

Andreas Golob***Participatory Journalism in Michael Hermann Ambros' Periodical Media.***

Communicating Politics, Education, Entertainment, and Commerce in Central Europe at the End of the 18th Century

Michael Hermann Ambros (1750-1809) ranged among the most prominent independent journalists in the German-speaking countries in the late 18th century. His newspaper *Bauernzeitung* (1786-1796, i.e. *Peasant News*) is renowned for being one of the best German newspapers of its time. Furthermore, in 1795, he also boosted Graz *Frauenjournal* (*Women's Journal*, 1792-1797) which had been founded as one of the first of its kind, produced in and specifically for the Habsburg Monarchy. In a situation of fierce competition Ambros had to seek for unique selling propositions, and found them in the critical and transparent use of a variety of media as well as correspondence and in regular communication with contributors and readers. Carefully used, the texts, comments, introductory as well as concluding remarks and Ambros' transparent comparisons of his sources are keys for insight into the media system of the Habsburg Monarchy and adjacent areas.

The interlocking nature of all parts of his media (i.e. the political newspaper, the educating and entertaining supplement and the advertiser) will be considered in a new integral approach and by means of statistics and interpretation. The focus will be on the communicators and media that formed Ambros' basis. Particularly the contributors' personal and professional contacts, their media use, and their interaction with the editor will be assessed. Concerning women, we want to emphasise their active contributions to reporting news, entertainment as well as education and advertising. To theorise the relationship within the collective *Actor-Media-Theory* will be adopted. We will also pay attention to connections between Ambros and other editors, attempting not only regional, but also supra-regional comparative perspectives. Apart from Ambros' media a selection of contemporary newspapers as well as journals and archival sources on the regional postal system and on local censorship will be included into the analysis.

Regarding the actual texts, we are not only interested in major events, but also in depictions of everyday socio-economic and cultural life. We will predominantly thematise errors, their sources and Ambros' failure management. We will particularly consider irrational traits, showing emotional involvement. As for female consumers, we want to proceed beyond typical texts connected with traditional female roles. Concerning strategies to convey news and background information to women and a lower-class male readership, we will search for connections between education and information, on the one hand, and an entertaining disguise, on the other. Assuming that emotional qualities not only played major roles in these fields, but also in advertising, concepts of the currently booming and innovative history of emotions will be taken into account.