

The Illustrated Popular Film Magazine *Neue Filmwelt* (1947–1953)

A Complex Stimulator of a New German Film Culture

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The *Neue Filmwelt* (*New Film World*)¹ was published in East Germany from 1947 to 1953. It was the first East German film magazine after World War II. Its founder and first editor was Karl Hans Bergmann, an important figure as cofounder of the recently established Deutsche Film AG (DEFA), which would be instrumental as a production facility for East German film until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Despite this, the *NFW* has not been mentioned in research, nor does it appear in the work of today's DEFA Foundation, which preserves and maintains the film heritage of DEFA. No question, this magazine seems to be a victim of "film studies' neglect of so many sources" and the unilateralism of the research field of film magazines, as Eric Hoyt points out.²

One possible corrective, of course, would be to use the *NFW* as a historical source and see what information can be extracted from it about DEFA, films or dubbed versions that are no longer extant,³ the state of German film, film advertising, and so much more. This is how periodical publications that report on films and are aimed at a mass audience have been used in the past, such as movie magazines and newspapers; information about films, stars, and the industry has been gleaned from the pages of magazines without the "container" itself playing a major role in the analysis.⁴ Alternatively, one could choose a path of analysis more commonly taken when film journals aimed at an intellectual audience are analyzed. The discourse of film theory has been analyzed this way in journals such as *Cahiers du cinéma*, *Positif*, *Cinethique*, *Filmkritik*, *Film Quarterly*, *Film Culture*, and *Screen*.⁵

However, I would like to argue for the existence of a special format, namely the popular illustrated film magazine, and for this specific format I suggest a third way to conduct an analysis, which I have already laid out in my essay "Where the

Film Has the (Visual) Word?”⁶ This way of analysis, which weaves together quantitative methods, qualitative methods, and data visualizations, goes hand in hand with the following thesis: the self-consciously “intellectual” film magazines are not the only publications that form a discourse about film. Magazines like the *NFW*, the illustrated popular monthly movie magazine which supplies my case study, form a multi-voiced discourse and produce film knowledge, but they do so in a complex interplay of type text, visuality, issue structure, layout, and materiality. The particular mix of complex design elements (and signifying strategies) found in the popular illustrated film magazine has been much neglected. Perceived as too “light,” popular illustrated film magazines have been more or less dismissed as mere advertising media or as beautifully designed publications hardly worthy of rigorous examination. Yet these very magazines, I would argue, had a strong influence on national and international film culture because of their popularity, their broader readership, and their multimodality. The launch of the *NFW* seems to me to be an ideal example for the pursuit of this thesis, since the period after World War II was essentially a new start for German film culture. The popular illustrated film magazines had an important role here as visual evangelists of a new national film culture.

In this essay, I will focus on the historical knowledge and information generated by the articles and pictures of the *NFW*. But this is always, in my opinion, bound to the magazine’s design: the layout produces a discourse on its own. This chapter also pays attention to the multitude of aspects and actors that have had an impact on this knowledge production and the produced discourse.⁷

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS

When the first issue of the *NFW* was published on August 1, 1947, World War II was not even two years past—the East and West German film cultures were still in the process of reconstruction. The title *Neue Filmwelt* (*New Film World*) immediately suggested in two ways that this magazine was an expression of a relaunch of film culture and a relaunch of print-media film culture.

On the one hand, the title *Neue Filmwelt* was a sign of a relaunch, because it referred to a similarly titled film magazine published during World War II: the film magazine *Filmwelt* by the Scherl publishing house.⁸ This magazine cooperated closely with the Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft (the production conglomerate best known as Ufa) and was thus interwoven with the Nazis’ film propaganda.⁹ On the other hand, the title *Neue Filmwelt* refers to a new beginning, being open to “new film worlds” in terms of national film cultures. Both associations signify that print media texts surrounded film in Germany and formed a specific media culture of their own, before and after World War II. The *NFW* is thus also a reminder that films never stand alone: film magazines have constituted film culture significantly, for better or worse.

Although a differentiated description of German film during and after National Socialism is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is necessary to recall what the relationship between the national German film culture and other film cultures had been shortly before the publication of the *NFW*'s first issue.

Film was the central medium of propaganda for the National Socialists, who, as Thomas Hanna-Daoud emphasizes, were already intensively interested in film during the Weimar Republic.¹⁰ Following Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the appointment of his confidant Joseph Goebbels as Reichsminister for National Education and Propaganda, the Gleichschaltung (the forced consolidation of all media corporations into one, the Ufa), and the unconditional alignment with the worldview of National Socialism, the National Socialist influence on and control over the production, distribution, and release of films in Germany was almost all-encompassing. As Klaus Kreimeier wrote, "A legend prevalent in film history is that the National Socialists succeeded in tainting with their ideological poison every cinematic genre, every film, and every subject, no matter how remote from politics."¹¹ But even if this is just a "legend," its existence shows in what a comprehensive way the films produced during the National Socialist regime were associated internationally and nationally with the National Socialist worldview, even if an analysis of many of these films produces a more differentiated result.

The fact that the National Socialist government had extensive control over German film presumably played a role in the creation of this legend. This control also meant that German cinemagoers were more or less cut off from other national film cultures. In his quantitative survey of film releases in Germany from 1933 to 1945, Klaus-Jürgen Maiwald demonstrates that no foreign productions were shown in the years 1943–45.¹² In the German-occupied territories, in turn, the extremely propagandistic newsreels were particularly hated—some German films were seen as a painful expression of a "cinematic" occupation in general. Moreover, and literally, some foreign cinemas were occupied; with the aim of "Germanizing" the film industry, more than one thousand cinemas were annexed in the occupied territories, showing German "required films."¹³ Conversely, since Germany left the League of Nations in 1933, German films had been increasingly boycotted abroad.¹⁴

Moreover, cinema viewing—specifically during the last two years of the war, screening only German films—was extremely successful in the Greater German Reich; it held a central function of distraction and entertainment.¹⁵ The fact that the German people had "fallen for" the seduction and propaganda of the Nazi regime also affected the reputation of the favorite medium of the Nazis¹⁶ after the end of the war and subsequently put the popularity of German film and cinema attendance during the war to shame—which is still true today for the films of this period; Karsten Witte claims these are still seen as a "despicable heritage."¹⁷

A second central context is more political in nature: in the Soviet Union, film had an extraordinarily high status, which spilled over to the satellite states, especially the Soviet zone and the later German Democratic Republic (GDR). As

David Bathrick states, “While the Western allies were primarily concerned with breaking up the existing cinematic monopoly of the UFA, for the Soviets the film was the central (political) medium of entertainment and education: One month after the German capitulation, the Soviet Military Administration in Germany . . . commissioned German technicians to refit a synchronization studio in Berlin for the purpose of dubbing Soviet films for German audiences.”¹⁸ Accordingly, the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAD) aimed to begin East German film production as soon as possible, and as early as May 17, 1946, DEFA was founded. During June 6–9, 1947, many professionals in the field of culture met for the Film-Autoren-Kongreß (First Conference of Filmmakers). In this context, Alfred Lindemann, the driving force behind the founding of DEFA, pointed out an aspect that had arisen as a result of the film industry’s cultural isolation: “It will not be easy for us to make our mark. We must be quite clear that our ten-year isolation from the rest of the world has led to a backlog of foreign films which will be dumped on the German market in the near future.”¹⁹

Lindemann brought in Karl Hans Bergmann to replace the late Carl Haacker in DEFA’s founding group. On June 9, 1947, one year after the founding of DEFA, the Deutsche Filmverlag was already established, which Bergmann ran in addition to his work as head of finance at DEFA. Bergmann had studied history, romance studies, and theater.²⁰ His main experience was as director and editor of communist cultural magazines. He was already head of the section “Film-Stage-Music” in the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition (RGO) and had succeeded the theater director Hans Rodenberg as the editor in charge of the magazine *Der Ausweg* (until 1933). The RGO was declared illegal in 1934. In 1934 Bergmann became editor of the illegal magazine *Die Rampe* (*The Ramp*), dealing with cultural and political aspects, which in its subtitle described itself as the “Organ of the Communist Party for theaters and film companies.”²¹ In these positions, he also gained his first experiences in supervising advanced photomechanical image reproductions—methods that he could still describe in detail in his 2002 autobiography.²² Even after fleeing to Switzerland in 1942, he produced a magazine there with other refugees: *Freies Deutschland* (*Free Germany*, with a first issue on September 3, 1943). In view of Bergmann’s biography, it is hardly surprising that barely two months after the founding of the publishing house, on August 1, 1947, a magazine appeared as its first publication: *Neue Filmwelt*.

The question we must ask here is how much control, how much censorship affected the *Neue Filmwelt*. The magazine needed a license from the Russian authorities in order to be published (the license was SMAD 301 [2.VI. 47]), and each issue had to be presented to the respective Russian liaison officer; however, this was not a problem for the NFW, as Bergmann spoke generally of a “splendid cooperation” with the Russians—they were all apparently film enthusiasts and excited about new things being created.²³ From the eyewitness interview with Bergmann, his autobiography, and the surviving statements of Lindemann, who

had to resign from DEFA on March 31, 1948, the picture that emerges suggests that the magazine enjoyed a great deal of freedom with regard to the presentation of film in the first years under the Russian occupation. This freedom met constricting interference from the Socialist Unity Party of Eastern Germany (SED) and the accusation by Karl Klär and others from the party that the *NFW* was too Western, preferring film journalists instead of party members.²⁴

THE EDITORIAL OF THE FIRST ISSUE

To what extent can the aspects mentioned so far also be observed within the first issue of the *NFW*? The issue begins with a powerful and multilayered editorial by Karl Hans Bergmann, from which the author continued to quote proudly in his memoirs. In the editorial, he describes both the educational mission and the way of producing film knowledge particular to an illustrated popular film magazine, proclaiming that the *NFW* is the product of a belief in the magic of film. Subsequently, the German film of National Socialism is harshly judged, and various aspects of this legacy are examined. German film, he claims, had recently been conveying the National Socialist “worldview”;²⁵ film had even become part of that “herostratic propaganda machine . . . whose workings and results have plunged our people into a misery never known before.” As a result, the German film industry had also been “turned into a ruinous site . . . not unlike the other industries in our country.” Last but not least, Bergmann also mentions the popularity of film during the National Socialist regime; the annual revenues of Ufa had “increased to 250 million Reichsmarks by 1943.” Bergmann’s rather detailed reckoning with German film highlights the fact that the launch of this magazine could only be seen in light of the recent past. Indeed, it was the very result of it. This is also reflected in the focus Bergmann assigns to the magazine in the following humble sentences: “We want to hear and see, after the long years of being excluded, what the film art of the other nations has to say. We want to participate in the life and development beyond our borders, not as demanders or determiners, but as learners and experiencers.” Only in the last paragraph of the editorial does Bergmann turn away from the past and basically summarize the format of the popular illustrated magazine and thus the targeted readership as well as the visual-typographical design: “So, a magazine for the man on the construction site? Quite right, but not for him alone. So for whom are we writing? For him, the human being among us, the witnessing, co-suffering and co-creating contemporary. The same person Rudolf Arnheim meant when he wrote a very personal preface to his wonderfully clear, completely factual book ‘Film as Art’: ‘. . . so that Ruth Vorpahl sometimes goes to the movies.’ That’s what we think, too, and with that we fade in. The film has the word.” One could say Bergmann emphasizes that the illustrated magazine, as a visual medium, represents the film, “fades in,” and thus invites “ordinary” people to go to the cinema; it is precisely this format, precisely this specific way of presentation,

that could popularize film again among a broader segment of the population, like the mentioned “ordinary person,” Ruth Vorpahl.²⁶

Of course, editorials should always be taken with a grain of salt, as there may be too many differences between external and internal perceptions. Editorials should also be viewed as advertising for the launch of this specific magazine. What becomes clear, despite all caution, is how Bergmann wanted the magazine to be seen: as a popular illustrated film magazine that did not ignore the past and was open to foreign national film cultures. The picture he draws of the *NFW* thus contradicts common preconceptions of the format of the popular illustrated film magazine. For Bergmann, this is not a format that merely informs readers about upcoming movie premieres and promotes those films. Various lines of evidence tend to suggest that Bergmann, the founders of DEFA, and the Soviet licensors assigned the *NFW* a significant role in the project of restarting a German film culture. Those involved were most likely well aware that the production of German films alone was not enough to create a new, different German film culture. The impact of films, their appeal, and a “proper” understanding of them would increase with accompanying explanatory media to contextualize them. Not only was the *NFW* the first publication of the Deutscher Film-Verlag, but a large part of their later publications were also connected in one way or another with this very magazine.²⁷ And not only was the publication of the magazine close in time to the founding of DEFA—although DEFA had hardly completed any films—but Bergmann’s expertise was also used in several ways. As one of DEFA’s central figures, Bergmann was responsible for finances but had experience primarily as a magazine editor, and thus he became entrusted with this publication and wrote numerous texts for it.²⁸ The intention to reach a broader readership was so important, at least to Bergmann, that he procured paper for it on the black market, even at the risk of punishment. In this way, the circulation could be increased from the starting forty-five thousand to one hundred thousand.²⁹

LAYOUT, DISCOURSE, AND NATIONAL FOCUS OF THE FIRST ISSUE

Which topics were predominant in the first issue? Did the contents live up to the claim of opening up to different national film cultures and the concern to “give film the floor” visually as well?

As can be seen in figure 16.1, different national film cultures are indeed covered in the first issue. German film (purple) receives the most print space with 14.5 pages, followed by Soviet film (red) with two essays and a total of four pages. The film cultures of the Western allies, the United States, France, and Great Britain receive somewhat less print space, with only three pages each, but the essays are prominently placed in the center of the magazine. The report on US film culture

is the most critical, while the film cultures of the other three foreign countries are praised and national characteristics are highlighted.

The temporal orientation of the pages is shown in figure 16.2. If we correlate figures 16.1 and 16.2, it becomes clear that the *NFW*, especially in the pages devoted to German-language films or actors and actresses, is more focused on the past and the future. Only pages 22 and 23 (blue in the middle right) are devoted to the filmic past of a nation other than Germany (in this case, Soviet film history). Hence, the division and structure of the magazine issue can be seen, to some extent, as a reflection of the state of German film production and culture at the time, which was busy processing past and future productions, but had—in contrast to foreign film cultures—few titles to offer in the present.

Figure 16.3 shows that the impression (gained from figure 16.1) of an only slightly more intensive examination of Soviet film in terms of print area is substantially reinforced by comparing the numbers of films mentioned: 23 percent of films mentioned in the issue are of Soviet origin. The majority of films mentioned, 41 percent, are German. Of all the films mentioned, however, 20 percent are German films from earlier than 1933—that is, 49 percent of all German films mentioned in a 1947 German film magazine are at least fourteen years old. We can surmise that the intention was to evoke a positive German film tradition of the Weimar Republic (which is also reflected in the content of some of the essays).

The fact that many older films from abroad were now shown in Germany for the first time in 1947, as Lindemann had somewhat feared, is also reflected in the *NFW*, as figure 16.4 reveals.³⁰ Moreover, this shows how far back the evocation of a positive German film history goes. Five very early German films are mentioned: *Der Andere* (1913), *Student von Prag* (1913), *Engelein* (1914), *Der Liebesbrief der Königin* (1917), and *Der blonde Chauffeur* (1916). Early German film history up to 1920 and forthcoming productions in 1947 frame the list with five mentions each, while 1945 and 1946 (naturally) form a gap in mentions of German films.

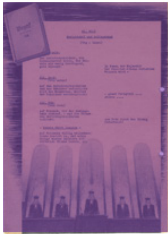
Let us leave the structural and quantitative level and turn our attention to the individual articles. How is German film culture and the past dealt with there? My thesis here is that a pre-National Socialist past of German film culture is seen as an ideal that is remembered more strongly than the National Socialist film era.

As an example, due to the lack of space, I would like to concentrate only on the first three double-spread pages following the editorial. Thereafter, we encounter a double-page spread featuring the responses of ten people from the film industry, including Paul Wegener, Wolfgang Staudte, and Kurt Maetzig (cofounder of DEFA), to the question: “German Film—Where To?” The polyphony often identified as a core characteristic of magazines³¹ is used here to map positions in the discourse surrounding the direction of German film. Half the authors explicitly refer to the National Socialist past. There seems to be agreement that “after the

Germany Soviet Union USA France UK Different Countries



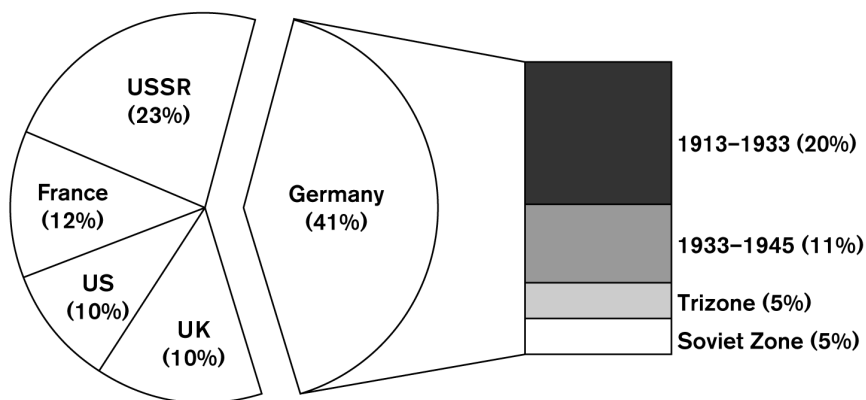
FIGURE 16.1. National focus in *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 1, 1947.



Past Present Future

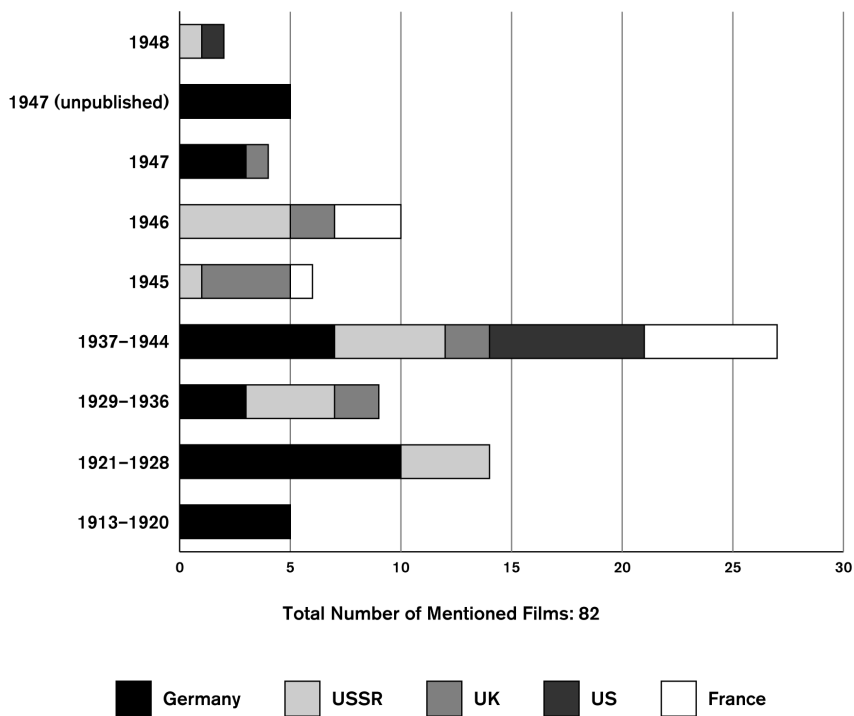


FIGURE 16.2. Temporal direction in *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 1, 1947.



Total Number of Mentioned Films: 82

FIGURE 16.3. Mentioned films by country in *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 1, 1947.



Total Number of Mentioned Films: 82

FIGURE 16.4. Mentioned films by country and year of premiere in *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 1, 1947.

substantive as well as tendentious hypertrophy of the Hitler era" (Paul Wegener), film is now taking "its first steps after the catastrophe" (Paul Bildt).

If visual elements are less important to this article on opinions about where German film should be heading, the two-page spread shown in figure 16.5 forms its own complex discourse precisely because of the interplay of script content, typography, and image—as I demonstrated in a previous essay.³² This spread announces one of the first DEFA productions, the film *Wozzeck*, which would have its world premiere on December 17, 1947—more than four months after the publication of the *NFW*'s first issue. This is significant in several ways. First, consider how many and which films the director of *Wozzeck*, Georg C. Klaren (one of the voices on the direction of German film on the previous double-page spread), mentions as inspirations for his production: the French film *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* by Carl Theodor Dreyer (1928) and Fritz Lang's *Die Nibelungen* (1924) as well as "Russian masterpieces" and, somewhat more hidden, Gustav Gründgen's Effi Briest adaptation *Der Schritt vom Wege* (1939). The evocation of a positive German film tradition is thus combined with a reference to a relatively international selection of films. Second, Klaren points out that this acknowledgment sounds like a kind of defense,³³ noting "that under the Nazis it was all the more impossible to even suggest this material," referring to Georg Büchner's stage drama *Woyzeck*, "without becoming ripe for a concentration camp." The director thus emphasizes the contemporary nature of the historical material precisely by stressing that it is only now that a film adaptation is possible. Third, his statements about aesthetic aspects of his film adaptation are accompanied and complemented by an elaborate montage of film stills that are laid around the written text. This collage, as I detailed in the previous essay, exhibits precisely the aesthetic possibilities of a visual film presentation on the flat surface of a film magazine. And fourth, the textual connection to a positive German tradition is also supported by the images and layout. Albert Steinrück is shown in the middle of the verso page; he played the part of Woyzeck not in the film but in the 1913 world premiere of Büchner's play in Munich, staged by Eugen Kilian. By showing the actor of the theater role three decades earlier, the layout also refers in a visual manner to a "non-fascist, German national identity" and invokes a positive line of tradition.³⁴ These references correspond to the aesthetic style of the film: "Klaren employed a film style reminiscent of expressionist and progressive German cinema, re-establishing links to the film heritage of the Weimar Republic."³⁵ Finally, the two-page spread also brings out this line of tradition through effects of similarity typical for magazines, which are induced by the layout: the picture of the actor in the theater premiere of 1913 on the verso page is opposed almost symmetrically to the picture of the actor of the film adaptation on the recto page.³⁶ The two performances are placed on an equal footing visually—but without the written essay in any way commenting on this analogy.

After a short excerpt from the script of *Wozzeck* on the verso page, the following recto page is an obituary for the actor Joachim Gottschalk, who had died on



FIGURE 16.5. *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 1, 1947, 4–5. Halftone on stapled pulp paper, 41.2 × 28.6 cm, private collection.

November 6, 1941. He and his Jewish wife, seeing no way to escape the personal slander and official pressure on their marriage amid the National Socialist reign of terror, killed themselves and their son. Goebbels forbade any obituary or attendance at the funeral.³⁷ The obituary for Gottschalk, more than five years belated, shows once again the numerous possibilities the creators seem to have seen in the format of the illustrated popular film magazine—in the very first issue of a German film magazine after National Socialism, Joachim Gottschalk is honored as an actor and attention is drawn to his death. The nature of Gottschalk's acting, his “clear, unaccented sentences,” is interpreted as an affront to the National Socialist way of speaking. The extent to which this obituary was part of a conscious programmatic approach is shown, among other things, by another obituary, for the actor Hans Meyer Hanno, in the fifth issue. Hanno was shot by National Socialists towards the end of the war while trying to escape. Once again, this page uses the visual possibilities to create relational structures. A film still is shown depicting Hanno together with Gottschalk; visually, he is placed in the company of another victim of the National Socialist regime—similar to the two-page spread for the film *Wozzeck* centering the actor in the theater premiere, the connection is made only visually, without any explicit comment through written text.

Of course, these mechanisms and discourses could be further examined, compared, and supplemented with other period documents, but that would take us

too far here. Important for this essay is merely the observation that a complex, multimodal, and polyphonic discourse was emerging. The tendencies of the discourse are conspicuous in that, through the quantitative accumulation of films from the prewar period, through visual markers and explicit statements, there is an increased remembrance of a pre-National Socialist past, and National Socialism is mentioned as an immediate past catastrophe. As a media-specific type of concluding gesture, obituaries are retroactively written and the opening to other national cultures initialized.

THE FURTHER COURSE OF THE NFW

As has been shown, *Neue Filmwelt* started as an idealistic project that was intended to accompany, in its own way, the relaunch of the new German film culture, using complex layouts and passionate texts; this magazine was supposed to bring other national film cultures closer and, last but not least, to remind readers/viewers of a positive, pre-National Socialist German film culture. Within a few years, however, the magazine developed into a nationally biased film magazine, which in part carried out propaganda for the Soviets, had monotonous layouts, and finally ceased to exist. The following section will provide some explanations for these developments.

In an SED report of December 11, 1948, the *NFW* was reproached for the fact that “the mindset of the editors was essentially Western” and that “the emphasis of the magazine was along Western lines.”³⁸ On April 14, 1949, two people from the Control Commission of the SED visited Bergmann.³⁹ Bergmann eventually fled (later to found a film club in West Berlin) and was replaced by Paul Letsch. From that point on, the magazine reported more intensively on national film cultures of the Eastern Bloc, praising Soviet film even more vehemently. In the final issue (figure 16.6) there was hardly any coverage of West German and Western film. However, later on, the field of Eastern film cultures presented by the *NFW* diversified considerably in return. In terms of the period covered, *Bicycle Thieves* (*Ladri di biciclette*) from 1948 was the oldest film mentioned, and the film premiering furthest in the future was *Cesta do pravěku* (1955). The time span from which the films originated shortened considerably.

In issue 9 of 1949, there was a change of printing technique, printing house, and layout, which enormously changed the look and discourse of the magazine. The number of pictures increased, extravagant typographies were used more often in the headlines, and picture sequences and montages increased somewhat. The publication design changed at the same time, with a tendency towards clearer political conformity. For example, especially during this period, the centerfold was used as a wide advertising space for Soviet film and its aesthetics. There was still a visual discourse, but it was now more politically pronounced and explicit. For example, in the centerfold shown in figure 16.7, a montage of film images was combined with a portrait of Stalin in the center headlined “30 Years of Soviet Film. A

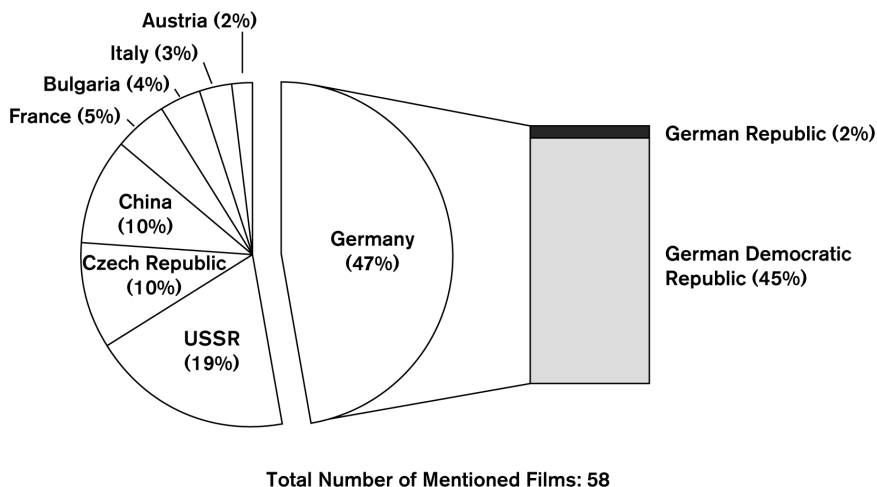


FIGURE 16.6. Mentioned films by country in *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 12, 1953.

Cross-Section in Pictures,” while further down, the text reads: “The development and great importance of the Soviet film is unthinkable without J. V. Stalin [written in capital letters and spaced], whose 70th birthday all progressive people of the world celebrate on December 21.” Film and politics flow into each other here, literally and figuratively.

The development of the more visual phase from issue 9 onwards can be related quite clearly to the change of publisher, the change of printing house, and the photomechanical reproduction method, as well as the SED report arriving beforehand and Bergmann’s subsequent flight. The decline of the more visual phase, which began around issue 4 of 1950, cannot be explained by a change of publisher or printer. It seems plausible to me, as a hypothesis, that this change of direction can be seen as well in the simultaneous discontinuation of the illustrated program leaflet *Illustrierter Film-Spiegel*.⁴⁰ The *Illustrierter Film-Spiegel* bore in its title the name “Program leaflet of the magazine *Neue Filmwelt*.” Typical for many postwar program leaflets, a single film was presented on four pages in terms of content, but mainly through the montage of numerous film stills. As a collector’s item and as a kind of substitute for the cinematic reception that was still only partially possible due to the destruction caused by the war, this format was especially popular in Germany during the transitional postwar period. However, the *NFW* discontinued these leaflets and noticeably decreased the highly visual expression almost simultaneously; these changes to the layout continued with relative consistency until the magazine was terminated.

The leaflet also played another important role: as already mentioned, with issue 12 of 1953, the *NFW* was discontinued. In this last issue, however, it was announced that instead of the *NFW*, a successor magazine was being



FIGURE 16.7. *Neue Filmwelt*, no. 12, 1949, 18–19. Rotogravure on stapled pulp paper, 41.2 × 28.6 cm, private collection.

launched: *Der Film Spiegel*. This magazine was the country's definitive illustrated popular film magazine until the end of the GDR, so it played a major role in shaping the GDR's film culture. Its origin, however, lies in the *NFW* (which in turn had taken up the title of the *Filmwelt*). One can also assume it is not by chance that the title *Film Spiegel* is reminiscent of the *NFW*'s illustrated supplement with the similar title *Illustrierter Film-Spiegel*.

PANORAMA

A multi-perspective analysis of the *NFW* reveals a complex multimodal and polyphonic discourse. This discourse, moreover, turns out to be extremely volatile over the course of the *NFW*. The *NFW* shows itself here very clearly as a product of a transitional period; the expression of the multimodal discourse presents itself as particularly susceptible to the effects of the numerous actors involved.

The intermedial relationship to film particularly complicates the matter, as this relationship encompasses links to the print media associated with film and to the actors who belong to both media worlds. For example, the “genealogical” lines of titles, from *Filmwelt* to *Neue Filmwelt*, from the leaflet *Illustrierter Film-Spiegel* to *Film Spiegel*, show that the relationships of popular illustrated film magazines can be better assessed if other print products such as program leaflets are also taken

into account because they, like the illustrated popular film magazine, are also part of a historical popular accompaniment and promotion of film.

Looking forward, I propose four theses that point beyond the object and can be discussed in further research on the format of the popular illustrated film magazine:

1. Popular illustrated film magazines initiate and accompany the conversation about individual films as well as about film as such. It is especially in times of transition that this function becomes particularly evident.
2. Popular illustrated film magazines produce their own multimodal knowledge about film. They need to be further contoured as formats of their own with their own media logics.
3. Popular illustrated film magazines, because of their target-group orientation, have a considerable, hitherto rather neglected, share in the creation of a national as well as international film culture.
4. The three aspects mentioned above, however, are dependent on a complex field of tensions among personal, technical, material, historical, political, and intermedial aspects of the medium of film and its related print products.

Popular illustrated film magazines can easily be underestimated because of their multimodal presentation style, their supposedly easy-to-understand manner, and their targeting of a broad audience. Yet this multimodal manner, the particularly intensive embedding in print media as well as cinematic culture, and consideration of the resulting complex relationships pose challenges to analysis. In the future, the influence of these relationships on the popular illustrated film magazine must be taken into account in order to better grasp this format in its multimodal complexity and its mode of participation in national and international film cultures.

NOTES

1. Abbreviated *NFW* hereafter.
2. Eric Hoyt, "Lenses for Lantern: Data Mining, Visualization, and Excavating Film History's Neglected Sources," *Film History* 26, no. 2 (2014), 150.
3. Because a dubbing studio was established in the Soviet zone almost immediately after the end of the war, extensive information about no-longer-extant dubbed versions of films from the Eastern Bloc can be drawn precisely from the *NFW*. For example, a Czechoslovak film entitled *Mr. Habetin* is reviewed in detail in issue 10 of 1949, pages 8–9, and film stills are staged in an elaborate manner. The presentation suggests that there was a dubbed version under this title—there is nothing about it in the DFF archives or on the internet. In all likelihood, it is the film *Pan Habetin odchází* (ČSSR 1949).
4. For similar observations on the description of film magazines, see the following analyses: Tamar Jeffers McDonald and Lies Lanckman, "Introduction," in *Star Attractions*, ed. Tamar Jeffers McDonald and Lies Lanckman, 1–10 (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2019); Patrick Rössler, "Die Zeitschriften des Stummfilms als transmediale 'kleine Archive,'" *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 50, no. 2 (2018): 211–45; Daniel Biltereyst and Lies van de Vijver, "Introduction: Movie Magazines,

Digitization and New Cinema History,” in *Mapping Movie Magazines: Digitization, Periodicals and Cinema History*, ed. Daniel Biltereyst and Lies van de Vijver, 1–13 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

5. See, for example, Malte Hagener, *Moving Forward, Looking Back: The European Avant-Garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919–1939* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

6. Vincent Fröhlich, “Where the Film Has the (Visual) Word? On the Visuality and Materiality of Illustrated Film Magazines Exemplified by *Neue Filmwelt* (1947–1953),” *periodICON* 1, no. 1 (2021).

7. Following the holistic ideal, I have chosen a methodological mix of production studies, actor media theory, material philology, layout analysis, and film historiography. For an explanation of a holistic approach to magazines, also see Penny Tinkler, “Fragmentation and Inclusivity: Methods for Working with Girls’ and Women’s Magazines,” in *Women in Magazines: Research, Representation, Production, and Consumption*, ed. Rachel Ritchie et al., 25–39 (New York: Routledge, 2016).

8. Patrick Rössler, *Filmfieber. Deutsche Kinopublizistik 1917–1937* (Erfurt, Germany: Universität Erfurt, 2017), 217; Rössler even concludes, “Whether, in view of these interconnections [with the Ufa], it is still possible to speak of an independent press organ or whether the *Filmwelt* thus already has to be considered as a PR organ of the Ufa, can hardly be decided anymore.”

9. Michael Töteberg, “Reklame! Reklame! Reklame!,” in *Das Ufa-Plakat. Filmpremieren 1918 bis 1943*, ed. Peter Mänz and Christian Maryška, 12–16 (Heidelberg, Germany: Edition Braus, 1998).

10. Thomas Hanna-Daoud, *Die NSDAP und der Film bis zur Machtergreifung* (Köln, Germany: Böhlau, 1996), 259.

11. Klaus Kreimeier, *The Ufa Story: A History of Germany’s Greatest Film Company, 1918–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 283.

12. Klaus-Jürgen Maiwald, *Filmzensur im NS-Staat* (Dortmund, Germany: Nowotny, 1983), 137–38.

13. Kreimeier, *Ufa Story*, 336.

14. Kreimeier, 225.

15. “Almost 1.12 billion people went to the movies in 1943 in the ‘Greater German Reich’ (including Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, and the Warthegau but not the Czech areas). Statistically, that meant more than fourteen film attendances per person, a record not even approached in any other war year, much less any peacetime year.” Kreimeier, *Ufa Story*, 344.

16. This is not only in terms of politics and propaganda but also on a rather personal level. For instance, Koop describes Adolf Hitler as a “cinophile.” Volker Koop, *Warum Hitler King Kong liebte, aber den Deutschen Micky Maus verbot. Die geheimen Lieblingsfilme der Nazi-Elite* (Berlin: be.bra verlag, 2015), 11.

17. Karsten Witte, “Film im Nationalsozialismus,” in *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, ed. Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, and Hans H. Prinzler (Stuttgart, Germany: Metzler, 1993), 119.

18. David Bathrick, “From Soviet Zone to Volksdemokratie: The Politics of Film Culture in the GDR, 1945–1960,” in *Cinema in Service of the State: Perspectives on Film Culture in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, 1945–1960*, ed. Lars Karl and Pavel Skopal (New York: Berghahn, 2015), 18.

19. Alfred Lindemann, quoted in Seán Allan, “DEFA: An Historical Overview,” in *DEFA: East German Cinema, 1946–1992*, ed. Seán Allan and John Sandford (New York: Berghahn, 2010 [reprint]), 5.

20. For information on Bergmann, see also his filmed interview by Ralf Schenk, *Zeitzeugengespräch: Karl Hans Bergmann* DEFA-Stiftung, TC 1:30.

21. Schenk, *Zeitzeugengespräch: Karl Hans Bergmann* DEFA-Stiftung, TC 4:02.

22. Karl Hans Bergmann, *Der Schlaf vor dem Erwachen. Stationen der Jahre 1931–1949* (Berlin: DEFA-Stiftung, 2002), 55–56. *Die Rampe* had already drawn attention to “ideologically suspect films such as *Hitlerjunge Quex*” (D 1933) (57).

23. Schenk, *Zeitzeugengespräch: Karl Hans Bergmann* DEFA-Stiftung, TC 31:10.

24. Schenk, TC 24:14.

25. My own translation of Karl Hans Bergmann, “Vorwort—Klein Geschrieben,” *Neue Filmwelt* 1, no. 1 (1947), I.

26. As far as our research goes, no one knows who Ruth Vorpahl was or why Arnheim dedicated the book to her. In an email from July 24, 2022, Helmut H. Diederichs explained that, during his several meetings with Rudolf Arnheim, he did ask him about Ruth Vorpahl once or twice but never got an answer.

27. The other publications of the publishing house appeared later and a large part of them were related to the magazine. The film calendar was clearly marked as belonging to *NFW*, and visual material was deliberately used in it that is not found in the magazine. The program leaflets, presumably published monthly, bore the title *Illustrierter Film-Spiegel, Programmblätter der Zeitschrift 'Neue Filmwelt.'*

28. Even in his autobiography, Bergmann quotes exclusively from the editorial of his passion project.

29. Bergmann, *Schlaf vor dem Erwachen*, 386.

30. Based on the outlined contexts, the time span of the release of films was initially divided into eight-year intervals and, starting in 1945, into one-year intervals. The bars of the two different intervals can thus only be compared to a limited extent—but national comparability, which is the main concern here, is maintained within one block.

31. Tinkler, "Fragmentation and Inclusivity," 32.

32. Fröhlich, "Where the Film Has the (Visual) Word?"

33. Georg C. Klaren continued to write screenplays during the National Socialist regime and is listed, among other things, as the originator author of the propaganda film *Achtung! Feind hört mit!* (*Attention! The Enemy Is Listening!*) (G 1940).

34. The director states in newspapers that his film "is indebted to Expressionism." Georg C. Klaren, "Transzendentaler Film," in *Aufbau* 9 (1949): 956.

35. Jan-Christopher Horak, "Postwar Traumas in Klaren's *Wozzeck* (1947)," in *German Film and Literature: Adaptations and Transformations*, ed. Eric Rentschler (New York: Methuen, 1986), 133.

36. Vincent Fröhlich, "Viewing Illustrated Magazines with Wittgenstein: Methodological Approaches to the Visual Seriality of Illustrated Magazines (1880–1910)," in *Periodical Studies Today: Multidisciplinary Analyses*, ed. Jutta Ernst, Dagmar von Hoff, and Oliver Scheiding, 54–88 (Boston: Brill, 2022). On the importance of symmetry in illustrated journals, see Vincent Fröhlich, "A/Symmetry and Dis/Order: Data-Based Reflections on Balancing Stability and Change in Illustrated Magazines from 1906–1910," in *Visuelles Design: die Journalseite als gestaltete Fläche/Visual Design: The Periodical Page as a Designed Surface*, ed. Andreas Beck, Nicola Kaminski, Volker Mergenthaler, and Jens Ruchatz, 85–117 (Hannover, Germany: Wehrhahn, 2019).

37. Kay Weniger, *Das große Personenlexikon des Films. Die Schauspieler, Regisseure, Kameralente, Produzenten, Komponisten, Drehbuchautoren, Filmarchitekten, Ausstatter, Kostümbildner, Cutter, Tontechniker, Maskenbildner und Special Effects Designer des 20. Jahrhunderts. Band 3: F–H. Barry Fitzgerald—Ernst Hofbauer* (Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2001), 336ff.

38. Quoted in Bergmann, *Schlaf vor dem Erwachen*, 389–90.

39. Schenk, *Zeitzeugengespräch: Karl Hans Bergmann DEFA-Stiftung*, TC 23:30.

40. It must be added, however, that the individual leaflets are not dated and can therefore only be assigned an approximate date, something that is at least made possible by the common numbering of the leaflets and the premiere date of the film depicted.

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