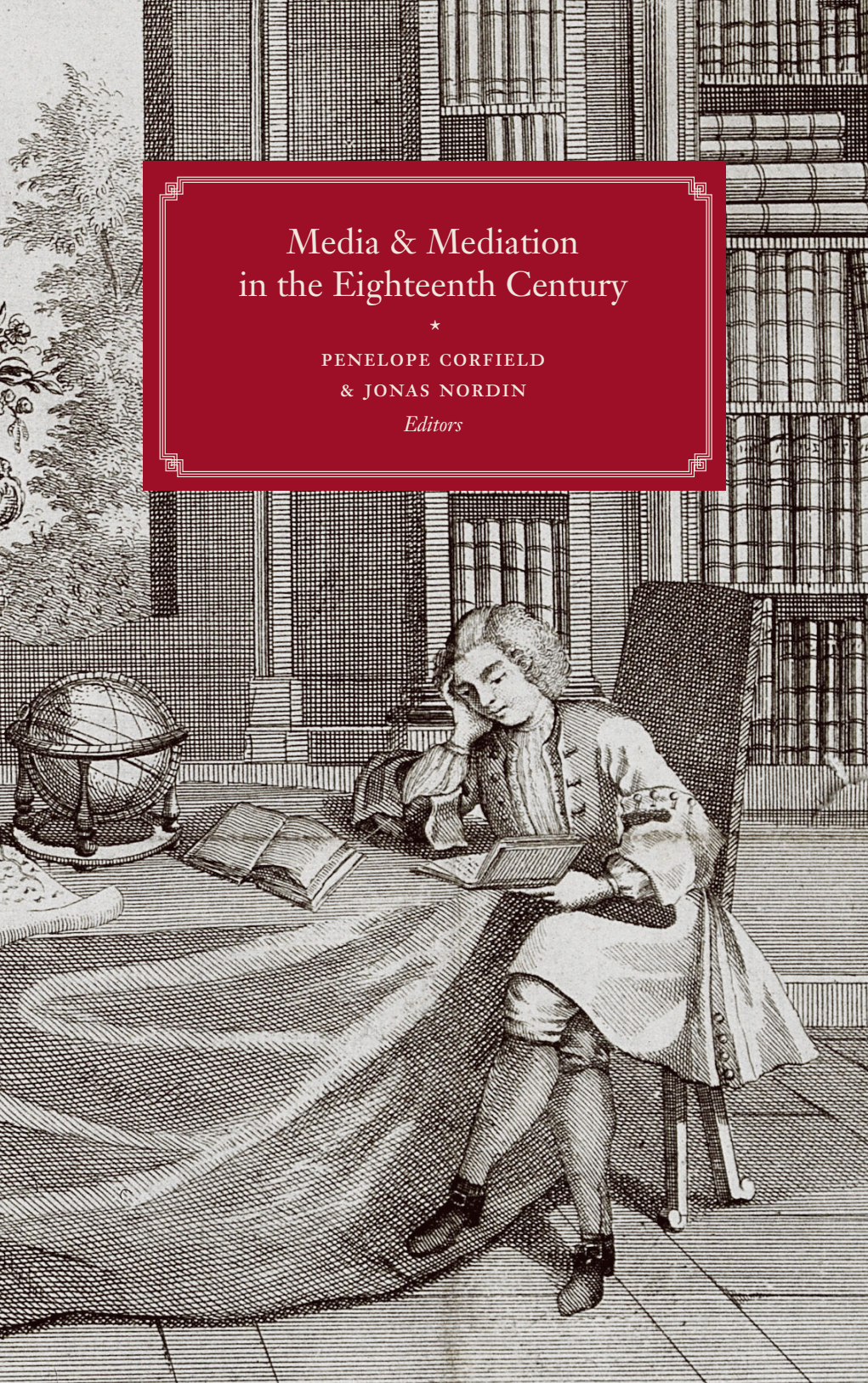
Media & Mediation in the Eighteenth Century

PENELOPE CORFIELD
& JONAS NORDIN
Editors







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SWEDISH SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES
DIVISION OF BOOK HISTORY, LUND UNIVERSITY
LUND 2023

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TYPOGRAPHY Johan Laserna
IMAGE EDITING David Laserna
BINDING Förlagshuset Norden Grafiska, Malmö
PRINT Media-Tryck, Lund 2023
ISBN (print) 978-91-527-7122-8
ISBN (pdf) 978-91-527-7146-4
DOI: HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.37852/OBLU.209

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Acknowledgements

The Editors express their warm thanks: firstly, to all the expert contributors to this volume, for their speedy and cheerful responses; secondly, to all ISECS colleagues who participated in the enjoyable and constructive day-Conference in Lund in August 2022, which launched this volume's big theme of Media & Mediation; and finally, to all specialist advisors, whose invaluable help behind the scenes has made the publication of this volume possible, especially to: Lise Andries, Nelson Guilbert, and Gillian Williamson.

The publication has been funded by the Department of Cultural Studies, Lund University, and the Swedish Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Penelope Corfield & Jonas Nordin

Introduction: 'The Electric Sensibility' of the Emergent Mass Media

Penelope J. Corfield

The growing rapidity of news circulation across eighteenth-century Europe was seen as generating an 'electric sensibility'.[1] Ideas, information and topical reports were becoming transmitted with what seemed like the veritable speed of lightning. And the results were 'electrifying'.

That modish reference came from the English agriculturalist and political commentator Arthur Young. In 1790 he reported admiringly upon the speedy circulation of news. And his reference to an 'electric sensibility' saluted the very latest experimental discoveries, which were providing humans with a hitherto unknown scientific understanding of electricity.

In his particular case, Arthur Young was contrasting the impressive speed of news circulation in England with its comparative slowness in rural France. Those who were getting rapid intelligence from diverse resources were being jolted into thought – as if from the vibrations of an electrical impulse.

By contrast, Young remarked that news in the French kingdom (beyond metropolitan Paris) circulated only slowly. As a result, he sighed, with a not unknown English complacency: 'it is not possible to describe, in words adequate to one's feelings, the dullness and stupidity of France.'

1. Arthur Young (1741–1820), *Travels in France during the Years 1787, 1788, 1789*, ed. Matilda Betham-Edwards (London: George Bell, 1909), pp. 193, 216.

Whether Arthur Young, on his recent travels, had fully taken the measure of his French contemporaries may well be doubted. The point here, however, is his ready association of a rapid circulation of news and views with high levels of popular knowhow and 'intelligence' in the broadest sense of the term.

A vibrant hum of news, views and gossip was especially expected in Europe's expanding urban centres.[2] So an English comedy, dating from 1748, featured a gentleman who visits a country town and asks immediately to see its local newspaper, as well as the press from all the nearby towns as well. But he is disappointed. None are available. Cue for the outraged gentleman to complain: '*A strange town this … : no news stirring, no papers taken in!*'[3] In other words, urban centres in the eighteenth century were becoming known as media hubs.

Illiterate societies, with only a tiny minority of literate citizens, have, of course, their own forms of local knowledge. And their own ways of disseminating news. Yet, historically, once ideas and information began to be circulated and debated with increasing speed and by growing numbers of people – following the advent both of printing and, equally importantly, of mass literacy – then a veritable ferment ensued.[4] The excitement was positively electric. As was the shock impact – plus also the criticisms, complications, and varied cultural adjustments.

Knowledge generation was (and is) not simply a matter of great numbers of people, all gaining information and thinking at speed.

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2. Jan de Vries, *European Urbanisation, 1500–1800* (London: Routledge, 1984).

3. Samuel Foote (1720–77), *The Knights: A Comedy in Two Acts* (1748; first published 1754), in idem, *The Works of Samuel Foote, Esq.*, 1, ed. Jon Bee (London: Sherwood, Gilbert & Piper, 1830), p. 15.

4. See Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979 and later reprints); David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

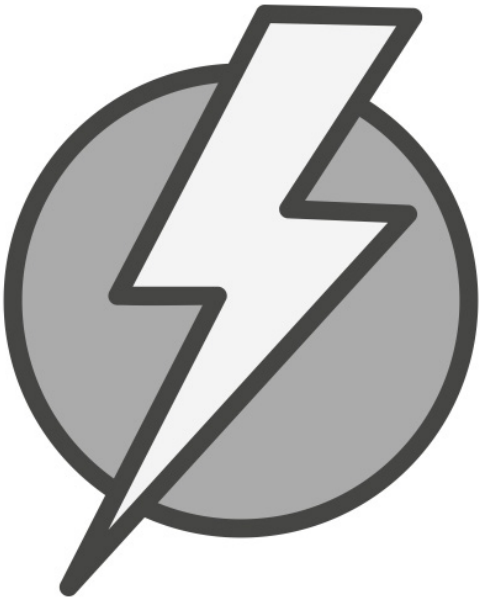


FIGURE 1:1. Electric Shock Icon © Pngtree 151590 (2023).

It takes time, collective and individual effort, shared debates, plus, very often, a process of trial and error, to establish intellectual breakthroughs.[5]

Nonetheless, there is some correlation between knowledge generation and the circulation of ideas. Closed communities do not innovate. Open societies are more likely to do so – but will also produce a share of errors, wrong turnings, and positive harm. (In the same way, electricity may be productively understood and applied by humans, even while its untrammeled power can be damaging).

In this sparkling collection of essays, the contributors explore diverse themes within the broad history of communication. They look at the circulation of ideas, images and identities in Enlightenment Europe, defined broadly to stretch from the later seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries. Particular attention is paid to the visual – but not in isolation. Circulating images help to convey ideas. Yet, conversely, too, ideas and visual impressions may be crystallized via mental perception *'in the mind's eye'*.

Overall, the media are subject to mediation by thinking humans. They study, debate, recirculate, and, at times, reject or complicate the messages. An intended lesson may be misunderstood – or even interpreted in a contradictory form. That is a key component of the challenge and excitement of human communications.

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Skilled communicators therefore take care to get their message across appropriately. In chapter 1, Jonas Nordin aptly elucidates this big theme. In eighteenth-century Sweden, propagandists on behalf of the monarchy, on the one hand, and commercial

5. Peter Burke, *What is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015); Anna Nilsson Hammar, David Larsson Heidenblad & Johan Östling (eds), *Forms of Knowledge: Developing the History of Knowledge* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2020).

traders in the book market, on the other hand, used a varied mix of ideas and images. They knew that country labourers would not respond to the same arguments that might appeal (say) to merchants in Stockholm or to scholars in Uppsala. Thus kingship was depicted, at times, as ceremonial/magical, while, at other times, as utilitarian/practical. And, throughout, the monarchy was invoked as a potent patriotic symbol both by supporters and critics of the regime.

Within the growing cities of eighteenth-century Europe, the ferment of circulating ideas and information was particularly notable. Sweden's capital city of Stockholm was thus defined by one onlooker as being veritably 'flooded with pamphlets'. In chapter 2, Sophie Holm deftly explores the implications of this state of affairs for the diplomatic corps. They represented foreign powers at the Swedish court and were charged with not only collecting news but also assessing its accuracy and value. As a result, diplomats made continual judgments – as individuals were liable to do, albeit usually much less carefully and thoroughly.

One important element of eighteenth-century communication was the stress upon putting faces to significant names. It was not only an era of great portraiture in oils but also one of multitudinous engraved portraits. These circulated in prints and book illustrations, bringing art to the wider world. In chapter 3, Ylva Haidenthaller takes Stockholm as an example and delves finely behind the scenes to identify the varied groups involved in generating a market for engraved prints. Miniature painters; engravers; publishers; customers – all played a role. The visual was not an optional 'extra' but helped people to crystallize knowledge.

Given the eighteenth-century philosophers' concern with the role of images in mediating human thought, it was unsurprising that there was also growing experimentation to study the physical mechanics of sight. In chapter 4, Fokko Jan Dijksterhuis expertly investigates the relevant intellectual milieu. Humans

were understood to learn from the senses, of which vision was the highest form of sensation. At first, the link between the eye and the object viewed was understood quite mechanically. Yet in the late eighteenth century, the experimenter Frans Hemsterhuis stressed the role of the thinking brain in unison with the seeing eye.

Across Europe, philosophers and scientists relished their ability to harness the power of the press to convey their new ideas to the wider public. Diderot's great *Encyclopédie* (1751–72), with its noble plan to bring the world's knowledge to global attention, was a fine example. Yet … there is always a serpent in Eden. In chapter 5, Halima Ouanada adroitly maps the dismay and anger felt by scholars at the growing tide of vituperation, disinformation, and errors that greeted their labours. She also shows how some thinkers, notably Voltaire, responded to the challenge – a timely message in view of the anarchic state of today's social media.

The philosopher Thomas Hobbes was prompted by England's civil warfare in the 1640s to re-envisage the nature of sovereignty. And his *Leviathan* (1651) became a timeless classic, with a cool, rationalist and secular approach. In chapter 6, Maria Isabel Limongi expertly revisits Hobbes's style of presentation. He deploys not only eloquent prose but also special imagery, to 'nail' his abstract concept. The *Leviathan* is shown, in a famous frontispiece, as towering over the world, wielding emblems of both secular and spiritual power. It was a pioneering image of a collective people's sovereignty, underlying all specific forms of government.

Finally, in chapter 7, Antônio dos Santos intriguingly tracks the changing identity of the atheist in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European thought. Non-believers at the start of this era were seen as morally, socially, and politically dangerous. And they remained suspect throughout. Yet, over time, some sympathy was emerging for a rational skepticism. A key intellectual influence behind this change can be traced to John

Locke's *Letter concerning Toleration* (1689). His arguments for a modest acceptance of religious pluralism paved the way for an awareness that non-belief as a personal option would not automatically destroy all social order.

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Together, these essays convey a number of aptly topical messages: Media of communications are created by humans – are mediated by humans – and are sometimes taken by humans into new and intellectually adventurous terrain. Yet the media can also be misused, misunderstood and/or twisted into negative uses. Their impact is protean. Mass media are truly 'electric' – with a capacity to enlighten, warm, empower, transmit, shock, harm, and even destroy. Hence ideas and images work best when processed in tandem by seeing eyes and by critical, thinking brains. That rule applied in Enlightenment Europe – and remains true today.

Introduction : « La sensibilité électrique » des médias de masse émergents

Penelope J. Corfield

La rapidité croissante de la circulation des nouvelles à travers l'Europe du dix-huitième siècle était perçue comme la source d'une « *sensibilité électrique* ».[1] La transmission des idées, informations et récits d'actualité se faisait à une vitesse telle qu'on la croyait semblable à celle des éclairs. Et les résultats étaient eux-mêmes « électrisants ».

Cette référence en vogue provient de l'agronome et commentateur politique anglais Arthur Young. En 1790, il témoignait avec admiration de la circulation rapide des nouvelles. Son allusion à une « sensibilité électrique » faisait écho aux toutes dernières découvertes expérimentales, lesquelles conféraient aux humains une compréhension scientifique sans précédent de l'électricité.

Dans ce cas précis, Arthur Young opposait la rapidité impressionnante de la circulation des nouvelles en Angleterre à sa lenteur relative dans la France rurale. Ceux qui recevaient des informations en rafale de diverses sources voyaient en quelque sorte leur pensée secouée, comme par les vibrations d'une impulsion électrique.

Young remarquait qu'au contraire, les nouvelles dans le royaume de France (hors du Paris métropolitain) ne circulaient

1. Arthur Young (1741–1820), *Travels in France during the Years 1787, 1788, 1789*, éd. Matilda Betham-Edwards (London: George Bell, 1909), pp. 193, 216.

qu'avec lenteur. Aussi soupirait-il, non sans une complaisance bien anglaise : « Il n'est pas possible de décrire avec des mots… l'apathie et la stupidité de la France. » (*'It is not possible to describe in words … the dullness and stupidity of France'.*)

On peut certes douter qu'Arthur Young ait pris la juste mesure de ses contemporains français lors de ses récents voyages. Cependant, ce qui nous intéresse, ici, est qu'il associe volontiers une circulation rapide des nouvelles et des opinions avec un niveau élevé de sagesse populaire et de « connaissance », au sens le plus large du terme.

On s'attendait des centres urbains en expansion de l'Europe à ce qu'ils bourdonnent particulièrement de nouvelles, de commentaires et de ragots.[2] Une comédie anglaise datant de 1748 mettait en scène un gentilhomme qui visitait un village de campagne, et demandait sitôt à en voir le journal local, ainsi que ceux de tous les villages avoisinants. Il fut déçu lorsqu'il apprit qu'il n'y en avait aucun. Outré, il se plaignit : « Étrange village que celui-ci… : aucune nouvelle n'y court, aucun journal n'y circule ! » (*'A strange town this … : no news stirring, no papers taken in!'*[3]) En un mot, les centres urbains du dix-huitième siècle étaient de plus en plus considérés comme des carrefours médiatiques.

Bien entendu, les sociétés peu alphabétisées, n'ayant qu'une infime minorité de citoyens lettrés, possédaient leurs propres formes de savoirs locaux, leurs propres manières de répandre les nouvelles. Mais, historiquement, ce fut au moment où les idées et informations commencèrent à être diffusées et à faire l'objet de débats, avec une vitesse accrue et par un nombre grandissant de personnes, non seulement dans la foulée des avancées de l'imprimerie mais aussi de l'alphabétisation de masse, que survint une

2. Jan de Vries, *European Urbanisation, 1500–1800* (London: Routledge, 1984).

3. Samuel Foote (1720–1777), *The Knights: A Comedy in Two Acts* (1748; first published 1754), in idem, *The Works of Samuel Foote, Esq.*, 1, éd. Jon Bee (London: Sherwood, Gilbert & Piper, 1830), p. 15.

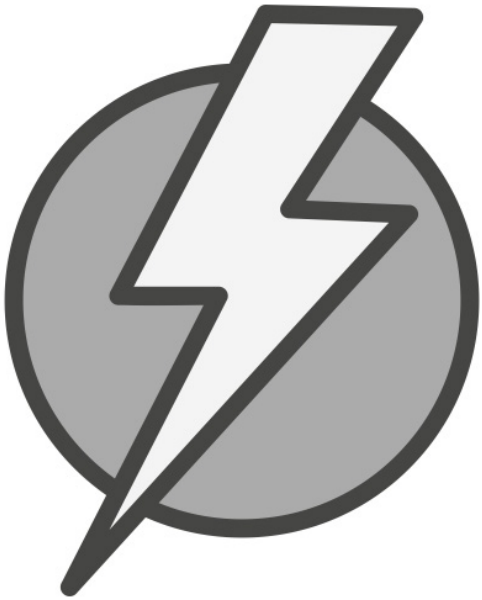


FIGURE 1:1. Electric Shock Icon © Pngtree 151590 (2023).

véritable effervescence.[4] L'agitation était bel et bien électrique, tout comme l'impact du choc, qui s'accompagnait de critiques, de complications et de divers ajustements culturels.

La production de connaissances n'était (et n'est toujours) pas simplement l'affaire d'un grand nombre de personnes accumulant des informations et pensant à grande vitesse. Il faut du temps, des efforts collectifs et individuels, des débats communs et, très souvent, des essais et des erreurs, afin de réaliser des progrès intellectuels.[5]

Quoiqu'il en soit, il y a une certaine corrélation entre la production des connaissances et la circulation des idées. Les communautés fermées ne savent pas innover. Les sociétés ouvertes sont plus susceptibles d'y arriver, bien qu'elles produisent aussi leur part d'erreurs, d'égarements et de préjudices. (De la même manière, l'électricité peut être comprise et utilisée de manière productive par les humains, bien que sa puissance incontrôlée soit potentiellement dangereuse.)

Dans ce brillant recueil d'essais, les contributeurs et contributrices explorent divers thèmes traversant la vaste histoire de la communication. Ils et elles examinent la circulation des idées, des images et des identités dans l'Europe des Lumières (définie au sens large, de la fin du dix-septième au début du dix-neuvième siècle). Une attention particulière est portée à l'aspect visuel, mais pas de manière isolée : la circulation des images contribue à transmettre les idées. Inversement, les idées et les impressions visuelles

4. Voir Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979 et réimpressions); David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

5. Peter Burke, *What is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015); Anna Nilsson Hammar, David Larsson Heidenblad & Johan Östling (dir.), *Forms of Knowledge: Developing the History of Knowledge* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2020). P. Burke, *What is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge, 2015).

peuvent se cristalliser dans la perception mentale ou, pour ainsi dire, « *dans l'œil de l'esprit* ».

En somme, les médias sont soumis à la médiation par des humains pensants. Ils étudient, critiquent, transmettent les messages et, parfois, les rejettent ou les complexifient. Le message que l'on souhaite transmettre peut cependant être mal compris, voire interprété sous une forme contradictoire. Il s'agit là d'un élément clé entourant les défis que posent, et l'enthousiasme que suscitent, les communications humaines.

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Les communicateurs habiles prennent soin de formuler leurs messages pour qu'ils soient bien entendus. Dans le chapitre 1, Jonas Nordin aborde avec justesse cette grande question. Dans la Suède du dix-huitième siècle, les propagandistes de la monarchie, d'une part, et les acteurs commerciaux dans le marché du livre, d'autre part, usent d'un mélange varié d'images et d'idées. Ils savent que les travailleurs ruraux ne seront pas sensibles aux mêmes arguments qui pourraient convaincre, par exemple, des marchands de Stockholm ou des savants d'Uppsala. Aussi la royauté est-elle décrite, selon le cas, parfois dans un esprit cérémoniel ou magique, parfois dans une perspective utilitaire ou pratique. Mais à travers tout cela, tant les partisans que les critiques du régime invoquent la monarchie comme un puissant symbole patriotique.

Dans les villes en expansion de l'Europe du dix-huitième siècle, l'effervescence de la circulation des idées et des informations est particulièrement remarquable. Stockholm, capitale de la Suède, est ainsi décrite par un observateur comme étant véritablement « inondée de pamphlets ». Au chapitre 2, Sophie Holm explore avec finesse ce que cela implique pour les diplomates. Ces derniers représentent les pouvoirs étrangers à la cour de Suède, et sont non seulement chargés de recueillir les nouvelles, mais d'en évaluer la justesse et la pertinence. Les

diplomates doivent donc continuellement émettre des jugements – comme tout individu est susceptible de le faire, mais généralement avec beaucoup moins de prudence et de rigueur.

L'un des aspects essentiels de la communication au dix-huitième siècle est l'accent mis sur le fait d'associer des visages aux noms importants. C'est l'époque des grands portraits à l'huile, mais aussi celle où se multiplient les portraits gravés, lesquels circulent à travers les livres et les estampes, mettant l'art à la portée du plus grand monde. Ylva Haidenthaller, au chapitre 3, prend l'exemple de Stockholm et nous mène derrière le rideau, identifiant les différents groupes impliqués dans le marché des gravures et estampes. Peintres en miniature, graveurs, éditeurs, clients : tous jouent un rôle. L'image n'est pas un supplément facultatif, elle permet de cristalliser les connaissances.

Étant donné l'intérêt des philosophes du dix-huitième siècle pour le rôle de l'image comme médiatrice de la pensée humaine, il n'est pas étonnant de voir se multiplier les expériences autour des mécanismes physiques de la vue. Dans le quatrième chapitre, Fokko Jan Dijksterhuis examine avec brio ce milieu intellectuel. On concevait que l'humain apprenait par ses sens, et parmi ceux-ci, la vue était la forme privilégiée de sensation. Le lien entre l'œil et l'objet observé fut d'abord envisagé sous un angle surtout mécanique. Mais vers la fin du dix-huitième siècle, l'expérimentateur Frans Hemsterhuis insista, d'une manière cruciale, sur le rôle du cerveau pensant de concert avec l'œil qui regarde.

À travers l'Europe, les philosophes, les hommes et les femmes de science se réjouissaient du pouvoir que leur conférait la presse dans la diffusion de leurs idées nouvelles à un auditoire élargi. La grande *Encyclopédie* de Diderot (1751–1772) en est un bel exemple, avec sa noble ambition de porter les savoirs du monde à l'attention d'un public global. Cependant… il y a toujours un serpent dans l'Éden. Halima Ouanada, au chapitre 5, cartographie adroitement la colère et le désarroi des savants, devant la montée fulgurante de la désinformation, des erreurs et des vitu-

pérations entourant leurs travaux. Elle montre également comment certains penseurs, notamment Voltaire, ont répondu à ce défi – un message opportun face à l'anarchie qui règne de nos jours sur les médias sociaux.

Dans les années 1640, la guerre civile an Angleterre pousse le philosophe Thomas Hobbes à repenser la nature de la souveraineté. Son *Léviathan* (1651), avec son approche froide, rationnelle et séculaire, est devenu un classique intemporel. Dans le chapitre 6, Maria Isabel Limongi pose un regard érudit sur la stylistique de Hobbes. Ce dernier déploie non seulement une prose éloquente, mais aussi une imagerie singulière afin de mieux « saisir » ses concepts abstraits. Un célèbre frontispice montre le *Léviathan* surplombant le monde, maniant à la fois des emblèmes des pouvoirs séculier et spirituel. Cette image novatrice illustre la souveraineté collective d'un peuple, au fondement de toute forme particulière de gouvernement.

Enfin, au septième chapitre, Antônio dos Santos retrace le parcours et les changements de la figure de l'athée dans la pensée des dix-septième et dix-huitième siècles. Les non-croyants sont d'abord perçus comme moralement, socialement et politiquement dangereux. La suspicion à leur égard perdure d'ailleurs tout au long de cette période. Au fil du temps, cependant, une certaine sympathie se développe envers la raison sceptique. L'une des principales influences à l'origine de ce changement est la *Lettre sur la tolérance* (1689) de John Locke. Ses arguments en faveur d'une acceptation modérée du pluralisme religieux ont ouvert la voie à l'idée suivant laquelle l'incroyance, en tant que choix individuel, ne mène pas automatiquement à la destruction de tout ordre social.

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Ensemble, ces essais livrent des messages qui éclairent notre actualité: Les humains ont créé les médias, et en assurent la médiation. Parfois, les humains portent ces médias vers des terri-

toires intellectuels inédits et inexplorés. Mais les médias peuvent aussi être mal utilisés, mal compris et/ou détournés vers des usages négatifs. Leurs impacts sont protéiformes. Les médias de masse sont véritablement « électriques » : ils ont la capacité d'éclairer, de réchauffer, d'animer, de transmettre, de choquer, de blesser et même de détruire. Le meilleur usage des idées et des images procède donc à la fois de l'acuité du regard et l'action critique du cerveau. Cette règle s'appliquait dans l'Europe des Lumières – et reste vraie aujourd'hui.

CHAPTER 1

Mediating Images of Monarchy from Castle to Cottage in Eighteenth-Century Sweden

Jonas Nordin

In early modern Europe, images of kings and queens, princes and princesses accounted for much of the visual message conveyed in a society. Alongside Christ and other religious figures, royalty were the most depicted persons. Biblical figures, saints, and church fathers belonged to a distant past and were recognized through attributes and distinctive characteristics rather than their facial features. The same often applied to royal portraits even when they depicted actual individuals from the present or the recent past. Among the population at large, people had expectations of how the king was supposed to appear, with his crown and sword and other symbols of power, although they did not necessarily know what he actually looked like. Images of royals and of royalty were powerful symbols in shaping imagined communities in the early modern world.[1]

Leaving all kinds of written communication aside, royals were depicted in painted portraits, statues, wax figures, tapestries, and reliefs, engravings, woodcuts, and drawings, coins, medals, and seals. If we move away from the proper portraits and include symbolic representations of royalty, such as crowns, monograms, and dynastic coats of arms, the pictorial flora becomes even richer. It is often assumed without closer examination that this

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communites: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

rich array of representations emanated from the royal propaganda machinery. However, in the communication circuit we cannot focus only on the message but must also consider who is the client, who is the executor, the distributor, the vendor, the consumer, and so on.[2] In doing so we discover that there were often various and entangled interests involved in the image production and distribution. Oftentimes this imagery was part of a transnational circulation, not only through the borrowing of models and patterns, but also through actual reutilizing of pictures in new situations. Book historian Daniel Bellingradt has talked about *media recycling*, *paper echoes*, and *feedback loops*, all of which we will see examples of in the following.[3]

In this essay, I will discuss how commercial forces accounted for large parts of the royal image production in eighteenth-century Sweden, without any official intervention. This indicates that the monarchy was not merely an institution of power but also a normative force in society that shaped people's everyday

2. The 'communications circuit' is a concept famously established by Robert Darnton in 'What is the History of Books?', *Daedalus* (Summer 1982), pp. 65–83. Darnton emphasized that the model was incomplete and it has continued to be developed by other researchers; cf. idem, '"What is the History of Books?" Revisited', *Modern Intellectual History*, 4 (2007), pp. 495–508. Several researchers have supplemented Darnton's model, which primarily pays attention to the book market's internal conditions of production, by introducing external socio-economic factors, see, e.g., Thomas R. Adams & Nicholas Barker, 'A New Model for the Study of the Book', in Nicholas Barker (ed.), *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society* (London: British Library, 1993), pp. 1–15. A recent attempt of widening the focus is Thomas Munck, *Conflict and Enlightenment: Print and Political Culture in Europe, 1635–1795* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 2.

3. Daniel Bellingradt, 'The Dynamic of Communication and Media Recycling in Early Modern Europe: Popular Prints as Echoes and Feedback Loops', in Massimo Rospocher, Jeoren Salman & Hannu Salmi (eds), *Crossing Borders, Crossing Cultures: Popular Print in Europa (1450–1900)* (Berlin & Boston: de Gruyter, 2019), pp. 9–32.

lives on an emotional and sociological level. I will also demonstrate that there was not always a straightforward connection between images of royalty and royalism.

Swedish Monarchy in the Eighteenth Century

My examples will be taken from Sweden's eighteenth century, which began and ended with royal autocracy. The period in-between, or from the violent death of King Charles XII in 1718 to the coup d'état by King Gustav III (1746–92) in 1772, is referred to as the Age of Liberty (*frihetstiden*). During this era Sweden was a republic in all but name. The supreme power rested within the Swedish Diet (*riksdagen*), which convened at least every third year. The Diet consisted of four estates: the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasantry, which created the widest political participation among any of the major European states. Between the sessions of the Diet, executive power was exercised by the council of the realm with sixteen members. The king was chairman in the council, but since he only had two votes beside the sixteen counsellors, he was easily and often outvoted. In effect, the king became a mere figurehead with little real power, although he possessed a lot of social and cultural capital which was deemed necessary for the realm's reputation and for the tranquillity of society. It should also be noted that, in contrast to many other historical designations, *frihetstiden* is actually a contemporary name which was used already in the eighteenth century.[4]

4. The best introduction in English to this period is still Michael Roberts, *The Age of Liberty: Sweden 1719–1772* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). For the functioning of the Diet, see Michael F. Metcalf, 'Parliamentary Sovereignty and Royal Reaction, 1719–1809', in idem (ed.), *The Riksdag: A History of the Swedish Parliament* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987). See also several of the chapters in Pasi Ihalainen et al. (eds), *Scandinavia in the Age of Revolution: Nordic Political*

It might be assumed that this powerless monarchy would not be subject to much public attention, but the actual circumstance was rather the opposite: as the monarchy's power diminished, its symbolic importance grew stronger and, for instance, some of the most lavish and expensive coronations in Swedish history took place during the Age of Liberty. Coronations were important rituals, but their immediate symbolic effect was limited to the comparatively few people who could attend the occasion. I shall therefore discuss some examples of how the image of kingship was disseminated through other means to wider parts of the population.[5]

A basic requirement for propaganda to be effective is that it reaches the intended audience, and the public – meaning the active citizenry – can be more or less limited depending on the form of government. But even a monocratic government needs to communicate with the public, because its power rests on authority which must be demonstrated, regardless of whether it is exercised through terror or benevolence. In revolutionary and violent upheavals, like the French and Russian revolutions, regimes make a point of abolishing old symbols and language markers, and creating 'a new man', both figuratively and practically. Major non-violent political upheavals, on the other hand, presuppose an evolutionary reinterpretation of ingrained symbols. The classic example is the gradual and careful reinterpretation of political concepts and symbols in Rome's transition from republic to empire, where old representations were given

Cultures, 1740–1820 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), about the monarchy, esp. my own chapter 'The Monarchy in the Swedish Age of Liberty (1719–1772)', pp. 29–40.

5. In a major study, I have investigated the functioning of a monarchy with a powerless king by looking at its constitutional role, the mediation of monarchy through various channels, and how the monarchy and the king was perceived by the subjects: Jonas Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki: Konungamakt och offentlighet i frihetstidens Sverige* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2009).

a new mythology which almost imperceptibly forged the imagery of power.[6]

The political upheaval after the death of Charles XII has been called a 'revolution' by later historians, and Gustav III himself used this term for his own coup d'état.[7] However, in neither case was the royal imagery changed in any substantial manner, although the polity went from absolutism to republicanism in 1718 and Gustav III, both before and after his coup, had to adapt to the republican language which had developed under the preceding two generations.[8] ('Republic' shall here of course be understood in the eighteenth-century fashion as a free government or *res publica* ruled by law and where the people could exercise a veto in political matters.[9]) The general and former councillor Fredrik Axel von Fersen (1719–94), a political opponent to Gustav III, observed that this not only influenced the king's rhetoric but also limited his room for action:

> The king, who never wanted to admit, neither in public nor to the foreign courts, that he had encroached on national freedom, because his manifesto for the revolution proclaimed, that he had not taken up arms for anything other than to protect the freedom and

6. Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, transl. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1988).

7. Lennart Thanner, *Revolutionen i Sverige efter Karl XII:s död: Den inrepolitiska maktkampen under tidigare delen av Ulrika Eleonora d.y:s regering* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1953); Gustav III, 'Memoires sur la Revolution de Suede en 1772', Konung Gustaf III:s egenhändiga skrifter, 5: Memoirer och Bidrag till Konungens egen historia, tome I: 1756–1778, Uppsala University Library, no 65.

8. Mikael Alm, *Kungsord i elfte timmen: Språk och självbild i det gustavianska enväldets legitimitetskamp 1772–1809* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2002); Henrika Tandefelt, *Konsten att härska: Gustaf III inför sina undersåtar* (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, 2008).

9. Cf. Rachel Hammersley, *Republicanism: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020), pp. 1–14.

> rights of his people, who sighed under the oppression of aristocratic abuse […].[10]

But in the same way that the king had to resort to republican rhetoric, republicans too were forced to use the symbols of the monarchy to legitimize or perhaps hide their exercise of power. What this means is that we cannot automatically see an image of a monarch as a mark of royalism and as a means of persuasion emanating from royal circles, much less from the king himself. In the following, we will see examples of images of kingship originating from royal propaganda, but also from businessmen, and from anti-royalists.

The Medium Modifies the Message

The basic function of media is to transmit and spread messages.[11] Various media have different performances but also different symbolic values. The two hostile crowns of Denmark and Sweden both commissioned paintings and tapestries with battle scenes from the Scanian War 1675–79 to adorn the royal palaces in either realm.[12] The engravings, which made up many of the models, naturally had a greater potential for dissemination, but the paintings and above all the tapestries had a higher status.

10. 'Konungen, som aldrig ville erkänna, hvarken offentligt eller för de främmande hofven, att han hade inkräktat på den nationella friheten, emedan hans manifest för revolutionen innehöll, att ej hafva gripit till vapen för annat än att skydda friheten och rättigheterna för sitt folk, som suckade under förtrycket af aristokratiska missbruk'; Fredrik Axel von Fersen, *Historiska skrifter*, 3, ed. R. M. Klinckowström (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1869), p. 132.

11. John Guillory, 'Genesis of the Media Concept', *Critical Inquiry*, 36 (2010), pp. 321–62.

12. Gudmund Boesen, *Christian den Femtes Rosenborgtapeter fra den skaanske Krig* (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen, 1949), pp. 62–81; Börje Magnusson, 'Lemkes bataljmålningar på Drottningholm och deras förlagor', *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 49 (1980), pp. 121–31.

The engravings could inform a larger audience, but the paintings and tapestries could awe a select crowd – it was efficacious communication versus conspicuous consumption. Furthermore, although it was the Swedish crown that was the final victor in the war (after French mediation), it did not prevent the Danish king from highlighting separate victories – you only had to present the story in the right portions.

A common way of displaying royalty was through state portraits with regalia and other marks of kingship (fig. 2.1), but since they were generally confined to the great halls of royal palaces and noble residences their general impact was as limited as the coronations. Versailles was famous for being open to all visitors in theory, and Louis XIV commissioned printed explanations of the allegories in the ceilings to be placed in the grand gallery so that their narrative content would not be lost on uninformed visitors.[13] However, most royal residences in Europe were only accessible to invitees and members of polite society who paid their way in through gratuities to some warden. In either case, the number of actual visitors was very limited.[14]

A way of making the portraits more widely known and of increasing the impact of the message they conveyed, was through engraved copies. Art theorists often talk about the composition in a painting and the movement in the image. Western viewers

13. François Charpentier, *Explication des tableaux de la galerie de Versailles* (Paris: François Muguet, 'Par ordre exprés de sa Majesté', 1684); Robert W. Berger, *In the Garden of the Sun King: Studies on the Park of Versailles under Louis XIV* (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1985), 29; Guy Walton, *Louis XIV's Versailles* (New York: Viking, 1986), pp. 80–91.

14. Joachim Christoph Nemeitz, *Séjour de Paris, oder Getreue Anleitung, welchergestalt Reisende von Condition sich zu verhalten haben, wenn sie ihre Zeit und Geld nützlich und wohl zu Paris anwenden wollen*, second ed. (Frankfurt: Friedrich Wilhelm Förster, 1722), p. 394; Marianna Jenkins, *The State Portrait: Its Origin and Evolution* ([New York]: College Art Association of America, 1947).



FIGURE 2.1. Ulrika Eleonora the Younger (1688–1741), ruling queen of Sweden 1719–1720, painted by Georg Engelhard Schröder (1684–1750). Photo: Erik Cornelius, Nationalmuseum (NMGrh 1359).

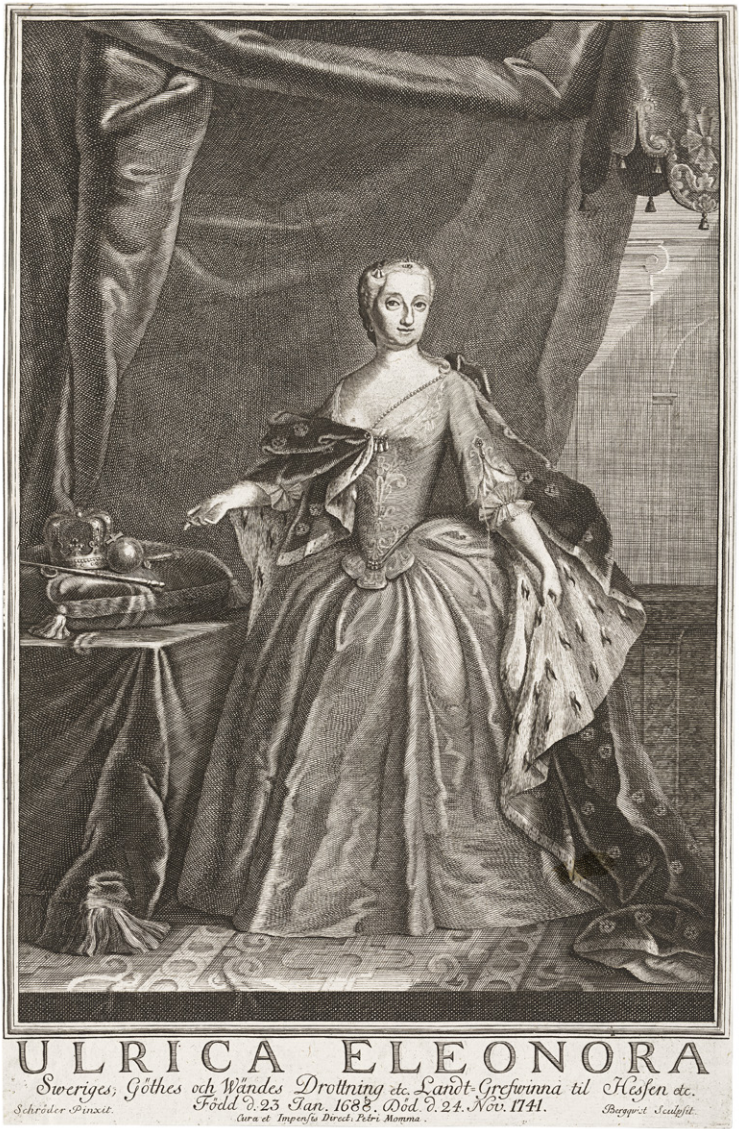


FIGURE 2:2. Queen Ulrika Eleonora the Younger, engraving by Carl Bergquist (1711–1781). Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden.

are generally assumed to read a motif from left to right in the same way that we read text. However, the conscious choice that each artist was expected to make was not more binding than that an engraver readily thought that he could reverse a motif without ruining the composition; it was a consequence of the production process where the motif directly copied onto a printing plate would give a mirrored impression. There were certainly techniques to reverse the motif during the transfer to the plate, but it involved an extra step in the work process that was obviously often not considered worth the effort.

An engraving made by Carl Bergquist (1711–81) after Georg Engelhardt Schröder's (1684–1750) full figure portrait of Queen Ulrika Eleonora (1688–1741; fig. 2.2) is admittedly not very skilfully executed, but its expected audience were nevertheless nobility, clergy, and better-off citizens rather than simple commoners. The commissioner was not the court, but judging from the inscription on the engraving it was a matter of economic speculation at the 'care and expense' of the printer and publisher Peter Momma. Berquist was employed as engraver by the Swedish Academy of Sciences, and Momma was licensed royal printer, but in both cases this did only guarantee a basic revenue and did not make them disinclined to other sources of income.[15] There are no records of the production of this engraving, but it seems likely that it was executed in the spring of 1742 in connection with the queen's death and burial. Engravings of this kind would be collected in portfolios or occasionally framed and hanged on the walls of, for instance, a rectory or a courthouse.[16]

Most common people had to make do with cheap woodcuts.

15. The system with the privileged royal printer is discussed in detail in Anna-Maria Rimm, *Elsa Fougt, Kungl. boktryckare: Aktör i det litterära systemet ca 1780–1810*, diss. (Uppsala: Avdelningen för litteratursociologi, 2009).

16. Cf. Sonya Petersson, *Konst i omlopp: Mening, medier och marknad i Stockholm under 1700-talets senare hälft* (Göteborg: Makadam, 2014), e.g. pp. 214–24.

This fragile and inexpensive material has been very poorly preserved, but we can say with great certainty that religious motifs were by far the most common sort – judging from Swedish collections, religious images made up for between 70 and 80 percent of the total.[17] Far behind, in second place, came images of royalties. These images were used to decorate the inside of the coffers where maids and farmhands kept their few belongings, and they could replace wallpaper in simple dwellings; this latter circumstance sometimes caused problems because it involved an infringement of the wallpaper makers' guild rights.[18] Having an enduring or semi-permanent place in the modest equivalents to galleries among common people, they needed to represent something important and lasting to their owners.

When it came to popular royal portraits, likeness with the portrayed person was of secondary importance. Very few people who owned these kinds of images ever saw the portrayed persons

17. There are extensive studies on popular woodcuts in Sweden, see esp. Nils-Arvid Bringéus, *Skånska kistebrev: Berlingska boktryckeriet, N. P. Lundbergs boktryckeri och F. F. Cedergréens boktryckeri* (Stockholm: Carlssons, 1995). For an overview, see idem, 'Massmedium i minformat: En översikt över den svenska kistebrevsproduktionen', *Rig: Kulturhistorisk tidskrift*, 2008/3 (2008), pp. 129–39. For the Danish production, which was a communicating vessel with the Swedish market, see, esp. V. E. Clausen, *Det folkelige danske træsnit i etbladstryck 1565–1884* (Copenhagen: Foreningen Danmarks Folkeminder, 1985). On the popularity of religious motifs, cf. Andreas Würgler, '"Popular Prints in German" (1400–1800)', in Rospocher et al., (eds), *Crossing Borders*, pp. 64–6.

18. Gunnar W. Lundberg, 'Formskärar Hoffbro', in idem, *Bellmansfigurer: Kulturhistoriska tidsbilder och personhistoriska anteckningar till Fredmansdikten* (Stockholm: Gebers, 1927), pp. 102–3; Clausen, *Det folkelige danske træsnit*, pp. 15–16; Elisabeth Berglin, 'From Chest Prints to Painted Wall Hangings: Context and World of Ideas in the Transformation Process', in Nils-Arvid Bringéus & Sten Åke Nilsson (eds), *Popular Prints and Imagery: Proceedings of an International Conference in Lund 5–7 October 2000* (Stockholm: Vitterhetsakademien, 2001), pp. 425–44.

in real life and could compare the resemblance, a circumstance which facilitated media recycling.[19] Two other things were important, on the other hand. Firstly, in contrast to the more exclusive engravings, popular prints were almost always colourized. In order for them to brighten up everyday life, the cheerful colours, often applied with the use of templates, seem to have been almost as important as the motif itself – they were sometimes called 'paper paintings' (*målade papperstavlor*). Secondly, although likeness with the portrayed person was of secondary importance the motif nevertheless had to be simple to understand. In a woodcut (fig. 2.3) copied from Carl Bergquist's engraving of Queen Ulrika Eleonora we therefore have not one, but *two* crowns so that there should be no mistaking of the represented person's royal lineage.[20] Furthermore, the portrayed person has also changed identity from Ulrika Eleonora, who died in 1741, to Princess Sofia Albertina, born in 1753 – that closed crowns were reserved for kings and queens and not to be worn by princesses was a technicality that hardly bothered customers. This print was subsequently copied by the printer in Gävle, Ernst Peter Sundquist, in 1801, but the identity had now shifted once more, to Princess Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta

19. Cf. Bellingradt, 'The Dynamic of Communication and Media Recycling', pp. 10–11, 24–31.

20. A similar example is a double portrait from Karlskrona around 1780 depicting Gustav III and Sofia Magdalena dressed in the 'Swedish costume' that the king had introduced. As was common in official portraits, both the king and the queen point to a crown lying on a podium. The Swedish costume was a sort of national uniform intended to create a standardized dress code for different circles, not least the court. A king wearing the Swedish costume and regalia simultaneously was therefore almost a self-contradiction, but this clarification was required in popular graphics, especially since the Swedish costume also existed in a version for the common people – a certain precision was therefore necessary to avoid mistakes. See reproductions in Nils-Arvid Bringéus, 'Kistebrev trycka i Blekinge', *Blekingeboken: Årsbok för Blekinge Hembygdsförbund och Blekinge Museum*, 76 (1998), pp. 28–9.

(1759–1818), sister-in-law to Sofia Albertina (fig. 2.4). The double crowns remained also in this rendition.

Once again: very few people were able to assess the resemblance with the portrayed persons and recycling of the woodblocks was therefore common. With only small adjustments and a new text, the Danish King Christian VII and Queen Carolina Mathilda could, for instance, be turned into Swedish King Gustav III and Queen Sofia Magdalena, or the latter could be turned into her daughter-in-law Queen Fredrika Dorothea Vilhelmina.[21] This circulation of stock images and reuse of woodblocks was all about economy and making use of the cheapest originals available. The transnational trade is also proof that the crown had little to do with this kind of image production, which was purely based on economic speculation on behalf of the producer.

More important than likeness to the portrayed person was distinct signs of royalty that explained the subject. Representative art moved towards a higher degree of informality during the eighteenth century, which coincided with a domestication of royalty. In a movement that became even stronger in the nineteenth century, the public image of royalty was transformed from that of an elevated dynasty exalted above the subjects, to a bourgeois family ideal to inspire citizens.[22] This attracted above all the bourgeois circles who aspired to be drawn closer into the royal networks and national development, but it had little meaning for commoners who would never come into intimate contact with the royal family, but at best could glance at them from a distance during public ceremonies.

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21. See Bringéus, *Skånska kistebrev*, pp. 174–5; Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, pp. 144, 149.

22. Simon Schama, 'The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500–1850', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 17 (1986), pp. 155–83; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), ch. 5.



FIGURE 2:3. Princess Sophia Albertina (1753–1829), colourized woodcut by unknown artist. Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 63:11).



FIGURE 2:4. Princess Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta (1759–1818), woodcut printed by Ernst Peter Sundqvist 1801. Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 37:5).



FIGURE 2:5. 'Gustavus Adolphus' (1594–1632), king of Sweden. Eighteenth-century woodcut by unknown artist. Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 63:17).

Painted parade portraits with the king in full regalia thus became less common, and the most exalted royal image of them all, the equestrian portrait, all but vanished in Sweden in the eighteenth century. But the genre thrived in popular woodcuts. In these contexts, one could even dispense with the otherwise necessary royal attributes: a person sitting on horseback was by himself sufficient sign of kingship.[23] In an image almost certainly produced from an imported and recycled woodblock, a cavalier dressed in eighteenth-century fashion has unconcernedly been transformed into the seventeenth-century hero-king Gustavus Adolphus (fig. 2.5). One may imagine a producer of popular prints getting hold of a recycled woodblock of some unknown nobleman or military commander. By simply adding the name of a national hero this anonymous figure was elevated to something meaningful in the same way as a depiction of a bearded man in robes could be designated as Jesus Christ or a biblical Patriarch without any requirements for likeness.

Kings in Profile

Religious motifs were in popular demand, and it was a short leap between God in Heaven and Gods on Earth. An image of Christ and the Apostles made by the German wood engraver Albrecht Schmid (1667–1744) was minutely copied by his younger Swedish colleague Peter Lorentz Hoffbro (1710–59; figs 2.6–7).[24] In

23. For other examples, see Lundberg, 'Formskärar Hoffbro', pp. 105, 109; Clausen, *Det folkelige danske træsnit*, pp. 91, 93, 99, and Bringéus, *Skånska kistebrev*, pp. 172–90.

24. Hoffbro's copying of Schmid's print was first observed by Maj Nodermann, 'Kistan från Forssa', *Fataburen: Nordiska Museets och Skansens årsbok* (1994), pp. 150–1. About Hoffbro, see Lundberg, 'Formskärar Hoffbro', pp. 99–117; Sten Åke Nilsson, 'Petter Lorens Hoffbro och frihetstidens bildmanipulationer', *Vetenskapssocieteten i Lund årsbok 1976* (1976), pp. 5–34; idem, 'On heroes and traitors: The first popular prints in Sweden", in Bringéus & Nilsson (eds), *Popular Prints and Imagery*, pp. 169–80.



FIGURE 2:6. Albrecht Schmid, 'Christ the Lord with his holy Apostles and Evangelists', colourized woodcut. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg, HB 24408.



FIGURE 2:7. 'The Lord Christ with the four Evangelists and twelve Apostles', woodcut by Peter Lorentz Hoffbro, after 1744. Nordiska museet, NM 0310791.



FIGURE 2:8. 'Recollection of Sweden's kings, together with their birth, age, and year', woodcut by Peter Lorentz Hoffbro, after 1744. Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 43:2).

1744 he began his business as the first domestic producer specializing in broadsheet woodcuts in Sweden and his influence was such that long after his demise 'Hoffbro's manner' was attached to all types of unsophisticated images, both printed and painted. His recognition was strongly enhanced by the production of playing cards that he started in the 1750s.[25]

The composition with Christ and the Apostles obviously inspired Hoffbro to widen his range of motifs, and he used a similar design, probably of his own invention, to depict the ruling King Fredrik (1676–1751) in the centre surrounded by his predecessors from the early 1500s onwards (fig. 2.8). It has a very crude execution and only the varying beards and hairstyles lend some personal features to the depicted monarchs.

The idea, however, had potential, and Hoffbro developed the theme in no less than three large folio sheets with all 153 Swedish kings from Magog, son of Noah the patriarch, to the ruling monarch (fig. 2.9).[26] This time Hoffbro relapsed to the copying of a model: the original was a intaglio print by the Nürnberg engraver Johann Georg Puschner (1680–1749; fig. 2.10).[27]

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25. Most famously, songwriter Carl Michael Bellman (1740–95) sang about a harp decorated with cherubs 'in Hoffbro's beautiful manner' (*utaf Hoffbros wackra rön*) in Fredman's Epistle no. 44 (published 1790). For other examples, see *Dagligt Allehanda*, 21 April 1774; *Stockholms Posten*, 13 March 1783; *Örebro Weckoblad*, 14 February 1784. About playing cards, cf. John Bernström, *Spelkort* (Stockholm: Nordiska Museet, 1960). Bernström does not mention Hoffbro in the historical overview, pp. 59–64, but only in the list of Swedish playing card manufacturers, p. 83.

26. This inventive list of kings traced its origin to the half mythological patriotic chronicle written by the exiled Catholic archbishop Johannes Magnus in the sixteenth century: *Historia Ioannis Magni Gothi sedis apostolicae legati Svetiae et Gotiae primatis ac archiepiscopi Vpsalensis de omnibvs Gothorvm Sveonvmqve regibvs qui vnquam ab initio nationis extitere, eorúmque memorabilibus bellis late varieqve per orbem gestis, opera Olai Magni Gothi fratris eiusdem autoris ac etiam archiepiscopi Vpsalensis in lucem ędita* (Rome: Giovanni de Viotti, 1554).

27. Puschner's engravings are treated in a revised dissertation by



FIGURE 2:9. 'Brief description of all Swedish and Gothic kings' reigns from Magog to our most gracious King Adolf Fredrik', woodcut by Peter Lorentz Hoffbro, around 1750. Photo: Jens Gustafsson, The National Library of Sweden (KB, 1700–1829, Liggfol., 82 Aa, 243/50c).



FIGURE 2:10. Johann Georg Puschner, *Verzeihnüß und Conterfeÿen aller Könige in Schweden, wie solche Ordentlich nach einander gefolget, von den Ersten biß auf kden jetzt Regierenden*, engraving, detail omitting descriptive text. Photo: Björn Green, The National Library of Sweden (KB, 1700–1829, Liggfol., 82 Aa, 243/54).



FIGURE 2:11 A–D. Swedish kings and queens from Magog, grandson of Noah, to the eighteenth century. Original etching by Johann Georg Puschner and three woodcut renditions by Peter Lorentz Hoffbro (details). Mythical and medieval rulers are depicted in three-quarter profile, while modern rulers have been copied in pro-



file from coins. Some of the more recent rulers have been depicted in three-quarter profile before coins with their likenesses were available, but their portraits have been updated in later versions. Photo: Björn Green and Jens Gustafsson, The National Library of Sweden.

What is striking is that almost all the mythical and medieval kings are depicted in three-quarter profile, which gives a vivid impression. The modern monarchs, on the other hand, are invariously portraited in full profile. The reason is without doubt that both Puschner and Hoffbro has used coins as models. Since antiquity it was established practice to always depict the ruler in full profile on coins and these became some of the most widespread images of the sovereign.

There are a few exceptions to this rule in Hoffbro's line-up (figs 2.11a–d), but they can all be explained and thereby substantiate the hypotheses. Ulrika Eleonora only reigned for one year and although an unusually large number of coins were struck during that time, the total number with her profile remained at only 217,000 pieces, all in higher denominations.[28] Their circulation was limited, and they were probably difficult to come by two decades later. Adolf Fredrik (1710–71) was first portrayed by Hoffbro as crown prince before coins with his features were in circulation. In a later stage, when he had become king, his portrait was replaced, now with a profile portrait similar to the ones on the coins. The future Gustav III, however, only ascended the throne after Hoffbro's passing and the original depiction was kept also in later executions.

Kings in Circulation

Coins have by far been the most prevalent royal portraits throughout history. It is a well-known story how the fleeing Louis XVI was captured in Varennes after having been recog-

Gerhild Komander, which I unfortunately have not been able to get hold of in writing this essay: *Der Wandel des 'Sehepuncktes': Die Geschichte Brandenburg-Preußens in der Graphik von 1648–1810* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1995).

28. Bertel Tingström, *Svensk numismatisk uppslagsbok: Mynt i ord och bild 1521–1972*, third ed. (Stockholm: Numismatiska bokförlaget, 1972), pp. 265, 287.

nised through his portrait on the French assignats. Admittedly, the assignats were paper money, but they still had the profile of the king printed on them.[29] But exactly how widespread were portraits on legal tender?

Sweden, like revolutionary France, had paper currency for much of the Age of Liberty, but the bank notes did not carry the king's portrait, and much of the coinage only had the royal monogram or some other official marker. Thanks to careful records we can calculate that there were about 2,4 million coins carrying the king's profile minted between 1719 and 1772.[30] The Swedish population at the middle of the century was about 2,5 million people, which means that there was not even one single portrait coin for each subject in any given year during this period. Furthermore, these coins were often withdrawn from circulation because the actual metal value was higher than the nominal value. A conservative guess would be that most subjects probably encountered portrait coins at least occasionally during their lifetime, but it was nothing they handled on an everyday basis. From estate inventories from deceased parish priests, we can deduce that they sometimes kept portrait coins as a sort of museum objects which they would display for visiting parishioners, perhaps as a way of upholding their cultural status in the local community.[31]

Ever since antiquity the minting of coins was regarded as part of the *jura majestatica*, the regalian rights that befell the sovereign as the symbolic agent of state power.[32] That the king's

29. Timothy Tackett, *When the King Took Flight* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 72–3; Mona Ozouf, *Varennes : La mort de la royauté* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), pp. 136–7.

30. See lists of minted coins in Tingström, *Svensk numismatisk uppslagsbok*, pp. 265–7, 281–2, 287.

31. Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, pp. 178–80.

32. See, e.g., 'Monarch', in *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste, welche bishero durch menschlichen Verstand und Witz erfunden und verbessert worden*, 21: Mi–Mt (Leipzig & Halle:

portrait or symbolic representation on the coins could arouse emotions is also evident from contemporary court cases. In 1731, the tailor Jonas Norlin from a small country town refused to accept coins carrying King Fredrik's name because of his depravity and bad qualities as a regent: 'To the devil with the king's money', Norlin exclaimed at a tavern. He did indeed need money, but not the king's money! King Fredrik 'is not good for anything but to sleep with old hags; he's not fit to wage war since he is not born of Swedish blood'.[33] A generation later, in 1757, the sight of the royal monogram embossed in a coin conversely gave the parish blacksmith Johan Petter Råbock from the Åland Islands reason to praise King Adolf Fredrik. 'God bless you', he cried while kissing the coin, 'you too have many slanderers.'[34] Although the coins of lower denominations that these two provincials handled only carried the king's monogram, and not his profile, they were immediately associated with the sovereign in Stockholm who in the ultimate instance guaranteed the currency's worth.

Kings in Metal

Statues in public places is a form of medium on permanent display and with the potential to communicate with large audiences. The earliest public statues of kings in Sweden were raised in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century: Gustav I was set up in 1774; Gustavus Adolphus was put in place in 1791, but not unveiled until 1796; and Gustav III was inaugurated in 1808. I shall concentrate here on the first statue, portraying King

Johann Heinrich Zedler, 1739); and 'Droits régaliens", in *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, 5: Do–Ety (Paris: Briasson et al., 1765), p. 144.

33. The Judicial Audit (Justitierevisionen), grievances and appeals, 27 April 1731, no. 44, The National Archives, Stockholm.

34. The Judicial Audit, grievances and appeals, 20 July 1757, no. 37, The National Archives, Stockholm.

Gustav I, who ruled 1523–60. Historically, he has been the great national hero of Sweden and in romantic historiography he was depicted as the liberator who ended the medieval union between the three Scandinavian kingdoms and created the independent Swedish realm.

King Gustav had no royal origin but descended from Swedish aristocracy. The statue of King Gustav was commissioned by the noble estate in 1757 to be erected in front of their assembly place, the House of Nobility. This was the political centre of Stockholm during the Age of Liberty and the nobility liked to see themselves as the pillar supporting the realm. The idea with the statue was thus that the king would be represented leaving the House of Nobility and moving, or at least gazing, toward the Royal Palace a few hundred metres away.[35]

Due to lack of funding, the statue took almost twenty years to complete, and when it was time to unveil it in 1773 King Gustav III had staged his coup d'état and restored royal power. In this new political situation, and although he was not the commissioner, the king planned for a wholly different framing which instead would highlight the union and mutual love between the sovereign and his people. He planned the event for Midsummer's Day, which had a certain significance.

Midsummer was and is one of the most important holidays in Sweden, but in this context, it also had political implications. In 1756, King Adolf Fredrik and Queen Lovisa Ulrika, Gustav III's parents, had attempted a poorly planned coup to restore royal power. The coup was foiled, several of the accomplices executed, and the royal family threatened with dethronement and expatriation.[36] The attempted coup had taken place around

35. Gunnar Mascoll Silfverstolpe, 'Riddarhuspalatset', in Carl Hallendorf (ed.), *Sveriges Riddarhus: Ridderskapet och adeln och dess riddarhus* (Stockholm: Historiska förlaget, 1926), pp. 179–81; Johan Cederlund, *Skulptören Pierre Hubert L'Archevêque 1721–1778* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 2003), pp. 153–67; Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, pp. 166–70.

36. Elise M. Dermineur, *Gender and Politics in Eighteenth-Century*



FIGURE 2:12. The Riddarholm Canal, The House of Nobility, and Ryning's Palace in Stockholm. The statue of Gustav Vasa is visible just to the right of the centre of the picture. *Midsummer's Eve at Munkbron, an old custom from time immemorial*, colourized etching by Martin Rudolf Heland (1765–1814). The National Library of Sweden (KoB, Sv. Uts. Stockholm, Staden B. 38).





FIGURE 2:13 A–B. Silver medal struck in celebration of the averted royal coup in 1756. The obverse shows the goddess of liberty and the text *Libertas manens*, 'lasting freedom'. The text on the reverse reads: 'The decree for public thanksgiving to God Almighty, who averted the disasters in Sweden, along with the annual Thanksgiving celebration in 1756.' ∅ 78 mm. Uppsala University Coin Cabinet.



FIGURE 2:14. Jacob Gillberg, engraving from *Skåde-penningar öfver de förnämsta händelser som tillhöra konung Gustaf III:s historia* (Medals depicting the most significant events belonging to the history of King Gustav III), executed before 1793. Uppsala University Library.

Midsummer, and the Diet declared that henceforth Midsummer's Day should be celebrated as a national holiday for the preservation of liberty. Gustav III's desire was to eradicate the memory of this embarrassment for the monarchy and reconnect with his subjects, but his plans were never realized. The statue was finally unveiled on Midsummer's Day 1774 but in the king's absence and without any ceremony early in the morning (fig 2.12). The monument nevertheless became an attraction that was admired by Stockholmers and temporary visitors alike, and it continued to be an important political symbol for both conservative and radical forces.[37]

Another metallic medium, less democratic but strongly symbolic, was medals. After the thwarted coup, the Estates had a commemorative coin struck showing Libertas, the Goddess of Liberty, with one arm raised and the other resting on the Constitution sealed by the four Estates (fig. 2.13). In her left hand, she holds a staff with the liberty cap (*pileus*). The inscription on the obverse reads *Libertas manens* (lasting freedom), and on the reverse is proclaimed the establishment of an annual thanksgiving festival to God who had averted the disasters in Sweden.

After his coup d'état, Gustav III reused this motif on a medal of his own invention, which hailed the new constitution as a triumph for freedom (fig. 2.14). The inscription *Libertas manens* remained, but with the addition of *Proscripta licentia* (license banned). The reverse describes how the Estates restored the old form of government to the king. This was a misrepresentation:

Sweden: Queen Louisa Ulrika (1720–1782), (London & New York: Routledge, 2017) ch. 4.

37. Gustav III to Carl Fredrik Scheffer, 18 October 1773, in *Gustave III par ses lettres*, ed. Gunnar von Proschwitz (Stockholm: Norstedts/Paris: Jean Touzot, 1986), pp. 145–51; Gustaf Fredrik Gyllenborg, *Mitt lefverne 1731–1775*, ed. Gudmund Frunck (Stockholm: Seligmann & C:is, 1885), pp. 127–8, 134; Carl Christoffer Gjörwell's letters in Otto Sylwan (ed.), *En Stockholmskrönika ur C. C. Gjörwells brev 1757–1778* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1920), pp. 74, 83, 126.

in reality, this was the first Instrument of Government that had been dictated from the throne to the Estates instead of the other way around; it was a frequent political strategy of the king to dodge opposition by subtly twist a familiar message to give it a different interpretation. Inspired by Louis XIV, Gustav III wanted to give further dissemination to all the remarkable events of his reign in a series of engravings copying the medals that told of his deeds. And just as Louis le Grand, Gustav did not want his message to escape anyone, so all inscriptions were reproduced in Swedish translation. As this was history written in real-time, both projects progressed continuously throughout the reigns of the two monarchs and were only published after their deaths.[38]

Mediation From Metropolis to Smalltown

When Gustav III ascended the throne in 1771, he was widely celebrated as the first Swedish-born king in nearly a century. His popularity continued to rise when he made his coup and restored royal power a year later. In the following period the printer Eric Hasselrot (active 1767–79) in the small town of Nyköping, some 90 kilometres from Stockholm and with a population of just over 2,000 people, started to produce woodcuts with members of the royal family.[39] One image was made in the same style as Alexander Roslin's portrait of Gustav III, painted in Paris in 1771 and

38. For Gustav III's printed medal history, see Alm, *Kungsord i elfte timmen*, on these medals esp. pp. 132–42. The king's immediate inspiration was *Médailles sur les principaux événements du règne entier de Louis Le Grand avec des explications historiques* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1723).

39. Nils-Arvid Bringéus has published a short overview and a catalogue (incomplete) of Hasselrot's production in 'Kistebrev tryckta i Nyköping', *Sörmlandsbygden: Södermalnads hembygdsförbunds årsbok*, 74 (2006), pp. 19–38. A handful of the woodblocks bears the signature 'C.H.', which may or may not signify Eric Hasselrot's son and successor Carl.



FIGURE 2:15. King Gustav III, colourized woodcut printed by Eric Hasselrot in Nyköping 1773. The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 62:8).

showing the king clad in armour and draped in an ermine-brimmed mantle (fig. 2.15).

Gustav had travelled to Paris as crown prince and arrived on 4 February 1771. It was a matter of course for him to take this opportunity to sit for Swedish-born Roslin, who was one of the most celebrated portraitists in France. On 1 March the prince received the message that his father had died and he himself had become king. Gustav remained in Paris and Versailles for another three weeks before returning to Stockholm. Although we do not have all the details, we can be certain that he did not spend this time sitting for more portraits. Instead, Roslin replicated Gustav's countenance from a group portrait of the crown prince and his brothers, which he had begun already before all three had arrived in Paris and finished only after their departure. To the single portrait Roslin added some standard royal paraphernalia to illustrate Gustav's elevation to king.[40]

There was naturally a demand for depictions of the new monarch and the painting was transported to copperplate by the French engraver Charles-Étienne Gaucher in 1772. This engraving was reproduced as frontispiece to Johan Busser's description of Uppsala printed in the first half of 1773 in the Swedish university town, and the book would have been readily accessible to Hasselrot (fig. 2.16).[41]

Historians Daniel Bellingradt and Massimo Rospocher have stressed how:

> intermediality was integral to the communication flows and the media ensemble of Pre-modern Europe, as communication was

40. Gunnar W. Lundberg, *Roslin: Liv och verk*, 1: Biografi (Malmö: Allhems, 1957), pp. 126–38.

41. Johan. B. Busser, *Utkast til beskrifning om Upsala*, 1 (Uppsala: Johan Edman, 1773); Lundberg, *Roslin: Liv och verk*, 3: Katalog och bilagor, no. 319; *Alexander Roslin*, ed. Magnus Olausson (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, [2007]), no. 59. Busser's book was advertised in *Dagligt Allehanda*, 19 July 1773, and *Stockholms Post-Tidningar*, 22 July 1773.

> conveyed in and to countless combinations of intended and actual publics, meanings, and effects, and in myriad forms, including images […][42]

The circulation of Gustav III's likeness in various apparitions is a fine case in point of what Bellingradt in another context has called 'inspirational echoes'.[43] It took about two years for the echo of Roslin's painting to travel from the salons of Paris over Uppsala and to reach the common dwellers of smalltown Nyköping as a decent and affordable rendition of their sovereign. In much the same way as the ecclesiastical year and the royal proclamations read aloud from the pulpit created a sense of contemporaneity all over the realm, such images of the ruling head of state helped to create a sense of community where everyone felt included from castle to cottage.

Judging from the preserved material, the printer Hasselrot found his niche in producing block prints with royalties. In a similar cut he copied another of Roslin's well-known portraits of Gustav III, also in armour and mantle. This print exists in various editions with both Gustav III's and his father Adolf Fredrik's names under the image, which was a way to maintain demand (fig. 2.17) – surely father and son had to resemble each other, and who among the customers would be able to tell the difference? Other of Hasselrot's woodcuts show a half-length study of Queen Sofia Magdalena (1746–1813) sitting at her dressing table; full-length portraits of the king and queen, respectively, standing next to tables with royal regalia; a full-length illustration of the king's brother Prince Charles, 'duke of Södermanland', the region where Nyköping is situated; the same prince on horseback with a raised marshal's baton (fig. 2.18, the

42. Daniel Bellingradt & Massimo Rospocher, 'The Intermediality of Early Modern Communication: An Introduction', *Cheiron: Materiali e strumenti di aggiornamento storiografico*, 2/2021, pp. 5–29, here p. 16.

43. Bellingradt, 'The Dynamic of Communication and Media Recycling', p. 21.



FIGURE 2:16. Johan B. Busser, *Utkast till beskrifning om Upsala*, 1 (Uppsala: Johan Edman, 1773). Title page and engraved portrait of King Gustav III by Charles-Étienne Gaucher after Alexander Roslin's painting. Photo: Magnus Hjalmarsson, Uppsala University Library.



FIGURE 2:17. 'King Adolf Fredrik', in reality a portrait of Gustav III after Alexander Roslin's original painting. Woodcut printed by Eric Hasselrot, Nyköping, 1770s. The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 63:8).

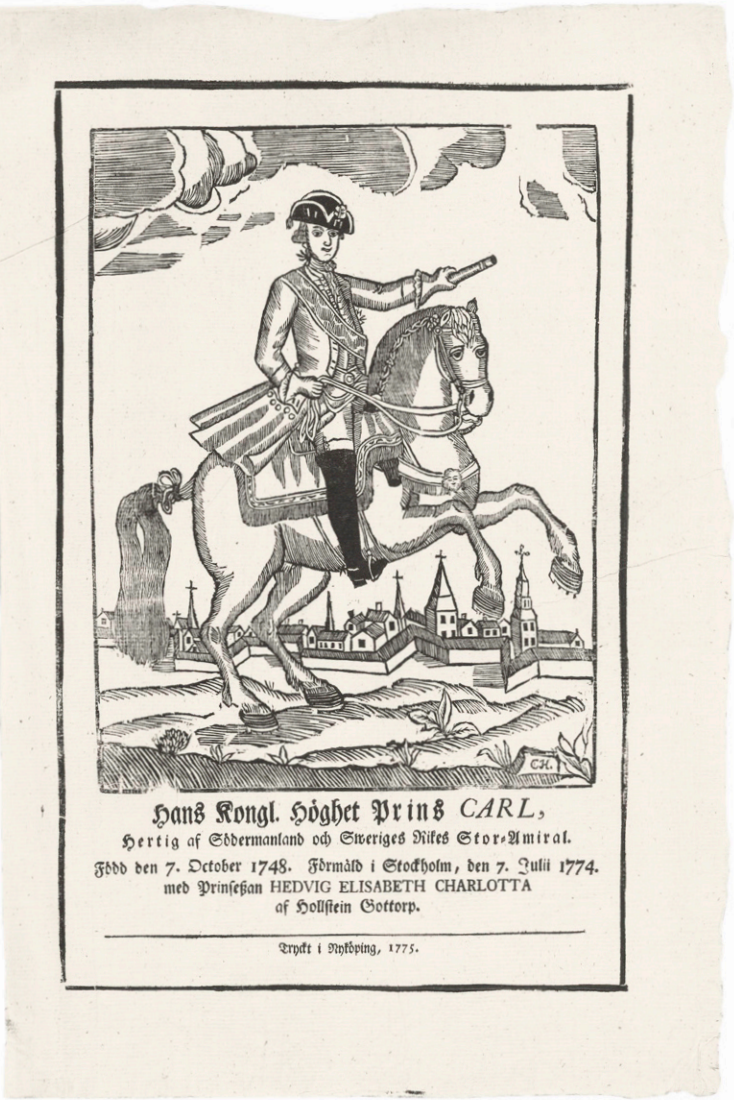


FIGURE 2:18. Prince Karl of Sweden on horseback. Woodcut printed by Eric Hasselrot in Nyköping, 1775. The same woodblock was also used to represent Prince Charles of Hesse-Kassel, governor of Norway. The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 62:3).



FIGURE 2:19. 'Death.' Woodcut printed by Ernst Peter Sundquist, Gävle, 1800. The verse reads: 'Death, do not astonish me, although he is dreadful; for he [is] slain by Christ, and cannot do me harm. I do not greatly fear the judgement, though evil I have done; for the comfort I do not forget, that my Brother Jesus will judge [i.e. is the judge].' The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 37:1).

same image was also used to represent Prince Charles of Hesse-Kassel, governor of Norway); King Gustav III on horseback in front of a naïve rendition of the Royal Palace in Stockholm, which would give associations to the coup staged in the capital and hailed in the accompanying verse.[44] The full-length representations show little or no likeness with the persons they portrayed – their attraction lay in the stately presentation of what was supposed to be royalty, but which may have been copied from any stock image of high society.

These royalist woodcuts did not emanate from central authorities but were the product of a printer's speculation in popular demand. Ethnologist Nils-Arvid Bringéus has conjectured whether it was the proximity to Stockholm that made Hasselrot invest in royal motifs. At any rate, the import, recycling, and circulation of stock images were not the province of royal intervention. In a curious image recycling, Ernst Peter Sundquist used an anonymous queen to illustrate 'Death' (fig. 2.19), accompanied by a soothing verse: 'Death do not astonish me, although he is dreadful …' Perhaps it was her gloomy stare that gave the association, but it also illustrates the closeness between *majestas divinæ* and *majestas humanæ*.[45]

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44. See reproductions in Bringéus, 'Kistebrev trycka i Nyköping', pp. 27–38, and Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki*, pp. 150–1, 157. Hasselrot was the only printer in Nyköping at the time and that he is the anonymous producer of these woodcuts is confirmed by a comparison with other works from his printshop. The same types and decorative elements have been used in, e.g., *Upmuntran til en glad efterlefnad af Kongl. Maj:ts allernådigste förordning emot yppighet och öfwerflöd, för innewarande år 1767*. I största hast sammanfattad af Carl Friedric Wadsten. Sjunges som sparfwesången (Nyköping, tryckt af factoren Eric Hasselrot, 1767).

45. The complete verse reads: *Döden, Gör mig intet häpen. ändock han är faselig: ty han [är] af Christo dräpen och kan intet skada mig. Domen fru[k]tar jag ej stort, fast jag hafwer illa gjort; ty den trös[ten] jag ej glömmer, at min Broder Jesus Dömmer*.

Kings as Negative Role Models

Despite his political shrewdness, Gustav III's initial popularity soon turned into widespread discontent. The king liked to equal himself with his admired namesakes Gustav I and Gustavus Adolphus, and this was done also by the opposition, but in those cases the comparison did not turn out in Gustav III's favour.[46] A woodcut depicting the statue of Gustav I is a fine example of how outwardly royalist expressions could hide positions critical of the regime (fig. 2.20). It was executed at the expense of the printer Lars Wennberg, who published some of the most radical pamphlets during the press-freedom era in the last years of the Age of Liberty, and who was subjected to several unlawful harassments when Gustav III soon after his coup d'état began to curtail the freedom of the press.[47]

The image is a simple and rather ordinary popular woodcut of Gustav I's statue, complete with bright colourization. What makes it special in this context is the way it is framed in the accompanying description. The text gives a short account of King Gustav's reign and portrays him as a ruler with a special bond to the common people of Sweden.

> [King Gustav] tried to rally the nobility to throw off the Danish yoke, but when he was rejected, he entrusted his cause to the commoners of Dalecarlia, who at first hesitated, so that Gustav set off out of the kingdom; however, the Dalecarlians came to their senses, gathered, and without a leader they defeated a Danish squad and

46. Annie Mattsson, *Komediant och riksförrädare: Handskriftscirkulerade smädeskrifter mot Gustaf III* (Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 2010), e.g. pp. 155–9.

47. Stig Boberg, *Gustav III och tryckfriheten 1774–1787* (Stockholm: Natur & kultur, 1951), pp. 97–100; Bengt Åhlén, *Ord mot ordningen: Farliga skrifter, bokbål och kättarprocesser i svensk censurhistoria* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 1986), p. 118; Bengt & Agneta Åhlén, *Censur och tryckfrihet: Farliga skrifter i Sverige 1522–1954* Stockholm: Ordfront, 2003), nos. 17.254, 17.256, 17.258, 17.261, 17.266.



FIGURE 2:20. 'King Gustav I's monument, erected on the Square of the House of Nobility in Stockholm, in commemoration of his great services to the Fatherland.' Woodcut published by Lars Wennberg, 1782. The National Library of Sweden (Kistebrev 43:16).

> sent cross-country skiers, who urged Gustav to return […] Within soon Sweden was cleared of all Danes. […] His motto was, *God and Sweden's Peasantry*.[48]

In this interpretation, King Gustav I was neither an aristocrat nor an autocrat, but rather a popular leader who was rejected by the nobles and instead rallied the commoners, the *true* people, to cast of the Danish yoke. It is a story of brave commoners, indolent nobility, and a virtuous monarch – as opposed to the ruling one. Needless to say, Wennberg's claim about the king's motto was a fabrication. King Gustav I's actual motto was 'Blessed is he who fears the Lord', but few of those who purchased the print would have had the historical knowledge to challenge the fake information. In this context, and without spelling it out, it served the purpose of presenting the qualities and political loyalties of a good prince, which anyone for himself could contrast with those of the current ruler. The fabricated slogan also had the positive attribute that it could not be questioned. Anyone who might have suggested that it was false would have to explain what was wrong with aligning oneself with God and the common people.

Royalism was deeply imbedded in the Swedish population, as in most other European nations, but it was not insensitive to the personal characteristics of the monarch. As an idea, people wanted to be loyal to the king, but if the monarch was incapable of carrying out his royal task properly, they would turn against him. Gustav III was assassinated in 1792, and his son and successor was dethroned and exiled in 1809.

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48. '[Gustav] sökte upwigla Adelen at afskudda Danska oket; men sedan han fick afslag, anförtrodde han sit wärf åt Dall-Allmogen, som i början twekade, så at GUSTAF gaf sig på wägen ur Riket; då imedlertid Dalkarlarne besinnade sig, samlades, och utan Anförare slogo en Dansk Trouppe, samt skickade Schidlöpare hwilka återhämtade GUSTAF […] Sedan blef Swerige inom kort tid ränsadt ifrån alla Danskar. […] Hans Wahlspråk var, *GUD och Sweriges Allmoge*.'

Conclusion

During the eighteenth century, there was a growing variation in the depiction of royals with an increasingly diverse range of motifs. For consumers in the higher echelons of society, the traditional parade portraits were appended with motifs featuring more informal settings. However, for the broader population, the representative images with royal symbols were predominant. Similar to religious art, the depicted individuals were primarily identified through various symbolic attributes, and the physical resemblance in popular imagery was negligible.

Popular depictions often took official portraits as their models, but many times the same templates were used to portray different persons. Trade and exchange with the woodblocks knew no national boundaries. This was a purely commercial process where printers tried to meet expected popular demand. The authorities did not intervene in this process, and the value of these images was deemed negligible to the extent that they do not seem to have been included in the legal deposit to the national archives and the royal library – at least those institutions did not bother to save them, and the random collections that exist in Swedish libraries today have been assembled in modern times.

Popular graphics sometimes reflected current political events, but more commonly conveyed stable sociological impressions. The royal family was a natural part of ordinary peoples' everyday life, just as religion or the seasons. Rulers could be ascribed with both positive and negative qualities, but in any case, they were a fixed point when people looked at the world around them. Kings were powerful symbols since almost everyone had a relation to them, and even when they were not part of official propaganda, the mediation of images from the royal salons to the peasant's cottage helped to forge the nation.

CHAPTER 2

'In a city flooded with pamphlets': Foreign Diplomats Monitoring and Spreading the News in Eighteenth-Century Stockholm

Sophie Holm

Between September 1746 and December 1747, the Swedish Estates assembled for the tenth Diet after Charles XII death and the abolition of absolute royal power. One of the Diet's main tasks, as usual, was a re-evaluation of the realm's foreign policy. On the agenda was an invitation to join a defence alliance with Prussia that, during the Diet, was countered by a rival invitation from Russia and Austria. The Diet's decisions were closely monitored by the foreign diplomatic corps in Stockholm, especially the diplomats immediately affected by the chosen alliance. In April 1747, the French ambassador reported what he perceived as efforts to prevent the Prussian alliance. According to him, the capital was 'flooded with anonymous writings in a specious style and directed against France, the King of Prussia and the [Swed-

This essay has been written within the project 'Languages of Eighteenth-Century Russian Diplomacy in European Context' funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) – 465387972. Parts of it have previously been published in Swedish in Sophie Holm, 'Diplomatins vakande öga: Utländska sändebuds hantering av rykten i Stockholm under 1746–1747 års riksdag', *Historisk tidskrift för Finland*, 104 (2019), and Sophie Holm, *Diplomatins ideal och praktik: Utländska sändebud i Stockholm 1746–1748* (Helsingfors: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 2020).

ish] government'.[1] He described how the texts reminded their readers about the recent war between Sweden and Russia and talked about the imminent risk of new war, hence implying that an alliance with Prussia could have disastrous consequences.

The French report painted a picture of a city highly engaged in political debates both at the official political institutions and outside the Diet. Like similar reports, it paid attention not only to the issues discussed in Stockholm, but also how – that is, in which media – news circulated and were debated. This paper takes a closer look at the connection between diplomatic actors, news circulations and media in Stockholm in the 1740s. The role of diplomats within early-modern news circulations – both the ways diplomats reported news to their superiors and how they actively engaged in news circulations and political debates – has been highlighted in recent studies focusing on diplomatic practices as part of broader communicative practices. The presence of foreign embassies was, often, a premise for an urban audience's access to diplomatic and military news through oral transmission,[2] or for certain news to reach printed gazettes.[3] In their efforts to control political publicity abroad diplomatic missions engaged in what Helmer Helmers has labelled 'early-

1. 'Elles [les manoeuvres] sont appuyées de memoires anonimes d'un stile captieux dont on inonde cette capitale contre la France, le Roy de Prusse et le Ministere', Lanmary, 3 April 1747, Correspondence Politique [CP], Suède, vol. 215, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères [AMAE], La Courneuve. If not specified, dates are given according to the old style following the Swedish calendar in the 1740s. The spelling has not been modernised in original quotes.

2. Tabetha Leigh Ewing, *Rumor, Diplomacy and War in Enlightenment Paris* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2014), p. 37; James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 30.

3. See e.g. Jason Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier": Diplomacy and News in Seventeenth-Century Europe', in Joad Raymond & Noah Moxham (eds), *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 420–42, here pp. 437–40.

modern public diplomacy'.[4] This had structural effects far beyond the sphere of diplomacy itself, perhaps especially in the eighteenth century when information could be circulated faster than ever,[5] and the social implications of publicly shared, political information seemed increasingly high. In France, for example, the intense circulations of diplomatic news amongst a local audience led to the emergence of the notion of 'public opinion' in police reports during the War of the Austrian Succession.[6] In Sweden, foreign diplomats were, according to Erik Bodensten, a driving force in the formation of political debates through different clandestine media before the abolition of censorship in 1766.[7]

Taking the idea of diplomatic actors as integral factors in the changes in eighteenth-century mediascapes as a starting point, the objective of this essay is twofold: first, to look at how diplomats monitored news circulations in Sweden and second, to highlight how they intervened in the local news circulations and political debates through different channels.[8] Special attention

4. Michiel van Groesen & Helmer Helmers, 'Managing the News in Early Modern Europe, 1550–1800,' *Media History*, 22 (2016), pp. 261–66, here p. 264; Helmer Helmers, 'Public Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe', *Media History*, 22 (2016), pp. 401–20.

5. Wolfgang Behringer, *Im Zeichen des Merkur: Reichspost und Kommunikationsrevolution in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003).

6. Ewing, *Rumor, Diplomacy and War*.

7. Erik Bodensten, 'Foreign Information Operations in Sweden, c. 1725–1750: A Media System Approach', in Anna Nilsson Hammar, Daniel Nyström, & Martin Almbjär (eds), *Gender, Materiality, and Politics. Essays on the Making of Power* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2022), *pp.* 271–96.

8. The term 'diplomat' is anachronistic in this context. It did not enter the English language until the Napoleonic wars and even if it was used in French in the eighteenth-century, other ways of addressing diplomats seem to have been more common. In lack of a better generic term – the historically more accurate term 'minister' being potentially

will be given to the role of different media: to use a modern word which stresses this connection, what kind of *mediascape* unfolds in the descriptions of news circulations? Which media did the diplomatic corps have access to and make use of? By looking at the diplomats' double role as observers and participants and not limiting the analysis to the latter the aim is to provide a fuller picture of the everyday work behind 'public diplomacy' or 'information operations' efforts highlighted elsewhere.[9] Eighteenth-century diplomats did not, I assume, fail to prioritize information,[10] and I argue that they made informed decisions about how to engage with local audiences based on their knowledge about the mediascapes in which they operated.

The discussion is centred around a selection of foreign representatives in Stockholm during the Diet 1746–47 with some comparisons to earlier periods and to Swedish diplomats abroad. The period overlaps with the last years of the War of the Austrian Succession, a war which engaged diplomats all over Europe in campaigns to gain support for one of the fighting blocks. This also concerned Sweden although the country was not directly involved in the war during the second half of the 1740s. The focus is specifically upon news and rumours about political, diplomatic and military matters which circulated beyond the immediate closed circle of decision-makers or, to borrow from Filippo de Vivo, on 'political communication' in a broad sense.[11]

misleading and not covering diplomats with ambassadorial status – 'diplomat' is used here to address the diplomats of different ranks present in Stockholm. See 'diplomat, n' in OED Online. December 2022. Oxford University Press (accessed 3 March, 2023), and 'diplomate, n' in DAF 9e édition (édition numérique) (accessed 3 March 2023).

9. In the Swedish context especially Bodensten, 'Foreign Information Operations in Sweden'.

10. Concerning the notion that early-modern diplomatic reports did not tend to prioritize or summarize, see van Groesen & Helmers, 'Managing the News in Early Modern Europe', p. 263.

11. Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethink-*

In other words, the diplomats' efforts to gather what today would be called intelligence is of secondary interest. Comparing sources from different diplomatic missions in the same city exposes similarities and differences both in the news they reported, the media they used and their interactions with a local audience. Following a short introduction to Stockholm as a diplomatic arena, the essay is divided into three sections covering how diplomats monitored news and debates, how they provided the readers of their reports with documentation and how they engaged with local audiences.

Foreign Representatives in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Stockholm

In the 1740s, Stockholm hosted around ten foreign diplomats with their respective offices and households. The Swedish capital was not a diplomatic hub, but Sweden's position as a former great power and an attractive alliance partner made the city into an active diplomatic microcosm. The missions of the foreign diplomats in Stockholm had diverging focus points. Some representatives had a greater interest in commercial issues, others in military or dynastic matters. All of them, however, had to promote their interests within the frames of Swedish politics. From this perspective, the major structural changes of the eighteenth century with a shift away from and back to absolute royal power in Sweden influenced the work of all members of the diplomatic corps in Stockholm.

The period between 1719 and 1772, usually referred to as the 'Age of Liberty', was characterised by weak royal power. The political power was mainly divided between the four-estate Diet and the Council of the Realm, where the king voted alongside the councillors. The monarchy maintained high symbolic value,

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ing Early Modern Politics (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

especially, as Jonas Nordin has argued, on the international arena as a guarantee for the prestige and independency of the realm.[12] Simultaneously, the political elite fostered a notion of Sweden as an aristocratic republic.[13] Foreign diplomats were instructed to take the constitutional changes into consideration and adapt to a Sweden which, as a French instruction phrased it in 1741, 'had almost become republican'.[14] This meant, amongst other things, taking the emergence of political factions into consideration. From the late 1730s onwards, two main factions, the Hat and the Cap parties, dominated Swedish politics. One of the main divisive issues being the realm's foreign policy, both parties had strong ties to foreign powers.[15] This was appar-

12. Jonas Nordin, 'The Monarchy in the Swedish Age of Liberty (1719–1772)', in Pasi Ihalainen et al. (eds), *Scandinavia in the Age of Revolution: Nordic Political Cultures, 1740–1820* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 29–40.

13. Charlotta Wolff, *Noble Conceptions of Politics in Eighteenth-Century Sweden (ca 1740–1790)* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2008); idem, 'Aristocratic Notions of Liberty and Patriotism in the Age of Liberty', in Ihalainen et al. (eds), *Scandinavia in the Age of Revolution*, pp. 121–32.

14. '[…] la constitution de ce gouvernement étant telle qu'il est devenu presqu'entièrement républicain par les bornes étroites dans lesquelles le sénat et les États du royaume ont renfermé l'autorité personnelle du roi, qui n'a proprement que les honneurs extérieurs de la représentation royale [...].'; Louis André et al. (eds), *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France, depuis les traités de Westphalie jusqu'à la Révolution française. Publié sous les auspices de la Commission des archives diplomatiques au ministère des Affaires étrangères*, 2: Suède. Avec une introduction et des notes par A. Geffroy, (Commission des archives diplomatiques au ministère des Affaires étrangères: Paris, 1885), p. 378. See also Sophie Holm, *Diplomatins ideal och praktik: Utländska sändebud i Stockholm 1746–1748* (Helsingfors: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 2020), pp. 71–73.

15. For an extensive historiographic overview, see Erik Bodensten, 'Korruption, utländsk påverkan och frihetstidens styrelseskick', *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift*, 123 (2021), pp. 335–64.

ent already in the 1740s,[16] and later developed into a practice so institutionalised that foreign diplomats had no choice but to support either of the two factions regardless of whether the collaboration seemed fruitful or not.[17]

The division into factions and the foreign support these parties enjoyed was, however, not a new situation. This has been shown, amongst others, by Svante Norrhem's and Peter Lindström's study on how the Habsburgian and Bourbon courts supported members of the Swedish elite in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In both periods, the great powers of Europe aimed at binding members of the Swedish elite to themselves through foreign patronage based on methods such as gifts, pensions and career possibilities in foreign service. What changed after 1719 was not the principles of foreign patronage, but, above all, the target group: this group was now potentially considerably larger, since it did no longer consist of only noble families with close ties to the monarch and the Council, but encompassed the most influential persons at the Diet, an assembly with up to 1,300 members.[18]

Along with a larger target group, foreign representatives also had to adapt themselves to new ways in which Swedish politics was debated. Diplomatic missions in the 1740s were faced with a different mediascape than their colleagues at the start of the century or in the years before the coup d'état of 1772. Scholars have stressed the negative stance towards any debates taking

16. See e.g. Johan Richard Danielson-Kalmari, *Die nordische Frage in den Jahren 1746–1751: Mit einer Darstellung russisch-schwedisch-finnischer Beziehungen 1740–1743* (Helsingfors: Alexanders-universitet, 1888).

17. Michael F. Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish Party Politics, 1762–1766: The Interplay Beween Great Power Diplomacy and Domestic Politics during Sweden's Age of Liberty* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977).

18. Peter Lindström & Svante Norrhem. *Flattering Alliances. Scandinavia, Diplomacy, and the Austrian-French Balance of Power, 1648–1740* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2013).

place in public outside the official political institutions during the early decades of the Age of Liberty.[19] This eventually changed and censorship was abolished in 1766, after which the amount of publications dealing with political issues soared. Political debates had, however, intensified already before the legal abolition of censorship.[20] Controversial matters were debated through clandestine media, mainly pamphlets and other political texts which were printed abroad or spread in manuscript form. They supplemented the media which operated within the frame of censorship, such as newspapers like *Stockholms Post-Tidningar*, which mainly worked as a channel for official news.[21]

In a synthesis of earlier research, Erik Bodensten has recently argued that diplomatic actors and practices served as agents of change in the Swedish media system. Bodensten points to the fact that many of the pamphlets in the 1720s and 1730s – when this medium grew in political importance – can be linked to foreign interests, indicating 'that other governments were a driving force in the medium becoming so important so fast'.[22]

19. See e.g. Karin Sennefelt, 'Mellan hemligt och offentligt: Sven Hofman vid riksdagen 1765–66', in Marie-Christine Skuncke & Henrika Tandefelt (eds), *Riksdag, kaffehus och predikstol: Frihetstidens politiska kultur 1766–1772* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2003), pp. 209–27; idem, 'Frihetstidens politiska kultur', in Jakob Christensson (ed.), *Signums svenska kulturhistoria*, 4: Frihetstiden (Stockholm: Signum, 2006), pp. 17–49; Erik Bodensten, *Politikens drivfjäder: Frihetstidens partiberättelser och den moralpolitiska logiken* (Lund: Studia historica Lundensia, 2016), esp. pp. 237, 352.

20. Bodensten has put forward reasons to view the abolition of censorship in 1766 not as a factor of change, but as 'codification of an already existing public sphere', Bodensten, *Politikens drivfjäder*, p. 349.

21. Ingemar Oscarsson, 'Med tryckfrihet som tidig tradition (1732–1809)', in Karl Erik Gustafsson et al. (eds), *Den svenska pressens historia*, 1: I begynnelsen (tiden före 1830) (Stockholm: Ekerlid, 2000), pp. 98–215, here p. 122.

22. Bodensten, 'Foreign information operations in Sweden', esp. p. 278.

Foreign support was, for example, crucial for Swedish actors accessing printing presses abroad.[23] Although the connection to foreign powers is evident, the direction of influence is not obvious. There are reasons to stress the importance of collaboration between political factions and foreign representatives, judging not only by the early connections between clandestine, partisan pamphlets and diplomatic actors but also by the importance of financial support from the French and British diplomats for partisan publications after the abolition of censorship.[24] In the following, the actions of foreign diplomats will be discussed with regard to, but, importantly, not solely from the perspective of a collaboration with Swedish actors and factions.

Monitoring Oral News Circulation

Foreign representatives in Stockholm gathered information about Swedish politics at different levels. Their reports describe the political decision making at official institutions, political debates outside of these institutions, rumours circulating in the capital and elsewhere and political pamphlets in circulation. Diplomats reported both domestic news and the arrival of international news in the Swedish capital. Early modern diplomatic reports have been described as confronting governments with a steady stream of news without prioritizing or summarizing enough.[25] Failures to manage news efficiently might have been a more common feature during the early days of permanent embassies and newspapers, neither of which was a new phenomenon in the mid-eighteenth century. How, then, did foreign diplomats in Stockholm approach the information circulations with which they were faced?

23. Bodensten, 'Foreign information operations in Sweden', p. 288.

24. Marie-Christine Skuncke, 'Medier, mutor och nätverk', in Skuncke & Tandefelt (eds), *Riksdag, kaffehus och predikstol*, pp. 255–86.

25. van Groesen & Helmers, 'Managing the News in Early Modern Europe', p. 263.

To start with, the letter from the French ambassador marquis de Lanmary (1689–1749) mentioned at the beginning of the essay merits a closer look. Its description of a city flooded with anonymous pamphlets implied not only the existence of political texts which circulated but also that these were discussed, potentially by large groups of people. If we look at the dispatches from the French ambassador and other diplomats in Stockholm, reports of oral discussions about political topics were, in fact, considerably more common than references to written sources. They could look like another report from Lanmary in which he mentioned 'a rumour spreading in town' that the Russian ambassador was leaving his post,[26] or like a Danish report estimating, 'suivant les bruits publics', that the newly elected governor general for Finland would leave to the eastern half of the realm in two weeks.[27] Phrasings like these indicated that the diplomatic letter described information which circulated in town and, thus, originated not from one source but from vaguely defined conversations and rumours.[28]

This reflected how information was spread not only to the diplomatic corps in Stockholm, but in general. News and rumours spread through nodes in the city such as Riddarhustorget, the square in front of the House of Nobility, and Stortorget with

26. Lanmary, 22 May 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La Courneuve: 'Le bruit se repand dans la ville, que le d. S Korff fait desja emballer ses equipages […].'

27. Vind, 6 March 1747 (n:o 13), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, Tyske Kancelli, Udenrigske Afdeling [TKUA], Rigsarkivet [RA], Copenhagen. For similar reports by Vind, see letters 25 November 1746 (n:o 58), 17 March 1747 (n:o 15), 3 April 1747 (n:o 18), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

28. For similar phrasings in the British correspondence ('The general talk here at present is […]'; 'Of late, They have talk'd here much […]') see e.g. Guy Dickens, 30 October 1747, State Papers [SP] 95/100, and 1 March 1748, SP 96/101, The National Archives [NA], Kew.

the old town hall which housed the meetings of the burghers during the Diet. During Diets, when political news were almost a daily matter, people gathered on the squares to exchange information, to wait for updates on votes in the different estates or to celebrate particular news. The squares, thus, became important information hubs for everyone, but especially, as Karin Sennefelt has pointed out, for groups without representation at the Diet and no direct access to information before the abolition of censorship.[29] Foreign representatives were as dependent on this oral news circulation as everyone else in the city. For example in December 1747, while the Diet was in an intense concluding phase, the British diplomat Melchior Guy Dickens (c. 1696–1775) surprisingly skipped one mail. He didn't have anything to report because, as he explained, it had snowed so much during several days that people could not leave their houses.[30]

The importance given to news which were widely discussed is especially evident in cases where the same rumour was reported by several diplomats. Throughout the Diet, news and rumours about Russian naval movements in the Baltic Sea and troop movements near the Swedish border reached Stockholm and were reported by the diplomatic corps in the city. In February 1747, for example, the Danish envoy Niels Krabbe Vind (1705–66) described how news about Russian troops near the border 'ne laisse pas de contribuer egalement à mettre ici tous les Esprits dans une grande Fermentation'.[31] In May 1747, Guy Dickens transmitted news about 75 Russian galleys in the Baltic Sea near Helsinki. He based his report, as he wrote, on 'a general Report in Town' after an express had reached Stockholm from Finland the previous day.[32] Three months later he similarly

29. Karin Sennefelt, *Politikens hjärta: Medborgarskap, manlighet och plats i frihetstidens Stockholm* (Stockholm: Stockholmia, 2011), pp. 68–72.

30. Guy Dickens, 8 December 1747, SP 95/101, NA, Kew.

31. Vind, 13 February 1747 (n:o 8), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

32. Guy Dickens, 22 May 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew. Vind mentions

described how a courier from the governor general in Finland had brought news about Russian galleys at sea, which, 'whether true or false, seems to give here some Uneasiness'.[33] These examples illustrate how news originating in a singular source, such as a letter from the eastern half of the realm, could enter into a spiral of oral transmission in Stockholm and then end up in the diplomatic correspondence.

Although providing news about events in Sweden and the Baltic region was one of their main tasks foreign representatives in Stockholm were equally interested in how news from outside the region reached Sweden. This was especially true for news concerning the crown that a diplomat represented. In March 1747, for example, Lanmary was glad that the news about French advances in Provence had arrived in Sweden.[34] In May, on the contrary, he complained about 'false news' about the war, since Stockholm was, as he claimed, mostly reached by news from the neighbouring countries which supported Vienna and the Maritime Powers.[35] In both cases the important aspect was not the news *per se* – the information was surely already known by the receiver – but the fact that the news had arrived. This was, as Lanmary's reports highlight, especially important for an embassy or a diplomatic household representing one of the two fighting

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the same news on the same day, see Vind, 22 May 1747 (n:o 28), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

33. Guy Dickens, 11 August 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew; for mentions about Russians galleys in the Danish correspondence during the same weeks, see Vind, 17 July 1747 (n:o 37), and 21 August 1747 (n:o 42), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

34. Lanmary, 20 February 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

35. Lanmary, 12 May 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve. Similarly in June, he reported that 'the partisans of the enemies' were exaggerating the British victory by Finisterre in May; Lanmary, 26 June 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La Courneuve.

blocks in the war on the continent. In this sense, the reporting was often circular, since diplomats reported news which were known to or even originated from the administration they represented.

If and how international news had arrived was of great interest since news from abroad had the power to strengthen or weaken the position of an individual diplomat and his office in Stockholm. As Lanmary commented regarding the news about the French advances in Provence: 'cette nouvelle a fait un effet admirable ; car nos amis etoient dans une grande inquietude de l'Evenement en sorte que nos actions en sont infiniment haussées'.[36] In June 1747, on the contrary, he complained that news about a British naval victory had arrived through gazettes and through the Swedish diplomat in London, which meant that the British version of it prevailed, a disadvantage for the French embassy.[37] The same news was reported the exact same day by Guy Dickens who, surprisingly, seemed almost equally disappointed with how the news had arrived:

> Twas with the greatest Joy that all the Honest Swedes and Patriots here, received the most agreeable News of the late happy Success of His Majesty's Arms Over the Enemy at Sea: The Post, which brought this Advice arrived at Eight o'Clock in the morning, but the Chancery would not suffer the letters to be deliver'd before the afternoon, by which time They had coined another Piece of News to Counterballance This, which was That Besides Madrass, The French had destroyed all our other settlements in the East Indies.[38]

Both Lanmary's and Guy Dickens's letters, thus, illustrate how diplomats tried to assess both the version of the news which had arrived and the potential effect this version would have.

36. Lanmary, 20 February 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

37. Lanmary, 9 June 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La Courneuve.

38. Guy Dickens, 9 June 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew.

An extended form of reports about the news from the country the diplomat represented can be found in the Danish correspondence. Between November 1746 and May 1747, Vind reported rumours about Danish rearmament on several occasions. There was no rearmament on the Danish side, but the rumours proved to be strong-lived, as the Danish dispatches suggest. Vind, who introduced the topic with the heading 'Faux bruit qui courent la Ville', suspected that the rumours originated in reports from the Swedish minister in Copenhagen and were deliberately spread with the objective of accelerating the conclusion of the defensive alliance with Prussia. Like in the case with the Russian galleys, there was in other words a known or suspected source – diplomatic reports from Denmark – but, likewise, Vind's reporting showed how information originating in letters from abroad entered into the local news circulation in Stockholm and elsewhere. Vind complained, for example, that his efforts at contradicting the rumours were in vain, since 'both parties' were using them for 'their own projects'.[39] There will be reason to return to the fact that he still tried to contradict the rumours.

Gathering Documentation

Although news through other channels were more common, written sources also occurred in the diplomatic reports. Diplomats paid close attention to physical evidence of recent events and ongoing political debates: royal decrees, prints commissioned by the Diet and clandestine pamphlets printed abroad or circulated as manuscripts. Following how political debates unfolded in pamphlets and other texts was, as will be discussed,

39. For Vind's reports on the rumours see dispatches 11 November 1746 (n:o 54), 17 March 1747 (n:o 15), 7 April 1747 (n:o 19), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen. The rumours were also reported by Lanmary, see idem, 13 March 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

a way of assessing the effect of news and the political atmosphere in general. Dispatches from Stockholm, like reports from other cities, often had two parts: the actual diplomatic letter and documents attached to it. This is important to note, since the latter one is not obvious. Archival practices have sometimes separated letters and attachments and the former need to be carefully scanned for comments about documents which were once attached or which were used as sources but, perhaps, kept at the residence until the end of the diplomatic mission.

One sign of the importance given to documentation as part of diplomatic reporting are sources which were collected and forwarded by more than one foreign representative. This was the case during a tumultuous process surrounding the realm's highest official Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770), acting president of the Swedish chancellery. The process was of great interest to the diplomatic corps in Stockholm, since Tessin was a leader amongst the pro-French Hats and had been personally criticised by the Russian diplomat at the beginning of the Diet.[40] On the last day of March 1747 Tessin gave a speech to the Diet's *plenum plenorum* and received an answer on behalf of the Estates by the lord marshall Mattias Alexander von Ungern-Sternberg (1689–1763). Both speeches were printed as official publications of the Diet and copies of them can be found both in a French and in a Danish report from Stockholm.[41] Telling of the importance given to an original copy is the fact that Lanmary attached the speeches as they had been printed, that is in Swedish, without a translation. He did the same at the end of the Diet, when he forwarded an untranslated version of what he called 'le conclusum de la Diette', presumably the Diet decisions.[42] The deci-

40. On Tessin and the Diet 1746–47, see Arne Remgård, *Carl Gustaf Tessin och 1746–1747* års *riksdag* (Lund: Gleerups, 1968).

41. Vind, 14 April 1747 (n:o 20), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen; Lanmary, 24 April 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

42. Lanmary, 18 December 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La

sions had been published after the ending of the Diet just four days prior to Lanmary's letter and the French ambassador described his copy as having just arrived from the printing presses.[43]

Besides official Diet publications, diplomatic missions also gathered clandestine documents. By the 1740s, manuscripts and printed political texts had become a common phenomenon in Sweden.[44] Several longer pamphlets, mostly manuscripts but also some printed, appeared and circulated during the Diet 1746–47.[45] The diplomatic interest in them is especially apparent in the Danish reports, which included copies of at least fours pamphlets on three different occassions.[46] One of them was an anonymous manuscript which Vind sent in Danish translation and claimed was worth reading 'pour voir les Idées, que l'on tache

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Courneuve.

43. *Sweriges rikes ständers beslut, giordt, samtykt och förafskiedat på then almänna riks-dagen som slöts i Stockholm then 14. december år 1747* (Stockholm: Peter Momma, 1747).

44. Bodensten, 'Foreign information operations in Sweden', p. 275.

45. Ingemar Carlsson counts 17 longer pamphlets in his inventory in addition to several smaller ones: Ingemar Carlsson, *Frihetstidens handskrivna politiska litteratur: En bibliografi* (Göteborg: Gothenburg University Library, 1967), pp. 84–9.

46. 'En Swensk Mands Tanker over Conjuncturerne vid og under Rigs-Dagen 1746 et 1747' [The Thoughts of a Swedish Man on the Current Situation at and during the Diet 1746 et 1747] in March, 'Enfaldiga Bonde Tankar öfwer then förrädaren Giösse Trolös snorkfulla thal i Norske Konungen Frejers Namn til hans trogna Ständer på herredagen i Storånger Åhr 647' [A Simple-Minded Peasant's Thoughts about the Traitor Giösse Trolös's Haughty Speech in the name of the Norwegian King Frejer to His Loyal Estates during the Assembly in Storånger in the Year 647] in May and 'Relation et la Prophetie de Sybille', and 'Lettre d'un Gentilhomme de la Campagne, à Son Amy à Stockholm' in October 1747. See Vind, 27 March (n:o 16), 1 May (n:o 24), and 16 October (n:o 55), 1747, Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

d'inspirer ici au Public'.[47] In another case he sent a Swedish manuscript pamphlet with a German translation of the whole text.[48] In October 1747, he forwarded a pamphlet which had been printed abroad and which was later banned in Sweden by royal decree.[49] Since the pamphlet originated from abroad, Vind assumed that the chancellery in Copenhagen already had a copy, but sent one over just in case with the motivation that the pamphlet concerned 'les Affaires, et les conjonctures de ce Païs-ci'.[50] The fact that he provided the administration in Copenhagen with a copy although he was sure they already had one is telling of how important he thought a copy of the pamphlet, not just a summary, was.

Vind's offfice was not the only one gathering and forwarding pamphlets. So did the British and the French representatives. In August 1747, Guy Dickens attached a copy of the manuscript pamphlet 'Lettre d'un Gentilhomme d'une Province ecrite a un autre à Stockholm' to one of his letters with the comment 'I herewith transmit to your Lordship the Copy of a Letter handed about here, in which, You will see a true and genuine Account

47. Vind, 27 March 1747 (n:o 16), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

48. Vind, 1 May 1747 (n:o 24), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

49. Vind attached two pamphlets to his letter mentioning that both, after arriving from abroad, had been read in one of the committees of the Diet involved with foreign affairs and security issues (*större sekreta deputationen*); Vind, 16 October 1747 (n:o 55), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen. He refers to them as 'la Relation et la Prophetie de Sybille', and 'Lettre d'un Gentilhomme de la Campagne, à Son Amÿ à Stockholm', the latter presumably being the pamphlet 'Lettre d'un gentilhomme d'un province m:b/ En adelsmans m.b. bref till sin goda wän banned on Dec 9, 1747'; Carlsson, *Fribetstidens handskrivna politiska litteratur*, pp. 85–6.

50. Vind, 16 October 1747 (n:o 55), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

of the present situation of Affairs, in this Kingdom'.[51] In Guy Dickens's version comments had been added in the margin identifying 'chapeaux' as 'the French Party' and 'bonnets' as 'the well intentioned Swedes', which illustrates the function of pamphlet copies in the diplomatic correspondence: They showed which topics were debated, with which words as well as through what kind of media. The practice was not unique to the 1740s. Already amongst various documents gathered by Johan Pechlin (1682–1757), long-time Holsteinian diplomat in Stockholm, we find a copy of the handwritten pamphlet 'Aristides bref till Eudippe. 10 Sept. 1722' [Aristide's Letter to Eudippe, 10 September 1722].[52] This was a pamphlet in support of the newly implemented limitations of the royal power in Sweden and, based on the number of surviving copies, it is assumed to have been widely spread.[53]

The fact that pamphlets were copied and included in dispatches hint to potential uses in addition to their informative value. Diplomatic reports were one way amongst several that pamphlets reached outside the original, local context where they had been produced. In this process, pamphlets were sometimes translated, as the pamhplets forwarded by the Danish envoy in

51. Guy Dickens, 28 August 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew.

52. Varia, welche von dem Kanzler von Pechlin während seiner Gesandtschaft am Königlich Schwedischen Hofe colligiret wurden 1720–1741, Abt. 8.1 Nr. 2461, Landesarchiv Schleswig-Holstein [LASH], Schleswig. The same collection also includes at least one other document, which seems to be a pamphlet ('En uprichtig Patriots wählmente betänkjande öfwer Hans Furstel. Durchleuchtighets, Hertigens af Holstein prätenderade Prädicat af Kongl. Högheet'), although conclusions are hard in a case like this, when pamphlets collected by diplomats and diplomatic reports are found in different collections.

53. At least more than twenty contemporary copies have survived in Swedish archives, see Jonas Nordin, *Frihetstidens monarki: Konungamakt och offentlighet i 1700-talets Sverige* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2009), p. 305 (endnote 40); Carlsson, *Frihetstidens handskrivna politiska litteratur*, p. 18.

Stockholm illustrate. A letter from the Swedish minister in London in December 1747 shows how one of the many pamphlets which circulated during the Diet 1746–47 had ended up in *The Daily Advertiser*. In this case, the pamphlet had been translated into English with the title 'A Letter from a Swedish Gentleman, Deputy at the Diet to a Friend in the Hessian Troops in the Low Countries, dated the 30th past'. It was a text critisizing the pro-French Hats, claiming they had invented intrigues against the Swedish succession while trying themselves to overthrow the elected successor. The Swedish diplomat in London, Caspar Joachim Ringwicht, sent a copy of the page where the pamphlet had been published to Tessin with the comment 'comme tout le monde ici n'est pas egalement bien informé de l'état de nos Affaires Politiques Suedoises, de pareilles pieces fournissent des idées monstrueuses des Notre Gouvernement'.[54] His report was similar to the ones by the British and French representatives in Stockholm describing news which concerned their courts.

Last but not least, it is important to note not only what diplomats in Stockholm collected but also what they did not. Neither the British nor the French representative showed any great interest in the Swedish press. The Danish envoy disclosed some costs for purchasing Swedish prints such as decrees and gazettes,[55] but references to gazettes were very scarce in Vind's

54. Ringwicht to the President of the Chancellery, 15 December 1747, Diplomatica Anglica, vol. 328, Riksarkivet, Stockholm. The same pamphlet appears in the French diplomatic correspondence as a manuscript in French with the title 'Traduction d'une lettre inserée dans le Daily advertiser ce samedy 12/23 xbre 1747. pretenduë écrite par un Gentilhomme suedois à la Diètte, à un ami dans les Troupes Hessoises aux Pais Bas en date du 30 Novembre 1747'. There is no mention of it in the letters, but a date annotation implies it was sent with a letter from Puysieulx to Lanmary on 30 November 1747; CP Suède, vol. 216, fols. 439 ff., and 443 ff., AD, La Courneuve.

55. Vind, 10 February 1747 (n:o 7), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

letters. Vind referred to an attached gazette, for example, when he mentioned ceremonial news at the beginning of the Diet.[56] More telling of the ways he used the Swedish press, however, is a comment in July 1746, before the Diet had started, when he sent a very brief report with the words 'Ces Lignes ne sont que pour accompagner les Gazettes ci-jointes. Elles renferment toutes les Nouvelles de ce Païs-ci. C'est assez dire pour marquer combien elles sont peu interessantes.'[57] The lack of interest in the local press is a notable difference to diplomatic missions in cities where gazettes played a major part in the reporting as sources either being referenced or attached to diplomatic letters. Reports from the Swedish representatives in London and Hamburg, for example, contain excerpts from the local press on a regular basis.[58] The lack of similar documents amongst the British reports from Stockholm mirrors the difference in how news of interest to the diplomatic corps were circulated locally. In the Swedish case, this did not happen in the press, which was affected by censorship and hardly contained the kind of information in which foreign diplomats were interested.

Engaging with the Local Audience

When the French and the British diplomats reported how military news from the continent had been received in Stockholm, they were in fact many times themselves the origin of the news. The author of a widely used eighteenth-century diplomatic manual, François de Callières, stressed the importance of both

56. Vind, 30 September 1746 (n:o 44), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

57. Vind, 29 July 1746 (n:o 32), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

58. See e.g. Carl Magnus Wasenberg's letters to Kungl. Maj:t 1742–43, Diplomatica Anglica, vol. 275, and C. J. Ringwicht's letters to Kungl. Maj:t 1744, Diplomatica Anglica, vol. 325, Riksarkivet, Stockholm.

acquiring and getting information: 'Il est sur tout très essentiel à un Negociateur de savoir parfaitement tout ce qui se passe de considerable dans la Cour de son Prince, […] afin qu'il soit en état de dissiper les faux bruit que sement souvent les ennemis de son Maître sur l'état de ses affaires, & d'empêcher les préjudices qu'ils pourroient faire à ses interêts dans le Pays où il se trouve.'[59] The situation described by Callières resonates with some of the examples already mentioned. How then did the diplomats in Stockholm fend off harmful rumours or spread positive news about their court?

The fact that both the British and the French representatives were provided with news implies that they were expected to spread it. In early September 1746, for example, Guy Dickens confirmed that he had received a letter from the British secretary of state William Stanhope (c. 1683–1756) with news about a British military victory in Italy and testified that 'all honest People here rejoyce very heartly'.[60] Similarly, in November 1746, Lanmary confirmed the news sent to him about Charles Edward Stuart's successful flight from Scotland to France and described how he had communicated the news to several persons.[61] Both cases show how foreign representatives were able to provide local news circulations with international news, always in the interest of the diplomatic mission.

News which were intended to be spread was occasionally communicated through documents with had the potential to facilitate the circulation and increase the impact. In May 1747, for example, Lanmary received Louis XV's declaration about

59. François de Callières, *De la maniere de negocier avec les souverains* (Paris: M. Brunet, 1716), pp. 178–9.

60. Guy Dickens, 2 September 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew.

61. Lanmary, 14 November 1746, CP Suède, vol. 214, AMAE, La Courneuve. Another example of the French administration providing the French embassy with news about a French victory can be found in Puisieulx to Lanmary, 3 July 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La Courneuve.

letting French troops enter Dutch territory. His report shows he made double use of the declaration distributing it amongst his Swedish contacts and inserting it in a local, francophone gazette.[62] Thanks to the copy of the declaration he could, thus, simultaneously provide his immediate contacts and a wider circle with favourable news. His strategy illustrates how parallel channels were used when possible. The usefulness of having not only information but actual documentation is confirmed by other cases. A couple of months later Lanmary received a journal about the military campaign of Louis XV,[63] whereas it was in fact a gazette sent from the British administration to Guy Dickens which brought the news about the British naval victory in May 1747 mentioned above.[64] These examples imply a similar use as the distribution Lanmary explicitly described regarding the declaration about French troops.

Distributing public documents like the French declaration or gazettes from abroad were not media to which diplomats had exclusive access. The ways in which foreign representatives reacted to rumours during the Diet 1746–47 shows to which extent diplomatic missions also used diplomacy-specific communication channels. One of them were diplomatic notes, memorandums and other official writings to the hosting crown. This option was discussed when the Danish envoy was faced with the rumours about a Danish rearmament. In his reports about how he was affected by the rumours, Vind mentioned that the Swedish councillor Herman Cedercreutz (1684–1754), himself a former diplomat, had suggested that Vind would counter the

62. Lanmary, 5 May 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

63. Puisieulx to Lanmary, 10 July 1747, CP Suède, vol. 216, AMAE, La Courneuve.

64. Chesterfield to Guy Dickens, 19 May 1747, SP 95/100, NA, Kew. The letter with the gazette arrived on 9 June 1747, see above footnote 37.

rumours with a memorandum to the Swedish Majesty.[65] The same suggestion was later made by another 'distinguished person', who, as Vind phrased it, wished that Vind had 'desabusé tout l'univers par une declaration publique'.[66] In other words, Vind was pressured by Swedish contacts to act with a formal and public writing. Handing in notes and memorandums was a common task at his office, to which several memorandums from the years surrounding the Diet 1746–47 testify. However, to the disappointment of many, this was not Vind's strategy in the case of the rumours about a rearmament. Instead he refuted the rumours in personal conversations with the king, the Lord Marshall and several councillors and members of the Diet's Secret Committee, where, for instance, foreign policy matters were prepared.[67]

Contrary to the Danish envoy, the Russian diplomat and his office did not refrain from formal writings when faced with rumours about hostile Russian actions. Early in September 1746, the envoy, later ambassador, Johann Albrecht von Korff (1697–1766) complained in a pro memoria about rumours concerning Russians plans to change the Swedish succession. The rumours had been spread, according to his complaint, with the intent 'to plant the seeds for suspicion and bitterness against the Russian empress' and were circulating 'not only in the royal city of residence but also in many provinces'.[68] von Korff also formally

65. Vind, 27 March 1747 (n:o 16), and 21 April 1747 (n:o 22), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

66. Vind, 21 April 1747 (n:o 22), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

67. Vind, 21 April 1747 (n:o 22), and 1 May 1747 (n:o 24), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

68. '[…] wie sich einige Leute die unerlautte Mühe gegeben nicht allein in der hiesigen Königlichen Residentz Stadt, sondern auch in vielen Provintzen den Saamen des Mißtrauens und Verbitterung gegen

complained about rumours later during the Diet. In February 1747, he handed in a pro memoria concerning 'a general rumour in town' which claimed that the merchant Christoffer Springer (1704–88) had been arrested due to visits to the Russian embassy.[69] Since he expected answers to his complaints, this was a highly formal and diplomatically delicate process compared to Vind's use of informal conversations.

In addition to his complaints through formal channels, von Korff used parallel unofficial channels for the same message. Shortly after he had handed in the complaint in September the text was reported to be spread around and von Korff was himself suspected to be the origin of the distribution. For example only a couple of days after the pro memoria had been handed in, the Danish envoy Vind reported that copies of it were 'entre les mains de tout le monde' and would reach the provinces with the evening mail. Vind, supportive of von Korff's complaint, attached a copy to his letter, as did the British envoy Guy Dickens.[70] The same pattern surrounded a speech von Korff gave

Ihro Rußisch-Kayserlichen Mayestät auszustreuen […].' Pro memoria from von Korff, Stockholm, 9 September 1746, Ryska beskickningars memorial och noter 1744–1748, DM 628, N:o 566, Riksarkivet, Stockholm.

69. 'Nachdem sich ein allgemeines Gerüchte in der Stadt ausgebreitet, daß der Kaufhändler Springer desfals arretiret worden, weile er gleich anfangs bey des Unterzeichneten Ambassadeur extraordinaire hiesigen Ankunftt deßen hauß frequentiert habe […].' Pro memoria by von Korff, Stockholm, 2 February 1747, Ryska beskickningars memorial och noter 1744–1748, DM 628, N:o 147, Riksarkivet, Stockholm. A copy of the pro memoria is found in Guy Dickens, 20 February 1747, SP 95/100, NA, and it is further mentioned by Lanmary, 20 February 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve, and by Vind, 20 February 1747 (n:o 10), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

70. Vind, 5 September 1746 (n:o 39), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen; Guy Dickens 5 September 1746, SP 95/99, NA, Kew.

during an audience with the successor to the Swedish throne, Adolf Frederick, in November 1746. His speech, highly critical of Adolf Frederick, rapidly spread in manuscript copies in Sweden and can be found in French, British and Danish diplomatic reports from Stockholm, both in its original German version and in French translation.[71]

The ways by which the official diplomatic writings of the Russian embassy spread in Sweden were similar to the ways by which clandestine political texts circulated. von Korff was in fact also suspected of writing or co-writing some of the pamphlets which circulated during the Diet. He was one of the diplomatic actors which, as Erik Bodensten has pointed out, contributed to the plentitude of clandestine pamphlets in the decades before the abolition of censorship. Not surprisingly the Swedish authorities reacted strongly to these actions.[72] As a case of public diplomacy, von Korff's use of media was disruptive in the manner described by Helmers. Instead of refuting unwished rumours on a horizontal level, like Vind's informal conversations with the king and the councillors, von Korff's communication was indeed vertical, reaching out to a wide audience beyond the usual circles of direct and confidential diplomatic communication. It should, however, be seen in constant comparison with strategies like those of Vind, which were less controversial and, probably, more common.

Conclusion: Reactive & Proactive Diplomacy

The ways foreign representatives engaged with the local audience in Stockholm highlights the various forms of early-modern public diplomacy: feeding gazettes with positive news, forward-

71. Guy Dickens, 18 November 1746, SP 95/99, NA, Kew; Lanmary, 21 November 1746, CP Suède, vol. 214, AMAE, La Courneuve; Vind, 21 November 1746 (n:o 57), Sverige: Relationer fra Stockholm (1743–55), vol. 127, TKUA, RA, Copenhagen.

72. See e.g. Remgård, *Carl Gustaf Tessin och 1746–1747 års riksdag*.

ing news for oral transmission, refuting harmful rumours through personal conversations with key figures in the political system and, last but not least, distributing formal diplomatic writings or clandestine pamphlets to a wider audience.

However, instead of viewing diplomatic interventions in isolation, the perspective here has been a parallel study of news monitoring, news management and public diplomacy efforts. This focus exposes to which extent the diplomatic corps adapted their reporting to local mediascapes: Diplomatic missions were less interested in the local press in Stockholm than they were in cities like London, a symptom of a censored press with little added value to the information foreign representatives could procure through other channels. Simultaneously, the diplomatic interest in the official publications of the Diet and the clandestine pamphlets which circulated during the Diet show a reporting adjusted to Swedish conditions. Understanding how diplomats, as a form of institutional readers,[73] monitored information flows is, clearly, a vital premise for understanding how they intervened in them: diplomatic actors needed and profited from a consistent knowledge about local mediascapes.[74]

The starting points adopted here, thus, leads to a more complex view of news management and public diplomacy than if 'foreign' interventions are viewed mainly as actions directly connected to politics in a perceived 'domestic' context like the Swedish Diet. The examples discussed here – such as the military news emanating from the British and French diplomats or the Danish efforts to deny rumours about a Danish rearmament – show how foreign representatives in Stockholm simultaneously interacted with the local news market and political debates both by distributing favourable news from the continent and by reacting to rumours and debates in Sweden. Their actions were,

73. van Groesen & Helmers, 'Managing the News in Early Modern Europe', p. 263.

74. For a similar conclusion, see Peacey, '"My Friend the Gazetier"'.

one could say, both proactive and reactive in relation to debates in Sweden. Moreover, when diplomats and their offices engaged in debates connected to factions within Swedish politics, they often did so in close collaboration with Swedish actors, as previous research has stressed.[75] The direction of influence is, as pointed out, hard to define. The example mentioned here – a Danish diplomat repeatedly being urged to deny rumours in a formal way – shows in what way members of the diplomatic corps could be under pressure to act according to the wishes of their Swedish contacts. It underlines the importance to consider not merely the explicit interventions by diplomatic missions, but also the failed plans and actions from which diplomats refrained.

A focus on diplomatic news management and public diplomacy beyond the efforts related to Swedish politics showcases the transnational character of the public spheres in which diplomats acted. When the British and the French representatives in Stockholm distributed news about the war on the continent, they did not react to Swedish debates. Their efforts were, however, still often reactive: to news circulations outside Sweden which had or were feared to have an impact on the news market and political debates in Sweden. Diplomats acted as members of a bigger communicative network or, to quote Matthieu Gellard, the 'communications machinery' of a ruler abroad.[76]

If we return to the initial example of this essay a final time, it is evident that a description of a city 'flooded with pamphlets' should be critically examined. Early-modern diplomats were frequently battling with financial challenges. Although permanent embassies had become the norm by the eighteenth century,

75. See especially Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish Party Politics*.

76. Matthieu Gellard, '"Face aux bruits et aux rumeurs": Le dispositif communicationnel de la monarchie française en direction des princes européens durant les guerres de Religion', in Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire (dir.), *La communication en Europe de l'âge classique au siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Belin 2014), pp. 206–13.

the financial ground they were standing on was not always secured. This meant that diplomatic reports often included passages in which the diplomat painted a menacing picture of the obstacles he had to overcome in order – whether immediately or later – to be able to ask convincingly for more financial support. In this specific case Lanmary had used more money than planned on supporting a French-Prussian alliance in Stockholm and needed to motivate his costs.[77] Once a certain narrative was established, it was moreover hard to change without risking to create a report in conflict with previous correspondence.[78]

These characteristics of the diplomatic correspondence are usually seen as an indispensable quality to take into consideration.[79] However, there are reasons for emphasising them not merely as an object for source criticism, but as potential objects of study. In her study of the spread of diplomatic and military news in Paris, Tabetha Leigh Ewing focuses on a paradox: neither the people spreading the news nor the police surveilling rumours aimed at changing the *status quo*, but both acts eventually led to the public opinion being given a more prominent position than previously.[80] The ways diplomatic missions monitored news discussed here show to what extent diplomats acted

77. Additional financial support for the French embassies actions during the Diet is a recurrent topic in Lanmary's letters from the start of the Diet in 1746 throughout the winter and spring 1747. He discussed a need for more money in the same letter as the pamphlets mentioned above; Lanmary, 3 April 1747, CP Suède, vol. 215, AMAE, La Courneuve.

78. Jean-Claude Waquet, 'Introduction', in Stefano Andretta et al. (eds), *Paroles de négociateurs: L'entretien dans la pratique diplomatique de la fin du Moyen Âge à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2010), pp. 1–26, here pp. 8–9.

79. On the extent to which diplomatic letters were adapted to the needs of both the sender and the receiver, see Waquet, 'Paroles de négociateurs'.

80. Ewing, *Rumor, Diplomacy and War in Enlightenment Paris*.

in the same way as institutions and officials with the task of surveilling the subjects of a ruler domestically. Diplomats reported what was said and by whom, gathered physical evidence of political debates and did their best to evaluate the truth and intentions behind specific news, rumours and political texts. In some cases, they even tried to stop the spread of specific news or rumours.

We can, thus, ask to which extent diplomats strengthened the interest within the state administration they represented for how news were spread and where political debates happened. This is a pertinent question considering the expansion and early professionalisation of diplomacy in the eighteenth century and the mediating position of diplomats which were stationed in countries with a distinct political system compared with the one they represented. An increased number of permanent embassies and their personnel gave state administrations insight into an increased number of news markets and political debates at an intensifying speed. As has been shown here, diplomats were highly engaged in monitoring the reputation of the crown they represented: The kind of public diplomacy Helmer Helmers and other scholars have discussed required constant lookouts for harmful news which had to be dealt with and in this sense diplomats were like watchdogs, a role highlighted by their circular reporting on how news from home reached different cities.

Of course, the fact that diplomatic reports occasionally might have exaggerated the existence and importance of public debates makes these diplomatic sources only potentially more important for the heightened interest for public opinions amongst eighteenth-century state administrations. Diplomatic reports, and their connections to other levels of the state administration, are therefore to be seen as integral parts of the eighteenth-century's communication revolution. What is more, diplomats were proactive as well as reactive players in the world of public opinion.

CHAPTER 3

Putting Faces to Names: Printed Portraits in Late Eighteenth-Century Stockholm

Ylva Haidenthaller

På Vänners begäran stucken i Paris av P. E. Moitte i Paris. 'On friends' initiative engraved by P. E. Moitte in Paris' says the inscription on the engraving portraying the Swedish merchant Claes Grill (1705–67) (fig. 4.1). The French engraver Pierre-Etienne Moitte (1722–80) depicted Grill bust-length from the left, wearing a fashionable jacket, a ruffled shirt, a cravat, and a wig. He has a fixed gaze and a faint smile, almost mischievous, giving him a lively but serious expression. The engraving was based on a previous painting made by Gustaf Lundberg (1695–1786), which portrayed the merchant in the same posture (fig. 4.2). The painting was considered to be a fair representation and well-liked, which is why it was remediated as an engraving. The clear dedication tells the viewer who commissioned the printed image. Yet, most often, one would be left wondering who commissioned such a printed portrait, whether it was the sitter, family or friends, the painter, the engraver, or even the publisher.

While such questions have been subject to research in the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain, the Swedish print portrait market remains yet to be examined.[1] So far, most research

1. E.g. Marianne Grivel, *Le commerce de l'estampe a Paris au XVIIe Siècle* (Genève: Librairie Droz,1986); Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on portraiture : The market, the public and the hierarchy of genres in eighteenth-century Britain', in *The Consumption of Culture 1600–1800:*

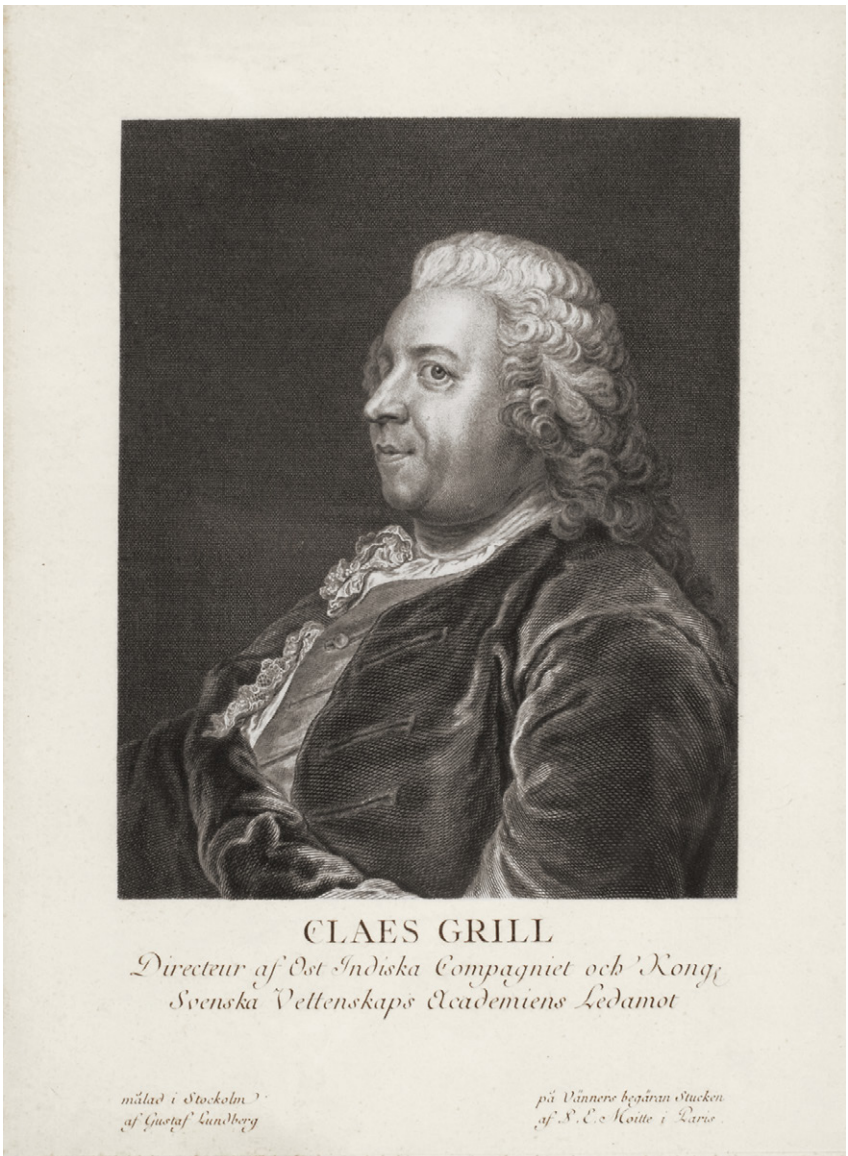


FIGURE 4:1. Claes Grill, by Pierre-Etienne Moitte. The National Maritime Museum, Stockholm.



FIGURE 4:2. Claes Grill, by Gustaf Lundberg. Nationalmuseum Stockholm.

on Swedish eighteenth-century engravings has mostly treated all mass-produced images as belonging to the same art category – reproductions for transfer into a new medium – and has not considered that landscapes, book illustrations, and portraits fulfil very different purposes.[2] Often only the sitter's and the customer's point of view has been in the limelight, leaving the engraver and the publisher out of the equation. However, this study will demonstrate that these players pursued a dedicated agenda.

The following article presents results from a pilot study on the use and distribution of engraved portraits in late eighteenth-century Sweden. The study is built on the cases of the

Image, *Object*, *Text*, eds Ann Bermingham & John Brewer (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 75–88; Andreas Köstler and Ernst Seidl (eds), *Bildnis und Image: Das Portrait Zwischen Intention und Rezeption* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1998); Cynthia Freeland, *Portraits and Persons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Perrin Stein (ed.), *Artists and Amateurs: Etching in Eighteenth-Century France* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013); William Jonsson McAllister, *The Rise and Fall of the Fine Art Print in Eighteenth-Century France* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2016); Antony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820* (London: British Museum Press, 2016); Kees Strien & Lieke van Deinsen, 'The true Likeness of a True Patriot', *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, 69 (2021), pp. 4–25; Lieke van Deinsen, 'Female Faces and Learned Likenesses: Author Portraits and the Construction of Female Authorship and Intellectual Authority', in Koen Scholten, Dirk van Miert & Karl A. E. Enenkel (eds), *Memory and Identity in the Learned World* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2022), pp. 81–116.

2. E.g. Emil Hultmark, *Svenska kopparstickare och etsare* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1944); Jan af Burén, *Grafik: Konst & kunskap på papper* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 2009); Carolina Brown, *Liksom en herdinna: Litterära teman i svenska kvinnoporträtt under 1700-talet* (Stockholm: Carlssons, 2012); Sonya Petersson, *Konst i omlopp: Mening, medier och marknad i Stockholm under 1700-talets senare hälft* (Göteborg: Makadam, 2014); Klas Nyberg (ed.), *Ekonomisk kulturhistoria: Bildkonst, konsthantverk och scenkonst 1720–1850* (Stockholm: Kulturhistoriska bokförlaget, 2017).

engraver Johan Fredrik Martin (1755–1816), the miniature painter Anton Ulrik Berndes (1757–1844), and the publisher Johan Christopher Holmberg (1743–1810). This article aims to show how engraved portraits were initiated, advertised, sold, and spread. Based on letters and newspaper announcements, the following questions are asked: On whose initiative (sitter, painter, engraver, publisher) were the portraits engraved, and why? How were the engravings spread? From whom to whom? How were they marketed, and what did they cost?

By answering these questions, this paper provides insight into how these players took part in the flourishing portrait market in late eighteenth-century Stockholm. Furthermore, the evidence demonstrates the exceptional value of the portrait as an art-form that creates identity and conveys knowledge.

The conditions of the portrait and print market

In eighteenth-century Sweden, the portrait genre went from being reserved for royals and nobility to becoming available to a broader social spectrum.[3] Landowners, merchants, scientists, writers, salon hostesses, physicians, and others had themselves portrayed to underline their position in society. However, the drawn or painted portrait had only a restricted circulation area.

3. E.g. Brown, *Liksom en herdinna*; Peterson, *Konst i omlopp;* Nyberg, *Ekonomisk kulturhistoria*; Ylva Haidenthaller, *The Medal in Early Modern Sweden: Significances and Practices* (Lund: Mediehistoriskt arkiv, 2021). On the rise of portraiture in general, see e.g. Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (Reaction Books: London, 1991); David Solkin, *Painting for Money: Visual Arts and Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Marcia Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession, and Representation in English Visual Culture, 1665–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon 1997); Johanna Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture: Facing the Subject* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).



FIGURE 4:4. Jonas Alströmer, by Fredrik Akrel. Uppsala University Library.



FIGURE 4:3. Jonas Alströmer, by Johan Fredrik Martin. Umeå University.

More important to a person's reputation was the engraved copy.[4] Newspaper advertisements from the time show that engraved portraits were very much in demand.[5] The mass-produced image was sold as single sheets, bound in books, and used to illustrate well-known men and women in magazines. Copyright, as we know it today, was not established, and it was rather common that all sorts of visual materials were reproduced and copied.[6] Sometimes it is impossible to tell if a print, a medal, a miniature, or a painting was first. Once the portrait was out there, it could be reproduced, like the portrait of the merchant Jonas Alströmer (1685–1761), which was executed by several engravers all during the eighteenth century (figs 4.3–4).

The prints conferred advantages to the involved parties. To have one's portrait engraved and thereby spread would be beneficial to the sitter as it would increase his or her reputation; it was also fruitful to the engraver as he could distribute his work and gain new customers via the sitters' connections; and, of course, it was profitable to the publisher and printer, who could sell the engravings. However, despite the popularity of printed images, the market in Stockholm was limited. The Royal Academy of Fine Arts, established in 1735, did not teach the art of engraving, and no shops specialised in distributing only engravings. As opposed to London or Paris, where *print shops* or *merchant d'estampes* were established, in Stockholm, engravings were mostly sold via subscriptions, announced in papers, and distributed by printers or bookshops, and in some cases by the engravers

4. Similar tendencies in the Netherlands, cf. Deinsen, 'Female Faces and Learned Likenesses'.

5. Petersson, *Konst i omlopp*, p. 215.

6. E.g. *Stockholms Posten*, 5 November 1779; 15 November 1779; 9 December 1796: 8 February 1797; Carl Christoffer Gjörwell, *Almän bibliographie eller förtekning på de böcker, skrifter, kartor och kopparstick, som finnas til salu, uti kongl. Bibliothecarien C. C. Gjörwells boklåda i Stockholm, i Rådhuset vid Riddarhus-torget belägen, no I*, Stockholm, 1775.

themselves.[7] Nonetheless, the portrait market, even though small, was quite competitive, and many players wanted to profit from it.

The engraver

The engraver and publisher Johan Fredrik Martin was one of those who ventured into the portrait market. In 1770, Johan Fredrik travelled to London to join his elder brother Elias Martin (1739–1818), a painter well known for his landscape paintings. In London, Johan Fredrik (hereafter named simply as Martin) trained in the art of engraving, mezzotint, and aquatint, particularly the production of serial prints. He also learned engraving techniques and the possibilities of re-interpreting – from painting to engraving – and the ways of spreading and selling his works. Martin studied under established engravers such as Richard Earlom (1743–1822), Valentine Green (1739–1813), Paul Sandby (1731–1809), and Francesco Bartolozzi (1728–1815).[8] Martin stayed in England for the following ten years, specialising in his techniques and learning the trade until he and his brother returned to Stockholm.[9] Back in Sweden, the brothers collaborated as Martin made engravings of his brother's works and sold them, such as views of Stockholm (fig. 4.5).[10] Selling prints was quite common in London then, but the market in Stockholm was still underdeveloped and would prosper from the brothers' injection.[11]

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7. Petersson, *Konst i omlopp*, p. 212.

8. Hultmark, *Svenska kopparstickare*, pp. 227–230; Gunnel Hedberg, '"Forssell direxit": Under hovgravörens överinseende', *Biblis: Kvartalstidskrift för bokvänner*, 52 (2014), pp. 2–20, here p. 7.

9. Mikael Ahlund, *Landskapets röster: Studier i Elias Martins bildvärld* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2011).

10. Hans Fröhlich, *Bröderna Elias och Johan Fredrik Martins gravyrer: En undersökning av deras verksamhet som gravörer samt en förteckning över deras produktion* (Stockholm: Thule, 1939).

11. Timothy Clayton, *The English Print 1688–1802* (New Haven: Yale



FIGURE 4:5. View over Stockholm by Elias and Johan Fredrik Martin. Uppsala University Library



STOCKHOLM.

№ 2. från Martins Schala.

och Riddaren Meyer

detta af Dess Vän och Tjenare Elias Martin

For unknown reasons, the brothers had a rift, and Martin continued the business on his own, amongst other things, focusing on portraits. First, he engraved portraits on private commissions, mostly of well-connected merchants and property owners.[12] Then, in 1782, he decided to publish a book including biographies and portraits of well-known Swedes, *Svenska Galleriet eller Portraiter af merkvärdige Svenske Herrar och Fruntimer* (A Swedish Gallery or Portraits of notable Swedish Men and Women) (1783–84).[13]

The idea was fashionable and followed German and French examples, like Johan Jacob Haid's (1704–67) *Bildersaal berühmter und gelehrter Schriftsteller* on well-known writers (the planned publication, including portraits and biographies, was even announced in a Swedish newspaper in February 1741[14]), or Gautier Dagoty's (1716–85) *Galeri Françoise au portraits des hommes et des femmes célèbres* published in 1770, which included portraits of well-known French men and women. By presenting written and engraved portraits to a broader audience, these books contributed to the collective image and memory of a country or a certain professional group (writers, scientists).[15]

Martin clarifies his intentions in the preface of the first edition of the *Svenska Galleriet*. Martin wishes to publish one *cahier* comprising six portraits and biographies a year but stresses in his introduction that he cannot promise how many years the

University Press, 1997); Ahlund, *Landskapets röster*.

12. Fröhlich, *Bröderna Elias och Johan Fredrik Martins gravyrer*.

13. In 1778, the publisher Magnus Swederus (1748–1836) announced a similar project as he advertised *Collection de portraits de sudeois celebres, gravés en tauille douce*.

14. *Posttidningar*, 26 February 1741.

15. Floris Solleveld, 'The Republic of Letters Mapping the Republic of Letters: Jacob Bruckner's *Pinacotheca* (1741–1755) and its Antecedents', in Scholten et al., (eds), *Memory and Identity in the Learned World*, pp. 156–96; Deinsen, 'Female Faces and Learned Likenesses', pp. 86–7.

project will last.[16] Martin continues that *friends* would write the biographies, probably to increase the project's credibility as it testified to the portrayed person's capacities. The biography could likewise tempt more buyers, because it would be a bargain to purchase a printed face and text by a (not so) anonymous writer. Further, he explains that engraving is the best way to preserve lovely images. 'The most precious busts or lively paintings would wither with time, but engraved portraits could always be renewed, so they might never disappear.'[17] His comment captures the long-established perception that remembrance is connected to portraiture. The wish to preserve the memory of persons and their great deeds would appeal to the depicted individuals and the buyers.

For his first edition to be published in January 1783, Martin wanted to include the politician count Carl Fredric Scheffer (1715–86), the poetess and salon hostess Charlotta Nordenflycht (1718–63), the physicist Christopher Polhem (1661–1751), and the wealthy merchants Alströmer, father and sons.[18] They were all influential and well-known Swedes, carrying substantial cultural capital. When Martin started his project, he had already established himself as a skilled engraver and was well-connected. Martin's first step would be to get financed and to gain access to portraits he could use as models. He began his endeavour by contacting the merchant and shipbroker Patrick Alströmer (1733–1804), who, following his father Jonas Alströmer's footsteps, earned his fortune in textiles, sugar, ships, and potatoes. Via a letter, Martin asked Alströmer if he might be interested in

16. Johan Fredrik Martin, *Svenska Galleriet eller Portraiter af merkvärdige Svenske Herrar och Fruntimer* (Stockholm, 1783–1784), Prospectus 3–4.

17. Martin, *Svenska Galleriet*, Prospectus 2. 'När de dyrbaraste buster, de lifligaste målningar af tid och våda förstöras, kunna graverade Portraiter efter behof förnyas så att de aldrig försvinna.'

18. Martin to Bergman, 28 August 1782, G21, Uppsala University Library (UUB).



FIGURE 4:6. Patrick Alströmer, by Johan Fredrik Martin. Umeå University.

the project, which, of course, he was.[19] To be included in a book on famous Swedes would certainly be flattering. In a letter from February 1782, Martin thanks him for the honour of being allowed to engrave Alströmer's portrait and appeals to his generosity, and asks him to finance the engraving plates for his *Svenska Galleriet*.[20] So even though Martin took the initiative, the sitter would pay.

In December 1782, Martin sent the engraving to Alströmer for approval.[21] Martin portrayed Alströmer in profile, from the right, dressed in appropriate attire (fig. 4.6). Visible on his chest rests the Order of the Vasa. The portrait is set in an oval frame with a bow on top and his coat of arms below. The plaque attached to the portrait transmits Alströmer's name and titles. The image shows all the necessary elements of a representative portrait, the face is as accurately portrayed as possible, and it provides information about the sitter's name, identity, and status. The inscription on the edge of the engraving reveals the signature *T. Sergel inv.t.* referring to the sculptor Johan Tobias Sergel (1740–1814), which indicates that Martin used a portrait medallion as a model and not a painted portrait, which also connects to the depiction in profile. It remains unclear if Martin travelled to western Sweden, where Alströmer mainly resided, to study his portrait bust or if it was sent to him.

At the same time, Martin also sent the engravings of the brother Clas Alströmer (1736–94) and their father, Jonas (1685–1761), and asked that the brother might look at his work and expressed his hope that the Alströmers would like their portraits.[22] Since Alströmer had graciously promised buyers, Martin continued to inform him that he had already sent subscription forms to Rodin, a printer in Gothenburg, so that people could

19. Martin to Alströmer, 28 February 1782, G6:36, UUB.
20. Martin to Alströmer, 28 February 1782, G6:36, UUB.
21. Martin to Alströmer, 20 December 1782, G6:36, UUB.
22. Martin to Alströmer, 20 December 1782, G6:36, UUB.

subscribe to them.[23] The fact that Alströmer promised to find assured buyers suggests that he also gained from this endeavour because the engravings could be purchased by friends and associates, thereby aiding the family's visibility and reputation.

Overall, Martin was very inventive as he outsourced quite a few steps of production and not only the financing of the plates. For instance, in August 1782, he contacted the chemist and mineralogist Torbern Bergman (1735–84) and inquired if he could write the biography of Christopher Polhem.[24] According to Martin, Bergman would be the ideal person to write a professional biography on Polhem. Bergman indeed wrote the biography, and a year later, the mineralogist was also included in the second book on famous Swedes (fig. 4.7). Of course, Bergman was well known in Sweden at that time, but it is probable that his inclusion in the gallery of famous Swedes was simultaneously a token of thanks for his help in writing Polhem's biography.

In the end, Martin only produced two editions. The second version of *Svenska Galleriet* was published in January 1784, yet it remains unclear how large the editions were. One item, consisting of six engraved and written portraits, could be purchased for 1 *Riksdaler* and 16 *Skilling*, or if one wished to have it coloured it would cost double the amount, 2 *Riksdaler* and 32 *Skilling* (in comparison, a subscription to the newspaper *Stockholms Posten* cost 2 *Riksdaler* per year).[25] Martin sold his *Svenska Galleriet* via subscription. In his preface, he writes that forms for a subscription could be obtained at the bookshop of Anton Adolf Fyrberg (1744–1813), located at Stora Nygatan in Stockholm.[26]

23. Martin to Alströmer, 20 December 1782, G6:36, UUB.

24. Martin to Bergman, 28 August 1782, G21, UUB.

25. Martin, *Svenska Galleriet*, Prospectus 3–4; Lars Olof Lagerqvist & Ernst Nathorst-Böös, *Vad kostade det?* Fifth revised edition, (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002), p. 86.

26. Martin, *Svenska Galleriet*, Prospectus 3–4; Isidor Adolf Bonnier, *Anteckningar om svenska bokhandlare intill år 1900* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1935), p. 70.



FIGURE 4:7. Torben Bergman, by Johan Fredrik Martin. Umeå University.

From the letters to Alströmer, we know that Martin also retailed his work via bookshops in other cities, like Rodin in Gothenburg, and the book was also announced in a newspaper in Åbo (Turku).[27] Martin had a reputation as a fine portrait-maker, and the publisher would benefit from selling a product of a renowned artist. One of those who sold Martin's work was the printer, bookseller, and publisher Johan Christopher Holmberg, as discussed in the next section.

The publisher

Holmberg was a busy entrepreneur who had a business between 1784 and 1810, with branches all over Sweden. He printed, published, and sold books, journals, and single sheets. In the following announcement, Holmberg advertises Christopher Manderström's (1727–88) poems, including the author's portrait by Martin (fig. 4.8).

> Fresh from the print, available at Holmberg's bookshop: The late Hofmarschall Baron Christopher Manderström's *Poetiska Arbeten*, including a portrait engraved by Martin. Costs 1 Riksdaler, and stapled, 1 Riksdaler and 4 skilling.[28]

Holmberg, who also published newspapers, circulated this advertisement several times in his papers during 1794.[29] The price, equalling 8 kilograms (one *lispund*) of pork meat or 8 kilograms of dried fish, included both book and portrait.[30] Because printing the image and the book required different techniques, portraits could often be bought separately if the book was not yet bound. Hence, again, Martin's work benefited not only himself but also

27. *Tidningar Utgifne Af Et Sällskap i Åbo*, 11 September 1783.

28. *Extra Posten*, 7 April 1794.

29. E.g. *Extra Posten*, 2 April 1794.

30. For calculation see: Lagerqvist & Nathorst-Böös, *Vad kostade det?* p. 88.



FIGURE 4:8. Christoper Manderström, by Johan Fredrik Martin. Uppsala University Library.

the sitter and the publisher, as he could distribute them in different ways.

Holmberg was not the only publisher selling portraits. Advertisements, coming from all over Sweden, give a glimpse into the variety of people whose portrait was for sale, such as Pierre Corneille (1606–84), Voltaire (1694–1778), Anders Celsius (1701–44), and Gustav III (1746–92).[31] Next to the current king, the bookshops also sold portraits of late kings, such as Sigismund Vasa (1566–1632), who briefly reigned in the late sixteenth century.[32] Images depicting Swedish royals appear to have been popular as they were frequently announced in the newspapers.[33] However, the most common types of portraits advertised this way seem to have been the portrait of authors, like Manderström's mentioned above.[34] These portraits filled a similar purpose as those depicting famous Swedes, they preserved the sitters' memory and made them known to a greater audience. But most of all, author portraits were essential in creating the writer's intellectual identity, increasing his or her visibility, and giving authenticity to their work.[35]

Next to publishing newspapers and journals, Holmberg initiated new book projects. Similar to Martin's venture with famous Swedes, Holmberg, together with the physician Sven

31. For instance: *Norrköpings Weckotidning*, 26 March 1763; *Hwad Nytt*, 8 October 1774; *Dagligt Allehanda*, 16 March 1780.

32. *Posttidningar*, 22 December 1746.

33. E.g. *Posttidningar*, 2 January 1746, 28 June 1759; *Stockholms Posten*, 16 September 1779.

34. E.g. *Posttidningar*, 5 March 1753; *Stockholms Posten*, 8 February 1781, 24 February 1781; Petersson, *Konst i omlopp*, p. 215.

35. Peter Berghaus (ed.), *Graphische Porträts in Büchern des 15. bis 19. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995); Lieke van Deinsen & Nina van Geerdink, 'Cultural Branding in the Early Modern Period: The Literary Author', in Helleke van den Braber et al. (eds), *Branding Books Across the Ages: Strategies and Key Concepts in Literary Branding* (Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2021), pp. 31–60; Deinsen, "Female Faces and Learned Likenesses", pp. 85–87.



FIGURE 4:9. Olof af Acrell, by Fredrik Akrel in *Vetenskapshandlingar för läkare och fältskärer* (1795). Uppsala University Library.

Anders Hedin (1750–1821), intended to publish a series on prominent doctors. Before Holmberg began production, he advertised his idea to spark subscribers' interest. In his announcement, he informs the reader that he intends to produce four volumes yearly, with portraits and biographies. In addition, Holmberg assures that the engravings will be executed by 'approved masters', and the book price would depend on the number of subscribers.[36] Holmberg published six volumes from 1793 to 1798, and he employed different artists for the portraits, including Martin, Fredrik Akrel (1748–1804), and Anton Ulrik Berndes, of whom more later (fig. 4.9).[37]

It seems that with this publication, Holmberg had a specific customer in mind, one interested in science. He called his publication *Vetenskapshandlingar för läkare och fältskärer* (Scientific Writings for Physicians and Surgeons), which targeted the vast array of people working with medicine,[38] but it also catered to the fast-increasing social curiosity about science and those who conducted it.[39] The rising fascination with the identity of scholars went hand-in-hand with the availability of learned portraits that revealed their physiognomic characteristics and gave their writings a face.[40] These portraits did not necessarily depict famous individuals but people whose work was well-known. Thus, the portrait market filled a vital function in spreading and carrying knowledge.

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36. *Extra Posten*, 11 September 1773, 19 March 1793.

37. *Extra Posten*, 19 March 1793, 12 June 1795; Magnus Olausson 'The Portrait Painter and the Market: Anton Ulrik Berndes as an Artistic Jack of all Trades', *Art Bulletin of Nationalmuseum Stockholm*, 8 (2001), pp. 58–63, here p. 63.

38. Bo Lindberg, *Kirgurgernas historia* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2017), p. 14.

39. Françoise Waquet, 'Scholars and Their Portraits in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Intellectual News*, 3.1 (1998), 24–29; Solleveld, 'The Republic of Letters Mapping the Republic of Letters'.

40. Deinsen, 'Female Faces and Learned Likenesses', pp. 85–6.

The miniature painter

Another artist who ventured into the printing market was the miniature painter Anton Ulrik Berndes who made a living by copying miniature portraits.[41] Berndes decided to go to London for a study trip, where he learned the art of engraving like Martin. Back in Sweden, Berndes noticed that the competition in the miniature market had become too strong, forcing him to reconsider his career. So, in 1796 he purchased an intaglio press to try his fortune with engraving.[42]

Berndes, eager to start his printing business, contacted people he knew, particularly former clients. The first he approached was Erik af Wetterstedt (1736–1822), a nobleman and official. Berndes wrote to his brother that Wetterstedt 'was most flattered by my offer and promised to send his picture painted by [Lorens] Pasch at the earliest opportunity.'[43] First, Berndes engraved a portrait that resembled the execution of the painting (fig. 4.10). It depicts Wetterstedt seated at a table, holding a map pointing to his surveyor work (fig. 4.11). The stitchings on his jacket are visible, as well as the insignia of the Order of the Polar Star. Wetterstedt was commander of the first class and proudly demonstrated the star on his left chest and the badge on a necklet.

As a first try, it was a decent reproduction, but it followed more the design of a painting than that of an engraving. So, after Berndes experimented with the technique and style, he made another engraving of Wetterstedt that better fitted the typical style of printed portraits (fig. 4.12). It shows the sitter in a fashionable oval frame with his coat of arms, name, and titles but without any unnecessary details that would sideline the viewer's attention. Wetterstedt's lavishly decorated jacket had turned monochrome, and instead of both badge and star, one insignia

41. Olausson, 'The Portrait Painter and the Market'.
42. Olausson, 'The Portrait Painter and the Market', p. 60.
43. Olausson, 'The Portrait Painter and the Market', p. 60.



FIGURE 4:10. Erik af Wetterstedt, by Lorens Pasch the Younger. Nationalmuseum Stockholm.



FIGURE 4:11. Erik af Wetterstedt, by Anton Ulrik Berndes. Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo.



FIGURE 4:12. Erik af Wetterstedt, by Anton Ulrik Berndes. Uppsala University Library.

of the Order of the Polar Star was considered to be enough. The Order of the Polar Star badge was still visible but had moved from his neck to his left side, directing the viewer's sole focus to Wetterstedt's steady gaze. The second version of Berndes' portrait of Wetterstedt exemplifies which aspects of a printed portrait were deemed to be important. Symbols indicating his status were necessary but should not take over.

In the following years, Berndes appears to have been quite successful in his printing ventures as he reproduced miniatures and grand oil paintings alike and turned them into engravings. He was keen on improving his techniques and started to work with aquatint and mezzotint. Berndes wrote to his brother about this:

> aquatint, which I am now pleased to tell you I have discovered. It is true, I suppose, that it is really used for landscapes, but I can employ it to advantage in portraits, over large areas, it produces finer and purer graduations of tone than mezzotint, although the latter must be of some assistance when it comes to the portraits. As I recall, the making of the plate is quicker, the results more beautiful, and more impressions can be made.[44]

Time and cost efficiency were always of the essence. Berndes also describes how the technology benefited the rendering of the portrait and how the finesse of the plate's execution would influence the result and, by extension, the customers.

Over the years, Berndes took commissions from publishers such as Holmberg, who employed him for his series on physicians, and collaborated with other artists, like the painter Per Krafft the younger (1777–1863). Krafft assigned Berndes to deliver an engraving plate of his portrait of General Carl Johan Adlercreutz (1757–1815), who had been part of the coup to depose king Gustav IV Adolf (1778–1837), and a famous figure in Stockholm. Krafft bought the plate and got all the earnings

44. Olausson, 'The Portrait Painter and the Market', p. 62.

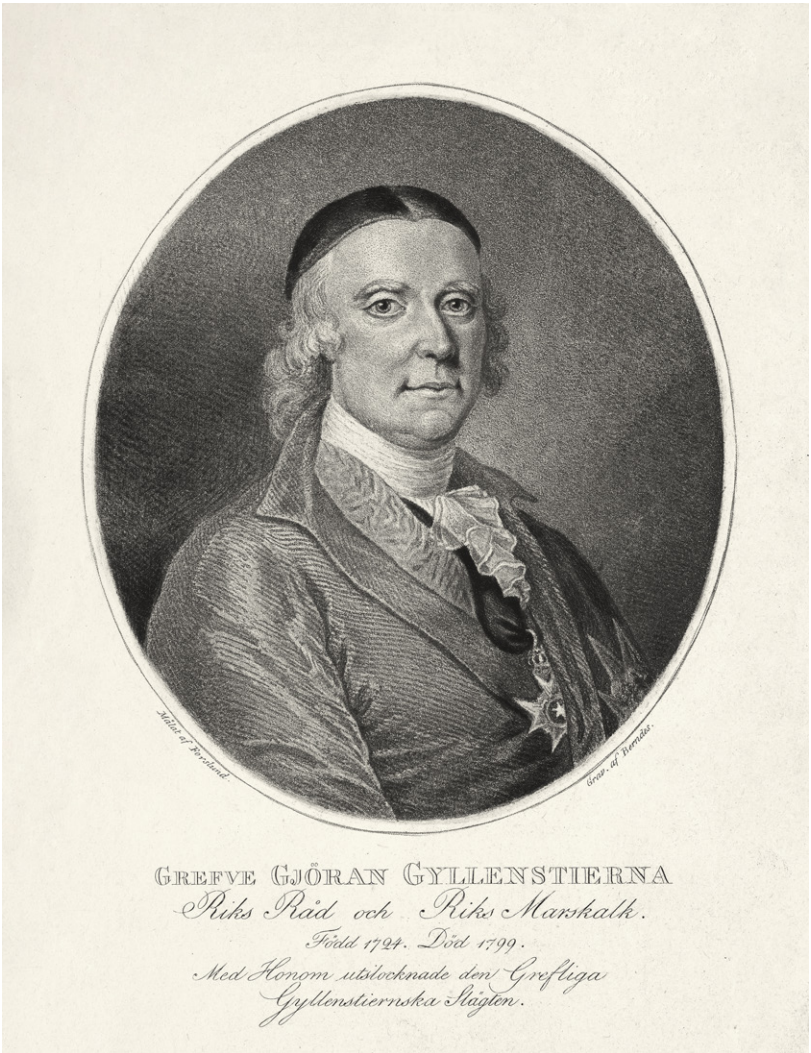


FIGURE 4:13. Göran Gyllenstierna, by Anton Ulrik Berndes. Uppsala University Library.



FIGURE 4:14. Eva Maria Gyllenstierna (born Ribbing), by Anton Ulrik Berndes. Uppsala University Library.

from selling the printed portrait of Adlercreutz.[45] In addition, Berndes took private orders, such as the joint portrait of the married couple Göran and Eva Maria Gyllenstierna (born Ribbing) (figs 4.13–14). The engraving reveals that Gyllenstierna had already passed when it was made, which suggests that the wife had commissioned the images. Such pictures would have been framed and sent to other members of the family as a reminder of their bond. However, Berndes mostly produced portraits of already well-known men and women, such as the adopted Swedish crown prince Karl August (1768–1810), scientists like Carl Peter Thunberg (1743–1828), or poets like Anna Maria Lenngren (1754–1817).[46] Berndes had realised the potential associated with the printing market and how portraiture was a vital part of it.

The customer

The artistic efforts of Martin, Holmberg, and Berndes work were clearly intended to respond to the rising demand inspired by the growing interest in portraits. The customers wanted to know what people looked like, and portraits became fashionable collector's items.[47] Van Deinsen argues that printed portraits and portrait frontispieces became *de rigueur* in seventeenth-century Europe,[48] and the fascination with the faces of the learned and famous would continue in the eighteenth century, not least nourished by the elaborated printmaking technologies. Martin and Holmberg sold books with portraits and biographies, as well

45. Olausson, 'The Portrait Painter and the Market', p. 61.

46. Hultmark, *Svenska kopparstickare*, pp. 36–7.

47. Stephan Brakensiek, *Vom 'Theatrum mundi' zum 'Cabinet des Estampes': Das Sammeln von Druckgraphik in Deutschland 1565–1821* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2003), p. 13; Antoine Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity 1750–1850*, transl. Lynn Carol Bird Jeffress (Cambridge: Polity, 2017); Strien & Deinsen, 'The true Likeness of a True Patriot', p. 5.

48. Deinsen, 'Female Faces and Learned Likenesses', p. 87.

as books including the author's portrait; and Berndes produced single sheets depicting so-called celebrities. Hence, the diversity of portrait types, bound or single sheets, leads to the question of who would buy these prints. Besides family and friends of the portrayed, or people who occasionally purchased a picture of a famous general, collectors would be a target group.

Next to single sheets, publications like *Svenska Galleriet* or *Vetenskapshandlingar för läkare och fältskärer* were often used as a basis for collections and framed in galleries.[49] Generally, the prices for printed portraits ranged between 4 *Skilling* to 4 *Daler* (transferring the price to food it would stretch from 20 eggs to a barrel of herring)[50] and depended on the artist, type of paper, and the sitter.[51] Depending on the quality of the paper – the engraving was often made on thin paper – the print could then be mounted on thicker paper that allowed framing or putting it in drawers. The practice of collecting prints was by then well-established in other parts of Europe, and the trend also found its way to Sweden.[52] Printed portraits could be collected in whatever way fascinated the collector, thematically according to profession, nationality, or artist. Likewise, the ideas on how to manage a print collection were many. For instance, the German scholar Siegmund Jacob Apin (1693–1732) wrote in his *Anleitung, wie man die Bildnisse berühmter und gelehrter Männer sammeln soll*, published in Nürnberg 1728, an instruction on how to collect portraits of famous and learned men. He suggested

49. Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, pp. 411–26.

50. Lagerqvist & Nathorst Böös, *Vad kostade det?* 83–89; cf. prices and affordability of prints in Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, pp. 364–74.

51. E.g. *Norrköpings Weckotidning*, 26 March 1763; *Hwad Nytt*, 8 October 1774; *Dagligt Allehanda*, 16 March 1780.

52. E.g. Arwed Arnulf, 'Jenseits der Kennerschaft. Intentionen gelehrten Graphiksammelns', *Aachener Kunstblätter*, 67 (2018/19), pp. 35–74; Solleveld, 'The Republic of Letters Mapping the Republic of Letters'.



FIGURE 4:15. Frontispiece from Sigmund Jacob Apin, *Anleitung, wie man die Bildnisse berühmter und gelehrter Männer sammeln soll* (Nürnberg 1728). Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek (L.art.o.169-b).

ripping out the author's portraits, as the book would not be worth anything after the owner's death, but the portrait certainly would.[53]

The frontispiece of Apin's *Anleitung, wie man die Bildnisse berühmter und gelehrter Männer sammeln soll* provides a suggestion of how such a print collection could look like, as it shows a room with a high ceiling full of ordered repositories fashioned to hold engravings (fig. 4.15). Two men are standing next to a coin cabinet in the centre of the image. They are both holding engravings in their hands and looking at each other. Behind them, an open door leads to another room, probably designed to contain more portraits.

A collection, similar to that which Apin had suggested building, was announced for sale in the Stockholm newspaper on 4 May 1795. The collection, previously owned by the colonel and knight Samuel Christian Wallén (1730–92), included almost 15,000 engraved portraits of various sorts. About 9,000 engravings were glued on white *regalpaper* with full biographies, and about 5,000 were mounted on blue *oliphant paper*. In addition to the engravings, the collection included a catalogue bound in two tomes and four cabinets to hold the prints.[54] Everything was sold

53. Sigmund Jacob Apin, *Anleitung wie man die Bildnüsse berühmter und gelehrter Männer mit Nutzen sammlen […] soll* (Nürnberg: Adam Johann Felßecker, 1728), p. 22. 'Andere suchen Portraits Gelehrter zusammen, und kleben sie in die Bücher, die sie geschrieben. Ich kehre es just um, und reisse sie heraus. Warum? Weil dergleichen Collection weder halb noch gantz, die Bilder Geld kosten, das Buch aber nach meinem Tod keinen Heller mehr gilt, Portraits hingegen sehr theuer allein bezahlt werden, und ist eins, ob das Portrait im Buch, oder in meiner Collection liegt.'

54. *Posttidningar*, 4 May 1795, 'För Samlare och Amateurer, utbjudes til salu, framl. Öfwersten och Riddaren Herr Sam. C. Wallens efterlämnade wackra och dyrbara Samling av circa 14,600 st. in= och utländska Personers Porträter i Kopparstick, utom flere hundrade graverade Medailjer, hwarav äro 9600 st. uppklistrade på hwitt Regalpapper, samt med fullständiga och interessante Biographier på det nitidaste under-

for 900 *riksdaler riksgäld*, a vast amount of money, but the advertisement still described it as a modest sum, which did not match the collection's actual value.[55]

According to the catalogue that today remains in the National Library of Sweden, Wallén listed the sitters in alphabetical order, in addition to providing information on their profession, the artist, and the size of the engraving.[56] Also, Wallén collected portraits not only displaying people with Swedish nationality or produced in Sweden but also others from all over Europe. For instance, under the letter B, one would find the physicist and first female professor in Bologna, Laura Bassi (1711–78), or the German theologist Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752). Wallén undoubtedly collected a wide array of faces but seemed to have had a particular interest in theology. It remains unclear how Wallén accumulated his 15,000 prints, but, next to gifts and purchases in Sweden, he would have obtained them simply by import. Importing books from other European cities and subscribing to them was rather common in eighteenth-century Sweden, so portraits could very well have been among the printed goods.[57] Thereby, Wallén's collection testifies not only to the

skrefne, uppå hwilka Herr Öfwersten öfwer 30 års tid anwändt lediga stunder; de öfrige 5000 st. äro dels lösa, dels på blått Oliphant=papper upklistrade. Fullständig Katalog öfwer alltsammans uti 2:ne Tomer i regal fol. samt 4 Porträtskåp medfölja denna Samling. Priset är i det yttersta modereradt och ingalunda swarande emot des werkeliga wärde. Hugade Köpare kunna alla dagar, helst eftermiddagarne, bese Samlingen hos Boets Curator, Dietualiehandlaren Abrah. Engel, uti Huset N:o 96 wid Regeringsgatan, och ifrån Landsorterne kan äfwen med honom därom corresponderas.'

55. *Posttidningar*, 4 May 1795; Samuel Christian Walléns förteckning, U 367: 1–2, Kungliga biblioteket/The National Library of Sweden (KB); the price would equal roughly 256,000 SEK. according to http://historicalstatistics.org/Jamforelsepris.htm (2022-12-30).

56. Samuel Christian Walléns förteckning, U 367: 1–2, KB.

57. On the import of books, see Anna-Maria Rimm, 'Böckernas vägar: Den svenska bokhandelns import av utländska böcker 1750–

vast number of available portraits – 15,000 – but also to the existence of a dynamic international market.

Conclusions

To return to the questions raised at the start: On whose initiative (sitter, painter, engraver, publisher) were the portraits engraved, and why? Here it seems that all of them could initiate the engraving of a plate. Martin, Holmberg, and Berndes proposed and created engravings for their financial and professional gain but also took private commissions, mostly from wealthy burghers. The portraits were spread as single sheets or bound in books. They were advertised in newspapers, distributed via bookshops and publishers, and sold by the artists. Also, the sitters or the family seem to have spread them in their circles after purchasing the plate or a couple of engravings. Accessible prices are confirmed via newspaper announcements and point to the variables (subject, paper, and printer) that would affect the cost. But most importantly, the engraved portraits did not just fulfil the function of aiding the sitter's reputation, the artist's visibility, and the publisher's financial situation, but they were also an investment, a source of knowledge, and a pastime.

This pilot study has unearthed various opportunities for further research. In particular, the financial details are something that warrant additional analysis. The newspaper advertisements and the engravers' bookkeeping appear to be excellent sources for studying prices and distribution, and also the size of the editions. The analysis also raises questions about the role of reproductions in a new medium. For example, which aspects of the painting or bust would remain when the image was turned into an engraving? And how does the rising enthusiasm for portraits affect their production and the visibility of the sitter?

1800', *Sjuttonhundratal: Nordic Yearbook for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (2011), pp. 139–55.

Did only famous people turn into printed faces, or was the engraving a strategic marketing scheme to create new celebrities? Answering these questions will provide a better understanding of how society in the eighteenth century related to printed portraits – a medium without boundaries. Putting a name to a face meant making knowledge accessible to fellow humans.

Research for this study was funded by Sven och Dagmar Saléns Stiftelse.

CHAPTER 4

Ways of Seeing: Conceptions of Visuality in Enlightenment Philosophy

Fokko Jan Dijksterhuis

Observation and experimentation took first place in the experimental philosophy of the eighteenth century. Even if many philosophers allowed for ideas and speculation in the pursuit of knowledge, the senses were generally considered the cornerstone of knowing. Besides the direct observation of phenomena, knowledge was mediated by representations thereof, the images and diagrams in books, the models of objects, and so on. Experimental philosophy was visual: *anschaulich*.

This observation raises the question how these philosophers exactly thought images mediate understanding. Often the question how vision creates images, and how understanding is derived from these, seems hardly problematized in works of experimental philosophy. With a take on John Berger's renowned television series *Ways of Seeing*, originally broadcast in 1972, this paper addresses the question how eighteenth-century philosophers thought images mediate understanding.[1] Although Berger intended to reveal underlying ideologies in visuality, this paper merely intends to unravel the ways eighteenth-century philosophers thought we see and how we learn by seeing.

1. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing: Based on the BBC Television Series with John Berger* (London: Penguin, 1995).



FIGURE 5.1 Frontispiece from Benjamin Martin, *The Young Gentleman and Lady's Philosophy*, volume 1 (London: Owen, 1759).

Seeing Stars

Let us start with a picture that is typical of Enlightenment experimental philosophy and its didactical ambitions (fig. 5.1. We see a young man and woman discussing the heavens. The stars are visible through the windows. Observing those is aided by the telescope in the center, understanding by a celestial globe between the pair. On her lap, the woman holds a book that presents such knowledge, and the man is pointing out an important insight regarding the universe. The picture presents the various modes by which we come to know the world, creating a multimedia encounter of senses, instruments, and words by which the man and woman together develop their understanding.

The picture is the frontispiece of *The General Magazine of Arts and Sciences, Philosophical, Philological, Mathematical, and Mechanical* (1755) by the renowned English writer, lecturer and instrument maker Benjamin Martin (1705–82).[2] Martin was one of the most popular teachers of experimental philosophy in the eighteenth century. From the 1730s onwards, he published a wide range of works that were translated to Dutch, French, Italian, and can be considered illustrative of the visual education of experimental philosophy. The *General Magazine* was his most ambitious project. It was a combination of an encyclopedia and a topical periodical, that ran from 1755 to 1764. Afterwards the text and plates were bound into thirteen volumes: *The Young Gentleman and Lady's Philosophy*.[3]

2. Benjamin Martin, *The General Magazine of Arts and Sciences, Philosophical, Philological, Mathematical, and Mechanical*, first issue (London: W. Owen: 1755)

3. John R. Milburn, 'Martin, Benjamin (bap. 1705, d. 1782)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <https://doi-org.vu-nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18175>, last accessed 13 March 2023. From 1763 the *General Magezine* was published in Dutch: *Algemeen Oefenschoole van Konsten en Weetenschappen; Eerste Afdeling; Behelzende de Wysbegeerte voor Jonge Heeren en Jufferen, of, Achtereenvolgende Beschouwingen van de Werken der Natuur* (Amsterdam: Pieter Meijer, 1763). De *Oefenschoole*

In the *Magazine*, the young man and lady literally take each other by the hand to look at diagrams and models of the universe to explain its workings. The text is written as a dialogue between the brother Cleonicus and sister Euphrosyne, addressing the whole of natural philosophy that he is learning as an Oxford College student. The lady takes her name from the Greek Goddess of cheer, joy and mirth, one of the Graces. The gentleman's name combines 'report', 'fame' with 'success', expressing his eagerness to share his learning.

In the sixth dialogue, they discuss 'the Truth of the Solar System': the Copernican idea that the Earth and the planets orbit the Sun. Martin introduces a particular instrument of his own design: a planetarium. This table-top clockwork modelled the orbits of celestial bodies, thus providing a tangible and visual model of the cosmos.

> By this descriptive View of the Solar System, I presume, my *Euphrosyne*, you will be prepared to understand a Demonstration of the Truth of it, by comparing the several Appearances of the heavenly Bodies with those of this System, as represented by the *Planetarium*.[4]

Understanding was thus achieved by looking and comparing. The transition from geocentrism to heliocentrism was made literally by replacing the earth at the center of the planetarium by a 'gilded sphere'. The sibling talk the matters of astronomy through, emphasizing the difference between apparent motions as they are observed from the earth and the real motions of the universe. With the planeterium this change of perspective could literally be made by viewing the system from the Earth and Sun, respectively.

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was made and published by the Mennonite Pieter Meijer and the Lutheran Johannes Lublink, with contributions by the Mennonite reverend Pieter van den Bosch.

4. Martin, *General Magazine*, p. 25.

The didactic use of the planetarium was mirrored in the didactic aim of the book. In a footnote, the reader was reminded to have the eye on the accompanying plates.

> The Reader is here supposed to have his Eye upon the Diagram in Plate V. where all the Phænomena, mentioned in this Dialogue, are represented just as they are seen in the Planetarium.[5]

In a manual for his instruments that Martin published in 1760, he had explained what could be learned from the planetarium and how.[6] By emulating the constitution of the world it provided the 'most direct and demonstrative way to knowledge'. Elsewhere, in the 1735 *Philosophical Grammar*, he emphasized the 'experimented' character of the new philosophy that had liberated learning from the rooms and books of scholars, 'the main foundations of natural philosophy, could be brought into vision, and made intelligible by simple experiments'.[7] In the *Grammar*, Martin used the format of a catechism, presenting natural philosophy as a question & answer between teacher and pupil. In this way, Martin showed how to acquire knowledge of the world by means of observations, instruments and illustrations. How exactly, such visuals mediated understanding, he more or less took for granted. There is no actual account of visual perception in the *General Magazine* or other of his works.

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5. Martin, *General Magazine*, p. 27, footnote.

6. Benjamin Martin, *The Description and Use of Both the Globes, and the Armillary Sphere, and Orrery, Exemplified in a Large and Select Variety of Problems in Astronomy, Geography, Dialling, Navigation, Spherical Trigonometry, Chronology, &c.* (London: Benjamin Martin, 1760), 178–86 (chapter five, with an illustration).

7. Benjamin Martin, *The Philosophical Grammar; Being a View of the Present State of Experimented Physiology, or Natural Philosophy* (London: John Noon, 1735), p. viii: 'All the great Points and Dogmata of the Science, here laid down and asserted, are such as have been proved by Experiments and otherwise, […]'

Learning from the Senses

The teachings of Martin are exemplary of the didactics of the Enlightenment that are rooted in the works of Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670).[8] His best known work *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658) was published throughout the eighteenth century, including various English editions. It showcases Comenius's systematic and multi-medial approach to education, as illustrated in the lemma on 'philosophy': *Welt-weisheit*. On the left (in fig. 5.2) stands an observer pointing out celestial phenomena; the thinker in the middle contemplates about these phenomena, and all is brought inside to be analyzed.

The *Didactica Magna* (written between 1627 and 1638, published in 1657) elaborated the underlying conceptions.[9] Comenius emphasized the mutual reinforcement of the senses and the mind: 'the sense of hearing should always be conjoined with that of sight, and the tongue should be trained in combination with the hand.'[10] In chapter 20, he outlined the special method for the sciences, founded on the conviction that understanding is the inner observation of objects perceived externally. All that is learned ought to be presented to the senses, visual, audible, smellable, tastable, tangible and cognition always starts with the senses. Ideally, this means that the things are experienced directly, but if they are not and hand they can be replaced with models, images, and so on.[11]

8. Cf. Jürgen Overhoff, 'Vorwort', in Johann Amos Comenius, *Grosse Didaktik* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2022), p. 9.

9. Johan Amos Comenius, *Opera Didactica Omnia* (Amsterdam: Laurens de Geer, 1757); the *Didacta Magna* is the first part, comprising pp. 5–197. An English translation can be found in M. W. Keatinge, *The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967).

10. Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, chapter 17, paragraph 42, col. 85 (In docendo & discendo Facilitatis Fundamenta; part of principle 8: Nature assists its operations in every possible manner.); translation *Great Didactic*, p. 139.

11. Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, chapter 20, paragraphs 2, 6/7, and

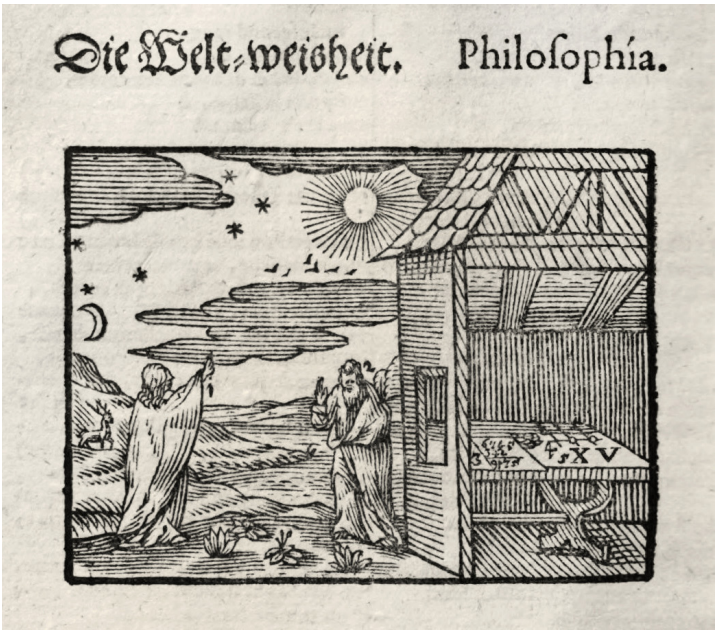


FIGURE 5.2 Title and illustration of lemma CI, 'Philosophy', page 384, in Jan Amos Comenius, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (Nuremberg: Michael & Johann Friedrich Endter, 1666).

Education is, according to Comenius, literally enlightenment: 'in the same way a master, if he wish to illumine with knowledge a pupil shrouded in the darkness of ignorance, must first excise in his attention, that he may drink in information with a greedy mind.'[12] In *Orbis Pictus*, astronomy figures in the explanation of the phases of the Moon and eclipses of the Sun as phenomena that can be understood by our particular perspective from the Earth.

Comenius prioritized visual perception, characterizing learning literally as 'im-printing'. However, seeing was not sufficient: understanding also required reflection in dialogue with teachers and fellow students. Education in the view of Comenius was a collective affair of heterogeneous groups in an open and free environment. Martin's textbooks can be said to reflect this view in the forms used for the teachings. The catechisms of the *Grammar* emphasized the interaction between teacher and pupil and the dialogues of the *Magazine* brought together pupils for collective learning.

Making Pictures

The privileging of vision in Martin and Comenius is typical of Enlightenment thinking. Vision was regarded as the highest form of sensation, and images as the principal source of ideas.[13] How exactly vision takes place and how visual perception conveys knowledge, men like Martin and Comenius did not explain.

10; translation *Great Didactic*, pp. 183–6.

12. Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, chapter 20, paragraph 12, col. 117 (Scientiarum Methodus, in Specie; something on light); translation *Great Didactic*, p. 187.

13. See Daniel Fulda, 'Einleitung. Vom Nutzen der Bilder für unser Bild von der Aufklärung', in idem (ed.), *Aufklärung fürs Auge: Ein anderer Blick auf das 18. Jahrhundert* (Halle (Saale): Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 2020), pp. 6–29, here pp. 8–10.

In general, Enlightenment thinkers adopted a rather straightforward idea of vision, where an image of the world was projected into the eye and processed by the cognitive system. In the 'Discours Préliminaire', Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717–83) maintained that we owe our ideas to our senses and of the senses vision is by far the most trustworthy and enlightening. This text expounded a straight-forward conception of observation and knowing, considering sensations to be unproblematic and objective, as they 'sont à peut près les mêmes dans tous les hommes'.[14]

Based on an ontology of matter and space and an epistemology of form and place, d'Alembert privileged sight and touch as the principal senses. Considering extension and impenetrability as the essence of space and bodies, his text viewed shape and number as the primary qualities of perceptible objects. Geometry and mechanics, sculpture and painting, these were the cornerstones of the arts and sciences as discussed in the 'dictionnaire raisonnée' that was the *Encyclopédie*.

The outspoken visual regime of the 'Discours' was in its turn based on a specific conception of visuality. As form and place were the primary qualities of objects, the essence of visual perception consisted of geometrical aspects. This reduced vision to perception by means of rays as taught by the early modern science of optics. In this way, sight and touch are basically becoming the same.

The classic depiction of early modern vision is the rendering of the astronomical theories of Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) by René Descartes (1596–1650) in *La Dioptrique*. The eye is a combination of a pinhole (the pupil) and a lens (the lens), bringing bundles of rays from object points into a focus on the retina. Rays of light thus paint images on the white screen of the retina. This is done in a geometrical point-by-point fashion, the image

14. Jean le Rond d'Alembert, *Discours Préliminaire de l'Encyclopédie*, ed. Michel Malherbe (Paris: Vrin, 2000), pp. 84, 99.

of an object reconstructed on the retina. According to Descartes, the image is impressed mechanically, similar to the way one impresses a shape in wax. Rays of light are tangible and tactile. The optical nerve passes on the image as it is constructed on the retina. This materialistic conception of light and vision is echoed in the *Encyclopédie*. The predilection in the 'Discours' for number and shape as primary visual qualities is linked to the tacit, impenetrable nature of things. Light literally impresses images into the eye.

Descartes also provided experimental substantiation of the model. In the early 1630s, he had executed ocular dissections with the Amsterdam eye doctor Plempius. They peeled off the back of a prepared eye, until the image cast on the retina was visible. In this way, they could study the retinal image as it was passed on the mind.[15] The outcome of this transformation of visual theory is a curious duplication: The mind observes images of objects projected on the retina. From the viewpoint of the mind, these images are objects in themselves. Kepler had left the question how the mind processes the retinal images to the philosophers. In that light, it is remarkable that 'les philosophes' said so little about this question and took the retinal images more or less for granted and as self-explanatory, in a direct impression from the retina to the mind.

Senses in Dialogue

If the conceptions of 'les philosophes' of visual perception may be limited and rather self-explanatory, their views on perception as a whole were more interesting and innovative. In particular, the French philosopher Denis Diderot (1713–84) raised new

15. Katrien Vanagt, *De emancipatie van het oog: V. F. Plempius's Ophtalmographia en de vroegmoderne medische denkbeelden over het zien* (Enschede: Dissertation University of Twente, 2011). See A. Mark Smith, *From Sight to Light: The Passage from Ancient to Modern Optics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015), for a history of Keplerian optics.

questions regarding the nature and functions of images, developing a critical reflection upon images and perception. The issue of the status of the retinal image becomes less pressing, as he questioned the distinction that could be made between natural and artificial images. In the *Salons*, Diderot walked the reader through the paintings he discusses, describes them with great precision (see fig. 5.3). He shared his experience of having his intellect stimulated and moods evoked. Good paintings appealed to his mind as well as his emotions. Writing from his desk, he carried the paintings and their actual meaning to his readers. In this way the text became more true that the image itself.

Crucial in Diderot's reflections on art was the realization that the image was not a mere projection of reality, but that vision and depiction create images that were often more 'real' than reality itself. He played with various levels of visuality, interchanging direct and mediated, observed and depicted images. He advised, for example, to watch Vernet's 'Harbour of La Rochelle' (1762) through a looking-glass, in such a way that your view coincided with the painting. The effect would be that you would see nature. In this way, Diderot made observation the subject of observation and reflection in order to understand what happens when an image is produced.[16]

The process of observation and the object of observation flow together.[17] This way of looking at images opens the field to visual criticism. The interaction between the senses plays a prominent role in Enlightenment aesthetics, not only in a Comenian sense of reinforcement, but also as de-stabilizing. In late seven-

16. Peter Bexte, 'Sinne im Widerspruch: Diderots Schriften zur bildenden Kunst', in Dennis Diderot, *Schriften zur Kunst*, ed. Peter Bexte (Berlin: Philo & Philo Fine Arts, 2005), pp. 291–325, here pp. 295, 300, 310–11.

17. Britta Hochkirchen, '"Meinen Geist in flagranti ertappen": Die Relation von Sehen und Nicht-Sehen in erotischen Genrebildern im Zeitalter der Aufklärung', in Fulda (ed.), *Aufklärung fürs Auge*, pp. 30–51, here p. 35.



FIGURE 5.3 The Paris Salon 1785. Jacques-Louis David's famous *Oath of the Horatii* is situated in the centre of the image. Beneath it hangs Adolph Ulric Wertmüller's portrait of Marie-Antoinette together with two of her children in the park of Petit Trianon. Contemporary etching by Pietro Antonio Martini (1739–1797). The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

teenth-century scientific circles, questions on how touch and vision complement or contradict each other dominated reflections on perception. Diderot remarked that viewing through a looking glass confused the senses as well, since vision and hearing no longer coincided.

In this regard, the passive eye of the *Encyclopédie* does not so much point to a defect of enlightened understanding of vision and images; it is the key to Enlightenment epistemics. Seeing is touching and vice versa. Still, it is the mind that feels, rather than the eye. In the eye as camera, there was, apparently, no place for an active participation of the eye and the cognitive system in visual perception. In the Enlightenment understanding of vision, the mind admired the images projected on the retina like a spectator in a gallery considered a painting on the wall.

Critiquing the Eye

The Cartesian conception of vision came under critique in the later eighteenth-century, with Frans Hemsterhuis (1721–90) as an important trailblazer. Hemsterhuis was critical of Isaac Newton's (1642–1727) optics and the limitations of its mathematical approach. The real problem, however, lay with his followers who did not recognize these limitations in the way that Newton himself had done.[18] The problem with the French was a lack of contact between the sciences and the arts. Writing to Diotime in 1783, he argued:

18. Frans Hemsterhuis, *Wijsgerige Werken*, ed. M. J. Petry (Ljouwert: Fryske Akademy, 2001), pp. 752–3 (Lettre sur l'athéisme, 2ème version 1798): 'Newton avoit été étonné de ses découvertes, comme de raison; mais son grand sens en entrevit les bornes. Ses successeurs furent étonnés et fiers d'en avoir tant appris, et jaloux de sa gloire, ils voulurent savoir tout ce que ce grand homme avoit ignoré.' See also Frans Hemsterhuis, *Oeuvres Philosophiques de François Hemsterhuis*, 2, ed. L. S. P. Meyboom (Leeuwarden: Eekhoff, 1846), p. 208.

> C'est que les Dalembert, les Clairauts, et tant d'exellents theoreticiens en optique n'ont aucune communication avec leurs bon practiciens et artistes, d'où il suit, que ces grands theoreticiens au beau milieu de leur haute geometrie et de leur profonde algebre disent quelques fois des sottises et des absurdités dont l'artiste se mocque avec raison, […][19]

Hemsterhuis had been involved in optical research from its early stages. He was particularly interested in the complex refractive interplay in the parts of the eye.[20] His ideas about optics only partially made it to his published writings, but they informed his writings on philosophy and aesthetics.

The first publication of Hemsterhuis was the 1769 *Lettre sur la Sculpture*. It opens with an exposition on perception, visual perception in particular, problematizing the retinal picture and the way the cognitive system processes it. Perception only began with the picture on the retina, and it took an active eye and an integrated cognitive system to develop a visual understanding of objects:

> Vous savez, monsieur, par l'application des lois de l'optique à la structure de notre oeil, que dans un seul moment nous n'avons une

19. François Hensterhuis, *Ma toute chère Diotime: Lettres à la princesse de Gallitzin, 1783*, ed. Jacob van Sluis, with Gerrit van der Meer & Louis Hoffman (2011), <https://www.rug.nl/library/heritage/hemsterhuis/04_diotime_1783c_neo.pdf>, p. 139 (22.7.1783): 'The D'Alemberts and Clairauts, though excellent theoretical opticians, have no contact with experienced practitioners and artists, the result being that these distinguished theoreticians, moving in the rarefied atmosphere of their advanced geometry and their profound algebra, have a tendency to make foolish and absurd remarks, which are quite rightly ridiculed by the artist […]'

20. Michael John Petry, 'Hemsterhuis on Mathematics and Optics', pp. 209–34 in John David North & John J. Roche (eds), *The Light of Nature: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Science Presented to A. C. Crombie*, (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985).

> idée distincte que presque d'un seul point visible, qui se peint clairement sur le rétine: si donc je veux avoir une idée distincte de tout un objet, il faut que je promène l'axe de l'oeil le long des contours de cet objet, afin que tous les points qui composent ce contour viennent se peindre successivement sur le fond de l'oeil avec toute la clarté requise, ensuite l'âme fait la liaison de tous ces points élémentaires et acquiert à la fin l'idée de tout le contour. Or il est certain que cette liaison est un acte où l'âme emploie du temps, et d'autant plus de temps que l'oeil sera moins exercé à parcourir les objets.[21]

It is in the collecting and combining of successive retinal images that the mind perceives the world. In other words: rather than being a passive receiver of images, the visual system has an active role in perception.

A few years later, Hemsterhuis published his *Lettre sur l'Homme et ses Rapports*, in which he developed a more systematic critique of the senses. Because of the active role of the organs in perception, their workings and effects needed to be analyzed carefully. Hemsterhuis considered the senses as systems: not only the eye should be taken into account but the path and transformation of light and rays as well, and the ideas that the mind formed. (He also emphasized the intersubjective aspects

21. Hemsterhuis, *Wijsgerige Werken*, pp. 498–501. 'It is evident from the application of the laws of optics to the structure of our eyes, that at any given moment there is just about a single visible point, clearly depicted on the retina, of which we have a distinct idea: consequently, if I wish to obtain a distinct idea of an object as a whole, I have to move the axis of my eye over the object's contours in such a way that all the points composing any one contour imprint themselves successively on the base of the eye with all the requisite clarity; it is, therefore, the mind or soul which establishes the connection between all these elementary points, and finally acquires the idea of the contour as a whole. Now the mind certainly requires a certain amount of time in which to carry out this operation, and more time if the eye is less practised in surveying objects.' (Translation by Petry, slightly adjusted by me.)

of perception in the exchange of ideas and experiences between humans.)

With this turn to the subject, he was one of the first to make the *functioning* of perceptive organs central to epistemology. In the end, the heart as organ of the soul is central in the *Lettre sur l'Homme*, functioning in a similar way as the eye and the ear. The *Lettre sur la Sculpture* had already made clear that in Hemsterhuis's epistemology, aesthetics – the perception of beauty – was central. Perception started when the soul was appealed.[22]

In the 1780s, he elaborated his ideas on visual perception further:

> Nos sens ne transportent pas seulement les rapports des choses par | le moyen de l'imagination à l'intellect, mais ils transportent au contraire, avec la même fidélité, les verités trouvées par l'intellect au moyen de sa geometrie.[23]

Hemsterhuis gave a cognitive turn to the empiricism that he had inherited from his teachers, emphasizing the active role of the sensory system and the mind. He was quite critical of the French materialism, drawing upon John Locke (1632–1704) and Willem 's Gravesande (1688–1742) in his adaptation of Newton's optics. Hemsterhuis's 1788 'letter on optics' to Diotime (Princess Amalia von Gallitzin (1748–1806) contains the most comprehensive account. Starting with a discussion of ray optics and the enhan-

22. Petry in the introduction to Hemsterhuis, *Wijsgerige Werken*, xxii. Diderot visited Hemsterhuis in 1773. He got a copy of *Lettre sur l'Homme* on which he wrote a comment. According to Petry the commentary did not add much.

23. Hemsterhuis, *Ma toute chère Diotime*, <https://www.rug.nl/library/heritage/hemsterhuis/08_diotime_1787.pdf> (19.6.1787), p. 115: 'What the senses convey to the intellect by means of the imagination is not simply the relationships of things, they also convey, and with equal fidelity, the truths the intellect discovers in exterior things by means of geometry.'

cement of vision by means of the telescope and the microscope, he switched to actual perception: 'il y a plus que l'apparence que notre dioptrique si embellée aboutirait à fort peu de chose, si l'âme n'avait pas la faculté de perfectionner et de compléter ces sensations et ces idées de son coté.'[24] He then used the case of the lorgnette to explain how, in binocular vision, it is the mind's eye that combines the images and produces a perfect image of an object. The dissimilar images in each eye 'are confounded in a twinkling, by a single act of the mind, in such a way that they form a single, perfect image of the object; secondly, that this perfect image, formed of the coalition of two imperfect images, is incomparably clearer, larger, richer, more saturated than each of the other two viewed apart'.[25]

Conclusions

Hemsterhuis' perceptual approach to vision feeds into the physiological turn in optics of the nineteenth century. Here, the eye and the visual system are active elements in perception, and, in this way, notable enigmas of Enlightenment visual theory could be solved, such as stereoscopic vision and the undetected blind spot.

Later Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–94), in particular, showed in his physiological optics that the eye could produce images that were wrong – just as the ear could hear things that

24. Hemsterhuis, *Wijsgerige Werken*, pp. 260–1: 'it is more than likely that our fine dioptrics yielded only very little, if the mind did not have the faculty of perfecting and completing those sensations and those ideas on its part'.

25. Hemsterhuis, *Wijsgerige Werken*, pp. 264–5: 'sont confondues ensemble dans un clin d'oeil, par un seul acte de l'âme, tellement, qu'elles forment une seule image parfaite de cet objet; et 2⁰ que cette image parfaite, formée de la coalition des deux imparfaites, est incomprablement plus claire, plus grande, plus riche, plus saturée que l'une des deux autres, vue à part.'

were not there. The physiological turn had been preluded in an oblique way by the optics of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), an issue that Helmholtz would reflect upon later in his career. Hemsterhuis, in his turn, had been decisive in the development of Goethe's thinking on light and optics, when, in 1793, the latter read the letter on optics.[26]

Enlightenment ways of seeing thus developed over time: the seeing eye being linked to the thinking brain; and both to the quest to understand the world.

26. Petry, 'Hemsterhuis on Mathematics and Optics', p. 221.

CHAPTER 5

Presse et « société des savants » au XVIIIe siècle : deux visions pour la fabrique de l'opinion

Halima Ouanada

Dans cette contribution, nous proposons d'examiner brièvement l'aspect paradoxal mais très actuel de la « société des savants », pour reprendre l'expression de Denis Diderot (1713-1784), devant la naissance du phénomène de la presse au XVIIIème siècle. Un phénomène qui tente de s'imposer en imposant par la même occasion un nouvel esprit également subversif dans la fabrication de l'opinion. Un esprit qui déroute les philosophes des Lumières, ébranle l'édifice qu'ils tentent d'ériger et les accule à composer avec, à défaut de le reconnaître ouvertement. Se sentant menacés, certains philosophes, dont Voltaire (1694-1778) notamment, va en faire un autre infâme à combattre et en profite pour provoquer un débat sur les limites à la liberté d'expression. Sujet d'une grande importance et qui s'avère toujours d'actualité.

La presse, un nouvel esprit qui s'impose

Rappelons qu'à l'époque le journalisme a le vent en poupe. D'ailleurs, plusieurs périodiques, gazettes, quotidiennes, canards ou feuilles paraissent autour de la capitale et à destination de la capitale[1]. Toutes ces formes d'expression semblent répandre, en

1. Cf. *Dictionnaire des journaux : 1600-1789*, dir. Jean Sgard (Paris : Universitas, 1991) ; « La multiplication des périodiques », dans *Le Livre*

effet, à une attente, voire à un engouement d'un public avide « de savoirs de tous ordres et de toutes tailles, à cette curiosité nerveuse et enthousiaste qui saisit tant les salons parisiens que les académies de province, les beaux-esprits de l'aristocratie que les bourgeois, les militaires que les hauts-fonctionnaires, les dévots que les libertins[2] » et dont la « curiosité est aussi insatiable que multiforme » comme le précise Pierre Lepape :

> Il consomme avec une même avidité potins de la cour et critique dramatique, nouvelles de la guerre et poèmes sur la victoire de Fontenoy, bruissements des salons et discussions sur la gravitation universelle. Pour une opinion publique en train de prendre conscience d'elle-même, mais sans pouvoir sur la marche des choses, tout est encore spectacle sur lequel il convient d'avoir un jugement. Les journaux, sous toutes les formes, fournissent des éléments de jugements[3].

Dans son ouvrage, *Histoire du journal en France*, Eugène Hatin, par exemple, annonce :

> Le journal est devenu comme une des nécessités de notre existence ; c'est un autre pain quotidien, dont nous ne saurions plus nous passer. Mais il en est de cette chose merveilleuse comme de tant d'autres excellentes inventions que le temps nous a léguées : on en

triomphant : 1660-1830, dir. Henri-Jean Martin & Roger Chartier, Histoire de l'édition française, t. 2 (Paris : Promodis, 1984) ; Claude Labrosse & Pierre Rétat, *L'instrument périodique : la fonction de la presse au XVIIIe siècle* (Lyon : Presses universitaires de Lyon, 1985) ; Jacqueline Giraud & Pierre Rétat, *Le journalisme d'Ancien régime : questions et propositions* (Lyon : Presses universitaires de Lyon, 1982) ; et *Les gazettes européennes de langue française (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)*, dir. Henri Duranton, Claude Labrosse & Pierre Rétat (Saint-Étienne : Presses de l'université de Saint-Étienne, 1993).

2. Pierre Lepape, « Journalistes et hommes de lettres : les positions de *l'Encyclopédie* », *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie*, n° 18-19 (1995), p. 109, <https://doi.org/10.3406/rde.1995.1294>.

3. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.

> jouit sans s'inquiéter d'où elles viennent ou de ce qu'elles ont pu coûter[4].

Cette presse dont les différentes formes sont si proches est source de confusion[5] parfois même chez les Encyclopédistes eux-mêmes. Ces derniers en proposent différentes définitions, certes mais, ils sont tous d'accord pour fustiger son aspect et son impact négatifs et pour la condamner à l'unanimité. Si les gazettes[6] sont des feuilles volantes en prise immédiate sur l'événement, précise Pierre Lepape, les journaux, eux, sont considérés comme de « la basse littérature »,

> reliés en volumes, souvent pourvus de tables des matières, réédités lorsque leur succès le mérite, ils appartiennent au domaine du livre dont les gazettes sont exclues. Cette distinction demeure néanmoins toute théorique. Elle cherche à introduire une coupure qualitative dans la production périodique alors qu'il est bien difficile, pour les lecteurs eux-mêmes, de tracer une frontière stable entre les différentes formes de presse[7].

Il s'agit en effet davantage d'une prise de conscience, chez les philosophes, de la concurrence à la fois commerciale, scientifique, voire de prestige que représente pour eux cette nouvelle forme d'expression. Contre ceux qui l'exploitent, ils vont déployer un arsenal de propos méprisants en les qualifiant de

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4. Eugène Hatin, *Histoire du journal en France : 1631-1853*, 2e éd., (Paris : P. Jannet, 1853), p. 1.

5. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.

6. Le terme « gazette » est emprunté à l'italien « *gazetta* » ou « gaza », une petite pièce indiquant, à l'époque, le prix d'un journal. Appelée « nouvelles à la main » quand elle est manuscrite, la gazette est, dans sa forme imprimée, un périodique consacré à rapporter les nouvelles et actualités politiques, littéraires et les faits de société. D'ailleurs, plusieurs journaux portent le nom de Gazette (exemple : *Gazette de France*, *Gazette littéraire*).

7. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

« canaille littéraire » et en décrivant le journalisme en général de « chambre basse[8] » de la littérature. Dans son œuvre *Essai sur le journalisme*, Jean-Baptiste-Claude Delisle De Sales, par exemple, considère le journalisme comme une secte et les journalistes comme « les Tartuffes de la littérature » et attire l'attention sur l'extrême danger de ces écrits. Tout le monde sait, écrit-t-il, « qu'une feuille incendiaire des agents secrets du journalisme suffisait pour arracher de ses foyers l'homme de lettres le plus paisible, et terminer ses rêveries de gloire par la mort ignominieuse de l'échafaud[9]. »

C'est surtout dans *l'Encyclopédie* que va se manifester la lutte contre cette forme d'expression qui commence à faire de l'ombre aux formes classiques. Les encyclopédistes vont se relayer donc pour la dénigrer. Diderot fournit deux articles sur la question : « Journaliste » et « Hebdomadaire ». Dans ce dernier article, il exprime son hostilité face à cette presse qu'il qualifie de « fléau » et la définit comme une « pâture des ignorants » :

> Ce sont des nouvelles, des gazettes qui se distribuent toutes les semaines. Tous ces papiers sont la pâture des ignorans, la ressource de ceux qui veulent parler & juger sans lire, & le fleau & le dégoût de ceux qui travaillent. Ils n'ont jamais fait produire une bonne ligne à un bon esprit ; ni empêché un mauvais auteur de faire un mauvais ouvrage[10].

Dans l'article « Journaliste », il qualifie les journalistes de « pillards » et de « parasites » qui s'occupent « à publier des extraits et des jugements des ouvrages de littérature, des sciences ou des

8. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

9. Cf. Jean-Baptiste-Claude Delisle De Sales, *Essai sur le journalisme depuis 1735 jusqu'à l'an 1800* (Genève : Slatkine Reprint, 1971 [1811]), p. 89.

10. Article « Hebdomadaire », *Encyclopédie*, t. 8 (1765), p. 75. Je cite l'édition de Paris de 1751-1772, disponible en ligne à l'adresse suivante : <http://enccre.academie-sciences.fr/encyclopedie/>.

arts, à mesure qu'ils paraissent », et il en tire la conclusion qu' « un homme de cet espèce ne ferait jamais rien, si les autres se reposaient ». Et d'ajouter :

> Un journal embrasse une si grande variété de matières, qu'il est impossible qu'un seul homme fasse un médiocre journal. On n'est point à la fois grand géomètre, grand orateur, grand poète, grand historien, grand philosophe : on n'a point l'érudition universelle. Un journal doit être l'ouvrage d'une société de savants ; sans quoi on y remarquera en tout genre les bévues les plus grossières.

Visiblement, une comparaison semble se faire dans l'esprit de Diderot entre journal et *Encyclopédie* dont les objectifs semblent identiques ! Dans une lettre à M. Verne, ministre du Saint-Évangile, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) définit l'écrit périodique comme :

> un ouvrage éphémère, sans mérite et sans utilité dont la lecture négligée et méprisée par les gens lettrés ne sert qu'à donner aux femmes et aux sots de la vanité sans instruction et dont le sort après avoir brillé le matin sur la toilette est de mourir le soir dans la garde-robe[11].

En 1756, Voltaire considère, dans l'article « Gazetier » de *l'Encyclopédie*, que l'unique objectif des « gazettes » est de « gagner de l'argent ; et comme on n'en gagne point à louer des auteurs, la satire fit d'ordinaire le fonds de ces écrits. On y mêla souvent des personnalités odieuses ; la malignité en procura le débit : mais la raison et le bon goût qui prévalent toujours à la longue,

11. Lettre de Jean-Jacques Rousseau à M. Verne, ministre du Saint-Évangile, à Genève le 2 avril 1755, in : *Lettres* (1728-1778), édition électronique de Diane Brunet, (á partir de *Lettres (1728-1778)*, dir. Marcel Raymond, Lausanne : La Guilde du livre, 1959), p. 79, <http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/Rousseau_jj/lettres_1728_1778/rousseau_lettres.pdf >.

les firent tomber dans le mépris et dans l'oubli[12] ». Et d'ajouter que comme un « bon gazetier doit être promptement instruit, véridique, impartial, simple et correct dans son style », « cela signifie que les bons gazetiers sont très-rares[13] ».

Néanmoins, devant le succès phénoménal de ces feuilles qu'ils lisent pourtant avec envie[14], Diderot, Rousseau et notamment Voltaire, et tout en les dénigrant car contraires à leurs principes, auraient tenté, malgré tout, l'expérience pour attirer ce public enclin à cet esprit nouveau. Aux gazettes et journaux va donc s'ajouter une littérature clandestine, comme l'explique Robert Darnton, dans son ouvrage *Édition et sédition*, *l'univers de la littérature clandestine du XVIIIe siècle*.

> Redécouvrir l'énorme corpus de la librairie illégale au siècle de Voltaire et de Rousseau, c'est pénétrer dans le monde bigarré de la littérature clandestine. On y rencontre, tour à tour, les éditeurs-imprimeurs aux frontières du royaume, souvent gens honorables et bons bourgeois calvinistes, qui multiplient les publications subversives ou immorales ; les pauvres hères de la contrebande : passeurs, colporteurs, marchands forains qui risquent les galères pour diffuser dans le royaume cette littérature de l'ombre ; les gens installés, édiles et notabilités, qui lisent sous le manteau ces opuscules interdits, mais aussi les libraires les plus insoupçonnables, qui sous le comptoir, se livrent au commerce de livres scandaleux, tant les gains y sont aisés à faire[15].

Diderot avoue dans une lettre adressée, le 10 août 1749, à Berryer, Lieutenant général de police : « Il y a dans les Observations de l'abbé Desfontaines plusieurs morceaux de ma façon[16]».

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12. Voltaire, article « Gazette », *l'Encyclopédie*, t. 7 (1757), p. 534.

13. *Ibidem*.

14. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 106-107.

15. Robert Darnton, *Édition et sédition : l'univers de la littérature clandestine du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris : Gallimard, 1991), par l'éditeur, 4ème de couverture du livre.

16. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

Rappelons au passage que ce même abbé Desfontaines est un journaliste, célèbre notamment par sa *Voltairomanie*, une compilation d'anecdotes scandaleuses contre Voltaire et auteur de ce que Delisle De Sales appelle « les journaux à venin[17] » en comparaison avec les « journaux à ambroisie ».

Et Rousseau de confier dans le livre 7 de ses *Confessions* avoir pensé avec Diderot à lancer une feuille périodique qui aurait pour titre *Le Persifleur*. « Je formai là, avoue-t-il, le projet d'une feuille périodique, intitulée Le Persifleur, que nous devions faire alternativement Diderot et moi. […] Des événements imprévus nous barrèrent, et ce projet en demeura là[18]». Jean-Françcois Marmontel (1723-1799), lui, a lancé *L'Observateur littéraire*, dédié aux spectacles qui n'a pas eu un franc succès car il a été interrompu au huitième numéro[19]. Quant à Voltaire, il aurait envoyé des articles au *Journal Encyclopédique* ou à la *Gazette Littéraire*. Dans son livre déjà mentionné, Robert Darnton déclare :

> Ouvrons un catalogue de livres prohibés établi par la librairie clandestine en 1775. C'est un document illégal qui circule sous le manteau comme les livres qu'il recense ou annonce. Le titre en est éloquent : Livres philosophiques. Mais les livres classés sous cette rubrique nous réservent quelques surprises[20].

Cette forme d'expression, consommée à profusion, par le public de l'époque circulait ouvertement et sous le manteau dans toute la France et avait pour pays de provenance principalement l'Angleterre, la Suisse, la Prusse ou encore la Hollande. Ces mêmes pays furent également des pays d'exils pour certains philosophes dont Voltaire. Ce dernier, en dépit de son éloignement, continue cependant de faire parler de lui à Paris à la fois par une

17. Delisle De Sales, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

18. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions : autres textes autobiographiques*, Œuvres complètes, t. 1 (Paris : Pléiade, 1959), livre 7, p. 347.

19. Lepape, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

20. Darnton, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

littérature tantôt avouée tantôt clandestine. Hugues de Montbas explique cette constante présence/absence du patriarche par un compromis qui aurait arrangé l'autorité et fait sa gloire:

> si un demi-siècle durant les œuvres divers de M. de Voltaire, et les plus agressives, ont pu librement se glisser sous toutes les portes et prendre place dans toutes les bibliothèques, c'est que l'autorité s'accommodait aisément du vain subterfuge où elle ne voulait voir qu'un ménagement à ses pudeurs et un hommage indirect à la majesté des lois[21].

Voltaire et la presse

Le cas Voltaire est ici très intéressant à examiner en raison justement de l'intérêt accordé à l'écriture brève et incisive. Il va d'ailleurs l'exploiter à profusion en tant qu'excellent moyen pour diffuser ses idées. Les écrits brefs ont la spécificité de toucher une large audience en quête d'émotion, de rire, voire de scandales[22]. Voltaire en homme d'affaire avisé va de surcroit faire de la clandestinité un espace de plus pour écraser efficacement l'infâme.

> Quand on parle de littérature clandestine au siècle des philosophes, c'est surtout à Voltaire que l'on songe. Car, il en a été tout ensemble le pourvoyeur le plus assidu et le roi le plus incontesté. De tous les grands écrivains de ce temps, il a même été le seul à pratiquer systématiquement la clandestinité[23].

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21. Hugues de Montbas, « La littérature clandestine au XVIIIe siècle », *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 juillet 1951 (1951), p. 328.

22. « Faire vite et tirer beaucoup : tels sont les objectifs de la presse naissante, de la Gazette de Renaudot à la Révolution. Des journaux à la parution encore irrégulière, vendus dans la rue ou par abonnement, qui contribuent à la naissance d'une véritable opinion publique dans les rues des grandes villes françaises. » Gilles Feyel, « La naissance de la presse : gazettes, journaux et publics sous l'Ancien régime », disponible sur <https://essentiels.bnf.fr>.

23. Montbas, *op.cit*, p. 328.

Et Baron d'Holbach (1723-1789) d'avouer : « la clandestinité assure au « philosophe » devenu symbole une latitude d'expression que *l'Encyclopédie*, malgré ses efforts, n'a pu lui octroyer[24]. »

Dans son combat pour les Lumières et contre certains journalistes, Voltaire va user des mêmes armes que ses adversaires pour leur rendre la pareille et pour agir directement sur une société de plus en plus séduite par la presse. Et tant pis si « les flambeaux de la raison [sont] condamnés par le despotisme à ne briller que dans les catacombes[25] ». Faisant face aux libellistes à succès, Voltaire va lui-aussi faire du libelle une forme d'expression de choix d'autant plus qu'elle sied parfaitement à son caractère convulsif et incisif. Rappelons que la forme brève est la forme préférée, si ce n'est la plus recherchée et la plus à craindre, par le patriarche de Ferney, auteur par ailleurs du *Dictionnaire portatif*. A cela s'ajoute le choix de la clandestinité « volontaire » qui lui permettra de frapper, sans être reconnu. « Aucun péril sérieux n'a jamais menacé Voltaire, explique Hugues de Montbas, il a été 'clandestin' parce qu'il l'a bien voulu et qu'il en appréciait le profit. Il eût pu s'en passer sans courir plus de dangers que n'en coururent sans s'être jamais camouflés, ses confrères dûment privilégiés de l'*Encyclopédie*[26]. »

Paradoxalement et tout en usant secrètement de la même forme d'expression, Voltaire continue de la dénigrer ouvertement considérant qu'il s'agit : « de petits livres d'injures » qui « sont petits parce que les auteurs, ayant peu de raisons à donner, n'écrivant point pour instruire, et voulant être lus, sont forcés d'être courts. Ils y mettent très rarement leurs noms, parce que les assassins craignent d'être saisis avec des armes défendues.[27]»

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24. Alain Sandrier, « L'attribution des articles de *l'Encyclopédie* au baron d'Holbach : bilan et perspectives », *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie*, 45 (2010), <https:// doi.org/10.4000/rde.4723>, p. 61.

25. Montbas, *op.cit*, p. 314.

26. Montbas, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

27. Voltaire, Œuvres complètes, éd. Louis Moland, 52 vol. (Paris : Garnier frères, 1877-1885), t. 19, p. 557.

Pour lui, la brièveté du libelle témoigne paradoxalement du manque d'idées et d'instruction et comme l'objectif du libelliste n'est pas forcément d'instruire, il faut le condamner sévèrement. « La vie d'un forçat, écrit Voltaire, est préférable à celle d'un faiseur de libelles, car l'un peut avoir été condamné injustement aux galères, et l'autre les mérite[28] ». Et le philosophe d'ajouter : « Pour mettre de l'ordre dans nos idées, comme il convient dans ce siècle éclairé, je dirai qu'il faudrait un peu distinguer entre la critique, la satire, et le libelle. […] Tous les honnêtes gens qui pensent sont critiques, les malins sont satiriques, les pervers font des libelles[29]. »

Pervers, le libelliste ne s'inscrit donc pas, selon Voltaire, dans un acte littéraire mais plutôt dans un acte criminel qu'il convient de punir. « On a pitié d'un fou ; mais quand la démence devient fureur, on le lie. La tolérance, qui est une vertu, serait alors un vice[30]. » Tout le clan des philosophes semble pareillement hostile à cette forme d'expression qui leur cause du tort et surtout leur dispute le même public et la même gloire.

Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), par exemple, lui consacre un texte intitulé *Dissertation sur les libelles diffamatoires* où il le définit comme un écrit contraire à la critique et à la satire car son auteur recourt à un pseudonyme et que ses cibles sont des personnes et des institutions plutôt que des modèles. Il appelle à le refréner parce que, selon lui, il ouvre la voie à la médisance. Tout en l'inscrivant dans la littérature de combat, il y déplore l'absence de l'aspect instructif. Son ami et disciple, Frédéric le Grand (1712-1786), avance le même argument, dans son *Discours sur les satiriques* (1759) :

28. *Ibidem*, t. 20, p. 331.

29. *Ibidem*, t. 8, p. 552-553.

30. Voltaire, « Sentiment Des Citoyens [avec les annotations de J.-J. Rousseau] », in : *Collection complète des Œuvres de de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, t. 14 : Supplément à la collection des œuvres de J. J. Rousseau, t. 2 (Genève : Du Peyrou & Moultou, 1782), p. 117.

> Ni les médisances, ni les satires, ni les calomnies ne corrigent les hommes ; elles aigrissent les esprits, elles les irritent, elles peuvent leur inspirer le désir de la vengeance, mais non celui de se corriger ; au contraire, un injuste reproche prouve innocence et nourrit l'amour-propre au lieu de l'éteindre[31].

Presse et diffamation

C'est qu'au fond, en prose ou en vers, le libelle plait au patriarche grâce à ses traits majeurs qui sont d'abord la capacité d'agir immédiatement sur l'opinion publique et, partant sur la vie politique, puis le caractère quasi convulsif face à l'événement et enfin le recours à l'*anonymat* pour brouiller les pistes[32]. Même si, pour le public de l'*époque*, *nourri à la griffe de Voltaire*, « le style et l'esprit équivalaient à une signature[33] ». Et Hugues de Montbas d'ajouter que les livres du patriarche,

> avaient beau passer la frontière sous un nom de fantaisie ou sous l'anonymat, se voir désavoué avec fracs par leur auteur qui les traitait communément d'infâme machinations, chacun savait à quoi s'en tenir. […] Ni Malesherbes, ni Sartine, ni Le Noir, ne furent jamais dupes de cette aussi transparente clandestinité et ils se prêtèrent de bonne grâce à la comédie[34].

D'ailleurs, les journalistes libellistes qui formaient un groupe hétérogène, furent conscients du pouvoir qu'ils avaient, mais également du pouvoir qu'avait le patriarche de Ferney. Ce dernier leur servait inconsciemment de faire-valoir. Par conséquent, leur stratégie se basait sur le crédo de viser haut pour se faire reconnaitre dans la profession et pour attirer davantage de public.

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31. Frédéric II, « Discours sur les satiriques », in : Œuvres de Frédéric le Grand, t. 9, (Berlin : Imprimerie Royale, 1848), p. 55.

32. Sandrier, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

33. Montbas, *op. cit.* p. 328.

34. Montbas, *ibidem.*

C'est le cas, par exemple, de La Beaumelle, de Linguet et notamment de Élie Fréron (1718-1776). Ce dernier a tout de suite compris le rôle et surtout la place qu'occupait un écrivain comme Voltaire dans la société de l'époque. En faisant du patriarche un rival et une cible de choix, Fréron a vite fait de gagner le pari à la fois de la notoriété et surtout de la postérité.

Car s'en prendre à Voltaire revient à se déclarer ouvertement l'ennemi de tout le clan des philosophes. « Il n'y a qu'un sot qui puisse être l'ennemi d'un de Voltaire, de Montesquieu, de Buffon , et de quelques autres de la même trempe. » écrit Diderot dans son article « Journaliste » de *l'Encyclopédie*. Mais, comme il faut viser la tête, Fréron, journaliste de profession, va donc centrer toute son artillerie sur Voltaire[35]. Son *Année littéraire* fut plusieurs fois suspendue, et il fut, lui-même, embastillé. Ce qui lui a valu une notoriété que les épigrammes de Voltaire et ses formules assassines encore gravées dans les mémoires[36] ont définitivement inscrite dans l'immortalité littéraire.

Plumitif né et visionnaire, le patriarche de Ferney, de son côté, prend très vite conscience du danger que représentait un homme tel que Fréron, notamment dans sa guerre contre l'infâme et à un moment décisif où les philosophes sont encore une minorité. Il sait aussi que les libelles gagnent rapidement du terrain dans la vie politique de la France du XVIIIe siècle. Un libelle lâché à propos, avoue Linguet, un des célèbres libellistes de l'époque, « peut opérer une *révolution*[37], changer, maîtriser les esprits et perdre un homme sans retour ». Il ajoute : « II y a des âmes pour qui l'art de nuire équivaut à celui d'être heureux[38]. »

La condamnation du libelle, pour Voltaire, s'inscrit certes, dans le cadre d'une riposte à l'acharnement contre le clan des

35. Avec une seule interruption de 1754 à 1759.

36. « L'autre jour au fond d'un vallon, / Un serpent piqua Jean Fréron ; / Que croyez-vous qu'il arriva ? / Ce fut le serpent qui creva. »

37. C'est nous qui mettons en italique.

38. Simon-Nicolas-Henri Linguet, *Théorie du libelle, ou L'art de calomnier avec fruit* (Amsterdam : s.n., 1775), p. 9.

philosophes encyclopédistes, mais répond également à son esprit combatif et à son penchant pour la pointe et pour les formules mordantes. D'ailleurs, ce duel entre les deux hommes à coup de libelle ne va prendre fin qu'en 1776, date du décès de Fréron.

Dès lors, en condamnant farouchement le libelle, c'est en réalité Fréron qui a littéralement envahi sa vie et sa correspondance de 1749 à 1776 que Voltaire condamne. C'est dans ce contexte que s'inscrit également son insistance sur l'aspect pervers chez le libelliste, au moment même où il exploite le libelle contre ses adversaires, y compris ceux du clan des philosophes.

Sa devise étant : « Qui plume a, guerre a[39] » qui fait écho à son autre célèbre crédo : « j'écris pour agir[40] ». Son libelle *Sentiment des citoyens* 1764 écrit en 1764 sous un pseudonyme (M. de V…) a failli coûter la vie à Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Ce dernier en fut tellement affligé que dans son mépris du libelle refusa d'identifier Voltaire comme son véritable auteur « M. de Voltaire sait que les libelles sont un moyen maladroit de nuire : il en connaît de plus sûrs que celui-là[41] ». Emporté par la logique de son combat, Fréron ira, semble-t-il, jusqu'à faire appel au roi pour sévir contre le clan des philosophes.

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39. Cette célèbre épigraphe de Voltaire est illustrée par Raymond Savignac en 1978, à l'occasion de l'exposition lors du bicentenaire de la mort du philosophe, où il représente une image croquée de Voltaire en escrimeur, maniant une gigantesque plume à la place d'une épée.

40. La citation complète est « Jean-Jacques n'écrit que pour écrire et moi j'écris pour agir. » En réponse, dans sa *Correspondance*, au pasteur Jacob Vernes. « *Moi, j'écris pour agir* » a été reprise par l'historien Max Gallo dans son ouvrage biographique, sous-titré *Vie de Voltaire*, éd. Fayard, 2008.

41. Henri Gouhier, *Rousseau et Voltaire* : p*ortraits dans deux miroirs*, (Paris : J. Vrin, 1983), p. 226, compte rendu de R. Trousson. « Ce ne fut qu'au bout de quelque temps qu'il apprit que son véritable auteur était M. de Voltaire. » *Sentiment Des Citoyens*, avec les annotations de J.-J. Rousseau, *op.cit*., p. 117.

Adeptes tous deux de la guerre à coup de libelles, « ils en sont arrivés à ne plus pouvoir se passer de ce qui est devenu une raison de vivre, de penser, de 'se sentir bien' », note, à juste titre, Jean Balcou, qui parle même d'un « étrange psychodrame avant la lettre[42] » que celui qui se joue entre Voltaire et Fréron voire d'une étrange relation ambivalente qui les lie. Tout en s'épiant mutuellement et en partageant une haine viscérale l'un pour l'autre, ils entretiennent une paradoxale complicité.

Il faut savoir que cette guerre n'est pas seulement celle de deux hommes, mais plutôt de deux visions et de deux projets de société diamétralement opposés. L'un et l'autre constituent à la fois une menace et une cible à éliminer.

Si Voltaire incarne ouvertement le pouvoir littéraire des philosophes, Fréron, lui, dont les feuilles remportent un grand succès à l'époque, représente une nouvelle puissance, celle des journaux, qui ne le cède en rien au pouvoir des auteurs.

Doté de sérieux appuis, et se présentant comme le défenseur acharné de la religion et du régime en place, Fréron, véritable auteur à gage, s'est hissé au niveau de son rival par le biais de la seule presse. Appelé « folliculaire » par Voltaire, Diderot et bien d'autres hommes des lumières, Fréron a toutefois le mérite d'avoir inventé la presse littéraire d'opinion et de gagner l'intérêt du public - grâce justement au choix de l'adversaire.

Dans ses multiples querelles avec Fréron, Voltaire ne s'est pas contenté des épigrammes et des libelles, mais il a même fait appel au crayon des dessinateurs de son temps pour proposer une image caricaturale de son adversaire pour le tourner en dérision, mais qui l'a paradoxalement immortalisé. En conjuguant deux modes de combat, littéraire et artistique, Voltaire voulut éliminer, à travers lui, une menace sérieuse pour le projet des Lumières et pour l'existence même des philosophes.

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42. Jean Balcou, *Fréron contre les philosophes* (1975), compte-rendu de Roland Mortier, in : *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, t. 59 (1981), p. 714-718.

Quoi qu'il en soit, en dépit de l'opposition idéologique apparente entre les deux partis, philosophes et journalistes vont, néanmoins, partager et disputer le même objectif, celui de vouloir maitriser l'opinion publique, ou comme l'écrira d'Alembert (1717-1783), de « donner la loi au reste de la nation sur les questions de goût et de philosophie [43]».

C'est probablement à cette période que s'est fait d'ailleurs le passage effectif de la littérature pamphlétaire vers une littérature politique. Et même si « elle n'a pas encore le statut politique et littéraire que Marc Angenot attribue à *La Parole pamphlétaire*[44] de l'époque moderne[45] », le libelle jouera un rôle décisif dans la formation et la diffusion des idées à la fois philosophiques et antiphilosophiques.

Car, contrairement à ce qu'on pourrait penser[46], au XVIIIème siècle, il n'y avait pas une seule et même vision du monde. Et si Voltaire, qui exploite fortement le libelle en faveur de J. Calas (1762), refuse de le reconnaître comme instrument de combat politique, ce qu'on appelle aussi la littérature « non soumise »[47], c'est parce qu'il refuse par la même occasion de céder le terrain

43. D'Alembert, *Essai sur la société des gens de lettres* (1759), cité de Lepape, *op. cit*., p 107.

44. Marc Angenot, *La Parole pamphlétaire : typologie des discours modernes* (Paris : Payot, 1982).

45. Kapp Volker, « Satire et injure au XVIIIe siècle : le conflit entre la morale et la politique dans le débat sur les libelles », *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises*, n° 36 (1984), p. 155-165, cit. p. 156.

46. « Tous partagent la même fascination pour l'*univers* fictionnel des « écrits philosophiques » clandestins. Canards, chroniques scandaleuses, pamphlets matérialistes, textes pornographiques nourrissent la même vision du monde : la Religion est une tromperie, l'Eglise une oppression, le Roi, une homoncule, ses maîtresses des catins, les catins les véritables maitresses du royaume et tout cela glisse vers l'abîme depuis le bon roi Henri IV … » Darnton, *op.cit*., par l'éditeur, 4ème de couverture du livre.

47. Montbas, *op.cit*., p. 329.

à des adversaires capables d'ébranler l'édifice des Lumières. Reconnaître un libelle, revient pour Voltaire à reconnaître ouvertement, surtout en l'absence de législation adaptée, le droit à la diffamation. C'est pourquoi, il insiste constamment sur la nécessité de ne pas confondre production pamphlétaire et libelle diffamatoire alors que, souvent, ses écrits de combat, par la forme et le fond, ressemblent beaucoup aux libelles de ses adversaires.

Média et liberté d'expression

Force est de constater que le libelle, notamment le libelle diffamatoire, va offrir une occasion de choix aux philosophes et notamment à Voltaire pour discourir sur un thème d'une grande importance à l'époque et qui demeure d'actualité aujourd'hui, à savoir, la liberté d'expression. En effet, en l'absence de critères de distinctions sûrs entre pamphlet et libelle, par exemple, le patriarche de Ferney va provoquer le débat : quelles limites à la liberté d'expression ? et quelles limites également à la tolérance ?

Dans ce débat, Voltaire qui fut la cible de plus de 300 libelles, va, dans les *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie* (1772), se placer à l'opposé des développements politiques de certains encyclopédistes, tels, par exemple, Diderot, Montesquieu (1689-1755) ou Antoine-Gaspar Boucher d'Argis (1708-1791) dont les idées sont reprises par le Chevalier de Jaucourt (1704-1779).

Contrairement au patriarche, les encyclopédistes incriminent certes le recours au libelle, mais proposent nonobstant un traitement juridique et politique via l'examen essentiellement du libelle diffamatoire. Pour Diderot :

> une société d'hommes libres est une société […] où les idées s'expriment et circulent sans contrainte, où la diffusion de l'erreur même est garantie par la loi. Car il n'y a pas de progrès possible dans l'ordre de la connaissance sans reconnaissance préalable du

> droit à l'erreur : tout le siècle s'est battu pour cette liberté-là, et singulièrement dans le temps où parut l'*Encyclopédie* (1751-1772)[48].

En 1763, il adresse au ministre chargé du département de la presse une *Lettre sur le commerce de la librairie* pour argumenter en faveur de l'idée que la liberté d'expression est consubstantielle à la liberté de penser.

> Bordez, monsieur, toutes vos frontières de soldats ; armez-les de baïonnettes pour repousser tous les livres dangereux qui se présenteront, et ces livres, pardonnez-moi l'expression, passeront entre leurs jambes ou sauteront par-dessus leurs têtes, et nous parviendront[49].

Tout est question de degré[50], selon Boucher d'Argis qui considère que « les injures qui se font par écrit, sont ordinairement plus graves que celles qui se font verbalement, par la raison que, verba volant, scripta manent[51]. » D'ailleurs, « plus l'offensé est élevé en dignité, plus l'injure devient grave[52] ». Le Chevalier de Jaucourt propose de son côté de proscrire le libelle : « A Dieu ne plaise que je prétende que les hommes puissent insolemment répandre la satyre et la calomnie sur leurs supérieurs ou leurs égaux[53]», mais attire l'attention tout de même sur l'excès de sévérité qui risquerait de porter atteinte à la liberté individuelle : « Je ne voudrais pas, dans un état policé, réprimer la licence par des moyens qui détruiraient inévitablement toute liberté[54]. »

48. Jacques Proust, « L'invention de la liberté au siècle des Lumières », *Autres Temps : les cahiers du christianisme social*, n° 25 (1990) p. 45-46, <https://doi.org/10.3406/chris.1990.2553>.

49. Cité par Jacques Proust, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

50. « Les injures se commettent en trois manières ; savoir, par paroles, par écrit ou par effet. » Encyclopédie, article «Injure» (vol, 8, p. 752).

51. *Encyclopédie*, article « Injure », vol, 8, p. 752.

52. *Ibidem*.

53. *Encyclopédie*, t. 9 (1765), p. 460.

54. *Ibidem*.

Tout, comme Montesquieu dont il s'inspire, Jaucourt tente de prouver qu'un gouvernement éclairé doit considérer les libelles moins « comme un crime que comme un objet de police[55] ». Dans son *Esprit des lois* (1748), Montesquieu semble adopter, en effet, « un point de vue fonctionnel[56] » en s'appuyant en cela sur l'exemple de l'Angleterre qui représente à l'époque et chez la majorité des encyclopédistes, l'idéal d'une monarchie éclairée,

> Les écrits satiriques ne sont guère connus dans les Etats despotiques, où l'abattement d'un côté et l'ignorance de l'autre ne donnent ni le talent ni la volonté d'en faire. Dans la démocratie on ne les empêche pas, par la raison même qui dans le gouvernement d'un seul les fait défendre. […] Dans la monarchie on les défend ; mais on en fait plutôt un sujet de police que de crime. Ils peuvent amuser la malignité générale, consoler les mécontents, diminuer l'envie contre les places, donner au peuple la patience de souffrir, et le faire rire de ses souffrances. L'aristocratie est le gouvernement qui proscrit le plus les ouvrages satiriques. Les magistrats y sont de petits souverains qui ne sont pas assez grands pour mépriser les injures[57].

Dans ses considérations politiques sur les libelles, Montesquieu opère une distinction entre les Etats despotiques, aristocratiques et démocratiques d'une part et les « monarchies éclairées » qui en plus de les tolérer, doivent les défendre pour protéger la liberté politique. En comparaison, l'honneur des honnêtes gens paraît bien minime et toute poursuite des libellistes s'avère alors inutile car « il est moins dangereux que quelques gens d'honneur soient mal-à-propos diffamés, que si l'on n'osait éclairer son pays sur la conduite des gens puissants en autorité[58].» Dans son article

55. *Encyclopédie*, t. 9 (1765), p. 459.

56. Livre XII, chapitre XIII.

57. Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, ed. Gonzague Truc (Paris : Garnier frères, 1945), t. I, p. 209.

58. *Encyclopédie*, t. 9 (1765), p. 459.

« Presse (droit politique) » de *l'Encyclopédie*, Jaucourt semble en définitif prêcher pour la primauté de la liberté d'expression :

> On demande si la liberté de la presse est avantageuse ou préjudiciable. Il est de la plus grande importance de conserver cet usage dans tous les états fondés sur la liberté : je dis plus ; les inconvénients de cette liberté sont si peu considérables vis-à-vis de ses avantages, que ce devrait être le droit commun de l'univers, et qu'il est à-propos de l'autoriser dans tous les gouvernements[59].

Voltaire va se retrouver seul, dans ce contexte, à vouloir absolument la condamnation sévère des libellistes qui, dépassent, selon lui, « les bienséances », alors qu'en 1765, dans la 13ème lettre des *Questions sur les miracles*, il déclarait :

> Soutenons la liberté de la presse, c'est la base de toutes les autres libertés, c'est par là qu'on s'éclaire mutuellement. Chaque citoyen peut parler par écrit à la nation, et chaque lecteur examine à loisir, et sans passion, ce que ce compatriote lui dit par la voie de la presse. Nos cercles peuvent quelquefois être tumultueux: ce n'est que dans le recueillement du cabinet qu'on peut bien juger. C'est par là que la nation anglaise est devenue une nation véritablement libre[60].

Conclusion

Force est de constater que la presse, avec ses différentes manifestations aux contenus variés, a énormément participé au XVIIIème siècle à la diffusion des idées nouvelles, et même si elle n'a pas fait l'unanimité quant à son utilité, elle a favorisé l'émergence d'un nouvel état d'esprit chez un public favorable à la forme brève qu'aux écrits longs et lourds. Comme l'explique

59. Kapp, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

60. « Questions sur les miracles », 13ème lettre, 1765, in : *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, éd. Louis Moland (Paris : Garnier, 1877-1885), t. 25, p. 419.

si bien Robert Darnton, les Français du siècle des Lumières furent attirés davantage par :

> une littérature séditieuse qui, bien qu'elle ne répondît pas aux genres nobles et canoniques, mina dans les esprits les fondements de l'Ancien Régime plus que ne le firent les forts traités des philosophes ou les grands romans du siècle dont la postérité voulut garder le souvenir[61].

Perçue comme concurrente et inscrite comme danger pour le mouvement philosophique, la presse, qu'elle soit diffamatoire ou pas, a également joué un rôle déterminant dans la diffusion des idées des Lumières, grâce justement à sa brièveté, à sa force dialectique et à sa plasticité[62]. Le libelliste, comme le souligne Marc Angenot, est : « porteur d'une vérité à ses yeux aveuglante, telle qu'elle devrait de toute évidence imprégner le champ où il prétend agir – et pourtant il se trouve seul à la défendre et refoulé sur les marges par un inexplicable scandale[63]. »

Fréquemment investie de passions, de préjugés et de violences, la forme brève[64] des écrits de presse renseigne également sur la divergence des positions dans le débat soulevé par les philosophes des Lumières sur le principe de liberté d'expression. Cette situation paradoxale a, en outre, « un effet de blocage ou de distorsion de la capacité critique » puisque persuasion et violence verbale forment un discours, le libelle, qui se présente

61. Darnton, *op. cit.*, par l'éditeur, 4ème de couverture du livre, dernier paragraphe.

62. Michel Hastings, Cédric Passard & Juliette Rennes, « Les mutations du pamphlet dans la France contemporaine», *Mots : les langages du politique*, n° 91 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.4000/mots.19159>.

63. Marc Angenot, *La Parole pamphlétaire : typologie des discours modernes* (Paris : Payot & Rivages, 1995), p. 38-39.

64. Gérard Dessons, in : *La forme brève : actes du colloque franco-polonais, Lyon, 19, 20, 21 septembre 1994*, ed. Simone Messina (Paris : Honoré Champion, 1996), p. 239.

comme « opposé à celui de l'Autorité et du Pouvoir tout en reproduisant de façon terroriste leurs traits[65]. »

Par ailleurs, traiter du libelle et des libellistes nous plonge d'emblée dans notre actualité avec des questions brulantes, toujours ouvertes comme celles des limites à la liberté, à la liberté de presse et à la liberté d'expression et surtout à ses dangers éventuels, sur les limites de ce qui est permis, qui semblent de plus en plus élargies mais jamais définies.

Aujourd'hui, un peu partout dans le monde, journalistes et hommes politiques passent maîtres dans l'art du libelle, notamment diffamatoire, qui continue de leur servir de véritable arme d'assaut, pour ne pas dire de poing. Leur devise étant : pour intéresser et prospérer, il faut être inique et brutal. Ces libellistes n'ont que faire d'entrer en conversation ou de faire l'effort de comprendre. C'est plutôt la création du « buzz » qu'ils recherchent frénétiquement. L'enjeu étant la maîtrise et/ou la manipulation de l'opinion publique.

65. Angenot, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

CHAPTER 6

Visual and Metaphorical Representations of the State in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*

Maria Isabel Limongi

This essay addresses the potential roles played by representations of the State in the *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). This is not an entirely original subject for discussion, as the strength and vitality of Hobbes' imagery have deeply penetrated the political imagination of later generations – and thus promoted extensive commentary. Nonetheless, this essay adds a new dimension, by reflecting specifically on the function of Hobbes's representations of the State, by comparing his *Leviathan* (1651) with his earlier work *De Cive* (1642).

It is striking that Hobbes resorted to such representations only in *Leviathan*, but not in *De Cive*, which was the first published version of his political philosophy. Therefore, the questions posed here are: What function do the representations of the State serve in *Leviathan*, in particular? And why did Hobbes mobilize them precisely in this work?

Introduction: Images of the Sovereign

Even those who have never read *Leviathan* are aware that, in this seminal work – an indisputable reference for modern theories of the State – the State is not merely the object of one of its most precise and decisive conceptual or theoretical representations, but also of an elaborate visual representation on the frontispiece.

This famous and infinitely reproduced figure is composed of a gigantic man, carrying a sword in his right hand, an episcopal crosier in his left, wearing a crown on his head, and whose body, formed by countless homunculi, is placed between heaven and earth, as if guarding both the fields and the city.

This visual representation is accompanied by a series of other images representing the State in *Leviathan*. The strongest is that of the sea beast (dragon or serpent) from the book of Job. This namesake of the work is referred to a verse quoted at the top of the frontispiece: 'Non est potestas Super terram quae Comparetur ei' (translated as 'There is no power on earth to be compared with him', Book of Job, 41:24).

Hobbes refers to Leviathan as another name for the State in three passages. In the introduction, he states that: 'by art is created that great Leviathan called a Common-Wealth, or state, (in Latine *Civitas*)'. Then, in chapter XVII, readers learn that: 'the multitude so united in one Person, is called a Common-Wealth, in latine *Civitas*. This is the Generation of that great Leviathan […]'. And in chapter XXVIII, Hobbes writes: 'Hitherto, I have set forth the nature of man […] together with the great power of his Governor, whom I compared to Leviathan, taking that comparison out of the two last verses of the one and fortieth [Book] of Job […].' As Patricia Springborg observes, 'the Oxford Dictionary credits Hobbes with lexical innovation as [he was] the first to use Leviathan […] as a synonym of Common-wealth'.[1] In 1666, Hobbes published the *Behemoth*, his account of the English Civil War (1642–49). This title references another sea monster in Job that reinforces and re-signifies the figure of Leviathan, as the State struggling against civil war.

In addition to the Biblical beast, the introduction to *Leviathan* compares the State to an artificial animal or man, 'though of

1. Patricia Springborg, 'Hobbes's Biblical beasts: Leviathan and Behemoth', *Political Theory*, 23 (1995), pp. 353–76.


Non est potestas Super Terram quæ Comparetur ei Iob. 41. 24.
LEVIATHAN
Or
THE MATTER, FORME, and POWER of A COMMON-WEALTH ECCLESIASTICALL and CIVIL.
By THOMAS HOBBES of MALMESBURY.
London
Printed for Andrew Crooke
1651

greater stature and strength than the natural' (L, p. 81)[2] – in effect, an automaton, created by man in imitation of nature. The reference is to René Descartes' descriptions of the human and animal body as machines, whose movements are explained in strictly mechanical terms. Hobbes' automaton, however, is endowed with a soul – the Sovereign, to whom it owes its life and movement. Meanwhile Hobbes also explores, in connection with the frontispiece engraving, the classical image of the State as a political body, emphasizing its artificial (man-made) character.

Hobbes further refers to the State as a 'mortal God', in the continuation of the chapter XVII passage quoted above, where he explained: 'This is the Generation of that great Leviathan, or rather, (to speak more reverently) of that Mortal God, to which we owe under the Immortal God, our peace and defense.' According to Horst Bredekamp, the source of this image is possibly the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a collection of ancient Egyptian philosophical texts that enjoyed great credibility at the time.[3] Jacob Taubes, however, argues that what is at stake is an approximation between Leviathan and Christ, with the former being 'a perfect symbolization of the medieval theocratic doctrine of the *societas christiana* as a single body, whose head is Christ, and under whom both powers-the spiritual as well as the worldly-stand'.[4]

The author of *Leviathan* thus resorts to five overlapping images – the man formed by homunculi, the sea beast from the book of Job, the automaton, the body, the mortal God – from varied sources, and which represent the State, while appealing to the collective imagination. It is not by chance that such multi-

2. L indicates Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Crawford Brough Macpherson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985).

3. Horst Bredekamp, *Leviathan: Body Politic as Visual Strategy in the Work of Thomas Hobbes* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2020).

4. Jacob Taubes, 'Leviathan as Mortal God: On the Contemporaneity of Thomas Hobbes', *Telos*, 181 (2017), pp. 48–64.

form and hybrid representations have gained multiple interpretations and meanings as they have been appropriated by a wide range of readers, in different contexts. Let us remember, for example, the way Bishop of Bramhall uses it to encourage a hunt for Hobbes in *The Catching of Leviathan* (1658), or how Carl Schimitt in *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes* (1938) projected onto it his own concept of Sovereignty. The intention here is not to analyze the layers of meaning of this complex figure, about which there is much dispute and speculation, but to reflect on the reasons that might have led Hobbes to represent the State in these visual and metaphoricals ways in *Leviathan*.

Differences Between Leviathan and De Cive in Form

The two works differ, as already mentioned, in their respective frontispieces. Hobbes is assumed to have devoted special attention to his illustrations, starting with that of his translation of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* (1629). The engraving was produced by the renowned Thomas Cecil, who also produced the maps and other illustrations. One of these images was a map of Greece, designed and co-signed by Hobbes, attesting to his zeal. The first edition of *De Cive* also has a frontispiece, by Jean Matheus, which has been reproduced in subsequent editions with significant changes, but with the same structure: to the left, the figure of the *Libertas*, or the state of nature, to the right the *Imperium*, or the civil state, and, above these two, the figure of the *Religio*.[5] It's not possible to reach a definitive conclusion about Hobbes's participation in the illustration; but its various versions could hardly have been carried out without his supervision.

The frontispiece of *Leviathan*, attributed by Bredekamp to Abraham Bosse, is a complex and original image, to which

5. About these frontispieces, see Bredekamp, *Leviathan*, appendix II.

Hobbes is also assumed to have contributed. It figures the monumental man at the top and three columns in the lower part. The right-most shows five niches, illustrating, with descending representations top to bottom, a fortress, a crown, a cannon, instruments of war and a battle. These representations are in accordance with the sword, wielded by the giant's right hand, representing Leviathan's temporal power. The left column, in accordance with the crosier wielded by the giant's left hand, representing his spiritual power, again with five niches, in descending order portrays a church, a mitre, the thunderbolt of excommunication, instruments of logic, and a scholastic dispute or a bishops' council. These are probably the representation of the powers (*potentiae*) – those of the warrior aristocracy and those of the clergy – to be submitted by the power (*potestas*) of the State. On the middle column a curtain displays the names of the work and its author, while a pedestal indicates the publisher and publication year.

It is important to note that the *De Cive* frontispiece is a figuration of the work, whose three parts are represented by the three flags, whereas that of *Leviathan* is a representation of the State, the concept constructed and presented in the work.

The same goes for the titles. *De Cive* is unequivocally the name of the work, whereas *Leviathan* is not the name of the publication, rather of the concept of the State portrayed therein. Only after it is understood that Leviathan designates the State – which is explained for the first time in this work, therefore this is not previously known to readers – does the term begin to designate the work. Thus, unlike the *De Cive*, whose title is the name of the work and whose frontispiece is an illustration of the work, Leviathan is the name of a key concept, just as the frontispiece is a representation of the State. It is worth remembering that clarity about what names indicate – whether they be bodies, images or discourses – is one of the most important methodological precepts defended both in *Leviathan* and in *De Corpore* (1658).

Therefore, this displacement in the object of the title and in the frontispieces was undoubtedly carefully crafted by the author. As previously observed, the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, along with other non-visual representations, is part of a strategy of figuration of the State, which is absent in the *De Cive*.

Additional features distinguish *Leviathan* from *De Cive*. The former is written in English and *De Cive* in Latin, which points to differing target audiences. *Leviathan* is addressed to the English public, at a time when Hobbes was preparing to return home after a decade of exile in France because of the English Civil War. *De Cive*, on the other hand, was penned at the beginning of that exile, and is addressed to the European literate public, in particular the intellectual circle of Father Mersenne, with whom Hobbes worked during his stays in France. At the time Hobbes was writing and publishing *Leviathan*, an English translation of the *De Cive*, about which controversy exists regarding the degree of the author's science and participation,[6] was also prepared and published, indicating the pressure to use the vernacular as a vehicle for the expression of political philosophy. This might explain the choice to publish *Leviathan* in English.

However, much more than meeting the need to translate the content of the new political science into English, *Leviathan* differs radically both in language and argumentative form. *De Cive* is the third part of a philosophical system that includes two others, *De Corpore* (1655) and *De Homine* (1658), which only came to be published later. The pressure of the civil war was cited by Hobbes as justification for the earlier publication of *De Cive*. It presents the doctrine of duties or the science of justice in a logical-deductive manner. *Leviathan*, in turn, is a complete work in itself, and its language is no longer the austere language of science, but that of rhetoric.

Quentin Skinner argues that, despite having criticized the

6. Cf. John Deigh, 'Hobbes's philosophy in *De Cive* and *Leviathan*', *Hobbes Studies*, 25 (2012), pp. 199–208.

eloquent style of political science that was commonplace in antiquity and the Renaissance and advocating the demonstrative form of the new science of nature, Hobbes may have reached the conclusion, at the time of the publication of *Leviathan*, 'that, in moral but not in the natural sciences, the methods of demonstrative reasoning need to be supplemented by the moving force of eloquence'. These methods, well known and mastered by the author by virtue of his solid humanistic education, were widely employed in the 1651 work. 'This prompted him [Hobbes] not merely to give a new account of his theoretical principles but to put them systematically in practice.'[7]

Leviathan is thus presumed to be not only a work of popularization, but more accurately of political intervention or action. As Carl Schimitt, quoting Schelsky, says: 'Leviathan is the symbol of a political battle'.[8] Whether one understands the battle in question to be that of the State vis-à-vis the seditious forces fomenting civil war – or, more particularly, the struggle of the clergy and the spiritual power against being subjected to the temporal power – what is certain is that *Leviathan* no longer fits into the logical-deductive form of the *De Cive* doctrine of duties. It is no mere exercise of demonstration. Metaphors, analogies, ironies, and other rhetorical techniques abound. Instead, *Leviathan*'s goal appears to be that of moving readers and inciting action. As Skinner observes, 'the basic suggestion put forward by the rhetoricians is that, if you wish to communicate with the fullest persuasive force, you will have to appeal to your audience's eyes and ears at the same time'. [9]

7. Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 5. See also, David Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the Politics of Cultural Transformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

8. Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), p. 11.

9. Quentin Skinner, 'The Material Presentations of Hobbes's Theory of the Commonwealth', in Dominique Colas & Oleg Kharkhordin

The Role of Imagery

Skinner's proposition is supported by the functions that Hobbes attributes to images in his theory of human nature.[10] Images are, in the first place, aids to thought. They help one remember what one once thought (as when one uses a stone to remember where one has stored a treasure), or as a sign, for the purpose of communicating one's thoughts (as when a tavern places an image of a vine hanging over a door to signal to passers-by that wine is sold there).[11] Images, when used as marks or signs, condense and evoke a certain thought, playing a role similar to that of names. To this end, their materiality, whether visual or oral, contributes decisively. The image serves to support thought. Auxiliary to the written text, it is a valuable resource that reinforces what has been thought and keeps it alive.

Hobbes attributes a second important function to the image, more precisely, to the imagination as the principle of action. Therein readers can understand the function of non-visual images that complement the visual one of the frontispieces. The imagination, defined as 'a decaying sense' (L, ii, p. 88), organizes a discourse or chain of images, in which one image introduces another in conformity with its first appearance to the senses (cf. L, iii), and is, according to the author, 'the interior beginnings of voluntary motions, commonly called passions' (cf. L, vi). This principle of action is at the same time (a) *conatus*, endeavour, a minute movement within the animate body whose composition explains and produces the voluntary motion or action of this body, and (b) opinion, a content of thought, a

(eds), *The Materiality of Res Publica: How to Do Things with Public* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), p. 121.

10. In this sense, see Bredekamp, *Leviathan*, ch.3, who explores the Hobbesian theory of the image to answer the question he asks himself: 'why did Hobbes place so high a value upon the medium of the image?' (p. 56).

11. Cf. *De Corpore* (São Paulo: Editora Unicamp, 2006), I.2.2.

conception or representation about the object of passion, according to one's experience of it and which reverberates in the body. As Hobbes states in his objections to Descartes' *Metaphysical Meditations*,[12] to see a lion, to form the image of a lion on the retina, is to fear a lion, is to conceive or imagine it as fearsome (since the image condenses meaning), which leads to the movement of escape.

In this sense, the influence of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, of which Hobbes prepared an abridged version in Latin for didactic purposes (1631), is notable in his theory of the passions. The Hobbesian definitions of the passions in *Leviathan* closely follow those of *Rhetoric*,[13] as does, in general, his theory of the passions as opinions that can be moved and mobilized by the speaker. Moreover, just as it is up to the speaker to move his audience by forming their opinion, Hobbes may have wanted to move his readers, having constructed the hybrid figure of Leviathan for rhetorical purposes, as a way to impress the imagination and produce action.

Differences Between Leviathan and De Cive in Content: The Fictional Character of Civil Obligations

These points do not exhaust the issue, however. One cannot overlook certain relevant theoretical changes in *Leviathan* vis-à-vis those of the *De Cive*, which may potentially account for, in a complementary fashion, the use of representations of the State.

The first is that, in *De Cive*, reason is presented as a natural faculty, while in *Leviathan* its artificial and instituted character

12. René Descartes (1596–1650), 'Meditations Metaphysiques', Troisiémes Objections, objection sixième, in *Oeuvres*, 9, eds Charles Adam & Paul Tannery (Paris: Vrin, 1996), pp. 141–2.

13. Cf. Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952).

is accentuated.[14] Reason is then defined as a 'reckoning with names', a kind of reckoning made possible by the invention of names as marks and signs, to remember and communicate respectively what has been thought at the level of imagination. This *marking*, and, above all, the *signification* of the imagination (since only the need to signify or communicate thoughts requires that names be organized into propositions and statements), reorganizes thought and redefines its status.

While mental speech is mere opinion of what will or will not be, was or was not, verbal speech is science, logical calculation endowed with necessity. According to *Leviathan*, through the transposition of mental discourse into verbal discourse (speech), the connection of names into general statements, forming well-constructed nominal definitions, enables the logical linkage of discourse into syllogisms and the calculation of consequences, which is the essence of science (cf. L, vii, p. 131).

The emphasis on the artificial and instituted character of reason as 'reckoning with names' sheds light on an important shift in the theory of civil obligation. While *De Cive* seeks a natural foundation for civil obligation, *Leviathan* emphasizes its fictitious and artificial character. Obligation is hereafter founded on the performative act of promise, that is, 'a declaration or signification, by some voluntary and sufficient sign, or signs, that he [the contracting party] do so renounced or transferred [a right]' (L, xiv, p. 191). Thus, in the same way that nominal definitions found science by the logical calculation of their consequences, the transposition of desires and intentions into verbal discourse functions as a sort of definition of wills in the contractual act and sustains the obligation to act in a consistent manner with what has been said.

Humans can thereby distinguish rationally between the just and the unjust. This is why Hobbes maintains in *Leviathan* that the signs of the will (instead of the will itself, as argued, for

14. Cf. Deigh, 'Hobbes's philosophy'.

example, by Grotius[15]) are the 'bounds, by which men are bound, and obliged' (L, xiv, p. 192).

This means that, in *Leviathan*, the obligation to obey the State, which Hobbes derives from a supposed contract of institution, takes on a hypothetical and fictitious character. Everything takes place *as if* we were obliged to obey the State, considering the words supposedly pronounced in the contract of its institution, whence the obligations and civil rights of subjects and rulers are calculated.

The State, consequently, is made of words. This gives it a special fragility, which Hobbes does not fail to explore, pointing out in *Leviathan* that civil order depends on the fact that the citizens, as well as the instances of government that occupy the place of Sovereignty, will correctly perceive the need to comprehend fully the names on which it is founded. Unless humans fully understand the necessity of the State, it can wield no power – because the power of the State is the gathered and collective power of its subjects.

It is valid, therefore, to posit that the State representations in *Leviathan* are a method for conferring materiality to this fictitious, nominal entity that is the State.[16] Their function might be similar to that attributed by Descartes to the figuration of a triangle with the 'eyes of the mind'. It is the imagination that enables said lines to reinforce the understanding of what is clearly and distinctly intelligible by pure intellect, just as the concept (corresponding to which, for Hobbes, is the nominal definition) of the triangle as a figure of three angles[17]. The imagination operates in this case as an aid to reason, illustrating, presenting, and thereby reinforcing what is understood abstractly by human understanding.

15. Cf. Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002), II:11.

16. Cf. Robin Douglas, 'Hobbes on Imagination and Fiction', *Hobbes Studies*, 27 (2014), pp. 126–47.

17. Cf. Descartes, 'Meditations Metaphysiques', sixième méditation, 2.

Further Differences Between Leviathan and De Cive in Content: The New Theory of Representation

Yet another important theoretical innovation appears in *Leviathan* and which offers, perhaps, the most valuable indication of the need for the image of the State in the 1651 work: the theory of the natural and fictitious person in chapter XVI that underpins that of the authorization and institution of the State as a representative person in chapter XVII. The same does not appear in *De Cive*. This new theory of authorization and representation lends State sovereignty a symbolic dimension that confers unity to the multiplicity of wills that institute it. In other words, the sovereign State turned the dispersed multitude into a people. Said unity is symbolic however, not real.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes already hints at this symbolic function of sovereignty when he contests the Aristotelian view that the wills of men are naturally convergent and tend to a common end. Instead, Hobbes posits that agreement among men is built from artifice, that is, by the submission of plural wills to that of one (a man or council of men), 'in such a way that whatever he wills about the things necessary to the common peace is taken by the will of all and of each' (Dci, V. 6). That is, the will of a monarch or the majority will of an assembly stands in the place of the will of all, whose unity, naturally nonexistent, is in this case instituted symbolically.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes highlights this symbolic character of Sovereignty, insofar as he begins to change his view regarding the union of wills, no longer, as in *De Cive*, in terms of *submission* but instead the *representation* of wills.

> A multitude of men, are made one person, when they are made one man, or one person, represented; so that it be done with the consent of every one of that multitude in particular. For it is the unity of the representer, not the unity of the represented, that make the person one [L, xvi, p. 220].

Henceforth, the multiple wills are no longer replaced by a single will, but are represented by it. They remain preserved as an element that is not erased before the representative-one. The symbolic character of Sovereignty, *is thus accentuated*.

The new theory of representation brings yet another important consequence: the distinction between Sovereignty and government. To understand this point, it is necessary to pay attention, even if very briefly, to certain details of the sophisticated theory of personification in chapter XVI of *Leviathan*.

> A person is he whose words or actions are considered, either as his own or as representing the words and actions of another man, or any other thing to whom they are attributed, whether truly or by fiction. When they are considered as his own, then is he called a natural person. And when they are considered as representing the words and actions of another, then is he a feigned or artificial person [L, XVI, p. 217].

To be a person, Hobbes continues - relying on the theory of personification, propounded by the classical Roman statesman and orator Cicero - is like wearing a theatrical mask, consenting that others regard certain words and actions as one's own or those of another for the purposes of legal calculations. Thus, even natural persons, insofar as they represent themselves, are to some extent fictitious, since they only become persons, or, they only become part of the legal scene, when they are represented therein, albeit by themselves, in the eyes of others.

This dualism means that the person, whether natural or fictional, is neither the actor, the one who acts on behalf of someone else, nor the author, the one whose actions are staged or represented, but both instances put into relation. Thus, the person is always double – both individual and representative.[18]

18. This is a rather controversial point since Hobbes several times identifies the artificial person with the actor or representative. However, the analogy with the theater supports the claim that the artificial

If this schema is applied to the fictional person of the State, it follows that its person should not be confused with that of the natural person who occupies the place of representative (the actor) but should be understood as existing in the relationship between the actor and the authors of the staged actions (in this case, the laws). In other words, the person of the State is no longer confused with that of government. The State is an artificial person. The government is the natural person or persons who take the place of the representative in the person of the State.

Thus, it's worth noting that Bredekamp observes that the visual figuration of the State in the frontispiece of *Leviathan* is modeled on the royal effigies used in the funerals of kings, as if presenting the dead king and thus preserving his immortal body,[19] giving it continuity in time. If that analogy be accepted, then it is also true that the body of Leviathan is no longer that of an individual King (or of any other individual governor), but that of the State itself, as *persona ficta*, different from the natural person of the King (the head of the body).

Herein may be detected what has already been called, in another context, the 'democratic invention',[20] which consists of conceiving the place of power as empty, meaning that it cannot be definitively or preferentially occupied by any particular individual or individuals. Thus the distinction between the society and the State, as well as that between the government and the State, is preserved. The radical nature of this invention may well

person is the actor or representative only insofar as he acts on behalf of another, just as the natural person is a person only insofar as he is represented by himself in a legal scene.

19. Bredekamp, *Leviathan*, p. 96. About the King's two bodies, the mortal and the immortal, see Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016 [1957]).

20. Cf. Claude Lefort, *L'invention démocratique: Les limites de la domination totalitaire* (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

explain why Hobbes needed to invent a symbol – Leviathan – as a figuration of this new and symbolic form of political unity, that is the modern State.

Conclusions

Having taken into account the differences between *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, several key functions can be attributed to the representations of the State in the latter work, which are absent in the former. These representations serves: (1) to mark or signify to everyone the chain of reasoning developed in the book; (2) to impress the imagination, understood as the internal principle of voluntary movements, and, thereby, to move readers, engaging them in the political struggle in whose service *Leviathan* operates; and furthermore (3) to give materiality to the concept of the sovereign State, and with that, to help people to comprehend the names by which the State as a fictive entity is instituted.

Such key representations can also (4) be understood, in a complementary fashion, as symbols (no longer images) of the union of wills under the State, as opposed to government.

Ultimately, it is worth stressing the symbolic function of these visual and rational representations of the State in *Leviathan*. It allows us, contemporary readers of the work, to revise our political imaginations in the sense of seeing the modern State, not as a terrifying and disciplining figure (as negative images of Leviathan have already been explored), but instead as an empty space of power – to be democratically disputed.

For, even if Hobbes was not an enthusiast of democratic government (which he rejected, on classic Aristotelian grounds, as a dangerous and unstable political regime), he certainly contributed decisively to thinking about modern democracy, and, especially, the democratic State. It is no mythic monster. But a collective construct. From a Latin American perspective (as indeed elsewhere in the world, but especially in Latin America

where national unity was generally forged in an authoritarian manner by the State), there is value in such positive representations of the State, since in these parts (as elsewhere) the need is for more rather than less appreciation of the benefits of democratic input within a communal State.

CHAPTER 7

The Changing Identity of the 'Atheist': Detecting Echoes of John Locke in Diderot's *Encyclopédie*

Antônio Carlos dos Santos

Atheists were commonly identified in mid-seventeenth-century England as *atheistical monsters*.[1] During the 1653–58 Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), who as a dedicated Puritan had unwavering faith in the operation of Divine Providence, rumours were spreading that atheism was multiplying, after the turmoil of the civil wars. The fear that divine punishment might thereupon fall upon England caused Cromwell to extend the repression of non-believers. Accordingly, in 1648 the death penalty was instituted for all who denied *the immortality of the soul (mortalism)*, who refuted the existence of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the power of God; and who questioned the authority of the Holy Scriptures. This decree became known *as The Blasphemy Ordinance*.[2]

With the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, censorship again attacked some sectors of English society, this time led by the revived Anglican Church. It was in that spirit that, in 1666, the English Parliament began legal proceedings against Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1651). On 31 January 1667, further legislation against

1. John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 697.

2. Sophe Soccard, 'L'exclusion des athées par Locke: L'envers théorique d'une convention politique', *XVII–XVIII: Revue de la société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 65 (2008), p. 317.

atheism was passed by the House of Commons and that book was cited as an example of atheistic thought in English. Interestingly, Hobbes himself was also a severe critic of atheism. He wrote in the Appendix of his *Leviathan*: 'He who denies the existence of God or who clearly professes it from not knowing whether God exists or not, even if the law does not need the penalty, we can punish, according to natural equality and send into exile. In fact, in every city, the law commands religion and the recognition of divine power'.[3] Atheism was seen as provoking divine wrath, in the form of the plague in 1666, and, before that, the great fire of London in 1665. Hence prosecution of Hobbes and his *Leviathan* would, it was hoped, help to avert further catastrophes from afflicting the English people.[4]

When writing in the later seventeenth century, however, the English political philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) used the term 'atheist' very variously. Sometimes, he represented the non-believer as an intellectual sceptic; at other times, as a libertine; or even as a madman.[5] In all these cases, Locke's main argument against the atheist focused on his or her lack of moral capacity. Atheists were unable to fulfil the terms that bound them to their wider society. They lacked a sense of political and religious duty, which was integrally linked to belief in God.

If the goal of the individual (as expounded in John Locke's political philosophy) is the preservation of both himself and his property, that individual needs a subjective conviction, which cannot be forced, but is derived from moral and religious teachings. In these circumstances, the atheist, in addition to having dubious personal morals, denies divine providence. In effect, the

3. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Paris: Dalloz, 1999 [1651]), p. 761.

4. Samuel I. Mintz, *The Hunting of Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

5. Antônio Santos, 'O ateísmo no pensamento político de John Locke', *Kriterion*, 143 (2019), pp. 257–77.

atheist denies, in ontological and absolute terms, the existence of any divinity, providence or transcendent power. If for John Locke the atheist is immoral, since he does not fulfill the social pacts, the deepest thrust of Locke's criticism is that without God, everything would be dissolved into chaos and anarchy. Starting from the knowledge of human existence, Locke arrives intuitively at the conclusion that there is an eternal being, for 'There is no truth more evident than this: something must be from eternity'(Locke, *Essay*, IV, 10, 8).[6]

Before saying more about Locke's interpretation of the 'atheist', it is necessary first to understand the identity of such figure, in the context of social thought in seventeenth-century England and France, as the historian Justin Champion rightly insists[7]. In practice, the term was often confused. Thus, it was variously applied: sometimes to those who denied divine providence; sometimes to those who denied the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, sometimes to materialistic thinkers; sometimes to supposed sceptics, or even epicureans; sometimes to those who

6. All of Locke's citations and references are from his complete works, *The Works of John Locke in Nine Volumes*, twelfth edition (London: Rivington, 1824). Only religious texts, discovered after World War II, form a corpus apart. Henceforth, for *A Letter concerning Toleration*, the abbreviation *Letter* corresponds to the first *Letter*, followed by the volume in which the work is inserted and finally the page number. For *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, the abbreviation *Essay* uses the following conventions: the Roman number signals the book, the first Arabic indicates the chapter, and the second, the corresponding paragraph. John Locke, *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (in *Works*, VII); idem, *Political Writings* (Cambridge/Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003); idem, *Selected correspondence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

7. Justin Champion, '"Le culte privé est libre quand il est rendu dans le secret": Hobbes, Locke et les limites de la tolérance, l'athéisme et l'hétérodoxie', in Yves Charles Zarka, Franck Lessay, John Rogers (eds), *Les fondements philosophiques de la tolérance en France et en Angleterre au XVIIe siècle*, 1 (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002).

lived immoral lives; or to the merciless (whether practical or speculative). The term was used, above all, to blacken someone's moral image or to denounce that same image, if it applied to a contesting group or competing religious current.

Hence the seventeenth-century identity of the 'atheist' was polysemic: it could be equated with a heretic, a blasphemer, a mockery of divinity, a pagan, a sceptic, or anyone who did not act according to institutional requirements. Ultimately, being an atheist was a moral offence. The term's imprecision caused anyone who was not considered an orthodox believer to be interpreted as immoral. There was accordingly an automatic harmony between 'atheism' and 'immorality'.[8]

In terms of the genealogy of this concept, it is apparent that it had close affiliations with the idea of 'restlessness'. This term appeared in the seventeenth century, in the works of Malebranche,[9] where it was linked to theology, denoting the causes of error and human ignorance.[10] Gradually it gained secular connotations: as 'uneasiness' in John Locke, for example, to the point that the concept arrived in the celebrated *Encyclopédie*, in the eighteenth century, with other senses, but without losing a focus upon the agitation of the passions, allied with anguish, emptiness and boredom. If, for the French, 'restlessness' had an Augustinian inspiration, associated with the problematic of God's glory for the restless man who seeks rest and peace, for the English, it gained an epistemological sense of restlessness and disturbance of the *soul* (*Essay*, II, 21, 31). In addition, it

8. Nicole Gengoux, 'Rôle de l'athéisme dans la pensée libertine: quelles Lumières?', *ThéoRèmes: Enjeux des approches empiriques des religions*, 9 (2016), <doi.org/10.4000/theoremes.862>.

9. Nicolas Malebranche, *Recherche de la vérité*, 4, Œuvres de Malebranche, 2, éd. Geneviève Rodis-Lewis (Paris: Vrin, 1963), ch. 2.

10. Marc Parmentier, *Introduction à l'Essai sur l'entedement humain de Locke* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999); idem, 'L'inquiétude dans De la Recherche de la vérité', *Les Études philosophiques*, 96 (2011), pp. 85–103.

carried also a psychological profile of desire, plus the motivation to do something that brings satisfaction and pleasure.[11]

'Restlessness', for both English and French theorists, operated in two ways: by internal agitation and by promoting dissatisfaction. In practice, the concept shifted from a religious sense to an epistemological and secular usage. But it still carried a negative charge, which was epitomised by the figure of libertine in the seventeenth century, and by that of the atheist, in the eighteenth. Both these identities prefigured key eighteenth-century debates: the problem of libertinage; and the challenge of deism, including the philosophy of materialism. (Indeed, Charbonnat sees the opponents of Enlightenment shifting their accusation from libertinage to materialism.) For the eighteenth-century *philosophes*, however, materialism was understood as a system of thought centred upon matter.[12]

Nonetheless, while the identity of the 'atheist' still retains a negative charge throughout the *Encyclopédie*, it in no way resembles the monster of seventeenth-century English invective. In the course of updating from one century to another, the concept has undergone a significant change. Well, what happened? What caused perceptions of the 'atheist' to change substantially between seventeenth-century English usage and that which became current in eighteenth-century France? How do ideas shift?

The following discussion probes the identity of the non-believer, as presented in the *Encyclopédie* under the headings of both the 'Atheist' and 'Atheism'. And it thereby detects the impact of Lockean thought. The shifting identity of the atheist between seventeenth-century England and eighteenth-Century France constituted a key change, which in the long term helped to

11. Locke inserts restlessness into his theory of passions (*Essay*, II, 20, 6). On this issue, see the book with presentation, translation and commentary by Étienne Balibar, *John Locke: Identité et différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).

12. Pascal Charbonnat, *Histoire des philosophies matérialistes* (Paris: Editions Kimé, 2013).

generate a warmer welcome for non-believers in modern societies, when compared with attitudes in earlier times.

Two Methodological Considerations

Firstly, great care is always required when considering the transmission and reception of ideas. In this case, John Locke did not write the entries in the *Encyclopédie* that are under review. Nor was he directly cited.

A second methodological consideration stems from the fact that, when Locke's thought first arrived in France, there were many disputes over the meanings of his specific English terms and concepts. It was the ensuing translation controversy that marked, to a large extent, the way in which Locke was read, interpreted and disseminated by Voltaire (1694–1778).[13] And Voltaire's interpretation reverberated through many entries in the celebrated French *Encyclopédie* (published 1751-72). That is, Locke in the *Encyclopédie* is not represented 'par lui même' but as he was viewed by French participants in heated debates.

Regarding the first problem (the lack of direct references to Locke), it can be circumvented by noting instead that there were numerous specific terms and expressions in the *Encyclopédie* that constituted key elements within John Locke's characteristic epistemological lexicon. Therefore, it is necessary to ascertain the precise nature of those terms – and their usage.

Concerning to the second problem (relating to the nuances of translation), it is necessary to understand the uses (and abuses) of Locke's thought made by French *philosophes*, writing in the *Encyclopédie*, and especially when compiling entries on the 'Athe-

13. According to Dédéyan, Pierre Coste translated the *Essay on Human Understanding* in 1700, but it fell to Voltaire to disseminate it. After the publication of the 'Lettres anglaises', Voltaire proposed to the French two examples of thinkers to be imitated for different reasons: Locke and Newton. See Charles Dédéyan, *Voltaire et la pensée anglaise* (Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1956).

ist' and on 'Atheism'. At that time, there was no habitual system of quotation. Hence, when assessing these two entries, three further enquiries have guided this analysis: (1) How did Lockean thought integrate the writer's reflections on the atheist into the two entries? (2) How did Locke's main approach to the concept of Atheism work in this context? And (3) what did the *Encyclopedists* retain from Locke in these entries?

According to Maclean, John Locke became especially known in England, for his *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1689), which, after the *Bible*, became the most read work of social philosophy in the English-speaking world[14]. That outcome happened because his study was not restricted to abstract philosophical questions but covered themes ranging from knowledge to literature, from medicine to theology, and from epistemology to religion and mathematics. It quickly became mandatory reading in English universities of this period. Indeed, it became seen as a kind of 'philosophy manual'.[15]

Thereupon, Locke's thought crossed the English Channel to France by two distinct ways. The first great reception portal was that created by the many French Huguenot refugees in England. Thanks to their reading of Locke's *Letter concerning Toleration*, the idea spread that, in Shakespeare's country, a much greater freedom of worship prevailed than was permitted in Bourbon France.[16] According to Secrétan, these Huguenots formed a true

14. Kenneth MacLean, *John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University press, 1936/London: H. Milford, 1937).

15. Walter W. Rouse Ball, *A History of Study of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1889).

16. These thinkers were French Protestants, who had studied in Geneva and who left France, because of religious persecution. They included: Le Clerc, who settled in Holland; and Coste and Mazel, who were Huguenots, and who passed through the 'Grand Arche des fugitifs' before taking refuge in England. On these men, see: SOULARD,

network of Franco-British communications, which greatly promoted the circulation of ideas which helped to build the French Enlightenment. In that sense, 'England was [a] determinant for the revolutionary heritage, manifested through the diffusion of Locke's ideas, as well as Newton's influence and his new natural philosophy, which may be associated with materialism'.[17]

The second route of reception was triggered by the controversies involving the translation, reviewing and dissemination of Locke's ideas. It is important to note that, in the seventeenth century, few people outside England knew the English language. Moreover, Latin was in frank decay and the international use of French was on the rise, to the point that Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) even stated that the French language was 'transcendental' and the 'point of communication of all the peoples of Europe'[18]. Peter Burke is quite emphatic in maintaining that 'the men of continental letters who could read in English were so rare before 1700 that they could be listed in a single paragraph'.[19]

Delphine Soulard, 'L'ouvre des premiers traducteurs français de John Locke: Jean Le Clerc, Pierre Coste et David Mazel', *Dix-septième siècle*, 253 (2011), pp. 739–62. Furthermore, Jacques Proust advances the idea that John Locke was acquainted with the situation of French Protestants at the time he passed through France between 1676 and 1679, and therefore, in his writings on toleration, was evoking issues that were already being discussed by the Pensioners in the period. That linkage in turn had some impact on the circulation of Lockean ideas in French lands. On this issue, see Jacques Proust, 'Le témoignage de John Locke sur la situation du protestantisme français à la veille de la Révocation (1676–1679)', *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, 151 (2005), pp. 91–103.

17. Catherine Secrétan, Tristan Dagron & Laurent Bove, 'Préface', in idem (eds), *Qu'est-ce que les Lumières 'radicales'? Libertinage, athéisme et spinozisme dans le tournant philosophique de l'âge classique* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, Les Belles Lettre, 2007).

18. Pierre Bayle, *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, Article VI (novembre 1685).

19. Peter Burke, *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*.

The arguments about English translations and meanings were so fertile and creative that Locke, a fervent Puritan in origin, was transformed, upon arriving in France, into a materialist 'malgré lui', in the happy expression of Paul Hazard[20]. On that same point, Thomson is also emphatic. When comparing and analyzing extracts from Locke's original texts with the French translation by Pierre Coste (1668–1747), Thomson has no doubts: 'the importance of Pierre Coste's task in this story clearly appears: he is the one who contributed to spreading an image of Locke as an irreligious thinker and to inscribe in the materialistic tradition'[21]. This filtered welcome in French intellectual circles was decisive in the way that Locke was read, interpreted and criticized in the *Encyclopédie*.

These methodological tools are thus very helpful when considering the two seminal entries in the *Encyclopédie*; and when assessing the changing identity of the 'Atheist' over two centuries.

The entry on the 'Atheist' was written by the Abbé Claude Yvon (1714–91); and that on 'Atheism' by Yvon in collaboration with Samuel Formey (1711–97), although the precise distribution of mental labour between the two of them remains unknown. According to Burson, their joint text appears to be plagiarised or closely copied from a letter by Formey,[22] although the core concept may well have been influenced by Yvon. He was a former Catholic priest who, in Voltaire's opinion, did not believe in God (Voltaire, 1986, p. 225-226).[23] Formey, mean-

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

20. Paul Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne* (Paris: Fayard, 1961).

21. Ann Thomson, 'Locke, Stillingfleet et Coste: La philosophie en extraits', *Cromohs: Cyber Review of Modern Historiography*, 12 (2007), <oajournals.fupress.net/index.php/cromohs> (5 March 2023).

22. Jeffrey Burson, 'Vitalistic Materialism and Universal Histories of Philosophy in the Contributions of Abbé Claude Yvon to the *Encyclopédie*', *Historical Reflections*, 40 (2014).

23. Voltaire's letter to the Margrave of Bayreuth, in 'Notes sur la cor-

while, was a German Huguenot, who became secretary of the Royal Academy of Prussia. Both men had strong ties with the Catholic religion and were, differently, involved with the debates over materialism and with arguments among radical Enlightenment thinkers. Nothing in their backgrounds prevented them from writing about atheism – or stopped others, including political and religious radicals, from reading them.[24]

On the first entry, the 'Atheist', signed only by Yvon: its sources are clear, as is its contextual background. However, with reference to the second entry, on 'Atheism', the questions are more complex. There are repetitions, which suggest some plagiarism by Formey of his own earlier work – and some further copying by Yvon from the 'Atheist'. Moreover, there are other tricky issues. How was it possible for Yvon, a Catholic abbot, who flirted with materialism, to join with a Protestant pastor of conservative profile? How did they jointly write an entry on 'Atheism' which proved rather controversial? How did they divide their labour? What was their shared vision? Not all these questions can be answered. After the *Encyclopédie's* first edition, Denis Diderot (1713–84)[25] as general editor began to sign many entries, although he was not their author. Nonetheless, these provocative statements remain 'on the record' and thus open to examination.

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respondance générale', *Dossier Voltaire en Prusse (1750–1753)*, ed. André Magnan (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1986), pp. 225–6.

24. François Moureau, 'L'Encyclopédie d'après les correspondants de Formey', *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie*, 3 (1987), pp. 125–45.

25. Denis Diderot & Jean le Rond d'Alembert (eds), *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751–1765) available at: <encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>; Diderot, *Enciclopédia ou dicionário razoado das ciências, das artes e dos ofícios*, 6: Metafísica, eds Pedro Pimenta & Maria das Graças de Souza (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2017), sub tit. 'Ateísmo' ; Jean Deprun, *La philosophie de l'inquietude en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1979).

The Encyclopedia's Entry on the 'Atheist'

The author of the entry was Abbé Claude Yvon. His theological background was that of a would-be Catholic moderniser, who was part of a group of theologians with similar attitudes. They had read the key works which circulated among learned circles in the eighteenth century: including works by Nicolas Malebranche (1638–1715), Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and John Locke (1632–1704). Yvon thus distanced himself from the orthodox Catholic apologists of his era – and evinced a strong sympathy for a more radicalised theology, which Burson calls 'Theological Lights' (Enlightenment).

The 'Atheist' entry begins by defining the identity of an atheist in that period. It then presents its typology and, finally, its causes. In terms of the core concept, the entry already points to what was coming to be understood in eighteenth-century France: the atheist is one who 'denies the existence of God'. In this definition, there is no doubt, hesitation or uncertainty (unlike views in earlier times). The unbelievers are then divided into three types: (1) those who deny that there is a God; (2) those who claim to be unbelievers or sceptics; and (3) those who deny the attributes of divine nature and its power over the world.

Next, the entry presents two underlying causes for the advent of the 'Atheist'. They are: firstly, ignorance and stupidity; and secondly, debauchery and the corruption of manners. At this point, the author adds further depth to the analysis. The first cause lies in people's ignorance, which is why they are compared to animals for their lack of reflection. Remembering, certainly, the famous Socratic phrase that 'a life without reflection is not worth living', Yvon sought to associate ignorance with brutish animality and thence with atheism.

It is true that, later on, Yvon tries to soften this relationship by evoking Strabon (a Greek geographer who lived between 64 B.C. and 25 A.D.). According to this Greek, there were Hispanic and African peoples without any trace of religion. He there-

fore proposed the anthropological conclusion that some societies have always been 'naturally' atheistic. Well, here there is some approximation to the arguments of Locke, not in the *Letter* but in the *Essay*. There he noted that people's knowledge of God depended upon the education that they had received. There were even those who had developed a mastery of the arts, but 'lack the idea and knowledge of God' (*Essay*, I, 4, 8).

Yet, after a bold start, Yvon took the argument down a different route. He argued against the idea that access to religion was simply a matter of nature. He asserted that 'religion is something that once established in the country must last forever'; and that changes in religion were hard to make, and therefore rare. Furthermore, he added that there are strong psychological reasons why people join religion: their fear of suffering and their hopes of redemption after death. Such motivations encourage parents to induct their children into religious belief from an early age. Yvon then sought to make his readers reflect, by concluding: 'Strabon deserves no confidence; and the accounts of some modern journeys, which claim that there are in the new world nations that have no religion should be taken with suspicion and even false.' Travellers in strange lands did not have full access to all the local ceremonies and cults – let alone have full knowledge of the local language. Thus, travellers easily but erroneously decided that strange peoples were atheists. And Yvon's readers were encouraged to question the sources and all over-hasty conclusions.

However, when the reader, once again, thinks that he is convinced that Yvon's criticisms are just, then the author returns to the initial argument but evokes another quite distinct example. According to Yvon, an author named Pierre Kolbe published in 1741 a work entitled: *Description du cap de Bonne-esperance*. In that, Kolbe recorded that the 'barbarians' of South Africa had no notion of God, but yet had a notion of law and natural morality. At this point, Yvon's readers might wonder at his argumentative ambivalence. And in fact, Yvon took a stance of

complete scepticism about all travellers' tales about the religion (or lack of the same) on the part of the 'primitive' and distant peoples beyond Europe. Hence 'ignorance and stupidity' were not automatic correlates with atheism.

The second imputed cause of atheism was 'the corruption of habits'. Vices and immoral behaviour on the part of an individual would 'turn off the natural lights and corrupt his reason'. That is, people are assumed to have a natural light or insight, which brings discernment. But atheists, by their lack of belief, end up corrupting their natural gifts, and descend into drunkenness and a numbed consciousness. They then suffer a constant internal struggle, as they veer between faith and lack of faith. As a result, atheists are tormented by their uneasy souls and internal agitation, prompted by their godlessness.

But the author gave no final verdict on the two deep causes of atheism. It is left to readers to make the proper connections and to detect the thread of Ariadne that holds the entire entry together.

After that, Yvon presents three central types of atheist: the practical; the heart-felt; and the speculative. The practical atheist is anyone who denies the idea of God and lives placidly in an environment of crime. The heart-felt atheist is one who is convinced that there is no God. As the author states, 'his atheism is only reasoning; he is perhaps the fruit and effect of the highest degree'. Citing La Bruyère, who says the atheist does not think, this type of 'conviction' atheist is the most common and has reached distant places such as Turkey. In this nation, they formed a sect composed of renegade scholars and Christians 'who to avoid the remorse they feel at their apostasy, strive to persuade [themselves] that there is nothing to fear or wait after death'. Comparing atheism with a contagious disease, which spreads and infects wherever it goes, Yvon added that the everyday atheist 'infected the apartment of women and eunuchs, introduced in bachas [?]; and that after he had poisoned them, he spread it throughout the court'. This attitude encouraged the

belief that the common atheist is highly dangerous because his views are contagious and therefore atheism spreads easily, as if it were an endemic disease.

Meanwhile, the speculative or reasoning atheist is founded on philosophy. They are also called theoretical atheists and are subdivided into two types from the historical point of view, those of the ancient world, whose best-known examples were Protagora and Epicurus, and relatively more modern ones, such as the twelfth-century Andalusian jurist Averroes, plus England's seventeenth-century political theorist Thomas Hobbes, and his contemporary, the Dutch philisipher Spinoza, among others. It is, according to the author, a form of unbelief that appeals to men 'who have neither principles nor system'. No further details were supplied.

Having presented this typology, the author then turns to analyse whether the educated elite in China consists of atheists or not. By way of evidence, Yvon cites some authors who are experts on the Chinese way of life. Three groups attract attention: (1) the sect founded by Li-laokium, who 'worships a sovereign God as [well as] many subaltern deities over whom he wields absolute power'. (2) The second group is 'infected with crazy and absurd practices', directed by a member who died at the age of 79 and communicated to his disciples through enigmatic codes. They believe that everything comes from, and returns to, nowhere, with the ironic conclusion: 'this is the abyss where our hopes rest'. (3) The third sect is the only one authorised by local laws, upheld by a mixture of politics, religion and philosophy. It 'does not recognise any deity other than matter, or perhaps nature; under this name, the source of many errors and misunderstandings, it understands such a universal soul of the world […] that it produces, that it organises, that it preserves all parts of the universe.' This principle is claimed as the beginning and end of everything that exists. It is a beautiful idea, seeking to build upon ancient traditions. In fact, however, it is a new faith, a 'refined atheism aligned with all religious worship'.

Yvon continued to meditate upon divine creation, which created good, not evil – contrary to the view of this third Chinese sect. However, the great question that readers come to confront, at the end of this description of Chinese types of atheistic beliefs, is that being an atheist, at least in China, appears to be a matter of decision, will and deliberation, allied to certain material constraints. This implication is that religion (or lack of the same) is not a natural condition; but is something that is built culturally.

So, the question that the author asks himself, even if rhetorically, is highly significant: why do many philosophers fall into atheism? To try to answer the question, Yvon starts with the pagan philosophers. According to him, their errors stemmed from the false ideas of divinity that prevailed then. And in more modern times, the philosophers were deceived by sophistic arguments. By implication, numerous clever men have fallen into atheism because they have been deceived by rhetorical tricks, or misunderstandings in the arguments about God.

Despite this evidence, however, Yvon thinks that the number of philosophers who lives and dies as atheists is not overlay large. He recalls that the French monk Marin Mersenne (1588–1648) has claimed that there are no more than 50,000 atheists in Paris in the early seventeenth century. And Yvon is sure that such a figure was exaggerated. The concept of an atheist is, after all, conceptually very vague. People with enemies might easily find that 'their dissatisfied adversary takes them [for] an atheist'. But such verdicts are 'reckless judgments. Anyone can be suspected of being an atheist, even if the claim was not at all plausible. So, what can readers extract from this part of Yvon's text? The answer is that there is very little clarity in definitions of the atheist. Here there is a sympathetic link with the thought of John Locke, who have already stressed the diversity within the concept, as shown at the start of this essay.[26]

One strand of Yvon's argument is dedicated to criticising the

26. Santos, 'O ateísmo no pensamento político de John Locke'.

works of Pierre Bayle, the French philosophical sceptic. Bayle's *Commentaires* (1686–88) are summarised, as are the views of some of Bayle's opponents, such as the English ecclesiastic William Warburton (1698–1779). It is possible to differentiate between atheism and polytheism. But both are damaging to social cohesion. And, among the varied types of atheists, such as the theoretical or practical, Yvon indicates that the practical one is the most harmful, because he lowers himself to the level of malice and banishes not only the idea of God but also his knowledge and power, that is, everything that concerns God.

Metaphors are strong: atheists use knowledge as a weapon against divinity, which is why such figures become a social danger. Again, there are parallels with the views of Locke. In his *Letter*, he argues that there can be no toleration for those who do not believe in God, since such a view is the foundation of core sociability.[27]

The speculative atheist, by contrast, is a minor evil, when compared with a pagan polytheist. Evoking various authorities, including the classical Greek philosopher and historian Plutarch, the French moral satirist La Bruyère (1645–96), and the French theologian Bishop Bossuet (1627–1704), Yvon makes it clear that the pagan is the worst of the two. The danger stems from the fact that 'they say nothing about God, neither good nor evil; if they deny their existence, it is that they look at them not as real things, but as fiction of human understanding'. Fundamentally, the atheist lacks sound knowledge. The atheists then try to erase the image of God; and the pagans despise it. Both are therefore, in their different ways, socially harmful.

In an attempt to give greater conceptual precision to the speculative atheist, Yvon subdivides this type into two categories: the negative atheist and the positive atheist. The first is someone who never thinks of God and who has not taken sides with Him either. Evoking the images of Locke's 'shallow table', Yvon

27. Santos, 'O ateísmo no pensamento político de John Locke'.

writes: 'this man's soul is like an empty picture, ready to receive such colours that one wants to apply'. The positive atheist, by contrast, is one who has examined the evidence on which the existence of God is established but simply concludes that there is 'nothing solid'. Instead this atheist prefers a philosophical spirit of reflection. While the first one is not aware of God, the second one has considered the concept but rejected it.

Once again, trust in God is a matter of argument, of knowledge. The two atheists, however, are left without a moral standard. Yet a divinely constituted sense of good and evil constitutes 'a legislator, who not only ordains […] what we feel and recognize for good, but who proposes at the same time rewards for those who conform to him and gives punishments to those who disobey him'. There is again a close parallel between this section of the text and Locke's view in the *Letter on Toleration*:

> *Who shall be Judge between them?* I answer, God alone. For there is no Judge upon earth between the Supreme Magistrate and the People. God, I say, is the only Judge in this case, who will retribute unto every one at the last day according to his Deserts; that is, according to his sincerity and uprightness, in endeavouring to promote Piety, and the publick Weal and Peace of Mankind.[28]

The similarities between Locke's God-legislator and Yvon's moral legislator are striking. Atheists have no notion of the legislator and therefore no understanding of how and why they will be judged. Moreover, because atheists do not know how to discern good from evil, they are unable to practice virtue. That deficiency makes them sick people, who are liable to infect others. Thus Yvon, again in Locke's wake, insisted that God is the beacon of human actions: 'When we submit to God's will, we secure the rewards and avoid the punishments. Without God, nothing is guaranteed because humans enter a realm of moral

28. John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010), p. 49.

uncertainty. The argument's conclusion, therefore, is that Bayle was mistaken in believing that atheists could act morally, much less constitute an atheist society.

All the arguments here were marshalled to contradict Bayle. For Yvon, it is religion that provides morality because 'society is unable to remedy by its own forces the disorders […] and it was obliged to appeal to religion to its aid and could only be implemented as a result of the same principles, fear, and hope'. That is, society cannot exist without religion, because it cannot handle everything. Religion, in the opinion of the entry's reporter, is a beacon for the practice of virtue and, consequently, of morality, which is divinely based.

Following this reasoning, Yvon was emphatic: 'an atheist, who has no principle of consciousness […] will not prevent himself from secretly satisfying all his passions. […] He will only consult his vicious inclinations, his avarice, his cupidity, the criminal passion where he will find the most violent dominion'. In sum, Yvon concluded that Bayle proves nothing because he is not interested in proof, which is why he constantly hides his intellectual games with 'sophisms and misunderstandings'. But underneath his 'pomp, eloquence and obscurity', Bayle was offering only 'the false brilliance of his captious reasoning, and the wickedness of his reflections'.

Yvon provided further extensive discussions based upon historical evidence for the positive role of religion. He also reviewed the current debates of his day. In that context, he took sharp aim at the English philosophical moralist, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713). For Yvon, the titled philosopher was nothing but a modern libertine – and hence a promoter of irreligion. And he added caustically: 'If his intention was to make all English men polite and good, he [Shaftesbury] might well propose to make them all milords'.

At the end, Yvon returned to refute the arguments of Pierre Bayle. His representations of atheistic societies were confined to 'primitive' and 'barbaric' peoples, who allegedly lived in a

state of nature. But for Yvon, such atheists 'are scoundrels, if one is allowed to use this expression', because no people can live outside civil society - that is, without laws and without restrictions, which are given by religion. Well, Bayle sought to show that atheism is not harmful to society. For Yvon, however, that argument was no more than a sophism - an artifice designed to disguise the author's true desire: to spread irreligion under the canopy of philosophy.

There are, therefore, two indications of Locke's influence in the *Encyclopédie*'s account of the 'Atheist'. The first is the possible defence of an anthropological atheism, that is, of primitive peoples who had no contact with the Christian idea of God, as Locke had argued in his *Essay*. The second influence appears in the identification of the incessant fight of the atheist (even if this concept remains undefined), since it corrupts the true foundations of society, as Locke maintained in his *Letter*. In both cases, the atheist must be rejected.

The Encyclopédie's entry on 'Atheism'

The entry 'Atheism' begins with a definition of the word, which does not differ from the description in the entry on the 'Atheist', as one who denies the existence of God.[29] Subsequently, however, the authors make it clear that they want to dialogue with the text of that parallel entry. They do that because, while in the previous text there was a kind of exhortation to the 'public execration' of the atheist, in the second entry, the text registers, even in its opening lines, a certain complacency. Although the atheist is 'hateful', the fact that such a person has no knowledge of God does not necessarily make him or an outright non-be-

29. The entry 'Athéisme' is in vol. 1, pp. 815–17, according to the edition of *L'Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751–72), which can be found at <encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>. This same entry was translated into Portuguese by Thomaz Kawauche, and is found in Diderot, *Enciclopédia*, 6, pp. 54–60.

liever. In order for 'atheism' to exist as a category of thought, there had to be a categorical rejection of God's existence.

Still in the initial impressions, the authors leave a certain scope for scepticism. They reaffirm that having doubts about the existence of God does not necessarily make the doubter a fully-fledged atheist. Only those who deny a core belief in the existence of God can be considered as real atheists. Indeed, the authors state that 'atheism is not restricted to disfiguring the idea of God, but to destroying it entirely'.

The joint authors, Yvon and Formey, then proceeded to examine the strategies of classical writers when referring to God. For the two commentators, acknowledgement of the concept of God does not make a person into a Christian. Nor does the reverse condition, of not acknowledging such a concept, automatically make that person into an atheist. To support their case, the joint authors gave as an example the Epicureans, who mentioned the gods all the time and yet were avowedly atheists. They also cited the seventeenth-century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza, who referred continually to God but was a self-declared deist. Therefore, for the joint authors, it was necessary to be suspicious when interpreting the religious terminologies used by earlier writers. Yvon and Formey evidently wanted to avoid an abusive and random use of the concept of 'atheism'. Instead, a spirit of tolerance was apparent in their preamble to their further discussions.

After their initial care with definitions, in order to prepare their readers, the joint authors analysed the term within the history of philosophy, starting with the predecessors of Democritus and then proceeding to Plato and Aristotle. Focusing upon theories that reduced everything to matter, the joint authors concluded that: 'the materialists were the true atheists, not so much because they conceived only bodies [but] because they did not recognize any intelligence that moved and governed them'. In other words, what makes an atheist is the non-recognition of divine Providence. But the joint authors added that

even in the ancient world there were various types of atheism; and they note that these other types can be seen in the *Encyclopédie*, referring the reader to other entries.

If the classical philosophers in the ancient world could all be defined as materialists, the joint authors considered that among the modern philosophers, only Spinoza ranked as a fully-fledged atheist. That view had two consequences. The first was that they practically borrowed the entry on 'Spinoness' from Bayle's *Dictionary*, which accepted Spinoza's atheism and defined him as a 'system atheist'. In other words, Spinoza presents in his work a set of elements that are related to each other interdependently. His world-view thus forms a rigorous totality that is difficult to penetrate. For Bayle, Spinoza uses the 'more geometric' in this sense: he uses a deductive method, based upon definitions and axioms, which provide the logical basis for the superstructure of argument. And, in effect, the joint authors of this *Encyclopédie* entry borrowed for themselves the entire discussion on Spinoza from Bayle's *Dictionary*.

The second consequence was that the discussion by the joint authors refrained from attributing the 'taint' of atheism to many commentators, including Bayle himself (in contrast to his role in the *Encyclopédie* entry on the 'Atheist', as already discussed).

Instead, to avoid any doubt, the joint authors provided four distinct criteria to identify an atheist. These were highly difficult and complex requirements. An atheist would therefore have (1) to prove that the notion of God does not exist, as already analyzed above. Alternatively, since atheists do not believe in divine Providence, they (2) have instead to prove what governs the world – perhaps something like fate or fatality. The joint authors here offer a subtle criticism of materialists, but also acknowledge a certain difficulty in explaining what governs the world, even by theists themselves. Given the difficulties raised by these incomprehensible issues, atheists are driven to a kind of madness by the search for a plausible explanation in these endless speculations.

Furthermore, (3) atheists need to explain the principled causality of matter. The joint authors provided an example of a topic which remains both thought-provoking and complex: after all, which came first, the egg or the chicken? The search for a first cause is endless; it 'gives in the same as the universal revolutions take millions of years or days, or hours, or minutes, for the existence of small ephemeral insects, of which one produces the other without end; they are always effects chained to each other without being able to indicate a cause, a principle, a sufficient reason to explain them'. Thus, (4) the most serious consequence of atheism is the subversion of the foundations of religion, morality and politics. Again, the result is that atheists cannot have a peaceful social coexistence.

Without the moral values that are linked to religion, are humans left to live in barbarism? Or in words from the honourable Roman, Marcus Junius Brutus, where had he been led by the: 'virtue, barren virtue, for which ye have served?' This query from the Roman indicates that he felt abandoned by civic virtue, in which he believed so much. He had been pursuing a phantom; and, once deprived of his strength and effectiveness, concluded that he no longer saw any utility in virtue. In the view of the *Encyclopédie*'s joint authors on 'Atheism', the only full virtue is the happiness that depends upon accepting a 'system of future penalties and rewards', which only religion can provide.

Because atheists were incapable of answering the first three questions, the fourth position was the unavoidable consequence – and therefore atheists should be punished under natural law. But what does that mean? What does that mean in practical terms? Too much. Worse than being an atheist is to be too sanguine about the 'amount of barbaric procedures and inhuman executions that mere suspicion or the pretext of atheism have caused'. Readers should thus realize that too many people have been wronged unjustly. And therefore, the joint authors call for caution in denouncing others of atheism. In sum, worse than actually being an atheist is the habit of condemning others without proof.

In conclusion, the joint authors prefer to rely upon the legality of any atheist convictions, which have come before a magistrate (or, in today's parlance, a judge). Such questions should not be a matter of speculation and defamation; but should be referred to the established laws of the land. It is civility that requires this change of behaviour. Of course, the conviction of an atheist is maintained if he or she does something wrong under the law; but social disapproval should also fall upon the intolerant, the blasphemers, the publicists of false testimonies and all who are against the established order.

Atheists, then, are neither above nor below any citizens, but on the same level as all others. So, what is the ultimate problem of the atheist, in the view of the joint authors? It is that such individuals are reckless beings, 'who assume that religion is an invention of politicians to keep society more easily regulated'. The point is that the atheist thinks too much and says what cannot be said freely. In this sense, long before the later denunciation of religion as the 'opium of the people' by Karl Marx (1818–83), the atheists, according to these joint authors in the *Encyclopédie*, already knew that 'religion is a greater support of kings than [is] the sword of monarchy'.

For readers, the question is posed: How could atheists with such a lucid awareness of power continue to survive unchallenged, in a society governed by the sword and the cross? The joint authors understood that, in the light of Locke's arguments about religious toleration, force does not convert anyone. Sooner or later, therefore, faiths are vulnerable. Since religion cannot act alone, it needs the sword to legitimise its perpetuation in power. Churches and states survive together. As a result, 'if sovereigns could destroy all conscience and all religion in the spirits of men, in order to be able to act in complete freedom, they would soon find themselves buried under the ruins of religion'. Power brokers of all kinds require order and discipline - which is why they cannot grant complete freedom to all.

By the end of this entry, then, the joint authors have changed

the emphasis. Society's problem is not the atheist as such. It is the lack of political freedom which prevents everyone from thinking freely – including those who do not believe in God. Again, then, the atheist is misunderstood, and therefore harassed and excluded from social life. The joint authors here provided a new interpretation of the atheist, which was quite different from that presented in the single entry by Yvon (which has already been explored).

If in that analysis, there was clear evidence of the influence of John Locke – especially via his arguments against atheism – in this second entry, that link was no longer so clear. Two hypotheses may explain this switch. In the first place, it may have been a tactical manoeuvre from the joint authors or from the general editor of the volume, Diderot. But, secondly, the change in emphasis may have indicated a significant change in the ways of thinking about the social impact of atheism.

Conclusions

What, then, can be deduced from the comparison between the two entries? What does their vocabulary reveal to attentive readers? In the 'Atheist', there was a combative hostility to everything that manifested itself as anti-religious. Particularly targeted were the ideas of Pierre Bayle, and especially his defence of the possibility of an atheist city.

Atheists, without belief in either God or the devil, have dreadful reputations. They live in a state of immorality and ethical transgression. Because they violate the norms of good thinking and the values of reasonable action, such atheists are not welcome members of a civic community. It is always worth recalling that such a hostile viewpoint dates back to the later sixteenth century, when the entries of 'Atheist' and 'Atheism' first appeared in a French dictionary. Those without faith were the worst enemies of every state and society.[30]

30. Edmond Huguet, *Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième*

Nonetheless, this same hostile identity, that ran unchanged throughout the seventeenth century and on into the eighteenth century, was updated with another connotation, or at the very least, with a certain ambivalence, in the entry on the subject of 'Atheism' in the *Encyclopédie*. If the atheist can be confused with a sceptic or even with a libertine, he does not need to be expelled from the city so drastically. Nor was it necessary to assume the worst about his general demeanour; or to adopt the harshest sanctions against him.

More than that: the joint authors in the *Encyclopédie* argued that no- one should be condemned for his or her ideas, even absurd ones. That stance in effect pointed to a distinction between religion and morals, indicating a potential difference between religious precepts and moral values. Readers were urged to be understanding about atheism. And to realise that many evils had been committed under the banners of faith. Perhaps instead what was most lacking, at that moment, was freedom in the public arena.

Here the joint authors, certainly inspired by Locke (and especially his *Letter concerning Toleration*), invite the reader to adopt a stance of civility: the crucial element is the need for freedom for those who wish to preach about religious values - and freedom for those who seek to hear the word of God in an open and enlightened way. Religion becomes something of a matter for private choice; and such choices do not concern public life, except if they interfere with good order and social stability in social life. Atheists thus do not automatically cause harm.

From the comparison of the two entries, a certain balance and moderation in tone becomes apparent. While the first one was more aggressive, the second was more tolerant of the atheist. The non-believer's personal restlessness (according to traditional views) is replaced by a readiness to take free moral decisions on his or her personal accounts. Atheists become conscious in-

siècle, 1 (Paris: Édouard Champion, 1925), p. 370.

dividuals who find an identity through acting freely and responsibly. Hence all persecution of people of non-faith, be it religious or political, is irrational and therefore inadmissible.

Thus the *Encyclopédie* begins to defend the atheist. His identity was slowly changing in the course of the eighteenth century. He was becoming an emblematic figure, embracing many facets of belief and behaviour: half heretical, a libertine, restless corruptor of moral values; and one who flirted with materialism. Yet, despite such qualities, the questing non-believers did not have to be kicked out of town. Their restless minds (according to seventeenth-century critics) would lead them to doubt the existence of God, And that would in turn lead to a state of unbelief: doubting everything, including the scriptures, the immortality of the soul, and all forms of authority. Indeed, it encompassed the universalisation of all doubt.

However, by the eighteenth century, such a state of non-belief was not perceived as such a social danger. Those who doubted the precepts of religion were exercising their rational intelligence; and they might have good reasons to deny traditional viewpoints. Perhaps such a change of perspectives reflected the growing pluralisation of societies in eighteenth-century Europe. in an era of growing trade and global exploration. If this is true, there would be, between a century and the next, a very redefinition of foundations on what is meant by atheistic. At the end of this question, the authors clamour for their readers to fight for more freedom so that all people can exist and express themselves freely in the bosom of society, regardless of their religious beliefs (or lack of same): there is no greater lesson than this one.

Gradually, therefore, the very foundations of what was meant by 'Atheism' were shifting. The identity of the atheist, in the first part of the eighteenth century, was not clearly defined. Nor was there just one atheistic doctrine. Atheists were questing figures: writing, posing rival viewpoints, raising doubts. They were ready to criticise established truths and dogmas, using varied strategies and forms of communication.

In sum, atheists were restless thinkers; and their capacities for doubt and experimentation were becoming accepted (even perhaps secretly admired) in Europe's emergent era of Enlightenment. Atheists by no means ruled; yet they had come to stay.

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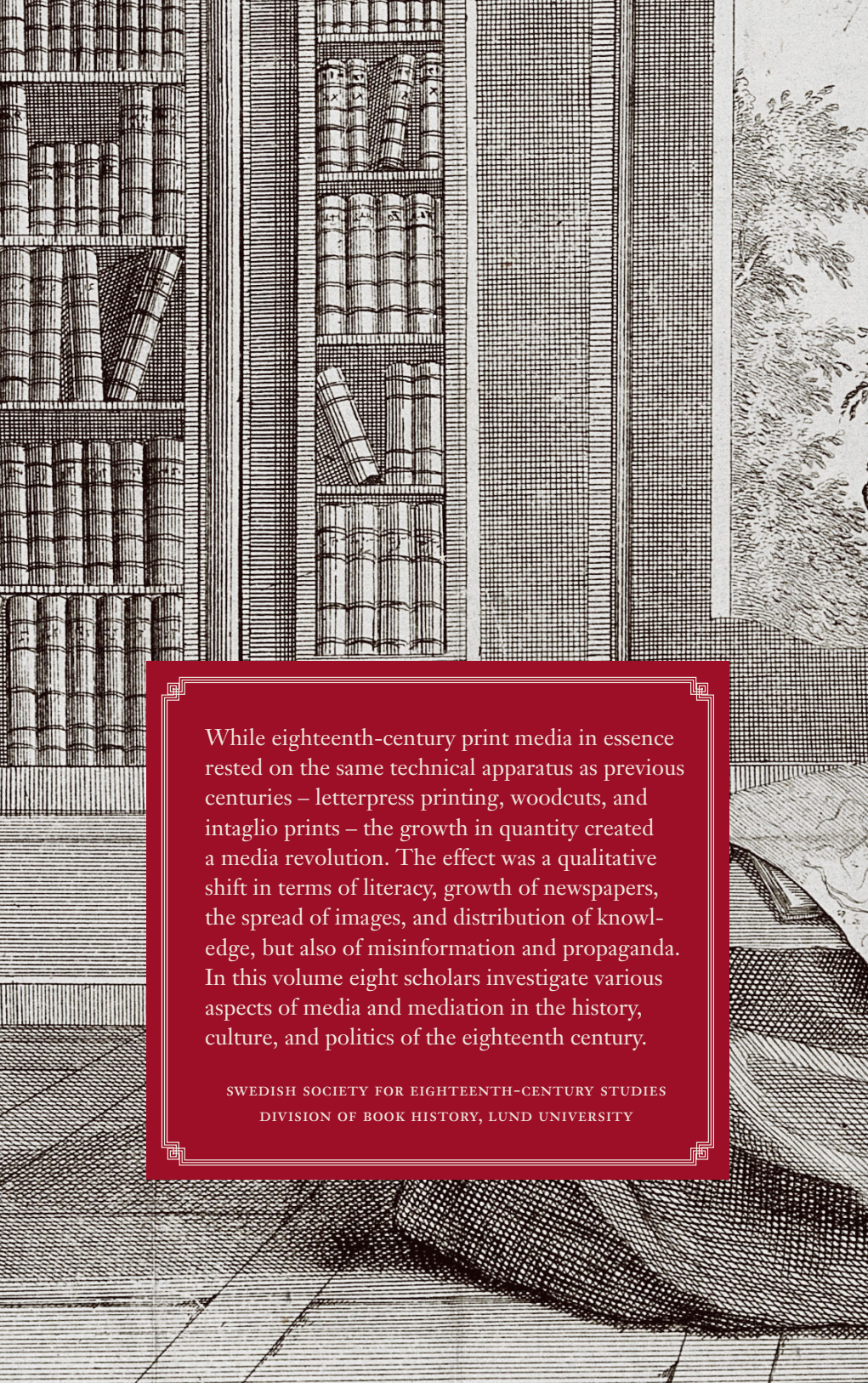
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While eighteenth-century print media in essence rested on the same technical apparatus as previous centuries – letterpress printing, woodcuts, and intaglio prints – the growth in quantity created a media revolution. The effect was a qualitative shift in terms of literacy, growth of newspapers, the spread of images, and distribution of knowledge, but also of misinformation and propaganda. In this volume eight scholars investigate various aspects of media and mediation in the history, culture, and politics of the eighteenth century.

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