

Workshop: “Magazine Culture(s) and Reader Engagement”

Including a public lecture at the National Library by Prof. Gustav Frank (LMU Munich)

25–26 March 2019, ILOS

Organized by Janicke S. Kaasa, Natalia Igl & Karin Kukkonen

This 1-day workshop is aimed at researchers interested in questions of materiality and mediality of literature in general and reader engagement in magazine cultures from the 18th century and beyond in particular. The event includes a public lecture by Prof. Gustav Frank (LMU Munich), expert on periodical studies and visual culture, who will join us in the workshop. We particularly invite postdoctoral researchers and PhD candidates to participate, share their ideas and research questions and profit from the international networking opportunity.

Why are we interested in periodicals?

Periodicals are agents of change – and the specific compositional, material, and social practices that shape and result from their production, distribution, and reception are manifestations of the inseparable interrelationship of media and ideas. Ellen Krefting, Aina Nøding and Mona Ringvej demonstrate this in their volume on *Eighteenth-Century Periodicals as Agents of Change* (2015) and the crucial role of periodical print media regarding the dissemination of ideas and practices of Enlightenment in Northern Europe. Their compelling attribution of ‘agency’ to these media functions as a point of departure for our reflections on magazine culture(s) and reader engagement.

This agency, however, is not easy to pinpoint due to the media’s characteristic polyphony and inclination to defy clear boundaries of genre, target audiences, and – of course – linearity:

Periodicals are polyphonous: assembling different authors and topics within one issue, sometimes on the same page, creating a space that puts the factual in dialogue with the fictional or combines the practical with the entertaining. Further, the single voice of the individual contribution tends to be interrupted, as longer items have to be serialized across several issues of the periodical. (Korte & Lethbridge 2018: 372)

Considering magazine culture(s) means to consider materiality and multimodality

Looking into the perspectival and semiotic complexity of periodicals and how the multiple voices of magazines work helps us to understand more about the ways in which literary media address and involve their readers. As material and multimodal media that combine different semiotic modes or resources, periodicals have multifaceted and complex means to engage their readers not just on an intellectual level, but also in their roles as onlookers and inter-actors with a magazine.

The multimodality of illustrated periodicals, though, does not only refer to the eponymous presence of illustrations and images, respectively the general foregrounding of visuality in periodical print media since the 19th century (Igl & Menzel 2016). It also extends to the haptic experience a reader might have when browsing a magazine, turning its pages and experiencing the sensory effects of specific formats, paper qualities and textures. In the course of the industrial age’s proliferation of periodical print media their multimodal and – correspondingly – multisensory potential has been utilized even more: As Courtney Wilder shows in her illuminating essay on the literal ‘fabric’ of British periodicals, several early to mid-nineteenth-century journals went beyond the standard text-image dynamic and offered their readers a genuine tactile experience in the form of actual textile samples pasted on the page (Wilder 2018: 434).

In a diachronic perspective, the interest in historical print cultures not least contributes to our understanding of more recent phenomena and shifts in media culture(s) strategies of reader engagement since the digital age (Hayles & Pressman 2013: ix).

Cited literature

- Hayles, N. Katherine & Jessica Pressman (2013): Introduction. Making, Critique: A Media Framework. In: N. Katherine Hayles & Jessica Pressman (eds.), *Comparative Textual Media. Transforming Humanities in the Postprint Era*. (Electronic Mediations 42) Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, vii-xxxiii.
- Igl, Natalia & Julia Menzel (2016): Zur medialen Eigenlogik Illustrierter Zeitschriften. In: Natalia Igl & Julia Menzel (eds.): *Illustrierte Zeitschriften um 1900. Mediale Eigenlogik, Multimodalität und Metaisierung*. (Edition Medienwissenschaft) Bielefeld: Transcript, 11-20.
- Korte, Barbara & Stefanie Lethbridge (2018): Introduction: Borders and Border Crossings in the Victorian Periodical Press. *Victorian Periodicals Review* 51.3, 371-379.
- Wilder, Courtney (2018): Crossing Sensory Borders: The Fabric of British Periodicals. *Victorian Periodicals Review* 51.3, 434-463.

Practical information

We welcome participants to present (aspects of) of their research that may be relevant to one or several of the subjects outlined above. The workshop will allow for discussion of individual research projects as well as a more general debate on key concepts, theoretical and empirical possibilities and challenges of working within the field of magazine culture(s) and reader engagement. We will provide a short selection of reading material in preparation for our joint discussion. PhD students will receive 2 ECTS credits for workshop attendance.

Preliminary program:

Monday 25 March

15–17: Public lecture with Prof. Gustav Frank (LMU Munich) at the National Library of Norway.

The public lecture will be followed by a joint dinner (provided by ILOS) for all workshop participants at a nearby restaurant.

Tuesday 26 March

10–17: 1-day workshop at ILOS with Prof. Gustav Frank. A joint lunch will be provided by ILOS.

A more detailed program will be provided to registered participants.

How to apply:

Please send a short abstract (app. 300 words) to Natalia Igl, natalia.igl@ilos.uio.no and Janicke S. Kaasa, j.s.kaasa@ilos.uio.no

Deadline for application: **30 January 2019**