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# Digitization of Popular Print Media as a Source for Studies on Visual Communication: Illustrated Magazines of the Weimar Republic

*Patrick Rössler, Achim Bonte & Katja Leiskau\**

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**Abstract:** »Digitalisierung von populären Printmedien als Quelle für Studien der Visuellen Kommunikation: Illustrierte in der Weimarer Republik«. Today, the type of illustrated magazine emerging during the 1920s has become an extraordinarily substantial and esthetically top-rate source of information on the history of culture, communication, design, photography and everyday life. However, complete issues in public libraries are extremely rare, and only very few have so far been backed up on secondary media. In an ongoing cooperation project by the Saxon State and University Library of Dresden (SLUB) and the Communication Studies Department at the University of Erfurt, ten of the most important German-language magazines of the 1920s, comprising around 650 issues, an estimated 75,000 printed pages and an expected number of at least 50,000 illustrations, are being made digitally accessible and prepared for a wide variety of interdisciplinary research purposes. The paper introduces main characteristics of these sources and informs about the basic technical conditions for digitizing this particular type of material. In its main part, special emphasis is devoted to the implementation, with regard to methods applied and proceeding. We close with a brief outline of an exemplary research access, referring to the visual framing of the "New Woman" during the Weimar period.

**Keywords:** illustrated magazines, visual communication, digitalization, content analysis, New Woman.

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## Introduction

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Digitization initiatives of German libraries and research facilities have hitherto been concentrating on traditional sources from the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age. Here rare, often unique manuscripts and early prints are made available to a global (professional) public without harming them (cf.

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<http://www.europeana.eu>). By contrast, both more recent sources from the twentieth century are underrepresented, as are resources relevant to the history of communication, for instance periodicals and early mass media. The few exceptions, such as the digital platforms for the Jewish press (<http://www.compactmemory.de>), for satirical papers such as the *Fliegende Blätter*, the *Wahrer Jacob* or the *Simplicissimus* (<http://www.simplicissimus.com/>), or the volumes of the *Jugend* which are of interest to cultural history (<http://www.dla-marbach.de>), along with the portal for historic Austrian newspapers and magazines (<http://anno.onb.ac.at>), are merely exceptions to the rule.

Other periodicals – in our case the illustrated magazines of the Weimar Republic – are nowadays also classified as scarce materials, since they were not considered worthy of collecting by libraries owing to the magazines' orientation toward entertainment (although this is not justified from today's point of view) and therefore were not saved. However, the type of illustrated magazine emerging during the 1920s is now an extraordinarily substantial and esthetically top-rate source of information on the history of culture, communication, design, photography and everyday life; complete issues in public libraries are extremely rare, and only very few have so far been backed up on secondary media. In an ongoing cooperation project by the Saxon State and University Library of Dresden (SLUB) and the Communication Studies Department at the University of Erfurt, with sponsoring from the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Axel Springer publishing house, the German National Library and other libraries, ten of the most important German-language magazines of the 1920s, comprising around 650 issues, an estimated 75,000 printed pages and an expected number of at least 50,000 illustrations, are being made digitally accessible and prepared for a wide variety of interdisciplinary research purposes. The goal is to bring together in virtual form the rare magazines which have survived in widely scattered places, to index their text and image content and present it in a user-friendly format. The digital copies are produced and displayed with the aid of the widely-used open-source software Goobi. The initial results of the digital collection have been online since fall 2012 [www.illustrierte-presse.de](http://www.illustrierte-presse.de) and made available for research purposes using library catalogs, search engines and the European digital library "Europeana". Along with a retro-digitizing contract with VG Bild-Kunst, the SLUB also concluded a trilateral licensing agreement on the subject of text rights with Ullstein GmbH and VG Wort to clarify rights of use.

Our report on this still ongoing endeavor first presents the project goal using the source material and its relevance to cultural history to indicate its potential for scientific application. In the main section of the paper, we discuss the technical-methodological problems related to implementation and suggest approaches to solutions for the specific requirements, in particular with regard to the interconnection of content analysis in terms of communications theory and

indexing through key words, whose potential ideally goes far beyond the convenience of online access independent of location. Finally, we show examples of a possible starting point for a scientific use of the digitized inventory: Apart from new findings on the authors and international photographic artists involved, and a more systematic view of the history of the photo essay, we illustrate specifically how visualizations in press photography could have influenced observers' perceptions of worlds beyond their own horizon of experience using the "New Woman" as an example (as an indicator of changing gender stereotypes and role models).

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## 1. The Sources: Illustrated Magazines of the 1920s in Germany

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In the 1920s, a boom was enjoyed by a mass medium without which today's kiosk culture would be unthinkable: the "magazine" as a weekly, biweekly or monthly periodical in book form with between 100 and 200 stapled or glued pages and usually a colored cover, produced for the entertainment and edification of its readers, presenting in addition a popular mixture of richly illustrated social and cultural articles (cf. e.g. Haacke 1968; Marckwardt 1982). At times the term "review" ("Revue") was used for this type of magazine, underscoring the montage-like character of the publications with its reference to the world of the stage (Beckers and Moortgat 2001, 214). The dominant design element of magazines was to use a great deal of photography, which was stimulated by technical innovations such as the compact camera and new forms of image collection and distribution (photo reporters, picture agencies; see Kerbs et al. 1983; Kerbs and Uka 2004). At the same time, advances in printing processes – such as the development of the high-capacity rotary press and phototypesetting – enabled large print runs at low unit costs, so that the magazines could be sold for a small price (Brüning 2004).

The target group of the magazines was the new, urban middle class working at office jobs and in service occupations, which here obtained reading matter which, owing to its format and breakdown into brief pieces, seemed to be made for the mobile lifestyle running between tram, commuter train and weekend amusement in big cities (Wilke 2004). The magazines reflected everyday culture in the 1920s like no other medium, but modified by the logic of routine journalistic work and rules of selection which must always be considered when evaluating their content (Rössler 2006). Thanks to their widespread distribution, magazines were at the same time the embodiment of an "iconic turn" (Maar 2005) and thus in a position to leave their mark on the visual presentation and perception patterns of an entire generation which enthusiastically took up this phenomenon that radically changed the media landscape. For their broad target groups, magazines, together with silent films, marked the transi-

tion to a visual entertainment culture. Overview 1 provides a look into the nature of the material by summarizing the content of a typical case, here fittingly an issue of “Querschnitt” on the theme of film (January 1931).

Overview 1: “Querschnitt” of January 1931 (Issue on the Theme of Film)



The femme fatale, adored by her youthful lover, a grim producer wildly gesticulating in half-shadow, while the director of photography runs the camera – with a few strokes, the great social critic George Grosz once again accomplished one of his typical miniatures. It adorns the title page of the (unmarked) issue of “Querschnitt” on the theme of film, partially hidden by the table of contents in a layout of several frames of film. At the threshold from silent movies to the talkies, publisher Wedderkop presented short pieces by literati and filmmakers, images of film distributors in an unusual combination, and again and again unexpected, socially critical insights into

a world on the far side of glamour.

Examples of this would be contrasting the (banned) Remarque film “Nothing New on the Western Front” and the (approved) cheap farce “Kriegsschwester” (“War Nurse”), or surrealist motifs from Bunuel films – together with a photo of the screen being pelted with ink bottles at the premiere in Paris; in addition, Erich Salomon’s view behind the scenes of a catastrophe film, and finally a juxtaposition, so typical of “Querschnitt”, of an Al Jolson mask with a picture of a gibbon – and again and again production photographs from Russian and proletarian films.

The texts make an effort to provide an impersonal-benign evaluation, wavering between the “Greetings to the Film” by Blaise Cendrars and Bernard Fay prophesying the “Death of the Cinema” on the following page. With articles by René Clair, Jean Renoir, Eisenstein, Dupont and Chaplin, the European intellectuals of the film industry, in particular, are given a chance to take up a position opposed to the Hollywood Moloch. And then it is also fitting that writer Georges Duhamel, a cultural critic who later became a member of the Académie française, is allowed to hurl his defiant verdict at the readers, “Cinema is entertainment for slaves, a pastime for the uneducated who have been stultified by work and worries.”

The covers acquired special importance as the “window to the contents”, providing space for advertising on their own behalf and an expression of the artistic zeitgeist (Crowley 2003). In addition, the magazines usually contained several first publications of photo stories which not only created a new form of communicating and perceiving reality in their “cinematic” presentation of current events, but are also important owing to the prominent creators of the images (Lebeck and von Dewitz 2001). Lotte Jacobi, Felix Man, Martin Munkacsi, Hanna Riess, Erich Salomon, Umbo, Yva – these and many more famous photographers are widely found in these magazines.

The current project deals with the most important magazines, such as “Uhu” (“Eagle owl”), “Querschnitt” (“Cross-section”), “Das Leben” (“Life”) and “Das Magazin” (“The Magazine”), but also took into consideration interesting niche titles such as “Das Jüdische Magazin” (“Jewish magazine”), the “Auto-Magazin” (“Car magazine”) or the “Kriminal-Magazin” (“Crime magazine”). Among the titles mentioned, the “Uhu” from the Ullstein Group is more representative of the mass-media magazines of the Weimar Republic than any other. No other editorial office employed such splendid authors and photographers, none had so many novel ideas implemented with such highly professional printing techniques and, if necessary, at such extraordinary expense. Editor-in-Chief of the “Uhu” was at first a collective with the noteworthy name of “Peter Pfeffer”, and later Friedrich Kroner, who had begun as an address writer at Ullstein (von Stackelberg 2004). The “Querschnitt” came from the same publishing house as “Uhu” and was just as outstandingly designed; however, it had in its editor-in-chief of many years’ standing, Hermann von Wedderkop, a distinctly more sophisticated and elite claim, and was accordingly 50 percent more expensive to buy (Haacke and von Baeyer 1968). The mixture of photos, literary texts, sports, books and riddles found in the “Jüdische Magazin”, made in a small publishing house in Berlin-Wilmersdorf in 1929, fits the type, yet makes a more serious and docile impression than, say, the “Uhu”. One unmistakable goal is to illustrate the extraordinary contributions of Jewish people to international cultural and intellectual life. Trying to sell a monthly magazine for a core target group of less than two percent of Germany’s population (as well as a likewise rather small number of committed philosemites) was a decidedly daring enterprise. Although the back cover still advertised for a subscription, the fourth issue was already the last, apparently for this reason.

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## 2. Basic Technical Conditions of Digitization

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This brief look at a few prototypes of the genre is intended on the one hand to show that we are dealing here with a rich source of material for a wide variety of questions, but at the same time also with objects which are not easy to process. In order to efficiently digitize large numbers of scientific sources, we

require automated production processes which (1) meet international standards of digitization, which (2) can be used on as many different types of media as possible, and which (3) are practically and financially feasible, particularly for smaller institutions. On the other hand, digitizing magazines presents a challenge because the starting material differs greatly both in its forms of publication (loose individual numbers, bound annual volumes, etc.) and in the quality of its preservation (for example, missing pages, stickers and markings on the title pages, covers and pages of advertising removed during the binding process). Finally, innovations in media technology, such as fold-out pages, inserts (for example, tinted foil), transparent sheets, stickers (see overview 1) or divided pages (see figure 2) often require individual digitization and a special presentation.

The selected corpus of magazines is processed by the Dresden Digitization Center at the SLUB in Dresden, because in the field of retrodigitization it is one of the leading cultural institutions in Germany in terms of IT equipment, software and conceptual design. It is a member of the “Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek” (“German Digital Library”) competence network and in charge of developing the so-called “DFG Viewer”, a Web service of the German Research Foundation (DFG) to standardize the presentation of digitized copies from various repositories. In 2011 alone, the SLUB produced more than three million scans or 16,000 digital prints, respectively, as well as 70,000 new pictorial documents. In doing so it can draw on a digitizing section which is of high quality and enables automated processing of entire volumes of magazines as well as individual scanning of special formats and designs, which is of key importance to the digitizing project in question. Another of the special features of the library’s profile is the “Deutsche Fotothek” Department. This photo library presents around 1.3 million graphic media in its image database, thus linking up very well to the digitization project, which is strongly oriented toward visual media.

The SLUB has been working in the field of digitization since 2007 with Goobi software. Goobi is developed under the auspices of German libraries and used internationally, boasts on open source code and is free of licensing costs, making it especially well-suited to mass digitization based on a division of labor. A professional release management system constantly ensures that Goobi will continue to be developed and gives new users help from initial installation up to detailed questions of everyday work.

For these reasons, collaborating with SLUB and using Goobi seemed to be a viable constellation from a professional point of view, since it ensures the networking of the digitization project and the sustainability of the work (a central issue for the DFG, which is sponsoring the project). Another argument on behalf of this compatibility is the fact that Goobi users have managed to have the METS/MODS application profile for digitized prints and its reference

implementation developed and operated in Dresden, the so-called DFG Viewer, accepted bindingly into the rules of practice of the DFG.

The integration into the routine process of a module for optical character recognition (OCR), which automatically converts the scanned images of texts back into texts, is in preparation. However, this procedure will only be able to be carried out subsequently on the results of the digitization project described here.

Strategically, it will be necessary to ascertain whether Goobi will be suited to more widespread use in archives and museums in the future, as well, considering the course of media-typological expansion and the advanced standardization of object descriptions (metadata). The digital revolution is offering a historic opportunity to overcome the barriers between the various aspects of culture – and Goobi software, being in the public domain, can help greatly to process and present the wide variety of cultural heritage in an integral manner.

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### 3. Implementation: Methods and Proceeding

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As mentioned above, the original sources from the 1920s are generally only found in a fragmentary state in public collections, which is why the originals for the digitization project have to be brought together from various places. So far, the German National Library in Leipzig, the Library of Humboldt University in Berlin, the Literature Archive in Marbach, as well as the Library of the German Historical Museum in Berlin and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bonn, have made sizable quantities of magazines available. Along with missing issues or entire annual volumes, a detailed inspection showed that individual pages and illustrations were often missing, which were presumably lost when they were originally used, but could be digitally replaced using other copies. Covers and advertising pages were also often removed when the volumes were being bound. Often an otherwise informative cover lost its date, issue number or signature of the illustrator thanks to excessively close, insensitive cutting.

As soon as the first annual volumes were processed, it became clear that the estimates of the material, made up of individual randomly sampled issues on which the project proposal was based, had been in most cases too low. Due to altered editorial concepts, intensive incorporation of photography, also in ever more ‘innovative’ layouts, and the increasing sizes of the issues, both the number of pages to be digitized as well as the units to be indexed increased, in particular the illustrations. Since, moreover, the funds apportioned by the sponsor had also turned out to be considerably less than applied for, the originally planned quantity structure had to be adjusted. So far, the “Querschnitt”, the “Jüdische Magazin”, the “Kriminal-Magazin” and the “Auto-Magazin” are the only ones to be fully processed. By the end of 2012, all issues of the “Uhu” will also be finished. Limited to the 1928-1933 volumes (and later, depending on

feasibility) of “Scherl’s Magazin”, “Das Magazin”, “Revue des Monats” and “Das Leben” will be the next to be made available online.

Making the texts and images accessible enables users to access the material for the first time by way of a controlled number of criteria related to form and content. The terms employed for tagging were compiled from the magazine contents and in certain cases supplemented during the starting phase of the coding work. In this way, basic thematic aspects were mapped which serve as a suggested mode of general orientation and can help stimulate individual scientific questions. In addition, it is possible to query the number of hits for specific terms in the search, even for specific magazines or annual volumes.

Texts and images were made accessible in separate steps of the procedure. This separation has proved to be sensible in practice. However, having members of the indexing team familiarize themselves with how to index texts as well as images is also helpful for a flexible workflow and for data control. Compiling structural elements and assigning the keywords can optionally be done in one or in a sequence of steps (whichever is preferred by the coders). Depending on the size of an issue and the density of its content, 28-35 structural elements are usually sufficient for the text of one issue. Added to the individual elements for the feature stories are tables of contents, covers and advertising pages, for each of which it is possible to choose distinctive types of structural elements.

The editing module of the Goobi suite offers two levels of hierarchy within the procedures arranged by issue, which can illustrate the text/image and image/image relationships:

- On the first, higher level, the written articles are filed individually by means of text elements, yet here too combinations of illustrations turn up, such as “art print sections” and individual illustrations, which can stand on an equal footing along with the written articles.
- The greater portion of the illustrations, however, is anchored on the next level down as an independent component or a so-called ‘child’ of a written article.

As with short written articles, anecdotes or mixed news, which can be bracketed together on the first level of hierarchy into a single text element, combinations and series of images which appear under a common heading and for whose content it is necessary to assign identical keywords can also be put together under a mutual image element.

In the Goobi presentation layer, the continuously zoomable pages, compiled in accordance with the current criteria of mass digitization, can be consulted by way of the scan sets of the individual magazine volumes or by way of keyword search as a reference site. It was decided to dispense with releasing the individual illustrations – not least because this could not be accomplished within a reasonable budget considering the large number of collages and compartmentalized, overlapping image combinations.

Along with the display of digitized copies, Goobi Presentation also makes a convenient tree structure available. It serves as a preview of the contents of the related page(s) through the informative presentation of the individual text and image titles by way of the “Main Title” metadata array, and enables intuitive, sideways access to the material. In addition, the structure tree enables direct navigation and orientation inside an issue.

If short titles accompany the illustrations, as is often the case in “Querschnitt”, it is very easy to use the “Main Title” field; if, however, there is a long, explanatory caption or even a small separate article instead of a simple image title (as is occasionally the case in “Uhu”, in the “Revue des Monats” or in “Scherls Magazin”), the contents must be reasonably abbreviated in order to maintain the teaser character of the structure tree. In these cases, the selection criteria are not as strongly related to form as to subject, and depending on the content and significance, a heading or associated caption can be used for the structural display. Especially small image texts with no title of their own call for a specialized, intellectual decision in order to bundle the information as much as possible.

Due to the particular relevance of the illustrations to this type of magazine and the fact that high-ranking photographers, artists and illustrators published their works here, image indexing is especially important. Decisive for the respective procedure are the individual context and the informative value of the contents of the images. Five minutes are allocated to index each image, but due to the large number of illustrations per issue, image indexing takes quite a bit of time even when coding is done expeditiously. Even though collage-like image combinations can in many cases be combined into a single related illustration, 70 to 100 images must as a rule be processed per issue. Since even after the provision of the full text search individual indexing is usually required to sufficiently record the image contents, this time investment appears to be thoroughly worthwhile for searches in all fields. In text indexing, too, coding according to various categories offers sensible criteria which enable a more structured pre-selection for differentiation and access than full-text search.

For text and image indexing, partially common and partially specific keyword criteria were stipulated which guarantee an initial thematic-motivic access to the material, but without exceeding a reasonable outlay for coding. Tagging was done by means of a controlled vocabulary based on the Subject Headings Authority File/Universal Authority File (SWD/GND). On the whole, nearly 170 terms were defined in five categories in order to map a broad spectrum of possible access points for a thorough examination of the contents of the material.

- In the theme / genre category, there are a good sixty keywords from A (*Aktdarstellung* = presentation of a nude) to Z (*Zeitgeschichte* = contemporary history) available for text and image indexing. The use of standard terms en-

tailed compromises in certain cases, such as whether to write the German word for photograph with a “ph” or an “f”.

- Further categories explicitly for image indexing are “Motif” with nearly fifty keywords, and the category “imaging technique” with a good twenty keywords.
- In text indexing, one of seventeen possible terms are additionally assigned to the “Type of text” category for each individual article, as well as for quizzes or letters to the editor.
- As an exception to the rules of the Subject Headings Authority File or the Universal Authority File, the terms in the “Time” category correspond to a chronological classification of contents or events, i.e., “present,” “historic” (including the year, where appropriate), “timeless”, “abstract” and “not determinable”.

Persons appearing as author or depicted persons are filed in the individual data sets in conjunction with an indication of their role, which can vary from one reference site to another. Since it is not possible to determine the roles of persons (<<http://www.loc.gov/marc/relators/relaterm.html>>) project by project, but only apply them to the entire production system, it was necessary to limit the roles to ten terms (architect, performer, author, depicted person (also if mentioned in the text), compiler, photographer, publisher, artist/illustrator, collector and actor). All other occupational groups are presented by way of the keyword for motif or theme. At need, however, several different roles can be assigned to a person in a structural element, as in the case of an artist’s self-portrait, where the “artist/illustrator” role and, after repeating the name entry, the role of “depicted person” can also apply.

Goobi cannot manage biographical data on persons. However, these are intended to be submitted later by way of a link to the person pool of the Universal Authority File. Since no self-learning lists are available in Goobi, the comparison of variations on names and the forwarding of information for the identification of initials and pseudonyms had so far been accomplished by means of a common text file used by the entire indexing team.

A metadata field of its own for institutions authoring image sources contains not only the traditional image agencies, film companies and galleries, but also other institutional sources such as publishing houses. Indications of place (both places of origin as well as places of occurrence) are recorded in their own metadata field. All metadata can be researched within the presentation and incorporated into the indexes of modern library catalogs and search engines. The considerably more elaborate library-oriented formal indexing of the roughly 15,000 individual articles contained in the magazines was expressly rejected with a view to the future possibilities of full text research in the total material. The making of a traditional content-related bibliography of the relevant works, however, is quite possible on the basis of the project’s results.

From the point of view of communication studies, it appears to be considerably more interesting, albeit an issue hardly discussed hitherto, that the tagging described here has a number of characteristics which are quite similar to coding within the framework of a standardized content analysis (cf. e.g. Früh 2007; Rössler 2010). Briefly summarized, this consists of a method which is mainly used in communication studies to record large quantities of messages (such as reports in the mass media). The standardized analysis can condense manifest and latent content from newspapers and magazines, radio, television and the Internet using select criteria. These are set down as categories in a system of rules, the code book, which is used by trained coders. The basis of this are the definition of the sampling unit (the media material being coded) and the units of analysis (carriers of characteristics for surveying and evaluating, cf. the remarks of Rössler 2010).

Within the framework of indexing digital copies – here the sampling unit – it is absolutely necessary to collect a number of core data, for instance, which are normally considered to be categories of a content analysis; such as the medium, date of publication, placement (page number) and, if appropriate, size and stylistic form, as well. Furthermore, topics, actors, places, authors or key events are also set down here at the intended depth of indexing – characteristics which are likewise interesting as categories for most content analyses. It is obvious that the use of these metadata, if expertly planned, can considerably facilitate the execution of a content analysis.

However the above documented way in which these metadata are compiled and filed does not in all cases meet the demands a standardized content analysis places on the material. This is primarily due to the different function of the work, for tagging is done as a rule not to support scientific analyses in the actual sense of the term, but rather to index a body of material in a value-free manner in accordance with the (in part even international) standardized specifications of library organization. For understandable reasons, the ideas prevalent there (see above) do not fulfill the requirements of the procedure appropriate for an individual content analysis, as with regard to the selectivity or comprehensiveness of the specifications.

Nonetheless this project attempts, in the sense of a pilot application, to index within the scope of digitizing work making use of the (scarce) room allowed by bibliographical specifications, but especially making creative use of the intended categories and keywords by competent specialists, so that later content analyses can easily build upon it. The required work of defining therefore resembles that done when compiling a code book, although a code book's structure serves overarching aims, too. For this reason, we expect the availability of metadata to yield substantial savings in terms of resources, especially when screening media samples or coding formal characteristics.

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#### 4. Exemplary Research Access: Visual Framing of the "New Woman"

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The concept of 'visual framing', understood as formatting, describing and interpreting through image content, has recently been gaining in importance in communication research (cf. Scheufele 1999, 2001; Leonarz 2006; Ziegelmaier 2009). In line with the traditional framing concepts of the field, it is assumed here that the images contained in reporting convey specific interpretation patterns (so-called 'frames') which not only clarify the perspective of the journalists (here: the image editors) on the matter at hand, but also influence its appropriation by the recipient.

The present digitization project was able to examine visual framing in the popular material using a wide range of topics. As an example, here is a sketch of a possible field of media and social history research which could have been aided by illustrated magazines for visual framing of the "New Woman" of the Weimar Republic. In view of the fundamental upheaval in image communication described above – the breakthrough of photojournalism during the period between the world wars – the question arises as to how a central social concept of the epoch was influenced by the presentations shown in the popular illustrated press.

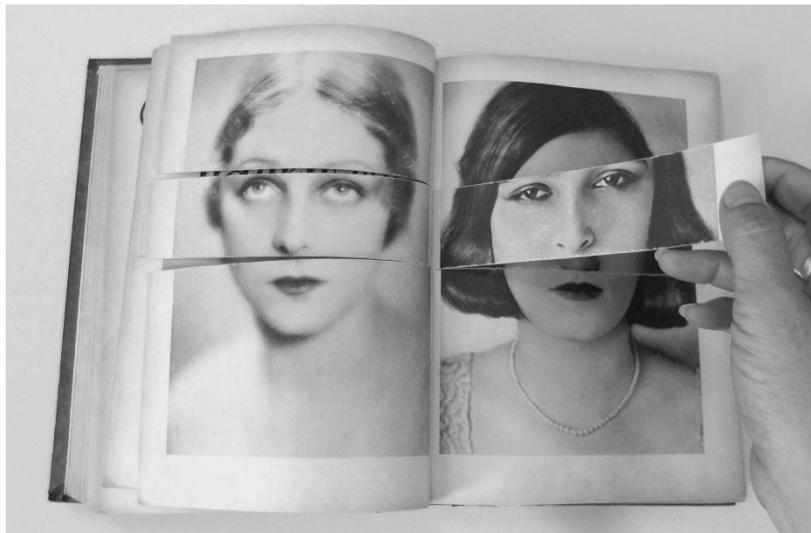
The public image of women changed dramatically following the First World War and the 'New Woman' of the Weimar Republic became a catchword for these changes, as a comprehensive international study recently detailed (cf. Otto and Rocco 2011). A pragmatic, cool keenness for objects was ascribed to this type of woman as an expression of a 'new objective attitude' (Bertschik 2005, 193). Looking back, three key indicators can be identified – women were working, gender roles were being redefined and external characteristics changed (Reinert 2000, 140ff.; von Soden and Schmidt 1988). Especially the hairstyle ('bob') and the clothing ('short skirts') possessed a special symbolism in their double function as 'maker' and 'marker' of the 'New Woman' (Bertschik 2005, 197).

The innovation in these areas was partly the result of actual social developments, but partly also a construct of the era's media reporting itself, especially the so-called 'Weimar cultural criticism' in the contemporary press (Frevert 1986, 171). The image of the 'New Woman' has survived to the present day as one who takes her life self-assuredly in her own hands, makes inroads into former men's domains (for example, at work), behaves like a sexually self-determined being, pays even more attention than ever to her outward appearance (which is sometimes marked by an androgynous style), engages in sports, drives a car and smokes – and thus appears to be a myth that is no more than a collection of stereotypes, for the social reality of many women in the period between the wars was much less spectacular (cf. on this the statements of Mes-

kimmon and West 1995). As an example, this can be shown by the motif of the 'woman at the wheel', ubiquitous in the media, which stands in contrast to the rather minor presence of actually motorized women in the everyday life of this period (Bertschik 2005, 251).

From the perspective of visual framing, this generates a specific research question which can well be treated using a digitized body of material, the question regarding how the above-mentioned elements characterizing the 'New Woman' appear as visual frames in the pictorial reporting of the popular illustrated press during the Weimar Republic. In a procedure guided by theory, image motifs considered as constituting frames must be those which can be identified in contemporary tracts and secondary literature as typical of the 'New Woman'. It is in the nature of the problem that historical framing analyses neither proceed by observing, nor can they question communicators and recipients; this interpretation must stay reserved to inferences based on a content analysis of media reporting – in the present case, the systematic analysis of all illustrations in the relevant magazines of the epoch as they are available through the digitizing project presented above and can be found through the appropriate tagging (representations of women).

Figure 2: "Puzzle for Grown-Ups", Female Version (Uhu, May 1929)



This logic stands squarely in the tradition of cultivation theory (Morgan and Shanahan 2001), developed to explain the medium- to long-term media effects of (audio-)visual media content (Gerbner et al. 2002) and whose first level, the message system analysis, can also be usefully applied to the present material.

Starting from the expectation that magazines develop a comparable potential for effectiveness in their time, it must be presumed that the visualizations in press photography influenced the ideas of the observers concerning changing gender images and role concepts. The basic assumption is that pictorial reports in magazines were capable of influencing their readers' perceptions of reality beyond the specific visual framing (Scheufele 2001).

At this juncture, a pictorial article in the "Uhu" can be described in more detail as an example which at the same time illustrates the originality, wit and masterly printing techniques of the Ullstein magazine, namely, the "puzzle for grown-ups to put together" published in May 1929 (see figure 2).

Readers were invited to put together a picture of their dream woman from various foreheads, noses and mouths printed on eight pages, each of which was divided into three parts, and thus construct their own 'visual frame'. On the one hand, this article makes use of the prevailing interest in glamour and entertainment, and on the other, it simultaneously offers in the text a comforting bit of counseling: "No, really, nature cooked up each individual being so well that, although we can derive undreamed-of amusement from our facial mosaic, yet we cannot 'improve' or 'beautify' anything. Light-colored eyes are only suited to certain faces."

Figure 3: Examples of Visual Frames of the "New Woman" in Magazines



The accompanying texts also offer plenty of pointers for gender studies, as the title "A Harem After Your Own Heart" already suggests; according to the editors, this invitation to the gentlemen immediately drew a storm of protest from female readers who demanded the same right for themselves. Even if the

alleged initiative of the women readers may not have really existed, it was at all events well contrived and aptly suited to the contemporary ideal of the active “New Woman”.

A more systematic analysis would presumably be able to ascertain at least two visual frames which dominate depictions of women in magazines (cf. figure 3): For one, the ‘girl’ or ‘flapper’ type, embodied for instance by the then popular actress Louise Brooks; and for another, the uncomplicated, cheerful girl next door type, whose spontaneous abandon documents a ‘natural’ lifestyle as seen in the widespread participation in the nudist culture of those years.

These findings should suffice to show that just those stereotypes related to fashion and hairstyle, or female promiscuity, prevalent in magazines and in photographic portraits of women actually presented a quite distorted image of women’s everyday life, which the makers of the papers presumably understood as conscious encouragement to use media for purposes of escapism.

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## 5. Outlook

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Digitized copies are making a growing contribution to the representation of history in the online world, and media sources relevant to communication studies are increasingly being taken into account in this realm. Our report on this work in progress illustrated not only the opportunities, but also the challenges of the current digitization project devoted to a printed medium from the early days of visual entertainment culture – that is, the type of illustrated magazine which arose in the 1920s, but of which only fragments have survived in libraries. As a mass medium which in its days quickly gained in importance, the illustrated magazines of the period between the world wars today offer a broad variety of material for a wide range of research questions from various disciplines. The “Illustrated Magazines of Classical Modernism” project enables access to the content of the individual articles and illustrations. This goes beyond a virtual consolidation of the magazines’ issues and the provision of an intuitive horizontal navigation within the specific issues by offering differentiated tagging which can also be used as the basis of systematic (content) analyses.

The technical solutions discussed in this paper originated from an in-depth examination of the starting material, whose specifics in terms of the creation and layout of its content only became identifiable in the course of the actual processing. It is absolutely necessary to note that digitization of innovative, visually oriented print media harbors challenges to indexing and presentation which are not readily comparable to working with traditional, text-oriented media, that tend to have few variants (daily newspapers, books, etc.). In future projects, as well, it can be assumed that further special cases will arise which

go beyond the problems sketched in the present paper, cases which will in turn call for individualized solutions.

The excerpt from the popular press we chose for digitization undoubtedly embodies an interesting, albeit certainly not the only possible way to access this body of material. It would be just as conceivable to take the next step by examining the type of the lifestyle magazine which also emerged at that time, such as *Die Dame*, *Elegante Welt* or *die neue linie* (Rössler 2007), or to digitize periodicals from the cultural avant-garde (Rössler 2006); projects of this nature are currently in preparation and will be undertaken in the time-tested combination of processing in the digitization center of the SLUB and indexing and presentation by way of Goobi.

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