

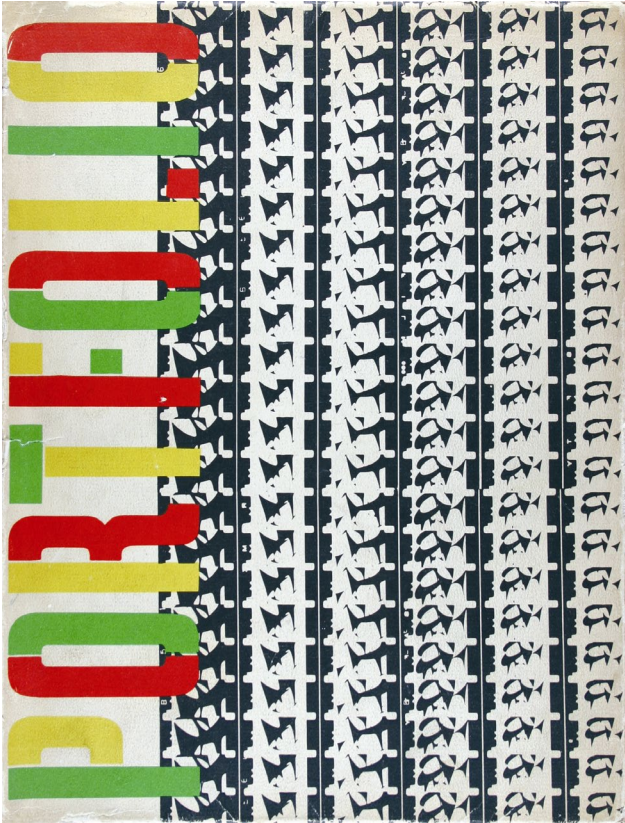
“America was the unquestioned leader of the popular illustrated magazine. New ideas were more readily accepted by the American public which was less tradition-bound than many European audiences.”

(Kery, 1982: 63)



“Indeed, there has been only one magazine during the twentieth century to attempt to break out of the trade ghetto and that was the American *Portfolio*.”

(Heller, 2003: 134)



Patrick Rössler

VIEWing our LIFE and TIMES

*American and German Magazine Design in the 20th Century:
A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Media Globalization*

Exhibition on Occasion of the Annual Conference of the
International Communication Association, Dresden, June 2006

sponsored by the University of Erfurt
co-sponsored by the Visual Communication
and the Mass Communication Division of ICA



Theoretical background of the exhibition: globalization

- process of increasing connectivity, which emerges from technical, economic and media developments
- networking and consolidation of dimensions which were previously unrelated

indicators for globalization:

- appearance of new actors
- new types of networks
- increasing interaction across cultures
- changing ideas of space and time

(Krotz, 2005)

Concept of the Exhibition:

- mutual relationship between two industrialized countries from the Western hemisphere – Germany and the U.S.
- one type of media: illustrated popular magazines
 - ⇒ *weekly, monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly printed periodical*
 - ⇒ *universal rather than special interest*
 - ⇒ *directed at the general reading public*
 - ⇒ *sold by subscription and/or at newsstands*
 - ⇒ *miscellaneous collection of articles, stories, pictures and illustrations*
 - ⇒ *intentional interaction of visual and written elements*
 - ⇒ *special emphasis on the cover serving as its showcase*
- specific historical period – from the breakthrough of the medium in the 1920's until its decline in the 1970's
 - ⇒ *inspiring Roaring Twenties'*
 - ⇒ *Nazi regime: censorship, émigrés*
 - ⇒ *post-war re-education era, re-establishment of democracy*

Dimensions of cross-national reference

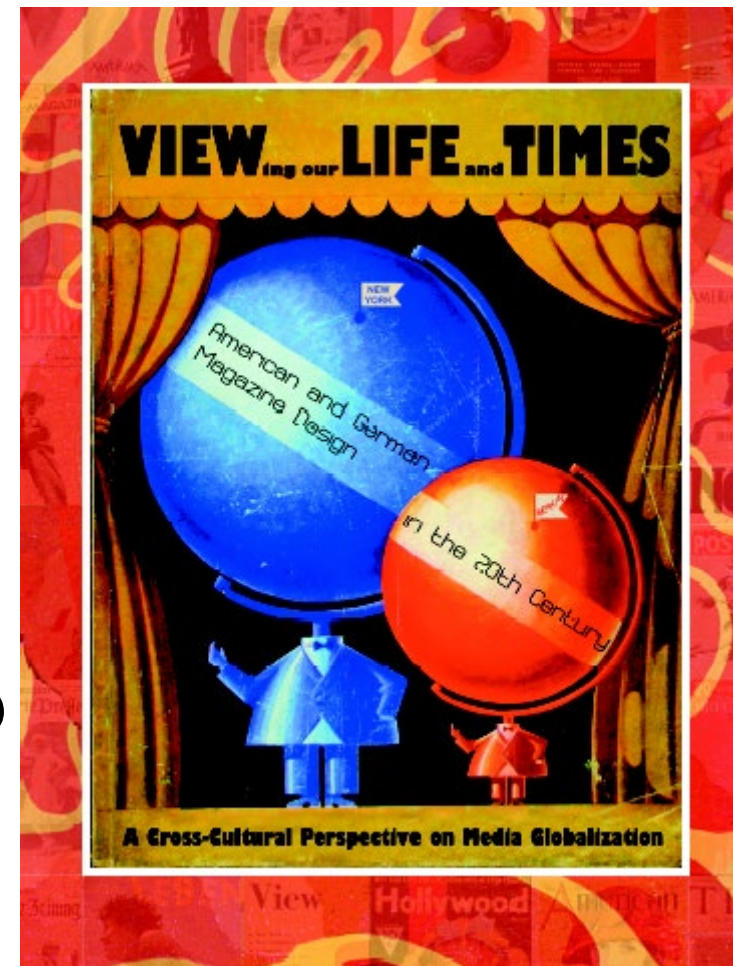
magazine design (visuals / concept) ≠ editorial content

- the emergence of internationally oriented publishing houses acting as global media players
- the identification of similar needs among media target groups in societies which share a certain cultural background
- the mobility of individual media protagonists which, for different reasons, live and work in different societies and serve as multipliers for ideas
- coorientation without a special indication ('Zeitgeist', commonplace typographic movements etc.)

Magazine genres included in the exhibition:

- graphic design magazines
- news magazines
- entertainment magazines
- fashion magazines
- propaganda magazines

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE PROVIDED
WITH CONFERENCE MATERIAL!



Magazine genres included in the presentation:

- graphic design magazines
 - news magazines
 - entertainment magazines
 - fashion magazines
 - propaganda magazines
- } selected examples

Genre I: News magazines

- early history: little evidence for coorientation
- *Harper's Weekly, The Nation, Saturday Evening Post, Leslie's* or *McClure's* gained merits for contributing to diversity of opinions in society



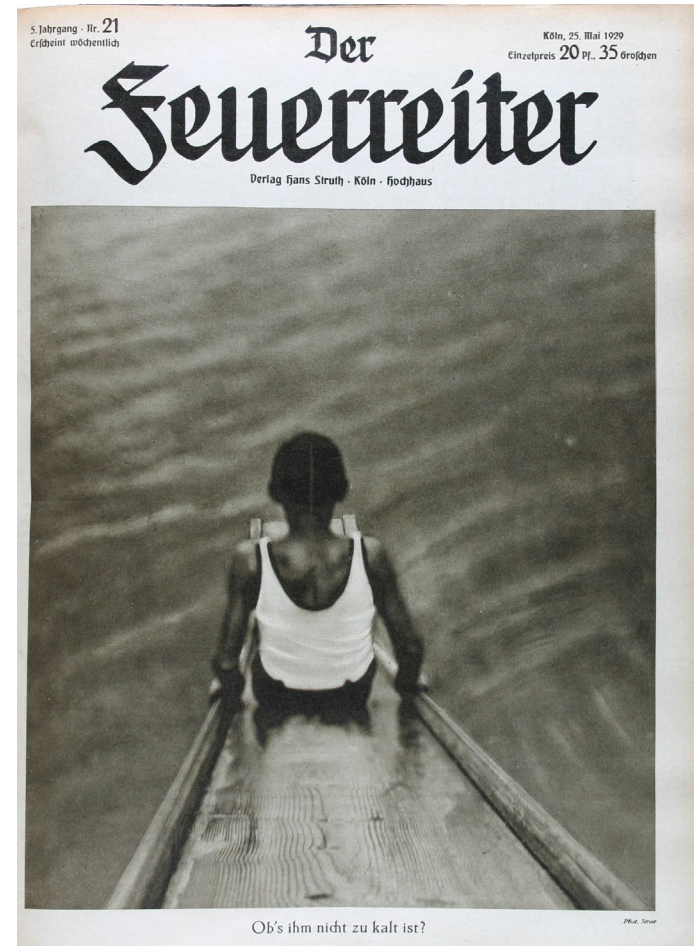
Genre I: News magazines

- early history: little evidence for coorientation
- *Illustrirte Zeitung* [Illustrated Times], *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung* [Berlin Illustrated Times], *Über Land und Meer* [Over Land and Sea] reached many Thousands among the bourgeois middle classes



Genre I: News magazines

- dramatic change at the dawn of the 20th century
- muckracking movement
- general acceleration in the workflow of the news business (telegraph, rotary press)
- photographic illustrations (half-tone process), modern photography, photo essays
- boosted public interest



Genre I: News magazines

- after WWI: rise of the popular illustrated weekly in Germany
- *BIZ*: focus on pictures

“The BIZ adopted the editorial principle that all events should be presented in pictures with an eye to the visual dramatic and excluding everything that is visually uninteresting [...] This reorientation is responsible for the change charted by the BIZ in the appearance of illustrated papers, which are no longer directed by text editors but by those who are capable, like film writers and directors, of seeing life in pictures” (Korff, 1927: 646)



Genre I: News magazines

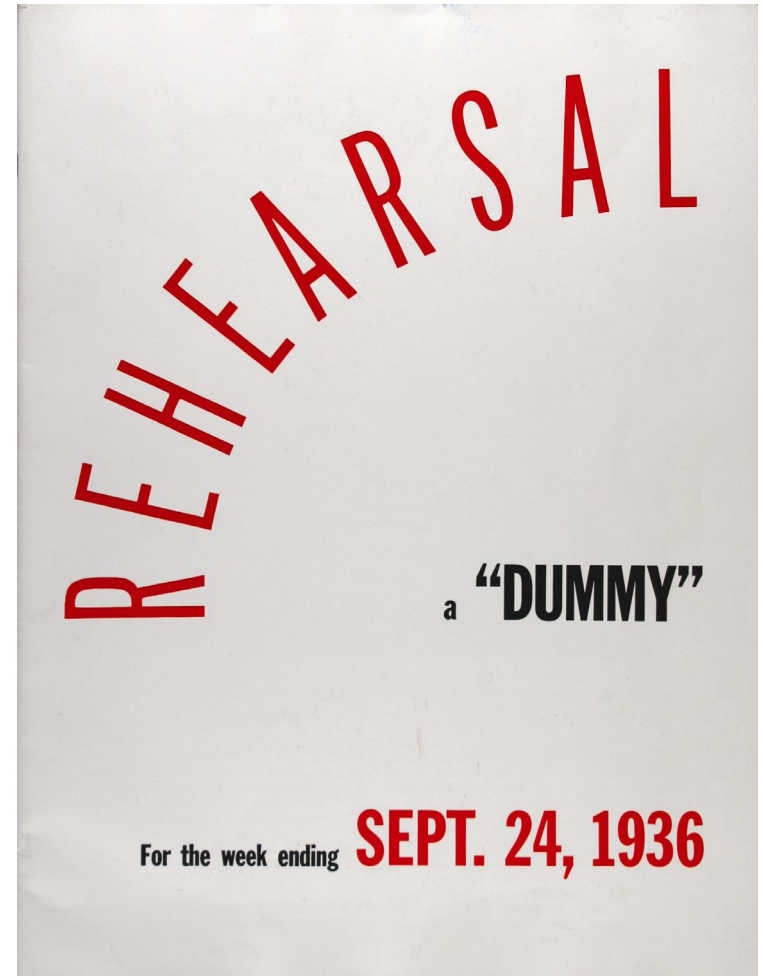
- iconographic turn from 'news to read' to 'news to see'
- leading figures: Kurt Korff (editor-in-chief), Kurt Szafranski ('artistic advisor')
- German competitors:
Münchner Illustrierte Presse (Stefan Lorant)
Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung (Münzenberg, John Heartfield)



Genre I: News magazines

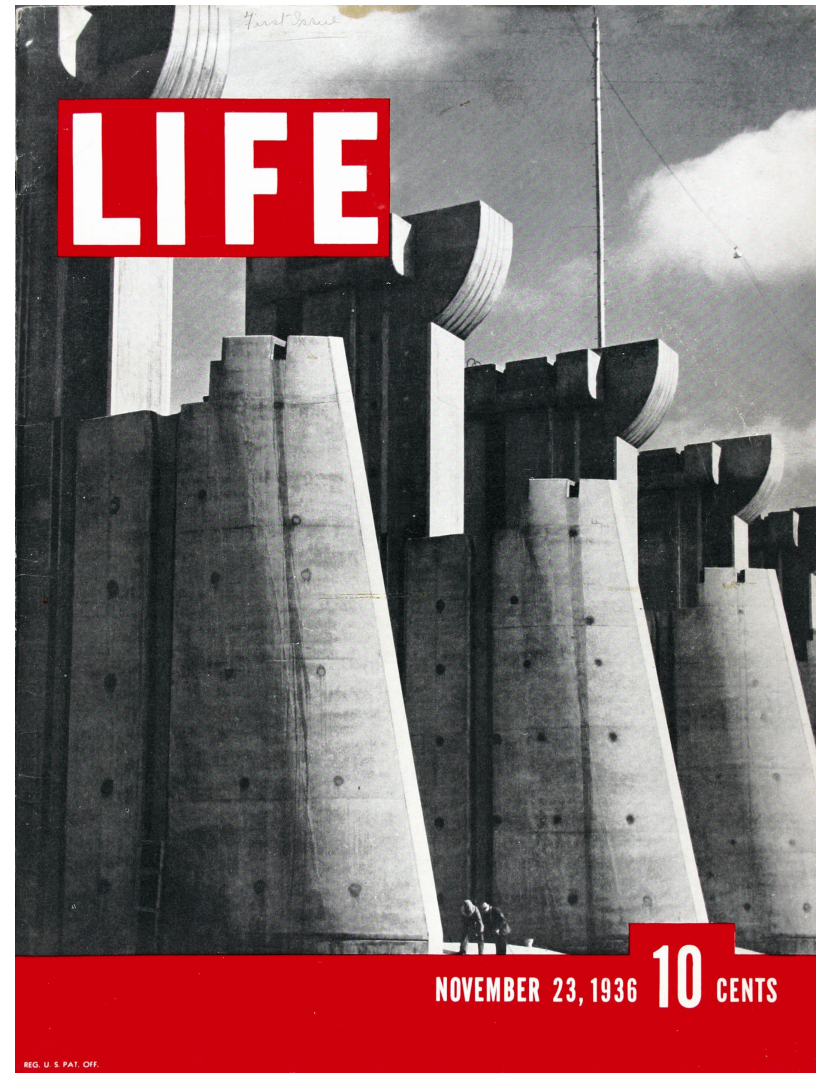
- American market: no similar development (political battle, role of picture agencies)
- 1936: implementation of *Life* (dummy: 'Rehearsal')

"To see life; to see the world; to eyewitness great events; [...] to see and be amazed; to see and be instructed. [...] Thus, to see, and to be shown, is now the will and new expectancy of half mankind. To see, and to show, is the mission now undertaken by a new kind of publication, The Show-Book of the World." (Luce, 1936)



Genre I: News magazines

- Luce took *BIZ* as an example
- émigrés Korff (editorial team), Szafranski (picture agency)
- Luce brought samples of *Weekly Illustrated* (Lorant, London) to New York



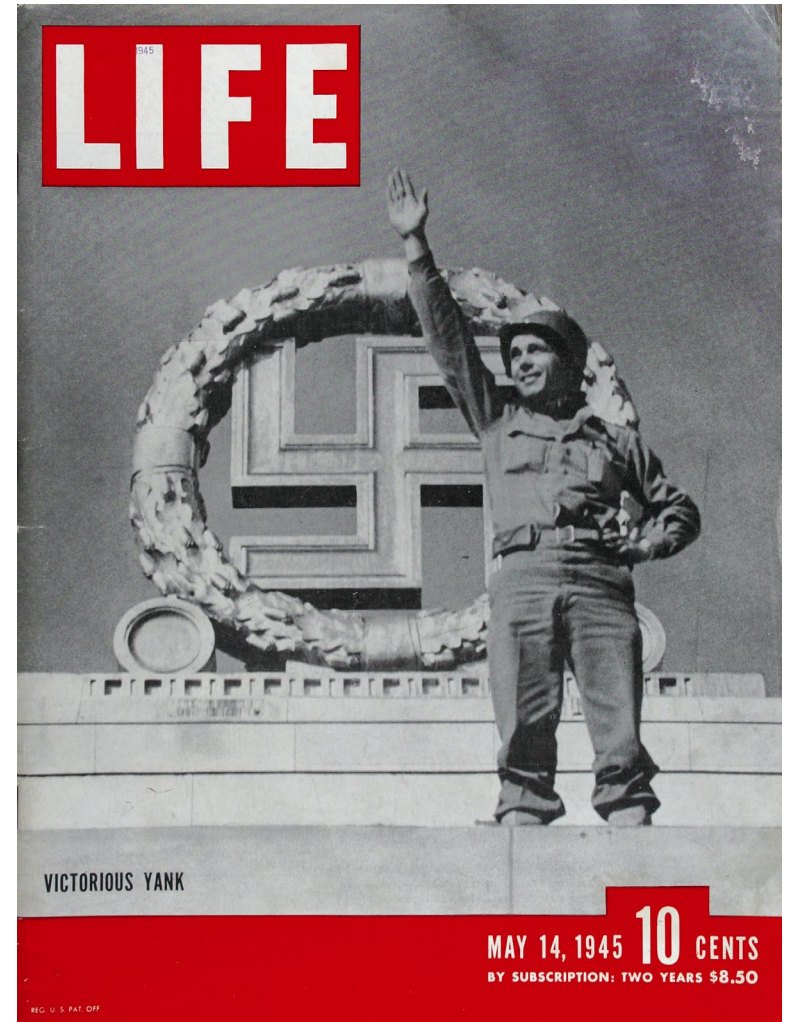
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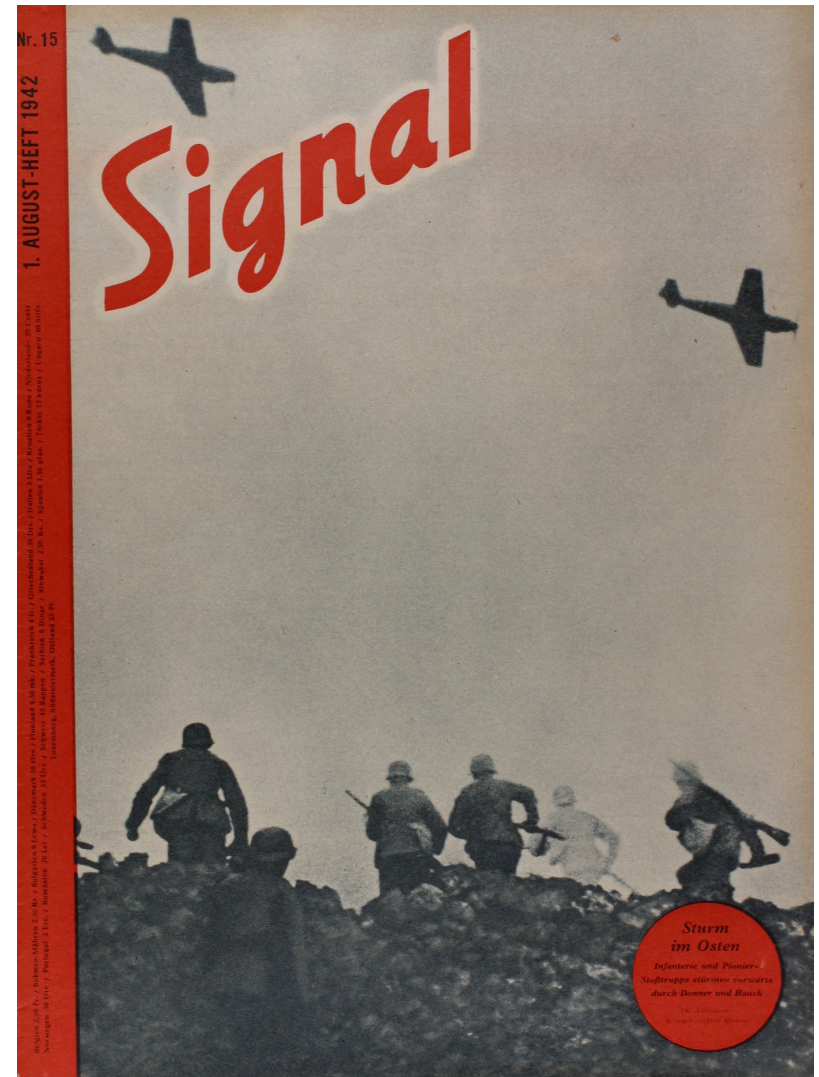
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- high prestige for war coverage



Genre I: News magazines

- influence on Germany limited by historical situation
- during the war: *Signal*, propaganda magazine in 20 languages for occupied nations
- after WWII: *Heute* [Today], news magazine for re-education of German people



Genre I: News magazines

- political magazine: *Time*, unparalleled until 1946
- singular concept, 'timestyle'



Genre I: News magazines

- political magazine: *Time*, unparalleled until 1946
- singular concept, 'timestyle'
- after WWII: *Spiegel* [Mirror] founded as a copy of *Time*
- Allied forces officers introduced Anglo-saxon journalism
- first issues: copies of articles, layout, cover design, pagesize
- formative influence of *Spiegel*



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

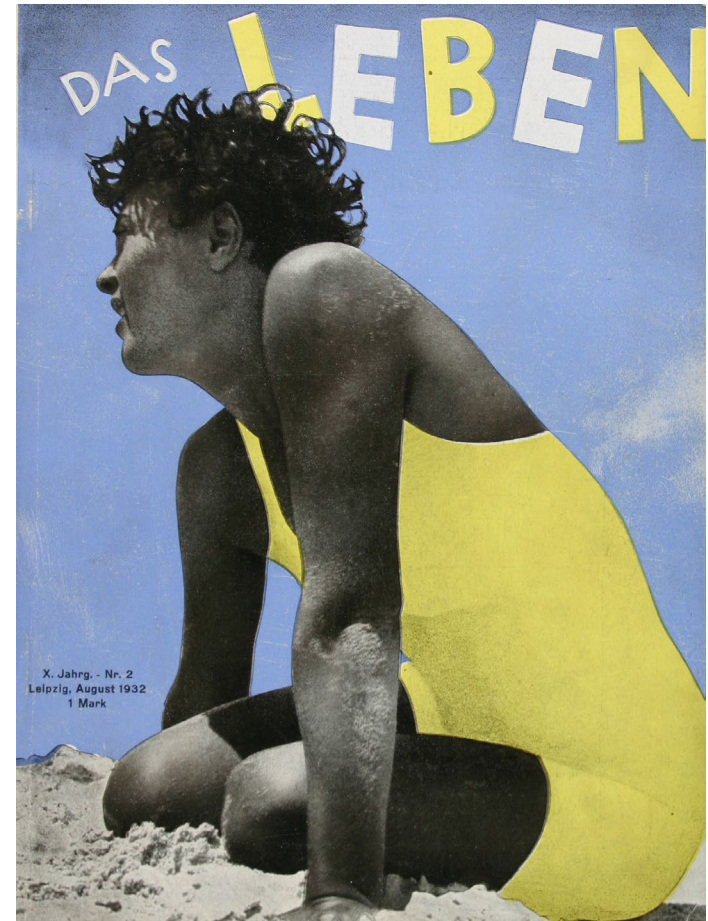
- German term 'Magazin' used for special type of periodical
- book-sized, illustrated monthly, 100-200 pages, adhesive binding, dedicated to the entertainment, social and cultural life
- report in 1927: *Saturday Evening Post*, *The American Magazine* predecessors of the 'currently emerging German Magazin'



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

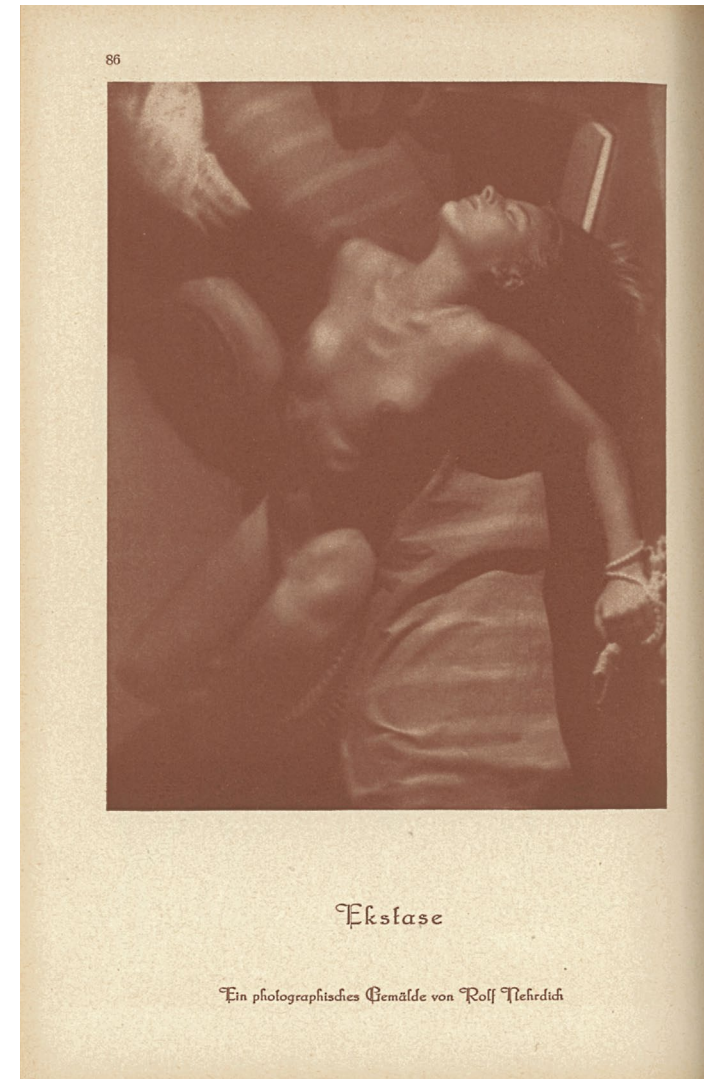
- German term 'Magazin' used for special type of periodical
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U.S. "country of origin of these magazines" which deliver "the favourite diet of the American reader: novels, brief and exciting; illustrations; short stories, articles on marriage, family, and crime; movie and theatre life, sports, a page of humour etc."



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- misleading argument, only true for basic orientation and content mix
- different format, 'fast consumption'
- new generation of city slickers, rather than rural white middle-class
- photography instead of illustrations
- suggestive, sometimes innocuous depiction of nudity



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- Trendsetter: *Querschnitt* (1921-36)
- publisher (1924): "even in America, overfed and thoroughly spoilt by magazines, its appearance has caused a sensation among all familiar with life and culture in Europe"



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- Trendsetter: *Querschnitt* (1921-36)
- publisher (1924): "even in America, overfed and thoroughly spoiled by magazines, its appearance has caused a sensation among all familiar with life and culture in Europe"
- similar target group and concept: *The New Yorker*, founder Ross' apartment filled with foreign magazines he studied for layout



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- other outlets exploited public demand for visual thrill: *Uhu*, *Das Magazin* [The Magazine], *Das Leben* [The Life], *Revue des Monats* [Monthly Revue], *Scherls Magazin*
- kaleidoscope of modern lifestyle with juicy photographs



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- kaleidoscope of modern lifestyle with juicy photographs
- some reference to movie magazines (e.g. *Photoplay*)
- adopted: *Spicy Stories*; later: *Playboy*



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- U.S.: *Life* success triggered less serious publications in 'Magazin' style: *Foto, Picture, Peek, Pic* etc.
- most relevant: *Look* (1937)
"Look tells stories in pictures"



Genre II: Entertainment magazines

- U.S.: *Life* success triggered less serious publications in 'Magazin' style: *Foto, Picture, Peek, Pic* etc.
- most relevant: *Look* (1937)
"Look tells stories in pictures"
- *BIZ* photo editor Zentner travelled to the U.S.; result: *Der Stern* [Star]
- Model for magazine mainstream in Germany after WWI ('Illustrierten')
- sex, sentiment, sensation, sadism



Genre III: Fashion magazines

- important role at forefront of magazine design, “perfect partnership”
- global approach inherent as fashion internationally marketed
- long tradition, 19th century (*Vogue, Bazar, VF, Frauenmode*)
- after WWI change in women’s life circumstances (‘neue frau’)



Genre III: Fashion magazines

- magazine for the intellectual, metropolitan women: *Vogue*
- German edition: 1928, Condé Nast: global player
- advertising sales by Dorland agency (Berlin branch)
- art director Mehmet Agha hired Herbert Bayer (Bauhaus)
- influence in June 1929, German *Vogue* folded October 1929



Genre III: Fashion magazines

- spring 1929: publisher Beyer relaunchs *Frauen-Mode* (1911)
- leading graphic designers from Bauhaus involved (Moholy-Nagy)
- 'New Typography': masthead w/o capitals, spread design, white spaces, assymetric lay-out, large photographs, sans-serif lettering
- *die neue linie*: outstanding influence on magazine design



Genre III: Fashion magazines

- Agha returns to Condé Nast U.S.: makeover of *Vanity Fair*
- „In using, and continuing to use, the new typography, *Vanity Fair* believes that it knows very well what it is doing” (March 1930, 31)
- influence of *die neue linie* style: international sales, Agha & Bayer, Dorland agency, modern art
- in return: adoption of editorial features by *die neue linie*



Genre III: Fashion magazines

- 1936: *Vanity Fair* & *Vogue* united
- *Harper's Bazaar* hired *Vogue* editor Snow, new photography: *BIZ* photographer Munkacsi
- surrealist covers by Cassandre, photomontages by Bayer, Matter
- Art director Alexej Brodovitch: Hungary-born, Paris years 1920-1930, inspiration from German periodical *Gebrauchsgraphik*



Conclusion:

Mapping the magazine coorientation

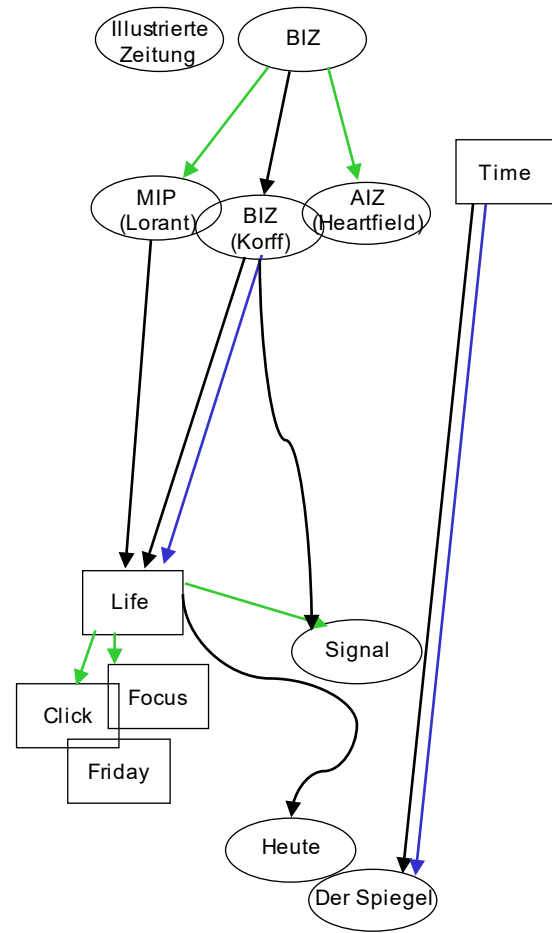
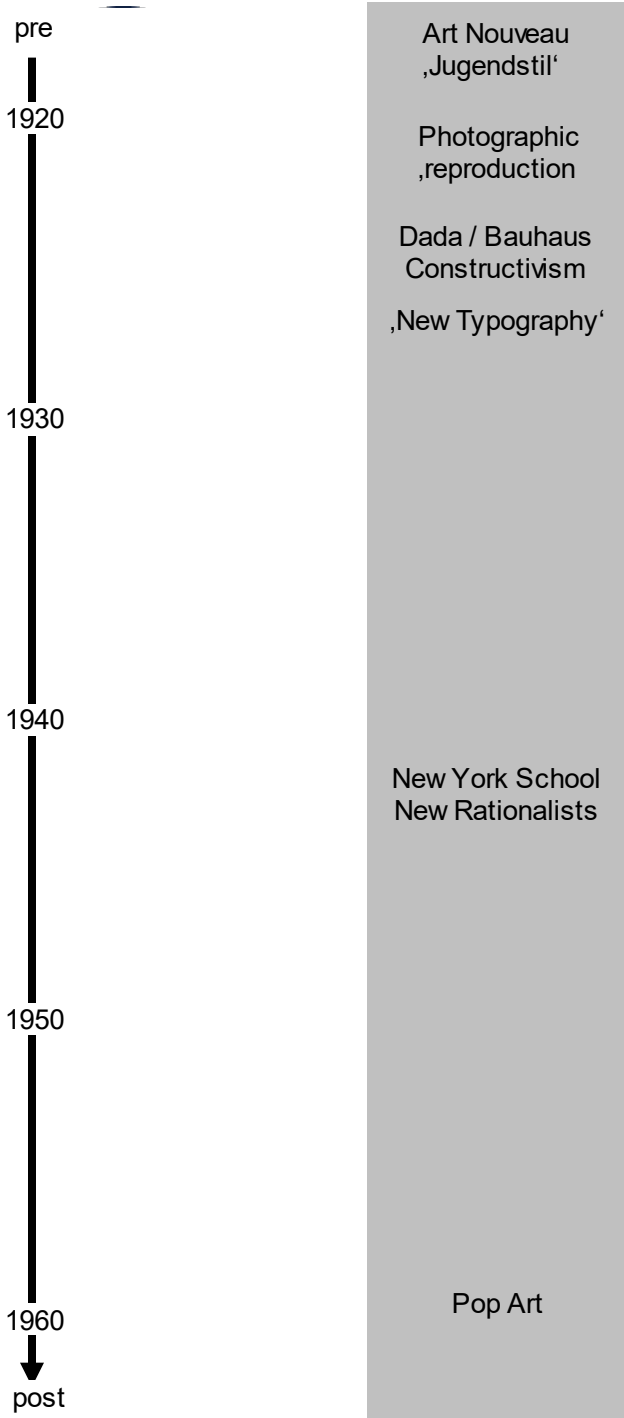
diagram indicating cross-references between American (squares) and German (oval) outlets

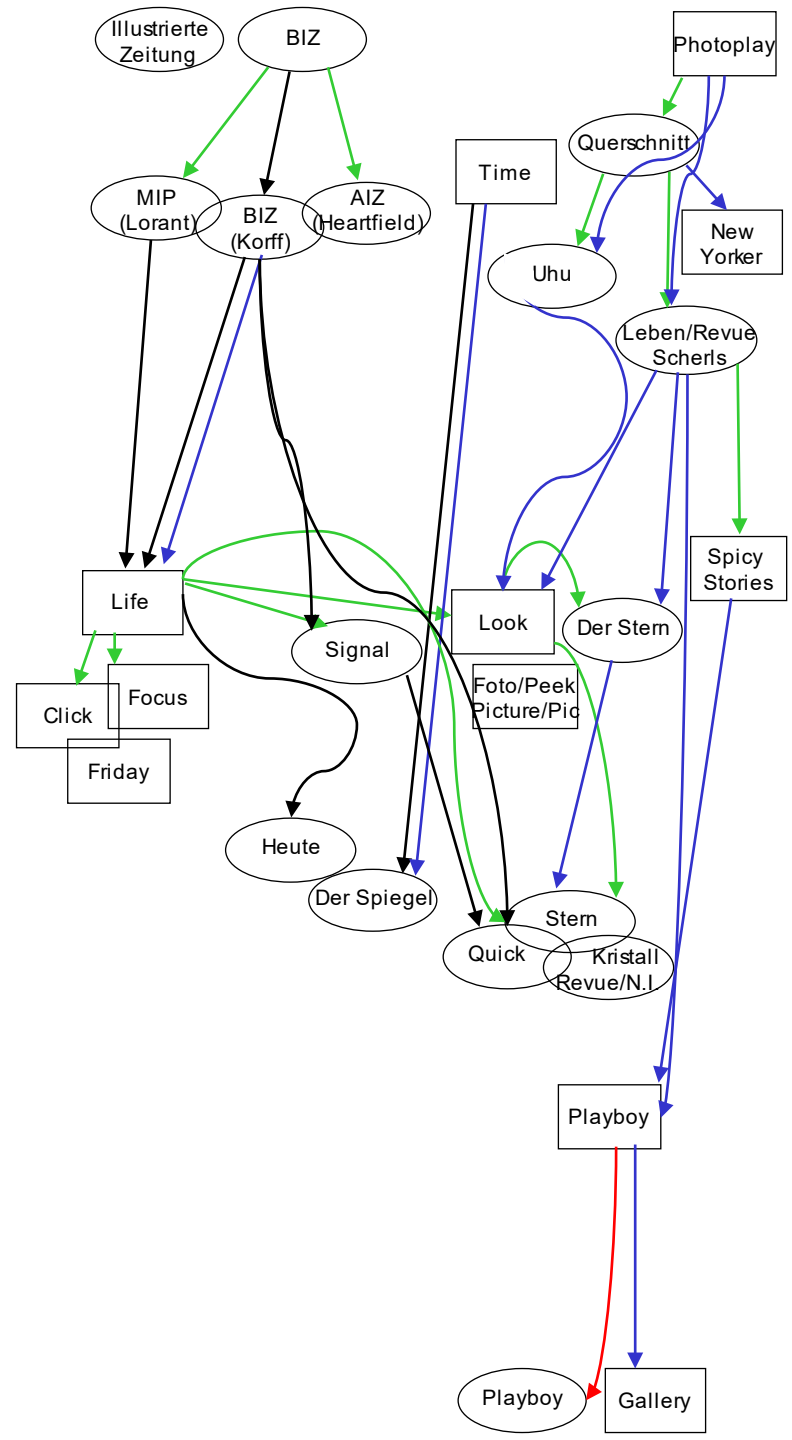
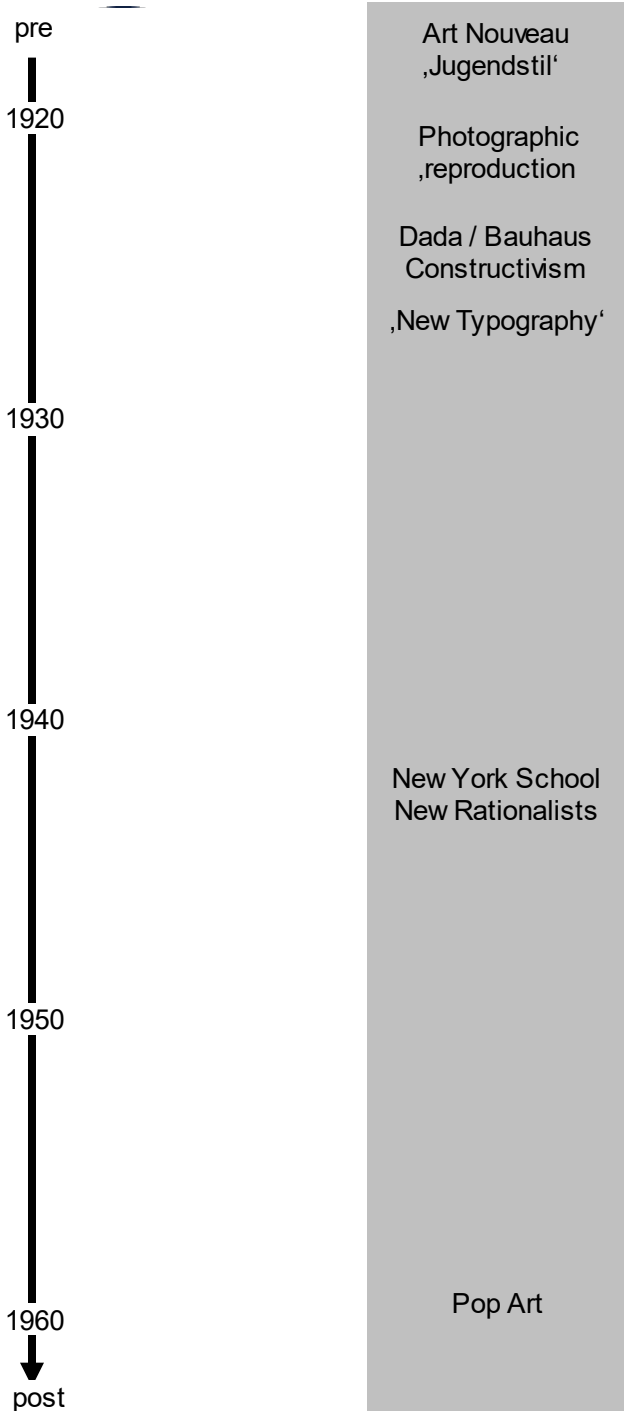
green: general coorientation, unspecific similarities

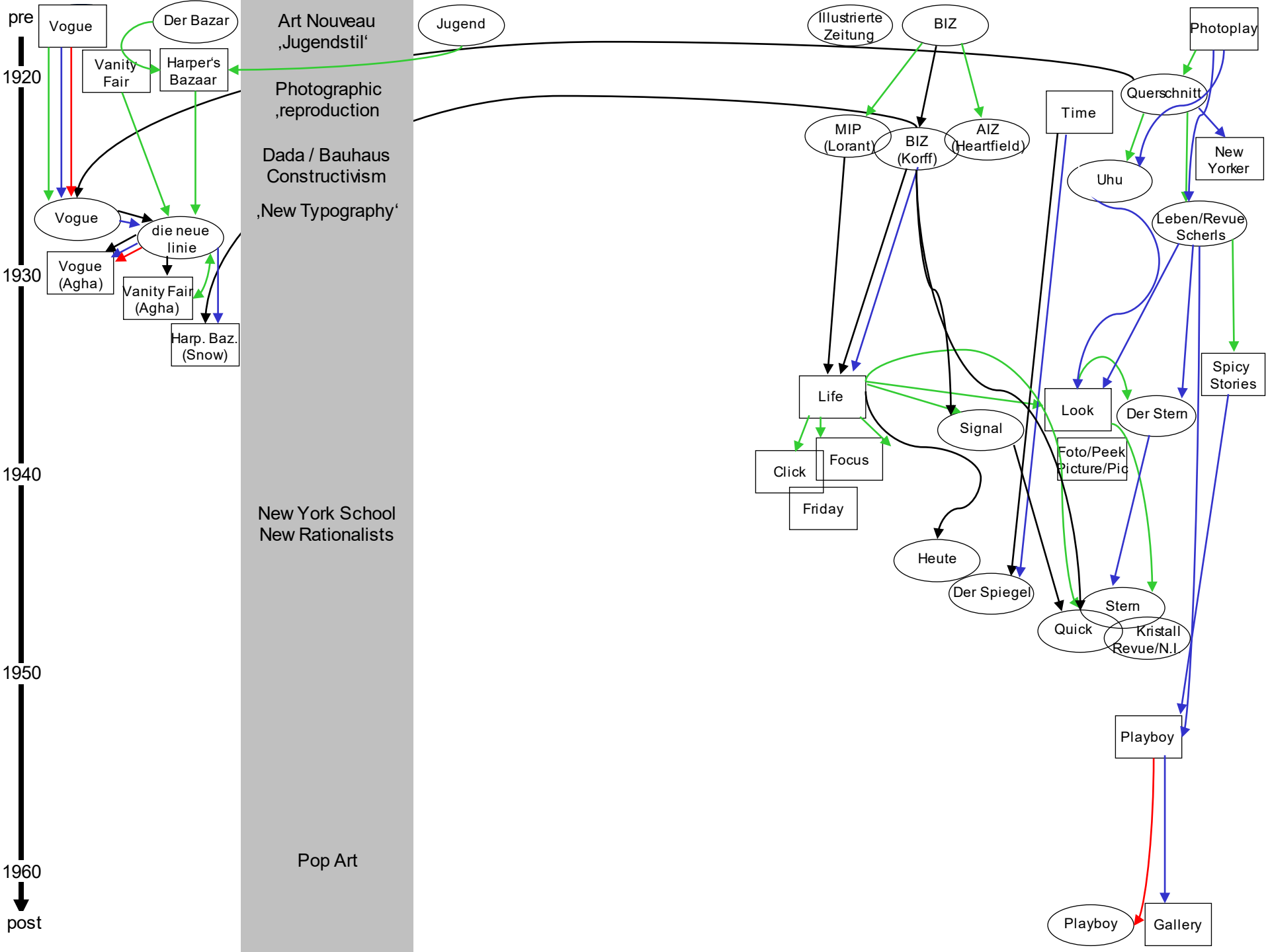
red: global players

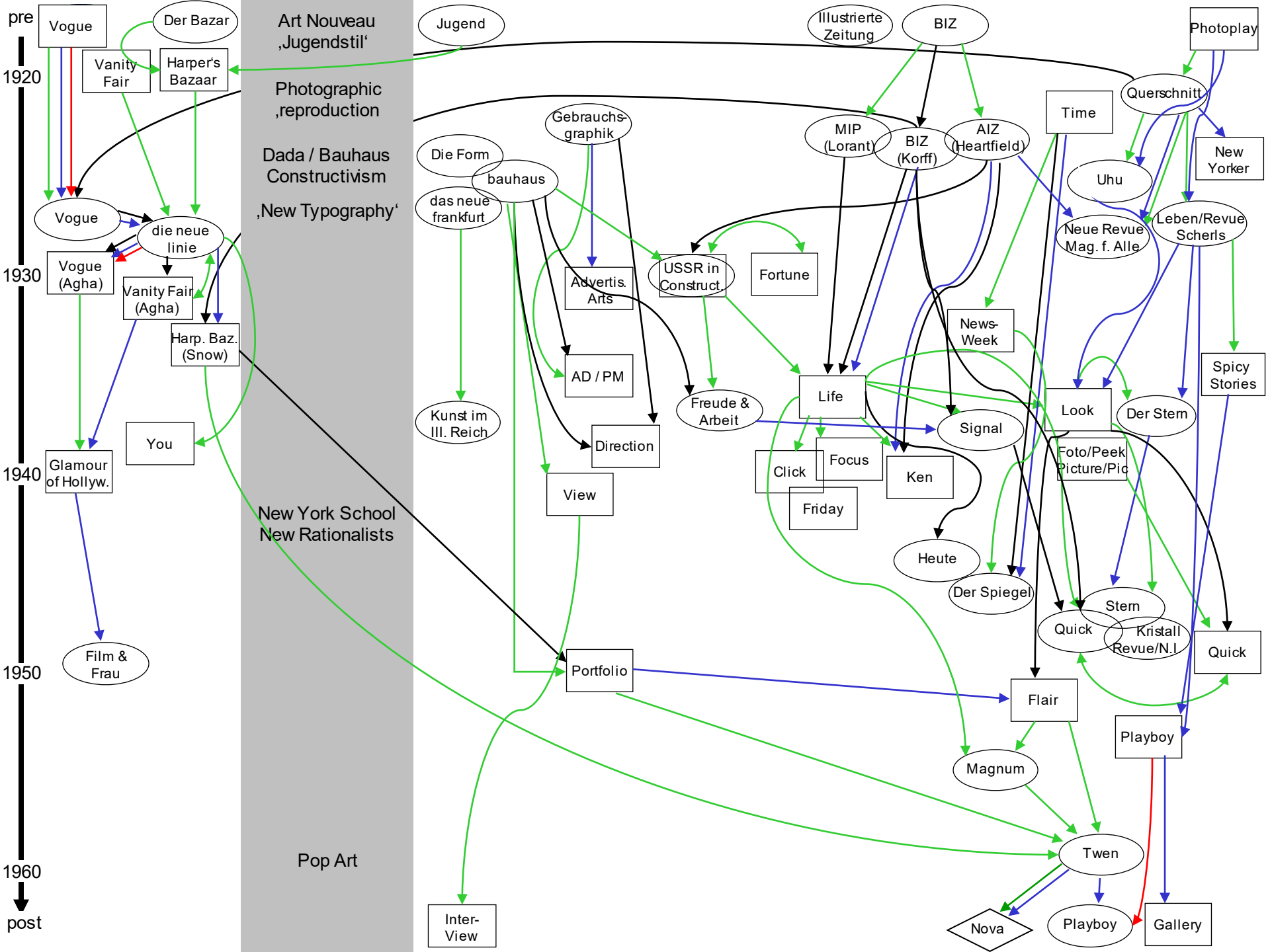
blue: common target groups

black: individual influence









Conclusion:

Mapping the magazine coorientation

- Majority of influences: general process of coorientation or unspecific similarities; only occasionally evidence for adoption or imitation.
Reason: testimonials emphasize originality.
- Least important dimension: influence of global players
Common phenomenon: target group orientation
Dominant: cross-national coorientation via influentials
- ➔ in the magazine history of the early and mid-20th century, the process component of globalization was based on the mobility of individuals who served as 'living transmitters' of new ideas (Beck, 2000).

Conclusion:

Mapping the magazine coorientation

- Across different periods, neither of the countries was the more influential partner
- Instead, dynamics vary between different eras:
 - ➡ 1920s / early 1930s – majority of innovations on the German market
 - ➡ Nazi rule / post-war – Germany lost avant-garde position to U.S.





Thank You!

- and: Enjoy the Exhibition!

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