

Lexicon of Royal Prussia Press

The aim of the project is to develop a bilingual (Polish-German) Lexicon of Periodicals from Royal Prussia as an open-source database that will for the first time be collecting the titles and bibliographical data, as well as comprehensive information on contents, reception and impact of all periodicals published in Royal Prussia in the 17th and 18th century. An important part of the Lexicon will be a multipart essay of the history of Royal Prussia Press as an introduction to the collection.

Royal Prussia (or Polish Prussia) was a Polish province, where the widespread distribution of periodicals and the development of the press market started much earlier than in other regions of the country. The German-language newspapers and magazines from Royal Prussia constitute about 80% percent of the seventeenth-century press production and about 30% of the eighteenth-century press production of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Most notably, they provide a unique source material containing many precursors of journalistic genres in Poland, such as the scientific journal, the moral weekly or the critical literary magazine. However, the newspapers and magazines from this region are only available to a limited extent for the scientific community. Some of these periodicals are dispersed in German and Polish libraries and have not been bibliographically recorded. To this day, research in Poland and Germany has paid little attention to the press of Royal Prussia. Therefore, in the main bibliographical and descriptive studies on the Polish print media history the journals, magazines and newspapers from this region have so far often been marginalized or completely ignored.

The Lexicon will be considered as the first history of the printed Royal-Prussia Press. It will help to identify and explore the titles, which have survived to the present day and therefore record a rare but important part of Polish cultural heritage. As a relational database offering a straightforward data access and basic search combined with a faceted search function, the Lexicon will be a research tool for researchers and academics. The Lexicon consisting of diverse journalistic genres will provide valuable source material for future research in many research fields, such as the cultural history of Poland and Royal Prussia as well as the cultural history of the Enlightenment; history of literary criticism; history of early journalism, media and communication in regional and in European perspectives, history of scholar networks and of other discourses of the 17th and 18th century. Moreover, the Lexicon will grant a solid foundation for a new, completed and extended bibliography of Polish early newspapers and magazines as well as for a new comprehensive study of the press history in Poland. The Lexicon will be bilingual - owing on the one side to historical references of the Royal Prussia periodicals to both, Polish and German cultural spaces. On the other side, the bilingual Lexicon will ensure direct access to the database service by both German- and Polish-speaking users.