisfactory". "It was then moved and voted" that seven members of the meeting "be a committee to wait on the Governor, and inform him that it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting", that his reply to the Town's vote of this morning "is by no means satisfactory; and that nothing less will satisfy, than a total and immediate removal of all the Troops". Note that the town meeting's authority is strengthened by its exact observance of proper procedures. The same is true for the Governor.

Act 4: The Governor asks the "the Gentlemen of Council" for their advice, the Council is "unanimously of opinion … that the Troops should be immediately removed out of the Town of Boston"; and finally, breaking the apparent impasse between the Governor and the Council, the military commander of the regiments, Colonel Dalrymple, "gave his word of honor that he would begin his preparations" for the "removal of both regiments to the Castle" without "unnecessary delay".

Act 5: The account ends back at the Town Meeting. "Upon the above Report being read, the inhabitants could not avoid expressing the high satisfaction it afforded them". They take "measures for the security of the town in the night by a strong Military Watch".

By weaving its account with an exact citation of the words spoken or written on 6 March, the *Gazette's* narrative braids a storyline out of available textual objects, the indisputable factual kernels of the day. While most of the words are copied out of the minute book of the Boston Town Meeting, this source has been abridged to create an illusion of an up-tempo flow of a dialogue between the Town and the Governor, with a critical final act of mediation by the Council. Through the directness and simplicity of this dialogue, the *Boston Gazette* eschewed polemics or abstract principles, commentary or explanation, or any tendentious speculations about motive. The coverage succeeds in specifying a *factual common ground* to which most readers could assent. This is the truth with a small t. The even-handedness and fidelity of the account is confirmed three days later when the Tory *News-Letter,* printed by Richard Draper, publishes a verbatim reprint of the *Boston Gazette*'s account of 6 March.

However, this account hides as much as it represents. While the *Boston Gazette*'s account is broadly accurate, there is one glaring gap in the narrative. Many readers must have wondered *why* the Governor changed his mind on the critical question of troop removal between the morning and afternoon meetings of the Council. One might defend the incompleteness of the *Gazette*'s coverage by noting that facts are numberless and reality illimitable. But the *Gazette*'s omission is most consequential. The substance of the Council's secret deliberations was reported by letters to the American Secretary Lord Hillsborough in Whitehall after the meeting. In the three long letters, sent by Governor Hutchinson, Secretary Oliver, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dalrymple, three critical (and even scandalous) moments of the meetings are described: first, when the morning committee of fifteen had warned of a violent popular uprising, the Governor had issued a stern warning: *that any who resorted to force would be guilty of treason,* "*and their life and property would be forfeit to the Crown*". Secondly, in reply to the Governor's compromise offer to remove one regiment, Samuel Adams had offered this sharp rejoinder: *"Mr. Adams, one of the committee, told Colonel Dalrymple that if he could remove the 29th Regiment he could also remove the 14th, and it was at his peril if he did not*".[31] Finally, and most significantly,

> *Councilor Royall Tyler insisted that if the troops were not removed that the people would come in from the neighboring towns, and that there would be ten thousand men to effect the removal of the troops, and that would probably be destroyed by the people, should it be called rebellion, should it incur the loss of our charter, or be the consequences what it would.*[32]

What proved decisive to the deliberations and led all the Council, including the Governor's close ally and brother-in-law Andrew Oliver, to abandon Governor Hutchinson was the conviction that militia from the surrounding towns were 'in motion' to remove the Royal troops from Boston by force. Then there would have been a real Boston massacre.

It is not known how soon the Whigs of the town meeting learned of the private deliberations of the Council.[33] This background information – from

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31 K.G. Davies (ed.), *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770–1783, Volume 11* (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1975), p. 53.

32 Ibid., pp. 53–54.

33 Because Royall Tyler was a resident of Boston and an ally of the Whig members of the town meeting, it is quite likely that the inner deliberations of the Council would become

the records of the official deliberations of the Council – throws the *Boston Gazette* account into a new light. The *Boston Gazette*'s broadly accurate account omits the elements of the deliberations in the Council that were decisive in its change of heart: that the militia from the surrounding towns constituted a creditable threat of civil insurrection. In order to stay clear of the seditious tendency of such a threat, the *Boston Gazette* narrative foregrounds other features of the Town Meeting's performance: its restraint even when sorely provoked; its observation of its customary procedures (voting, appointing committees, and patiently awaiting results); the speed and decisiveness of its deliberations; the simplicity of its demand; and, most importantly, its achieved unity. By organising its account around authoritative public documents, the *Boston Gazette*'s narrative has a 'cooling effect'. In response to the irregularity of the riot of 5 March, or the spectre of civil war that opened on 6 March, the *Boston Gazette* account represents the events of 6 March as a triumph of responsible – because disciplined – popular sovereignty. By this account, the passing of the crisis is due neither to Royal Officials, who prudently relent, nor to the Whig threat of civil insurrection. The concision of this narrative suggested the magical efficacy of the Town Meeting's disciplined moral resolve. The Town Meeting's exercise of self-government allows them to govern the action of others. By the *way* it acts, by the disciplined power it exercises, and by the lively 'spirit of liberty' it evidences, the Town Meeting emerges, in the account of the *Boston Gazette*, as the hero of 6 March.

If, as it is sometimes said, newspapers write the first draft of history, then this case history suggests that its history is partial and incomplete. The *Boston Gazette*'s account of the day after the Boston massacre suggests the limits of the truth-value of even an accurate newspaper account. Paradoxically, its coverage is both factually correct but untrue. Because Whigs and Royal Officials have a divergent understanding of the reality that grounds the events under consideration, it is quite likely that Royal Officials and their Tory supporters found the *Gazette*'s account to be *accurate but essentially false*. While both Whigs and Tories had no trouble agreeing upon certain details – names of the dead, time of the shooting, the fact that the ringing of bells gathered a crowd, etc. – these constitute only a thin layer of the realities in dispute. The Whig and Royal Officials diverge on essentials. There was no political consensus to decide whether what happened was a riot, a massacre, or an unfortunate

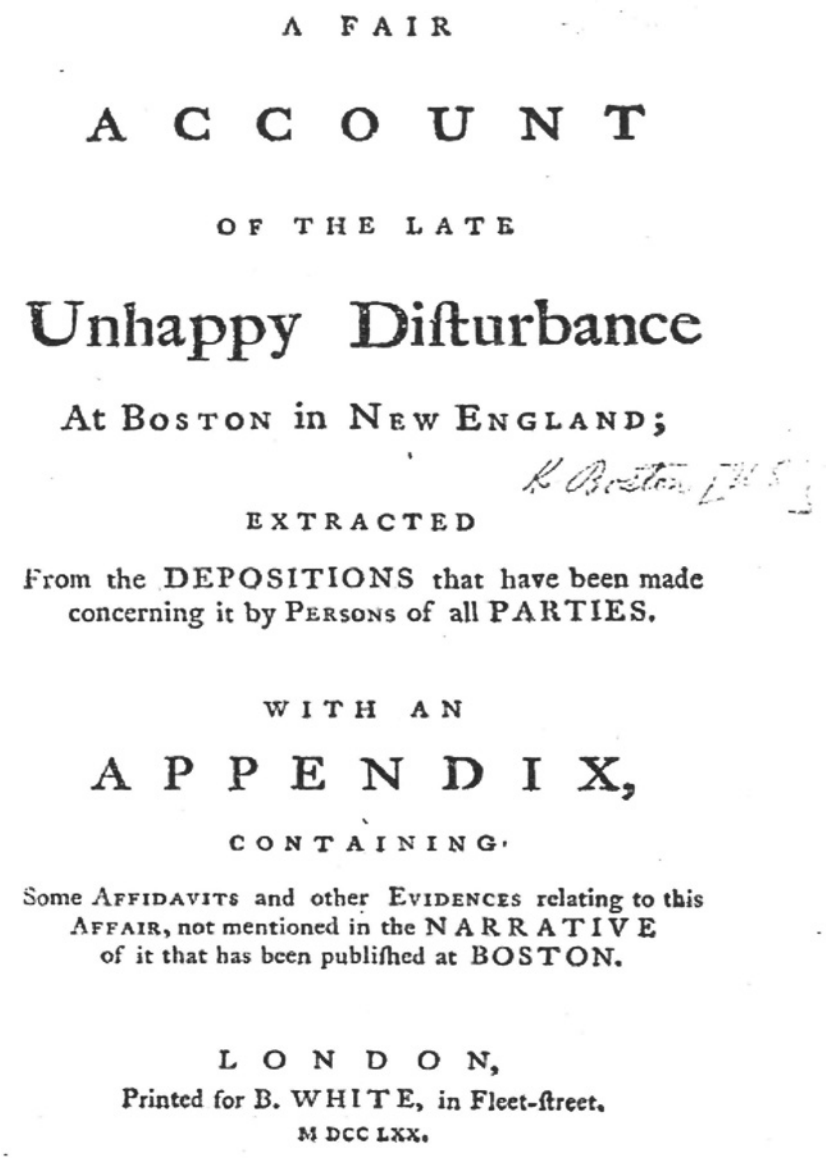
quickly known. It did not take long before Boston Whigs would have read Andrew Oliver's letter-affidavit in the ministry's pamphlet, *A Fair Account of the Late Disturbances at Boston* (London: 1770). See Hiller B. Zobel, *The Boston Massacre* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1970), pp. 212–213.

accident, and exhaustive forensic analysis has never even settled who began the violence that ended in five deaths. The Whig's 'massacre' was labelled by Tories as an "unfortunate disturbance on King Street"; the Town Meeting's victory in compelling the removal of British troops was received in Whitehall as an alarming symptom of the "state of misgovernment in His Majesty's Province of Massachusetts".[34] Whigs and Tories, drawing upon different parts of the news record, developed starkly divergent lessons with which to seed their mutual future. Each side published a polemical pamphlet to disseminate their version of events: the Tory pro-Ministerial pamphlet, written by John Mein, was published in London and entitled, *A Fair Account of the Late Unhappy Disturbance at Boston in New England* (see Figure 1.2). Then, to counter its influence, Boston Whigs published and sent to their supporters in London a rival pamphlet entitled, *A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre in Boston Perpetrated on the Fifth Day of March 1770* (see Figure 1.3).

In the months after the events of 5–6 March 1770, Boston Whigs and the British Ministry institutionalised the events in utterly different ways. The Whigs developed an annual oration to commemorate the massacre and celebrate the unity that had enabled them to triumph over the Royal Governor. These orations encouraged Boston Whigs to apply the republican moral lessons of 6 March – courage and firmness – to subsequent moments in the American Crisis. By contrast, the British Privy Council in Whitehall held a series of private meetings, patiently gathered evidence of the weakness of Royal government in Massachusetts, and then promulgated reforms of the Massachusetts provincial charter to strengthen government there. They included Royal appointment of previously elected councillors and sheriffs, as well as the requirement that all towns receive prior approval from the Governor for any non-routine town meeting. These plans were not implemented immediately, but when the Boston Whigs threw East India tea into Boston harbour at the end of 1773, the Ministry took these plans off the shelf and introduced them into Parliament as the Massachusetts Government Act (1774). It was passed with unprecedented speed and became one of the triggers of revolution. By then, it had become evident that the peace so arduously achieved on 6 March was only temporary.

My brief discussion of the eighteenth-century newspaper suggests how, over time, newspapers became institutions that had established a reputation for truthfulness that readers could trust. Having modest expectations for their

34 'State of Disorders, Confusion, and Misgovernment which have lately prevailed and do still continue to prevail in His Majesty's province of the Massachusetts Bay in America', enclosed in John Pownall's letter to Clerk of Council, 21 June 1770, in *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770–1783*, pp. 110–128.



A FAIR

ACCOUNT

OF THE LATE

Unhappy Diſturbance

At BOSTON in NEW ENGLAND;

EXTRACTED

From the DEPOSITIONS that have been made concerning it by PERSONS of all PARTIES.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

Some AFFIDAVITS and other EVIDENCES relating to this AFFAIR, not mentioned in the NARRATIVE of it that has been publiſhed at BOSTON.

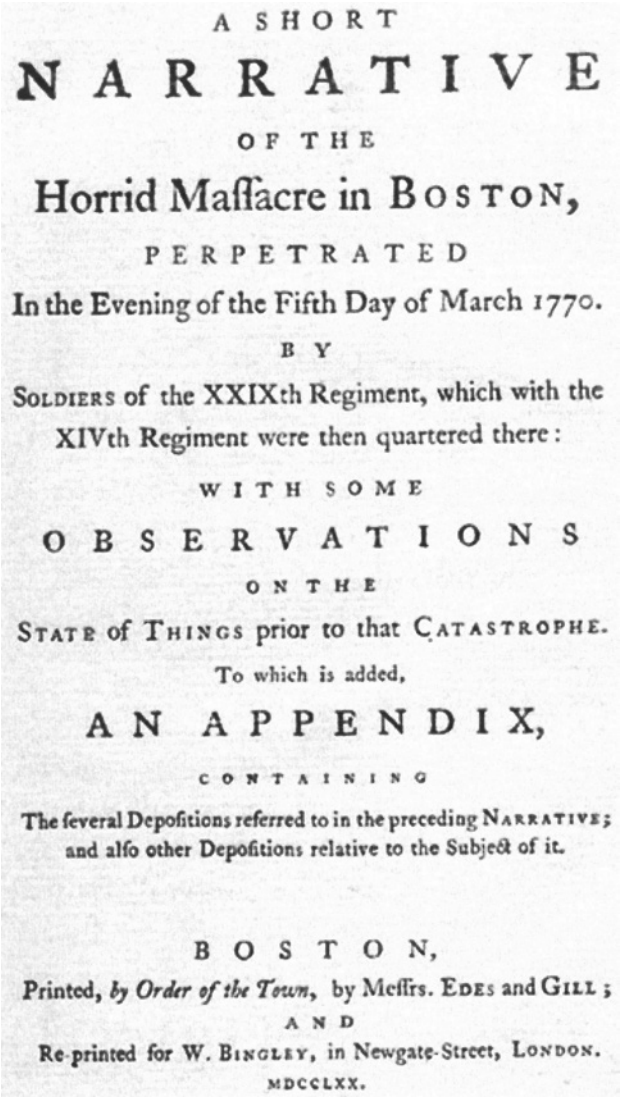
LONDON,

Printed for B. WHITE, in Fleet-ſtreet.

M DCC LXX.

FIGURE 1.2 *Title-page of the Tory pro-Ministerial pamphlet* A Fair Account of the Late Unhappy Disturbance at Boston in New England *(1770).*

newspapers, eighteenth-century readers saw them neither as heralds of liberty nor as sources of manipulative propaganda. Instead, they accepted newspapers as the most timely, varied, flexible source of information about events occurring in places remote from the paper's production. As such, they became



A SHORT
NARRATIVE
OF THE
Horrid Maſſacre in BOSTON,
PERPETRATED
In the Evening of the Fifth Day of March 1770.
BY
SOLDIERS of the XXIXth Regiment, which with the
XIVth Regiment were then quartered there:
WITH SOME
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
STATE of THINGS prior to that CATASTROPHE.
To which is added,
AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
The ſeveral Depoſitions referred to in the preceding NARRATIVE;
and alſo other Depoſitions relative to the Subject of it.

BOSTON,
Printed, *by Order of the Town*, by Meſſrs. EDES and GILL;
AND
Re-printed for W. BINGLEY, in Newgate-Street, LONDON.
MDCCLXX.

FIGURE 1.3 *Title-page of the Boston Whigs' pamphlet* A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre in Boston Perpetrated on the Fifth Day of March 1770 (*1770*).

woven deep into the information ecology of the British Empire. But our look at the coverage of the day after the Boston 'massacre' also suggests that there never can be a definitive resolution of the opposition between fact and opinion; neither can there be a definitive answer to what might be the founding query directed at the early newspaper: *is this news account accurate enough, inclusive enough, and unbiased enough to be considered true and trustworthy*?

The problematic of truth and error, trust and distrust, may render every answer to this question provisional and temporary. Thus, as the new American republic moved into the nineteenth century, the open, inclusive and impartial mode of eighteenth-century newspapers faded both as ideal and practice. Newspapers that served as agents of partisan opinion, party mobilisation, and democratic participation replaced them.[35] Ever since readers of the newspaper have been obliged to dispute whether news is fair and balanced, trustworthy or true. Perhaps they always will.

35 In *The Tyranny of Printers*, Jeffrey Pasley argues that this development enabled partisan party papers – which framed the news by their political projects – to broaden participatory democratic politics in the early Republic.

PART 3

Archival Limits

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CHAPTER 2

Searching for Dr. Johnson: The Digitisation of the Burney Newspaper Collection

Andrew Prescott

As you enter the Rare Books and Music Reading Room of the British Library, the bookshelves on your left-hand side are full of boxes of microfilm which few readers ever touch. These are the microfilms of the Burney Collection of newspapers which twenty five years ago were one of the most frequently used microfilm sets in the British Library. The microfilms are no longer much used because of the release in late 2007 by Gale Cengage Learning in partnership with the British Library of a searchable database of the Burney Newspapers which provides more convenient access to the collection both in the British Library and remotely. The boxes of microfilms of Burney Newspapers in the Rare Books Reading Room now seem like fossils, discarded relics of a superannuated information technology – the British Library collection guide to newspapers only refers to the digital version and does not mention the existence of the microfilms.[1] Yet our use of the digital resource is still profoundly shaped by the technology and limitations of the microfilm set, and whenever you enter the Rare Books Reading Room it is worth glancing at the microfilm as a reminder of the pitfalls inherent in using the digitised Burney Newspapers.

The Burney Collection is the largest single collection of early English newspapers, currently containing nearly a million pages in about 1,290 titles, and it was purchased by the British Museum in 1818 from the estate of Rev. Charles Burney (1757–1817), the son of the music historian Dr. Charles Burney and brother of the novelist Frances Burney. As a young man, fond of high living and carousing, Burney was sent down from Cambridge in disgrace after stealing and defacing over ninety books from the University Library. Refused entry to his father's house, Burney was determined to redeem himself and went to Aberdeen where he became a diligent student.[2] Burney became a successful

1 https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/burney-collection (accessed 10 October 2016). I am grateful to Michael Alexander, John Goldfinch, Edmund King, Michael Lesk and Simon Tanner for their assistance in completing this essay. Responsibility for errors and misunderstandings is entirely mine.

2 Lars Troide, 'Burney, Charles (1757–1817)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/

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schoolmaster and distinguished classical scholar. He was reinstated at Cambridge and awarded a degree by royal mandate, removing the taint of his crime and allowing him to be ordained as a clergyman. Burney resumed his book collecting, using more conventional methods, and was made a Fellow of the Royal Society.

The material purchased by the British Museum in 1818 from Burney's executors comprised five important collections.[3] The first was over 500 manuscripts chiefly of classical texts and Christian texts in Greek and Latin. The second group contained over 13,000 printed volumes including rare early editions of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. The Museum also purchased over 7,000 prints collected by Burney. The fourth collection acquired by the Museum consisted of nearly 400 volumes of newspaper cuttings, playbills, notes and prints which Burney had compiled towards a projected history of the theatre. The final component of the Burney purchase were the newspapers which he had begun to collect on his return from Aberdeen in 1781 by gathering old papers from Gregg's coffeehouse in York Street, Covent Garden, which was run by his maiden aunts.[4] The bald description by the Museum of the newspaper collection at the time of its purchase as "a collection of early newspapers, filling 700 volumes, more ample than any in existence" has been taken to suggest that the newspapers were considered less important than the classical manuscripts and books,[5] but the price paid for the newspapers, 1,000 guineas, compares favourably with the valuation of the manuscripts which was between £2,500 and £3,000,[6] indicating that the importance of Burney's newspaper collection was recognised at an early date.

The curatorial history of the Burney Collection is complex.[7] Burney did not file his newspapers by title but bound them in a chronological sequence, arranging them day by day so that all the papers collected by him for a given date are together. This was a convenient way of following the reporting of particular

article/4079 (accessed 26 October 2016); R.S. Walker, 'Charles Burney's Theft of Books at Cambridge', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 3 (1959–1963), pp. 313–326.

3 P.R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753–1973* (London: The British Library, 1998), pp. 37–38.

4 Lars Troide and Stewart Cooke (eds.), *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney, Vol. 3* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 457–459.

5 Arundell Esdaile, *The British Museum Library: A Short History and Survey* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1946), p. 208.

6 Harris, *History of the British Museum Library*, p. 38.

7 It is helpfully summarised in Moira Goff's note on 'The Burney Newspapers at the British Library' in the 'About' section of the online version of the Burney Newspapers: http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/bbcn_about.htm.

events without having to move from one volume to another, but annoying for anyone trying to establish which issues of a particular title survive or for a reader interested in one particular title. This chronological arrangement became more cumbersome as the number of newspapers increased in the later eighteenth century, when many volumes were needed for a single year.

Following the acquisition of the Burney Newspapers by the British Museum, British Museum curators inserted seventeenth- and eighteenth-century newspapers acquired by the Museum into the Burney Collection, a practice which continued until the 1970s. As a result, perhaps two-thirds of the Burney Newspapers were not collected by Burney himself but added to the collection after its acquisition by the Museum.[8] The first such addition seems to have been newspapers from the collection of Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum.[9] The most recent addition to the Burney Newspapers was in 1972 when a bequest by the architect and philatelist Sydney R. Turner filled gaps in runs of titles and added new titles such as the *Corn Cutter's Journal*, a progovernment newspaper heavily subsidised by Walpole.[10] In many ways, the name Burney Newspapers is more of a homage to the founder of the collection than an accurate indicator of their provenance.

In inserting these additional newspapers into the Burney Collection, the British Museum curators tended to prefer single title volumes, as opposed to Burney's day-by-day arrangement. Consequently, it can be difficult to anticipate where numbers of a particular newspaper may have been placed. For example, Volume 3 for 1758 contains not only the *Universal Chronicle* from 8 April to 30 December 1758, but also numbers of the same title for 1759 and 1760. The complexities caused by the different ways in which newspapers were incorporated into the collection over the years are illustrated by the first volume for 1717. The first volume for 1717 starts with a complete run of the *Daily Courant* for the year, followed by the complete 1717 run of the *London Gazette* and then the complete annual run of the *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*. This 1717 volume then continues with one number of the *Original Weekly Journal* for 23 February 1717; numbers of the *St. James's Evening Post* from January, February, November and December; individual numbers of the *Flying Post* and *London*

8 The extent of the additions to the collection is evident from annotations to Burney's handwritten collection of his collection. The estimate of two thirds of the collection being later additions is by Moira Goff, 'Burney Newspapers'.

9 Alison Walker, 'Lost in Plain Sight: Rediscovering the Library of Sir Hans Sloane' in Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 410.

10 Goff, 'Burney Newspapers'.

Post from November 1717; odd numbers of the *Weekly Journal* or *Saturday's Post* from August to December 1717; and finally one stray number of the *Evening Post* for 28 December 1717.

When the Newspaper Library was established by the British Museum at Colindale in 1905, all post-1801 newspapers were transferred there and assimilated into a general title sequence, including those from the Burney Collection, which was thus split up. However, this division was not cleanly made and the main Burney Collection still retains a few post-1801 London titles – for example, the Burney run of *Lloyd's Evening Post* continues to 18 April 1804. All pre-1801 provincial newspapers were also transferred to Colindale at that time. Although the Burney Collection contains some provincial titles, the vast majority of the titles in the Burney Newspapers came from London and it appears that the British Museum curators regarded it as essentially a London collection, so there do not appear to have been any transfers of pre-1801 provincial newspapers from the Burney Collection.[11]

Until the digitisation project, the primary means of locating material in the Burney Newspapers was by means of Burney's own handwritten catalogue reflecting the chronological arrangement, with later annotations reflecting subsequent additions and changes. Burney's original manuscript was used in the Reading Room until the 1970s, when a photocopy was provided which is still in use in the British Library's Rare Books Reading Room for anyone wishing to consult the microfilms. A project in the 1940s to prepare a new catalogue fizzled out, but a card index was made at that time of titles in the handwritten Burney catalogue. This index was subsequently lost but photocopies of the cards survive. In 1970, the bibliographers John Joliffe and Julian Roberts (afterwards both to move to the Bodleian Library) developed a method to produce an issue-by-issue listing of the collection on computer (to be input using punched tape). A pilot project was carried out to catalogue 200 volumes in the collection using this method, but this visionary proposal was not continued, and the data accumulated has also been lost. The continuing lack of a comprehensive title index and the chronological arrangement posed a direct threat to the preservation of the Burney Newspapers themselves, since readers wishing to trace particular titles had to wade through the chronological volumes, considerably increasing wear and tear on the newspapers.

The origins of microphotography go back to the nineteenth century, but it began to appear in commercial use in the 1920s and the Library of Congress started microfilming material in British libraries. The British Museum became interested in the extent to which microfilming could reduce wear and tear on

11 I am grateful to John Goldfinch for advice on this point.

its collections and in 1935 Eugene Power, who afterwards established University Microfilms International which pioneered the large-scale microfilm publication of primary materials, helped set up a programme at the British Museum for the microfilming of rare books. After the Second World War, the Museum recognised the potential of microfilm for dealing with the problems of preserving and providing access to large volumes of fragile newspapers, and Power was again involved in setting up, with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation, a studio to microfilm newspapers at Colindale.[12]

Joliffe and Roberts during their time in the British Museum were alarmed by the deteriorating condition of the Burney Newspapers and in 1971 Roberts suggested that the entire collection should be microfilmed. The American microfilming company Research Publications (later Research Publications International and Primary Source Media, now incorporated into the Gale Group) expressed interest in microfilming the collection in 1972, but it was not until 1977 that filming finally began. It was initially hoped that the microfilm would rearrange the collection into title order rather than reproduce the confusing arrangement of the existing volumes. It was originally intended to do this by splicing the microfilm to rearrange the titles, but this proved impracticable. Instead, it was decided to film title by title, so that each volume went under the microfilm cameras as many times as necessary to assemble all the issues of a particular title. This process created a number of problems. For example, camera operators had to decide what page went with which issue, and a number of the films have odd pages at the end. John Goldfinch has observed that "We don't actually know that all the pages in a given Burney volume made it onto the film".

These films were supplied to Research Publications who in 1979 produced *Early English Newspapers: 1622–1820*, which included both material from the Burney Collection and another large collection of early English newspapers, the newspapers collected by John Nichols in the Hope collection in the Bodleian Library. The Research Publications microfilm set was in title order. However, the title listing published as a guide to *Early English Newspapers* did not distinguish material taken from the Burney and Nichols collection. Moreover, it appears that where the Burney run of a particular title was sporadic, Research Publications did not include it in the hope that fuller holdings of the title might be identified elsewhere. Consequently, the Research Publications set did not provide comprehensive coverage of the Burney Collection, omitting many titles for which Burney only had partial holdings.

12 Harris, *History of the British Museum Library*, pp. 530–531, 601; S. John Teague, *Microform, Video and Electronic Media Librarianship* (London: Butterworths, 1985), pp. 8–9.

By 1981 or so, a complete microfilm of the Burney Collection was available to readers in the British Library's reading rooms. This at least helped ensure that the original volumes would suffer much less wear and tear and, as John Goldfinch observed in 2003, "microfilm has proved its worth in supporting the preservation of the collection without impeding access to the information within it".[13] Nevertheless, it was a tiresome process, sitting beneath the celebrated dome of the Round Reading Room of the British Museum, trying to navigate one's way around the endless reels of microfilm of the Burney Collection. For Ashley Marshall and Robert Hume, the chief benefit of the Gale Burney database was the way it liberated them from the "grim business" of skimming microfilms.[14] According to Marshall and Hume, the "difficult and inefficient" process of searching microfilm meant that "Even those scholars who have spent thousands of hours with the films have mostly stuck to scanning well-known papers for paragraphs on particular subjects".[15] Not only was searching microfilm time-consuming and inconvenient, but only one reader could have access to a single reel of microfilm at any time. This was a particular problem in the case of the Burney Newspapers where the chronological arrangement meant that a reader wanting to read a particular title would require a number of microfilm reels. Above all, heavy use of the single set of microfilms in the reading room meant that the quality of the microfilms rapidly deteriorated as they became scratched and worn.

In 1992, at the behest of Professor Robin Alston, the Editor-in-Chief of the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue and bibliographical consultant to the British Library, the British Library purchased a Mekel M400XL microfilm digitiser, and an immediate priority was to see how far this could improve the way in which the Library provided access to its microfilms, by for example allowing multiple reader access to microfilms and above all dealing with the problems caused by the deterioration of single microfilm sets as a result of heavy reading room use. The Library set up a project called 'The Digitisation of Aging Microfilm' (with the uninspiring acronym DAMP) and it is from this microfilm project that the Burney digital resource derives. The DAMP project

13 John Goldfinch, 'The Burney Collection of Newspapers: will digitisation do the trick?' in John Webster (ed.), *'Parallel Lives': digital and analog options for access and preservation: Papers given at the joint conference of the National Preservation Office and King's College London held 10 November 2003 at the British Library* (London: The National Preservation Office, 2004), pp. 49–60 (54).

14 Ashley Marshall and Robert Hume, 'The Joys, Possibilities, and Perils of the British Library's Digital Burney Newspapers Collection', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America,* 104 (2010), pp. 5–52 (6).

15 Marshall and Hume, 'Joys, Possibilities, and Perils', pp. 5–6.

formed part of the British Library's first major digitisation and networking programme from 1993 onwards which was called Initiatives for Access.[16]

The original aim of the Burney Newspapers digitisation project was thus not to produce a searchable text at all. It was an experimental project to improve the way in which the Library made its microfilm surrogates available. There was no assumption that digital images would replace microfilm, since microfilm, which tests showed would survive one thousand years in the right conditions, was considered a more stable preservation medium. Details of the early stages of the DAMP project can be found in two articles by the project's manager, Hazel Podmore.[17] She emphasised how the first stages of the project were meant to test the capabilities of the Mekel scanner. She noted that the microfilm was not the best quality the Library has ever produced, both because the microfilm was quite old and because the original newspapers were in such poor condition. However, from the point of view of Podmore and her team, this was ideal since it provided a tough test for the Mekel scanner. Another problem is that it was quickly found that for best results it was necessary to use the master microfilm, but the DAMP team were concerned about the potential for damage to the master microfilms during the scanning process and worked from the reading room set.

The DAMP team's main priority was to establish an efficient workflow for the scanning of the microfilm. They focussed initially on newspapers from the French Revolution period. By the time the project finished in 1996 over 21 gigabytes of images had been produced at a work rate of approximately 6,000 frames per month, suggesting that it would take about eighteen months to scan the 650,000 microfilm frames of the entire Burney Collection. However, while the team had successfully mastered the production workflow, the best way of enabling readers to navigate the thousands of images produced by the system was not immediately clear. Simply dumping hundreds of thousands of digital images on a server was not a practicable way of offering a reading room service, while the production of a special programme for access to the images would have been too expensive. Experiments were made with Optical Character Recognition (OCR) packages to convert the images to machine readable text, but at that time no OCR packages were capable of recognising eighteenth-century type.

16 Hazel Podmore, 'Microfilm Revolutionised', *Initiatives for Access News*, 1 (1994), p. 8; Hazel Podmore, 'The Digitisation of Microfilm' in Leona Carpenter, Andrew Prescott and Simon Shaw (eds.), *Towards the Digital Library: the British Library's Initiatives for Access Programme* (London: The British Library, 1998), pp. 68–72.

17 Ibid.

Among the other projects undertaken within the 'Initiatives for Access' programme were experiments with Excalibur PixTex/EFS, a Unix package which offered fuzzy searching, using substantial computing power to recognise shape of letters in images on the fly rather than relying on OCR.[18] Excalibur was used successfully in offering search access to images of a catalogue of medieval seals, but its proprietary nature and use of a Unix platform not generally supported in the Library meant that Excalibur remained only an experimental demonstration of the potential of fuzzy searching. Again, experiments were made with the searching of Burney images using Excalibur but once again these were unsuccessful.

For the time being, the images of the Burney newspapers generated by the DAMP project languished. In a presentation to the Newspapers Section of IFLA in the late 1990s, Graham Jefcoate, then Head of Early Printed Collections at the British Library, declared that it was "melancholy to report that little progress has been made with the digitisation of the Burney newspapers since 1996", but insisted that "The digitisation of the Burney collection must be a priority for us".[19] Jefcoate reported that further tests had been made of scanning the Burney microfilms, this time using a Mekel M500 greyscale production scanner. It was hoped that this slightly more sophisticated scanning would improve image quality and facilitate OCR. Jefcoate cited a technical report which stated that the OCR had achieved an accuracy level of 58% but recommended that manual indexing was advisable.[20]

On the basis of this report and on advice from the National Science Foundation, in 2001 the National Science Foundation in the United States made a grant to the British Library's partner, the Center for Bibliographical Studies at the University of California, Riverside. The grant proposal again emphasised the difficulties of accessing the Burney Collection through a single microfilm set. It also suggested that advances in OCR would now make it possible to produce a searchable version of the Burney Newspapers and "extend the wonders of computer-based text searching to the corpus of texts that form the foundation

18 'Finding the Fuzzy Matches', *Initiatives for Access News*, 1 (May 1994), p. 2; 'Digital Data Retrieval: Testing Excalibur', *Initiatives for Access News*, 2 (December 1994), pp. 6–7; Andrew Prescott and Malcolm Pratt, 'Image – the Future of Text?' in Carpenter, Prescott, Shaw (eds.), *Towards the Digital Library*, pp. 178–189.

19 Graham Jefcoate, 'The Digitisation of the Burney Collection of Early Newspapers at the British Library', in Hartmut Walravens and Edmund King (eds.), *Newspapers in International Librarianship: Papers Presented by the Newspapers Section at IFLA General Conferences* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2003), pp. 185, 187.

20 Jefcoate, 'Digitisation of the Burney Collection', p. 186.

of the modern world".[21] This work was not without its difficulties. No count had been kept of the number of images when the microfilming had been done; the only count that had been kept was of feet of film used. While most papers had been filmed one page per frame, others were filmed one opening per frame, and the orientation was variable. As a result, the cost of the scanning was 50% higher than expected, and the OCR work had to be undertaken later, in partnership with Gale Cengage. It was this work in both London and California, taken forward by the determination and pertinacity of curators such as Moira Goff and John Goldfinch and with the enthusiastic support and assistance of Professor Henry Snyder of the University of California and Michael Lesk of the National Science Foundation, building on the pioneering work of Hazel Podmore and her team in the DAMP project, which eventually facilitated the partnership with Gale Cengage and the final release of the digital Burney Newspapers in 2007.

The fundamental driving force of the digitisation of the Burney Newspapers was then not so much the wish to produce a searchable text but rather to find a way of delivering surrogate access to the fragile newspapers that was more convenient and flexible than microfilm. This was recognised by Marshall and Hume in their article on the "Joys, Possibilities and Perils of the British Library's Digital Burney Newspapers Collection". For Marshall and Hume, the joys of this resource consisted chiefly in the way it released them from the drudgery of winding their way through reels of microfilm and in its ability to facilitate off-site access to the collection to a wide audience. Marshall and Hume expressed surprise that the microfilm images of the blotchy eighteenth-century newspapers had cleaned up so well and that the OCR worked as well as it did, but nevertheless noted some serious problems, for example in a search for the German lutenist Sigismund Weiss:

> A search of 'Weys' or 'Wey's' in digital Burney produces fourteen hits (three of them duplicates), which means that in eight cases the search engine failed to spot the target – 10 February, 8, 15, and 22 April, 12, 17, and 18 June, and 1 July. In some cases broken type, creased paper, or bleed through may be responsible, but not in all cases. The appropriate response seems to be Gulp! The error rate is discouraging, but the omission rate is horrifying.[22]

21 National Science Foundation Award Abstract #0219461, available at https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/.

22 Marshall and Hume, 'Joys, Possibilities, and Perils', p. 42.

Despite issues such as these, Marshall and Hume remained enthusiastic about the potential of the Digital Burney as an alternative to microfilm, describing it as "pretty fabulous" and "leading to tectonic shifts in the way we do our research and teaching",[23] largely because the collection had previously been virtually impenetrable when only available on microfilm.

Marshall and Hume suggested that the initial release of the digital Burney Newspapers would have benefitted from greater involvement of subject specialists in the design of the search interface.[24] This may be the case, but it assumes that the project to create this digital resource was focused and self-contained, whereas as has been seen, the evolution of the online Burney Newspapers was a long and complex process involving various partners at different stages and was driven in its initial stages by the Library's concern to improve management of its microfilm surrogates. Project management textbooks stipulate that digitisation should not be undertaken by libraries in response to such institutional needs as accommodation pressures,[25] but in fact many of the largest digitisation projects are precisely a response to such extraneous issues as accommodation and reader service requirements. For example, the British Library's need to vacate the Newspaper Library at Colindale was one of the primary drivers in the digitisation of newspapers held there.[26] As a result, digital versions of pre-1801 provincial newspapers in the British Library are generally not to be found in the Burney package but in the *British Newspaper Archive*, a partnership of the British Library with the family history company, findmypast. The *British Newspaper Archive* is available free of charge in the British Library's reading rooms, but otherwise requires an expensive personal subscription – there is no adequate arrangement for institutional subscriptions.

One of the benefits of digitisation should be that collections are brought together and can be cross-checked, but the roots of many digitisation projects in microform publication and the involvement of commercial partners has meant that digitisation has frequently fragmented access. Given the involvement of separate commercial partners, it is unlikely that it will be possible to undertake remote cross-searching of the Burney Newspapers and the *British Newspaper Archive* in the near future. Moreover, parts of the Hope collection in

23 Marshall and Hume, 'Joys, Possibilities, and Perils', pp. 51–52.

24 Marshall and Hume, 'Joys, Possibilities, and Perils', p. 50.

25 Lorna M. Hughes, *Digitizing Collections: Strategic Issues for the Information Manager* (London: Facet, 2004), p. 51.

26 See, for example, http://lukemckernan.com/2013/10/09/leaving-colindale/ (accessed 9 November 2016).

the Bodleian Library, another major newspaper collection containing material gathered by the printer John Nichols, have been separately digitised by Adam Matthew for its Eighteenth-Century Journals project which also includes newspapers from such repositories as the Harry Ransom Centre in Texas and Cambridge University Library. It is worth noting that the Eighteenth-Century Journals project offers far better search facilities than either the Burney Newspapers or the *British Newspaper Archive*, since it seems that either the package has been keyboarded or the OCR has been corrected. Although the texts in the Adam Matthews package are not completely accurate, they certainly achieve accuracy rates in excess of 95%.

While the initial concern of the British Library in digitising the Burney Newspaper microfilms was to make reading room access to this material easier, the need to rely on search to navigate the mass of digital images means that, for most users, the value of the resource depends on the quality of the OCR underpinning the search. In 2009, Simon Tanner, Trevor Muñoz and Pich Ros undertook the first detailed analysis of the quality of the Burney OCR and its impact on search results.[27] Modern OCR software is capable of achieving very high levels of accuracy in converting printed text. Commercially available packages such as Omnipage or Adobe Acrobat achieve text accuracy results in excess of 98%. This compares well with the benchmarks used for conversion projects involving double keying and correction, which generally stipulate sampled accuracy rates in excess of 99.5%. However, such high quality OCR can only be achieved with modern print and with high quality images. When OCR packages are used on older typefaces, their accuracy rapidly declines, no matter how assiduously they are trained. Moreover, OCR accuracy depends very much on the quality of the image, and older materials are often only available in quite poor images frequently derived from microfilm.

Tanner and his colleagues found that the OCR for the Burney newspapers offered character accuracy of 75.6% and word accuracy of 65%. This means that, given a notional newspaper page of 1,000 words with 5,000 characters, in each page of the converted Burney newspaper text, there are about 1,200 incorrect characters or say about 350 wrongly rendered words, depending on word length. This need not necessarily be a big problem if significant words are accurately rendered by the OCR. If all the inaccuracies occurred in insignificant words such as 'and' or 'the', but words like 'British Museum' were

27 Simon Tanner, Trevor Muñoz and Pich Ros, 'Measuring Mass Text Digitization Quality and Usefulness: Lessons Learned from Assessing the OCR Accuracy of the British Library's 19th Century Online Newspaper Archive', *Digital Library Quarterly*, 15: 7–8 (2009): http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july09/munoz/07munoz.html (accessed 9 November 2016).

correctly rendered, then it would be possible to achieve 90% or more hit rates in a search for 'British Museum'. However, Tanner and his colleagues found that this was not the case. Significant word accuracy for the Burney Collection is only 48.4%. In other words, a search of the Burney Collection has a less than evens chance of finding the desired word – indeed, the situation may be even worse than that. Tanner *et al.* point out that "At below 80% word accuracy, the search capacity will drop off steeply as the word accuracy drops. Thus, the BL's Burney Collection loses a lot of search capacity because the long 's' character reduces word accuracy to such a low point that searching can become very difficult".

The implication of the findings of Tanner and his team is that searchers would be lucky to find 20–30% of the references for any particular search term, which echoes the experience of Marshall and Hume in searching for Sigismund Weiss. The Burney Newspapers interface conceals the raw OCR from the user, but it is available via other routes such as the *Connected Histories* website, and one glance at this raw OCR quickly reveals the difficulty of accurate searching, as this example illustrates:

> It is frippofed that we have actually 40 Frigates at Sea for the ProteEaion of our Trade. r The St. Domingo Fleet is fafely arrived at La Rochelle vith a rich t Cargo. ltsArrival is the more agreeable to the Merchants, as there was not a Ship of tde whole Fleet infui ed." Extrolg of a Lette?-from Mr, Coxvwood, Afate of tThe Wfter, ViWlsaller, from Cork fir Ne-w-rork, dated P3qlon, March So. &quot.[28]

The potential problems of faulty OCR have since been further highlighted by Laura Mandell in her discussion of Gale Cengage's *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO)[29] and by scholars such as Tim Hitchcock.[30] However, it is important to bear in mind that in the case of the Burney Newspapers the role of the OCR was not so much to facilitate search as to provide a means of conveniently moving around a mass of scanned microfilm images. The digital interface to the Burney Newspapers is in many ways a replacement for the microfilm reader.

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28 T. Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital, or How Academic History Writing Lost the Plot', *Cultural and Social History*, 10 (2013), p. 13.

29 L. Mandell, 'Brave New World: A Look at 18thConnect', *Age of Johnson*, 21 (2012). Web: http://earlymodernonlinebib.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/mandell-fixed-final-oct-2012.pdf.

30 Hitchcock, 'Confronting the Digital', pp. 12–14.

Nevertheless, the deceptive simplicity of the search interface for the Burney Newspapers seduces scholars into assuming that hit rates for particular terms can reveal historical trends, regardless of the fact that many references will probably be missed. In a 2014 lecture at the London Guildhall, Linda Colley described the development of what she called the cult of Magna Carta.[31] Colley argued that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw a substantial growth in the reputation and resonance of Magna Carta. To illustrate this point, Colley listed the number of hits returned by a search for 'Magna Carta' in what she described as an index of British newspapers, by which she apparently meant the digital collection of British Library Historic Newspapers produced by Gale Cengage (incorporating the Burney Collection). Colley states that there were 30 references to Magna Carta in the first half of the eighteenth century, 450 articles in the second half, 4,000 articles in the first half of the nineteenth century, and 13,500 articles in the second half. While this increase in references to Magna Carta might be partly explained by the growth in the number of newspapers, Colley suggests that it also reflects a greater national engagement with Magna Carta, stimulated by such factors as the reprinting of the charter in school text books. However, given the problems with the OCR in the Burney Newspapers, doubt must be felt as to whether the growth was as dramatic as she suggests – simply searching for 'Magna Charta' produces over 450 hits in the first half of the eighteenth century (when OCR errors are far more likely), suggesting that the changes are far less dramatic than suggested by Colley, and that the trend described by her might be a mirage, produced by poor OCR.

Perhaps the most extended and disturbing illustration of indiscriminate reliance on search is Peter de Bolla's 2013 book *The Architecture of Concepts* which uses very crude searching of ECCO to illustrate the development of the discourse of human rights in the eighteenth century. This book, which has been widely acclaimed, uses an approach very similar to that of Colley, simply searching ECCO for references to rights and looking for words that occur nearby. By these means, de Bolla seeks to demonstrate the development of the discourse of rights during the eighteenth century, arguing that figures like Thomas Paine had a more crucial influence on the emergence of ideas about rights than has hitherto been allowed. The issues for OCR in ECCO are very similar to those in the Burney Newspapers, but for de Bolla these OCR problems are a minor concern. He acknowledges that the extraction of date information from ECCO is "beset with problems", adding that "as is well-known the OCR

31 The lecture is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFTDUtK2a6Y (accessed 9 November 2016). Colley's figures are repeated in D. Hughes, 'A Brief History of Magna Carta', *House of Lords Library Note*, 1 (2015), pp. 1–27 (23).

software used by Gale, the publisher, compromises the reliability of the data extracted".[32] But as far as de Bolla is concerned this is a mere technical glitch which does not challenge the validity of the new kind of conceptual history he seeks to present in his book. He is blithely confident that when these annoying technical gremlins are resolved his conclusions will remain valid, declaring that "I doubt there will be significant changes to the profiles I have created for the concepts here studied, the revisions of precise numerical values will be unlikely to lead to different conclusions".[33]

Is the confidence of scholars like Colley and de Bolla that comparatively uncritical searching and counting within digital resources such as the Burney Newspapers can produce valid historical insights justified? Or are the problems with OCR such that we should be far more cautious in presenting the results of our searching of these packages, as Tanner's study suggests? One method of assessing the issues in using the Burney Collection is to compare the results of searches with checklists of newspaper articles compiled manually. In 1976, Helen McGuffie published a *Chronological Checklist of Samuel Johnson in the British Press 1749–84*.[34] McGuffie compiled her list manually, searching through thousands of pages and concentrating on collections in the Bodleian Library, the British Library, the National Library of Scotland and the British Library, checking each item listed personally. The checklist focuses on the London and Edinburgh press, and there was no systematic search of provincial publications. The listing runs to over 325 pages and confirms that Johnson's comment to Boswell in 1781 that "I believe there is hardly a day in which there is not something about me in the newspapers" was not far off the truth.[35] McGuffie admitted that "Even among the thousands of pages that I did turn over, there no doubt lurk unrecorded items that my eye did not catch". Nevertheless, McGuffie felt confident that "It is unlikely that many new or significant items will be found in the future".[36]

McGuffie's checklist thus provides an excellent yardstick with which to measure the performance of the Burney Newspapers search engine. I have made a comparison between the results of Burney searches for Dr. Johnson

32 Peter de Bolla, *The Architecture of Concepts: the Historical Formation of Human Rights* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), p. 8. For a detailed critique of de Bollas's methods, see further James Baker, *Interfaces between Us and Our Digital Resources*, https://cradledincaricature.com/category/research/ (accessed 11 November 2016).

33 de Bolla, *Architecture of Concepts*, p. 8.

34 Helen McGuffie, *Samuel Johnson in the British Press: A Chronological Checklist* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1976).

35 McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 5.

36 McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 5.

and McGuffie's checklist for four sample years: 1765, 1766, 1773 and 1782. These confirm that online searching of the Burney Newspapers misses the majority of target references but suggest that the problems may be less acute for certain types of material, such as adverts. It also seems that the performance of the Burney searching is significantly improved by the use of fuzzy searching. Moreover, McGuffie's listing reminds us that, even if it was possible to have OCR with an accuracy in excess of 99%, many key references to a figure such as Samuel Johnson will still not be retrieved by simple searches. This has implications for the way we document and report research into the contents of newspapers.

There are a number of important preliminary points to bear in mind before considering the results of these comparisons. First, McGuffie only reports news items – she ignores advertisements, whereas, as we will see, one of the valuable aspects of the online Burney is the ability to explore newspaper advertisements. Second, a glance at McGuffie quickly shows how, although the coverage of newspaper titles by the Burney Collection coverage is impressive, it is far from comprehensive. For the four sample years, McGuffie lists references to Johnson in 78 different publications. Of these, 36 (just under half) are in the Burney Collection. These are mostly London publications, but they do include some provincial and Scottish titles. The third major point to bear in mind when comparing the McGuffie checklist with the Burney newspapers is that McGuffie includes not only newspapers but also items from the periodical press, such as the *Annual Register*, *Gentleman's Magazine* and *Monthly Review*. One of the striking features of McGuffie's listing is the way in which she demonstrates the porosity between these more occasional publications and the weekly newspapers, with information about Johnson shared freely between the various publications.

From a library point of view, periodicals such as the *Gentleman's Magazine* or *Monthly Review* have always been treated differently to newspapers, but the case of Dr. Johnson illustrates that the distinction between the two has been overstated, at least in the eighteenth century. The difference in library approaches to monthly and weekly publications have been carried over into the digital sphere. Annual and monthly publications have tended to fall between the two stools of books and newspapers. Digital coverage of eighteenth-century periodical publications is patchy. A few annual and monthly publications have been included in ECCO, while others have been covered by book scanning programmes such as Google Books, but not consistently. Above all, metadata for scanned periodical publications is poor, whether on Google Books, the Internet Archive or in more sophisticated metadata presentations such as the HATHI Trust catalogue. McGuffie's checklist reveals starkly how the fragmentary and

inconsistent coverage of periodical publications is a significant deficiency in digital coverage of the eighteenth century. By comparison with the extensive coverage of newspapers and the systematic coverage of book publications in ECCO, the patchy coverage of periodical publications is surprising. Pulling together existing scans of these periodical publications, improving metadata and facilitating search across these titles should be a priority for future activity.

In comparing the results of a basic search for 'Johnson' in the Burney Newspapers with McGuffie's checklist, one is tempted to share the reaction of Marshall and Hume at the omission rate: 'Gulp!'. For 1765, McGuffie's checklist itemises 122 references to news items about Dr. Johnson in newspapers and periodical publications. A basic search for 'Johnson' in the Burney newspapers for 1765 produces just eight hits under 'news'. Just five of these hits relate to Dr. Johnson. Two of these are advertisements; so a simple Burney search finds just 3 of the 122 items in McGuffie – a success rate of just 2.4%. The results for 1766 are even worse. McGuffie lists 59 news items relating to Johnson for 1766. Of these, 39 items are from titles in the Burney Collection. A basic search on Johnson in the Burney Collection for 1766 retrieves 3 news items, all of which are actually advertisements. Two of these are for the third edition of Johnson's *Dictionary*, but the search retrieves none of the news items listed by McGuffie for 1766 – the search is a complete failure.

For 1773, McGuffie lists 190 news items relating to Johnson. A basic Burney search on Johnson for 1773 retrieves just 16 news items, of which 10 relate to Dr. Johnson and are also found in McGuffie. So, for 1773 the success rate of a Burney search is slightly better than in 1765 and 1766, but still unimpressive: 5.2%. Finally, for 1782, McGuffie lists 195 news items relating to Dr. Johnson. A basic Burney search retrieves 18 news items for Johnson; of these just three relate to Dr. Johnson – most of what is retrieved are actually adverts. For 1782, then the success rate of a Burney search on Johnson is 1.5%. These are very crude initial results. Account needs to be taken of the fact that the Burney Collection only covers about a half of the titles used by McGuffie, and also of the fact that a basic 'Johnson' search does not cover some items listed by McGuffie, but even so it is evident that results of basic Burney searches are just as bad as Tanner's analysis indicates, with a success rate probably barely in excess of 5–6% and frequently much worse. Each of our basic Burney searches probably misses well over 90% of the information we are seeking.

The extremely poor quality of basic Burney Newspaper search results not only suggests that quantitative conclusions of the sort offered by Colley and de Bolla are very hazardous but it also raises questions about other methods derived from this data. For example, it appears that the linking of other data sets to Burney newspaper data in the *Connected Histories* resource

(www.connectedhistories.org) relies on a similar search method to the basic Burney search, suggesting that the likelihood of establishing worthwhile linkages using the Burney data is extremely low. However, all is not complete doom and gloom, and there are some points to make about the Burney package which may suggest fruitful future lines of approach.

The first is that the success rate of the search apparently varies according to whether the search covers news items, advertisements and so on. The Burney package attempts to segment eighteenth-century newspapers into different sections such as news, business news and advertisements. Inevitably, this segmentation is not entirely successful, so that for example an advertisement will sometimes be treated as a news item. However, it seems that the Burney package is far more successful at searching for text in advertisements than it is at retrieving text in news items. It is also striking how, although a Burney search only retrieves a very low proportion of news items, those which it does find are often similar in format to advertisements, such as extracts in the *St. James's Chronicle* from the Johnson and Steevens edition of Shakespeare in 1773.[37] McGuffie does not include advertisements for Johnson's work, so we do not have a benchmark against which to measure the Burney search performance with advertisements. It is unlikely to be very high, but it does seem to be significantly better than with news items. A method which blended McGuffie's comprehensive checklist and the ability of the Burney newspapers to open up the wealth of information in the advertisements would potentially provide a valuable new resource for Johnson studies.

The other important point which the comparison of Burney searches with McGuffie's checklist reveals is the extent to which fuzzy searching improves matters. A search on 'johnson' for 1765 with a low fuzzy search setting produces 305 items under 'news', a sixty-fold increase. Moreover, there are no false hits – all of these 305 items refer to a 'johnson' of one sort or another, most of whom had been completely ignored by the basic search. Taking account of the fact that the Burney Collection only covers less than half of the titles in McGuffie, a low fuzzy search produces a success rate of about 50% – a dramatic improvement on the performance of the basic search. Moreover, what is particularly exciting is the way in which fuzzy searching allows us suddenly to start finding items which are not in McGuffie's checklist. For 1765, a fuzzy search identifies four items which are not in McGuffie, ranging from a copy of a Jacobite toast,

37 *St. James's Chronicle*, 5–7 October, 12–14 October, 16–18 November, 18–20 November, 4–7 December, 11–14 December, 18–21 December 1773. These are not included in McGuffie's checklist, presumably because they are simply extracts from the prefaces and do not provide any biographical information about Johnson.

allegedly found in a copy of Johnson's works,[38] to an attack on Johnson's edition of Shakespeare in a series called 'The Babler' in *Owen's Weekly Chronicle*.[39] Similarly, for 1773, fuzzy searching adds enormously to the material returned, creating a tenfold increase in the number of hits relating to Dr. Johnson. Once again, use of fuzzy searching enables entries not in McGuffie to be found, including for the later part of 1773 reports of the movements of Johnson and Boswell during their tour of the Highlands.[40]

Of course, as Tanner observes, the problems with the OCR are such that fuzzy searching cannot completely compensate for them. Fuzzy searching still only retrieves about half of the entries found manually by McGuffie, but nevertheless the improvement is such as to suggest that it would be worth using low fuzzy searches by default. Moreover, the hit rate of fuzzy searches may be better than 50%, since I have so far only experimented with simple word searches, and many of the items listed by McGuffie would not be found by simple word searches, even if the OCR was very accurate. Some of the references to Johnson are allusive, such as the attack on obscure writers published in the *London Chronicle* on 26 February 1765 which does not mention Johnson by name.[41] In other cases, Johnson's name has been obscured as in the references to 'Pensioner J——', 'Learned Pensionary J—n—n' or 'Dr J——'.[42] Many of the newspaper references to Johnson found by McGuffie are only evident because the piece parodies Johnson's literary style.[43] Other entries do not refer to Johnson by name but refer to works of his, such as the many attacks on *Taxation No Tyranny* in 1773. Such references are unlikely ever to be retrieved by simple searching unless you already know they are there.

38 *St. James's Chronicle or British Evening Post*, 19–22 January 1765.

39 *Owen's Weekly Chronicle and Westminster Journal*, 21 December 1765.

40 For example, the following reports of Johnson and Boswell in the Highlands are not noted by McGuffie: *General Evening Post*, 14–16 September 1773; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 15 September 1773; *London Evening Post*, 16–18 September 1773; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 3–5 November 1773; *Daily Advertiser*, 5 November 1773; *London Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, 6–9 November 1773; *The Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal*, 13 November 1773; *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 13–16 November 1773; *London Evening Post*, 16–18 November 1773.

41 McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 34.

42 For example, *Gazetteer*, 28 March 1769 (McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 60); *Middlesex Journal*, 6 February 1770 (McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 68); *London Evening Post*, 13 March 1770 (McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 72); *Caledonian Mercury*, 6 February 1775 (McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press,* p. 143).

43 For example, *Public Advertiser*, 21 May 1779 (McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 233).

Search is the paradigm of the age and our engagement with knowledge becomes increasingly bound up with searching. It seems to be the only way to cut through the mass of information with which we are now confronted. But search is not a simple or consistent process. While it might be possible to develop quantitative findings from fully curated and consistently presented resources like the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* (www.oldbaileyonline.org) or the Text Creation Partnership (www.textcreationpartnership.org), it is not possible when the resource is essentially intended to assist navigation of unstructured data such as video images or scans from microfilm. Digitisation and search is frequently presented as having a consistent aim and structure but different projects develop in different ways for a variety of reasons, and to make critical use of a digital resource it is necessary to have some background information on the nature of the digitised material and on the evolution of the project.

Our dependence on search also assumes a particular relationship of information object to intellectual outcome. We hew out the raw material from newspapers, periodicals, books and then by a process of intellectual alchemy transmute it into an academic discourse, still largely presented in book or article form. Search has become a fundamental way by which we extract that raw material. The impression given by scholars like Colley or de Bolla is that search is an objective and scientific process, but actually the way in which we engage with a resource like the Burney Newspapers is much more iterative than lists of number of hits suggests. We try a variety of searches, assemble different fragments of information, and gradually try to piece the story together. In this backwards and forwards mixture of searching, reading, browsing and cross-checking, we will probably use a mixture of digital and printed resources, in much the way I have moved backwards and forwards between the digital Burney Newspapers, other digital resources and McGuffie's list in writing this essay.

In this context, how far do the deficiencies of search matter? Not a great deal. For all the problems with the OCR in the Burney Collection, it has still established itself as a fundamental and indispensable resource for the study of the eighteenth century. It would clearly be desirable for Gale to re-run the OCR in the Burney package which would lead to some improvements in the hit rates,[44] but we would still then be puzzling as to how we could trace those

44 The British Library reported recently that, in connection with the *Black Abolitionist Performances and their Presence in Britain* project, it had experimented with new OCR of some text material from the nineteenth-century newspapers collection with good results: http://blogs.bl.uk/digital-scholarship/2016/11/black-abolitionist-performances-and-their-presence-in-britain-an-update.html (accessed 11 November 2016).

allusive references to Johnson. Crowdsourcing, following the model of the Australian Trove package, might provide another solution.[45] But perhaps more important is to think about how we structure processes of reading, browsing and annotation around the use of a resource like the Burney newspaper. In his remarkable recent book, *Metaphors of the Mind: An Eighteenth-Century Dictionary*, Brad Pasanek describes how a process of search, reading and browsing enabled him to explore metaphors of the eighteenth century and to use them to create around headwords an encyclopaedic dictionary view of Enlightenment mentalities.[46] Pasanek calls this process "desultory reading" and I suggest it is this kind of process we want to capture in exploring resources like the Burney newspapers. Incidentally, it is perhaps worth remarking how Pasanek's use of digital techniques to explore enlightenment mentalities is far more sophisticated and useful than that of de Bolla. Pasanek bases his analysis on higher quality data – the structured texts in *Literature Online* rather than the poor quality OCR of ECCO. Pasanek also avoids quantitative methods rather looking at textual relationships to shape his discussion around a series of headwords. In general, Pasanek's book is an exemplar of how methodology needs to respond to data.

Ideally, I would like to be able to mark all the entries listed in McGuffie's checklist in the digital version of the Burney Newspapers. I would then like to be able to do the same with other digitised resources covered by McGuffie but not in the Burney Collection. This would give me a consolidated view of the resources listed by McGuffie. I would then like to start adding other material not covered by McGuffie, particularly the advertisements, but also the new material found in experimenting with fuzzy searching. I might want to mix a process of reading and annotation with one of search. I could produce these annotations in a variety of ways – I might develop a shared spreadsheet with links using something like Google Drive. One method of doing this might be by annotating digital resources, using a tool such as hypothes.is, an open annotation tool. This clearly has potential for recording the type of information given in Helen McGuffie's checklist of references to Johnson, but how it might perform with more complex types of listing is not yet clear. However, open annotation tools such as hypothes.is do suggest that there are other ways of

45 Marie-Louise Ayres, '"Singing for their Supper": Trove, Australian Newspapers and the Crowd', paper presented at IFLA WLIC Singapore 2013, available at http://library.ifla.org/245/1/153-ayres-en.pdf (accessed 11 November 2016).

46 Brad Pasanek, *Metaphors of Mind: an Eighteenth-Century Dictionary* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015).

engaging with digital resources such as the Burney Newspapers beyond the erratic and unpredictable simple search.

I am not advocating annotation of this form as a replacement for search. It seems to me rather to be valuable as a means of recording the kind of mixed methodologies that we all use. Its openness, and the potential for sharing, is also very important. In producing resources like the Burney newspapers, it seems to me that the model we all had in mind during the 1990s and first decade of this century was a closed one – that resources like the Burney Newspapers would be similar to big books, stand-alone finite resources whose contents could be navigated by search functioning in a similar way to an index. This closed approach was blown apart by the Text Creation Partnership, which first illustrated how a package like Early English Books Online could be extended, developed and effectively repurposed. EEBO/TCP are now an open-ended process, rather than a package, and this is a model of one way our use of the Burney Newspapers might develop. A good exemplar for this process is the way in which library catalogues have developed into open-ended and linked resources. I hope that we will see a similar process develop with major resources like the Burney Collection.

In the preface to her checklist, Helen McGuffie quoted Boswell to the effect that "from the diversity of dispositions it cannot be known with any certainty beforehand whether what may seem most trifling to some, and perhaps to the collector himself, may not be most agreeable to many".[47] As we develop online resources, it is our ability to build collaborative frameworks allowing us to explore and mix different configurations of search and annotation which will enable us to match this ideal of Boswell.

47 McGuffie, *Johnson in the British Press*, p. 6.

CHAPTER 3

Spreading the News within the Clerical Profession: Newspapers and the Church in the North of England, 1660–1760

Daniel Reed

In 1748, Montesquieu observed that the British knew better "than any other people upon earth how to value [the] three great advantages, religion, commerce, and liberty".[1] The provincial newspapers that appeared in Britain from the first decade of the eighteenth century strongly reflected a society in which these strands of life were tightly intertwined. As Jonathan Clark describes, in this period the Church often acted as the ubiquitous agent of the State, "quartering the land not into a few hundred constituencies but into ten thousand parishes".[2] In many respects, the early provincial newspapers that served this national mosaic of parochial communities reveal the centrality of religion to everyday life in eighteenth-century Britain. The affairs of the Church featured prominently alongside diplomatic and mercantile intelligence as the content of news reports, and the clergy acted as key consumers of newspapers, and agents in spreading the news. Despite this, religion has often been allotted a minor role in the discussion of newspaper development, in which the commercial aspects of the printing trade have been emphasised to serve a narrative of Enlightenment discourse founded on theories of secularisation.[3] This essay argues that the emergence of newspapers to serve provincial markets represented a new transformation in the long-standing relationship between the established Church and print which began with the introduction of the press to England in the fifteenth century.

1 Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, trans. Thomas Nugent (New York: Hafner, 1949), p. 321, quoted in Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments* (New York: Vintage, 2004), p. 52.

2 J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 320.

3 William Gibson, 'Introduction: New Perspectives on Secularisation in Britain (and Beyond)' *Journal of Religious History*, 41:4 (2017), pp. 431–438.

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Historians such as Andrew Pettegree and Jeremy Black have outlined the centrality of religion to the rise of print culture in the early modern period.[4] The appearance in 1620 of the first newspapers in English was an innovation to supply a nation eager for news, but it is clear that this form of report, including ecclesiastical intelligence, was modelled on other long-standing traditions of manuscript and oral news transmission.[5] A report in Nathaniel Butter's newsbook of 18 September 1622, that the Dean of Paris had received the consent of the French king to succeed his brother as bishop of the city, but had fallen sick and died on his journey to Rome, would have been instantly recognisable to eighteenth-century readers of the first English provincial newspapers.[6] This can be attributed in some measure to the influence of manuscript news, which continued to play an important role in news transmission in eighteenth-century Britain. Surviving manuscript newsletters issued during the reigns of William III and Anne demonstrate that Church affairs were reported alongside other regular dispatches, and closely followed the development of religious controversies, such as the trial of the High Churchman, Henry Sacheverell, in 1710.[7] The form of news was also influenced by the print culture of continental Europe, where there were more open markets for the printing and sale of newspapers. In the seventeenth century, Dutch newspapers reported the affairs of the Church of England as international intelligence at a time when manuscript newsletters were still the predominant source of news outside of London.[8]

Taking examples from the North of England, a region with its own distinct history of printing, this essay investigates ways in which religion, primarily in the Church of England and espoused by members of the clerical profession, was a pervasive presence in early provincial newspapers. This is achieved by first considering the state of the archival record relating to early provincial

4 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Jeremy Black, *The English Press, 1621–1861* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Group, 2001), pp. 2–3.

5 Ian Atherton, 'The Itch Grown a Disease: Manuscript Transmission of News in the Seventeenth Century', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Portland: Frank Cass & Co., 1999), p. 39.

6 *The 25. of September. Newes from most parts of christendome. Especially from Rome, Italy, Spaine, France, the Palatinate, the Low Countries, and divers other places* (London: printed for Nathaniel Butter and William Sheffard, 1622), p. 3.

7 Huntington Library, HM 30659, manuscript newsletters from London, 1689–1710.

8 Arthur Der Weduwen, 'Towards a Complete Bibliography of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Newspapers: Delpher and its Applications', *Tijdschrift voor tijdschriftstudies*, 38 (2015), p. 21.

newspaper titles, and secondly outlining the particular relationship between the Church and the press in the North of England from 1660. This provides a foundation for three key points of investigation: the manner in which clergymen of the Church of England were commonly represented in news reports of the period; the roles that the clergy played in the consumption and dispersal of news; and the techniques used by newspaper printers to harness the popularity of religion for commercial purposes. Furthermore, this essay engages with ongoing discussions about the usability and utility of digital newspapers in relation to other archival source material, and draws attention to evidence drawn from physical newspapers, and secondary references in account books, diaries and letters, to examine the place of the clergy (and religion more broadly) within the transforming newsprint culture of the eighteenth century.

Early Provincial Newspapers: Gaps in the Digital Record

When undertaking an investigation based on early provincial newspaper titles, it is necessary to first consider the relative value of the major newspaper databases for supporting such a study. The contents of these resources are governed by factors such as the scope of the particular digitisation project, and the limitations of the physical collection (or collections) from which the databases are derived. To take the example of the *British Newspaper Archive*, which is drawn from the collections of the British Library, this database currently features 762 issues of the *Newcastle Courant* for 1710 to 1729, but no York titles for the same period.[9] And whilst this project is still underway in 2016, and it is possible that further issues will be added in the future, there are many provincial titles that the British Library does not hold, and consequently, will never appear in the database within the current compass of the project. Furthermore, archival search platforms that incorporate multiple repositories, such as *Copac* and the National Archives's *Discovery* catalogue, are currently poor for accurately locating issues of eighteenth-century newspapers.[10] So, to find

9 Cataloguing conventions in major digital databases can also lack nuance. The *British Newspaper Archive* hosts a single copy of the *Newcastle Gazette*: *Or Northern Courant* for 23 December 1710, which is catalogued together with the *Newcastle Courant*, despite being identified by R.M. Wiles as a distinct and separate title. See R.M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965), pp. 451–452.

10 *Copac* lists a single copy of the *York Gazetteer*, whereas *Discovery* retrieves only microfilm copies of the newspaper held at North Yorkshire County Record Office. See http://copac.jisc.ac.uk/about/ (accessed 13 June 2016).

many early newspaper titles it is necessary to turn to other institutions, such as regional libraries and archives services.

One title that is not currently available in digital form is the short-lived *York Gazetteer*, notable as a reflection of the political influence wielded by the eighteenth-century Church through the newspaper's association with the clergymen Jaques and Laurence Sterne.[11] Whilst the exact nature of their involvement is still under discussion, it is clear that both men were contributors to the newspaper, and had wider roles in its financing, and promotion.[12] The *York Gazetteer* was printed by John Jackson as a mouthpiece for supporters of the Whig ministry ahead of the general election of 1741, and a subsequent by-election for the county in January 1742.[13] During the first year of the newspaper's existence, the *York Gazetteer* was explicit about its intended audience and political stance, stating in its colophon that it was published "to correct the Weekly Poison" of the Tory *York Courant*.[14] Once the elections were over, however, this attack was replaced with the more commercial proposition of offering the "the fullest and most disinterested Accounts of Foreign and Domestick Affairs".[15] The latest known, extant copy of the *York Gazetteer* is issue 222 for 14 May 1745, although out-payments for advertising by local organisations, and notices in other newspapers, strongly suggest that the *York Gazetteer* was in existence until the summer of 1752.[16]

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11 Richard Hall and Sarah Richardson, *The Anglican Clergy and Yorkshire Politics in the Eighteenth Century* (York: University of York, 1998).

12 *The York Gazetteer* is important to scholars of the life and work of Laurence Sterne, as it is considered to have been the first publication to host work by the writer. Reference to Sterne's political writings for *The York Gazetteer* first appeared in his *Memoirs*, published in 1775, and the subject has been considered at length in the final instalment of the Florida editions of Sterne's works. Laurence Sterne, *Letters Of The Late Rev. Mr. Laurence Sterne, To His Most Intimate Friends* (London: T. Beckett, 1775); Melvyn New and W.B. Gerard (eds.), *The Miscellaneous Writings and Sterne's Subscribers, an Identification List. The Florida Edition of the Works of Laurence Sterne, Volume IX* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014).

13 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 517–518. A single issue of the *York Gazetteer* survives for 1741, although its start date can be extrapolated from the numbering of later issues.

14 For the *York Gazetteer* and provincial newspapers in the context of partisan politics of the mid-eighteenth century, see Black, *The English Press*; Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1695–1855* (Harlow: Pearson Educational, 2000).

15 *York Gazetteer*, no. 54 (16 March 1742).

16 The terminal date of the *York Gazetteer* has been inferred from a notice in the *York Courant* for 4 August 1752, advising readers that the newspaper had ceased publication. See Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p. 518. The accounts of the Assembly Rooms in York suggest, however, that the *York Gazetteer* was in decline some months earlier, as having formerly made

Despite the half-century that has passed since its publication, R.M. Wiles's 'Register of English Provincial Newspapers, 1701–1760' remains the most accurate guide to locating surviving issues of the *York Gazetteer*, and has not been surpassed by British Library initiatives such as Newsplan, or the *English Short Title Catalogue*.[17] In 1965, Wiles recorded that all but one of the forty-two extant issues of the *York Gazetteer* were located across five highly fragmentary collections in the North of England, proximate to where the newspaper was originally published.[18] This relationship between the original place of publication and present institutional holdings is even more acute in the cases of other Yorkshire newspapers of this period. All sixteen known copies of Hull's first newspaper, the *Hull Courant*, are held by archives services and museums in that city.[19] Investigation into the current whereabouts of issues of the *York Gazetteer* reinforces Wiles's findings as to the geographical distribution of surviving issues, but several amendments can be made through newly identified holdings and institutional changes to previously acknowledged collections. The most significant additions are fifty-one issues held by East Riding of Yorkshire Archives & Local Studies Service, which were presented to Beverley Public Library in 1964, and were not recorded by Wiles.[20] It is the single largest

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payments for advertising in the 'three York News Papers' in August 1749, similar payments in February and March 1752 were made only to the printers of the *York Courant* and *York Journal*. See York City Archives, M23: 4a, Assembly Rooms Ledger, 1732–47.

17 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 517–518; The *Newsplan* project of the 1980s sought to survey regional newspaper holdings in the United Kingdom, but prioritised the identification of longer runs of vulnerable newspapers in public libraries with a view towards producing microfilm copies. Whilst the project leaders were aware that single issues of early titles were located at other institutions, these were not investigated. As such, the project's report adds little to our knowledge of many early titles. The *English Short Title Catalogue* entry for the *York Gazetteer* is largely informed by Wiles, but also includes misleading entries such as an issue listed in the collections of McMaster University in Ontario, which is a microfilm copy of an original issue at New York Public Library. See Andrew Parkes, *Report of the Newsplan Project in Yorkshire and Humberside, March 1988-June 1989* (London: The British Library, 1990); 'The York Gazetteer' in *English Short Title Catalogue*, http://estc.bl.uk/ (accessed 13 June 2016).

18 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 517–518.

19 All known copies of the *Hull Courant* (1739–1750) are held at the Hull History Centre and Hull Museums Service. A volume of 183 issues was held by Hull Subscription Library at the turn of the twentieth century, but following the destruction of one of the library's premises in 1943, and subsequent dissolution of the collection in 1975, its present whereabouts is unknown. Hull History Centre, U DSL/69, Catalogue, volume 4 (Ms., Hull Subscription Library), 1889–1921.

20 Issues nos. 45–96 of the *York Gazetteer* for January – December 1742 were gifted to Beverley Public Library in 1964. In Pat Rogers, *Essays on Pope* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

collection of copies of the *York Gazetteer* anywhere in the world, and the most complete run of consecutive issues. Despite this prominence, however, the collection is yet to be digitally catalogued and currently remains 'invisible' to the majority of researchers. Improvements to the digital catalogues of existing collections holds the potential for revealing previously unrecorded issues of provincial newspapers that are hidden in plain sight.[21]

The Church and the Press – Foundations of the Newspaper Trade in the North of England

The development of the provincial press in the North of England after the Restoration was largely governed by a special proviso in the Licensing of the Press Act of 1662, which sought to bring more strict regulation to the printing trade following the relative freedoms of the Interregnum.[22] The Act designated York as the only place in the country other than London and the universities permitted to operate a press, which curtailed other printing enterprises in the region.[23] The Act also stated that, in parallel with regulations for books produced at other designated centres, all "Bookes of Divinity" printed in the North

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Press, 1993), the author notes that the file was "formerly in the possession of my father and was presented to [The Library] by my mother following his death". Soon after, the file came to the attention of Kenneth Monkman of the Laurence Sterne Trust, who had microfilm copies created in 1966, but those are now thought to be lost. *The York Gazetteer*, no. 46 (Tuesday 19 January) was loaned for display at the Laurence Sterne Bicentenary Conference in 1968, but the newspapers do not appear to have been consulted for some time thereafter. See Kenneth Monkman and J.C.T. Oates, 'Towards a Sterne Bibliography: Books and Other Material Displayed at the Sterne Conference', in Arthur H. Cash and John M. Stedmond (eds.), *The Winged Skull. Papers from the Laurence Sterne Bicentenary Conference* (London: Methuen & Co., 1968), pp. 279–284.

21 In 2014, additions to the online catalogue of York Museums Trust revealed an unrecorded and unique copy of the *York Gazetteer*, no. 215, for 26 March 1745. See York Museums Trust, http://www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/collections (accessed 13 June 2016).

22 'Charles II, 1662: An Act for preventing the frequent Abuses in printing seditious treasonable and unlicensed Bookes and Pamphlets and for regulating of Printing and Printing Presses', in John Raithby (ed.), *Statutes of the Realm: Volume 5, 1628–80* (London: Great Britain Record Commission, 1819), pp. 428–435, available at British History Online, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/statutes-realm/vol5/pp428-435 (accessed 1 May 2016).

23 'Charles II, 1662: An Act for preventing the frequent Abuses in printing'. The printer Stephen Bulkley produced works in Newcastle immediately following the Restoration, but relocated to York after the passing of the 1662 Act. See Richard Welford, *Early Printing in Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (Newcastle: Cail & Sons, 1895), pp. 15–16.

were to be "first licensed by the Archbishop of Yorke".[24] This created a legal framework in which the Church was empowered to act for the State in regulating printing activity, and aligned the trade with renewed royal authority and the reinstatement of episcopal oversight of the Church of England. When the strictures of regulation were loosened temporarily during the Popish Plot of 1678 to 1681, intelligence from the North appeared in unlicensed newspapers for the first time since 1662, but it does not appear that any such works were printed in York.[25]

Between the implementation of the Licensing Act in 1662 and its subsequent lapse in 1695, printers in York maintained a consistent commercial relationship with the Church through the production of materials which directly supported ecclesiastical administration. As James Raven has identified, early provincial printers in England often adopted the role of jobbing stationers who derived much of their business from the demands of local governing structures.[26]

With the Glorious Revolution, ties between Church, Crown and the press were further strengthened through the appointment of John White as "their Majesties printer for the city of York and the five Northern counties" in recognition of his loyalty to William III in 1688.[27] White printed material in support of various aspects of ecclesiastical administration and civic governance, and first displayed his Royal appointment in the imprint for a sermon of thanksgiving for the safe return of the king from Ireland, preached by George Tullie, Subdean of York, at Newcastle in October 1690.[28] In the dynastic tradition of the

24 'Charles II, 1662: An Act for preventing the frequent Abuses in printing'. Following the Restoration, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of London held the authority to fill vacancies of master printers to the Stationers' Company, but this was delegated to Sir Roger L'Estrange in 1663. See Black, *The English Press,* p. 6; for the rights of the universities, see John Gutch, *Collectanea Curiosa; or Miscellaneous Tracts, relating to the History and Antiquities of England and Ireland, The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1781), pp. 278–283.

25 James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 96.

26 James Raven, *Publishing Business in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014), p. 75.

27 Society of Antiquaries of London, SAL/MS/592, Warrant appointing John White to be King's printer at York; Hampton Court, 26 May 1689.

28 White printed materials in support of episcopal, archidiaconal and capitular administration. These included, *Articles to be Inquired of Within the Several Parishes of the Diocess of Carlisle In the Primary and Metropolitical Visitation of … John, … Arch-Bishop of York* (York: John White, 1693); *Injunctions given by the Honourable Henry Finch, Dean of the Cathedral and Metropolitical Church in St. Peter in York* (York: John White, 1705); *Articles to be Enquired*

printing trade in the North of England, White headed a family which became highly influential in the development of the first newspapers in the region.[29] With the 1695 lapse of the licensing laws, provincial printers further diversified the outputs of their presses, and between 1710 and 1720 the first newspapers were established at Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Nottingham.[30] White's son founded the second (and first successful) newspaper in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and in 1719, White's widow, Grace, founded York's first newspaper, the *York Mercury*.[31] As such, newspapers became an additional output of Northern printers who had long-standing commercial and familial connections to the Church and civic governors.

Reporting the Clerical Profession – Places and Preferment

Turning to the content of early news titles, one of the most immediately observable ways in which newspapers reflected the status of the Church in eighteenth-century society was through the reporting of the preferments, changing health and deaths of clergymen, which appeared among the regular dispatches of newspaper titles throughout this period. Whilst these reports were often brief, they provided glimpses of the machinery of the clerical profession in action. Like other early provincial newspaper enterprises, printers of York's first newspapers mainly reprinted reports concerning the bishops and other dignitaries of the Church from London titles, as these individuals usually held State roles alongside their functions in the regions, creating greater

of in the Visitation, of the Reverend Knightley Chetwood, Dr. of Divinity, Arch-Deacon of the Arch-Deaconry of York (York: John White, 1705); see also University of Nottingham, Special Collections, Me x 4/3, 'Order of the Court of Quarter Sessions at Pontefract relating to the apprehension and punishment of beggars', 1700; *A Sermon, Preached October, the 19, 1690. Before the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriff &c. of the Town and County of New-Castle Upon Tyne* (York: John White, 1691). See also Robert Davies, *A Memoir of the York Press, with Notices of Authors, Printers, and Stationers, in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries* (Westminster: Nichols and Sons, 1868), pp. 119–120.

29 William K. Sessions, *Thomas & Alice Broad(e), Parliamentary Printers of York from 1644, and their daughter Hannah* (York: Ebor Press, 1998).

30 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p. 373.

31 Welford, *Early Printing in Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, p. 18. The *Newcastle Courant* was preceded only by the *New-Castle Gazette*, which had been founded the year prior and soon afterwards ceased publication.

interest in their affairs.[32] It is apparent, however, that by 1730 newspapers in York were drawing attention to the preferments of the more minor, local clergy. In June of that year, the *Original Mercury, York Journal: Or, Weekly Courant* carried a notice that Reginald Heber, rector of Marton-in-Craven in the West Riding, had received the relatively modest appointment of a chaplaincy to Brigadier Fielding's Regiment.[33]

Whilst reports concerning Church preferments were prevalent, they were a secondary channel of information to the flurry of epistolary and oral exchanges of intelligence that accompanied the vacancy of a position in the Church. The active application by individuals for places held a greater degree of moral acceptability in the eighteenth century, and it was not unusual for patrons to be inundated with letters and personal calls from clergymen hopeful of gaining a place.[34] Producers of newspapers fuelled speculation by printing the latest rumours as to who might succeed to a position, and followed with details of appointments when the process was completed. It was not until the nineteenth century that excessive self-recommendation came to be more generally viewed as worldly and unspiritual, but there were recognised limitations in the eighteenth century to the level of importunity deemed appropriate.[35] Those that exceeded these conventions were satirised by critics such as the clergyman Lewis Stephens, who in 1743 acknowledged the degree to which printed reports had become an adjunct to the unseemly business of gathering intelligence about the health of clergymen and expected vacancies, describing a known bishops' informant as a "sly downfaced walking News paper".[36]

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32 For the structure of the Church of England in the eighteenth century see Norman Sykes, *Church and State in England in the XVIIIth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934).

33 *Original Mercury, York Journal: Or, Weekly Courant*, no. 252 (Tuesday 9 June 1730).

34 To give an example from the Southern Province, Archbishop William Wake received several letters regarding the death of the master of the Hospital of St. Cross in Winchester in 1728. Wake granted the sinecure to his son-in-law, John Lynch. Cornwall Record Office. PB/8/7, letter book of William Wake, 1728–1729.

35 William Gibson, '"Importunate Cries of Misery": the Correspondence of Lucius Henry Hibbins and the Duke of Newcastle, 1741–58', *The British Library Journal*, 17:1 (1991), pp. 87–93.

36 Lewis Stephens (1689–1747) served as domestic chaplain successively to bishops Sir Jonathan Trelawny, Charles Trimnell, and Lancelot Blackburne. In the mid-1730s, Stephens broke ties with Blackburne and dedicated the rest of his life to his existing clerical engagements, and to study; 'The Ecclesiastical Climbers' can be found among manuscript letters of Lewis Stephens. See Cornwall Record Office, G/1968, letter book from Lewis Stephen to Francis Gregor, c. 1710–1747.

Inevitably, given their age and social status, those who occupied the highest stations of the Church were most often subjected to frequent speculation concerning their clerical positions. Surviving correspondence demonstrates that within a decade of the appearance of the first daily newspaper in Britain, churchmen had grown wary of the attention paid to their affairs. In October 1712, Edmund Gibson informed the Bishop of Carlisle that persistent rumours in the press of the Archbishop of Canterbury's ill-health were unfounded:

> You will hear repeated accounts of his Graces illness from the publick papers for which there has been no more ground than this. That the Town being thin and little company coming he intermitted his publick days, & happened a little after to have something of the Gravel: but as to Health, you may depend upon it he is hearty and well.[37]

The very oldest members of the Church often felt the glare of newspaper writers most acutely, as acknowledged by the eighty-eight year old John Hough, Bishop of Worcester, in February 1739:

> I heard indeed that the Gout had made some discovery of itself in your Lords^{ps} stomach; but the report gave me no such disturbance; for it came only from the common News Writers, who watch the Constitutions of those who are Eminent in Themselves, or in their Stations, as narrowly as the Physition: who make the most of every trifling indisposition, and sometimes amuse us with mere fiction. … those Gentlemen have once or twice stooped so low as to myself; but their intimations were groundless.[38]

Lancelot Blackburne, Archbishop of York from 1724 to 1743, suffered from recurrent bouts of serious ill-health for the last fifteen years of his life, which interrupted his personal attendance on his diocese and determined the manner in which the archbishop organised his administration in the North. Whereas this has often been mistaken by historians for outright neglect of his diocesan duties, the ability to search across many newspaper sources using the digital databases for this period reveals the degree to which both London and provincial newspapers reported on the changing state of Blackburne's health over

37 Bodleian Library, Add. MS. A. 269, copy letter from Edmund Gibson to William Nicolson, 4 October 1712. Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, died in December 1715.

38 University of St. Andrews, MS. 5410, letter from John Hough to Edmund Gibson, 11 February 1739.

many years.[39] These reports reached their most fevered state in the summer of 1734, when several newspapers printed an erroneous account that Blackburne had died at his palace at Bishopthorpe. This caused confusion in the press for the full week of 30 June to 6 July 1734, with various prints retracting and contradicting one another in the details of the archbishop's passing.[40] When the reports were eventually revealed to be false, Blackburne's subsequent recovery provided ample ammunition for satirists. In August 1734, a Latin epigram titled, "To his Grace the [Lord Archbishop] of York on his Recovery after being mention'd as dead in the News-papers", appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and was soon followed by translations in English by other writers.[41] One such translation appeared in October of the same year, and read as follows.

> Of LAN EBOR. should common fame
> Again belie the sacred name;
> Should your good grace give up the ghost,
> Some ages hence in th' *Evening Post,*
> May you yourself, the news before ye,
> Laugh in your sleeve, and read the story.[42]

Incidents of this nature left readers like George Legh, vicar of Halifax, wary of taking such news stories about his diocesan at face value. In response to fresh reports of Blackburne's ill-health in October 1737, Legh wrote to Thomas Hayter, the archbishop's chaplain, that "I hope there is as little ground as formerly for [what] occurs in [the] News-papers concerning my Lord [Archbishop's] state of Health".[43] In this case, it can be observed that the speed at which the

39 The author's forthcoming doctoral thesis at Oxford Brookes University reassesses the functioning of administration and patronage during Lancelot Blackburne's archiepiscopacy.

40 *Grub Street Journal*, issue 392 (London: Thursday, 30 June 1734); *London Evening Post,* issue 1032 (London: 29 June – 2 July 1734); *Derby Mercury*, Vol III, No. 15 (Derby: Thursday 4 July 1734); *Daily Courant,* issue 5694 (London: Thursday 4 July 1734).

41 *Gentleman's Magazine* (August 1734), p. 445. The epigram also appeared in other periodicals such as the *Bee or, Universal Weekly Pamphlet* (*The Bee Reviv'd*), Volume 7, Issue 83 (London: 1733–1734), p. 206.

42 *Gentleman's Magazine* (October 1734), p. 566. Three years earlier, William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, had also been subjected to similar, unfounded rumours. A satirical treatment of this appeared in *The Mitre. A Tale In Hudibrastick Verse. Describing three B-sh-ps in Lawn-Sleeves Rowing to Lambeth for a See* (London: 1731), p. 3.

43 Borthwick Institute for Archives, Bp C & P III/7/23, Dr George Legh to Thomas Hayter, 12 October 1737. See also *Newcastle Courant*, no. 649 (Newcastle: Saturday 1 October 1737).

news was collated and published led to confusion and the dispersal of misinformation, and false reports became events in themselves, worthy of comment and ridicule. This treatment was extended beyond the clergy to all public figures, as demonstrated by the *Caledonian Mercury* for 1 July 1734, which noted that "the Dutchess of Northumberland is not dead, tho' some News-mongers have not only killed Her Grace, but buried her at Windsor".[44] This may call into question the reliability of news during this period, but it is evident that these reports were taken seriously by some until proven to be untrue. In October 1737, the clergyman Thomas Wilson took what he saw in the newspapers sufficiently seriously to call upon Edward Chandler, bishop of Durham, after reading about the death of the prelate's son in the *London Gazette*.[45] Wilson was relieved to discover that on that occasion the bishop's son was quite alive, and the *Gazette* hastily revised their notice in the next day's issue.[46] A swift correction could prevent the impact of an incorrect report, but some newspaper proprietors were particularly assiduous in ensuring that mistakes made by a rival print did not pass by unnoticed. On 18 February 1752 the *Protestant York Courant* reported that Henry Goodricke had been installed into the Prebend of Grindal at York Minster, "and not Givendale, as was mentioned in another Courant".[47] This declaration is a strong reflection of the highly partisan local print market that existed in York in the mid-eighteenth century, but it is also indicative of the continued importance of perceived reliability in reporting the news. By calling into question the veracity of a relatively minor report of ecclesiastical intelligence, the printers of the *Protestant York Courant* aimed to gain a commercial advantage over their competitor by undermining the reliability of their product.

Clergymen and the Dispersal of News

Whilst the depiction of the clergy in news reports can be detected through analysis of the contents of eighteenth-century newspapers, to discover ways in

44 *Caledonian Mercury*, Issue 15993 (Edinburgh: Monday, 1 July 1734).

45 C.L.S. Linnell, *The Diaries Of Thomas Wilson, D.D., 1731–37 and 1750, Son of Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man* (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), p. 214; *London Gazette*, Issue 7645 (London: 15 October 1737 – 18 October). Richard Chandler (c. 1703–1769). The *London Gazette*'s mistake came when reporting on James Gambier's appointment as Solicitor of the Excise, initially stating that the position had been vacated due to Chandler's death. This was corrected to state that Chandler had in fact been made a Commissioner of the Customs.

46 *London Gazette*, issue 7646 (London: 18 October 1737 – 22 October).

47 *Protestant York Courant*, issue 326 (York: Tuesday 18 February 1752).

which churchmen consumed news, it is necessary to turn to surviving personal papers, such as financial accounts, commonplace books, correspondence and diaries. Evidence from these sources reveals that at the turn of the eighteenth century, news concerning matters of Church and State was perceived to originate in London and then radiated outwards to the regions, augmenting existing lines of communication. In January 1703, within a year of the appearance of the first daily newspaper in Britain, Thomas Blofield MP wrote from Westminster to Humphrey Prideaux, Dean of Norwich, that he had little fresh information about the ongoing dispute in Convocation other than what Prideaux would have already seen in the public prints.[48] The regular correspondence between Edmund Gibson, rector of Lambeth, and William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle, from the 1700s to the 1720s, reveals that the two men often reflected on domestic and foreign issues read in the 'public prints', and that they consumed printed news in tandem with information transmitted through correspondence. The delivery of one form of news occasionally outpaced the other, as acknowledged by Gibson in June 1712, who wrote, "I need not tell your Lp what our Generals and Soldiers are doing abroad: because you will see that at large in the publick Papers of [this] day".[49]

That London was deemed to be the principal stage of the news in matters of Church and State is hardly unexpected, but there was an acknowledged exception to this model during election years, when the "scene of News" was, as Edmund Gibson described it, "remov'd from London to the Country", and public discourse became dominated by comparing "Intelligences from Counties and Burroughs".[50] Whilst provincial newspapers of the 1720s and 1730s largely followed this model by emphasising national and foreign news over local occurrences, they did provide a more readily available digest of the news for readers in the country. This is reflected in the notes of Robert Marsden, Archdeacon of Nottingham, who between 1724 and 1735 transcribed excerpts and pasted cuttings from London and Nottingham newspapers in his commonplace book.[51] Whilst many of these notes are taken from curious reports of thefts and extraordinary feats, it is clear that Marsden did not rely solely on the London

48 Cornwall Record Office, PB/8/4, letter from Thomas Blofield to Humphrey Prideaux, 9 January 1703.

49 Bodleian Library, Add. MS. A. 269, copy letter from Edmund Gibson to William Nicolson, 24 June 1712.

50 Staffordshire Archives, D1057/M/J/11, letter from Edmund Gibson to John Hough, 17 March 1722.

51 Nottinghamshire Archives. DD/TS/14/2, commonplace book [of Robert Marsden], 1724–35.

prints for political news, recording in March 1730 details relating to the Pension Bill taken out of the *Nottingham Courant*. More significant to our understanding of the consumption of news in this period is a "key to the news-papers" drawn up by Marsden in February 1732. The key gives brief, descriptive notes on the backgrounds of twelve London newspapers; the *Craftsman, Fogg's Journal,* the *Daily Courant,* the *London Journal,* the *Free Briton,* the *Hyp-doctor,* the *Grub Street Journal,* the *Universal Spectator,* the *Auditor,* the *Weekly Miscellany,* the *London Crier* and *Applebee's Journal.* Of those opposing the government, Marsden described *Mist's Journal* as a "Tory-paper", and the *Craftsman* as "writtⁿ. by" William Pulteney, whereas the *Daily Courant* is noted as being "on the Side of the Ministry", and the *London Journal* written by "a client of Sʳ.R.W's.". In the latter case, Marsden's High Churchmanship can be detected in his speculation that Walpole's client was in fact "a Deist".[52] The key also comments on the style of the newspapers, remarking that the *Auditor* is "Ingenious", whereas the *Universal Spectator* is dismissed as "dull".[53] Whilst Marsden's key provides an exceptional insight into one man's views on the market for news during this period, Marsden was not unique in his reading habits, nor were newspapers the sole preserve of clergymen of the Church of England.[54] The Lancashire dissenting minister Peter Walkden transcribed dozens of news items at great length in his diary of the mid-1730s, taking reports from at least ten different London newspapers. Walkden also took in some of the earliest issues of a local title, *Adam's Chester Courant*, but suspected the newspaper of Jacobite sympathies.[55] These private records demonstrate the degree to which individuals who were permanently resident in the North could be highly engaged with, and knowledgeable of the political inclinations of a wide variety of London newspapers, and also acted as some of the earliest consumers of the first provincial news titles.

These examples are drawn from sources identifiable within the archival record as created by clergymen and ministers, but it is apparent that the personal records of the laity can be equally instructive, particularly in the case of early provincial newspapers. A surviving account book of Hugh Bethell of Rise in the

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 In the South of England, Benjamin Rogers, rector of Carlton in Bedfordshire, was a reader of the *Northampton Mercury* from the late 1720s, and made notes in his diary of reports that interested him. See C.D. Linnell (ed.), *The Diary of Benjamin Rogers, 1720–1721* (Streatley: Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 1950), pp. 17, 22, 38–39.

55 Chipping Local History Society (eds.), *The Diary of the Reverend Peter Walkden for 1733–1734* (Otley: Smith Settle, 2000).

East Riding of Yorkshire gives details of expenditure relating to newspapers, and is highly illuminating of the relationship between a parson and landowner in a rural parish.[56] Jaques Sterne, mentioned above in relation to his involvement with the *York Gazetteer*, was rector of Rise for the entire period covered by Bethell's account book, and his influence can be detected in attracting political allies as subscribers and financial supporters to the newspaper enterprises of York during a period of sharp political and religious division. The accounts reveal that Bethell made subscription payments for the *York Gazetteer* from 1743 until 1746, and from 1746 until his death in 1752, he subscribed to the *York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser*.[57] This staunchly Whig, and anti-Catholic newspaper was printed by John Gilfillan from November 1745, in direct response to the Jacobite Rebellion. By March 1746, the newspaper changed its title to the more confrontational *Protestant York Courant*, in a direct slur against the supposed political and religious inclinations of the rival *York Courant*.[58] The accounts reveal that on at least two occasions Bethell provided Jaques Sterne with additional funds to 'encourage' the publication of Gilfillan's newspaper, firstly within a month of its initial publication, and then again a year later.[59]

Surviving evidence also demonstrates that beyond providing financial backing for the *York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser*, Jaques Sterne was also closely involved in the collation of information to be printed in the newspaper. Sterne utilised his patronage network to assist in the business of tracing the most up-to-date accounts of the opposing armies during the course of the Rebellion, which included individuals such as the ecclesiastical lawyer Francis Topham, and his nephew, George Fairfax, who was also a clergyman.[60] Once intelligence had been gathered, it was jealously guarded to ensure that it could be printed in the *York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser* before it appeared in the pages of its rival. A letter from the York lawyer, Jerom Dring, describes the way in which

56 East Riding of Yorkshire Archives & Local Studies Service, DDRI/acc. 2980, Hugh Bethell of Rise Hall account book, 1725–1752. For more background, see Daniel Reed, 'A New Historical Perspective on Jaques Sterne in the East Riding: The Account Book of Hugh Bethell of Rise, 1725–1752', *The Shandean*, 23 (2012), pp. 98–105. See also East Riding of Yorkshire Archives & Local Studies Service, DL/1/12, Marmaduke Constable's memoranda book, 1738–1749.

57 Ibid.

58 All but six known copies of the *York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser* (later, *Protestant York Courant*) survive in three volumes held by the Laurence Sterne Trust, and York Explore Library, respectively.

59 East Riding of Yorkshire Archives & Local Studies Service, DDRI/acc. 2980, Hugh Bethell's account book, 1725–1752.

60 John Wright, 'Out in the Forty Five', *The Antiquary*, 23 (Feb. 1891), pp. 74–75.

an account of an address from Sir Everard Fawkener, secretary to the Duke of Cumberland, to the Magistracy of Liverpool, was prepared for publication in the *York Journal; or the Weekly Advertiser* of 10 December 1745:[61]

> This I had from Dr. Sterne, under a promise not to give a copy to any Body, from w^{ch} I can only understand that he chooses to have the intire propogation of it; for it seems to be worth making public. I fancy the Reason has only been to prevent Ward from having it in his paper [*York Courant*], for I hear Gilfillan is to have it in his.[62]

The numerous official orders, proclamations, speeches, and accounts of military manoeuvres that were published during the Rebellion were forms of information which newspapers were particularly suited to disseminate. In a letter of 9 August 1746, Thomas Cheyney, Dean of Lincoln, wrote to Archbishop Thomas Herring to thank him for a cutting from the *York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser* which gave a report of the Duke of Cumberland's arrival in York following his victory at the Battle of Culloden.[63] The report appeared in the issue of 29 July 1746, and included a full transcript of Herring's speech on that occasion, with the Duke's reply.[64] Dean Cheyney explained his particular pleasure in receiving the cutting from the newspaper, as it, "gave me [the] pleasure of reading [what your] Grace spoke to [the] Duke [with] So much Propriety sooner [than] otherwise I [could] have done".[65] These instances demonstrate that during a time of national crisis, clergyman utilised newspapers as a key tool in the direction of the clerical and civil response to the Rebellion.

Religion for Sale

Having outlined that provincial printers maintained distinct commercial relationships with the Church as an institution, and with individual clergymen as consumers, it is also apparent that they harnessed the general popularity of religion through the advertisement, and dispersal of religious texts. Within

61 *York Journal; or the Weekly Advertiser* (York: 10 December 1745).

62 John Wright, 'Out in the Forty Five', *The Antiquary* (Jan. 1891), pp. 30–37.

63 Borthwick Institute for Archives. Bp. C & P IV/18, letter from Thomas Cheyney to Thomas Herring, 9 August 1746.

64 *York Journal: or, The Protestant Courant* (York: 29 July 1746).

65 Borthwick Institute for Archives. Bp. C & P IV/18, letter from Thomas Cheyney to Thomas Herring, 9 August 1746.

the broader landscape of the eighteenth-century print market, the emergence of provincial newspapers coincided with the 'golden age' of sermon culture in Britain, in which sermons constituted "a major part of the output of the print industry and a significant element in the cultural fabric of the country".[66] These texts were at the forefront of popular, mainstream literature, with an estimated eight times as many pages of sermons printed as fiction during the eighteenth century.[67] The development of provincial newspapers in the North of England provided an opportunity for printers to advertise the multitude of religious texts produced from their own presses, and to gain revenue by promoting other booksellers and traders. This can be observed in the earliest Northern newspapers, such as the *New-Castle Gazette* for 23–25 December 1710, which promoted religious texts in three of the four advertisements carried in that issue.[68] The Church was not passive to these developments, and exhibited sensitivity to the manner in which religious texts were advertised in provincial titles. In February 1727, Edward Wells wrote to William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, enclosing a cutting from the *Stamford Mercury*, in order to alert the primate that his name, alongside that of Robert Marsden, Archdeacon of Nottingham, had been associated with a religious work he viewed as "an Ill-digested Confused Heap of Materials taken out of Bp Andrews".[69] Evidently, it was not improper for the potential misuse of the names of the higher clergy in advertisements to be addressed to the head of the Church of England directly.

As the provincial print marketplace became more competitive, printers experimented with the inclusion of supplementary publications to promote circulation and increase subscriptions to their newspaper titles, offering maps, song-sheets and religious texts either at discounted prices, or given away freely.[70] This device was used extensively by the London newspaper printer Robert Walker, who serialised works such as the *Exposition of the Common Prayer* and the *History of the Holy Bible* in his newspapers directed to markets outside of the capital, such as the *Derbyshire Journal* and the *Lancashire Journal*.[71] The two religious works were purported to be written by one Laurence Clarke, a clergyman of the Church of England, although it is likely that Clarke was

66 William Gibson, 'The British Sermon 1689–1901: Quantities, Performance, And Culture', in Keith A. Francis and William Gibson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the British Sermon 1689–1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 3–30, (p. 6).

67 Ibid.

68 The *New-Castle Gazette; or, the Northern Courant,* no. 65 (Newcastle: 23 December 1710).

69 Cornwall Record Office, PB/8/5, letter from Edward Wells to William Wake, 21 February 1727.

70 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 109–110.

71 Ibid., pp. 437–443.

fictitious and that the name was employed as a commercial technique to add legitimacy to the publications. The two works were produced concurrently in the summer of 1737, and were subsequently offered as detachable supplements with continuous pagination to be collected by readers and bound into a volume. Initially, Walker attempted to issue the *Exposition of the Common Prayer* as a discreet, serialised publication in wrappers containing news content in an attempt to avoid newspaper taxes, and an advertisement of August 1737 demonstrates that he intended to follow the same course with the *History of the Holy Bible*, which was designed to make up two volumes in around one hundred numbers.

> One Sheet in Quarto, neatly stitched up in large Covers, on which Covers will be printed the freshest News Foreign and Domestick, as in the Daily Papers, will be published every Wednesday.[72]

To further lure potential customers, these sheets were to be embellished with occasional cuts, and a new serialisation of *Hudibras*, accompanied by its own engravings by Hogarth.[73] The works were recommended "to the Perusal of all Families, being very proper for instructing Children in the Rudiments of the Christian Religion", and the price of two pence each, that the "poorer sort" may have access to the works.[74] Walker managed to avoid the tax for ten months before it was insisted that he used stamped paper for his half-sheet news wrappers.[75] Thwarted in his attempts to avoid the duty, Walker proceeded to attach the serialised texts to his newspaper ventures in an attempt to secure a dedicated readership for his provincial titles. Surviving copies of Walker's publications from 1738 and 1739, such as the *Lancashire Journal: with the History of the Holy Bible,* gave equal prominence to both the imprint of the newspaper and the supplementary religious work.[76] Other titles, such as the *Hull Courant*, were also accompanied by serialised sheets of the *History of the Bible*, although the precise nature of Walker's involvement with this newspaper is unknown.[77]

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72 Laurence Clarke, *Exposition of the Common Prayer*, no. III (London, Wednesday 3 August 1737).

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p. 112.

76 Ibid., p. 448. See also titles such as *The Warwickshire and Staffordshire Journal: with the History of the Holy Bible*, no. LXXXII (London: 8 March 1739).

77 W.G.B. Page, 'Notes on Hull Authors, Booksellers, Printers, and Stationers, etc.', in Frank Karslake (ed.), *Book Auction Records*, vol. 6, Part 1, Oct. 1 to Dec. 31 1908 (London: Karslake & Co., 1909), pp. i-vii. No issue of this date survives, but it is likely that Page had access to

It is possible that by 1739, the London printer wished to downplay his association with titles issued into the North, as his commercial techniques came under criticism. In response to the appearance of Walker's *Derbyshire Journal*, the rival *Derby Mercury* published an advertisement for Laurence Howell's history of the Bible, describing the work as being of "establish'd Reputation", as opposed to the works attributed to Clarke, which were blasted as being "pirated".[78] The *Derby Mercury* added that Walker's claims that his *Derbyshire Journal* produced in London could provide more up-to-date news than a country journal were "ridiculous".[79] In this instance, it can be observed that the aggressive marketing techniques adopted by Walker prompted provincial printers to defend both their own products, and the veracity of the religious texts advertised in the pages of their newspapers.

Conclusion

When investigating the place of religion in relation to newspaper development in the eighteenth century, digital databases have made many news titles of that period more accessible than ever before, opening up untold avenues for new research. In the case of early provincial newspapers, however, many titles are unlikely to become available in the scope of current digitisation projects, and future accessibility would be reliant on initiatives taken at the few individual repositories which hold physical copies. Until such time, digital research methods can only reveal part of the picture, and it is one that remains heavily London-centric. Wider research using other archival sources goes some way to make up for the current limitations of these resources, and is crucial when investigating issues of newspaper authorship, financing and readership. These aspects of the printing trade can be detected at regional level for individual newspaper titles, but references in the archival record are extremely scarce. When these secondary references can be discovered, however, they offer rare opportunities to augment information taken solely from the close-reading of

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copies of the *Hull Courant* which were known to exist at the turn of the twentieth century, but are now lost.

78 Laurence Howell was a non-juring clergyman whose popular three-volume history of the Bible was first published posthumously in 1725. See Robert D. Cornwall, 'Howell, Laurence (c.1664–1720)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13977 (accessed 6 June 2016).

79 *Derby Mercury*, vol. VII, no. 15 (Derby: Thursday 29 June 1738).

newspapers, and hint at pathways for future studies, such as more rigorous analysis of the reading habits of distinct social groups such as the clergy.

In the North of England, the emergence of local newspaper enterprises in the early eighteenth century represented a development in the relationship between printers and the clerical profession which had existed since the early modern period, and was reinforced both commercially and legally by the provisions of the Licensing Act of 1662. The instrumental roles taken by clergymen in the establishment and financing of two of York's three newspapers by 1746, is indicative of a relationship between the Church and the press that developed rather than diminished into the mid-eighteenth century. The affairs of the clergy, particularly their changing health and preferments, continued to feature among the regular dispatches of many Northern newspaper titles, reflecting a broader interest in the lives of public figures and their relative positions within local structures of governance that were of particular consequence to a provincial readership. This perhaps reached its most succinct form in the 1750s, when York newspapers published concise lists of the noblemen who had died in the previous two years.[80] The influence of churchmen as readers of newspapers can also be observed from the mid-century onwards in advertisements which addressed the clergy directly as consumers.[81] In the later eighteenth century, the Church also began to utilise newspapers in new ways, and more directly as a tool of ecclesiastical administration. Whereas in the first half of the century, details of diocesan events such as ordinations, and confirmation and visitation tours were reported irregularly as local intelligence, it was not until the 1760s that formal advertisements were taken out in Yorkshire newspapers to mobilise individuals to attend these occasions.[82] These developments in the relationship between the Church and the press are highly indicative of the continued centrality of religion to British society, in which the role of the clergy in contributing to, and shaping print culture in this period should not be underestimated. The reintroduction of religion to the forefront of the discussion of newspaper development offers alternative pathways and modifications to narratives of secularisation, and notions of 'the Enlightenment', the parameters of which continue to be interrogated, reassessed, and reinterpreted.

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80 *Protestant York Courant*, issue 282 (York: Tuesday 16 April 1751).

81 Charles Pearson addressed an advertisement for his robemakers business to 'the Reverend the Clergy'. See, *Protestant York Courant*, no. 259 (York: Tuesday 6 November 1750).

82 Borthwick Institute for Archives. Bp C & P III/29, letter from Sir Hardolph Wasteneys to Lancelot Blackburne, 31 October 1726; *Newcastle Courant* (Newcastle: Saturday 3 September 1737); Judith Jago, *Aspects of the Georgian Church* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997), pp. 63–64.

PART 4

Manuscript, Print, Word of Mouth

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CHAPTER 4

All the News that's Fit to Write: The Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Newsletter

Rachael Scarborough King

In 1717, Sir Richard Steele sent a letter from London to his wife, Mary Scurlock Steele, at her family estate in Wales to update her on the talk of the town. "I do not write news to you because I have ordered the letter from the Secretarys office to be sent to you constantly", he noted in a postscript to his letter.[1] Steele was a former editor of the *London Gazette*, the official state newspaper produced by the Secretary of State's office, and by 1717 a famous periodicalist as the collaborator with Joseph Addison on the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. But rather than arranging for his wife to receive the *Gazette* or a popular newspaper such as the *Post Boy* or *Daily Courant*, Steele indicated that he was forwarding a handwritten document, the manuscript newsletter distributed by the Secretary of State's office. Alongside the printed *Gazette*, the department continued to produce an official newsletter well into the eighteenth century; this practice had been in place since the tenure of Under-Secretary of State Joseph Williamson, who oversaw both the 1665 founding of the *London Gazette* and the distribution of a newsletter bearing the *imprimatur* 'Whitehall'. The information in the manuscript and printed productions derived largely from incoming diplomatic correspondence, and the office regularly reminded foreign envoys that one of their duties was to provide a "Circular" containing a "full & particular relation of such occurrences & Transactions as shall from time to time become the subject of news".[2] Diplomats, bureaucrats, journalists, and other interested parties depended on manuscript sources as an integral component of the eighteenth-century news marketplace.

The growing body of scholarship on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century newspapers and periodicals, however, persists in seeing the newspaper as quintessentially a print product, and the newsletter as a precursor, supplement, or small-scale alternative to modern commercial printed news.

1 Richard Steele to Mary Scurlock Steele, 1 May 1717, Sir Richard Steele Letters, British Lib. Add. MS. 5145B f. 131. All archival sources retain original spelling and punctuation throughout this essay.

2 James Craggs to Robert Sutton, 11 July 1720, PRO SP 78/168/68, f. 169.

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The medium of the printed periodical is central to Jürgen Habermas' account of the development of the public sphere and Benedict Anderson's description of the rise of nationalism, and as David Randall notes, "Scholars of print culture have looked at such ephemera as one of the categories of 'proof-texts' for Elizabeth Eisenstein's theory of a 'print revolution' in early modern Europe".[3] Analysis of manuscript news documents often assumes the pre-eminence of 'print culture': James Sutherland, for example, describes the newsletter as "a personal service, beginning politely with the word 'Sir', and giving the recipient the pleasant feeling that he was reading his own private correspondence", while Ian Atherton notes, "newsbooks were in the public sphere, whereas the newsletter belonged to the more private world of correspondence".[4] And while scholars such as Atherton, Paul Arblaster, and Filippo de Vivo have incisively analysed groups of manuscript newsletters, they have focused on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and seen a post-Restoration decline in the genre's salience.[5] The continuing presence and prominence of manuscript news in the Restoration and eighteenth century remains a footnote to the story of the rise of the newspaper.

I argue, however, that the newsletter remained an important, valued source of public news well into the eighteenth century, not succumbing to the newspaper but complementing printed sources in many ways. In numerous aspects of form and function, manuscript and printed news were profoundly intertwined. While there were some kinds of news that were more common in manuscript than print, and vice versa, on the whole the relationship between the two media was one of convergence and continuity; the manuscript newsletter had more in common with the printed newspaper than with a personal letter

3 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 16–23, 37–40; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp. 33–35; David Randall, 'Recent Studies in Print Culture: News, Propaganda, and Ephemera', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67:3 (2004), pp. 457–472 (457).

4 James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and Its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 8; Ian Atherton, 'The Itch Grown a Disease: Manuscript Transmission of News in the Seventeenth Century', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), p. 53.

5 See Atherton, 'The Itch Grown a Disease'; Paul Arblaster, 'Posts, Newsletters, Newspapers: England in a European System of Communications', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 19–34; Filipo de Vivo, 'Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth Century Britain and Europe*, pp. 35–49.

containing items designated 'news'. These works often shared a format, a single half-folio sheet with a banner heading and date at the top of page one and subscription or colophon at the bottom of page two. Newsletters generally lacked personal salutations in favour of a simple 'Sir' or, less frequently, 'Madam', and they presented an even clerks' italic hand [see Figure 4.1]. Unlike seventeenth-century newsbooks or eighteenth-century pamphlets, newsletters and newspapers tended to offer terse, straightforward accounts with little commentary or editorialising. Both genres divided items into discrete paragraphs of news according to the location from which the information had arrived,[6] and both were published on a periodical schedule, with papers regularly available once, twice, or three times a week. The only explicit organisational structure in either genre was chronological, with the 'freshest advices' appearing at the end of the sheet. In this publishing model manuscript in fact had an advantage, as new information could be added up to the deadline for taking letters to the post office and editors could more easily adjust edition sizes in response to demand.

Many newsletters were professionally produced in numbers equal or close to those of printed papers, and they were publicly available to subscribers for a fee, with an increasing number of options from the 1670s and '80s onward. Indeed, rather than being replaced by the newspaper, the newsletter in England seems to have flourished during the growth of the news marketplace after 1665, with major collections at the Huntington, British, Beinecke, and Bodleian libraries, and at the Harry Ransom Center and British National Archives, spanning the 1670s to 1740s. Eighteenth-century representations of coffeehouses depict written and printed materials lying side by side on tables, and many readers received newsletters and newspapers folded up and mailed together, a fact visible today in the mirror-image impressions of type that remain on some handwritten sheets [see Figures 4.2 and 4.3]. Both news writers and consumers relied on multiple media sources to present and access a holistic sense of the events of the day.

Recognising the continuing importance of the manuscript newsletter into at least the mid-eighteenth century not only corrects our understanding of the history of news periodicals, but also offers broader insight into the gradual processes of transition and adaptation that more accurately characterise media

6 Will Slauter has shown that the "basic unit of news" in the eighteenth-century newspaper was the paragraph, which could be easily republished from one periodical to another and facilitated news transmission across Europe. Will Slauter, 'The Paragraph as Information Technology: How News Traveled in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World', *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 67:2 (2012), pp. 253–278 (253).

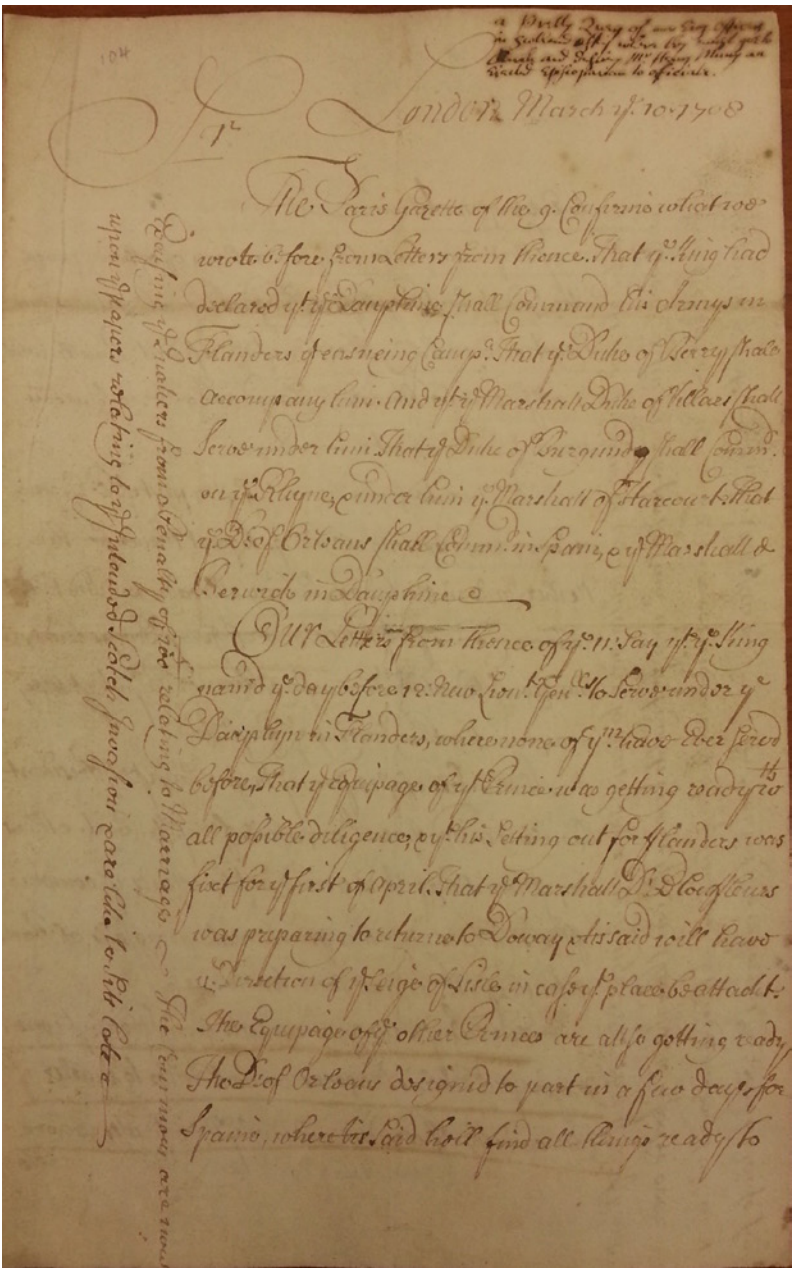
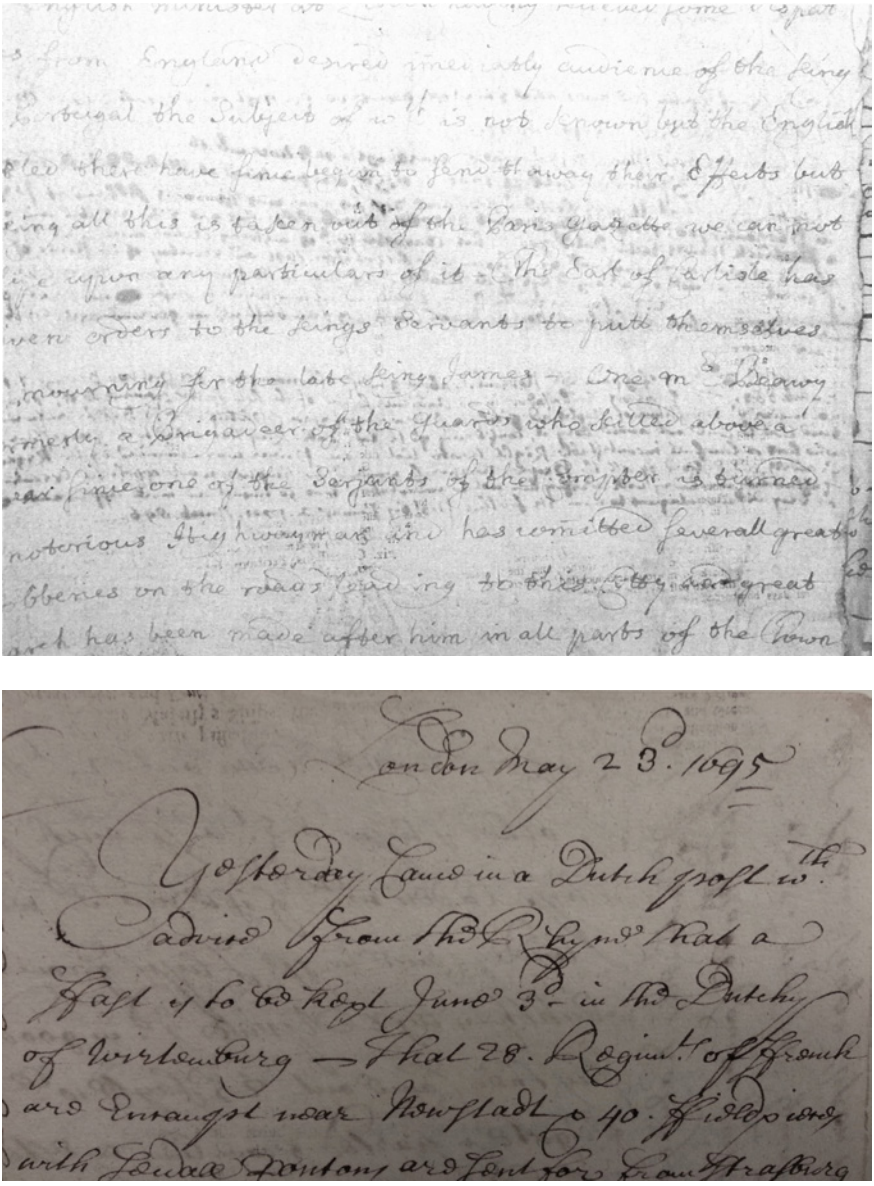


FIGURE 4.1 *Manuscript newsletter sent to the Hobson/Dewey family, 10 March 1708. Huntington Lib. HM 30659 f.104. The letter features a typical half-folio layout with banner heading indicating the place and date of sending. Each paragraph of news corresponds to a particular piece of incoming correspondence. In the upper right-hand corner, the recipient has endorsed the letter with a digest of its contents.*



FIGURES 4.2 AND 4.3 *Manuscript newsletters with mirror-image impressions of type on the handwritten sheets. Huntington Lib. HM 30659 f.85; Clark Library MS.1951.021 box 2 folder 47.*

shifts than do amorphous concepts such as the 'print revolution'. Reorienting the critical narrative away from the inevitable triumph of print provides a clearer picture of the eighteenth-century media environment and reveals a back-and-forth interaction between media forms instead of a teleological progression from old to new. Writers and readers exhibited an omnivorous media appetite, often making little practical distinction between written, printed, and, indeed, spoken, sung, and performed sources of news. As D.F. McKenzie writes, "a phrase like the 'impact of print' – however carefully it is qualified – cannot help but imply a major displacement of writing as a form of record … but for the speaker, auditor, reader or viewer, the texts tend to work in complementary, not competitive, ways".[7] Rather than seeing the printed newspaper as a replacement for or advancement over the newsletter, we have a better understanding of journalism and print history when we acknowledge that the newspaper was only able to come into being by working alongside the newsletter during the former's first century of existence. And in multiple ways, as I will show, the newspaper retained the impression of its manuscript forebear.

Newsletters had existed alongside the printed corantos of the 1620s and newsbooks of the 1640s; they originated in Venice in the mid-fifteenth century in the genre of handwritten news known as *avvisi*.[8] Readers could subscribe to the public *avvisi* and receive letters twice a week; many of the subscribers were themselves news writers who re-circulated the information.[9] In the seventeenth century, almost all Dutch and English corantos, a genre of news pamphlet that flourished in the 1620s, excerpted from the *avvisi*: as de Vivo notes, "manuscript and printed texts interacted, each prolonging the message of the other".[10] In addition, sixteenth-century merchants developed a new business technique of regular correspondence concerning exchange rates, commodity costs, taxes, and transportation; at the same time, improvement in postal networks over the seventeenth century allowed for regular news updates.[11] By the early seventeenth century, professional, scribally reproduced newsletters had appeared, consisting of "the public news written out anonymously under the heading of the place and date of origin of the report provided".[12] Given the

7 D.F. McKenzie, 'Speech-Manuscript-Print', *The Library Chronicle of the University of Texas at Austin*, 20:1–2 (1990), pp. 86–109 (88).

8 Vivo, 'Paolo Sarpi and the Uses of Information in Seventeenth-Century Venice', p. 35.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 41.

11 Arblaster, 'Posts, Newsletters, Newspapers', pp. 19–20.

12 Ibid., p. 20.

long-standing connections between the circulation of manuscript and printed news in the seventeenth century, it seems only natural that newsletters would continue to develop as the printed news marketplace also became more extensive and professionalised in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

This essay will establish the status of the manuscript newsletter in late-seventeenth and eighteenth-century England based on archival investigation of hundreds of such sources held at repositories in Britain and North America. Although I focus on newsletters written in English and produced in London, I will show how these texts depended upon the international circulation of news in manuscript and print. The essay will begin by addressing a point of contention about the English manuscript newsletter: that its existence was a result of censorship regulations. While this belief has led newspaper historians to neglect both newsletters, on the assumption that they were not a part of the public news sphere, and the *London Gazette*, asserting that it "was an instrument of state propaganda, intended to control rumour and occlude alternative news services",[13] censorship does not adequately account for the persistence of manuscript sources, and an overemphasis on its explanatory value in fact distorts our understanding of newsletters and their relationship to printed news. The essay will go on to explore three moments in the history of the newsletter, focusing on individual collections from the Restoration, turn of the eighteenth century, and 1710s. The manuscript newsletter remained a fundamental feature of the news industry throughout the take-off in printed periodicals that scholars have seen as integral to the rise of a modern print culture.

Circulation and Control of Written and Printed News

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries constituted a critical moment of change, innovation, and expansion in the news industry, but it is one that has often been overlooked in favour of a focus on the politically turbulent period of the Civil War. Jason Peacey has argued for continuity in media cultures across the Commonwealth-Restoration divide, asserting that a participatory forum of cheap and accessible print, alongside a "revived and increasingly vigorous scribal culture", continued in the late seventeenth century despite his-

13 Joad Raymond, 'The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 109–136 (126).

torians' assumptions that the period saw a return to control and censorship.[14] The 1695 lapse of the Licensing Act led not to rapid changes in the content or format of newspapers but to rapid expansion in the industry: in London, five new papers appeared in the month following the act's demise – two of them within three days – and a dozen periodicals served the capital city by 1712.[15] While there were no provincial newspapers in 1700, there were 13 in 1710, 24 in 1723, and 42 in 1746.[16] Although many of these new publications lasted for only short periods of time, the eighteenth century witnessed ongoing growth in the scope of the news media.

We might assume, then, that a major and defining difference between manuscript newsletters and printed newspapers was that of edition size – with print presumably reaching a much broader audience – but publication practices and circulation numbers from the period tell a different story. The *Gazette* was the most widely distributed newspaper, with a circulation ranging from 4,000 to almost 9,000 from the 1670s to early 1700s, depending on the season and on public interest in current events.[17] These numbers were partly due to the fact that the *Gazette* was the only newspaper available for portions of this period, and that it was a sponsored government publication with many copies distributed for free. Other newspapers and periodicals saw much more modest tallies. Tax and other financial records show that Daniel Defoe's *Review*, which he wrote thrice weekly from 1704 to 1713, averaged 400 to 500 copies per issue; while Addison and Steele's *Spectator* had a circulation around 1,600, their *Guardian* was less popular at about 850. The first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, fluctuated from 600 to 900 copies per issue in the early 1700s, while the popular tri-weekly *Flying Post* rose from 400 copies in 1704 to around 1,400 in 1712.[18] The *Post Boy* and *Post Man* – both of which offered a blank page for the addition of handwritten news – boasted circulations of 3,000 to 4,000, but many newspapers were printed on the very small scale of 300, 250, or even 100

14 Jason Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 406–408.

15 G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper, 1700–1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 17–22; James Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 117; Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), p. 14.

16 Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, pp. 17–22.

17 John Childs, 'The Sales of Government Gazettes during the Exclusion Crisis, 1678–81', *The English Historical Review*, 102, no. 402 (1987), pp. 103–106.

18 Henry L. Snyder, 'The Circulation of Newspapers in the Reign of Queen Anne', *The Library*, s5–XXIII, 3 (1968), pp. 209–210.

copies per number.[19] Similarly, Christine Ferdinand estimates that the average circulation for a provincial newspaper up until the 1730s would be from 200 to 300 copies.[20]

Meanwhile, various manuscript newsletters had circulations in the hundreds of copies and were, like the most popular London papers, published up to three times a week. Newsletter writer John Dyer was estimated to have a subscriber list of 500, Williamson had about 150 recipients of his official newsletter, and *Gazette* editor Charles Perrot's newsletter circulated around 200 copies per issue.[21] While manuscript newsletters were more expensive than newspapers – ranging from £5 to £20 per year rather than 1*d*. per issue – their circulation numbers were on the same order of magnitude as those of many newspapers. Lower cost and the ability to produce more, identical copies were certainly long-term factors in the eventual dominance of the newspaper, but given the local, small-scale conditions of the early eighteenth-century print shop, this quantitative distinction may not have been immediately apparent to contemporary news consumers. And as the anonymity and impersonality of print – both features magnified in the newspaper, with its lack of any authorial names – remained a source of concern for readers,[22] the correspondence relationship between newsletter writers and subscribers may have appeared preferable to the chaotic fluctuations of early newspapers.

The other apparently definitive distinction between newsletters and newspapers is that of the level of censorship to which they were subject. Newspaper historians often assume that the existence of manuscript sources was due to a higher level of official restriction or self-censorship in the realm of print. Sutherland, for example, notes, "in a time of rigid press control [newsletters] enabled news to be circulated that would never have been permitted to ap-

19 Ibid., pp. 211, 213.

20 Christine Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the Provincial Newspaper Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 18.

21 Sabrina A. Baron, 'The Guises of Dissemination in Early Seventeenth-Century England: News in Manuscript and Print', in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 50; Peter Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State and Their Monopoly of Licensed News, 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), pp. 140–144; P.M. Handover, *A History of the London Gazette, 1665–1965* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1965), p. 17.

22 See Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 30–34; Chad Wellmon, 'Why Google Isn't Making Us Stupid … or Smart', *The Hedgehog Review*, 14:1 (2012), http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/THR_article_2012_Spring_Wellmon.php.

pear in print".[23] However, as I have argued elsewhere, the causal relationship between censorship and newsletters does not hold up under scrutiny of either the existing regulations or the comparative content of newsletters and newspapers.[24] David McKitterick and James Raven have each argued that censorship regulations were unevenly and sporadically enforced in the late Stuart and early Hanoverian periods,[25] while Sabrina A. Baron calls the idea that "a law or a decree or a proclamation somewhere along the line had banned the printing of domestic news" a "fiction", and notes that both manuscript and printed works were subject to laws against spreading false news and seditious libel.[26] Furthermore, Peter Fraser shows that until 1695 the Secretaries of State held an official monopoly on both written and printed news, so that "[a]ll news, either printed or in manuscript, that was not derived from the Secretary's office or officially licensed, was considered 'false news', and declared illegal by proclamation and order in council".[27] In 1688, James II issued a decree "To Restrain the Spreading of FALSE NEWS" promising harsh punishment to "all such Persons who shall be guilty of any such malicious and unlawful Practices by Writing, Printing, or other Publication of such False News and Reports".[28] While it may have been easier to trace the authors or distributors of printed materials, and thus likelier that they would face prosecution, manuscript news encountered many of the same barriers as its printed counterpart.

Comparison of the content of newsletters and newspapers bears out the conclusion that they overlapped significantly in material. From the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries, both genres featured a high proportion of foreign news, which generally comprised the majority of items – not the domestic gossip and scandal assumed to be the preserve of the newsletters. Newsletters, like newspapers, were concerned primarily with foreign battles, trade information, and the activities of continental diplomats. Andrew Pettegree notes that the tone of reporting in both newsletter and newspaper was

23 Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and Its Development*, p. 6.

24 Rachael Scarborough King, 'The Manuscript Newsletter and the Rise of the Newspaper, 1665–1715', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 79:3 (2016), pp. 411–437.

25 David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 152; Raven, *The Business of Books*, p. 83.

26 Baron, 'The Guises of Dissemination in Early Seventeenth-Century England', pp. 46–47.

27 Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State*, p. 115.

28 *London Gazette* No. 2394, 25–29 October 1688, p. 1, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/2394/page/1 (accessed 25 January 2016). Proclamations issued in 1672 and 1674 by Charles II similarly attempted to prohibit the spread of "false news", but they focused more on the oral spread of information, whereas the 1688 proclamation was aimed at written and printed news.

that of "dry, political, military and diplomatic reports", as the newsletter "valued unadorned fact … [and] the total separation of news from the more discursive, analytical and frankly polemical style of news pamphlets".[29] Although the Secretary of State's control over the news industry and the *London Gazette*, regulations against seditious libel and the printing of parliamentary speeches, and self-censorship were certainly important factors in the emergence and endurance of manuscript newsletters, they do not adequately account for the genre's longevity, particularly after the lapse of licensing in 1695. As we shall see, newsletters in fact became increasingly aligned with newspapers as the latter proliferated in the eighteenth century. In the remainder of this essay, I will turn to three case studies to demonstrate the newsletter's wide-reaching influence over the newsgathering methods and style of reportage that would also structure the printed newspaper.

Diplomacy and the International Exchange of News

When Henry Muddiman assumed the editorship of England's first broadsheet newspaper, the *London Gazette*, in 1665, he was ideally positioned to bridge the realms of manuscript and printed news. Muddiman, who held the official title of "king's journalist", had overseen both newsletters and newsbooks for a decade, and he continued his newsletter service as a private enterprise after becoming Gazetteer, now enclosing the printed production with his letters.[30] However, he soon clashed with his supervisor Williamson – possibly because Muddiman was reserving the more interesting news items for his profitable newsletters – and he was fired as gazetteer in early 1666.[31] Williamson maintained his own newsletter service and later *Gazette* editors, including Henry Ball, Charles Perrot, and Robert Yard, were responsible for both the written and printed sources,[32] but Muddiman remained a competitor until the late 1680s; as a subordinate wrote to Williamson in 1667, "Mr. Muddiman gives far larger accounts to his correspondents than you do, which makes them much desired".[33] While Willliamson and his superior, Secretary of State for the Southern Department Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, chose recipients for the of-

29 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 183, 265.

30 Handover, *A History of the London Gazette, 1665–1965*, p. 7.

31 J.G. Muddiman, *The King's Journalist, 1659–1689* (London: John Lane, 1923), p. 193.

32 Ibid., p. 204.

33 Quoted in ibid., p. 195.

ficial newsletter – which many received in exchange for providing news, rather than for a fee – the newsletter services of Muddiman and other writers in the 1670s, '80s, and '90s were commercial ventures.[34]

Both Muddiman and Williamson relied on a network of correspondents supplying them with news, much of it foreign, to be republished in the newsletters, in the *Gazette* or in both. Williamson may have begun the policy requiring foreign envoys to send regular weekly news bulletins, whether or not there were dramatic events to report, to the Secretary of State's office for use in the manuscript and printed venues.[35] The Harry Ransom Center's Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of English Manuscripts includes hundreds of newsletters sent from Williamson to Sir Richard Bulstrode, agent and later resident ambassador at Brussels from 1674 to 1689,[36] along with instructions to Bulstrode for supplying news. From 1675 Bulstrode also began receiving newsletters from the office of Edward Coleman, a prominent Catholic and the secretary to the Duchess of York,[37] apparently as a supplement to the official Whitehall letters. Williamson's letters to Bulstrode employ a two- to four-page half-sheet quarto format, a typical layout for a personal letter, but they include almost no personalisation: the letters feature a number of different clerks' handwritings, and they are generally formatted with wide left-hand margins containing the datelines for the news [see Figure 4.4]. The only heading is the date on which the letter was sent, and there is no subscription or signature at the bottom of page four.

Bulstrode received newsletters from Williamson both before and after leaving England for Brussels in 1674. These records help illuminate the intersecting uses of written and printed news during a period when the *Gazette* was, for the most part, the only available newspaper.[38] There are certainly categories of information that are more likely to appear in the newsletters than in the

34 Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State*, pp. 28–29.

35 Ibid., p. 71.

36 J.D. Davies, 'Bulstrode, Sir Richard (1617–1711)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3930 (accessed 25 January 2016).

37 Andrew Barclay, 'Colman, Edward (1636–1678)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5871 (accessed 30 January 2016).

38 When the Licensing Act first lapsed in 1679, many newspapers immediately appeared, particularly to provide commentary on the ongoing Popish Plot. These were suppressed in the early 1680s and licensing reinstated in 1685 before finally lapsing in 1695. C. John Sommerville, *The News Revolution in England: Cultural Dynamics of Daily Information* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 89–95.

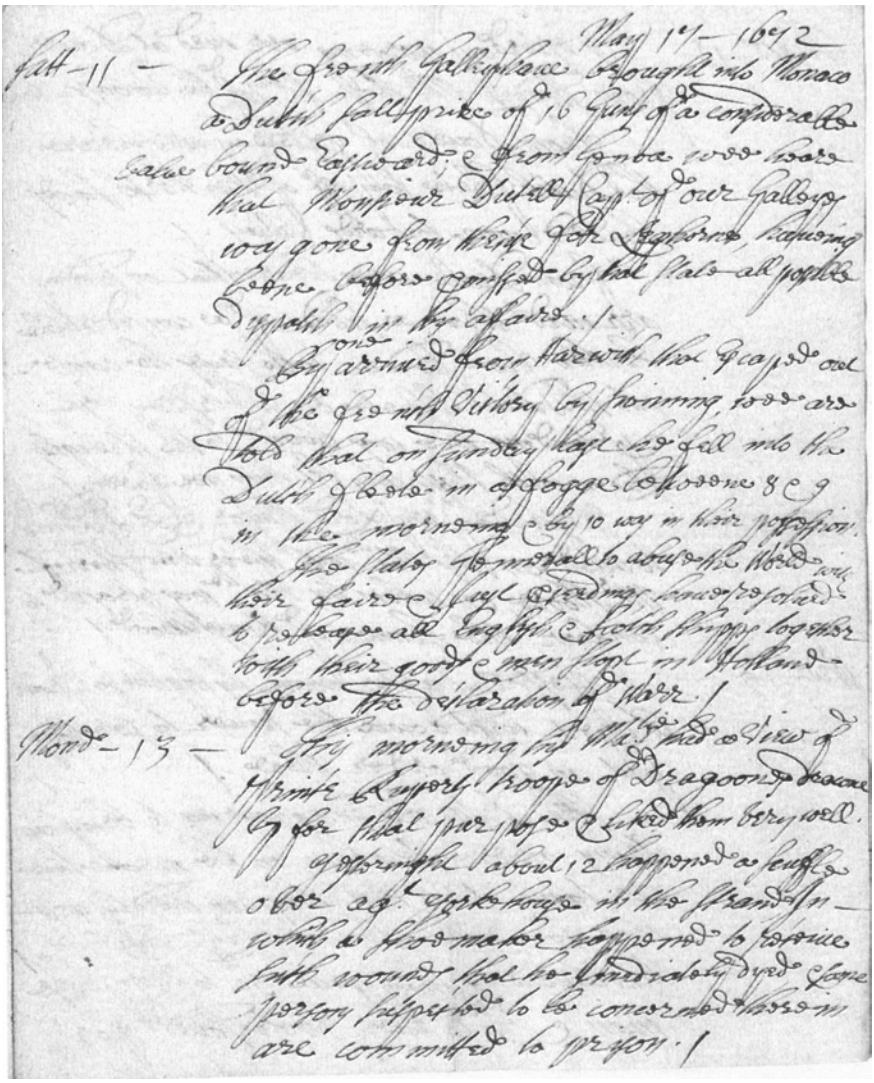


FIGURE 4.4 *Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, Harry Ransom Center Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of English Manuscripts, PFORZ-MS-0625, MS.103c, Box 5 folder 10. The Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.*

Gazette, including reports of Parliamentary speeches and votes, proceedings in Privy Council, court gossip, and aristocratic births, deaths, and marriages. However, Muddiman's newsbook, the *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, had previously printed accounts of parliamentary activities, so the purpose of the news-

letter was not initially or solely to fill that gap.[39] Parliament, of course, was not always in session, and in 1680 the House decided to start printing its votes and transactions;[40] over the course of the eighteenth century, regulations about printing Parliamentary proceedings, and the enforcement of those restrictions, fluctuated.[41] The newsletters were also full of the military, mercantile, shipping, and diplomatic information that was the primary concern of the *Gazette*. This material was presented in the same style in both media, with brief sentences or paragraphs strung together with minimal connection or analysis. Foreign and domestic, public and private, information was not distinguished in any way, and it would be up to the reader to determine the relative importance of individual pieces of news. For example, in August 1672 the newsletter presented a typical alternation between types of information:

> At the Hague t'was reported the Prince of Conde was dead at Arnhem but we having the news from noe other part suppose it only feighned. … This morning was solemnized at Goring house the marryage between the Earle of Euston & the Daughter of *th*ee Earle of Arlington where their Ma*jes*ties and all the principall persons of quallity were pleased to be p*re*sent, & were nobly entertained at dinner and spend this evening withe balls & other divertissements on such occasions. From Amsterdame of *th*e 5 their stile they write they had just come thither news of the East Indya fleet 14 in number being on their coast, & that they were reported to be two of them got in Ems in Friesland & soe to Delfzyle, and that two English fregats were engaged with them & had taken one of them, but of this we dayly expect to have a farr better account from his Royall Highness, the stormes have been this week strangely high … but we hear of noe damage we have received thereby more than two or 3 small vessels returned into port disabled.[42]

39 Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State*, p. 43.

40 Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and Its Development*, p. 16.

41 Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695–1855* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), pp. 77–79; Bob Clarke, *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), pp. 92–93.

42 Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, to Sir Richard Bulstrode, 1672 August 2, Harry Ransom Center Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of English Manuscripts, PFORZ-MS-0633, MS.103c, Box 5, Folder 11.

The letters do not appear to be tailored to the interest of the individual recipient and – other than occasionally offering commentary on the reliability of a source – do not provide guidelines on how to construe the news.

Such evidence does not support the contention that newsletters "contained parliamentary proceedings and other news not allowed to be printed" or "were packed with parliamentary news and political gossip".[43] Instead, there was significant commonality between the stories in the *Gazette* and those in the newsletters. For example, in December 1671, the newspaper reported from The Hague, "On thursday [sic] last was brought into the Assembly of the States General, the Advice of the Province of *Zealand* for the making the Prince of *Orange*, Captain General &*c*.", and continued in an item datelined London, "This week dyed here in Town, His Grace *William* Duke of *Somerset* &*c*. in the twentieth year of his Age, after five days illness, of the small-Pox, to the great affliction of that Family; having left his Unkle the Lord *John Seymour*, Heir of his Honor and Estate".[44] Williamson's newsletter of 15 December reported the death of Somerset almost word-for-word with the *Gazette* item: "This night dyed here his Grace *th*e Duke of Somerset, after 5 days sickness of *th*e small pox to *th*e great affliction of *tha*t family, leaveing as heir to his estate and honours my L*or*d John Seymor his uncle". But it added more context to the debates in the States General, noting of the proposal, "Delfe, Rotterdame, Dort, & Tergood opposed it, but *th*e other townes who were for his being [advanced] are more powerful: it may easily be believed that they may be induced to follow their steps".[45] Likewise, the newsletters, like the newspapers, were full of continental military information. In August 1672, the letter informed, "The Dutch say the Brandenburgh forces are on their march, and … that the Emperor has 15000 men, the Elector of Brandenburg 25000, the Dukes of Lundenburgh 10000, & the Landgravinne of Hesse 6000, which when they come together will make a considerable army". This item updated the *Gazette* of 15–19 August, which reported, "the *Brandenburgh* Forces may now very suddainly begin to march"; a few issues later, the newspaper continued, "it is reported here [in Cologne], that the Elector of *Brandenburgh* will act apart with his Army, to consist of

43 Muddiman, *The King's Journalist, 1659–1689*, p. 179; Peacey, *Print and Public Politics in the English Revolution*, p. 31.

44 *London Gazette* No. 635, 14–19 December 1671, p. 2, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/635/page/2 (accessed 25 January 2016).

45 Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, to Sir Richard Bulstrode and Mr. Richardson, 1671 December 15, HRC PFORZ-MS-0605, MS.103c, Box 5, Folder 9.

30000 Men, against the Bishop of *Munster*".[46] The sources acted in concert to provide detailed military information to readers.

At the same time, the *Gazette* was not as devoid of local news, and even what we might classify as court gossip, as scholars often assume. To take one example, in March 1672 the newspaper reported from Whitehall, "On Thursday last His Majesty was pleased to Honour the Reader of *Lincoln's Inn*, Sir *Francis Goodricke*, with his Presence at Dinner, accompanied with his Royal Highness, his Highness Prince *Rupert*, and attended by several of the Nobility, and many other Honourable persons".[47] The language follows that of the newsletters' reports on royal activities, as when Williamson wrote, "This morning his Ma*jes*ty with many p*er*sons of quallity went to Hampton Court to divert themselves there for this day, where they dined and returned in the evening".[48] Similarly, in August 1672 both the newsletter and newspaper reported the news of the birth of a son to the Duchess of Monmouth. While it is true that the newspaper, able as it was to fit more text onto its pages than could the handwritten sheet, provided a greater quantity of foreign news than the newsletters, it is also clear that there was genuine public interest in foreign affairs: as scholars have shown, circulation numbers for the *Gazette* and other newspapers increased during periods of continental battles and declined at other times.[49] It is also possible that Williamson and the *Gazette*'s editors anticipated a lack of interest in the business of individual aristocrats or the Royal Family, whose movements would conversely have been useful news for the courtiers and diplomats who received the newsletter.

The intersection between news items in the printed and written sources was largely due to their shared newsgathering method: republication from incoming diplomatic correspondence. This practice is evident in the named sources of items, diplomatic capitals such as The Hague, Paris, Vienna, Rome, and Florence. Both media make frequent reference to incoming letters, as well as foreign newspapers, as the foundation of news, relying less commonly on local items that have been 'heard' or 'discoursed'. For example, an October 1669 newsletter to the Earl of Huntingdon, likely written by Muddiman, now in the

46 *London Gazette* No. 704, 15–19 August 1672, p. 1, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/704/page/1; *London Gazette* No. 708, 29 August-2 September 1672, p. 1, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/708/page/1 (accessed 25 January 2016).

47 *London Gazette* No. 657, 29 February-4 March 1671/2, 2, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/657/page/1, accessed 25 Jan. 2016.

48 Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, to Sir Richard Bulstrode, 1671/1672 March 1, HRC PFORZ-MS-0614, MS.103c, Box 5, Folder 10.

49 Raymond, 'The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere', p. 127.

collection of the Huntington Library, attributed the majority of its items to letters: "The Fr*en*ch Gazett mentions Lett*ers* by way of Venice w*hi*ch tell *the*m that *th*e Turks have blowne up a mine Neere Saborinera … They write from Hamburgh that *th*e heats have been soe great this Autumne in those partes … They write from Paris dat 5th inst. that they are assured from Marcellis that *th*e Fr*e*nch Amb*assado*r and their Effects are seised in Constantinople".[50] The newsletters, like the newspapers, displayed a global network of postal news transmission.

After Bulstrode's move to Brussels to serve as envoy he at first received shorter letters from Williamson, but was now expected to provide news in return. The newsletters became slightly more individualised – as when, for example, Williamson apologised, "I am very sorry that my letters are so short still, but here happening so little worth y*our* knowledge I know not how to make them longer"[51] – but they still presented the usual digest of items, were composed by clerks, and lacked personal salutations and subscriptions. The exceptions were those letters in which the writers requested news or thanked Bulstrode for information. As Gazetteer Robert Yard wrote in July 1688, perhaps referring to the disputed election of the Archbishop of Cologne that had been reported in the *Gazette*, "I thanke you for the fav*our* of yours from Liese, and had I not heard the same before from Holland, what you told me would have mightily surprised me; It's above my comprehention to understand what they would be at".[52] The newspaper continued the newsletter's practice of updating stories, often in the course of a single issue, as new letters arrived, and of juxtaposing different incoming letters to allow the reader to make a determination about the accuracy of a story. The methods that Williamson had instituted to obtain information for both his newsletter and newspaper shaped the course of eighteenth-century news as it remained skewed toward foreign military and diplomatic activities.

50 Newsletters addressed to the Earl of Huntington, 1669–1671, 5 October 1669, Huntington Lib., MSS. HA 9599–9614.

51 Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, to Sir Richard Bulstrode, Brussels, 1676 August 21, HRC PFORZ-MS-0797, MS.103c, Box 6, Folder 6.

52 Newsletter from the office of Sir Joseph Williamson, Whitehall, London, to Sir Richard Bulstrode, Brussels, 1688 July 20, HRC PFORZ-MS-1812, MS.103c, Box 10, Folder 4.

Eighteenth-Century Convergence of Manuscript and Printed News

In the early eighteenth century, the *Gazette* began declining in prominence and circulation as it faced competition from new daily and tri-weekly newspapers, but manuscript newsletters remained common. Some innovations in printed news attempted to further bridge the media; Ichabod Dawks' *News-Letter* used a specially cut font designed to resemble handwriting and began its issues with a large flourishing "Sir", while the *Post Boy* and *Post Man* provided space for readers or news writers to provide additional or updated information by hand. Anne Pole, a Derbyshire widow, received both printed newspapers and handwritten newsletters through the mail from the 1690s to 1710s. The letters maintained the same format, style, and variety of information across the 1695 lapse of licensing, and Pole valued them enough to subscribe three times a week at a cost of £4 per year. Hundreds of Pole's newsletters survive in two collections, at UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, and at Yale University's Beinecke Library. The letters show the extent to which manuscript and printed news increasingly converged at the turn of the eighteenth century.

In the newsletters sent to Pole, the reportorial language is almost identical to that of the newspaper, and the letters focus even more on foreign news than had the earlier ones from Williamson's office. The letters, like the newspaper, almost always began with foreign news before filling in any remaining space with domestic items, and they attributed the presence or lack of news to the arrival of letters. As the writer noted in January 1691, "Wee want 3. Holland & as many Flanders Posts & therefore having nothing of forraine news".[53] A letter the following week made up for this dearth with two full pages of foreign items beginning, "The Paris Letters of the 12 give an account that the Envoye was arrived there from Florence, but his Negotiation was not yet known", and continuing with information concerning Brussels, Savoy, Venice, Dublin, and Provence.[54] Between January and June 1691, a period for which a continuous sequence of letters is available, half of the items in the letters contained foreign news, with an additional 42% pertaining to London and 8% to other locations in England. From March to August 1695, 60% of the items included London news, 24% foreign, and 16% provincial. The newsletters frequently updated the *Gazette* or other printed sources and made reference to the relationship

53 8 January 1691. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 1.

54 15 January 1691. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 1.

between the media; for example, the writer noted, "Besides the acc*oun*t the Gazette gives as of his Ma*jes*ties landing in Holland, the letters say the K. upon his arrival at the Hague being mightily fatigued desired there might be little noise made, & went forthwith to bed".[55] In March 1691, he wrote, "The Advises from Ireland further add to what the Gazette relates, that the Lords Justices have made custome free the bringing in Arms & Ammunition for the use of our Army".[56] Occasionally, the writer also made reference to his manuscript competitors, noting in February 1693, for example, "One Buttlar, that writes news letters, was seized 3 dayes agoe at the Post house in Lumbard street by order of the L*or*d Mayor, having counterfeited the hands of severall Parl*iamen*tmen & in their names carried the Letters to the Post house to frank them".[57] Relying on the same sources of incoming correspondence, the newsletter often described its own role as updating or expanding upon the printed newspaper.

This dynamic is clear in the newsletter's coverage of the arrest and trial of the Jacobite conspirators in 1691. While we might assume this is the kind of local, politically sensitive story that would be excluded from the printed newspaper, the media in fact offered complementary reporting. For example, on 27 January 1691, the newsletter reported of one of the co-conspirators, John Ashton, "Mr. Ashton is to dye to morrow", while the 26–29 January *Gazette* had the update, "Mr. *John Ashton*, lately convicted of High-Treason at the *Old-Baily*, was this day executed at *Tyburn*".[58] In the following issue, the newsletter offered more details, noting,

> Major Ashton had at the request of his Relations the Queens favour not to be drawn & quartered but was carried to Tyburn in a coach, there hanged & then brought back againe to be interred by his Relations. He made noe speech, but delivered a paper to the sheriff. The papists say he died like a

55 29 January 1691. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 2.

56 3 March 1691. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 5.

57 2 February 1692/3. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 2 folder 35.

58 27 January 1691, Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 2. *Gazette* No. 2631, 26–29 January 1691, p. 2, https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/2631/page/2 (accessed 27 January 2016).

> man of a heroick spirit, saying if he had 10 lives he would spend them all for the ^late^ K[ing].[59]

In February 1691, the newspaper frequently printed advertisements for a forthcoming book about the conspiracy and Ashton's execution, while the newsletter provided more speculation than the newspaper; as the writer noted of another one of the conspirators, Richard Graham, Viscount Preston, "I hear from very credible hands, *tha*t the L*or*d Preston has made a great discovery not only of the methode to carrye on the designe of the Fr. K. but also of the chiefe managers of the same here in England & Scotland" (Preston would escape execution based on the information he had provided).[60] In this scandalous case, the newsletter and newspaper worked together to provide reliable information.

As the number and variety of newspapers increased in the eighteenth century, newsletters may have become increasingly useful, as they could offer readers, particularly those outside of London, a digest of the most interesting or trustworthy newspaper stories. Printed news also relied on manuscript sources to a mounting extent, as newspapers sought to distinguish and authenticate their items. The diplomatic 'circulars' appear to have become more standardised and attuned to the language of newspaper reporting, allowing for the easy transcription of their items into printed sources. A series of newsletters in English written from Rome, Naples, and continental military camps from 1702 to 1705, now at the Beinecke Library, uses the layout and language of newspapers like the *Gazette*, *Post Boy*, and *Daily Courant*. For example, one letter used the foreign dateline structure to report, "Naples 15 Aprill 1702 Great preparations are continued here against the King of Spaine's arrivall, who wee understand had fixed his departure for the 7th instant, soe wee may be every day expecting him". Likewise, a letter datelined "Camp at Corbais the 24th Aug. 1705" noted, "On Saturday the Army under his Grace's command march'd from Basse Waere to this Camp, and that of the States Commanded by Mons*ieu*r D'Auverguere came at the same time to Mount St. Hubert".[61] The Beinecke's collection includes a group of newsletters from The Hague from as late as the 1760s. These letters, which feature at least three different clerks' handwritings, use the same newsletter layout of a four-page half-sheet quarto lacking salu-

59 29 January 1691. Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 2.

60 17 February 1691, Newsletters Addressed to Madam Pole. Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 60, Box 1 folder 4.

61 William Blathwayt Papers, Beinecke Lib. OSB MSS. 2, Box 6, folder 131.

tations and subscriptions, and many of them are endorsed by the recipient "Hague News" or "Hague Letter".[62] These incoming letters mimicked elements of both the outgoing manuscript newsletters and printed newspapers, and they reveal the systems in place throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for transcontinental news reporting. However, newsletters appear to have become less common as the century wore on, with most of those still in existence dating to the turn of the eighteenth century. By the mid-century period, they may have remained prevalent in the context of diplomacy, but the commercial news business had shifted more decisively to print.

The eighteenth-century newsletter thus increasingly intersected with the printed newspaper. This was also true in visual terms: newsletters were systematised along the lines of the newspaper, with clear datelines, items separated into individual paragraphs, 'typographic' features such as bolding and underlining, and a standard italic hand. A set of newsletters sent to the Hobson/Newey family from about 1690 to 1710, now at the Huntington Library, shows the growing standardisation of manuscript practices: while the seventeenth-century letters feature messier writing with a part-secretary hand, inconsistent headings, and generally low-quality brown paper, by 1710 the clearly laid out letters had fully adopted the newspaper dateline system, marking almost every paragraph of news with either a place and date or with the manuscript or printed source of the news [see Figure 4.5]. While most of the newsletters are addressed to Mrs. Hobson or Mrs. Newey, likely the same person, they are headed with a large "Sir", showing that they were mass produced, not personalised. The letters employ the same linguistic style as the incoming diplomatic correspondence described above; a letter of 10 March 1708, for example, began, "The Paris Gazette of the 9. confirms what wee wrote before from Letters from thence. That *th*e King had declared *tha*t *th*e Dauphine shall command his Armys in Flanders". The issue, following the usual geographical progression of the newspaper's information, continued with items from Vienna, The Hague, Edinburgh, Moscow, and Deal, and closed with the local news that the Duke of Montague was ill but had been blooded.[63] These collections show that a demand for newsletters remained even as they coincided more and more with the look and content of the printed newspaper.

This set of newsletters also includes evidence of readers' use and understanding of their news sources, as the recipient annotated letters with personal opinion and additional information, and endorsed the first page of many letters with a one-line summary of the contents. Frequently, we can see him or

62 Newsletters from the Hague, 1760–1761, Beinecke Lib. Osborn c 199.

63 10 March 1708, News Letters, Huntington Lib., HM 30659, f. 104.

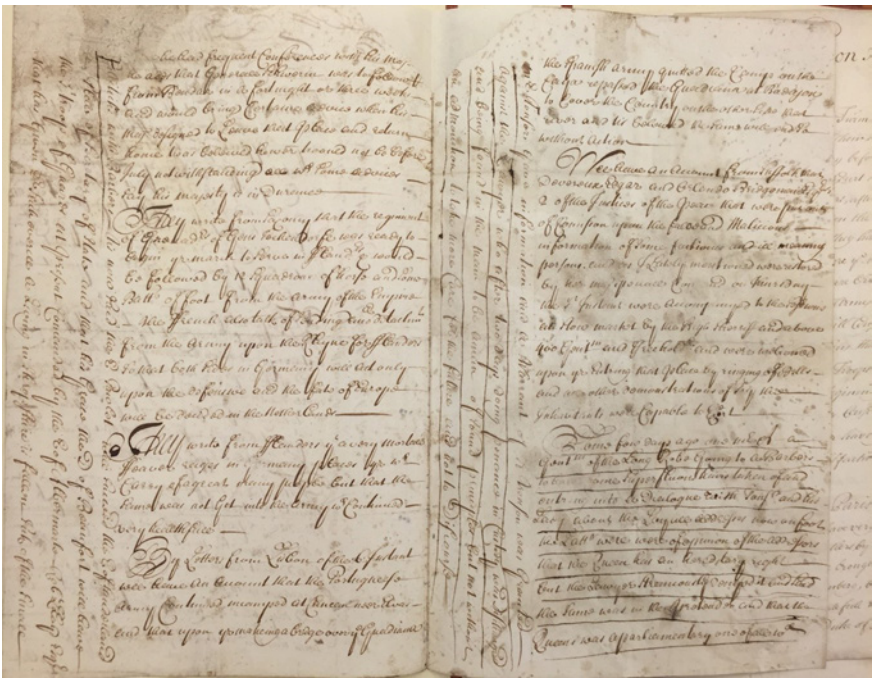


FIGURE 4.5 *Manuscript newsletter showing the bifolium format and paragraph and dateline layout, with the recipient's additional underlinings. Individual news items are introduced with "They write from Saxony", "They write from Flanders", "By Letters from Lisbon", and "We have an account from Suffolk". 10 June 1710, News Letters, Huntington Lib. HM 30659 f.124.*

her cross-referencing the texts with other newsletters and newspapers, and he or she made little distinction between the written and printed sources while continuing to employ dateline organisation.[64] To a letter of 4 April 1710, he or she added notes on pages 1, 3, and 4, concluding with a paragraph of additional information:

> News letter apr. 6. 1710. Yesternight *th*e Q. came to *th*e Lords house and *th*e Com*m*ons called she thankt them [corner torn] effortes both houses had showne and the Commons for *th*eir particular dispatch of funds and

64 It is possible that these notes were added by the news writer, rather than recipient, as there are no signatures to them. However, they occur only in one handwriting, occasionally cover the address panels of the newsletters, and sometimes include news dated after the letter itself, leading me to believe that they were added by the reader rather than writer.

> supplyes for carrying on *th*e war … Postman Aprill 1. 1710. We hear *tha*t at *th*e late assize at Welsh pool one Mr. Cornwall having preacht took occasion in his sermon fro*m th*e late proceeding ag*ain*st Dr. Sacheverel [sic] to make divers false seditious scurrilous assertions and insinuations highly reflecting upon *th*e Queen.[65]

The latter item coincided almost exactly with one in the *Post Man*, showing how the note taker retained the first-person plural voice in transcribing news. The recipient, who often underlined significant passages, treated the material text of the letter almost as a compendium for various sources of news, updating paragraphs as new information arrived. In the eighteenth century, readers apparently continued to rely on the intersection of written and printed media to obtain trustworthy news.

Conclusion

The manuscript newsletter remained a vital and valued part of the news industry in England well after the introduction of the broadsheet newspaper and take off in printed news that followed the lapse of licensing. While newspapers continually referred to 'letters received' and foreign circulars as the source of their items, there was no simple, one-way transmission from manuscript to print in news dissemination: newsletters re-circulated diplomatic correspondence, offered the latest updates on printed news, and were delivered or mailed folded up together with printed sources. As Konstantin Dierks writes, "The very concept of a newspaper was rooted in letter writing: in the service provided by a correspondent positioned to report on events happening at a distance, and also in the service provided by a publisher as a gathering point for numerous correspondents".[66] The diplomats and paid observers sending news updates from continental Europe were the first 'foreign correspondents', gaining their authority from their status as on-the-scene witnesses – or at least closer recipients of other first-hand accounts – of the events described. Newsletters and newspapers often emphasised this witnessing function by transcribing letters in the first-person voice of the authors, so that, for example, the phrase 'our king' could refer to a foreign monarch. While the first professional

65 4 April 1710, News Letters, Huntington Lib. HM 30659 f. 121.

66 Konstantin Dierks, *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 144.

reporters did not appear until the nineteenth century, we can see an early version of the role in the newsletter compiler's correspondence network.

The dispersed web of correspondents, editors, and recipients that characterised newsletter services also extends our understanding of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century news distribution beyond the urban, print-centric model of coffeehouse news consumption central to Habermas' description of the public sphere. While historians have disagreed about the extent to which women participated in coffeehouse culture,[67] significant collections of female subscribers' newsletters – two of which were discussed in this essay – remain in existence. The conventionally 'feminine' genre of the personal letter thus aligned with the more professional forms of business and diplomatic correspondence central to the newsletter. The newspaper in many ways took its size and shape from the existing manuscript newsletters, like Muddiman's, that also used a half-sheet folio format, but by the early eighteenth century the newsletter increasingly resembled the newspaper with banner headings, prominent datelines, and clear paragraphs of news. Rather than constituting two separate spheres, one waning and one waxing, newsletters and newspapers exhibited a mutual reliance as periodical publication became an important and profitable sector of the print marketplace in the first half of the eighteenth century. The manuscript newsletter is therefore an important news genre in its own right, but it also forces us to revisit our assumptions about the development of the newspaper, and of the periodical more generally, as a print product. As attention to newspapers and periodicals becomes increasingly prominent in literary studies – expanding upon the role these documents have long played as historical sources – we can better understand the emergence of the news media if we acknowledge the ways in which it was not solely or even primarily a phenomenon of print culture.

67 See, for example, Brian Cowan, 'What Was Masculine about the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England', *History Workshop Journal*, 51 (2001), pp. 127–157.

CHAPTER 5

Christoff Koch (1637–1711): Sweden's Man in Moscow

Heiko Droste and Ingrid Maier

During the seventeenth century, diplomatic relations constituted for the most part elaborated news services, run by news experts. These news experts relied both on their international networks as well as their local expertise in collecting and distributing news. In the case of Sweden, about half of these experts had their backgrounds in wealthy merchant families.[1] These news services were complemented, when necessary, by official embassies, carried out by members of the higher nobility. A great deal of our knowledge about seventeenth-century politics and culture is owed to their reports, which have only begun to be investigated with the rigour they deserve. Contrary to the common perception of diplomatic news as a self-contained system of information, compiled for the good of international negotiations and internal governmental debates, the very same news formed an integral part of the public news flow, which accelerated quickly in the seventeenth century. Printed and manuscript newspapers, more exclusive newsletters, and similar genres shaped contemporaneity, a kind of hitherto impossible, simultaneous participation of social elites in a news flow that stretched over all of Europe.[2]

Although this news culture was partially available to the general public, its rhetorical style and high cost created a kind of exclusivity, which meant that

1 Heiko Droste, *Im Dienst der Krone: Schwedische Diplomaten im 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006), pp. 85–97. The research for this article was enabled through a grant by The Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (Riksbankens jubileumsfond, project number RFP12-0055:1) and The Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies. We are very grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities (project number RZ-51635-13) for research trips to Amsterdam, Bremen, Copenhagen, London, Tartu, Berlin and Tallinn in order to work in the archives. Any views, findings, or conclusions expressed in this article do not necessarily represent those of the funding organisations. We would also like to thank Dan Waugh and Claudia Jensen (both from Seattle), who have read a previous version of this article and made many valuable suggestions.

2 Brendan Dooley (ed.), *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2010).

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only a small elite of news consumers had full access.[3] Still, over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, news was turned into a commodity, which was traded by a growing number of news experts.

We find their reports in many archives and libraries. The problem is that the identity of the news experts and their reasons for indulging in the market are quite often unclear. We simply do not know, for instance, who posted news in Riga, reporting about events in Moscow, news which eventually turned up in European newspapers.

In order to explore this news flow and the elite of news experts, we not only need to know what kinds of networks these news experts maintained; equally important is the search for the resources involved in this news business. Substantial costs were involved: for occasional bribes in exchange for important news, for the scribe who copied the newsletters, and for the postal fees. Who would reimburse a news expert for his service, and in what ways?

The German press historian Martin Welke proved that some portions of the newsletters from Moscow sent to Queen Christina of Sweden by Johan de Rodes during the first half of the 1650s could also be traced in printed newspapers of the time, sometimes verbatim.[4] Karl-Heinz Kranhold described the news correspondence in Danzig (Gdansk) in the middle of the seventeenth century and showed which handwritten and printed news was distributed from Danzig to Sweden and other places.[5] However, Welke cannot prove that de Rodes was *directly* involved in the dissemination of his newsletters; Kranhold struggles to pinpoint the news experts and their methods of gathering news.

Previous studies of the international news flow in the seventeenth century have not been able to answer these questions, not least due to a strong, albeit unconvincing, focus on printed newspapers, in spite of the fact that the majority of news was delivered in manuscript up to the eighteenth century.[6] Another problem is that many scholars follow (today's) national boundaries, while ignoring the international connections that were necessary in order to organise a news trade, which, as we know, came into existence during the sixteenth century, if not earlier.[7]

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3 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

4 Martin Welke, 'Rußland in der deutschen Publizistik des 17. Jahrhunderts (1613–1689)', *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, 23 (1976), pp. 105–276 (here pp. 151–153, 255–264).

5 Karl-Heinz Kranhold, *Frühgeschichte der Danziger Presse* (Münster: C.J. Fahle, 1967).

6 This is strongly emphasised by Andrew Pettegree in *The Invention of News* and by other scholars. See also the forthcoming study by Heiko Droste, *Commercium litterarium: The News Market in the Baltic Sea Region in the Seventeenth Century*.

7 Mario Infelise, *Prima dei giornali: alle origini della pubblica informazione* (*secoli XVI e XVII*) (Rome: Laterza, 2002).

The following example of Christoff Koch, son of a Reval (Tallinn) merchant, who indulged in the news trade from Moscow for decades, demonstrates all these aspects. He is a major source for our knowledge of Russian politics from the 1660s up to the 1680s.[8] Koch's career is rather typical, although he was exceptional in his ability to penetrate the inner workings of the Kremlin, which were generally marked by suspicion against foreigners and a strong focus on secrecy. At the same time, Koch and other correspondents were obviously used by the Muscovite authorities in order to spread news in their own interest.[9]

Koch's life and correspondence will be discussed in detail, focusing on core aspects of his work as news expert. Why did Koch take the pains and risks of being a Swedish correspondent in Moscow? Who were the recipients of his news? Which subjects did he write about, and which sources for his correspondence can we detect?

The International News Trade in the Seventeenth Century

When dealing with early modern diplomacy and news transfer, several notions of intelligence services and spies come to mind. For the most part these notions are not helpful for our understanding. Sending news about a changing world was the duty of all crown servants stationed abroad. It was also considered as a social norm among relatives, friends, scholars, and business partners. News was mostly exchanged mutually. This news service was called 'correspondence'; one individual piece of this correspondence will be called a 'newsletter', or simply 'report'.[10]

This news could be adapted to different purposes and recipients. The crown officials' newsletters were, thus, not only sent to the king or certain institutions, but they also worked as a kind of gift that shaped social relations between crown servants. In fact, the very same news could be used in order to inform a growing number of news experts, who were involved in a partially

8 Heinz Ellersieck, *Russia under Aleksei Mikhailovich and Feodor Alekseevich, 1645–1682: The Scandinavian Sources* (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1955), p. 19: "There is no doubt that Koch ... through his connections with Eberschildt and as a merchant travelling in Russia and residing in Moscow, was one of the best informed foreigners in the tsar's empire".

9 See, for instance, Ingrid Maier, 'How was Western Europe informed about Muscovy? The Razin Rebellion in Focus', in Simon Franklin and Katherine Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire: Mechanisms of Communication in Russia, 1600–1850* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), pp. 113–151.

10 Unfortunately, there are no common terms for the different kinds of news media, in either seventeenth-century or modern languages.

public news business. The number of newsletters disseminated by one expert could be substantial; moreover, there was a dramatic increase in the seventeenth century, in particular when postal services had been introduced in all parts of Europe. In the case of Russia, this happened in the 1660s, when the international postal traffic reached Moscow.

A major part of this correspondence was sent anonymously, for several reasons. One reason was certainly that a correspondent wanted to protect himself, that is, not reveal his identity. However, it was at least equally common that the *receiver* of a certain correspondence wanted to protect his sources. Since newsletters were a gift within social relations as well as a commodity on the news market, their exclusivity was an important asset. As a result, most newsletters preserved in the archives are anonymous.

Regarding the content of these newsletters, we find more or less informed reports about events taking place first and foremost in the city where the news expert is living, but also in places from which he could obtain news at his location. In the seventeenth century there were several news hubs, usually big merchant cities, where news could be obtained easily. These cities were important for ambassadors, residents, news experts, and newspaper publishers. For the Baltic Sea region the most important news hubs were Riga, Danzig and Hamburg.[11]

In these nodes, but also at Europe's more important courts, news experts were gathering news by contacting people who had access to them. Some of these people readily shared this news, whereas others had to be paid. It is important to have in mind that this way of obtaining news was expected, albeit not tolerated in every single case and at all times. A necessary background to this news exchange within and outside crown services was that crown servants, news agents, and in particular crown secretaries were almost always poorly paid. To trade in news was a common way to improve one's income or to build a career. As a consequence, the Russian authorities knew that some of the foreign residents (for instance, merchants and news agents) were reporting about the changes they perceived in Moscow as well as interesting events that took place in the environs of the capital.

Efforts to hinder their correspondence mostly relied on rules that ordered secluded areas of living for foreigners, restrictions in their freedom to travel, and control over the interpreters necessary for almost every kind of transaction. In order to trade news in Moscow it was therefore a great advantage if the news expert knew Russian. Sometimes younger students were sent to Moscow

11 See the forthcoming book by Heiko Droste, *Commercium litterarium.*

for a longer period in order to learn Russian.[12] Koch might have been such a student.

From 1665 there was a government-controlled international postal system that offered better opportunities to correspond with Russia; at the same time it also became easier to control the correspondence that flowed through this system. Still, despite efforts of control, Koch's reports show that he was able to report on Russian matters regularly. And although the European newspapers did not contain detailed information on all aspects of Russian politics, not least due to Russia's position as a minor power in the periphery of Christian Europe, West-European newspapers nevertheless contained thousands of news items from Moscow.[13] The Swedish crown had even more exclusive intelligence, for example an important book about Muscovy, written by Grigorii Kotoshikhin, a former clerk at the Muscovite Ambassadorial Chancery (*Posol'skii prikaz*) who had come to Sweden as a fugitive in February 1666.[14]

Christoff Koch's Life and Career

Christoff Koch was born in 1637 into a wealthy merchant family living in Reval (Tallinn).[15] His father, Christoff Koch senior, was the town's mayor.[16] At a young age, Koch started to travel abroad, which was the common way of educating future merchants. In 1655 he came to Moscow, and stayed until 1690,

12 The Brandenburgian scholar Hermann Dietrich Hesse went to Moscow in 1673 in order to learn Russian. See Ferdinand Hirsch (ed.), *Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte des Kurfürsten Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg*, Vol. 19: *Politische Verhandlungen* (Berlin: Reimer, 1906), pp. 291–292. In the 1680s the Swedish scholar Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld went to Moscow for the same reason; see Ulla Birgegård, *Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld and the Lexicon Slavonicum* (Uppsala: Acta Bibliothecae R. Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1985), p. 3.

13 For printed newspapers from Hamburg see Welke, 'Rußland in der deutschen Publizistik'.

14 The Russian manuscript (which is now at Uppsala University Library) was finished in 1667 and in 1669 the first Swedish translation was produced; see Anne Pennington, *Grigorij Kotošixin. O Rossii v carstvovanie Alekseja Mixajloviča. Text and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 9.

15 In the Swedish literature his name is often spelled 'Christopher Kock' or 'Kocken'. ('Kock' is Swedish for 'cook', 'Koch' is German.) Koch himself always wrote 'Christoff Koch'; from 1683 he used his noble title 'von Kochen'. Cf. *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. 21 (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1975–1977), pp. 439–445 (439), where Koch is mentioned in Sven Grauer's entry on his son, Johan Henrik von Kochen.

16 Gustaf Elgenstierna, *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor: Med tillägg och rättelser* (9 vols., Stockholm: Norstedt, 1925–1936), vol. 4, p. 229.

with the exception of a few shorter periods. For reasons discussed below, he started sending newsletters to the Swedish governor-general in Narva, Simon Grundel-Helmfelt. This service apparently started in 1666, when Koch was still in his twenties.[17] Koch wrote newsletters for about 25 years.

Koch's correspondence was particularly valuable due to his good connections within the foreign merchants' community, but also – at least during certain periods – with the Muscovite administration. His correspondence shows him to be a literate person, who knew how to express himself in writing. The following short extract from one of his reports (datelined Moscow, 14 March 1671) shows his detailed knowledge about Muscovite politics as well as his access to a variety of sources:

> Concerning the rebel Razin [Raisin] it is quite silent now. According to a friend, who arrived two days ago from Romodanovskii's army, from Circassia, via Kursk, they have trustworthy news that Razin has gone to see the Tartar Chan with 5000 men. It is said that he is seeking the chan's help against the tsar. He is afraid that they [i.e., Razin and his men] will start some new actions, as soon as the fresh grass in spring will appear.[18]

Koch is an important and trustworthy source on many aspects of Muscovite life. In the example quoted above, he mentions his own source, something he often does in order to ascertain the trustworthiness of his news. He was living, working and networking in Moscow, eventually as an officially accredited Swedish commissar. In 1690, after many years of service for the crown and an ennoblement in 1683, he became burgrave (German *Burggraf*, Swedish *borggreve*) in Narva – in other words, an important figure in the administration of the Swedish Baltic provinces. The Great Northern War (1700–1721) forced him into exile in Sweden proper. He died in 1711 in Stockholm.

In order to understand Koch's work in Moscow, it is important to look more deeply into his kinship relations, which were useful in many respects. Koch had an older sister, Medea, born in 1632. In 1653, she married Johan de Rodes,[19]

17 Koch tried for decades to make the Swedish crown repay him for his work. These efforts started in 1678, when Koch was in Stockholm for a shorter period. At that point the crown acknowledged his work for Grundel-Helmfelt since 1666. See Swedish National Archives, Stockholm (RA), Kammararkivet (KA, Chamber), Likvidationer, series 24, vol. 17; series 94, vol. 143; series 95–96, vol. 26.

18 Koch in a report sent to Simon Grundel-Helmfelt. RA, Livonica II, vol. 180. All translations are our own.

19 B. Kurts, 'Doneseniia Rodesa i arkhangel'sko-baltiiskii vopros v polovine XVII veka', *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia,* N.S. 38 (1912), pp. 72–105 (77). Kurts' article contains the most detailed description of de Rodes' life known to us.

who at that time was the Swedish commissioner in Moscow.[20] De Rodes' family originated from the Spanish Netherlands, but he moved to Reval, before he was appointed as commercial representative in Moscow.[21] When de Rodes once again went back to Moscow, in 1655, he took Christoff Koch, his new brother-in-law, with him. De Rodes died on 31 December that same year in Moscow,[22] where his widow Medea in February 1656 gave birth to his posthumous son, Johan Gustaf de Rodes.

After de Rodes' death, Christoff Koch – only 18 years of age – stayed in Moscow. When a large Swedish embassy (altogether around 140 persons) was retained in Moscow from May 1656 to April 1658, in a kind of 'house arrest',[23] Christoff Koch's sister – and probably Koch himself, too – were also kept under house arrest, but not together with the embassy. Medea stayed in Moscow for a few more years, but seems to have left Russia in the early 1660s.[24] She remarried in 1687, this time the burgrave in Narva, Johan von Tunder, in 1678 ennobled as Tunderfelt.[25] Tunder was also born into a merchant family in Reval.[26] Another sister of Christoff Koch, Bela, married Eberhart von Straelborn, born in 1625 into yet another Reval merchant family.[27] Straelborn worked as a customs officer in Reval (1670) and went to Moscow at least once.

Christoff Koch, in his turn, was married to Anna Hassenia, born in 1661 – incidentally, also into a merchant family from Reval. In 1690, von Kochen took over the position as burgrave in Narva (although he had been appointed already on 16 October 1686), as Johan von Tunderfelt's successor.[28] This means,

20 The function of 'kommissar' was most often restricted to missions of a more commercial kind. During the eighteenth century this work was executed by consuls. Cf. Leos Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce. The Swedish Consular Service and Long-distance Shipping, 1720–1815* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2004).

21 B. Kurts, 'Doneseniia Rodesa', p. 77.

22 Ibid.

23 Stefan Troebst, *Handelskontrolle, 'Derivation', Eindämmung. Schwedische Moskaupolitik 1617–1661* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), pp. 433–435.

24 Letters by Christoff Koch senior and his daughter Medea Koch to Bengt Horn, governor-general of Estonia in Reval, from 1659 and 1661 are in RA, Bengt Horn's collection, E 4310.

25 Elgenstierna, *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, vol. 8, p. 387. Koch was promoted to Sweden's commissioner in Moscow on the very day of Tunder's ennoblement (RA, Riksregistraturet (RR), 24 June 1678).

26 Already in 1671, Johan Tunder acted as an intermediary for Christoff Koch in Moscow, transferring money for him (RA, KA, Likvidationer, series 94, vol. 143).

27 Bernhard Schlegel and Carl-Arvid Klingspor, *Den med sköldebref förlänade men ej å Riddarhuset introducerade svenska adelns ättar-taflor* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1875), pp. 285–286.

28 Von Tunderfelt died in 1688; RA, RR; cf. also Elgenstierna, *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, vol. 4, p. 229.

in a way, that Koch took over the job as a Moscow correspondent from his first brother-in-law, Johan de Rodes, while he later 'inherited' the office in Narva from his second brother-in-law, Johan von Tunderfelt.

All in all, Christoff Koch's family situation shows a strong relationship between several Reval-based merchant families, which ruled for decades over parts of the Swedish foreign relations with Russia. His own son Johan Henrik von Kochen completed the family's social climb, starting his career at the Stockholm court and marrying into another family of crown servants.[29]

Christoff Koch's Time in Moscow

We know very little about Christoff Koch's activities between de Rodes' death in December 1655 and 1666, when Koch – still living in Moscow – offered his services to the governor-general in Swedish Ingria, Simon Grundel-Helmfelt.[30] In 1663 Adolf Ebers, at that time Swedish resident in Moscow, mentions Koch as a merchant, who on at least one occasion delivered Ebers' letters to Grundel-Helmfelt.[31] In 1664 Koch seems to have worked as some kind of clerk for Ebers.[32] At that time Koch was almost 30 years old, still unmarried, and probably fluent in Russian. Unfortunately, we have not found any more detailed information about Koch's activities as a merchant; we do not even know what kinds of merchandise he traded in, or whether he had a merchant company of his own. He eventually took over the administration of the Swedish merchants' court in Moscow, probably after Ebers had left the city.[33] At this point he must have been a wealthy, respected and independent merchant.

In 1666, the governor-general Grundel-Helmfelt in Narva probably wanted to have a personal correspondent among the permanent residents of Moscow, one who knew Russian. He was not satisfied with the correspondence he had been receiving from Moscow during the previous year. According to a 'relation'

29 See the entry on Johan Henrik von Kochen in *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. 21, pp. 439–445.

30 *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. 21, p. 439.

31 Ebers to Grundel-Helmfelt, Moscow, 26 April 1663 (Tartu, National Archives of Estonia, 278. 1. XIX, vol. 64a).

32 *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, vol. 4, p. 229.

33 It is not quite clear when Koch officially took over the merchants' court, but both in 1670 and in 1685 he organised and financed the re-building of this court, which had been destroyed by fire twice (RA, KA, Likvidationer, series 95–96, vol. 26, and also Likvidationer, series 24, vol. 17).

Koch sent to the Swedish king in 1683, he was contacted by Johan Tunder in 1666; Tunder asked him, on behalf of Grundel-Helmfelt, to send news to the latter regularly.[34] When Koch started sending newsletters to Grundel-Helmfelt he took some risks with respect to his safety and to his finances. His correspondence depended on his merchant business, both financially and because it provided some kind of cover for his work as a correspondent.

But why did Koch start writing about Russian politics, well aware that the authorities disapproved of these activities, and that the postal fees would soon grow to substantial amounts? Although Koch in 1683 claimed that he was contacted by Grundel-Helmfelt, it is likely that Koch himself had contacted Tunder and/or Grundel-Helmfelt prior to the 'request' by the latter. Most Swedish correspondents in diplomatic services contacted the crown in Stockholm, or certain crown representatives at their own location, in order to offer their services. Grundel-Helmfelt offered money in exchange for Koch's correspondence. During the following years he called Koch regularly 'my correspondent', or 'the usual correspondent'.[35] Also the next governor-general in Narva, Johan Jacob Taube, referred to Koch as 'my correspondent in Moscow'.[36]

In 1671, the crown recalled Adolf Ebersköld,[37] who had been Swedish resident in Moscow for some time, and asked Grundel-Helmfelt if he could recommend someone who could report secretly about events in Russia. Grundel-Helmfelt suggested that 'his correspondent' in Moscow, Christoff Koch, should be commissioned to write newsletters, if possible every week. This correspondence, he wrote, should be kept as secret as possible. The crown accepted Koch as a correspondent and granted Grundel-Helmfelt 1000 thaler (silver mint) per year for this correspondence, plus extra money for postal expenses. Moreover, Grundel-Helmfelt suggested that Koch should receive a proper crown assignment; however, this was not granted by the crown.[38] Koch thus remained in Grundel-Helmfelt's private services. According to a later settlement of Koch's claims from this employment as Grundel-Helmfelt's correspondent, Koch had received hardly any money from the governor-general in Narva up to 1671, and not much more during the following years.[39]

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34 RA, Biographica K 12. Koch wrote to Charles XI from Novgorod on 26 February 1683.

35 For instance, in a letter to Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, Narva, 17 August 1666; to Otto Stenbock, Narva, 20 November 1668. Both letters in RA, Ericsbergsarkivet, Autografsamlingen, vol. 84.

36 Taube to the king, Narva, 17 January 1677 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 182).

37 Adolf Ebers had been ennobled in 1666 as Ebersköld.

38 Grundel-Helmfelt to the king, Narva, 16 January 1671 (RA, Biographica, K 12).

39 RA, KA, Likvidationer, series 94, vol. 143.

If we consider the final result (the ennoblement and a career as burgrave in Narva), Koch's reasons for taking on the job seem obvious. However, this goal took more than two decades to achieve, without much of a salary during the first decade. Consequently, the payment is not the most important factor, not least since the crown had the well-earned reputation of paying poorly. Koch might also have hoped to strengthen his position within the Swedish merchant community in Moscow. The merchants received Swedish protection, since the Russian trade was of great interest for the crown. In this matter we find striking similarities between Koch and similar news experts in Swedish services, such as his first brother-in-law Johan de Rodes in Moscow, Simon Dörffler in Poland, and Vincent Möller in Hamburg. All these men were working in merchant cities, and they all belonged to merchant families. Some of them had a formal university education, although this was not a precondition – Koch, for example, did not have any university education. These news experts had economic interests, but they are hard to define, since neither the correspondent nor the crown would often discuss them. Simon Dörffler worked as the crown's correspondent for decades, apparently without ever receiving all of his appointed payment for this service. He was born into a merchant family in Breslau (Wrocław).[40] Only a short notice in a letter about the impoverished Dörffler, written by another Swedish resident, Anders Lilliehöök, reveals that the basis of Dörffler's economy was the privilege to trade in Silesian linen with the Swedish crown, without being obliged to pay any customs.[41] The trade route for linen probably explains both Dörffler's places of residence and his interest in working as a Swedish correspondent, eventually as a resident in Warsaw. Adolf Ebers also worked first and foremost as a merchant; in January 1667 he suggested in a letter to the king that the money he requested from the crown as a salary could be remunerated in the form of a custom exemption for all trade ships that reached Stockholm under his name.[42]

Most of these Swedish news agents and residents with a merchant background remained at their place of residence throughout their lives, even if they had a Swedish noble title, other social advancements, estates, and kinship relations to Swedish elites. This unwillingness to move is probably related to their economic interests at their place of residence. Koch left Moscow after about

40 Droste, *Im Dienst der Krone*, pp. 387–388.

41 Anders Lilliehöök to Charles XI, dated Cracow, 1 May 1676 (RA, Polonica, vol. 70).

42 Adolf Ebers to the king, dated Narva, 21 January 1667 (RA, Diplomatica Muscovitica, vol. 83). Hans Deijne, Swedish commercial factor in Novgorod, asked Lars Fleming to use him as a messenger, "as I have still some debts in Moscow, which I would like to collect"; see Deijne's letter to Fleming from Novgorod, 10 April 1672 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 626).

thirty years, moving to Narva, an important town in the context of Swedish-Russian commercial relations. Koch's reasons for staying in Moscow for such a long time, indulging in a news business for which he for the most part was not properly paid, are therefore most likely connected to his business activities. However, we have no information about possible economic interests between Koch and the Swedish crown.

The Recipients of Koch's Reports

In the beginning Koch was sending all his newsletters to the governor-general in Narva, Simon Grundel-Helmfelt. We assume that the governor had his secretary make copies of these reports; they were then distributed to his own correspondence partners, among them representatives of the ruling high nobility in crown services. Today we have access to Grundel-Helmfelt's letters in several collections at the Estonian and Swedish National Archives in Tartu and Stockholm. They often contain copies of Koch's letters, or at least mention them.[43]

Grundel-Helmfelt had good reasons to send Koch's reports to his colleagues. News was hard currency in a political system that longed for ever more news. Grundel-Helmfelt could expect that his correspondence partners would reimburse his correspondence with other news. Without this exchange of news from Moscow on the one hand, and from other Swedish provinces on the other hand, Grundel-Helmfelt would hardly have been able to learn about the world outside his province, since the Swedish crown did not regularly send news to their ministers working abroad. On the contrary, complaints from officials posted abroad about not receiving news are common.[44]

Things changed in 1678, when Koch was promoted to an official position in the Swedish foreign administration. Then, finally, he received official recognition as a commercial representative, or commissioner (Swedish *kommersiefaktor*) in Moscow. The protection that a Swedish office could provide improved his possibilities. Koch continued writing to Narva, or, more correctly, *via* Narva

43 We have letters by Grundel-Helmfelt to Carl Gustaf Wrangel, governor-general in Pomerania (RA, Skoklostersamlingen, II, E 8189); to Per Brahe (ibid., E 8167); to Bengt Horn, governor-general in Livonia (Tartu, National Archives of Estonia, 278. 1. XIX, vol. 64a/b), to Bengt Oxenstierna, Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, Gustaf Otto Stenbock (in RA, Ericsbergsarkivet, Autografsamlingen, vol. 84), to the king (Livonica II, vol. 175ff.). In several volumes – e.g., in the letters in Ericsbergsarkivet – Grundel-Helmfelt explicitly mentions attachments from Moscow, which, however, are not present in the volume. We also find newsletters by Koch in RA, Diplomatica Muscovitica, vols. 114–115.

44 Droste, *Im Dienst der Krone*, pp. 175–178.

(the main postal route between Moscow and Stockholm went via Narva), because now his correspondence was addressed directly to the court in Stockholm, that is, either to the king or to members of the court elite. As an official crown representative he no longer had any reason to write anonymously, and all his letters to the king and the king's secretary Bergenhielm are signed with his full name. He rarely used ciphers, as the use of ciphers was not very common among Swedish correspondents; obviously he was not really worried about the safety of his reports.

We can only assume that his correspondence also reached recipients beyond the crown, for instance, other news agents. Unfortunately, we know nothing about this for sure, since Koch, like almost all other news experts, did not leave a personal archive behind. All in all, Koch engaged in a news correspondence with members of the Swedish high nobility, who used his letters in order to trade news with their peers in crown offices.

The Topics of Koch's Correspondence

After having studied far more than a hundred newsletters written by Koch from different periods, it becomes clear that he wrote about anything and everything that happened at the Russian court (much of which he could report since he had actually seen it as an eyewitness) – ambassadors who were coming or leaving, the tsar's family going on a trip to Kolomenskoe, feasts, 'ballets', and traditional Russian celebrations (for instance, Epiphany). He also wrote about factions at the Muscovite court (especially during the time of Sofia's reign, when the official tsars, Ivan and Peter, were still children), prices of certain merchandise, etc. Moreover, he described events that he had *not* seen, but about which he could get information via his good connections. From his correspondence we learn about Russian troops heading for a certain destination, the names of the military commanders for a specific operation, the content of diplomatic negotiations not only between Muscovy and Sweden, but also between the tsar and, for instance, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, the Polish or the Danish king. Many of Koch's reports would have been interesting enough to be disseminated in any of the German-language newspapers; unfortunately, we have not yet found any newspaper articles that contain exactly the same wordings as Koch's newsletters.[45] On the other hand, the style of his

45 We have also studied Dutch newspapers (both in Dutch and in French). News about Muscovy is generally much shorter than in the German papers and may have been taken from the latter.

news is very similar to the style of seventeenth-century newspapers, and the *content* is often the same.

A very likely example of a Koch report that turned public is about a vaudeville-like performance, given in the Kremlin for the tsar, his family and two or three court officials in February 1672 – an important event, since this was the very first Western-style performance that had ever taken place in Moscow.[46] The Hamburg newspaper *Nordischer Mercurius* printed a detailed review: the major part of the news item 'Moscow, 23 February', which covered almost two octavo pages, was dedicated to the 'ballet':

> 12 Germans presented a ballet for His Tsarish Majesty … It consisted of 4 Romans, 4 wild men, 2 drunk peasants, and 2 cutpurses, to whom was added an amusing Pickleherring … The tsaritsa or empress was sitting with her state ladies behind a scarlet curtain, which afforded a glimpse of their beauty and allowed them to see the ballet clearly. They were shining like brilliant stars through small clouds, and since this ballet was the first that has ever been seen in Moscow, it provoked a great deal of interest. The tsar together with his 4 princes and most important ministers as well as the tsaritsa with her ladies were so pleased with it that they often almost shook with laughter …. This is being written to show that something that is very common for our German people is seen as something new in these parts.[47]

Shorter articles about this 'ballet' were printed in *Oprechte Haerlemse Saterdaegse Courant* (No. 15, 1672) and in *La Gazette d'Amsterdam Du Mardi 12 Avril* (No. 15, 1672), so altogether a few thousand newspaper readers in several countries and in three different languages were informed about this cultural event in far-away Moscow.[48] According to a newsletter from Moscow, an enclosure

46 For more details about this performance, and a similar one from May 1672, see Claudia Jensen and Ingrid Maier, 'Orpheus and Pickleherring in the Kremlin: The "Ballet" for the Tsar of February 1672', *Scando-Slavica*, 59:2 (2013), pp. 145–184; and 'Pickleherring Returns to the Kremlin: More New Sources on the Pre-History of the Russian Court Theatre', *Scando-Slavica*, 61:1 (2015), pp. 7–56. Both articles are available via http://uu.diva-portal.org/ (open-access).

47 *Nordischer Mercurius*, Martius 1672, p. 197f. Quoted from Jensen and Maier, 'Orpheus and Pickleherring', p. 158.

48 According to Welke, 'Rußland in der deutschen Publizistik', pp. 156–160, the average print runs of German seventeenth-century newspapers were around 350–400, whereas the 'strongest' newspapers reached up to 1000–1500 copies. The Haarlem newspaper (near Amsterdam) was typeset twice and printed on two presses, at least from 1660; the

to a letter from Narva signed by governor-general Grundel-Helmfelt, the 'ballet' was "arranged by 12 persons, mostly foreign merchants". It is thus very likely that the merchant Koch was among the performers; this was more or less the only way to get access to this presentation in the Kremlin. And although we cannot prove that one (or both) of the very detailed reports, which today are kept in Stockholm,[49] were written by Koch, we assume this to be very likely, all the more since these reports also contain other news, such as the death of the Patriarch – exactly the kind of news we always find in Koch's correspondence.

The major topic during the previous two years, 1670–1671, was the Cossack uprising under Stepan Razin, which was eventually dissolved with Razin's public execution in Moscow. Together with many other foreigners, Koch witnessed the execution. He also sent a lengthy description to Narva, together with a colour drawing that shows two separate scenes (from different days):[50] to the right the entry into Moscow of the main rebel and his brother (2 June), and to the left the scene shows six body parts set up on poles, after the execution (which took place on 6 June; see Fig. 5.1). In this specific case the Muscovite court was more than pleased with all reports the foreigners sent to their home countries, and it is very likely that the Ambassadorial Chancery produced *several* copies of the 'execution drawing', although only one copy – the one in Stockholm – seems to have survived. There is, however, indirect evidence that one copy ended up in London,[51] and one in Hamburg.[52]

The most likely route from Moscow to Sweden is through the hands of Christoff Koch, who obviously in this case was used as a tool to spread the latest news about the rebellion, viz. the gruesome end of its leader. The head

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print runs were probably about 800–1000. (Our thanks to Arthur der Weduwen for his estimate.)

49 RA, Bengt Horn collection, E 4304; RA, Livonica II, vol. 180.

50 We suppose that the drawing was produced before the execution took place; see Maier, 'How was Western Europe informed about Muscovy?'

51 The similarity between the colour drawing preserved in Stockholm and an imprint from London about Razin's execution is so striking that we are sure that the imprint was made on the basis of another copy of the drawing. See the Moscow drawing and the illustration in the imprint next to each other in Maier, 'How was Western Europe informed about Muscovy?'

52 Cf. this article in the Hamburg-based newspaper *Nordischer Mercurius*, August 1671, p. 474 (Royal Library Copenhagen): "Lower Elbe, 1 August. How the rebel Razin was executed, this has been drawn in Moscow by hand, and the description is in Greek letters. Arms and legs, as well as the head and the trunk, are on poles, whereas the intestines have been thrown to the dogs". Apparently, this journalist has seen a copy of the Moscow drawing. He talks about *Greek* letters (instead of Cyrillic), and he mentions that the trunk was also set up on a pole, although all eyewitnesses report that the trunk was left on the ground.

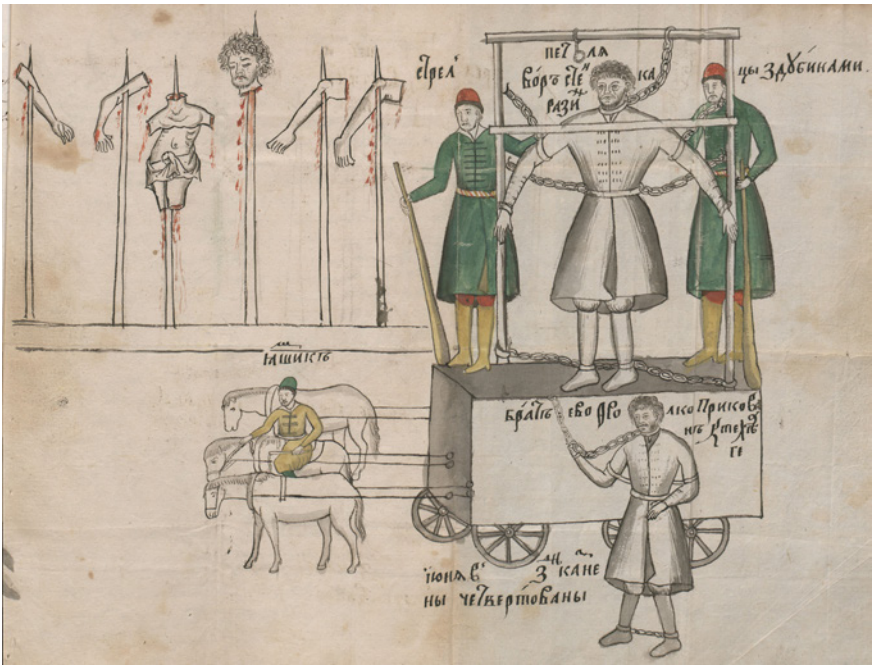

FIGURE 5.1 *The execution of Stepan Razin.*

of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Artamon Sergeevich Matveev, was, of course, well aware that Koch was a worthy 'multiplier', somebody who had the necessary connections to spread news far and wide. The drawing must have been handed over to Koch (and to a number of other foreigners) by Matveev, as a kind of hard-currency proof that the rebellion was now indeed over, that all foreign merchants could come to Russia again with their merchandise – the rebellion had previously caused severe problems for the Russian trade. In any event, it was sent to Stockholm by S. Grundel-Helmfelt from Nyen on 30 June 1671, together with two of Koch's 'relations' about Razin.[53] (The two reports and the drawing are sewn together.)

The Sources of Koch's Correspondence

Several reports by Koch can only be explained through his good contacts in the Kremlin, in particular with the head of the Ambassadorial Chancery, Matveev, with whom Koch had a close relationship, at least in the early 1670s. Some of

53 RA, Livonica II, vol. 180.

their meetings took place at the chancery, but it seems that Koch was also invited to Matveev's home. He describes this and other visits in detail, in order to demonstrate his access to and appreciation by Matveev:

> Last Friday, in the afternoon, I was at Ertemon Sergiewitz' [i.e., Matveev's] place, and I gave him my best wishes on the occasion of their New Year.[54] He asked me, among other things, whether I did not have any news from our people [i.e., from Sweden] or any message from Colonel Von Staden. I answered that I had not received any letters from Riga; however, a German in Novgorod had written to me that it had already been communicated across the border that Herr Eberskiöldt is coming as an envoy. He [Matveev] answered: "I am glad that he is coming, especially because I have met him before". I do not doubt that if somebody comes from Sweden right now, he will be successful in his tasks.[55]

During his time in office, Matveev opened the Muscovite court to European influences. One method was to engage in private relations with foreigners and to exchange news with them. Koch reports several times that he – without having any official position – was invited to the chancery and to Matveev's home. Later on, when the relationship between Muscovy and Sweden deteriorated due to the Swedish war with Brandenburg, the same courtesy was given to a student, Hermann Dietrich Hesse, from Brandenburg, who also lacked an official mission.[56] It seems that Matveev used this kind of contact in order to spread news on Muscovite politics according to *his* interests – a rather typical form of information politics during that time. Since even the Muscovite government could not control the news flow from Moscow, despite its efforts, Matveev engaged in disseminating his version through those he knew, or suspected, were in correspondence with contacts in other countries.

At other times, the Kremlin complained about how Russia was described abroad. One example is the harsh critique addressed to Sweden during the time of Stepan Razin's insurrection in the years 1670–1671. The tsar complained about Sweden's 'anti-Muscovite reports' that were spread in printed newspapers all over Europe, since they usually exaggerated Razin's military successes

54 In Russia the year started 1 September until the reign of Peter I.

55 Moscow, 5 September 1671 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 180); see also the report from Moscow, 23 April 1672 (ibid.).

56 Moscow, 15/25 December 1675; Secret State Archives Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (GStA PK, Berlin-Dahlem, I HA, Rep. 11, Nr. 6572).

against the tsar's troops.[57] The Muscovite government clearly understood that the Swedish agents and their correspondence were very important for the image of Russian politics in other parts of Europe. The anti-Muscovite news items (especially during the Razin uprising) were often published under the headline Riga, and Riga was a 'Swedish' city at the time. However, we cannot be sure that the 'Riga reports' always (or even often) were based on the Swedish news agents' reports. Beyond that, there was no periodically printed German newspaper in the Swedish Baltic provinces at that time.

If certain news seemed too sensitive for the postal system or if haste was needed, Koch might send his reports with a special messenger, although this was expensive, and the messenger still had to cross the border, where he could be searched. In any event, the vast majority of his letters were sent via the official Muscovite post. On several occasions, Koch applied other measures of secrecy; for instance, he addressed his letters to trusted private addressees.[58] An example is his letter of 23 September 1687 to Jacob Johan Hastfer, governor-general of Swedish Livonia in Riga, in which he wrote, among other things, that he will send his letters to the governor via a private person in Riga; this person will then deliver them to Hastfer.[59] He explains that the reason for this procedure is due to the fact that "the Russians control the correspondence and letters, and a Russian citizen has been ordered to take over the administration of the post".[60]

In 1676, when Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich suddenly died, life as a correspondent and merchant in Moscow became increasingly dangerous. Koch wrote a desperate letter to governor-general Taube, claiming that he was in danger, due to rumours that he was spying for Sweden.[61] Taube tried to calm him down, telling him that he already enjoyed Swedish protection in Moscow, due to his position in the merchant community as head of the merchants' court. Still, Taube also wrote to the king, asking if it would be possible to get more protection for

57 Nicolaus von Staden to Adolf Eberskiöld, Novgorod, 24 September [1672] (RA, Diplomatica Muscovitica, vol. 83).

58 In a newsletter written by Koch in Moscow on 16 December, 1676 and sent as an attachment by governor-general Taube from Narva to King Charles XI on 17 January 1677, Koch explains that he is sending his letters to a Friese in order to protect the real recipient, Taube (RA, Livonica II, vol. 182).

59 This letter was published in Russian translation; see K.A. Viskovatov, 'Moskva v 1687–1688 gg.', *Russkaia starina. Ezhemesiachnoe istoricheskoe izdanie*, 23 (1878), pp. 121–129 (here p. 122). Most of Koch's letters to Hastfer are kept in Riga, National Archives of Latvia, fond 7349, 2, 88 and 91.

60 Viskovatov, 'Moskva', p. 122.

61 Koch in a letter to Taube, dated Moscow, 16 December 1676 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 182).

Koch.[62] It is not quite clear whether this was a consequence of Taube's letter, but Koch was eventually turned into an official Swedish commissioner in June 1678. A commissioner always had the official duty to write newsletters to his king. In addition to the appointment, King Charles XI wrote to the tsar on behalf of Koch's financial claims in and outside of Moscow, asking the tsar to allow Koch to travel in person in order to collect these debts.[63] In another letter from the same day, however, Charles XI wrote to Koch that the letter to the tsar was just meant as an excuse so that he could become more mobile in Moscow and in the capital's surroundings, in order to improve his correspondence.[64]

At one point, as early as 1666, Koch was able to produce a copy of the Russian delegation's instructions for their negotiations about commercial matters with the Swedish envoys. Nils Eosander, at that point secretary and member of the Swedish delegation, later confirmed that Koch had produced this copy.[65] The instructions were most likely obtained by bribing a secretary – a method employed by many news agents at many courts in contemporary Europe. In his 'relation' about his work in 1683, Koch explicitly recommends bribing the tsar's secretaries and ministers, in order to retain their goodwill regarding Sweden: it would be helpful "to give to the voivodes and the clerks in the chancery a veneration now and then, to maintain their minds in a useful affection towards our nation". In the same 'relation' Koch states that "money can help with those at the tsar's court, who are at the fore and hold the pen".[66]

The tsar's translators formed another important source. Koch probably did not need any personal translator for his everyday life, but from a letter (dated 29 November 1676) by the Danish resident Mogens Gjøe to his king we know that in this case the translator – who was none other than Nikolai Gavrilovich Spafarii-Milescu (1636–1708), one of the tsar's best and most senior translators – was an important source of information, and Gjøe complained bitterly when Spafarii was sent to China.[67]

62 Taube to the king from Narva, 17 January 1677 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 182), and once again in a letter from Narva, March 30, 1678 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 183).

63 The king's letter to Koch from Ljungeby (RA, RR, 24 June 1678).

64 RA, RR, 24 June 1678.

65 Letter by Nils Eosander, Stockholm, 3 August 1678 (RA, Biographica K 12).

66 Relation by Christoff Koch, 26 February 1683 (ibid.).

67 Cf. Gjøe's letter of 16 March 1675: "Mon Interpret Moldavien ira à Chine en qualité d'Envoyé Ext[raordinaire] ce que vient fort mal à propos pour muy, d'autant que Je ne trouveray pas un hom[m]e à qui fier mes affaires, ny quil aura l'industrie et l'add[resse] pareille à la sienne, car le reste de ces gens lâ icy ne vaut guere, et les scaura on corrompre

Gjøe's successor as a resident in Moscow during the years 1676–1678, Frederik von Gabel, complained that the Swedes, before he had arrived, had been walking in and out of the chancery as if they were natives, whereas now they were no longer welcome.[68] As first stated by Heinz Ellersieck, the Dane Gabel was certainly complaining about Koch[69] – who had the same assignments as Gabel and would, without any doubt, use just the same sorts of methods as the Danish resident; of course, it was also in Gabel's interest to damage his Swedish counterpart.

Despite the many different methods to engage in news gathering, we do not think that Koch should be considered as a spy, at least not in the modern understanding of this word. Whereas the term 'spy' is old, today's understanding was shaped in modern times. Koch did only what the Muscovite government expected him to do, considering his Swedish assignments. Matveev knew also how to take advantage of Koch's role as a correspondent. Koch himself seems to have had no problems gathering news, without the need to rummage through 'secret letter boxes'. However, he did engage in diplomatic conflicts that involved illegal measures, such as falsifying news and letters. In 1678, many foreign envoys left Moscow.[70] The official reason in Koch's case was that he had been writing newsletters to Sweden, and that he had been forging news in cooperation with the English resident John Hebdon.[71] Koch himself wrote about this event: "This letter was fabricated explicitly by us so that the Danish resident might be expelled from Pskov".[72] We do not know why Koch took part in that conflict. There is no evidence that he acted in the interest of the crown, or on his own account. The Danish resident fought back, which led to Koch's expulsion. He was, however, back in Moscow quite soon.

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avec dix Escus" (Danish National Archives, Tyske Kancellis Udenrigske Afdeling, Rusland, Mogens Gjøes gesandtskabsarkiv, fond 73, no. 93).

68 Draft of this letter in Gjøe's draft book (ibid., Rusland, fond 73, no. 39).

69 Ellersieck, *Russia under Aleksei Mikhailovich and Feodor Alekseevich*, p. 52, note 40.

70 Letter by governor-general Taube to the king, Narva, 18 February 1678, containing a letter by Koch, Moscow, 8 January 1678, stating that he was expelled, but that other envoys were also about to leave Moscow (RA, Livonica II, vol. 183).

71 Governor-general Taube reported to the king from Narva on 22 March 1678 that Koch had arrived to Narva, expelled from Moscow, for trying to hinder the Danish resident in his work by forging news (RA, Livonica II, vol. 183). John Hebdon wrote to Koch about a meeting between the two men the day before (Moscow, 18 September 1677); at that occasion, they had discussed Hebdon's negotiations (which also concerned Sweden) – they obviously worked together (RA, Extranea, vol. 156:2).

72 Koch to Taube from Moscow, 24 December 1677 (RA, Livonica II, vol. 183).

Conclusion

Koch's sources and his ability to learn about the Muscovite government depended heavily on his social relations in Moscow, within the merchant community and with other foreigners. At the same time, he had to consider sudden changes in Russian politics. It was certainly a difficult task, and he had to engage in different modes of news gathering, which he did successfully.

Koch was exceptionally well suited for his task. His reports gave detailed information about Russian politics from the 1660s to the 1680s, a time when Moscow became more open to Western influences, in particular during the reign of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich. Two years after the tsar's death, in 1678, Koch was finally recognised as a Swedish commissioner (*kommersiefaktor*), which made his work as a correspondent open and widely acknowledged for everybody. However, the Russian authorities – above all Artamon Matveev – were apparently aware of his work as a news expert even earlier, and also the student Hesse from Brandenburg recommended in a letter (1676) that Koch's letters should be intercepted in order to prove that he was working as a correspondent.[73] As we have seen, Matveev obviously used Koch as a channel to inform the Swedish crown as early as 1671, in connection with Razin's execution. Regarding another execution (in September 1674), the tsar gave an explicit order to Matveev and another state official to inform the foreigners, so that they would write to their respective countries about the 'traitor' Ivashka Vorob'ev, who pretended to be the tsar's son.[74]

Koch's work as a news expert depended greatly on actual changes in Russian politics and interests. His proximity to the Kremlin in 1671–1672 was simply impossible a few years later, when Russian-Swedish relations had turned sour due to Sweden's war with Brandenburg. To accuse Koch of being a spy must be understood as an effort to hurt him at a particular time, for a particular reason. It was a strategic argument, created for a specific series of events. Despite Koch's and other correspondents' worries, we are not aware of any examples where foreign correspondents were severely punished for their reports or for being a spy.

This leaves us with one important question: Why did Koch do it in the first place? In his work for the crown, Koch was poorly paid, like many other

73 Governor-general Taube to the king, Narva, May 16, 1679, about Koch's return to Moscow (RA, Livonica II, vol. 183).

74 *Dvortsovye razriady: tom tretii. S 1645 po 1676 g.* (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo II Otdeleniia Sobstvennoi Ego Imperatorskogo Velichestva Kantseliarii, 1852), col. 1021–1023. On that occasion, the foreigners were also invited explicitly to attend the execution (col. 1022).

Swedish correspondents. As a backdrop for these activities, we might assume a strong interest in the commerce between Sweden and Moscow, although this is only speculation. We have no information about Koch's business relations apart from the evidence of his reports. It is only in his career as a whole that we can find a specific argument for his activities, although it took about two decades of service before he achieved his ennoblement. This is, however, not an unusual time frame. An eventual success could be expected, since almost all Swedish correspondents of his kind were ennobled and promoted, in that way opening prospects also for their families in Swedish services. When it comes to Koch's personal interests, the crown could offer protection, but this happened only in 1678, when Koch already was a middle-aged man who had been living in Moscow for more than 20 years.

Still, some open questions remain, in particular concerning the economic basis of Koch's news services. It is unlikely that the correspondence in itself might have produced a substantial income. The seventeenth-century news market was not so much about financial gains; rather, it was about investing time and resources in order to create a network that represented an amalgamation of kinship with friendship, offering other assets like privileges, monopolies, ennoblements, and such.[75] In that way, news experts indulged in the news business not primarily as a means in itself, but as part of a career. This is true for most news experts in crown services, which has consequences for our understanding of early modern 'diplomats'. They entered crown services as news agents (residents, agents, correspondents) in exchange for privileges, trade monopolies etc. In that respect, news was a resource, which could be traded in crown services. Despite their crown services, however, they continued to work as merchants.

Therefore, financial gains can hardly explain Koch's or other news experts' work as a correspondent and he probably did not expect that either. He reported to Grundel-Helmfelt and others for years, without getting paid. His work was part of a long-term engagement in networks and services that eventually offered crown services, ennoblement and a social ascent for all of the family. Probably financial gains were also a part of Koch's business in Moscow, although we did not find any proof of this in the historical documents.

75 Droste, *Commercium litterarium*, will deal with these aspects intensively.

CHAPTER 6

What the *Posol'skii prikaz* Really Knew: Intelligencers, Secret Agents and Their Reports

Daniel C. Waugh

The first part of this essay's title is a reference to two earlier publications about the knowledge level of the Muscovite *Posol'skii prikaz*, the ambassadorial office (diplomatic chancery). One is Knud Rasmussen's article about its information level in the sixteenth century, and the other Mikhail Alpatov's essay on the same subject focusing on the seventeenth century.[1] Rasmussen and Alpatov reached rather different conclusions. Relying mainly on the instructions to Muscovite ambassadors, Rasmussen showed that, to a considerable degree, the Kremlin was out of touch with current events in Europe. Alpatov, on the other hand, citing the reports (*stateinye spiski*) written by Muscovite emissaries when they returned home, painted a much more positive picture of the way in which the Kremlin kept abreast of international affairs. Of course there is much else we might cite here to provide a full review of the relevant literature, but my task is a more modest one: to sketch out ideas and some examples from work in progress, in which I am examining the mechanisms for acquiring foreign news, the reliability of that news, and the degree to which its acquisition may or may not have played a role in the actual formation of policy.

A priori we must recognise that what may have been the case in the middle of the sixteenth century certainly was not equally true a century later. The frequency and reliability of Muscovite contacts with other countries had grown

1 Knud Rasmussen, 'On the Information Level of the Muscovite Posol'skij prikaz in the Sixteenth Century', *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, 24 (1978), pp. 88–99; Mikhail A. Alpatov, 'Chto znal Posol'skii prikaz o Zapadnoi Evrope vo vtoroi polovine XVII v.?', in *Istoriia i istoriki. Istoriografiia vseobshchei istorii. Sbornik statei* (Moscow: Nauka, 1966), pp. 89–129, reprinted in his *Russkaia istoricheskaia mysl' i Zapadnaia Evropa XII–XVII vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973), pp. 323–363. The author gratefully acknowledges financial support which made possible part of this research from the Riksbankens jubileumsfond / The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation in conjunction with the project 'Cross-Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe', RFP12-0055:1, and from a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (RZ-1635-13): 'The Russian Court Theater in the late 17th Century and its Context in Trans-National Information Exchange'. Any views, findings, or conclusions expressed in this article do not necessarily represent those of the funding organisations.

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substantially, and there were means of obtaining news which had not existed earlier. The late Elena Kobzareva's *kandidat* dissertation focusing on Muscovite relations with England in the seventeenth century shows vividly how within a short space of two or three decades, the Kremlin went from blissful ignorance to some level of accurate information about English affairs.[2] This, despite ingrained Russian views about politics which hindered any real understanding of what was going on during the Protectorate. Even if we were to look only at a decade or two in the second half of seventeenth century, we would discover a considerable unevenness in news acquisition and its use in Muscovy. A lot might depend on the subject of the news: for certain polities with which Muscovy dealt, geographic proximity and strategic importance might well dictate being better informed than might be the case for others (generally those more distant from Muscovy's borders). A particular negotiation might offer opportunities to obtain information that was not otherwise regularly available. In short, there are complexities here which require that we look beyond the texts of *stateinye spiski* and translations in the *kuranty*, the news compendia which became an important source of information for the Kremlin as the seventeenth century progressed.[3] Yet to look beyond such sources then creates a host of additional challenges. Documentation may be scattered, a lot of what is essential not yet published. More generally, to say anything of substance about the making of Muscovite foreign policy over the course of something like a century requires detailed monographic study. With some exceptions cited below, too little that has been written on the subject has analysed closely

2 Elena I. Kobzareva, *Izvestiia o sobytiiakh v Zapadnoi Evrope v dokumentakh Posol'skogo prikaza XVII veka* (Unpublished diss., Moscow, 1988).

3 On the processes by which the *stateinye spiski* were created, see Aleksei A. Novosel'skii, 'Raznovidnosti krymskikh stateinykh spiskov XVII v. i priemy ikh sostavleniia', *Problemy istochnikovedeniia*, 9 (1961), pp. 182–194. Such reporting by returning ambassadors was normal procedure in other countries. See, for example, Phyllis S. Lachs, *The Diplomatic Corps under Charles II and James II* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1965), pp. 42–45. For an overview of the history of the *kuranty*, see Daniel C. Waugh and Ingrid Maier, 'Muscovy and the European Information Revolution: Creating the Mechanisms for Obtaining Foreign News', in Simon Franklin and Katherine Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire: Mechanisms of Communication in Russia, 1600–1850* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), pp. 77–112. See also the monograph-length introduction by Ingrid Maier in the most recent volume of the ongoing series publishing the *kuranty* and their sources, Ingrid Maier (ed.), *Vesti-kuranty 1656 g., 1660–1662 gg., 1664–1670 gg. Ch. 2. Inostrannye originaly k russkim tekstam* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskikh kul'tur, 2008), and Stepan M. Shamin, *Kuranty XVII stoletiia. Evropeiskaia pressa v Rossii i vozniknovenie russkoi periodicheskoi pechati* (Moscow and St. Petersburg: Al'ians-Arkheo, 2011).

the acquisition and reliability of diplomatic intelligence and correlated it with specific decision-making.

It is important to establish whether foreign policy decisions are based on accurate information and a clear understanding of international politics. Certainly there are many examples, even in our own day, of information overload, to illustrate how preconceived notions, wrong assumptions or misinformation led to bad decisions.[4] Muscovy is no exception here, which does not mean that the Muscovite officials were in any way naïve about their sources. In fact, just the opposite seems to have been the case: they were *very* suspicious about the reliability of what they were told. The terms they used to describe information suggest as much: *slukhi* is commonly used to specify unverified rumour; '*nam podlinno vedomo*' ('we know for certain') generally introduces information deemed to have come from a reliable source. The need to verify news was taken seriously, especially in the situation where there was no single institutionalised mechanism for acquiring it. Ultimately, I think, what was important was the degree of personal trust in the source of information. In this regard, Muscovy was no different from the rest of Europe. Trusted agents often had proven their worth by carrying out specific commissions that may have had little to do with the acquisition of news.[5] Such agents tended to have their own networks of reliable contacts and had secure channels of communication. While it would be wrong to label all acquisition of news through agents as espionage, such clandestine activity was everywhere to be found. Despite its importance, it has been the subject of too little systematic investigation.

Of course, even the most trusted agents might in fact prove to have been unworthy of that trust. They might deliberately or unwittingly mislead in what they reported. Vera Chentsova's work on some of the Greek reports on the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire illustrates very well the potential for deliberate deception on the part of those who wished to obtain Muscovite support of one

4 The key figure in the making of Muscovite foreign policy in the 1660s, Afanasii Lavrent'evich Ordin-Nashchokin, was one of the best informed men of his time; yet his insistence on pursuing policies that were at odds with political realities ultimately compromised his goals. See Boris N. Floria, *Vneshnepoliticheskaia programma A.L. Ordina-Nashchokina i popytki ee osushchestvleniia* (Moscow: INDRIK, 2013).

5 See Hans Cools, Marika Keblusek, and Badeloch Noldus (eds.), *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2006). Stepan Shamin (e-mail 25 July 2017) has reminded me that, beyond my few examples in what follows, there is a great deal more to be said about Russian efforts to create a network of agents in Europe in the seventeenth century.

kind or another.[6] Often during a sensitive diplomatic negotiation, each side would share intelligence reports, hand over copies of letters from outside interested parties, and the like. A very interesting example of this was the Danish mission to Moscow led by Frederik von Gabel in 1676.[7] Well before he arrived in Moscow, he was sending messages to the Kremlin – from Danzig, Vilna, and then Smolensk – trying to convince the Russians that the Poles, Swedes and Brandenburg, with French encouragement, were conspiring in an alliance ultimately directed against Muscovy. The point, of course, was to persuade the Russians to sign an alliance with Denmark directed against Sweden. Even though the Russian resident in Warsaw was reporting similar information, the tsar's government seems not to have been convinced. The Dane's mission failed. Sometimes information so provided was not false, but its transmission was deliberately delayed in the hope that an agreement or concessions might be obtained before the latest news destroyed any rationale for them.

There is a longstanding belief that Muscovite foreign policy was handicapped by the near absence of permanent representatives or agents abroad. However, we need to be careful in assessing the impact of having *or lacking* long-term residents in foreign capitals.[8] A comparative perspective is useful here. The reports sent to London by British residents posted in northern Europe suggest that there was a considerable range in the substance and reliability of what they communicated. A number of factors explain this. The person of the resident was important: was it an individual of some social status,

6 Vera G. Chentsova, *Ikona Iverskoi Bogomateri* (*Ocherki istorii otnoshenii grecheskoi tserkvi s Rossiei v seredine XVII v. po dokumentam RGADA*) (Moscow: INDRIK, 2010). Chentsova here and in other publications and Shamin (e-mail 25 July 2017) also emphasise how important the Greek Orthodox were in the Balkans as a source of reliable information about the Ottoman Empire.

7 Aleksandr N. Popov, *Russkoe posol'stvo v Pol'she v 1673–1677 godakh. Neskol'ko let iz istorii otnoshenii drevnei Rossii k evropeiskim derzhavam* (St. Petersburg: Tip. Morskogo kadetskogo korpusa, 1854), Chapter 12.

8 The *locus classicus* for any discussion of the rise and importance of permanent diplomatic representation is still Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971; 1st ed. 1954), but it was rare that any European power's representatives abroad could match the achievements in the level of knowledge and ability to report it regularly that was attained by the Venetian baili even as early as the late fifteenth century. For Habsburg diplomatic intelligence, see Charles Howard Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598–1625* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1964), esp. Pts. 3–4. On the intelligence gathering and communications concerns of seventeenth-century English diplomatic personnel, see Lachs, *The Diplomatic Corps*, esp. pp. 30–46.

education and foreign experience, well connected with the British foreign secretaries, or was it a relative non-entity? Perhaps more important was whether the home office kept the resident informed regularly and accurately about the news involving Britain. Thomas Thynne, the agent in Stockholm for many years, continually complained about his not being kept informed on a regular basis by his contact in Whitehall, the redoubtable spymaster Joseph Williamson.[9] As Thynne explained, if he was going to be offered insider information through his contacts in Stockholm, he had to have something to offer in return, beyond what might be reported through the *Haerlemse Courant*, which was one of the main sources (and not, in his opinion, an unbiased one) of printed foreign news received in the Swedish capital. Hamburg, as a commercial and communications centre, was undoubtedly more important as a listening post for Britain. For a good many years, the British representative there was Sir Peter Wyche, who had once even headed a British embassy to Moscow in the 1660s. Wyche's reports suggest that he had an excellent network of contacts with all the other foreign residents in Hamburg, with diplomatic missions that passed through, and even with agents he hired in some of the other imperial cities.[10] It was the norm for these British residents to send a report in practically every regular mail, which from Stockholm ideally was weekly, but from Hamburg could mean more often. Hamburg was the collecting point for reports coming from further east in the Baltic or from Poland.

The Muscovite government in fact had some experience regarding the value of having a long-term resident in another capital. Starting well back in the sixteenth century, there had been regular representation at the court of the Crimean Khan.[11] The real limitation there was not so much the acquisition of intelligence, since well-placed bribes generally produced inside information from amongst the Tatar elite, and there were ample opportunities to quiz merchants and others arriving from the Ottoman Empire. Rather, there was always

9 Thynne's letters are in National Archives (London), SP 95/6. State Papers Foreign, Sweden, 1665–1668. See esp. fols. 143–144v, Thynne to Williamson, 20 February 1666; fols. 145–146v, Thynne to Williamson, 27 February 1666. Williamson's intelligence network, one of the best in any state at the time, has been analysed by Peter Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State & Their Monopoly of Licensed News 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), esp. Chapters 3–5.

10 For Wyche's reports, National Archives (London), SP 82/16, State Papers Foreign, Hamburg and Hanse Towns, 1678–1686, beginning on fol. 100 with Wyche to Joseph Williamson, 17 December 1678. Of particular interest for his review of his sources and their reliability is fol. 218, Wyche to Secretary of State Sir Lionell Jenkins, 15 October 1680.

11 See Aleksei V. Vinogradov, *Russko-krymskie otnosheniia 50-e – vtoraia polovina 70-kh godov XVI veka* (2 vols., Moscow: Institut rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2007).

the question of how rapidly the information might be transmitted to Moscow. This required sending of special couriers, whose travel at times was deliberately blocked by the Tatars. A careful examination of Muscovite relations with the Crimea and the Ottomans reveals the importance of the reports sent or brought back from the Crimea by the Muscovite representatives there.[12]

Certainly by the 1640s, the Muscovite government must have understood the value of having a long-term resident at least in neighbouring European territories. For more than half a year in 1643–1644, a Rigan writing under the *nom de plume* of Justus Filimonatus was sending reports from Riga and Danzig, though it seems he was unable to persuade the Muscovite authorities to hire him on an extended basis.[13] For several months in 1649, a Russian embassy to Sweden sent back to Moscow translations of German newspapers received in Stockholm.[14] The example of the Swedish residents in Moscow who, at least from the 1650s, were sending regular reports to their government, surely was not lost on the Kremlin, and in fact around 1660, the Muscovite government on at least two occasions tried (unsuccessfully) to arrange to be supplied on a regular basis with foreign news from abroad, by hiring correspondents if not by actually stationing its own representatives in another capital. The establishment of the Muscovite foreign post on a regular basis in 1665, connecting to Riga, ensured the regular delivery of newspapers and newsletters, which, however, were no substitute for having an agent on the ground who could ferret out confidential information.[15]

The first appointment of a Russian resident at a European court followed on the Truce of Andrusovo in 1667. It provided for an exchange of Russian and

12 In addition to the evidence in Vinogradov's focused study, this is apparent in the more general but dated treatment of Russo-Ottoman relations by Nikolai A. Smirnov, *Rossiia i Turtsiia v XVI–XVII vv.* (2 vols., Moscow: Moskovskii universitet, 1946).

13 For his reports, see N.I. Tarabasova *et al.* (eds.), *Vesti-kuranty 1642–1644 gg.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), pp. 40–43, 54–55, 59–74, 76–80, 83–84, 97–103, 109–113, 126, 131–138, 146–147, 167–172, 178–183.

14 See the discussion by Ingrid Maier, 'Newspaper Translations in Seventeenth-Century Muscovy. About the Sources, Topics and Periodicity of *Kuranty* "Made in Stockholm" (1649)', in Per Ambrosiani (ed.), *Explorare necesse est. Hyllningsskrift till Barbro Nilsson* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002), pp. 181–190.

15 On the establishment and functioning of the Muscovite foreign post, see Daniel C. Waugh, 'Istoki sozdaniia mezhdunarodnoi pochtovoi sluzhby Moskovskogo gosudarstva v evropeiskom kontekste', *Ocherki feodal'noi Rossii,* vyp. 19 (2017), pp. 394–442. The classic and still valuable study by Ivan P. Kozlovskii, *Pervye pochty i pervye pochtmeistery v Moskovskom gosudarstve* (2 vols., Warsaw: Tip. Varshavskogo uchebnogo okruga, 1913), publishes many of the relevant documents.

Polish residents, even if some years elapsed before they were in place. The establishment of the Vilna foreign postal route (to supplement that already in place via Riga) was in the first instance to ensure regular and rapid communication between these residents and their superiors at home. The mission of the first Russian resident in Poland, the *stol'nik* Vasilii Mikhailovich Tiapkin, was examined in some detail a century and a half ago by Aleksandr Popov, who based his study mainly on Tiapkin's *stateinyi spisok* and on his extensive correspondence with the then head of the *Posol'skii prikaz*, Artamon Matveev, and his immediate successors.[16] Popov tells us nothing about Tiapkin's qualifications for the job, but he surely must have known Polish and maybe Latin. He would later be sent as an envoy to the Crimea. Tiapkin's mission lasted from late 1673 until the middle of 1677. Near the end of his mission he became disillusioned with his ability to obtain reliable news, isolated both by the Poles and by his Moscow superiors after the downfall of Matveev. A closer look at Tiapkin's residency suggests that he was in fact quite successful as an agent reporting regularly on internal Polish-Lithuanian affairs. This, despite deep suspicions harboured by each government (and leading echelons of society) regarding the other side, and their vested interest in spreading as much disinformation as truthful news.

Tiapkin's assignment was a challenging one, given the fact that within Poland-Lithuania, there were so many competing political factions and he arrived during the interregnum following the death of King Michał Wiśnowiecki. In the first instance, Tiapkin's source of information was the Lithuanian Chancellor Hetman Krzysztof Pac. Information channelled through the Lithuanian magnates would continue to be of central importance for subsequent Muscovite news coming out of its neighbour to the West. When Tiapkin presented his credentials, his demands as to how he was to be treated show that the *Posol'skii prikaz* understood what a resident diplomat should be authorised to do if he was to be a source of reliable information. Those demands, to all of which Pac agreed, included free access to the king and the Rada, unhindered access to any other foreign diplomats, and permission to send couriers back to Moscow and to obtain news sent to the Polish chancery of foreign affairs from other states. As Tiapkin put it, these were the same privileges held by the Polish resident then already in Moscow. We know that Pac in fact frequently sent one of his secretaries to Tiapkin with requests or information, and arranged meetings with him. Naturally, this Lithuanian connection had the potential to bias considerably the information Tiapkin might obtain, both with regard to the upcoming election of the king and once Jan Sobieski had been selected. There

16 Popov, *Russkoe posol'stvo*.

was ongoing suspicion of Sobieski's intentions on the part of both the Polish and Lithuanian magnates, who felt the new king was scheming to make the elective Polish monarchy into a hereditary and absolutist one. Tiapkin seems to have made a serious effort to confirm the accuracy of anything he was told and clearly was sceptical about a lot of it. He did not confine himself merely to reporting, but expressed his own opinions and gave advice to his superiors. Apart from the frequent conversations with the Lithuanian party, he would be approached by representatives of the Polish elite, on more than one occasion had private conversations with Sobieski, and of course picked up a great deal else from conversations with visiting diplomats. All of his informants, naturally, were trying in some way via Tiapkin to influence Muscovite foreign policy decisions. Whoever was talking with Tiapkin proclaimed how trustworthy they were and favourably inclined to Muscovite interests – which must have made him suspect that they were protesting too much. In some cases, where he was hearing conflicting reports, he bluntly confronted Pac, demanding to know the truth. Tiapkin's counterpart in Moscow, *pan* Swidierski, presumably was experiencing the same thing, but also seems (deliberately) to have given preference to rumours unfavourable to Russian interests.

It was important for the resident to stay close to the court, which in Sobieski's case might mean his campaign headquarters. Tiapkin had mixed success in obtaining permission to follow the monarch, who never stopped long in one place. Yet even when permitted, for Tiapkin to be able to travel as he deemed necessary and to be able to present himself in a manner befitting the representative of the tsar required money. Like so many of the English representatives abroad, he would complain about not being given sufficient funds and not having the personal financial resources to make up the difference. In one plea for better support, he told his bosses in Moscow that he needed a portrait of the tsar to hang in the room where he might receive visitors, since, after all, the other foreign representatives in Poland all had in their chambers portraits of their royal masters. In general Tiapkin was diligent in defending the honour of his government and had a clear idea of his own status: at one point he refused to interpret the words of a courier from Moscow for Prince Radziwill, insisting that he (Tiapkin) was an accredited diplomat and not a mere translator.

Since the acculturation of the Muscovite elite is relevant to any study of Muscovite foreign relations, it is worth noting that Tiapkin's son was with him in Poland and was permitted (by special dispensation from the king) to attend schools there, where he acquired a decent knowledge of Latin and Polish. At the point when the young Tiapkin was about to be sent off as a courier to Moscow, his father asked that he be granted a special farewell audience with the king, at which the young man delivered a prepared speech in those languages.

Tiapkin wrote regularly to Moscow, at least weekly by the post, but sometimes using additional couriers. Judging from what Popov's monograph tells us, much of the correspondence seems to have been in cipher, though how secure it was is something we still might want to determine. Tiapkin reported on meetings of the national *sejm* as well as on meetings of the regional ones, provided verbatim accounts of his conversations with various officials and the king, and even recounted what purported to be private arguments between the king and his French queen regarding foreign policy matters. Often the news was labelled as rumour, although it is not always clear whether that was Tiapkin's designation or Popov's in writing about the resident's reports. Until more of the Muscovite diplomatic files have been published, it is impossible to establish the impact of Tiapkin's reports in Moscow. However, one may hypothesise that for the making of Muscovite military strategy, news arriving from Ukraine regarding the realities of Turkish, Tatar and Cossack affairs would have been more important than much of the information concerning the political squabbles in Poland.

Toward the end of his stay, when relations with Poland were strained because the Poles had signed a peace with the Turks and resented the fact that Muscovy had failed to send military support when it had been most needed, Tiapkin began to wonder whether it was possible to discern the truth in anything he was told. He was forbidden to travel to the court and required to stay in Warsaw, even if the main activity of government was being carried on elsewhere. Tiapkin blamed his inability to obtain good intelligence on the failure of Moscow to send Russian news which then could be traded and could be used to counter false reports being spread in Poland regarding Muscovite affairs. Earlier, when he had been receiving news regularly, he had even been able to impress Sobieski by telling him information from Ukraine which the king had not yet heard. In other words, here we have a situation analogous to that of Thomas Thynne, the English representative in Stockholm, whose effectiveness was compromised by his inability to obtain from London English news to trade for intelligence.

For the period following Tiapkin's residency, we now have an excellent monograph by Kirill Kochegarov covering the negotiations between Poland and Muscovy in the early 1680s which resulted in the signing of the 'Permanent Peace' in 1686.[17] Kochegarov has mined both published and archival sources and includes a range of detailed information on how the acquisition of news

17 Kirill A. Kochegarov, *Rech' Pospolitaia i Rossiia v 1680–1686 godakh. Zakliuchenie dogovora o Vechnom mire* (Moscow: INDRIK, 2008). My discussion on the following several pages is based on Kochegarov's book.

fed into negotiations. Even though their existence has long been known, he is the first scholar to devote serious attention to reports the Kremlin was obtaining through the crucial years of the early 1680s from a strategically placed agent. This example is worth closer examination here.

Beginning in 1680 and continuing right through to the signing of the Permanent Peace in 1686, as Kochegarov puts it, "a special agent of the *Posol'skii prikaz* in Smolensk, Nazarii Mikhailov syn Kraevskii, was sending the most valuable and detailed information to Moscow".[18] Kraevskii was from an old Smolensk noble family. A convert to Orthodoxy, he entered Muscovite service in the 1650s, was involved in the Andrusovo negotiations and in subsequent border adjudication. Interestingly, he never seems to have mastered Cyrillic; his intelligence reports to Moscow were in a kind of heavily Polonised Russian written in the Latin alphabet. The significance attached to them can be seen from the fact that his letters always were addressed directly to the head of the *Posol'skii prikaz*. Starting in 1682, his correspondent in Moscow was Vasilii Golitsyn, the influential favourite of the regent Tsarevna Sofiia Alekseevna. Kraevskii's reports were deemed so secret that the Smolensk military governors were given explicit instructions to forward them sealed to Moscow and not open them. On several occasions Kraevskii travelled to Moscow for direct consultations; in other instances, he crossed the border into Poland-Lithuania for clandestine meetings with his contacts there.

Some of what Kraevskii was forwarding to Moscow were the typical *avvisi* which circulated widely in Poland and to a fair degree replicated material coming in via the normal news channels that served as the sources for the *kuranty* translations. However, what made Kraevskii's reporting so significant was his close relationship with Augustin Konstantynowicz, an important administrative secretary (his title was *pisar' grodskii mstislavskii*), who for many years was a close confidant and functionary for the Trock commandant Michał Oginski. Konstantynowicz had earlier, in 1674, been sent to Moscow by the Lithuanian magnates who were trying to negotiate the candidacy of Tsarevich Fedor Alekseevich for the Polish throne. The Lithuanian connection, and Konstantynowicz's position as a privileged insider, then meant that a substantial amount of confidential information was being passed on to Moscow on a regular basis in the 1680s. Information transmitted through this channel moved in both directions. The Lithuanian side was also able to obtain confidential reports out of Moscow. While the specific content of individual dispatches might be known only to those privileged to be in the loop, the existence of this exchange was a badly kept secret. Both in Moscow and

18 Ibid., *passim*; here, p. 50.

in Poland-Lithuania, suspicions about the Kraevskii-Konstantynowicz connection were widespread. At least for a time, the Kremlin suspected Kraevskii of being a double agent and decided therefore not to allow him to come to Moscow where he might ferret out information that the *Posol'skii prikaz* deemed too secret to share. When some of the documents Kraevskii was sending on to Moscow raised questions about his trustworthiness, he carefully deleted those comments before forwarding the rest. If indeed, as is possible, he was playing a double game, he certainly would not have wanted his employers in Moscow to know about such suspicions on the Lithuanian side.

The Kraevskii-Konstantynowicz connection did, however, facilitate the secret negotiations the Lithuanian magnates, Hetman Michał Pac and Oginski, were carrying on with Moscow outside the framework of formal Polish-Muscovite diplomacy. For security reasons, they would insist that the originals of their letters not be sent on to Moscow, but only copies of them made by Kraevskii. As Kochegarov makes clear, the Lithuanian connection did mean that the 'news' being sent on to Moscow had a distinct and in some cases misleading bias. Given their ingrained hostility to Sobieski, whom they tarred with the accusation of his being too pro-French, Pac and Oginski were able at the very least to heighten suspicion in Moscow regarding Polish intentions. Pac and Oginski were quick to send on to Moscow information about Polish diplomatic missions to the Turks. Could the king's profession of his serious commitment to fighting the Turks really be trusted, or was he not rather planning to turn his forces against Muscovy? Since there no longer was a Russian resident in Warsaw in this period, the *Posol'skii prikaz* was limited in its ability to learn first-hand about the realities of Polish political intrigues and lacked the direct access Tiapkin had earlier had to the king.

Quite apart from the specific contribution of the Kraevskii-Konstantynowicz conduit, clearly other channels made it possible for each side to obtain important information which was not being readily communicated officially by either government. An example is the text of treaties. Moscow had pressed the Poles for the text of the Polish-Turkish treaty of Zhuravno signed in 1676, which the Poles refused to provide; therefore a copy was obtained by other means, even though the *Posol'skii prikaz* could not be certain of its authenticity. Similarly, the Poles wanted a copy of the Bahçe-Sarai treaty of 1681 ending at least temporarily the Muscovite war against the Turks and Tatars. A Russian embassy to Poland claimed it did not know the terms of the treaty, yet a copy of it had already been obtained in Poland. What we see then in a lot of the diplomatic sparring in this period is deliberate obstructionism with reference to information that was not being officially shared, even if in fact the contending parties already knew it in detail. Well before one important Polish embassy

had set out for Moscow, the *Posol'skii prikaz* had obtained through Kraevskii a copy of the confidential instructions the ambassador had been given for the upcoming negotiations. At least on the Moscow end, in the absence of minutes of meetings in which decisions were taken, there can be no simple answer to questions regarding the relationship between the acquisition of a particular item of news (or dis-information) and foreign-policy decision-making. On the Polish side, the situation was somewhat different, in that positions taken in the deliberations of the *sejm* might well be reported, but then Sobieski's own intentions, where he certainly was engaging in his own diplomacy, are less easy to ascertain.

Apart from the intelligence communicated through diplomatic channels, the Kremlin had another significant source of political intelligence: reports (*otpiski*) sent to Moscow by its military governors (*voevody*) appointed to border posts.[19] In his analysis of reports from Ukraine sent to the *Razriadnyi prikaz* (the office which supervised the *voevody*), Nikolai Ohloblin showed that information deemed of particular relevance to other jurisdictions – for example, the *Posol'skii* or *Malorossiiskii prikazy* (Office of Ukrainian Affairs) – would be passed on to them. These reports, and the mechanisms by which the intelligence in them was obtained, are clearly hugely important for any study of the information level of the court and the *Posol'skii prikaz*. A primary duty for *voevody* stationed near the borders was to keep a close eye on events in the neighbouring countries which might have a direct bearing on Muscovy's foreign relations. Ohloblin offered a tentative ranking of the reliability of the information obtained by the *voevody* from different sources. At the top of his list was what merchants related, followed in descending order of reliability by reports from former captives, reports by spies, and those from *vykhodtsy*, individuals who might arrive in suspicious or unclear circumstances. Interrogations of those who were not going beyond Kiev and presumably had an obligation to return whence they came were recorded by the Kievan officials and ultimately forwarded to Moscow. Interrogations of escaped captives or those hoping to proceed to Moscow or gain some favour in Muscovite service were recorded locally, but the individuals then sent on to be interrogated once again when they had arrived in the Russian capital. The second interrogations generally were more thorough and often revealed details not in the preliminary ones or even contradicted some of what had earlier been recorded. Here are two examples which will illustrate the importance of the *voevodskie otpiski* and the complexities of analyzing intelligence obtained at Muscovy's borders.

19 See the seminal article by Nikolai Ogloblin (Ohloblin), 'Voevodskie "vestovye otpiski" XVII v. kak material dlia istorii Malorossii', *Kievskaia starina*, 12 (1885), pp. 365–416.

In the late 1660s and early 1670s, a rebellion led by the Cossack Stepan Razin challenged the survival of the Muscovite state. While in its initial phases the disturbances on the lower Volga and into the Caspian Sea seemed little different from earlier incidents of Cossack piracy, the movement grew rapidly, and in 1670 the rebels were capturing important Russian towns and even seemed to be threatening to move on Moscow itself. This was not merely an internal Muscovite affair, as it affected relations with Persia, and the home territory of Razin's Don River Cossacks was in fact beyond Muscovy's southern border and in proximity to the territories of the Crimean Tatars and their Ottoman suzerains. As the rebellion spread, the urgency of obtaining information about it grew. An analysis of the published reports from the border commanders illustrates well the ways in which information was obtained and transmitted, much of it coming from merchants, one-time captives of the rebels, and agents sent into rebel-held territory.[20] What was initially vague and conflicting rumour gave way to verifiable reporting, and that in turn provided an explicit justification for policy decisions. Moreover, the *Posol'skii prikaz* seems to have been charged with assembling a history of the rebellion from several years of reports, in order that it then could be used to counter wild rumours about the imminent collapse of Muscovy which were fodder for Western newspaper reports. The Kremlin had a particular sensibility to any Western reporting that seemed to impugn the dignity of the tsar or suggest weakness of the Muscovite state.

My second example is from the mid-1680s and relates to intelligence-gathering in Kiev, as recorded in the remarkable diary of the Scottish mercenary Patrick Gordon.[21] Gordon arguably was the most accomplished of all the mercenaries to enter Muscovite service. He had played a key role in the heroic,

20 For the Razin rebellion, see E.A. Shvetsova, *et al.* (eds.), *Krest'ianskaia voina pod predvoditel'stvom Stepana Razina. Sbornik dokumentov* (4 vols., Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1954–1976). I have analysed a portion of these reports in Daniel C. Waugh, 'What Was News and How Was It Communicated in Pre-Modern Russia?', in Simon Franklin and Katherine Bowers (eds.), *Information and Empire: Mechanisms of Communication in Russia, 1600–1850* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), pp. 213–252 (esp. pp. 236–250). See also in that same volume, Ingrid Maier, 'How Was Western Europe Informed about Muscovy? The Razin Rebellion in Focus', pp. 113–151.

21 The following material is based on Daniel C. Waugh, 'The Best Connected Man in Muscovy? Patrick Gordon's Evidence Regarding Communications in Muscovy in the 17th Century', *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies*, 7:2 (2014 [2015]), pp. 61–124 (here esp. pp. 114–121). The relevant volume of Gordon's diary is Dmitry Fedosov (ed.), *Diary of General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries 1635–1699*, Vol. IV: 1684–1689, (Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen Press, 2013). In the following section, references are made to the dates of the diary entries rather than the pages of the edition.

if ultimately unsuccessful defence of Chyhyryn against the Turks in 1678, following which he was posted to Kiev and given responsibility to organise and strengthen the fortifications of the city. In Kiev, Gordon moved easily in the circles of the Russian and Ukrainian elites, both secular and religious. Beyond Kiev he maintained a voluminous correspondence. His knowledge of military matters both on the domestic scene and internationally meant that his counsel was valued in decisions about policy. His detailed diary provides a good introduction to the acquisition and transmission of news at an important border post in 1684 and 1685.

Since Muscovite borders in the south generally were not closed, there was a lot of coming and going, in the first instance by merchants, but also by clerics, messengers and others. In Gordon's phrasing, information arrived via "a Kyovish burgesse comeing from Nemerow", from "a Jew came from Byally Czerkiew", "a merchant come from Russe Lemberg" (that is, L'viv), "from people come out of Polland", from "men come from the Bania with salt" and so on. Clerics were an important source, their news sometimes obtained when Gordon visited a local monastery. A priest who apparently had seen the encounter provided one of the most detailed and perceptive reports about a key battle fought by the Poles against the Turks and Tatars.

Another important source of information arriving on a regular basis in Kiev was the *voevoda*'s correspondence with other military officers and with Cossack leaders. Local troop deployments or instructions for the immediate strengthening of defensive works might be spurred by the receipt of such information, although normally any kind of major commitment of forces had to wait until the matter was cleared in Moscow, something that might well take a month or more. The exchanges with the Cossack leaders – in particular the Hetman of the Left Bank Cossacks, at this time Ivan Samoilovich – were very important. Samoilovich, of course, was also writing directly to Moscow, and clearly was concerned first and foremost with pushing Muscovite policies in ways that would benefit his own power. Even though Gordon was subordinate to the Kievan *voevoda*, the Scot also had his contacts in the Hetman's capital at Baturin. His correspondents there included both Samoilovich and his then chief lieutenant and eventual successor, Ivan Mazepa. Often it seems that the Cossack reports contained the most up-to-date information about the movements of the Crimean Tatars or efforts by the Poles to send spies or agitators across the borders to persuade Cossacks to go over to the Polish side.

The *voevody* were by no means simply passive recipients of information but were also proactive in acquiring it. On a number of occasions Gordon reported the results of military scouting expeditions outside of Muscovite-controlled territory. Of even greater interest is the fact that agents (spies) were sent to

more distant locations, some of these individuals on the regular payroll of the Muscovite administration even if they had no clearly defined social or occupational status. One, Ivan Filonov Varilov, first mentioned in the 11 November 1684 entry, returned from another mission on 2 January 1685. Whereas many of the reports obtained from visiting merchants about possible military manoeuvres seem not to have been so important as to require immediate forwarding to Moscow, Varilov's information about possible Polish negotiation with the Crimea and planning to attack Muscovy was deemed significant and was sent to the capital the following day 'by post'.

Another of these intelligence agents was Mikhail Suslov, "whom wee had sent to Polland & Germany and went from hence the first of May last [1684]", returning to Kiev on 1 January 1685, a day before Varilov. On 4 January, Gordon summarised Suslov's rambling account of events in the Turkish wars far to the West, concluding with a note about rumours he heard on his way back through Poland about possible plans there to turn against Muscovy. One gets the sense that Suslov tended to exaggerate, an impression reinforced on the next day, when Gordon reported, "It was resolved to methodize & epitomize Susluws newes & send them to Mosko by post". Yet later in the year, after more of Suslov's intelligence reports had been confirmed from other sources, Gordon would write of him: "Susluf being a good bairne, as bringing good wares for their money, was dispatched againe for more".

Where such reports dealt mainly with the more distant wars against the Turks, the information probably would have been old by the time it reached Moscow. Arguably Varilov's detailed and fresh information from Poland, whether or not it was accurate, should have been of great interest in the Kremlin, as it might have really been news.

These examples and my earlier discussion should convey a sense of how widely we must cast our nets if we are to gain a full appreciation of the richness and value of the foreign news coming into Muscovy from so many different directions by the last decades of the seventeenth century. To compare Muscovy and the West, as we are wont to do, is at best a risky enterprise, for it is all too easy to reach simplistic conclusions about the progress of those slippery processes we term 'modernisation' or 'westernisation'. When I first began to work on this material several decades ago, I tended to side with Rasmussen's scepticism and question Alpatov's optimism about how well the *Posol'skii prikaz* was informed. Now I would want to take a much more nuanced approach and would venture that at least by the last decades of the seventeenth century, the Muscovite government had come a long way in connecting itself to the state-of-the-art means of obtaining foreign news that was to be found almost everywhere in Europe. Yet foreign news seems to have been of little consequence in Russia beyond narrow circles of the elite.

In fact, much of what we know about the dissemination and consumption of news in other parts of Europe offers us little by way of meaningful comparison for any discussion of news more broadly in Muscovy. One obvious difference is that Muscovy had no published newspapers, and foreign news generally was treated as a state secret. Where for the rest of Europe, the rapid spread of print culture has been the focus for many studies of the dissemination of news, for Muscovy it is necessary to rely on still inadequately published manuscript material and, even more challenging, to consider how best to assess the role of oral communication. Possibly one result of such study may invite us to look afresh at the situation in the rest of Europe, reflected as it were, in the Russian mirror.[22] The concerns of ordinary people, for whom news might mean many different things, may turn out to be similar wherever we cast our gaze.

22 I have in mind here the interesting comparative results obtained by the economic historian Alexander Gerschenkron and embodied in his book *Europe in the Russian Mirror: Four Lectures in Economic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). The Russian example led him to reassess conventional wisdom about 'economic backwardness' and the role of the state in overcoming it elsewhere in Europe.

PART 5

Foreign Reporting

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CHAPTER 7

News of Travels, Travelling News: The Mediation of Travel and Exploration in the *Gazette de France* and the *Journal de l'Empire*

Marius Warholm Haugen

The study of an eighteenth-century gazette or an early nineteenth-century French newspaper quickly reveals that the terms 'voyage' ('travel') and 'voyager' ('to travel') appear regularly. The news bulletins that constitute a central element of these publications are filled with information about the movements of royals, diplomats and other 'celebrities'.[1] News from long-distance voyages and expeditions, in the shape of letters from or about travellers, provided the press with intriguing and 'exotic' material. Non-fiction travel writing also had a place in the press, notably through reviews and book advertisements. Primarily preoccupied with the transmission of events happening outside of the community of its readers, the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century press entertained an intimate relationship with the notion of travel, to the point where, in the terms of Sylvain Venayre, "le journal est en lui-même voyageur" ("the [newspaper/journal] is in itself a traveller").[2]

Furthermore, non-fiction travel writing was perceived as closely connected to the concept of news, bringing to its readers new knowledge of the places visited. In 1810, the *Journal de l'Empire* wrote of André Michaux's *Histoire des Arbres forestiers de l'Amérique septentrionale* that it was recommendable to "tous ceux qui, dans la lecture des relations de voyage, cherchent une source de connoissances neuves et solides" ("all those who, in reading travel accounts,

1 The *Journal de Paris* covered Voltaire's travel to Paris over 15 issues in 1778. Claude Bellanger *et al.*, *Histoire générale de la presse française : 1 : Des origines a 1814* (Paris: PUF, 1969), p. 243.

2 Sylvain Venayre, 'La presse de voyage', in Philippe Régnier *et al.* (eds.), *La Civilisation du journal. Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au xixe siècle* (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2011), p. 465. All translations are mine. The translation of the French 'journal' into English is a complex issue. Already in the eighteenth century, the term 'journal' was being used both for newspapers and for periodical reviews. For the history of the term, see Jean Sgard, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un journal à l'époque classique', in Irène Passeron and Ulla Kölving (eds.), *Sciences, musiques, Lumières: mélanges offerts à Anne-Marie Chouillet* (Ferney-Voltaire: Centre International d'Étude du XVIIIe Siècle, 2002).

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look for a source of new and solid knowledge").[3] As the British *Critical Review* attested in 1759, "travels acquire one great part of their merit from being new".[4] On the one hand, the press treated travel writing as sources and pieces of news; on the other, newspaper reviews propagated a demand for the newsworthiness of travel writing. Notices in the press about new travel book publications contributed to building the expectations of prospective readers. Thus, when newspapers started adopting from other parts of the periodical press the practice of reviewing travel books, this added a new dimension to their transmission of news from and about foreign places. Reviews provided newspapers with a periodical genre that enabled commentaries on the wider world as well as on the domestic book market.

This essay explores different ways in which the French newspaper press mediated travel and exploration. The first part deals with what we might call the 'live coverage' of travels, how specific travels became newsworthy events. The second part examines the role of the press in the process of mediating travel experiences into publications. I will show how the press made events out of the 'travel' of reports, letters and travelogues on their way to becoming published books. The third part examines the practice of reviewing travel books, showing how newspapers often amplified and rewrote travel accounts. I will look at two titles from the turn of the century: the bi-weekly *Gazette de France* (1631–1792), the official gazette of the Ancien Régime;[5] and the daily *Journal de l'Empire* (1805–1814), the newspaper with the greatest print run during the first French Empire.[6] Studying cases from the French press in the last decade of the Ancien Régime through to the end of the Napoleonic era, we can identify continuity and rupture, as the journalistic mediation of travel developed together

3 *Journal de l'Empire* (hereafter *JE*), 20 October 1810. I have respected the original spelling in all quotes.

4 Quoted from Morris Golden, 'Travel Writing in the "Monthly Review" and "Critical Review", 1756–1775', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 13:2 (1977), p. 214.

5 In the period in question, the *Gazette de France* had seen its heyday. It experienced a steady decline, in numbers of subscription and revenue, throughout the 1780s. See Gilles Feyel, *L'annonce et la nouvelle: la presse d'information en France sous l'Ancien Régime (1630–1788)* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), pp. 882–910. The *Gazette* nonetheless remains a case in point for the mediation of travel in the gazette format, in a period where the interest in travel and travel writing was formidable.

6 Bellanger *et al.*, *Histoire générale*, p. 561. The newspaper ran under the title *Journal des Débats* from 1789 to 1805, then as the *Journal des débats, politique et littéraire* from 1814. Here, we concentrate on the nine-year period of the *Journal de l'Empire*.

with the newspaper in a period where the French press underwent important changes.[7]

Travels into News: The 'live coverage' of the La Pérouse Expedition

As an example of the 'live coverage' of travel and exploration, I will look at how the *Gazette de France* followed the global circumnavigation of the French naval officer and explorer Jean-François de Galaup La Pérouse. This case is especially interesting because of the tragic circumstances surrounding the expedition: La Pérouse and his crew never returned to Europe, but perished, it was discovered much later, in 1788. The *Gazette* covered different stages of the expedition, as well as the subsequent attempts to rescue the vanished explorers and to discover what had happened to them.

Prior to the publication of La Pérouse's journals in 1797, the *Gazette de France* was an important source of information about the expedition, a medium for the public representation of what was not only an official expedition, but also one in which Louis XVI was personally invested.[8] This was the first official French expedition around the globe, an attempt to respond to the exploits of James Cook. The very first mention of La Pérouse's voyage in the *Gazette* highlights its official nature. On 5 June 1785, the readers of the *Gazette* saw La Pérouse at Versailles taking leave of the king.[9] Official as this event might be,

7 A particularly notable change in this context is the shift from bi-weekly and purely informational gazettes, such as the *Gazette de France*, to daily newspapers that combined informational news bulletins and cultural content, such as the *Journal de l'Empire*. This was again the result of important political and material changes taking place: France experienced vast shifts with regard to the liberty of the press and censorship under the different regimes that succeeded one another from the Revolution and onwards. Different attempts at controlling the press through taxation also led to developments in the formats. For an introduction to this topic, see Gilles Feyel, *La presse en France des origines à 1944. Histoire politique et matérielle* (Paris: Ellipses, 2007), pp. 34–64.

8 Dominique Le Brun, *La malédiction Lapérouse* (Paris: Omnibus, 2012), pp. vi–viii.

9 *Gazette de France* (hereafter GF), 5 July 1785. "Le 29, le sieur de la Perouse, Capitaine de Vaisseau, commandant de la *Boussole* & l'*Astrolabe*, a eu l'honneur de prendre congé, étant présenté à Sa Majesté par le Maréchal de Castries, Ministre & Secrétaire d'État ayant le département de la Marine". ("On the 29th, M. de la Perouse, Ship Captain, commander of the *Boussole* & the *Astrolabe*, had the honour of taking leave, having been presented to His Majesty by the Marshall de Castries, Minister & Secretary of State in charge of the ministry of the Navy".).

and of personal importance to the king, this news item was not, however, the object of more particular attention in the *Gazette* than other pieces of news. In the conventional format of the gazette, which usually 'levelled' all forms of information, the single sentence that communicates La Pérouse's departure is inserted between the promotion of a functionary and the royal blessing of a wedding.

A modern reader can be struck by the apparently nonchalant manner with which this event was mediated. It is fully in line, however, with how newspapers were composed, and read, during the Ancien Régime: each individual part of the gazette was only a single part of a sequential, on-going conversation; in the terms of Andrew Pettegree, reading an "individual issue of a newspaper would always be like coming into a room in the middle of a conversation; it was hard to pick up the thread, and the terse factual style offered little help".[10] As opposed to pamphlets and journals, which contained cohesive and topical texts, the gazette format was characterised precisely by "la juxtaposition et la non-cohérence des énoncés" ("the juxtaposition and non-coherence of the statements").[11]

When the *Journal de l'Empire* reviewed Jean de Reuilly's *Voyage en Crimée*, a previous article on the same subject six months earlier meant that it could omit certain details, by arguing that they amounted to repetition: "Comme nous avons, il y a cinq ou six mois, tracé la description de ces déserts russes, nous nous croyons dispensés de nous livrer, en ce moment, à de plus grands détails" ("As we have, five or six months ago, painted a picture of these Russian deserts, we believe that we are exempted from going, at this moment, into further details").[12] The example points to how the newspaper presupposed, if only rhetorically, a loyal readership that engaged in sequential reading over long periods of time.

If we are to say something about how the *Gazette* mediated La Pérouse's expedition, we therefore have to look at this mediation over a longer period

10 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 261.

11 Claude Labrosse and Pierre Rétat, 'Le texte de la gazette', in Henri Duranton and Claude Labrosse (eds.), *Les Gazettes européennes de langue française* (*XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles*) (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 1992; repr. 2015). I have used the epub version of this book, without pagination, and will in the following only refer to the article title.

12 *JE*, 19 May 1806.

of time, as a sequence of issues reporting on the same event. At the moment of his departure, La Pérouse would already have been familiar to the *Gazette*'s readers, since a long excerpt from a letter he sent from Hudson Bay on a previous voyage had been published in a supplement to the paper in October 1782. Then, a little over a year after his departure, the *Gazette* brought news from and of the expedition: "Avec les lettres du Comte de la Peyrouse, il en est arrivé plusieurs écrites par les voyageurs qui l'accompagnent" ("With the letters from the Count de la Peyrouse, there came several written by the travellers who accompany him").[13] This time, the gazette gave more space to the expedition, extracting from the letters a two-paragraph account of the landing at Concepción (in Chile), explaining how they were unable to venture inland because of hostile natives. Printing letters from the La Pérouse expedition, the *Gazette* can be seen to expand its geographical zone of coverage, as it were, bringing its readers in contact with exotic and dangerous places. The members of the expedition are simultaneously news items and news correspondents; in a condensed account, the *Gazette* informs the readers *about* the development of the expedition, but also, *via* its crew members, transmits snippets of insight into the present state of Chile, with its 'savage' and dangerous regions. In a certain way, the travellers appear as roving reporters *avant la lettre*.

The publication of letters from travellers, integrally or as excerpts and paraphrases, was a common feature in the newspaper press, as in other periodicals. This is an important aspect of how the periodical press as a whole contributed to the transmission of knowledge about foreign places and cultures. However, the format of the gazette enabled a different form of mediation of travel, as it was shorter and more fragmented than literary journals, which could print longer excerpts from travellers' letters and embed them into topical articles. The gazettes nonetheless provided, in sequential form, a fragmented narrative on the course of specific travels, where letters from travellers provided the primary material.

This was a form of narrative, though, that presupposed an informed reader already familiar with the subject matter. It was a 'virtual' narrative that had to be actuated by the reader, following the gazette over often quite long periods of time. In the case of long-distance expeditions, the time intervals between the news notices in the gazette were particularly large compared with other kinds of events developing over time. Between the notice of La Pérouse's departure and that of his landing at Concepción, fourteen months had passed.

13 *GF*, 15 September 1786.

This time interval was a result of the nature of the event itself: not only was the eighteenth-century voyage a slow event, but the conditions of its mediation were also particularly complex, depending on often precarious and unstable means of communication.[14]

As the result of pieces of news that in themselves had to travel long distances, articles and notices of expeditions such as this could lead to the journalist reflecting on the spatial and temporal conditions of transmission that governed this type of reporting, as in the notice on La Pérouse's landing at Concepción:

> Il est rare, & peut-être n'y a-t-il pas d'exemple d'avoir des nouvelles aussi fraîches (en quatre mois & demi) de pays aussi éloignés; mais celles-ci sont venues par terre de la Conception à Buenos-Ayres, où elles ont trouvé un Vaisseau prêt à mettre à la voile, qui a eu une courte traversée.
>
> [It is rare, & perhaps there has never been an example before of news so fresh (in four months & a half) from places so far away; but these went by land from Concepción to Buenos-Ayres, where they found a Ship ready to set sail, and which had a short journey.][15]

The joy expressed by the journalist on the rare and relative velocity of this piece of news from the other side of the globe reveals how such 'live' travel accounts were considered as news, current events to be followed as they developed, albeit under different conditions than would be considered live coverage today, or even than would be the case with contemporary events happening close by. What this also reveals is the complex routes by which travel accounts often travelled on their way to the press. The travel conditions of the report seem to have been favourable in this case, the dispatch having found a relatively quick route back to Europe. The fact that the journalist points this out indicates precisely that the travel of travel news was not easy, and that its success was therefore appreciated.

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14 In a letter to Antoine-François Fourcroy, published in the *Annales de Chimie*, Alexander von Humboldt evokes the uncertainty with which letters would travel long distances, expressing fear that some of his shipments from America to France had been intercepted by pirates. Humboldt notes how it was common to make four or five copies of each letter, and to send them via different routes between the continents. *Annales de Chimie*, 19 July 1800.

15 *GF*, 15 September 1786.

The transmission of news from long-distance travellers often passed via correspondents, individuals residing abroad, such as diplomats or merchants, sending dispatches to Paris. In the 'canonical form' of the gazettes, as Labrosse and Rétat have termed it, the *Gazette de France* was dominated by news bulletins from correspondents (or copied from other gazettes).[16] The bulletins were ordered under headlines stating their date and provenance. On 8 August 1788, news about La Pérouse's expedition appeared in the shape of a dispatch from St. Petersburg, where the correspondent retransmitted information coming from Siberia:

> On a su ici, par les Gouverneurs de la Sibérie, que le Comte de la Peyrouse étoit arrivé au port d'Avatcha, dans la péninsule de Kamschatka, avec les deux bâtimens à ses ordres; qu'on attendoit, à la fin d'Avril, à Irkouski, une des principales villes de la Sibérie, l'Officier que ce Général devoit dépêcher, par terre, en France.
>
> [It has come to our knowledge, from the Governors of Siberia, that the Count de la Peyrouse had arrived in the port of Avachta, in the Kamchatka peninsula, with two ships under his command; that one expected, at the end of April, in Irkutsk, one of the major cities of Siberia, the Officer that this General were to have sent, by land, towards France.][17]

What this notice points to is not only the different geographical stages of the information, but also its dependence on a more or less informal network of communication that, apart from certain brief indications ("les Gouverneurs de la Sibérie"), remains hidden from the readers. The notice also expresses the expectation of receiving more news from La Pérouse: "Il y a lieu d'espérer qu'on ne tardera pas à recevoir des détails plus particuliers de l'arrivée du Comte de la Peyrouse au Kamschatka" ("There is reason to hope that we will not wait too long before receiving more specific details on the arrival of the Count de la Peyrouse in Kamchatka"). This rhetoric of expectation serves to create a feeling of participating in 'live coverage' of the expedition, to underscore that this was an event followed by the *Gazette* as it developed. Moreover, when the *Gazette*

16 Labrosse and Rétat, 'Le texte de la gazette'.

17 *GF*, 8 August 1788.

points to, or even reflects upon the conditions of news transmission from the expedition, this adds force to the rhetoric of expectation, turning the circulation of information in itself into a veritable adventure.

Four years later, a notice from the *Gazette* concerning one of the rescue missions after the disappearance of La Pérouse and his crew shows an even greater complexity of transmission:

> *Madrid, le* 16 *août* … On mande de Cadix, d'après des lettres de Lima, que deux bâtimens François, partis de l'Orient vers la fin de l'année dernière, pour aller à la recherche de M. de la Peyrouse, ont relaché dans l'isle de Chiloé.
>
> [*Madrid*, 16 *August* … It is reported from Cadiz, after letters from Lima, that two French vessels, that departed from the East towards the end of last year, to search for M. de La Peyrouse, have landed at the island of Chiloé.][18]

News of the French vessels had reached the *Gazette* from Madrid, via Cadiz, Lima, and Chiloé. Reflecting, again, the difficult conditions of transmission for this kind of news circulation, notices such as these may also have had another value, an evocative power resulting from the enumeration of more or less distant places. If the early-modern newspaper in general "required frequent recourse to an atlas", the news from and about distant travels were perhaps particularly evocative, echoing the diversity of the world and contributing to the gradual expansion of the readers' worldview.[19]

The rhetoric of expectation that we saw accompanying the coverage of La Pérouse's expedition would soon receive a tone of concern, if not despair. In 1786, the *Gazette* had taken great pleasure in the relative speed with which news of La Pérouse's expedition arrived back in Europe. And, in June 1787, it pronounced the expedition a success (despite the reported deaths of 21 crew members), and estimated a safe return by the spring of 1788.[20] In 1790, however, the *Gazette* expressed concern and frustration over not having received any more news from La Pérouse and his crew:

18 *Gazette nationale de France*, 1 September 1792. The gazette had added 'nationale' to its title in an attempt to turn its coat in the turmoil of the Revolution. Feyel, *L'annonce et la nouvelle*, pp. 908–909.

19 Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 207.

20 *GF*, 12 June 1787.

> L'intérêt qu'inspire l'expédition du Comte de la Peyrouse, l'impatience avec laquelle on attend son retour en Europe, & le tems qui s'est écoulé depuis qu'on en a reçu les dernières nouvelles, font rechercher, avec avidité, toutes celles qu'on peut se procurer indirectement. Nous nous empressons de publier celles-ci extraites d'une lettre écrite, le 9 Février, par Sir Joseph Banks, Président de la Société royale de Londres, au sieur Broussonet de l'Académie royale des Sciences.
>
> [The interest that the expedition of the Count de la Peyrouse inspires, the impatience with which one awaits his return to Europe, & the time that has passed since receiving his latest news, have us search, with eagerness, news that we can acquire indirectly. We are hastening to publish these [reports] taken from a letter written on 9 February, by Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society of London, to M. Broussonet of the Académie royale des Sciences.][21]

In retrospect, this notice has poignancy, as La Pérouse's vessels had been shipwrecked already several months before. The excerpt from Banks's letter, which communicated some of the last signs of life from the expedition, provided information in the form of hearsay that had already passed through several hands:

> [J]e saisis avec empressement [Banks writes] les nouvelles que m'en a donné [about la Pérouse], Samedi dernier, le sieur *Berkley*, qui vient de commander, avec le plus grand succès, un vaisseau pour le commerce des pelleteries sur la côte du nord-ouest de l'Amérique. La dernière relâche de ce Capitaine a été à l'*Isle-de-France*, d'où il a mis à la voile l'automne dernière [sic]; peu de tems avant son départ de cette Isle, il y étoit arrivé un vaisseau venant de *Batavia*, dont l'équipage lui avoit dit qu'au mois de Mai dernier, le sieur *de la Peyrouse* y étoit avec ses deux vaisseaux, l'un & l'autre en fort mauvais état, & qu'il étoit occupé à les abattre en carène.
>
> [I eagerly grasp [Banks writes] the news [about la Pérouse] that, last Saturday, M. *Berkley* gave me, who has just been in charge, with the greatest success, of a ship for fur trade to the north-west coast of America. The last port of call of this Captain was the *Isle-de-France* [Mauritius], from where he set sail last autumn; shortly before his arrival at this Island, there had arrived a ship coming from *Batavia*, of which the crew had told him that last May, M. *de la Peyrouse* had been there with his two ships, the one & the other in very bad shape, & that he had been busy repairing the keel.]

21 *GF*, 2 March 1790.

Both the journal's introductory remarks and the excerpt from Banks's letter reflect the concern that had begun to set in with regard to the fate of the expedition. They also reveal the uncertainty of the news report itself, visible through the numerous stages of its travel to France, as well as through Banks's proviso of "si cette nouvelle est exacte" ("if this news is precise"). Furthermore, in line with the periodical practice of copying other publications, the article from the *Gazette* was reprinted in the *Journal de Paris* the following day, adding yet another step to the stages of transmission that this piece of news underwent on its way from Batavia to Paris.

At the same time, this article in the *Gazette* is a particularly clear example of how the press, in its coverage of La Pérouse, mobilised what I have referred to as a rhetoric of expectation. Through the use of terms such as *intérêt, impatience, avidité, empresser*, the article reflects the expectations of the journalist, but probably also works to enhance the readers' desire to receive news from the expedition. As we will see, this rhetorical aspect of travel articles, along with the reflections on the material, spatial, and temporal conditions of transmitting news from long-distance travels, is also an important part of our second category of travel in the newspaper press, namely the coverage (and construction) of travel book publications as events. In its coverage of travel, as well as of the mediation of travel into literature, the newspaper press turned travel and expedition into news, thereby often reflecting how this particular type of news itself circulated, or *travelled*.

Travels into Print: The Coverage of Travel Book Publications as Events

The publication of a travel book is the result of a complex process of mediation and remediation of the experience of travel. Keighren, Withers, and Bell have termed this 'travels into print', drawing upon I.S. Maclaren's conceptual model describing the different stages of travel writing: the travel experience is mediated into field notes, then into daily journals and draft manuscripts, before resulting in the publication of a book, thereafter often continuing into subsequent editions and translations.[22] The newspaper press intervened in this process in two notable ways. As we will see in the final part of this essay,

22 Innes M. Keighren, Charles W.J. Withers, and Bill Bell, *Travels into Print: Exploration, Writing, and Publishing with John Murray, 1773–1859* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 18–19. For a complete description of this model, see I.S. MacLaren, 'In consideration of the evolution of explorers and travellers into authors: a model', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 15:3 (2011), p. 227.

the press itself took a role in this process by way of reviewing and rewriting the travel text, adding to it yet another stage of remediation of the travel experience. Also, as we will see in this part, the press reported on different stages of 'travels into print', thus constructing travel book publications as events.

Reporting on the development of specific expeditions and travels, the press often voiced expectation of seeing the published results. When the *Gazette* announced, in a news bulletin from London, that James Bruce had presented his Abyssinian Travels to the English monarchs, it first and foremost expressed anticipation: "Cet Ouvrage important est attendu depuis longtems, & sera publié dans la semaine prochaine" ("This important Work has been expected for a long time, & shall be published in the coming week").[23] As this notice, probably taken from a London newspaper, was referring to the English publication, the *Gazette* added a footnote to announce an upcoming French translation, making the information more relevant to its own readers. Treated as pieces of news, publications were presented as events that merited a place in the informational columns of the gazettes. Original publications, but also translations and new editions of particular travel books, appeared as news, inserted between paragraphs on battles and aristocratic weddings.

Moreover, gazettes and newspapers mediated stories of how travel journals had themselves travelled back to Europe, adding to the expectation of seeing these published. On 18 August 1775, the *Gazette de France* printed an excerpt of a letter from a member of Cook's second voyage, sent from the Cape of Good Hope in March the same year. The three-paragraph excerpt recounted the last stretches of the expedition, the loss of crew members, encounters with "Savages", and the shipment back to England of "many rarities just as precious as worthy of curiosity".[24] The text is immediately followed by a piece of information that stands out, as it is not a part of the excerpt and set in larger type: "Le Capitaine Cook a envoyé du même endroit ses Journaux qui ont été remis aussi-tôt à Sa Majesté" ("Captain Cook has sent from the same place his Journals, which have immediately been given to His Majesty"). To the 'live coverage' of travel is here added an element pointing to a particular stage in the 'travel into print' of Cook's voyage, an account of the actual journey of his journals back to England.

The published account of Cook's first voyage, translated into French in 1774, had been a great success.[25] We can imagine how the extract of a letter from the

23 *GF*, 27 April 1790.

24 *GF*, 18 August 1775. Information seemingly from the same letter had appeared in the *Gazette* on 14 July 1775.

25 The French translation was published as *Relation des voyages entrepris par ordre de Sa Majesté Britannique actuellement régnante* (Paris: Saillant et Nyon and Panckoucke, 1774).

expedition would have built on the expectation among the readership of seeing a publication from the second voyage. Just as the *Gazette* often reflected the conditions of transmission of news about travels, it could also contain traces of the 'travel' of documents on their way to publication. The official capacity of Cook's expedition, which entailed that his journals had been "directly presented to the king", presented this 'travel into print' as a particularly important event.

The same went for the announcement of the publication itself. Only a few months after the *Gazette* had informed its readers about the travel of Cook's journal back to England, it announced, in another dispatch from London, that it had been published, together with that of Tobias Furneaux, captain of HMS *Adventure*, the vessel accompanying Cook's *Resolution*:

> On vient de publier le journal du voyage du Capitaine Cooke [sic] sur le Vaisseau *la Résolution*, dans les années 1772, 73, 74, 75, avec le dessein de découvrir l'hémisphere méridionale. Ce voyage tend à prouver que la découverte prétendue du Continent entre l'Equateur & le 50^{e} degré de latitude méridionale n'a rien eu de réel. On a ajouté à cet Ouvrage le Journal du Capitaine Fourneaux sur le Vaisseau l'*Aventure* en 1772, 73, 74, 75 avec le récit de la séparation des deux Vaisseaux & les événements remarquables arrivés à l'un & à l'autre. Cet Ouvrage contient la description Historique & Géographique des Isles & des Pays découverts par ces deux Capitaines.
>
> [Now is published the travelogue of Captain Cook on the Ship *The Resolution*, in the years of 1772, 73, 74, 75, with the intention of exploring the southern hemisphere. This voyage aims to prove that the presumed discovery of the Continent between the Equator & the 50° latitude south has no truth to it. One has added to this Work the Travelogue of the Captain Fourneaux on the Ship *The Adventure* in 1772, 73, 74, 75 with the account of the separation of the two Ships & the remarkable events that happened to the one and the other. This Work contains the Historical and Geographical descriptions of the Islands and the Lands discovered by these two Captains.][26]

The original travel book was 'ghost-written' by John Hawkesworth, who had reworked the journals of Cook and of other members of the crew (Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and Banks) into one single narrative. See Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 12–13.

26 *GF*, 1 December 1775. French readers had to wait three years, however, for the first volume of the French translation to appear, as *Voyage dans l'hémisphère austral, et autour du monde* (Paris: Hôtel de Thou, 1778).

It is important to bear in mind that this announcement is not an advertisement as such, but a piece of news about what was perceived as a significant event for the progress of knowledge. The *Gazette de France* occasionally advertised books, usually as a list of titles in a smaller, two-column section on the last of its four pages. However, important new publications often appeared in the news bulletins. As a piece of news, this text in the *Gazette* informs the readers about two events: the event of the expedition, its scope with regard to time and place, its primary motivation; and the event of the publication, including a short description of the book's contents. This description gives information about the composition of the book. It also makes a short assessment by indicating how the book transmits the account of "événements remarquables" ("remarkable events").

That a travel book publication was perceived as a newsworthy event can be considered to be the result of two factors: the avid interest of the late eighteenth-century readership in travel writing, and the importance of travels as tools for scientific progress. Important for the advancement of knowledge, the publication of travel accounts could tie in with political concerns. As I.S. MacLaren has argued, the British government used the publication of travelogues from official expeditions as a tool, not only for scientific advancement, but also in the process of 'claiming' parts of the globe:

> Unlike the Spanish, for example, who jealously guarded unpublished *their* explorers' narratives of eighteenth-century voyages to the New World's Pacific Coast, the British initiated claims to the portions of the globe that they explored by publishing printed volumes by command of their monarch.[27]

The notices of the shipment of Cook's journals and their subsequent publication could therefore be seen as news items concealing a symbolic, political value. We might ask if the *Gazette*'s coverage of this specific 'travel into print' did not interact with the publication in its reflection of an official British policy of global discovery and claim. If the publication of a travel book was a newsworthy event that had a place in the columns of the French 'presse d'information' (the 'informational press'), it was precisely because of the book's symbolic value as a sign of scientific progress, global discovery and expansion. This does not mean that the editors of the *Gazette* were necessarily aware of this value. It could be seen rather as a subtext resulting from the very form of the gazettes, which, due to their composite and polyphonic nature, transmitted "l'écho de

27 MacLaren, 'In consideration', pp. 223–224.

voix publiques et officielles multiples" ("the echo of multiple public and official voices"),[28] and could thus, inadvertently, reflect values to which their editors did not necessarily subscribe.

As already mentioned, the official French attempt at replying to Cook's voyages ended in tragedy. The unfortunate La Pérouse was, however, able to send documents back to France on several occasions, the last in January 1788.[29] These documents did not result in a publication until almost a decade later: the National Assembly decided by decree the publication of the journals in 1791, but the advent of the Terror effectively postponed it until 1797. But if French readers had to wait a long time for the publication of La Pérouse's travelogue, as early as 1788 they were able to follow the 'travel' of his documents via the press. The year before, the captain had sent a member of his crew, Jean-Baptiste-Barthélemy de Lesseps, from Siberia to France with a dossier of reports from the expedition. In a supplement to its issue on 28 October 1788, the *Gazette de France* published a short extract from the reports, prefaced by an account of Lesseps's journey. It is safe to presume that, in the wake of the success of Cook's travel books, this 'foretaste' added to the expectations among the *Gazette*'s readers of the future event of a publication.

The narrative of Lesseps's journey bringing the documents back is in itself interesting in our context, as a particularly good example of how the travel of documents could be intriguing in its own right. This short narrative, stretching over one and a half columns, accentuates the heroic aspect of Lesseps's exploit:

> La jeunesse & le zèle du sieur de Lesseps l'ont soutenu, jusqu'au terme, contre les fatigues & les dangers inséparables d'un voyage de 4000 lieues, à travers des pays peu habités & peu fréquentés.
>
> [The youth and eagerness of M. de Lesseps have carried him, all the way to the destination, against the fatigues and dangers that are inseparable from a journey of 4000 leagues, across countries scarcely inhabited and not much visited.][30]

Lesseps's itinerary is described closely, with regard to time as well as space, in a kind of micro-travelogue.[31] Specific attention is given to parts of the travel

28 Labrosse and Rétat, 'Le texte de la gazette'.

29 Le Brun, *La malédiction Lapérouse*, pp. XXIII–XXIV.

30 *GF*, 28 October 1788.

31 Lesseps's travelogue was published two years later, as *Journal historique du voyage de M. de Lesseps* (Paris: l'Imprimerie royale, 1790).

that stand out as extraordinary, providing this micro-travelogue with narrative elements beyond the simple places and dates of the itinerary:

> Arrivé à l'Isthme, qui joint cette terre au continent, il suivit la côte orientale de la mer de *Pengina*, passa par *Ingiga*; &, après beaucoup de difficultés & de dangers, il parvint, le 5 Mai, à *Okotskoï*. Cette partie de son voyage a été faite sur des traîneaux, tirés ou par des chiens Kamschadales, ou par des rennes, suivant l'usage de chaque pays qu'il a traversé.
>
> [Having arrived at the Isthmus that joins this land to the continent, he followed the eastern coast of the *Pengina* sea, passed by *Ingiga*; &, after many difficulties and dangers, he made it, on 5 May, to *Okotskoï*. This part of his journey has been done on sleighs, pulled either by Kamchatkan dogs or by reindeers, following the customs of each country he travelled through.]

The *Gazette* goes here into details on the conditions of transmission of travel reports, creating a small travel text in its own right, with enough details and episodes to interest readers avid for adventurous accounts. Therefore, 'travels into print' should not only be taken metaphorically, as the description of different stages of the remediation of travel experience; it can also refer to specific parts of these stages that depended on the physical travel of documents back to Europe in order to be published, travels that could in turn become objects of notices, and narratives, in the press. The next stage of this remediation, reviewing, is the topic of the last part of this essay.

Travels in Reviews: The Amplification and Rewriting of Travel Accounts

It was in reviews that the press could exert perhaps its biggest influence on the public perception of travel. The relationship between travel writing and the press had been increasingly important throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, with a formidable rise in the number of travel book reviews in French periodicals.[32] For a long time, reviews had been an important part of literary journals, but with little or no place in the pre-revolutionary gazettes. The *Gazette de France* not only contained little cultural content, but

32 Yasmine Marcil, *La fureur des voyages. Les récits de voyage dans la presse périodique (1750–1789)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), p. 49.

was also, in its status as 'feuille royale', denied all form of commentary and reflexion.[33] After the French Revolution, the newspaper press began to incorporate cultural content in its columns, to a much larger extent than had been the case in the gazettes of the Ancien Régime or in the revolutionary newspapers. As Gilles Feyel has pointed out, the all-political journalism of the Revolution was, under the Consulate and the First Empire, replaced by a literary newspaper journalism that drew its legitimacy and review practices from the pre-revolutionary literary journals.[34] Moreover, with the strong censorship of the Napoleonic regime, literature, arts and sciences were the only domains where the few remaining newspapers could exert a degree of independence and freedom.[35] The *Journal de l'Empire* in particular devoted extensive space to travel book reviews, where it could include commentary and reflexion that it had to avoid in its news sections.[36]

A review is also an item of news, in the sense that its goal is to transmit to its readers information about a recent publication. In the case of travel writing, it has an additional news function, transmitting new knowledge about places and cultures. This function would, in many cases, become the most important one. Although qualitative assessments of the books were included in the reviews, their main emphasis was more often than not on the transmission of knowledge. In fact, travel book reviews tended to amplify or rewrite the travel text, adding to the many stages of remediation that had already altered the representation of the travel. Thus, the reviews became an integral part of 'travels into print'. Articles stretching over several issues retold travels to the readers, paraphrasing and making extracts from the source texts, as well as reflecting on the knowledge of the places visited that the book brought to the public. To the extent that stylistic judgments were given a place in the reviews, it was usually in quite formulaic terms of *utile dulcis*, bearing on the travel writer's ability to balance truthful observations and descriptions with a pleasurable style.

Taking up this practice of reviewing, the newspaper became, to an even greater extent than the gazette of the Ancien Régime, a medium for travel writing, thus contributing greatly to the rich culture of travel in this period.[37] As

33 Feyel, *L'annonce et la nouvelle*, p. 891.

34 Feyel, *La presse en France*, p. 62.

35 André Cabanis, *La presse sous le Consulat et l'Empire (1799–1814)* (Paris: Société des Études Robespierristes, 1975), p. 105. See also Feyel, *La presse en France*, p. 62.

36 It should be noted that the *Journal de l'Empire* also covered travel and travel book publications within its news sections, in very much the same way as the *Gazette de France*.

37 For more on the relationship between journalism and the culture of travel, see Daniel Roche, *Les circulations dans l'Europe moderne: XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard/Pluriel, 2011), pp. 106–110.

such, the press could also have the effect of stimulating the curiosity and 'Wanderlust' of its readers. A letter from a reader in the *Observateur des spectacles* points to how periodical fragments of travel books gave the urge to travel:

> C'est en lisant dans nos gazettes des fragmens d'ouvrages publiés en France, qu'on a conçu l'idée et le désir connaître, par soi-même, une cataracte dont on trouvait de si belles descriptions dans les écrits de MM. Liancourt et Châteaubriand.
>
> [It is reading in our gazettes the fragments of works published in France, that we have come up with the idea and the wish to know, by ourselves, a waterfall of which we found such beautiful descriptions in the texts of MM. Liancourt and Chateaubriand.][38]

Excerpts and reviews thus appear to have provided the newspaper with a function that it shared with, and borrowed from, the travel book: informing readers about other places and cultures, newspapers, like travel books, could inspire them to go there themselves. In the terms of Sylvain Venayre, the press was both the arrival point and the starting point of travel: accomplished travels put into writing ended up as reviews in the newspapers, which could then inspire new travels.[39]

Elisabeth Hagglund has pointed out that the primary role of the eighteenth-century reviewer – to "giv[e] a reader a sufficient 'taste' of a book to enable him to decide whether to purchase it or not" – was often supplemented by a secondary role: "some reviewers of travel chose extracts which they judged would interest their readers, whether or not they eventually acquired the book".[40] Since the beginning of literary journalism, with Denis de Sallo's *Journal des sçavans* (1665), an important role of the journals was to save readers the trouble of reading mediocre books by summarising them.[41] When daily newspapers adopted book reviewing, they also took on this role. The *Journal de l'Empire* often spread travel book reviews over two, sometimes three articles,

38 *L'Observateur des spectacles, de la littérature et des arts*, 8 December 1802.

39 Sylvain Venayre, 'Le voyage, le journal et les journalistes au xixe siècle', *Le Temps des médias*, 8 (2007), p. 49. Venayre quotes a passage from Adelbert von Chamisso's *Voyage autour du monde. 1815–1818*, in which the French-Prussian adventurer identifies the cause for his travel urge in reading in a gazette about a Russian expedition towards the North Pole. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

40 Elizabeth Hagglund, 'Reviews of Travel in the Monthly Review, 1749–1758: An Introductory Survey', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 2 (1998), p. 7.

41 Sgard, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un journal', p. 484.

echoing the practices of literary journals. The reviewers could spend an entire first article on creating their own narrative of the places visited, extracting and paraphrasing the source text, and drawing upon other texts dealing with the same places. Comments on the style of the book, or even on the veracity and precision of the travellers' observations, could be reserved for a second article in a subsequent issue, and did at times not even receive any attention at all. In the style assessments that we find at the end of the reviews of the *Journal de l'Empire*, the journalists often give preference to a 'simple' style of writing that avoided unnecessary embellishments and digressions.[42] As in the literary press, *utile dulcis* is still the common schema of the assessments, although with a clear tendency to privilege "connoissances positives" ("positive knowledge") and scientific credibility to literary elegance and entertainment.[43]

The choices made by the journalist of the excerpts to include and the elements to retransmit constitute in and of themselves an interpretation of the travel narrative; the review text appears as a remediated version of the travel account, a rewriting of the source text combined with the reviewer's own knowledge of the places in question. For the two most prolific travel reviewers of the *Journal de l'Empire*, the historian Étienne Jondot and the geographer Conrad Malte-Brun, the review was a tool for taking part in an erudite conversation about a given topic.[44] The newspaper article thus espoused a central aspect of the eighteenth-century travel book: references to precursory travellers were frequently used by travel writers to define their own standing in an on-going discourse on the place visited. Commenting on this discourse as a form of metanarrative, the review also took part in it, retelling the account of its source text in a way that altered the representation of the travel.

The practice of reviewing as rewriting would sometimes be explicitly pointed to. Reviewing Lazzaro Spallanzani's *Viaggi alle due Sicilie*, Étienne Jondot

42 See for example *JE*, 15 February 1807.

43 *JE*, 30 December 1807.

44 Malte-Brun was also the editor of the geographical journal *Annales des voyages, de la géographie et de l'histoire*, established in 1807. He would occasionally reuse material from his journal in the newspaper, and refer in the latter to pieces in the former. Thus, his reviews in the *Journal de l'Empire* were made a part of a transmedial, scholarly network of books, journals and newspapers. Claude Labrosse has described the form of reading enabled by periodicals as entering precisely into a network, as a reading "*mise en réseau*". Claude Labrosse, 'Fonctions culturelles du périodique littéraire', in Claude Labrosse and Pierre Rétat, *L'instrument périodique. La fonction de la presse au XVIII^e siècle* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1985), p. 60. I would like to argue that this idea of 'network reading' needs to be extended and studied further to include all the various mediums through and between which readers would acquire knowledge on specific topics.

criticises his overly detailed manner of writing, which "ne convient pas à tous les lecteurs" ("does not suit all readers").[45] Jondot intends to remedy this flaw by giving his representation of the places visited by Spallanzani, nourished by his own classical culture:

> Pour rendre ces articles plus intéressans, nous nous servirons des connoissances que nous avons puisées nous-mêmes dans les auteurs de l'antiquité, lesquels ont déployé, dans leurs observations, autant de sagacité que les modernes.
>
> [In order to render these articles more interesting, we will make use of the knowledge that we ourselves have drawn from the ancient authors, who have exerted, in their observations, just as much sagacity as the moderns.]

The article continues with a depiction of the landscape surrounding Etna, where Jondot mobilises his own rhetorical talents in personifying the landscape. This lyrical depiction self-consciously contrasts with Spallanzani's more scholarly account.

In paraphrasing the source text, the journalists could add stylistic elements and value judgements that had little or no place in the original. In the French translation of the German Count Hoffmannsegg's travel to Portugal, there is a description of a gate at the monastery of Bussaco, near Coimbra. The gate catches the attention of the traveller, as it is decorated with skulls and bones:

> Plusieurs croix annoncent le voisinage du couvent, et bientôt on arrive à la porte du mur d'enceinte: elle est ornée des images de la mort; des crânes et des ossemens figurés par des pierres noires et blanches incrustées, l'entourent. Après avoir sonné, on est introduit par un frère lai.
>
> [Several crosses signal that we are near the monastery, and soon we arrive at the gate of the bailey: it is decorated with images of death; skulls and bones inlaid with black and white stones surrounds it. After having rung, we are let in by a lay brother.][46]

This is a rather sober description of "images of death", which the author makes *en passant* without further reflection. The visit to the monastery is paraphrased

45 *JE*, 1 October 1805.

46 *Voyage en Portugal, fait depuis 1797 jusqu'en 1799, par M. Link et le comte de Hoffmansegg*, vol. III (Paris: Dentu, Imprimeur-libraire, 1808), p. 97.

by Jondot in his review, where he gives a more elaborate interpretation of the morbid decoration:

> Des cranes, des ossemens humains en forment l'affreuse décoration, et peignent d'une manière assez énergique le saint mépris des anachorètes pour cette vie si fugitive et si misérable que partout ailleurs nous égayons d'ornemens aussi frivoles que mensongers.
>
> [Skulls, human bones form the hideous decoration [of the gate], and paint in a rather vigorous manner the holy disdain of the anchorites towards this life so fleeting and miserable, that everywhere else we liven up with decorations as frivolous as they are deceitful.][47]

These moralistic reflections, which are not found in the source text, point to how Jondot's review is just as much an amplification of the narrative as a review in the modern sense.

The review could also include a political tone with little or no place in the source text. In the second article on Hoffmannsegg's travelogue, Jondot criticises the reflections of the German count on the hierarchical nature of Portuguese society:

> *M. de* Hoffausegg [sic] s'élève aussi contre *le démon de la hiérarchie*. Est-ce que M. le comte auroit voulu prêcher la liberté et la fraternité? Nous l'invitrons [sic] à enseigner aux paysans de son comté une telle doctrine. Il verra si la prospérité de ses affaires domestiques sera bien plus brillante.
>
> [*M. de* Hoffausegg [sic] also rises up against the *demon of hierarchy*. Was M. the count intending to preach liberty and fraternity? We invite him to teach such a doctrine to the peasants of his own county. He will see whether the prosperity of his domestic affairs becomes more brilliant.][48]

Accusing Count Hoffmannsegg of hypocrisy, and ironising over the revolutionary associations that his critique evokes, Jondot flags his own political standpoint, thereby revealing just as much about the political situation of imperial France as about Portugal. In newspapers strictly controlled by the Napoleonic regime, the sections for cultural content were the only place for subtly hinting at the ideology of the newspaper. In the terms of André Cabanis, "se moquer

47 *JE*, 15 March 1806.

48 *JE*, 26 March 1806.

d'une tragédie de Voltaire, c'est prendre parti pour la contre-révolution. Rire d'une oraison funèbre de Bossuet, c'est se situer dans la lignée du XVIII[e] siècle" ("To mock a tragedy by Voltaire is to side with the counter-revolution. To laugh at a funeral oration by Bossuet is to place oneself in line with the eighteenth century").[49] For the *Journal de l'Empire*, as a counter-revolutionary newspaper, mocking the traces of 'liberté' and 'fraternité' in Hoffmannsegg's travel meant announcing its own ideological stand.

This did not mean that book reviews were a free zone in which to criticise the regime. Chateaubriand painfully experienced this in 1807, when his attack on Napoleon in a travel book review led to the dismantling of his journal.[50] Other journalists were more cautious. Jondot finishes his review of Hoffmansegg by praising the maintenance of peace and order, in a way which would not have displeased the imperial authorities:

> vraisemblablement les révolutions politiques qui viennent d'ébranler l'Europe, ont fait sentir la nécessité de considérer et de respecter les hommes qui assurent le maintien de l'ordre et le repos des régimes.
>
> [in all likelihood, the political revolutions that have recently shaken Europe have shown the necessity of esteeming and respecting the men who assure the maintenance of order and the peace of regimes.][51]

On one level, the passage praises the value of Portuguese soldiers, but reads, on another, as a concession to the regime that had restored order to revolutionary France. By mobilising the travel account in a political discourse, such as here, or by referencing, explicitly or implicitly, France's political, economic or cultural situation, a review would also bring forward comparative perspectives, by which the readers could perceive their own place and culture in light of those visited by the travel writer, and re-visited by the journalist. Such perspectives constitute a common feature that the review shares with travel books and the travel writing genre in general; this, then, is a good example of how newspapers

49 Cabanis, *La presse*, p. 105.

50 Jean-Marie Roulin, 'Chateaubriand', in Philippe Régnier *et al.* (eds.), *La Civilisation du journal. Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au xixe siècle* (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2011), pp. 1108–1109. In a review of Alexandre de Laborde's *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne* in the *Mercure de France* (4 July 1807), Chateaubriand opened his review with an allegory that cast Napoleon as emperor Nero. The regime responded by merging the *Mercure* with another periodical, the *Décade philosophique*.

51 *JE*, 26 March 1806.

drew upon topics and rhetorical devices from other formats, but also of how they appropriated precisely these elements to create a distinct and independent voice. Through comparative perspectives and practices of amplification and rewriting, another dimension is added to the mediation of travel and exploration in the newspaper press: the review format allowed the journalists to build on their own geographical and historical knowledge to construct articles on other places and cultures, as well as to comment on their own. Several decades before the birth of the periodical travel reportage proper, the review allowed the newspaper to become a medium for travel writing in its own right.

We have seen how late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century French gazettes and newspapers were important in transmitting the experience of travel and exploration to the public. The press followed practically all stages of travel, from departure to arrival, often thematising the material conditions that governed the communication of travels. Covering the dramatic travels of travel reports, it also helped construct their publications as events. With the practice of reviewing, the newspaper became a medium for critique, amplification and rewriting of travel narratives. The newspaper press thus appears to stand in a complex and interdependent relationship with the genre of travel writing: a medium for travel writing in its own right, the press is also deeply interwoven with the whole of a literary culture that, at the turn of the century, saw travel writing as one of its most popular genres. Gazettes and newspapers share with the travel book certain defining features, such as the demand for newsworthiness and the interest in the foreign; newspapers as well as travel books were expected to inform readers about the outer world. Travels into news, travels into print, travels in reviews: these different mediations of travel form the picture of a press as an agent with a central role in constructing the public perception of travel and exploration.

CHAPTER 8

Foreign News Reporting in Transition: James Perry and the French Constitution Ceremony

Johanne Kristiansen

Introduction

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, there was a shift in the practice of how British newspapers gathered news from abroad. The traditional method for acquiring such news had primarily taken the form of copying from official documents, from foreign newspapers, or from the foreign news reports printed in rival British newspapers. This copying was in some cases supplemented by short news bulletins provided by news writers based in certain European capitals, and by occasional letters from part-time correspondents stationed abroad, typically soldiers, merchants and travellers.[1] However, neither the news bulletin writers nor the occasional correspondents were hired full-time, and none of them offered their services to one paper exclusively. Thus, as noted by Ivon Asquith, these practices could not be relied upon either in terms of accuracy or regularity, and they were proving inadequate when faced with the growing demand for foreign news in the period.[2]

The great political revolutions of the late eighteenth century had led to an increased demand for the speed and accuracy in the reporting of foreign news, especially from the various groups of people whose economic interests depended upon international affairs. Merchants, shop owners, bankers and investors all relied on newspapers for their information, and as Bob Harris notes, the newspaper was an unparalleled source of intelligence for most of its

1 For instance, the editor of 'Europe's best-informed journal', the *Gazette de Leyde*, paid news writers based in eight European cities to provide him with foreign news bulletins. See Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac's* Gazette de Leyde (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 71–77; Michael Harris, 'Journalism as a Profession or Trade in the Eighteenth Century', in Michael Harris and Robin Myers (eds.), *Author/Publisher Relations during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Polytechnic Press, 1983), pp. 40–41. Harris does, however, point out that these casual connections could become more permanent in certain cases, so as to involve regular payment.

2 Ivon Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle 1790–1821* (Unpublished PhD diss., 1973), p. 17.

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readers, and "offered far more complete coverage of politics, domestic and foreign, than most individuals' personal contacts could be expected to furnish" in the period.[3] Towards the end of the century, newspaper proprietors gradually came to see the potential of this substantial demand for fresh foreign news, especially after the outbreak of the French Revolution in the summer of 1789.

Fortunately, for the newspaper conductors, the political commotions across the channel had not only created a greater *demand* for news, but also a greater *supply*. One London newspaper – the *Morning Chronicle* – capitalised on this situation by sending one of its editors, James Perry, to Paris in the summer of 1791 to ensure a steady and accurate reporting of events.[4] Perry's co-proprietor, James Gray, stayed behind and took sole charge of editing the newspaper in his absence. Their enterprise came at a particularly opportune moment, as several important events in France in the summer and autumn of 1791 caused an even greater demand for French news. This essay focuses on one of these events, namely the ratification of the French constitution by King Louis XVI in September 1791.

After the outbreak of Revolution, the deputies of the newly formed 'National Assembly' had set out to reorganise French society in fundamental ways. They moved to abolish the privileges enjoyed hitherto by the nobility and the clergy, and to establish a new political system based on legal equality and popular sovereignty. The basic principles of the 'New Regime' were made explicit as early as August 1789, in the seventeen articles of the 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen', but the culmination of the National Assembly's efforts was the king's formal acceptance of a written constitution on 14 September 1791. This marked an important political shift from absolutist to constitutional monarchy, considerably limiting the king's power vis-à-vis the people.

Through the pioneering effort of James Perry, a new pattern of newsgathering emerged, with the introduction of the professional foreign reporter based at the scene of events, as opposed to the occasional contributions from part-time correspondents only loosely connected with the newspaper press. Jeremy Black argues that this earlier practice was "substantially different from a developed system of particular correspondents or agencies" that would characterise the newspaper business in the nineteenth century.[5] James Perry's voyage to

3 Bob Harris, *Politics and the Rise of the Press: Britain and France, 1620–1800* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 77.

4 Jeremy Black, *The English Press, 1621–1861* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2001), p. 147.

5 Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 98. By 1850 it had become customary for daily morning newspapers to have a foreign correspondent in all the major capitals in Europe. See Ivon Asquith, 'The structure,

France marks an early attempt to create such a developed system, although it must be noted that his residence in Paris was for a limited amount of time, and that he was there not solely as a foreign correspondent, but also as a deputy of the English Revolution Society.[6] Nevertheless, his connection with the *Morning Chronicle* was permanent and exclusive: he did not offer his reports to any competing newspapers. This early initiative thus anticipates the emergence of the full-time professional foreign reporter on British newspaper staffs.

In the years immediately following Perry's venture, other London newspapers followed his example. Both John Bell of the *Oracle* and D.E. Macdonnel of the *Gazetteer* travelled to Flanders in 1794 to report from the front. They attempted to establish a regular chain of information by hiring agents to transmit news, so that they would become less dependent on copying from other papers.[7] The *Morning Chronicle*'s leading competitor in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth centuries, the *Times*, also attempted to improve their foreign news service by establishing a regular chain of correspondence from Brussels and Paris, claiming that it was "through such regular channels of information only, that the public can be well and truely informed".[8] For some time after Perry's dispatch to Paris, however, the *Morning Chronicle*'s competitors continued their accustomed practice of copying – this time with new source material available in the form of Perry's reports.

The objective of the following essay is to explore the political implications of this copying, and to demonstrate how challenging it could be to rely on this practice when the information provided by rival newspapers was becoming increasingly politicised. Although scholars have already noted the tendency of newspaper proprietors to send their own reporters to the scene of events in

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ownership and control of the press', in George Boyce *et al.* (eds.), *Newspaper History: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London and Beverly Hills: Constable and SAGE, 1978), pp. 98–116 (109).

6 According to the entry on James Perry in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Perry stayed in Paris for almost a year, but Ivon Asquith argues convincingly that he could not have been resident there for more than eight months, and that he probably only stayed for six months, returning in time for the opening of the Parliamentary session in late January 1792. See E.A. Smith, 'Perry, James (1756–1821)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21996, (accessed 19 May 2016), and Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, p. 23.

7 Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, pp. 21–22; Robert L. Haig, *The Gazetteer, 1735–1797* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1960), pp. 232–233; Stanley Morison, *The English Newspaper* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), pp. 32–33.

8 The *Times*, 25 June 1792.

this period, the possible reasons behind this significant transition has not yet been the subject of a detailed study.

A careful analysis of the news columns of some of Perry's competitors reveals how the reporting of a politically fraught event, such as the royal ratification of the new constitution, challenged the existing methods for newsgathering in a time of exceptional political strife and vicissitudes.[9] The *Morning Chronicle* was a self-confessed opposition paper in support of the Revolution, and this article will demonstrate how the political tenor of Perry's reports changed when they were incorporated into the columns of newspapers with conflicting political leanings. As other newspapers copied the comprehensive accounts of this reporter at the scene of events, they sought to avoid his most politically charged observations by selecting only certain paragraphs, and paraphrasing others based on alternative sources, in order to accommodate the information to their own political stances. This would at length prove to be a difficult task. The intensely polarising issue of the French Revolution – and the political journalism inspired by it – not only complicated the process of copying foreign news reports from papers with a conflicting political orientation, but it also challenged contemporary conceptions of the *validity* of existing sources of foreign news altogether. In order to secure what was believed to be a trusthworthy and unbiased report of events, newspaper proprietors would in the century to come rely less on copying from other newspapers and more on the reports provided by their own foreign reporters.

Reporting the Revolution: The London Morning Dailies

With no regular foreign correspondents of their own, London newspapers other than the *Morning Chronicle* relied on traditional sources and newsgathering methods in order to cover the important events unfolding in France. One source commonly resorted to was the aforementioned letter correspondence from individuals abroad, but these were casual arrangements that proved too irregular to be relied upon as steady and accurate sources of foreign news. A more stable, and much more authoritative, supplier of information about foreign affairs was the *London Gazette*, the official government paper. As stated in a large blackletter font on the paper's title page, the *Gazette* was "published by authority", and through this state sponsorship its editors had access

9 This paper focuses on the *Times*, the *World*, the *Public Advertiser*, the *London Chronicle*, the *St. James's Chronicle* and *Lloyd's Evening Post*. This selection is based on the newspapers available for this period in the Burney Collection and the *Times Digital Archive*.

to important state documents from British Ambassadors and military officers stationed abroad. Because of these usually reliable sources, the contents of the *Gazette* were often copied into the commercial newspapers, especially in times of international crisis.[10] In the case of the signing of the constitution, however, the London press could not rely on the *Gazette*, because its columns contained no mention of the ceremony whatsoever. This was a conspicuous omission that did not go unnoticed. The *St. James's Chronicle* commented that it was "remarkable that the London Gazette has taken no sort of notice of the King of France's acceptance of the New Constitution", and speculated whether the recent death of the Ambassador might be the reason for the delay in the official communications.[11]

In this situation, another frequently utilised source proved especially valuable, namely the foreign newspaper press. Prior to the Revolution, the London press had depended largely on newspapers published outside of France for their French news, such as the French-language *Gazette de Leyde* from Holland. The newspapers published in France itself were so tightly controlled by the authoritarian government that they would give no true account of political affairs. After the Revolution, however, a "virtually unregulated" albeit short-lived French domestic press was allowed to prosper, providing the London press with a valuable new source of information.[12] London newspaper conductors subscribed to these papers, and spent much time and money on translating them in order to insert their contents into their own columns.[13] According to Jeremy Black, the dependence on foreign newspapers reached its climax during the French Revolution and the subsequent wars between Britain and France.[14] Indeed, a mistake in the delivery of the French newspapers to the office of the *Times* in October 1791 shows how dependent the London press was

10 Michael Harris, 'London newspapers 1695–1830', in Michael F. Suarez and Michael L. Turner (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 413–433 (420).

11 The *St. James's Chronicle*, 22–24 September 1791.

12 Jeremy D. Popkin, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France, 1789–1799* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 32.

13 The following advertisement appeared in the *Times* on 27 August 1792: "Wanted immediately, A Gentleman who is capable of translating the French language. In order to prevent trouble, he must be a perfect Master of the English Language, have some knowledge of the Political State of Europe and be thoroughly capable of the situation he undertakes. His employment will be permanent and take up a considerable share of his attention; for which a handsome salary will be allowed". *The History of The Times, vol. 1: 'The Thunderer' in the Making, 1785–1841* (London: The Times Publishing Company, 1935), pp. 41–42.

14 Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 89.

on the foreign gazettes in this period: having not received the French papers, the *Times* was apparently unable to report any news from France that day. As French news by this time had become the unrivalled topic of public interest, this was an omission for which the conductors were "extremely sorry".[15]

In the autumn of 1791, a new source of Parisian intelligence emerged with the publication in the *Morning Chronicle* of James Perry's authentic first-hand reports. The dispatch of Perry to the French capital enabled the editors, in their own words, to "give an earlier account of what is passing there than any of our competitors".[16] Ivon Asquith notes that Perry's summary of events in Paris had one day's priority, and that his reports of the proceedings in the National Assembly had two day's priority, but he does not explain the logistics of this operation: how was Perry able to dispatch his reports sooner than others?[17] The details of how Perry's accounts travelled from Paris to London are not completely clear, but it is possible to make certain conjectures. Based on the often abrupt endings of Perry's accounts, he seems to have been in a hurry to reach the deadline for outgoing mails. Perry could dispatch his hand-written notes as soon as he had finished writing them, whereas the conductors of other London newspapers – who relied on the French gazettes for their news from France – would have to wait for the French reporters to deliver their notes to the printer; for the composers to set type; and for the printer to print the final product, before the newspapers could be shipped to London. They would also have to spend extra time and resources on translating the reports from French to English once the newspapers arrived.

The *Morning Chronicle*'s ability to provide an early account of events was an advantage that boosted its sales, and while Perry was residing in Paris as a foreign correspondent, his early reporting of French affairs often resulted in verbatim reproductions in the other London newspapers.[18] Not only is this clear from a comparison of the newspapers themselves, it was also frequently pointed out by the *Morning Chronicle*'s editors, who complacently mocked the other newspapers for "filling half their columns" with "[e]xtracts from the MORNING CHRONICLE".[19] There was nothing new in newspapers copying each other's reports, or in newspaper conductors pointing this out to readers. However, in the period of James Perry's residence in Paris his reports in particular were frequently copied, presumably because he was considered to provide

15 The *Times*, 25 October 1791.

16 Black, *The English Press, 1621–1861*, p. 147.

17 Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, p. 18.

18 Black, *The English Press, 1621–1861*, p. 147.

19 The *Morning Chronicle*, 11 January 1792.

the most accurate and up-to-date news from France. This is supported by a letter published in the popular and much circulated *Gentleman's Magazine*, where the correspondent notes:

> Though I was in Paris when the King accepted the new Constitution, I was not present at that ceremony; but I know that what passed on that memorable day has been faithfully related by (I believe) Mr. Perry, in the "Morning Chronicle" of the 23rd of September.[20]

A main goal of establishing Perry as a foreign correspondent had been to secure an accurate, punctual and trustworthy delivery of news. Unfortunately, this did not always go according to plan. In the days following the signing of the constitution, there had been a delay in the shipment of mail from France to England. On 20 September, six days after the constitution ceremony, the *Morning Chronicle* apologised for not giving an account of this important event, explaining that they had not received their expected accounts from France the preceding day.[21] The post having not yet arrived the following day, a general apprehension had broken out in London, as described in a paragraph from the *St. James's Chronicle*:

> The commercial part of the town has been in somewhat of a ferment for these two days past. Ever since the 14th no letters have been received from *France*, yet the wind has been during a considerable part of that time not unfavourable, and for a short space even favourable. What can have occasioned this delay, in the correspondence with that kingdom does not appear, but no mails, no letters of any sort having arrived, it looks as if the post was entirely stopped, though to what to attribute this is beyond the power of conjecture.[22]

Apparently, it was not so far beyond the power of conjecture as to deter the writer from speculating on possible causes, and he points to popular unrest

20 The *Gentleman's Magazine*, October 1791, 61 (4). That Perry's reports were perceived to be the best sources of French news is further evidenced by a correspondence between the two opposition MPs George Tierney and Charles Grey. Tierney noted to Grey that "of French news, I can give you no better than what the Morning Chronicle affords", demonstrating that even well-connected people who moved in high social circles looked to the *Morning Chronicle* for updates on the situation in Paris. See Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, p. 23.

21 The *Morning Chronicle*, 20 September 1791.

22 The *St. James's Chronicle*, 20–22 September 1791.

due to the shortage of bread, and a possible insurrection resulting from this, as the most probable cause. In other words, political crises and weaknesses in existing distribution systems could interrupt the flow of news, despite the innovations made by individual newspaper entrepreneurs. Thus, the *Morning Chronicle* could not always secure priority of intelligence.

Finally, on 23 September, the *Morning Chronicle* had received "no less than four packets from Paris", and, despite the delay, they nevertheless contended that they would "certainly anticipate most of [their] contemporaries" when laying this news before the public.[23] A survey of the other London dailies on the same day shows that, in fact, they had not been able to anticipate their competitors in terms of speed. What is clear, however, is that they certainly outstripped them in terms of detail and volume. James Gray noted how the sheer amount of information contained in the four received packets made it "impossible … to lay a particular detail of each before [their] readers in one day" and he had consequently "been at pains to select the most important and interesting".[24] This wide selection, combined with Perry's frequent use of the first person singular, gave the *Morning Chronicle* an edge that the other London dailies simply could not match. As Ivon Asquith points out, the first person singular draws attention to the fact that Perry's reports are "authentic and first hand".[25] For instance, he opens his description of the constitution ceremony by pointing out how he had been "fortunate enough to get a place in the Tribune of Suppliants, exactly opposite to the President, and not more than ten or twelve yards distant – so that I commanded a full view of the scene. I mention this fact, only to prove that my relation is likely to be correct".[26] The superiority of Perry's report in terms of detail and scope is evident when we compare it with the reports of the other London dailies. When describing the ceremony, the *World* and the *Public Advertiser* only provide the reader with brief, factual information:

> A few minutes past twelve o'clock, the KING entered by the left side of the Hall, escorted by his Ministers, and preceded by a Deputation of twelve Members of the National Assembly, sent to meet him. The KING was not distinguished by any of the ornaments which have been reserved to him.[27]

23 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

24 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

25 Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, p. 19.

26 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

27 The *World*, 23 September 1791.

After this sparse explanation, the *World* immediately moves on to a circumscribed account of the king's speech in acceptance of the new constitution. In contrast, Perry's report abounds with detailed descriptions of how the Hall of the Assembly was decorated on this grand occasion:

> At twelve o'clock precisely they prepared the Assembly for the Royal Sessions. The table of the Secretaries had been removed from the platform, and was placed on the ground, just before the Bar. The President's table, and ordinary chair, were now removed, and a carpet, of a purple ground, embroidered with *fleurs-de-lis* in gold, was spread over part of the elevated platform to the left. A chair of the same colours was placed on this carpet. A chair of the same workmanship, but the ground blue, and the *fleurs-de-lis* not so numerously embroidered, was placed to the right of the carpet for the President.[28]

The attention to detail in Perry's report clearly shows the advantages of his physical proximity to the event, and must have been far more gratifying to avid readers who hungered for news from the French capital than the short remarks offered by the *World* and *Public Advertiser*. Importantly, however, Perry's first-person narrative not only lends credibility and richness of detail to his reports, but also blends the reporting of events with his political beliefs.

The Politics of News

Although Perry's proprietorship of the *Morning Chronicle* had made him a wealthy man by the time of his death in 1821, he came from humble origins. He was the son of an Aberdeen carpenter, and had been so fortunate as to matriculate at Marischal College in 1771, although he was forced to leave without completing his degree three years later when his father's business failed.[29] He then had to earn his own living, and worked as an attorney's clerk and as an assistant in a draper's shop, before entering a theatrical troupe only to be told that he would never make it as an actor south of the border because of his thick Scottish accent. He nevertheless had a great talent for oratory, and attended public debating societies after moving to Manchester, and then in

28 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

29 He had purchased the paper jointly with Gray in 1790 for a mere £210, but around the time of his death the newspaper secured him an annual profit of £12,000, and when he died the paper was sold for £42,000. See E.A. Smith, 'Perry, James (1756–1821)'.

London, where he settled down at the age of twenty-two. Indeed, his talent was so great that William Pitt himself had suggested he go into Parliament.[30] Perry never embarked on a Parliamentary career, but his political convictions were so strong that they became a deciding factor in his career as a newspaper editor and proprietor. Before buying the *Morning Chronicle*, Perry was asked to be editor of the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* in 1783, a position he accepted only "on the express condition that he was left to the free exercise of his political opinions, which were those asserted by Mr. [Charles James] Fox".[31] In particular, it was Fox's reputation as the 'Man of the People' and champion of their liberties – especially the liberty of the press to report and comment freely on the transgressions of government – that attracted Perry. Like most other newspaper proprietors in the period, Perry was not above accepting subsidies from politicians, and his links with the Foxites are obvious from a perusal of the pages of the *Morning Chronicle*, and are even made explicit in the opening address to readers in December 1790, when Perry and Gray had bought the ailing *Morning Chronicle* from the exhausted printer-proprietor William Woodfall.[32]

Nevertheless, Perry's political support of Fox was genuine and unconditional throughout the 1790s, despite having to swim against the tide of public opinion for most of the decade. This genuine support is demonstrated in part by the fact that there were clearly fewer advantages in supporting the opposition than the ministry, because the government had far more resources available in order to control the press. For one thing, the ministry had Secret Service funds at their disposal, whereas the members of the opposition had to pay for press subsidies from their own pockets. Furthermore, the ministry could intimidate the press into submission in ways that were not available to the opposition, for instance by raising taxes, by prosecuting ex-officio for seditious libel, or by blocking their access to information.[33] Indeed, it was hardly a coincidence that the enterprise shown by Perry and Gray in the summer of 1791 came from newspaper proprietors with political ties to the opposition, rather than the government. As argued by Ivon Asquith, their investment in the foreign news service was perhaps an attempt to counter the advantages enjoyed by the ministerial press, whose political connections provided far greater access to domestic news.[34] In other words, Perry's unwavering support of Fox probably

30 Haig, *The Gazetteer, 1735–1797*, p. 189.

31 Ibid.

32 The *Morning Chronicle*, 13 December 1790.

33 Lucyle Werkmeister, *The London Daily Press, 1772–1792* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 318.

34 Asquith, *James Perry and the Morning Chronicle*, pp. 16–17.

afforded him more inconvenience than advantage, but his political principles were so strong that he was willing to countenance these drawbacks in order to pursue what he deemed to be the greater good.

Perry's political convictions shape his lengthy account of the ceremony and of the public celebrations following this event, which "to the eye of reason, and philosophy, … was, and must be considered by enlightened posterity, as the grandest event of the antient or the modern world".[35] He describes the enthusiastic, but peaceful, celebration that followed the signing of the constitution, and he takes great pains to stress the moderation of the Revolution in order to downplay its violent reputation:

> Through the whole of the rejoicing on this event, the people have manifested a tranquil and peaceable spirit … There was no tumult, no drunkenness, no disorder; and that ferocious democracy, which has been so trumpeted and abused, was no where visible.[36]

It was important for Perry to stress the peaceful nature of the public celebrations, especially because Edmund Burke's famous conservative pamphlet *Reflections on the Revolution in France* had produced a powerful hold on the public imagination. By drawing on violent episodes from the Revolution, Burke had managed to create a lasting impression of the vices and transgressions of the revolutionaries, and he succeeded in conjuring up ideas and tropes that would act as a warning to all reformers in Britain, lest they should attempt to change in any way the balance of the British constitution.[37] Thus, when Perry takes such great pains to stress the moderation of the public festivities, he enters into an explicitly politicised debate about the prospects of effecting political and societal change without violence and chaos.

Another example of how Perry's political opinions influence his news reporting, is his comparison between French and British institutions and practices that put the latter in an unfavourable light. This is especially apparent in his discussion of an issue that affected his own business directly, namely the

35 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

36 Ibid.

37 For a more detailed account of Burke's impact, see the chapter 'Edmund Burke: Reflections on the Revolution in France (1790) and the Origins of Conservatism' in Gregory Claeys, *The French Revolution Debate in Britain: the Origins of Modern Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 11–48 and David Bromwich, 'Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France', in Pamela Clemit (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 16–31.

fraught question of press freedom. By describing how the French newspaper reporters were given excellent seats in the Assembly in order to produce the best possible account of events, Perry explicitly points to the shortcomings of existing British regulations:

> The writers … were accommodated with places for the day in the body of the Hall; for so properly attentive is the Assembly to the true interests of the people, that, for the sake of publishing correct accounts of the proceedings, the respectable Papers have bureaus and places allotted to them, that they may write the accounts on the spot. There is none of the affected prudery on this subject, by which knowledge is sacrificed to the unbecoming pride of the English Parliament.[38]

In the 1760s, the British press had fought for the right to report the activities of Parliament, and had won the right to do so in 1771.[39] However, this did not necessarily mean that journalists were free to report debates as they saw fit, and there were important restrictions to their newly won freedom. For one thing, reporters were not allowed to take any notes, and had to report the proceedings of Parliament from memory.[40] In addition to this, journalists could be forced to leave the gallery of the House, if the MPs suspected that any 'strangers' were there to spy on them.[41] In contrast, Perry notes how "the politeness of the Assembly yielded to the eager curiosity of the people, by admitting numbers of foreigners, and others, to seats in the body of the Assembly" and that "in all there could not be fewer than 3000 strangers present".[42] Not only were these 'strangers' allowed to witness the ceremony, they were moreover afforded a place in the body of the Assembly, as opposed to the galleries.

It is significant that Perry criticises the administration in such a direct and forceful manner. No newspaper that was subsidised by the Pitt ministry would dare incorporate these sentiments into their own news reports for fear of possible repercussions, despite Perry's objective being in line with their own interests. England was renowned in the period for its free and uncensored press, but the governing authorities could in fact depend on several mechanisms

38 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

39 For an overview of this important development, see P.D.G. Thomas, 'The Beginning of Parliamentary Reporting in the Newspapers, 1768–1774', *English Historical Review*, 74 (1959), pp. 623–636.

40 E.A. Smith, 'Perry, James (1756–1821)'.

41 Harris, *Politics and the Rise of the Press*, pp. 40–41.

42 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

designed to keep the press in check. Most importantly, printers and newspaper proprietors were under constant risk of being prosecuted for publishing libellous material, and this functioned as a serious impediment to the alleged press freedom. One of Perry's leading competitors in the period, John Walter of the *Times*, had personally felt the consequences of this restricted freedom, when he was prosecuted for publishing a libel on the Prince of Wales and his brothers in 1789, and was sentenced to two years in prison. The paragraph had not been written by Walter himself, but in return for political subsidies from the Treasury, he had agreed to insert political paragraphs written by government hirelings. Instead of revealing the true identity of the writer, Walter kept his mouth shut, for fear of losing his political subsidy.[43] In other words, Perry's comparison between French and English conditions is clearly involved in an ongoing and extremely contentious debate surrounding press freedom in Britain.

Copying Political News: The London Triweeklies

The evident political tendencies of Perry's reports would prove challenging for some of his competitors, especially the conservative evening papers published three times a week. These publications had dominated the London market in the first half of the century, but by 1775 the morning dailies had come to surpass them in terms of sales and significance.[44] This is an indication of the rising appetite of readers in the period: by the late eighteenth century, the demand for updated news had become so great in London that there was now a larger market for daily than triweekly publications.

As discussed above, there had been a delay in the mail delivery from France, which meant that Perry's lengthy account of the constitution ceremony was not published in advance of the reports of other daily newspapers. Thus, the London daily press could not copy from Perry's report, and had to resort to other sources when covering the ceremony. The same problem did not present itself to the triweekly papers. They were published in the evening and only three times a week, which made them especially able and likely to copy from the London morning papers. Jeremy Black suggests that it was not necessary for provincial newspaper proprietors to subscribe to foreign newspapers and

43 Hannah Barker, 'Walter, John (1739?–1812)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online edition: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28636 (accessed 19 May 2016).

44 Harris, 'London Newspapers', p. 424.

spend large amounts of money on translating their contents, when they could rely on the London press.[45] Black is referring to the provincial press, but the same logic can be extended to the London triweeklies which, because they were published only three times a week and late in the evening, had plenty of English sources to rely on, without having to pay large sums on subscriptions to foreign papers and on hiring translators.

It is particularly interesting to explore how these triweeklies copied from the news columns of the *Morning Chronicle*, because they mainly catered to a conservative audience based in the English countryside. Scholars have pointed out that the London triweeklies were "specifically designed for a provincial readership", or "aimed primarily at the country reader".[46] This is clear from the fact that the publication of these newspapers was timed to correspond with the outgoing mails from London to the provinces, in other words on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. According to Michael Harris, 4,650,000 copies of London newspapers were distributed to the provinces through the Post Office in 1790.[47] This distribution was very expensive, unless the recipient was able to acquire his copy through the franking system.

In the eighteenth century, MPs and the Clerks of the Roads had the privilege of sending newspapers free of charge through the post in franked envelopes, and, in fact, the charges of sending them unfranked were so high that "no one even considered paying them".[48] The fact that it was so expensive to acquire a London triweekly meant that country subscriptions were restricted to the powerful and well-connected. Admittedly, one could turn to the Clerks of the Roads, who through their franking privilege could earn good money on distributing newspapers to country subscribers, but while their franking charges were lower than the postal charges, they were still high enough to place the London triweeklies out of reach for the lower orders. The high cost of the London triweeklies points to an audience firmly rooted in the social and political elite, constituted by "the local gentry, the clergymen and the town magnates".[49] For this reason, it is particularly interesting to explore how the conductors of these

45 Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 89.

46 Michael Harris, 'The Structure, Ownership and Control of the Press, 1620–1780', in George Boyce *et al.* (eds.), *Newspaper History: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London and Beverly Hills: Constable and SAGE, 1978), pp. 82–97 (87), and G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper, 1700–1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 180.

47 Harris, 'The Structure, Ownership and Control of the Press', p. 90.

48 Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, p. 179.

49 Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper*, p. 181.

newspapers dealt with news reports from a newspaper directed at a much less conservative audience than their own.

Taking their political inclinations into account, one may ask why the London triweeklies would copy from the *Morning Chronicle* at all. As discussed above, Perry's report had the clear advantage of being a first-hand account, both authoritative and meticulous in its attention to detail. It seems as though the triweeklies could not resist this advantage, because several newspapers copied paragraphs verbatim from Perry's report. In the pages of both the *London Chronicle* and *Lloyd's Evening Post*, we find Perry's exact formulations, without his words being attributed to either him or the *Morning Chronicle*. As opposed to the *London Chronicle*, which has at least left out or paraphrased the sentences containing the personal pronoun, *Lloyd's Evening Post* has conspicuously chosen to retain them:

> THE grand event is past, and the Constitution of France has received the signature of the King. I will give you a circumstantial detail of the proceedings of yesterday: The anxiety of the public to be present at the ceremony was so great, that hundreds remained all night in the Hall of the Assembly. When I went at seven o'clock in the morning, I found all the galleries full to overflowing.[50]

The conductors may have chosen to keep the personal pronoun to extend the authenticity of Perry's report to their own newspaper. The paragraph above, and others similar to it, would be safe to reproduce, because it contains no controversial political hints. It is crucial to note, however, that *Lloyd's* ends its verbatim copying at the exact place where Perry began his contentious critique of British press freedom. Similarly, the *London Chronicle* silently skips Perry's political expostulations, before returning to their word-for-word reproduction of his report.[51]

Other newspapers were more selective in their approach. The *St. James's Chronicle* was a decidedly conservative newspaper. It accompanied its reporting of the constitution ceremony with the publication of a letter signed "Many of the People", defending the integrity of the king from attacks by a "French Revolutionist, very zealous in making new proselytes".[52] In light of their own political stance, the incorporation of Perry's report into the columns of the *St. James's Chronicle* could not have been an easy task. In fact, it seems as

50 *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 21–23 September 1791.

51 The *London Chronicle*, 22–24 September 1791.

52 The *St. James's Chronicle*, 22–24 September 1791.

though the greater part of Perry's report was deemed unfit for reproduction, because – although what they actually *did* include was reproduced word-for-word – it can hardly be said to draw heavily on Perry's account. The only paragraph taken from the *Morning Chronicle* is this:

> Yesterday, for the first time since the journey to Varennes, the King took an airing on horseback. Upon His Majesty's arrival at the drawbridge, a vast concourse of people, who had been drawn together by the report of his design to take an airing, and a desire to see him, hailed him with repeated and sincere shouts of Vive le Roi – An affecting joy was visible in his countenance at these marks of love and attachment.[53]

This tiny paragraph, undoubtedly the least controversial and most royalist to be found in Perry's account, is the only one from the entire report to be included, despite the report spanning seven columns and almost two whole pages. When compared with the rest of Perry's report, it is quite striking how little the *St. James's Chronicle* actually decided to include. The editors seem to have avoided the political implications of the original source simply by selecting its copied materials *very* discriminately.

Another interesting detail in the same issue is their account of the public celebrations following the ceremony. As previously mentioned, it was important for Perry to highlight the tranquillity and nonviolence of the revolutionists when describing the public celebrations. These comments were highly politicised and, as with several other politically controversial paragraphs, both the *London Chronicle* and *Lloyd's Evening Post* refrained from copying these remarks. The *St. James's Chronicle* took another approach. Instead of simply skipping Perry's descriptions of the peaceful celebrations, they published their own version, in stark contrast to the one offered by Perry. Under the headline "SUNDAY'S FETE", we find the following:

> All Paris was up before the sun, though not all for the same reason – the favourers of *the new theory* rose to celebrate the festival of the Constitution, and pay their early homage to a code of laws that *put the servant on a footing with his master*; but they were so *vociferously* patriotick, and so *petulantly* merry, that they roused the friends of tranquility from their soft slumbers and forced them into a *chaos of noisy mirth* (my emphasis).[54]

53 Ibid.

54 The *St. James's Chronicle*, 22–24 September 1791.

This paragraph is teeming with significant rhetorical devices, building on the aforementioned impression made on the British public by Burke's famous pamphlet. Describing the revolutionists as vociferous and petulant, and their celebrations as a "chaos of noisy mirth", the writer draws the reader's attention to one of the main themes of Burke's pamphlet, namely the transgressions of the revolutionists, who were deemed to be self-seeking and greedy amateurs whose knowledge and experience were insufficient for the governing of a country.[55] Burke's strongest attack on the revolution, however, was based on his dismissal of the abstract principles of the 'natural rights of man', which the writer in the *St. James's Chronicle* is alluding to in his comment about the 'new theory'. Burke had established a conservative precedent for derisive comments about this new theory, by pointing out the absurdity of establishing a political framework upon abstract theories rather than actual knowledge of political institutions and their proven success – in other words upon knowledge that could only come with experience and tradition. Naturally, this would exclude a large majority from exercising political power, for who other than the ruling elite would have the experience Burke is calling for? Indeed, Burke is known for his notoriously condescending remark about mob rule by the "swinish multitude", and for his idea that the tyranny of the few would be replaced by the tyranny of the many, which was much worse.[56] The writer in the *St. James's Chronicle* is alluding to this when he describes the French constitution as a "code of laws that put the servant on a footing with his master", a remark that also echoes long-standing and unpleasant associations with the Leveller movement of the Civil War period. This version of the public festivities provided by the *St. James's Chronicle* is exclusive to their paper. Fortunately, the conductors have provided a clue under the headline "Authentick advices", by explaining that this piece has been provided by "the Correspondent of the St. J. Chronicle resident at Paris", and this is a good example of how these sporadic communications could supplement the information gained from other sources (or, as in this case, replace it).[57] By exploring the news columns of the *St. James's Chronicle*, it seems that this particular paper has solved its dilemma by opting for an extremely careful selection combined with the construction of alternative narratives based on other sources that were available to them at the time.

A greater and more complex engagement with Perry's report can be found in *Lloyd's Evening Post* when their substantial verbatim copying gives way to a

55 Claeys, *The French Revolution Debate in Britain*, p. 16.

56 Ibid., p. 13; David Duff, 'Burke and Paine: contrasts', in Clemit (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s*, pp. 47–71.

57 The *St. James's Chronicle*, 22–24 September 1791.

construction of an alternative narrative in their description of the ceremony itself, and of the dynamics between the king and the National Assembly in particular. Perry and several of the London daily newspapers devoted much space to a debate that took place in the Assembly prior to the king's arrival, namely whether the Assembly, as representatives of the nation, should stand or remain seated while the king took the oath of fidelity, and whether or not they should remove their hats as a tribute to him. Some representatives suggested that they should stand and take their hats off, because the king, as the supreme chief of the whole nation, should be received with all possible respect. The majority, however, wished to remain seated, to express the sovereignty of the people vis-à-vis the king. They decided to receive him standing, but to be seated while he spoke.

Despite large chunks of Perry's report having hitherto been copied verbatim by *Lloyd's*, many sentences and paragraphs had admittedly been paraphrased, even before arriving at the description of the king and the National Assembly. However, apart from the places where certain controversial paragraphs have been skipped, this paraphrasing seems to have been an attempt to save space rather than an effort to avoid political controversy, because – although many of Perry's original sentences have been changed – the content of his report is still very much the same.

This is not the case in *Lloyd's* depiction of the dynamics between the king and the National Assembly. When arriving at this important part of Perry's report, the verbatim copying stops completely, and continues by paraphrasing alone. Furthermore, at this point, the nature of the paraphrasing itself changes: the information presented to the reader is no longer similar in content to the information we gain from Perry's report. In fact, *Lloyd's* provides a completely contrasting narrative of the conduct of the National Assembly towards the king, and also of the latter's reaction to this notable decline of respect, power and prestige. According to Perry, the king, upon ascending the platform where his chair was placed, "began instantly to read, without sitting down, and without any previous ceremony".[58] When recounting his speech, Perry interrupts several times with explanatory remarks that paint a rather awkward picture of the king:

> I swear (here the President sat down, and his example was followed by the Assembly) to be faithful to the Nation and the Law; and to employ all the power that is delegated to me, to maintain the Constitution decreed by

58 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

> the Constituting National Assembly. (At this moment, the King turning his head to the right, observed [the President] seated – He looked round, and saw all the Members to the left seated, and one or two with their hats on – He instantly sat down – He did it in a manner which testified an embarrassed emotion – but recovering himself – he proceeded, sitting, with the only remaining sentence of his paper).[59]

In other words, Perry describes an uncomfortable and perplexed king, and draws the reader's attention to his distress and humiliation.[60] The report in *Lloyd's* describes a very different king, one who entered the Assembly with confidence, and "looking around with a cheerful air" – gave his speech in the following manner:

> "I swear – (on this the Deputies sat down) to be faithful to the Nation and to the Law, to employ all the power delegated to me, to maintain the Constitution decreed by the National Constituent Assembly, and to cause the Laws to be executed. [Loud plaudits; in the midst of which the King sat down] The King, having again risen, continued as follows: May this great and memorable epoch be that of the re-establishment of peace and union, and may it become the pledge of the happiness of the People, and the prosperity of the Empire!" [The Hall resounded for several minutes with gratulations of joy; after which the patriotic side of the House began new acclamations, by repeated cries of "Vive le Roi!"].[61]

If we compare the two, we clearly see how *Lloyd's* has removed all the humiliating details concerning the king's perplexed state of mind on this formal occasion. Moreover, they add their own comments that we cannot find in Perry's report at all, comments that place the king in a very positive light. According to *Lloyd's Evening Post*, the king sat down due to loud applause, rather than humiliation, and there is in general a great emphasis on the respectful attitude of the Assembly towards the king. It is important to point out that this

59 Ibid.

60 It is important to note that the word 'embarrassed' did not carry the same meaning in the eighteenth century as today. According to the 6th edition (vol. 1) of Johnson's *Dictionary*, published six years prior to the constitution ceremony, 'embarrassed' signifies the feeling of being perplexed or distressed. In any case, Perry is describing a king who is clearly uncomfortable and not in control of the situation.

61 *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 21–23 September 1791.

information is not fabricated. It is most probably drawn from one or more of the London dailies, several of which report on the excessive plaudits and "[r]epeated shouts of *long live the King!*".[62]

Indeed, we may draw Perry's own trustworthiness into question, because – despite being an eyewitness to the event – he has refrained from commenting on the loud plaudits from the more conservative members of the National Assembly, which seems to be quite essential information. His depiction of the king, it must be noted, seems to be a sound interpretation, corroborated by a statement in the *Times* that "it was evident that his voice faultered, that his countenance was pale, and, that he was exceedingly embarrassed".[63] It is nevertheless interesting that *Lloyd's Evening Post* has decided to place such emphasis on the loud plaudits, and that they suddenly depart so conspicuously from Perry's report, after having hitherto depended so heavily upon it. It is clear that they are no longer paraphrasing simply to save space, but also to avoid the political implications of Perry's report.

Conclusion

The heightened demand for the prompt and accurate reporting of foreign news in the aftermath of the French Revolution inspired newspapermen to provide accurate and timely information, leading to Perry's pioneering effort in the summer of 1791. His enterprise changed the framework for foreign news reporting in England, and inspired later efforts by other newspaper proprietors to improve their own foreign news coverage. The *Oracle* and the *Gazetteer* sent reporters to the front at Flanders in 1794, in an effort to establish a regular chain of information. The leading competitor of the *Morning Chronicle* in the period, the *Times*, also made an effort to improve its foreign news coverage by establishing a regular chain of correspondence from Brussels and Paris in May 1792. The news articles provided through this new channel were singled out as especially important through the use of the headline "Original Correspondence", and in an editorial note on 22 May 1792 the editor stressed the expediency of this arrangement:

> The good arrangement and expedition of our new Foreign Correspondence we trust, will be sufficiently evinced by our News from Paris in this day's Paper, which though not extremely important in itself, proves the

62 The *World*, 23 September 1791.

63 The *Times*, 23 September 1791.

> means we have taken to obtain it. We yesterday received letters from Paris of TWO days later date than those brought by the ordinary Mail.[64]

A month later, they appealed to the discernment of the public, and trusted that they would be able to "distinguish in this Paper between the vague reports caught at by other Morning Prints, and the authentic Communications which come to us by every Mail from Brussels, Paris, Vienna, &c", and they end their address to readers by claiming that it is "through such regular channels of information only, that the public can be well and truely informed".[65]

Stanley Morison suggests that it was the initiative of Bell that had provoked the *Times* to improve their own foreign news coverage.[66] However, since Bell travelled to Flanders as late as 1794, it is clear that the initiative of the *Times* was due rather to Perry's efforts the preceding year. Prior to this initiative, the London press had relied primarily on copying from the government sponsored *London Gazette* and foreign newspapers, as well as irregular contributions from correspondents abroad. These newsgathering methods continued to dominate both during and after Perry's venture and, as Jeremy Black points out, "the practice at the end of the century was still essentially the same as that at the beginning".[67] James Perry's enterprise had nevertheless clearly pointed out the benefits of having a steady and permanent flow of intelligence from Paris to London. This inspired similar initiatives by competitors, and there is no doubt that the entrepreneurial efforts of the *Morning Chronicle* form part of an emerging systemic shift in the practice of foreign news gathering towards the end of the eighteenth century.

This development was driven in large part by the pursuit of economic gain, but it is nevertheless clear that there were also political motivations at play. After having described the constitution ceremony, Perry claimed to have "forborne all observations of [his] own on this unexampled scene".[68] His competitors, with differing political sympathies, would hardly agree with his assertion. The political tenor of his news reports posed significant challenges for them, and they were forced to select carefully or paraphrase the material in order to accommodate it to their own newspaper columns. As the Revolution became radicalised from 1792 onwards, newspaper editors were finding it increasingly difficult to evaluate the reliability of their sources. They could not rely on the

64 The *Times*, 22 May 1792.

65 The *Times*, 25 June 1792.

66 *History of The Times*, p. 43.

67 Black, 'The English Press in the Eighteenth Century', p. 99.

68 The *Morning Chronicle*, 23 September 1791.

eyewitness accounts of other reporters, and – to make matters worse – the French papers were becoming less suitable sources of foreign news. When the Revolution entered a more radical phase, the counter-revolutionary and moderate French papers were stamped out, resulting in a far less diverse press.[69] Thus, the *Times* complained in May 1792 that "The foreign Gazettes which chiefly guide the other Morning Prints, are become so extremely partial, that they aggravate or suppress almost every material fact, as suits the purpose of their several parties".[70]

By 1792, the Revolution debate had become so fraught that conductors not only faced the challenge of how to copy the eyewitness accounts of reporters with contrasting political opinions. They were questioning the very validity of the reports they received from sources that were not their own. Perry had demonstrated the benefits of having a reporter of one's own at the scene of events, and in the increasingly strained political climate of this revolutionary period, newspaper editors must have found it impossible to base their reports from France on copying and paraphrasing alone.

69 Popkin, *Revolutionary News*, p. 38.

70 The *Times*, 21 May 1792.

CHAPTER 9

Diplomatic Channels and Chinese Whispers: Reception and Transformation of the Moscow Uprising of 1648 in Sweden and France

Malte Griesse

The Moscow uprising of 1648 took place almost simultaneously with innumerable other large-scale revolts throughout Europe and civil wars further afield. Contemporaries were well aware of this wider, simultaneous social upheaval and they drew parallels between events in countries with diverging political orders. They sought explanations of these phenomena, which they often attributed to common causes. Adler Salvius, one of the Swedish diplomats at the Westphalian Peace Congress, wrote:

> It seems to be a great miracle that in the whole world people talk about revolts of the people against their sovereigns, for instance in France, Germany, Poland, Muscovy, Turkey … If this has to be explained by a certain disposition of the stars or by something like a general agreement of the people against their bad governors: God alone can know it.[1]

The Dutch jack-of-all-trades Lieuwe van Aitzema, who worked as diplomat for the Hanseatic seaports as well as for the Dutch Republic and who spied for several other leading governments, composed an immense encyclopaedic multivolume work on (contemporary) 'state affairs' (*Saken van Staet*). The Moscow uprising does not loom large, but a few columns are dedicated to the events, which are compared with the Naples revolt under the leadership of Masaniello one year earlier (in 1647), mainly on the grounds of their 'popular' character.[2]

On the other hand, the prolific Venetian historians of contemporaneity, many of them members of the *Academia degli Incogniti*, did not say a word in their equally monumental works about what was going on in Muscovy.

1 Quoted from Georges Livet, *La guerre de trente ans*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), p. 121.

2 Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Saken van staet en oorlogh, in, ende omtrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden, beginnende met het jaer 1645, ende eyndigende met het jaer 1656*, vol. 3 (Graven-Haghe: Johan Veely, 1669), pp. 229–233.

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Maiolino Bisaccioni, for instance, had worked as a diplomat for several Italian courts, among them the papal court in Rome. In his *History of Civil war of our times* (1652) he deals with the revolts in England, Catalonia, Portugal, Palermo, Naples, Fermo, Poland (i.e. Ukraine), France and Turkey – and in a later edition (1655) he updates his narrative not only with regard to still continuing revolts, such as those in England and Ukraine, but even adds accounts of more recent events in Moldavia and Switzerland (1653).[3] But the Moscow uprising of 1648 does not show up here. This is even more noteworthy since only three years before his first edition of the *History*, Bisaccioni had written a novelistic biography of (false) Tsar Dmitrii, one of the principal protagonists of the Time of Troubles, i.e. the civil war that had shaken the Muscovite Empire at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[4] In the account of Poland in his *History*, he also highlights diplomatic and military enmeshments with Muscovy that sparked the Russo-Polish War of 1654–67 and would constitute a major ingredient of the Second Northern War (1655–1660). Muscovy was definitely on Bisaccioni's radar, but apparently he did not even know about the 1648 uprising that would have fitted perfectly into his panorama of contemporary civil wars and revolts.

Since the same is true for the other Italian writers of contemporary history, this illustrates that intelligence on Muscovite internal affairs was in the first place spread through the Northern routes of the Baltic Sea, where the adjacent countries entertained ongoing commercial and occasional diplomatic relations with Moscow. For the highly urbanised centres of Southern Europe the country was interesting primarily as a potential adversary of their own dangerous neighbour, the Ottoman Empire, but was also of interest on the rare occasions when religious dissensions stirred papal hopes that Russia might return to the fold (which was the case, for instance, in the time of Tsar Dmitrii, who was supposed to be crypto-Catholic). Muscovy was associated with the 'Northern' countries – the concept of the 'East' was yet to be born. Therefore, the spread of news and rumours concerning the Muscovite uprising, which I will dwell on in this article, is essentially a phenomenon of the Northern hemisphere, especially of the Baltic and the North Sea rim. Whereas accounts transmitted orally can only be retraced indirectly, the written reports examined here include both arcane and public communication.

3 Maiolino Bisaccioni, *Historia delle guerre civili di questi ultimi tempi*, 4th ed. (Venice: Storti, 1655).

4 Maiolino Bisaccioni, *Il Demetrio moscovita: historia tragica*, In questa ultima impressione corretta, accresciuta, et aggiuntaui la seconda parte (Venice: Viest, 1649).

Both are part of what I call 'Chinese whispers', drawing to some extent on Albrecht Koschorke's narratology. According to the German literary scholar, all narration resembles Chinese whispers, but this does not lead to final messages that are 'crazier' than those first transmitted; on the contrary, the "thinning and adaptation of narrative material" leads back to "well-known narrative patterns". Narrating would be "a filter rather than a means of conveyance. … Also an add-on can render the account more efficient, as long as it completes an established schema". The formation of such schemas is "based on three principal procedures: ellipsis, adjustment, completion".[5] However, I am not aiming at narration as such, but apart from the signifier (i.e. the narration) I am interested in both its relationship to the signified (i.e. the historical/contemporaneous event referred to) and to the (cultural, political, social) context that contributes to a reframing of this relationship between signifier and signified and thus introduces new implicit references, be they real or potential, present or impending, perceived or expected, hoped for or apprehended. No doubt, retelling is a filter: it can definitely distort a message with regard to the depicted event – and we will see to what extent it did so in the case of the Muscovite uprising. But the emerging narrations have also to be read against the background of both (1) the context in which the commentator finds himself, and (2) the commentator's assumptions about the contexts in which his recipients find themselves. These multiple contexts are the frames that attribute meaning to the narration; and the longer the chain of 'whispers' becomes the greater is the variety of real or anticipated contexts. Since the whispers do not stop at state borders, we have to deal with extremely complicated processes of translation across borders of political cultures.

The importance of implicit meaning, i.e. of meaning borne by reference to recipients' contexts, is considerably increased by early modern governments' policies of *damnatio memoriae* with regard to domestic revolt. Rather than claiming interpretative predominance, after successful repression (or abating) of a revolt the authorities tried to silence and taboo the events. It was therefore much easier to discuss revolts abroad than to speak about an uprising at home. Foreign revolts could thus also serve as a projection surface for implicitly discussing delicate domestic issues. Misunderstandings and distortions of the original events, which are normally deplored by historians, are particularly interesting for my purpose, since they often show strikingly how events

5 Albrecht Koschorke, *Wahrheit und Erfindung: Grundzüge einer allgemeinen Erzähltheorie* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2012), p. 32.

were translated into a new context and thereby generated new meanings. Cross-border reports therefore act as bridges between *described* and *describing* political cultures.

In the following I will retrace a loose chain of reports and rumours that leads me from the accounts of foreign residents in Moscow to Sweden and, via the French ambassador in Stockholm, to Paris where the *Gazette de France* reports on the Muscovite events in October. I thus focus on the accounts that remain close to the events in chronological terms.

Reporting the Extraordinary in a Time of Crisis: Foreigners as Eyewitnesses

Even though the accounts written by Swedish residents in Moscow of the 1648 uprising were not published, in sum Sweden was the most important communicative hub for the international diffusion of information about the events. Apart from the official resident's very substantial and regular diplomatic letters to the Swedish government, other accounts specifically dedicated to the events have been found in the Stockholm state archives.[6] In addition, one anonymous Dutch eyewitness report has survived and been published in Leyden and Amsterdam (of which manuscript translations into English and French have been discovered),[7] and Adam Olearius supplemented the second edition of his monumental travelogue on Muscovy and Persia with a second-hand

6 See especially the anonymous account in German found by Forsten and published by Sergei Fedorovich Platonov, 'Novyi istochnik dlia istorii moskovskikh volnenii 1648 g.', *Chteniia v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* (*ChIOIDR*), 164 (1893), Section III, pp. 1–19. In addition, Peter Loofeldt's account is of interest. Although he never resided in Muscovy, his report was apparently written with more hindsight than the others that have been examined.

7 *Waerachtighe historie ende beschryvinghe, van het schrickelijck tumult ende oproer in der Moscou, op den 2 Iunij 1648. Ontstaen uyt de groote ende onverdragelijcke schattinghen, tollen ende contributien der ghemeynte opgeleyt. Alles partilculierlijck door een aensienelijck ende geloofwaerdigh persoon, die aldaer tegenwoordigh is gheweest, beschreven, ende hier te lande tot Amsterdam, aen seker sijnen vrient, overghesonden. Wt het origineel gecopyeert, ghedruckt tot Amsterdam … Anno 1648* (Amsterdam, 1648). The English translation found in the Bodleian Library has been published by Leo Loewenson, 'The Moscow Rising of 1648', *Slavonic and East European Review* (*SEER*), 27 (1948), pp. 146–156, whereas the French version, probably translated by Denis Godefroy, the French court historiographer, has not yet attracted attention within the scientific community.

description of the uprising.[8] All existing foreigners' accounts seem to originate from diplomats or diplomat-like correspondents.

The only eyewitness-author, though, whose name we know and whose consecutive reports on the events have been preserved, is Karl Pommerening. In 1647 he succeeded Peter Krusebjörn as Swedish resident in Moscow. His letters are directly addressed to Queen Christina – and later occasionally also to her secretary. He reports on the Moscow uprising of 1648 at great length. The revolt broke out on 1 June, but Pommerening's first dispatch with several successive accounts was only sent in July, more than a month later. The delay was due to the chaos and the breakdown of ordinary lines of communication, as he affirms in the first letter. But he does not limit himself to depicting the most spectacular and bloody events at the beginning of the uprising in early June; he also relates the succeeding waves and aftershocks in his following letters. His depictions of the events are remarkably balanced, even though he himself had become a victim of the turmoil. His house in the foreign suburb was burned down by the big fire that destroyed more than half of the city.

Apparently this experience did not impair his rather comprehensive attitude towards the insurgent populace. He does not speak of the assembled 'mob', as is done in other accounts, but of the 'commoners' (*gemene mannen*, or related terms). Indeed, the foreign eyewitnesses seem to be more or less unanimous in their empathy with the people. They consider well-founded their complaints about excessive taxes and in particular the ruling elite's peculations, cruelty, abuse of power and greed. They even tend to explain xenophobic tendencies, from which they potentially suffer personally, by the foreigners' privileged status, especially in trade.[9] Even though the term is not used

8 Among his correspondents were the physicians W. Sybelist, H. Gramann and J. Belau, as well as the merchants Peter Marselis and D. Ruts. See Uwe Liszkowski, 'Adam Olearius' Beschreibung des Moskauer Reiches', in Mechthild Keller, Ursula Dettbarn and Karl-Heinz Korn (eds.), *Russen und Rußland aus deutscher Sicht: 9.-17. Jahrhundert* (München: Fink, 1985), pp. 223–246 (238); Stefan Roller-Aßfalg, 'Der Moskauer Aufstand von 1648', in Heinz-Dietrich Löwe (ed.), *Volksaufstände in Rußland: Von der Zeit der Wirren bis zur 'Grünen Revolution' gegen die Sowjetherrschaft*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), pp. 69–104 (73). Liszkowski also writes about newspaper reports as a source for Olearius' account, but he does not specify which newspapers he refers to.

9 He related that the Dutch ambassador hoped to profit by the chaos and obtain even more for his merchants, who had the furthest-reaching privileges and were about to crowd out the English from the Russian markets. But as Pommerening states, in the course of the revolt the Russian merchants tried hard to force the Dutch out of Moscow altogether. K.V. Bazilevich,

and the insurgents' violence not openly justified, what shines through is the idea of a *ius resistendi*.

Instead of blaming the insurgents for the fire, Pommerening accuses Boris Mozorov, Tsar Aleksei's favourite and the actual regent, who "is equally hated by the lower and the upper sorts".[10] The commoners consider Morozov to be the main culprit and 'traitor' and call for his head. For that reason Morozov would have instructed his "servants to set fire to the city simultaneously at different places", in order to divert the insurgents' attention and bring their rage to a halt to allow for his escape in the ensuing chaos. Morozov would thereby have put up deliberately with thousands of deaths, as well as with invaluable material losses. This pro-insurgent version of Morozov as incendiary can also be found in the anonymous Swedish account.[11] None of the foreigners' records assumes that the fire was an accident, as it is taken for granted (later) in Russian chronicles.[12]

According to Pommerening's reports, even those written well before the actual uprising, Tsar Aleksei had remained emotionally dependent on Morozov, his former tutor. Shortly after Tsar Aleksei's succession to the throne and Morozov's promotion, Pommerening's predecessor Krusebjörn had anticipated far-reaching changes:

> A few days ago Prince F.I. Scheremetieff [Sheremet'ev], who was closest to His Majesty's blessed father in his lifetime and whose councils were decisive for the direction of Russia's most important affairs, has voluntarily renounced from his high office. This will probably entail significant changes in government, since Boris Morozoff ..., a firm and stiff man, who sticks closely to the old Russian customs and morals, has taken his place.[13]

The fact that the new tsar did not generally attend government meetings made Morozov's position even stronger.

Gorodskie vosstaniia v Moskovskom gosudarstve XVII v. Sbornik dokumentov (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia publichnaia istoricheskaia biblioteka Rossii, 2003), p. 39.

10 Pommerening to Queen Christina, 7 July 1648, see Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*.

11 Platonov, 'Novyi istochnik', pp. 16–17.

12 Loewenson, 'The Moscow Rising of 1648', pp. 154–155.

13 Krusebjorn to Queen Christina, 2 February 1646, see G.V. Forsten, 'Snosheniia Shvetsii s Rossiei v tsarstvovanie Khristiny', *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, 275 (1891), pp. 348–375 (368–369).

As Pommerening affirms, Morozov exploited his overwhelming power in order to plant his clients in all positions of influence and the officials of his network systematically abused their offices to enrich themselves at the expense of the broader population. The judge of the Zemskii Prikaz (the Office of the country) Leontii Pleshcheev is said to have hired criminals "for imputing crimes to honest and rich people", in order to except them from their money. And indeed, before his promotion to the central office under Tsar Aleksei, as voevode (governor) of Vologda under Tsar Mikhail, Pleshcheev had been accused of theft and was exiled to Siberia. Pommerening does not evoke Pleshcheev's past but, curiously enough, the anonymous Swedish account construes a precedent of arson precisely in this context:

> It is said about this Pleschoeou [Pleshcheev] that about 10 years ago, out of greed and thirst for booty, as well as in order to better maintain his own servants, he had set a blaze in the city of Moscow. Since several hundreds of houses had burned down, he was condemned to be beheaded, but due to a mighty intercession and thanks to His Majesty's outstanding act of grace, his life was spared and he was sent with his family to Siberia.[14]

Now, in 1648, together with his brother-in-law Petr Tikhonovich Trakhaniotov, head of the Canonn Office [*Pushkarskii Prikaz*], and with the 'Chancellor' Nazarii Chistyi, a wealthy merchant [*gost*], who had become a high-ranking bureaucrat (*dumnyi d'iak* of the ambassadorial office), Pleshcheev was held responsible by the insurgents for the exorbitant increase in taxes.

The foreign observers are sensitive to the collective dynamism of the revolt and to the formation of inter-social alliances that gave the movement its threatening impact. At the same time they attribute crucial significance to the tsar's behaviour and to his role – and failures – as the most important communicative hub. It becomes clear that for the protesting people he was the main addressee. For this reason, his shortcomings in terms of mediation and communication are singled out as important accelerators of the revolt.

> When on June 1st the grand prince was coming from his Troitskii procession to Moscow, the commoners complained, as they had done formerly, about the falsehood and coercion they had been subjected to, which can be seen from the enclosed supplication.

14 Sergei Fedorovich Platonov, 'Moskovskie volneniia 1648 goda', *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia*, 267 (1888), p. 15.

He explicitly states: "as they had done formerly". Thus he does not yet consider the assembled crowd to be insurrectional, because the people make use of nothing more than their right of petition. Pommerening regards the tsar's reaction, or the reaction of his entourage, as the actual trigger of the revolt:

> And since His Tsar's Majesty *did not want to receive the supplication himself* and the commoners were instead beaten with knouts, they started to throw stones and to descend on a series of notable boyars; 15 or 16 people who followed the Tsar with the supplication to the Kremlin were thrown into the tower.

The general picture is quite clear: the peacefully assembled people want to bring their complaints directly to the tsar, but they are relegated to those whose despotism they are decrying. Pommerening states that *the tsar does not want to hear their case*. In the Leyden Brochure, it is the 'boyar' entourage that screens the tsar from sight. The contemporaneous English manuscript translation of the pamphlet reads:

> The Bojates [i.e. boyars], environing his imperiall Majestie, got these petitions, tore y^{e} same not onely into pieces, flung the pieces into the petitioners faces, rayling at them mightily, and caused them to be cruelly beaten by their chalopps [*kholopy*] or slaves, and imprisoned a great many of them.[15]

In both accounts the people still remain peaceful. According to Pommerening, violence is only started by the guards, who are instructed to lash out at the assembled petitioners. This finally provoked violence on the part of some petitioners. But only a few let themselves be driven to shy stones against boyar officials. Therefore the guard has no difficulty in dispersing the crowd and arresting the alleged ringleaders.

But the next day a crowd reassembled at the occasion of the tsar's second Pentecost procession *within the city*, where it was harder to screen him from sight: "Again the commoners followed him and solicited the liberation of those arrested the previous day (which was immediately granted) and the surrender of those who suck their blood and torment the innocent".[16] The 'bloodsuckers' are clearly named, among them Morozov. Tsar Aleksei does not want to aban-

15 Loewenson, 'The Moscow Rising of 1648', p. 153.

16 Pommerening to Queen Christina, letter dated 6 July 1648. Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*, p. 36.

don his favourite, and his favourite does not want to abandon his clients. Again the tsar tries initially to send ahead others to negotiate with the crowd, among them the Patriarch as the highest representative of the Orthodox Church. However, "the Patriarch's admonishments did not help, and not even the words of his Majesty himself were able to calm down the unrest", unless he would yield to their demands. People seem to have drawn their lessons from their reversal of the previous day. A considerable part of them intruded into the territory of the Kremlin, the very centre of power and

> since in the meantime Morozov's servants beat some of the musketeers [i.e. the military guard], because they had not prevented the people from entering the Kremlin, the musketeers declared that they had only His Majesty the Tsar [i.e. only recognised him as authority], but no favourite, and that they didn't want to fight for the boyars against the people, but were ready to help [the people] to get rid of the boyars' coercion and falsehood.[17]

The military guard virtually defects to the petitioners and a new coalition takes shape, which changes the balance of power. The musketeers refuse obedience to the boyars, but explicitly declare their loyalty to the tsar. Aleksei could have commanded them to evacuate the Kremlin from the petitioners, but he would not dare to do so:

> Then, *in the presence of His Tsarist Majesty*, they [the musketeers] joined the people to ravage and destroy Boris Morozov's house on the Kremlin territory; from there they went to chancellor Nazarii [Chistyi's] house who was already sick and after having been severely harassed was thrown down and killed: for a long time he lay bare on a dunghill. In the same manner they continued to destroy the houses of the above-mentioned persons, until on 3 June the huge fire spread everywhere.[18]

The Russian original of the petition is not preserved, probably because it was never handed over to the tsar even in the following days. Pommerening is quite clear about its non-acceptance having largely contributed to provoking the shift from peaceful assembly to large-scale crowd violence. Most likely several

17 Ibid., pp. 36–37.

18 Ibid., p. 37. This defenestration certainly reminded Swedish readers of the Prague events in 1618 that had triggered the Thirty Years' War. Throwing 'traitors' from towers, bridges or out of windows was a recurrent ritual of execution staged by insurgents in Russia.

petitions were circulating during these days: different copies or even different versions. The document enclosed with the resident's correspondence is the only surviving 'copy'. The effort he took to have translated the extensive document shows to what extent the Swedish government was interested both in the insurgents' complaints and their ways of voicing them.

According to Pommerening the petition comes from the 'gemene mannen', i.e. the 'commoners' as opposed to the privileged estates.[19] But towards the end of the document, the authors say they represent "the simple Muscovite gentry, urban service people, *gosti* (wealthy merchants engaging in long-distance trade) and merchants (with lower-scale businesses), [as well as] the upper and lower ranks of Moscow".

The musketeers' declaration of undamaged loyalty to the tsar, combined with a *de facto* prescription regarding how the monarch should behave, is substantiated by the petition. To be sure, the biggest part of the document is devoted to a depiction of outrageous abuses, embezzlement, cruelty and general arbitrariness of corrupt Muscovite officials, in particular those of the Morozov clan. At some points resentment shines through against those social climbers, who made it into the highest bureaucracy and managed by means of unlawful exactions, excessive imposts and bribes "to amass piles of riches and build themselves houses that *do not befit their rank*: in the times of former grand princes this was not customary".[20]

Such passages are quoted by historians as proof of the people's traditionalism and resistance against a modernising state and the formation of a modern bureaucracy based on merit instead of birth.[21] But social agents engaging in collective protest have to justify their actions along the lines of generally accepted, common good-oriented principles. Indeed, by referring to the limitations imposed by ranks they do appeal to the patriarchal values of an estate-based society that is supposed to assure social peace. But this is only a subordinate element of their reasoning. The main thrust of their argument

19 In Muscovite society he refers to the *chernye*, the tax-paying population inside (*posadskie liudi*) and outside the city walls.

20 P.P. Smirnov, 'Chelobitnye dvorian i detei boiarskikh vsekh gorodov v pervoi polovine XVII veka', *Chteniia v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete* (*ChIOIDR*), 3 (1915), pp. 1–73 (62).

21 The most interesting and balanced interpretation of the uprising as resistance against the establishment of a new bureaucracy can be found in Valerie Ann Kivelson, 'The Devil Stole His Mind: The Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising', *The American Historical Review*, 98:3 (1993), pp. 733–756. Cf. also Hans-Joachim Torke, *Die staatsbedingte Gesellschaft im Moskauer Reich: Zar und Zemlja in der altrussischen Herrschaftsverfassung 1613–1689* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 218–244; Roller-Aßfalg, 'Der Moskauer Aufstand von 1648'.

is to deny the accused bureaucrats their alleged merit. Instead of serving the common good they pursue nothing but selfish interests and pad their pockets by plundering the subjects and the tsar's treasury, so that many regions of the country already 'lie barren'. Therefore the tsar is asked to take the reins of government himself and to replace his corrupt officials by deserving people, who are really devoted to the common good. Thus meritocracy is not repudiated, but vehemently called for.

It is a widespread pattern in early modern protest movements, not only in Russia, to blame the 'evil councillors' while hailing the monarch's benevolence and benignity. But the petition does not stop there. The tsar himself is clearly informed of his limits:

> It has come to the point that *they* [*the corrupt officials*] *have set His Tsarist Majesty against the people – and the people against His Majesty*. And due to these injustices the population of the entire Muscovite State and its border regions are put into a state of unsteadiness, *as a consequence of which a storm will be arising in the city of Moscow and in many other places, in towns and districts, if Your Majesty the Tsar will continue to tolerate and pardon* the ever increasing oppression of the poor and leave this gang of crooks unpunished, which only makes them feel safer in their practice of bribery and embezzlement.[22]

Concerning the impending outbreak of unrest in numerous Russian cities, this passage turns out to be prophetic – or can be read as a direct threat. The tsar is commanded to "remember that you, Sovereign, were called to the throne by God Himself, not by your own will". If he does not take to heart "the humble supplication of Your slaves and orphans", he should keep in mind "that God's wrath, which has formerly been spilled on the Muscovite state as a punishment for such lawlessness, is supposed to attain it again".[23] This is an unambiguous allusion to the Time of Troubles (*Smutnoe vremia*), the great and traumatic civil war at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in which numerous pretenders were claiming the throne and tsars were dethroned almost in series, which provoked far-reaching Polish and Swedish intervention and shook the country to its very foundations. The events were also part of the recent history of Sweden and Pommerening can count on the understanding of his readers.

In fact, it was with the election of Mikhail Romanov as new tsar in 1613 that the civil war gradually came to an end and that the Romanov dynasty was in-

22 Smirnov, 'Chelobitnye dvorian', pp. 62–63.

23 Ibid., p. 63.

stalled. This at least is how it looks with historical hindsight since, after Tsar Mikhail's death in 1645, the 16-year old Aleksei succeeded his father smoothly and without any complications. But the petitioners suggest that the Romanovs lack the unquestioned divine legitimacy of the former Rurik dynasty. In a subclause they boldly affirm that: "Your Majesty the Tsar – as well as your defunct father, after the complete destruction of the Muscovite state by evil men – has been installed and elected sovereign and grand prince by God and *the entire people*".[24] In combination with the insurgents' deeds and behaviour towards the sovereign this implies that if Tsar Aleksei does not fulfill his responsibilities towards the entire country and the common good, the people can withdraw their consent and take matters into their own hands as is suggested at the end of the petition:

> You shall have all the unjust judges extirpated and the ignorant disposed and have them replaced by suitable people, who are able to answer for their judgments and their service before God and before Your Majesty. And if [you can] not [do that], then Your Tsarist Majesty shall let the commoners themselves nominate all service men and judges by their own means and to select those, who will guide them between custom and justice and who can protect them against violence of the mighty.[25]

Even though the petitioners call themselves the tsar's "slaves and orphans" (the customary manner of addressing the tsar), their propositions, claims and suggestions are hard to reconcile with a 'naïve monarchism' of a servile people 'born to slavery'.[26] The supplication concludes with what sounds almost ironic: the people's agency is supposed to relieve both the tsar and the boyars "from all sorts of excessive work". The tsar would be able "to govern his tsarist crown in complete tranquillity" and the boyars could "more conveniently manage their domestic affairs".[27] What this 'tsarist cause' should be is not specified: foreign

24 Ibid., p. 62.

25 Ibid., p. 64.

26 The concept of 'naïve monarchism' stems from the Slavophil tradition of the nineteenth century. See a discussion of the concept in Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), pp. 1–27. The concept of inborn slavery as the counterpart of autocracy is vehemently defended by Marshall T. Poe, *'A People Born to Slavery': Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography, 1476–1748* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

27 Smirnov, 'Chelobitnye dvorian', pp. 64–65.

policy or rather hunting parties and similar amusements, which Tsar Aleksei was known to prefer over government affairs.[28]

Against the background of what was simultaneously going on elsewhere, Pommerening and his readers in Sweden could have drawn numerous parallels, for instance to England, where King Charles I had been divested of the army and most government affairs and thus temporarily been reduced to his 'private body' as it was argued by the ideologues of the English Parliament, who were drawing on medieval political theology in order to justify their takeover of the functions of the king's 'political body'.[29] (Charles' execution still lay ahead.) The Muscovite petitioners did not use the language of the 'body politic', but in the foreigners' accounts their arguments and deeds headed in a similar direction.

The tsar's youth, inability or unwillingness to govern on his own, and his ongoing ties to his tutor, who was at the same time the most influential statesman, invite comparisons with Sweden, where the authorities were particularly afraid of an impending uprising. Both sovereigns, Aleksei and Christina, had only recently reached majority – and royal minority or weakness had been identified by numerous observers as common triggers of political violence and revolts.[30] In both cases, the former tutors to the dauphin pulled the strings of politics. Morozov owed his predominant position to Aleksei's succession to the throne; Oxenstierna had obtained his overwhelming power much earlier under Christina's father Gustav Adolf. Both of them were efficient networkers, but due to the different political system with a regular representation of the four Estates in the Swedish Diet, Oxenstierna had to rely on persuasion and was at the same time an extremely skillful public orator, as can be seen from preserved protocols of the Diet. To be sure, Christina was much more independent in emotional and intellectual terms and occasionally also tried to emancipate herself from Oxenstierna on a political level. But at the same time she was known to be rather averse to the work of government and similarly prone to sumptuous balls as Aleksei was prone to hunting parties.

When Pommerening depicts the rapid emergence of a broad coalition between diverse social strata against the governing elite in Muscovy that lead

28 Cf. Krusebjörn's letter from 14 October 1645, Forsten, 'Snosheniia Shvetsii s Rossiei', p. 368.

29 On the king's two bodies, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

30 For numerous examples see Yves-Marie Bercé, 'Political Vacuum and Interregnum in Early Modern Unrest', in Malte Griesse (ed.), *From Mutual Observation to Propaganda War. Premodern Revolts in Their Transnational Representations* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014), pp. 81–91.

not only to peaceful petitions, but eventually to an enormous orgy of violence, this should have reminded Swedish readers of the broad cross-Estates opposition that was forming against the Oxenstierna clan in their own country. Pommerening and the other observers highlight the monarch's failure to fulfill his role as communicative hub standing above political factions. This is more or less clearly singled out as the decisive trigger for the outbreak of large-scale violence. At the same time, the Swedish government received very similar analyses from other foreign trouble spots, most explicitly from their ambassador to the French court, Schering Rosenhane, who commented from Paris on the unfolding Fronde. While criticising Cardinal Mazarin for his failure properly to communicate his government policy and thereby aggravating social and political tensions, the ambassador posed as sort of a consultant to other governments – in the first place the Swedish one – which should avoid similar errors.[31] Taking into account the Swedish authorities' notorious fear of revolts, its general willingness to learn from foreign examples, its proneness to seek reconciliation via communication, balancing of interests and even concessions, as well as of the simultaneous reception of Rosenhane's reports from France, the Swedish residents' analyses of the Moscow events fell on fertile ground in the Queen's council.[32]

A Large-scale Boyar Conspiracy? Rumours of the Moscow Events on Their Way to Paris

The news from Moscow was highly valued in Sweden, but due to blocked lines of communication, letters from Moscow took a long time to arrive there. In the meantime, the Swedish government was limited to rumours, mainly those spread across the border. This was the situation in August, when the French ambassador to the Swedish court Pierre Chanut reported to Cardinal Mazarin, his master in Paris, what he had picked up in Stockholm about Muscovite

31 On Rosenhane's reports and the Latin publication of his Observations on the Fronde, see Erik Thomson, 'Le travail du diplomate et la diffusion des idées politiques à l'époque moderne: la Fronde vue par le résident suédois Schering Rosenhane (1648–1649)', *Histoire, économie et société*, 29:1 (2010), pp. 13–23; Malte Griesse, 'Swedish Observations on the Fronde: Schering Rosenhane as Ambassador to the French Court', in Malte Griesse, Monika Barget and David de Boer (eds.), *Ink and Blood: Writing Rebellion in Early Modern Diplomacy* (Ashgate-Routledge, forthcoming).

32 On Swedish fear of revolts see Miriam Rönnqvist, 'Fighting Fires and Weathering Storms: Fear of Peasant Revolt and Communication of Revolts in Early Modern Sweden', *Revue d'Histoire Nordique/Nordic Historical Review*, 18 (2014), pp. 125–145.

events. Chanut was very close to Queen Christina and often managed to obtain arcane information from the Swedish court.[33] But in this case he had no clue about Pommerening's reports.

His account of Muscovy follows a report on Swedish-Polish peace negotiations. He introduces it by stating that contradictory versions of "the troubles of the Muscovite court" were circulating in Sweden and he recapitulates "a big relation (*grande relation*) that came from Novgorod and Pskov" about what sounds like a fantastic plot involving the mightiest boyars conspiring in order to kill the Grand prince. They wanted to break the Empire apart into governments and principalities and divide them among themselves. The ensemble of these principalities was to be subjected to an eligible chief – in the manner of the German Empire. In order to assure that these huge changes in government would not be disturbed by foreign interventions, the conspirators would have secretly negotiated with the Crimean Tartars and promised them a big province on the Southern border in exchange for military help if it would be necessary. "Morosoph", the "premier minister" and brother-in-law (beau-frère) of the Grand prince, as well as the "chancellor Nazari" (by which he means Chistyi) would have been part of this plot. But the conspiracy would have been uncovered by a certain "Banaanoph", a relative of the Grand Prince and the Patriarch's son. The defector had regretted his participation in the huge treason and informed the Grand Prince, providing proof and the names of all involved conspirators. The tsar then invited these people into his palace under different pretexts and had them all killed and their corpses thrown to the dogs in the streets. The people [*le peuple*] would have watched this tragedy with great pleasure, because shortly before they had complained that the ministers were abusing their power, selling their 'services' for a lot of money and imposing more and more taxes on the population. Therefore, instead of showing pity and compassion in the face of this big slaughter of the seigneurs, the people did not even forgive their families, but pillaged their houses and set many of them on fire. At the same time, the Grand Prince had sent people to the provinces, in order to get hold of all the other culprits. "Chancellor Nazari" would have escaped the massacre, because he did not obey to the Grand Prince's order to come to the palace, but on the following day he would have poisoned himself.[34]

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33 On Chanut's close relationship to Queen Christina, see Jean-François de Raymond, *Pierre Chanut, ami de Descartes: un diplomate philosophe* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1999).

34 Pierre Linage de Vauciennes, *Memoires de ce qui s'est passé en Suède, et aux provinces voisines, depuis l'année 1645 jusques en l'année 1655; ensemble le demêlé de la Suède avec la Pologne, tirez des depesches de Monsieur Chanut, ambassadeur pour le roy en Suède*, vol. 1 (Cologne: Pierre du Marteau, 1677), pp. 332–333.

To be sure, Pommerening had not written a word about such a fancy conspiracy of the grandees against the tsar as being the cause of the uprising or even of large-scale retribution. The scenario of (thwarted) regicide rather recalls contemporaneous plays staged at the French and other courts.[35] Chanut's fantastic scenario must, therefore, be seen as the result of "Chinese Whispers" and I will try to retrace the rumours, from which the story might have been pieced together. In the scenario, a central element stands out: the tsar is the active part; he immediately takes the initiative, when being informed about the assassination plans by the mysterious "Banaanoph", allegedly Patriarch Iosif's son and a relative of the tsar (of whom we do not know anything from reliable sources). The people are on the tsar's side, but they only take up his initiative. Having been continuously abused and exploited by the traitors, they gleefully welcome the tsar's revenge and top it by pillaging the culprits' houses. Apart from "Banaanoph" the names of the plotters correspond to those against whom the people (insurgents) actually did voice their grievances and petitioned to the tsar. Even the story of the escape is documented in a narration by Simon Azar'in, the cellarer of the Troitse-Sergiev monastery, according to which a "certain magnate" fled from Moscow to the monastery, where his presence would have offended the icon of Saint Sergei Radonezhskii, the founder of the monastery of the fourteenth century.[36] The story does not refer to "chancellor Nazari" (Chistyi), though, but to Trakhaniotov. According to Azar'in and the eyewitness accounts from Moscow, Trakhaniotov did not commit suicide, but was caught, brought back to Moscow and executed in a popular ritual of punishment.

As in the insurgents' petition these "ministers" are enemies of the people, violators of the common good, and therefore also enemies of the tsar, who they screen from his subjects in order to shroud their own misdeeds. Altogether it is remarkable to what extent the scenario corresponds to popular representations of the events, especially those circulating outside the capital.

From Pommerening's accounts and especially from the petition he forwarded to the Swedish court in translation we have seen how the insurgents insisted upon acting *in the name of the tsar*, and how, in direct confrontation, they tried to push Tsar Aleksei to subscribe to their cause. The Moscow events resonated

35 From a total of 116 tragedies published in France between 1634 and 1651 Lise Michel has counted 18, where the monarch is actually assassinated, and many others, where regicide is planned or announced in the course of the plot. Lise Michel, 'Régicide et dramaturgie dans la tragédie française, de *La Mort de César* de Scudéry (1636) à la *Rosemonde* de Baro (1651)', *Littératures classiques*, 67 (2008), pp. 115–129 (115).

36 Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*, pp. 88–91.

throughout the whole country, and in many provincial towns uprisings immediately followed the advent of rumours about the dramatic happenings in the capital. The authorities reacted in a similar way as those in many other European countries in case of domestic revolts: they tried to control rumours and punish the messengers. Bearers of 'false news' were considered insurgents and in several cases their tongues were cut off, the organs with which they had infringed the taboo and thereby offended the state.[37]

Chinese whispers modified the image of the events and often these modifications tended to approximate the desires and imaginaries of those who told and retold them. Dissatisfaction with taxes and corrupt officials was widespread throughout the country and the most obvious way to legitimise resistance was to act *in the name of the tsar*. And indeed, rumours from Moscow about the tsar's behaviour encouraged people in the provinces and helped them justify their insubordination against local and regional officials. This is clearly captured in Chanut's "*grande relation*", where the tsar "sends [his emissaries] to the provinces to seize the culprits". What else might ensue from such a rumour if not that the tsar needed (his people's) assistance?

In Pommerening's and other foreigners' accounts Tsar Aleksei looks helpless: he desperately tries to protect Morozov. However, in the end he must ban him from the capital 'forever' (in fact, Morozov would come back in less than two months). Together with the populace the musketeers pillage and destroy Morozov's, Pleshcheev's and other officials' houses – in the presence of the sovereign, who does not object to these 'punishments'. The enraged people are certainly persuaded to act with the tsar's approval, or perhaps even by his command. This and similar versions of the events were spread by the insurgents themselves. In their eyes, Morozov and the other officials were not only enemies of the people, but also traitors against the tsar, since they wanted to deprive him of his power in order to rule the country on their own, serving exclusively their excessive self-interests.

It is no mere coincidence that many of the juridical cases related to unseemly talk about the uprising involved dependents of Prince Dmitrii Mamstriukovich

37 See the case of Andrei Larionov, who was punished for spreading rumours and instigating a new revolt. The case is summarised in Sergei Vladimirovich Bakhrushin, 'Moskovskoe vosstanie 1648 g.', in *Nauchnye trudy 2. Stat'i po ėkonomicheskoi, sotsial'noi, i politicheskoi istorii russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva XV-XVII vv.* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1954), pp. 66–67. In early 1649 Pommerening also reported about the punishment of four gossipers who, while talking about the past events, anticipated a new uprising. "Two of them were beheaded, and two others had their tongues cut out…" Letter of 9 February 1649, Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*, p. 47.

Cherkasskii and Prince Nikita Ivanovich Romanov (the tsar's father's cousin), the two boyars, who had been ousted from political key positions by Morozov and his clique and who hence led the most powerful anti-Morozov faction at court and came to re-occupy the leading offices during (the intermezzo of) Morozov's exile.[38] As we can see from Pommerening's account, Tsar Aleksei, in his plight, finally relied on their popularity: they talked to the insurgents and largely contributed to soothe their anger, in combination with the tsar's own appearance before the people and his concessions.[39]

Persecution of the loose tongues only started after Morozov's restoration to office. However, even though some denunciators decried talks, in which the Princes Romanov and Cherkasskii should have appeared as instigators, they were never touched or reprimanded themselves.[40] This would have been an extremely delicate issue, since they seemed to have considerable parts of public opinion on their side. Most likely the court faction assembled around the Princes played an active role in the dissemination of rumours that presented the tsar as the active part against the 'traitors'.[41] The rumours accusing Morozov of Moscow's destruction, which corroborated the idea that he was a traitor to the tsar, are repeated not only in Swedish reports, but they even made their way into one (albeit exceptional) Russian account of the events, where the 'traitors' of the Morozov-clan are confronted with the protesting people as 'the community' (*mir*) and even 'the whole country' (*vsia zemlia*), i.e. as legal entities, that come to an agreement [*dogovorilisia*] with the tsar about punishments and banishments.[42] In this account Morozov and Trakhaniotov have already been deposed from office and condemned to exile by the tsar, "wherever you, the *mir*, deem appropriate", when, "inspired by the devil [*naucheniem d'iavol'skim*], they sent out their people throughout Moscow and ordered them to burn down all Moscow".[43] They are not said to have attempted to take the

38 Bakhrushin, 'Moskovskoe vosstanie 1648 g.'.

39 Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*, pp. 37–38.

40 Bakhrushin, 'Moskovskoe vosstanie 1648 g.', pp. 66–67.

41 Kivelson, 'The Devil Stole His Mind', p. 740, mainly focuses on the anti-Morozov tendency of the rumours fostered by the Princes' faction. The two Princes' crucial role in disseminating rumours is also highlighted in the second- (or third?-) hand account by Peter Loofeldt, a Swedish diplomat working in the Swedish border towns, who had never been permitted access to Moscow. See Heinz E. Ellersieck, *Russia under Aleksei Mikhailovich and Feodor Alekseevich, 1645–1682: The Scandinavian Sources* (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1955), p. 326.

42 The reference to elements of a contract concluded between tsar and people is in tune with the assumptions underlying the people's petition forwarded by Pommerening.

43 Bazilevich, *Gorodskie vosstaniia*, pp. 81–83.

tsar's life as in Chanut's account, but the ingredients of conspiracy and treason are present – and even though Aleksei's attachment to his tutor is highlighted, the tsar appears as considerably more active than in the Swedish residents' and other foreigners' accounts.[44]

The tsar's activity and his alliance with the people against a gang of traitors, who have infiltrated and usurped government, are the major elements of the story that encouraged revolts in many other cities of the realm, often directed against officials in league with Morozov. In general, the three pillars (the *tsar* with *people* against Morozov-*traitors*) remained intact, since they corresponded to the expectations and interests of the insurgents in the provinces, who were also disaffected with their rulers. But in the process of oral transmission over long distances and through numerous intermediaries, the story built on these pillars could change considerably (as can be seen from the series of legal cases in the provinces).[45] Both the tsar's commitment to Morozov and the constitutionalist vein in the confrontation between tsar and people (which play such a crucial role in foreign residents' reports and the petition, as well as in the quoted Russian account) seemed to disappear in the versions of the Moscow events as they were told and 'used' in political confrontations in the provinces. Since the tsar was not personally present, it was much easier than in Moscow to imagine him in unison with his people. This illustrates that limitations of, and eventually even legal resistance to, the tsar's power (and autocracy) were indeed part of Muscovite political repertoire, but that they were downplayed as far as possible in favour of the image of the 'good tsar', who incarnated the common good and the will of his people.[46]

Curiously, this constitutionalist dimension reemerges in Chanut's account, but acquires a completely different meaning, when attributed to Morozov and his clique. They allegedly want to overthrow autocracy in order to establish a new political order as it is known 'from the Holy Roman Empire'. Since Muscovy was often represented as autocracy,[47] these Swedish rumours associate constitutionalist aspirations with treason. But the version of a political overthrow attempted by the Morozov clique might have already been disseminated

44 For the complete text of the account and interesting editorial remarks see Platonov, 'Moskovskie volneniia', pp. 69–75.

45 Bakhrushin, 'Moskovskoe vosstanie 1648 g.'

46 The same pattern can be observed in the large-scale revolts that promoted false tsars. Cf. Maureen Perrie, *Pretenders and Popular Monarchism in Early Modern Russia: The False Tsars of the Time of Troubles* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002).

47 See Poe, *A People Born to Slavery*.

in provincial cities of Muscovy, since it made legal resistance (to Morozov's accomplices) *on behalf of the tsar* a matter of necessity.

The Chanut-scenario of the Moscow events allows only very general comparisons to the contemporaneous situation in Sweden. Indeed there was widespread resistance against the 'grandees', especially against the overwhelming influence of the Oxenstierna-clan. In Chanut's fantastic account Morozov's people also figure as 'grandees' and not as the social climbers they actually were. In Sweden resistance against the 'grandees' was organised in an oppositional movement assembled around Karl Karlsson Gyllenhielm (1574–1650) and the Count-Palatine Johann Kasimir. It reached into the highest circles of the Privy Council and eventually even included the Queen, where she was trying to emancipate herself from the Chancellor's (Axel Oxenstierna's) paternalism. The opposition's criticism was more or less well-known – due to a series of tracts and leaflets. In 1647 the group had circulated its "Remarks upon the Form of Government", where it castigated "ambition, selfishness, jealousy and ill-will", out of which certain groups "exalt themselves and lord it over the rest". It postulated that the people, "who *contribute to the welfare of the kingdom*, should know how their money is spent by those who have the handling of it", and that "*superfluous officials*, and the many foreigners who enter the country and are not essentially necessary to its service, may be struck off, and *unnecessary expense spared*", since "the revenues are now considerably diminished *by reason of the poverty of the people*, and because so much crown land has been sold, or granted as fiefs".[48]

The pamphlet appeared anonymously, but Gyllenhielm was suspected of being the author. Gyllenhielm's importance for the opposition in Sweden might explain the appearance of the mysterious "Banaanoph" (Bananov) in Chanut's account. Like "Banaanoph" Gyllenhielm was a bastard. "Banaanoph" is presented as a relative of the tsar and the Patriarch's illegitimate son; Gyllenhielm was the illegitimate son of King Charles IX, grandfather of the ruling Queen Christina. "Banaanoph", himself one of the grandees, reveals the treason of his peer group and thus saves the tsar from being assassinated and the Empire from being dismantled. Gyllenhielm and Johann Kasimir, also fight as grandees against their peers' appropriation of state revenues and power and thereby embrace popular resentment in order to rally support, even though they do not openly present the Oxenstiernas and their supporters as conspirators. Most likely in the chain of Chinese whispers about Muscovite events, the whistle-blower "Banaanoph" was an outgrowth of Swedish political expectations and fears.

48 Michael Roberts, *Sweden as a Great Power, 1611–1697: Government, Society, Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968), pp. 41–42.

It is particularly interesting that in Chanut's story the Muscovite conspirators would have taken the federalism of the Holy Roman Empire as a model. Was this federalist motive a result of Muscovite or Swedish whispers? In Muscovy the negative idea of the state's fragmentation was related to the 'Tatar yoke'. Therefore it made sense to accuse the alleged plotters of splitting the country, but it would have been more obvious to compare this to the Mongol past. The reference to the Holy Roman Empire as bogey has rather to be attributed to whispering Swedes, who have just seen the devastated German principalities. Indeed, after the Thirty Years' War 'absolutist' aspirations were 'in the air' and federalist tendencies were largely discredited as sources of intestine strife.[49]

The Moscow Uprising in the Gazette de France

In this last section, I follow the Chinese whispers to Paris, where the *Gazette de France* 'reports' on the Muscovite events in an *Extraordinaire* of early October. This is the first account in the chain of communications followed here that was published thereby and addressed a larger audience. The *Gazette de France* was not a commercial paper run by private entrepreneurs, who were primarily interested in profitmaking, as was the case with most publishers in the Holy Roman Empire. It was a state-run paper, founded only in the previous decade on the initiative of Cardinal Richelieu, who wrote some of the articles himself. The *Gazette* was therefore, first and foremost, a means of propaganda used by a government with clear-cut absolutist aspirations. Even though the relationship with Cardinal Mazarin was less intimate than it had been with Richelieu, and the Queen's favourite and factual regent hardly ever wrote articles himself anymore, the editor Renaudot and his correspondents remained closely associated with the government.[50] To judge from the style and the use of metaphors, the article on Muscovy was probably written by Renaudot himself.[51]

In contrast to Chanut in Stockholm, the author of the article had already seen the barricades in Paris in protest against the arrest of the popular

49 On the general aspiration for tranquility see Theodore K. Rabb, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

50 This would only change at the beginning of 1649, when the French court fled from the capital. Renaudot was with the king and Mazarins in Saint Germain, but Renaudot's sons had remained in the capital and continued to run the Gazette under the influence of the ruling Frondeurs. On the history of the *Gazette* during the Fronde, see Stéphane Haffemayer, *L'information dans la France du XVIIe siècle: la Gazette de Renaudot de 1647 à 1663* (Paris: Champion, 2002).

51 Ibid., pp. 516–517.

parliamentarians Broussel and Blancmesnil, as well as Mazarin's surrender and their release after only a few days of imprisonment. It is more difficult to say for sure which items of information and rumours on the Muscovite uprising he used, even more so since he clearly exploited the events in distant Muscovy to transform them into a didactic play for his French readers. He might have known about Chanut's reports. In addition, he had probably read the Leyden Brochure, of which I have found a French manuscript translation in the papers of the (French) court historiographer Denis (II) Godefroy.[52]

The *Extraordinaire* of the *Gazette*, dated 8 October 1648, assembles two 'news items' from Eastern Europe. The article on Muscovy is followed by another article on the state of health of Marie-Louise de Gonzaga, Queen of Poland. But the two articles are not related to each other and the assemblage does not mean that the 'news' about Muscovy also came from Poland. Anyway, the author of the account on Muscovy was obviously rather 'creative' with his sources.

The framework of general destruction is described accurately, and also the beginning of the revolt is correctly dated, even if it is given according to the Gregorian instead of the Julian calendar, which was still in use in Orthodox Muscovy and protestant Sweden: "On 12 June in the great city of Moscow broke out a terrible rebellion, during which so many awful things happened that its memory should be rather effaced than refreshed". Interestingly, the report is thus introduced by reference to the imperative of *damnatio memoriae*. Indeed, the reader learns hardly anything about the events of the revolt. Instead, the account consists almost entirely of the verbal reproduction of an Orthodox priest's sermon that is obviously made up by the author:

> But there was a Muscovite clergyman, venerated by for his virtuous life and because he was so zealous in his religion, who managed to tame the rage of the people by his remonstrance. Therefore I thought that it would be a crime to posterity not to report on him. For he reminds us of the greatest histories of Antiquity, where we find important speeches that have been held at numerous occasions, for instance the speech by Menenius Agrippa who saved Rome, and the speech of a peasant from the Danube that astounded the [Roman] Senate.[53]

52 'Relation véritable du tumulte arrivé en la ville de Mosco, capitale de Moscovie, le 12 Juin 1648', BnF, 'Mélanges historiques sur l'Europe' fol. 287 (La Moscovie, la Perse, la Tartarie), f. 323r–323v.

53 'La Harangue d'un callogére ou religieux Moscovite. Sur le sujet des émotions de ce Royaume-là, & qui se trouvent aujourd'huy presque par tout le monde', *Gazette de France* no. 154, October 1648, sec. Extraordinaire, pp. 1373–1374.

Already in this introduction a lot of erudition and many references to antiquity are displayed. The Muscovite clergyman is placed in an illustrious line of tradition. The story of Menenius Agrippa, who went to the insurgent plebeians of Rome and told them the fable of the members' rebellion against the belly and thereby brought them to terms, is well-known from Titus Livy's *Ab urbe condita* (2.32.9). The reference to the Danube peasant has been imputed to Marc Aurel, who attributed the vitiation of morals in Rome to the many flatterers, and in this context would have told the story of one of the very few 'true men' who he met in his life: the story of a simple peasant from the Danube, who came to Rome and forthrightly denounced to the consuls the arbitrariness, abuse of authority and cruelty of the Roman judges in his Province, who heavily suppressed his unhappy people. He mused that the officials had been sent by God to punish and enslave his people for their sins. But during his two weeks in Rome he had seen so much excess and effeminacy that the Romans also seemed to deserve God's punishment and might soon be forced to recognise his people as their masters. For his audacious speech the peasant reckoned with being beheaded. But instead, the Senate replaced all his judges in the province, elevated the peasant to a patrician for his veracity and ordered him to be nourished by the Roman treasury for his entire life.[54]

This is the erudite horizon that is extended before the French readers. As full of references to antiquity as this introduction is, the cleric's speech itself starts with a particular sort of 'audience bashing':

> Another one would start by Messieurs: But what do I see around me? To whom should I give the honour and address him with such respect? To those, who have just killed more than 300 people and desecrated the holy places and saints with the blows of their battle axe and their scimitar? To the arsonists [actually: shot firer (boutefeux)], who caused the enormous fire that is still smoldering …? Would it be our Boyars and main senators [that I might address myself with this respectful address]? – They have lost all credit…. Therefore I prefer to say: miserable people, magistrates, who are no more what you were, masters without servants, slaves without masters, lost flock, spectacle of horror: Rather in order to calm myself and not to remain silent in the face of the destruction of my homeland, and even though the disaster exceeds all possibilities of rhetoric, than for the sake of real hope that I could nourish to figure out a remedy to our evils, do I lament our common misery.

54 A.C.M. Robert (ed.), *Fables inédites des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles: et fables de La Fontaine, rapprochées de celles de tous les auteurs qui avoient, avant lui, traité les mêmes sujets, précédées d'une notice sur les fabulistes* (Paris: É. Cabin, 1825), pp. ccviii–ccix.

> Only ruins remain from the old splendor of the biggest city that exists between Asia and the Arctic Sea. Since nobody pities you, pity at least yourselves![55]

The orator affirms he has little hope that people will even hear him, since "all the confines of religion have already been offended".

> But who listens to me? When I see you running through the streets like madmen, like lions in search of prey, what hope could I nurture? Don't I have to reckon with sacrificing myself then trying to soothe your fury? What do I say? It seems as if our misfortune does not content itself with the damage of our goods and bodies, and still wants to disintegrate our spirits.... Should I hope that those who could be retained neither by the considerations of their wives and children, nor by the honour and decency they had professed during a whole lifetime, might be held off by any other respect once they have trespassed against all limits of religion, honour and contentment?[56]

Nevertheless, he wants to try to proceed in the manner of a physician, quite similar to Menenius in the fable related by Livy:

> However, even though it will be impossible to fight them off, there is still a glimpse of satisfaction, when you at least name the most extreme evils, so that the poor sick can get some relief by sighing at their fate. Although they know that their sickness is about to kill them ..., they often even find some relief when hearing about medicine.... Let's do it in the same way. And to assure myself that at least some of you are listening to me and pausing from their rage, I will imitate the physicians, who use the short intervals of aperture to administer their remedies to the sick. My dear Muscovites, you would have so much reason to calm down. You were so well; and now you have suffered so much from the confusion and disorder and you cannot yet estimate the abysms of misery into which this will precipitate you.[57]

Then he passes on to the Christian faith and the values of charity. He appeals to the submerged moral standards of his listeners:

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55 'Harangue d'un callogére', pp. 1374–1375.

56 Ibid., pp. 1365–1366.

57 Ibid., p. 1376.

> Remember that you are humans and Christians … What is the use of praying to God: forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us? By seeking revenge isn't it as if you say to God: Condemn us, Lord, punish us in this world and in the other one with all the force and rigour of Your divine justice: and since we are spilling over our next all our wrath, do not spare us from your wrath. Who would not be horrified from such a prayer? And isn't this exactly the message that is emerging from speaking your Sunday prayer in the midst of your chaos and raising your bloody hands to heaven?[58]

A considerable part of the sermon asks for the origins of the troubles that could be ascribed "not so much to particular causes but to a general one", in the first place "to ourselves", especially to sinfulness and godless deeds against better knowledge. The preacher recurs to a widespread explanation when referring to the stars, but gives it a particular twist:

> Either we attribute [the disaster] to God's wrath that he spills over the whole human race at once, with even more reason since those who carry his name [as Christians] offend him even more than the infidels.… Or [our sufferance has to be attributed] to some influence of the stars, which are used by Divine Justice as a mighty instrument of His vengeance.… It is well-known that common effects have a universal cause. And don't believe that I speak of celestial influence in order to diminish divine power. This is comparable to the actions of Kings that belong to themselves – and even with more splendor and éclat –, when they are carried out by their Council, Sovereign courts or plenipotentiaries, and not by themselves.[59]

This comparison between God as the prime mover, who commands the stars and all their effects on earthly human life, and kings and their state apparatuses as extensions of royal will, illustrates the general amplitude of absolutist desires in the French government. But it has also to be seen in the concrete context of the emergent civil war in France, where the Frondeurs precisely denied that government measures emanated from the young King Louis XIV, who they regarded as Mazarin's hostage.

The alleged Muscovite clergyman situates the uprising not only in a European, but even in a global context.

58 Ibid., pp. 1376–1377.

59 Ibid., pp. 1377–1379.

> And indeed, later centuries will read … in our history that God's wrath had an effect on the entire face of the earth. Even if the world has rarely been peaceful and the ports of the Temple of Janus could rarely be closed … the unrest did not easily spread from one climate to another and when one kingdom was at war, another one enjoyed peace. The current protest-movements, though, are not only universal, but they all happen under the same pretext.[60]

The simultaneousness of revolts is seen as a novelty: as an overarching phenomenon that affects "very different climates", a reference to Jean Bodin's theory of climates as determinants of people's temperaments. This accounts for their new destructive power that runs rampant and out of all control:

> The three kingdoms of Great Britain have triggered these movements and they are still going on there, Naples has followed them, China had its revolution, Constantinople even before, Germany is divided in factions, Poland armed to the teeth and threatened by enormous divisions [the *Gazette* had already reported in some detail on the beginnings of the Khlmel'nyc'kyi uprising], Madrid had its part in the tumults, Rome as well: and one has to attribute it to a particular divine protection, when some states have yet been spared or have escaped with mere fear; and here [*chez nous, i.e. in Muscovy*] things speak for themselves.[61]

The French kingdom is omitted in this list of countries struck by internal strife and civil war. This is no coincidence, but due to *damnatio memoriae* with regard to revolts at home. The sermon concludes as follows:

> Let us admire, my dear Patriots, the secrets of the Almighty: let us seek for the causes of our chaos, uproar and troubles but in ourselves, i.e. in our sins. Instead of putting the blame on each other …, let us make our peace with God, then we will also find peace … among us. This will be a veritable confirmation of the word, according to which the wise man has the command of the stars…. And this peace is the true beauty of this life and the reflection of the eternal repose.[62]

According to the final comment of the "correspondent" the sermon did not fail to make a deep impression on the audience:

60 Ibid., p. 1378.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., pp. 1379–1380.

> It was astonishing that all inhabitants of this huge city (of which the stories tell us such miraculous things, for instance that they have a castle, where the grand prince lives, whom they call Tsar and Emperor, and that it can accommodate without difficulty his lifeguard consisting of 20.000 men), after hearing this speech, dropped their battle axes, scimitars and torches, felt ashamed about their former deeds, decided henceforth to do better than before, and resumed their trades and their ordinary business.[63]

Of course, the priest is rather addressing the inhabitants of Paris than those of Moscow. He addresses the 'principal Senators' in Parliament and the 'menu peuple' who had erected barricades. The Moscow uprising is stylised *as a model of pacification*. This went counter to the habitual othering of the Muscovite Empire as a cradle of barbarism and despotism.[64] The speech and references are laden with erudition and references to topoi of antiquity. In addition, Moscow appears as part of a European and a global tendency. Even more so, the virtuous return from sin and corruption is presented as a model to the French. The Muscovites are introduced as plain Christians, the Eastern schism is not even mentioned and Orthodoxy thus does not represent a decisive dividing line.

With the invocation of general sinfulness and God's universal punishment all concrete causes are brushed aside. In this way the primacy of *damnatio memoriae*, announced in the introduction, is consummated: memory of the events and even more so the concrete causes and grievances are 'erased' for the Muscovite uprising. But this is even more true for the Fronde in France that is not mentioned with a single word, even though it is the principle signified of this account that uses the Muscovite uprising as a projection surface in order to comment upon domestic troubles in veiled terms.

Historians tend to ascribe the emergence of what we call 'Aesopian language' to intellectuals in opposition to repressive modern states. The term has been coined in late imperial Russia by authors (namely Saltykov-Shchedrin), who were trying to circumvent censorship. But the practice can be easily traced back historically,[65] not least to eighteenth-century France, where in

63 Ibid., p. 1380.

64 The negative stereotypes of Muscovy that were widespread in central and Western Europe are summarised for instance in Gabriele Scheidegger, *Perverses Abendland – barbarisches Russland: Begegnungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im Schatten kultureller Missverständnisse* (Zürich: Chronos, 1993).

65 Lev Losev, *On the Beneficence of Censorship: Aesopian Language in Modern Russian Literature* (München: Sagner, 1984).

Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721) and other works it had become a topos to speak about the East in order to implicitly denounce despotism at home. It is not surprising that dissidents recurred to 'Aesopian language' earlier, but it is more noteworthy that they were also – or even initially – used by the authorities in face of domestic strife, since they were afraid to speak plainly.

On the one hand Chinese whispers about uprisings abroad bore considerable danger. Current metaphors and concomitant explicatory patterns suggested that revolts could spread across borders like 'wildfires' or 'epidemics', particularly in the troubled mid-seventeenth century.[66] Therefore disseminators of unwanted messages were severely punished and often their tongues were cut off. But on the other hand, the spread of rumours could not be defeated by repression, and talk about revolts abroad was considered less offensive than talk about revolt at home. In the present case, therefore, Chinese whispers eventually became a source, from which the French government mixed the ingredients of an Aesopian cocktail designed to provide an Eastern model for the pacification of its own subjects. But this did not prevent the Fronde from unfolding and gaining momentum. Since Mazarin rather despised the relevance of journalism as a means of public persuasion, government propaganda was submerged in a flood of oppositional 'Frondeur' pamphlets that did not tend to mince matters, the so-called Mazarinades.[67]

66 For a broad range of examples for this mid-seventeenth century, see Peter Burke, 'Some Seventeenth-Century Anatomists of Revolution', *Storia Della Storiografia*, 22 (1992), pp. 23–35.

67 See Christian Jouhaud, *Mazarinades: La Fronde des mots* (Paris: Aubier, 1985); Hubert Carrier, *La presse de la Fronde (1648–1653): les mazarinades*, 2 vols. (Genève: Droz, 1989–1991).

PART 6

Advertising

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CHAPTER 10

From Piety to Profit: The Development of Newspaper Advertising in the Dutch Golden Age

Arthur der Weduwen

Johann Hermann Knoop (1706–1769), a gardener at the court of the Frisian Stadhouder, was a bestselling author of guidebooks on horticulture, mathematics and astrology.[1] His weakness was drink, and he spiralled into poverty by 1758.[2] Abraham Ferwerda (1716–1783), the first newspaper proprietor in the Frisian capital, Leeuwarden, came to his rescue. In order to boost the readership of his bi-weekly *Leeuwarder Courant* (1752–), Ferwerda made use of Knoop's expertise as a handbook-writer. He employed Knoop to write a short tract: the *Kort Onderwys, hoedanig men de Couranten best lezen en gebruiken kan* (*Brief education, on how one can best read and use newspapers*).

This was a small guide which praised the virtues of reading a newspaper: it argued that any individual would improve their standing, knowledge and education through the regular consumption of a newspaper.[3] Towards the end of his handbook, Knoop also touched on the many benefits of newspaper advertising:

> The newspaper not only serves to highlight news and reports of foreign occurrences, but also to notify the inhabitants of a country or province … of public affairs which could be of interest to many sorts of people, and who would, without newspapers, not be aware of these things … such as advertisements or notifications for the sale or rent of dwellings, houses, fields, farms, gardens, cows, oxen, horses, sheep, books, &c., prices of grain, bread, butter, cheese, meat, bacon and a hundred other things which concern general society or the communality, and which are

1 The *Short Title Catalogue Netherlands* (http://picarta.pica.nl, accessed 26 April 2017) records 40 editions under his name between 1744 and 1790.

2 Marcel Broersma, *Beschaafde Vooruitgang: De wereld van de Leeuwarder Courant 1752–2002* (Leeuwarden: Friese Pers Boekerij, 2002), p. 50.

3 Several German authors had composed similar tracts on newspaper reading in the late seventeenth century. See Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 261–263.

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> especially useful and necessary for those who seek to engage in trade, and who wish to make an honest profit.[4]

Knoop's praise of advertising was not only promotion for the *Leeuwarder Courant* – it was also reflective of the state of Dutch newspapers around the 1750s. By the end of that decade the periodical market had gone through a significant period of expansion. New titles had recently emerged in Middelburg, Groningen and Leeuwarden; with ten Dutch newspapers published throughout the country, competition was intense.[5] In order to boost profits and cultivate readership, newspaper proprietors relied on advertising. Throughout the first thirty years of its publication two-thirds of the *Leeuwarder Courant* was given over to advertisements.[6] Most Dutch newspapers at this time still used the traditional format pioneered in the Netherlands, publishing as single folio half-sheets printed on both sides. Advertisements and other paid notifications were usually placed at the end of newspapers, on the lower half of the second page (see Figure 10.1). From the 1740s onwards, Dutch newspaper proprietors crammed in even more advertisements by placing them sideways along the margins on both front and rear; the result was hardly elegant, but more cost-effective than increasing the size of the paper to four pages.[7]

As Knoop had observed, the newspaper of the 1750s was a vehicle for an endless variety of products and services. Taverns, medicine, cloth, spices, colonial novelties, jewellery, education and employment were all to be found amongst the "hundred other things" that featured in the pages of periodicals. Newspapers had become synonymous with advertising: when Abraham Ferwerda received his monopoly from the Leeuwarden magistrates, it was granted on the condition that he would not increase the price of advertising.[8] It was a public good as much as a private enterprise, a natural component of commercial and civil society.

When Knoop wrote his guidebook in 1758, newspaper advertising had, in fact, been a fixed component of newspapers in the Dutch Republic for over

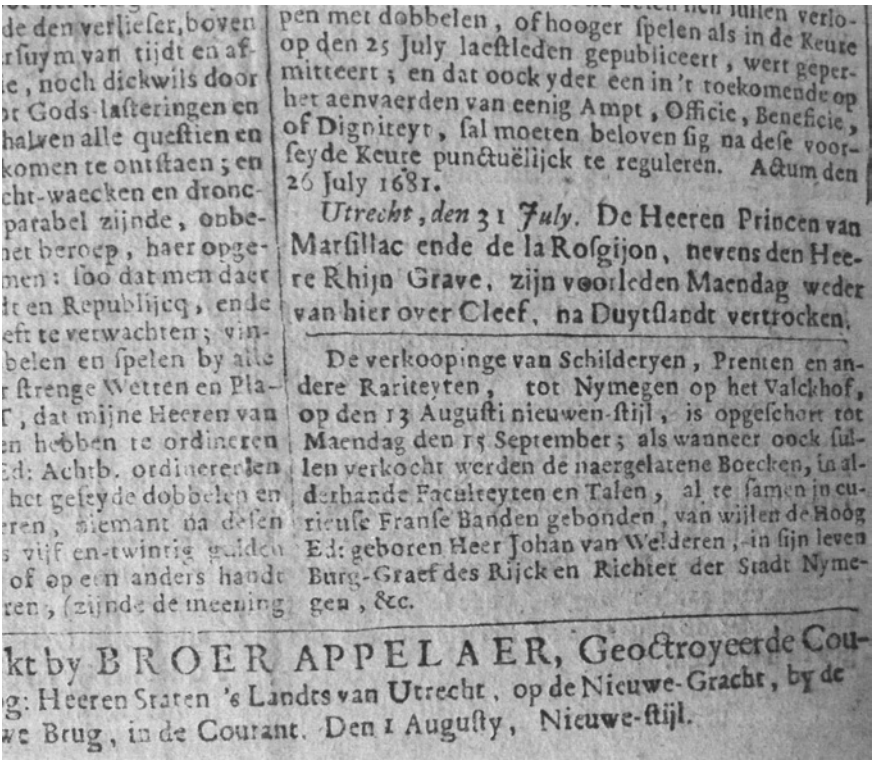
4 Johann Hermann Knoop, *Kort onderwys, hoedanig men de couranten best lezen en gebruiken kan* (Leeuwarden: Abraham Ferwerda, 1758), p. 16.

5 By the 1750s Dutch newspapers were published in Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, The Hague, Delft and Rotterdam (Holland), Utrecht (Utrecht), Middelburg (Zeeland), Groningen (Groningen), and Leeuwarden (Friesland).

6 Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, p. 40.

7 I.H. van Eeghen, 'De Amsterdamse Courant in de achttiende eeuw', *Jaarboek van het Genootschap Amstelodamum*, 44 (1950), pp. 31–58 (43).

8 Broersma, *Beschaafde vooruitgang*, pp. 40–42.



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26 July 1681.

Utrecht, den 31 July. De Heeren Princen van Marſillac ende de la Roſgijon, nevens den Hee-re Rhijn Grave, zijn voorleden Maendag weder van hier over Cleef, na Duytſlandt vertrocken.

De verkoopinge van Schilderyen, Prenten en an-dere Rariteyten, tot Nymegen op het Valckhof, op den 13 Auguſti nieuwen-ſtijl, is opgeſchort tot Maendag den 15 September; als wanneer oock ſul-len verkocht werden de naergelatene Boecken, in al-derhande Faculteyten en Talen, al te ſamen in cu-rieuſe Franſe Banden gebonden, van wijlen de Hoog Ed: geboren Heer Johan van Welderen, in ſijn leven Burg-Graef des Rijcks en Richter der Stadt Nyme-gen, &c.

kt by BROER APPELAER, Geoctroyeerde Cou-
g: Heeren Staten 's Landts van Utrecht, op de Nieuwe-Gracht, by de
we Brug, in de Courant. Den 1 Auguſty, Nieuwe-ſtijl.

FIGURE 10.1 *A typical Dutch newspaper advertisement. This advertisement, for a sale of "paintings, prints and other rarities" in the eastern town of Nijmegen, was placed in Broer Appelaer's* Utrechtse Courant *on 1 August 1681. The advertisement is set directly below the final news report (datelined "Utrecht, 31 July"), separated only by a line-break.*
COPYRIGHT IMAGE: HET UTRECHTS ARCHIEF, XXVIII I 7.

130 years.[9] The adoption of advertising by the first Amsterdam newspapers in the 1620s was the first systematic attempt by newspaper proprietors to incorporate this profitable side-line. By the time newspaper advertising took off in England, France, the Southern Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire several decades later, thousands of advertisements had already been placed in Dutch newspapers by hundreds of advertisers.[10]

9 Arthur der Weduwen and Andrew Pettegree, *News, Business and the Birth of Modern Advertising. Advertisements and Public Announcements in Dutch and Flemish Newspapers, 1620–1675* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2019).

10 For early newspaper advertising in England, France and the Southern Netherlands (amongst others), see R.B. Walker, 'Advertising in London Newspapers, 1650–1750', *Business*

The success of advertising, so obvious by the eighteenth century, was by no means guaranteed from its inception. Early printed newspapers were only mechanised versions of manuscript newsletters, providing short digests of foreign news. Mixing paid advertisements for local products with an established tradition of political and military reporting, essentially and almost exclusively of foreign affairs, was not a natural combination. In the early seventeenth century, newspaper proprietors in London, Antwerp and the Holy Roman Empire occasionally placed short announcements for their own works in their newspapers, but other customers remained hesitant (or perhaps were not given the opportunity). Key to the success of advertising in the Dutch Republic, and thereby to the periodical market, was innovation and diversification.

The rapid development of newspaper advertising in the Dutch Republic was accompanied by several transformations. The first three decades of newspaper advertising were dominated wholly by the Dutch book trade, and advertisements for many popular works of piety and self-improvement. Around the middle of the seventeenth century, the range of goods and services expanded in tune with the changing landscape of Dutch newspaper publishing. By the end of the century many newspapers catered first and foremost to the tastes of their local urban elite, providing new platforms for the exchange of commercial goods and luxuries. Tracing these changes from the early seventeenth century to the "hundred other things" of Knoop's guide in the 1750s sheds new

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History, 15:2 (1973), pp. 112–130; Michael Harris, 'Printed Advertisements: Some Variations in their Use around 1700', in Robin Myers, Michael Harris and Giles Mandelbrote (eds.), *Books For Sale: The Advertising and Promotion of Print since the Fifteenth Century* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2009); Michael Harris, 'Timely Notices: The Uses of Advertising and its Relationship to News during the Late Seventeenth Century', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999); Christine Ferdinand, 'Constructing the Frameworks for Desire: How Newspapers Sold Books in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', in Joad Raymond (ed.), *News, Newspapers and Society in Early Modern Britain* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999); Blanche B. Elliott, *A History of English Advertising* (London: Business Publications, 1962); Gilles Feyel, *L'annonce et la nouvelle: La presse d'information en France sous l'Ancien Régime (1630–1788)* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000); Stephen Botein, Jack R. Censer and Harriet Ritvo, 'The Periodical Press in Eighteenth-Century English and French Society: A Cross-Cultural Approach', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23:3 (1981), pp. 464–490; D. Lyna and I. van Damme, 'A Strategy of Seduction? The Role of Commercial Advertisements in the Eighteenth-Century Retailing Business of Antwerp', *Business History*, 51:1 (2009), pp. 100–121.

light on the dynamic role of newspapers in the culture of communication during the Dutch Golden Age.

Advertising and the Book Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century

Amsterdam was the first newspaper centre in the Dutch Republic.[11] By 1619 two weekly newspapers appeared every Saturday: the *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* (1618–1669) and the *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren* (1619–1671). Amsterdam was becoming one of the most important commercial and information hubs in Europe, and provided ample opportunities for the expansion of a vibrant news market. By the mid-1640s the eager Dutch news reader could find seven newspapers (including one bi-weekly and one tri-weekly) in Amsterdam, giving a total of ten weekly issues: published on Mondays (1), Tuesdays (3), Thursdays (3), and Saturdays (3).

Two factors supported the emergence of newspaper advertising in Amsterdam. Firstly, the Dutch book trade underwent a momentous expansion throughout the first half of the seventeenth century. Around 250 booksellers had established their businesses in the Republic by 1650 – increasing from 68 in 1600.[12] And this was not a market confined to metropolitan Holland: booksellers were now plying their trade in all the seven provinces, and often in very small towns. Secondly, the competition for periodical print in Amsterdam forced proprietors to look beyond their own city for customers. With the proliferation of booksellers in the Dutch Republic, the Amsterdam proprietors were eager to expand both their market and their service to the book trade. Booksellers such as Tjerck Claessen in Leeuwarden or Thomas Pietersz Baart in Alkmaar received weekly bundles of newspapers from Amsterdam, which they sold on to their local clientele for a small profit. These humble, often anonymous provincial agents of the book trade ensured that the Amsterdam newspapers circulated in a national market.[13]

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11 Arthur der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century, 1618–1700* (2 vols., Leiden: Brill, 2017); Folke Dahl, *Dutch Corantos, 1618–1650: A Bibliography* (The Hague: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 1946); Folke Dahl, 'Amsterdam – Earliest Newspaper Centre of Western Europe', *Het Boek*, 25:3 (1939), pp. 161–198.

12 J.A. Gruys and C. de Wolf, *Thesaurus Nederlandse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers tot 1700 met plaatsen en jaren van werkzaamheid* (Nieuwkoop: Hes & De Graaf, 1980).

13 Arthur der Weduwen, 'Booksellers, Newspaper Advertisements and a National Market for Print in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', in Shanti Graheli (ed.), *Buying and Selling in the Early Modern Book World* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2018).

The close relationship between the Amsterdam news publishers and booksellers throughout the country was a significant stimulus to the early adoption of advertising. From 1621 onwards, advertisements appeared in the two competing Saturday papers.[14] At first the advertisements were wholly orientated to the book trade: advertising books, maps, paper, ink, stationery, or even whole bookshops, stock and all. And even here the business took a few years to catch on: in the first years only a few publishers and booksellers notified newspaper readers of a selection of their forthcoming titles. Throughout the 1620s these were often texts directly related to the editorial content of the newspaper: maps of sieges, accounts of explorations, diplomatic manoeuvres or lamentations of the suffering of co-religionists in neighbouring countries. It was not long, however, before hundreds of booksellers throughout the country began to advertise their products.

The following table (Table 10.1) illustrates the rapid expansion of the number of advertisements placed, and the wholly dominant role of the book trade in fuelling this development. The 1630s and 1640s saw a general rise in the number of advertisements, still dedicated almost exclusively to the market for print. The titans of the trade, such as Hendrick Laurensz, Joost Hartgersz or Johannes Janssonius in Amsterdam, would place several advertisements over the course of the year; but advertising was not reserved only for entrepreneurs churning out a new title each month. A publisher like Pieter Hendricksz van Wieringen in Kampen, who survived largely on a local market for devotional and ephemeral print, also invested in the placement of an advertisement once every three years when he finished a major publication.[15]

Booksellers made use of advertising to target a wide reading public. They cornered a profitable market of self-improvement and pedagogy. The Dutch Republic of the first half of the seventeenth century was a state of rapidly expanding wealth in an era otherwise characterised by famine, war, religious unrest and political upheaval.[16] Trade flourished in the Republic as its navies tightened their grip on the Baltic shipping trade and successfully took on the

14 The earliest (surviving) advertisements were placed on 1 March 1621 in the *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren*.

15 For advertisements by Pieter Hendricksz van Wieringen see, for example, *Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren* (*TVQ*) 48, 28 November 1637 and *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* (*CID*) 49, 5 December 1637 and *CID* 36, 7 September 1641.

16 Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Maarten Prak, *Gouden Eeuw. Het raadsel van de Republiek*, 2nd imprint (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013); J.L. Price, *Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011); Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

TABLE 10.1 *The dominance of the book trade in early Dutch newspaper advertising*

Newspaper advertisements in Amsterdam newspapers, 1621–1650

Years	1621–25	1626–30	1631–35	1636–40	1641–45	1646–50	Total
Surviving issues	131	301	306	395	589	434	2.156
Issues with advertisements	14	32	110	239	288	226	909
(% of surviving issues)	(10%)	(10%)	(36%)	(60%)	(49%)	(52%)	(42%)
Advertisements (average	15 (1.1)	35 (1.1)	139	340	482	336	1,347
number per advertising issue)			(1.4)	(1.4)	(1.7)	(1.5)	(1.5)
Advertisements for published	15	35	136	329	467	294	1,276
books, maps and engragings	(100%)	(100%)	(98%)	(97%)	(97%)	(87%)	(95%)
(% of total advertisements)							

Portuguese and Spanish seaborne empires. The profits made in commerce were reinvested in improved infrastructure, industry and urban governance. But this was also a period when citizens combined a love of commerce with a taste for introspection and deep religiosity. With the triumph of orthodox Calvinism in the later 1610s, the Dutch Reformed church grew in stature and importance. It was at the forefront of regulating a social life which was intrinsically bound with the political fortunes of the state.[17] Meticulous cleanliness, pious restraint and an emphasis on employment and learning would, it was hoped, strengthen the fabric of the fragile commonwealth of provinces. For all its prosperity, this was a state vulnerable to threats from both within and abroad.

Newspaper advertisements help us understand the importance of the Dutch cultural quest for improvement and prosperity. The book trade of the Dutch Republic certainly catered to the cream of international scholars and collectors, but this was not the sort of literature that publishers chose to advertise to the patrons of the weekly newspapers. Rather than offering great scholarly tomes of academic learning, books advertised in Dutch newspapers promoted practical self-improvement and professional education. Most of all they fed the need for religious instruction and reassurance. The vast majority of books advertised were vernacular titles, many small enough to carry in one's pocket. By far the largest genre of titles advertised in early Dutch newspapers

17 Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: an Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (London: Collins, 1987), p. 4.

concerned the spiritual well-being of its citizens: bibles, psalters, sermons and popular devotional tracts. A specialist such as the Amsterdam publisher Marten Jansz Brandt could advertise three or four different editions of a single religious tract in a matter of months.[18] Publishers emphasised the spiritual qualities of their titles: Theunis Jacobsz Lootsman's publication of the *Spoore tot der Deught* (*Path to virtue*) was "most useful for the practice of Christian virtue".[19] These were texts meant not only for individual study, but also for communal prayer; other advertisements placed an emphasis on the education of youth and the family, through prayer, song and poetry.[20]

Booksellers not only sold titles by famous theological writers and preachers, but also peddled the sermons of their local ministers. On 30 July 1633 Jan Jacobsz, a bookseller in Arnhem, advertised a tract on the suffering of Jesus Christ, translated from English and expanded by a preacher in Arnhem, and a religious discourse on the state of mankind by a preacher in nearby Wageningen.[21] Arnhem, in Gelderland, was two days riding from Holland; Wageningen was a tiny community in the same eastern region. Both texts were printed in small formats (duodecimo and octavo), lowering the prices and making the books relatively easy to transport. In this way Reformed ministers situated in small rural towns found their sermons disseminated throughout the entire country. Neither would have the success of Gellius de Bouma, minister in nearby Zutphen, who saw his version of the Heidelberg Catechism become an unexpected best-seller.[22] These are the sort of books that did not necessarily make their way onto the shelves of libraries, but were often used to destruction: their contemporary popularity is therefore not fully reflected by modern library holdings. Indeed, were it not for the fact that many of the editions of Bouma's catechism were listed in the newspaper advertisements, we would have no idea of its contemporary popularity.

The first half of the seventeenth century provided the Dutch Republic with some of its most popular literary authors: Jacob Cats, Joost van den Vondel,

18 See Arthur der Weduwen and Andrew Pettegree, 'Publicity and its Uses. Lost Books as Revealed in Newspaper Advertisements in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic', in Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Lost Books. Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

19 *TVQ* 27, 8 July 1634.

20 For example, Frans Esausz den Heussen's *Christelijcken Jongeling*, advertised at least six times in Dutch newpsapers between 15 May 1638 and 5 January 1644.

21 *CID* 31, 30 July 1633.

22 Der Weduwen and Pettegree, *News, Business and the Birth of Modern Advertising*.

Pieter Cornelisz Hooft, and many others.[23] Recreational literature, especially emblem books and musical texts, composed a second prominent category of advertising. This was literature which expounded moral teachings in entertaining verse – and proved immensely popular. The author Jan Hermansz Krul was advertised at least twelve times between 1634 and 1646. Other common texts include compilations of songs, poems and emblems, such as the *Herders Vreugt* (*Shepherd's joy*), advertised as a song book including contributions from Krul, C. Stribée, Gerbrand Bredero and Jan Jansz Starter.[24]

In the same advertisement for *Herders Vreugt*, the Dordrecht publisher Abraham Andriesz advertised a "New ABC" for writing schools.[25] Here the publisher targeted a third part of the book market: professional and educational handbooks. In the urban and highly literate Dutch Republic, social mobility was dependent upon knowledge and information. This explains the frequent appearance of dictionaries, judicial handbooks, books of accounting, mathematical tracts, and surgical tomes in newspaper advertisements. These works were not only aimed towards a specialist audience. When Amsterdam bookseller Christiaen Anhalt advertised his *Proportional Liniael* (*Proportional ruler*) on 21 April 1646, he emphasised that it was most appropriate for those "unskilled in the art of arithmetic, or for those unable to learn it".[26]

In a society formed by its ambiguous relationship with open water, the trade in maritime books also prospered.[27] Dutch overseas exploration reached its zenith in the first half of the seventeenth century. Each expedition brought back valuable spices, but also added greatly to the sum of topographical and maritime information. As the great publishing houses of Amsterdam competed to publish the largest and most expensive atlases, so other booksellers targeted a broader market for naval literature. Navigation manuals, accounts of distant coasts and cultures, and disaster narratives fascinated a reading public familiar with the profits and tribulations of the sea.

Together these Dutch literary demands – spiritual comfort, emblematic wisdom, professional guidance and topographical awareness – spurred on the Amsterdam newspaper market of the first half of the seventeenth century. The audience targeted by booksellers and publishers belonged firmly to the

23 René van Stipriaan, *Het volle leven: Nederlandse literatuur en cultuur ten tijde van de Republiek* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2002).

24 *Ordinarise Middel-weeckse Courante* (OMWC) 16, 17 April 1646.

25 Ibid.

26 CID 16, 21 April 1646.

27 Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 25–34.

aspiring urban communities of *burghers*, or citizens: the men and women who underpinned the commercial, social and political power of the prosperous Republic.

The Changing Landscape of Advertising

By the early 1640s other products and services began to enter the advertising columns. As we can deduce from Table 10.1 above, this was not immediately impressive: only 71 out of 1,347 advertisements recorded from 1621 to 1650 did not advertise new books, maps or engravings. From the mid-century onwards, this changed with remarkable speed. Throughout the 1650s, 1660s and 1670s, around 40% of notifications placed in the popular tri-weekly *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* advertised the publication of new books.[28] Advertising did not recede in popularity, but the content and purpose of advertising was in a process of transformation.

The first expansion of goods and services advertised in Dutch newspapers was stimulated by private schooling. From the late 1630s, French and Latin schoolmasters began advertising in the newspapers to sell their own accounting books and calligraphic exemplars. Advertising their texts as "most useful for the youth", the schoolmasters aimed to supplement their income from their small private schools, often located in smaller rural towns.[29] By the mid-1640s, these schoolmasters also began to advertise their services as teachers: the description of opportunities available to their pupils usually included accounting, classical languages, French, arithmetic and music. These were men like Samuel Barard, a French schoolmaster in Amsterdam, who on 7 March 1643 announced in the pages of the *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c*. that he was moving to the smaller town of Alphen aan den Rijn; likewise Hendrick Kaldekerck moved to Muiden in April 1647; and Master Cobette to Naarden in June 1648.[30] Many of these schoolmasters had been in business for years. They had been able to find pupils for their schools before, but now they utilised the newspaper to publicise their reputation and skills. These notices indicate a

28 See the analysis of 2,800 advertisements between 1656 and 1675 by Jan Helwig *et al.*, 'Advertenties uit de Oprechte Haerlemse Courant', http://www.apud.net/index.php/oprechte-haerlemse-courant/81-advertenties-uit-de-oprechte-haerlemse-courant, accessed 26 April 2017.

29 See for example the advertisements by Nicolaes Boddingh van Laer, a French schoolmaster in Haarlem, in *CID* 27, 2 July 1639.

30 *CID* 10, 7 March 1643; *CID* 14, 6 April 1647; *CID* 26, 27 June 1648.

growth of confidence in the capacities of the newspaper as a vehicle for public information and private demands.

Once schoolmasters had proved the utility of newspapers for drumming up trade, others swiftly followed. From the 1640s onwards, merchants, surgeons, inventors and brokers also began to advertise their services. Johannes van Duren, a self-styled "oculist, apothecary and doctor of medicine" in Rotterdam advertised on multiple occasions in different newspapers throughout the 1660s and 1670s.[31] A merchant called Alexander Hanshelmi announced his intention to travel back to Venice from Amsterdam in January 1656 in an Amsterdam newspaper from 18 December 1655.[32] He appealed to all "gentlemen and merchants" for a travelling companion to accompany him at least as far as Cologne or Frankfurt. Hanshelmi was able to offer, for an unspecified price, the convenience of horses, a carriage, and the possibility to transport any goods or wares. Interested parties were to address a broker, to be found at the Amsterdam bourse at noon, when trading had closed. Brokers like Bernard Hidding in Amsterdam were jack-of-all-trades, advertising the sale of "various jewels, pearls, diamonds, East-Indian wares and rarities, cloths, cotton, skirts, blankets, table-cloths, furniture, cabinets, cutlery, tables, porcelain, Venetian mirrors, silk stockings, Haarlem and Lille cloth, and general works of art, ingenuity and rarity".[33]

Throughout the 1640s, 1650s and 1660s, new products and services entered the advertising columns on a regular basis. Musical instruments, spices and other apothecary goods, clocks and other rarities, including fantastical inventions, were offered up for public sale in increasing abundance. It required only one pioneer, and one advertisement, to inspire a new genre. The first broker to advertise in a Dutch newspaper, Cornelis Mourisz Hobbe, advertised on 17 October 1643 in the *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* that he was able to help young men find mercantile employment in Amsterdam.[34] Less than a month later, on 14 November 1643, the broker Jan Braemsz advertised in the same newspaper for similar services.[35] As soon as one newspaper reader realised that their product or trade could be advertised in a newspaper, colleagues and rivals did likewise – either for fear of losing out or in the hope of stimulating a greater business profile. Newspaper advertising could spark local and regional competition. On 15 August 1678 the postmasters of Dordrecht and Rotterdam

31 At least ten times in three different newspapers between 1665 and 1673.

32 *CID* 51, 18 December 1655.

33 *CID* 13, 28 March 1665.

34 *CID* 42, 17 October 1643.

35 *CID* 46, 14 November 1643.

placed a joint advertisement in the *Utrechtse Courant*, pointing out that their services and rates were much more generous than those offered by the postmaster of The Hague.[36] Other postmasters rallied to their insulted colleague, and two weeks later, on 29 August, a notification was placed in the same newspaper denouncing the postmaster of Rotterdam for his manipulation of the postal schedules.[37]

Another development with considerable significance for newspaper advertising was the rise of public auctions. The prominence of the Dutch Republic as a centre for the book trade had led to the development of a significant number of auction sales from the early seventeenth century onwards.[38] A specialism of Dutch booksellers, in particular those in Leiden, was the sale of the libraries or book collections of distinguished scholars, doctors, jurists and members of the book trade.[39] In order to publicise these auctions, catalogues detailing the sale and its contents were printed and distributed. Advertisements for book sales and book auctions, together with details of the catalogue and its vendors, became a regular feature of the weekly newspapers. The sale of the library of Theodoor Saekma, a deceased councillor of the court of Friesland, took place in Leeuwarden in September 1666. According to the advertisement placed in the *Rotterdamse Zee-en Post-tijdingen* before the sale, catalogues were to be found at bookshops in Amsterdam, Leiden, The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Arnhem, Middelburg, Groningen, Leeuwarden and Emden.[40] An advertisement for the sale of the library of Bartholomeus Cromhout in the summer of 1699 saw the catalogue distributed to 35 cities throughout the Low Countries and the Holy Roman Empire.[41] Such notifications, unknown before the 1640s, rapidly challenged advertisements for books: there was at least one book auction announcement for every two book advertisements in the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* from 1656 to 1675.[42]

Public sales and auctions expanded into other areas of commerce. The *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.* of 20 October 1657 advertised the public sale of "various exceptional paintings of many talented masters, including Paulus de Vernees, Anton van Dijck, Firaen, Anton Moor, Marten de Vos, Vincent

36 *Utrechtse Courant* (*UC*) 65, 15 August 1678.

37 *UC* 69, 29 August 1678.

38 Bert van Selm, *Een menighte treffelijcke boecken: Nederlandse boekhandelscatalogi in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw* (Utrecht: HES, 1987).

39 Laura Cruz, *The Paradox of Prosperity: The Leiden Booksellers' Guild and the Distribution of Books in Early Modern Europe* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2009).

40 *Oprechte Rotterdamse Zee-en Post-tijdingen* 35, 19 September 1666.

41 *Opregte Leydse Courant* 70, 12 June 1699.

42 Helwig, 'Advertenties uit de Oprechte Haerlemse Courant'.

Maso, Jan Hemse, Peter Paul Rubens, and many other Italian masters", to take place in Amsterdam, near the Regulierstoren. A roll-call of notable painters was common: in a nation where almost every bourgeois household could afford a painting or two, illustrious names and styles were crucial to stimulate interest in the sale.

The use of newspapers for the placement of personal announcements started with appeals for lost and stolen goods or children. The earliest surviving announcement of this sort was placed on 25 October 1642, following the disappearance of a child.[43] Four similar advertisements appeared in 1643; again, the loss of children was not a new phenomenon in the Dutch Republic, but for the first time anguished parents used weekly newspapers to try to locate their lost ones.[44] Appeals for help finding stolen or lost children were only the beginning of a flood of similar public notifications. Before long, one could find announcements detailing the loss of jewellery, horses, tablecloths, clothes and entire boats in the advertising columns. From 1653, frequent appeals were made for missing financial bonds worth hundreds or thousands of *gulden*. But no item was too singular: the *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* of 18 March 1673 contained an appeal for the return of an account book lost in the panic following the invasion of the bishop of Münster in the Eastern provinces of the Dutch Republic.[45]

The transformation of the advertising business was not simply a result of social and commercial change: it was also stimulated by shifts in the periodical market. While the Amsterdam newspapers had successfully supplied a national market in the 1630s and 1640s, they entered a period of decline from the early 1650s.[46] The burgomasters of the city decided to regulate the production of periodicals. In 1654 they ordered the four remaining weekly papers to publish fortnightly, sharing rather than competing for customers. In 1645 at least ten weekly issues of news were published in Amsterdam. Ten years later this was reduced to two issues. This had significant repercussions for the whole national news market. Over the next decade, newspapers emerged in quick succession in other Dutch towns: in Haarlem, Utrecht, The Hague and Rotterdam; even in the tiny community of Weesp (see Table 10.2).[47]

These ventures provided serious competition for the Amsterdam newspapers. Apart from the exceptional tri-weekly *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant*,

43 *TVQ* 43, 25 October 1642.

44 *CID* 1, 3 March 1643; *TVQ* 30, 25 July 1643; *TVQ* 33, 15 August 1643; *CID* 51, 19 December 1643.

45 *Oprechte Haerlemse Courant* 11, 18 March 1673.

46 Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*.

47 Ibid.

TABLE 10.2 *The changing landscape of the Dutch newspaper industry, 1645–1670*

Weekly issues of news in the Dutch Republic, 1645–1670

Year	Amsterdam	The Hague	Haarlem	Weesp	Utrecht	Rotterdam
1645	10					
1646	6					
1647	4					
1648	5					
1649	4					
1650	4					
1651	4					
1652	4	1				
1653	4	2				
164	2	2				
1655	2	2				
1656	2	4	1	1		
1657	2	4	1	1		
1658	2	4	2	1	2	
1659	2	2	2	1	3	
1660	2	2	2	1	3	
1661	2	2	2		3	
1662	2	2	2		3	
1663	2	2	2		3	
1664	2	2	2		3	
1665	2	2	2		3	
1666	2	2	2	1	3	2
1667	2	2	3		3	2
1668	2	2	3		3	2
1669	2	2	3		3	
1670	2	2	3			

the new generation of periodicals catered largely for a regional or local audience. While the new newspapers all rapidly adopted advertising, the majority of advertisements were placed close to home. Two-thirds of advertisements in the *Rotterdamse Zee-en Post-tijdingen* (1666–1668) and the Utrecht *Mercurius* (1658–1669) were related to goods and services offered in Rotterdam

and Utrecht respectively.[48] Many other advertisements in the Rotterdam paper came from traders in nearby Dordrecht, Delft and the surrounding Maasland. This trend continued into the final decades of the seventeenth century. Some of the new titles disappeared by the 1670s: Rotterdam and The Hague would be without a local Dutch press until the early eighteenth century, and Utrecht's newspaper proprietor was banished in 1669. However, from 1675 onwards a new bi-weekly *Utrechtse Courant* would satiate the needs of Utrecht's commercial community once more. From 1686 Leiden too would have a Dutch newspaper, the tri-weekly *Opregte Leydse Courant*, providing publicity for local salesmen, students and citizens.

As the Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Leiden newspapers carved out local markets, the tide turned against the national ambitions of the Amsterdam periodicals. But with the new carefully regulated system of local publication, there was less competition in Amsterdam itself. The remaining Amsterdam newspaper proprietors therefore turned their eyes to the local market as well. This, again, was a gradual transformation, but one of great significance. By the mid-eighteenth century, the sole remaining tri-weekly Amsterdam newspaper sold 80% of its print run in Amsterdam.[49] It invested less and less in its news sources, and derived more of its income from local publicity.

Booksellers and publishers suffered from the localisation of Dutch newspapers. In order to make a profit, they had to market and sell their books throughout an extensive national network, one which the Amsterdam newspapers had provided so well in the first half of the seventeenth century. With more papers now catering to a local market, only the more prosperous booksellers could afford to advertise in multiple newspapers. To newspaper proprietors, this was not a problem. As newspapers became the pride of local communities, citizens flocked with their requests and demands to their periodical. The broker in Rotterdam or the surgeon in Utrecht had more to benefit from local publicity than national coverage.

The Gentrification of the Newspaper in the Final Decades of the Century

Sir William Temple, English ambassador to the Dutch Republic, is famed for his *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands* (1673). This treatise, filled with Temple's notes and judgements on the Dutch Republic and its

48 23 out of 35 for the Rotterdam bi-weekly, 6 out of 8 for the Utrecht bi-weekly.

49 Van Eeghen, 'De Amsterdamse Courant', pp. 48–49.

inhabitants, is still lauded today for its clarity and candour. In his *Observations*, Temple perceived in the Dutch a taste for frugal living and a moral tendency towards industry rather than enjoyment or recreation. However, towards the end of his tract he noted that

> there seems to have been growing on for these later years, a greater Vie of Luxury and Expense among many of the merchants … than was ever formerly known … the very Foundations of their Trade would soon be undermined, if the habitual Industry, Parsimony, and Simplicity of their People, came to be over-run by Luxury, Idleness, and Excess.[50]

One might approve of Temple's judgement when reading at random any issue of the tri-weekly *Amsterdamsche Courant* of 1697.[51] The issue of 10 September contains several notifications. The first advertised the loss of a watch made in London, with a 10 *gulden* reward; the second the loss of a red satin purse with gold thread and a small golden ring; the third sought the return of a lost bond of a stakeholder in the Dutch West India Company worth 196 *gulden*; a fourth placed by two brokers, offered for sale a frigate on 13 September; and yet another by two brokers was for the sale of 4,000 pikes, 12, 16 and 18 feet long, to take place on 16 September. This is not an unusual selection for an issue of the *Amsterdamsche Courant* from this period. The issue of 9 April 1697 featured 10 notifications. These included a public sale of paintings in Leiden, the sale of jewels and precious stones in Hamburg, the sale of two libraries, a French school in Cleves (with available dentistry) and the sale of a cabinet in Leiden containing ancient coins, rarities and weaponry.[52]

The advertising columns provide evidence of an explosion of consumerism: coffee, tea, beer, tobacco, canaries, lap dogs, paintings, jewellery, medicine and weapons feature regularly. The message from the Calvinist pulpits and moralistic writings of the Dutch Republic was clear on the effects of such indulgence: the decay of political and spiritual society. Jan Hermansz Krul, the popular author of emblem books from the first half of the seventeenth century, had warned against the corrupting effect of greed in his *Wereld-hatende nootzaakelyke* (*On the necessity of unworldliness*).[53] In his account of Dutch Golden Age culture, Schama points to the "gradual breakdown of the social

50 Sir William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. Sir George Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 126.

51 *Amsterdamsche Courant* (*AC*) 109, 10 September 1697.

52 *AC* 43, 9 April 1697.

53 Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 332.

and moral consensus", and "sumptuary extravagance, political ossification and an increasing tempo of tax riots" in the years around 1700.[54] The final decades of the seventeenth century were indeed plagued by warfare, rising taxation, urban decline and rising civil unrest, but one should not take the forebodings of later seventeenth-century commentators, like Temple, at face value. Consumerism had long sustained the fortunes of the Dutch Republic: the rich trade of the Indies and the refinement of luxury linen and household wares had turned the Republic into the most affluent state in Europe. Already in 1601 the burgomasters of Amsterdam had complained in a new decree that many bakeries adorned their pastries with such luscious toppings and colouring that when they displayed them in their windows, this caused great offence to "a great many pious folk".[55]

What is clear, however, is that by the final decades of the seventeenth century the consumption of luxury goods and the satisfaction of extravagant personal desires had become a part of the periodical market. This was a transformation not only of urban society, but of the communication systems available to citizens who hankered after peculiar designs, beautiful homes and interesting tastes. The Dutch elite embraced newspapers as a means of circulating news on fashionable and valuable goods. The rampant consumerism of the oligarchical elites disparaged by William Temple had thus far been most in evidence behind closed doors; in the home, the traditional location of bourgeois pride and lavishness.[56] Now, the newspaper, a public product originally valued for sober and straightforward reporting, was deemed an eligible medium for the display and transaction of luxury goods, opening the eyes of readers across the country and beyond to what was available, or what lay just beyond their reach.

The advertisements placed in the newspapers increasingly reflected the interests of a prosperous upper class of mercantile oligarchs and families. By the 1680s, one could find in the advertising columns life insurance schemes – in effect an invitation to gamble on the lives and deaths of one's family, friends and neighbours. One such scheme, advertised on 11 July, 18 July and 8 August 1686 in the *Amsterdamsche Courant*, insured a group of up to 50 people against a sum of 10,000 *gulden* – with the possibility of increasing this sum even further.[57] A school in Loenen specifically addressed its advertisement to "gentlemen and

54 Ibid., p. 53.

55 J.G. van Dillen, *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van het Bedrijfsleven en het Gildewezen van Amsterdam, Eerste Deel: 1512–1611* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1929), p. 597, no. 1005.

56 Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 311–323.

57 *AC*, 11 July 1686, 18 July 1686, 8 August 1686.

merchants", whose sons were welcome at its establishment.[58] The *Amsterdamsche Courant* of 21 July 1685 contained an advertisement placed by one "Monsieur Beron, stable master of the great stable of the King of France, former master of the Royal Academy in Sedan". Beron sought pupils from among the young bloods of the Dutch nobility, advising potential clients that he had settled in Liège, where he intended to hold an academy for noble students: he would teach them horse-riding, fencing, dancing, shooting, the French language, military strategy and the study of mathematics; the last particularly devoted to the understanding of military fortification.

Large estates were offered for sale in the Dutch countryside. Such advertisements specified at length the features of the property, the design of the gardens, and its splendid location.[59] Artisans took their chance to offer pieces of art and sculpture to a similar audience: Master Frans Grell, from Emden, advertised a "beautiful fountain, carved to human height", featuring "the history of the Counts of Tildenburg and other rarities".[60] In order to ease travel to their large estates, the landed classes benefited from advertisements for an expanding coach network. Far more expensive than the more common barges or canal-boats, carriages provided relative exclusivity and personal space.[61] The post-wagon bound for Antwerp from Rotterdam was able to take up to six customers for a grand sum of 60 *gulden*.[62] Owners of inns and taverns announced their establishments in the advertising columns, hoping to tempt wealthy travellers on their upcoming trip. These recuperative interruptions to a taxing journey were not for the middling sort: 12 *stuivers* for a lunch, the going rate in such advertisements, was a price that could only be afforded by the carriage-riding passengers.[63]

By the final decades of the seventeenth century, advertisements were also frequently placed in the Dutch papers by advertisers from major European hubs of commerce, such as Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp, Brussels, Paris and London. Newspapers were part of an international network of news and information, and had long overstepped national or linguistic borders. Here one sees the direct engagement with an elite transnational audience. An announcement

58 *AC* 47, 19 April 1691.

59 For an advertisement for an estate named Schoonoort (near the village of Doorn), see for example the *AC* of 6 June 1686.

60 *CID* 28, 14 July 1657.

61 Jan de Vries, *Barges and Capitalism: Passenger Transportation in the Dutch Economy, 1632–1839* (Utrecht: HES, 1981).

62 *TVQ* 23, 4 June 1661 and *OMWC* 49, 6 December 1661.

63 *AC*, 25 April 1686.

placed in the *Amsterdamsche Courant* on 16 and 21 February 1686 stated that two earrings, each featuring ten diamonds, as well as a ring, were lost in London somewhere between the bourse and Whitehall. A reward of 400 to 500 *gulden* was offered in Amsterdam for the finder of these precious jewels. The reward offered was equal to the annual salary of a Dutch schoolmaster. Comparable appeals were placed from abroad for the loss of horses, servants, and personal items.[64] They mobilised a network of wealthy readers with similar tastes and anxieties, speaking to a transnational commercial community.

The cost of advertising also spoke to a wealthier audience. In the early seventeenth century, when booksellers ruled the world of advertising, payment for the placement of advertisements could easily be made in paper or printed sheets – a standard practice amongst professionals in the book trade. But for individuals not associated with the trade, advertising was expensive. Most newspapers in the Dutch Republic charged around one and a half *gulden* for an advertisement up to four lines (approximately 50–80 words).[65] In the mid-eighteenth century, the *Amsterdamsche Courant* charged almost two *gulden* for the same number of lines.[66] This was a considerable investment, given that one issue of a newspaper could sell as low as half a *stuiver*: one-fortieth of a *gulden*. An artisan earning ten *gulden* a week could not easily give up a fifth of his week's wages to advertise his services in a newspaper. To the commercial and political elite of Europe's major capitals, a couple of *gulden* for an advertisement announcing the sale of a library worth many thousands seemed like a reasonable investment.

Newspaper proprietors too underwent a gentrifying transformation. The publishers of the first half of the seventeenth century were primarily printers, specialising in current affairs and other ephemeral works. Many had backgrounds as field-reporters and jobbing printers. The second and third generation of newspaper proprietors focused their efforts firmly on establishing themselves as scholars and publishers.[67] Men like Abraham Casteleyn (1628–1681) in Haarlem, and Johannes (III) van Ravesteyn (1618–1681) and Caspar Commelijn (1636–1693) in Amsterdam embedded themselves within their municipal governments, joining the ranks of the merchant oligarchs. By the eighteenth century most newspaper proprietors became, in effect, servants of

64 For example, Utrecht *Mercurius* 67, 23 August 1666, for the theft of three horses between Cleves and Maastricht, or *AC*, 13 April 1686, for the loss of 8,000 *gulden*, stolen by the driver of a carriage.

65 Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem, Museum Enschedé, HBA 3049 and HBA 4891.

66 Van Eeghen, 'De Amsterdamse Courant', p. 43.

67 Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*.

the state, since they were required to buy their privilege as publisher for large fees and contributed substantial sums to the municipal coffers.

By the 1670s the great authors and publishers of the first half of the century had passed away. The majority were not replaced, and the number of booksellers and publishers reached a low point around the final years of the seventeenth century. In 1650, thirty-four towns in the Dutch Republic contained at least one printing press; in 1700 this had declined to twenty-two, fewer even than in 1625.[68] While the influx of Huguenot immigrants from the mid-1680s reignited some of the former glories of the business, they did not restore the relationship between the book trade and the Dutch newspapers. The Huguenots brought with them a vogue for literary and scientific journals. Periodicals such as *De Boekzaal van Europe* (*The library of Europe*) (1692–1702) published in Rotterdam, and its successor the *Twee-maandelijke uyttreksels van alle eerst uytkomende boeken* (*Two-monthly extracts of newly-published books*) (1702–1704) dominated the market for publicising newly published books. Invariably the titles reviewed and advertised in scientific journals were expensive and scholarly. The divergence between newspapers, focused more and more on an audience of *burghers* buying and selling their way through life, and the journals, targeting scholars, left less room for the middling booksellers to publicise their popular devotional and professional texts. By the end of the seventeenth century they had lost their place at the heart of the advertising trade.

"Hundred other things"

Seventeenth-century Dutch newspaper advertisements can tell us a great deal about Dutch Golden Age society: about changing tastes, trends and anxieties. The study of seventeenth-century advertisements also reveals the truly innovative character of Dutch newspapers. Historians of the Dutch press have long scolded the periodicals of the Ancien Régime in comparison with the revolutionary papers of the late eighteenth century, regarding them as conservative organs taking easy profits, and contributing little to the new spirit of Enlightenment enquiry in the pre-revolutionary era.[69] Such sentiments misjudge the dynamic role of the early modern newspaper and the constant repositioning of its proprietors. The first Dutch newspapers were firmly integrated into the prosperous Dutch book trade, but were not reliant on the fluctuating fortunes

68 Gruys and De Wolf, *Thesaurus Nederlandse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers*.

69 For example, Maarten Schneider and Joan Hemels, *De Nederlandse krant 1618–1978: Van 'nieuwstydinghe' tot dagblad*, 4th ed. (Baarn: Het Wereldvenster, 1979), pp. 56, 64–65, 70.

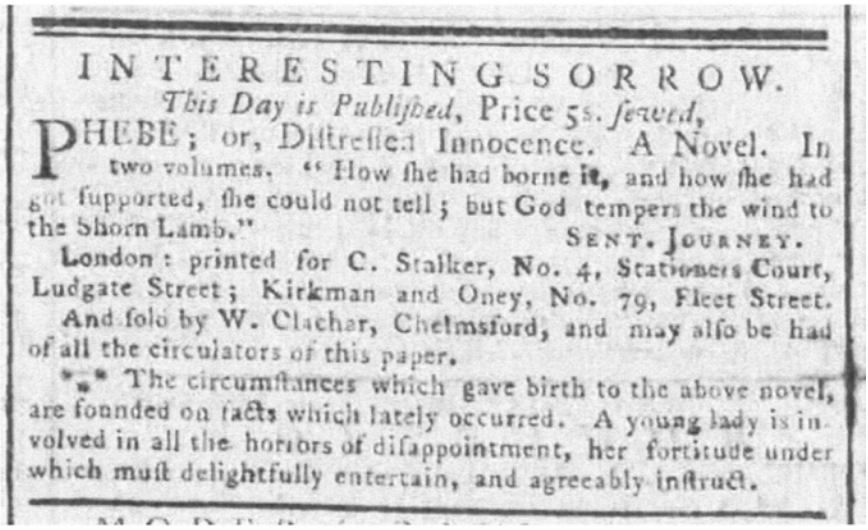
of booksellers and publishers. Newspaper proprietors embraced a diversifying marketplace of advertisements and announcements irrespective of the decline of the Dutch book trade. The decentralisation of newspapers in the Dutch Republic paved the way for readers beyond the book trade to identify a suitable audience for their advertisements, strengthening the bond between the periodical and its urban community.

Reading audiences experimented with the use of newspapers, and newspaper proprietors were only pleased to accommodate. To the publishers, the benefits of advertising far surpassed the revenue generated, welcome though this was. Advertising created a new role for the newspaper; it appealed not only to those with an interest in foreign affairs or military engagements, but to a wide mercantile and urban clientele of *burghers*, buying and selling their way to success and, for the fortunate, upward social mobility. It also played an important part in underpinning the economic foundations of a trade, in other parts of Europe, closely dependent on direct or indirect support from the local ruling power. The development of newspaper advertising in the Dutch Republic ensured that the newspaper was there to stay: catering for the "hundred other things" of the *burgher* imagination.

CHAPTER 11

Mercury as Merchant: The Advertisement of Novels in Eighteenth-Century Provincial English Newspapers

Siv Gøril Brandtzæg



INTERESTING SORROW.

This Day is Published, Price 5s. *sewed*,

PHEBE; or, Diſtreſſed Innocence. A Novel. In two volumes. "How ſhe had borne it, and how ſhe had got ſupported, ſhe could not tell; but God tempers the wind to the Shorn Lamb." SENT. JOURNEY.

London: printed for C. Stalker, No. 4, Stationers Court, Ludgate Street; Kirkman and Oney, No. 79, Fleet Street.

And ſold by W. Clacher, Chelmsford, and may alſo be had of all the circulators of this paper.

*** The circumſtances which gave birth to the above novel, are founded on facts which lately occurred. A young lady is involved in all the horrors of diſappointment, her fortitude under which muſt delightfully entertain, and agreeably inſtruct.

FIGURE 11.1 *Advertisement for* Phebe; or, Distressed Innocence*, in the* Chelmsford Chronicle*, Friday 11 January 1788.*

The advertisement of *Phebe; or, Distressed Innocence* in the *Chelmsford Chronicle* is a small notice of a now forgotten novel in a provincial newspaper that no longer exists (see Figure 11.1). But despite this obscurity, this promotional text can prompt a number of queries: why was a newspaper such as the *Chelmsford Chronicle* interested in including an advertisement for a novel? How did this novel travel from its place of origin, London, and end up advertised in the *Chelmsford Chronicle*? Who was W. Clacher, the bookseller listed in this advertisement, and how did he go about distributing the novel to the customers in the Chelmsford area? What was the relationship between the London

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booksellers listed in this advertisement and the provincial one? And, finally, what is the relationship between novels and news in the eighteenth century, and how can small advertising texts in local newspapers serve as windows into the history of two interrelated mediums?

Such questions need to be posed, for one reason above all others: most of them have not been asked before. In spite of a scholarly acknowledgement of, on the one hand, the significance of the provincial newspaper press alongside the London newspapers, and on the other hand, the importance of the commercialisation of fiction within the rise of the novel as an art form, an account of the newspaper text which most conspicuously represents the intersection of these two issues has yet to be written. There are several factors which may explain why attention has not been paid to advertisements of novels in the provincial press. First, there is the matter of availability. Up until very recently, the scholar looking for something specific in provincial newspapers had to seek out the physical collections, scattered in numerous libraries across England and beyond. Over the last years, the issue of access has changed dramatically with the advent of digital newspaper databases. Although far from complete, the *British Newspaper Archive* is set to be the most expansive digitisation project of provincial British newspapers, allowing scholars to study generic newspaper texts such as advertisements across multiple newspaper issues and titles.[1]

A second reason why nobody has attempted to write a full account of the advertisements of novels in the provincial press might be that the country trade in books appears minor and marginal when compared with the London book market. If a study of newspaper book advertisements reflects the market for books in a specific geographical area at a specific period in time, then the eighteenth-century provincial market for books emerges as *peripheral* in comparison with the metropolitan book trade. But as this chapter will argue, the minor role of novel advertisements in the provincial press needs to be treated as an important phenomenon in itself – even if one then becomes guilty of reproducing some of the commonsensical prejudices about the relationship

1 When the *British Newspaper Archive* (British Library/findmypast) is complete in 2020 it will be the only major database containing non-metropolitan newspapers: provincial newspapers, Irish newspapers and Scottish newspapers. The other major database, the Gale Cengage Burney Collection contains but few issues of a small selection of English newspapers printed outside London, and the undergoing digitisation of the John Nichols collection from the Bodleian Library (Gale Cengage) will primarily contain London newspapers from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

between centre and fringe criticised by recent scholars. Furthermore, as texts about texts, advertisements have little to offer literary scholars compared with the period's other major journalistic engagement with literature: the periodical reviews. Where the latter offer rich and sometimes extensive commentaries on literary works, advertisements can seem short and formulaic in comparison. But suffice to say, this is no reason to ignore these small texts: if reviews represent the immediate afterlife of novels in this period, then advertisements are the *heralds* announcing what is to come, and a study of newspaper announcements contributes to an understanding of the life cycle of novels in the early modern period.

An account of novel advertisements may also have been (wisely) shunned by scholars since such an account needs to take into consideration a challenging and complex list of enterprises and agents: the newspaper press, and the relationship between the London newspapers and the provincial ones; the business of book publishing – the production and distribution of books – and the often complex associations between the London booksellers and the provincial agents; the double role of newspaper proprietors as booksellers, and the relationship between the newspapers and the review periodicals; the procedures of jobbing printing and the history of advertising prior to newspaper marketing. Importantly, though, these complex levels make it even more significant to study novel or book advertising in general, and *provincial* book advertising in particular. Frank Felsenstein writes that "A comprehensive investigation of English provincial book trade advertisement of the eighteenth century deserves to be written, for it will help us to uncover the significance of print within a wider culture outside London".[2] The following will not provide a comprehensive investigation (given the vast material unleashed by databases still in the making, such an undertaking is a book-length study for the future), but this chapter aims to present some initial observations on the advertisements of novels in provincial newspapers. Although the main bulk of material is necessarily from the last part of the eighteenth century, I have tried to provide representative examples of advertisements from several decades, from a variety of provincial newspapers as well as advertisements of different kinds of novels, both well-known ones and more minor productions of the period.

2 Frank Felsenstein, 'Some Eighteenth-Century English Provincial Book Advertisements', *Library Review*, 44:3 (1995), pp. 32–43 (43).

A Brief History of the Emergence of the British Provincial Newspaper, the Development of the Book Market, and the Rise of Newspaper Advertising

Over the past fifty years scholars have pointed to a variety of important features of the eighteenth-century provincial newspapers and their relationship to the metropolitan newspaper press. For one thing, the provincial press catered to a larger proportion of the British population in the period. "To understand the eight-ninths of English society who did not live in London in the eighteenth century, examination of the provincial newspaper press is a good place to start", Victoria Gardner dryly remarks in the most recent study of the provincial press, with a clear critique of earlier scholarship's focus on London newspapers.[3] Then there is the geographical spread. From Newcastle in the North to Exeter in the Southwest, the provincial towns in the most distant parts of England increasingly came to have their own newspaper. In these widespread communities, the newspaper was far more important – both for acquiring news from the world and for obtaining information about local events and goods for sale – than was the case in London. The early history of the provincial newspaper is more remarkable than the metropolitan counterpart for the simple fact that most local presses were reliant upon an extraordinarily sophisticated and complex system of distribution and circulation, involving a swarm of news-carriers employed in distributing fresh news to the far-flung people of England. Then there are the political implications. As Gardner has shown, "provincial newspapers were more powerful within the press-politics nexus than has been previously recognized", partly because the provincial newspapers made a larger total contribution in advertising duties paid to the government than the London ones.[4]

The one factor that disrupts the argument of the prominence of the provincial newspaper alongside the metropolitan press is the late starting date of these more peripheral journalistic enterprises. Whereas London newspapers can be traced back to the early seventeenth century, the provincial equivalents emerged later. This is because until the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, printing was illegal in the provinces. Most scholars agree that there was no regular newspaper outside of London until the first decade of the eighteenth

3 Victoria M. Gardner, *The Business of News in England, 1760–1820* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 4.

4 Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 6.

century, but by 1712 about fifteen provincial newspapers had been established.[5] R.M. Wiles notes that the earliest ventures in the printing of local papers were made in towns on main roads far away from London: after Norwich, Exeter and Bristol – the first places where newspapers were launched in the years 1701–1704 – the next towns to get their newspapers in the second decade of the eighteenth century were Worcester, Stamford, Newcastle, Nottingham, and Liverpool.[6] In the earliest history of the wider English news press, then, the distance from the metropolis decided whether it was worth starting a newspaper – a stark reminder of the way in which London both served as a model for all provincial newspapers whilst at the same time jeopardising regional journalistic enterprises. Although at a distance from London, the dominance of the metropolis was strongly felt in these earliest provincial newspapers. As Christine Ferdinand reminds us, the first provincial newspapers were printed and distributed locally, but they had the same format as the London papers, and the news came largely from the metropolis, consisting of selections from the London press.[7] What, then, constituted *local* material in the early local newspapers? The answer is: advertisements.

A modern reader opening an eighteenth-century newspaper, either metropolitan or provincial, will be struck by the number of advertisements therein, and the way in which these notices, perhaps better than any other newspaper text, reflect the everyday life of the people of this period: their needs and their desires, their sorrows and joys, their professional and private lives. The advertising columns of the eighteenth-century newspapers marketed land and

5 Scholars have proposed several candidates for the first provincial newspapers starting in the seventeenth century, but in *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England*, R.M. Wiles soundly reject most of the earliest contenders: both the *Oxford Djurnall* (1643, later *Mercurius Aulicus*) and the *Oxford Gazette* (1665) were printed outside London, but the printing place was only temporary, as the Court was evacuated out of London because of the plague; the two mentioned Oxford newspapers were both official publications of the government, relating no local news. Likewise, Wiles rejects both an unnamed and now lost *Newcastle News Bulletin* (1639) for being irregular and short-lived, whilst the *Colchester Spie* (1648) was probably printed in London. Wiles allocates three newspapers to share "the honor of being the pioneers in English provincial journalism": the *Norwich Post* (earliest extant issue is from 1707, but it probably started in 1701); the *Bristol Post Boy* (first surviving issue is from 1704, but it probably started in 1702); and *Sam. Farley's Exeter Post-Man; or Weekly Intelligence* (earliest surviving issue is from 1711, but it probably started in 1704). See R.M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1965), pp. 11–16.

6 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p. 23.

7 Christine Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the Provincial Newspaper Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 11.

properties, comestibles, sanitary products, medicines, stationery and books; they carried announcements for jobs wanted and jobs waiting to be filled; they advertised for lost servants and promised rewards for eloping wives. The expanse of advertising happened in spite of government taxation.[8] The Stamp Act of 1712 included a duty on advertising, requiring that newspapers pay 1 shilling per advertisement – a sum which increased steadily throughout the century.[9] Merchants wanting to advertise had to pay both a printer's fee and government duty, making it expensive to advertise. What, then, was the benefit of newspaper advertising?

Since printers charged advertisers a higher charge than advertising duty alone, advertisements provided the main income for most newspapers.[10] Andrew Pettegree makes the important point that advertisements were more crucial for the development of a provincial press than the metropolitan one, since "with far more limited pools of potential customers who were prepared to pay two pence for a weekly news-sheet, it was hard to envisage turning a profit from the cover price alone".[11] To this we might add that, unlike the urban customers, the people of the provinces were often completely dependent upon newspaper advertisements for learning about goods and services for sale, and the routes of distribution of the newspaper were inevitably also the routes of distribution of books and other goods. As Ian Jackson has argued, most of the local advertisements in provincial newspapers did not come from towns, but from hamlets, villages and rural areas, which implies that "advertising was

8 Already from the first decade of the century, an early newspaper like the *Norwich Gazette* filled more than a quarter of the newspaper with advertisements, and both the *Stamford Mercury* as well as the *Newcastle Courant* regularly carried dozens of advertisements in each issue (Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p. 152). Moreover, the number of advertisements in the provincial press grew steadily throughout the period. Jeremy Black gives the example of the *Sherbourne Mercury*, where the number of advertisements grew from about 1,000 in 1740 to about 4,000 in 1790; see Jeremy Black, *The English Press 1621–1861* (London: Sutton Publishing, 2001), p. 119. Ferdinand has collected the numbers for the *Salisbury Journal*, showing that the newspaper inserted about 1,000 advertisements a year in the 1750s, 2,000 by the 1760s, and more than 3,400 advertisements by the 1770s (Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p. 192). Gardner gives examples from several newspapers, including the *Newcastle Courant*, which contained 238 advertisements in 1711, rising to 1,878 in 1761 and 4,211 in 1801 (Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 48).

9 Advertising duty increased in 1757, 1780, 1789 and by 1815 each advertisement cost 3s 6d. (Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 18).

10 Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 18.

11 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 303.

more, not less, useful for non-urban traders and vendors".[12] Partly thanks to the revenue from advertising, by the mid-century there was, according to Wiles, "no corner of England in which at least one attempt to found a local paper had not been made".[13]

In total, the advertisements of books and novels took up a relatively small place in these columns. Gardner writes that in most provincial newspapers, local material such as properties, shops, lost or stolen goods, services and leisure events took up about 80%, whilst national advertisements – i.e. advertisements for books and medicines, schools, lotteries and insurance – constituted about 20%.[14] But the marketing of reading material nevertheless holds a special place in the history of advertising and the history of the development of the newspaper. When Andrew Pettegree traces the first appearance of newspaper advertisements back to the early 1620s Dutch Republic and, some years later, England, he shows that in their earliest incarnation they were predominantly announcements of books for sale.[15] The particular relationship between the print medium, advertising and books is also suggested in various categories of jobbing printing which served as precursors to the newspaper advertisement, such as handbills, printed circulars, single sheet flyers, trade cards, posters, and, perhaps most importantly, the bookseller's 'term catalogues'. However, the most important innovation in the history of marketing of books is undoubtedly the emergence of the newspaper advertisements.

Heterogeneous Mercury: Advertising the Novel in the Eighteenth-Century Provincial Press

As the number of printing presses in the provinces grew throughout the century, and the double role of the newspaper proprietor as a bookseller became customary, advertisements of novels for sale started appearing in the provincial newspapers. The *Stamford Mercury*, the second oldest surviving provincial newspaper in Britain, was among the first papers to carry advertisements of novels. On 26 December 1723, Eliza Haywood's *The Rash Resolve* was advertised

12 Ian Jackson, 'The Geographies of Promotion: a Survey of Advertising in Two Eighteenth-Century English Newspapers', in John Hinks and Catherine Armstrong (eds.), *Printing Places: Locations of Book Production and Distribution since 1500* (London: Oak Knoll Press/ British Library, 2005), pp. 65–80 (70).

13 Wiles, *Freshest Advices,* p. 26.

14 Gardner, *The Business of News*, pp. 48–49.

15 Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, p. 300.

as the only novel title in a long list of books, and this modest advertisement – mentioning title only – is the first trace I have found thus far of a novel being marketed in a provincial newspaper. The list of books ends with the standard informative note that the books are "Sold at the Printers hereof, and by the Men that carry the Stamford Mercury".[16] The inclusion of fiction within a *list* of other books sold by one or several booksellers is quite typical for provincial novel advertising in this early phase. Unlike a number of London newspapers, some of which carried *individual* announcements of new or recently published novels on a daily basis, the appearance of novels for marketing purposes in the provincial press before 1750 was usually in the form of stock lists.

This procedure in the earliest period of the eighteenth century made perfect sense, for several reasons. The trade in novels had yet to become a specialised one, and the provincial booksellers would most certainly have been dependent upon marketing a variety of genres in one advertisement. As Ferdinand suggests, local booksellers stocked a basic collection made up of one or more copies of those titles actually advertised as available from named retailers.[17] Moreover, the listing of several recently published books can be regarded as a continuation of the most important precursor to the newspaper advertisements, the 'Term Catalogues', i.e. booksellers' trade catalogues designed to inform book traders and customers about new publications. 'Term' in the title refers to the dates of the fairs where traders would meet and exchange their wares, and the first successful term catalogues in Britain were published in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The book lists were arranged according to subject, and they identified where the books could be purchased, giving the names of shops or coffeehouses. The earliest lists were primarily aimed at booksellers and trades people, but when the descendants of these term catalogues started appearing in the smaller and less formalised form of newspaper advertisements for books, they were most certainly aimed for a broader audience.

Under the heading "BOOKS for AUCTION" in the *Newcastle Courant* of 14 September 1728, *Gulliver's Travels* as well as collections of novels are announced for sale with information about the time and place, and we read that "catalogues may be had at the Place of sale; and Money for any Library, or Parcel of Books to their full Value, during the Time of the Auction by two

16 *Stamford Mercury,* 26 December 1723. Other examples of provincial newspapers in the 1720s carrying advertisements of novels with some regularity are the *Newcastle Courant* from 1724 and the *Gloucester Journal* from 1727.

17 Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p. 205.

London Book-sellers".[18] In the same newspaper some decades later, in 1752, it was announced that "JAMES FLEMING, Bookseller, At the BIBLE under the Magazine-gate on Tyne Bridge, Newcastle" sells "several thousand" books as well as "a CATALOGUE of which may bee seen daily at the said shop" (see Figure 11.2).[19]

In the provinces, the announcements of books for sale in the newspapers retain this heterogeneous quality throughout the century, with advertisements involving multiple agents and exhibiting a variety of goods. Most importantly, many booksellers and newspaper proprietors relied on combining announcements of books with advertisements for stationery. The above-mentioned James Fleming of Newcastle was not only a bookseller; he also sold "all kinds of STATIONARY WARES at the very lowest PRICES".[20] Felsenstein argues that for many booksellers and newspaper proprietors, particularly in the provinces, "stationer" becomes the "portmanteau term" used by numerous members of the English provincial book trades to describe their occupation as a sort of jack-of-all-trades.[21] In addition to stationery, many book advertisements also contain announcements for more or less trustworthy medicines – a tradition going back to at least the seventeenth century. In the *Ipswich Journal* of 11 March 1749, Elizabeth Rogers styles herself "Bookseller and Stationer", selling "at the most reasonable Rates, BOOKS of all sorts … Writing and Course Paper, Pens, fine Japan Ink for Records, common Pencils, Letter Cases, and all other sorts of Stationary Wares" – but she can also offer "Daffy's and Squire's Elixirs, Scotch Pills, Stoughton's Drops, Golden, Plain Spirits of Scurvy".[22]

This heterogeneity was also common in the advertising columns of the London newspapers, carrying as they did notices of several books in one article, or combining the puffing of novels with marketing of stationery and medicines. But the important distinction between the metropolitan and provincial press in terms of the marketing of books is that several London newspapers would also carry what we might, for a lack of a better term, call *single-novel advertisements*: announcements of individual novel titles carrying the name of one or several booksellers with meticulous information about the whereabouts of the publisher-booksellers, and often accurate dates of publication. It is these single-novel advertisements that constitute the main bulk of book

18 *Newcastle Courant*, 14 September 1728.

19 *Newcastle Courant*, 4 July 1752.

20 Ibid.

21 Felsenstein, 'Some Eighteenth-Century English Provincial Book Advertisements', pp. 35–38.

22 *Ipswich Journal*, 11 March 1749.

JAMES FLEMING, Bookſeller,
At the BIBLE *under the* Magazine-gate *on* Tyne Bridge, Newcaſtle,

Sells the following BOOKS, with ſeveral thouſand other VOLUMES, both antient and modern, now on Sale; a CATALOGUE of which may be ſeen daily at the ſaid Shop.

Alſo all KINDS of STATIONARY WARES at the very loweſt PRICES.

Bibles and Common Prayers of all Sorts
Bp. Patrick and Lowth's Comment. 4 Vols.
Humphrey's Comment. do. 3 Vols.
Dr Clarke's Works, 5 Vols.
Chambers's Dictionary, 2 Vols.
Coetlogon's ditto, 2 Vols.
Savary's univerſal ditto on Trade and Commerce
Ainſworth, Littleton, and Cole's Dictionaries, Latin and Engliſh
Boyer's French Dictionary
Bailey and Dyche's do. Engliſh
Raleigh's Hiſtory of the World
Pliny and Petavius's ditto
Rapin's Hiſtory of Eng. 2 Vols.
——— Continuation, 3 Vols.
Univerſal Hiſtory, 20 Vols.
Buchanan's Hiſt. of Scotl. 3 Vols.
Middleton's Life of Cicero, 3 Vols.
Collection of Voyages, 4 Vols.
Anſon's Voyages, 8vo. and Cuts
Herleian Miſcellany, 8 Vols.
Dr Clarke's Sermons, 10 Vols.
Eaton's Theſaurus Rerum Eccleſ.
Joſephus's Works, 6 Vols.
The Preceptor, being a general Courſe of Education for Youth, 2 Vols.
Watſon's Horace, 2 Vols.
Francis's ditto, 4 Vols.
Rolin's Roman Hiſt. 16 Vols.
Turkiſh Spy, 8 Vols.
Jewiſh Letters, philoſophical, &c. 4 vols.
Spectators, 8 Vols.
Tatlers, 4 Vols.
Guardians, 2 Vols.
Female Spectator, 4 Vols.
Arabian Nights Entertain. 6 Vols.
Pope's Works, 9 Vols. large and ſmall
Swifts's Works, 14 Vols.
Pamela, or Virtue rewarded, 4 Vols.
Adventures of Peregrine Pickle, 4 Vols.
Fielding's Amelia, 4 Vols.
The Life of Patty Saunders
Hume's Eſſays on Morality, &c.
Brown's Eſſays on the Characteriſticks

By the ſaid James Fleming is ſold all Sorts of Sea Books and Charts for the Sea Coaſts of the World, &c. Where Gentlemen and Country Shopkeepers, on ſending their Orders, may depend on being duely ſerved with new Books as publiſhed, at the loweſt Prices; and Books bound in the beſt Manner.

At the above Shop alſo may be had all Sorts of MILLINARY GOODS for Ladies and Gentlemen.

FIGURE 11.2 *Advertisement for the bookshop of James Fleming, in the* Newcastle Courant, *4 July 1752.*

advertisements in the period, and my research has shown that in the period 1700–1800, almost every novel title was announced for sale in one or several London newspapers.[23]

The relative absence of these single-novel advertisements in early provincial newspapers is indicative of the main difference between the metropolitan and provincial market for books. Whilst the London market for books could be based on a regular supply of the very freshest novel titles – which is conspicuous in the insistence in London newspapers on dates of publication (discussed in more detail below) – the book-buying customers in the towns and villages remote from London would have to wait patiently before a novel would be available from their local bookseller. From their provincial newspaper they would gather information about which novels were available, and how they could obtain it. When most advertisements of novels in the provincial press in this early period comes in the form of lists, this suggests that provincial distributors would order batches of new titles rather than single ones, and that quantity and choice was, perhaps, more important than speed.

After 1750, advertisements of individual novel titles resembling the London ones started appearing in the provincial press – the advertisement of *Phebe; or, Distressed Innocence* that introduced this chapter is an example of such an advertisement. But unlike the metropolitan papers, this never became a regular feature of the local newspapers in the eighteenth century. Most novels continued to be marketed in lists of recent and less recent titles. It is tempting to assume that when an individual title *did* get advertised in a provincial newspaper, this was due to its originality or because of the specific status of the author. However, my preliminary research gives little evidence to suggest that provincial newspapers contributed greatly to the canonising process of the major works of the period. In fact, there seems to be little, if any, difference between the marketing of a novel by Richardson, Smollett or Sterne, and the marketing of the novels that have been left in oblivion, such as *Phebe; or, Distressed Innocence*. Importantly, this lack of distinction in the provincial newspapers between 'major' and 'minor' works follows the overall logic of the metropolitan newspapers, where the minor works of the period were just as likely to be subject to campaigning as novels by already established authors, or works which were in the process of becoming famous.

23 The research referred to here is part of the work-in-progress of a book tentatively entitled *Novel Advertising in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers: Marketing a Genre in Britain, Ireland and North America*.

Mercury's Names: Proprietors and Booksellers in the Provinces

A modern reader looking for advertisements of books may be surprised to find that few book announcements flaunt the name of the author. This, however, is in line with the custom of anonymous publishing in the eighteenth century, dominating the book market until well into the nineteenth century. In book advertisements, the only names to appear on a regular basis are those of the booksellers, placed either directly below the heading or making up the last line of the advertisement. Apart from the fact that publishers' names (as well as addresses of bookshops) were the only way to provide readers with necessary information about where and from whom they could obtain a book, the prominence given to booksellers in advertisements may also be because many of these were, in fact, also the newspaper proprietors. According to Gardner, more than half of the eighteenth-century newspaper proprietors in the provinces were also booksellers.[24] Why did this combination become such an established one in the period? First, it has to do with practicalities of production. Since newspapers inevitably required a print press and at least one printer, there were large sums to be saved from combining trade in books and newspapers.[25] Second, it has to do with distribution. Gardner writes that the book trade was the "bedrock" of the provincial newspaper trade, offering as it did "opportunities to maximise upon business and customer demand"; many of these offered a "one-stop-shop for the production, sale and delivery of printed materials".[26] Third, there is the propensity for collaboration rather than competition, both between the London print press and the provincial press, and between various provincial agents. For Gardner, the strong tendency to favour teamwork serves as the most crucial explanation for the success and importance of the provincial proprietors in this period, since it was collaboration that "underlay the growing power of the provincial press as a collective force".[27]

In terms of advertising, this collaboration is conspicuous in two important pieces of information given in almost all advertisements of novels for sale in this period: the line announcing where the novel in question is published, and who distributes it. An overwhelming majority of the novels from this period were subject to what John Feather calls "national distribution": they were *printed and published* in London – with London appearing on the imprint and in

24 Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 75.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., pp. 91 and 76.

27 Ibid., p. 9.

advertisements – and *distributed* to country bookshops.[28] Thus, the London addresses given in almost all provincial novel advertisements tells tales about a close collaboration between London publishers and their colleagues in the districts outside London. As Feather reminds us, newspapers proprietors represented "a ready-made system of deep market penetration" which gave the newspapers a crucial role in the provincial trade: the majority of papers were printed in regional capitals with easy and established communication with London, and the newspaper owners had good credit and connections with their London partners.[29]

For the provincial bookseller, however, it was not enough to develop strong links with the London agents; they also had to convince their own audience that it was more convenient to order their books locally, and they had to keep within the same price range as the London booksellers. Thus, many provincial book advertisements as well as newspaper imprint lines throughout the period point out that the novels in question can be had "as cheap as in London", and they often boast of wide ranging routes of distribution. Far from being a sign of inferiority, then, the persistent model of national publication and provincial distribution suggests successful collaboration – a point which is further strengthened if we consider that the model has, to a great extent, continued into our time, where books are still predominantly published in the larger towns and distributed to the provinces.

Equally conspicuous, if less consistent, is the listing of conglomerates of provincial publishers in announcements of novels for sale. Some advertisements could be general, announcing that the novel in question was sold "by all Booksellers in Town and Country"; others were more specific, listing the names and addresses of anything between one and several dozen booksellers. The power relationship between the London booksellers and the provincial distributors is often revealed in the order of names in the advertisements, where the first provincial bookseller mentioned refers to the main distributor, and in many cases the first name would also be that of a newspaper proprietor.

Let us consider some examples of the way in which various provincial newspapers dealt with the listing of booksellers and distributors by looking at the advertisements of a late edition of a popular novel in the period, Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766). In December 1769, advertisements of

28 John Feather, 'The Country Trade in Books', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds.), *Spreading the Word: The Distribution Networks of Print, 1550–1850* (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), pp. 165–183 (165).

29 John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 65.

the fourth edition of the novel appears in several provincial newspapers. The *Bath Chronicle* (Figure 11.3) and the *Oxford Journal* (Figure 11.4) have advance advertisements of this novel in late November and early December, announcing that "On Saturday, December 9, will be published. In Two Vols. Price 6s, bound, The FOURTH EDITION of THE VICAR of WAKEFIELD. A Tale".[30] Both of the advertisements announce that the novel is "Printed for Carnan and Newbury, at No.65, in St. Paul's Church Yard", and the *Bath Chronicle* then states that the novel is "sold by the Booksellers in Bath and Bristol; T. Burrough, Devizes; J. Smith, Marlbro'; E. Easton, Salisbury; G. Cass, Bridgewater; M. Anderdon, Taunton; and T. Peters, Calne". None of the booksellers listed here were proprietors of the newspaper (whose name is R. Cruttwell), but the imprint line of the front page informs the readers that "advertisements are taken in by Mr. Newbury" in London, signifying a specific collaboration between a London publisher and the printer of the *Bath Chronicle*. The imprint line goes on to list some, but not all, of the booksellers named in the advertisement of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, suggesting that a selection of the newspaper distributors in the Bath and Bristol area chose to distribute Goldsmith's novels, whilst others refrained from doing so. The *Oxford Journal* informs its readers that the novel is "sold by W. Jackson, in Oxford; C. Badham, in Hereford; T. Price, and T. Dunn in Gloucester; and by the Oxford Newsmen". In this newspaper, the

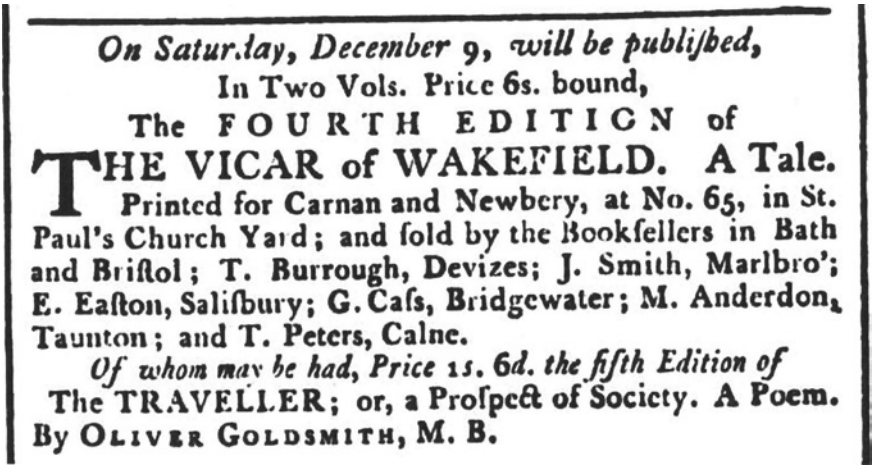
On Saturday, December 9, will be published,
In Two Vols. Price 6s. bound,
The FOURTH EDITION of
THE VICAR of WAKEFIELD. A Tale.
Printed for Carnan and Newbery, at No. 65, in St. Paul's Church Yard; and sold by the Bookfellers in Bath and Briſtol; T. Burrough, Devizes; J. Smith, Marlbro'; E. Eaſton, Saliſbury; G. Caſs, Bridgewater; M. Anderdon, Taunton; and T. Peters, Calne.
Of whom may be had, Price 1s. 6d. the fifth Edition of
The TRAVELLER; or, a Proſpect of Society. A Poem.
By OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

FIGURE 11.3 *Advertisement for* The Vicar of Wakefield *in the* Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 30 November 1769.*

30 *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 30 November 1769, and the *Oxford Journal*, 2 December 1769.

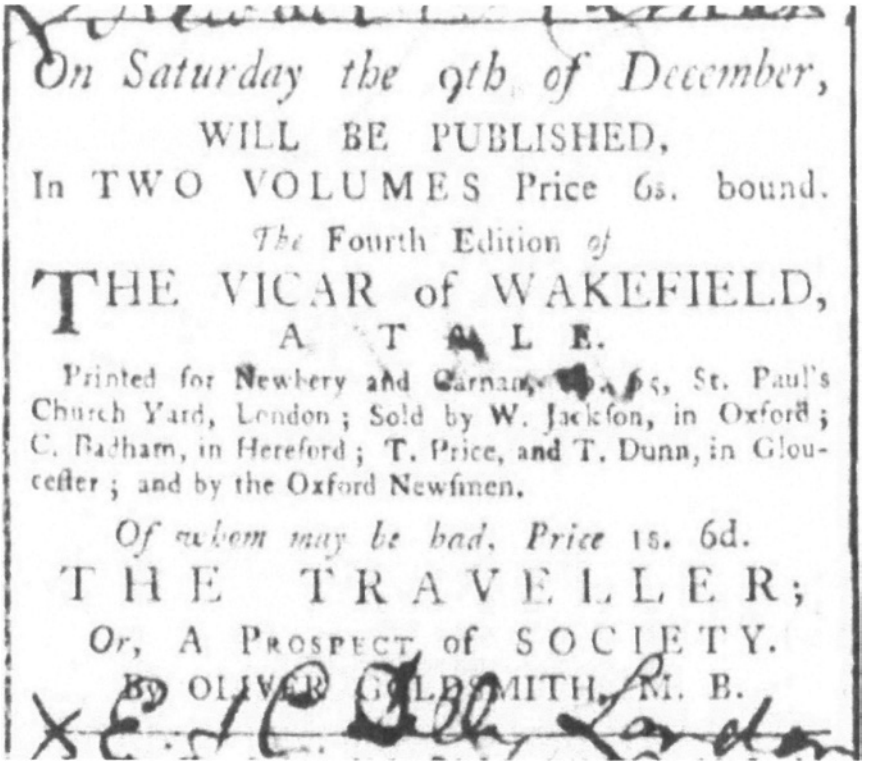
On Saturday the 9th of December,
WILL BE PUBLISHED,
In TWO VOLUMES Price 6s. bound.
The Fourth Edition of
THE VICAR of WAKEFIELD,
A TALE.
Printed for Newbery and Carnan, [illegible], St. Paul's Church Yard, London; Sold by W. Jackson, in Oxford; C. Badham, in Hereford; T. Price, and T. Dunn, in Gloucester; and by the Oxford Newsmen.
Of whom may be had, Price 1s. 6d.
THE TRAVELLER;
Or, A PROSPECT of SOCIETY.
By OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

FIGURE 11.4 *Advertisement for* The Vicar of Wakefield *in the* Oxford Journal*, 2 December 1769.*

clue to ownership is in the newspaper title itself: the *Oxford Journal* was originally titled *Jackson's Oxford Journal* and the imprint line (printed at the bottom of the last page) confirms that the first mentioned name in the novel advertisement is the proprietor of the newspaper, and that he deals in books and other printed matters as well as stationery. None of the other booksellers are mentioned as newspaper distributors in the imprint line – possibly because Oxford's proximity to London narrowed its distribution routes – but the advertisement itself nevertheless suggests cooperation between the proprietor of the newspaper and booksellers in the Oxford area.

Whereas the advertisements cited above suggest collaboration between the newspaper proprietors and multiple booksellers in the vicinity, the announcement of *The Vicar of Wakefield* in the *Salisbury Journal* (Figure 11.5) tells a different story. The novel was advertised as "this day is published" on 11 December, naming two agents only: the London based publisher (Newbury) and

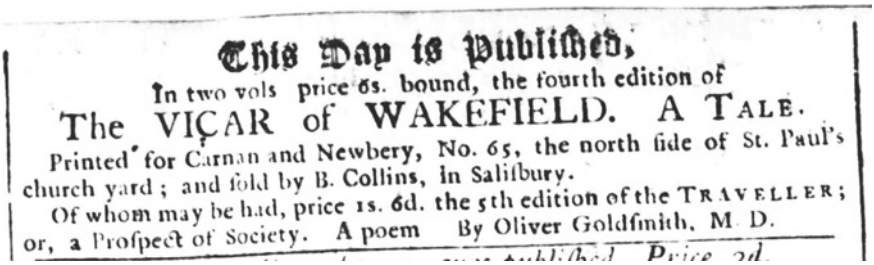
This Day is Published,
In two vols price 6s. bound, the fourth edition of
The VICAR of WAKEFIELD. A TALE.
Printed for Carnan and Newbery, No. 65, the north side of St. Paul's church yard; and sold by B. Collins, in Salisbury.
Of whom may be had, price 1s. 6d. the 5th edition of the TRAVELLER; or, a Prospect of Society. A poem By Oliver Goldsmith, M. D.

FIGURE 11.5 *Advertisement for* The Vicar of Wakefield *in the* Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 11 December 1769.*

"Benjamin Collins, in Salisbury".[31] Collins (1715–1785) was the most important editor of the *Salisbury Journal*, and he was a dominant figure both in regional newspaper production and the book trade. Alongside a handful of others in the period, he was a provincial shareholder of several copyrights, and through his close cooperation with the London-based publisher John Newbury, he made both successful and unsuccessful purchases of copyrights from the 1750s onwards. According to Ferdinand, the one-third copyright Collins purchased from Oliver Goldsmith in 1762 (the other two shares were held by Newbury, and the famous London-based Scottish publisher, William Strahan), was one of his few bad investments – whilst the copyright shares of other novels, like the tenth edition of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* as well as some of Smollett's novels proved more profitable.[32] On 13 January 1752, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* was advertised in his journal with his name appearing alone, whilst many other novel advertisements include the names of both himself and other distributors.[33] Because of his close connections to the London book trade, Gardner observes that his newspaper contained considerably more advertisements of books than was common in provincial newspapers, making

31 *Salibury and Winchester Journal*, 11 December 1769.

32 Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, pp. 49–50. See the same pages in Ferdinand for prices and profits of Collins' purchasing of copyright of books. London booksellers would normally have monopolies on the copyrights or shares of copyrights of best-sellers in this period, but according to Ferdinand, Collins was able to obtain his shares by "purchasing them directly from colleagues, some of whom acted as his agent at the sales" (Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p. 38).

33 "This day is published (in four pocket volumes), Price bound 12 s, in Boards, 10s., 6d. THE ADVENTURES OF PEREGRINE PICKLE … Printed for the author, and sold by D. Wilson, at Plato's Head, near Round-Court, in the Strand, and B. Collins in Salisbury" (*Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 13 January 1752).

the *Salisbury Journal* a good place to start for those wishing to study provincial advertisements of novels.[34]

Another factor that affected the number of distributors involved in bookselling through newspaper advertising was vicinity to London. When *The History of Harry Herald* (1754) was advertised in the provincial press, the *Oxford Journal* referred solely to the London booksellers (R. Griffiths, and F. and J. Noble), whilst the *Manchester Mercury* gave some information about the whereabouts of local distributors of the novel.[35] This tendency seems to be stable throughout the period. When William Lane's famous Minerva Library was marketed in the provincial press in 1790, the advertisements in the *Chester Chronicle* lists 19 local bookseller-distributors; the *Bath Chronicle* lists 6, the *Northampton Mercury* lists 5; the *Derby Mercury* lists 3, the *Leeds Intelligencer* lists 5 – but when the same advertisement appears in the *Reading Mercury* it carries no references to local distributors. The absence of indications of local book distribution in newspapers like the *Reading Mercury* and the *Oxford Journal* is not a constant – indeed there are several examples of novel advertisements throughout the period appearing with full reference to local distribution networks in these newspapers too – but they appear less frequently than is the case with provincial newspapers remote from London.[36]

Mercury Rapid and Slow: The Distribution of Newspapers and Novels in the Provinces

The most complex but also interesting aspect of novel advertisements in the provincial press is the issue of distribution. As Wiles points out, the *sine qua non* of survival in the newspaper business was wide circulation, because

34 Gardner, *The Business of News*, p. 51.

35 *Oxford Journal*, 21 December 1754. The advertisement in the *Manchester Mercury* relates that the novel is "Sold by Joseph Harrop, Printer in Manchester, and by the Men who carry the News" (*Manchester Mercury*, 11 February 1755).

36 Closeness to the metropolis affected not only the organisation of book distribution networks; it could also determine the level of success of the newspaper itself. According to Jeremy Black, the development of the newspapers in the Home Counties was "limited by the ready accessibility of the London papers", and some of the metropolitan papers "were designed to tap nearby markets" (Black, *The English Press 1621–1861*, p. 114). Thus, several London newspapers frequently listed for example grain prices of the areas close to the urban centre – and although books were luxury goods, interesting only for a minority of the public, we can safely conclude that proximity to London affected the level of engagement in the distribution of books.

"without wide distribution, regional rather than purely local, few provincial newspapers could carry on".[37] Wide distribution was not only more important to the *profitability* of the provincial newspapers than the metropolitan counterparts; it was also a prerequisite for the readers: where the London audience could seek out newsagents or hawkers on the street to procure fresh papers, the country readers living at a distance from a town centre were reliant upon the apparatus of distribution offered by the newspaper in question. Importantly, the same thing can be said about procuring a book, and it is by studying the logistics and networks of distribution that we can discover the degree to which the book trade and the provincial newspaper trade were deeply intertwined in this period. And, again, the advertisements provide the main 'maps' directing us towards new knowledge about the way in which books were presented and delivered to provincial readers.

As we have seen above, the most common way of announcing local distributors would be to list their names and locations after the London publisher. Advertisements for novels in the provincial newspapers were frequently much larger than their metropolitan counterparts: in addition to presenting a list of books, an advertisement could also contain not only the names but also the whereabouts of a number of local distributors. Another and more space-saving variant of book advertising was to refer the reader to the booksellers and/or proprietors mentioned in the imprint of the paper. According to Wiles, the newspaper imprint represents the "most valuable sources of information about distribution".[38] And indeed, these imprints – usually appearing in small type at the bottom of the last page – would often contain a long list of distributors and places of distribution, as well as detailed information about the procedures for distribution, how to place an advertisement and so on.

Some newspapers advertised books without reference to publisher or bookseller in the advertisement itself. In the *Derby Mercury* of 21 June 1739, Penelope Aubin's *A Collection of Entertaning Histories and Novels* is, unusually for the period, advertised on the front page, and without reference to a publisher or to the imprint of the newspaper. The implication is that the local reader of the *Derby Mercury* would know exactly where to look: at the bottom of page four we are told that the newspaper is "Printed and sold by Sam. Drery", and the imprint names eight other booksellers from the Derby district, all of whom, it is assumed, sell Aubin's novel collection.[39] In some cases, an advertisement of a novel would inform the readers of several options for procuring a book.

37 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 112–113.

38 Ibid., p. 117.

39 *Derby Mercury*, 21 June 1739.

FIGURE 11.6 *Advertisement for* The Scotchman; or The World As It Goes*, in the* Kentish Gazette*, 18 August 1770.*

When *The Scotchman; or The World As It Goes,* by the notorious author of sentimental ficton, Mr. Treyssac de Vergy, was marketed in the *Kentish Gazette* of 1770 (see Figure 11.6), the advertisements announced that it was "sold by SIMMONS and KIRKBY, Printers, Booksellers and Stationers, at the King's Arms Printing-Office, CANTERBURY – By the Booksellers mentioned at the End of the Paper – And may be had of the NEWSMEN who deliver the KENTISH GAZETTE".[40] In addition to the imprint – in which 21 Kent-based booksellers are listed – the readers of the *Kentish Gazette* could also use "the NEWSMEN" to procure Vergy's book. Who were these, and what role did they play in the provincial distribution of novels and newspapers in the period?

The message that a novel could be had by "the Men who carry the News" was a recurring one in provincial book advertisements of the period. As Ian Jackson has shown, the newspaper distribution network was well suited to the delivery of products such as medicines or books, and "people could place orders with their newsman, and then have the remedy or printed product delivered

40 *Kentish Gazette*, 18 August 1770.

with the next week's paper".[41] If this scheme – an early version of the Amazon delivery service – sounds too good to be true, it is important to remember that the jack-of-all-trades model of business was crucial for the survival of many provincial proprietors: the newspapers served as intermediaries between the sellers and buyers of goods such as books and medicines – not only in the sense that they advertised the wares, but also because they were in charge of *distributing* them to the customers. In fact, the role of the newspaper agents as Mercuries of goods beyond the newspapers was what made it possible for the newspapers to sustain a wide circulation. As pointed out by Wiles, the main reason why it was beneficial to have a newspaper delivered at the doorstep of a customer living far distant from a distribution centre, is that they also delivered more goods, and "without this second string to their bows the printers of the country newspapers could not have shot their arrows much beyond the limits of their own towns".[42] Thus, the business of distributing books (among other commodities) was deeply entangled in the expansion and sustainment of newspapers. As Wiles writes, "Provincial journalism developed rapidly because men on horseback or on foot could easily carry more than the weekly budget of news".[43]

Who, then, were these men or women "on horseback or on foot" who were weighed down by books, medicines and other goods? We know that some newspapers and books were sent by the post, and that local postmasters assisted in the distribution – as stated in a number of provincial newspapers. But even more common for provincial newspaper proprietors were the local or even long distance 'carrier' or 'Messenger', also known as the 'Running Footmen', who transported goods of all sorts to people living along his or her route and who typically operated from a local inn which would serve as headquarters or a calling station (and was also often listed in the imprint of many provincial newspapers).[44] According to Wiles, the regular practice was that "the printers sent bundles of papers to their main local agents in nearby towns", which means that many newsmen basically served as travelling salesmen.[45] These newsmen would also take new orders as well as advertisements back from the customer in what appears to have been a systematised circuit of delivery and ordering. An advertisement for books, medicines and stationery in the *Stamford Mercury* on 14 January 1725 assures interested customers, that

41 Jackson, 'The Geographies of Promotion', p. 77.

42 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 130–131.

43 Ibid., p. 131.

44 Ibid., p. 119.

45 Ibid., pp. 126 and 131.

"any Person (who) Orders by the Messengers that carry the Stamford Mercury, may have it delivered at their own houses".[46] Suffice to say, a special delivery at one's doorstep would not, in general, come free. According to Wiles, it was always the subscriber or buyer who paid for the delivery, and the further away from the headquarters, the more the customers would have to pay for delivery.[47] But there also exist advertisements which suggest that this service could sometimes be offered for free. When *The Test of Filial Duty* was advertised in the *Kentish Gazette* of 1 January 1772, the paper announced that the novel "may be had (Carriage-free) of all the Newsmen who deliver the Kentish Gazette" – a remarkably service-minded approach which might have boosted sales of both newspapers and novels for those who lived at a distance from a bookshop or circulating library.[48]

Another important aspect of distribution of newspapers and books in the provinces is the issue of time: how long did it take for a newspaper to reach a customer remote from a centre of distribution; what was the average span of time for a London-printed novel to reach the bookseller and/or proprietor in the provinces; how many days would pass between the advertisement of novels in the metropolitan and the provincial press; and when could a provincial reader expect to procure a novel advertised in the provincial press? Although these four questions are all equally important, the following brief account will have to revolve around the only stage for which the newspaper can provide clues, namely the distance in time between the advertisement in a London and a provincial newspaper.

The most common heading in eighteenth-century advertisements for books, in metropolitan and provincial newspapers alike, is the phrase "This day is published" (or "was" or "were" published), a recognisable heading tapping into the newspapers' general preoccupation with immediacy, providing the readers with the most up-to-date material, including the freshest print items. The advertisers also created a sense of anticipation with the use of advance notices, particularly in the London newspapers, announcing that "Next week will be published", or "tomorrow will be published" – sometimes with references to specific days or dates ("Next Thursday will be published"). My research for the London newspapers has shown that the sentence "this day is published" is very reliable following its first appearance after an advance notice: "Next week", "next Thursday", or "Tomorrow" of the advance notices meant exactly that. However, the heading "this day was published" was often

46 *Stamford Mercury*, 14 January 1725.

47 Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp. 128–129.

48 *Kentish Gazette*, 1 January 1772.

deployed to continue promoting a 'new' title that could sometimes have been on the market for many months. One of the reasons for the frequency of this phrase is thus that it was usually repeated beyond its initial appearance.

What, then, about the provincial newspaper and speed of advertising vis-à-vis the metropolitan 'press release' of novels? John Feather suggests that "speed was not usually important in the distribution of books" in the eighteenth century.[49] But some of my findings suggest that many booksellers must have had wind beneath the wings of mercury to give their readers the opportunity to buy the latest London-printed novels.[50] If we look again at Haywood's *The Rash Resolve*, cited above as one of the earliest examples of a novel advertisement in the provincial press, it is declared published in the London newspapers around 16 December, after a series of advance announcements which can verify the course of the publication of this title, and a fairly accurate publication date for this novel.[51] On 26 December, the advertisement in which Haywood's novel appears in a list is printed in the *Stamford Mercury*, indicating that the novel travelled from the London booksellers to the Stamford printing office in ten days. The novel *Siberian Anecdotes* was advertised in the *London Chronicle* on 26–28 December 1782 (and in the 7–9 January issue of the *St. James Post*), and as early as 7 January 1783 it appeared in the *Manchester Mercury*, as well as in the *Northampton Mercury* on 20 January, and the *Bath Chronicle* on 23 January. Similarly, when Burney's *Cecilia, or Memoirs of a Heiress* was presented as "this day is published" in the *Northampton Mercury* on

49 John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-century England*, p. 62.

50 Here, too, it is difficult to establish accurate data since many of the advertisements declaring a novel to be "this day published" might be repeat advertisements; moreover, we have no way of knowing whether an announcement of the published novel meant that it had actually arrived at the bookseller in question – it might have been a way of attracting browsers. With the provincial advertisements we also have to look for advance marketing and follow-up "this day"-advertisements in the London press before establishing a correct publication date. With these limitations in mind, a few examples can nevertheless provide a suggestion that a novel's time of travelling between center and periphery could be fairly short, and increasingly so throughout the period.

51 The first advance advertisement of *The Rash Resolve* appears in the *Daily Journal* of 27 November 1723 where the novel is announced below the main advertisement for *Lasselia, or the Self-abandon'd*, with the heading "From whom, next Week will be publish'd (being the last Novel of Mrs. Haywood)". The next advance advertisement appears on 7 December, declaring that "On Tuesday next will be published" (In the *London Journal* and several other newspapers). The novel is then declared as "This day is published" from 16 December (in the *Daily Journal* and other newspapers).

Monday 15 July 1782, this was only a few days after the novel was announced as published in the *St. James Post* of 11–13 July.

These and other examples show that anything from a few days to a couple of weeks was the normal 'travel time' for a London-published novel to reach advertising columns of the provincial press. The variety of times here might be related to different levels of collaboration between the London publishers and their distributor-colleagues in the provinces – with some novels being sent directly to local booksellers at the time of their metropolitan releases, whilst some novels had to be picked up by provincial agents working in London. In the cases when the London booksellers themselves chose to advertise their titles in the provincial newspapers, the provincial readers could learn about the publication more or less simultaneously with the London readers. *The Memoirs of the Countess of Berci* ("by the author of the Female Quixote"), was advertised as "printed for A. Millar, in the Strand, and sold by the Booksellers in Town and Country" in the *Manchester Mercury* of 6 April 1756 – coinciding with the London advertisements of the same publication.[52]

Most of the advertisements discussed above confirm the general impression that there was a close cooperation between the London booksellers and their country colleagues, a collaboration which was, as we have seen, fundamental to the movement of a novel from its publication in London, to the reader in the provinces. The provincial trade in novels may have been first and foremost on the side of distribution rather than production – but far from being a sign of inferiority, this only serves to prove the importance of newspaper advertising and the provincial book trade in the chain of production and publication. For what, after all, is the point of producing a novel, or a newspaper, unless it reaches a wide audience? In comparison with other printed genres such as conduct books or political tracts, most novels had a fairly low print run and readership in the period. But the eighteenth century is nevertheless the most important era for the rise and spread of the novel *en masse* just as much as the rise of individual famous authors, and every part of the machinery plays a crucial part in explaining the success of the genre, including the way in which it was marketed for a non-urban audience in the newspaper.

52 *Manchester Mercury*, 6 April 1756. The advance advertisement appears in the *Public Advertiser* of 1 April, suggesting that the novel will be published "next week".

PART 7

Control

CHAPTER 12

Establishing a State-Controlled Network for News Trading in the Swedish Baltic Provinces in the Late Seventeenth Century: Causes and Consequences

Kaarel Vanamölder

The beginning of printed periodicals in Estonia and Latvia dates back to the last quarter of the seventeenth century when the majority of the territories of the present Baltic States were part of the Swedish kingdom. For historical reasons, German culture and language dominated in the Livonian, Estonian and Ingerian provinces. The first periodical newspapers printed in the provincial centres – Riga, Tallinn and Narva – were also published in German and they have been rightfully dealt with in the wider context of the early modern German press. Their layout and contents did not differ from the other newspapers of the time and were influenced by the printing houses of Hamburg (and Altona) which was the main centre of communication and news production and reproduction in the Baltic Sea region during the seventeenth century.[1]

The historiography of the news press in the Swedish overseas provinces has been under-researched for a long time – no significant information has been added to the primary introductory survey of the newspapers undertaken nearly a century ago.[2] The topic has been covered mainly by researchers of Baltic German background, while for their colleagues from Estonia and Latvia the history of the press in a foreign language has not been of much interest until recently. The state of research is furthermore characterised by the fact that the newspapers published in the provincial centres have been looked at

1 See, for example, Else Bogel and Elger Blühm, *Die deutschen Zeitungen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (2 vols., Bremen: Schünemann, 1971); Holger Böning and Emmy Moepps, *Deutsche Presse. Bibliographische Handbücher zur Geschichte der deutschsprachigen periodischen Presse von den Anfängen bis 1815. Bd. 1: Hamburg. Kommentierte Bibliographie der Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Intelligenzblätter, Kalender und Almanache sowie biographische Hinweise zu Herausgebern, Verlegern und Druckern periodischer Schriften. Von den Anfängen bis 1765, Bd. 1.1* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1996), pp. XI–XXX.

2 See, for example, Arno Rafael Cederberg, *Die Erstlinge der estländischen Zeitungsliteratur* (Tartu: C. Mattiesen, 1922), pp. 3–16; Arend Buchholtz, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga 1588–1888* (Riga: Müller, 1890), pp. 165–173.

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independently and in an antiquarian way, mainly by listing the extant issues.[3] There is also very little information on news consumption in the provincial centres before the publication of local newspapers.

In the present chapter I will focus upon the conditions of publishing of the newspapers from the provincial centres: *Rigische Montags* (*Donnerstags*) *Ordinari Post Zeitung* (1680–1681) and its successor *Rigische Novellen* (1681–1710), both published in Riga, and the Tallinn newspaper *Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung* (1689–1710), connected to the newspaper in Riga.[4] The chapter will not focus upon the Narva newspaper *Narvische Post-Zeitungen*, about which next to

3 See, for example, Friedrich Koch, 'Die Anfänge des baltischen deutschen Zeitungswesens', *Baltische Monatshefte* (1938), pp. 67–81; Roland Seeberg-Elverfeldt, 'Dreihundert Jahre deutschbaltische Presse', *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, 26 (1977), pp. 651–670; Endel Annus, 'Tidningsväsendet i Baltikum före 1710', in Endel Annus and Esko Häkli (eds.), *Den estniska boken genom seklerna* (Helsinki: Helsingfors universitetsbibliotek, 1995), pp. 53–65; Endel Annus, 'Die im Baltikum bis 1710 erschienenen Zeitungen', in Aleksander Loit and Helmut Piirimäe (eds.), *Die schwedischen Ostseeprovinzen Estland und Livland im 16.–18. Jahrhundert* (Stockholm: Centre for Baltic Studies, 1993), pp. 423–432; Oskar Grosberg, *Die Presse Lettlands. Mit einem geschichtlichen Rückblick* (Riga: Baltischer Verlag, 1927), pp. 8–11; Johannes von Eckardt, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des deutsch-baltischen Zeitungswesens* (Ludwigshafen am Rhein: Waldkirch, 1929), pp. 5–6; V.I. Simonov, 'K istorii vozniknoveniia pervoi pechatnoi periodicheskoi gazety v Rige', *Izvestiia Akademii nauk Latviiskoi SSR*, 9 (446) (1984), pp. 118–130; M. [A.] Taube, 'Rīgas pirmie laikraksti kā kultūrvēstures avots (XVII un XVIII gs)', in E. Arājs (ed.), *Grāmatas un to krātuves* (Riga: Zinātne, 1966), pp. 65–129; Valda Rudziša, 'Deutschsprachige Zeitungen in Riga aus dem 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in Jörg Riecke and Britt-Marie Schuster (eds.), *Deutschsprachige Zeitungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Sprachliche Gestalt, historische Einbettung und Kulturelle Tradition* (Berlin: Weidler, 2005), pp. 79–89; Kaarel Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli Rootsi Läänemere-provintsides 17. sajandi lõpul. – Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung varauusaegse informatsioonikandjana* (Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2012) <http://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/27085>.

4 The issues of the Riga newspapers can be found at the National Library of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Sciences Library, in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts and in the Royal Library of Sweden in Stockholm. See for example Endel Annus (ed.), *Eestis ilmunud saksa-, vene- ja muukeelne perioodika 1675–1940* (Tallinn: Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Raamatukogu, 1993), pp. 228–234. The digitalised versions of the newspapers can be accessed from the Bremen University Library homepage in the collection "Zeitungen des 17. Jahrhunderts" <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>. The name of the Tallinn newspaper had two different spellings: *Revalsche Post-Zeitung* (1689–1699?) and *Revalische Post-Zeitung* (1699?-1710). Due to this a combined form of the name, *Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung*, is used in this article. The issues of the Tallinn newspaper can be found at the Tallinn University Academic Library Baltica collection, Estonian Historical Archives, the Royal Library of Sweden in Stockholm, Uppsala University Library and in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts. See Annus, *Eestis ilmunud*, p. 201. The digitalised copies of the newspapers are available at <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>.

nothing is known beside the fact that it was published (proven by one extant newspaper issue from 1702).[5] The chapter is an attempt to treat the press history of the Swedish overseas provinces as fully as possible, taking a closer look at the reasons and causes of newspaper publishing, and to place this within the wider context of early modern press history. It endeavours to answer the questions: which control mechanisms were appropriated by the Swedish state (and when and why), how were the new news media modelled and distributed, how successful were these activities, and how did they influence the publishing of newspapers in the overseas provinces? To find the answers I have not so much looked upon the extant numbers of the newspapers as the extant archive materials in Estonia, Latvia and Sweden, concerning the newspapers' publication, selling and distribution.

The Establishing of the Riga Newspaper in 1680 and the pre-1680 Town News Market

In May 1680 Charles XI sent a letter to the governor-general Christer Horn in which he expressed discontent with the contents and forwarding of the news in Livonia during the recent Scanian War (1675–1679).[6] This document marks the birth of a centrally controlled new press in Riga: according to the order of the king, a newspaper henceforth had to be published by an official who was specially appointed for this task, and the censorship of the contents was to be carried out by the office of the governor-general. The first state-appointed newspaper purveyor was Christoph Prescher, who had worked in the royal field office during the war. He fulfilled the task for the next four years and was followed by the castle court assessor Georg Ruvius who was appointed by a royal privilege issued in 1684 and who (or whose widow) held the right until the closing of the newspaper in 1710.[7]

Christoph Prescher and Georg Ruvius were therefore both officials acting in accordance with a royal privilege, state-appointed *Zeitunger*s who held a monopoly on publishing a newspaper. Their main task became gathering the

5 See the historiography of the Narva newspaper: Enn Küng, 'Johann Köhler ja Narva trükikoda 1695–1705', in Enn Küng (ed.), *Läänemere provintside arenguperspektiivid Rootsi suurriigis 16/17. sajandil II* (Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2006), pp. 336–363 (here 348–349). The extant issue of the Narva newspaper (*Narvische Post-Zeitungen* No 17; 23 April 1702) can be found in a digitalised version at <http://brema.suub.uni-bremen.de/zeitungen17>.

6 Latvijas Universitātes Akadēmiskā Bibliotēka [Academic Library of the University of Latvia, henceforth LUAB], MS. 1140, 1, No 7; for a transcription of the document see: Riksarkivet [Swedish National Archives, henceforth RA], Riksregistraturet: 1112.1/B/452 (1680), pp. 394–395.

7 Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, pp. 208–209.

news items from other sources, and editing and compiling a newspaper based on the items. The privilege did not include crown-supported recompense, assuming the mediating and selling of news guaranteed sufficient income. In this respect the state-appointed editor in Riga differed from the ordinary early modern news merchant acting on private initiative for whom the sale of information was an additional income source beside their main occupation (postmaster, printer or other).

Although the above-mentioned letter of the king is not completely unknown in historiography,[8] this document, rich in information, deserves further mention. While subjecting the publication of the newspaper to the control of a central power, the document also points out the reasons for the decision and this enables us to sketch the way in which the Riga news market functioned up until that time. Prior to the document, the sale of printed newspapers in Riga was criticised for the faulty news that they contained: "…and not to publish, as it has happened so far, a lot of unfounded things in the journals and newspapers printed in Riga…".[9] The source could be interpreted in different ways. From the purely grammatical construction of the sentences it can be assumed that (several) newspapers were printed in Riga prior to May 1680. This piece of information is of great interest because in the historiography so far, only postmaster Jakob Becker's failed attempt to publish a newspaper in the town in 1632 is known.[10] For the following period of half a century there is no information and according to the present state of knowledge, people in Riga were limited to reading newspapers brought from other towns, mainly the newspaper from Königsberg.[11]

The letter addressed to the governor-general was intended to outline the upcoming tasks of Prescher, and to guarantee the full support of the local authorities the document names the printer and the postmaster as news distributors whose competing and harmful activities were to be stopped. The document clearly states that henceforth only Prescher had the right to garner information for newspapers in Riga and Livonia and publish them after they

8 Taube, 'Rīgas pirmie', pp. 65–129.

9 "… und nicht wie bishero geschehen, viele ungegründete dinge in denen dort zu Riga drückenden Gazetten und Zeitungen, debitiret werden mögen …" (LUAB, MS. 1140, 1, No 7).

10 About Jacob Becker see Enn Küng, 'The Attempts to Establish Private Postal System in the Swedish Baltic Sea Provinces in the Beginning of the 1630s', in Priit Raudkivi *et al.* (eds.), *Sõnasse püütud minevik: In honorem Enn Tarvel* (Tallinn: Argo, 2009), pp. 178–189.

11 Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, pp. 28–31.

had been censored by the office of governor-general.[12] The printer was strictly (*ernstlich*) forbidden to accept newspapers for publishing from anybody else but Prescher. In the same context the postmaster was forbidden to transcribe (*verschreiben*) and accept other newspapers.[13]

Riga was doubtless a trading metropolis of the Baltic Sea region during the early modern period, its population being thrice that of Stockholm.[14] Due to the excellent position of Riga in the network of postal routes, the leading overseas postal office was situated there, providing the main connections with Western Europe and vice versa. The Western or so-called German post (*teutsche post*) was regularly distributed overland, especially when the navigation season ended.[15] Riga was also one of the main communication channels between Russia and Europe. In addition to correspondence, the Western European newspapers, which the Russian Head of Post had to supply to his government, travelled via Riga to Moscow.[16]

There is no doubt that news marketing and, by some means, the reproduction of news items took place in Riga prior to 1680 and this process was executed by the postmaster and printers – the traditional representatives of the early modern newspaper business.[17] The Riga news market and people acting upon

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12 "So haben Wir Ihme zu einiger ergetzlichkeit für solche drauf anwendende specen in gnaden vergönnet, daß Er und sonst niemand anders die Gazetten und Zeitungen dort in Liefland und Riga schreiben und nach dem Sie vorerst alda in der Gouvernements Cantzeley zur censur eingegeben, drucken zulaßen …" (LUAB, MS. 1140, 1, No 7).

13 "… zu welchem ende Ihr nicht allein Unseren daselbigen Buchdrucker ernstlich inhibiren und verbiethen werdet, die Gazetten von niemand alß erwelten Prescher zum Druck anzunehmen und Ihme wieder ausfolgen zulaßen, besondern auch dem Postmeister nachdrücklich anbefehlet, daß weilen dergleichen Zeitungen und Nouvellen auf diese weise durch eine pertinente correspondence dort in loco füglicher können beygeschaffet werden, Er hiefüro keine Gazetten von Königsberg oder andere Örther verschreibe oder einkommen laße.", (LUAB, MS. 1140, 1, No 7).

14 Elisabeth Harder-Gersdorff, 'Riga als Handelsmetropole des Ostseeraums in der Frühen Neuzeit (16.–18. Jahrhundert)', in Ilgvars Misāns and Horst Wernicke (eds.), *Riga und der Ostseeraum. Von der Gründung 1201 bis in die Frühe Neuzeit* (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2005), pp. 261–294; Robert I Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 140.

15 See Enn Küng, '"…mugavamaid teid, kui nüüd linnade vahel tarvitatakse, on vaevalt leida…": Postirevisjon Eesti- ja Liivimaal 1687.–1688. aastal', *Tuna*, 4 (2005), pp. 17–34 (23–25).

16 Enn Küng, 'Riia-Moskva postitüli Põhjasõja eelõhtul', *Tuna*, 4 (2006), pp. 12–24 (19–24).

17 In 1675 Riga had two printing houses: the royal printing press was established beside the town printing press by royal privilege, see Tiiu Reimo, 'Trükiprivileegidest Baltimaadel XVII–XVIII sajandil', *Tartu Ülikooli Raamatukogu aastaraamat 1999* (2000), pp. 184–195 (188–189).

it, as they are reflected in the king's letter, represent in reality a stereotypical early modern market town where different news items were sold and new ones compiled. Should we reverse the forbidding imperative of the source, we get a picture showing a Riga printer (or printers) accepting newspapers for publication and a postmaster transcribing and selling others, possibly handwritten news items. Taking into consideration Riga's role in long distance marketing and the Swedish postal network in the seventeenth century, the 'silence' prior to 1680 would seem extremely odd. It is possible and even expected that in addition to one newspaper, other news media reached Riga.

Another important question is why was it necessary to rearrange the news market of Riga in 1680? The historiography has considered the establishing of censorship in Riga as a measure against the nobility, and the first step towards the reduction of their power.[18] This explanation may be unsatisfactory and shallow because the purpose of the early modern newspapers was not the coverage of and commenting upon the local news but the bringing of information in from outside. The main concern, therefore, was the better control of the information coming from abroad. The need to rearrange the ruling of the state, based on the recent results of the Scanian War, meant the establishing of absolutist power in Sweden. This, indeed, is a widespread viewpoint in the existing historiography.[19] In this context, 1680 is a significant date when the Swedish *Riksdag* declined its constitutional power over Charles XI thereby opening the way to several important reforms.[20] In the countries controlled by absolutist power the information of the central power targeted at the vast public was sought to be rigidly controlled which meant subjugating the publishing of newspapers to the direct and strict control of the state. It may be assumed therefore that the king's wish to 'rule' the news market should be seen, among the other means like the reduction of the powers of the nobility, as a manifestation of the king's sole power. The intervention of the royal power replaced the existing information business with a new reality, in which the traditional representatives of this business were pushed aside by the pressure inflicted by the central power, and a new monopoly for state-controlled newspapers and news distribution was established. With these steps the marketing of news in Riga was brought closer to the practices of Stockholm.[21]

18 Aleksander Loit, *Kampen om feodalräntan. Reduktionen och domänpolitiken i Estland 1655–1710* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1975), pp. 97–98.

19 See for example Frost, *The Northern Wars*, pp. 216–225; Anthony F Upton, *Charles XI and Swedish Absolutism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 11–50.

20 Upton, *Charles XI and Swedish Absolutism*, pp. 31–50.

21 Ann-Katrin Hatje, 'Von der königlichen Postzeitung zum "Swänska Argus". Ein Überblick über die Schwedische Presse im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in Martin Welke and Jürgen

When looking at the king's decree as a whole, it appears that the discontent was caused by what was going on in the Riga news market in general rather than by the Königsberg newspaper read in the town which, nevertheless, remains the only geographically localised publication mentioned in the document. The desire caused by the Scanian War to block the distribution of the Königsberg newspaper in the Swedish provinces is understandable since Brandenburg-Prussia was among the opposition against Sweden in the conflict, a fact that was undoubtedly reflected in the choice of the news items for the Königsberg newspaper. The practical experience of the information war received during the conflict – presenting events in a positive light for the state and harmful to the opposition reputation in all possible ways, and establishing the image of aggressor in the printed media etc. – might have played an important role, as was noticed by contemporaries of the events.[22] The experience of the Swedish information war was poignantly summarised by Gottfried Zenner in 1692: "even the Swedish king noticed that the Hamburg news writers were of more use during the recent Swedish–German war than could possibly have been achieved by the regiments".[23]

Prescher as the State Newspaper Editor / the Marketing Strategies of the New Newspaper

Having become the sole Rigan official *Zeitunger*, Prescher had to realise his task. We will look now at how he tried to accomplish this. Although the information is scarce, certain strategies for selling the newspaper become evident. While preparing the publication of the actual newspaper sometime in October of 1680, Prescher's immediate concern was trying to find subscribers to the

Wilke (eds.), *400 Jahre Zeitung. Die Entwicklung der Tagespresse im internationalen Kontext* (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2008), pp. 205–221 (217–218).

22 See for example Astrid Blome, *Das deutsche Rußlandbild im frühen 18. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur zeitgenössischen Presseberichterstattung über Rußland unter Peter I.* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000).

23 "Und gleichwie man von dem Hamburgischen Zeitungs-Schreiber in vorigem Schwedischen Teutschen Kriege nicht uneben gesaget/ der König in Schweden habe selbst bekennet/ dass er ihm mehr Nuzen geschaffet/ als zehen Regimenter nicht gethan; Also kann auch einer/ der entweder partheylisch und praejudirlich/ oder wider Warheit etwas in die Welt schreibet/ nicht geringen Schaden stifften". Gottfried Zenner, *Novellen aus der gelehrten und curiösen Welt* (Frankfurt and Gotha: Junius 1692), pp. 517–518; see also Johannes Weber, 'Kontrollmechanismen im deutschen Zeitungswesen des 17. Jahrhunderts. Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Geschichte der Zensur', *Jahrbuch für Kommunikationsgeschichte*, 6 (2004), pp. 56–73 (here p. 56).

newspaper beyond Riga. It seems that he treated as his rightful market not only Livonia but the other overseas provinces such as Estonia and Ingeria.

The letter sent to the Estonian commercial centre, the Tallinn Town Council, in the beginning of November of the same year remains a good source.[24] In this document Prescher first sheds some light on the conditions of publishing the newspaper: by the decree of the king it was henceforth forbidden to bring Königsberg newspapers to the local post-office. After that Prescher recommended in a polite manner ("meine Arbeit unterdienstlich recommendiren zu durffen") that newspapers should be ordered from him for 6 state dalers per annum ("iarlich 6 Rthlr vons Stuck"). The sample issues of the new publication for Thursday and Monday were included with the letter.[25] This is the first piece of information to confirm the printing the Riga newspaper as early as 1680, which has only been a presumption within the historiography thus far.[26]

Prescher did not treat only the Tallinn Town Council as his target audience because in the latter part of the letter it was suggested that the magistrate should help to spread the information on the option of ordering the Riga newspaper among the townspeople, encouraging interested bodies to come forward.[27] The aim of the letter was therefore to advertise the new newspaper as widely as possible in Tallinn and to find as many subscribers as possible. The sample issues added to the letter were supposed to speak for themselves.

It can be assumed that Prescher sent a similar advertising letter to the Ingerian commercial centre at Narva. The grounds for this assumption are given by the letter sent to the Narva magistrate from Riga on 30 December of the same

24 Tallinna Linnaarhiiv [Tallinn City Archives, henceforth TLA], 230-1- B.B.13, pp. 268–270, published in: Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, p. 207.

25 "Hierbey gehet allso ein Exemplar von Donnerstag und Montag, wie man allenmahl continuiren wirdt". (TLA, 230-1-B.B.13, pp. 268–270, published in: Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, p. 207). In Riga the newspaper was, until the end of 1686, published in accordance with the postal days of Mondays and Thursdays, after that, from 1687 to the end of 1703, on Sundays and Wednesdays, most probably for the same reasons. From 1704 to 1710 the newspaper was again published on Mondays and Thursdays, being available for its readers at 10 a.m. See: Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, p. 53 and *Rigische Novellen* Nr 104 (30 December 1703).

26 See Buchholtz, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga*, p. 167; Taube, 'Rīgas pirmie', pp. 70–71; Simonov, 'K istorii', p. 122.

27 "Mit gehorsamer Bitte ihren selbst die große Ehre ihrer Benevolenz mir aber die Gütte zuerweisen, und hievon Euer Löbl. Bürgerschafft notification geschehen zulaßen, damit ob etwa ein oder ander diese Nouvellen verlanget, ich seine Nahmen wißen, und damit bedienen möge." (TLA, 230-1-BB.13, pp. 268–270, published in: Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, p. 207).

year,[28] in which Prescher points out the task or duty (*schuldigkeit*) of supplying Narva with at least one copy of the newspaper.[29] This document had been compiled as a reply to the letter from the Narva Town Council of 25 November and is therefore specific and sparse. Although the newspaper is not mentioned explicitly in the letter, it is hinted at by Prescher's request to notify him should the Town Council wish to have more than one issue [of the newspaper]. Knowing the contents of the advertising letter sent to Tallinn it can be assumed that sometime in the autumn an analogous letter was received by the Narva Town Council which responded favourably to Prescher. Due to the lack of further information, further assumptions cannot be drawn. It can be assumed, though, that the new Riga newspaper had found its way to Narva in 1680.

This newspaper was published under two titles, first as *Rigische Montags* (*Donnerstags*) *Ordinari Post Zeitung*, but sometime in March 1681 the name change took place, and the new *Rigische Novellen* differentiated itself from the predecessor by its volume, layout, typeset and contents, with more mundane and less sensational information. It has been assumed in the historiography that the change of name and contents meant the shift of publishing the newspaper from the royal printer to the town printer.[30] It may be possible that the changes described above were caused by Prescher's attempt to make the newspaper more attractive to the readership. We know that due to the facelift of the newspaper and the change of the printer, Prescher negotiated with the Riga Town Council to receive an annual subsidy of 100 dalers for publishing the newspaper. The town, though, was willing to pay only half of this sum.[31] Whether any agreement was reached cannot be deemed for certain at the present state of research.

Whether the abovementioned advertising had any positive result also remains unclear. In a petition sent to Charles XI in around 1681,[32] Prescher

28 Narva magistrate, Suppliken – P, Band III: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv [Estonian Historical Archives, henceforth EAA] 1646.2.270, p. 53.

29 "Ihro hochgeehrtes von 25en hujus hatt mir Anlass gegeben meine schuldigkeit abermahl mit diesem abzustatten; bitte nur nur an hand zu geben, ob Sie mehr alls ein Exemplar begehren, allsdann werde Ihnen nach dero gefallen allemahl bedienen. Hierbei gehen nun Doubletten …" (EAA 1646.2.270, p. 53).

30 See Simonov, 'K istorii', pp. 126–128; Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, pp. 28–31.

31 Buchholtz, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga*, pp. 165–167.

32 RA, Livonica II, vol 141, Prescher to the royal majesty. The letter can be roughly dated by a trustworthy definition it contains: "Weiln E Königl Mayt mir auch vorm jahr allergnädigst vergönnet die Gazzetten in Riga drucken zulaßen", by which it could be assumed that the letter is from 1681 or 1682.

complained about the financial hardships.[33] In order to acquire additional income he provided an inventorial plan with the aim of gaining greater control over foreigners visiting Riga, and of rearranging the work of the local post office. There is a separate item concerning the newspaper. According to Prescher the expenses overtook income which made further activities doubtful.[34] To solve this problem, it was suggested that some of the money acquired as excise tax from shipping should be supplied for continuing the newspaper.

As a new item of information concerning the sale of news, it seems that Prescher wished to acquire the right to supply and distribute his letters and newspapers free of charge, and to be permitted to receive from Hamburg, free of charge, postal deliveries up to the weight of two lodes.[35] As recompense he promised, despite the great pains and expenses, to forward on the postal days to Tallinn and Narva governorate offices "everything new that is not made public by printing".[36]

Selling Exclusive Information: The Business of a Handwritten Newspaper

Based on the petition, it became evident that aside from the publishing of newspapers, Riga (that is Prescher) supplied Estonian and Ingerian centres regularly with somewhat more exclusive information by means of a form of handwritten newspaper. The account books of the town of Narva provide evidence that during the last two decades of the seventeenth century among the 'expenses extraordinaire' there were annual subscriptions for ordering some kind of news media from Riga and Stockholm. What exactly was meant by the Riga newspapers (*die Rigischen Advisen*) remains unclear from the sources although attention should be given to the fact that the orders are detectable, according to the present data, to the period 1678 to 1682,[37] that is also for the

33 "Allso lege zu E. Königl Maytt hohen Gnaden mich in tiefster Erniedrigung fußfällig wieder, und bitte demüthligst umb ein stückchen brodt zum auffenthalt meines armseliges Lebens" (ibid.).

34 "… wiewoll die Unkosten die Einkünffte überwägen, und damit dem gemeine Wesen zum besten zu continuiren schie unerträglich …" (ibid.).

35 One lode was approximately 10–12 grams.

36 "Wogegen ich gehalten seyn will, alle das Neue, waß durch den druck nicht publique zumachen, alle Post Tage dem Revalschen und Narwischen Gouvernement zu communicieren, worzu , weil die Mühe groß un eß offtmahle eine weitläuffige Arbeit ist, ich auf meine Unkosten iemand halten, und darunter nichts versammen will." (ibid.).

37 EAA 1646.1.1058, p. 32; Narva magistrate, kniga prikhoda i raskhoda gorodskikh summ, 1678; 1646.1.1062, p. 26, *ibid.*, 1679; Latvijas Valsts Vēstures Arhīvs [Latvian State Historical

period predating the press reform of Riga. The price of subscriptions was, in currency conversion accounts, 16 dalers or 16 dalers and 8 öres in silver.[38] For subscriptions to the Swedish newspapers (*die Stockholmche Advisen; Swänska Aviser*), entries for a longer period of time can be found (1678 to 1696).[39] For sending the Swedish newspapers, payments were made to Daniel (von) Möller,[40] who worked at the end of the seventeenth century in the Stockholm post office holding various posts and who became the Stockholm postmaster at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[41] According to the same sources, the subscription price of the Stockholm newspaper was 16 dalers, 21 and 1/3 öres in silver.

It seems possible that Narva ordered more than one copy of the newspaper since 16 dalers seems to be too high a price for an annual subscription of a single printed newspaper. In comparison, the Stockholm postmaster asked in the middle of the seventeenth century for a printed weekly *Ordinari Post-Tijdender* annual subscription of 2 dalers and 8 öres in silver.[42] The Prescher printed newspaper appearing twice a week is in a comparable price bracket: 6 state dalers.

The fact that Narva continued to subscribe to the same priced Riga newspaper after 1680, and in addition corresponded with Prescher concerning the subscription of the new newspaper, seems to confirm the hypothesis that from Livonia additional and more exclusive news materials in shape of more

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Archives, henceforth LVVA], 7349-1-205, p. 28. lp., Vidzemes generālgubernātora pārvalde, Narvas pilsētas gada pārskati 1681; 7349-1-206, p, 28. lp., *ibid.*, 1682.

38 At the beginning of 1680s, according to the exchange rate used in Narva, one state daler consisted of 62 öres. See Enn Küng, 'Riigitaalrite kasutusest Rootsi Läänemereprovintsides 17. sajandil', *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 2 (2013), pp. 183–201 (198–200). <https://ojs.utlib.ee/index.php/EAA/article/view/AA.2013.2.02>.

39 See EAA 1646.1.1058, p. 32, Narva magistrate, kniga prikhoda i raskhoda gorodskikh summ, 1678; LVVA, 7349-1-205, p. 28. lp., Narvas pilsētas gada pārskati, 1681; EAA 1646.1.1065, p. 17–18; LVVA, 7349-1-206, p. 28. lp., Narvas pilsētas gada pārskati, 1682; EAA 1646.1.1088, pp. 122–123, 1696.

40 "För Swänske Adviserne och Correspondencen har Daniel von Möller bekomnit 2-e Ahr efter den Wexel och Advis sampt Order och quittens" (EAA 1646.1.1088, pp. 122–123).

41 See Teodor Holm, *Sveriges allmänna postväsen: ett försök till svensk posthistoria* IV: 1–3 (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1912–1916); 'Daniel Möller', in Yrjö Kotivuori, *Ylioppilasmatrikkeli 1640–1852* (online version 2005) <http://www.helsinki.fi/ylioppilasmatrikkeli/henkilo.php?id=1875>. Last retrieved 12 March 2012.

42 See Paul Ries, 'The Politics of Information in Seventeenth-Century Scandinavia', in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 237–273 (240); Claes-Göran Holmberg, Ingemar Oscarsson and Jarl Torbacke, *Den svenska pressens historia. 1: I begynnelsen* (*tiden före 1830*) (Stockholm: Ekerlids förlag, 2000), p. 69.

expensive handwritten newspapers were sent to Ingeria. Ordering of such news carriers for the town magistrates seems to have been common.[43] For example, one of the means of acquiring additional income used by Stockholm postmasters from the mid seventeenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century was the open sale of handwritten newspapers (*Extract auß einkommenden Correspondenz brieffen*), which were also distributed in other areas of the State, including Livonia and Finland.[44] According to Paul Ries, such newspapers were compiled during the seventeenth century by the post office workers with lower status, including postal clerks.[45] The routine weekly marketable dispatching of information from Riga, an important centre of post and communication for the overseas provinces, basically meant that one of the areas of activities of the former postmaster – the compilation of news – ceased in accordance with the royal order. Although Prescher noted Tallinn as the receiver of exclusive information, in the case of Narva no documentary evidence has been found.

The End of Prescher's Activities

The negative tone of the petition that was sent to the king and the fact that Prescher was actively seeking to find supplementary financing for his activities and actively advertised 'his' newspaper in both Tallinn and Narva suggest that by only holding the privileged status of the news purveyor he could not support himself adequately. There is no information regarding the king's reply. It is possible that in the end Prescher did not manage the task given to him very well which could explain why he left the post as soon as 1684 (the grounds given are getting married and moving to Saaremaa).[46]

43 Heiko Droste has shown that the price of handwritten newspapers in the Baltic sea region during the seventeenth and eighteenth century could have been four to ten times as much compared with the printed newspapers of the period: Heiko Droste, 'Die geschriebene Zeitung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert. Ein öffentliches Nachrichtenmedium', *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, 3/4 (129/130) (2009), pp. 509–525 (515–517).

44 Heiko Droste, '"Einige Wiener briefe wollen noch publiciren". Die geschriebene Zeitung als öffentliches Nachrichtenmedium', in Volker Bauer and Holger Böning (eds.), *Die Entstehung des Zeitungswesens im 17. Jahrhundert: Ein neues Medium und seine Folgen für das Kommunikationssystem der Frühen Neuzeit* (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2011), pp. 1–23 (5–6).

45 See Ries, 'The Politics of Information', pp. 240–241.

46 Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, p. 208.

The news business during the seventeenth century was considered to be a subsidiary activity to postal duties. The petition sent in May 1681 to Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie by Statius Stein, who was closely connected to the Riga post office at that time and who later became the postmaster, seeking to move the privilege to print and distribute printed newspapers back to the post office, could be seen in the same context.[47] The document stressed that such a privilege had always belonged to the postal office.[48] When Prescher offered in his petition to be the reorganiser of the Riga post office he sought the same: that is, a return to the situation of pre-1680. It appears that the job of state news purveyor was at the beginning equally alien to both Prescher and the Riga postal office.

The Tenure of Georg Ruvius and the Subscribers to Riga News Media

After Prescher left the post in 1684, the castle court assessor Georg Ruvius was appointed to the post of Riga newspaper purveyor. The aim of the royal privilege dated 18 October of the same year sought to ensure the continuation of the already existing arrangement.[49] The document stated that only Ruvius had the right to publish weekly a newspaper in Riga. It was strictly forbidden to publish or distribute any other newspaper. As for possible competing interest groups, the privilege, as with the 1680 royal order, lists separately printers and postal workers. The privilege also ensured the continuation of control of the central power on the newspaper because, although Ruvius is described as a "trustworthy person and long-time servant of the crown", the *Rigische Novellen* was subjugated to the censorship of the office of the governor-general.[50]

As before, there was no annual salary or other recompense from the crown. Nevertheless, it seems that the financial position of Ruvius was better than his predecessor's and the job of state news purveyor did not cause him any difficulties. Very little is known about his tenure: there are no extant petitions,

47 See Enn Küng, 'Johan Lange's Inspection of the Estonian and Livonian Postal Systems, 1687–88', in Heiko Droste (ed.), *Connecting the Baltic Area. The Swedish Postal System in the Seventeenth Century* (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2011), pp. 99–122 (108).

48 RA, De la Gardieska samlingen, E 1567, Statius Stein till Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, Riga, 20 May 1681; Heiko Droste, 'The Terms of Royal Service: Post Servants' Finances, c. 1700', in ibid., *Connecting the Baltic Area,* pp. 123–174 (167).

49 EAA, 278.1.IV:25:2, p. 16.

50 Ibid.

complaints or other such documents, and this suggests that, at the present state of research, he did not encounter major problems with his work. The official newspaper of Riga continued its regular appearance twice a week until the end of Swedish rule in 1710.

By the end of the 1680s, Ruvius had acquired, in addition to the local Riga consumers, a notable circle of subscribers in the other overseas provinces. Among the documents of the postal inspection in Estonia and Livonia, carried out by the central power in 1687 and 1688, is a list of people who received free letters and newspapers (*avis*) from Riga between 23 January to 6 February.[51] This list reflects the period when Johan Lange visited and inspected the Riga post office. Addressees – approximately 25 people – lived in Tallinn, Narva, Tartu, Kuressaare (Arensburg), Pärnu and Valmiera (Wolmar). All these towns (excluding Kuressaare in Saaremaa) were situated along the main roads connecting the provincial centres. Along these same roads the official state postal connection operated.[52] From the point of view of press history, the extant list is very interesting and valuable since so little is known about the readership of early modern newspapers. The people listed in the documents deserve individual and detailed analysis, which would enable one to sketch in more detail the prosopographical portrait of the early modern newspaper reader.

A cursory look tells us that higher ranking citizens were among the subscribers of the newspaper. For example, the addressees in Narva include burghers Ludolf Zander, Ulrich Herbers and Hans Fonne.[53] There is no doubt that all these men were part of the Narva elite: Zander was a goldsmith and Elder of a Guild, Herbers a syndic, Town Council secretary and burgomaster, and Fonne a renowned merchant.[54] In other towns as well as the traditional subscribers, the list contained merchants; however, in Pärnu the news media were ordered separately by the Town Council. A separate group was formed by postmasters (Andreas Max in Tartu and Lorenz Hindrich in Pärnu) and Tallinn printer Christoph Brendeken who were typical early modern news purveyors. The newspapers were ordered by several other people holding official posts like royal fiscal officer Philippius Schirm in Pärnu, the secretary of the Tartu

51 See RA, Kanslikollegium G 11:f1 and compare with Küng, '"… mugavamaid teid"', p. 25.

52 Küng, 'Johan Lange's Inspection', pp. 111–112.

53 *Ludolf Zander*, *Ulrich Habers* [*Herbers*], *Hanß Fonne* – compare Ludolf Zandler (nr 809), Ulrich Herbers (nr 787) and Hans Fonne (nr 751) in Dirk-Gerd Erpenbeck and Enn Küng, *Narvaer Bürger- und Einwohnerbuch, 1581–1704* (Dortmund: Forschungsstelle Ostmitteleuropa, 2000).

54 Ibid. See also Dirk-Gerd Erpenbeck and Roland Seeberg-Elverfeldt, *Narva 1581–1721. Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt in schwedischer Zeit* (Dortmund: Forschungsstelle Ostmitteleuropa, 1993), pp. 75–79.

court of appeal Caspar Johann Knifig, and literati: a professor of Tartu University, Michel Dau, and a professor and later rector of Tallinn Gymnasium, Johann Rudolf Brechm. There are also military officials among the list: for example, a certain Albedyl from Valmiera.[55] Even this brief sampling shows that the background of the newspaper readers was diverse yet representative of all the groups in the society (officials, military men, clerics, intelligentsia) who are typically considered the news consumers during the early modern period.[56]

At the present stage of research, it is impossible to be certain, whether the forwarded newspaper was *Rigische Novellen* or, for example, a 'package' of handwritten news items. The addressees were definitely the clients of Ruvius which is confirmed by the final report that Lange wrote after his inspection in March 1688. The text stresses that only Ruvius was permitted to bring newspapers to Riga free of charge and to make abstracts from the foreign newspapers, to let them be printed in Riga and to dispatch them all over the country tax free.[57]

Due to the lack of sources it cannot be claimed that Christoph Prescher managed to create such a vast network of subscribers during the beginning of 1680s. Nevertheless, looking at his activities and the fact that the only legal way to quench the thirst for news was to turn to the state newspaper purveyor in Riga, it seems that the business was on its feet at least by the end of the same decade. The materials of Lange's postal inspection confirm the concept of the Riga newspaper as the only official news medium for the Swedish overseas provinces.[58] Assuming that at the end of 1680 the annual subscription of the Riga newspaper still cost 6 dalers, we can make a reasonable calculation, based on the number of known subscribers, that the turnover of the state newspaper purveyor was approximately 150 dalers per annum, which would

55 According to the source the people receiving the newspaper in Tallinn were *Hindrich Hakelman*; *Christoffer Brendeken*; *Joh. Cahillis*; *Hermann Hentenberg* [*Herm Hortenb*]; *Michel Guntery; prof. Bechm* (RA, Kanslikollegium G 11:f1); compare for example Johann Clayhilles (nr 1092), Hinrich Hakelmann (nr 906), Christof Brendeken (nr 910) in Georg Adelheim, *Das Revaler Bürgerbuch 1624–1690 nebst Fortsetzung bis 1710 = Tallinna kodanikkuderaamat 1624–1690 ühes jätkuga kuni 1710-ni* (Tallinn: Eesti Kirjastus Ühisus, 1933). The last one on the list is presumably a professor and later rector of the Tallinn Gymnasium Johann Rudolf Brehm (?–1730): Endel Laul and Jaan Tamm, *Gustav Adolfi Gümnaasium 375* (Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus, 2006), p.40.

56 Kaspar Stieler, *Zeitungs Lust und Nutz* (*Vollständiger Neudruck der Originalausgabe von 1695, hg. von Gert Hagelweide*) (Bremen: C. Schünemann, 1969), pp. 68–72.

57 RA, Kanslikollegium G 11:f1, Johann Lange's report to Chancery Board 15 March 1688; compare Küng, '"… mugavamaid teid"', pp. 22–23.

58 Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, pp. 192–197.

be accrued by the profit made from selling the newspaper in Riga, exceeding the annual hundred daler salary that Prescher requested from the Riga Town Council.[59]

The Tallinn Printer Christoph Brendeken and Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung

The subscriber list compiled by Johann Lange also includes the Tallinn Gymnasium printer Christoph Brendeken who in Estonian press history is known as the publisher of the second newspaper issued in the Swedish overseas provinces: *Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung*, published twice a week.[60] The Tallinn newspaper cannot be treated as an independent publication since the comparison of the contents of its extant annual volumes with the Riga newspaper shows that *Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung* was mainly a verbatim reprint of the *Rigische Novellen*, albeit in a somewhat abridged version.[61] *Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung* was usually a reprint of the Riga newspaper issued within a week and never based on a chronologically older issue, as illustrated by the schema below.

TABLE 12.1 *Sample of the transformation of the Riga newspaper into the Tallinn newspaper in 1692 as shown by four consecutive numbers.* Vanamölder, 'Was für eine Zeitung', p. 82.

Rigische Novellen **(number, date and weekday)**	***Reval*(*i*)*sche Post-Zeitung*** **(number, date and weekday)**
No 33, 24.04.1692, Sunday	No 34, 28.04.1692, Thursday
No 34, 27.04.1692, Wednesday	No 35, 02.05.1692, Monday
No 35, 01.05.1692, Sunday	No 36, 05.05.1692, Thursday
No 36, 04.05.1692, Wednesday	No 37, 09.05.1692, Monday

As the schema shows, the Riga newspaper issue of Sunday transformed into the Tallinn Thursday issue, and *Rigische Novellen* published on Wednesday

59 Buchholtz, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Riga*, pp. 165–167.

60 See, for example, Friedrich Puksoo, 'Die Buchdrucker Brendeken in Estland', *Gutenberg Jahrbuch*, 9 (1934), pp. 199–207; Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli*, pp. 23, 35.

61 Vanamölder, *Kommunikatsiooniväli,* pp. 181–191; Kaarel Vanamölder, 'Was für eine Zeitung wurde in Reval am Ende der schwedischen Zeit gelesen?', *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, 6 (2011), pp. 61–84.

became *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* of Monday. To bring the Riga newspaper to Tallinn and to reprint it took therefore on average five to six days.[62] The publication days of both newspapers coincide with the post dispatching days in Riga and Tallinn: in Riga the postal days were Sunday and Wednesday, in Tallinn Thursday and Monday. On these days the mail, including letters that had arrived at Riga earlier, was dispatched.[63]

A regular and dependable operating postal connection with Riga made it, logically, possible to issue *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* so that in the eyes of its readers its contents did not lose any topicality, which, by default, is proven by the fact that the newspaper continued for at least 22 years. In this respect the Tallinn newspaper symbolises the well-functioning postal connections between provincial centres at the end of the seventeenth century. The post-haste galloping and horn-blowing post courier image on the heading of the *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* carried in a direct sense the message of the news arriving with the utmost speed.[64] For publishing twice weekly a newspaper in Tallinn, which was one of the 'end-stations' of the Estonian and Livonian overland postal chain, there was hardly any other technical alternative. The contact along the postal network reaching abroad was maintained overland and was in many aspects dependent upon the role of the Riga post office as a mediator. Only during the navigation season were private letters from Tallinn dispatched directly to Western Europe.[65]

Evidently the postal connection between Riga and Tallinn in the seventeenth century had occasional failures. In 1680 Prescher admitted that problems occurred depending on the season with the postal connection to Tallinn which also affected the distribution of the Riga newspaper. On these occasions *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* numbers had been compiled based on the newspapers issued in Hamburg that had reached Tallinn.[66] Transcribing newspapers was a commonly known practice during the early modern period: so called 'pirated publications' had been made, for example, of Hamburg's *Nordischer Mercurius*[67] and Stockholm *Ordinari Post-Tijdender*.[68]

62 See Vanamölder, 'Was für eine Zeitung', pp. 68–82.

63 Received letters concerning management and legal issues, April 1689. EAA 1.2.491. L 288.

64 See Marianne Larsson, 'Livery Coat, Postal Horn, and the National Coat of Arms. The Material's Agency for the Honour and Protection of Seventeenth-Century Post-Carriers', in Droste, *Connecting the Baltic Area*, pp. 175–195 (180).

65 Küng, '"… mugavamaid teid"', p. 26.

66 Vanamölder, 'Was für eine Zeitung', pp. 73–78.

67 Böning and Moepps, *Hamburg,* pp. 25–26.

68 Ries, 'The Politics of Information', p. 243.

Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung may be seen as a clever compromise between technical possibilities and contemporary 'press politics' in order to satisfy the hunger for news within the town. Multiple objectives could be achieved by the transcription of the Riga newspaper: firstly, it provided an easy option for publishing a regular newspaper, and secondly, it helped prevent the intervention of the local censoring authorities. Taking into consideration how attentive the central power and its representatives were towards publishing regular news media in Stockholm and Riga, the printing of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* must have taken place if not upon the initiative of the central power and its representatives, then at least with their knowledge and acceptance. Unfortunately, no additional sources, revealing anything on the motives of establishing the Tallinn newspaper, have been revealed so far. The role of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* continues to be shown by the sheer number of the extant newspapers.

As a centrally controlled newspaper transcript the publication mechanism of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* can be compared with the press politics applied in France. The dissemination of the only printed, legal and regular French newspaper, the *Gazette*, had its geographical limits. Due to this, the provinces could, upon having purchased a licence, publish exact reprints of the newspaper. By the last decade of the seventeenth century the central power had issued 13 such printing licences.[69] The motherland and the provinces of the Swedish state were both connected and separated by the sea. Application of the described 'French model' in both Riga and Tallinn, based on a newspaper published in Stockholm once a week, would not have been logistically possible. At the same time, the press politics of both states and the character of their official newspapers have several similar traits. *Rigische Novellen* was established for political reasons: to compete with the Königsberg newspapers published twice a week. It is possible that this timeframe dictated how often the Livonian and Estonian newspapers were published. Based on the 'French model', *Rigische Novellen* could be seen as the official newspaper of the Baltic provinces, which licensed transcript appeared as *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* in Tallinn, and which, in all likelihood was also available in Narva.

Conclusion

Up to 1680 information trading in Riga was typical of early modern market towns where post masters and printers were selling different news media

69 Jean-Pierre Vittu, 'Instruments of Political Information in France', in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron, *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 160–179 (172).

and compiling new ones. The probably hand-written news media compiled in Riga were ordered by Narva prior to 1680 and this activity continued later. The intervention of the royal power changed the existing information market, pushing aside the traditional representatives of the business by pressure from the central power, and this created a state monopoly of newspaper publishing and news mediation. With these steps taken, the trading of news in Riga was brought closer to the practices in Stockholm.

In 1680 the Riga news market was subjected to the control of the central power by royal order and the privileged professional monopoly of the state newspaper purveyor was established. This professional monopoly continued until the end of Swedish power in the region in 1710. The newspapers compiled and printed in Riga at this time, *Rigische Montags* (*Donnerstags*) *Ordinari Post Zeitung* (1680–1681) and its successor *Rigische Novellen* (1681–1710) are examples of publications controlled by the central power whose contents were controlled by state censorship.

In countries with absolutist power, the central power sought to control the information targeted for public consumption, subjugating the issuing of newspapers to direct and rigid state control. The regulating of the Riga news market, imposed by the central power in 1680, was presumably not an accidental event but was part of the consolidation of the power of the Swedish king, Charles XI.

The archives providing insights into the service of Christoph Prescher, the first state newspaper purveyor, from 1680 to 1684, allow us to take a closer look at the marketing strategies of an early modern newspaper purveyor as he distributed his goods, the news media. To alleviate financial and economic difficulties, he endeavoured to find readers for his newspaper outside Riga and Livonia by advertising the new newspaper in the centres of the neighbouring provinces, Tallinn and Narva, and in 1681 he changed the name and appearance of the newspaper. Approximately a year after the publication of the newspaper, Prescher encountered problems. To break out of the restrictive role of the news purveyor, Prescher sought additional outlets for his activities offering, for example, to be the reorganiser of the Riga post office and wishing thereby to re-establish the situation prior to 1680. The Riga post office, on its own behalf, was seeking to re-establish its previous right to trade news. It seems that the post of a privileged news purveyor was equally unfamiliar to Prescher and the Riga post office.

The problems of the Riga state news purveyor seem to have been solved by the end of the 1680s since, during the tenure of Georg Ruvius (1684–1710), the newspaper had acquired a large subscription network in Estonia, Livonia and Ingeria in addition to its local town readership. The extant data reveals up to 25 individuals who received newspapers from Riga at the beginning of 1688.

This is a valuable piece of information since usually nothing is known of the readers of the early modern newspaper. The important role of Riga as a news controlling and forwarding centre in Swedish overseas provinces is reflected in the publication history of the Tallinn newspaper, *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* (1689–1710). The Tallinn newspaper cannot be treated as an independent publication because the comparison of its extant issues shows that the contents of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* with the Rigan newspaper were mainly verbatim reprints of *Rigische Novellen* with slight cuts. The regular and unhindered postal connection with Riga permitted publishing of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung*, so the contents did not lose their relevance in the eyes of the readers: a fact proven by the publication of the Tallinn newspaper for at least 22 years. As a transcription of a centrally controlled newspaper, the publication mechanism of *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* is similar to the publication politics applied in France. Since the distribution of the only legal regular printed newspaper in France – the *Gazette* – had geographical limits, the provinces were permitted to publish exact reprints of the newspaper if a special licence was acquired. Based on the 'French model' the *Rigische Novellen* could be seen as the official newspaper of the Baltic provinces which was transcribed and published as *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* in Tallinn, and was presumably also available in Narva. *Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung* therefore represents a clever provincial compromise between technical possibilities and existing press politics that was applied to quench the information thirst of Tallinn. By using the transcript of the Riga newspaper several objectives could be achieved: guaranteeing an easy solution for publishing a regular newspaper and preventing the interference of local censorship.

CHAPTER 13

News versus Opinion: The State, the Press, and the Northern Enlightenment

Ellen Krefting

The absolutist kingdom of Denmark-Norway may have been situated on the geographical as well as the cultural outskirts of eighteenth-century Europe, but this twin kingdom nonetheless took part in the transformation and expansion of news transmission at the beginning of the Enlightenment period. Handwritten newsletters, printed broadsheets, pamphlets and ballads began circulating early in the seventeenth century. Networks of postal routes were connected directly and regularly to several European networks through Hamburg, a centre for the dissemination of news about Europe and beyond. These networks made possible the first newspapers regularly printed in Copenhagen, which were published from the 1660s in German and Danish.[1] The popular craze for news became a literary topic early in the eighteenth century, just as in other, more central parts of Europe. The market for news, however, and for printed material in general, developed and expanded despite the heavy controls imposed by the Lutheran, absolutist state through the privilege system and strict censorship laws and procedures.

Absolutism was introduced in 1660, with a Royal Law (*Kongeloven*) vesting all legislative, executive, judicial and fiscal power in the sovereign king. The market for print was placed under even stricter control in order to protect absolutist power and religious uniformity. Scholars have traditionally seen absolutism as the main reason for the centralised and slow development of the printed news press, especially in the Norwegian part of the kingdom during most of the eighteenth century. As we shall see, the official censorship 'rescript', issued by the king in 1701, laid particularly detailed and comprehensive constraints on the news press, explicitly prohibiting the blending of 'news'

1 For an analysis of the Scandinavian news press in the seventeenth century, see Paul Ries, 'The Politics of Information in Seventeenth-Century Scandinavia', in Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 237–272.

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on the one hand, defined as "what is reported to really have taken place", with 'opinion', or what it called 'reasoning' or 'conjectures', on the other.[2]

In this chapter, I aim to show that concerns beyond the political were involved in the sharp distinction between news and opinion that was articulated in the censorship instruction. I will argue that the structure of the media landscape in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway was shaped by the controlling state which based its conception of news – as distinct from opinion – also on epistemological worries concerning the reliability of truth claims which haunted all of Europe at the time. I will raise the question of whether this distinction had only repressive effects and will try to show how the 'censorship rescript' of 1701 can be said to have contributed productively to shaping not only the book market, but the entire media landscape in eighteenth-century Denmark-Norway. My contention is that the sharp distinction between news and opinion opened a favourable space for the medium of the journals, turning the craze for news into what was referred to at the time as a fast-spreading 'writing disease', an urge to express one's own knowledge and opinion on a variety of matters. As a consequence, the journals, rather than the news press, became the vehicle for the phenomenon that we can call the 'Northern Enlightenment'.

Literacy and Censorship

"The Danish and Norwegian absolutist hereditary Monarch is hereafter to be looked upon and honoured by all subjects as the brightest and most elevated Head on our Earth, and to be above all manmade Laws …, accountable to no one but God".[3] So announced the 1665 *Lex Regia,* Europe's only formal absolutist constitution. But long before this foundation of absolutism, the government aimed to build a Lutheran state composed of pious and obedient subjects. One important vehicle for streamlining religious and intellectual life was literacy. As Charlotte Appel has demonstrated, the 'Catechism policy' of the seventeenth-century church strongly promoted literacy.[4] Luther's *Shorter*

2 The 'Censur-Instrucs' is reprinted in its entirety in P.M. Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark, dens Vilkaar og Personer indtil Midten af det attende Aarhundrede* , 4 vols. (Copenhagen: 1878–1882), I, pp. 348–355.

3 Paragraph 11 of *Kongeloven* 1665, here quoted from *Lex Regia: or the royal law of Denmark. Writ in the Danish language by order of Frederick III. Of Denmark, Norway, of the Goths and Vandals, etc. Subscribed by his Majesty on the 4th day of November 1665. Translated into English by a lover of the British constitution* (London: 1731).

4 Charlotte Appel, *Læsning og bogmarked i 1600-tallets Danmark*, 2 vols. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanums forlag, 2001).

Catechism was seen as the essence of Christian faith; the reading of the text had to be the basis and the starting point for all Christians. This boosted exceptionally high literacy all over Scandinavia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[5] This holds true even for peasants in the more remote parts of the Norwegian realm, as book historian Jostein Fet has shown.[6] Reading was the path to salvation and to obedience, which explains why the Dano-Norwegian post-Reformation government actively sought to make pious reading material available on the market. But reading could also pave the road to damnation and social unrest.[7] The other important vehicle for streamlining religious and intellectual life was therefore close control of the market for print, especially the production and circulation of print material among the general population. To protect the population from heresies and distortions – and the state and the church from opposition and social conflict – the state implemented censorship laws and practices as well as monopolies and privileges that regulated print.

Absolutism further promoted the process of political centralisation and intellectual universalisation, strengthening requirements for schooling and for desirable printed material, ranging from religious literature to political texts supportive of the government. The institution of pre-publication censorship itself dated back to the reformation, but it became no less important and meticulously played out with absolutism. Censorship was control of communication; it was supposed to protect the secrecy and privacy of policy making and to exclude any printed expression incongruent with or subversive of the monarchy and the Lutheran church. At the same time, the censorship system secured the verticality of communication between king and subjects. The government made royal decisions publicly known so that subjects could see, understand and obey them. On the other hand, individual subjects were allowed to pass petitions and suggestions directly to the king, as a kind of private communication from below, hidden from the public. The state sought to maintain loyalty and obedience by creating the impression of a benevolent and merciful

5 See Loftur Guttormsson, 'The Development of Popular Religious Literacy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 15:1–2 (1990), pp. 7–35; Egil Johansson, *The History of Literacy in Sweden in Comparison with Some Other Countries* (Umeå: Umeå University and Umeå School of Education, 1977).

6 Jostein Fet, *Lesande bønder. Litterær kultur i norske allmugesamfunn før 1840* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1995).

7 See Elisabeth L. Eisenstein, *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of an Ending* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011) for a general European overview of this duality.

king who generously granted personal and financial favours.[8] The possibility of horizontal, mass communication among subjects, however, was extremely limited. Censorship was aimed at obstructing political and religious discussion as well as criticism and the formation of what would be frequently discussed in the later eighteenth century as 'the general voice' or 'public opinion'.[9]

The Danish Law and the Norwegian Law promulgated in the 1680s provided the framework for the organisation of both theological and political prepublication censorship.[10] Printers and booksellers needed royal privilege, and they were only allowed to publish and disseminate texts that had also obtained approbation – in the form of what was called *imprimatur* – by an official censor. The approbation signalled that the text did not contain anything that challenged or insulted their Majesties or the Church. People responsible for printed material dishonouring the king could face torture and execution. This applied not only to domestic publications, but also to imported material.[11]

The appointed censors were university faculty members from the relevant fields; texts on matters of religion were censored by the theology faculty, and secular texts – including scientific, historical and literary works – by the appropriate professor from the philosophy faculty. Texts on politics and economics were singled out for special attention; censorship in this domain was entrusted only to a select few government officials. In the censorship process, adjustments could be made in how a text or parts of a text were categorised. As Jakob Maliks has noted, significant shifts in categorisation occasionally occurred, revealing deep changes in world view and conceptions of truth.[12] An important

8 See Michael Bregnsbo, 'The Crisis and Renewal of the Monarchy: Introduction', in Pasi Ihalainen *et al.*(eds.), *Scandinavia in the Age of Revolution: Nordic Political Cultures, 1740–1820* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 17–28; Jakob Maliks, 'To Rule is to Communicate. The Absolutist System of Political Communication in Denmark-Norway 1660–1750', in Ellen Krefting, Aina Nøding and Mona Ringvej (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Periodicals as Agents of Change. Perspectives on Northern Enlightenment* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 134–152.

9 The Dano-Norwegian expressions circulating in periodicals in the latter part of the eighteenth century were 'Publikums Røst', 'Den offentlige Stemme', 'Den Almeene Røst', 'Folkets stemme'. See Martin Eide (ed.), *Norsk presses historie 1. En samfunnsmakt blir til 1660–1880* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2010), p. 63.

10 The Norwegian Law of 1687 (equally valid for the Danish realm) was particularly detailed about the censorship procedures. See The Norwegian Law of 1687, Book 2, Chapter 20, article 1, 'On books and almanachs'.

11 See Øystein Rian, *Sensuren i Danmark-Norge: Vilkårene for offentlige ytringer 1536–1814* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2014), especially Chapter 4, pp. 150–152.

12 Maliks, 'To Rule is to Communicate', pp. 136–137. The book in question was Johan Brunsmand, *En liden, kort og enfolding Erklæring. Om noget Kiøge-Huus-Kaarsis Historie, angaaendis. Dennem til Behag, som elske Sandhed* (Copenhagen: 1700).

turn of this kind can be seen from the debate between the different faculties of the university in 1700 about which academic department should have responsibility for censoring a book that supported the existence of witchcraft. As neither the government nor the theologians at the University of Copenhagen believed in the existence of witchcraft, responsibility was moved from the faculty of theology to the faculty of philosophy.

Printed newspapers, introduced in Denmark-Norway during the first half of the seventeenth century, were considered 'politicum negotium', political texts.[13] News publications – called 'nye Relationer' or 'Aviser' in Danish (terms covering both popular news pamphlets, which offered single 'complete' stories, and news sheets that presented shorter pieces of information from several places) – were, in the beginning, not considered important enough to merit censorship at the very highest level. In 1644, the censoring responsibility was given to a professor in history.[14] With the advent of absolutism, however, this authority was at some point taken over by the government itself, probably by the Foreign Ministry ('Det tydske Kancelli').[15]

The special attention censors gave to news publications in the seventeenth century was first and foremost motivated by a need to keep them from publishing 'implausible and false news'. This is clear from what happened after the outbreak of the war with Sweden in 1644, during which news sheets aired anxieties and rumours. Joachim Moltke and Melchior Martzan, who from 1634 held the privilege to print and sell news broadsheets as well as weekly newspapers in Danish and German, received several official complaints in the spring of 1644 for spreading misinformation. The result was that their publications, which the censors had previously handled lightly, suddenly needed manuscript approval before being printed.[16] It was not so much the political status of the news that provoked this reaction as their trustworthiness.

'Naked' and Contextualised News in the Seventeenth Century

The privileges given to publishers during the latter part of the seventeenth century show that newspapers had by then become separated from popular broadsheets, permitting the publishers of newspapers to extract, copy, and

13 Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, I, p. 130.

14 According to a decision taken by the University of Copenhagen in July 1644. See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, I, pp. 130–131.

15 Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, pp. 293–294.

16 See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, I, pp. 128–129.

sometimes translate objective information and present it to their readers. Copenhagen's first newspapers were printed in German and conveyed mainly international news reports that drew heavily on traditional Hamburg newspapers and other foreign sources.[17] There were strong concerns about the purity of the news and the trustworthiness of the reporting. In 1673 Daniel Paulli, editor of the German-language Copenhagen newspaper *Extraordinaires Relationes aus Allerley Orten*, responded to such fears by expressing the goal of producing 'naked' news. He echoed the words of his German newspaper hero Georg Greiflinger:

> I do not make up the news myself, but communicate it unchanged as it is related to me, first by one, then by another [person], and present it to the public as a naked girl so that everybody can dress her the way he wishes and believe as much of it as he thinks fit.[18]

Yet Paulli (together with an Altona news reporter) was prosecuted after French complaints about anti-French biases in the reports.[19] As Paul Ries has suggested, this was not due to any personalised, opinionated content, but might simply be explained by Paulli's method of presentation.[20] Rather than adopting the staccato style of simple reporting, as seen in Gøde's *Ordinarie Post-Tidende*, for instance, Paulli's newspaper used the traditional principle of rubrics headed by names of the countries covered in the reports they contained. In this way, he provided a more contextualised picture of events.

The first newspaper in Danish, *Den danske Mercurius*, published monthly from 1666 to 1677, provided ever more contextualised news overviews and summaries. It offered both national (about one third) and international news in versified form (modelled after the French *La muze historique*), written and edited by the poet Anders Bording, who had royal privilege and was paid by the king as a government official. Bording's close relations with the new power elite may explain the surprisingly large amount of original, domestic news. Some of this was even quite controversial and politically sensitive, such as the account of the arrest in March 1676 of the ennobled Peder Schumacher Griffenfeld on

17 See Ries, 'The Politics of Information'.

18 Quoted in Ries, 'The Politics of Information', p. 261.

19 See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, p. 304.

20 Ries, 'The Politics of Information', p. 253.

suspicion of high treason.[21] Because of its versified form and its extreme loyalty to the authorities, *Den danske Mercurius* has often been considered a poetic bagatelle. Yet one of the striking features of this 'official', royal newspaper is the reporter's urge to contextualise: Bording actually combined straight reporting of 'what had actually happened' with commentaries and explanation, mainly with the aim of justifying the king's point of view and his decisions. But he also brought a broader moral dimension to the news. In the Griffenfeld case, for instance, Bording pointed to the relationship between greed and corruption. The editor frequently reminded his readers that not only news and information, but also moral lessons could be learnt from observing the actions of all the players on the world stage. Bording's *Den danske Mercurius* explicitly used the newspaper as a means of secular reasoning and of influencing readers' views of the world.

The 1701 Censorship Instruction

In January 1701, the king published an official censorship 'rescript' that put an end to the way *Den danske Mercurius* and other papers (such as Paulli's *Extraordinaires Maanedlige Relationer* from 1673) provided monthly news summaries that combined news and commentaries. The rescript officially prohibited the blending of 'news', on the one hand – belonging to the realm of truth and impartiality and defined as 'what is reported to have really taken place' – with opinion or what is called 'reasoning' and 'conjecture' on the other.

The immediate context for the rescript was the outbreak in 1700 of the Great Northern War, which made international news reports – comprising the major part of the content of newspapers – particularly sensitive. There had already been several complaints from foreign powers on the content of Copenhagen newspapers, and the war required even closer control over the press. The official decree, aimed at censors and publishers equally, started by prescribing an extremely cumbersome censorship procedure explicitly targeting the publication of news.

Two crown-appointed censors (soon to be cut to one) from the Home Ministry (*det danske Kancelli*) were entrusted with the pre-publication censoring of newspapers (both manuscript and printed). The rescript required newspaper

21 *Den danske Mercurius 1666–1677*, pp. 481–482, available at Arkiv for dansk literatur, www.adl.dk, http://adl.dk/adl_pub/pg/cv/ShowPgImg.xsql?p_udg_id=392&p_sidenr=13&hist=&nnoc=adl_pub.

editors to scrutinise their sources (mainly foreign newspapers) to ensure that they contained no harmful content. They were then supposed to submit two identical handwritten copies to the censor, for correction and signing off. Leaving one copy of the approved text with the censor, editors then had two copies of it printed. They once again submitted these to the censor. Having checked that both of these printed copies corresponded in every detail to the approved handwritten copy, the censor would again sign both copies and retain one, while the editor was now free to hand the second copy to the printer, who was supposed to print the censored and approved text without changes.

The instructions were equally detailed concerning the material to be excluded: international news not reprinted from foreign newspapers; any remarks questioning the foundations or splendour of the realm or harmful to the interest of the king, ministers or officials; information about size or strength of the nation's army or navy; details of negotiations with foreign powers and 'sceptical, scornful or offensive' remarks about foreign princes or their representatives. It is after this that we find the distinction between pure news and individual opinion:

> Also to be excluded is the reasoning of the *nouvellistes* and others' discourses on what is happening, and similarly unnecessary conjectures about what could possibly happen, and one must only deal with what is reported to really have taken place.

The rescript meticulously listed the type of content that could be included in newspapers: detailed and respectful descriptions of grand occasions, such as processions and feasts, to ensure that no fault could be found by others in the ceremonies of the Danish court; official announcements and royal proclamations; information about shipping and other forms of trade; and advertisements of important auctions or the loss of valuable property. The rescript required that all information must be written in plain language with appropriate vocabulary and published as soon as possible after the arrival of the post, except in the case of monthly newspapers, which were to carry only the most important and recent reports already published during the preceding month and nothing else.

Surely, these censorship procedures, if they were to be followed to the letter, did not enhance the frequency and regularity of the news press. The early circulation of printed news already suffered from irregularities caused by erratic postal services and political vicissitudes.[22] In periods of war, there

22 The postal instruction of 1694 required postal delivery between Hamburg and Copenhagen twice a week. There were weekly deliveries to Norwegian cities. See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, pp. 247–248.

could be overloads of information that affected the size, the title and the frequency of newspapers (often coupled with supplements, 'extraordinaires' or appendices).[23] As P.M. Stolpe has demonstrated in his detailed history of the early press in Denmark-Norway, the two last decades of the seventeenth century had seen the growth of a surprisingly rich and lively news press conveying information and stories of many kinds in many forms. The beginning of the eighteenth century marked a turn towards a news press of a more conscious, rigid and submissive kind. This trend was enforced by the censorship instruction of 1701.

The immediate motives behind the censorship instruction might well be the particularly sensitive context of the outbreak of war and the need to control public discussions about (international) politics. But the text also expresses quite clearly a more general anxiety concerning the 'purity' of the news and the truth value of its reports.

Truth Worries and News Frenzy

The epistemological worries following religious conflicts as well as the huge impact of the 'new philosophy' and the 'scientific revolution' have been well documented for decades by scholars of early modern intellectual history who see the heightened sense of urgency and self-consciousness regarding the contingency of truth claims as a defining feature of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.[24] Despite deep changes in evidentiary standards and practices in the period, a growing readership still expressed the problem of interpreting and trusting various truth claims, such as the information conveyed by so-called 'true relations' of different sorts (of fires, heavenly apparitions, women giving birth to animals, as well as of scientific experiments), as Frances E. Dolan has shown in her study of late-seventeenth-century England.[25] The category of news did not escape these worries about reliability, as Andrew Pettegree has recognised in *The Invention of News*.[26] With the expansion of the commercial news market and a larger and more dispersed audience hungry for news, a tide of criticism arose, questioning the trustworthiness and integrity of

23 Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, p. 120.

24 See, for example, Paul Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680–1715* (Paris: Fayard, 1961); Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth. Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

25 Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

26 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News. How the World Came to Know about Itself* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014).

the news messengers (were they interested parties?) and the verifiability of the information (was it based on pure rumour?), and expressing a growing dissatisfaction with the serial form of news delivery itself. Newspapers were forced to present events that were still unfolding and to include a lot of potentially trivial information, chosen hurriedly from a larger heap of news items. Pettegree shows how critics of the newspaper at the beginning of the eighteenth century complained of 'information overload', and how they worried that the old tradition of straight reporting (with the manuscript newsletter as a norm) was being contaminated by political or commercially biased opinion, analysis and polemics (news pamphlets, in particular).[27] These anxieties were also connected to a growing concern for the social consequences of the proliferation of a commercialised serial news press. Why should anyone other than public men and merchants need to read newspapers? Was newspaper reading among the general public leading to idleness? And what was happening to truth and good sense when newspapers were resorting to blending facts, fiction, rumours and opinion in order to gain readers?

The anxieties about news reporting and news reading that Dolan and Pettegree have described also apply to the Dano-Norwegian context. We have already seen how the censoring institutions worried about the publication of false news in the printed newspapers of late seventeenth-century Denmark-Norway. The most flamboyant expression of concern about the growing news-reading public is found in the very first comedy written for the Copenhagen stage in 1722 by the Norwegian-born playwright, historian and major intellectual of the period, Ludvig Holberg. The play, called *Den politiske kandestøber* (The political tinker), mocked and attacked the craze for news and current affairs among ordinary people. It was clearly inspired by the essays from *The Tatler* about the 'political upholsterer', a figure Steele describes as "the greatest newsmonger", who was "much more inquisitive about what was happening in Poland than in his own family".[28] Like Steele's 'upholsterer', Holberg's 'tinker' is an honest man – one who happens to have become absorbed by politics. He spends most of his time passionately debating the latest news from southern Europe or local politics, while his family and business are neglected. He is a 'project maker' – a recurring negative characteristic in Holberg's work (as we shall see later). The tinker frequents taverns, where he reads newspapers and exchanges opinions, "knowing everything, and yet nothing", as Holberg himself points out in his introduction to the first published edition of the play. The knowledge these artisans and commoners in the taverns draw from the

27 Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, especially pp. 261–266.

28 *The Tatler*, nos. 155, 160 and 178.

newspapers they read and discuss is superficial, and the information given cannot always be trusted. Holberg also emphasised the untrustworthiness of news in his mock-heroic poem *Peder Paars*, published just a couple of years earlier (1719). It presents newspaper printers as 'bold liars'.

Holberg's satirical attack targeted not only the moral and levelling effects of the popular appetite for news and politics: an avid, news-craving, politically engaged sector of the society, in which artisans and other would-be politicians try to rise above their station and run society (threatening the natural and rational social hierarchy and the functioning of political culture defended by Holberg). He also directed his satire at the very production and transmission of news. How can we rely on what we read in the newspapers? How can we distinguish news stories (whether they are called 'news', 'reports', 'true relations', 'correspondences', 'intelligences', 'information' or *avvisi*) from other stories, fact from fiction, or opinion?[29]

As we have already seen, worries about the blending of news with more discursive, analytical and polemical opinion had already been expressed in the 1701 censorship instruction. The absolutist state of Denmark-Norway sought by law and cumbersome censorship procedures to protect unadorned fact in news reporting. As Stolpe and Ries have noted, when followed to the letter, the procedure drastically reduced the speed of the news delivery, which made 'naked' news less fresh. In reality, however, the instruction was not followed to the letter. There were actually long periods when the newspapers in Denmark-Norway did not undergo censorship prior to publication.[30] This does not necessarily indicate that the regime had adopted a more liberal policy. During the first decades of the eighteenth century, only one printer in Copenhagen had the privilege to publish news in the entire twin kingdom, and there was always the threat of post-publication sanctions. The laws nonetheless served as a constant threat and proved to be an effective spur towards self-censorship. The absolutist regime seems, in fact, to have had only minor problems with

29 'Avis' is today the Norwegian and Danish word for newspaper, but in Holberg's work this was still the name of a specific piece of information about the contemporary world, either local or more geographically distant, often supported by written documentation of some kind or making reference to (living) eyewitnesses, to be assembled and printed in a 'nyhedsblad' or 'relationer'. See the Holbergordbog (the 'Holberg dictionary') at http://holbergordbog.dk/.

30 Stolpe actually contends that no newspapers until 1738 were censored, and were published at the printer's own risk (*Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, p. 302). Yet, the censorship instructions were repeated unchanged in the Press rescript of 1756, when the police were appointed to conduct pre-publication censorship of newspapers. See also Øystein Rian, *Sensuren i Danmark-Norge*, pp. 172–173.

the Dano-Norwegian newspapers (with the exception for the newspapers published in the town of Altona, close to the liberal city-state of Hamburg) for decades after 1701, even with the rapidly increasing amount of domestic news they contained.

Press historians agree that the Copenhagen newspapers of the early eighteenth century were loyal and extremely panegyric towards king and court. The information they conveyed was also quite limited to life at court. Disasters, such as the outbreak of a plague in 1711 or the great fire of 1728 were only mentioned briefly.[31] In delicate matters, such as the reporting of the death of Queen Louise and the king's rapid marriage to Anna Sophie Reventlow in the same issue of *Hoftidende* ('News from the court') the editor solicited the chancellor (*Gehejmeraad*) in order to find the right words.[32] What the licensed newspapers avoided reporting is perhaps the most telling; for instance, the public persecution on 8 March 1723 of the Trondheim-born civil servant and publicist Povel Juel, who was charged with conspiracy and high treason. This was undoubtedly an important and sensational event in Copenhagen, but since it concerned the state and its politics, the newspapers did not take any chances and no Copenhagen newspaper mentioned the event with so much as a single word. The affair, however, was richly described in a popular broadsheet ballad about 'the dreaming prince project maker Povel Juel'.[33] What was not allowed to appear as 'news' was published as a sensational, contextualised, entertaining story instead – which surely demonstrates that newspapers were not the only conveyers of important information to the public.

News, Announcements and Opinions

There are good reasons to contend that the 1701 censorship instruction contributed to the meagre content and prosaic but loyal style of the newspapers. It is also possible to argue that the instruction contributed to the shaping of the whole 'media landscape' of Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century. One characteristic of this landscape is the increasing amount of announcements – advertisements for goods, notifications for objects lost and found – in the newspapers. The handful of serial news publications in German, French

31 Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, p. 276.

32 See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, II, p. 280, and Ellen Krefting, Aina Nøding and Mona Ringvej, *En pokkers skrivesyge. 1700-tallets dansk-norske tidsskrifter mellom sensur og ytringsfrihet* (Oslo: Spartacus, 2014), pp. 53–55.

33 Krefting, Nøding, and Ringvej, *En pokkers skrivesyge*, p. 55.

and Danish emanating from Copenhagen continued to carry pieces of political information from abroad in addition to national news from the court and the royal family (according to the instruction from 1701), serving the king's need to exhibit and legitimise his absolute power.[34] But newspapers were also in the process of becoming channels for local news in the purest, most factual and least sensitive sense, politically speaking.

The very first so-called newspapers published in the Norwegian realm of the twin kingdom were pure intelligencers (*Intelligenz-Blätter* in German) or 'address newspapers' as they were called in Norwegian, such as *Norske Intelligenz-Seddeler* in Christiania (1763), *Efterretninger fra Adresse-Contoiret i Bergen i Norge* (1763) and *Kongelig allene privilegerede Tronhiem Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger* in Trondheim (1767), later to be known as 'Adresseavisa' (and still today the largest Trondheim newspaper).[35] All of them followed the model of the Copenhagen *Addressekontorets Efterretninger* launched by Hans Holck in 1759.[36] This kind of publication was usually connected to a public office for the exchange of information serving the local trade in goods and services. This phenomenon of a public 'trading post' had spread from France to other European countries during the seventeenth century (the Frenchman Théophile de Renaudot established the first 'Bureau d'adresse' in Paris in 1637). The editors of the Bergen and Trondheim 'address newspapers' had both obtained privileges for establishing address offices. The Christiania intelligencer, however, had circumvented privilege restrictions by not being connected to an office. Samuel Conrad Schwach's printing shop, however, functioned effectively as a public trading post.[37]

All three Norwegian papers avoided strict censorship procedures by shunning the publication of political news. The motives behind these weekly publications were connected to trade, manufacturing and practical interests. The main bulk of material they published were advertisements, notifications of local sales and private services, announcements of property and persons lost and found, personal notices (engagements, marriages, births and obituary notices), announcements of public services and useful, religious essays as well as

34 See Stolpe, *Dagspressen i Danmark*, 11, and Martin Eide (ed.), *Norsk presses historie 1*, pp. 41–55.

35 There had been earlier attempts at publishing a Norwegian newspaper, such as *Den Ridende Mercurius* in Bergen in 1721, but they were all prohibited by the government in Copenhagen.

36 See Chr. Kirchhoff-Larsen, *Den danske presses historie*, 3 vols. (Copenhagen: Berlingske, 1942–1962), 1, pp. 53–84.

37 Eide (ed.), *Norsk presses historie 1*, p. 112.

fictional, entertaining texts (often translated pieces) and anecdotes and letters from readers (a combination first introduced in Germany in 1759).[38] Schwach in Christiania was particularly eager to adapt his publication to the varying needs and desires of the reading public. Variety in content as well as in form was his motto. He also encouraged his readers to contribute, to the point that the paper was accused of being a post box for reader's manuscripts and of not being properly edited according to textual and social norms. The paper opened its pages for people of humble origins to criticise tradesmen and artisans for overpricing their goods and services.[39] Hence, *Norske Intelligenz-Seddeler* was an important medium for non-political, local news in the most 'naked' and factual sense. Yet it also became an important medium for the exchange of ideas and opinions: for public debate. The debates could be bold and stretch over several issues, but they did not concern politics or news directly. They were first and foremost concerned with questions of social norms and civic virtues, and with questions of style and taste.

From 'news frenzy' to 'writing disease'

The intelligencers, however, were not the only medium for conveying and exchanging local knowledge, personal thoughts and opinions. After 1720, weekly or monthly journals appeared in rising numbers, starting with the learned journal *Lærde efterretninger*. Some of these journals were not only licensed, but were even encouraged by the state or edited by royal officials. The most prominent example of a journal the regime saw as useful for the state is the annual journal *Danmark og Norges Oeconomiske Magazin* (1757–1764). It was the result of a royal invitation in 1755 to people of all strata – "whoever he may be, high or low, aristocrat or not, clerical or not, learned or not; he will be most welcomed" – from every corner of the twin kingdom, to submit "theses of general use in economic and physical matters". It welcomed contributions from periodicals and publications dealing with economic development.[40] The

38 See Aina Nøding, *Vittige kameleoner: Litterære tekster i norske adresseaviser 1763–1769* (Oslo: Unipub, 2007), p. 25.

39 See Eide (ed.), *Norsk presses historie 1*, pp. 107–123. In fact, the correspondence and debate had characterised this kind of news publication from its beginning in Paris in 1637. See Nøding, *Vittige kameleoner*, p. 25.

40 Erik Pontoppidan, *Indbydelse til at insende almennyttige økonomiske og fysiske Afhandlinger til Grev A.G. Moltke. En Opfordring til at forene sig om Skribentvirksomhed*

magazine – which published "a mixture of small pieces submitted by good patriots concerning the possible perfection of agriculture, foresting, mining, house building, the breeding of livestock, fisheries, manufacturing, etc., in the service of bettering the common good" – was edited by Erik Pontoppidan, the pro-chancellor of the university, and became an important channel for assembling and disseminating knowledge of technology and economics, and for critical discourse about these matters.[41] It aimed to convey not only more knowledge, but knowledge of increasingly higher quality and relevance, which implied critical discussion. As Maliks has noted, establishing a government-subsidised periodical under the supervision of a highly dependable editor somehow resolved the dilemma the government faced concerning the critical discourse on economics.[42] Economics had previously been one of the subjects not allowed in print, being closely connected to legislation and politics. Now, the government encouraged public discussion, but under its close control.

Not all journals, however, were initiated by the government. The extremely popular spectator journals, also called 'moral weeklies', characterised by having a fictitious narrator presenting essays on a variety of topics, appeared in Denmark-Norway from the 1740s. The genre thrived on the legal, political and epistemological distinction between news and opinion expressed in the 1701 rescript. As we have seen, concern about political news and the heavy restrictions around its publication were, by the middle of the century, supplemented by a controlled interest in public debate about practical, economic matters. But these concerns did not affect publications such as the spectator journals, which specialised exclusively in social observation, secular moral reasoning, philosophical discussion, and personal opinion. As long as the journals steered clear of reporting or commenting on news, and shunned any content that addressed political (or economic) matters directly, they obtained approbation (*imprimatur*) from the censors. The learned journals and the spectator journals alike were censored by the more liberal and independent professors among the philosophy faculty.

(Copenhagen: 1755), p. 7. See Mona Ringvej, 'Communicative Power and the Absolutist State. Denmark-Norway c. 1750–1800', in Pasi Ihalainen *et al.* (eds.), *Scandinavia in the Age of Revolution*, pp. 303–316; Maliks, 'To Rule is to Communicate', pp. 144–146.

41 It was followed by a growing amount of topographical literature in Denmark-Norway with the continuing production of descriptions of local geography, natural resources, technology, history and folk culture. See Anne Eriksen, *Topografenes verden: Fornminner og fortidsforståelse* (Oslo: Pax, 2007).

42 Maliks, 'To Rule is to Communicate', pp. 144–145.

The relatively open-minded censoring of the 'spectators' appearing in Copenhagen during the 1740s makes a case for considering censorship in Denmark-Norway at the time as both 'functionally ambiguous' and also 'productive', rather than purely repressive. The learned and literary profile of moral weeklies such as *Den danske Spectator* (1744–1745) and *La Spectatrice danoise* ('The female Danish spectator', published in French in Copenhagen from 1748 to 1750), with a limited and non-popular readership, probably made them less problematic in the eyes of censor H.P. Anchersen, a professor of history and eloquence at Copenhagen University. These spectator journals were modelled on the English *Spectator* of Addison and Steele and their German, French and Swedish imitators. The English pioneers had famously mixed the publication of moral essays on 'fixt and immutable' themes with social observation and political news. Such a mix was not possible in the Dano-Norwegian context, where blending news with opinion was forbidden. But both of these journals were bold and experimental in their opinion-based content as well as in style, with their attention to important Enlightenment questions, such as religious liberty, social inequality, the legitimacy of the nobility, the role of women, education and freedom of the press. The authors used the moral weeklies as channels for a new drive to seek the truth by means of secular reasoning, and for their urge to write and communicate from a more modest station in society.[43] By employing various fictional dialogical forms, they succeeded in creating something resembling a horizontal public sphere in miniature form. They served as forums in which multiple voices could engage in rationalist and sometimes quite critical debates on philosophical and moral as well as social and even political issues.[44]

We know that the censor Anchersen had required changes and revisions before their publication, which is clearly expressed by Jørgen Riis, the author of *Den danske Spectator*, who exclaimed that "My reflections would have been more useful had it not been necessary to disguise the truth". In the very last issue of his journal he admits that "I have been forced to exclude a lot of important matters … and I have had to squeeze the juice out of them, just to reach the end of the year with my journal".[45] But the fact that this journal and also

43 Ellen Krefting, 'The Urge to Write: Spectator Journalists Negotiating Freedom of the Press in Denmark-Norway', in Krefting *et al.* (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Periodicals*, pp. 153–171.

44 Jørgen Riis, the author of *Den danske Spectator*, actually published several spectator journals in parallel (*Den danske Anti-Spectator*, *Den politiske Spectator*) during 1744 and 1745, which commented upon each other, creating a fictitious exchange in print. See Krefting, 'The Urge to Write'.

45 *Den danske spectator* 38, pp. 349 and 52, p. 468.

Laurent De La Beaumelle's *La Spectatrice danoise* were licensed at all indicates the level of negotiation that must have been involved between the censor and these authors. Censor Anchersen, being a learned man and author, probably considered himself as a literary guide and guardian of quality rather than as a repressor of literature. His negotiation with the authors may have served the desire to affect and contribute to the literary field in a positive way, making journals like these actually happen, rather than suppressing them. This is 'productive censorship' of a very practical kind, echoing how the French censors of literary publications operated during the Enlightenment, according to Robert Darnton.[46]

The rise and growing success of this particular type of journalism in Denmark-Norway, conveying personal opinion and debate rather than news, did not, however, go unnoticed. Most of the journals like the two mentioned here were short-lived, but they served as a low-threshold medium for a young generation with a growing urge to write and publish their points of view and to become 'authors' in their own right. Several journalists of this kind started commenting on this urge, in their own journals, pointing to a 'writing disease' spreading in the twin kingdom, from Copenhagen to the more remote parts of Norway. In a 1761 issue of his journal *Tronhiemske samlinger* ('The Trondheim collections'), Peter Frederik Suhm refers – through one of his fictitious characters – to "a goddamn writing disease spreading in this town". A few years later, the phenomenon is registered also in Bergen and other Norwegian towns. In a 1794 issue of *Den snaksomme Bergenser* ('The chattering citizen of Bergen'), the editor notes self-ironically that 'To be a publicist and to write in public has in our days become an epidemic fever which is spreading quickly among the children of men'. Even people who hardly can read what they write, get to publish their 'original madness', he exclaimed in print.[47]

Yet, the first to link the new journalism to an epidemic illness (of the more serious and destructive kind) had been the elderly author and history professor Ludvig Holberg. Assessing the new opinion-based journalism developing during the 1740s from the outside, not to say from above, he despised it as much as he had loathed the craze for news decades earlier. Holberg had

46 Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work: How States Formed Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014). On 'productive censorship' see also Matthew Bunn, 'Reimagining Repression. New Censorship Theory and After', *History and Theory*, 54 (2015), pp. 25–44.

47 'At ville være offentlig Skribent og skrive offentlig, er i vore Dage blevet en epidemisk feber, som griber alt mer og mer om sig blant Menneskenes Børn', Bernt Børretzen in *Den snaksomme Bergenser*, no. 41, 1794. See Krefting, Nøding and Ringvej, *En pokkers skrivesyge*.

himself frequently argued during his career for greater freedom of expression in print.[48] Yet he was utterly sceptical of these publicists "from nowhere", rising above their station, trying to "act as authors", as he phrased it at one point in the 1740s.[49] According to Holberg, the spectator journalists were contaminated by the sudden and dangerous writing disease spreading in the kingdom – threatening the standards of quality in the literary field. Spectator journalists were perfect examples of "project makers", or "political tinkers" who, as he put it, "are quick to hurriedly recast the world in a different mould". They confirmed, Holberg wrote, that "freedom of expression had gone too far". To him, it might seem at times, the world would remain a better place without either news or opinions – especially the news and opinions that engaged common citizens.

In this matter, Holberg was not on history's winning side. Journals like the ones initiated by Riis and La Beaumelle were to become the most important medium for the importation and dissemination of Enlightenment ideas and debates in Denmark-Norway during the latter part of the eighteenth century, slowly transforming the textual, intellectual as well as the political landscape of Denmark-Norway and culminating in the Norwegian liberal constitution of 1814. The newspapers were still singled out for special censorship procedures – even under the two-year regime of the royal physician Struensee, who, in the name of the mentally ill king, declared unrestrained freedom of the press in 1770.[50] However, the journals of the late 1780s and 1790s, from central to distant towns of Denmark-Norway, were arenas for praise, humour and discussions about the French Revolution, freedom of speech, natural rights, 'democracy' and new constitutions. This lively public sphere of journals may explain how so many people, even peasants from the various Norwegian valleys, displayed a spontaneous urge to participate in the discussions about constitutional matters during the weeks before the signing of the Norwegian Constitution at Eidsvoll in May 1814.[51]

48 See Krefting, 'The Urge to Write', pp. 160–162.

49 Ludvig Holberg, 'Fortale', in *Adskillige Heltinders og navnkundige Damers sammenlignende Historier efter Plutarchi Maade* (Copenhagen, 1745). For Holberg's comments on the spectators, see also essay number 280 of his *Moralske tanker* (Copenhagen, 1744), and epistles number 63, 72, 413 and 478 in *Epistler* (Copenhagen 1748–1754) both available at http://holbergskrifter.no.

50 See John Christian Laursen, 'Censorship in the Nordic Countries ca. 1750–1890. Transformations in Law, Theory, and Practice', *Journal of Modern European History*, 3 (2005), pp. 100–117.

51 See Krefting *et al.* (eds.), *En pokkers skrivesyge*, pp. 278–280.

Journalism and The 'Northern Enlightenment'

Recent research trends have revised previous notions of the Enlightenment as a unified, intellectually coherent set of ideas or practices originating in France and penetrating other parts of Europe or the world with varying degrees of success. Although it would be equally wrong-headed to evade any 'diffusionist' approach and view the Enlightenment as an intellectual phenomenon determined solely by national context, there is no doubt that 'enlightenment' ideals, visions and practices look different from a Dano-Norwegian perspective. I will conclude with the contention that the state-controlled media landscape of the eighteenth century, with its relatively poor news press but a bourgeoning public sphere of opinions which I have tried to describe in this chapter, can offer a useful vantage point for considering certain characteristics and general features of what we can call the 'Northern Enlightenment'.

At a general level, the Northern Enlightenment is distinguished by Lutheranism, utilitarianism and support of absolutism rather than by anti-religious, democratic radicalism and universalism. It was definitely conservative and 'mainstream', in Jonathan Israel's terms.[52] Enlightenment discourse in Denmark-Norway was largely disseminated by intellectuals either employed by the absolutist state (clergy, university professors, state officials) or closely tied to state interests. These interests were, during the early eighteenth century, turning from warfare and security to development and welfare. Ideas of material and social growth for the common good were grounded in the economic paradigm of 'cameralism', being the German version of mercantilism which saw detailed state control of economic life as the core of development and public welfare. In its Dano-Norwegian adaptation, this also implied seeing scientific progress and the dissemination of practical and useful knowledge among the population as vital for the state's economic performance. The result was that the new public sphere of print did not emerge from private, 'bourgeois' initiatives, as it did in other parts of Europe, but from the absolutist government actively promoting the development of 'enlightenment' through print.

State-serving publicists saw education and the rise in general knowledge as a means of achieving material and moral 'perfection' and common welfare. The apparently growing appetite for intellectual, religious, legal and social reform, for science and learning and for a flourishing public sphere of

52 See Jonathan Israel, 'Northern Varieties. Contrasting the Dano-Norwegian and the Swedish-Finnish Enlightenments', in Krefting *et al.* (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Periodicals*, p. 17.

print was permeated by 'patriotism', a moral-political discourse about social improvement and of the common good that nonetheless rarely questioned or opposed the prevailing political and social order. Within these 'patriotic' frames, public discussions about science, philosophy, literature, morality and social norms and even about 'civic liberties' were thriving. Censors were eager to negotiate with the authors and journalists in order to promote knowledge, literature and reasonable opinions. In Denmark-Norway, 'civic liberties' (such as freedom of expression) and 'absolutism' were not seen as mutually incompatible. On the contrary, they were closely interrelated ideals, as the prominent journalist and professor in political sciences Jens Schielderup Sneedorff argued adamantly in his own periodicals. According to his 'patriotic' ideology, royal power and the public sphere are associated in a continuous process of exchange and interdependence that is fundamentally necessary for the state's health.[53]

The fact is, however, that the freedom to express one's own opinions or, even more, to report truthfully and fearlessly what was actually happening in the world was still dependent on whatever was defined as the interests of the state and of the absolutist king. It was not until the Constituent Assembly at Eidsvoll in Norway decided to break with Danish absolutist rule in 1814 that this freedom was guaranteed by constitutional right (within certain limits) in article 100 of the Norwegian constitution. This is also the period in which we see the emergence of a genuine news press in Norway, where daily papers could function as 'political hour watches' or an 'archive of the time'. According to the editor Niels Wulfsberg, his newspaper called *Tiden* ('The time'), published from 1808, was to offer not only "foreign and domestic news of public interest", but also discussions of "topics about which there can be doubt".[54] The trustworthiness of news was no longer something to be decided or controlled by the king. It was to be discussed in the newspapers themselves.

53 See Jens Schielderup Sneedorff, *Den patriotiske tilskuer* (Copenhagen, 1761–1763) and his treatise *Om den Borgerlige Regiering* (Copenhagen, 1757).

54 Quoted from Eide (ed.), *Norsk presses historie 1*, p. 195.

PART 8

Endpiece

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CHAPTER 14

Was there an Enlightenment Culture of News?

Andrew Pettegree

Friday 28 November 1721 was to be a busy news day in Paris, for now, at last, the notorious thief Cartouche was to be put to death. Cartouche was the Parisian equivalent of London's Jonathan Wild, the leader of a notorious criminal gang. Now, along with several hundred of his confederates, he had been arrested, and after several weeks of interrogation and trial he was to die. Paris had been consumed by all things Cartouche for several months, including an opportunistic musical comedy, *Cartouche: the Thieves*. The enterprising players had made their way into the prison to interview the gangmaster, who had gallantly assisted their research by teaching them to sing and dance like criminals. Cartouche earned high marks for his bravado and *sang froid*, for his fate was certain and he was to die one of the cruelest deaths available in the pre-modern judicial system: broken on the wheel, each limb shattered by two blows of an iron bar before he was exhibited, still alive, to the baying crowd. "A bad quarter hour passes quickly", was Cartouche's reported laconic reflection on this grisly fate. This memorable phrase was remembered eighty years later, in a French revolutionary debate on the reform of the penal code; such is the power of celebrity.[1]

Trial, condemnation and subsequent attempts to force Cartouche to name accomplices filled the pages of Paris's diarists, along with details of his last meals; meanwhile crowds packed the Place de la Grève so as not to miss the dramatic denouement. Even after the execution Cartouche fever took some time to subside. The Duchesse d'Orleans, mother of the Regent, fully shared the popular enthusiasm for every last detail: "I ran into the comte d'Hoïm and the chevalier de Schaub. They told me about Cartouche's having been executed yesterday; this detained me quite a while". On 29 November Caumartin de Boissy informed his sister, "For several days, no one has spoken of anything but Cartouche".[2]

This was the news world of Enlightenment France. Then, as now, investigation of news culture can cast a bleak light on human nature. Certainly in the

1 Paul Friedland, *Seeing Justice Done: The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 169–172, 231–232.

2 Ibid., p. 171.

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rumbustious glee with which citizens thronged the place of execution, or the better sort schemed for the best balcony view, we can see little of the rationality, the seriousness of purpose or heightened sensibility that is said to have characterised the Enlightenment. The fascination with executions did have its contemporary critics. As early as 1669 Louis XIV had rebuked several ladies of the court for the morbid eagerness with which they had followed the last suffering of another celebrity criminal, Madame Ticquet, the wife of a magistrate of the Parlement of Paris condemned for having hired men to murder her husband.[3] And forty years after the execution of Cartouche, Voltaire would further enhance his reputation with a passionate denunciation of the judicial lynching of the Huguenot merchant Jean Calas, done to death after the family had unwisely attempted to cover up the apparent suicide of Calas's son. In 1764, after publication of Voltaire's celebrated pamphlet, Calas would be declared innocent of the crime of his son's murder, of which he had been convicted by the justices of Toulouse in an atmosphere of religious hysteria. The campaign did much to burnish Voltaire's reputation, though of course it could not help the unfortunate Calas, done to death by the same agonising process that had despatched Cartouche.

There was nothing particular to the eighteenth century in the excitement and public curiosity that accompanied the execution of Cartouche and Calas: similar scenes could have been reported in many parts of Europe throughout the period of spectacular public justice. An execution was self-consciously an occasion when the community came together to witness the ceremonial expulsion of individuals who had offended the accepted canons of behaviour, and by their public witness signal agreement with exemplary punishment. If the eighteenth century is different it is largely because we are better informed through the survival of more copious quantities of documentation, and the development of a more extensive network of reporting mechanisms.

This was the age when the development of a fully articulated network of public news media reached its first climax. For three centuries, from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, European societies had witnessed the growth of a dense network of interlocking mechanisms for the dissemination of news – a network made possible by the invention of new forms of printed media, though by no means exclusively so. Gossip, correspondence and word of mouth continued to play a major role in vivid news events such as the death of Cartouche, but in the eighteenth century print was becoming the increasingly common means of sating the appetite for news. The newspapers, a form of serial news developed from the early seventeenth century onwards, now

3 Ibid., p. 156.

reached into every part of Europe. More of Europe's citizens than ever before could now have access to their weekly or even daily fix of news.

This prompts the essential question: was there an Enlightenment culture of news? Was there anything specific to the news culture of the eighteenth century public sphere that reflected the spirit of the Enlightenment?[4] Here the evidence thus far adduced is distinctly ambiguous. On the one hand, locations where newspapers were perused, such as the coffeehouse or salon, loom large in considerations of the Enlightenment public sphere. The coffeehouse in particular has taken on an almost emblematic role as a place of news gathering, exchange and opinion forming.[5] Coffeehouses were certainly popular and fashionable. By the mid eighteenth century many of Europe's towns and cities offered a dense network catering to different sociability groups and clientele of different political allegiances. This segmentation, of course, somewhat impeded their effectiveness as locations of political exchange, or at least of rational Enlightenment discourse. In eighteenth-century London, Whig and Tory coffee shops were sharply differentiated, and this was predominantly male space. The salon gave more room for female agency, but catered only to a socially exclusive clientele: the segment of society whose correspondence offers us a window on the latest fashion and the most recent society execution (sometimes, disconcertingly, on the same page).

Most of all, this concentration on location has resulted in far less attention being paid to the structure and actual contents of the newspaper. Newspapers were certainly present in the coffeehouses, but do they function effectively as agents of rational discourse? Can an examination of the newspapers reveal the spirit of the Enlightenment at work? In the pages that follow, this question will be approached though two main lines of enquiry. We will see, firstly, as we trace the origins of the public news media, that many of the features seen as characteristic of eighteenth-century public discourse were essentially present in the developing information culture of preceding centuries. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries developed both a highly sophisticated multi-media news world and a clear code of news ethics. In the eighteenth century, newspapers certainly took a step forward in terms of availability, but at some cost to the ethical principles established in this earlier age. It becomes increasingly

4 See here, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Jeremy D. Popkin (eds.), *Enlightenment, Revolution, and the Periodical Press* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2004). Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac's* Gazette de Leyde (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

5 Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

difficult to discern the spirit of the Enlightenment in the rumbustious news culture of eighteenth-century Europe.

The Invention of News

The instinct for news – to be in the know – is as old as society itself. Some of the oldest surviving written communications bear evidence of this human curiosity and fascination for events both near and far.[6] But it was only really in the sixteenth century that the provision of news for public consumption could for the first time be efficiently organised on a commercial basis. This was one of the many consequences of the invention of printing in the fifteenth century, though it was only in the sixteenth, from about 1520 onwards, that print began to make a substantial impact on the developing mechanisms of news exchange. Until this point a functioning news network had essentially been the exclusive preserve of Europe's elites, international merchants, princes and churchmen. Now, through the agency of print, and especially cheap print, news could be shared with radiating circles of new readers.

It had been the Protestant Reformation, Luther's assault on the church in the 1520s, that had first unlocked for Europe's print industry professions the full commercial potential of current events.[7] As the pamphlet storm of the Reformation receded, German publishers naturally looked for new ways to retain the readers tempted into a habit of book buying by the drama of Luther's protest. This spawned what was essentially a new genre: the short pamphlet of eight or sixteen pages devoted to contemporary affairs. In the course of the sixteenth century, news pamphlets proliferated, though within a relatively narrow thematic range. They brought to Europe's citizens mostly news of the doings of the great: royal entries, treaties and alliances; battles, sieges and the conduct of war. Occasionally they delved into more parochial matters, with accounts of crime or natural disasters. The more spectacular of these events also generated a market for news broadsheets: single sheets devoted to a single event, accompanied by a vivid illustration. Naturally the broadsheets concentrated on events that would most obviously benefit from the inclusion of an illustration. The collections that survive furnish examples of broadsheets dealing with

6 Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know about Itself* (London: Yale University Press, 2014).

7 Mark U. Edwards, *Print, Propaganda and Martin Luther* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther: 1517, Printing and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin, 2015).

floods, earthquakes and notorious crimes, as well as what were known in the unforgiving terminology of the time as 'monstrous births', deformed human or animal births, or conjoined twins.[8] By far the greatest number, at least judging by surviving examples, recorded strange celestial apparitions: comets or meteors, the Aurora Borealis (the Northern Lights) or instances that have no obvious scientific cognate, such as animals or contending armies in the sky.

All of these news prints, whether in broadsheet or pamphlet form, were strongly moralistic in tone. Tales of exemplary punishment for terrible crimes served an obvious purpose, while heavenly apparitions were universally regarded as portending great or terrible events. Crucial to the form and purpose of news pamphlets was the fact that they were almost inevitably written after the conclusion of the events they described: when a battle was decided, a siege concluded, or a treaty signed. This allowed their authors to write with the benefit of hindsight, when the consequence of an event was known. It also allowed the author to place the event in a wide context: to explain the background and offer analysis.

These early new prints were far from objective. Publishers were very wary of issuing anything that might give offence to their readers, or, perhaps more pertinently, the local authorities. They tended therefore to celebrate exclusively the victories and triumphs of the ruling power, or, in the age of confessional conflict, states of a similar religious persuasion. Reverses and defeats were usually passed over in silence. This obviously posed problems to those who, for professional reasons, required more objective statements of the disposition of military force, and the risks of international commerce. For discerning interested parties of this type, the pamphlets were of little practical use: they relied instead on a parallel manuscript news service offered to customers on a subscription basis.

These *avvisi*, as they were known, were the greatest news innovation of the age, one that would be deeply influential in the later form of the newspaper.[9] The *avvisi* originated, like so many other critical aspects of news culture, in Renaissance Italy. They grew out of the normal practice of merchant correspondence, where the communication of political events likely to shape market conditions was as necessary to successful commerce as details of prices and goods traded. In the sixteenth century, enterprising news agents began to offer such bulletins to subscribing customers on a regular basis, usually weekly.

8 Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer auf Papier: Die 'Wickiana' zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube* (Epfendorf: Bibliotheca academica, 2011).

9 Mario Infelise, *Prima dei giornali: alle origini della pubblica informazione* (*secoli XVI–XVII*) (Bari: Laterza, 2002).

Such services became a recognised part of the news networks first in Rome and Venice, the two established news hubs of the Italian peninsula, before crossing the Alps with the Imperial post service. By the seventeenth century most parts of Europe had their purveyors of manuscript newsletters.

The service was not cheap, but universally recognised as the most reliable form of news available in early modern Europe. *Avvisi* were also very distinctive in stylistic terms. Again taking their cue from merchant correspondence, they offered their information in short, clipped paragraphs, seldom more than two or three sentences long.[10] The bare essentials of the pertinent information were generally offered without comment or analysis. It was assumed that the reader would be sufficiently aware of the context to draw their own conclusions.

This was the exact opposite of the pamphlet tradition, and led to an early bifurcation of the European news trade. The *avvisi* offered regular diets of unembroidered news, with native caution reinforced by an uncomfortable recognition that they were recording unfolding events. It was by no means clear how things would turn out, or even which of their mass of reports would turn out to be significant. The *avvisi* traded in a regular flow of pure news, offered to an elite audience of those who had a professional need for accurate information. Pamphlets served a far broader market of those who were not regular consumers but whose interest could be piqued by momentous events. These occasional readers welcomed both the detailed narrative and guidance on the significance or likely consequences of what had occurred. These two traditions would continue to exist, largely in parallel, until well into the eighteenth century. It would only be at the very end of the period that the contrasting streams of information and opinion would be fully merged.

Before we pass on to consider these later events in more detail it is important to recognise one other form of news medium, seldom if ever mentioned in studies of the news, and that is state communication. In the early modern period all government regimes functioned to some extent by a process of dialogue and regulation. While court ritual might emphasise the ineffable God-given authority of the ruler, in reality all regimes existed to a large extent by consent; and this had to be cultivated and nurtured. Early modern states developed an elaborate infrastructure for making known changes in the law, and this was an age in which the arm of the state encroached into ever expanding areas of civic life.

10 See the splendid examples from the newsletter collection of the Fuggers of Augsburg at http://fuggerzeitungen.univie.ac.at/en.

Europe's princes were quick to see the potential of print for making known their intentions: to their subjects but also to neighbouring states. These ordinances and proclamations were to a wholly unacknowledged extent both news-bearing and persuasive.[11] These important documents are only now being systematically studied; they reveal an acute sensitivity to the needs and expectation of the citizenry, and recognition that law requires the consent of key groups among them.

These printed ordinances enhanced, rather than replaced, highly efficient existing mechanisms for the communication of law and regulations. The range of business they cover is extraordinarily broad, from announcements of new taxation, through detailed regulation of commerce, to the announcement of a search for a missing child or notorious criminal.[12] These, too, have their echo in the seventeenth-century newspaper world. They are a reminder that long before the coffee shop or the Enlightenment salon, Europe's urban communities had an extremely various news world. Indeed, the effectiveness of this news environment created a challenging context for the new periodical news ventures of the seventeenth century.

The First Newspapers

Just as the thirst for books in the fifteenth century helped inspire the birth of print, so the thirst for news spawned a significant new innovation: the newspaper. The newspaper emerged from the milieu of existing newsmen: the first man to attempt a regular printed serial, Johannes Carolus of Strasbourg, was the proprietor of a manuscript news service.[13] With his newspaper, rather as with books in the incunabula age, he was essentially mechanising (and thereby increasing the volume) of an already existing part of the communication process. This may help explain why, faced with a clear choice of models, the argumentative pamphlet or the dispassionate manuscript newsletter, the first newspapers opted decisively for the latter. This is a highly significant choice. In the first generations, the newspapers would essentially adopt the style and

11 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, and forthcoming studies by Saskia Limbach and Arthur der Weduwen.

12 Stephen J. Milner, '"Fanno Bandire, notificare, et expressamente comandare". Town Criers and the Information Economy of Renaissance Florence', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 16 (2013), pp. 107–151.

13 Johannes Weber, 'Strassburg 1605. The Origins of the Newspaper in Europe', *German History*, 24 (2006), pp. 387–412.

structure of the manuscript newsletters. They offered a succession of short, staccato reports from the continent's major news hubs, all presented without comment or explanation. It was assumed that the subscriber would need no further guidance on the meaning or significance of what they were being told.

While this may have been true for those who could afford the expensive manuscript newsletters, it was hardly the case for members of the far wider circle who must be persuaded to subscribe if the newspapers were to succeed. Given that a year's subscription to a manuscript newsletter might cost the equivalent of £10 or more, a dozen subscribing customers would provide a decent living. But a newspaper subscription was governed by the normal economics of print. An eight-page newspaper in pamphlet form would retail for as little as two pence. It was hard to turn a profit even on a print run of three or four hundred. For this reason the early years of the newspaper were characterised by commercial difficulties similar to those that had afflicted the fifteenth-century print industry, once the first technological fascination had worn off.

The establishment of the first newspaper in Strasbourg (then in the Holy Roman Empire, rather than France) was symbolic in one further respect: it marked the shift in the axis of the news market from southern to northern Europe. In the sixteenth century the Italian peninsula had been the undisputed heart of the European news world. Now, with the birth of the newspaper, primacy shifted decisively to Germany, the Netherlands and England. Newspaper publication spread most rapidly in the city states and principalities of the Holy Roman Empire. We can enumerate ninety papers published before 1650 in the German-speaking lands, in at least thirty different cities. Given that it was highly unusual for a city to be able to sustain two competing papers, we can deduce that many of these titles were very short-lived: in fact, for many newspapers we know of their existence from just one surviving issue.[14] Those newspapers that endured were often sustained by direct subsidy from the local prince: hence the rather scathing designation as 'court papers'.

The first truly commercial market was that established in the booming and heavily urbanised Dutch Republic. A new state, with a buoyant economy and apparently limitless entrepreneurial energy, the Dutch Republic, and especially its largest city Amsterdam, took to the newspaper with great enthusiasm. Amsterdam had two weekly newspapers by 1618, and for a brief period in the 1640s as many as seven.[15] In England the innate caution of the Stuart monarchy initially restricted the opportunities for news serials, and as late as 1632 they

14 Jan Hillgärtner, *German Newspapers, 1605–1650: A Bibliography* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

15 Arthur der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers of the Seventeenth Century, 1618–1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

were banned altogether. This period of official restraint was temporarily ended by the turbulence of the Civil War, which provoked a rash of new serials. Few lasted more than a few months, though the most successful on the royalist and Parliamentarian side were regarded as influential tools in the struggle for moral supremacy. The victorious Commonwealth quickly tired of an unregulated free-for-all, introducing restrictions continued by the restored monarchy. It was only in the last decades of the century that a truly free, multi-title market was introduced in London. England would enter the eighteenth century with far and away the most vibrant and commercially mature newspaper market, a mass of competing titles serving a segmented and diverse market.

Elsewhere, the picture was more mixed. Italy had not taken to the newspapers. Neither Rome nor Venice had a successful newspaper during the seventeenth century, and the earliest ventures, which date from the 1640s, all appeared in secondary population centres.[16] These papers scarcely flourished. All were quasi-official ventures, closely monitored or even directly published by the court. The conspicuous failure of the newspapers in Italy partially reflects continued satisfaction with the more confidential medium of the manuscript news books. It also signals the declining importance of the Italian states in European affairs.

The rising power of France, with its twenty million inhabitants, at first sight represents a far more promising terrain for newspapers. But here the government chose a different path, establishing a single title, the Paris *Gazette*, as a monopoly provider.[17] The *Gazette* monopoly was carefully policed. To avoid the establishment of competitors, the shrewd proprietors (the family Renaudot, who ran the paper for the best part of 150 years) franchised a series of provincial reprints; in the closely controlled Paris market there was no possibility of a rival. The news coverage of the *Gazette* was good, since the Renaudot were provided with access to a good deal of official diplomatic correspondence. The paper was unusual also in the attention it devoted to domestic news, or at least to the doings of the king and court. Here its coverage was unrelentingly fawning and obsequious.

The editorial submissiveness of the Paris *Gazette* has been much deplored by newspaper historians, as it was by contemporary commentators, but seventeenth-century newspapers throughout Europe were generally inclined to caution in their coverage of domestic events. Most newspapers devoted

16 Nina Lamal, *Late with the news: Italian Engagement with Serial News Publications in the Seventeenth Century (1639–1700)* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

17 Gilles Feyel, *L'annonce et la nouvelle: La presse d'information en France sous l'Ancien Régime (1630–1788)* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000).

eighty percent or more of their space to foreign despatches. Coverage of events nearer home seldom extended beyond the relatively safe terrain of ships safely arrived in port or the movements of the Prince. With the exception of the more contentious English press, domestic politics were generally regarded as being off limits.

Most German papers had only a limited local circulation, were closely associated with the local court and were often dependent for their survival on a direct financial subsidy. Even in the Netherlands, where the papers came closest to true independence through their early adoption of paid advertising, the exuberance of the early decades was progressively reined in. The Dutch Republic ended the seventeenth century with a good range of newspapers, but now distributed one to a city: in Amsterdam, Haarlem, The Hague and Leiden. The proprietor of each paid a substantial fee to the local municipality for the right to make large profits, a privilege that could easily be withdrawn or reassigned if the paper caused offence. Thus in most parts of Europe government authorities found ways of enforcing the dutiful obsequiousness so evident in the Paris *Gazette*. If less obvious, and certainly less florid, elsewhere, newspaper proprietors usually had a clear idea of the limitations of their freedom of action.

Journalism

In these multiple ways, journalist freedom of action was extremely constrained: not only because of the obvious danger of punitive repercussions should a paper step out of line, but because the economics of publication were so daunting. The cover price of a paper could seldom cover the costs of news-gathering and production. Any theoretical profit margin was easily eroded by the difficulty of collecting subscriptions. Many papers published in the seventeenth century were the work of a single proprietor, working without further editorial staff. The proprietor would create the text by the relatively simple process of digesting incoming reports, many taken either verbatim from manuscript *avvisi* or from other newspapers.

This digest had to be crammed into a four- or eight-page pamphlet, or, in the Dutch case, a single half-sheet printed on both sides. The inflexibility of the form, and the fixed date of publication, was particularly restrictive when major news events occurred; at such times a swiftly composed pamphlet would still trump a newspaper. Proprietors were aware of this danger, and would sometimes publish an extra issue (an 'extraordinary') to reward the loyalty of subscribers; but in normal circumstances a single issue seldom comprised more

than about two thousand words.[18] As the century wore on the most successful papers, particularly in the Dutch Republic, developed a more extensive range of correspondents, responsible for collecting news and forwarding it to the editorial office. Some Dutch papers of the 1680s list as many as twenty-five places of correspondence.[19] But they were extremely reluctant to add extra pages, preferring to cram more news into the same double-sided sheet.

In many ways the newspaper proved to be a remarkably conservative and inflexible medium: cautious in the choice of material, typographically unadventurous, an unchanging recitation of bare reports from Italy, Germany and France. And some things could not be changed even by the most adventurous newsmen, notably the speed at which news could be obtained. Europe's postal network was substantially in place before the foundation of the first newspapers, and reached its refined state within the next thirty years. Thereafter the speed at which news passed through the postal routes was not significantly improved until the middle of the nineteenth century, with the advent of steam-powered ships, the railways and the telegraph.[20] In these critical elements of infrastructure, the Enlightenment newspaper was not significantly different from its seventeenth-century predecessors.

Harassed and living on a financial knife-edge, Europe's newspapermen were nevertheless thoughtful about their trade. However difficult it might be to obtain reliable news, newspapermen cared deeply that what appeared in their issues was true. They hesitated to report rumour as fact, and if a report were uncorroborated they would indicate as much. An uncertain source was frequently labelled as such: 'we hear from Vienna'; 'it is said that in Lyon'. If news confidently reported turned out to be false, many newspapermen felt the need, albeit often with an ill grace, to offer a correction in the next issue.[21]

Here we see the beginnings of a code of journalistic ethics: not always clearly articulated, but nevertheless strongly felt.[22] This consisted of several elements: the concern that news should be true and verifiable, hence the need for corroboration; the suspicion of opinion, and the continued sense that a reader should be presented with the facts, having sufficient wit to draw their

18 For examples of these special issues, see Der Weduwen, *Dutch and Flemish Newspapers*.

19 Ibid.

20 Joop K. Koopmans, 'Supply and Speed of Foreign News to the Netherlands during the Eighteenth Century. A Comparison of Newspapers in Haarlem and Groningen', in his *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), pp. 185–202.

21 Pettegree, *Invention of News*.

22 Stephen J.A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2004).

own conclusions. This was famously set out in the editor's address to his readers in the first issue of the *Daily Courant*, where he swore off any commentary or conjectures of his own, "supposing other people to have sense enough to make reflections for themselves".[23]

These considerations in turn gave birth to a sense that the proper role of the newspapers was to remain impartial: to present facts for the judgement of the reader. In places like London with competing newspapers and fractious politics, such a position was impossible to maintain, but this was very much the exception. Most newspapers were published in places where there was no local competitor, so it was a matter of simple prudence not to risk offending one portion of your readership. This principle was enunciated with characteristic elegance by Benjamin Franklin, a newspaperman in his early career before he became a leading statesman of the American colonies. "Printers are educated in the belief", he wrote, "that when men differ in opinion, both sides ought equally to have the advantage of being heard by the public".[24]

Such a principle might seem ideally suited to the age of Enlightenment: the newspaper as the facilitator of rational discourse, presenting educated readers with the facts to shape their views. In fact, as the eighteenth century wore on, these principles came under increasing strain as contentious politics put pressure on the ethical principles adduced in the early newspapers. The importation of the spirit of the pamphlet, argumentative and partisan, threatened to effect the first fundamental change in the form and style of the newspaper since their introduction. Not all would agree that this was a change for the better.

Bought and Sold

There is no doubt that the eighteenth century witnessed a considerable growth in the periodical press. By 1750 there were more than 90 newspapers published in German-speaking Europe, and 150 by 1785; although most were still small local ventures, the total print run was something approaching 300,000 copies. While the *Gazette* maintained its monopoly in France, the appetite for news can be gauged by the fact that by 1749 no fewer than 28 cities were served by authorised reprints.[25] In England the efflorescence of the London press was now echoed by a strong growth in the provincial news market; an echo in a very real

23 *Daily Courant*, 11 March 1702. Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 247.

24 Quoted in Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 335.

25 Popkin, *News and Politics*, p. 2.

sense, as much of the text of these newspapers was extracted directly from the London papers.[26] The same can be said of the first papers in colonial America. These early colonial papers, generally distributed one to a colony, drew up to 70% of their copy from newsletters and papers brought over on the Atlantic packages.[27] Not surprisingly, many early newspaper publishers doubled as the local postmaster, who in this way were able to monetise their privileged early access to the incoming mails.

There is little doubt of the appetite for news. Whether the expanded newspaper trade would be able to satisfy it was more questionable. The German papers by and large maintained the traditions of their seventeenth-century predecessors, eschewing local politics, and this was also the settled practice of the Dutch papers, now monopoly providers in their own local markets. This studied neutrality came under increasing strain during the Patriot agitation of the 1780s, but it was not given up without a struggle; witness the pained editorial placed in the *Leidse Courant* of 1785:

> Since a newspaper is meant to publish news events, and print official documents, and is not designed to be a collection of contesting articles, we kindly request our contributors not to bother us with this kind of copy.[28]

Like Canute holding back the tide, this venerable tradition was about to fall victim to revolutionary pressures, in the Netherlands as elsewhere, but it does signal one significant shift in content in the eighteenth century, as the short clipped reports of the early papers were increasingly interspersed with long official documents, published complete or in extended extracts. This was the expression of a public service obligation that many newspaper proprietors were happy to honour, but it did not make for lively reading. The continued absence of a strong editorial line made the newspapers increasingly vulnerable to the competition of the new political monthlies or essays published in serial form. Even the satirical *Spectator* genre, while ostensibly denying any political intent, often contained more pointed political comment than the newspapers.

The general exception, of course, is England, with its lively and partisan press. Here, for the first time, a newspaper culture entered wholeheartedly into the hurly burly of domestic politics. But this was not because sales or advertising

26 Roy MacKeen Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965).

27 Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700–1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

28 Pettegree, *Invention of News*, p. 358.

revenue had given the newspapers the independence of financial security: rather, in practice, almost all London papers were bought instruments of either government or opposition. It was in this context that the term journalist entered the English language, not as a description of an honoured profession, but as a term of abuse. A journalist was seldom employed by a single paper, but retained by the government (or an opposition politician) to place articles as required in one or other of their paid agents' publications. Most of England's leading writers, including Samuel Johnson, accepted fees for this sort of work, but a more characteristic figure was probably a Mr Taylor, who was paid £100 for writing in various government-supporting papers in 1791.[29] We know of him only because of this entry in Pitt's secret service accounts. Otherwise he makes no impact on the record. In Walpole's day, payments had generally gone directly to the newspaper publisher, for both printing and writing the paper: copies could then be disbursed free of charge to a friendly audience.

The result was that the London press earned a reputation for vicious partisanship that even our modern day press would find hard to match. No reputations were spared, not even the royal family. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, the London press found new ways to aggravate the leaders of society, and line their pockets, by mixing political abuse with salacious stories about their private lives. The model in this brave new world was the *Morning Post*, a lively venture established in London's West End. From the beginning it assumed that readers wished to be entertained as much as informed. Its runaway success inspired many imitators. The system was called selling paragraphs. A paper would obtain a story about the antics of a society figure or member of the aristocracy. The victim would then be offered the opportunity to suppress the story in return for a fee. Should the publication go ahead, there was the further opportunity to place a rebuttal, again in return for a fee. This was a conscienceless trade, but the practice became endemic: a reminder that long use and familiarity can make the appalling commonplace. A rare hold-out like William Cobbett believed that his failure as a newspaper editor could be attributed to his refusal to sell paragraphs. The descent into scandal and titillation completed the degeneration of the newspaper ideal in eighteenth century London.

In France the *Gazette* sailed on, secure in possession of its privileged monopoly. This did not spare France increasingly rancorous political debate, not least a titanic mid-century struggle between the ministry and the Parlement of Paris. Reverses overseas also unleashed a torrent of criticism, unreported in the

29 *The History of The Times, vol. 1: 'The Thunderer' in the Making, 1785–1841* (London: The Times Publishing Company, 1935), p. 60.

Gazette (as were the military setbacks).[30] The *Gazette*'s very traditional interpretation of a newspaper's duty, as an obedient instrument of royal power, created an opportunity eagerly seized by a group of French-language newspapers published abroad, most notably the celebrated *Gazette de Leyde*. Sober, serious, measured and well-informed, the *Gazette de Leyde* was extensively read outside the French-speaking world, and built a towering reputation. By the middle of the seventeenth century it was Europe's *de facto* newspaper of record.

Not surprisingly both the *Gazette de Leyde* and its sober-sided editor, Jean Luzac, have attracted a great deal of admiring comment from modern scholars.[31] In many respects this was the quintessential Enlightenment newspaper, serious and painstaking. Luzac refused any hint of subsidy from those seeking to influence the choice of contents and certainly never descended to the ribald abuse practiced in the London press. The *Gazette de Leyde* was certainly a remarkable creation, frequently praised in diplomatic and intellectual circles. Its influence, however, was probably more circumscribed than we may be led to believe by this chorus of approbation. The *Gazette de Leyde* could only circulate in France with the connivance of ministers, who could, had they chosen, simply have instructed the postmaster to refuse consignments. Luzac was well aware of this, and tailored his coverage of French political events accordingly. The French authorities were generally happy to allow the circulation of foreign newspapers so long as they maintained this measured coverage of French events; they recognised that publication outside France offered an assurance of editorial independence that was not always justified. The *Courrier de l'Europe*, published in London, was sustained by a direct subsidy from the French government.[32]

The print run of the *Gazette de Leyde* was not especially large, and not all the copies were delivered to France. Its circulation was a fraction of that of the apparently despised Paris *Gazette*. We must not assume that because we admire the judicious reporting of Luzac from Leiden, this is necessarily what French citizens were themselves looking for to assuage their hunger for news. We get some hint of their news priorities in the carefully assembled Paris police reports, a wonderful source that offer us a sort of equivalent to the reports of the Mass Information project set up to monitor civilian morale in Britain during

30 Tabatha Ewing, 'Invasion of Lorient: Rumor, Public Opinion and Foreign Politics in 1740s Paris', in Charles Walton (ed.), *Into Print: Limits and Legacies of the Enlightenment* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), pp. 101–112.

31 Popkin, *News and Politics*.

32 Ibid., p. 54.

the Second World War.[33] The Paris police files report that café goers followed the royal sex life with obsessive interest, with sympathy or disfavour depending largely on the general climate of politics. The French crown had deliberately placed itself at the centre of eighteenth-century celebrity culture, and this was the price.

A further revealing insight into the news culture of the Ancien Régime comes from Pierre Manuel, writing from the perspective of the new revolutionary freedoms after 1789. Manuel was savage about the *Gazette*:

> A people that wants to be informed cannot be satisfied with the *Gazette de France*. Why should it care if the king has performed the ritual of foot-washing for some poor folk whose feet weren't even dirty? Or if the queen celebrated Easter in company with the comte d'Artois? Or if Monsieur deigned to accept the dedication of a book that he may never read?

A fair point, but what did the people want: serious discourse on economic affairs? An analysis of battlefield tactics? Not at all:

> The people want to know everything that is actually done and said in the court – why and for whom the cardinal de Rohan should have taken it into his head to play games with a pearl necklace; if it is true that the comtesse Diane appoints the generals of the army and the comtesse Jule the bishops; how many Saint Louis medals the minister of war allotted to his mistress for distribution as New Year's presents.[34]

It was not the triviality of the Gazette that offended, rather that it provided the wrong sort of gossip. According to Manuel the political *beau monde* wanted something far closer to the irreverent London scandal sheets. For this they had to turn to the manuscript *nouvelles à la main*, now largely shorn of their seventeenth-century high-mindedness in a society hungry for scandal.

Revolutions

The age of revolutions was in some respects the ultimate test of Enlightenment principles of public discourse. To some, merely to throw off the constraints

33 Robert Darnton, 'An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris', *American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), pp. 1–35.

34 Darnton, 'Early Information Society', p. 6.

that hampered the free expression of opinion was a sufficient warranty of ultimate victory. As Thomas Paine put it in *The Rights of Man*, "Ignorance is of a peculiar nature; once dispelled it is impossible to re-establish it. … It has never yet been discovered how to make a man unknow his knowledge or unthink his thoughts".[35] Certainly it speaks volumes for the importance attached to news that the issue of press freedom played a crucial role in all the main revolutionary events of the age. The press was, in this sense, both agency and cause.

In England the long and complex agitation unleashed by John Wilkes would eventually bring significant victories for the principle of a free press. Wilkes was not an easy man to follow: volatile, erratic and not particularly scrupulous. But his cheerful heedlessness epitomised a risk-taking spirit that ultimately made the London press impossible to harness within traditional constraints. In the American colonies, too, it was the perceived assault on the freedom of the press, the Stamp Act crisis, that jolted the colonial press out of its tradition of placid impartiality. It was hard not to take sides against a financial imposition that many believed, with some justice, threatened the financial viability of colonial papers. Certainly the logistics of obtaining the stamped paper were far more daunting than in England, where a similar imposition had been absorbed without undue disruption. The new solidarity of political activism, and the swift victory as the Stamp Act was withdrawn, made it more difficult to retreat from the political front when other crises followed in its wake, though the colonial press never again showed the same unity of purposes as it did here, in the defence of its own economic interest. In France the destruction of the hated *Gazette* monopoly was one of the earliest revolutionary acts, unleashing a flood of news serial publications (and pamphlets) that would chronicle every act of the unfolding drama over the next decade.

Revolutions, of course, are seldom kind to their first begetters; and so it would prove to those who put the freedom of the press at the heart of the revolutionary agenda. In the American colonies the long march to independence left many casualties along the way, not least the hope of free and rational debate. Many colonial newspaper proprietors were men of a naturally conservative disposition, and as postmasters, imperial officials. The violence and disorder of the Boston commotions were to men of this stamp naturally uncongenial. But the gradual polarisation of opinion left little room for equivocation: to be insufficiently warm in the Patriot cause was to become, by default,

35 Quoted in Elizabeth Eisenstein, 'On Revolution and the Printed Word', in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teick (eds.), *Revolution in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 186–205.

a Tory.[36] The banner slogan that decorated many newspapers, 'Open to all parties, but influenced by none', was now an empty gesture towards an earlier tradition no longer relevant to the new realities of the revolutionary conflict. Press freedom had in effect been redefined to mean the freedom to support liberty against imperial tyranny. Only in cities occupied by the British army was it safe to offer contrary opinions, with the consequence that publishers who expressed loyalist sentiments were inevitably denounced as paid agents of the London Treasury.

The ironic consequence of this functional redefinition of press freedom – the freedom to agree – was that the nearest semblance of open debate on policy towards the colonies was to be found not in America, but in the capital of Imperial tyranny, London. Here a considerable part of the London press continued to press the colonial cause, a drumbeat of criticism courageously maintained despite predictable outrage at a lack of patriotic solidarity. For those determined to pursue what was increasingly clearly an unwinnable war, the steady and remarkably unrestrained interrogation of a critical press was a significant additional burden.[37]

In France, the decade between 1789 and 1799 would spawn over 1,400 serial publications, in Paris alone.[38] Almost all of the major figures of the revolutionary years were at some point journalists; for some, the periodical that was their mouthpiece was the cornerstone of their claim to a public voice. But in rejecting the sycophantic tone of the *Gazette*, the papers of revolutionary France gradually came to reject almost every other tenet of journalism as it had developed in the last two centuries. Gone was the sober recitation of news from Europe's capitals: the new periodicals were absorbed by the unfolding dramas at home, a relentless tumult of advocacy and denunciation. Each became the instrument of a leading actor or faction, and many died with their directing spirit, for, as never before, in revolutionary France journalism was a deadly trade. Brissot, Marot, Camille Desmoulins and Hébert (Père Duschesne) all fell victims to the terrors they had unleashed.

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36 Stephen Botein, 'Printers and the American Revolution', in Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench (eds.), *The Press and the American Revolution* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1980), pp. 11–57.

37 Andrew O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Command during the Revolutionary War and the Preservation of the Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

38 Hugh Gough, *The Newspaper Press in the French Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1988) and 'The French Revolutionary Press', in Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows (eds.), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 182–200. Jeremy D. Popkin, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France, 1789–1799* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990).

The Revolution also addressed itself to the irrationality of Ancien Régime justice. The theatre of punishment was everything that a philosophe despised: arbitrary and vicious, shot through by custom, rituals and distinctions of status that prescribed a baroque cocktail of differentiated punishments. In 1791 the revolutionary Assembly discussed abolishing the death penalty altogether. The most eloquent advocate of such a cause was the young Maximilian Robespierre:

> I come not to beg the Gods, but the legislators who must be the organs and interpreters of eternal laws which divinity has dictated to mankind, to erase from the Code of the French the blood laws which call for judicial murders.[39]

The Assembly drew back from such a radical proposal, instead opting for justice that recognised no variations of status; all would be despatched by the same method, beheading, and by a new painless mechanism, the guillotine. The guillotine was the ultimate rational killing machine, the triumph of Enlightenment thought and science. And it was not immediately popular. The fact that there was so little drama angered onlookers; when the first prisoner was despatched with lightning speed, onlookers expressed their disappointment, chanting 'Give me back my wooden gallows'. Such disappointment was short-lived, for the Paris mob soon learned how to create a sense of occasion as the pace of executions accelerated towards the Great Terror. When Jacques René Hébert, creator of the ribald alter ego Père Duschesne, faced his own appointment with death, 400,000 lined the streets to watch him die, determined that a fallen hero should feel their full wrath. The despatch of so many revolutionary heroes was the signal accomplishment of Maximilian Robespierre, who had by now abandoned both his distaste for capital punishment and his commitment to the freedom of the press. Shortly before concluding his ascent to power, Robespierre had sketched an extraordinary political catechism. This demonstrates the extent to which he now saw unlicensed freedom as the heart of the discord that had engulfed the revolutionary movement:

> What is our aim? It is the use of the Constitution for the benefit of the people.
> Who is likely to oppose us? The rich and the corrupt.
> What methods will they employ? Slander and hypocrisy.

39 Friedland, *Seeing Justice Done*, p. 231.

> What factors will encourage the use of such means? The ignorance of the sans-culottes.
> The people must therefore be instructed.
> What are the obstacles to their enlightenment? The paid journalists who mislead the people every day by shameless distortions.
> What conclusion follows? That we ought to proscribe these writers as the most dangerous enemies of the country, and to circulate an abundance of good literature.[40]

On 16 June 1793 he invited the Committee of Public Safety to punish "treacherous journalists who are the most dangerous enemies of liberty".[41]

The passing of the revolutionary tide was marked by measures to rein in the press. The post-Thermidor regimes moved swiftly to repress the most offensive titles, creating a legislative context eagerly embraced by Napoleon Bonaparte when he seized power in 1799. Of the eighty Parisian publishing houses chosen to be retained under the Napoleonic system, only nineteen specialised in journals or periodicals. There was no great public outcry. The new restrictions imposed on the press seemed to have accorded with a public desire for a period of respite from the incessant calls to arms.

In the new United States, the frantic tone of press criticism eventually goaded John Adams, faced with the impossible task of following the sainted George Washington, into passing the Sedition Act, criminalising false statements critical of the Federal government. When this was allowed to lapse by the new president, Thomas Jefferson, statesmen of the early Republic would pay a heavy price for the constitutional guarantee of free speech, subjected to a barrage of rancorous abuse that overstepped all restraints of civility.

This was, furthermore, a press largely bought and paid for by interested parties.[42] It would be technological innovation in the nineteenth century, especially the introduction of the steam press, that would finally place the press on a firm financial footing, and provide the prospect, if not the guarantee, of editorial independence. The nineteenth century would witness far more revolutionary change in the newspaper world than the age of the Enlightenment.

The eighteenth century had demonstrated that the appetite for news continued to run ahead of the supply of newspapers in many parts of Europe, despite

40 Quoted in Ruth Scurr, *Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2006), p. 255.

41 Gough, *The Newspaper Press*, p. 98.

42 Marcus Daniel, *Scandal and Civility: Journalism and the Birth of American Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

steady incremental growth in the quantity and frequency of issues. For much of the period the newspaper world was characterised by a profound conservatism of form and style; the boisterous London press was in this respect the great exception. Serious political debate was obliged to find other avenues: the new political journals, the venerable pamphlets. The eighteenth century is often rightly characterised as the age of the journal. The revolutionary fervour of the latter part of the century both accelerated the pace of change and radicalised the form of the newspaper, not always to the benefit of rational discourse. One of the most significant actions of the pro-French revolutionary ascendency in the Netherlands was Jean Luzac's forced resignation from the *Gazette de Leyde*, the axiomatic Enlightenment newspaper.[43] In these strange new times, its cool rationality was *prima facie* evidence of counter-revolutionary tendencies. The complexities and contradictions of the search for an Enlightenment culture of news in some respects encapsulate very neatly the essence of a society in which political ambition, commercial considerations and human nature often combined to subvert the optimistically proclaimed spirit of the age. But then, reporting the news will always hold up an unflattering mirror to the face of the society it serves.

43 Popkin, *News and Politics*, pp. 188–214.

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Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette.
Bee or, Universal Weekly Pamphlet (*The Bee Reviv'd*).
Boston Gazette.
Boston News-Letter.
Caledonian Mercury.
Chelmsford Chronicle.
Chester Chronicle.
Christelijcken Jongeling.
Corn Cutter's Journal.
Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.
Courrier de l'Europe.
Craftsman or Say's Weekly Journal.
Critical Review.
Daily Advertiser.
Daily Courant.
Daily Journal.
Danmark og Norges Oeconomiske Magazin.
Den danske Mercurius.
Den danske Spectator.
Den snakksomme Bergenser.
Derby Mercury.

Edinburgh Evening Post.
Efterretninger fra Adresse-Contoiret i Bergen i Norge.
Evening Post.
Extraordinaires Maanedlige Relationer.
Extraordinaires Relationes aus Allerley Orten.
Flying Post.
Gazette d'Amsterdam.
Gazette de France.
Gazette de Leyde.
Gazette nationale de France.
Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser.
Gazetteer, The.
General Evening Post.
Gentleman's Magazine.
Grub Street Journal.
Guardian, The.
Hull Courant.
Ipswich Journal.
Jackson's Oxford Journal.
Journal de l'Empire.
Journal de Paris.
Journal des sçavans.
Kentish Gazette.
Kongelig allene privilegerede Tronhiem.
Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger.
Lancashire Journal.
Leeds Intelligencer.
Leeuwarder Courant.
Lloyd's Evening Post.
L'Observateur des spectacles, de la littérature et des arts.
London Chronicle or Universal Evening Post.
London Evening Post.
London Gazette.
Lærde efterretninger.
Manchester Mercury.
Mercure de France.
Mercurius.
Monthly Review.
Morning Chronicle.

Morning Post.
Narvische Post-Zeitungen.
New York Gazette.
Newcastle Courant.
Nordischer Mercurius.
Norske Intelligenz-Seddeler.
Northampton Mercury.
Nottingham Courant.
Oprechte Haerlemse Courant.
Oprechte Rotterdamse Zee-en Post-tijdingen.
Opregte Leydse Courant.
Oracle, The.
Ordinari Post-Tijdender.
Ordinarise Middel-weeckse Courante.
Original Mercury, York Journal: Or, Weekly Courant.
Original Weekly Journal.
Owen's Weekly Chronicle and Westminster Journal.
Oxford Journal.
Pennsylvania Gazette.
Post Boy.
Post Man.
Protestant York Courant.
Public Advertiser.
Reading Mercury.
Reval(i)sche Post-Zeitung.
Rigische Montags (*Donnerstags*) *Ordinari Post Zeitung.*
Rigische Novellen.
Rotterdamse Zee-en Post-tijdingen.
Salisbury and Winchester Journal.
South-Carolina Gazette.
Spectator, The.
Spectatrice danoise, La.
St. James's Chronicle or British Evening Post.
St. James's Evening Post.
St. James Post.
Stamford Mercury.
Stockholmche Advisen.
Swänska Aviser.
Tatler, The.

Tiden.
Tijdinghen uyt verscheyde Quartieren.
Times, The.
Tronhiemske samlinger.
Universal Chronicle.
Utrechtse Courant.
Virginia Gazette.
Warwickshire and Staffordshire Journal.
Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer.
Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post.
World, The.
York Courant.
York Mercury.
York Gazetteer.
York Journal; or, Weekly Advertiser.

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