

'The Cultural Value of The Analogue Fiction Book in the Digital Age'

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Birmingham City University for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2021

Birmingham School of Media,
The Faculty of Performance, Media, and English

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the help of several people who I want to mention here.

My access to the English language as a student was anything but easy. That I did not give up and that I could finally discover my love for the English language I owe to my classmate, the late Julia Müller-Wesemann, who encouraged me and appeased my English teacher. She is very much missed by many.

When I applied to Birmingham City University in 2014, Professor Paul Long, Professor Nicholas Gebhardt, and Professor John Mercer accepted my application. It was Nicholas Gebhardt who paved the way for my research project. I would like to thank him very much, and I fondly remember the breakfasts we shared. Next, a big "thank you" goes to Paul Long, whose influence on my work I cannot emphasise enough. He helped me develop a substantial research project from my initial idea and outlined how it could take. Paul and his wife, Debra's hospitality, made me feel very welcome when I came to Birmingham. Special thanks go to Dr Oliver Carter, who has closely accompanied my work over the years. He has always encouraged me, has read many versions of sometimes worse and sometimes better chapters (and never lost faith in the project) and provided the initial spark for many ideas that shaped my work. He has gone far beyond his duty, and I cannot thank him enough for his support. Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank Professor Kirsten Forkert, whose close observations and detailed feedback on my work saved me from many wrong turns. This is highly appreciated.

Thanks to the following scholars whose work inspired and influenced this study: Jonathan Westin, Filipe Carreira da Silva, Dave Hesmondhalgh and Pierre Bourdieu. I want to thank all the authors, representatives of publishers, booksellers, collectors, and readers who took part in my focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews and who gave their time and offered me advice and support.

A big thank you goes to my parents, who have always supported and encouraged me. And finally, I would like to thank those people without whom this work would never have been possible. My wonderful wife Gabriela and my children Noah and Greta. Over the years, they have spent countless weekends without me and still supported me through all these years. I am forever grateful.

Abstract

This thesis addresses the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany in the digital age. It highlights crucial issues in the debate about the materiality of objects. Previous research on the digitisation of the analogue book tends to focus on the digitisation of texts and its consequences on reading and comprehending texts. Alternatively, contemporary research on digitisation in the book market has focused on the economic implications of the digitisation of the book trade, but not on the analogue book as a material object in relation to contemporary German fiction.

To explore how digitisation affects the cultural value of the analogue fiction book, I examine how producers of fiction books (authors and publishers), consumers of fiction books (readers) and intermediaries (booksellers) in Germany value the analogue fiction book in the digital age. I do this by drawing on interviews and focus-group discussions with members of the aforementioned three groups. The data is interrogated by applying Griswold's (2013) 'cultural diamond' to help understand the relationship between cultural objects, their creators, recipients and the social world in which they exist.

I argue that the analogue fiction book in the digital age is understood as a cultural good that is particularly valued as a counterpart to the advancing digitisation of media. The limiting material features of the analogue book are considered assets in the digital age. The analogue book is perceived as a medium that stands against digital media, which is perceived as full of distractions. The analogue book evokes nostalgic feelings and is seen by a particular group of readers and authors as a medium that needs to be protected against its decline. I conclude that the media and cultural studies would benefit from focusing on the materiality of the fiction book to research the further development of cultural value in the course of digitisation.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis addresses the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in the digital age by focusing on the analogue fiction book in Germany as a cultural object. I focus my research on the German book market to first narrow the scope in terms of publishers as well as authors and the readership. In addition, Germany is the third largest book market in the world (*Statista*, n.d.). Germany is also among the ten largest publishing markets in terms of the number of books published each year about population size (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2020), and it is home to the world's largest book publisher, Penguin Random House, and the world's largest book fair in Frankfurt am Main. In addition, it has one of the highest densities of booksellers in Europe (EHI Retail Institute, 2021). The book is, therefore, both an important economic factor for Germany and very present in the daily lives of the German population. But Germany has another important particularity: it has the lowest acceptance of eBooks by readers among the most significant book markets worldwide (Bocksch, 2015). Especially this aspect makes the German book market exceptionally suitable for exploring the cultural value of the analogue book in the age of digitisation.

Likewise, I focus on fiction literature in this thesis and exclude other forms of literature, such as e.g. academic or nonfiction literature, because the motivation for reading non-fiction or academic literature is usually quite different from the motivation for reading fiction literature. The essential ones are that fiction literature is about stories from the author's imagination, while non-fiction addresses actual events. For the reader, it makes a difference whether he or she is reading a fantastic story or a real one (Matravers, 2016; Smith, 2021). Though I claim that it is important to extend the research question to the field of non-fiction and academic literature as well. For this thesis, though, I decided against it as it would have expanded the scope in a way that could not have been satisfactorily managed within one thesis.

A lot of academic work on the analogue book in the digital age has focused on reading digital texts or eBooks and on changes in the book trade caused by digitisation rather than on the analogue book itself as an object (Brown, 2006; Delgado et al., 2018; Schiffrin, 2001, 2010; Schilhab and Walker, 2020; Singer and Alexander, 2017a; Striphas, 2009; Zboray and Zboray, 2013). Hence, I refer to the object of this study as the analogue book as the term 'analogue' describes non-digital and tangible things in contrast to the virtuality of eBooks that only become tangible in connection with reading devices such as eBook readers. As I use it in this thesis, the term 'analogue book' includes all non-digital, substantial, physical books, handwritten or printed. When I speak of objects in this thesis, I mean material, tangible things or artefacts unless the context makes it clear otherwise (for example, in chapter three on digital materiality). In Chapter one, on the definition of the book, I discuss the definition in more detail. The term codex is used when I explicitly talk about a book with a cover, back cover, spine, and pages. I use this term to distinguish analogue books from the paper scroll and other print formats that are often referred to as books. To study the cultural value of the analogue book in the age of digitisation, I took an approach that included book publishers, authors, booksellers, and readers. Empirical data was sourced using a combination of interviews and focus group discussions. I directed my research towards fiction books to compare them with other forms of media, such as music or film, which are also often used for entertainment purposes.

I found that my participants perceived the analogue book as an alternative medium against digital media's perceived distractions. It is, therefore, the material features of the analogue book that many value. The analogue book evokes nostalgic feelings, especially against the background of digitisation. Moreover, the analogue book is regarded as a status object by many authors and readers in a time when anyone can publish eBooks without the editing process of a

publisher. I state that in the age of digitisation, the analogue book's cultural value is significantly defined by its materiality and the forms of use that result from it.

This study's idea emerged from my professional experience as an A&R/Marketing Manager in the German music industry for companies such as Warner Music, EMI and edel records from 1996 to 2003. During this time, I experienced the renewal of the music industry triggered by the introduction of the compact disc and the subsequent growth of the music industry. Around the end of the 1990s, the MP3 was introduced to the German market, and some peers believed that this new digital format would lead to a worldwide digital marketplace where music would be sold from one market to the rest of the world without the need for a costly network of partner companies in each territory. Yet, the growing enthusiasm in the industry ended abruptly at the turn of the millennium when stock prices of the new Internet-based economy fell drastically. They assumed that this collapse occurred because—as became clear—the highly valued new Internet companies could not meet profit expectations in the foreseeable future. As this downturn strongly affected many media companies (to whom most record companies belonged) had heavily invested in this market, the music industry was strongly influenced by this downturn.

The simultaneous emergence of digital music piracy caused the music industry to slide into its most severe crisis (Rogers, 2013). Working for edel records during these years, numerous employees in the music business lost their jobs, and new competitors entered the music market. Apple's iTunes and streaming services, such as Spotify, provided legal access to millions of songs and, incidentally, paved the way for a fundamental change in using music by many music consumers. Once intended to show one's tastes, physical record collections were swapped for digital playlists that could be played, changed, and deleted. As a result, those who worked in

the music industry saw that consumers cared increasingly less about owning music and more about being able to access their favourite music using iPods and smartphones.

When I moved to book publishing in 2004, it was like travelling back in time. At that point, digitisation marginally affected books. Although the first eBook readers had been released and platforms such as the Gutenberg Project were providing out-of-copyright books as PDFs to download, only a few consumers made use of these options. eBooks played only a minor role in the publishing company I worked for. Management staff often ridiculed the idea that consumers would want to read books on a screen. The book, as it seemed, was the only medium that the digitisation of media would not affect—or at least this was my impression of listening to leading representatives of the trade. Only when the Amazon Kindle and the Sony eBook reader were introduced to the market did a market share for digital books slowly develop. Now publishers consider it relevant to invest in this field. I asked myself whether the development in the book market would be like the development I had experienced in the music industry. Would the way we use or consume books be changed by digitisation in the same way as digital files and streaming had altered the way various people consumed music? So, would the digitisation of the analogue book be related to the cultural value that is often assigned to analogue books? These three questions have been neglected in many previous research projects (Baron, 2009; Carter, 2016; Delgado et al., 2018; Lhowe, 2018; Purchase, 2019; Schilhab and Walker, 2020; Singer and Alexander, 2017a; Walker, 2013; Westin, 2013b).

The analogue book has been an object of previous research projects. This research at large focuses on the book trade, book publishing and its history (Darnton, 1982; Glomski, 1996; Silverman, 2016; Thompson, 2012; Zboray and Zboray, 2013). In addition, this research on the book pays attention to book collecting (Holzenberg, 2019; Lenaghan, 2012; Martin, 2009; Silver, 2011; Stam, 2006) and reading (Clinton, 2019; Singer and Alexander, 2017b; Walker,

2013) or annotations in analogue or digital books (Riggat and Smith, 1987; Rosenthal, 1997; Sherman, 2009). The cultural value of the book has also been discussed in book history (Davis, 2000; Scott-Warren, 2018; Scott-Warren and Zurcher, 2018). But the previous research focuses primarily on what we do with the analogue book, how it is produced and traded, and how it has been historically valued. Yet the cultural value of the analogue book in the age of digitisation, especially in the contemporary German fiction market, is underrepresented in research.

Therefore, I consider it necessary for the analogue book as an object in the digital age to receive more attention in media and cultural research. Of course, a part of this object is its design. By this, I mean creating the cover, inside pages, dust jacket and other book components. But book design is concerned with the design of books, whereas my research is concerned with the book as an object. For this reason, I deliberately decided against incorporating book design to leave the focus on the analogue book as a media concept. However, I have touched on the topic of book design in Chapter six on nostalgia and Chapter seven on the connoisseurs of the book. In addition, I want to refer to a variety of studies on book design, such as on the changing design of books since the beginning of digitisation (Stout, 2007), the fundamentals of book design (Haslam, 2006) or Kuzlo's study on e-book design (Uszkalo, 2007).

The digitisation of the book represents a transition in book production, like the introduction of the codex, the printing press, or the paperback that I all refer to in chapter two. However, these three transitions were not as profound as the book's digitisation when referring to the book as an object. The introduction of the eBook is the first transition in book production that leads to a book format that is not haptic, does not need two covers, and can be read in different ways (scrolling and flipping). In this respect, this transition differs from the previous transitions, such as the invention of the printing press (Johns, 2009; Kilgour, 1998) or the paperback introduction (McCleery, 2016; Sen, 1983).

Most digital devices, such as tablet computers, personal computers, smart TVs, and smartphones, offer various uses and functions. One can use these devices to watch, listen to, or read the content. The introduction of the eBook brought the book into the digital world and thus into an environment in which one can supplement the book with additional functions (e.g., video and sound) or consume it in parallel with other media (e.g., music) on the same device. Conversely, the analogue book can only be read or, in case of picture books, looked at.. The eBook or the eBook reader has significantly expanded the possibilities for using the book. Certain eBook readers also allow their users to surf the internet, stream music or films, or use them as digital cameras. Therefore, researchers have expected that the eBook would replace the analogue book. These additional functions of eBook readers would make it more attractive to read books on them (Miller and Bosman, 2011; Rapp, 2009; Wasserek, 2011). While LCD/plasma wide screen TVs have widely replaced tube TVs (Kalmykova et al., 2015), the PC has replaced the typewriter in most countries (Ballenger and Ballenger, 2017; Wershler-Henry, 2007), and the streaming of films has caused DVD consumption to plummet (Yu et al., 2017); the average global sales of analogue books still outnumber those of eBooks by nearly 80% (Clark and Phillips, 2019). Against this background, the question of the cultural value of the analogue book in the age of digitisation arises. Why has the analogue book maintained its status almost unchanged when digital media devices have in most cases prevailed against their analogue predecessors?

By studying the cultural value of the analogue book in Germany in the age of digitisation, I sought to further the debate about the diffusion of new media, the importance of the materiality of media and the use of media in the digital age. As I show in this thesis, most research on the book in the age of digitisation often considers the analogue book to be only a container of visual and textual content. I explore the role the analogue book's physical virtues play in the digital age in Germany and whether these virtues are translated into the digital era.

My research sought to explore the following research question:

What is the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany in the digital age?

To answer this question, I explored how authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers produce books, use books, read books, and collect books in the digital age and which role the book's format plays in these processes. I also researched how they value the analogue book as a physical object and how the book market relates to this value.

Another essential aspect to mention in the context of the digitisation of the book is the culture of the book (Fehrle and Birke, 2018). Both the analogue book and the eBook are part of what is considered book culture. The term 'book culture' is comprehensive and includes various aspects of literature and the book itself as an object. According to Kurschus (2015), one must begin with a definition of the two components of book culture: the culture and the book. Kurnuss (2015) gives three brief descriptions of culture. First, she states that fine arts and humanities are often identified as constituting culture. Second, the term 'culture' is considered to describe a degree of taste and refers to high culture in contrast to mass culture. Third, she explains that culture may also represent a common set of attitudes, beliefs, and values of a specific group of people or even a company (i.e., corporate culture or business culture).

At last, she describes a concept that sees culture as a pattern of knowledge, behaviour, and belief. All three ideas are frequently used and are sometimes intermingled in the public discourse on culture. I will provide a comprehensive definition of a book in chapter one and the development of the book market in chapter two. The book market is part of what is described as book culture (Carter, 2001) as it contains not only publishers, authors, and readers but also bookstores, booksellers, reading groups, libraries, book magazines, book fairs and others. Therefore, my research uses the concept of book cultures by focussing on the book in two

formats, an analogue book and an eBook and how authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers relate to these two formats.

To determine the relationships among authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers in connection with the book, I used Griswold's (2013) 'cultural diamond'. The cultural diamond is described by Griswold (2013:16) as an 'accounting device intended to encourage a fuller understanding of any cultural object's relationship to the social world'. Griswold created a framework of six links between creators, receivers, cultural objects, and the social world. A complete understanding of a given cultural object requires understanding all four points and six links. To get this understanding, I used focus-group interviews with authors, readers, and booksellers and one-on-one interviews with leading representatives of publishers to explore their views on the eBook as an object and how digitisation relates to these views. I interrogated this using a theoretical framework comprising the vocabulary of limitations (Westin, 2012), theories of nostalgia (Menke, 2017; Niemeyer, 2014) and social capital (Bourdieu, 1984). I argue that many consider the analogue book as a material object in the digital age to be a cultural artefact that is particularly valued for its material features and the uses made possible by the book's materiality. Moreover, the analogue book stands for a bygone era fondly remembered by many of my participants. Finally, the materiality of the analogue book is seen as a distinction compared to the unlimited field of digital media.

Chapters one, two, and three provide a theoretical framework for what I describe as the book's cultural and economic practices. Chapter one examines the object of the book itself, aiming to define what a book *is* by reviewing the content and physical aspects of books. I apply an etymological approach to determine whether the term 'book' explains what a 'book' is since the term "book" is used for many, often different, objects. A definition of the subject of my research is therefore necessary. I also research the meaning of the codex and discuss books'

content as the defining element of what makes a book. Again, the aim is to frame the object of this study since we use the term book in various contexts, which I explore in this chapter. I argue that, initially, it is necessary to get a clear understanding of the analogue book as both a concept and an object to research the cultural value of the physical object in the age of digitisation.

Chapter two discusses research on value creation in the cultural industries and the development of the cultural sector to evaluate how the analogue book's cultural value has developed and, more precisely, how the analogue book's cultural, political, and economic environment relates to this. Finally, the chapter introduces literature on the relation with the book market – especially the publishing industry—with the value perception of the book as an object to explore how the cultural value that we assign to the analogue book came into being. This is important for understanding which factors are related to our understanding of the cultural value of the book.

Chapter three is concerned with the analogue book in the digital age. I examine research on the digitisation of books to summarise the essential aspects of scholars. I discuss research on the use of the book in the age of digitisation. My goals are to determine the state of research on the digitisation of the book and to measure the importance of the book's format in previous research. I seek to show to what extent the cultural value of the book is relevant for studying the digitisation of the book.

In Chapter four, I describe the method I used to research the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation. I begin by outlining the advantages and limitations of taking a qualitative approach to studying the cultural value of the book. I then introduce Griswold's (2013) 'cultural diamond' and describe how I used her model to answer my research question. This model was crucial to my approach as I included producers (i.e., authors and publishers),

intermediaries (i.e., booksellers and librarians) and consumers (i.e., readers) in my research. It is a unique approach to researching the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation, as previous research in this field has considered readers and their reading behaviour for digital texts or with the economic changes in the book market caused by digitisation. I close the chapter by describing how I responded to the ethical issues I encountered while conducting the research.

Chapters five, six, seven, and eight contain the findings of this research. Chapter five considers the properties of analogue books that many of my participants mentioned in connection with the uses of books. To discuss these properties of analogue books and how they relate to our uses of books, I applied Westin's (2012) 'Vocabulary of Limitations', which shows that we often link cultural objects to society through how we use them. By discussing the book's physical features with my research participants, a large group considered the properties of the analogue book as advantages rather than disadvantages compared to digital media.

Chapter six considers expressions of nostalgia that were made in various forms by my interview and focus-group participants. I introduce theories of analogue nostalgia and media nostalgia, including fields such as photography, computer gaming, and film. I argue that digital nostalgia for the analogue book primarily correlates with publishers, booksellers, and readers. Readers want analogue books that remind them of their past, such as their childhood; recognising this trend, publishers satisfy these nostalgic sentiments with analogue books that come to the market with a retro design.

In Chapter seven, I use the results of my interviews and focus-group discussions to show that the analogue book is acquiring economic importance for various publishers. In my focus-group discussions, a large group of readers and authors demonstrated themselves as connoisseurs of the analogue book, who believed that it had to be preserved from digitisation. Therefore, these

connoisseurs of analogue books will spend more money on beautifully designed analogue books. Publishers take advantage of this willingness by producing lavishly designed analogue books that specifically target this group of readers and authors. The authors additionally showed that the analogue book had acquired status in the age of digitisation because being published in print is considered unique in a market dominated by digital products.

My dissertation concludes it is precisely the material properties of the analogue fiction book on which its cultural value in the age of digitisation is based in Germany. First, there are restrictions in the use of the analogue book that make the analogue book a medium that is not suitable for multimedia use. As a result, the analogue book is a medium that resists advancing digitisation. The material properties of the analogue book arouse nostalgic feelings. Be it through the design of book covers or other design elements that remind of past times, special moments or loved ones. Finally, connoisseurs of printed books ensure publishers continue strengthening the medium as a critical source of income. In contrast, the analogue book has gained importance as a status symbol for authors in the overfull market for digital publications. Therefore, I propose that the book and media studies should not regard the analogue book as a medium awaiting its replacement by the eBook but as an artefact whose analogue properties are gaining importance against the background of digitisation.

CHAPTER 1.

DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE BOOK

In this study, an essential first step was to evaluate how previous research defined the physical object known as an analogue book. Therefore, it is necessary to enclose the object of this study to clarify what I mean when I refer to an object as an analogue book. The importance of this distinction becomes apparent when one examines the variety of things or items named 'books', such as audiobooks, eBooks, silent books (i.e., books that tell stories only through pictures), scrapbooks, matchbooks, and chequebooks. Initially, an audiobook and a chequebook have nothing in common: the former is an audio file that contains fictional or nonfictional spoken content, whereas the latter is usually a physical object with front and back covers and paper cheques in between. However, the use of the term 'book' to describe these two different objects implies that a certain similarity exists - these objects have something in common that, in our perception, makes them books. I mention this comparison here because it shows two criteria that play a role in the book's definition: the object's physical properties and content. Although, academics often use the term 'book' as self-evident, without explaining in their papers what they mean by the word 'book'. For example, Kirby (2002) discusses the making and consuming of literature but not of the material artefact itself. Cummings (2020) considers the material artefact both as a cult object and an object of fear and anxiety, not for its material properties. Both speak of books without explaining which things they consider 'books'. Therefore, I state it is even more important to start this thesis by defining the object of this research, namely the analogue book. I begin this chapter by looking at etymological research approaches to determining the book. This approach serves the definition of the book by its name. The aim is to determine whether the term book and its derivatives show the properties that an object must have to be called a book.

1.1. Defining the Book by its Name

Various objects we surround ourselves with daily carry in their name, purpose, or use.

Therefore, an etymological starting point for explaining what a book is is a sensible approach.

Erler (2005:52) states that an etymological approach to defining a book provides a first idea of how and where the term developed. Erler notes that language offers information about the properties and functions of an object. I, therefore, consider an etymological approach as a helpful starting point for exploring to what extent the term book offers access to the exact definition of the book. I followed the approach of Stuart Hall (1997:18), who stresses the importance of language in describing things. Hall explains that signs are organised into languages, and it is the existence of common languages that translate our thoughts into words, sounds, or images. This is important as it helps people to express meanings and communicate ideas to others. The term 'book' serves as a name for an object and describes the concept of such an object. The word or phrase conveys what an object is made of and what it stands for. In the next paragraph, I examine the development of the term 'book'.

Funke (2006), bibliographer and director of the German Book Museum, explains that the Germanic terms for book, namely *block* (Middle High German), *buoh* (Old High German), *Book* (English, Old English *box*), *bok* (Swedish), and *boek* (Dutch), are assumed to have originally referred to the bark of a tree. He argues some scientists think Germanic tribes used beech wood to create wooden boards to scratch signs on. According to this theory, there is a direct connection between the word 'book' and the materiality books were made in these times. However, Kluge (2013) doubts the connection to beech and instead assumes that the origin of the word *bok* refers to the Germanic word for *sign* and, thus to the letters or content of such books. This would mean the term book refers to the content of the book and not its physical properties or the material it is made of. Therefore, it is necessary to state that the range of the

word 'book' in Germanic languages cannot be clearly established. However, the conflict over whether the book can be defined by its physical appearance or its content is already symbolically visible in this contradiction. Erler (2005) explains that the Latin and Romanesque word origins can, without doubt, be connected to the object's materiality and not the content. The word 'liber', for example, refers to the layer of fibrous bast beneath the bark. Mignon (1990) explains that 'livre', the French word for book, developed from the Latin 'liber' and the Spanish and Italian 'libro'. The Greek term 'biblos' refers to the Phoenician city of Biblos, known for being the main harbour for papyrus imports (Kluge, 2013), and the Hebrew word 'tefer' originally meant an animal skin that was used for writing upon (Mignon, 1990). It is important to note that the research discussed here comes from a western cultural perspective and represents western conceptions that refer to the term 'book' and its Latin, Romanesque or Germanic origins. Non-western concepts are not part of this discussion as my research is limited to the German book market.

This brief etymological discussion above shows that the origin of the word book in many languages relates to the book's materiality and not to the book's content. However, Erler's (2005) approach to defining the book, which uses an etymological starting point, has limitations. First, as mentioned above, it only considers western definitions and stems from Germanic, Romanesque and Latin languages. It only allows for recognising that the book must have some materiality. However, it provides little information about what this materiality must comprise or what it must contain. Although remarkably, the term 'book' indicates the materiality of the book rather than its content in many languages, this finding reaches its limits when different formats of books are compared; such formats have little in common physically apart from being physical items that store information. Therefore, having a definition that is more comprehensive in scope – one that moves beyond mere materiality – is necessary. The

following section, therefore, reviews definitions of the book that refer to the features an item must possess to be considered a book.

1.2. Defining the Book by its Features

In 1964, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO; 1964) provided a definition that clarified which artefacts could be called a 'book'. This definition was significant as it had a direct cultural and political influence. Giton (2015) explains that the book at UNESCO was linked to literacy as an essential step in economic development. In this discourse, literacy, education, book, and library went together; book distribution and the creation of libraries were directly associated with increasing the number of readers worldwide (Giton, 2015). Countries that applied for financial support from UNESCO for building up a publishing industry, libraries or schools had to show their progress in terms of the number of books read, borrowed, printed, and sold. Therefore, for these values to be comparable worldwide, it was necessary to determine which print products were to be regarded as books. As a result, the definition of the book by UNESCO gained global, political, and economic importance, especially for developing countries. UNESCO described the book as "a non-periodical printed publication of at least 49 pages" (Brouillette, 2014). The reason for UNESCO delineating the book from other print products was derived from the UNESCO book policy, which, after the end of the Second World War, viewed the book as a central medium for developing countries' educational and economic development. To measure the success of its book policy and the connected programmes for statistical purposes, such as how many books were read in a country or how many were printed and sold), UNESCO first had to determine which print products would be considered books (Giton, 2015).

According to UNESCO's definition, it is of no importance whether the content of a *book* is fictional, non-fictional or non-textual—it can be considered a book if it is a non-periodical print

publication of 49 pages. This definition does not require the book to have any textual or figurative content as a printed cover or spine would make such a publication a book. This definition only considers the book's physical attributes in a restrictive way. For example, the limited number of pages would exclude famous children's books such as *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak and Schickele, 1963), *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) or *The Rainbow Fish* (Pfister, 1992), as all three books contain only 48 pages or fewer. Another issue is that the word 'non-periodical' excluded daily papers, magazines, and scientific journals from the realm of books. Therefore, this definition proves problematic; for example, a journal published annually in book format would be considered a periodical publication. Though, a novel by Eleanor Hibbert, who for 50 years published more than one book per year under a variety of pen names, would not be considered to be a periodical publication (Kovač *et al.*, 2019). In addition, the term 'printed' is given a special meaning.

By 1964, book printing technology had developed so that only print runs larger than 500–1000 copies containing more than three printing sheets were financially viable. This made self-publishing as we know it today almost impossible. Therefore, UNESCO's definition of the book only allows for books published by professional (i.e., commercial) publishers to be called books (Kovač *et al.*, 2019). A one-off fan publication written on a typewriter, for example, and multiplied by duplicating copies on a copier would thus not be considered a book, even if it contained more than 49 pages. In sum, UNESCO's definition of the book is problematic because it excludes many children's books and creates confusion by defining certain publications as periodicals that are not published periodically and others that are regularly published as not being periodicals.

It only considers printed publications that have been published for commercial purposes as books. However, UNESCO's definition goes beyond the physical attributes of the medium of

books. It links the description of a book to how books are published and their economic benefits. UNESCO's explanation of the book is still in use today; thus, statistics regarding global book publishing or reading until today are based on the said definition. Moreover, the fact that UNESCO's definition does not acknowledge eBooks shows that it is incomplete and cannot be used as a final definition.

A further issue is that UNESCO's definition of a book does not mention its content. This is remarkable against the background that UNESCO understood the book as an educational medium in the first place. As previously mentioned, the book is understood to be a medium that should help advance the development of states by contributing to the education of their population (Giton, 2015). However, by focusing its definition merely on the physical appearance of the book and the way it is published rather than on the content of a book, UNESCO makes it challenging to measure the success of their book policy. It is important to remember that the book policy aims to promote literacy and education. I argue that the increasing sales of notebooks in each country would provide information about whether a country's literacy is progressing as people are writing more; however, this says little about the increasing education of a country in other fields such as history, literature, or languages. In addition, one can argue that information about increased education in different areas would only be obtained if one stipulates that a print product must have fictional or nonfictional content that could be used for educational purposes.

What is important to note is that UNESCO's definition of the book is based on the material features that make a printed object a book. Additionally, it considers the conditions under which a print product must enter the market to be considered a book. UNESCO's definition says nothing about that product's literary or symbolic content. Therefore, this definition identifies the book as a medium for storing content without mentioning the kind of content. The

UNESCO definition is, therefore, equally focused on the material features as most of the etymological approaches discussed above. The concentration of the UNESCO definition also reveals an important aspect. It only relates to the format of the codex. It defines a book as an object with book covers between which there are bound or glued pages. Other formats, such as scrolls, are, therefore, not books. This approach that a book must consist of a cover, spine and pages can also be found among other scholars and signifies a critical narrowing of the definition of the book, as I will show in the next section.

1.3. The Meaning of the Codex

The terms *codex* and *book* are often used interchangeably (Baron, 2009); however, little research has been conducted on whether this equation applies. In one of the few examples, the book historian Werner Faulstich (2004) attempted to define the differences between the book (i.e., the codex) and the scroll to explain why only the codex should be considered a book. The book is primarily a storage medium for long cultic texts that emerged at the end of the first century for Faulstich. The scroll, he argues, embodies the rule of religious world order as scrolls were used in religious services. For example, Faulstich mentions the Egyptian 'Book of the Dead or the 'Torah'. Although he acknowledges that the scroll has become profaned since ancient times, he considers scrolls to be 'Men Media'. According to Faulstich (2004a), 'Men Media' are media that develop their benefits only in interaction with the user. For example, Faulstich mentions the priest unrolling the cultic character of the scroll in a festive manner. The codex for Faulstich is both a writing medium and a storage medium—it does not need to be used to perform its function.

For me, Faulstich's definition has several weaknesses. First, his proposition that the scroll embodied religious rulership can apply to the codex equally. Faulstich states that Emperor Constantine commissioned 50 copies of the Bible as a codex in the 4th century to substantiate

that Christianity was now the state religion (Faulstich, 2004). In this context, Faulstich's assertion that the scroll is a lecture medium while the codex is a storage medium cannot be upheld because the libraries in Alexandria and Athens contained mostly writing boards, papers, letters and scrolls, and their main function was to store knowledge and cultic texts (Erler, 2005). Moreover, the cultic use of the codex in church services (e.g., when the priest lifts the bible to the cross or the congregation) shows that the codex is used in a similar cultic way as the scroll was, according to Faulstich (2004b). I, therefore, argue that Faulstich's approach to defining what makes a book neglects some critical points and thus comes to imprecise conclusions.

The archaeologist and historian Westin (2013a), whose research focuses on how representations relate to our perception of culture, also defines the book in a way that assumes the book is necessarily a codex. Westin argues that the book is content presented in a specific format. He describes that format as a cover enclosing a minimum number of pages. It is not dependent on what type of content it contains or if it is structured around these pages. He argues that the pages can be left blank, and it would, to some degree, still be recognized as a book. Like UNESCO's definition (2014), Westin places no importance on the content of books but stresses the format as being that of a codex. Westin does not, however, fully explain how he came to define the book in this way. He does not compare his definition to other definitions or provide further argumentation for his argument.

Further definitions and argumentation for the codex as the format of a book have been proposed by the book historians Kovač, Wischenbart and van der Weel (2019). They state that people often recognise ancient scrolls and clay tablets as predecessors of printed books, even though they share few physical features. It can be argued that the rationale behind this all-embracing historical perception of the book is reflected in the view that all of these formats of

books performed similar tasks as they were read, bought, sold or collected in different periods, even if the physical form of early books was different from that of today (Howard, 2009; Johnston, 2019). I suggest that these various incarnations of the book may look different but are – at a certain level of abstraction – the same or at least similar purposes; however, this neglects not only the physical differences among textual objects but also the vastly different cultural and societal contexts in which they come into being and the functions they perform.

A further example stresses this issue even more. Kovač et al. (2019:315) argue that an early printed bible performed vastly different than a copy of a Dan Brown novel. They say that Johannes Gutenberg (the German inventor of the mechanical movable-type printing press), if taken by the time machine to a contemporary bookshop, would most likely recognise the Dan Brown novel as a 'distant grandchild of his bible' (Kovač *et al.*, 2019). By contrast, if a Babylonian priest were given a paperback, he would be less likely to recognise the functional relationship between that paperback and a clay tablet. This argumentation by Kovač shows that when we talk about a book, we mostly think about codices rather than clay tablets or scrolls. This view is supported by examples of scholars who use the terms *book* and *codex* interchangeably, whereas the scroll is rarely referred to as a book (Chartier, 1995; Erler, 2005; Gilbert, 2013; Houston, 2016).

In sum, I argue that we consider the codex format when discussing the book. Because the current research deals with the question of the cultural value of the analogue book in the age of digitisation, the following questions arise: If we accept that the book as an artefact is linked to the codex format, then what can be said for audiobooks or eBooks? To what extent can the eBook be called a codex? Although it often virtually resembles the look and functions of a codex, an eBook is a digital file. It is accepted that publishers distribute books in different formats; however, what happens when the publisher creates an audiobook that resembles a

bestseller in nearly every way, with the only difference being the format? (Johnson, 2019). As these questions demonstrate, it is essential to look at the book from its physical outer shell and take its content into account when defining the book, which I will attempt in the next section.

1.4. Content as the Defining Element of the Book

Johnson (2019:3) states that the definition of the book must capture the essence of content while remaining fluid enough to encompass existing and future packaging. Thus, Johnson places the focus on the content of the book. This view is supported by the scholar and inventor of librarian systems, Kilgour (1998:3), who describes the book as the 'storehouse of human knowledge', thus stressing the importance of content over format. Eliot and Rose (2007:3) state that a book is a text that has been 'multiplied, distributed, or in some way made public'. This definition lacks clarity in various ways as it discounts those books that are printed and never made available to the public, such as pulped books and private print runs, which sit in a room, never shared; nevertheless, it is still interesting as it puts the focus on the content of books. The most comprehensive approach to defining a book that has placed importance on the content was proposed by the book historian Mignon (1990), who named some features that make a book. Among them are the *form* (although Mignon acknowledges that this has changed throughout the centuries); the *writing materials* (e.g., pencils, pens, and others); the *form of recording* of the content, which includes graphics and symbols (thus, print products with blank pages are not books); and most importantly *content*. Mignon considers it crucial that the book contains content. He also gives an overview of what kind of content a book should have. Mignon (1990: 16) states that the content of a book represents the knowledge and ambitions of individuals, interests of groups and communities and the civilisational achievements of humanity. He cites Muszkowski, who described the book as 'the result of graphic materialisation of cultural content, which forms a definite unit, to preserve, transmit and disseminate it to people' (1990:

16). Mignon (1990:16) explains that the book is a 'material instrument for the fixation and transmission of cultural content'. As such, it fixes and conserves the achievements of humanity and transmits them through time and space. It serves the development of sciences, technology, and literature, supports religious, political, and social activities, and does its part for aesthetic, ethical and patriotic education. Moreover, it has an element of educational training as well as for leisure activities.

Two aspects of this definition are remarkable. First, Mignon acknowledges that the form of a book can change, and it would still be called a book, thus accepting that it is not a fixed format that makes a book; however, he limits this form to print products and leaves out digital formats. The second remarkable aspect of Mignon's (1990) definition is the intense focus on the content of books. He describes books as 'a material instrument for the fixation and transmission of cultural content' and states that the book 'does its part for education. To summarise Mignon's (1990) definition of what makes a book, one can say that a book has a certain format that includes content and that the book is meant to make this content available so it can be used. This focus on content is dominant in fields such as book history, book studies or literature studies. The book as a 'thing' recedes behind its content. It increasingly takes on the role of a 'box' or 'container' that is used to convey interesting textual and visual material.

Simultaneously, the content becomes a defining aspect of what makes a book. Armstrong (2008), whose work focuses on electronic information resources and their effective use in libraries, explains that a book without its content would be useless except for developing new content. According to Armstrong (2008:4), '[a] book is designed and serves no purpose other than conveying content. So, when we talk of a book, surely, we refer implicitly to the content'. Armstrong offers the example that when people talk about a book, they speak about its content, not the number of pages or the paper. He continues, '[t]he purely physical aspect is only important in so far as it allows an author's wit, wisdom or whimsy to be communicated

easily, to be "transported" from author/publisher via bookshop or library to readers. This view is also supported by Bazin (1996:158), who describes the book as a 'stable, reliable and public interface' between the author and the reader. In this definition, the book is nothing more than a container for the text or images it is meant to carry.

A focus on the book only being there to transmit content is often eminent in book history. Here, research is strongly focused on the textual content of books, or on their authors and publishers, and the reception of books by readers, but not so often on the format of the book itself (Barnhisel, 2010; Finkelstein and McCleery, 2013; Johns, 2009; McElligott, 2014). In his essay *What is the history of books?*, Darnton (1982) describes the development of the field of book history. He argues that book history should focus its research on printers, book production, shippers and how books reach bookstores. He also mentions readers and suggests that book history should research how they make sense of signs on the printed page. However, the book as a physical object plays a minor role in Darnton's model, apart from being a commodity that needs to be shipped from the printer to the bookstore. The book is a 'thing' that is produced to carry the text that an author has written and that readers wish to read. It is only of interest insofar as it is worthy of studying the socioeconomic processes in which the book exists. Even though Darnton (2007) revised his essay to make some amendments, he suggests that book history should focus its research on the following three questions: How do books come into being? How do they reach readers? What do readers make of them? The book as a material object is not part of this research focus. Instead, Darnton's focus is on the writing process, the author's work, how readers become aware of books and what readers make of books.

This view proposed by Darnton is also evident in other scientific works on the nature of the book, which take a very different approach to defining what makes a book compared with the UNESCO's definition. For example, Eco (1981) researched the reader's role and how readers

produce text by reading them. Brown et al. (2007) understand the book as a vessel for words and concentrate their research on readers' relationships with books. They examine the rituals of reading in early New England to come to a new understanding of the book as an object of reverence, a medium for reading performance and an organisational system for word and image. Reuveni (2006) considers reading habits in pre-war Germany by closely examining the reading culture in the Weimar period and the relationship that reading had with the consumption of other goods.

Furthermore, works on readers and reading include research on reading books in 18th-century America (Loughran, 2007) and Jackson's *The reading of books* (2001), in which he focuses on the relationship between author and reader, describing reading as the art of extracting essences from books for our own – not the author's – benefit. Kirby (2002:xi) focuses on the books in four sections: the reader, the writer, the critic and the book. All four chapters revolve around the content of the book. The first chapter is about reading to children. In the chapter about writers, Kirby describes specific characteristics that all writers have in common. The critic chapter deals with the profession of the literary critic, while the chapter called 'What is a book' is based on a poll of favourite books among readers from different age groups. Thus, Kirby's definition of a book focuses on its content, the stories, the texts, and how they are received. When Kirby makes a statement as to what, in his understanding, makes a book, he declares that for most people, the terms 'novel' and 'book' 'are all but synonymous' (2002:xii). However, this definition is far too narrow because it excludes general nonfiction books and most children's books and declares those non-books. For example, poetry books and collections of short stories would not be considered books following Kirby's (2002) definition.

As demonstrated by this overview of definitions of what makes an object a book, the analogue book is often equated with its textual or graphical content. In this context, the book becomes

only its content, and the material attributes almost vanish in discussing what makes a book. This again contrasts with UNESCO's definition. This even happens in a field of research that is expected to deal with the book as a material object, namely that of book collecting. Widener (2012) presented research on Morris L. Cohen, a law librarian with a passion for collecting law-related books. Widener explains that Cohen began building a collection of law-related children's books in 1960. Although the book is titled 'Morris Cohen and the Art of Book Collecting', the book as an object plays a minor role, favouring the textual content Morris L. Cohen was interested in for his collection.

One can argue that the *Art of Book Collecting* is not about books but about the art of collecting texts on a topic. Widener synonymously uses the terms 'book collecting' and 'text collecting'. Lenaghan (2012:4), in her work on the Caxton Book Club, acknowledges the importance of the book as a material object. She states books are 'rarely considered objects whose significance extends beyond their capacity as content providers'. Although Lenaghan acknowledges this aspect, it is of minor importance in her work. She gave more attention to the topics collected by the collectors in her study. For example, she mentions that the collectors collect books on American literature, Americana, books about books, film, children's books, English literature and so on (2012:115). According to Lenaghan, collectors collect topics and themes rather than material objects. Lenaghan (2012:268) states that '[b]ooks are materially significant, therefore, only so much as they embody what would otherwise be transparent—memories, history, identity, friendship'. She continues that for collectors, books are a means to connect. Through books, they connect to other collectors, to a previous owner or author, to the past from which the book came, or to when the collector him/herself found the book. In other words, it is more about the ideal value that the book represents and not so much about the physical object of paper, leather, or linen.

A further example is proposed by Nicholas A. Basbanes (1999), who describes the story of Aaron Lansky, a book collector who collected over 300,000 books in Yiddish intending to save Yiddish literature in just four years. He had heard that in the United States (U.S.), books written in Yiddish were to be destroyed, as too few people could still read them. He later founded 'The Yiddish Book Centre' to preserve Yiddish literature in the U.S. Lansky did not collect the books for their actual value as collectors' items but collected them for the language they were written in. In his case, it made no difference whether the books were hardcovers or paperback or were new or used, whether they came from a renowned library or a warehouse, or whether they contained annotations or had belonged to a famous person. The materiality of the format of the books was only vital insofar as he feared that the Yiddish language would disappear from the U.S. if these physical books had been destroyed or forgotten. Lansky would have collected any item that contained texts written in Yiddish. I do not suggest that research on book collecting does not focus on books as material artefacts. The quality of the paper or aspects that highlight the material appearance or value of books over its textual or graphical content is discussed by Glomski (1996), Koopman (2016), Cardinal (2004), Hancock (2007) and Silver (2011).

However, the examples mentioned above on the importance of the content of books for collectors indicate that book collecting can refer to both the object and the textual or visual content. This again raises the following question: What is a book—the physical thing (i.e., the format of the codex) or the content it contains? If I follow Darnton (1982, 2007) – who suggests that a book is made of its content and the connections between authors, readers and publishers who write, produce and consume the book – then the materiality or physicality of the book loses importance. The combination of content, authors, publishers, producers, and consumers is not specific to the analogue book but also exists in other contexts. We find them, for example, in film or theatre, where authors write scripts and production companies produce

the plays or movies, just as publishers produce books, viewers consume the content, and readers read texts. Thus, if the book is nothing more than its content and socioeconomic environment, what is the difference between the analogue book and other media that show, play or broadcast content to be consumed, collected, distributed, and sold?

At this point, one might ask whether the book as a definable object has already died without anybody noticing it (Kovač *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, when the book's specific elements that distinguish it from other forms of media disappear, reading might be associated with other activities. For example, people might suggest reading books when they listen to audiobooks or podcasts, playing with story apps, or skimming online on fiction platforms. One of them is Wattpad, an online platform where one can read and download millions of eBooks that members of the Wattpad community write. Therefore, I claim that the aforementioned book definitions are not suitable in the age of digitisation because they do not help provide a particular definition of the book. In the next section, I present an approach brought forward by Kovač *et al.* (2019), who developed a layered system for defining the book that acknowledges the material properties, the structure and the content in determining what makes an object a book.

1.5. A 'Quantum Approach' to Defining the Book

Kovač *et al.* (2019:324) suggest that the book is initially defined by its form of long form reading. They state that '[...] the survival of the book as a medium with special status depends on whether society continues to recognise long-form reading as an activity of sufficient cultural importance to keep supporting the publishing industry through market regulation, despite the decline of the book's importance as the bearer of textual knowledge'. Eco (2006) supports this approach by explaining that differences between a book and any other information form are the reader's 'psychological mechanisms of attention', which vary between a book and other textual

formats. Eco argues that the book as a reading object promotes concentration and intensity with textual content. He states that long-form reading sets a book apart from other reading, requiring greater focus or concentration. The length of a text and, consequently, the necessary engagement with it set the book apart from other forms of reading or other media. One can object to this argument by highlighting how a focus on long-form reading would again exclude silent books (books that tell stories only through pictures), picture books and audiobooks, as previous definitions of the book – including the definition by UNESCO – have done so before. Consequently, naming long-form reading as the defining difference to define what makes a book would not advance the definition of the book. However, another approach to the aspect of long form reading brings some clarity and presents a way to come closer to a definition of the book.

Although I deal with the digitisation of the book in detail in Chapter three, it makes sense at this point to take a brief look ahead. From 2017 to 2019, three meta-studies covering more than 200 earlier reading studies with more than 200,000 participants revealed that when reading the exact long informational text, one's understanding will differ depending on whether the text is read from the screen or paper (Clinton, 2019; Delgado et al., 2018; Singer and Alexander, 2017b). These studies have made clear that different substrates evoke different ways in which we read and understand the text. Kovač and van der Weel (2018) summarised the correlations between reading substrates and reading modes through a triad of skimming (online short textual, audio and video content, predominantly accessed on screen); immersive reading (long and medium-sized linear texts read on screen or paper, such as genre fiction); and deep reading (short- and long-form cognitively demanding linear texts such as poetry, literary fiction and serious nonfiction, predominantly read on paper). Consequently, the mode of reading and the substrate from which it is read ought to become one of the attributes that define a book. Again, one can state that this approach banishes several formats that we are used to calling 'books'

such as audiobooks, silent books, colouring books, and gamified book-based story apps. Moreover, the categories' deep, immersive, and long-form are subjective and cannot be measured or standardised in a single way for every reader. I, therefore, state that defining a book solely as a long form reading object is insufficient, and an additional aspect must be taken into consideration.

The historian Eisenstein (1985) describes that the information explosion of the early print era required tools for navigating the information. Consequently, page numbers, chapters, alphabetical indexes, title pages, author names and alphabetical organisation of texts came into being. Cope and Philips (2006) argue that such tools are the main elements of the printed book's 'information architecture'. They identified such factors as the title, cover, title page, author, linear structure, page numbers, chapters, alphabetical order, and body text and images.

This is an essential step in defining the book as it adds another dimension to the previous approaches in the form of the information structure. As a result, the question of the definition of the book no longer moves only between the material properties and the graphic and textual content. The structure of the book adds an element that acts as a link between content and material form. In combining the concepts of deep reading and the 'information architecture' (Cope and Phillips, 2006), one gets closer to the textual objects that the book industry predominantly distributed in the 20th century. Nevertheless, using only these two defining criteria leaves out many other formats such as silent books, audiobooks, picture books and many eBooks that are shorter reads (Johnson, 2019). Kovač et al. (2019:327) therefore suggest what they call a 'quantum approach', naming the following four criteria that help to define what a book is:

- a minimum length;
- an emphasis on textual content;
- boundaries to its form;
- a book-information-architecture.

The artefact that meets all four criteria is the analogue book of a certain length. Ebooks remain the closest to print books as they are meant for reading, have a long-form narrative, and apply recognisable organisational tools to linear content. One can state, however, that eBooks provide some additional features that print books lack. For example, they provide the opportunity to digitally share annotations and highlights and measure and benchmark reading dynamics (Johnson, 2019). By contrast, audiobooks are narrated audio versions of books that are often (but not necessarily) abridged. Following the definition of Kovač et al. (2019), audiobooks might be considered more distant relatives of books. They involve no reading in the sense of decoding characters, but as a hardcover version on tape or CD, they come with a cover sleeve and in a linear format. The narrator often mentions the chapter number or name, so the structure is noticeable to the listener. On the other hand, silent books provide little or no textual content but provide a more book-like information architecture than audiobooks. The most distant relative might be colouring books as they only have a small set of elements of book architecture. (Kovač *et al.*, 2019) suggest a model for the hierarchy of the book, with the printed paper book at the core and the colouring book as the furthest removed layer. As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the chequebook would consequently be outside this ranking. It does not provide any textual content that can be considered reading material. Neither allows for extended reading, providing no structure that can be regarded as a book information architecture such as chapters, author, or index. The figure below shows the hierarchy of the

different levels.

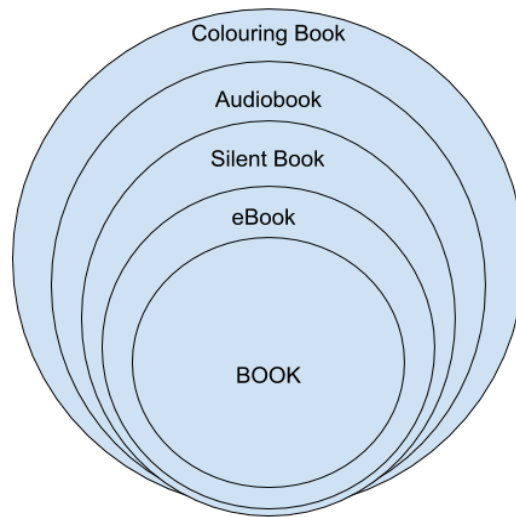


Figure 1 The hierarchy of the Book (from Kovac et al., 2019)

I claim that this approach is the most helpful attempt at defining the book thus far. This approach is neither limited to purely physical elements nor does it reduce the definition of the book to its content. It is just as extensive and creates a system in which books and book-like objects and formats can be displayed in relation to one another. It acknowledges the codex as the core of the book—a medium to be read with a title, a minimum length, an emphasis on textual content, boundaries to its form and a book information architecture. The other book-like formats are defined and assigned to the book to meet the four specific criteria. This enables us to determine the book and put new forms, commonly referred to as books, in a codex format with the 'original' book. In addition, this means that we do not have to find a definition that fits all formats equally and, therefore, does not have to deny objects that are recognised as books

the status of being a book. Finally, this model also allows an expansion of the objects and formats that people commonly perceive as books, which means that it can be applied to future technologies.

For this thesis, I attempted to research the cultural value of the analogue book in the digital age; therefore, I based my definition on the definition of Kovač et al. (2019), as it is the most comprehensive and inclusive definition of what makes a book. This definition is clearly outlined but simultaneously formulated in such a way that future new media can be defined as a book or clearly classified as a non-book according to these criteria. For my thesis, I focused on the centre of Kovač et al.'s (2019) definition, meaning the analogue book in the form of a codex of a certain length and with a given structure in the form of chapter page numbers and textual or graphical content. In conclusion, focusing on one format allowed me to reach a depth in my research that would not have been possible had I included different formats such as audiobooks and eBooks. Furthermore, by using Kovač et al.'s (2019) definition of the book in my thesis, I have clearly distinguished which books are part of this research.

1.6. Summary

This chapter explored how the book has been conceptualised. At the core of this, so I state, is the question of what a book is. As the literature presented in this chapter indicates, various approaches have been taken to define the book as an object. These started with an etymological approach that traced the meaning of the book to the meaning of the word and concluded that the term 'book' primarily means the physical nature of the book. The specific physical format of the book also played an essential role in the book's definition by UNESCO. However, as with the etymological approach, this was about the material, function, scope, and appearance. I showed that this definition is problematic because it excludes many works, such as some children's books or novels published serially. This gave rise to the importance of the codex's

format in defining the book. The codex, as I showed is the format that most people would recognise today as the book's format.

I also showed that the external format is not the only decisive criterion. It is also vital that the pages contain graphical or textual content for the object to be considered a book. For this purpose, I presented and examined research on the meaning of books' textual and visual content. I concluded that the definition of the book must comprise of content and form. In this context, I used the definition of Kovač et al. (2019), who formulated four criteria for defining the book. This is a particular scope to differentiate the book from other print products such as magazines and a concentration on textual content.

It provides certain limitations of the format, such as a beginning and end, a cover, and an organisational structure. I have argued that this is the best working approach for defining the book. On the one hand, the definition clearly outlines an object's criteria to be considered a book. The definition introduces a sort of ranking in the book's hierarchy, which provides information about which media are close to the core definition and which are further away from it. Finally, this definition also allows future media to be classified according to this hierarchy as a book or even as a non-book. In my research, I focused on the analogue book and researched the cultural value of this format in the digital age. Against this background, I considered it necessary to examine how the cultural value of the book has developed to be able to research – based on this knowledge – how the cultural value of the book relates to digitisation. Therefore, in the next chapter, I evaluate research on the development of the cultural value of the book.

CHAPTER 2.

CULTURAL OBJECT AND COMMODITY – THE BOOK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MARKET

This chapter evaluates previous research on the development of the cultural value of the book. I claim that the cultural value can be traced to its use as a religious symbol, as a collector's item, as an object for presenting wealth and education and as a carrier of knowledge and new ideas. By this, I mean that, at first, there were periods during which the book was not yet widely available as a commodity for a large proportion of the population but was instead used as an embodiment of often secret knowledge and an object in cultic rituals (Bluhm, 2009; Janzin and Güntner, 2007). I claim that this gave the book a certain aura. Building on this, I reason that the commercialisation of the book through the centuries has built on the original status of the book as a cultural asset. By this, I mean that the creative industries, and in particular the book market such as publishers, book dealers and other players in the book and culture market, have also built up and maintained the special status of the book as a cultural item, which is also reflected in many countries' cultural policies. This meaning of the book as an object and a cultural concept was (and is) expressed to a large extent via the material appearance of the book, as I show in this chapter.

This chapter aims to determine whether the book market and the cultural industries are related to the cultural value of the analogue book and how this is related to the digitisation of the book. First, I provide a brief history of book culture and discuss which developments of this history relate to the cultural value of the book, especially the introduction of the letterpress print. From there I discuss the emergence of the mass market for books and how this relates to the cultural value of the analogue book. This is followed by a discussion of research regarding aura (Benjamin, 1991) and the aspects of reproduction, discussing how the reproduction of the book

relates to its cultural value. Building on this, I evaluate research on the display, reading, selling, sharing and development of the book market (various aspects related to the book, which I summarise under the term 'book culture'), which participated in the development of the cultural value of the book. The aim is to discover whether the broader distribution of the book and the commercialisation that went with it were related to the book's cultural value. At the end of the chapter, I partly return to the starting point by examining research on the literary (Murray, 2013) to discuss the extent to which the cultural value of the book is essential in other areas of the cultural industries. The purpose is to evaluate whether the literary transmission into a film is a blueprint for transferring the literary into the digital.

2.1. A Brief History of Book Culture

The German media scholar Werner Faulstich (2012) reasons that the beginning of the history of the book lay in the introduction of the codex. He means that papyrus rolls, and clay tablets are not the book's predecessors, an argument I also briefly discussed in Chapter one. Faulstich (2012) claims that the papyrus roll was used for longer sacred texts and therefore has an authoritative, representative character. On the other hand, the codex was intended as a writing medium (2012:41). He explains that the early Christians preferred the codex over scriptures for practical reasons; for example, the codex was easier to hide when transported secretly during the persecution of Christians. Second, the codex was considered to separate Christian writings (and the Christian faith) from previous pagan religions, such as those in Egypt and Judaism, which used papyrus rolls to store their sacred writings (2012:42). The codex became the symbol of the 'new' faith. Cummings (2013:95) states that the importance of the codex as a symbol would later manifest in ritual practices such as the raising of the book during service, the carrying of it in procession, or the kissing of the codex or kneeling before it. I argue that through these ritual acts, the sacredness of the text in the book was symbolically projected onto

the object, namely the physical or analogue book. Therefore, the holiness of the text would partly pass over to the book as an object. This process would load the reader with a cultural value separating it from other cultural goods without immediate religious significance. The sacredness was, therefore, the first value passed on to the book. Another form of value was added in the medieval ages, as I discuss in the following paragraph.

In the medieval ages, books became luxury goods with cut decorations or impressive illustrations, making them famous spoils of war that were kept as treasures in monasteries and among the aristocracy (Jochum, 1993). Consequently, the book developed from being an object of sacred ritual (at least for Christians) to a valuable object in a worldly sense, which led to the foundation of book collecting. The Chancellor of the Church of Amiens is considered to have been the first to collect books systematically. His book *Bibliomania* is a guide for setting up a library (Erler, 2005). These libraries of Abbots and Noblemen were, above all, signs of sophistication and noble lifestyle. For this purpose, they were furnished with leather covers, fine fabrics, and precious metals: 'They were objects that celebrated and staged the splendour of the courtyard'(Cavallo et al., 1999:36). In this context, another development is worth mentioning. While books used to be stored with the spine towards the back of the shelves and the fore-edge facing the room, this changed in the medieval ages. Owners of books wanted visitors to know which books they owned (and probably had read); therefore, the spine had to face the room so that the titles of books could be read (Schön, 1999). From the beginning of the 17th century, the book increased its value as an object of education and representation. In this context, further aspects regarding the book gained importance. Schön (1999:22) describes that the compilation of libraries of wealthy nobles had to follow certain principles. Books needed to be 'raritas' (rare and exceptional), 'curiositas' (books that were out of the ordinary), 'presiositas' (Art) and 'perfectio' (perfect).

Most importantly, all of this had to be 'spectatio' (visible). In the 17th century, the term *bibliophile* came into broader use. Bibliophiles knew about books, collected, and presented books in their homes but rarely read them (Jochum, 1993). This was even strengthened at the beginning of the 19th century. In the Biedermeier period (1818–1848), an emerging non-aristocratic wealthy middle class (later called the *Bourgeoisie*) started setting up private book rooms (smaller libraries). These not only served for reading by oneself but also – and even more so – for showing off one's book collection to visitors (Becher, 1990). This was also when publishers started to produce luxury editions of books with furniture for presentation (Jochum, 1993). The book had become an object whose physical features and value for the display was often more important to its owners than its content. Although books were sold and treated as commodities by this time, the representative character of the books was outstanding (Manguel, 1996).

At this point, one can summarise that although in the early Middle Ages, the book was almost exclusively confined to the sacred area of the monasteries, it developed into a central part of secular culture thanks to urbanisation and the founding of the first universities (e.g., Bologna 1088, Paris 1150). Eventually, the book became a vehicle for education. As this section has also shown, it was not always necessary that the owners read their books. Instead, the mere presence of books transferred the respective value onto their owner (Escarpit, 1966). A notable change for the book happened in the 15th century with the introduction of the letterpress print and the widespread distribution of the book beyond the previous circles. O'Connor (2010:14) states that the invention of printing was not primarily seen as epoch-making because it gave rise to the book's cultural commodity but because it radically transformed the sphere of media and communications as it challenged the established religious and political authority. The Catholic church at first supported the printing of books. Bishops saw the possibility of disseminating carefully edited and completely identical texts of the teachings, excluding the

numerous mistakes that occurred when copying the texts by hand (Füssel, 2020). However, this attitude later changed with the spread of the writings of Luther (Jochum, 1993). Now, the church wanted to get hold of writings it considered heretical. In this context, the media scientist Joachim Leonhard (1999) describes the aspect of censorship. Before the invention of the letterpress print, it was easy to ban critical or heretical ideas by simply arresting the creator and banning the handful of hand-copied issues of his books. However, in the age of the letterpress print, censorship became more difficult as print runs increased, and books could be easily spread within weeks. This led to the dissemination of ideas that were rejected by the church or other authorities.

From then on, the book itself was often persecuted because it had to be destroyed as a bearer of dangerous ideas. It was burned on behalf of the creators or disseminators of these ideas (Chodorow et al., 2007). Darnton and Heinemann (2016) state that book burning had two intentions: first, it stood for the symbolic burning of the ideas contained therein, and second, it served as a warning to those who sympathised with said ideas. I state that although the banning and burning of books were the first acts of censorship to keep specific ideas from spreading, the result was that the book itself as an object became a symbol for provocative ideas, or in other words, ideas that challenged the powerful. In this section, I showed that the letterpress print, although first an instrument for mass-producing books and other print products, was unintentionally related to the 'cultural value' of the book. While the book was initially a vehicle of sacred and cultic content and later a popular object of representation that underpinned the status of its owner, it became a political tool ruled out by those in power if the content was considered a threat. The book became a symbol of the ideas it contained, as if it were books that could overthrow authorities and not the ideas held within them.

Another change occurred in the shadow of letterpress print. Ultimately, the increased availability of books led to a significant increase in the population's literacy in Western Europe, from only 4% in the 15th century to 20% in the 17th century (Briggs, 2000; Houston, 2016). This resulted in a growing readership that demanded books. However, these readers also had to be able to afford the books. With each new technological improvement to the printing press, the time and effort involved in reproducing books fell (Briggs and Burke, 2009).

Consequently, it was possible to produce books at a lower price. This led to substantial growth in the book market (Erler, 2005). Eventually, in the 19th century, even the lower classes of society – especially the emerging working class – became eager to consume books. The trade unions supported this need by founding libraries to educate the working class (Faulstich, 2004b:209). The publishers also recognized the growing demand among workers and other low-income earners for literature and created corresponding offers. For example, in Germany, at the beginning of the 20th century, the publishing house Reclam (Leipzig) started to publish classics and plays as paperbacks, making it possible for a broader audience to afford this kind of literature (Schröder, 2015). Furthermore, according to Rautenberg et al. (2001), Reclam tried to make it easier for this new group of customers to buy these books by introducing vending machines. This way, workers could buy books when coming from their shift early in the morning or late at night when regular book shops were closed (Segrave, 2015).

Affordable editions of literary classics and plays achieved two things: first, they made it possible for workers (i.e., people with low incomes) to possess 'highbrow' literature, which was previously only available in more expensive hard-cover editions; second, it strengthened the cultural value of this kind of literature among the working class or low-income groups. By providing lower classes of society with affordable editions of literary classics, publishers strengthened the importance of these works (that is, they are so important that everyone should

be able to read them). This development of making important or so-called highbrow literature available to most readers continued with the founding of Penguin Books by Allen Lane in 1935 in the UK. Lane wanted to provide quality books at low prices (McCleery, 2002). Following the example of Penguin, Robert Fair de Graff founded *Pocket Books* in the U.S. (Markert, 2016). Through this, the importance of the book as a valuable cultural good was strengthened, as the book was the medium that contained these valuable literary works. At the same time, though, the book became increasingly commodified. I finish the historical overview at this point and explore how academic work suggests that the commercialization of the book by the beginning of the 20th century started an argumentative struggle. Some representatives of the cultural field opposed the idea that the book is not only a cultural asset but also a commercial commodity (Bluhm, 2009). In contrast, there was a growing book market in which the book was being marketed in new ways (Brown, 2006; Kong, 2005; Raven, 2009). As the next section shows, this tension determined the book's discussion and cultural value over a long time in the 20th century.

2.2. Cultural Item or Mere Commercial Commodity

The title *Merchants of Culture*, a book about the book market in the late 20th century by Thompson (2012), shows what books are considered to be by many who write, edit, design, publish, sell, or read them at first an expression of culture. Therefore, the title of Thompson's book represents a linkage between the market, the book as a commodity, and the cultural value many people assign to the book as a cultural item. However, I state that this title can simultaneously be considered a critical remark. For some in the cultural field, it conveys an often-expressed contradiction between the cultural value of an object or artefact and its commercialisation (Erlin, 2006; Raven, 2009). In other words, it represents the commodification of culture, which is criticised by scholars such as Horkheimer and Adorno

(2019; 2011) and Walter Benjamin (1968), as this commodification is often linked to the mass production of cultural goods. Therefore, by using the title *Merchants of Culture*, Thompson (2012) alludes to an argument that has been ongoing for quite some time. Discussing these ideas in the context of this thesis is especially important as the digitisation of the book also allows for the analogue book to be disembodied from its original state and theoretically unlimited reproduction of the book in the same condition. Therefore, I consider it essential to discuss ideas dealing with the relationship between technical reproduction and mass production and the cultural value people assign to the analogue book.

According to McCleery (2002), Penguin, next to Reclam in Germany, was one of the first publishers to use non-traditional outlets for their books, selling them at places such as department stores to sell larger quantities. This approach did not just affect the quality of the paper, which had to be cheaper because of the higher printing costs, but also the cover artwork. Sen (1983) explains that the paperback cover artwork appealed to shoppers who did not necessarily come to the department store to shop for books. Therefore, Sen (1983) argues that book covers were brash or strident to attract passing customers. Some criticised this development in the early 20th century. Most prominently, Adorno and Horkheimer criticize the, in their opinion, increasing transformation of the book from a cultural object to a mere commodity.

Adorno (1991:187) stated the following:

I realized that books no longer look like books. Adaptation to what is – correctly or incorrectly – considered the needs of consumers has changed their appearance.

Around the world, covers have become advertisements for their books. The dignity that characterises something self-contained, lasting, hermetic – something that absorbs the reader and closes the lid over him, as it were, the way the book's cover

closes on the text – has been set aside as inappropriate to the times. Instead, the book sidles up to the reader; it no longer presents itself as existing but rather as existing for something other [...].

Adorno criticised the marketing of books, which aimed to make books appealing to readers. According to Adorno, this caused the book to lose its dignity. Noteworthy, Adorno's criticism did not refer to the content of the books but rather to their appearance. In other words, it was not the literature losing quality; instead, its shrill presentation damaged the quality of books. Adorno directed the focus away from the textual to the visual quality of the book and concurrently emphasised the importance of the book as an object. In other words, the book was no longer determined only by its literary quality but also by its physical appearance. Adorno expected the book not to simply reveal its content, not make a fuss, and not recommend itself to the reader. The book is supposed to hide its content such that it remains mysterious and can be discovered. Adorno indirectly criticised the book as a commodity in a market that must fight for sales. Instead, in his eyes, the book should pull the reader under its mysterious spell without any advertisement. Adorno's criticism was not aimed at paperbacks in or of themselves, as the often-simple straightforward design of Penguin books fulfilled what Adorno meant by '*dignity that characterises something self-contained, lasting, hermetic*'. Instead, it was aimed at the covers of the New York publishing firm Pocket Books, which were characterised by often sexualised covers or covers that portrayed acts of violence.

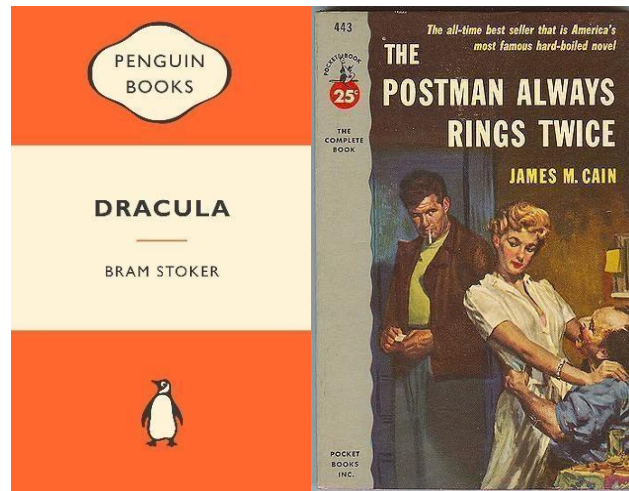


Figure 2 Penguin's 'Dracula' (left); Pocket Books' 'The Postman Always Rings Twice' (right)

Hoggart (1957), who sees a change in British culture towards "massification", takes a similar approach to Adorno and Horkheimer. He argues that "the mass publicists" were made "more insistently, effectively and in a more comprehensive and centralised form today than they were earlier" and "that we are moving towards the creation of a mass culture, that the remnants of what was at least in part an urban culture 'of the people' are being destroyed" (as cited in Walton, 2007:75). The development to design books to appeal to a broader audience marks a further step in the book's visual design and the importance of the book as an object of representation. As mentioned, books were initially kept with the fore-edge facing the room but later placed with the spine facing the room for display purposes, proudly exhibiting the owner's distinguished taste or intellectual status (Watson, 2019). However, the design of covers by Pocket Books did not serve the purpose of making the owner look like a distinguished personality but only helped to boost sales. Adorno despised this development because, as he put it, it took away the dignity of books. According to Adorno, books do not need to advertise themselves since books should be 'self-contained and absorb the reader' (Adorno, 1991:187). By describing books as 'self-contained, lasting, hermetic' (Adorno 1991:187), Adorno presents his view of books as something universal, genuine, and generally accepted, not as his

understanding of books. Adorno does not recognise that there can be other ways of accessing books than books absorbing the reader by themselves, which, to Adorno, does not require any marketing. However, publishers like Pocket Books marketed their books mainly to groups with lower-income or working-class backgrounds, of whom many did not grow up in a 'reading environment' (Silverman, 2016). They, therefore, saw the need to advertise their books in a way that they considered appropriate for an audience that would also watch various movies in the cinemas. The adverts for these groups had to set the book apart from other means of entertainment such as radio, cinema, and newspapers to gain attention (Tebbel, 1972).

However, it would be wrong to conclude that Pocket Books only published pulp fiction or light literature. The books published included *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, *Great Tales and Poems* by Edgar Allan Poe, Shakespeare's works, and *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (Silverman, 2016). In the second half of the 20th century, the growth of the cultural industries (I will explain this term in more detail in the next section) accelerated. Several reasons were involved, such as rising prosperity in the global North, increasing leisure time, rising levels of literacy and even growing importance of 'cultural hardware' such as hi-fis, TV sets, VCRs and later PCs (Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005:4). Interestingly, research on the emerging cultural and creative industries rarely considered book publishers and the literary market. Instead, the literary market included authors, publishers, and booksellers who only played a subordinate role. Therefore, in the next section, I will discuss the emergence of the concept of the 'cultural industry' and its criticism and illuminate the effects these discussions had on book publishing and the analogue book.

Adorno and Horkheimer coined the term 'cultural industries' in 1947 (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2011). According to Garnham (2005:17), using the term 'industry' in the same context as culture shows thinking about the arts and media in economic terms. When Adorno and

Horkheimer coined the term, they expressed they saw the linkage between culture and industry as paradoxical (Horkheimer et al., 2002). In their definition of culture, Adorno and Horkheimer largely followed Herder (1773), who defined 'culture' as the expression of the deepest shared values of a social group. They conceived culture in this form as opposed to civilisation, which was merely the meretricious and superficial taste and social practices of an elite, and art as the realm of freedom and the expression of utopian hope (Garnham, 2005:17). The term 'industry', on the other hand, referred to the Marxist economic concept of commodification and crucially also to worker alienation at the point of production (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2011). In summary, Adorno and Horkheimer saw a shift towards the commodification of cultural products and the alienation of the cultural producer as a wage labourer within increasingly concentrated large-scale corporations (Garnham, 2005:17). They argued that the cultural industries would shift the focus from the content of culture to its forms and from the cultural product to the relationship between cultural producers and consumers (Garnham, 2005). The former aspect is especially relevant to my thesis. It refers to the format, and the emphasis placed on it by Horkheimer and Adorno in connection with the book's cultural value, as I discuss in more detail in Chapter three.

However, the criticism levelled by Adorno and Horkheimer at the cultural industries went further. Adorno (2014) describes the new 'cultural industry' as using the effects associated with popular culture and 'high art', but instead of producing meaningful content, the industry would only provide seduction and distraction. The cultural industry disguised its products as new and exciting but produced endless repetitions of the same (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2014). As such, the cultural industry was a direct extension of the new mass reproduction and distribution industries, which had begun at the turn of the 19th century, such as film, sound recording, mass-circulation dailies, popular prints, and later radio broadcasting (Adorno and Bernstein, 2001). According to Adorno, workers must be fully integrated into the industrial machine to

sell these mass-produced cultural goods to the people. Even their leisure time must be controlled by modern industrial techniques (Huyssen, 1986). Adorno (2019:12) states that the cultural industry products had to create a circle of predictable effects. He says that the controlled manipulation of audience response and the 'endlessly deferred gratification of stimulated desire – which had been developed under commodification's pressure was now used by monopoly capitalism. Garnham (1990) contradicts Adorno's system of pre-programmed cultural commodities. He states that cultural products had to satisfy fundamental human needs for meaning and enjoyment; therefore, he saw a clear need for new products. Williams (1981) supports Garnham's view by stating that people are not content to consume the same and want new and different products. Thus, even if the cultural industry, as described by Adorno and Horkheimer (2011), might aim to sell as many copies as possible of the same product, consumers would only submit to this to a certain degree. Another aspect is Adorno's prediction and 'pre-programming' of audience response (2001). Rushton (2002) and Ryan (2010) have stressed that it was impossible to predict whether a product would sell. A list of examples from books, films, music, and broadcasting have indicated the volatility and unpredictability of demand for cultural goods. The scholars mentioned above criticise that Adorno failed to register the distinctions between the different kinds of cultural commodities. Some argued that the exchange value for cultural goods was achieved differently. Physical objects such as books, recorded music or videos were sold as commodities to individuals, while television and radio broadcasts made money from sponsorship and advertising, and theatres and cinemas depended on the admission fee (Miège, 1987; Mieke, 1989; Mieke and Garnham, 1979). Finally, Adorno believed that 'cultural workers' would be fully integrated into the cultural industry, somewhat indistinguishable from workers in other production fields. However, Caves (2002) argues that creative labour is not exploited as in the classic Marxist analysis of surplus-value but through contracts determining the distribution of profits to various rights holders. However, it is

noticeable that the literary business is excluded at numerous points in the discussion about the cultural industries and the criticism of these by Adorno and Horkheimer (2011). As mentioned above, Adorno criticised the increasing marketing of books, but he considered the publishing industry to be essential compared to other areas of culture. I will devote myself to this discussion in the next section.

2.3. The Literary Market: A Different Cultural Industry?

Relevant to my thesis is that in Adorno's critique of the cultural industries, they barely mentioned book publishing. By book publishing, I mean the entire book market, including authors, publishers, and booksellers. I deduce from this that Adorno does not consider the 'literary field' (Bourdieu, 1996) as being influenced by market forces to the same extent as other cultural fields such as fine arts, photography, film, or music. There is a parallel with Bourdieu (1993), which I discuss in more detail in this section. Before I start, it is essential to briefly explain where the parallels, especially the differences between Bourdieu, Adorno, and Horkheimer (2011), lie. Bourdieu and Adorno believe that material inequalities are closely related to cultural processes. Both theorists criticise the dominant culture they see as a means to legitimise and (re-) produce oppression and inequality. Like Adorno, Bourdieu states that the enjoyment of culture often is not an authentic expression of true feelings but is somewhat shaped by the respective class affiliation. Bourdieu sees high culture as a product of social power struggles that shows the dominance of certain groups. The contents, forms and subject areas of high culture are therefore not permanently fixed.

In contrast, Adorno takes a more universalistic claim to a culture of the Enlightenment. At the same time, Bourdieu's (1987:36) expression "legitimate social taste" shows an affinity to Adorno's concept of high culture since both relate to a particular taste in music and art valued higher than other styles. Nevertheless, in Bourdieu's work, the differences between different

cultural groups are characterized less by the contrast between high and popular culture than by social contrasts, reproduced through the habitus and find expression in everyday culture.

Another point relevant to my thesis is the role of the literary field in Bourdieu's theory. I state that there is a certain similarity to Adorno and Horkheimer's argumentation. However, Bourdieu also sees the literary as different from other cultural fields such as music, film, or television.

In his essay, *The Field of Cultural Production*, Bourdieu (1983) suggests that the literary field represents precisely that part of the cultural economy that cannot be entirely reduced to economic incentive. In his perception, the literary field partly retains its artistic and independent orientation. Although it has long since become a somewhat commercialised market, the literary market is still assumed to have a positive cultural, knowledge and value-imparting function. Bourdieu (1996) argues that the literary field is, at least in parts, independent of the constraints of the commercial culture industry. Thompson supports this view (2012), despite describing the book publishing and literary market as a highly commercialised industry, and claims that the literary market maintains its aura of being the media industry, which is still seeking the good at its core as artistically valuable. Indirectly, Schiffrin (2010, 2012) supports this view of the literary market when he states that 'it was understood that entire categories of books, particularly new fiction and poetry, were bound to lose money' (2001:11). Schiffrin underlines those publishers were interested in making profits and supporting upcoming authors and quality literature. Quality literature was intellectually important literature that publishers such as McGraw-Hill, Schocken, Dutton or Quadrangle would publish (2001:69). Thus, Schiffrin continues to describe the literary market as a haven for those for whom the publication of books is primarily an intellectual and cultural process and only in the second step a commercial one. Therefore, the book is not mainly a product but a sophisticated intellectual form of expression that has come under pressure from the commercial

media industry. Bourdieu himself proposed an interesting argument that is the source of this differentiation between the literary market and other cultural industries. Bourdieu (1983) claims that the faith in uniquely aesthetic merit is a product of the rise of commercial culture, as an ideology of artistic separation from market concerns accompanied that rise. Bourdieu feared the dominant system 'that made economic rather than cultural capital its lodestar' (Benson, 1999: 465). This apparent contradiction in Bourdieu's statements reveals the tension in this discussion on whether the literary market is equally a commercial industry, such as the film industry. Although all four scholars mentioned above come from different theoretical backgrounds (especially Bourdieu compared to Adorno and Horkheimer), they all held on to a similar perception of the literary market. They all believed that the literary field is less shaped by commercial interests than by holding on to a higher value of the literary and the analogue book as an outstanding cultural object. I claim, though, that the commercialisation of the literary market and the developments such as mergers and takeovers in the book industry (see Schiffrin, 2012) followed the same commercial interests as in other cultural sectors (Schiffrin, 2010). This is supported because ever since books became commercially available, there has been entertaining, commercially oriented literature to make money (Gilbert-Santamaria, 2005; Springhall, 1994). The literary market, therefore, always had a solid commercial orientation too. The opinion that the literary market is more focused on creating culture than on making money has long been sustained.

Only recently has there been an increase in scholarly work from cultural studies that consider the literary field a critical industry (Collins, 2010; Kong, 2005; Murray, 2013; Striphas, 2009). Striphas (2009:6) states that the notion that books 'belong at a significant remove from the realm of economic necessity is one of the most entrenched myths of contemporary book culture'. Striphas argues that this myth exists partly because of the everydayness of books, so their commercial aspect is overlooked. He aims to dismantle this myth by examining the many

ways in which books and the literature industry at large are intricately connected to the current state of consumer capitalism. Murray (2013:12) adds to this argument. She considers it necessary to dispel the myths that books are the product of individualised, authorial creation untouched by commercial interests, while film and television result from collaborative industrialised processes. Murray (2013:13) argues that today the 'adaptation for the screen is not merely an add-on or afterthought of this complex [literary] economy, but is now factored in and avidly pursued from the earliest phase of book production. Murray describes how publishers are now part of more giant corporations keen on products that can be endlessly repurposed. In this adaptation economy, the book is only a 'temporary vessel for "liquid content", which may be decanted and reconstituted across the full gamut of contemporary media platforms' (2013:38). The symbolic 'liquid' that Murray refers to is the 'literary'.

In this section, I showed that scholars such as Adorno and Horkheimer (2001; 2011), Schiffrin (2010, 2012), Bourdieu (1996) and Thompson (2012) have in their works helped to shape the image of the literary market to be less commercially oriented and more geared towards creating sophisticated literature. I finished the section by presenting criticism of this representation by Striphas (2009), Collins (2010), Kong (2005) and Murray (2013), who has described the notion that the literary market is less commercially oriented as a myth. I claim that the literary market has maintained the aura of producing items of high cultural value geared towards a sophisticated audience. The analogue book mainly symbolises this as an object. In the next section, I present how other industries, such as the film industry, use this aura of the analogue book and the literary to upgrade their productions. In doing so, I show how, conversely, these industries maintain the cultural value of the book.

2.4. The Meaning of the 'Literary' in the Media Industries

Murray (2013) states that the adaptation industry (e.g., the film industry) benefits from the widespread belief in the socially autonomous author and literary market. She explains how the adaptation industry relies on the literary-cultural capital of authors. To support her argument, she asks how else to explain 'the ritual appearance of the author at the adapted film's premier, then as an authorial imprimatur and creative blessing given upon the adaptation?' (2013:27). Even when the author has had little impact on the production of a film adapted from their work, their blessing upon the film sanctifies it with the aura of literature (Brouillette *et al.*, 2015). Brouillette and Doody (2015:106) argue that economic and political concerns are widely perceived as socially autonomous and untainted by the author figure. Bourdieu (1996) criticises the romantic figure of the author, who only lives for the art, unaffected by material interests. However, in his assessment of the literary field, he recognises this type of author. Bourdieu states that there are different degrees of autonomy within the literary field. At the artistic pole of the literary field, which is roughly congruent with the concept of high art literature, the focus of interest is not primarily economic profit but literary fame or, as Bourdieu puts it, specifically literary symbolic capital. Unlike the author's romantic figure, though, Bourdieu states that these authors can afford this attitude as they are financially independent and do not have to live off their literary production. It can be argued that authors like Shakespeare both created demanding works and made a living from them. Therefore, the contradiction between high artistic standards and financial goals is not as absolute as Bourdieu assumes here.

On the other hand, one can conclude, though, that the cultural industries benefit from the romantic notion of the literary as autonomous because this separation is what endows the literary with its value. Similarly, Murray and Nash (2013) claim that publishers are trying to find new ways to capture and profit from this value. Nash states, '[y]ou begin to realize that the business of literature is the business of making culture, not just the business of manufacturing

bound books (2013:n.p.). However, just like Murray, Nash acknowledges that the modern literary industry increasingly relies on the value of literature's aura to make a profit, as opposed to selling actual material books. Following Murray (2013), Nash (2013), and Brouillette and Doody (2015), I state that the symbolic value, namely the 'aura' of the analogue book, is increasingly commercialised by the literary industry. I claim that it is precisely this point in which the literary market differs from other media markets since neither radio, television, nor film can fall back on this 'aura'. For example, there are only a few examples of a book based on a film acquiring literary significance because the director recommended the book as a good adaptation of the film.

The arguments of Striphas (2009), Murray (2013) and Nash (2013) have their weaknesses. First, they consider every writing activity by an author as an act within the literary field. They do not differentiate whether an author writes a book, a play, or a political feature. Second, their definition of the literary field is based on the image of the lonesome, creative author who creates a written work alone. Striphas (2009), Murray (2013) and Nash (2013) have defined the literary field by how authors work and create their work and not by the output of their work. However, I state it is not the authors and their way of working that define what Murray (2013) calls the literary sphere but the analogue book as an object. Film adaptations are usually based on true stories or books (or true stories turned into books) and less often on mere manuscripts, theatre or radio plays, or other written works (DeForest, 2008; Ryan and Shamir, 2016; Seger, 2011). I, therefore, claim that the aura of the literary is primarily based on the analogue book as an expression of the literary work of authors. It is most crucially the object of an analogue book that ennoble a cinematic or audio adaptation with the aura of the literary and not so much the authors or writing. To better understand the meaning of the aura of the analogue book, I will use the following section to discuss the concept of 'aura'.

2.5. The Aura of the Analogue Book

Benjamin (1968) spoke about the 'aura' of-the-art object and observed its erosion in contemporary culture because of the reproducibility of cultural objects. He stated: 'One thing still fails in the perfect reproduction: the here and now of the artwork – its unique being in the place where it is. At this unique existence, however, and nowhere else the history happened to which it has been subjected during its existence is (1968:3). The artwork, Benjamin argues, does not only exist in the way that we see it when we stand right in front of it or touch it but also through its history. For example, when we admire a painting in the Louvre, we admire the painting in its here and now, yet this work of art is also embedded in its history and our own. In other words, DaVinci's 'Mona Lisa' is not just a famous and valuable painting today that we can look at in the Louvre. It is also a painting painted in 15th-century Italy that shows a particular person who lived in that time. It is a painting that Leonardo DaVinci touched, and that was painted using colours that were made at that time. This history is unique to this very object. If someone were to make a copy of this painting, they would have a painting that showed the same woman; however, that copy would never have been touched by Leonardo DaVinci, the colours would not have been made in the 15th century, and the female model would never have come for sessions to sit to have this portrait painted. In Benjamin's words, a copy cannot hold the same aura. The term 'aura' therefore stands for the 'here and now, in which a work of art of any nature is created, and for its embeddedness in its history and tradition. A work of art in its completed – but also unfinished – manner represents the 'Zeitgeist' of the respective epoch uniquely. However, this unique 'aura' is lost once this original work of art gets reproduced, according to Benjamin. Because analogue books have been reproduced from an early age, one might argue that only a few books would have what Benjamin calls an aura since only a few were made manually and never duplicated, holding the 'aura' of the original. I state, however,

that Benjamin's definition of 'aura' can be adapted to the analogue book in a modified way, which I expound upon in the next section.

In his essay titled *Unpacking my library*, Benjamin (1970:60) describes the collector's joy upon acquiring a book: '... everything conscious, becomes the pedestal, the frame, the base, the lock of his property. The period, the region, the artisanship, the former ownership – for a true collector, the whole background of an item adds up to a magic encyclopaedia whose quintessence is the fate of his object'. According to Benjamin, the analogue book acquires an aura as a collector's item by having a unique history. In this context, whether only one copy of the book exists or several thousand is not essential. Instead, the history of this very copy is vital to the collector. Part of this history might be whom the book belonged to or the annotations it contains. Thus, a copy of a book can gain an aura through its 'biography', which Benjamin calls 'fate' (1970:60). I state that this 'fate' is an essential addition to Benjamin's concept of 'aura', as it can create an aura even for a mechanically produced object or a copy of an original work of art. For example, a copy of the Mona Lisa that perhaps once belonged to Winston Churchill gained a new aura by being owned by one of the most influential British personalities of the 20th century. In other words, this copy of a famous painting becomes an original, as Winston Churchill owned only this copy. The question is whether this 'aura' can also be adapted to the digital? Can a digital item that was or is reproduced by a click on a trackpad gain an aura? In other words, can aura be obtained by an immaterial object such as a digital file?

Benjamin's (1968) work on photography is a starting point in this discussion. Benjamin argued that photography was taking away the aura of the work of art. He stated that one could make any number of prints from a negative. Because of this, to ask for an authentic print would make no sense. Consequently, photographs could not have an aura as they lack authenticity. Again, it can be argued that a print that gains 'fate' by being owned by a celebrity or having lived through

a dramatic history (as an example one might think of a copy of a photograph that survived the sinking of the Titanic). The photographer and theorist Carbone (2009) describes Benjamin's theory as a relational theory and, therefore, takes another turn in answering whether a digital copy can gain an aura. She explains that the digitisation of photography has now taken on the role that the chemical process of developing pictures once had as the agent that erodes the aura. In return, the analogue camera takes on the role of the original paintbrush. Carbone (2009) states that when a new form of technology appears, it changes the definition of 'aura'. Therefore, she describes Benjamin's (1968) concept as a relational concept tied to the history of technology. She argues that the effort put into a manual shot is much higher than the one put into a digital shot as the manual shot requires time, patience, and direct labour as analogue photography needs to be developed. All these aspects, she states, show a specific engagement with the picture taking that creates an aura for the photo.

Another of her arguments is that the digital picture can be looked at and erased instantly, allowing the photographer to retake the picture immediately. The analogue photographer will not know whether her picture is good until it is developed later. At that point, the moment that was worth capturing is gone forever. According to Carbone (2009), this makes every analogue picture unique. Carbone's (2009) summary reasoning is that the additional labour and skills required in analogue photography justify saying that an analogue photograph holds an aura. Although her argument that an analogue picture portrays a particular moment that disappears shortly after the picture is taken follows Benjamin's (1968) argument of 'space and time'. Adopting Carbone's argumentation to the book, one can argue that the production of an analogue book still requires manual labour since the pages must be trimmed and - if the book is to be bound - prepared for binding. This is done in print shops by humans and using handwork. This work is not necessary with digital books. Every analogue book has a specific

manufacturing moment, and paper quality is different even within a print run, so every book has individual characteristics.

The French philosopher and writer Roland Barthes (2001) brings forward a different point of view on why photography might have an aura. He attests that a photographic image is one of the most accurate representations of a lingering presence from an absent subject. Barthes provides an example that I have paraphrased: he was going through an album of family pictures looking for a photograph of his mother. When he found one of her as a child, he felt her spirit had been resurrected: he was using photography to hold on to his mother's presence. Barthes moves the definition of aura away from the aspect of originality and the history that a picture or object might have and considers the aura of an image to lie within the subject being portrayed. In other words, the aura and the presence of the person being photographed give the work of art an aura. Following Barthes' (1981) argumentation, a digital photo can have an aura as it – just like any other photograph – captures a particular person or object in a specific way.

Transferring this argument onto the eBook, the situation is more complex as an eBook does not reflect a particular moment (it does not reveal the exact moment it was created) and does not portray a particular object or subject. The analogue book can have individual characteristics as handwork is involved even in modern print shops. Every analogue book has a specific manufacturing moment, and paper quality is different even within a print run, so every book has individual characteristics. Therefore, I state that following the original meaning of Benjamin's (1968) 'aura', copies of eBooks cannot have an aura. However, one might argue that the original script, namely the digital file that the author wrote in a particular moment in a certain setting on a specific laptop or PC, might gain an aura.

Nevertheless, once this digital file is sent off or downloaded from the laptop or PC it was written on, it will no longer contain any traces that make it recognisable as the original script.

Unlike the Mona Lisa, the digital script was not touched by its author nor does the screen typography provide a hint as to when and where this document was written. To be precise, each screen reproduces the document from digital data and produces a new document every time someone opens the file. Therefore, the document is adapted to each screen's brightness, size, and colour settings. In Chapter three, I discuss the aspect of digital materiality. However, for now, I claim that the understanding of originality as we understand it from physical and haptic objects cannot be transferred one on one to the digital world. Therefore, the understanding of 'aura' introduced by Benjamin (1968) cannot be transferred to the digital file. The NFTs (non-fungible tokens) should not go unmentioned. An NFT is the digitized form of an asset. In theory, any asset can be digitized and turned into an NFT: drawings, digital works of art, video clips or even actual possessions. The NFTs must contain information that proves their uniqueness so that the respective owners can always be traced back (Fairfield and Trautman, 2021). However, when this work was written, there were no eBooks that were traded as an NFT.

2.6. Summary

In this chapter, I showed how the cultural value that we assign to the analogue book developed over time by providing a brief overview of the history of the book. I showed how the book developed from a religious object to a cultural commodity and acquired various meanings that determined its cultural value. This value originated from the book being an object in cultic religious worship in antiquity and the Middle Ages. Later, this value was supplemented by making the book a collector's item and an expression of the level of education of the owner. With the advent of printing, the book took on another symbolic meaning by using the analogue book to spread new – often controversial – ideas. The power rulers ascribed to the book in this function was made clear by book burnings, with which these ideas were to be extinguished.

Simultaneously, book printing ensured that books became more widespread and, as a result, literacy among people increased. This transformed the analogue book into an educational medium for society, adding to its value as a means of expressing one's level of education. From the 16th to the 20th century, a publishing landscape in Europe was established, which on the one hand, promoted the book as a valuable cultural object (through elaborate editions, and especially presentation furniture), and on the other hand, attempted to reach out to a broader audience by publishing easy-to-read and affordable literature. The latter eventually caused criticism (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2011; Schiffrin, 2010, 2012). This criticism clarifies that it views the cultural value of the book as being endangered by its commercialization. The literary field (Bourdieu, 1993) is a cultural field that, unlike film, TV, or music, has to withstand its increasing commercialization to protect the book's cultural value. This highlighting of the book as a cultural object that stands above other cultural goods, in exchange, again contributes to the cultural value of the book to this day and finds a tangible expression, e.g., in fixed prices for books (i.e., in Germany and Switzerland), as this removes the value of a book from regular market forces.

Therefore, I suggest that the cultural value of the analogue book is composed of its history as a religious symbol, as an expression of scholarship and prosperity and the power attributed to it as a medium to change society. Moreover, despite the increased commercialisation of the literary market, the book managed to maintain its cultural value well into the 21st century. Murray (2013) and Nash (2013) have supported this assessment by showing that other cultural industries still benefit from the cultural value of the analogue book, as these industries use the cultural value of the literary to enhance the cultural value of their products (e.g., films). I ended the chapter by discussing Benjamin's idea of the 'aura' to investigate the role of materiality for the cultural value of the book. I have demonstrated how Benjamin defines the aura and discussed why I claim that according to his definition, the eBook cannot obtain 'aura'. The

book's cultic veneration, display as an object of representation, and burning books as a sign of the suppression of ideas have all contributed to the creation of the book's cultural value. All these aspects, though, depend on the material existence of the book, as does the aura. This aspect makes it clear what role the materiality of the book plays. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will discuss research about the digitization of the book and the changing materiality of the book. The chapter examines the importance of materiality in the digital age and applies this to the analogue book.

CHAPTER 3.

THE DIGITISED BOOK AND THE MEANING OF MATERIALITY

The first two chapters of this thesis primarily dealt with the book as a material object, by which I mean an analogue, tangible object. However, the definition of the book in Chapter one did not limit its definition to analogue or tangible objects alone but also defined the eBook as a book. More importantly, the book's definition was based on a limitation of the formal and organisational structure of the book. Therefore, it can be said that the definition of the book, as discussed in Chapter one, is strongly related to the book as a codex. In this chapter, I now argue that digitisation has partly phased out this structure of the book. I use a variety of online libraries as examples of this development, which I claim are gradually changing the conventional structure of the works, showing that the digitisation of the analogue book not only turns paper into bits but can also dissolve the structures of the book. Furthermore, I discuss previous research on the digitization of books and show that this mainly relates to the digitization of reading. From there, I deal with literature that has the disappearance of media as its content and discusses to what extent this applies to books in the age of digitization. The question of the significance of materiality and whether the digital also has materiality thus arises from this discussion. I discuss these two points at the end of this chapter. The chapter aims to show how the book has been researched in the digital age and what role the book's materiality has played in the research on the book in the digital age.

3.1. Single Book or Mass of Data

The digitization of the book has taken various forms in the past. In this section, I discuss two approaches and show how the digitization of the book has partially led to a dissolution of form and content. Using this example, I illustrate the importance of materiality for the book in the digital age. One of the first projects to use the possibilities of digitisation was the Gutenberg

Project which made books out of copyright available. Witten et al. (2010) state that the success of the Gutenberg Project was the often-emphasized 'grassroots' character of the Project.

However, to make the books available digitally, the books first had to be typed by hand. To

date, numerous volunteers are busy scanning books or proofreading submitted manuscripts.

The digitization of the book is, therefore, first a material matter. Another approach to digitizing media is the Internet Archive (Panos, 2003), making books and music, films, and other media permanently digitally available. In addition, websites are stored here that can no longer be accessed via their previous host. For these two approaches, digitization is about making works available in the same way they were available in analogue or making works permanently accessible regardless of place and time. The materiality of the media only plays a role insofar as the media can no longer be used physically but only digitally. The books are fully visible and readable and are even scanned into the internet archive so that one leaf through them like an analogue book. In contrast, Google Books takes an entirely different approach.

The Google Library Project (now Google Books) was launched in 2002 and had a different impact. It was severely criticised as publishers and authors saw their copyrights endangered (Travis, 2006, 2016). In 2008, publishers, authors and Google reached an agreement, an essential aspect of which was the so-called 'non-display' usage of the works that Google had scanned. 'Non-display' means using the content of works without fully displaying the works to readers. Only the content from work requested by the person searching is presented, not the entire work. This content, though, is drawn from various works (Borghi and Karapapa, 2011). In other words, the works are not perceived as such but are a source of data. Unlike the Gutenberg Project or the internet archive, where books as works (including cover, chapter and page structure) were digitised, the mass digitisation by Google leads to books losing their format because it detaches the books from their state of being and consequently from their comprehensibility to users (Borghi and Karapapa, 2011:3). The work as such, with a logical

structure, a beginning, a middle section, and an end, is dissolved and only used as a source of information. Therefore, the context that previous and following pages provide to any given information in a book is lost.

At this point, I state that Borghi and Karapapa's (2011) reasoning should be combined with that of Kovač and van der Weel (2019). That is, the organisational structure and the limited format of the book, according to Kovač and van der Weel (2019), are decisive for the book's disappearance. The book vanishes as a self-contained object. Instead, the book's content is added to an ever-growing information platform where it is combined with the contents of thousands of other books. There it can be searched for using search queries. This process is called 'mass digitisation' (Coyle, 2006; Samuelson, 2010), which I deal with in the next paragraph, along with the process of 'large-scale digitisation' (Rieger, 2010) and its consequences for the book. Mass digitisation and large-scale digitisation raise questions that directly affect the cultural value of the book as a cultural object in the digital age. Although large-scale digitisation aims to digitise as many books as possible, it selects, curates and organises those books. By contrast, mass digitisation aims to digitise whatever is available (Coyle 2006). The sociologist Gooding (2016) describes Google Book Search (Google Books) as a form of mass-digitisation, which he justifies with the example of Google's 2004 announcement that they would scan 15 million texts from the university libraries of Oxford, Michigan and Harvard and make them searchable to everyone (Gooding 2016). Google is thus not concerned with the curation of works but interested in making substantial amounts of content available.

Large-scale digitisation, though, receives the most criticism from scholars. Questions such as who should curate the new digital libraries, who should determine what would be transferred into the digital age, and what should remain on paper and thus possibly be lost in the future

have been raised (Jeanneney, 2008). The most significant criticism is that large-scale digitisation would only make specific titles available for research and thus reduce the literary material available for researchers. Therefore, those who determine what should be digitised also determine what information is available to researchers (Lanier, 2010; Nunberg, 1996). The librarian Karen Coyle argues that she finds large-scale digitisation more discriminatory than mass digitisation because large-scale digitisation would be designed to create collections and digitise entire documents (Coyle 2006, page 641). By contrast, mass digitisation would strive to create a gigantic catalogue that makes all books in the world accessible to all people (Schmidt, 2005).

Mass digitisation has been welcomed by many scholars from technical and media disciplines. Keegan (2005) saw the possibility of building a 'virtual library of Alexandria' through mass digitisation—a place where the world's knowledge is freely available to everyone. By this, Keegan follows Blanchot, who envisaged the overthrow of the book long before the internet, which in his view, 'held knowledge prisoner'(Carrière and Eco, 2011:261). More recently, Gomez (2008:14) stated that 'pages are cages, trapping the words within boundaries', although he ignored that pages exert a certain dominance over digital media. These scholars are continuing a long history of the celebration of hypertext that finds its climax in the claim of the American philosopher Nelson (1992:14), who argued that '[o]pen hypertext publishing is the manifest destiny of free society'. Keegan (2005), Gomez (2008), and Nelson (1992) thus support the law scholar Lessig (2001, 2004), who is a critic of restrictive copyright. Lessig argues that innovation and creativity are under assault from corporate and political interests (Mahoney and Lessig, 2004). At this point, I will not discuss these issues of copyright and aspects such as creative commons or the internet archive any further, as they primarily deal with socioeconomic and legal issues surrounding the book, which are outside this thesis's scope.

As I have demonstrated, the discussion about mass digitisation and large-scale digitisation revolves around whether digitisation will lead to content being lost in the process and who will be responsible for selecting the content (i.e., the books to be digitised). For instance, criticism of mass and large-scale digitisation has mostly been levelled at practical aspects, such as poor optical character recognition making digitised texts hard to read (Martin, 2008; Tanner et al., 2009), incomplete metadata (Coyle, 2006; Jackson, 2008) and the Anglo-American dominance in the selection of digitised data (Grafton, 2009; Hetcher, 2006; Jeanneney, 2008). However, the book (i.e., the book as an object), as defined in Chapter one, is of little importance in this discussion. An exception is a critique by Coyle (2006), who saw a loss of structure through mass digitisation. He argues that its firmness is a characteristic of the book in the physical world. Like Kovač et al. (2019), Coyle mentions the bond that ensures the book keeps its order and integrity. Coyle (2006) states that books have logical sub-elements such as chapters, numbered tables, tables of contents and indexes. These elements supply a conceptual structure for the reader. Books are thus organisational units. Mass digitisation converts the book into a collection of data disconnected from its original logical structure. Coyle (2006:642) states that nothing is inherent to binding the book when scanning books. Instead, the software used when scanning the book decides to what extent the scanned books correspond to the physical book. For example, the links in Google Book Search often show a page near the page one is looking for. From this, it can be argued that the digitised book no longer provides a secure orientation for the reader, which the analogue book provided. I claim that this criticism might be true for mass digitisation, but it is not the case for large-scale digitisation, which aims to digitise books in their original structure. This discussion also shows what effect a change in the book's materiality can have if this leads to the book being dissolved as a book, as defined by Kovac et al (2019), and losing its organizational structure.

Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the book's materiality is of minor importance for the scholars I have discussed in the previous paragraph. An exception is only the argumentation of Coyle (2006). As I established in Chapter two, the cultural value of the book is, to a great extent, related to activities that concern the materiality of the analogue book (e.g., the lifting of the book in religious services, the presentation of the book, and the design of the book). However, the transition of the book from an analogue object to a digital file and the consequences this might have on the perception and cultural value of the book in society are rarely discussed in the context of mass- and large-scale digitisation. The materiality of the book in context with its digitisation, however, plays a role in the reading of books and the digitisation of texts, as the next section demonstrates.

3.2. Superficial and Full of Distractions? The Materiality of text in the Digital Age

A major criticism of the digitisation of the book in the context of the reading is the aspect of distraction, which various scholars have addressed. Birkerts (1994) criticises that reading digital content means the loss of what he calls 'deep time', meaning the time that people spend with a text, in which they let the words of the text work their way to an understanding of the text's deeper meaning. Birkerts (1994) argues that copious amounts of digitised content cause our attention span to decrease. Our ability to read a text accurately and concentratedly would be lost. We would also lose the inclination to deal with texts in detail. Birkerts explains that for him, the physical and intellectual act of reading is a natural activity that is undermined by digital technologies. One can indeed argue that Birkerts' text comes from a time when digitisation was just beginning; thus, many of his arguments are not based on practical experiences but on a forward-looking assessment of what might happen.

Nevertheless, his scepticism towards digital media and primarily digital texts is shared by many academics today. For example, Wolf (2009) fears that future generations will become used to the immediate availability of on-screen information, so attention and inferential and semantic

skills in the brain may be less developed. This dystopian outlook is supported by Lanier (2010: xiii), who argues that 'words will be scanned, rehashed, and misinterpreted by crowds of quick and sloppy readers into wikis and automatically aggregated wireless text message streams'. Lanier's criticism is significant as he is a computer scientist and digital visionary widely understood to be a thought leader in virtual reality and artificial intelligence.

While Birkerts (1994), Wolf (2009) and Lanier (2010) have been concerned with reading digital texts, Baron (2015), a scholar of linguistics, argues against reading on screen. She fears readers will quickly be distracted from the text by using e-Readers. She claims that these reading devices often allow one to surf the Internet. This would encourage readers to multitask and 'skim read', which can be seen as the opposite of Birkerts' 'deep time' (Birkerts, 1994). Baron argues that this form of reading also affects authors and publishers. She claims that in response to people's changing reading behaviours, authors would write shorter texts requiring less concentration or reflection by readers. Scott (2015) supports Baron by stating that even award-winning serious fiction writers would now aim to produce a 'good read' with a gripping plot and unfussy writing to cater to shorter attention spans caused by digitised books. Although Baron's (2015) work is based on many studies, I state it has some weaknesses. First, some e-readers do not provide Internet access unless downloading new eBooks, such as the original Kindle or the German Tolino. Therefore, these devices do not offer distractions such as surfing the net or watching YouTube videos for readers. Second, I argue Baron neglects other media such as television or radio that existed before e-readers, which can also distract from concentrated reading. Consequently, the phenomenon described by Baron is not new and not specific to e-readers.

On the other hand, neither Baron (2015) nor Scott (2015) substantiates their thesis that authors' writing has changed because of the emergence of eBooks. For example, it can be shown that

the approach to writing more entertainingly became widespread at the latest with paperback. So-called 'fast fiction' was successfully sold in book megastores, and authors turned to this style of writing (Thompson, 2012).

Anne Mangen (2016), whose research interests lie in the effects of digitisation on cognitive and experiential aspects of reading, takes a less critical approach to read on digital devices than Baron (2015, 2017), Birkerts (1994) and Lanier (2010). She argues that more research is required to make a reliable statement about how reading works on-screen and paper and the effects both have on readers and their understanding of the text. However, Mangen (2016; 2013) showed that the format of a text causes different emotional reactions among readers. Her study revealed that emotional reactions by participants to a given text depend not only on whether a text is read digitally or in print but also on other aspects of the format. For example, her study showed that whether a book was bound or presented as a collection of individual pages that were simply clipped together had influence on participants. The latter was perceived by the readers as less 'valuable' and therefore was read in a less attentive manner employing less concentration. Nevertheless, Mangen (2016:244) concludes that readers generally deal more intensively with printed texts than digital ones. She states printed texts are tangible, fixed, and 'physically contiguous with the storage and display medium'. In doing so, she emphasises the importance of materiality and how this relates to our perception of content. This aspect is of particular interest to the present research as it suggests a connection between the cultural value we ascribe to an object and its materiality. Therefore, in the next paragraph, I discuss research that has examined the relationship between the format and materiality of a book and its perception by readers. The purpose is to show how the materiality of text, or the content of the book adds to the cultural value that is assigned to the book.

McKenzie et al. (2002) claim that every variation in the book's form, both in its content and format, relates to the book's meaning. Therefore, even the most minor changes to the book

often significantly impact the reader's reaction (McKenzie et al., 2002). Carreira da Silva (2015) states that books can be read differently and reach new audiences if their appearance changes. A good example is colportage editions of already published texts that were rendered into new forms to reach a broader readership. This effect can also be seen in the examples mentioned in Chapter two regarding Pocket Books, the publishers. They often published highbrow literature such as *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë with a more appealing cover to their working-class readership than the cover used by other publishers of the same work. See examples below of two editions of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*.



Figure 3 The covers of two 1940s editions of 'Wuthering Heights' Random House (left) and Pocket Books (right)

The aspect that I wish to highlight in this context is that a change in a book's materiality relates to how one might perceive or value that book. In other words, books affect us like how we affect them through our use (e.g., reading, leafing through, inserting annotations, or folding pages). This argument was also put forward by Carreira da Silva (2015), who referred to Hegel's analysis of the subject-object relationship (Houlgate, 2005). Following this theory, things 'make' us the same way we make things. We only become people by producing and exchanging things. This is how culture comes about, according to Hegel. In this context, a scholar of cultural studies Daniel Miller (2010), explains that 'we do not start from what

societies do with things; it is the circulation of things that creates society. Alternatively, better still, what we call society and stuff are artificial separations out of the same process'. From this, it can be concluded that the digitisation of the book (i.e., the making of the eBook) changes our perception of the book and our relationship with it. We change the book to an eBook in the same way that the eBook changes us. As already stated above, the digitisation of the book, especially the large-scale and mass-digitisation approaches by Google discussed earlier in this chapter, changes the book's structure and format. At a basic level, page numbers often no longer fit, or some chapters are not available to access for free; therefore, the book cannot be accessed in the same way as a printed copy. In other words, the book dissolves as an orderly, clearly defined unit and is transformed to only exist in the form of its content. This process can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle. If one buys a box with a puzzle, the finished image is usually shown on the box. Inside the box, one will find the parts required to assemble this image as shown on the cover. This means that one has an orderly framework that helps to assemble the jigsaw puzzle. Therefore, the mass digitisation of books can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle for which the cover showing the finished image is missing. Different search enquiries present chapters or sections of books in ever-changing combinations with content from other sources. This makes it challenging to recognise the book as an original unit and understand the chapters' original structure. Therefore, putting the right parts together is more complicated. I claim that this change in handling the book will relate to how we use and assess books. It will shape our understanding of books and eventually the cultural value we assign to books. The analogy of the jigsaw puzzle demonstrates the importance of the format and its effect on how we understand and perceive a book.

Westin (2013) claims that the structure and limitations of the book format are responsible for how society refers to information and measures education. He uses the acceptance speech of Nobel Laureate for Literature Lessing (2007). In this speech, Lessing complained about the loss

of culture because children would no longer read books. For Lessing, this meant that children no longer deal with literature. For her, engagement with literature is inseparably linked to the book, as I defined in Chapter one. Therefore, Lessing's criticism does not deal with a lack of engagement with certain cultural content but with a lack of engagement with the book's specific cultural format. Lessing (2007), in her speech, stated : 'How will our lives, our way of thinking, be changed by this internet, which has seduced an entire generation with its inanities ...

Reading books used to be part of general education. Westin (2013a) concludes from Lessing's reaction that the format of the book is more intricately linked to society than to the content of the book format. He concludes that the limitations of a format (for the book, these are the pages, a text with a beginning and end, and a front and back cover) shape how one deals with these objects. The format of the book determines how people can express themselves culturally. He states that separating the content from this format also means separating the content from the ties with society through which the format has gained much of its 'culture'. I agree with Westin to the extent that the eBook removes the 'limitations' of the printed book through the possible incorporation of videos, the subsequent alterability of the text or so-called embedded content such as maps, which can be opened from within the text when reading about certain geographical regions, for example. The eBook can change how one uses and makes sense of textual content and how one uses and values the book. Van der Weel (2009) explains that humans have certain literary habits, which are needed so that readers find the act of reading liberating. One of these requirements is the organisational order that a book offers. However, Van der Weel sees the possibility that the digitalisation of the book will create new ways in which one deals with literary content. Westin, however, (2013a) does not see the necessity for a new value-giving structure, as he sees this already provided by the print book. Westin (2013a: 138) argues that '[t]he book is not an educational format because there are educational texts in some books – it is an educational format because it was the only viable option during a time

when educational institutions matured and needed to negotiate their processes around a source of information. One can argue that this time has passed as these institutions have various other options for storing content, such as the cloud or servers. Consequently, the value-providing format of the book would become outdated.

Westin follows a narrative often brought forward in discussions on media in which developments in the media field occur linearly, meaning that one format of media displaces another (McLuhan, 1962:136). Westin (2013a) sees a change by which another medium that takes on the function of the book eventually replaced the book. He explains that content can be moved from one format to another but that the 'culture' present in the combination of format and content must be translated; in that act, branches are created that take the content in new directions – developing it through the possibilities of the new format. Therefore, it is a transition from the old medium to the new one. From this reasoning, two points can be drawn: the underlying understanding of the diffusion of new media and the narrative of the disappearing medium. Both aspects are related to my research question about the cultural value of the analogue book in the digital age. This is clear when the introduction of a new medium means a change in the materiality of this medium, as I will explain in the next section.

3.4. Diffusion and the Disappearing Medium

Gooding et al. (2013) argue that much of the criticism of the digitisation of the book is since this process is still relatively new and emerging. They state that technology is developing faster than our understanding of the importance of this development. Williams (as cited by Göttlich, 2009) explains that technologies often follow a recognisable transitional process in the public consciousness as language and understanding adapt to innovation. Gooding et al. (2013) add that our understanding of digitisation as both technology and social force is inherently incomplete, meaning that society, at this point, cannot grasp the scope that digitisation will

have on society. We can find this incomplete understanding of digitisation in many works dealing with the digital transition of media and technological adoption, whether in music (Negus, 2019; Waldfogel, 2015) or film (Kehoe and Mateer, 2015; Pardo, 2015). For example, Waldfogel (2015) argues that with Napster (a music-sharing platform), there was a risk in the music industry that the quality of music would deteriorate sharply since everyone would have access to digital distribution systems.

The filtering function and quality control of record companies would be missing. Pardo (2015) discusses the changes in the movie industry and debates fears that movie consumption would shift from the stationary watching of films to the mobile consumption of movies or the impending end of physical media for films, such as DVDs. In these two statements, they perceive innovative technologies as a deterioration that eventually leads to a devaluation of the medium. Technical progress thus becomes a process of perceived cultural decline. The result is a powerful narrative of ruptures and dramatic changes, which is rarely reflected (Mosco, 2005).

However, this narrative of dramatic changes works in positive and negative ways. By this, I mean that digitisation is judged in a highly negative or highly positive manner. For example, the large-scale digitisation discussed at the beginning of this chapter has also been seen by some scholars as overly optimistic as it goes a long way towards satisfying the dreams of philosophers 'haunted by the myths of knowledge and wholeness that books spawn when massed in their millions' (Battles, 2003:214). Therefore, it can be said that technological determinism often fills the gap when there is a lack of understanding of technological change. According to Nunberg (1996:10), this view is based on the misconception that 'history moves by abrupt and sweeping discontinuities'. The development of digitisation is heading towards a future perceived by many as being more complex than the past. In this future, complex modern technology will inevitably replace complex predecessors that were fewer (Duguid, 1996). I

state that this perception of the future being a more challenging period is often only based on modern technologies being relearned. The replacement of old technologies through new technologies is again a narrative of a linear development from the old (e.g., the printed book) to the new (e.g., digitised books or texts) in the argumentation of many scholars, as well as the prediction that the new will lead to the disappearance of the old. I argue that although the digitisation of the book has been going on for quite some time now, no evidence exists that the eBook has supplanted the analogue book. My research suggests, as I will show later, that the digitisation of the book has affected people's understanding of the book in such a way that to get an impression of a book, one no longer must go to the bookshelf or the library but can access the book digitally, searching for it using keywords on Google Books or in an e-reader. As a result, one loses some of the book's orientation that the analogue book format provides. Likewise, one increasingly loses physical contact with the book. I consider both aspects relevant in digitisation since the physical occupation with the book plays a more critical role than, for example, the haptic engagement with the DVD case, record sleeve or CD case. Wolf (2018) and Symes (2004) mention the importance of album covers and cover notes but emphasise that dealing with them is only one aspect of dealing with music. The primary use of music occurs regardless of its material packaging. The content of the analogue book is rigidly connected to its form and can, therefore not be mere packaging (Schilhab et al., 2018; Schilhab and Walker, 2020). To read a book, one must hold it in one's hands for hours, days, or even weeks. As chapter two of this literature review describes, an essential part of the book's cultural value development depends on the book's materiality. The digitisation of the book is now felt to a considerable extent as a loss of the book's materiality. This assessment shows what role materiality plays in the assessment of cultural value for the book. Therefore, in the following section, I discuss research on the concepts of materiality to better understand the relationship between the digitisation of the book and the cultural value assigned to it.

3.5. The Meaning of Materiality and the Book

I suggest that a closer look at materiality concepts can help better understand the relationship between the book and its digitisation. The digitisation of the book is substantially a change in the book's materiality from a tangible, physical object to a digital file. Although the devices on which digital books are read give them a physical framework, this framework is no longer specific to a particular book with an individually designed cover or a book cover made from a particular type of paper but a technical device that allows for the reading of the book.

Therefore, in this section, I discuss certain aspects of the book's materiality. I discuss the materialisation of text or content, research which role the materiality of books plays for their users and owners and explore whether digital materiality might exist. I consider this approach necessary, as it provides a better understanding of the book's materiality plays in the attribution of cultural value.

In a video by the University of Basel in Switzerland, Schweighauser (2020) examines the first edition of Ezra Pound's *Lustra*. He highlights the meaning of materiality in books and speaks about the cover wrapped in cloth that would give the book a certain feel of 'something precious, something worthwhile preserving, something of note' (Schweighauser, 2020). He notes the book title is printed with sunken letters, 'making the book the opposite of cheap airport fictions that have embossed letters that protrude from the page and almost scream at us' (Schweighauser, 2020). Schweighauser concludes that these physical qualities of this book partially determine one's expectations of the book as one opens it. As the book presents itself as a valuable object, one expects that the literary content is valuable too. Schweighauser argues that the material form affects how one values the content. Literary studies frequently debate whether the materiality of a book relates to one's experience of the quality of a book (see my discussion of Mangan earlier in this chapter) or whether the materiality is of no or little

importance to one's perception of the text. In the age of digitization, this question must be extended to the eBook and the extent to which the digitization of the book influences the perception of the book's content and thus also the cultural value attached to the book. The discussion in this section touches on this debate.

Kastan (2001:3) argues 'that literature exists, in any useful sense, only and always in its materialisations, and that these are the conditions of its meaning rather than merely the containers of it'. The framework in which the text is presented is, therefore, more than just a means for transporting or presenting text, but a prerequisite for the text to have its meaning unfold. Richard Bucci (2007:7) contradicts Kastan (2001), stating that '[a] literary work ... is not a material object, but sequences of words; the destruction of a particular material object that records the words does not necessarily destroy the work itself—unless the object is the only record, and no one has committed the text to memory. Interestingly, both views perform different kinds of work by either elevating or diminishing the status of a text's physical properties related to its literary meaning (Walker, 2013). In other words, Bucci (2007) argues that the iterability of language is not linked to a particular material object. Kastan (2001), by contrast, argues that a text must have materiality as this is a condition of its meaning. This discussion, in a way, refers to Chapter one, where I defined the book as an object. Even when Kastan (2001) and Bucci (2007) are concerned with literature (the text itself), a similar discussion emerges as with the definition of the book. As discussed above, some scholars already see clay tablets and papyrus scrolls as early forms of the book, as they often served the same purpose as the last codex, Kovač et al. (2019) see the book to only be realised in the form of the codex, which has clear organisational and material structures. In other words, what makes the book—the literary content that could exist in various material forms or in fact, the material form itself? It can also be deduced from this that for Bucci, cultures in which texts are only passed on orally can create literature, whereas, for Kastan, this process only begins with

the introduction of the writing of texts, which gave them a material structure and container with which the text enters a symbiotic relationship. It is worth mentioning though that neither Kastan (2001) nor Bucci (2007) has thought of digitisation in their respective arguments. W. W. Greg (1950:21) proposed a further dimension of materiality. He argues that text knows another form of materiality in the printed version of the text. By this, he means that text has two dimensions. First, text reveals the author's meaning or the 'essence of his expression', and second, the materiality of text manifests itself in spelling, punctuation, word division and issues affecting its formal presentation. From this it can be said that Greg partly combines the approaches of Kastan (2001) and Bucci (2007) by acknowledging that text has an immaterial form of existence and a material form.

Bucci's (2007) argument that strips literature from any form of materiality is supported by Bowers (1956:86), who suggests that it is necessary to 'attempt to strip the veil of print from a text' to find beneath that 'authorial manuscript' that no longer exists in a printed version. Unlike Kastan (2001), Bowers focuses on the nonphysical existence of text. In his argumentation, the original manuscript exists foremost in the author's mind before he or she writes it down. Therefore, Kastan is against a digital manifestation of the text and criticises the printing of text. For him, the printed text is a physical manifestation of the text and covers it with a veil, meaning that it makes the author's original intention more challenging to see or understand as it is blurred. While it is important to mention this approach in discussing the book's materiality, Kastan's point of view is of little relevance to my research since text should not be materialized in any form in his imagination. According to the box, the pure form of the text, which only exists in the author's mind, should ideally not be written down and, therefore not be published in the form of a book. Lastly, the literary scholar and critic F.W. Bateson (1972:12) joins Bowers in substance by stating that he considers it problematic when bibliographers are preoccupied with sheets of paper 'on which a mechanical process has imprinted meaningful

symbols, there is the danger that the storage shed of the printed word will come to seem an essential part of the verbal vehicle'. Therefore, the focus should lie on the textual content, that is, on the author's ideas. The materiality of text is consequently a metaphysical form of 'matter'. Therefore, as described in Kastan, these approaches are only of minor importance for my dissertation. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is essential to have briefly outlined them here since in their criticism of the materiality of printed or written text, they emphasize the importance of the materiality of literature. Likewise, all the scholars discussed here make it clear that a change in the materiality of the text has an impact on the perception of the text.

Challenging Greg (1950), Bowers (1956) and, Bateson (1972), McLaverty (1984) states that print and paper are not more minor but more critical than bibliographers have considered it.

McLaverty (1984) argues that some authors have contributed to the layout and appearance of their printed books and states that this should draw attention to those features as integral elements of a text's literary and aesthetic design. His argument is supported by bibliographer McKenzie (1981), who argues for analysing all elements of book design to account for how choices in typography and other formal matters of page layout mediate the reading experience.

The material design of the book thus becomes part of the work and expression of the author.

Walker (2013:201) researches how features of early texts such as spelling and punctuation, and more importantly margins, physical damage, and non-semantic qualities, 'participate in substantial ways with the literary meaning that we read out of or into dramatic narratives inscribed within those features'. Shakespeare scholars de Gracia and Stallybrass (1993:256) explain that features such as old typefaces and spellings, irregular lines or scene divisions, and other paratextual matter are the 'materiality of text'. However, Walker (2013) criticises that most scholars interested in the materiality of text remain confined to the interest of analytical bibliography and the cultural and institutional processes by which printers, papermakers and

other artisans shaped early text. Walker's research is therefore focused on how these features of printed text affect our literary understanding of text.

As this brief section on the materiality of text shows, most scholars have concentrated their research on how these amendments created by print affect our understanding and perception of the textual content. The material qualities of text are seen as having a relationship with how the value of manuscripts is understood. Many scholars discussed above argue that text undergoes a metamorphosis from when it is created in the author's mind to when the author writes it down and finally prints it. This metamorphosis is not only accompanied by a purely substantive change in the text, but according to Greg (1950) and Greg and Bowers (1956), it also changes the value of literature. Even if these authors wrote their essays long before the advent of the Internet, I claim there is a parallel here with the digitization of the book. The digitization of the book also affects the perception of the book. The value placed on the digital book differs from the value placed on the printed book. What is striking in the aforementioned research is that the meaning of materiality is only understood in terms of the text. The structure surrounding the text – by which I mean the organising structure of chapters, as I discussed at the beginning of this chapter in connection with mass digitisation – is hardly considered. In other words, the book's physicality is of little importance in discussing the materiality of the text. However, the materiality of the text described here is primarily experienced when one picks up a book that contains textual content. The browsing through a book, the pages, and the paper structure allow the reader to experience the materiality of the text. Thus, in the next section, I evaluate research on the book's materiality.

3.6. The Materiality of the Book – The Meaning of the Book as a physical Object

Bollmer (2019) suggests that when people read a book, they think about what the words say to them and what they mean, but they rarely think about the medium through which people

communicate. Bollmer (2019:7) continues by saying that 'how we communicate depends on the physical qualities of the media we use'. Bollmer explicitly criticises the theories used to study media only in terms of the meaning of their content. He argues that this approach reduces the study of a medium to interpret the representations or content it channels. In the case of a book, this means a textual analysis, whereas in the case of television, this would mean the discussion of a particular programme. Bollmer (2019) proposes a 'materialist' analysis, which considers that the materiality of a medium – of any medium, be it analogue or digital – matters. When considering the book, little research exists on its materiality. The book's materiality is usually only of importance as it deals with materials from which books are made, annotations written on book pages, or the quality and restoration of paper. I argue, however, that the book's materiality goes beyond visual aspects and the aspects of the material used. Therefore, my dissertation aims to contribute to this debate by investigating the relationship between the book's materiality and the digitisation of the book and how this relates to the cultural value assigned to the analogue book.

Dant (2004) sees a propensity to study the material environment merely as a backdrop to social interaction. He claims that a material environment surrounds people, yet people act upon and within it through their interactions with material objects. Dant (2004) proposes that the key to understanding material culture lies in investigating the everyday, practical interaction between subjects and things. Thus, he breaks with the conventional emphasis on the creation of 'meaning' and the significance of objects as markers of 'social status', which came from sociological and anthropological consumption studies. Instead, Dant (2004) argues that subject-object interaction takes the form of practice as embodied, habitual actions of the body that are naturalised into a routine through repetition. For example, taking a book off the shelf, leafing through it, and sorting the books on a shelf are actions of the body that are naturalised into a routine through repetition. Against this background, the digital representation of books also

takes on a new meaning. Imitating the printed book in digital forms, such as the digital bookshelf in the iBook store or leafing through the screen, then addresses learned routines in dealing with books that are translated to the digital realm.

According to Dant (2004:62), in interactions with material objects, these objects become imbued with cultural values, which in turn affect and direct techniques and practices at a mental level and a physical one. Dant's premise is that culture as the practice is mediated in an embodied, non-symbolic and largely unconscious manner. Thus, Dant sets himself apart from Veblen (2009)(2009), for whom material life is primarily about display and emulation; it is how individuals live out their position within the social structure. For Veblen (2009), the material objects of consumption are treated as signifiers of social class and status, informing about their owners as individuals who have acquired or inherited wealth and the capacity to read and recognise these signs. Veblen pays little attention to how the objects are lived with, how their form leads to a specific type of action and curtails others, or how their presence within a life affects the bodily experience of those who use them. The object's materiality only plays a role insofar as it represents the status of its owner and transmits this status to others. Another aspect of the meaning of materiality in objects was brought forward by McCracken (1990), who did not focus on the ideas and motivations behind consumption but rather on the possession of material objects. He describes the 'patina' that shows on objects once they age should be understood as an indicator of social status.

For McCracken (1990:32), the ageing of material possessions is meant to show that the existing status claims are legitimate. The patina on inherited silver plates, for example, is a 'kind of proof of the family's longevity and the duration of their gentle status' (1990:32). McCracken talks about the patina using Lévi-Strauss' (1973) structuralism, Veblen's (2005) conspicuous consumption and Peirce's (2006) concept of the icon. Patina undoubtedly evokes feelings of admiration and nostalgia for many. Therefore, it might well create a status once one owns an

object of great symbolic value (e.g., the first edition of a rare book signed by the author with a dedication to a family member of the owner). However, suppose the objects were not always in the family's possession (e.g., the first edition was purchased from a second-hand bookshop and is dedicated to a person outside the owner's family). In that case, the relationship between owner and object vanishes partly. Therefore, owning old, valuable material objects does not always work as an indicator of social status.

Nevertheless, the aspect of the effect of the patina is engaging with the book as an object. Books do not have a patina in the way that metal, leather, or wood develops a patina, but old leather bindings begin to shine, the paper changes colour over time and stains appear on the paper. Thus, books develop signs of ageing, and numerous collectors and book lovers value these signs. Some wish to collect books primarily because of these signs of ageing. These signs promise a transfer of cultural capital by distinguishing the owner as a connoisseur and distinguished collector of books (Bartlett, 2015; Wine and Lane, 2020). For the collector, these aged books distinguish him or her from people for whom books only exist to be read. However, the books' materiality alone is not essential for collectors. As mentioned in Chapter two, special editions of books often come with specially made furniture for presentation purposes.

The previous section described how Schweighauser (2020) examined the first edition of Ezra Pound's *Lustra*. Before he started, he entered a particular library room inaccessible to the public. He then put on white gloves and took the book out of a special acid-free cardboard box. Although storing the book in this box and wearing gloves only serve to protect the book, this treatment of the book uniquely emphasises the material object's meaning. First, having to wear gloves and placing the book in an acid-free cardboard box emphasises the meaning of the material object, namely the book, because special material items are necessary for storage and use. Second, it emphasises the object's vulnerability since the book must be protected from damage, which expresses the value of this material object that is the book. If such a book were

privately owned, it would most likely not be placed on a bookshelf but in a unique showcase or a safe. Therefore, another material item (a showcase or safe) would be required to protect the book. Third, these objects' material design and fabric help emphasise the book's special value, whether a beautifully designed showcase for presenting the book or steel safe to protect the book from theft. As this example shows, the object's value is particularly emphasised by the materiality of the objects necessary for its use and protection.

This aspect of value-imparting materiality can also be found in French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1987) works, who describes this as 'habitus'. According to Bourdieu, the habitus is the general basic attitude of a person; that is, the totality of their behaviour in the social world—both their incorporated structures, which are understood as inclinations and dispositions and their way of life, attitudes, and values. Through one's habitus, the individual can move successfully within their class because this offers all the necessary means. The individual only recognises what they are used to. Nevertheless, the habitus is not static and can be understood as a dynamic concept that can be changed to a limited extent (Fuchs-Heinritz and König, 2011). For example, a business consultant is expected to appear confident, performance-oriented, and analytical, whereas a kindergarten teacher is expected to appear understanding, cooperative and creative. However, Bourdieu's (1987) habitus differs from Veblen's (2005) approach. It is not about determining status in the hierarchical sense but about expressing belonging to a particular group and class. Employees in start-ups, for example, often like to wear casual clothing and find suits and ties rather inappropriate. However, Bourdieu's (1987) theory is just as critical in this context as jeans, t-shirts, and sneakers have acquired a symbolic value for start-ups or other companies in the creative industry, which is as symbolic as suits and ties in more conservative industries. This expression of habitus can also be applied to the analogue book. For example, in most students' rooms, one often finds simple wooden shelves filled with paperbacks or stacks of copied notes, books and documents. The book in

this context, works as a sign: by lying around with kinked corners and annotated pages, it works as a symbol that shows that the owner belongs to a particular group, in this case, students, and is therefore associated with research, knowledge or higher education. No further interactions between the book and the owner are necessary to express this belonging. In her work on the social life of books and eBooks, Hupfeld (2015) states that the presentation and handling of books are related to a person's habitus (Bourdieu, 1987).

Another approach that includes the handling and interaction of material objects and persons is taken by Tisseron (2016), who identified several aspects of emotional and practical relationships with material objects. Through these relationships, objects begin to take on something of the status of human agents. In this approach, Tisseron distances himself from scholars such as McLuhan (1962), for whom material objects are mainly extensions of human beings, and pursues an approach that can be assigned to new materialism (Connolly, 2013; Fox and Alldred, 2015). Tisseron (2016:133) states that material objects are included within the psychological states of those whose bodies they extend. He refers to artefacts such as clothing, monuments or art objects and states that how one contacts things or objects is not merely functional or symbolic but also linked to our identity and sense of self. Such contact between individuals and things can also be applied to the digital. The way we surf the net or play computer games might as well reflect identity and sense of selves; however, a physical object - the smartphone, laptop, or tablet, for instance - is still required. Therefore, even when using digital applications, one must access them through a material object. Tisseron draws on Winnicott's (2016) concept of the 'transitional object'. Tisseron (2016) uses the example of the Peanuts comic character Linus and his piece of blanket, which is treated as a replacement for the mother. Following Tisseron's argument, one can say that what a material object does for people is not merely symbolic, and it is not simply a presentation of signs. However, it is entangled with the practical arrangements that a person lives out through the activities of their

body. These motor actions have an emotional quality while simultaneously carrying a social meaning. Dant (2004:64) describes Tisseron's (2016) argument by saying that material objects act as a 'conduit that extends the agency of the body and the person into the world while also providing a channel from the world back into the person'. Thus, material objects work as agents from oneself towards society but also from society towards oneself. Therefore, one can refer to these objects as carriers of memories, signs, and social relationships to the person, and vice versa; these objects can be used to express and manage their personality and emotional life. Many examples come to mind in the realm of books, such as a book that was once given to a person by her mother, who might have died when that person was a young child. By looking at the book, the person probably 'receives' a feeling of being loved by her mother while concurrently expressing that she still misses her. That person will most likely handle this book with extreme care and admiration. Tisseron (2016) argues that it is precisely these gestures – the way material objects are taken up or cared for – that show that objects are more than simply signs.

The last approach to the meaning of the materiality of objects that I wish to discuss in this section is proposed by the American Psychologist Gibson (1968). His approach to the affordance of a material object is based on the term *Aufforderungscharakter*, which was coined by psychologist Kurt Lewin (1969). The term can be translated as 'inviting character' or the 'valence' of an object. This largely coincides with Mead's (1934) statement that objects call up a specific use. What a material object invites a given person to do with it is thus not entirely based on its physical qualities or structures but also on cultural issues. Taking the example of the book, we can argue that the shape of the printed book and the structure of the pages invite us – that is, people who can read and know what books are – to hold the book and leaf through its pages. The book's format invites us to hold the book in a certain way. This 'predestination' of the use of objects can change. If one thinks, for example, of a chair, the initial thought would be

that the chair invites one to sit on it. However, one can also stand on it to change a light bulb or use it to block a door, as Dant (2004) states. Gibson (2014:133), though, does not see this variability, arguing that the affordance of an object is fixed. He states that 'an elongated object of a certain weight can be used for welding. If it is used to hit or strike, it is a club or a hammer. Again, however, there is some variability in this statement. The part about '*if used*' makes *affordance* challenging to define since if that elongated object is used to block a door, lift a box, repair a fence, or anything else, then it is no longer considered a *hammer* or *club*. Thus, affordance is not simply a fixed or given physical property; it states what a material object *can* be used for, but it does not necessarily determine that it is used for that purpose. The affordance of a book is that it can be read, but someone who is illiterate might just use the book to balance a shaking table. In the context of my thesis regarding the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation, the aspect of affordance is crucial because I state that it is related to the cultural value of the book. As I demonstrated in chapter two, the cultural value of the book has evolved from the context in which the book was used—whether as a religious symbol, as a collector's item, as a medium for disseminating ideas or as a medium for education.

Hutchby (2001) discusses this aspect of affordance. He states that the social affordance of objects is essential next to the technical affordance of objects. Whereas technological affordance describes what can be done with a given artefact, social affordance describes what should be done with it. If we apply this to the example of the book, this could mean that it is possible to balance a shaking table with a book. However, if that book is a rare edition or a bible, then society might consider it inappropriate to use a valuable or 'holy' book for such a task. In this context, the book's materiality has technological and social connotations that are both found in its materiality. The technological affordance is visible in the book's thickness, which shows that one can use the book to balance the shaking table as the thickness of the book fits. The social affordance is visible on the book's cover, which tells us that this book is a bible.

In this example, the materiality of the object fits two purposes. This example also shows that digitising the book would bring about a change here. One can use an eBook reader to balance a shaking table (unless one must assume that the screen breaks). Social affordance, however, does not apply in this case because the content of an eBook reader cannot be firmly defined from the outside. Whether the open page on the screen was from a science-fiction novel, a children's book, or the bible cannot be judged from the outside as the sleeve does not provide any such information. With the concept of social affordance, Hutchby (2001) already mentions an aspect that has changed with the digitisation of the book (i.e., the direct visibility of the content) and thus already relates the aspect of the book as a collector and representative object, as described in Chapter two. I will return to this aspect later when discussing my findings in Chapter seven.

Dant's (2004), Veblen's (2005), and Tisseron's (2016) arguments can only be applied to physical objects. On the other hand, only Bourdieu's theory of Habitus is independent of an object's physical condition. In other words, it can be applied to tangible and intangible objects. In this context, the aspect of digital objects is of particular importance. It raises the following questions: To what extent can digital data be viewed as an object, and does materiality also exist in digital? Therefore, the following section discusses research on the relationship between materiality and digitisation.

3.7. The Materiality of the Digital

Digitization is often equated with the dematerialization of objects (Magaudda, 2011; Smil, 2016). The term 'dematerialization' was initially coined by Chandler and Lippart (1968), who predicted a future without objects, and described an emerging "ultra-conceptual" art that would no longer require material production. Granjon and Combes (2009) analyse recent trends that are changing the consumption patterns of music content in what they call the 'dematerialisation of music media', while Belk (2016) researches the notions of ownership and notes changes in traditional ownership based on what he sees as the dematerialization of possessions such as books, newspapers, films, letters and music. The term 'dematerialisation' has been brought forward in various studies focusing on economics and the environment (Geiser and Gros, 2001; Herman, R., Ardekani, 1989; Wernick, 1996) as well as art history (Dryansky, 2019; Duffy, 2016). Most of these studies have in common that they appeared when the digital was considered in research as not having materiality and, therefore, was not seen as another form of material. Kovač et al. (2019) also bring forward the idea that the digital has no materiality. They state that digital objects have no physicality and are immaterial.

Because of this, the technology behind digital media would not frame the content in the same way as printing technology framed books (Kovač et al., 2019:321). I assert that this argument cannot be upheld as digital media provides several frames or constraining features that shape our perception and consumption of text and, thus also, of eBooks. Leonardi (2010), a communication studies researcher, argues that the digital does contain materiality. He criticises scholars such as Latour and Lowe (2013) and Orlikowski and Scott (2008), stating that the physical and conceptual are phenomena of different orders. Those scholars argue that the physical can be touched.

In contrast, the conceptual cannot, whereas Leonardi (2010) argues that if there were only physical artefacts and conceptual innovations, it would be relatively simple to define materiality as physical matter. To strengthen his point, he provides an example of software. He argues that software such as Microsoft Word is an artefact that, although not composed of matter and or tangible, can also not simply be seen as existing in the conceptual domain '...because it provides hard constraints and affordances in much the same way as physical artefacts do' (Leonardi, 2010). These constraints and affordances described by Leonardi (2010) are often associated with tangible objects, as I showed in the previous section. In other words, this association implies that materiality first applies to tangible objects, and software might have a material quality as it provides certain constraints and affordances. These features are naturally associated with tangible objects. This approach was strengthened by Pinch (2008: 461), who states that 'materiality is the world of objects and things'. Pinch continues to provide various accounts drawn from sociological studies of how technologies are treated purely as symbolic instead of material. To support his point, he reviews studies regarding material by Bijker (1997) and about the bicycle and the car (Kline and Pinch, 1996). In addition, Pinch (2008) adds studies about digital objects like electronic publishing software (Boczkowski, 2004) as well as some that are in-between material and immaterial such as the synthesiser, which consists of a material frame but only works because of its insides (Pinch et al., 2009). He concludes that scholars who have spent much time thinking about 'materiality' have difficulty defining it. The definition of materiality is, therefore, not as straightforward as many scholars assume. From this, Leonardi (2010) concludes that perhaps the physical matter from which objects are constructed is not all that important. He suggests that it might be of more use not to define the term 'materiality' and instead to examine how scholars use the adjective 'material' to come closer to a definition and to provide an answer for whether the digital might also be

material. Using the term 'material' as an adjective lead to the consideration of what an object or a programme does or what it enables.

The American sociologist Pickering argues that to call something 'material' means to emphasise performativity, the notion that it provides people with capabilities that they can use to accomplish their goals (Pickering, 2001). Leonardi (2010) uses this approach to state that what matters most about an artefact is not what it is made of but what it allows people to do. This leads back to Gibson, whose thoughts on affordances I evaluated in the previous section.

Gibson (2014) argues that people do not interact with an object before or without perceiving what it is suitable for. In other words, people need to know what can be done with an object before deciding whether to use it. This approach is interesting insofar as it moves the aspect of 'material' away from the inherent properties of the artefact and towards how the artefact exists in relation to the people who created and use it. Here, a point of contact occurs with my thesis, in which I involve authors, publishers, booksellers and readers to research the cultural value of books in the age of digitisation. However, Gibson is concerned with the use of the respective object, whereas my thesis examines the cultural value and how it is assessed by authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers. My research is not concerned at first with how people use books, whether analogue books or eBooks, but rather with how they experience and evaluate the cultural value of books in the age of digitisation. Nonetheless, the discussion about the materiality of the digital is also relevant to my research work, as I argue that the change in the physicality of the book through digitisation also affects the way the cultural value of the book is perceived by authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers. Leonardi (2010) concludes his argument about materiality as follows: 'when those researchers describe digital artefacts as having "material" properties, aspects, or features, we might safely say that what makes them "material" is that they provide capabilities that afford or constrain action'.

Manoff (2006) uses a slightly different approach to define the material in the digital. She first focuses on the frame that is necessary to access electronic text. She argues that digital objects have materiality as we access texts with machines made of metal and plastic through networks that are composed of fibre optic cables. Manoff quotes studies by (Drucker, 2002; Hayles, 2003; Kirschenbaum, 2002), who have all argued that an emphasis on immateriality has constrained our understanding of print and electronic objects. Kirschenbaum (2002) and Drucker (2002) consider this approach misleading as people have failed to grasp the distinction between electronic and other media, thus misunderstanding the nature of both print and digital objects. What is therefore needed is not just a discussion on whether the digital is material but also one on what the differences are between digital text and printed text.

Kirschenbaum (2002) states that textual scholarship addresses the physical aspects of texts such as typography, binding, illustrations, and paper to understand their role in meaning creation. In a world of digital artefacts, textual scholars may well consider a new range of physical objects such as platforms, interfaces, standards, and coding. These new features and 'constraints' provide the text's new 'physical' aspects. I claim, for example, that the surface of electronic reading devices affects our perception of text and how we collaborate with it. If, for example, one reads a scientific paper on an eBook reader or tablet computer, text can only be marked using one's fingers or a special stylus rather than a highlighter or pencil; moreover, annotations are written using the virtual keyboard rather than a pen. When annotating a paper document, one can quickly draw arrows or lines linking paragraphs, which is often not possible or not as easily possible when working on a digital text, at least on tablet computers and eBook readers.

Another example is the smartphone screen, which shapes how one writes messages. The screen can only display a limited amount of text, and cell phone touchpads are even more constraining because of their size. For example, it is not possible to use a 10-finger system on a smartphone so far. Although it is certainly possible to write a novel on a smartphone screen using fewer

than 10 fingers, this would be much less convenient than using a standard keyboard. I argue that these examples demonstrate how materiality relates differently to how we create or work with text. Referring to Chapter two, in which I pointed out the discussion on to what extent fast-selling novels might affect the way authors write, the following question arises: How might the use of digital writing devices relate to the way texts are written? Although this question is not part of my thesis, it deserves to be discussed in a further study on the digitisation of the book. In the last paragraph of this section, I wish to briefly examine two aspects that I consider essential: the first is the aspect of the physical manifestation of a novel, and the second is the aspect of permanence in the digital. Both aspects are crucial to my thesis as they touch upon characteristics of the book that relate to digitisation.

Hayles (2003) states that the meaning of a work, whether print or electronic, cannot be separated from its physical manifestation. She states that the distinctive physical organisation of novels is crucial to how they are read and the purposes they serve. This links Hayles' argument with the order of the book, as described by Kovač et al. (2019) in their definition of the book presented in Chapter one. Hayles (2003) states that navigational features of text do not merely provide orientation through a text but are also 'part of a work's signifying structure' (2003:264). Drucker (2002:152), a book artist, poet and theorist, finds that the information of a text is much more than a progression of words or numbers. For both print and electronic objects, 'the structure or configuration of a text functions as information, and it is this information that may not translate between media'.

One aspect of thought missing from the discussion thus far is permanence. A printed text is permanently linked to its carrier medium, while an electronic text can be accessed through different devices. In other words, the bookstore delivers the text while a computer or tablet distributes these functions (Aarseth, 1997). Moreover, the computer has the additional capacity to process and manipulate text and data. Books and computers store, display and distribute text

in very different ways. However, as Paul Eggert (2005:428), a researcher in computer science, states, '[w]hether the textual carrier is the physical page, a computational capacity, or the sound waves that transmit orally declaimed verse, there is always a material condition for the existence of text'.

3.8. Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, I dealt with some of the first projects to digitize the book and compared two concepts that show a different approach to the book's concept in the digital age. While the Gutenberg Project and the Internet Archive digitize books in their current form and make them accessible as whole works, the Google Books Project sees itself as a search platform in which books can be searched for specific content. These two different concepts suggest a possible change in the book format in the digital and the possible consequences this can have on our use of the book. Furthermore, I have explored research relating to the digitisation of the book and show that most research in this field tends to give much attention to the digitization of texts and digital reading. As I described in Chapter one, the book as a format receives little attention in this research. Studies that consider the digitization of the book often describe this as a process where the book disappears in favour of other media and loses its importance. However, I have shown that this narrative of the disappearing medium does not apply to the analogue book and has also not occurred in connection with other media such as LPs, DVDs, or CDs. Instead, the analogue book exists alongside the eBook. To better understand the book as a medium in the digital age, I subsequently researched the book's materiality. It became clear that the book's materiality has seldom been researched against the background of the digitization of the book. Instead, the book's materiality is almost without exception understood as physical materiality, which has led me to the extent to which there is digital materiality and how it relates to the book. It became clear that there is also a form of materiality in the digital world. However, this research has not yet shown how this materiality

affects the cultural value of objects. There has been little research to date that examines the relationship between the cultural value of the book and the digitization of the book and the relationship between the changing materiality of the book in the digital and the cultural value of the book. Therefore, my research aims to fill the mentioned research gaps. In the next chapter, I will therefore explain how I did research the cultural value of the book in the digital age.

CHAPTER 4.

RESEARCHING THE CULTURAL VALUE OF THE BOOK IN THE AGE OF DIGITISATION

As the past three chapters have shown, most scholars have focused their research on the digitisation of text and reading rather than the digitisation of the book as an object and how its materiality affects its cultural value in the digital age. In this chapter, I now discuss the approach that I employed to research the cultural value of the book. Moreover, I outline how I addressed the limitations of previous studies on the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation to find out how the cultural value of the book is related to the digitization of the book. I also discuss my approach to researching how the digitisation of the book is related to the cultural value perception of the book by readers, authors, booksellers, and publishers. I adopted a concept called the 'cultural diamond' (Griswold, 2013), which allows people to understand a given cultural object and its meaning from the perspective of the creators, the social world and recipients of such a cultural good. At the heart of this approach was an attempt to research multiple connections that affect the cultural value perception of the book from authors and publishers to bookshops and then to readers, through which I researched the relationship between the digitisation of the book, the materiality of the book and its value perception in the age of digitisation. This allowed me to examine how producers of the book (authors, publishers), intermediaries of the book (booksellers) and consumers of the book (readers, collectors) relate to the cultural value of the book in the age of digitization.

As outlined in the Introduction to this dissertation, the guiding research question was as follows:

In what ways does the materiality of the analogue book relate to its cultural value in the digital age?

From this, I identified the following sub-questions to further structure my research:

- Using Griswold's cultural diamond, how do consumers, producers and intermediaries assign cultural value to the analogue book?
- What significance do the material properties of the analogue book have for its producers, distributors, and reader in the digital age?
- To what extent does the digitisation process relate to how books are distributed and consumed?

Examining the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation means examining the significance of a cultural object in times of change and, at the same time, examining the change in the object itself. This investigation was thus initially related to the physical book. Beyond that, I also investigated how the book's cultural value relates to the digitisation of the book itself. This is at first related to the book as an object, as described in Chapter one when defining what makes a book because digitisation can change the form and structure of the book (i.e., through mass digitisation). Second, the digitisation of the book relates to the cultural value of the book as it relates to how the cultural value of the book developed, starting from the book being a religious symbol, an expression of scholarship and prosperity, and a medium with the power to change society. Despite the increased commercialisation of the literary market, the book managed to maintain its cultural value well into the 21st century. Finally, the digitisation of the book relates its materiality and thus to the way we deal with the book, how the book can be used as an object to express our habitus and how the book can be used to express our

personality. I begin the chapter by discussing previous studies on the cultural value of cultural objects such as books, VHS tapes, the iPod, and others and show their limitations. I then introduce and describe the cultural diamond, demonstrating how it responds to the limitations of studying past issues of the cultural value of cultural objects. Following this, I outline how I used the model to research cultural value in the age of digitisation. I then present my pilot study, which I conducted to evaluate my chosen methodology. I end the chapter by discussing the ethical issues that I encountered while conducting the research.

4.1. Research Designs Applied in Studies of Cultural Objects

In the previous chapters, I have shown a lack of research on the cultural value of the analogue fiction book. Because of this, I have engaged with studies that consider the significance of cultural objects, such as videotapes, records, and the iPod, to evaluate their approach to methodology and form my research design. The helpful starting point is to work around the collecting of cultural artefacts. In Chapter two, I discussed Benjamin's essay 'Unpacking my Library' (1970), in which Benjamin describes the relationship he, as a book collector, has with his collection. He describes his actions, feelings, and the greater meaning of having a book collection by observing himself while placing his books on a bookshelf. Although Benjamin's insights are subjective and of limited scope as they only include his feelings and thoughts towards his book collection, they provide a starting point for understanding the relationship between people who own, use, or collect cultural items and the items themselves.

Furthermore, studies on collections of cultural objects include Lenaghan's (2012) study on book collectors, which I discuss in more detail later in this chapter. I also wish to emphasise Bjarkman's (2016) study of fans who collect and trade video recordings of television broadcasts and Geraghty's (2014) study on the cult film and TV merchandise collectors. Dinsmore's (2010) study on the collectors of videotapes and Shuker's (2004) study on contemporary record

collectors. They all have something in common: they describe collectors of physical and cultural objects and refer to the aspects of materiality in this context. As I mentioned above, my study did two things: first, it researched the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation, and second, I examined which aspect of the materiality of the book played in this context. Therefore, my interest was not limited to studies on physical, cultural objects but extended to the collection of digital or digitised artefacts as all these studies also touched on the aspect of materiality. I begin my evaluation of previous studies by discussing the two that dealt with books in the age of digitisation in diverse ways.

With her work on collecting books in the 21st century, Lenaghan (2012) has carried out research that has been of particular relevance to my research, which is why I am discussing it in more detail here. She focused her research on material books' value for collectors in the digital age. She used archival and ethnographic analysis to identify the primary arenas, actors, and values associated with book collecting from the 'Golden Age' (that, according to Lenaghan (2012), lasted from 1890 to 1930) to the present. Lenaghan considered the Golden Age period particularly relevant for her research since collectors such as Henry Clay Folger, J.P. Morgan, and Henry Huntington cultivated libraries during these years. Lenaghan's (2012) research consisted of fieldwork and interviews. The fieldwork occurred at the Caxton Book Club, Chicago's oldest extant book collecting society. Lenaghan herself became a member of the book club to conduct her research and attended bi-weekly meetings for over four years, using these meetings for participant observations. She supplemented her attendance with visits to rare antiquarian book fairs and book and manuscript auctions. Finally, she assessed her observations in 15 semi-structured interviews with members of the Caxton Club. To find her participants, Lenaghan used purposive snowball sampling. She asked existing participants to recruit other subjects from among their acquaintances. For her interviews, Lenaghan mixed genders and ages and new and experienced collectors. She tried to choose collectors whose collections had

different degrees of depth. Next to the interviews with book collectors, Lenaghan conducted 30 interviews with booksellers of antiquarian bookshops. Her archival research included the Caxton Club archives, including newsletters, correspondence, yearbooks, and photographs. The last resource Lenaghan made use of was book collectors' memoirs. An essential tool that she used to gather material was ethnographic observation. Ethnographic observation provides valuable insights into book collectors' relationship with their collected items. It allows the observation of which books are essential to their owners or are used often. Lenaghan's study provided two exciting aspects I could build upon in my research. First, she introduced the aspect of digitisation in connection with the book and thus contrasted the book with digital media, which could be seen as competition to the book. Second, she surveyed collectors (i.e., consumers of books) and dealers of antiquarian books or intermediaries in the book market. However, Lenaghan did not include digitisation in her research in such a way that it affected the book directly but rather contrasted digital devices with the book. Therefore, her research was not about digitising the book itself.

Furthermore, she only surveyed booksellers of second-hand books but did not involve authors or book publishers in her research. Although Lenaghan's research approach offers exciting insights into the motivations and habits of book collectors, it has some crucial weaknesses. Lenaghan relied on the interviewees' explanations concerning their collecting habits or relationships with books. In several cases, however, discrepancies were apparent between what the collectors said about their collection, their approach to collecting and what the previous observation had shown. This discrepancy is an interesting observation, but Lenaghan ignored it and left it without comment. This discrepancy suggests a difference between collectors' aspirations for their collection and their actual collecting behaviour. I argue that this might be due to issues that often occur during interviews according to Nunkoosing (2005), such as power issues between the interviewee and the interviewer and truth and authenticity.

For my research question on the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation, it was essential, without pressure from my side, to get participants to reflect on what they have said to gain a more profound insight into their motivation and values. Therefore, I decided, where possible, against using one-on-one interviews to limit the impact of the power issues mentioned above. Lenaghan (2012) also included booksellers working in bookstores for antique books in her research. This integration of intermediaries is helpful as it allows an external view of the collectors. The dealers see the collectors as customers and thus provide observations of behaviour outside scientific research. However, it would have been interesting if Lenaghan had also included representatives of book publishers since, according to Martin (2021) and Miller (2013) increasingly focused on collectors when designing their new releases, which illustrates the importance of collector editions in the book trade. As mentioned above, however, one of the differences between my thesis and Lenaghan's (2012) research is that she did not apply the topic of digitisation to the book itself but contrasted digital technologies with the book. As a result, the eBook only played a very occasional role in her study. Hupfeld (2015) focused more on the eBook and the digitisation of the book in her study, which I discuss in more detail in the next paragraph.

Hupfeld (2015) aimed to develop a situated understanding of the everyday practices and values surrounding books and eBooks to identify opportunities for change through design. Her research focused on the use of books and the change from print to eBooks, but she considered the value people assign to the traditional book to be an essential factor in this change process. Hupfeld (2015:15) stated the following: 'Taking a holistic approach to studying our everyday experience through books and eBooks necessarily requires a focus not just on the entities themselves, i.e. things and people, but more importantly, the relations between them'. Hupfeld attempted to achieve that by conducting two exploratory field studies about the everyday uses of books and eBooks. She first used a diary study to understand how eBooks were used for

leisure across e-reading devices (e-readers, tablets, smartphones, and PCs) and settings (inside and outside the home). Participants had to document any use of eBooks such as acquisition, use, discussion and sharing. This was done using photo diaries, which were used in conjunction with two interviews to elicit background information. She conducted a second study aimed at understanding the lifecycle of books as they entered, moved through, and out of the home, such as their acquisition, ownership, use, exchange, and divestment. She conducted unstructured interviews as people took her on tour around their homes. Hupfeld's (2015) approach allowed her to research the use of eBooks and print books and the differences among these uses by her participants. As Hupfeld was interested in people's practical use of eBooks, this approach worked for her research. However, Hupfeld only focused her research on users or consumers of books, leaving out other groups such as booksellers, publishers and librarians who also use and deal with books and eBooks. Nevertheless, people working with books professionally and commercially are likely to have a different attitude to books than the readers and owners of the books in Hupfeld's study, as book publishing or bookselling is their way to make money.

Nevertheless, Hupfeld's research proved helpful in my research methodology as she came across questions of value that people assign to the book. Her photographic diary is an exciting concept because the participants had the opportunity to reflect on how they use their books in quiet without being observed. This eliminated the interview situation in which, as mentioned above, certain power situations can arise (Nunkoosing, 2005). I also argue that the fact that her participants had time, were undisturbed, could observe themselves and could later change entries that they made increased the probability that entries reflect the real intention of participants. This is because it allows the reader of her study to see how books move around in the places of her participants, providing important insights into how the books are treated and used. However, Hupfeld's approach had its limitations because it only focused on the users and owners of books. The other parties involved in the book market, such as publishers, authors,

and booksellers, were not part of her research. I believe that observation by producers of books as well as intermediaries would have provided a more comprehensive insight into everyday practices and values surrounding books and eBooks. As mentioned, the studies of Lenaghan (2012) and Hupfeld (2015) are two of the few studies to have dealt with books in the age of digitisation. As already described in chapter two, further studies have been devoted to digitising text and reading (Kovač and van der Weel, 2018; Mangen, 2016; Mangen et al., 2013; Mangen and van der Weel, 2017), but not to the book itself. For this reason, I also decided to use studies that deal with other media, such as VHS tapes, vinyl records and the iPod, to find out how they have examined the digitisation of media and the related aspect of cultural value.

A study that aimed to investigate the relationship between materiality and music consumption was conducted by Magaudda (2011), who researched digital music consumption and the renaissance of the vinyl record. He aimed to understand the role of materiality in the age of dematerialisation, as he calls it. Magaudda adopted a structure he named the 'circuit of practice', an explicative model that enables empirical analysis and aims to highlight the relationships between materiality and social practices. Magaudda (2011) collected his data in 25 in-depth, narrative, semi-structured interviews. His participants were young Italian digital music consumers between 15 and 30 years of age. The sample of interviewees was selected based on theoretical sampling, which describes a process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects codes and analyses data before deciding what data to collect next and where to find them, thus developing a theory as it emerges (Glaser and Strauss, 2017). The data from these interviews were analysed and interpreted based on a grounded theory approach. Magaudda structured his study in a way that at first considered the introduction of a new object (the iPod), second an existing object previously external to music consumption (the hard drive), and finally an old and obsolete object (the vinyl record). Magaudda aimed to obtain data about listening practices. By comparing conventional music

objects (vinyl records) and new players (iPod), Magaudda (2011) contributed to how media usage changes because of the changes in platforms. This gave rise to insights into the cultural value of media. I see parallels here to my literature review (Chapter two) and the criticism of reading on the PC screen by Baron (Baron, 2009; NS Baron, 2015) and others since the PC can be used to read books but was not initially intended for doing so. However, Magaudda was only concerned with the respective social practices, not with the participants' cultural values attached to the individual objects. Like Hupfeld (2015) and Lenaghan (2012), Magaudda focused his research only on the consumers and not on the producers or intermediaries. However, I believe that to understand the change in technology and its cultural value, it is necessary not only to turn to the consumer side but also to include producers, intermediaries, and consumers. Whereas Magaudda primarily focused on the devices required to use the cultural content, in the next section, I discuss a study that dealt with the digitisation of cultural content.

The sociologist Andy Bennett and the cultural scientist and musician Ian Rogers (Bennett and Rogers, 2016) researched concrete manifestations of music listening and fandom, namely how 'various aspects of popular music-related material culture become palpable objects for the writing of personal histories' (2016:29). Among those objects were CDs, LPs, ticket stubs and merchandising goods, but also objects that have no apparent link to music. The study also explored whether the meaning of these objects for their owners could be translated into the digital realm. Their research was based on a three-year-long study on popular music and cultural memory. The data were collected in six major Australian cities using a snowball sampling technique to recruit participants. Overall, 91 individuals were interviewed, ranging in age from the late teens (18 and above) to seniors in their seventies and eighties; 63 participants were men, and 28 were women. The primary method used to generate the data was semi-structured one-to-one interviews. They used several standardised questions, although the questions were modified slightly to suit interviews with different participant groups. Those

diverse groups included musicians, archivists, and fans. They were aware that these categories are not entirely distinct from one another. Therefore, Bennet and Rogers (2016) acknowledged that diverse groups of participants might have a different approach to the questions asked and do similar things for several reasons. Their approach is the closest to my approach as they acknowledged the necessity of including producers of music (musicians), consumers (fans) and archivists, who are not necessarily intermediaries but can be seen as being in between musicians and fans as a group that neither produces the music nor are necessarily fans themselves.

On the consumer side, however, Bennet and Rogers (2016) did not pay much attention to the music industry, which I consider critical for thoroughly researching the various meanings of memorabilia. This is because, from my time in the music industry, I remember fellow employees who collected lanyards from concerts and festivals or had photos of themselves and various artists hanging on the walls in their offices. These collections were less an expression of fandom for certain artists but more an underpinning of their importance and belonging to the industry. Bennett and Rogers (2016) used semi-structured interviews. As I have already indicated with Lenaghan's approach (2012), I consider one-to-one interviews to not be without problems as sometimes in cultural research studies, the true motivations of interviewees remain undetected because respondents do not feel comfortable in the interview situation; furthermore, the interviewer might not be familiar enough with the scene from which the participants he/she is interviewing are from and thus does not address crucial points with his/her questions (Nunkoosing, 2005; Potter and Hepburn, 2005; Shohel et al., 2015a). For my research, I considered it particularly important to determine the underlying motivations of my participants, as I argue that many motivations lie in the participants' unconscious or that many participants are not already fully aware of their motivations. Therefore, I chose an approach to my research that seemed more appropriate for making the participants aware of their motivation, as I will

explain in more detail later in this chapter. Before moving on to this aspect, though, I consider it necessary to address another aspect that played a role in my research, which is gender. This is because in my research, I experienced a different weighting of the sexes on the part of the producers (in this case the publishers) and the intermediaries (booksellers) and consumers (readers). While the management positions in the publishing houses are still strongly male-dominated, women predominantly work in the book trade. In addition, most of the reader participants in my study were female. Therefore, in the next section, I discuss a study that added the aspect of gender to research the cultural value of a cultural object. Said study provided me with valuable insights into how to consider the issue of gender in my research.

Gray's (1992) study of the use of the VCR by women examined the introduction of a new piece of entertainment in the domestic environment and how women, in particular, make use of this new piece of entertainment. Gray examines the cultural and emotional value the new entertainment device has for the women of her study, making it a valuable counterpoint to the attachment people ascribe to books. She states, 'Women are "positioned" differently from men within the domestic environment through their labour of reproduction, child-care, and domestic work' (1992:VI). Gray conducted one-to-one interviews with 30 women. Her sample consisted of women who lived with a male partner in full employment, most of whom were married. Gray recruited from the same ethnic background as she wanted to explore how factors such as age, class and employment crossed with gender within a broadly homogenous group who shared the same nationality and cultural background. Women from same-sex relationships or women with different gender identities were not part of her study. Gray located her participants by undertaking a questionnaire survey in a video library. This produced a working-class sample of women as these libraries were mostly used by women with working-class backgrounds. She decided to hold the interviews at the homes of the women as she wanted them 'to make sense out of their experience'. Therefore, she thought this open approach to the interview situation

and setting allowed the women to raise issues and topics which they felt were essential to the subject of the study. Gray's (1992) study offered three approaches that were also valuable for my study. As she dealt with the cultural value that objects, in her case, the VCR player, had for their participants. To improve the general conditions for the interviewees, she interviewed her participants in their familiar surroundings and allowed interruptions; thus, there was no artificial situation, and Gray obtained important insights beyond what was said. Finally, her study provided important insights into the gender issue and showed how important it is to pay attention to this aspect. Nevertheless, just like Lenaghan (2012) and Hupfeld (2015), Gray (1992) focused on consumers of cultural objects and left out producers and intermediaries.

Though different in research design, comprehension, and object of study, all of the studies above have some aspects in common: they researched the value and meaning of cultural objects. They provided helpful insights, which I will evaluate in more detail below. The semi-structured interviews employed by all the researchers revealed some limitations of this method. Often, they had to encourage their participants to think more deeply about a given question. This could have led to participants feeling compelled to say more than they would like to say (Shohel et al., 2015b), or to feel that they are expected to make more in-depth or further statements, which may be followed by answers that do not necessarily reflect their true feelings or thoughts (Nunkoosing, 2005). As Gray (1992) acknowledged, she relied on her respondents' explanations of their actions. She thus stressed the limitations of her research. Hupfeld's (2015) study focused on the use of books and eBooks, and her observations while her participants took her on a tour around their house provided basic insights into the values people place on books. In addition, she provided insight into how this value varies between books and eBooks. However, although the book as a cultural object was omnipresent in her study, she paid little attention to the book as an object. Hupfeld's core concern was the reading behaviour of her participants. Lenaghan's (2012) approach of combining observations and interviews is,

therefore, the most useful in obtaining information about the interaction between people and books and their value on them. The mixture of observations and interviews allowed Lenaghan to compare the actions of people and research through interviews how her participants described their actions themselves and the motivations for their actions. This enabled exciting insights into how certain attitudes and the resulting actions were related and, thus, into whether the expressed opinion or attitude matched the actions of the person concerned.

Nonetheless, Lenaghan (2012) rarely used the possibility of comparison since her research question was essentially about the meaning of materiality and not the cultural value of books. Besides, Lenaghan focused her research only on collectors, a group that represents a relatively small group among book consumers. Unfortunately, her brief outlook on antiquarian bookshops and the way bookshops and collectors relate to each other was not deepened. Lenaghan shared this restriction on the consumer side with Gray (1992) and Hupfeld (2015). Only Bennett and Rogers (2016) partly included musicians – and thus 'producers' – in their research. Lenaghan (2012), for example, could have dealt more intensively with the motivations of antiquarian bookshops, and Hupfeld (2015) could also have examined the relationship between physical books and eBooks and their use and processing in the publishing world. Beyond that, it would have been necessary also to research the relation of the materiality of books in connection with cultural value, as Bennet and Rogers (2016) had done in their study on music fandom. This is a gap that I sought to explore in my study. I not only examined the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation based on the readers or buyers of books but also based on authors, publishers, and booksellers. In doing so, I integrated representatives from various parts of the production and consumption cycle of the book into my research. I argue that this was necessary as I discussed in Chapter two that the cultural value of the book is created by producers of books (authors and publishers), intermediaries of the book market (booksellers and librarians) and consumers of books (readers and collectors) alike.

It is essential to add that I do not limit the book market to the actors such as authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers. Likewise, the book market is not limited to the areas of publishers, booksellers, and consumers. The book also occurs in various other contexts. For example, I should mention libraries here. Likewise, book fairs, such as the largest book fair in the world in Frankfurt am Main and the book fair in Leipzig, which is just as crucial for Germany, where publishers, authors and readers meet intensively in a different space for a couple of days. In addition, books are present in antiquarian bookstores, flea markets, and auction houses, to name a few more spaces. For this research, however, I have decided not to extend my research to these spaces. The reason for this is that although these fairs represent a particular space, it is by large the same actors in the book market who meet in this space. Thus, these trade fairs are meeting places for publishers and the book trade, as well as between publishers, authors, and readers or booksellers. Since I already consider these three groups in my research set-up, adding book fairs or other spaces such as libraries is not primarily relevant in this research. However, I think it is essential to consider them in further research projects, as I explain in more detail in my conclusion.

Therefore, I designed my research to include most of the participants of the book market who are involved with the production, dissemination, and consumption of books. To do this, I formulated a methodology to include the three groups and discuss their relationship. A helpful tool that helped me to examine the relationship between the three groups and their respective view on the cultural value of the books was Griswold's (2013) cultural diamond, which is introduced in detail in the next section.

4.2. Introducing the 'cultural diamond'

Griswold (2013) developed the cultural diamond to better understand the culture and cultural objects. She states that the cultural diamond is '...an accounting device intended to encourage a fuller understanding of any cultural object's relationship to the social world' (2013:16).

Therefore, a valuable approach for my research. To introduce her concept of the cultural diamond, Griswold referred to Durkheim's (1915) analysis of religion. Durkheim suggested that the book as a cultural object can be seen as a collective representation of the 'society' that participates in the book's production, distribution, and consumption. As Durkheim indicated, the book is a collective product of producers, distributors, and consumers of books. Griswold (2013:53) stated that 'culture, including religion, is a collective representation in two senses. First, the cultural objects [...] are not simply created by an individual touched by genius or inspired by God. Instead, people bound to other people—people who work, celebrate, suffer, and love, [...] produce them'. Griswold continued by stating that if we apply Durkheim's insights, it will constitute what we call the collective production approach to cultural meanings. Following Durkheim's (1915) insights, I, therefore, considered it necessary to include the creators of books (authors and publishers), the intermediaries of books (booksellers) and the consumers of books (readers) into my research.

To examine these three groups and their relationship with the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation, I used Griswold's (2013) cultural diamond. By making explicit the myriad connections between its parts, this model of culture provides a richer structure through which the role of the book as a material and cultural object might be considered. Griswold's model is like that advocated by social constructivist approaches for the study of technology in that it emphasises users' agency in determining the meaning of technologies through enactment (Risse, 2004). Similarly, it is philosophically akin to reception-oriented approaches to audience studies, particularly those that aim to address the affective relationships cultivated between

users and technology. Those approaches, though, often emphasise the practices of users as oriented around specific technologies. The larger goal of such studies is often focused on explaining a technology's acceptance or rejection. By contrast, the cultural diamond emphasises the importance of practice in determining an object's meaning within a specific context. Unlike social constructivist approaches (Kim, 2001; Kiraly, 2014; Pfadenhauer and Knoblauch, 2018), it is not concerned with studying technologies at the moment of their inception.

Similarly, unlike reception studies (Hardwick, 2003; Porter, 2008), it does not focus on instances of consumption. Instead, in focusing on specific cultural objects as they circulate and orient the practices of their users, the cultural diamond allows for more wide-ranging and free-flowing definitions of its objects of study. The framework of the cultural diamond allowed me to research the views of the three groups (i.e., the creators, intermediaries, and consumers of books) regarding the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation and also how the interdependency of the groups relate to these value perceptions. In the next section, I describe how these interdependencies between the groups work.

As described in Chapter two, the cultural value of the book is composed of its history as a religious symbol, as an expression of scholarship and prosperity and the power attributed to it as a medium to change society. Hence, we can say that all cultural objects have creators.

Griswold (2013) described these creators as the people who first articulate and communicate an idea or who fashion a form. Other people then experience the cultural objects as audiences in a concert, readers of books or visitors to an art exhibition. Both cultural objects and the people who create and receive them are anchored in a particular context that Griswold (Ponzoni, 2015) calls the 'social world'. By 'social world', Griswold means economical, political, and social patterns and exigencies. These four points create the cultural diamond, in which each element is connected to all the others, as illustrated in Fig. 4.

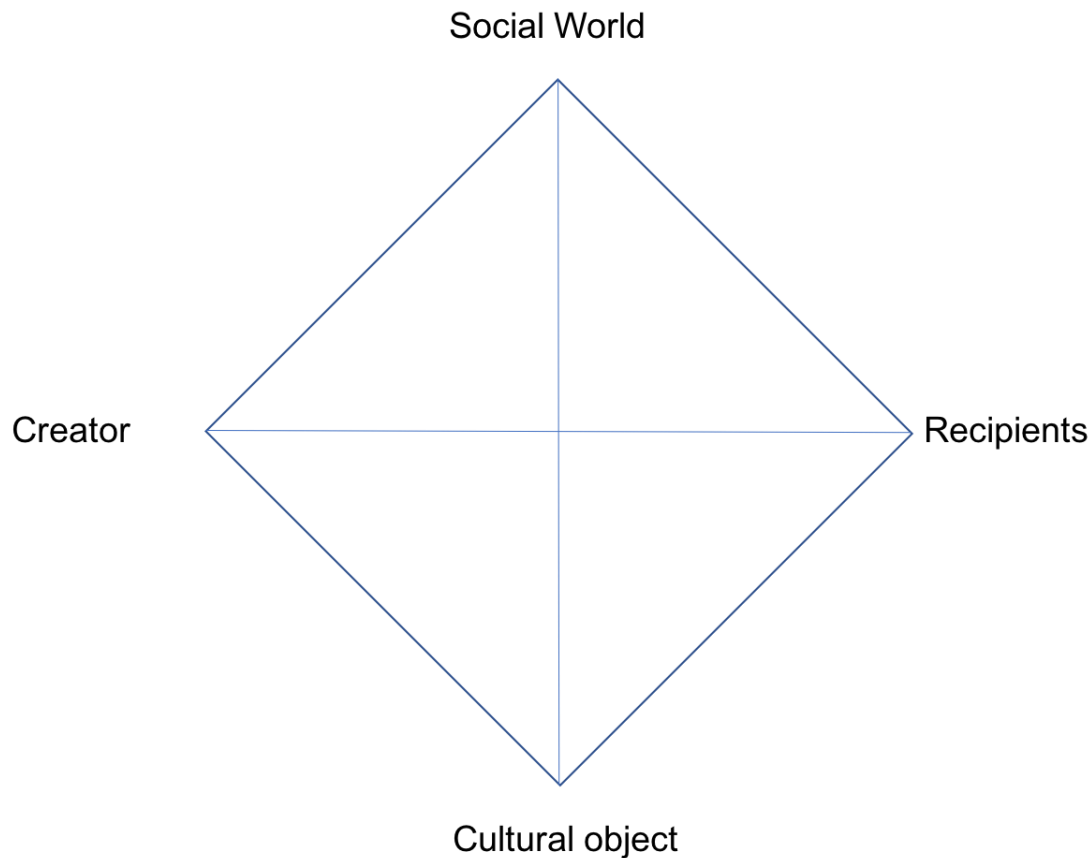


Figure 4 The cultural diamond

The cultural diamond does not say anything about the kind of relationship among the points but shows a relationship between them (Griswold, 2013). Moreover, the relationship lies as much in the links as in the four points. To fully understand a given cultural object, it is essential to understand all four points and all six links. It is central to identify the characteristics of the object and how it is like some other objects in the culture and unlike others. One must consider who created the object and who received it. One must also think about the various linkages. For example, regarding the cultural object recipient link, it is interesting to evaluate how some cultural objects reach an audience, and others do not. For the creator of cultural objects link, it can be used to evaluate how changes in formats of cultural objects affect the relationship that creators have with the objects they create. I adapted the cultural diamond for my research by including the creators of books (authors and publishers), the intermediaries of books such as

booksellers (Griswold (2013) uses the term 'social world') and the consumers of books (readers and collectors). After investigating these points and connections, I was able to understand the relationship that exists between the book as an object and the society that creates, represents, and consumes the book. This process helped me to build a contemporary understanding of the cultural value of the book in the digital age. Therefore, I adapted the 'cultural diamond' to my research question as shown in figure 5.

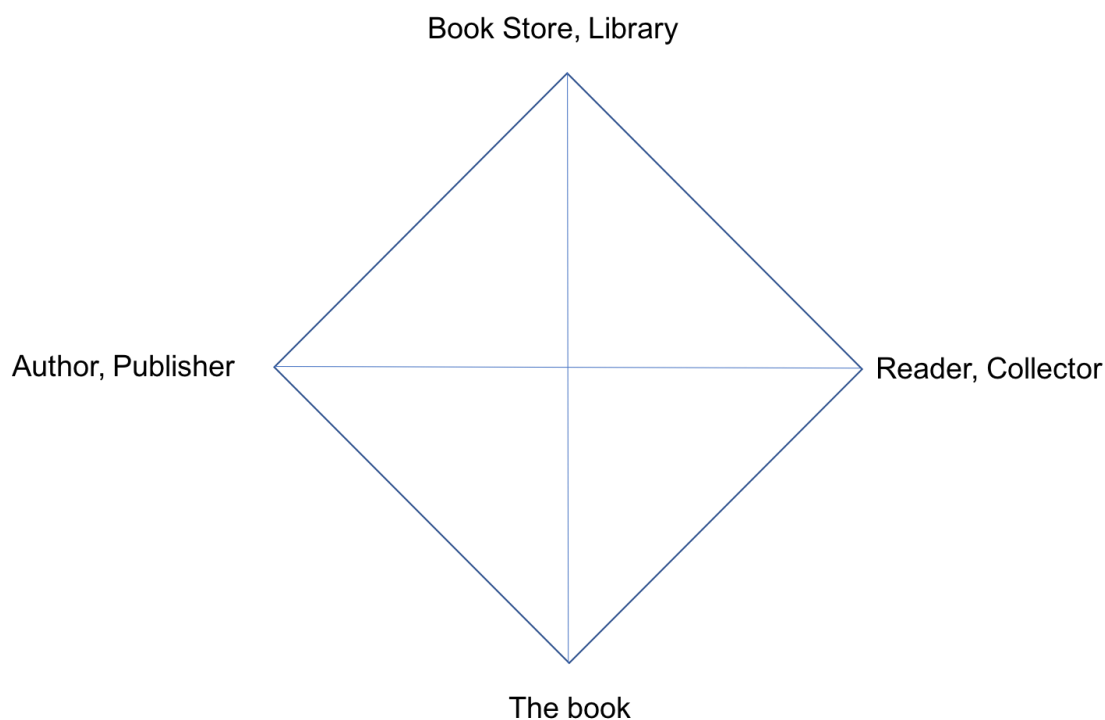


Figure 5 The cultural diamond adapted to the present study's key research question

Once one understands the specific points and links in the diamond, one can develop a sociological understanding of the book as a cultural object in its physical and digital forms. Once I could sense how the book fits into its context, I could develop an understanding of how the digitisation of the book is related to its cultural value. Finally, by investigating the relationship between publishers, booksellers and readers or collectors, I could also gain essential insights into the book's materiality role in the formation of the books cultural value in

the age of digitization. In the next section, I outline how I incorporated the four points (i.e., creators, intermediaries, the cultural object, and consumers) into my research, specifically my data collection.

While Griswold's cultural Diamond makes it possible to examine the relationship and impact of different actors or groups and in relation to cultural expressions or objects, the Diamond also has significant limitations. For example, it defines unique functions for each group. So, someone is either a producer, an agent, or a consumer of cultural goods. However, this separation between functions is never so clear-cut. For example, some authors also publish books; booksellers are usually readers, i.e., consumers of books and authors also buy and read books. The individual groups or actors in the cultural diamond can therefore represent overlapping interests.

Furthermore, the specification of four poles or actors and groups is limited. For example, the definition of producers, intermediaries, and consumers, with the differentiation of authors and publishers (producers), booksellers (intermediaries) and readers (consumers), does not reflect the book market comprehensively. To get a more diversified picture, groups such as librarians, literary critics, collectors, antiquarians, book illustrators and others would have to be added. But this inclusion of all players integrated into the book market would significantly expand the scope of my research. Moreover, despite the aforementioned limitations, the reduction to the four poles of producers, intermediaries, consumers, and the object offers important and further-reaching insights and allows a fundamental statement to be made about the relationship between the three groups, respectively their roles in the market as well as about the book as cultural object. The additional actors mentioned above should then be considered in further research projects as I will explain in more detail in the conclusion to this thesis.

4.3. Methods Adapted for My Research

As this dissertation attempts to understand the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in the digital age in Germany, I used qualitative research methods to identify the primary issues concerning the value perception of the book. Burns and Grove (2003) describe a qualitative approach as a 'systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and situations to give them meaning'. Bryman (1992) stated that one of the central motifs of qualitative research is how the people being studied understand and interpret their social reality. My research question dealt with how people value the cultural object of the book in the age of digitisation, which approaches how people interpret a part of their social reality.

I combined focus groups and interviews to examine the range of groups I identified as interested in books. I used focus-group interviews for my research involving readers and collectors of books. Bryman (Bell et al., 2018:463) described the difference between a focus group and a group interview as follows: 'Focus groups typically emphasise a specific theme or topic that is explored in depth, whereas group interviews often span very widely'. . Though the focus group method has gained popularity since the 1980s (Morgan, 1996, 1997). It has been used for many years in market research and has been employed there to evaluate responses to new products and advertising initiatives. Focus groups are increasingly used in media and cultural studies, especially in what is known as 'audience reception' (Moore, 1994). An influential study in this context was Morley's (1980) research on *Nationwide*, a British news programme shown in the early evening. This programme was popular in the 1970s. Morley used focus groups comprising diverse groups of people and showed them recordings of the programme. He found that although the groups were shown the same programmes, the groups arrived at different interpretations of what they had watched. This implied that meaning does not reside solely in the programmes but also in the ways in which they are watched and interpreted (Moore, 1994). As I am also interested in how people interpret the book and the

new format of the eBook in respect to its cultural value, I considered the format of the focus-group interview suitable for my research. This was supported by the specific characteristic of the technique of focus-group interviews as I explain in the next paragraph.

Bryman (2016) described focus groups as a technique that allows the researcher to understand why people feel the way they do. While in one-to-one interviews, interviewees are often asked about their reasons for holding a particular view, in focus group interviews, participants can probe each other's reasons for holding a specific view (Bryman, 1992). In addition, participants may answer in a certain way in a focus-group interview. However, as they listen to other participants' answers, they might want to qualify or modify a view or even add something (Bell et al., 2018). Participants in focus-group interviews sometimes learn about perspectives they might not have thought of without the opportunity to hear the views of others. As the researcher relinquishes a certain amount of control to the focus group participants, the issues that concern the participants can surface more easily (Bell et al., 2018). In one-to-one interviews, the dynamics are often different. For example, interviewees might say things inconsistent with what they said before (Nunkoosing, 2005). If the interviewer wishes to clarify which statement is more important to the interviewee, he or she must point to that issue; however, this 'interruption' can sometimes alienate the interviewee and interrupt the interview flow (Nunkoosing, 2005). In a focus group, however, other participants are often more open to pointing out such inconsistencies of other participants (Morgan, 1996). As the participants of a focus-group discussion are all on the same level (all are interviewees), being aware of such inconsistencies by other participants is less disruptive since the interviewer is not the cause of the interruption. This regularly leads to the researcher obtaining more realistic accounts of what the participants think (Morgan, 1996). It is a central tenet of theoretical positions that the process of understanding and interpreting social phenomena is not undertaken by individuals in isolation but in interaction and discussion with others. In this sense, focus groups represent the

process through which meaning is constructed and hence are more naturalistic (Aspers and Corte, 2019).

Previous interviews conducted by myself with members of a student group at the Macromedia University of Applied Sciences in Munich (Germany) and the University of Applied Sciences in Kufstein (Tirol/Austria) have taught me that questions regarding value perceptions are often difficult to answer in a one-to-one interview setting. The reason is that often participants do not think about these issues, or they do not think of them as necessary (Bloor, 2001). As described above, the power relation, especially between lecturer and student, proved difficult. In addition, as an interviewer, I did not always know which aspects of values could be necessary for the students; therefore, my questions may have missed crucial points. In a one-on-one interview situation, this can lead to crucial points or opinions remaining undetected. However, when asked similar questions in a group setting, the students fed off each other in discussions and thus, provided more significant insights into the given research question and prevented researcher bias.

Nevertheless, there are certain limitations to focus groups. For one, the researcher often has less control over proceedings than an individual interview (Kitzinger, 1994). This raises the question of how far the researcher can allow participants to 'take over' control of the focus-group interview (Bloor, 2001). Conversely, a discussion that takes an inevitable 'detour' will provide useful additional information. On the other hand, such a 'detour' can prove to be problematic since it could be challenging to get the participants back to the main topic of the discussion. Another problem arises from the data to be analysed. When a group of people discuss an issue, a vast amount of data can quickly be produced. Moreover, focus-group discussions are particularly prone to inaudible elements.

Morgan (1996) and Kitzinger (1994, 1995) have demonstrated that the examination of group interaction can be used to show how issues of thematic interest arise in the course of the discussion. Therefore, these interactions also need to be included in the transcription of focus-group interviews, producing even more data to be evaluated. This is not necessarily a problem, but it is essential that the researcher is aware that the evaluation of focus group data often takes much more time than evaluating information from one-on-one interviews. Therefore, the researcher must correctly estimate the time it takes to evaluate the data and plan enough time for it. A further issue with focus groups is that they are challenging to organise. Bryman (2008) suggested that one should over-recruit participants as practice shows that recruited participants often refuse to show up. Bloor et al. (2001) suggested that a focus group session lasting one hour can take up to eight hours to transcribe.

Further issues arise from unexpected conflicts or power struggles, and specific group dynamics may inhibit discussions. Even more importantly, shy participants might be intimidated by more assertive individuals. Nonetheless, I value the aspect of group dynamics, especially the element of group members' reflecting on each other's comments and asking questions among themselves higher than the disadvantages mentioned above. Moreover, focus group discussions provide different perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation; they clarify unclear questions because dialogue is used and allows nonverbal communication to be observed. Moreover, the number of participants (i.e., samples) influences how much data is produced.

4.4. Choosing the Samples for my Research

Samples for qualitative studies are usually smaller than those used in quantitative studies (Potter and Hepburn, 2005). The reason is that there is a diminishing return on a qualitative sample, where more data do not provide more information (Mason, 2010). Frequencies are rarely necessary for qualitative research, as one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as

many in understanding the process behind a topic. This is because qualitative research is concerned with meaning and not making generalised hypothesis statements (Mason, 2010). Qualitative samples must be large enough to assure that most or all the perceptions that might be important are uncovered. However, the data will become repetitive and perhaps superfluous if the sample is too large. Sample size in qualitative research should generally follow the concept of saturation (Bacchetti *et al.*, 2015). Ritchie et al. (2013:84) outlined factors that might affect the potential size of a sample and determine the moment when the saturation of the qualitative research is reached. They stated the following: [the factors are] 'the heterogeneity of the population; the number of selection criteria; the extent to which "nesting" of criteria is needed; groups of special interest that require intensive study; multiple samples within one study; types of data collection methods used; and the budget and resources available'. Other researchers suggested that expertise in the chosen topic can reduce the number of participants needed in a study (Jette et al., 2003).

As mentioned above, I considered it essential for my research question to include participants from the 'creators' side of the book (authors and publishers), the intermediaries (the 'social world') of the book (booksellers) and the 'receivers' side of the book market (readers and collectors). The need to include representatives of all these groups created the risk of needing too many samples. Nevertheless, as mentioned, I considered this necessary to answer my research question and provide the comprehensive research that is lacking regarding the question of the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany in the age of digitisation.

Qualitative samples must be large enough to assure that most or all the perceptions that might be important are uncovered, but at the same time, the research needs to be doable, meaning not too time-consuming or impractical because of the size of the sample and the diversity of the participants chosen. As mentioned above, it was essential to reach saturation. Considering these aspects, I conducted four focus-group interviews with reading groups from Munich and

Augsburg, Germany (having 6–12 members each). I picked these cities for two reasons. First, more than 140 publishers have their headquarters in Munich; among them are Random House and major German publishing houses such as Hanser and Piper. These publishers publish 8000 titles annually, making Munich one of the major publishing cities in the world (Börsenverein Bayern, n.d.). This concentration also means that various well-known German authors live in Munich to be close to the publishers. Only Berlin is comparable in terms of the number of publishers and authors. Because my place of residence is in southern Germany, I chose Munich because it would enable me to accommodate appointments flexibly; I could be in Munich quickly if necessary for a debriefing. I conducted one focus-group interview with six German fiction authors in Munich and with the staff of three bookstores in Kempten, Nesselwang and Munich (12 people altogether).

As for the publishing houses, I could not conduct focus groups with publishers. The houses found themselves in a state of competition. They did not wish to discuss these issues in a focus group with members of other publishers, as issues of digital strategies or even future programmes might have been discussed. Hence, I conducted one-on-one interviews with leading editors of the six largest German trade book publishing houses: Random House, Droemer Knauer, Rowohlt, S. Fischer, Ullstein, and dtv. Although this change in methodology for conducting my research was brought upon me by the publishers, using multiple methods is common in qualitative research. Yet, there has been little discussion of this as a design issue. Using multiple methods has been systematically addressed to a much greater extent in what is generally termed mixed-methods research, which refers to the common use of qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study (Greene, 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). One of the first purposes of using multiple methods in qualitative research is triangulation (Fielding and Fielding, 1986). This involves using different methods to check on one another, thus determining if methods with different strengths and limitations support a single conclusion.

This strategy reduced the risk that my conclusions would reflect only the biases of a specific method and allowed me to gain a more secure understanding of the issues I was investigating. Interviewing can also be a valuable way of gaining a description of actions and events. As Weiss (2014:1) stated, 'Interviewing gives us access to the observations of others. Through interviews, we can learn about places we have not been and could not go and about settings in which we have not lived'. Therefore, I included qualitative interviews in my methods. I adapted semi-structured interviews to ensure that the data gathered through these interviews were comparable to the data gathered through the focus-group interviews. I intended them to be open-ended conversations covering a broad and evolving set of questions so that I could follow up on any statements made by my interviewees. I expected the interviews in a few cases to take their lead from participants because I might have needed to follow their elaborations. Also, I expected the interview questions to evolve as the research progressed. Interesting themes or aspects emerged in early interviews that I added to the following interviews.

4.5. Analysing My Focus Group Data

The analysis and interpretation of focus group data require much judgement and care, just as any other scientific approach does. A great deal of the scepticism surrounding the value of focus groups probably arises from the perception that focuses group data are subjective and difficult to interpret (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2007:109). Like most types of research, the amount of analysis required varies with the purpose of the research, the complexity of the research design and the extent to which conclusions can be reached quickly based on simple analyses. The most common analyses of focus group results involve transcripts of the discussion and a summary of the conclusions that can be drawn (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2007). As mentioned above, focus-group interviews generate large amounts of data. Thus, according to Robson (2011), a central aim of data analysis is to reduce data. Yin (2017) pointed out that data analysis consists of several stages, namely examining, categorising, and

tabulating, to address the study's initial goal Krueger and Casey (2009) built on this concept and suggested that the purpose should drive the analysis. For them, analysis begins by going back to the study's intention. Qualitative analysis aims to bring meaning to a situation rather than the search for truth quantitative data analysis (Stewart, 2011). Strauss and Corbin (1990: 136) described the analysis as 'the interplay between researchers and data'. I used a technique that Stewart (2011:116) referred to as the 'scissor-and-sort-technique'. This is a quick and cost-effective method for analysing a transcript of a focus group discussion. The first step of applying this technique was to go through the transcript and identify relevant sections to the research questions. Based on this initial reading, I used a classification system for significant topics and issues and identified material related to each topic in the transcript. I used colour-coded brackets to mark different topics within the text. The material that I coded for each topic depended on the importance of that topic to the overall research question as well as the amount of variation in the discussion. I passed through the material several times to identify relevant material as the categories of topics evolved and gained greater insight into the content of the group discussion. Once the coding process was complete, I took the coded copy of my transcript, cut it apart, and sorted the pieces so that each topic was placed together.

I am aware that this technique relied strongly on my judgement as I, as the analyst, determined which segments of the transcript were important, developed the categorisation system for the topics discussed by the group, selected the relevant statements regarding these topics from the transcript and developed an interpretation of what it all meant. There were apparent opportunities for subjectivity and potential bias in this approach. Nevertheless, given the nature of my research question, I considered this approach appropriate. As I also used probing statements made by the participants, I aimed to resolve as many misleading statements as possible that could have been analysed falsely. I conducted a pilot study to evaluate this procedure, which is described in the next section.

4.6. Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study to assess the focus group method and the interviews, which allowed me to adapt my research approach. As I had never conducted a focus-group interview before, I considered it necessary to evaluate whether the concept of a focus group would work for my research. This included my ability to lead a discussion without interfering too much; to follow the discussion, especially in cases when two or more participants spoke at the same time; and to make sure that the discussion stayed focused without interfering in a way that would disturb the participants or even end the discussion. Moreover, I needed to assess whether the desired group dynamics would come about. This included the participants discussing the matter among themselves and helping each other to think more deeply about their value perception of the book in the age of digitisation. Finally, I supplemented the focus-group interviews with one-to-one interviews to see how the processes would differ and to evaluate whether the outcomes would differ in a way that would make them incomparable. In the following paragraph, I summarise the focus group and one-to-one interviews I conducted as part of my pilot study.

The first focus-group interview was held in a book shop in Kempten, Germany, with seven participants who were members of a book club. The owner of the book shop was also a member of that book club. The group consisted of people with various professional backgrounds, from office assistants to teachers and bus drivers. Five members were female, and two were male. The book club has 12 regular attendants (but not all of them come to attend every meeting), of which eight are female and four are male. Four members lived with their partners, whereas three were single (I did not ask about their marital status). All participants were German citizens, and none had a migrant background. All but one (parental leave) were working full time. Six members were employed, while one member ran his own business. The average book consumption of each member was three books per month, although this number differed quite widely among the group members.

My second focus-group interview was held in Munich with four fiction authors. Two of them wrote historical novels, one was a science fiction author, and one wrote romance. They all were professional authors who had published three or more books with an established publishing company. Two authors can be labelled best-selling authors, as each has sold several hundred thousand books. Three of the authors were male, and one was female. The group met at the home of one of the authors. The last participant of my pilot study was the director of the religious and spiritual books department at Droemer Knaur, one of Germany's largest publishing groups. His interview took place at his office in Munich. In terms of content, his area does not fall within the field of fiction literature. Nevertheless, I decided to do an interview with him because I wanted to do in the conversation with him was to test my methodology. In the following section, I briefly summarise the findings of my pilot study.

The book club participants started to discuss the matter immediately, without me having to start the discussion actively. The discussion revolved around issues such as preferences for eBooks and print books and the 'disappearance' of the book from our everyday world due to the decline of the brick-and-mortar book trade (this topic might have emerged because the meeting took place in a bookshop and a bookseller was present). The participants did not consider me an intruder and barely addressed any statements in my direction. Therefore, as an interviewer, I seemed to 'disappear' (Kitzinger, 1994; Morgan, 1997). The focus-group interview with the authors started with the authors agreeing with each other that the research question would not apply to them and that they did not see the possible problem as their books were continuously published in print and as eBooks. Therefore, they stated that they did not see any transition from print books to eBooks. However, as the discussion proceeded, it became apparent that the authors did feel concern over the digitisation of the book market and a push back of the printed book. This proved the point that in focus-group interviews, participants often 'feed off' each other (Bryman, 2016).

Once I had finished my pilot study, I evaluated the various discussions. I concluded that the format of focus-group interviews was appropriate for conducting my research. Although the dynamics in the groups varied as readers were eager to start the discussions right away and authors were at first reluctant to see any relevance in my research questions, the participants fed each other off and were willing to engage with the questions. I realised that my role as an interviewer was becoming increasingly less important, and I rarely had to intervene to control the interviews. In certain situations, I took on the proverbial role of the 'fly on the wall' that watches what is happening without being noticed. As a result, the participants became intensely involved in the discussions. Only from time to time did I have to interfere with continuing questions when the discussion was about to veer off the topic or when I felt that the actual argument had reached a dead end. Afterwards, participants stated that they did not see me as an intruder and that they had soon 'forgotten' about the actual purpose of the focus group as they were deeply involved in the discussion of the issue.

Interestingly, participants also probed each other's statements and got each other thinking about their statements. Immediate reactions were often refined during the interview or added other aspects, and the discussion led to deeper insights into participants' thoughts on the book as an object. I realised, however, that I needed fewer questions than I had immediately thought. The one-to-one interview with Stefan Wiesner, head of religious and spiritual books at Droemer Knaur, was held at his Munich office. Comparing the focus-group interviews with the one-to-one interview made specific differences and difficulties noticeable. The one-on-one interview proved to be more difficult. I considered this to be less related to the chosen method and more to the fact that Wiesner often represented (and had to) conflicting positions as an industry representative. It was often noticeable that Wiesner occasionally replied as a private person, reflecting on his behaviour and views, but then returned to his function as programme manager and made statements as a representative of the publisher. This was not a problem per se but

provided exciting insights into the sometimes-different view of the private individual and the person as a publisher's representative. As a result, I made sure that in my research interviews with further industry representatives, I paid attention to these contradictory statements; that is, the conflicts that industry representatives might feel.

After completing my pilot study, I adjusted my approach in several ways. Specifically, I reduced the number of questions, changing the order to start with less controversial questions. Through this, I wanted a pleasant conversation in which all participants felt comfortable before discussing controversial topics (Kitzinger, 1994; Morgan and Spanish, 1984). I also integrated points into my questions that arose from the discussions in the pilot study. To start the discussions with the industry representatives, I decided to use selected statements from the readers and authors of the pilot study to be able to counter the argument that my research question was irrelevant. I hoped that a statement by a reader who considered my research question relevant would also encourage industry representatives to take a closer look at it. The way I conducted the focus group and one-on-one interviews also raised some ethical aspects concerning handling the participants' data and the data collected. The following section describes how I dealt with this information.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

First and foremost, ethical considerations related to moral standards that the researcher should consider in all research methods and stages of the research design. This includes freedom from harm, meaning that I would not consider causing any physical harm to my research participants. It also includes staying sensitive to the participants' emotions when asking probing questions that could psychologically harm the participants. Ethical considerations also include the protection of participants from adverse situations. The researcher needs to assure the participants that the information provided by the participant will not be used against them.

Another important issue is the right to full disclosure, meaning that the researcher shares the study's aim and purpose, the type of interview, and other data collection procedures with the participants (Polit and Beck, 2012). Lastly is the right to privacy, which means that the information provided by participants will not be shared without their will (Burns and Grove, 2003). I took the following precautions to ensure the necessary confidentiality to protect my participants. The list of names, transcriptions, original recordings, and notes was locked, and a copy of the entire material was uploaded to the Microsoft Office 365 server of Birmingham City University. The list of names was kept separate from the recordings, transcription and notes and no names were attached to the tapes, transcription, or notes.

From all participants, I sought informed consent for my research and fully informed them about the purpose of the interview and the fact that I recorded the interviews on audio tape. During the focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews, I also took notes, reminding myself of critical statements I wanted to follow up on. As Holloway and Wheeler (2013) stated, note-taking is an important activity but one that might disturb the participants. I informed the participants that notes would be taken during the interview to limit such disturbances. For the interviews, I prepared a guide with semi-structured questions allowing me to react to any unforeseen developments in the interviews. I applied the technique of probing (verbal and nonverbal) to follow up on statements and ensure that I correctly understood the answer. I, therefore, included probing silence, prompting, and summarising statements made by participants. A more critical issue arose from my role as a researcher who works in book and magazine publishing. As I had met some industry representatives before, my role as a researcher might not have been as neutral as I had wished for. Although I am in no situation that makes me a potential competitor to the publishers who participated in this study, my role as someone with many years of publishing experience could have caused my industry participants not to meet me with the neutrality that is desirable for such a study. There was also

occasional 'suspicion' that I could gain insights from this study, which I could then use, although, as I said, I am not in competition with the participating publishers.

4.9. Summary

In this chapter, I have shown an approach that is designed to research the cultural value of the analogue book in the digital age and the role materiality plays in this context. The methodology I have outlined here highlights the importance of considering the many stakeholders in the book chain, such as the book's producers, intermediaries, and consumers to assess their valuing of the book through the adaptation of the cultural diamond. I first demonstrated how previous studies had examined the relationship between people and cultural objects. It became clear that these studies primarily only examined the relationship between customers or consumers with cultural objects rather than those who produced or distributed such objects. I then explained that it is necessary to go beyond the relationship between users and cultural objects and include the producers and intermediaries in the research to gain a comprehensive picture of their cultural value. To achieve this comprehensive approach, I conducted my analysis using Griswold's cultural diamond (2013). The cultural diamond makes it possible to present relationships and dependencies on many levels between groups and objects. It so often makes it possible to reveal subliminal relationships that are not noticeable at first glance. I also argued that holding focus-group discussions was a better approach to generating data because the one-on-one interviews that were conducted often did not produce the desired flow of conversation. To evaluate this approach, I conducted a pilot study that provided important data on my research's feasibility. It became clear that the expectations of the focus-group discussions were met. The one-on-one interview with a leading publisher editor revealed that this approach presented a more significant challenge since their personal and professional opinions were conflicting. This resulted in a conflict that had to be considered in the following interviews. When looking at my ethical challenges, I found that my role as someone who works in a publishing house often led

to the fact that the representatives of publishers I spoke to assumed issues from the publishing industry to be known by me. As a consequence they did not find some of the considerations about the program design worth mentioning since they assumed that I should be aware of these considerations. However, precisely, these points give a lot of information about the extent to which a publisher reacts to market developments, e.g., by strengthening the hardcover segment compared to the paperback segment or placing more emphasis on the design of books. Therefore, the relationship here was not as factually impartial as it should have been. However, the pilot study indicated that implementing my proposed research approach was feasible. The following chapter is the first of three that present the findings of my research. I draw on the data that I gathered using (2013)the cultural diamond, which enabled me to research the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation.

CHAPTER 5.

LIMITATIONS AS AN ASSET AND SIGN OF AUTHENTICITY

The first chapter of my findings deals with the importance of the materiality of the analogue book in the digital age. In doing so, I show that the analogue book is gaining cultural value for authors, readers, and collectors, especially against digitization. The reason is that the material framework of the analogue book and its fixed structure is perceived by the participants in my research as a limitation. However, this limitation is perceived positively, as it contrasts with a digital offer that is experienced as unmanageable. Therefore, I start the chapter with a discussion about the extent to which certain physical specifications and properties of objects anchor them in society. Then, I use Westin's 'Vocabulary of Limitations' and my participants' statements to discuss the extent to which the material properties of the book anchor the analogue book in society. From there, I examine the aspect of multitasking, which my participants mentioned as a burden in digitization, and examine to what extent the book is understood as a contrast to this development. I then take a closer look at the concept of limitation and show that it is precisely the limitations and the associated restrictions that have a decisive influence on the cultural value of the book in the digital age. Based on this, I assume that the analogue book is understood as the authentic medium in contrast to the eBook due to increasing digitization and therefore gains in value against the background of the growing digital media market through this perceived authenticity. Lastly, I argue that this authenticity lies in the material properties of the analogue book.

5.1. Limitations as an Anchor to Society

The limitations of media (i.e., cultural objects) have been researched by Westin (2012) and Pels et al. (2017). According to Westin, limitations are not negative features of a format/medium. Instead, they describe the borders of a particular format '...within which the content is moulded. When these borders are strong, they move beyond the physical into society. The limitations of the format – the rules our interaction with the artefact relentlessly must adhere to – anchor it to society' (Westin, 2012). Pels et al. (2017:13) stated that '[p]eople perform objects, but especially buildings, by moving through and around them; but these objects also perform people by constraining their movements and by suggesting encounters between them and others'. These restrictions can also be adapted to the book. By limiting the possible uses of the book and not allowing for distractions caused by polychronicity while using (reading) a book, the book provides certain limitations that shape its connection with society. Westin (2012) used the example of an antique statue in the New Acropolis Museum in Greece. He described how the architecture (an ample space and broad staircase at the end of the room), signs, lights, and materials guide the visitor through the building and direct how he or she walks and pauses. Westin (2012:24) described that 'just as the curator is dependent on the visitor's acceptance, the visitor is dependent on the museum to tell her what is of importance'. This guidance of the visitor is provided by, for example, light, pedestals, glass, and signs. Examining the Greek statue that Westin used as his example, he described how the artefact was first anchored to society through rituals, religion, and business: 'The collectors anchored it through power and wealth; the renaissance artists anchored it through technique and beauty; the museums anchored it through age and education' (2012:24). It can therefore be said that the statue existed in different formats. In this context, a format is both 'a physical description, such as height and width, but also, and more appropriately in this example, a set of rules describing how something is presented' (2012:24). This approach can also be adapted to the book and how

human and nonhuman actants shaped the perception we have of the book and its cultural value. For example, a tourist guide for Paris sold in the 1950s was initially anchored as a nonfiction book that would help you find your way through the city. The same book sold in the 2000s in an antique bookstore would be anchored as an antique book from a different period containing tips for tourists that might not be valid anymore; therefore, it would contain historical content that would allow the reader to get a glimpse of how Paris looked in the 1950s. As soon as a book collector bought the travel guide, it would be anchored as a valuable collector's item that might gain value. By focusing on limitations at various steps in the career of an artefact, we have a tool that helps us to describe earlier negotiations and to understand how our current perception of it is formed. Westin (2012) did that for his Greek statue by following a network of nonhuman actants at the New Acropolis Museum to demonstrate how the format anchors an artefact to society through networks that create socio-cultural connections. Westin referred at this point to actor-network theory (John and Others, 2009; Latour, 1996) and materialism (Bollmer, 2019; Dant, 2004), which I discussed in Chapter three. Westin argued that it is essential for our understanding of artefacts to understand how our more profound perceptions of the artefact have changed because of its many translations. Latour and Lowe (2013) described that if an artefact is translated in a way that adheres to the values invested in it by the stakeholders, a representation can be perceived as even more authentic than the original in the case of the book that could be, for example, a luxury edition or a newly made 'vintage' edition. Likewise, an original out of context can lose much of its value and sense of culture connected to it, thus becoming 'generic rather than unique' (Malpas, 2008:22).

Authors and readers often mentioned the last facet in connection with eBooks. For example, best-selling science fiction author Andreas Eschbach (2018), who participated in my focus-group interviews, stated the following:

'It is important for me how my books are published. I would not like it if they were only published as eBooks. It would for once limit my scope as not everyone has an eBook reader, but at the same time, I think if a publisher decides to publish an author only by eBook it just shows that the publisher does not believe in the author.'

According to Eschbach, eBooks are second-class publications. This statement is significant, as the eBook would contain the same story, cover, and illustrations as the printed version. Even though Eschbach himself is only engaged in writing the story, he considers his story only a 'real' book when it is published in print. The eBook, in his view, is only a generic form of a book; the 'real' thing is the analogue book with its format consisting of several pages in between two covers. This physical format and limitation - not offering video, sound, or Internet access, therefore, no content apart from text and graphics - of the story is considered the authentic book. Eschbach's argumentation for the analogue book is supported by bestselling German author of historical novels Müller (2018), who also participated in my focus-group interviews. Müller declared, 'I would buy back the rights of my books from my publisher if the publisher would decide just to publish my books as eBooks'. For him, an eBook is an add-on, another format for selling a book, but the printed version is more authentic. From this original [the printed book], other formats are made as generic products, such as the eBook and the audiobook. This attitude that only an analogue book made of paper is the authentic book is even supported by people who say they prefer eBooks. Andreas Rhien (2018), an author from Munich, who stated in a focus-group meeting I conducted that he prefers to read eBooks and rarely ever buys analogue books, nevertheless explained: 'I am certainly more excited when I receive my books [the books he wrote as an author] as analogue copies rather than eBooks'. For him, too, the analogue format is the original or authentic format of a book. In contrast to Eschbach and Müller, Rhien stated that he prefers the generic form of the eBook in everyday use, but that has no effect on his appreciation for the analogue book. Regarding Westin's (2012) vocabulary of limitations, it can be stated that the authors anchored the book in its analogue

form in my research as original and authentic. The eBook, by contrast, is considered the 'generic medium' (Malpas, 2008) that does not provide the same level of distinction and status (Bourdieu, 1987) as the analogue book. In other words, the new formats of the book are perceived as generic products, which have not yet affected the perception of the authentic book in such a way that they are perceived as being equivalent or 'original'. The authentic book is just the analogue book that offers the reader stories and pictures embedded between two book covers. The participants in my focus-group discussions and interviews only saw generic forms of books such as eBooks and audiobooks as formats that served a purpose under certain circumstances. Just as one could take a few books on vacation with an eBook reader or listen to an audiobook in bed while one's partner is asleep, such formats have a functional purpose. The possible advantages of using eBooks or audiobooks were recognized by my participants but did not affect their attitudes towards the analogue book that they still preferred. In the next section, I examine how the limitations described by Westin (2012) were applied to the book by the participants of my study. To introduce these limitations, I discuss the digital opposite in the form of multitasking, as this then results in the perceived added value of the book's limitation.

5.2. Doing It All at Once – The Aspect of Multitasking

To introduce what I describe as the 'less' or the 'the limitations' of the book, I consider it useful to briefly outline a development raised by several of my research participants. This dealt with technological development and the aspect of multitasking when using technological devices. This development served as a background for many of my participants, against which they emphasised the material advantages of the analogue book. As technological developments continue, they enable multiple media consumption and communication through a combination of traditional and contemporary forms of media. Today, it is easy to consume various forms of media content simultaneously through different channels (Mark, 2015; Wallis, 2006). In other words, while reading a magazine, one can listen to the radio or have the television on in the

background. While playing an online game, one can listen to music or chat with friends.

Multitasking means being in sync in different activities. So, we are polysynchronous.

Robinson (2017) discovered the following eight dimensions of polychronicity: comfort with multitasking, multi-media channel preference, effectiveness and efficiency, convenience, emotional gratification, information and knowledge, social benefits, and assimilation.

Robinson's study on polychronicity focused on so-called 'digital natives', the generations born since 1980 for whom digital media such as PCs, mobile phones and the Internet are technologies and objects that have been around all their lives and for whom this form of communication and entertainment is natural (Prensky, 2001). Prensky describes digital natives as a generation used to living within a period of rapid technological advancement and often adapts quickly to new technological developments, especially in communication. For this generation, *gratification* is especially relevant when using digital media. Prensky's definition of the digital natives is not without problems. It assumes a uniformity of generations in which everyone in the same age group also has the same inclinations, interests, and preferences. I choose not to use the term 'digital natives' here but speak of that part of society that already uses digital devices such as smartphones, tablets and others and for whom this use has become a matter of course. The aspect of gratification can also be found in the study of Brasel and Gips (2011), who described the multiple streams of stimulation that multiple media use provides. It is important to mention at this point that the simultaneous occupation with multiple media occurs in private and public; for example, when we watch videos on monitors in the subway while listening to music through headphones simultaneously. We also hear announcements in public spaces (e.g., at airports) while we read, among other things, are part of it. Exposure to multiple media is not always a personal decision but can also be imposed from outside.

In most cases, however, the simultaneous use of media results from a personal decision. Pilotta and Schulz (2005:1) stated in this context that 'the audience determines the media exposure, not

the media delivery system. The consumer selects the media form(s) they will access and use. They determine the amount of time they will spend'. By stating this, Pilotta and Schulz (2005) made it clear that the audience consciously chooses to use or consume more than one medium at a time. Therefore, it is a behavioural decision that the media delivery system does not impose on us.

This behaviour of using more than one medium at a time is described as multitasking. Oswald (2017) defined multitasking as performing multiple tasks, where their performance requires a conscious shift from one task to another, with shifts in attention occurring over a short period. Multiple media use, the aspect of multitasking relevant in this chapter, was acknowledged as a specific case of multitasking by Rosen et al. (2013). They describe it as emotionally gratifying, unlike multitasking in the household or at work, which is often instructed from outside.

Multiple media use is mostly based on individuals' preference for performing multiple tasks in connection with media, known as polychronicity (Srivastava et al., 2016). As mentioned at the beginning of this section, many participants of my research mentioned this development as a backdrop against which they proposed their argument. Especially against the background of the steadily increasing possibilities of digital media, the analogue book as a medium is gaining importance. In the perception of many participants of this study, the book is an alternative to the digital world, which is perceived as distracting and exuberant. On the other hand, the book was often described as a limited medium created for one use: to be read. Therefore, I adopt the concept of the limited medium in the next section, in which I discuss how the study participants perceived this limitation as an advantage of the book in the age of digitisation.

5.3. The Advantage of Less – The Book as a Limited Medium

As the previous section showed, various studies have researched multitasking and multi-media consumption by users. Motives for multimedia use comfort with multitasking, the fear of missing out and effectiveness (i.e., efficiency). Multitasking and polychronicity provide a certain emotional gratification. Getting back to the topic of this thesis, namely the cultural value of the fiction book in the age of digitisation in Germany, the following question arises: What role does the book have in this environment where many other media allow for multitasking since the analogue book – as I argue – is a medium that is less comfortable to use in the process of multitasking? The book, whether printed or eBook, requires concentration for the reader to understand the content. Compared with computer games, social media applications or music, the book imposes certain limitations on its consumers. By limitations, I mean that the analogue book as an item or object does not allow for surfing the Internet, watching videos, listening to music, or anything else. The analogue book consists of pages with textual or graphical content in between two covers. One might conclude that analogue books are no longer up to date in the digital age as they require readers to concentrate on the content they contain without providing additional multimedia content. In other words, books require a certain level of focus from their readers that other media do not; thus, they do not allow for the same experiences of gratification mentioned above. Following the argumentation of some of my participants, concentrated engagement with the media is out of date. Holger Kuntze (2018), programme manager of trade book publisher Blessing (an imprint of Random House), observed the development of generations who, according to him, grew up using digital devices and consuming digital media are now no longer capable of concentrating for a longer period: 'It is the digital natives. They grew up with cell phones. Neuroscientists say that this generation cannot concentrate for more than a few minutes. They are just not used to reading and

comprehending a longer text anymore'. He explained that this generation needs to multitask and is only capable of consuming shorter bits of text.

As mentioned above, the definition of 'digital natives' is a generalisation of a generation, assuming that all its members have the same likes and dislikes and not allowing for individual differences. Though studies support Kuntze's statement that reading behaviour is changing (Jabr, 2013), there is as well plenty of data supporting the assumption that members of this generation still enjoy reading (Martens, 2016; Pianzola et al., 2020). According to Kuntze, the book as a medium has already lost this generation of potential readers. Kuntze's (2018) view generalises and describes an entire generation as incapable of focusing on a book. His assessment was supported by Therese Hochhuth (2018), leading editor of paperbacks for trade book publisher Carlsen. She highlighted children's reading habits and saw the smartphone as the most important competition for the book. She also stressed the aspect of polychronicity and loss of focus: 'Kids listen to music, play video games all at the same time. We have a culture of bits [a culture where people consume bits of this and that], and that causes a general loss of focus'.

Concerning Griswold's cultural diamond (2013), a different view of publishers and consumers of books can be established here. While the publishers emphasise that these limitations would ensure they would no longer reach young people with books, the readers in the present study perceived such limitations as an advantage. Participants in my focus group and one-on-one interviews often referred to the book as the last medium that does not allow for simultaneous media use and considered this an asset only the book provides. In a world full of distractions and interruptions, be it from cell phones, pop-up advertising messages on the Internet or multimedia advertising in public spaces (e.g., digital screens at bus stops), the book seems to be considered by many as a refuge for focus and concentration. As mentioned in the previous

section, it is a medium that stands precisely against the perceived distracting and exuberant digital world.

The German crime novel author Jochen Bender (2018) used the term 'timeout' to describe what the book means to him. Reading a book is a time-out from a busy life full of distractions. He stated, ' [o]nly the book allows drowning into another character's life and story without distraction'. Therefore, the book provides focus and allows its reader to concentrate on the story without luring them into distractions. The book requires concentration and dedication. Bender strengthened this argument by comparing the book to a nice dinner: 'Reading a book is like going out to have a fancy dinner. You get involved in that, and you dedicate your time to it'. The book is nothing that is consumed 'on the go'; it requires time, and one must get involved. Bender's comparison of the book with a fancy dinner also makes it clear that taking the time to read a book is unique. Something that is not or cannot be done daily, as so many other things require our attention. Bender criticised how the Internet and Netflix absorb so much of our time but admitted that he also reads less due to the distractions provided by the Internet and TV. However, he stated that what makes the book special is that one must 'get fully involved in it and be prepared to sink into the story that is often so deep that I completely forget where I am. That never happens to me when I watch a film'. Indeed, one must state here that this view of Bender is very individual and personal, and one has to be careful about generalising it.

Another aspect brought forward by Novelist Susanne Brenner (2018), who places the book in comparison to digital media, was as follows: 'For me a book...in this fast-paced digital age, a book is something real. When you open the book, you hold it in your hands, you smell the book, but you also hold on to it, and you can [access it] page by page..., you do not have to turn on a stupid computer, and therefore it is relaxing for me. So relaxing because the book wants you to focus on its story. There are no ads or any sounds, and nothing is popping up. It is this limitation that makes reading a book relaxing'. Brenner especially highlighted the aspect of

the various distractions provided by digital media that she finds disturbing. In her case, the book's limitations are considered an asset, although expressions such as 'stupid computer' might imply that she is averse to digital media. However, in an accompanying conversation about my work, she stated that for her work as an author, she, of course, knows the advantages of digital technology and would not want to do without it. Yet, because she would experience her work with literary text on computers as work full of distractions in which she could never fully concentrate on the textual content, Brenner enjoyed reading literary texts in the form of books when not working as it allowed her to fully 'dive into' the text.

Although Bender and Brenner talked about the book, they did not specifically mention whether they were referring to analogue or eBooks. This was another critical aspect brought forward by Katharina Hierling (2018), an editor at German trade book publisher Hoffmann und Campe in Hamburg. Hierling explained that she finds it more accessible to drown in a book than into the same story on an eBook reader. The analogue book provides no distractions, such as the Internet and social media apps, thus making it easier to focus on the text. As I mentioned in Chapter three, one can argue that many old or simple eBook readers do not allow the reader to surfing the net. Yet, Hierling (2018) referred to modern eBook readers such as the Kindle Fire, which do make it possible to surf the net. However, from a publisher's perspective, she also saw the difficulties of this aspect: 'The book [has] got much competition. Given all the media we consume daily, the book has the disadvantage that we cannot multitask while reading a book'. She stated this is especially problematic as 'people want to make the best use of their time [and therefore they multitask] which places the physical book in a difficult position. She continued to explain that it is hard for many people to come down and relax: 'It is so much easier to have yourself entertained by watching TV. Reading a book requires time. For many people reading a book is like being on holiday, sitting down, reading a book, taking your time, and ignoring distractions. Many of us cannot reach this state of mind during work weeks. We have the urge

to get as much information as possible [from friends and family or the office]. It is this fear of missing out on something'. In this statement, Hierling (2018) combined many of the aspects that were mentioned before by Bender (2018), Kuntze (2018) and Eschbach (2018), especially the aspects of multitasking, effectiveness and efficiency, as brought forward by Robinson (2017), who reflected on what many consider to be the advantages of digital media over the book.

These statements indicate that the book is considered to disconnect us from the busy world around us. It forces us to focus on only one activity: reading the book. The book does not allow us to participate simultaneously in fast-paced activities on Twitter, Pinterest, or Facebook while we read. It is this fear of losing contact with friends and of missing out on something important that, according to Hierling (2018), keeps people from reading books. The fear of missing out (also known as *fomo*) is thus not simply the urge to see or know what others are doing but is also described as 'a general apprehension that others have more rewarding experiences than you are' (Przybylski et al., 2013:1841).

Moreover, it might cause an uneasy feeling when one's peers are doing, possessing and learning things that one is not (Abel et al., 2016). Although newspapers, radio and pictures have long enhanced the fear of missing out on important things and events (Wortham, 2012), the emergence of social media has made receiving information about others more addictive than ever (Abel et al., 2016). In such an environment, the book has a hard time because it pulls readers out of this other digital world and 'forces' them to dedicate their attention to it.

This reasoning, as described before, applies to the analogue book. The same cannot, for example, be said about the audiobook, as the audiobook allows for multitasking. One can listen to an audiobook while writing, playing, tidying up or cleaning. Therefore, it is a format of the book that is also suitable for a generation that, according to Kuntze (2018) and Hochhuth

(2018), can no longer concentrate on one book. I repeatedly addressed this aspect in the interviews and focus groups, but the participants' reactions were often defensive; for example, they questioned whether an audiobook is really a book. An argument presented in the literature review was that an audiobook is a book because its emphasis on textual content has boundaries to its form. Many participants did not fully accept a book's information architecture.

Therefore, the book was associated with a reading by many participants, not with listening.

Eschbach brought forward this argument, famous for science fiction and dystopian novels. He stated the following: 'A little while ago in a newspaper, the question was raised whether listening to a book is the same as reading a book. So as for whether you can say after listening to a book you have read. Many people commented that listening is just the same as reading a book. They argued that kids whose parents read books to them also listen to the story and would still argue that they have read the book or know the book just as well as someone who read it herself. Well, I think that is not the same. Eschbach argued that when his parents read books to him, he entirely concentrated on listening to the story. He was not distracted by anything else, but today, as he argued, people can listen to books while driving in a car, cleaning their house, or doing anything else. Eschbach argued that, therefore, the concentration on the story being read is not the same as when reading the book uninterrupted and focused.

This is an interesting perspective as it presents the aspect of focus in a new context. The argument of publishers and participants in my study, namely Hierling (2018), Kuntze (2018) and Hochhuth (2018), was that the book requires attention, and therefore, it is challenging to introduce a generation to the book that is used to consuming several forms of media at the same time. On the other hand, Eschbach mentioned the aspect of focus in connection with understanding the book, that is, the book's content. For him, the book must be read concentrated and focused so that one can claim that one has really read the book. Eschbach shifted the focus from one aspect, that as a reader, one cannot read a book meaningfully if one

does not focus on the book's content, to the acceptance of whether a book can be considered read if it was read in an environment full of distractions. Eschbach continued to describe his point of view by comparing reading a book to watching a film about the same story. He argued that content consumed by reading a book has a more significant impact on a person than if the person was to watch the same story as a film. He told the story of a friend who read a book about a man undergoing psychiatry. This friend told Eschbach that he was haunted by the images and character of the book much more than if he had watched the film. He did not notice the world around him anymore while reading the story. He said that if he had watched the film, he might have looked to the right or left of the screen, where he would have noticed his wife coming or leaving the room, and therefore, the experience would have been less intense. Eschbach used this example to make the point that only when fully engaging with a story, which for him is only possible with a book (and here I stress again that by 'book' I mean an analogue book), does one experience the full impact of that story. In other words, the focus that the analogue book requires is the key to really experiencing the potential of the analogue book.

Like the publishers, Eschbach, a representative of the authors, had little hope regarding the question that arises from this, namely how a generation used to multitasking can experience the book if it can no longer concentrate fully on one medium, especially a non-audio-visual medium. The statements of the focus group participants indicated that the situation is not as clear as outlined by Kuntze (2018) and Hochhuth (2018). Many focus group participants belonged to the age group of so-called 'digital natives' (a term I discuss critically later) and were eager readers themselves. In addition, some were teachers and thus dealt with even younger generations. For example, Henelink (2018), a primary school teacher and member of a book club in Munich, rejected the rather general statement that children do not read. Although she stated that she has undoubtedly experienced the affection many children have for mobile phones, she argued that there are moments in class when the children enjoy silently reading a

book. In addition, book presentations in class (as part of the homework or as a special project) have shown her that books are still part of the daily routine for many families: 'The motivation with which the children present their favourite books and also encourage each other when they notice that other pupils have the same or similar favourite books, makes me believe that children will still read in many years' (Henelink, 2018). Henelink thought books fulfil a particular need today in the context of other forms of media such as television, radio, audio plays and computer games. She stated, "[k]ids love stories, and sometimes they play the stories, sometimes they watch the stories, sometimes they listen to the stories, and sometimes they read the stories' (Henelink, 2018). She continued to explain that she has experienced how books are the means of choice when children come to rest and need time for themselves. At this point, she followed Bender's (2018) statement that reading books was a 'timeout'. However, Henelink's (2018) statements can only be applied to a limited extent to many readers. She referred to an age group with no smartphones and often only limited access to digital media. What is remarkable is that in this age group, the book is also used when children are looking to take a break from too much distraction and stimulation. This aspect is applicable to many groups of readers, as I discuss in the next paragraph.

Kuntze (2018) explained that he sees his readers [meaning the readers of books of the book publishing house Blessing] as people who actively look for a time without distractions. However, he added the aspect of 'quality' of the literary content in this context: 'Publishers who publish literature that is mere entertainment will lose. I do not want to state any names...you know who... they are suffering and will continue to do so...they offer a form of entertainment that Netflix and others replace, as I have outlined. But what we [Blessing, ed. Note] offer is precisely the opposite... it is a digital detox. Our readers are looking for quiet time without distractions', he stated. At this point, I wish to emphasise the term 'digital detox' used by Kuntze (2018). This shows that the book is not only seen as a kind of counter-medium to the

perceived oversupply of the digital, but also as a kind of 'cleansing' medium. This suggests that digital, at least if it is used too intensively, is seen as 'toxic'. The book can then counteract these 'toxins' and cleanse its users. Here, values resonate that the book has a cleansing effect in the age of digitisation. Participants perceived the digital as 'toxic' due to providing more distractions and consuming people's time. For instance, participants described how they became easily distracted by pop-up messages or videos that suddenly started playing, resulting in spending more time online than initially intended. Brenner (2018) described this as the seduction of the digital: 'There is always something new to discover and as soon as one starts reading another, even more tempting pops up'.

The other aspect is what Bender (2018) described as 'timeout' and Kuntze (2018) as 'quiet time'. Among the perceived 'noise of the digital' (Kuntze, 2018), the book is a haven of calm. This quiet time is best offered by the book or a 'good book'. At this point, Kuntze brought in another aspect, namely that of the perceived quality of the book. While it is hard to narrow down and grasp what exactly makes a good book, this narrative fits other images such as Bender's (2018) statement that reading a book is 'like having a good meal'. Thus, the book and the preoccupation with it is something special—a special moment, a moment in which one consciously withdraws from the distractions that the media otherwise has to offer to consciously dedicate oneself to a theme, a text, and the content it transmits. In a world in which multitasking otherwise determines our daily routine, the book is a special moment where one gets invested in one thing. Therese Hochhuth (2018) also adapted the term 'digital detox' when she stated the following: 'The book is digital detox, and we must market it that way. It is a format that is anachronistic to the digital world we live in, but I am convinced that this is the advantage of the book. That is what our customers want'. To stress this point, Hochhuth told the story of an app called Leyo that the publisher Carlsen once marketed. The idea behind Leyo was to turn a book into an interactive experience. With a smartphone, kids could obtain more

information about the story or the book's topic. However, soon it turned out that parents did not like it as it meant that the kids would spend part of their reading time using a screen. Therefore, their concentration on the book would be interrupted. Hochhuth (2018) declared that "[a] book is exactly the format that helps our kids and us to focus on a world full of distractions'.

Noteworthy, the attitude of the parents described by Hochhuth reflects the criticism of Baron (2015), which I described in Chapter three, namely that reading on screen is not equated with reading the pages of a book. Lessing's (2007) criticism is also pertinent here; who perceived a story as only having been read if it has been read in the form of a book.

The statements by readers, publishers and authors highlighted two essential aspects of the book. First, it was assumed that the book, in contrast to other forms of media, requires our full concentration or attention. It requires dedication and time to read a book. In times that offer various distractions from other devices and apps that allow for polychronicity and multimedia use, the book is struggling to get a share of the available time of potential readers. At the same time, though, this perceived limitation of the book, which cannot be used for surfing the Internet, listening to music, or watching videos, was considered a potential asset by readers, publishers, and authors alike, forming part of the cultural value that is assigned to the book in the age of digitisation. The use of a book stands for an uninterrupted time in which readers consciously dedicate their time and concentration to one medium. It also stands for the conscious decision not to be distracted by the 'inaneities of the internet' (Lessing, 2007). The limitation of the analogue book is a 'unique selling proposition' by publishers who want to highlight this potential. The limitation of the analogue book, that is, not offering distractions, is no longer a negative restriction but links the artefact book to society. It is precisely this limitation of the analogue book – not to be more than what can be seen and read on the pages – that is considered an asset rather than a limitation in a negative sense. Publishers such as Kuntze (2018) are catering to this aspect of the analogue book, turning this into an economic

asset. This perception of the book leads to critical views on formats such as audiobooks or eBooks, as these dissolve the restrictive function of the book. Although it may not seem sensible at first glance that the ability of a medium to do less is to the advantage of the medium, this aspect is not limited to the book. In Chapter six, which deals with nostalgia, I demonstrate that playing old video games or using analogue cameras for nostalgic reasons also involves the limitation of the respective media being an advantage rather than a disadvantage.

Nevertheless, the limitations considered an asset of the analogue book were considered a disadvantage when discussing other media. Many participants of my focus-group discussions mentioned that they would not buy an eBook reader as the scope of technical applications was too limited. They would instead buy a tablet such as an iPad, allowing various uses such as surfing the Internet. Although participants required a broader scope of functions with these devices, they stated they would not use them to read books. Therefore, it can be said that the limitations of the printed book were considered assets and even advantages.

In contrast, the same limitations were considered disadvantages when applied to the eBook reader. This strengthens the argument that the eBook reader is not considered an 'authentic' book. As the statements of Eschbach, Müller, Rhien and Thomas have shown, it lacks the authenticity of the analogue book. Therefore, in the next section, I examine the aspect of authenticity in greater depth to evaluate how the perception of authenticity relates to the cultural value that we assign to the analogue book in the digital age.

5.4. Not the Real Thing – The Authenticity of the Book

In Westin's (2012) vocabulary of limitations, the theme of 'authenticity' repeatedly resonates. The statements of Müller (2018) and Eschbach (2018) have shown that, in their eyes, there is an authentic and an inauthentic non-genuine book. The participants themselves did not use the term 'authentic' but many descriptions corresponded to authentic in their meaning. For example, Lisa Werner (2018), a member of a book club in Munich and a participant in my research, said the following: 'For a real reading experience, I must be able to touch the paper of the book, smell the smell of the pages and the print. That is simply part of reading'. Other participants often spoke of authentic books' [echte Buecher] when referring to analogue books, separating them from generic books such as audiobooks and ebooks. All of these statements refer to an aspect described as authenticity (Boyle, 2011; Newman and Bloom, 2012; Timm Knudsen and Waade, 2010), which I discuss in connection with my findings in this section.

Munoz Vinas (2005:92) referred to authenticity by highlighting that if an object such as an artefact has a true [authentic] state, then this implies that 'the object can exist in a different (a non-true, i.e. false) state or condition', which has to be eliminated in order to reveal the truth. The idea of authenticity is often formed through collective memory and often does not mirror an absolute truth but a perceived truth. An example is the so-called 'traditional Bavarian clothing', which is supposed to represent authentic Bavarian culture but is instead the result of a mixture of different cultures and clothing styles that were collected and combined to recreate something that induces a sense of national pride (Audretsch and Lehmann, 2016; Egger, 2008). It is, therefore a form of invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 2012; Thomsen, 2018). That the idea of authenticity is often the result of collective memory can be tested by, for example, returning to an earlier format of a particular artefact. Westin (2012) described this with the example mentioned above of the Greek statue. He stated that by reverting the statue to an earlier format, such as that of an active cult object with less restrictive rules of interaction as

experienced in a museum, the classical statue would lose much of its perceived authenticity and 'cultural' value. It now stands in contrast to the format through which it has been anchored to society. Therefore, the change of format causes the loss of cultural value.

Consequently, the format, the rules that tell us how we might access content, are a generator of culture. Cultural values are bound to sociocultural practices and are therefore lost when removed from their context. Westin (2012) argued that the limitations of the format work as bodyless actants, again referring to actor-network theory. He argued that these bodyless actants must be addressed when the artefact should be translated into another format. In the case of the eBook reader, one could argue that it attempts to emulate the characteristics of the analogue book by using a similar format and dividing the text into pages that one must turn. However, the eBook reader, or the books uploaded to an eBook reader, exhibit a few crucial differences from the analogue book, one being that they can be altered. Amazon, for example, allows authors to change parts of published eBooks without marking the changed version as a new edition of the book. If readers download a book again or allow automatic updates, they will receive the altered version without a special notification that the book has been altered. Hence, the eBook lacks a particularity of the analogue book, namely the inviolability of the text.

Fleischmann (2018), Lecturer at the Technical University in Munich and member of a Munich book club who participated in my research, thought of this possibility as rather disturbing: 'I just do not like the fact that a book that I am reading is probably not finished. When I buy an author's book, I want to feel that it is a work and that, for me, it is only when it is finished. I don't want to read "work in progress'. I will refer to this aspect of digital books in more detail in chapter seven of this dissertation. Jahnke (2018), a librarian in Munich and member of the same book club as Fleischmann, mentioned the case of the publishing company Carlsen, who stated that they would amend books by Swedish author Astrid Lindgren as they contained terms considered racist. Although the members of the group agreed that these terms were

problematic, they also expressed their discomfort that a book they know from their youth is now being changed, especially since the author cannot defend herself against this change or can no longer agree to it. In this context, the books' authenticity is also affected since the author's authentic voice is no longer provided due to such changes (Willetts, 1990). The book is no longer exactly the same book that the author wrote and no longer corresponds to the original or authentic book. During my research, it was interesting to notice that even though the amendments made to the text were minor (they concern a few words), the book was less authentic to many reading group members. At this point, I wish to briefly highlight that this example shows that it is not the format of the book but rather the language that it contains that counts as the marker of authenticity. The participants were referring to the book's content, as Baron (2015), Lessing (2007) and other scholars were reported to have done in slightly different forms in Chapter three.

In addition, another aspect of authenticity came into play in the focus group interviews with readers, which referred to the rituals and practices surrounding the book. Just as I described the importance of the book's presentation for certain circles in Chapter two, from which part of the book's cultural value has developed, this aspect again plays an essential role in the age of digitisation. Sabrina May (2018), assistant in an IT company and member of a book club in Munich, described how she would sort her books by the colour of their spine at home. Andreas Fleischmann (2018) described how he sorts books on his shelf according to this preference and meaning, with some books sorted to the front and some to the back. Author Titus Müller (2018) described how it is a ritual for him to only sort books on his bookshelves that have been read by him. Books he has not read must stay on the floor until he has read them. These methods of dealing with books cannot be performed on an equal footing for eBooks. For example, Fleischmann (2018) highlighted the moment when he puts a book that he has read on the shelf as follows: 'When I have finished reading a book, I actually always remember that moment

when I put it on the shelf. That is also a part of my life that ends with this moment. Sometimes it was only a few days, sometimes it took me months or even years to read a book and then this moment already has meaning'. These rituals, it has been repeated time and time, are not possible with digital books or audiobooks. Thus, digital formats do not allow the same book experiences and ways of dealing with books as analogue books do. They do not allow the books to be dealt with in a way that makes the book experience authentic. One can also argue that eBook collections cannot be put on display in the same way printed books can, as they cannot be collected on an analogue bookshelf. Although the Apple bookshop, for example, 'stores' books that users have bought on a virtual bookshelf, this bookshelf is not physical and can only be accessed by people who have access to a computer or iPad.

Fleischmann (2018) raised another point that he is part of the authenticity of books. He noted that lending a book to someone is also difficult in the digital age. The spoke of moments when friends have been with him and told him about something, and then he would remember a book that would go well with what the friend told him: 'I then just go to the shelf and pull out the book. You can't do that with eBooks. Not all of them have the same formats, and you often can't share the books anyway'. Marius Senkel (2018), PhD student in chemistry and member of the same book club as Fleischmann, commented that even if one sends someone a digital book, it is not the same: 'When I lend someone a book, I talk to them about it a few weeks later. Maybe only because I want the book back, but also because I'm interested in how they liked it. When I send out a digital book, I'm not actually doing it because I haven't given the book away'. An eBook that is lent therefore does not create the same connection between the lender and the borrower as an analogue book. In addition, one is not giving the lending person the exact book one has read. There is also no authenticity from the lender having held this book in his or her hands, turned the pages and looked precisely at those letters, as is the case with a loaned analogue book. In this context, it is worthwhile highlighting an aspect that is not directly

related to authenticity in this context but that should be mentioned; that is, lending an ebook, which is often tantamount to giving away the book since the lender does not return it, creates problems related to copyright and product piracy that do not arise when lending an analogue book.

All of the points mentioned above are aspects my participants described as essential to their use of books. Whether sorting on the bookshelf, lending or discussing books, or simply living with books that fill a shelf, it was emphasised time and time again that this way of dealing with books is not possible with eBooks. They cannot be sorted, shown, or lent similarly. Westin (2012) explained that if an artefact is too far removed from the formats that anchor it to society, it loses its perceived 'culture' and has to form new connections with society in another format. As mentioned above, eBook readers were considered by participants of my focus group discussions to be a good choice when one must carry many books simultaneously; thus, they were considered convenient devices in certain situations. Audiobooks were a good alternative if one wishes to consume literary content but cannot read due to various circumstances. However, the perceived lack of materiality in eBooks and audiobooks means that these formats were perceived as less authentic by my participants and consequently as having reduced cultural value.

This brings another critical point to the discussion. Although the concept of materiality was neither directly addressed in the interviews nor in the focus group discussions, it resonates both in the discussion about the limitations and the discussion about the book's authenticity. The discussed limitations of the analogue book result from the materiality of the book. The paper book ensures that the book cannot be used to surf the Internet, listen to music, or watch videos. The analogue book is also the book format described as authentic and therefore often referred to as 'real' or authentic. The described 'time out', as well as immersion in the book and concentrated reading are all related to the analogue structure of the book. This shows that the

analogue materiality is an essential aspect of the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation. From Kuntze's statement that Blessing's customers are looking for a 'digital detox', it is also clear that the publishers have recognized this value of the analogue. This suggests that the analogue book is becoming a 'counter-medium' that enables intense analogue moments in the increasing digitization. Adapting Griswold's cultural diamond, the discussion shows that the 'social world', or the book's environment, has developed the eBook market for years as publishers set out to digitize their books. In interaction with the digitization of other media, a group of readers is now rediscovering the advantages of analogue and are increasingly beginning to appreciate them. The publishers, in turn, capitalize on this need and increasingly offer their customers analogue books that meet their needs.

5.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have shown that the analogue book has a particular purpose in the age of digitisation. Although anachronistic to the development of digital media, the book was seen by many participants in my focus group discussions and interviews as valuable precisely because of its limitations (2012). In times many participants experience as overstimulating, the book takes on the role of the medium that allows for moments of focus and separation from the fast-paced digital world. The book benefits from the fact that in its analogue form, it does not offer the possibility of multitasking, but rather 'forces' the reader to concentrate on his or her work. As a result, many participants rejected other book formats such as eBooks or audiobooks because they do not offer this possibility of focusing. Concerning the cultural diamond, it was observed that readers and authors had similar approaches to assessing the book's authenticity. Both the authors and many of the readers judged the analogue book to be authentic and genuine book. While the readers primarily mentioned aspects such as the moment of the first reading, sorting the book on the shelf or lending books, the authors focused on other aspects. The statements by Eschbach, Müller and Rhien made it clear that they were primarily concerned

with the value of their work, which they will only see appreciated when the book comes onto the market as a physical book. Similarities between readers and authors emerged regarding the book as a format for telling stories. Both groups largely agreed that the book as a format offers an exceptional experience because it is a break from time spent with digital media. The format, which I described as a limitation, was understood as an advantage and a particular characteristic of the book because it forces one to focus on a fast-moving world.

On the other hand, the publishers hardly mentioned the different values of analogue and digital books. Instead, they feared that future generations would no longer necessarily be able to concentrate on reading books. In the same way, however, it was also recognised that concentrating on the book as a medium for focusing could be an approach in the competition between the various forms of media. It became clear that the limitations described by the participants and the authenticity of the analogue book result primarily from the materiality of the analogue book. This analogue materiality thus contributes significantly to the cultural value of the book in the digital age and thus reinforces the perceived authenticity of the analogue book. An aspect closely linked to the issue of authenticity is the aspect of nostalgia. As the statements regarding alterations to eBooks on Amazon demonstrated, the link between authenticity and nostalgia is close. Therefore, in the next chapter, I explain the role nostalgia – mainly analogue nostalgia – plays in connection to books in the digital age.

CHAPTER 6.

LONGING FOR THE LOST – OBJECTIFYING THE BOOK

In this chapter, I present the findings from my research that concern aspects of nostalgia as brought forward by the participants of my focus-group discussions and one-on-one interviews. Building upon the aspects of limitations of analogue books as discussed in the previous chapter and the perceived authenticity of the analogue book, nostalgia surfaced in my research as another critical aspect that influences the cultural value of the analogue book in the digital age. I begin this chapter by examining the notion of nostalgia and explaining the differences between nostalgia, mediated nostalgia, and media nostalgia, as these forms describe different aspects relevant to my research. This is followed by examples of how people make sense of their nostalgic feelings towards the book in the age of digitisation and how creators of books such as publishers and intermediaries such as booksellers make use of the notions of nostalgia and memory among readers. To evaluate the meaning of media nostalgia for the book, I use Griswold's (2013) cultural diamond by showing how publishers make use of the notion of nostalgia with the involvement of the book trade. It also highlights how the creators, intermediaries and consumers of books describe feelings of nostalgia and how the different groups work or deal with these aspects. Finally, I argue that replacing consumer goods such as the book with their virtual equivalent or competing forms of digital media is bringing about a certain 'fetishisation' of the material object. This development, often called media nostalgia (Menke, 2017), surfaced many times during my interviews with readers and was raised by authors and publishers.

6.1. Nostalgia – Remembering the Past

Recently, a fascination with analogue or vintage digital media has become evident. This, among other technologies, is evident in the significantly increased fascination with analogue or vintage digital photography (Caoduro, 2014; Keightley and Pickering, 2014). In addition, computer gaming communities increasingly share, collect and play retro games or use emulators to create the looks of old computers such as the Commodore c64 (Handberg, 2015; Heineman, 2014; Suominen, 2008). I suggest that these trends are nourished by a certain nostalgia, which I examine in detail in this chapter. Nostalgia has been researched for the film (Lee, 2018; Sperb, 2015) and popular music (Bartmanski and Woodward, 2015; Reynolds, 2011). On social media sites (e.g., Facebook and Instagram), groups and forums with names such as 'nostalgia', 'vintage' or 'retronaut' have emerged on Facebook and Instagram. Niemeyer (2014:1) stated that '...videos and pictures with nostalgic statements are posted [...]. Indeed, part of the web could be seen as a huge attic or bric-a-brac market where individual, and collective nostalgias converge and spread'. However, the book as an artefact has rarely been the object of nostalgia research. This is even more interesting as aspects related to memories and nostalgia were regularly in my focus group discussions and interviews. Before discussing the issue of nostalgia for the book, it is first necessary to define the differences between nostalgia, mediated nostalgia, and media nostalgia as these three terms are often used interchangeably in the literature but describe different longings. For the sake of my argumentation, it is important to distinguish and apply these differences.

Today, nostalgia is often used to refer to a longing for a time that is lost and constructed in contrast to the present (Higson, 2014). Looking at the conceptualisations of nostalgia in the literature, it can be said that nearly all of them are based on the notion of change (Menke, 2017). Nostalgia links a time before and after a perceived change. Thus, nostalgic feelings often consider the times or conditions before the change superior to the present (Volkan, 1999).

However, one must be careful when considering the before as truly superior, as nostalgic remembering is often biased toward the positive aspects of the past, tending to disregard negatives (Sedikides *et al.*, 2015). This cheerful colouring of the past often occurs not only on a personal but also on a collective level. Davis (1979) argued that societies sometimes experience a discontinuity of collective identity due to a crisis caused by societal change. This can then manifest a nostalgic identity construction related to generational media experiences, influencing the identity of everyone from that generation. One example is the image of a cassette tape with a pencil and the question 'Who still knows what the pencil is for?', which is frequently shared on Facebook, especially on vintage-oriented Facebook pages.



Figure 6 Tape and Pencil found on the website 'Wer kennt das noch?' (Who still knows that?).

By recognising what the pencil was needed for and expressing this by liking or commenting on the image, one expresses the belonging to a generation. The example of the cassette and pencil is clearly an example in which the negative aspect has faded, and the memory is used to elicit a positive feeling of togetherness. Many who still remember how they got the 'spaghet tied' tape back into the cassette with a pencil have probably forgotten the frustration they felt when kinks in the tape significantly worsened the sound quality or the tape even became torn. This transfiguration of the past becomes even more evident in connection with retro computer

gaming. So-called simulators allow the graphical aesthetics of the C64 to be resurrected on today's high-tech laptop, but of course, the annoying changing of floppy discs is no longer necessary (Suominen, 2008; Wulf *et al.*, 2018). These two examples described here represent what is defined as media nostalgia, where the respective medium evokes nostalgic feelings. The discussion in the next section is devoted to this form of nostalgia. Media often triggers nostalgia because many memories are accessible, such as when we watch a film that presents particular objects that remind us of our childhood (Pickering and Keightley, 2006). Media nostalgia differs from other types of nostalgia in how media are involved. In media nostalgia, media culture, technology, or content are at the centre of the nostalgic longing, such as the longing for vinyl records when watching the film *High Fidelity* (Frears *et al.*, 2000) or for old computer games when watching the film *War Games* (Badham *et al.*, 1983). By contrast, when media serves only as a *mediator* or *portal* to media-unrelated experiences from the past, we talk about mediated nostalgia (Lizardi, 2015; Niemeyer, 2014). The following example further illustrates this difference. Suppose someone reads an old children's book that refers to a situation that the reader remembers, such as a visit to a funfair in the 1970s. In that case, this sentiment is described as mediated nostalgia. Suppose the book itself triggers, because of the cover or a particular issue, the feeling of nostalgia. In that case, it becomes media nostalgia, as it is the medium itself that triggers the feelings of nostalgia. Media nostalgia can thus be understood as a reaction to media change as one develops nostalgic feelings for a medium considered to be lost. Media nostalgia then often focuses on previous experiences with media culture and technology. This can either lead to people turning to media content or embracing outdated media technology with its formerly genuine social and cultural significance, aesthetic, style, way of operation, smell or haptics (Kaun and Schwarzenegger, 2014; Niemeyer, 2014). The latter is often referred to as analogue nostalgia (Caoduro, 2014), which describes the longing for analogue media in a digitised world. In my research, this longing was often evident

in statements made by the participants of my focus group and in one-on-one interviews when they, for example, described their book collections and referred to times during their childhood (Klotz, 2018). This not only happened in the form of 'neo-Luddism' (Jones and Park, 2007), rejecting new technologies, as shown in Chapter five but also as a reaction to a world that virtualises an increasing number of areas of everyday life. The following section explores the manifestations of analogue nostalgia and links them with findings from my focus group and one-on-one interviews.

6.2. Nostalgia and the Analogue Book

The digitisation of the 20th and 21st centuries has added a new form of media to the media canon of print, radio, and TV. Digital content was added to the world wide web in the form of blogs, websites, podcasts, social media and more. In addition, new technologies such as laptops, smartphones and tablets allowed for mediated interpersonal communication (Gorman and McLean, 2009). Digitisation is not only taking place at the macro level through the change of media systems, the media economy, media production or media content but also (and probably) more importantly on an individual level and in the way we communicate with each other. Lievrouw and Livingstone (2009:xxi) stated the following:

No part of the world, no human activity, is untouched by the new media. Societies worldwide are being reshaped, for better or for worse, by changes in the global media and information environment. So, too, are the everyday lives of their citizens.

This quote emphasises the importance of introducing digital technologies and media not only for our professional life but also – and especially – for our private life. From this, it becomes clear that this change affects parts of our lives and permeates our life as a whole. Our everyday

life is defined by our use of computers, mobile phones, and other digital devices, which are interconnected. Deuze (2011:38) stated that 'our life is lived in, rather than with, media'. Therefore, a growing number of people communicate, assuming that everybody is skilled and willing to be online, that nearly everyone has a smartphone or Internet connection, and that they are at least signed up for one social media site (Menke, 2017). In my research, several interviewees strongly criticised this development of digitisation. As mentioned in Chapter five, the e-reader was often rejected by my focus group participants, who believed that it would offer too many distractions if it was a model that allowed surfing the net, such as the Kindle Fire; this would tempt users to check social networks or websites and hinder concentrated reading (Baron, 2017; NS Baron, 2015). Additionally, audiobooks were criticised for a similar reason: they did not require the reader's full attention and allowed for various forms of distraction. These are just two examples of why some people refuse to participate in media change, or they decide to reduce the pace of this change significantly by not buying the latest technological devices and keeping an old mobile phone instead. This can be a conscious refusal or because the technical understanding of the new developments is missing, and they no longer feel capable. People might feel excluded from the cultural and social exchange, discourse, and decisions in media societies (Kaun and Schwarzenegger, 2014). Although none of my participants consciously expressed that he felt left out by the rapid digital development, this aspect cannot be completely ruled out. Some participants indicated they were not particularly interested in digital media and digital devices. To what extent this results from their lack of understanding of these devices, or whether this was a purely cultural decision, was not part of my research and was therefore not examined further. However, it can be said that people in certain jobs who do attempt to adapt to these changes often feel stressed and overwhelmed by the constant pressure to be available for communication and maintaining pace with media communication (Fang et al., 2019; Hayles, 2003). I argue that under this situation of fast-paced

technological developments and constant pressure to adapt, people are likely to develop a sentiment for analogue media, an aspect that I discuss in more detail in Section 6.6.

As explained above in the section about media nostalgia, some people experience nostalgic feelings for media if they perceive this medium to be lost or in danger of being extinguished. In addition to the rapid change caused by digitisation, people sometimes develop a sentiment for media that they can operate and trust—a medium they had control of, for no technical knowledge or constant adaptation was necessary. I argue that one of these media objects is the book. Renate Cramer (2018), a general practitioner and member of a reading group in Augsburg who participated in my research, remembered times when her parents read to her as a child, especially when she was sick. In our focus group interview, she passionately recalled that it was always the same book of fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm and that she always wanted to hear the same stories. Cramer recalled how she knew the stories by heart and that whenever her father would leave out or change sentences, she would interrupt him to tell him off. Cramer still owns this book, but it is now 'totally worn out; the edges are broken. However, I cannot give that book away. It is the story of my life. That book marks the beginning of my love for books (Cramer, 2018). She has maintained her love for books until today and stated that she still opts to read the old versions of certain books even though they are nearly falling apart. She declared that it is not just the story that she longs for but also the book's object. When I asked whether she could imagine reading the fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm on an e-reader, she immediately said no; as for her, the object book and the story were interconnected. She explained that she even had a newer version of the Brothers Grimm book, but when reading the tales to her daughter, she grabbed her old version of the book, as she used it to tell her daughter how her parents read to her and how she felt about that. She said, 'When I grab that old book and open it is as if I read two stories. First, it's the stories in the book, but simultaneously I remember how my parents read to me, which is just like another story. It's just a nice walk

down memory lane'. Therefore, this very book triggers sentiment and nostalgia, yet that feeling is compounded by the fact that she had few books at home. Cramer recalled that she only owned a handful of books: 'Books were rare at home. I maybe got one book for my birthday and one for Christmas'.

In this narrative, the element of scarcity was evident, which I discuss in more detail in the next section. Thus, the book has an added value as it is associated with being rare. She continued to explain how when her mother brought her to Munich to go shopping; she would leave her at Hugendubel [a book chain] where she could read books for hours until her mum came back to pick her up: 'That was heavenly. To be there to look at many books for hours...' (Cramer, 2018). Again, the point about enjoying the abundance of books in the bookshop reinforced the narrative of the perceived lack of books. This perceived deficiency often reappeared throughout my interviews and focus group discussions. Therefore, in the next section, I look closely at the element of scarcity with nostalgia.

6.3. Nostalgia and Scarcity

In my interviews and focus group discussions, participants often mentioned that books were rare in their childhood. Therefore, books were already considered valuable as they were perceived as scarce. This certainly did not affect all of the participants. However, it was evident for many of them, as quite a few grew up in Germany shortly after the war or had family backgrounds that would not allow them to buy many books for financial reasons. Most prominent, though, was the aspect of scarcity among older participants as they had experienced books to be scarce or difficult to obtain in the years following the war. Ralf Huber (2018), a former teacher and member of the reading group in Augsburg, told of how he would always visit the small parish library in his neighbourhood and read for hours as books were not available in his home: 'I would sit there in the library and browse through the books for hours.

And it was just fantastic. It was a very closed [comprehensive] fantastic world for me. All these foreign countries came to me through books. So, that was very interesting, as I could not do that at home, as my parents could not afford to buy that many books'. Udo Klotz (2018), software engineer and organiser of the *Kurt-Laßwitz-Preis* (a science fiction literature award in Germany) and member of the science fiction reading group 'Die Phantasten' in Munich, was another participant in a focus group discussion. He stated that he is a book collector with more than 16,000 books due to the scarcity of books that he experienced when he was a child:

'I remember my birthdays as a kid when I was ten or so. I always asked for books. So, I got one book. And when my relatives came for coffee and cake to celebrate my birthday I would sit in my corner and read the book and by the time the birthday was over I had finished the book. And even though I thought this was an honour for the person who gave me the book, everyone was disappointed as I had "used up" the present already.'

Klotz recalled that he kept all the books he received for his birthday during his childhood as they reminded him of times that he eagerly anticipated receiving new books. Now, when he passes by the bookshelves of his extensive collection, he likes to remember the times when books were so memorable for him: 'Books meant to dive into a new or strange world. I could not wait to do it again and get lost in this 'universe' that the author had created'. Today, with all the media and especially entertainment formats available, a considerable number of different 'universes' exist, Klotz explained, and this vast number of 'universes' invalidates the effect that immersion into one story once had on him. For him, it is too many series, and they all move too fast. The motif of the multitude of universes was also produced by another group member, Jürgen vom Scheidt, a retired psychologist and science fiction author who has published more than 35 fiction and nonfiction books with major publishers such as Heyne or Bastei Lübbe as well as independent publishers. According to him, 'There are so many worlds today. Too many worlds that we, as consumers of media, shall enter. It is just too much. I do not want that anymore'. Vom Scheidt strengthened the aspect of scarcity by mentioning that in his youth, the scarcity of paper made books even more valuable: 'When I was a kid, and I wanted to buy a

new book, I had to bring old paper to the bookshop. The money was not enough, I had to bring old paper that would be recycled and turned into a new publication'. Vom Scheidt's statement is interesting because it describes a unique event and simultaneously puts it in a historical context. There was indeed a shortage of paper in Germany after the Second World War, and newspapers, for example, were not published daily. When they were published, they only had a few pages, but the practice described by vom Scheidt of bringing paper when buying books was only common in very few areas of Germany for a relatively short period (Frei, 1987; Williams, 1959). Vom Scheidt's descriptions are critical because a brief period in his early childhood shaped his perception of the book, which was perceived as scarce and, therefore, particularly valuable. However, paperbacks were easily affordable for almost everyone in Germany as early as the 1950s, the period of shortage shaped vom Scheidt's appreciation for books. In addition, for Klotz (2018) and vom Scheidt (2018), in retrospect, this scarcity is experienced as a positive memory because it meant focusing and concentrating on one book, or one 'universe', at a time. The book and its experiences became even more valuable for both of them.

In this context, though, the feeling of nostalgia for the book is not about the technology of the book or its limitations but rather about the time in life associated with the book and reading that one longs for, and this longing is associated with the book. In this context, it would be possible for to forgo the other media stimuli in favour of reading books. However, considering the wide range of books and other media on offer, this is difficult for them. For Klotz (2018), as a collector, it is hardly possible to limit himself, and for vom Scheidt (2018), digital media also plays a role. Both, therefore, long for a time in which external circumstances denied them these multiple media stimuli and allowed them to concentrate only on the book. The perceived scarcity in this context becomes a means that helps to focus on one 'universe' at a time. These statements though reflect the point of view of two people who were born during the war or shortly afterwards. Participants who did not live through this period rarely expressed nostalgic

feelings towards the book out of a perceived deficiency. A further issue Klotz (2018) raised was the cover design of books. At the focus-group discussion, he presented two books in context with the *Kurt-Laßwitz-Preis*. He explained that science fiction is always a mirror of the respective epoch. When he walks past his collection today, he still prefers to reach for the old books as their designs resemble what got him interested in science fiction literature in the first place. The graphic design of books was mentioned various times in connection with nostalgic stories. Therefore, I examine this aspect of my research in the next section.

6.4. Nostalgia in Design

The artwork, design and originality of books proved to be another aspect raised by many participants in my research. The aspect of artwork and design was attributed with a unique role on two accounts: first, the design of books was of importance in connection with first editions of books, and second, design played a role when participants were reminded of times or moments in their life by looking at specific editions of books. Petra Lange (2018) was a participant in a focus group discussion in Munich, a freelance journalist and author (she has published nonfiction and fiction books), as well as a member of the reading and writing group "Kaliber" in Munich. Lange recalled the moment she found a German edition of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* (published in 1962) at a doctor's waiting room in Munich as follows:

'[...] Such an old thing and I took it and thought, how amazing that this book survived all these years, it is older than me. It was around six years before I was born so it is somewhat historic, and I think that books ...they last throughout the times. They have always been there, and they will... and one knows that these things will outlive us and that is a great feeling.'

Lange expressed a feeling she had when she took the book. Immediately her sentiment was not about the book itself or the story it contained. She did not remember when she read the book for the first time. What struck her was the understanding that this book had been around for so

many years, that this edition was even older than she was. She combined that with a feeling that books 'outlive' us. Another aspect that is gaining importance in the digitisation age is Lange's statement, namely the perception of the permanence of media (Pesce and Noto, 2016; Plaisance, 2020). Using the example of the Little Prince, Lange emphasised the durability of the printed medium, the existence of which can surpass that of ourselves. As a result, this book extends beyond our own lives and is given a special meaning. She connected this to herself by noting that the book was older than her. Her entire thoughts revolved around this edition and this very copy of the book, which brought her memories of her life. Old books, or original or special editions, were often of great importance in my interviews. Participants often mentioned that they would like to buy a particular book for the first time or buy it again, but only if it was available with the artwork of a particular edition that they remembered, such as from their childhood or other periods in their lives. These statements demonstrated how important not only the content of books was but also how important the appearance of the book was. Petra Velle (2018), the owner of the bookshop 'The Bücherstube' (the book chamber) in Nesselwang (Germany), participated in a focus group discussion of booksellers. She stated that she often overhears parents when they come to her bookshop to look for books: 'The parents then pick books and say to their kids "Look this is what I read when I was your age" or something like that'. If parents do not find a specific edition of a particular book, they would order that specific edition they had read rather than buy a later one. Velle mentioned the example of *Oh, wie schön ist Panama*. This illustrated children's book, written by German author Janosch, was first published in 1978 and tells the story of a little tiger and a little bear who try to find the land of Panama as they consider Panama to be the 'land of our dreams'. This book is part of the German children's book canon comparable to *Paddington* (1958) in the UK or *The Cat in the Hat* (1957) in the U.S.. In 2006, it was adapted for film and turned into an animated motion picture.

With the release of the film, a new edition of the book was published, which is graphically based on the more modern design of the film.

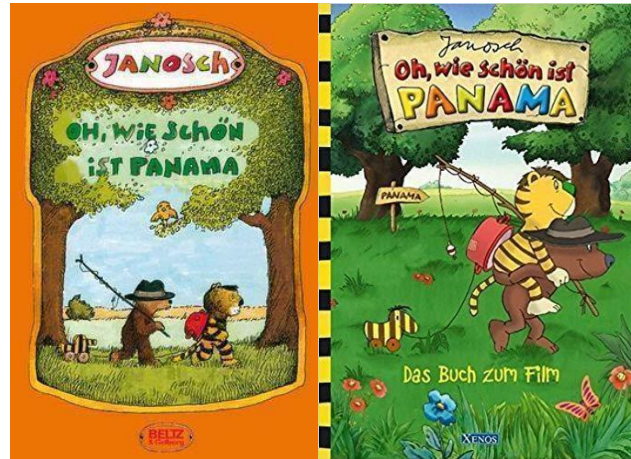


Figure 7 Original edition of 'Oh, wie schön ist Panama' (left) and a book made in addition to the film (right).

Velle recalled that when parents came to buy the book, the children wanted to buy the new version with the characters they knew from the film, while the parents tried to convince their kids to instead go for the book's original edition. The parents then talked about how they liked the original edition better, as it would remind them of when they first read the book, or their parents read it to them and wanted to do the same to their children using the same edition. Velle thought this was interesting because 'for the kids, the new version of the book represented the version that they related to more than the original one, but the parents' memories were decisive in the end. For Velle, it seemed as if reading the book was more important for the parents than for the children as it brought them pleasant memories. However, these memories were only or better evoked when the book was read using the original edition. A similar experience was mentioned by the bookseller and owner of the bookshop 'Lesezeichen' (Bookmark) in Kempten, Daniela Haberkorn (2018). She recalled the different editions of the children's classic series *Heidi* by Swiss author Johanna Spyri. The books were first published in 1880 and 1881 and are also part of the children's book canon in Germany. She explained that she has various editions

of the books available in her store, as different generations ask for different editions. She also explained how grandparents come to buy the books for their grandchildren, and they ask for editions illustrated as they were illustrated in the 1950s and 1960s. Then, in the late 1970s, the Japanese anime series *Heidi* has aired for the first time in Germany: 'The animated series made Heidi really popular in Germany. Therefore, the parents usually resort to editions in which Heidi is depicted as in this series, as this is the "original" Heidi for them'. However, the children tend to pick editions that depict Heidi as she looks in the new animated series released in 2013.



Figure 8 Different editions of *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri. From left to right: Edition of the late 1950s; edition based on the illustrations of the first animated series of the 1970s; and a new edition with modern illustrations based on the series from 2013.

Book publishers are aware of the importance of reflective elements in the selection of books. For this reason, the German publisher Weltbild has used historical or historicised covers for many years to commemorate the time the books were initially published.

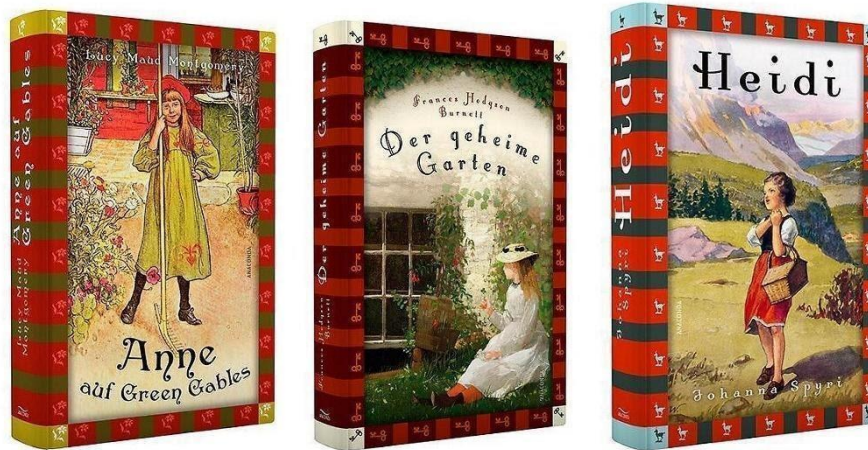


Figure 9 New editions of classic children's books using original or retro-style artwork.

A Weltbild box set containing titles with historicised covers, such as *Anne of Green Gables*, *Heidi*, and *The Secret Garden*, was published in 2018. The text used on the website to advertise the box read as follows: 'The most famous children's book classics are captivating stories and great literature in one. Our parents read it to us; we reread it as children and as adults again' (Weltbild, n.d.). This text speaks directly to the element of nostalgia and remembrance, and the box's design supports this approach with a design reminiscent of bygone times. Notably, the publishers attempted to evoke nostalgic feelings in parents through historical cover designs. According to Velle (2018), children prefer a design that corresponds to their generation. For example, the new Heidi series from 2013 is computer-animated, and the new Heidi books are also available in this aesthetic. As stated above by Velle, many parents prefer classic covers and try to convince their children to pick these editions. Adapting Griswold's (2013) cultural diamond, it can be said that the aspect of design in books serves different purposes for consumers of books and for publishers. While for consumers, as the examples of *Oh, wie schön ist Panama* (2008) and *Heidi* (2006) have shown, the design of editions evokes nostalgic feelings, publishers use this knowledge and attempt to target these nostalgic emotions in different generations of buyers. To this day, Heidi books are offered in versions with artwork

that is strongly reminiscent of the aesthetics of the first editions as well as versions with artwork that leans on the aesthetics of the 70s TV series.



Figure 10 (Left) Heidi edition (2016) refers to the design of the early editions in which Heidi is a blonde girl, and (right) a colouring book using the 1970s design published in 2020.

Dr. Hella Reese, Vice President of the Program of German for the publishing house dtv (one of the largest independent publishers in German-speaking countries) and participant in one of my interviews, explained the following: 'Especially with our classic's editions, the making of the books is important. Therefore, we work extensively with historical motifs and other classic elements of book design, such as gold cutting'. She continued to explain that the artwork does not necessarily refer to the time in which the book's plot takes place, but the design should first all appeal to readers in a way that they feel reminded of the book. By this, she means that dtv aims to address notions of nostalgia and a longing for the past in their readers. Dr. Reese's statement represents the company line. It reveals the marketing strategy behind the cover design, which aims to create books that are attractive to different generations and purposefully play with the nostalgic feelings of their customers.

Stefen Haselbach (2018), publishing director of fiction for the German publishing group Droemer- Knaur and participant in my interviews, stated that he realises this trend that books are designed to evoke certain nostalgic feelings or memories. However, he sees this not only because a particular artwork should be copied to evoke these feelings but also because it is increasingly important to equip books beautifully. 'When we think of books that have impressed us as children, these were often books that impressed us because of their mere appearance', he stated. He continued to explain that, in his opinion, many people barely remember simple paperbacks but rather the lavishly designed fairy-tale books by the Brothers Grimm, which were full of illustrations and graphic elements. Therefore, he argued, 'one has to make the book a piece of art again'.

Furthermore, he stated, 'Especially in the field of historical novels and fantasy, readers love well-equipped books; therefore, publishers have to create products that are beautiful objects'. Haselbach's statement shows how aware publishers are now about the aspect of nostalgia as a sales argument. However, the examples also show that publishers are prepared to commodify nostalgia by providing beautifully designed books. The importance of these is apparent, as Haselbach referred to the countless sites on Pinterest and Instagram where people share images of books or cover artwork that they like:

'That is very interesting for us to see what people appreciate about books. Sometimes it is the pictures in the books, the graphic design, or little elements such as gold print. Often the photographs show vintage designs or certain functions such as pop-up books. No matter what it is, it is just interesting to see that well-designed books or lavishly designed books encourage people to post photos of their books on the internet.'

This statement by Haselbach marks a connection between the analogue book and the digital world. As a result, new questions arise: Do the forms of nostalgia discussed in this section also apply in the digital world? Are we experiencing the end of a culture of recollection and

remembrance with digital reading, or can these sentiments and feelings of nostalgia be transferred to the digital sphere? In the next section, I explore whether the book is experiencing similar nostalgic affection in the digital realm.

6.5. Analogue Nostalgia

In 2002, the film scholar Laura Marks (2002) coined the term *analogue nostalgia*. Marks referred to videos in her work and did not elaborate on the term further or adapt it to other media. Rombes (2017:2) used the term, describing analogue nostalgia as a '[t]endency in digital media [...] to reassert imperfection, flaws, an aura of human mistakes to counterbalance the logic of perfection that pervades the digital'. Marks (2002) and Rombes (2017) have only applied the term analogue nostalgia to films. However, their observations can be applied to other media too. In many respects, such forms of 'analogue' editing can be observed throughout the media culture, such as in music or photography. It is about aesthetic effects, which are perceived specifically as analogue. Marks (2002) and Rombes (2017) have recognised that this form of nostalgia is often a nostalgia that refers to a time beyond the biography of the individual actors.

Again, this shows a desire for permanence described above in connection with *The Little Prince*. Marks (2002:153) stated that '...analogue nostalgia seems especially prevalent among works by students who started learning video production when it was already digitised'. In the previous chapter, I have already mentioned Presky's definition of the 'digital natives' and how problematic this definition proves to be. Therefore, as above, I will only use this 'terminology' to describe a part of the society for whom computer games, the Internet, mobile phones, and other digital media are a natural part of their lives. This part of society does not know a time before and without digital media. This sets them apart from the groups of society who had to

learn their way around digital media, whom Prensky (2001) describes as 'digital immigrants' (Though Prensky thinks of this group as a generation just as his definition of digital natives). Prensky's (2001) analysis of 'digital immigrants' is close to the same semantic environment as the notion of nostalgia, especially in its original meaning of homesickness and the desire for the lost (Davis, 1979). For Prensky (2001), the idea is central that 'digital immigrants' are still intellectually rooted in their old homeland of the analogue world and that it is difficult for them to get used to the new environment. According to Prensky's analysis, one must conclude that only digital immigrants should be subject to a nostalgic attitude towards the analogue book.

However, this analysis stands in contrast to Marks' (2002) observations that she experienced among people whom Prensky (2001) would describe as 'digital natives', who are the ones that incorporate analogue characteristics into their films. Two questions emerge from these observations: Why do so-called digital natives have a longing for analogue characteristics in their work? Do digital immigrants wish to reverse the process of digital development? The cultural scientist Dominic Schrey (2017) described analogue nostalgia as yearning for the lost without wanting to reverse time. It is a longing above all for the sake of yearning itself. As a result, it exposes the lost, simulates its surface and is aware that such a simulation is not satisfactory, but only reminds one of the losses. It is conceivable that this longing exists both in the generation that experienced the analogue world and also in the generation that only knows this world from books and films. In my research, I experienced this longing, especially among the participants of reading groups. Lisa Werner (2018), participant of a focus group interview in Munich and member of a reading group, described how she appreciates certain paper qualities that she would only find in old books and certain forms of ex libris that she found in books, and also how these physical attributes would sometimes carry her away. She said the

following: 'Once in a flea market in Berlin I grabbed an old children's book, probably of the 1920s if I recall it correctly. I can't recall the title, but it struck me at that moment that I thought of the child that once owned that book. I thought of it lying in a cosy old wooden bed [laughter], with a candle or kerosene lamp all tucked in prepared to get absorbed by the story. And I thought that must have been nice. At this moment there was nothing else to do for that child but to read'. This description reflects a certain form of analogue nostalgia and a longing for a time or moment in which reading a book was a process that was not challenged by other media or activities. This nostalgic longing of Werner was apparent in her description of the 'wooden bed' or the child being 'tucked in' and maybe the imagination of a cosy light. The described scene reflected a calm and focus that seem to be missing for Werner today. Although Werner is in her late twenties and therefore considered a digital native, it is also notable that the situation she described is one that most of us cannot reproduce today. This is because people do not have a wooden peasant bed or someone to wrap them in a blanket or because they read neither by candle nor kerosene lamp. Therefore, this nostalgic longing of Werner is a longing that can no longer be achieved. This demand for a state that can never be achieved or can never be satisfied is now also consciously addressed by advertising. By addressing these nostalgic feelings, publishers sell memories and experiences that many customers of these books have never experienced themselves. This turns this into a kind of mediated nostalgia, which in turn refers to a mediated and not lived nostalgia (see Landsberg, 2004).

The economist Kießling (2012) explored how consumer marketing uses notions of nostalgia and retro trends, especially among younger people. Kießling argued that even generations who grew up being surrounded by digital media are at times overwhelmed with the technical or media development and therefore long for a time that is, in their view, perceived as slower and more stable. The analogue is not only seen as representative of the more stable and slower but

also develops an additional stimulus. It is often associated with a positively biased inaccuracy or susceptibility to error (Menke, 2017). This preserves a degree of uncontrollability that the digital system no longer allows. The analogue is thus again attributed to the aura Benjamin (1969) saw endangered in his essay on the reproducibility of art, as I described in Chapter three. Ironically, Benjamin saw this aura ousted by those media that today are considered analogue. Benjamin was theorising a kind of reaction to mechanical reproduction. Analogue books as we know them today however are industrially produced rather than being artisanal craft objects. The nostalgia discussed here is often for an earlier phase of industrially produced goods as they seem more individual and unique because they are associated with an earlier phase of production. In the face of digital reproduction, which at least theoretically allows for identical copies, analogue copies with their potential minor deviations or mistakes in print or paper almost feel unique. The German historian and journalist Schivelbusch (1973), already in 1973, suggested rethinking Benjamin's concept of aura and observed the decline of industrial goods through use and ageing. He argued that the originality of an object 'arises' not only during the process of production but also develops over time through use and wear and tear. Schivelbusch's (1973) argument can be understood using the example of so-called 'barn finds'; that is, cars that were mass-produced goods in their time and have rusted in an old warehouse or barn over the years, thus becoming coveted collectors' item that has developed its originality. This refers to the aspect of patina (McCracken, 1990) that I described in Chapter two. The analogy of the antique car also means that equipment once considered old-fashioned or outdated acquires new value. For example, a convertible roof that must be closed manually is no longer considered impractical but authentic (Cross, 2015; Lyon and Colquhoun, 1999; Setiffi and Scotto, 2018). This shift in values can be observed similarly in connection with analogue media. Aspects of analogue media, which were mostly regarded as a disadvantage or a problem, are often celebrated today, whether it is the crackle of records, loss of quality when

copying, or the yellowing of photos. Many of these aesthetics is emphasised in nostalgic recollections. By contrast, the book has barely been the subject of research in the context of analogue nostalgia. One reason for this may be that the analogue book still exists and therefore there is no reason to develop the same nostalgic feelings that are felt for other media. However, my research demonstrates that there are strong nostalgic feelings for the book, especially in the digital environment. I will deal with this topic in the next section.

6.6. Analogue Nostalgia and the Book

Although for most analogue books, there is no scarcity as they are still widely available, nostalgia in connection with the analogue book is nevertheless present. Jürgen vom Scheidt (2018), a focus group discussion participant in Munich, stated that he could no longer imagine living without an eBook reader. However, since the device itself is 'too technical' and 'electronic' (vom Scheidt, 2018) in appearance, he bought a leather protective cover to give the device a more book-like appearance and especially feel. The visual approach of eBook readers to the look and feel of books has become a real market. Various online shops provide eBook covers and other accessories referring to the book. The British online store forreadingaddicts.co.uk offers various products around the book such as T-shirts, tote bags, dresses, blankets and many more, as well as a large variety of covers for e-readers designed to resemble book covers. These products can be considered a bridge between the analogue, haptic and the virtual and digital as they simulate an analogue reading environment in the digital world. Although it can be assumed that owners of e-readers show their willingness to read books digitally, it is still important to some that this experience is optically as analogue as possible. Steffen Haselbach (2018) of Droemer Knaur stated that "[d]igital reading is still a strong echo of the book. eBook readers are similar in weight and look a lot like analogue books.

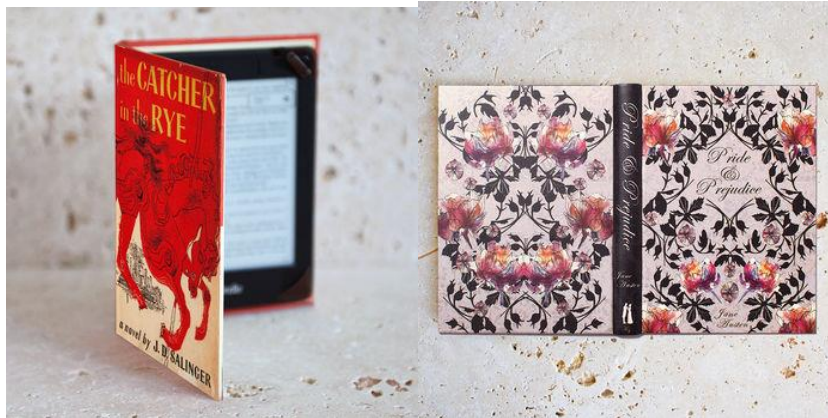


Figure 11 Examples of protective eBook reader cases using classical book designs (source: www.shop.forreadingaddicts.co.uk).

However, the eBooks themselves also simulate the world of analogue books in many of their functions, be it through the virtual flipping of pages, which visually resembles that in analogue books, or the 'cracking' sound of paper when turning the pages. Furthermore, the design of the Apple iBook store resembles a classical bookshelf, and the design of the Apple Notepad logo resembles a classical paper notepad; even the logo of the Apple iBook app is a reference to analogue books.

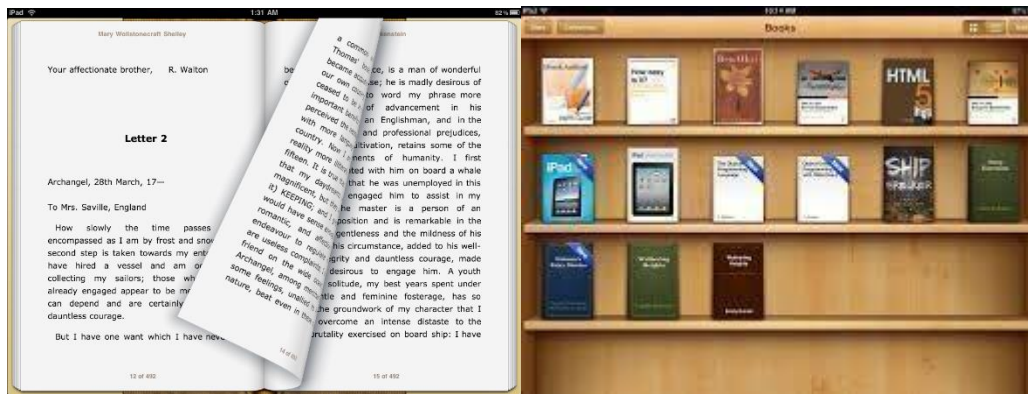


Figure 12 (From left to right) eBook with flipping pages, the Apple iBook store bookshelf, and the design of the Apple Notepad logo.

The question that emerges from these digital simulations of the book is as follows: Why do we need this connection to the classic analogue book in the digital world? First, one might argue that the experience of digital media has not yet spawned the same rituals and habits as traditional analogue media has; for example, turning pages in a book, which signals to the reader that their reading is progressing, has no adequate counterpart in the digital world, so one simulates the analogue turning of pages. Yet, this alone is not a sufficient explanation. Returning to photography, for example, one can notice two parallel developments. The first is image processing software, which offers numerous functions that allow adding a yellow cast to photos or making them look like Polaroids. The second parallel development is 'swiping', which is already an established way of dealing with digital photos. It can often be observed that small children try swiping the screen when trying to get an image to go away on any screen automatically. For photographs, a generation has already formed for whom the standard way of

dealing with photos is to swipe them aside to see the following picture. This is a process or ritual that did not exist in analogue photography.

To explain why we might need the simulation of analogue media in the digital, Marks (2002: 152) argues that this digital nostalgia is a yearning for the allegedly largely lost indexical relation of the images to their speakers during digitisation, with the demand for physicality and materiality in a supposedly immaterial media context and with the fundamental need for an as yet unimpaired experience, in a time when experience is almost only conceivable as 'information'. For Rombes (2017:2009), analogue nostalgia is first a manifestation of defiant humanism; an emphasis on the contingent, faulty, corporeal and the imperfect; just where digital code threatens to mercilessly drive these human qualities out of the medial conditions of a post-humanistic age. Rombes (2017) sees this nostalgia as a necessary countermeasure of deceleration in a time of digital alienation and perfection. Rombes (2017) argued that the lack of perfection is exactly what determines humanity for us humans. The fallibility and inaccuracies cause the longing for the analogue in contrast to the perfect digital copy. Rhien (2018), a participant of my focus group interviews in Munich and a resolute consumer of eBooks, made the following observation: 'I really prefer reading eBooks and certainly consider myself as digitised through and through when it comes to my media use. But I believe that the reason we long for the analogue is that though we know that the digital works better in many ways, it just lacks the individuality of the analogue'. Rhien used the iPhone as an example to explain his point:

'The iPhone has long been a status object and in some ways still is to a certain extent. But the apps look the same on all iPhones, the frame looks the same one iPhone 11 looks just like the other. The software does not allow for customisation. It is the same with Apple Watches. How many options do you have for customisation? There are maybe 30 different bracelets, but the cases are always the same'.

According to Rhien, the analogue allows for more individuality as there are still so many more analogue items to purchase than digital ones. Rhien, being a mac user, states that the IOS software looks the same on any mac. However, the MacBook as a physical object can be individualized, for example, through stickers that can be stuck on the case. This leads again to Rombes' (2017) statement that the analogue leaves more room for individuality through its assumed imperfection, in other words, the physical materiality. Thus, I claim that the same analogue book read by two different people will show very different traces of use, whereby the eBook file of the same book does not change with continuous use.

This statement also leads back to the statement of Fleischmann (2018), who said that when looking at his bookshelf, he would remember when and where he read each book. Therefore, while an analogue book that one reads on holiday in Greece, for example, may still contain traces of sand from the beach that can be traced back to that holiday, this is not so easily possible with an eBook reader. The eBook reader may contain traces of sand or other traces of use, but it retains these regardless of which book one is currently reading on it. Therefore, the connection between a holiday and a text, a story, and an object, as is possible with the analogue book, cannot be achieved to the same extent with the eBook reader. Another example books one buys for friends, loved ones or relatives. These book gifts are often given dedications or small drawings, or one marks text passages in the text that seem essential to the giver. This turns these books into memorabilia that remind their owners of a particular moment or person. Although eBooks can also be given away, these cannot (so far) be individualized with personal comments or even drawings, etc. When analogue books marked in the way described above later go on sale or are given away, they carry this memory on. People who have no connection to the original owners of the book can thus learn about the connection between the owner of the

book and the person who gave the book as a gift. So, part of a personal story may be made public and live on.

This ability to individualise the book is made possible by the materiality of the analogue book, which ultimately can create a nostalgic sentiment. As Fleischmann explained, looking at his bookshelf creates feelings in him and evokes memories of past experiences. In the digital world, however, the simulation of the analogue inevitably must be an illusion. The digital crackling in the digital sound recording or the Polaroid effect in the digital photo is copied repeatedly in the same way. Returning to Schivelbusch's (1973) argumentation, the eBook reader as a haptic device can age and, through signs of use, develop the originality and aura ascribed to the analogue, but the digital data most likely remains precisely the same.

6.7. Summary

This chapter has dealt with the aspect of nostalgia and the book in connection with digitisation to present various aspects of how digital and analogue media relate in the age of digitisation. While Marks (2002) and Rombes (2017) argue that the cracking of records or yellowed book pages evokes feelings of nostalgia, my research participants emphasised the advantages of beautifully printed book editions that often feature relief printing or gold trimming over the intangible eBook. It was aspects like the smell of books or the feel of the paper that evoked feelings of nostalgia. However, aspects that can be associated with issues of individualism surfaced, indicating a discussion of to what extent digital media allows for the same space for individualisation as analogue media. While in the examples of Marks (2002) and Rombes (2017), the analogue 'original' was simulated using digital technology and thus evoked memories of a bygone analogue time, the digital copies of books and book-related items such as the bookcase in the iBook store rather reminded the participants of my interviews and focus

groups of the original. Schrey (2017) sees this as the difference between 'vintage' (genuine old) and 'retro' (new in the old garb). While the sound of cracking vinyl records, grainy pictures, yellowed photos and the like that are created by digital sounds and filters can be considered 'retro', the desire for original analogue books in the digital age can be considered 'vintage'. Additionally, it became clear what role the materiality of the analogue plays in connection with nostalgia. It enables objects to be individualized, which in turn allows for certain memories to be constructed, which their owners can recollect years later when they are made aware of the title.

Adapting Griswold's cultural diamond to the findings in this chapter, I find that the aspect of digital nostalgia with the book is primarily a correlation between publishers, booksellers, and readers. While readers need books that remind them visually and haptically of their past (e.g., childhood), publishers have recognised this trend. They are serving those nostalgic sentiments with books that come to the market in a retro design. The booksellers function as intermediaries between the generations who have several editions of the same title in stock to satisfy the nostalgic feelings of different generations. For the booksellers, this is an economic aspect, as they fulfil and exploit this demand for nostalgia. Simultaneously, publishers are also publishing their works in a more contemporary layout to consider the aesthetic needs of a younger generation that is more used to contemporary designs and possibly to lay the foundation for nostalgic feelings in the future.

Nonetheless, one can assume that the nostalgic feelings toward analogue books are likely to be less developed in future generations than they are currently. New rituals in dealing with digital media will emerge, and new aesthetics will evoke nostalgic feelings in these generations. This can already be observed in the field of computer games (Heineman, 2014; Suominen, 2008; Wulf et al., 2018) where old arcade games or handheld game consoles such as the Nintendo

Game Boy have been perceived as retro and evoked nostalgic memories among digital natives (Heineman, 2014; Suominen, 2008; Wulf et al., 2018). This development has not gone unnoticed by publishers, who are preparing to offer special editions of books to a decreasing number of customers who feel responsible for 'protecting' the book against its perceived decline. I deal with this development in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7.

CONNOISSEURSHIP AND THE BOOK

In this final chapter of my findings, I consider a theme that regularly surfaced in discussions and interviews with readers, authors, and publishers. The book is now deemed a medium for a specific group of readers. From now on, I refer to this particular group as connoisseurs. The connoisseurs of the book cannot be classified according to social class or income. The group includes authors as well as readers and booksellers. They are characterized by an intense relationship with the book beyond buying, reading, collecting, or socially engaging with books. In this chapter, I demonstrate what distinguishes the connoisseurs of the book from other authors, readers or booksellers and what role this group plays in the book market. The idea for the concept of the connoisseurs of the book emerged from my focus-group discussions and one-on-one interviews in which participants often spoke about certain groups of readers as being 'elite', 'educated people', 'intellectuals' or 'academics'. However, as I demonstrate in this chapter, the concept of the connoisseur of the book surpasses classifications in social hierarchies. I start the chapter by demonstrating that book connoisseurs are constantly grappling with the impact of digitisation and consequently try to distance themselves from the digitization of the book. The chapter continues with a discussion of the role of publishers in this context and the importance that the publication of a manuscript as a printed book has for connoisseurs. I then discuss how the publishers are reacting to this development. The chapter ends with a consideration of the importance reading and presenting analogue books has for connoisseurs. I state that against the background of the digital book market, the analogue book, which a publisher publishes, is the privileged artefact for connoisseurs. At this point the chapter follows on from the previous chapter, as the connoisseurs of the book, with their inclination towards the traditional book trade, also display expressions of nostalgia.

7.1. Distinguishing Oneself from Digitisation

The characteristics that Bourdieu (1984) described in his book *Distinction* are one motif for connoisseurs to defend the book against what they perceive as fast-paced digitisation. To better understand this, briefly discussing Bourdieu's statements about taste is helpful. Bourdieu (1984) rejects the notion that what he calls 'tastes' are the result of individualistic choices of people, arguing that this 'Kantian aesthetic' fails to recognise that tastes are socially conditioned. Instead, Bourdieu suggests that the objects people choose (i.e., consumer goods) reflect a symbolic hierarchy determined and maintained by socially dominant groups to enforce their distance or distinction from other groups of society. Consequently, for Bourdieu, taste becomes a signifier to distinguish the higher classes from the lower classes. Thus, this function of tastes is adapted to objects and products such as food, drink, cosmetics, and newspapers on the one hand and to music, art, and literature on the other. Bourdieu (1984) describes this realm of consumption, which includes non-monetary consumption of culture, for example, as a field of power relations. This field is a multidimensional space of positions in which a person's locations are determined by the amount and forms of 'capital' they possess. Bourdieu (1984) thereby uses the term capital in an economic and cultural sense, which he also describes as the most critical form of capital. While the economic form of capital describes a person's wealth, cultural capital refers to cultural knowledge, skills, education, world views and factual knowledge. Bourdieu thus states that cultural capital is generally acquired unreflected through the socialisation of one's family or social class, among others.

Additionally, it is essential to mention that cultural capital is reinforced by institutional forces such as schools, churches, and the workplace that one is exposed to due to the locational accident of one's birth. According to Bourdieu (1984), the field is where individuals struggle to either maintain or redistribute the various forms of capital. Essential to my thesis is the field of consumption, in which the main object of struggle is the definition of legitimate, middlebrow,

and popular culture. Those who possess large amounts of economic or cultural capital (or both) are considered dominant and will, according to Bourdieu (1984), impose a hierarchy of taste on those with less capital, consequently dominant.

At this point, I consider it useful to briefly reflect on the discussions in Chapter two, where I described how the cultural value of the book developed to demonstrate how the analogue books serve as a symbol to set oneself away from the outcomes of digitisation that were perceived as negative by my participants. Among the factors that contributed to the cultural value of the book throughout the centuries, I identified the cultic religious use of the book in antiquity and the Middle Ages. This can be seen as the reinforcement of cultural capital by institutions perceived as authorities (Bourdieu, 1984). I continued to describe how later, the book became a collector's item and, therefore, an object that could be used to express one's cultural capital. Again, this was reinforced by institutional forces such as schools and universities, which were considered authorities.

Additionally, the book became the cultural object that represented education and was promoted by institutional forces, making the book a medium that transfers cultural capital to its users and owners. With this cultural capital, one can present oneself as educated and thus as belonging to the middle or upper class or to an environment where understanding literature is essential. A particular way of reinforcing this distinction was with luxury editions of works of world literature, which were intended for exhibition in private libraries and would provide their owners with a particular kind of cultural capital. Now, I state that against the background of digitisation, the book as a cultural object is under pressure as preoccupation with the book is increasingly less important for acquiring cultural capital. As I claim, this is mainly because an increasing number of forms of other media are drawing level with the book in terms of their association with cultural capital. In particular, for example, the consumption of films (Hill, 2004; Rice and Yumibe, 2015) and computer games (Prieur and Savage, 2013; Seiter, n.d.)

increasingly promise the same gain in cultural capital as reading or collecting books. Against this background, I state that the group I consider to be connoisseurs of the book is struggling to maintain the cultural value of the analogue book they wish to defend. Therefore, the connoisseurs need an ally who helps maintain the status of the analogue book as a medium of education and a sign of culturally high quality. The connoisseurs have identified the established publishers as supporters, who for them stand for the publication of literary quality, as I will show in the next section.

7.2. The Meaning of the Gatekeeper

To begin this section, I first briefly refer to McLuhan's *Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), in which he describes, among other things, the end of the Gutenberg man, who was shaped by book printing as well as the media and publishing culture that resulted from it. McLuhan sees the end of the Gutenberg man and the economic media structures as a form of liberation of the word and thus also of authors. Yet, I found in my research that the people whom I call connoisseurs of the analogue book did not perceive this development as a liberation of the word (McLuhan, 1962) or democratisation of the book market (Thompson, 2012) but primarily as a threat to the analogue book and the cultural capital associated with it. In particular, the liberation of the publishing market through self-publishing (DeWild and Jarema, 2015; Selzer, 2015) was considered by many participants to add to the arbitrariness and abundance of the literary market, overriding existing quality controls. This was even strengthened in the way that my focus-group participants questioned the quality of self-published books, especially self-published eBooks. In this section, I take a closer look at these processes, and the role publishers play for this distinguished group of readers when judging books.

Bauer, a former German teacher and nurse, born in Romania (a member of the German-speaking minority in Transylvania) and participant in a focus-group discussion in Augsburg,

explained his rejection of eBooks (he was referring to self-published eBooks only) with what he saw as a lack of quality control by agents, but even more so by editors: 'Everyone can just publish what they like. Whether it is good or not. So, there are thousands of [self-published] eBooks published. Moreover, among them is most likely much nonsense that you do not need to read. I do not want to waste my time going through all that stuff to see whether I find something useful among all these publications'. Bauer's remark suggested that he assigns the role of the filter or gatekeeper to publishers and assumes that books that have not passed these filters or gates are likely not to be worthwhile reading. He did not accept the counterargument of authors such as Thomas Hardy, Alexandre Dumas, Charles Dickens, T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, or Beatrix Potter's self-published work (Kremer, 2013). Nor did he consider that reputable publishers also publish eBooks. He replied to this objection by mentioning one of Germany's most influential writers, Friedrich Schiller. He argued that Schiller, who lived in the 18th century, only had to self-publish his most famous play *Die Räuber* ('The Robbers') as the content of the play was considered subversive because it criticised the aristocracy, especially the Prince of Württemberg. Therefore, publishers refrained from publishing the play not to find their publishing house closed by princely order. Therefore, Schiller chose to self-publish not due to a lack of literary quality but to political pressure. Bauer was supported by Karin Meyer (a member of the same book club). The latter stated that the quality of Schiller's play was proven by the reception it received from the audience, as well as the fact that Schiller was eventually offered a publishing contract by Cotta (an influential German publishing house). For the two participants, the recognition by the public and the subsequent confirmation through the offered contract by Cotta lifted Friedrich Schiller into the ranks of recognised writers of quality literature.

One might argue that among the tens of thousands of authors who self-publish their books, one would likely find authors who provide outstanding literary quality; these authors either decide

to self-publish as they hope for higher revenue by selling their books themselves, or they have just not found the right editor yet—the list of well-established authors who were rejected several times before their work was finally published is long and includes names such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Herman Melville, H.G. Wells, George Orwell or more recently J.K. Rowling (Lewis, 2018). However, for the two participants, being published by a publisher is a confirmation that their work provides a certain literary quality. One might argue that the age of the two participants (Bauer was in his early 80s and Bauer her mid-50s) would make it harder for them to accept a method of publishing other than through an established publisher, as for them, the publisher takes on a particular function as a gatekeeper that provides control over literary quality. Nevertheless, the importance of the publisher was often also stressed by younger participants of my focus-group interviews. Lisa Werner, who was in her late twenties and participated in a focus-group discussion in Munich, remembered the moment she received her first eBook reader. She mentioned that she downloaded many free eBooks as her device could store several hundred. Later, when she decided to erase many of the books as she was not going to read them, she chose to delete the self-published books first. She stated, 'I felt that the books published by a publisher were more valuable. It's hard to explain, but I thought it is more likely that I would read these books than the others'.

Susanne Brenner, member of a second book club in Munich and participant of one of my focus group discussions, provided a possible explanation for Werner's decision, stating that there are so many books on the market already and that it is useful to choose books that were published by a publisher as this signal a certain quality. She argued that this quality is based on a strict selection process. An objection to this assessment came from Andreas Fleischmann (a member of the same book club as Werner in Munich), who drew attention to the example of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, which was first published as fan fiction and only later by a publishing house. He stated that this example shows that publishers are also sometimes just chasing the money,

and not every published work promises literary quality. Nevertheless, most participants agreed that publishers, by and large, would be necessary as filters and editors of literature. Petra Lange, a participant in a focus-group discussion in Munich, summed up the attitude of many participants, complaining that the Internet has made the book publishing market so confusing that the editing of publishers is required as guidance in such a crowded environment. For her, publishers sift through the sheer volume of texts and choose what is worth reading. They are empowered to do so through their experience and the overview they have of the market. Certainly, one can counter that, even before the Internet, far more publications were available than were read annually. Due to the limited size of bookshops and the fact that most people bought their books from a manageable selection of bookshops, this excess was not as noticeable. The Internet has made the already existing abundance perceptible for everyone; the new possibilities of self-publishing on platforms such as Amazon and iBook create the impression that an increasing number of books are being published. However, the number of published books by traditional book publishers is declining, as the figure below shows.

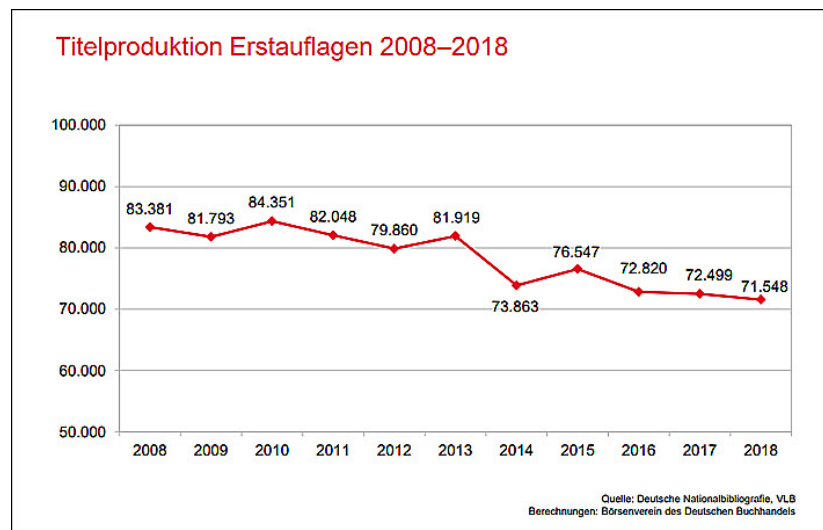


Figure 13 Chart depicting the trends in numbers of new titles (first editions) issued annually in the German market from 2008 to 2018. Source and image: Deutsche Nationalbibliografie, VLB Berechnungen: Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels.

Simultaneously, the number of titles published by publishers in Germany is declining. While the number of self-published books increased by 40% from 2017 to 2018 in the U.S. alone, the number of books published by traditional publishers is shrinking. Specifically, a growing number of new self-published titles are 'flooding' the market, whereas traditional publishers are reducing their output for economic reasons. The effect is that the prospect of being published by a traditional publisher is diminishing. This has fostered the perception among my focus-group participants that to have a chance to be published; works must have a certain literary quality. From this point of view, the role of the publisher as a gatekeeper in the age of digitisation is, therefore, of particular importance.

This perceived increasing importance of publishers as filters for literary quality also affects the authors themselves. Radermacher (2018), an author of crime novels, member of a book club in Munich and participant in one of my focus-group discussions, explained that for authors, it had, of course, always been important to be published, but in the age of digitisation, being published by a publisher has acquired a new meaning for many authors. He said, 'At the beginning [of digitisation] the new opportunities for writers were welcomed. Things like BoD [Book on Demand] or publishing online were promising. But now many have realised that it is not so fulfilling to function as a self-publisher in an overwhelming market'. Susanne Brenner (2018), a member of the same book club, self-publishing author and a participant in the focus-group discussion, agreed. Although Brenner has published several crime novels herself, selling between 500 and 800 copies per book with average revenues of 7 euros per copy sold, she still always attempts to secure a publishing deal with Gmeiner, a small publisher of regional crime novels. Brenner (2018) knew that there was only a tiny chance that the publisher would sell more books than she had already managed to on her own and that she would have to forgo a significant part of her royalties to do so; still, Brenner felt that securing a contract with a publisher, even a small one, is a kind of recognition of her art and skills as an author. She felt

that the value of this recognition has even increased in the age of digitisation as the market for online publishing has become so confusing. Brenner (2018) explained that she is on Wattpad, a social platform for aspiring authors, where she has observed a specific ritual repeating itself: 'The dynamics are always the same. First, everyone pokes at the publishers and assures each other that it would be much better to self-publish. Though, as soon as someone receives an offer from a traditional publisher, most of us are jealous.'

Brenner explained that on Wattpad, 80 million people are reading or uploading stories and books; receiving an offer by a publisher is thus akin to someone saying that among these millions of manuscripts, it is yours that is worthy of being published. Radermacher (2018) added that before the opportunities provided by the Internet, it was challenging to self-publish as it took a great deal of effort to have one's book edited and the cover designed and then to find a printer who would print a small print-run. The Internet has made all that much more accessible and, at first, many thought that self-publishing online would be the way to go: 'But as with all things, which are simple, it attracts too many and eventually, it becomes arbitrary', Radermacher added. In such a market, being chosen by a publisher has gained new meaning. While before the Internet, a publisher was often necessary to publish one's book at all since the possibility of self-publishing was significantly limited, many authors in the age of digitisation feel that having their manuscript published by a publisher is a form of artistic recognition, setting their work apart from all the manuscripts published online. For many authors, it was of importance that their book would be published in print as this meant another distinction. Therefore, in the next section, I examine the author's and readers' reasons to explain their preference for the printed book in depth.

7.3. Being Published in Print – The Analogue Book as a Symbol

As the previous section indicated, publishing by a publishing house has gained importance for authors as an act of artistic recognition. This refers to the beginning of this chapter, where I discussed Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*, especially the aspect of cultural capital. This can be linked to Radermacher's statement, as publishing by a publishing house provides cultural capital for many authors. Many of the authors in my research advocated that their books should appear as printed books. The authors even shared this preference, who stated that they only read eBooks. Andreas Rhiem (2018), an author of a book club in Munich and participant of a focus-group discussion, declared that he would only read on his iPad and rarely buy printed books.

Nevertheless, he explained that he preferred his books to be published in print for two reasons. First, as he wrote on a computer, he knew how easy it was to erase a line or a paragraph in word processing software such as Microsoft Word—one moment, the sentence would be there, the next, it was gone. The digital would not provide the permanence of print. It is not that definitive. He felt the need for his books to have something permanent. With the notion of 'permanence', Rhiem (2018) described a longing that was apparent among many authors. A possible explanation for such a longing was offered by bestselling German author of historical novels Müller (2018), who said the following: 'I like the fact that a printed book is a finished product that cannot be changed any more. When I edit my manuscript before I hand it to my publisher, I find it hard to finish. I re-work and edit it repeatedly. But once I hold a printed copy of that book in my hands, it's like a relief. That is it! It cannot be changed any more, and it marks a point. This is the best book I can write now. My next book might be better, but at this time, this is the best I can do'. This statement by Müller leads back to issues of materiality as discussed in Chapter three. Müller's statement can be associated with Dant's (2004) argumentation, which highlights the importance of the material surrounding us in respect to the

interaction of subjects and objects; as for Müller, the existence of his books in print is an expression of his development as an author. At the same time, it refers to the argument of McCracken (1990) as the printed books of Müller legitimise him as an author and show his belonging to a particular social class. According to many authors, the eBook as a digital file lacks this permanence. The durability of printed matter is gaining importance among authors, particularly when content and statements on the Internet can be written, published, and deleted in minutes.

Moreover, the importance of the printed book in the age of digitisation played an increasingly crucial role for many readers in my focus-group discussions. For example, Tatjana Schmid (2018), a member of a reading group in Augsburg, expressed her discomfort with eBooks as follows:

'I just don't like the idea that I buy a book and I do not know whether this is the last version of the book or whether a new version might be out soon. If a publisher must print a new edition because the author wants to change something, they would consider whether it was worth it, but changing an eBook does not cost them anything.'

This utterance also speaks of the need for something definite, something lasting. As discussed in the chapter on nostalgia (Chapter six), readers often feel nostalgic about books from their childhood. First, aspects such as the cover play a unique role. Besides, the text plays a decisive role, as the statements on changing racist terms in the Pippi Longstocking books indicated earlier. That new editions or remakes of the same story do not necessarily evoke the same feelings of nostalgia for a story can be seen in many films (Druxman, 1975; Gunter, 2018). Therefore, the eBook was not as popular among the participants in my focus-group discussions as there was always the risk of change in the file and, thus, the lack of permanence of the work. Fleischmann (2018), a member of a book club in Munich and participant in a focus-group discussion, added to this. He criticised the changeability of the eBook and the lack of

permanence of the written word. He recognised that the eBook naturally allows authors to repeatedly change their work and thus keep a creative process going, but he disliked the idea that a book that he is reading may not be the final version of the work but rather only a temporary state; this is precisely what has become possible through electronic publishing. This statement also leads back to the discussion regarding Chapter six's example of the Pippi Longstocking books. Fleischmann acknowledged that there are also different editions of printed books available. However, he argued that these books would be identifiable by being referred to as the first, second or third editions. In addition, each issue would remain unchanged. Friedrich Köhler (2018), a focus group discussion participant in Augsburg, offered a different perspective. He stated that the author writes a book, and thus this book is his or her work. Usually, an author spends a great deal of time writing a book. For Köhler, it is essential that when he reads a book now, he reads the work as it was intended by the author—that it is the version the author wanted to have published. He felt that this is only achieved if he reads the first edition of the work, as that is the edition that the author handed to the publisher. Finally, Lena Jahnke, a member of a Munich book club and participant in my focus-group discussions, voiced the reservations of many participants by explaining that one can still purchase an old book at a flea market or in a second-hand bookshop.

In contrast, it is not yet clear whether this will also be possible with an eBook in the future. This again stresses the meaning of the materiality of the analogue book and as it contains the aspect of permanence, which was discussed in connection to the eBook by many focus-group participants. The fear of loss also resonated, where digitisation is seen as a danger to the long-term survival of analogue books and texts that the participants have grown fond of, as I explained in the previous chapter on analogue nostalgia. In this section, I have shown how the printed book is gaining importance for both authors and readers in the age of digitisation. Applying Griswold's (2013) cultural diamond, it became clear that the motifs differed between

authors and readers. Against the background of the vast market that is opening up on the Internet, authors need to receive recognition for their work in the form of being published by a publisher, especially against the background of declining publications by publishers. By contrast, the readers in my interviews increasingly emphasised the character of the definitive and permanent, which would apply more to the printed book than to the eBook. What both approaches have in common, however, is that this increased recognition of the printed book can be understood as a reaction to digitisation in the book market, be it as a reaction to the immeasurable selection of literature on the Internet or to the technical possibilities that arise from e-publishing. Building on the cultural diamond, the next section highlights how publishers are reacting to this development. I make clear that the aforementioned development is not a general development in the book market, but rather affects a specific group of readers and authors, namely connoisseurs of the analogue book.

7.4. Serving the Connoisseurs – The Book Market and the Printed Book

As I showed in the previous section, printed book has gained increasing importance among authors and readers in the digital age. For authors, the aspect of recognition by publishers is particularly crucial, which is reflected most strongly in the publication of the book in print. For readers, the permanence and finality of the printed book are essential. Both groups had in common that they based their preferences on the digitisation of the book. The authors expressed wanting to stand out from the 'flood' of online or digital publications, whereas the readers expressed rejecting the changeability of the digital. However, it must be added that the authors and readers who participated in my focus-group discussions and interviews belong to the group of people I identified as connoisseurs of the book. Many expressed an intense relationship with books, and their engagement with books often goes beyond reading. They write or edit books and feel the desire to discuss literature with like-minded people. Therefore, I do not claim that this group represents an average group of readers but rather a selected group

which has developed a special relationship with the printed book against the background of digitisation. As I discussed in Chapter five, the book is a medium that, in its limited functionality, is perceived by this group as a counterweight to the overflowing digital world. It is the printed book in particular that possesses these properties. This was also acknowledged by Katharina Hierling (2018), editor at Hoffmann & Campe, a traditional German publishing house (publisher of influential German authors such as Heinrich Heine and Siegfried Lenz). Hierling stated in her interview that she and her colleagues are aware of the development that a particular group of readers and authors dislike the book, seeing it as 'just another medium'. She explained that the book is a cultural good of higher standing for these people. In this context, she mentioned a marketing campaign of the *Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels* ('German Publishers and Booksellers Association'). The campaign called *Vorsicht Buch* ('Be careful, a book!'), presented the book as 'being an oasis or spa helping you to relax from your stressful day-to-day life. However, some authors argued strongly against this campaign, saying that this is exactly what the book should not be', said Hierling. In my interviews and focus-group discussions, it was repeatedly emphasised that in these times of binge-watching and social media, the book is the medium that challenges one differently than media, which according to my participants, one can consume. This connection between the book and the effort it takes to work through one was a recurring motif in my conversations. A recurring belief was that books affect the senses very differently compared with other media, which is examined in depth in the following section.

7.5. The Act of Reading – Making an Effort, Spending Time

May (2018), a member of the same reading group as Andreas Fleischmann, explained that the more she likes a book, the more used the book looks in the end because she engages with that book more: 'Engaging like that with a book is important to me. I cannot just read a book incidentally. I need to work my way through a book'. Notably, this narrative of effort has

always been associated with the printed book, which requires greater involvement from the consumer than films or other visual media. May expressed this by stating that a book would require the reader to imagine things—what a room looks like, what the characters look like, how the characters move and what exactly they feel: 'it [the book] takes more time, more concentration... [than watching a film or a series]', she said. In this recurring narrative of the demands that a book requires of the reader, it became clear that the participants claimed to be willing to deal with a form of culture that is not easy to consume. There was a specific claim and awareness that they would belong to a group that deals with a cultural asset that is somewhat more demanding and of a higher status than other media. Therefore, engagement with a book would set the participants of my focus-group discussions apart from those who, according to my participants, would only consume media for entertainment or distraction. In this example, they followed the author Virginia Woolf, who, already in the early 20th century, believed that novels should not be easy to consume. In contrast to 'easy to consume' media formats, this engagement and dedication to the printed book also play an increasingly critical role for publishers and booksellers, who cater to this image of the book. One aspect is creating an environment where the distinguished group can indulge in their literature.

Frank Edele, General Manager of bookseller Dannheimer in Kempten, saw the necessity to create 'spaces' in his shop 'where readers can withdraw from the diverse requirements of their everyday life'. He has seen a rise in the numbers of people who come in briefly from the busy high street outside for a time-out: 'Maybe our bookshop is a bit like a modern library insofar as we require our customers to be silent and turn off their cell phones and all our sales assistants try to keep a certain silence so that people are not interrupted while browsing or reading books. We are just different in that we offer some amenities such as coffee', he said. In creating spaces where readers can devote themselves to searching for books and reading books, Edele has provided a room that symbolically enhances the value of books. The book is perceived to be so

important that it deserves this particular surrounding, symbolically reminiscent of the reading rooms and libraries in middle-class houses of the 19th century, as I described in the second chapter on the development of the cultural value of the book. The newly formed Bourgeoisie used private libraries to present their books, giving attention to special luxury editions (Bluhm, 2009). The second noteworthy aspect behind Edele's approach is that people take this time to read books. Reading a book in such an environment differs from reading a book at a bus stop or on a train. The concept of this quiet room of the bookstore is all about blocking out the noise and the hustle and bustle of the outside world such that one can fully devote oneself to reading. Again, it is essential to note that Edele aims his offer at a particular group of people who need to devote part of their time to indulge in reading books. Publishers have also taken note of this development, but they are aware that the people who take this time to read are a specific group of readers. Katharina Hierling (2018) of Hoffmann & Campe stated, '[r]eading a book is a sign of leisure time, taking time deliberately to read a book. However, primarily people from the middle or upper classes find the time to read this way'. She continued to explain that this devotion to the book is primarily nourished by the desire to read and the time available. However, time with a book is not only the time that readers spend with a textual work but also with a cultural object. Thus, the following section discusses the importance of this object's appearance for many of the readers, authors, booksellers, and publishers in my research.

7.6. To Set Oneself Apart – Showing the Book

In my research, readers, authors, publishers, and booksellers highlighted the growing importance of the design of books. As Hierling stated, the people who find the time to read this way or deliberately take time to do so are primarily members of middle- and upper-class households. According to Hierling, for many of these readers, the price of a book plays only a minor role. Publishers and the book trade have recognised this and increasingly rely on well-equipped books that provide haptic and visual appeal. Kristine Kress (2018), an editor at

Ullstein Verlag, stated that '[t]he printed book as an object still enjoys high esteem. This appreciation is growing'. Therefore, she continued that Ullstein has 'started to emphasise objectivity more; it is also about emphasising the book as a gift more'. Kress continued explaining that for this group, paying a price as high as 20–25 euros for a book is not a problem if they like it. Against the background of a shrinking market for new releases, as described in Section 7.2, it is therefore of growing importance for publishers to address this group of buyers. Dr. Hella Reese, Vice President of Program Management at dtv [a German publishing house], explained: 'For our classic books of authors such as John Williams, Henry James or Dorothy Baker and others, it is important that the design is of high quality. That is essential for the readers. Especially for bibliophiles, that is important'. Reinhard Rohn, publishing Director of Rütten & Loening, an imprint of Aufbau publishing group, added: 'Publishers have done a lot to make books more than just containers for the text. That is important because, in our times, books are bought by the people who, if they buy music, go for vinyl'. Although Rohn did not offer any evidence for this last statement, it shows which group of customers publishers see as desirable clientele. Just as there is only a particular group of music lovers in the music world who are enthusiastic about the vinyl record (Farrugia and Swiss, 2005; Winters, 2016), it is also only a particular group of book lovers for whom the design of their book is of such great importance that they are willing to pay a higher price for an edition that is also visually attractive. This admiration for visually beautiful books repeatedly appeared in my focus group discussions. Sabrina May (2018) explained her appreciation for a book that someone brought to the reading group meeting, describing it as follows: 'That book was amazing and expensive because of the design. It came with a leather cover and glitter everywhere like seawater on the ground. Very thoughtful and gorgeous, like a fairy-tale. I just bought it because it was so beautiful'. The growing appreciation for well-designed books by specific customers in the

book market goes together with an ongoing (although slow) decline in paperback sales, as the graph in Fig. 14 shows.

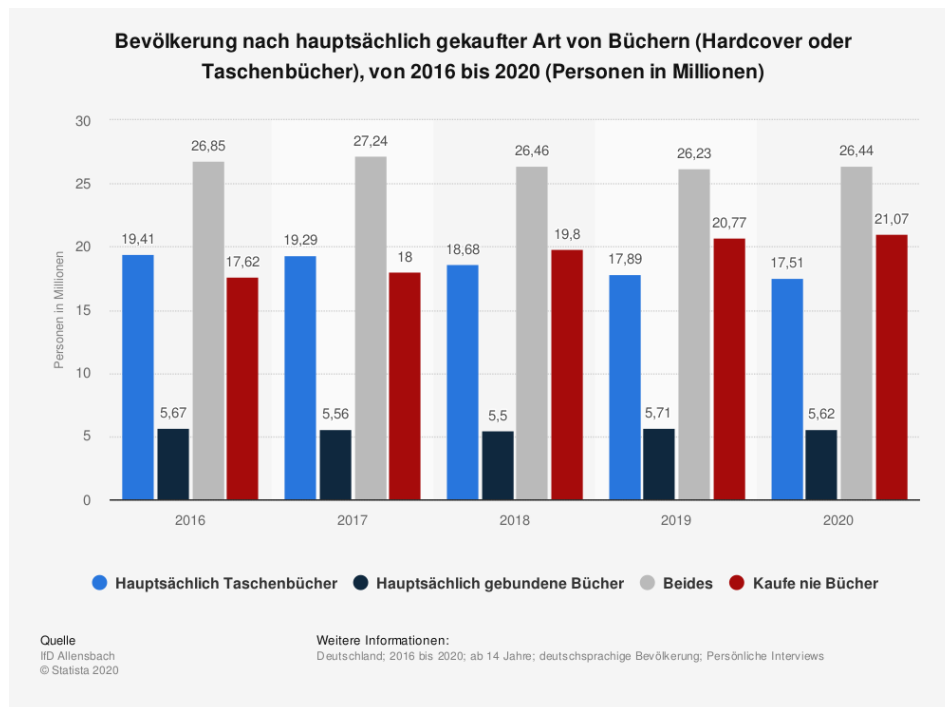


Figure 14 Book sales in Germany (2016 to 2020). Light blue denotes readers who prefer to buy pocketbooks, dark blue denotes readers who prefer hardcovers, red denotes people who never buy books and grey denotes people who buy paperback and hardcover edit

Hierling of Hoffmann & Campe saw this as a sign that books are also gaining importance as an object of representation. She talked about an observation she had made. In the German fictional crime series *Tatort* ('Crime scene'), families who should represent people with a high level of education or income would often be shown in front of bookshelves: 'If an actor should be represented as a working-class character, books would rarely be around in his home', she continued. Hierling saw this as a development that, in a certain way, brings us back to the past. She explained that it was precisely the ideal of the 1968 movement when mainly students all over Europe questioned existing social structures and took to the streets against the so-called

establishment (Seidman, 2004; Tuck, 2018). This movement was committed to ensuring that education was no longer only open to higher social classes. Many publishers reacted to the movement by publishing books (especially nonfiction) in paperback to make the content accessible to everyone. For several years now, Hierling has recognised a development that at least symbolically reverses this: 'Against the background of Netflix or computer games, books are suddenly once again a medium for the educated, and that often means the wealthy too', she stated. Nevertheless, she sees the book as still being a 'status symbol that offers prestige and allows the owner to stand out of the crowd'. Kristine Kress (Ullstein) added that a book allows the reader to stand out and set oneself apart from others.

Adapting these statements to Griswold's cultural diamond (2013), it becomes clear that the connoisseurs of the book and the publishers encourage each other in their endeavours to maintain the cultural value of the book. While the publishers recognise the connoisseurs as an important customer group and address them specifically, they ensure that this process is further strengthened with their purchasing behaviour. Thus, one can observe the beginnings of a self-fulfilling prophecy. For this process to work, however, the editions must be used to distinguish oneself. Moreover, these editions must be perceived as unique to provide a visual value. The aspect of presentability played an essential role in the focus group discussions and the interviews with publishers but was of secondary importance among the authors. Cathrin Henelink (2018), a member of a reading group in Munich, named the importance of presenting one's books in a certain way at home. She explained that when she visits people for the first time, she always looks at the bookshelf to see what they read. She added that she does not do it that often anymore as she knows that reading habits have changed for many people, but for her books create connections:

I mean if you see that people read and you like to read yourself and then you realize that the person has a similar taste. If, above that, you realize that the person has books

that you have yourself or that are like what you read yourself, then I feel much more connected to that person.'

This statement speaks of a kind of secret language among book lovers. Like youth groups such as punks, emos or mods recognise each other through clothing, makeup or hairstyles, the book on display is read as an expression of one's personality. People can recognise each other by similar preferences for genres, authors, or topics. However, Henelink added that she feels this only works with books: 'With films, this connection is not as intense, I think. Because it's more like that one consumes films, but books must be "conquered'. Andreas Fleischmann added that when he passes his bookshelf, he sees the books, bringing back memories that he connects with those books. This refers to Benjamin's (1931) description of unpacking his library. Fleischmann explained that he remembers things about himself and what he puts into the books on his shelf. He added that he has a different relationship with books than with films: 'With films what you have to invest in yourself is not as much as with books', he explained. In this sentence, the aspect of *effort* that readers put into reading books resonates again. Likewise, the setting of other non-readers or non-booklovers is apparent; their preference is not given the same importance as one's own book culture. Finally, it becomes clear from this ritual that it only works if the books are visible (i.e., exhibited). This is difficult to achieve with eBooks. Whereas it was mentioned that one could display one's books and look at the books of others, eBooks were never mentioned in my focus group discussions and interviews. Through expressions that mentioned paper, envelopes, or special prints, it became clear that we were talking about printed books. Lena Jahnke, a member of the same book club in Munich as Andreas Fleischmann, recalled an incident at university. A fellow student wanted to buy a book for a relative only available in paperback at the bookshop. The student refused to buy the paperback copy of the book. He stated that a book must be a hard cover to be gifted. This corresponded with experiences recounted by Petra Velle, owner of the 'Bücherstube' bookstore in Nesselwang. She has also seen a shift when it comes to buying books. She recalled that

probably until 10 or 15 years ago, when people came to buy a book to give as a gift, they would tell her about what the person who was to receive the book liked. Thus, she would look for crime, love, or mystery stories. However, today she often overhears customers discussing issues that concern the design of books: 'I hear them discuss different editions of the same book—comparing the cover or the graphics inside. I guess that says as much about the person who buys the book as it does about the person who receives it as a gift', Velle explained. My interviews with publishers made it clear that they are aware of this development and actively nurture it. Reinhard Rohn (2018), publishing director of Rütten & Loening an imprint of the German publisher Aufbau saw this development towards the expected value of the book in all age groups: 'Even among those who grew up with digital media; there are more and more who collect books. He explained that they want to show that they do not only watch television or listen to the radio but also have a cultural background.

However, this is not a development that affects the entire market. Let us return to the beginning of this chapter, and specifically to the group that I initially called the connoisseurs of the analogue book. As I mentioned, I see the participants in my focus group discussions and interviews as part of connoisseurs of the book. They are all people who deal intensively with the book, whether as a publisher, author, reader, or member of a book club. This point of view was supported by Holger Kuntze (2018), programme manager of Blessing (an imprint of Random House), who explained that he thinks this book's meaningfulness is understood by people who love books and read intensively. However, as soon as this love for the book ends, the meaning that the book is somewhat unique becomes meaningless. This particular group drives this development towards the printed book as a reaction to advancing digitisation. Referring to the idea of 'digital detox', as discussed in chapter five, Kuntze (2018) acknowledged that a shift is occurring in the market towards more expensive and better-designed books:

'Publishers who publish literature that is mere entertainment will lose. I do not want to state any names...you know who... they are suffering and will continue to do so...they offer that form of entertainment that is replaced by Netflix and others. But what we [Blessing] offer is precisely the opposite...it's digital detox. Our readers are looking for a quiet time without distractions reading high-quality books. I do not know whether they will continue to pay more for lavishly designed editions in the future, but for now, we have an audience that appreciates what we publish.'

Here, Kuntze does not refer to a particular class but to a specific intellectual group of customers, which is often linked to the middle- or upper classes. My participants' composition has shown are not always linked to these class terms. For him, the connoisseurs of the analogue book can be found in the lower and upper classes.

When Griswold's cultural diamond (2013) is applied to the aspect of connoisseurship, one can place the four groups (authors, publishers, intermediaries, readers/collectors) to one another. On one side are the authors who are developing a renewed relationship with the printed book and classic publishing houses. Even though it sometimes means accepting financial disadvantages compared with self-publishing, signing a contract with a traditional publishing house promises recognition from both authors and readers, which for many authors is of higher value than financial incentives. This recognition as an author through traditional publishing houses has gained importance, particularly against the background of digitisation. In a time when anyone can publish via services provided by companies such as Amazon and Lulu, recognition by an accepted trade authority is of increasing value. The haptic aspect is also becoming more important. While the signing of a publishing contract means recognition for the author, having one's book published in print is the highest form of acceptance for an author in the age of digitisation because the printed book stands for consistency and durability, characteristics not associated with the digital file. Turning to the readers, one can also find that the printed book plays an increasingly significant role for a specific group of readers. Like authors, the printed book embodies a valuable medium for many readers in the age of digitisation. For them, the printed book is an object that opposes the fast pace and changeability

of the digital by being unchangeable as a printed object and therefore permanent. As well, one's presentation with the book is playing an increasingly crucial role for a specific group of readers, as in the age of digitisation, it promises a differentiation from fast-moving and less profound media such as the Internet. If one examines the publishers, it becomes clear that they have recognised the situation. In a shrinking market, connoisseurs play a critical role as a distinguished group of readers. This group is willing to pay more for beautifully furnished and designed books and so at least partially compensate the book publishers for the loss of income in the paperback sector. In cooperation with booksellers, publishers offer this group of readers both high-quality, beautifully designed book editions and retreats for reading, in which the fast-moving digital world must remain outside.

7.7. Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed a group of readers, authors, and intermediaries for whom the analogue book is more than one medium among many. I consider this group to be connoisseurs of the analogue book, and I have shown in this chapter that this group is becoming increasingly important to the book market as they actively strive to strengthen or even protect the book against a process of digitisation. Connoisseurs perceive digitisation as a danger to the analogue book that, consequently, must be protected against this process. For connoisseurs, the book is at first a medium of representation that, as demonstrated in chapter two, stands for education and distinction. To maintain this status as the educated medium, the publishers' selection process plays a vital role for the connoisseurs. Here, publishers function as gatekeepers, ensuring that only content of a certain quality is published. However, connoisseurs often ignore the fact that publishers also publish books for purely commercial interests and are critical of the possibilities of self-publishing and independent digital publishing. High-quality literature in the form of self-published works or self-published eBooks is also often ignored. For them, the authentic book is the analogue book that a renowned publisher published. At this point, the importance of

the book's materiality becomes evident, since connoisseurs often link the literature's quality to the book's materiality. The more complex and expensive process of publishing analogue books - they have to be printed, stored and physically distributed - is a guarantee for connoisseurs that these books are of higher quality and the status of the analogue book as a culturally significant object is preserved.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to consider the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in the digital age and the relationship this has with the materiality of the analogue book. I found that the materiality of the analogue book continues to give the analogue book cultural value in the digital age as an alternative to digital media. Focusing on the German book market, I aimed to move beyond previous studies on the digitisation of the book, which examine the digitisation of the book mostly as the digitisation of texts, focus predominantly on reading digital texts and often limit their scope to readers. Besides, previous studies on the digitisation of the book rarely consider the materiality of the book as an issue. To address these issues, I placed the book as an object at the centre of my research. I included authors, publishers, booksellers, readers, and collectors as participants in my study, including producers, intermediaries, and consumers of the book. In this way, I examined the book as an object from its creation and production, through its distribution, to its use. In this way, my research placed a particular focus on the book as an object and thus on the materiality of the book. To examine the relationship between the previously mentioned participants and the book's cultural value in the digital age, I used Griswold's (2013) 'cultural diamond', which helps to examine relationships between actors in each environment or market and cultural objects.

From this, I have identified three key findings. My first finding is that a book is an object that many participants of this research highly value, especially against the background of digitisation. Participants considered the analogue book an advantage over digital media as it offers what they often referred to as 'digital detox'. By this, they meant that the time spent with books was time not spent online, at the computer or using other digital media. Although the aspect of digital detox has been covered substantially concerning the analogue book in the fields of book design and publishing research, the book and its cultural value have not previously been considered concerning digital detox in media and cultural studies. Media and

cultural studies examine media in their historical, economic, social, and political context. I am now arguing that an increased focus on the aspect of digital detox is essential because, in media and cultural studies, several areas are affected at once. For example, my research has shown that the aspect of digital detox has an economic significance for publishers, as many participants in my research perceive the analogue book as the embodiment of digital detox and, therefore, consciously hold on to the analogue book. In the social context, the analogue book also stands for a "me" moment in the context of Digital Detox, which one consciously does not spend with other people or on social media. This makes the analogue book the medium with which one consciously detaches oneself from media such as TV or the internet. My work, however, is far from exploring all areas of media and cultural studies, as I elaborate in the section 'A New Direction for Studying the Book in the Age of Digitisation.'

My findings show that the analogue nature of the book is perceived as an advantage rather than a disadvantage for readers and authors. Such features were often referred to as 'limitations' by participants of my research. However, these limitations were nearly always perceived as positive. Among them was that one cannot browse the Internet, listen to music, or take pictures with the analogue book, as is possible with smartphones or tablets (i.e., with digital devices) on which one can also read eBooks. In addition, participants in the focus group and one-on-one interviews often referred to the book as the last medium that does not allow for simultaneous media use (i.e., multitasking). Therefore, I demonstrated that the analogue book is not perceived as a medium with fewer functions or limited usability but as a medium that plays a role in making a counterpoint to the perceived digital oversupply.

My second finding shows that the analogue book arouses feelings of nostalgia and childhood memories for many of the readers and authors who participated in this research. In this context, the materiality of the analogue book played a key role as beautifully designed book covers, relief printing, gold trimming or certain graphic representations often evoked these nostalgic

feelings. It also became clear that this nostalgic feeling towards certain analogue books was not only felt by the participants who had once owned or read these books in the past but also by participants for whom this nostalgia only existed as mediated nostalgia showing them a time and space that they have never experienced in their lifetime. For the publishers and intermediaries of the book market, these nostalgic notions were consciously triggered. The book design with corresponding titles is designed so that different age groups or generations can find themselves, their childhood or past in it.

Additionally, it was often the fundamental properties of the materiality of the analogue book, such as the smell, the sensory touch of paper or the crackling of pages, that aroused nostalgic feelings. The last important aspect was the individualization or the change in the analogue that triggered nostalgic thoughts. This included annotations in books, bent pages or holiday memories, such as grains of sand that remained in the book, through which the analogue book evoked memories for and of their owners. Most participants believed that digital media could not create memories in this way.

Lastly, I found that a group I called the book connoisseurs is gaining importance in the book market. This is because members of this group see the need to preserve the analogue book in the digital age against a perceived digital predominance. Many members of this group are critical of the increasing digitisation of the book market. This is because digitisation has made self-publishing easier. As a result, much literature is published without publishers, weakening publishers in their perceived role as gatekeepers for the market. Many of the connoisseurs of the analogue book also believe that there is little literary value to be found in many digital publications, because of this lack of gatekeepers to filter quality literature from what many participants perceive as amateur literature. Against this background, a book published by a traditional publishing house is gaining value for these connoisseurs. Based on this motivation, connoisseurs are often willing to spend higher amounts on lavishly designed books, offsetting

some of the monetary loss that publishers are experiencing from the overall decline in book sales. In the context of a perceived digital abundance, many readers and authors who participated in my research perceive the book as a status symbol against the mass of published digital content. I show that this attitude towards the book can also be found among many authors. As the digital age offers numerous opportunities to self-publish books, I have shown that many authors feel that being selected by a publisher is a particular form of distinction, primarily when their book is published in print. Many authors consider publishing in print as a certain commitment by publishers to their work, as this form of publication requires a financial commitment, which the eBook does not require.

My focus on the connoisseurs of the book is significant because it illustrates the importance of a small but affluent target group for the cultural sector. In addition, it is precisely at this point that there are significant differences in how the book industry treats these groups to the way vinyl advocates were treated in the music industry. The major labels in the music industry in the past have noticed the market for vinyl productions but have largely disregarded this market in the first place, which they considered to be negligible (Bartmanski and Woodward, 2015; Wolf, 2018). Only the widespread success of the vinyl record in recent years has led to a rethink here (Winters, 2016). However, major publishing houses like Random House are mainly concerned with this target group of analogue book lovers in the book market. In the future, more research will be needed to investigate the extent to which the major labels have changed the way they consider vinyl customers and how other cultural industries, such as the film industry, deal with analogue media customers.

In the three chapters summarised above, I have shown that in the digital age, the analogue book is not an artefact of the past that only has a niche alongside a multitude of digital media. Rather, the material nature of the analogue book as an analogue medium determines its cultural value in the age of digitization. The book is seen as a medium that demands concentration and

dedication and is perceived as an alternative to a perceived digital oversupply of content. Furthermore, the book arouses feelings of nostalgia and memories that are often perceived as positive. In the age of digitization, the book is a medium that stands as a symbol for acknowledgement, selection, and value, but that is considered by a particular group of book lovers as to be under threat the digital. Therefore, the connoisseurs set out to protect the analogue book against a perceived decline.

A New Direction for Studying the Book in the Age of Digitisation

My research project related to the analogue fiction book in Germany in the age of digitisation. In doing so, I was interested in the relationship between the digitisation of the book and the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany, following the development in the music industry described in the introduction to this thesis. In view of this, in Chapter three on the history of the book and the development of the book market, I have only touched on research into book design, earlier upheaval phases of book technologies or book cultures, as a detailed discussion of these areas would have extended the research scope of this thesis too much. However, all three topics are important to further research tasks. I see the need to compare parallel phases of upheaval in book technology with the upheaval in the age of digitalisation.

Furthermore, it is essential to investigate further how book design continues to develop in the age of digitalisation. I have already briefly mentioned this topic in this thesis in chapters 6. on nostalgia in the book market and chapter seven. on connoisseurs, but I see a need for further research here. Finally, there is a need to investigate further how book cultures evolve in both digital and analogue. I have deliberately not included other digitisation projects in this work as I make clear in my introduction and in Chapter six, that there are important differences between the digitisation of music, film, photography and the digitisation of books, which lie in the fact

that music and films are now predominantly consumed digitally in Germany (Mikos, 2016, 2020), while in the German book market the analogue book is still the dominant medium, as I have explained in Chapter seven.

Researching the cultural value of the fiction book in Germany in the age of digitization has indicated the need for further research on the cultural value of the book and the consequences of the digitisation of the book. As I have demonstrated in chapter one, previous research on the fiction book in the age of digitization often lacks a clear definition of which object is to be called a book. As a result, a large part of the research on the digitization of the book is concerned with the digitization of text or the digitization of reading (NS Baron, 2015; Chartier, 1995; Gilbert, 2013; Hupfeld, 2015; Mangen, 2016; Singer and Alexander, 2017b). The only recently published definition of the book by Kovac et al. (2019) promises to align research on the digitization of the book and the book in the digital age more clearly. Their book definition allows a clear demarcation from other media and, thus, more meaningful results. In addition, a lot of the research on the digitisation of text and digital reading text focuses solely on readers and collectors. Furthermore, I have shown in Chapter three that previous research on the cultural value of the book has often insufficiently considered the materiality of the book. Scholars of book history (Darnton, 1982, 2007; Eliot and Rose, 2007; Jochum, 1993, 2015) mostly only consider the paper quality, bindings or marginalia in books when referring to the materiality of books. Few scholars like Westin (2013a) or Carreira da Silva (2015) have so far examined the connection between the book's materiality and our perception of the book's value. I argue that in the age of digitization, the book's materiality is a decisive factor in determining the cultural value of the book, as I explained above.

My approach has been to include producers (authors, publishers), intermediaries (booksellers) and consumers (readers, collectors) of books in my research. Data was collected through focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews. The groups and participants were chosen based

on my geographical situation. Therefore, they primarily represent participants from the south of Germany. By choosing participants from reading groups or book clubs, I aimed my research at readers who show particular importance in reading books. My research mainly relates to people with a very intense relationship with the book. People for whom books are an integral part of their daily life. This grouping does not represent most of the society as it excludes, e.g., casual readers, so my research work has so far only been limited to a part of the population. This limitation also continues with age. None of my participants was younger than 25 years. Thus, there is a lack of data from particularly young readers in my research. Numerous studies examine the reading behaviour of schoolchildren and young students (Byars, 2015; Woody et al., 2010), showing that many prefer the analogue book to the eBook. These studies, though, relate to learning or studying and reading non-fiction or academic books.

Further research on the cultural value of the book in the age of digitisation needs to address the limitations I have mentioned above. At first, my research is only focused on the German book market, which limits the scope of my research to one market only. Besides, Germany provides certain market conditions such as fixed book prices, many book publishers (including Random House, the largest publisher in the world) and the largest book fair in the world in Frankfurt. Germany also still has many bookstores. For example, in 2019, 3311 bookshops were statistically recorded (EHI Retail Institute, 2021) compared to 2000 in France (dpa, 2013) and 1050 bookshops in the UK (Watson, 2021). This means that the analogue book is still evident in everyday life in Germany.

Another crucial point is Germany's history of the 20th century and the war experiences that went with it. The perceived shortage of books after the Second World War is particularly noteworthy in this context. It is therefore important to expand research on the cultural value of the book in the age of digitization into other territories to determine how other market

conditions relate to the cultural value of the book and to see and to see whether the materiality of the analogue fiction book has a similar significance in these countries as it does in Germany.

Another point is the selection of participants. Since the participants in my research all have a solid relationship with the book market and books, it is crucial to expand the research to casual readers. Furthermore, it is essential to involve readers and authors who read or publish eBooks more strongly. This helps to understand better those authors and readers for whom the book in its digitized form is of great importance. As well, I have only focused on fiction literature in my research, so comparable data from the area of non-fiction literature should be determined to get a broader picture of the cultural value of the fiction book in Germany in the age of digitization. Finally, most authors who took part in my study are authors who publish through established publishers. Another research approach is, therefore, necessary to include self-publishing authors as well as fanfiction authors and their readers.

Nonetheless, my research has advanced the knowledge of the digitization of cultural objects and how this relates to the cultural value of those objects. When I started this research project, I expected to find a similar development in the book market as I had experienced in the music industry. By this, I mean that the analogue book would increasingly be pushed aside by the eBook, as digital files (i.e., streaming services or iTunes) have pushed back the use of CDs or vinyl records in large parts of the world. I assumed that my research would deal with how eBooks would influence our relationship to the book and how the eBook, as the 'new' book, would shape our perception of the book in the age of digitization. This is also influenced by the fact that much of the previous research on the digitization of books has been limited to the use of eBooks and the reading of digital texts. The aspect of materiality has only played a subordinate role in previous research. My research has now shown that the aspect of materiality is essential for the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany in the digital age. The materiality gives the analogue fiction book value as a stable medium in a rapidly changing

digital environment. In addition, it is the material properties of the analogue book that distinguish the analogue book from a perceived digital abundance. Finally, the analogue materiality of the book enables publishers in Germany to publish special editions with which they encourage a shrinking but more committed readership to buy books. Thus, an essential part of the cultural value of the analogue fiction book in Germany in the digital age lies precisely in the fact that it is not digital.

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APPENDIX A

A selected sample of interview material, featuring a transcription of a focus-group-discussion with members of a reading group in Munich on September 19th, 2018.

Petra Lange: I had a wonderful experience, and that showed me how vital a printed book is for me. In addition, I hope that all the books that all of us will be writing will somehow be available in an antiquarian bookshop because that is something so lovely [the book]. The other day I accompanied someone to a doctor, and there in the waiting room, I found an edition, very small, a little book of Antoine Saint Exupery of 1962. It was worn out ... it was small, no hardcover, but a small paperback and it was just lying there, and I took it and thought, that is amazing. Such an old thing and I took it and thought, how amazing that this book survived all these years, it is historic, and I think that books... I mean the digital things I do also read them...but books for me...they last throughout the times. And no matter whether a book is placed on a shelf or lies in a recycling yard...they should be somewhere, and one takes a book...the older the better... and one knows that these things will outlive us and that is a great feeling... At least I hope so. At home, I have a big bookshelf and that is where I sit down to write as I find this very inspiring. All the other authors are talking to me saying like 'Hey, you can do it'...just emotionally speaking. It builds me up. I need books.

Annette Marquardt-Mois: [to Interviewer] Are you interested in the contrast of physical books and eBooks or audiobooks?

Interviewer: Audiobooks are excluded. I am interested in the book as an object.

[Inaudible]

Annette Marquardt-Mois: I would like to take that up as you have mentioned the historic aspect so nicely... I am working at the Institute of medieval history as an information officer. And it is a new job and I enjoy it so much...when I enter the office... The offices are at the state library building...the institute was opened two hundred years ago and since the end of the second world war it has been located at the state library. Long history...well, I enter the rooms and I smell the books. Because there is a huge reference library, the largest reference library for medieval history in the world. Books have a marvellous smell. So, something...

Petra Lange: Yes, I also love that smell.

Annette Marquardt-Mois: And your book that of the 1960s is comparatively new, so there you find much, much older books, on various floors... so it's a big reference library. And it is a smell, a bit like vanilla and something else and I love that smell. I am so happy to have this job. That is just an impression I wanted to share. There are lots of scientists who write books, of course, very serious ... what they do is they edit...its old texts that only exist in handwriting and the scientist edits them, that is hard work. Those are all people who love books, of course. People who love books or the printed or written word in general. Moreover, it has a very nice atmosphere. Before I worked for Fraunhofer which is quite the opposite ... its applied natural sciences. Quite different people.

Susanne Brenner: Are you done? I wanted to add something that is especially important. For me, a book...in this fast-paced digital age a book is something that is real. And when you open the book you hold it in your hands, and you smell the book, but you also hold on to it and you

can page by page...and you don't have to turn on a stupid computer and therefore it is relaxing for me. To read a real book is relaxing. Another aspect is that I am an author...of course I am happy when my publisher calls me to tell me that we will make an eBook of one of my titles or an audiobook. As an author of course, I am interested in having my book published in all formats but for me personally there is nothing better than a good smelling book. That is just great.

Höfle: I see that differently. For a long time, I kept my books like sacred goods. I really kept it all, also the stuff that I thought was rubbish and that I did not finish and at some point, I started to throw them away. I do still like the physical book but... therefore my question regarding the audio book...for me that is on the same level [as a physical book]. Because for me it is the story and ... though a new book... but I borrowed many books from the library as I have realized that often, books were not as good as they seemed in the beginning. Then I was mad that I did spend money on them. Now I can just bring them back to the library. But when I have a new book ...that is still nice, but it is not as 'sacred' as it used to be. It is more a kind of media to me now.

Ulrich Radermacher: But you can also go to a library and say, 'ah that is great, I'll buy that'.

Höfle: No, I don't do that.

Interviewer: So when you get a book from a library and that book fascinates you...

Höfle: [Nodding]

Interviewer: After you have finished the book, ...I mean there are some people who read a good book and afterwards they say, I must own that...

Höfle: No, that is not important to me. When I have bought the book before and I liked it, that is nice. But when I got the book from the library and liked it, I would not buy it for myself, but buy it to give it to someone as a gift. That I would do. And then I would prefer a physical book over eBooks...though that depends on who I give it to. My old stepmom who will go to hospital soon also likes audio books. Especially when one grows older and the eyes get worse... then I think the technical development is great as you can make the letters bigger, and you have light [with an eBook reader] ... that is an advantage.

Interviewer: So, for you the content is more important.

Höfle: Yes, for me it is about the content of a book.

Susanne Brenner: If I am allowed to get involved...For me there are books that I must own even though I have borrowed them from the library. If I liked it a lot, then I buy the book. But that happens seldom as the quality of books is going down in general.

[group giggles]

Höfle: I do not own an eBook-reader and for thrillers or books that I read on holiday I can imagine using one, but for real literature not. That is maybe because I, as a Germanist, like to make notes in text when I read something good. I like to underline, and I think as an author you need to read because if you do not read you cannot write and the good books, I want to keep at home just to check how this author solves a certain literary problem.

Interviewer: Now I could say provocatively that it is also possible to make such notes on an eBook reader.

Andreas Riehn: I did not dare to say that.

[Group giggles]

(inaudible): Yes, but that is uncomfortable.

Susanne Brenner: I write all my text all by hand and only then type it on the computer, but I use the typed version of the text to correct the text. So, every manuscript of mine is written by hand first.

Andreas Riehn: To get involved at this point... that I printed this [holding up a printed chapter of a forthcoming book] is the second or third time in four years working on the book that I have printed something at all. I am a digital person. So, when you [turning to Female (5)] asked me whether I can print it for you, because you are an analogue person... for example when I want to work on my document, I turn it into a pdf and work on my iPad. I can see my notes, can make annotations, I can move annotations and text, I can mark text and erase marks and I am a complete opposite of what we have just heard. I feel as if tablets were invented for me. I remember that as a kid I was thinking that I wanted to have a device that I can use to watch TV, to read and write. I wanted to sue Apple because they stole my idea that I had some 40 years ago.

[group laughs]

Andreas Riehn: But I could not prove that. Well, some people say that they cannot live without their smartphones. I would not miss my iPhone as I spend much time on the phone, but immediately miss my iPad. And then I think 'shit' what I shall do now. I cannot read or write, not watch anything. I am very digital and playful. I also document my text using something different... Andreas has just told me that he wrote his text using LibreOffice, and now he sends the text to me as a word document, and I wanted to say to him that he could have sent the text to me in any format. I have five different word processors, and I like to play around with them. For me that is creative. Playing around with technology helps me to overcome writer's block. I just play around with the program, trying out how to format text or other things. But I only buy my books digital. The last book that I bought as a book was "Lovecraft country". That was also available as an eBook, but I thought that it is not acceptable that the eBook is as expensive as the hardcover. I am willing to spend ten or five euros for an eBook but not twenty. And one more thing, I started my career at the Beck Verlag [academic publisher specialised in law] as editor for electronic media. And the publishers... I think they defend physical books and think all the digital stuff will disappear anyway.

Dr. Peter Wieland: Yes, the digital stuff is just annoying to them.

Andreas Riehn: Yes. And that the sales figures of eBooks are slowing down ... I think that is caused by eBook readers that are not that comfortable yet and price models that are not very attractive. I think the price for an eBook should be five to a maximum of six euros. EBook production is just so much cheaper. I love digital. It is philosophical. I think if I am dead then

my hard disk [his brain] will be erased and if no one knows how to open my iPad as it has a fingerprint sensor it will erase itself too after a while.

[group giggles]

Andreas Riehn: Unless my sons will rip off my thumb.

Ulrich Radermacher: I published a book once that I could only publish as an eBook but by now it makes no difference anymore. All publishers publish paperbacks and eBooks. That is a mandatory standard. So, from a writer point it does not matter. Though there are differences. I am talking about the moment when you receive your ten free copies of your new book. It feels different when you receive a box with actual books inside than when you find an epub file in your inbox.

Interviewer: That would have been my question...

Ulrich Radermacher: That is the first point...mmh... the second is the financial aspect. You make more money as an author with eBooks than with print copies. That can be said. Given that the eBooks are sold for a decent price...that is a German exception...I guess my last book [paperback] did cost 9,99 Euros and the eBook was 8,99 Euros. Now they have changed the price to like 10 or 12 Euros...my agent said that it was a German exception that eBooks are so much cheaper than print books. In Austria or Switzerland eBooks are as expensive as printed books.

Andreas Riehn: That closes the circle. [at the Interviewer] That is what you said about the music business in the beginning. The difficult situation in the music business was solved when iTunes entered the market as consumers were willing to pay the 0,99 Cents, rather than illegally copy the music. That [iTunes] killed music piracy. I think the price policy in Germany is fatal, because...the digital market is the market of the future...it won't be the only market, the printed book won't disappear but not every book needs to be printed.

Ulrich Radermacher: But then we talk about Amazon prime or audible. But that is another topic. But I wanted to say something else...it is very difficult to add an inscription to an eBook.

Andreas Rhien: Well, you can scratch that onto the display.

[group giggles]

Ulrich Radermacher: My eBook publisher suggested that I create a card with a QR code at readings and then write the dedication directly onto that piece of paper. I did publish my first book at an eBook publisher; therefore I told this story, but when I published my first paperback, my agent said that now I can call myself "author". Since now, you have posted a printed book. Another anecdote, I once had a girlfriend and when she came for the first time to visit, she browsed along my bookshelf as if she wanted to check out how intelligent I am.

APPENDIX B

A selected sample of interview material, featuring a transcription of a one-on-one interview with Holger Kuntze, program manager of Blessing (imprint of Random House) in Munich on July 2nd, 2018.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for your time and the Opportunity to meet.

Kuntze: You are welcome (organises things on his desk and leans back in his chair),

Interviewer: Okay, so, if you are ready, we could just start.

Kuntze: (clears throat) though I am not sure whether I can be of great help, to be honest. (Short pause) If I understand you correctly, you want to research the cultural value of the book in the age of digitization?

Interviewer: Yes, that is correct. As I wrote to you my background is in the music business and there, I experienced the entire digital transformation, from the physical CD to mp3 and streaming services. So, I experienced the ...one can call it the disembodiment of music. Nowadays..., well you know... I am working with students and for them to own music physically is of no importance. They do not collect music and they do not need to display their music with their friends and family. What counts is availability. I am interested in finding out whether this is also true for books?

Kuntze: I understand what you mean. I hope that I am not destroying your entire research project, but this is simply not happening.

Interviewer: What is not happening?

Kuntze: The digitisation of the book... at least not in the way you describe it.

Interviewer: You mean that the book becomes a file that we only read on e-readers?

Kuntze: Yes, that is not happening. You should talk to academic publishers instead because that is an issue, but not for trade book publishers.

Interviewer: Is that your experience?

Kuntze: Yes... (short pause) ...if you had asked me...let's say five, six years ago, I might have given a different answer. We all expected that to be different. Whomever you ask in trade book publishing, they'll give you the same answer. My American colleges have an e-book market share of 15% to 20% and the growth curve is flat; actually, it's rather going down a bit. In Germany we look at 10-11% per cent market share of eBooks and that market share is not growing since two, three years.

Interviewer: And how about other forms of media like streaming... I mean, Netflix...

Kuntze: Oh, wow, wait, that is a different topic.

Interviewer: I know...

Kuntze: I thought you just wanted to know about eBooks.

Interviewer: Well; I am interested in the disembodiment of the book. By transforming it into digital files. But at the core of my research is the disembodiment of the book and that can of course be ...

Kuntze: Let's stick to the eBook for a while. As I said, that is not happening, at least not for the general market. The eBook reader is for businesspeople who travel a lot and want to read, but the average reader still prefers the printed book.

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Kuntze: Well, the book has a haptic advantage. [Kuntze leans over his desk and grabs a book] When you hold a book in your hands, you have a lot of information at hand [Kuntze opens the book, flips pages]. For example, you know where you are in the book immediately, and how much you still must go. Besides the texture of the paper, the design - all this is sensual information that forms part of our reading experience.

Interviewer: And that makes a book a more [pause] enjoyable reading experience?

Kuntze: Exactly.

Interviewer: So how do you experience the reading habit of younger people? Is there a change, because of other media?

Kuntze: [coughs] They do not read at all.

Interviewer: [surprised] Not at all?

Kuntze: In general - no. The German book publishers association has just released a study showing that we have lost about 6 million readers in the last ten years alone.

Interviewer: That is quite a lot.

Kuntze: Yes, and I am afraid that we won't regain these readers.

Interviewer: Why do you think they are lost forever?

Kuntze: One of the reasons is that we will not see these big international bestsellers anymore. That I am convinced off. In the 1990s we saw the Harry Potter boom, in the 2000s it was Dan Brown and later the Twilight Saga – but those days are over.

Interviewer: [surprised] Really? I mean...why won't there be international bestsellers anymore?

Kuntze: [coughs] Because the new Generation is not reading anymore. There is an entire generation of people who do not buy and do not read books at all, most of them, are below 30 years of age.

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Kuntze: It's the digital natives. They grew up with cell phones. Neuroscientists say that this generation cannot concentrate for more than a few minutes. They are just not used to reading and comprehending a longer text anymore.

Interviewer: So, a book requires too much attention?

Kuntze: Yes, of course. They cannot concentrate for that long. Besides, they are used to having different senses addressed at the same time. For them, it is not so much the haptic touch and feel. It is more visual, animated and they need sound. They like videos, short texts. They read Instagram notes while listening to their favourite music [while talking Kuntze is pointing to his mobile phone and the PC screen and speakers]. That is far from the experience a book provides [Kuntze takes the book in his hands]. Interviewer: So, to wrap it up here. You say that digitisation is not happening for trade book publishers...

Kuntze: Yes

Interviewer: ... and that young people do not read at all anymore.

Kuntze: That is true.

Interviewer: So, what is happening to the book as a cultural symbol?

Kuntze: For whom?

Interviewer: Let me rephrase my question. What I mean is that for example, bookshelves are a part of the traditional furniture for most people. Apart from providing storage space they also display books, keep them visible...

Kuntze: ...younger people won't care for that. They do not care for CD collections or DVD collections anymore. The difference is just that they still listen to music or watch films, but they do not read anymore. So, what would they use bookshelves for?

Interviewer: So, you assume that the bookshelves will be disappearing?

Kuntze: Lots of things have disappeared. The rotary-dial telephone or ...

Interviewer: ...that has been replaced by the push button phone...

Kuntze: Okay, bad example...let's say the classical TV cabinet...these mostly ugly wooden ones in which one could hide the monstrous TV sets – it's gone as we now have slimmer TVs and the TV itself became a part of the furniture.

Interviewer: Sure, but would you compare the TV cabinet with a bookshelf? I mean do you think the cultural "meaningfulness" is comparable?

Kuntze: Okay, I understand what you mean – but you are making one mistake...

Interviewer: Okay

Kuntze: This meaningfulness is understood by me, by you, by people who love books, who read – as soon as this love for books ends, that meaning becomes meaningless.

Interviewer: Well sure, if you describe it, they do not need them [bookshelves] anymore. [Short pause] So what can publishers do about that... I mean young people not reading anymore.

Kuntze: Nothing.

Interviewer: That sounds a bit fatalistic...

Kuntze: [laughs]...well, to me this is a battle that the book has been waging against other media for years.

Interviewer: Which media in particular?

Kuntze: [clears his throat] Well, the book was often declared dead. First when the cinema came up, then the radio, then television, video, and video games. Now the most significant thread is streaming services, such as Netflix.