Publishers’ advertising strategies to widen and diversify readership
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The study brings a formal analysis of the advertisements published in four Prague newspapers at the end of the eighteenth century, two in German and two in Czech. It enables us to understand the way publishers used this medium and targeted new readers. The article then questions the role of the two locally used languages in publishers’ strategies and the boundaries booksellers “imagined” for their readership. In the complex socio-cultural configuration of the Habsburg monarchy, they were not yet working within a fixed framework that would place boundaries on their activities or their clientele. Several elements of the advertisements enable us to distinguish different types of publishers. Until at least the 1820s, publishers’ strategies were not always defined by the language of the books they were advertising, but by other discriminating criteria: the quality of the language used in the book, the readers’ multilingualism, the scale and structure of distribution networks, the publisher’s attitude towards tradition.

Keywords: book market, readership, marketing strategy, advertisement, booksellers, Bohemia, 1770–1820

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Exploring the notion of materiality and its interrelation with culture, knowledge and society is at the core of the history of the book as a historiographical field. Historians commonly acknowledge that this field was primarily launched by the
publication of *The Coming of the book. The impact of printing 1450–1800,*¹ in 1958 in the wake of the post-WWII socio-economical history and, in its national context, in the wake of the *Annales* school. Lucien Febvre, one of its two authors and a co-founder of the *Annales*, devoted his own research to the sixteenth century, forging the notions of “total history” and “outillage mental” (mental toolkit).² His student, Henri-Jean Martin, who was responsible for completing the research and publishing of *The Coming of the book* after Febvre’s death, characterized books as “a commodity and a ferment”. He rejected the division between materiality and intellectuality, materiality and culture, as a misguided assumption in the history of material culture. He intended that this new field of research should draw up a “total history” of the book that would bridge intellectual, cultural and socio-economical history.³

While historians of “material culture” use both “things” and textual sources to analyse economic, social, anthropological or cultural issues, book historians analyse the materiality of text transmission. In doing so, they address a radical methodological problem in the relationship between text and “thing”: each book is a crafted object of texts, the result of a specific way of encoding texts materially. As such, research into the history of the book has transformed radically as historians have changed the way in which they consider their sources, borrowing the archaeological principle of seeing sources as “clues” rather than as “evidence”.⁴

Drawing on erudite methods of bibliography and philology but also on anthropology or pragmatic sociology, book historians have explored these issues in several directions: making quantitative surveys of book production, diffusion and reception, and analyzing the relationship between texts’ inscription and their

meaning,\(^5\) the appropriation practices of readers,\(^6\) or the entrepreneurial, economic and technical history of book professionals and their relations to cultural transformations. Throughout, they continued to pursue the ambition of addressing key issues in cultural and intellectual history, for instance the Reformation movement,\(^7\) humanist and post-humanist erudition,\(^8\) the cultural context of the French Revolution,\(^9\) the building of collective identities and nation-building processes.\(^{10}\)

As part of this enquiry into the socio-economic history of books, in the present paper we make use of a source directly related to the materiality of the book and to the economic implications of this materiality: newspaper advertisements for books.\(^{11}\) This is not an unknown source; the most prolific Czech book historian, Josef Volf, drew much information from advertisements, considering them as “documents” attesting to the existence of advertising firms.\(^{12}\) We use them now in a different way. The discourse on books and their readership that advertisements provide enables us to address one of the major phenomena of the transition period between the Enlightenment and the nationalisation of written culture in Bohemia: the transformation of readership, its enlargement, its social

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5 This issue is the core of Donald McKenzie’s, Armando Petrucci’s and Roger Chartier’s works.
12 See the complete bibliography of Josef Volf: KAREL HUENDL, Josef Volf a jeho význam pro čs. knihoznictví [Josef Volf and His Role in Czechoslovak Library Studies], Prague 1987.
complexification and its linguistic differentiation (c. 1770–1820).\textsuperscript{13} We assume that the discourse delivered by advertisements is closer to publishers’ economic strategies than intellectual projects; it is mainly profit-oriented and designed to communicate efficiently with potential readers. As such, it might differ in certain ways from representations of readership as we know them from regulatory and educational texts about literacy, reading and languages issued by members of the elites (pedagogues, authors, censors or legislators); individual testimonies by readers themselves remain rare.\textsuperscript{14}

The diffusion of literacy, the progressive rise of a modern public sphere and the explosion of the book market were common phenomena among the European societies in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the Habsburg monarchy, and in particular the Lands of the Bohemian crown, some of these phenomena bear peculiar features which bring certain issues to the fore, e.g. the impacts of language and plurilingualism on knowledge and information transmission processes,\textsuperscript{15} and the role of language and political borders in setting the

\textsuperscript{13} We use the term “Enlightenment period” to refer to the reigns of Maria Theresa (1740–1780) and Josef II (1780–1790), as both sovereigns implemented reforms that strongly impacted written culture and intellectual life in their lands (for example, Maria-Theresa reformed censorship and universities, regulated bookselling as a profession in 1772, and promulgated compulsory elementary schools in 1774; Josef II almost suppressed censorship and tended to liberalise the book market during the first half of his reign). This period ended with a severe political reaction in 1792 when the Habsburgs went to war against revolutionary France. The progressive development of literary and intellectual institutions referring to themselves as “national” and “Czech” took place no sooner than the first decades of the nineteenth century. For an overview of these five decades from the perspective of book history see: ZDENĚK ŠIMEČEK, Geschichte des Buchhandels in Tschechien und in der Slowakei, Wiesbaden 1990, pp. 10–97.


limits of a given text’s circulation. In this paper we shall look at both these issues by examining the marketing strategies of Prague booksellers and publishers.

Studies of eighteenth century advertisements have analysed how this type of discourse was born, and how it ceased to simply provide information about goods and began to persuade readers to buy the announced products. They have also shed light on the potentialities of these texts to give us access to the public they were meant for, because they sometimes provide us with clues about the social context of the intended use of the commodities they advertise. That is the reason why advertisements seemed a good source with which to analyse booksellers’ representations of their readers and the activity of reading.

We begin by investigating the materiality of advertisements in order to define their specificity amid book announcements and to grasp the reading practices they foresee, transform and adapt to. We then analyse the books described in the advertisements, in order to understand the range of readers the advertisements targeted: which aspects of the books are highlighted, for whom, and which contexts of reception do they depict or expect? Lastly, we focus on language as one of the characteristics of the advertised books and scrutinize the way this is used by the publishers.

Enlarging the Reading Public

The very fact that publishers and booksellers had advertisements printed in newspapers is evidence of their desire to widen their readership. Advertising books was by no means a new practice in the second half of the eighteenth century: publishers and booksellers had long been using a variety of means to inform people about their products. These included printed book catalogues, or lists of newly published books, that they could either disseminate as leaflets or add to their publications; we often find these bound into their books. These two media primarily addressed librarians and booksellers, along with the publishers’ more wealthy clients. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, though, a new medium was at hand: newspapers. An increasing readership was gaining

access to and interest in them, especially those related to offices of intelligence. Advertising in newspapers was easy in terms of financial cost, flexible because newspapers were regularly and often published, had a well-organised distribution network and enabled readers to keep track of the ever growing flow of new publications. Preserved collections indicate that from approximately 1800 onwards, booksellers printed fewer and fewer lists of new books, and preferred to use general, specialised and professional periodicals to advertise their collections.

Notices published in newspapers soon became the major non-professional way to find out about new books, as one Prague publisher stated in 1820: “Some say they would rather spend their money on a good book than a newspaper. Yet we can only comfortably find out about the latest good book by reading the newspaper.”

Advertisements for books printed in general political newspapers offer a unique opportunity to study representations of readership, because they addressed the public as a whole, whereas journals were usually specialised and targeted only a particular group of people with a certain domain of interest. Within the longer period in question (c. 1770–1820), the beginning of the 1790s offer us abundant material, since events related to the French Revolution were so compelling that a variety of newspapers managed to survive for several decades (uninterrupted publication was not something taken for granted, as we shall see). In Prague, two newspapers were in print in German and two

19 ZDENĚK ŠIMEČEK, Počátky novinového zpravodajství a novin v českých zemích (do devadesátých let 18. století) [The Beginning of Journalism and Newspapers in the Czech Lands (until 1790)], Brno 2011, pp. 247–358. For later periods see: ALADAR GUIDO PRZEDAK, Geschichte des deutschen Zeitschriftenwesens in Böhmen, Heidelberg 1904; JOSEF VOLF, Dějiny novin v Čechách do r. 1848 [History of Newspapers in Bohemia until 1848], Prague 1930.


in Czech, which is itself evidence of a readership increase. Each was published regularly and had a more or less regular supplement filled with various public and private announcements. Two were published by Johann Ferdinand Schönfeld (1750–1821), a successful entrepreneur who had progressively acquired the privileges of the two main newspapers: “the Prague Principal Post News” (Prager Oberpostamtszeitung) in German and “Schönfeld’s Royal Prague News” (Schönfeldské královské pražské nowiny) in Czech; from 1794 on he also published a list of the office of intelligence, Intelligenzblatt, as a supplement to the Oberpostamtszeitung. The third newspaper was founded in 1789 by Matěj Václav Kramerius (1753–1808), who had formerly worked for Schönfeld’s Czech paper but left him to found his own title “Kramerius’s Imperial Royal Patriotic News” (Kraméryusowy Cýs[kářské] Královské Wlastenské Nowiny). The fourth title,

22 Censorship had not yet had too much impact on the range of books being published, which was still very rich, see CLAIRE MADL, MICHAEL WÖGERBAUER, Censorship and Book Supply, in: Studies on Voltaire and 18th Century, vol 7: The Enlightenment in Bohemia: Religion, Morality and Multiculturalism, (eds.) Ivo Cerman, Rita Krueger, Susan Reynolds, Oxford 2011, pp. 69–87; M. WÖGERBAUER, P. PÍŠA, P. ŠÁMAL (eds.), V obecném zájmu, vol 1, pp. 141–161.

23 This long lasting newspaper was published from 1744 onwards by Karel František Rosenmüller and from 1781 to 1814 by his successive heirs (his son, followed by his twice-remarried daughter-in-law); after this it was taken over by J. F. Schönfeld and continued under various titles. See MIROSLAV LAISKE, Časopisečtě v Čechách 1650–1847: příspěvky k soupisu periodického tisku, zejména novin a časopisů [Newspapers and Journals in Bohemia 1650–1847. Contribution to a Catalogue of Periodicals, Mainly Newspapers and Journals], Prague 1959, no. 354. I thoroughly analyzed advertisements published in this paper in 1793.

24 This paper was published under the title Český postýlion or České nowiny from 1719 onwards by Karel František Rosenmüller and later his heirs, with suspensions between 1741 and 1745 and between 1776 and 1782, due to insufficient numbers of subscribers. Schönfeld bought the privilege in 1785 but had to give up publishing it between 1792 and 1796, probably because of competition from Kramerius. It was then published again under various titles (M. LAISKE, Časopisečtě, no. 694). I thoroughly analyzed advertisements in this paper in 1789–1790.

25 Before 1794, this was published independently by Ignaz Franz Pruša [Pruscha], later by his widow and then his son Vincenz Victorin Pruša, i.e. a family of printers who had bought the privilege of the Prague office of intelligence (Prager Fragment). See ALADÁR GUIDO PRZEDAK, Das Prager Intelligenzblatt. Kulturgeschichtliche Bilder aus dem alten Prag, Prague 1918.

26 M. LAISKE, Časopisečtě, no. 387. From 1789 until the end of 1791, this was published under the title Kraméryusowy cýs. k. pražské postowowské nowiny. Kramerius was a brilliant journalist and an important figure of his time. See JAN NOVOTNY, Matěj Václav Kramerius, Prague 1973; and the short synthesis recently published in German ALENA KÖLLNER, Buchwesen in Prag. Von Matěj Václav Kramerius bis Jan Otte, Vienna 2000, pp. 48–57. According to Novotný (p. 63), Kramerius had attracted 900 subscribers when working for Schönfeld and may well have drawn
Prager neue Zeitung,\textsuperscript{27} was founded in January 1793, and lasted only until 1808, but did attract advertisers, even though the form of the announcements sometimes took that of a short review.\textsuperscript{28} The yearly fees for subscription to these newspapers varied, because the Czech newspapers were published less frequently than the German ones – probably because they had higher redaction costs or a less wealthy readership. In case of difficulties, publishers preferred to reduce the frequency of publication rather than to increase the price, which would quickly have reached a prohibitive level.\textsuperscript{29} For the present work, the very poor state of newspapers collections also had to be taken into account: they are incomplete in all libraries and not yet fully digitized. For the purposes of this article we were able to thoroughly analyse ‘Schönfeld’s News’ for 1789 and 1790, and the three other titles for 1793. This sample includes a total of 185 advertisements, placed by 17 publishers and 2 authors. My analysis also considers advertisements published in a single trimester for each of the years 1781, 1806 and 1820.

In order to attract new readers, the publishers progressively enhanced the graphical presentation of their advertisements. The most common form of notice was a list of books. The layout techniques already used in catalogues, aiming at clarity and sparing space, were also adopted in these newspaper advertisements. The set of information delivered to readers was also similar (each book’s title, size, price, often the name of the author and the place of publication, and if necessary a mention of illustrations; scarcely more). Despite the fact that the newspapers had a broader public audience than the catalogues, there is no evident shift in the content of the information delivered. The only visible adaptation to the new medium is a restriction in the number of books announced at once (scarcely more...
than ten, sometimes only three), and the repetition of the advertisements, which was indeed the main asset of the newspapers’ mode of publication. We find rare examples of separate lists of books or brochures that were probably distributed along with the newspapers thanks to the postal network, and are now bound within the volumes.  
Short announcements use the layout of the news texts themselves. Traditionally, different items of news were very poorly graphically separated, if at all: a new paragraph heralded a new topic; there were no headings, dividing lines, or even enlarged initial capital letters that could guide the reader to where one topic ended and another began (see fig. 1, p. 78). As a result, continuous linear reading was needed to discover the content of each paragraph and to realise when one of them was not in fact a piece of news but one of the very rare advertisements. The reader of the advertisement thus had to read the whole newspaper, or at least the first line of each paragraph. Even when a short textual presentation of the advertised book was given, this was not visible at first sight, and neither were the listed book titles.  
As time went on, however, newspapers lightened and sophisticated their graphical presentation, introducing lines and headings between different topics or different kinds of information (see fig. 2, p. 79). The supplements devoted to announcements pioneered an art of presentation that enabled an interrupted approach to reading; this was not yet found in the political sections. The headings were at times relatively long, composed of the full first sentence of the announcement (see fig. 3, p. 81) but at times were very short to make them easy for the reader to spot, but lacking any real information about the content: “Anzeigen” “Zpráva” (announcement(s)). The explicit heading „Literarische Anzeigen“ (Literary announcement(s)) was hardly ever used in general newspapers. Later, a set of graphical features appears to highlight particular elements of the information given: the printers and publishers invented a range of ways of attracting readers’

30 A leaflet for a Gesetzlexikon by Johann Scheppl (Prague/Vienna, Schönfeld, 1793) is bound before no. 33 (23.4.1793) of the Oberpostamtszeitung, in the volume that belongs to the Library of the National Museum in Prague. We know that some brochures were paginated within the newspaper but could be read separately: for example in Kraméryusowy cýs. král. wlastenské nowiny 41/1793 (12. 10. 1793), pp. 397–398: independent leaflet announcing Kramerius’s almanac: Kalendář Tolerancí.

31 [Český postýlion] Sobotní pražské postovské nowiny 47/1727 (14. 6. 1727), last page (not paginated): “V Jana Frydrycha Rudygera Nürnbergského Handljře w Kniňách přes tento Pražský Swatowjtský Jarmark/w královském Nowém Městě Pražském k dostanj jest.” [At J. F. Rüdiger’s, Nuremberg merchant of books, during this St-Vitus Fair, in the New Town of Prague, is to be purchased.]
Fig. 1. – [Český postýlion] Sobotnj pražské posstowské nowiny, (June 14, 1727), publisher: K. F. Rosenmüller. Courtesy of the National Library of the Czech Republic, 54 A 76 / 1727.
Nachtlieder an die Bühlschüler.

letztem Jahres 1780, allgemein bekannt, daß nach geisterter Art, dann die 21. Num
ner der letzten Ausgabe 1779, in den bekannten Erzählungen der griechischen und
römischen Geschichten, würden der Wahrheit der reinen, einfachen und durchsichtigen
Lichter des Vernunftes, in der Ordnung der Welt, und besonders in der Wahrheit der
feinsten Natur. Deshalb lohnt es sich über diejenigen, die in den vorliegenden Zeitschriften,
besonders in der Zeitung der Bühlschufer, die neuesten Nachrichten, auch die ansprechendsten,
zu lesen, und auch dem Leser, der sich mit Aufmerksamkeit und Einbildungskraft mit
nachdrücklichen Erzählungen und Geschichten, die in den vorliegenden Beiträgen,
und auch den vorangehenden Nummern, so besonders anregende, geweiht.


Fig. 2. – K. K. Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung, supplement (January 2, 1781), publisher: J. F. Schönfeld. Courtesy of the National Library of the Czech Republic, 52 F 91.
attention to their small and still tightly packed paragraphs, experimenting with different formatting techniques, alternating centred and justified paragraphs, small and big letters, gothic letters and roman types (when a Latin or French title was to be advertised).\textsuperscript{32}

The highlighted information is not always what today’s reader would expect. In the 1790s, the name of the publisher or bookseller delivering the announcement is not the most noticeable information, nor is the name of the book’s author.\textsuperscript{33} Instead, it is the title that is highlighted, and these had often been chosen to entice readers, according to Furetière’s well-known assertion: “a nice title is the true pander of the book”.\textsuperscript{34} In 1793, some books issued on the “excesses” of the French Revolution, in particular the execution of the royal couple, gave publishers a good opportunity to put together sensational adverts for “French Fooleries,” and “Stories of Murder and Woe” (see fig. 3, p. 81).\textsuperscript{35} These were often cheap, short books, which presented the most striking aspect of current events.\textsuperscript{36} On the contrary, it seems that publishers did not feel the need to highlight higher quality books in advertisements, and these are almost hidden as a result, since when the layout is designed to bring something out, it also necessarily hides something away. It seems, then, that there was a negative relationship between a book’s material quality and its visibility in these newspaper advertisements, as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{32} The supplement to Schönfeld’s German newspaper, at first entitled \textit{Komptoirsnachrichten}, and then from March 1793 onwards \textit{Intelligenznachrichten}, provides a good example of these innovations, see Bookseller Buchler’s advertisement of “Jos. Sperge: Palentini Centuria Literarum ad Italas” (Vienna, Alberti, 1793), Komptoirsnachrichten 2/1793 (5. 1. 1793), p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{33} These two elements have been analyzed in the exceptional case of Lord Byron: NICHOLAS MASON, \textit{Building Brand Byron. Early-Nineteenth-Century Advertising and the Marketing of ‘Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage’}, Modern Language Quarterly 63/2002, pp. 411–440, esp. 417–423. In the Czech case, things changed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1820 for instance, Schönfeld’s layout highlights the name of the publisher, even if the title of the book is still the first noticeable piece of information on the page. See for example \textit{k. k. privilegirte Prager Zeitung} 46/1820 (21. 3. 1820), p. 428.
\item \textsuperscript{35} \textit{Mord- und Unglücksgeschichten}, Komtoirsnachrichten, supplement to the Prager Oberpostamtszeitung 8/1793 (26. 1. 1793), p. 64. \textit{Komtoirsnachrichten} and \textit{Intelligenznachrichten}, both successive supplements of the Prager Oberpostamtszeitung, were paginated separately and are hereafter quoted independently.
\item \textsuperscript{36} Another example is given by Schönfeld’s announcement for a cheap imprint at 20 Kreuzer — “Monumente des Geistes, der grossen Theresia errichtet” Kaiserl. königl. Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung, Beylage 4/1781 (13. 1. 1781).
\end{itemize}
Intelligenznachrichten.

In der von Schönfeldischen Buchhandlung in Prag

von nachstehende neue Bücher zu haben:

Französische Narreteien,
or:
Schimpf- und Schmieren
aus der neuen Revolutionsgeschichte, wie
solche undweder öffentlich in Franzreich gebräuch,
ober als Landesffächer ergräft werden.

Fig. 3. – Intelligenznachrichten, supplement of Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung (April 16, 1793), no. 31, 1793. Courtesy of the National Museum in Prague, Library of the National Museum, 7 32 H1, p. 240.
indeed some contemporary authors noted.\textsuperscript{37} An example of this is that an old precious (so called Wenceslas’s) Bible of 16 Gulden seems almost forgotten at the end of Kramerius’s announcement.\textsuperscript{38}

Some of the most sophisticated announcements took full advantage of the newspaper as a medium that by nature assumes that there is always something new that deserves to be published. This enabled publishers and booksellers to print simple, remarkable and repeated (though each time different) advertisements. In 1793 for instance, Schönfeld published a regular column of advertisements for the same books. In each issue, however, a different title was printed in a larger font size, so that the list appeared to be new.

These newly adopted graphic tools allowed for reading approaches that were better adapted to occasional readers. Once the text was sufficiently graphically processed to make the key information stand out, readers no longer needed to concentrate for a long period of time in a calm place to read advertisements. A glance over a neighbour’s shoulder in a coffee shop would suffice to draw one in, after spotting the word “Murder” or “Fooleries”.

The Art of Seriality

Another well-known and long-lasting marketing strategy aimed at enticing new sporadic readers and converting them into regular readers was to divide books into serial publications. As a consequence, the advertisements were not only a repeated discourse themselves, but focused on publicizing the serial quality of the products being advertised, which they mentioned explicitly and highlighted by typographical means. The publication “A French History of Murder and Distress”, for instance, was advertised in such a way that its title sometimes took

\textsuperscript{37} B. BENEDICT, “Encounters with the Object”, stresses the impact of the bad image of advertisement as associated with low quality products (quack cures for instance) and the slow progression of its use for cultural goods once it had become more common for commodities. Still, in 1781, Schönfeld’s advertisement explicitly refrained from providing any blurb about the book, which would have implied he wanted to get rid of it.: “Also kein Wort davon” [not a word more about it]: “Statistische Tabelle” (perhaps an older edition of Acht Statistische Tabellen by Georg Rudolph v. Schmidtburg, Leipzig, Schönfeld, 1783), Prager Oberpostamtszeitung, Beylage 62/1781 (4. 8. 1781).

\textsuperscript{38} “Celá Biblj svatá wydaná nákladem dědictwj sw. Wáclawa” [The Whole Holy Bible Published by the Saint-Wenceslas Foundation], no date of publication, 1715 or 1771, Kraméryusowy cýsařské král. wlastenské nowiny 3/1793 (19. 1. 1793), pp. 25–26.
Fig. 4. – Intelligenznachrichten, supplement of Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung (April 30, 1793), no. 35, 1793. Courtesy of the National Museum in Prague, Library of the National Museum, 7 32 H1, p. 288.
second place behind the key statement “continuation to follow every week” (see fig 4, p. 83).³⁹

The main asset of serial publications was that each volume was less costly, and so potentially addressed readers who could not afford a larger work at once. This meant that the price became an important aspect of the advertisement’s text, whereas it was only perfunctorily mentioned in catalogues.⁴⁰ In some advertisements, publishers detailed the material quality of the book in quantitative terms to justify their price: how many sheets of paper, the paper quality, the format of the book in professional terms (“in einem bequemen Oktavband”),⁴¹ the quantity and quality of engravings, the artist’s name, etc. In this sense, the advertisements actually taught readers about the precise features of a manufactured product, which had hitherto been reserved for the booksellers’ most expert clients.

Enticing and Educating Beginners

The publishers’ newly enlarged readership – thanks to these advertising strategies – appears to have been broadly varied and reached by several different types of advertising. On the one hand, publishers could deliver a solid, almost scholarly commentary about some books. In 1792, for instance, Kramerius announced the publication of a book of Czech legends by describing its historiographical context and explicitly addressing literary connoisseurs and writers themselves.⁴² On the other hand, some of Kramerius’ other announcements, especially those concerning subscriptions to his newspaper, clearly addressed readers who would be subscribing for the very first time. In these, Kramerius repeatedly explained where and when to pay the subscription fee, recalled that it was not possible to

³⁹ Intelligenznachrichten 25/1793 (26. 3. 1793): The title of the book is Das zehnte Heft der Französischen Mord- und Unglücksgeschichte, the words “Fortsetzung folgt jede Woche” are printed in a larger font.

⁴⁰ The general title sometimes mentioned that prices were “fair” (… um billige Preise). This is in contrast to what we find in France in the eighteenth century, where no liberalization of the book market had yet occurred, see: VÉRONIQUE SARRAZIN, L’affichage des prix et la promotion des livres dans les annonces de librairie au XVIIIe siècle, in: Le livre entre le commerce et l’histoire des idées, (eds.) Annie Charon, Claire Lesage, Eve Netchine, Paris 2011, pp. 103–126, esp. 112–125.

⁴¹ Prager Oberpostamtszeitung, Beylage 1/1781 (2. 1. 1781).

⁴² Announcement for PROKOP ŠEDIVÝ, České Amazonky [Czech Amazons] (Kramerius, 1792), Kraméryusowy c. k. vlastenské nowiny 26/1793 (29. 6. 1793), p. 262. See below.
obtain older issues, and peremptorily begged not to be addressed in any correspondence.\footnote{Zpráva o těchto Nowinách [Announcement About This Newspaper], Wlastenské nowiny 10/1793 (9. 3. 1793), p. 96.}

A close look at these advertisements reveals that publishers were reluctant to grant readers complete autonomy. Some advertisements seem to consider the readers critical spirits and follow the form of a typical “enlightened” discourse about individual judgment. The period we are looking at is of course very problematic from this point of view, since propaganda and counter propaganda were common practices at the time. For instance, in June 1793 the *Intelligenz-nachrichten*\footnote{Intelligenznachrichten 47/1793 (11. 6. 1793), pp. 385–386; 48/1793 (15. 6. 1793), pp. 393–394.} published an advertisement for a work by controversial journalist Leopold Alois Hoffmann (1760–1806).\footnote{Hoffmann was a controversial journalist who eventually had to retire from public life because of his open reactionist propagandist articles published under Leopold II and his services to the police. KURT VANCSA, *Hoffmann, Leopold Alois*, in: Neue Deutsche Biographie 9, Berlin 1972, p. 433, www.deutsche-biographie.de/ppn104355034.html, accessed August 4, 2018.} The text of the advertisement directly addressed the paper’s readers and promised them a biography *sine studio & ira* of the French general Dumouriez (another well-known and problematic figure of the French Revolution). His reflections, Hoffmann asserted, would deliver a point of view that would enable the reader to “judge the events of the French Revolution and the French war fairly” and make up his opinion, “as he must do”.\footnote{Scipio-protheus Dumourier. Ein historisch-politisches Gemälde, Intelligenznachrichten 47/1793 (11. 6. 1793), pp. 385–386; 48/1793 (15. 6. 1793), pp. 393–394: “Reflexionen bei, die – vielleicht zum Theil neu und auffallend – den wahren Gesichtspunkt eröffnen, von welchem aus man die eigentliche Veranlassung und den ganzen räthselhaften Gang der französischen Revoluzion und des französischen Krieges am sichersten beurtheilen kann und muss.” Hoffmann’s work was actually published in the Wiener Zeitschrift 2/1793; 4/1793.}

More often than not, announcements like this rather stressed the fact that the book would provide readers with a “fair” (i.e. ready-made) judgment about its topic. Several works were explicitly sold as providing an opinion on particular events so as to prevent the confusion that contradictory interpretations might create among readers. They assumed that readers expected texts to give them a truth to believe in.\footnote{Another advertisement for the *Wiener Zeitschrift*, which was also published by Hoffmann, promised to be critical towards “false freedom” and “the spirit of this century” namely “insubordination” and “irreligion”: Komptoirsnachrichten 104/1792 (29. 12. 1792), p. 924.} This practice corresponds to the general belief that it was
possible and indeed necessary to form one’s readership by providing “legitimate” publications.⁴⁸

Even though printers and publishers did not, at this stage, abandon the ambition to address expert readers through their advertisements, the gradual enlargement of their readership led them to adapt their discourse, both in a very practical way so as to attract new readers, and by using a paternalistic approach to information transmission, based on the common idea that new readers needed to be directed in their opinions. This in turn led them away from an enlightened discourse and towards the production of propaganda, especially once the political and social order were in danger.

What to Read For?

In order to meet the demands of a greater variety of readers, publishers developed new arguments about what their readers would achieve by buying and reading their books. In our sample, few of the advertisements have any real text praising the quality of the books. When an announcement gives something more than the book’s title, the additional information usually reports on the contents of the book, i.e. a list of its chapters, allowing the product to speak for itself. When there is a text of blurb form, its tone is neutral, polite and smooth, and addresses the public as a whole, using the plural form of the third person: “Sirs amateurs of books” (Herrn Liebhaber, Milovnjky). Kramerius’s newspaper was a little more verbose than others. There, the texts sometimes focus on the contents of the book, for example praising its authenticity when it is a book about current events, but more often the advertisements praise the benefit the reader will get from the book. The most common argument used is utility. The announcer seeks to persuade the reader that their book is a good investment, that it will “efficiently” (mit Wirkungen) impact the reader’s everyday activities,⁴⁹ and hence will enable the separate sphere of abstract knowledge to enter their everyday life. Almanacs and textbooks for children are said to be “useful”, a Czech-German

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dictionary,50 a collection of new patents and edicts,51 and, naturally, a handbook about beekeeping are all also said to be useful,52 and more surprisingly an adaptation and translation of the story of the Trojan War into Czech is also praised for its utility.53

The second good reason the advertisers give for why the readers should buy their book is the pleasure it provides. In Kramerius this argument is not very common, although the Trojan War Letters are not only described as useful, but also “original and pleasant stories”, a good pastime and entertainment (kratochvile).54 In the Prager neue Zeitung, novels are praised for being delightful and easy to read – this suggests that they were targeting an audience of readers who found certain books somewhat difficult to read. In Schönfeld’s newspapers, books are described as being readable “without too much effort” (ohne viel der Müde)55 and the reader is assured that he will not fall asleep (den Leser nicht einschläfern wird),56 which seems to be a common fear. Humour is eventually also praised, so it is clear that books were by now becoming objects of pure diversion.

In addition to these strategies to draw in new, infrequent or reluctant readers (those who fell asleep too easily), another marketing technique we are still familiar with today emerged, which made the printed product only a side product in a “package” designed to attract absolutely anyone. After the death of the king of France Louis XVI in 1793, a campaign of counterrevolutionary propaganda was launched, as part of which a small booklet was printed entitled “The Monarch’s

50 Advertisement for FRANTIŠEK TOMSA, Slovnik, Normalní škola (i.e. Malý německý a český Slovník [Small German-Czech Dictionary]), Schönfeldské cýs. král. pražské nowiny 4/1790 (23. 1. 1790), p. 32.
51 Advertisement for Natřjeni neb Generálie [Reglementation or Ordinances] – this title could not be precisely identified, Kraméryusovy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 13/1793 (30. 3. 1793), p. 129.
52 Obsah potřebných navčenj a prawidel, wedle kterýchž wčely se (…) opatrowati dagj [Advice and Rules about Beekeeping] (Banská Bystrica, Jan Josef Tumler, 1792), Kraméryusovy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 14/1793 (6. 4. 1793), p. 139.
53 Kraméryusovy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 40/1793 (5. 10. 1793), p. 388: advertisement for Letopisowé Trojansstj [Trojan Chronicle], (Prague, Kramerius, 1790): “Welmi podiwnj y kratochviln přjběhowé obsaženi gsau” [contains very original and entertaining stories].
54 Kraméryusovy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 40/1793 (5. 10. 1793), p. 388.
love for his citizens” (*Die Liebe des Monarchen gegen seine Bürger*). This booklet was sold together with a beaker bearing Emperor Franz’s portrait. The price of the beaker alone was so ridiculously high compared to the price of the beaker–booklet set, that one was effectively compelled to take the booklet.

Expanding the practice of reading among the public, disseminating various ways of reading (e.g. reading to learn, as a leisure practice, or as a moral duty, as well as for professional or scholarly purposes) implied an increasing variety of readers and from the publishers’ point of view this went hand in hand with an effort towards differentiating between these different types of readers.

**Social Differentiation of Readers**

In a society divided into estates, one cannot presume that the “public” was easily considered as a whole. The very fact that some books, especially moral handbooks, were published with “for all estates” (*für alle Stände*) on their title page shows that this unity was not taken for granted. In response to the substantial enlargement of readership, a discussion arose about who should read what. In the peculiar context of the Habsburg monarchy during the 1790s, we know that censorship officers distinguished between different readers and practically prohibited some of them from reading materials that they allowed others to read, which caused fractions in the public sphere.

However, the enlargement of the readership also designated new groups of potential readers, which are for example mentioned in catalogues. At the end of the eighteenth century, besides the various domains of knowledge (religion, law and jurisprudence, etc.), booksellers started to add new categories of books into their catalogues, referring to the groups of readers they were targeting. These

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58 Advertisement for *Unverwesliche Schätze für die Menschheit*, Gräz, Kienreich, 1793), Intelligenznachrichten 38/1793 (11. 5. 1793), p. 312.


60 This is the main issue analyzed by EDWARD H. JACOBS, *Buying into Classes. The Practice of Book Selection in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Eighteenth-Century Studies 33/1999, pp. 43–64, esp. 52–58.
groups included “Women” and “Children” or “Youth” and materialized as new headings in the publishers’ catalogues.\textsuperscript{61}

In advertisements, few of these groups are mentioned. Some are defined by their professions, according to a social functional categorization of the readership: writers, merchants and officers are named in my sample. A history of the French Revolution and of its impact on the economy and entrepreneurship is advertised as explicitly intended for members of various professions: “craftsmen, tax collectors, agents, lawyers, magistrates, regional and government officers” (\textit{Gewerbsmanne, Zunftinungsvorsteher, Agent, Solizitator, Magistrate, Kreisämter, Länderstellen}).\textsuperscript{62} Children’s books are also a genre referring explicitly to its target group of readers.\textsuperscript{63} Meanwhile, in drawing attention to the quality of the language in the advertised books, Kramerius explicitly addresses authors who themselves write in Czech.\textsuperscript{64}

I could only find one advertisement that specifically targeted women, and it addresses them in French, whereas the book itself is in German, which implies that its publishers assumed that their potential female readers were part of higher society.\textsuperscript{65} Generally, though, our sample suggests that women were not expected to read newspapers, even though they did at the time, as economic actors, use this medium and published announcements there (for rentals and sales, for instance). Some groups of readers are targeted indirectly in advertisements that give an insight into the social framework of textual transmission and

\textsuperscript{61} Kaspar Widtmann mentions books for women in several catalogues: \textit{Verzeichniss neuer Bücher von der Leipziger Ostermesse}, Prague 1791, p. 126; Prague 1799, p. 134.


\textsuperscript{64} For instance in the notice for PROKOP FRANTIŠEK ŠEDIVÝ, \textit{Maran a Onyra} (Prag, 1791), Krameryusowy cysařské král. vlastenské nowiny. Závěsek 34/1791, p. 1: “[This text is a short novel, the story of two lovers, an American man and an English woman; told in pure Czech, it can be of great utility to those who intend to write similar texts.]”

reading practices. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a book for children is recommended to parents, teachers and priests, who are traditional mediators. 66 And Kramerius gives us a glimpse of another, less obvious context of textual transmission, when he explains that a commentary on the Gospel is a rich and useful resource for a farmer, “for himself and his servants too”. 67

These few mentions of individualised groups of readers are sporadic and do not contradict our overall impression that book advertisements addressed the general public. The subject matter of the advertised books is always of general interest: none of the advertisements are for scientific or specialized books. Political matters, commentary on current events, statistics and legal codes, textbooks and pedagogical works, and accessible novels are the most frequently advertised publications.

Inventing a “Czech” Readership

It is important to remember that some groups of readers at this time were naturally divided by the language they used. Historians of literature in the Czech Lands usually consider that at the end of the eighteenth century and during the first decades of the nineteenth century, a literary sphere was born in Bohemia that at first used two languages (German and Czech) but gradually transformed into two separate linguistic fields. 68 This progressive transformation is embedded in the transformation of the communication system and of readership. Until the


67 Skrowná postylla na Ewangelia celého roku (Prague, Dědictví svatého Václava, 1767) [Short Postilla on the Gospel for the Whole Year], Kraméryusowy cýs. král. wlastenské nowiny 3/1793 (19. 1. 1793), pp. 25–26. “Křesťanský hospodář této knihy k swému wlastnjmu y čeledí swé užitku welmi dobře potřebowati může, neboť se w nj wssecky powinnosti člowěka k geho wzdělání co nezřetelně předstawugj. [This book is useful for the Christian farmer himself and his servants too, for it very clearly presents every man’s educational obligations.]”

final decades of the eighteenth century, besides a local market in Latin, German and Czech, the elitist system of communication was wide open to imports from the larger book market of the German lands. Building an independent Czech literary market took a whole century and the imbalance between the circumscribed Czech sphere and the more open German one was never fully erased. The enlargement of the reading public and the rise of this “Czech” literary sphere were concurrent, if not hand in hand. Advertising practices can shed light on this broad issue because they reflect shared representations of this “reading public” and tell us how far the linguistic criterion was a relevant and discriminating factor in the publishers’ eyes.

The existence of two newspapers written in Czech at the end of eighteenth century proves that there were more readers eager to read in Czech than there had been 20 years earlier, when the publisher of the only Czech newspaper had complained that the privilege she owned did not bring her any profit. Both the Czech and German newspapers, however, addressed a majority of bilingual readers (bilingual at least), so that, in the eighteenth century, the reading context of these monolingual papers was to a certain extent plurilingual. This particularity implies that publishers were in an environment of competition between the two languages and could hardly target an exclusive readership or customer base. In July 1790, thus, Schönfeld advertised his Czech newspaper stating that its content was richer than all other German newspapers: “it contains much more than any of the other German newspapers”. Schönfeld was obviously ‘hunting’ for clients among the German newspapers’ readership and his argument did not focus on the language difference, but on the content. Books in Latin were advertised in all newspapers of course, but we also find a few German books advertised in Kramerius’s Czech newspapers and Czech books listed

69 C. MADL, “Nicht nur aus Leipzig”.
70 J. VOLF, Dějiny, 1930, p. 102.
71 This is particularly true in towns, and amid readers with secondary education, because secondary schools taught in German. Anecdotes and theatre announcements testify to the fact that editors assumed their readers possessed bilingual abilities. STEFAN NEWERKLA, Intendierte und tatsächliche Sprachwirklichkeit in Böhmen. Diglossie im Schulewesen der böhmisichen Kronländer 1740–1918, Vienna 1999 (diss.), pp. 1–50; this first part is mainly based on regulations, as statistics on language use are not accessible before 1848.
72 [Information about subscription] Schönfeldské cýs. král. pražské nowiny 27/1790 (3. 7. 1790), p. 218: “w sobě mnohém více obsahugi, nežží skutečně wsseliké gině nemecké nowiny”.
73 Advertisement for FRANZ MARTIN PELZEL, Antrittsrede über den Nutzen und Wichtigkeit der Böhmischen, Prague 1793, Kraméryusowy cýs. král. wlastenské nowiny 14/1793 (6. 4. 1793), p. 139.
in Schönfeld’s German newspapers.\textsuperscript{74} Bilingual advertisements were also published.\textsuperscript{75}

Kramerius’s newspaper, however, clearly considered language as the criterion according to which he defined his clients; he directly addressed readers interested in reading in Czech. He referred to his public as “sincere Czechs” (\textit{vpřím-ným Čechům}). At that time, Kramerius’s publishing activity was almost exclusively focused on his newspaper; he published very few books. He did, though, also sell books that he had not published himself, and regularly advertised his collection of these. His advertisements obviously tried to give his readers access to whatever was published in Czech, whoever had published it – even when this was his former manager and now competitor Schönfeld. For Kramerius, the language in which the books were written, and the level of the Czech they used, merited mention in the advertisements.\textsuperscript{76} Reading any book in well-written Czech was seen to be fruitful and a worthwhile goal in itself.

Czech readers, as addressed by Kramerius’s advertisements, seem to have had little to read. Although this was not strictly true, since as previously mentioned a large proportion of those who read the Czech newspaper consisted of bilingual readers, nevertheless Kramerius held the view that his “Czech readers” should read in Czech, and this concern led him to publish a newspaper in Czech as well as advertising Czech publications in it.

The greatest objective difference between the books advertised by Kramerius and those advertised in the three other newspapers is that Kramarius’s assortment was older. Kramerius was an antiquarian bookseller and thus regularly advertised old books. This confirms that there was a general lack of new books in


\textsuperscript{76} For instance: Kraméryusovy císl. král. vlastenské nowiny 40/1793 (5. 10. 1793), p. 388: “poněvadž tato kniha velmi výborně česky psána gest, y wssem těm za příklad poslauž [because this book is in excellent Czech and will serve as an example to all]”.
Czech, which we have also seen from analysis of burghers’ libraries. According to Kramerius’s advertisements, however, these old books were good books, because they were written in good Czech and guaranteed a high moral content. Kramerius positioned himself in terms of quality and tradition in opposition to what he saw as an opportunist trend towards the “vulgarisation” of literature in the other newspapers.

Schönfeld held rather the opposite view. In 1789, his advertisement for a Czech children’s book explains that it is unique. Compared to German-speaking children, Czechs have either “nothing at all”, or “old and inconvenient books, which they borrow from their poorly educated parents and which often contain superstitious prayers that they do not fully understand, merely repeating one word after another.” This progressive – and consumerist – advertisement considers parents unreliable as far as cultural transmission is concerned and puts forward the view that the younger generation should turn their backs on old times. In line with the Enlightenment discourse warning against superstitious practices, Schönfeld does not trust old books, and the fact that they are written in Czech does not help. He focuses on the content of the book, whereas Kramerius’s strategy of specialisation is linguistic.

Besides their language, the geographical scope and the scale of the public the publishers addressed enabled them to consider the integration and exclusion processes at stake as they built up an autonomous (soon-to-be national) book market. Newspapers’ contents build a world of events and places in which their readers can situate themselves. The books they advertise thus set the intellectual horizon for their readers.

Setting a Communication Space

The news that was published in each of the Prague newspapers in the 1790s was relatively similar. Each paper gave an account of the war, of current events from

78 Advertisement for JAN JOSEF RULÍK, Wlastenské pěsáně a dějů činění nad slavným vvedeným cys. králov. Professora gazyka Českého na větelskau stolicy w slavné Pražské Vniwersy [Patriotic Rejoicing and Thanksgiving for a Glorious Introduction of Imperial and Royal Professor], (1793), Kraméryusovy cys. králov. wlastenské nowiny 13/1793 (30. 3. 1793). p. 128.
79 52 propowjdek mrawnjch [52 Moral Tales], Pražské posstowské nowiny, Přjloha 33/1789 (15. 8. 1789), p. 2.
France, the Austrian Lands and Bohemia, primarily Prague. Alongside these stories, announcements of all kinds reflected the whole country (Bohemia), with its administrative local capitals and main dominions.\textsuperscript{80} If we consider where the advertised books were printed, the majority of the books in German, mainly advertised in the German newspapers, were printed in Prague. We did not find a single German book listed that was printed in Bohemia but outside Prague, although these were numerous at the time. A smaller proportion of the advertised books were printed in Vienna or in the German lands (Leipzig, Jena, Regensburg).\textsuperscript{81} The intellectual horizon, or the books’ area of circulation, was hence quite broad and yet Prague played a key role.\textsuperscript{82} In 1781, when Schönfeld launched the newspaper he had just bought the privilege for (Oberpostamtszeitung), he held the ambition that its distribution would reach “Habsburg scale” and mentioned the main provincial cities of the monarchy as places where readers could subscribe (Vienna, Brünn/Brno, Pressburg/Bratislava, Graz, Klagenfurt, Trieste).\textsuperscript{83} In an announcement, he gave a long list of his bookseller colleagues across the whole of the Habsburg monarchy.\textsuperscript{84} This overestimated scale of diffusion disappeared later. Schönfeld did not receive many advertisements from publishers and booksellers settled in the Habsburg Monarchy outside Prague.\textsuperscript{85} Not every publisher invested in advertisements in the German papers, and only the

\textsuperscript{80} Z. ŠIMEČEK, \textit{Počátky novinového zpravodajství [The Beginning of Journalism]}, p. 265.

\textsuperscript{81} For instance Kaiserl. königl. Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung 14/1781 (17. 2. 1781): “Johann Christoph Keyser, Buchdrucker in Regensburg: Historische Nachrichten zu Regensburger Zeitung”. In 1806, booksellers from Brunsvick and Leipzig also published announcements in Schönfeld’s newspaper.

\textsuperscript{82} This is to be contrasted with the origin of books announced in booksellers’ catalogues, where the proportion between Prague and the German Lands is reversed C. MADL, “\textit{Nicht nur aus Leipzig}”.

\textsuperscript{83} Kaiserl. königl. Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung, Beylage 26/1781 (31. 3. 1781): people could subscribe to the newspaper at Lottery collectors all over Bohemia, and at Augustin Weigner’s, “priv. Lottokollektor” in Wien, at the “k. k. priv. Mährischen Lehenbank” in Brno, at Ferstlichen’s (a bookseller) in Graz, and at the bookseller’s called Benedikt in Pressburg.

\textsuperscript{84} When publishing a synthetic statistical table of the main European states, Schönfeld mentioned a new set of contacts: Kaiserl. königl. Prager Oberpostamts-Zeitung, Beylage 64/1781 (11. 8. 1781): these included lottery collectors in Bohemia, Prager in Wien, Mangold in Brno, Zeitungskomptoir in Trieste, Marchesa (a printer) in Roveredo, Kleinmayer in Klagenfurt.

\textsuperscript{85} See notes 46 and 47 about the advertisements in the \textit{Wiener Zeitschrift}. At the end of our period, Schönfeld printed an announcement by Franz Gräffer (Vienna) in k. k. privil. Prager Zeitung. Intelligenzblatt 40/1820 (10. 3. 1820), p. 370.
newspapers’ own publishers regularly advertised their products. Schönfeld’s
Intelligenznachrichten published advertisements for Prague publishers Albrecht and Calve. The Prager Neue Zeitung (distributed by Prague bookseller Josef Valenta) seems to have been a little more open to other publishers. Neither Schönfeld’s newspapers nor the Prager neue Zeitung gave a rich image of the network of booksellers in the country before 1820.

On the other hand, the advertisements in the newspapers written in Czech give a less patchy image of the book market outside Prague. Schönfeld’s Poštovské noviny have very few advertisements but those that are there announce books from Plzeň (Morgensäuler) and Klatovy (Hirschberger). Kramerius played a unique role as an advertising and sales agent for books published in Czech. Publishers who published in Czech repeatedly advertised in his papers, listing only their Czech products and not their books in German. As a bookseller, Kramerius was in contact with all the country’s publishers, both those in Prague and those elsewhere in the country. He advertised their books or, more often, gave their names as commissionaires (i.e. retail sellers) for particular titles. As a result, he familiarised his readers with the network of publishers and booksellers outside Prague. Schönfeld was obviously hoping to build such a network

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86 The price of the advertisements does not seem to be the reason for this disinterest. In the 1790s Schönfeld charged 1 Gulden for a column, which represents the retail price of a common book; see A. G. PRZEDAK, Das Prager Intelligenzblatt, p. 80.
87 In the supplement to the Prager Oberpostamszeitung, (known as Komptoirsnachrichten then Intelligenznachrichten), from January to December 1793, 5 publishers placed 59 advertisements: Schönfeld published 51 advertisements for himself (i.e. 90 % of the total) the rest were by publishers Johann Buchler, Johann Gottfried Calve, Aloys Doll and Johann Martin Krauss, and one author Leopold Alois Hoffmann.
88 In 1793, in the Prager neue Zeitung, 6 publishers from Bohemia published 38 advertisements: Josef Valenta (with 14 advertisements), then Johann Friedrich Albrecht (9), Johann Gottfried Calve (5), Walthers (5), Johann N. Ferdinand Schönfeld (2), Normalschulbuchdruckerei (the Normal school’s textbook printing house) (1), (in two cases the advertiser is not identifiable).
89 Pražské posstowské nowiny, Příloha 33/1789 (15. 8. 1789), p. 2, the announcement for A. PARÍZEK, Modlitby pro dětě [Prayers for Children], published by Josef Hirschberger in Klatovy (printed in Prague by Diesbach 1789) gives the name of several retailers in Prague (Jan Josef Diesbach, Kaspar Widtmann, widow Samm) and one in Plzeň: Josef Morgensäuler.
90 In Kramerius’s newspaper, during 1793, 6 publishers or authors published 11 advertisements: Johann Josef Diesbach, Josef Hirschberger, Jan Karas, Joseph Kottnauer / Fabian Augustin Beinhaur, Jan Rulik, Kaspar Widtmann; Kramerius printed 26 notices for himself.
91 Advertisement for: Skrėrėna postylla na Evangelia [Short Postill on Gospels]. (Praha, Dědictví svateho Václava, 1767), Krameryusowy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 3/1793 (19. 1. 1793), pp. 25–26; the booksellers mentioned are as follows: Josef Hirschberger (in Klatovy), J. J. Diesbach, Kaspar Widtmann, Widow Samm (in Prague), Josef Jan Morgensäuler (in Plzeň).
when he repeatedly proposed to sell several copies of the same book to anyone eager to sell it on.\footnote{Schönfeldské cys. král. pražské nowiny 17/1790 (21. 4. 1790), p. 136.} It seems, though, that he in fact never succeeded in setting up such a network, or at least we know nothing of it if he did.

We know that Kramerius had clients in Moravia and Upper Hungary (in Pressburg/Bratislava\footnote{Kramerius addressed them directly: Kraméryusowy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 14/1793 (6. 4. 1793), p. 140.}), and that he advertised books from Moravia (Brno\footnote{Kraméryusowy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 2/1793 (12.1.1793), p. 16: advertisement for „Du-chu plná Knjžka modlitebnj Trassler, 1791–92.” This is perhaps the following prayer book: MATTHÄUS REITER, Katolická modlitebnj Krajška [Catholic Prayer Book], Brno 1793.}) and Upper Hungary (Pressburg, Banská Bystrica\footnote{Kraméryusowy cysařské král. wlastenské nowiny 17/1793 (27. 4. 1793), p. 173: notice for Wraucné a nabožné modlitby [Devout and Pious Prayers], Pressburg 1781, Kraméryusovy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 14/1793 (6. 4. 1793), p. 139: JÁN GLOSYUS, Potřebných Navčenj a Přawídel wedlé kterýchž se wčely rozsafně a s vžitkem opatrowati dagj [Advice and Rules About Beekeeping], Banská Bystrica 1792.}). At the end of 1793, in an announcement for one of the first books he published (an almanac), he printed a particularly rich and detailed list of people who would take orders and payments for it, all over the country.\footnote{Kraméryusowy cys. král. wlastenské nowiny 17/1793 (12. 10. 1793), pp. 397–398; 44/1793 (2. 11. 1793), p. 421: „Wenku po kragjch handljři a kramáři obrátiti se mohau.” [Outside merchants and chapmen may contact]; 19 agents are mentioned, including merchants, bookbinders, city councillors, etc. The most famous figure among Kramerius’s contacts is František Vladislav Hek, a collector, author and reader of Kramerius’s newspaper who inspired the main character of Jirásek’s novel F. L. Věk (5 vol. 1888–1906), See JOSEF JOHANIDES, František Vladislav Hek, Prague 1976. A map of these contacts is reproduced in A. KÖLLNER, Buchwesen in Prag, fig. 18 [n.p.].} This network was by no means as efficient as the network of lottery collectors and post offices that Schönfeld could use thanks to his privilege,\footnote{Václav Rodomil Kramerius complains about his newspaper’s distribution difficulties in Cýsařské, králowské wlastenské nowiny 3–5/1820 (29. 1. 1820), p. 18.} but its image was also different, since it was independent from the administrative system and closer to a community of readers than a commercial network.

The fact that Kramerius’s network included booksellers and individuals located all over the country gives us a first insight into the transformation of the communication system in Bohemia in the run-up to the 19th century. In order to disseminate a rare product – Czech books – Kramerius built a unique tool of intermediation. In the 1790s, the boundaries of this network were not fixed by...
the Czech Lands but included Upper Hungary and Moravia, albeit less intensively.

**Conclusion**

As a result of economic constraints on book production, every publisher tried to increase its clientele and, to do so, advertised its books using various strategies. These included using the potentiality newspapers' broad distribution to accelerate the dissemination of texts among the public, transforming their lists of new books into small paragraphs that might entice occasional readers. Advertisements became the most visible elements in newspapers and their supplements. While some adapted their content to suit beginner readers, referring to sensational events or enticing buyers with cheap and easily accessible products, others resisted this trend and relied on the prestige of reading as a social practice to appeal to both expert and non-expert readers. Some continued to promise ready-made opinions for readers lost in the flow of current events, assuming that they would expect to find a reliable interpretation, the ‘truth of the matter’, in books.

Whereas the elites’ discourse about readership clearly distinguished readers according to their social origin and tended to be highly prescriptive, prohibitive or at least paternalistic toward newcomers, publishers were generally reluctant to differentiate in this way in their advertisements. No doubt they therefore presented an unsettling image of the common readership to those members of the elite who read the same newspapers. Kramerius’s orientation toward tradition and quality appears to be a reaction to this.

The transmission of texts is a major tool in the process of nation building, since texts have to choose between language(s), and national movements very soon became focused on language as a means of inclusion and exclusion. At the very end of the eighteenth century, though, potential readers were not necessarily yet considered to belong to an existing, linguistically-defined community and publishers did not always define their books as “linguistic” products. Advertisements focused on the contents of the books in question, which they placed in a broad context, referring for instance to current events in Europe, and thus addressed a varied audience within a wide framework of news and texts.

Kramerius’s strategy differed from this somewhat. He systematically referred to a linguistically determined set of texts. For him, Czech readers were a commercial opportunity and a social group he was firmly committed to. Kramerius made a network of Czech book professionals visible, together with their readers who could already be considered a “community of readers”. At the end of 1793, when advertising a book he had published about the execution of the Queen of
France (his competitor had long been exploiting public interest in any kind of news on this topic), he emphatically addressed “the whole Czech nation.”

Kramerius’s model is well known and paradigmatic, but it was very fragile in terms of economical sustainability, as his widow’s difficulties would reveal. Schönfeld’s model was not steady neither, as the interruption of his Czech newspaper between 1792 and 1796 shows. Two competing models had been proposed for the treatment of books chiefly as commodities, but neither of these was yet settled. Before national boundaries were fixed, each publisher’s customer base was highly movable and neither language nor political borders had yet contained it. Similar research looking at advertisements published outside the borders of Bohemia, within the Habsburg monarchy or in the German lands (especially in Leipzig), would be thus a most relevant continuation to the present work.


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