

GDR CINEMA ON SWEDISH TELEVISION

THE FORMATION OF CULTURAL CONTACTS AND THE RECEPTION OF EAST-GERMAN NARRATIVES

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Abstract: This article studies the import of East German films by Swedish public service broadcaster Sveriges Radio, and their reception in the Swedish public sphere. While few GDR films reached theatrical distribution, Swedish television imported and broadcasted over 30 productions by the state-owned film studio DEFA during the 1970s and 1980s, making this the primary distribution window for East German film in Sweden. Relying on sources such as Sveriges Radio's in-house correspondence and screening reports, the weekly Sveriges Radio magazine *Voices in Radio/Television* (*Röster i Radio/TV*) and the public service corporation's annual reports, this study sheds light on the political, economic and ideological considerations involved in the cultural exchange between Sweden and the GDR.

Keywords: Swedish television, DEFA, film on television, transnational, transmedial, cultural exchange, reception

1 Introduction

During the Cold War, the media landscape became a battlefield for states that used culture as a diplomatic weapon.¹ In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), ideology guided cultural policy and international cultural exchange was an important way for the country to negotiate its image abroad.² Likewise, international cultural contacts were of crucial importance for the state-owned GDR film studio Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft (DEFA) – both in its efforts to entertain and educate East German audiences and in its ambition to export GDR cinema.³ Up until the fall of the Berlin Wall, Sweden's location between the East and the West made it a key country (*Schwerpunktsland*) that East Germany prioritized in its advances and propaganda efforts.⁴ As commercial Swedish cinemas showed little interest in the distribution of GDR cinema, DEFA sought alternative paths of distribution by targeting Swedish television. In the 1970s and 1980s, the East German film studio developed institutional connections with SR, and during this time more than 30 DEFA films were screened on Swedish television.

Although a lot of research has been devoted to the institutional history of Swedish film and television from a national point of view, less emphasis has been placed on transnational perspectives. Some empirical research has been carried out with regard to the cultural exchange between DEFA and Scandinavian public service broadcasters,

but questions about the cultural transfer of GDR films and their reception in Sweden have remained unexplored.⁵ This article studies the Swedish public service broadcaster Sveriges Radio's (SR) import of East German films and their reception in the Swedish public sphere.⁶ While some of the broadcast GDR films were historical in nature (e.g. literary adaptations or films drawing on the German cultural heritage), other films centered on contemporary life – both in the GDR (e.g. youth films about gender equality and social change) and around the world (e.g. political documentaries about US imperialism in Vietnam, or Chile's military dictatorship). This raises the following central research questions:

- How were the contacts between SR and DEFA formed, and how did the exchange function?
- What themes did the GDR films highlight and how were these narratives received in the Swedish public sphere?

Methodologically, this article builds on qualitative analyses of textual material about exchange, contact and cultural collaboration, relying on sources such as Sveriges Radio's in-house correspondences and screening reports, the weekly SR magazine *Voices in Radio/Television (Röster i Radio/TV)*, and the public service corporation's annual reports. The archival material, collected from SR's archive in Stockholm, sheds light on the careful planning that preceded cultural exchange between Sweden and the GDR. Additionally, the article will study the DEFA films' circulation and reception in the Swedish press. Drawing on Gregory A. Waller, I employ a method of "search and re-search" using the National Library of Sweden's digital search tool for digitized newspapers, in an effort to trace the public debate surrounding the DEFA films.⁷ While the accessible and searchable digital newspaper archive is not complete, Waller points out, general search terms can prove generative and offer leads to be followed in both digital and non-digital environments.⁸ In doing so, Waller argues that the most crucial aspect are the unique searches based on previously obtained information.⁹ In this process, I have made broader searches (for example, "east german film" or "gdr film") as well as more specific searches for individual film titles and names of directors. Moreover, I have not only studied the searchable articles, but also investigated programming sections, letters to the editor sections and non-digitized journals surrounding key broadcasting dates. In doing so, this article contributes knowledge not only about the methods and rhetoric that permeated the cultural exchange, but also further knowledge about the critical reception of GDR narratives in Sweden.

2 Entanglements between Sweden and the GDR

During the Cold War, the GDR aimed to influence perception of the country in both the East and the West. From the early post-war period, the GDR attempted to gain legitimacy as a sovereign nation, as opposed to merely a Soviet-occupied zone – a distinction which guided the GDR's contacts with Sweden and other nations until the country gained official recognition in 1971.¹⁰ Sweden's position outside of The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its commitment to nuclear disarmament made the country especially important to the GDR and its communication efforts.¹¹ In the 1970s and 1980s, other elements of its foreign policy, such as an increasing emphasis on "international solidarity" and recurring criticism of other Western countries' relationship to the Third World,¹² made Sweden a country of particular importance to the GDR. In a Swedish context, previous research on the cultural contacts between the GDR and Sweden has primarily centred on the school system, universities and the work carried out by the GDR Culture Centre (DDR-Kulturzentrum) in Stockholm.¹³ None of these studies, however, deal in depth with the role of film or television.

Much research on East German film history revolves around the state-owned film production company DEFA. Situated in the Soviet-occupied zone, in the same facilities as the historically dominant German film company UFA in Potsdam-Babelsberg,¹⁴ DEFA was set up as the GDR's state monopoly film company.¹⁵ Although the Soviet Union relinquished control over the studio in the late 1940s, the East German film industry mirrored the Soviet film industry's organizational structure to a great extent. As Daniella Berghahn notes, through the Central Film Administration (Hauptverwaltung Film) and the Ministry of Culture, the government exercised control over all aspects

of the film industry in order to “ensure that the national film culture reflected the grand master narrative of socialism.”¹⁶ While many DEFA films can be categorized as didactic or educational, Berghahn points out that few were overtly propagandistic.¹⁷ As Marc Silberman and Henning Wrage argue, DEFA was not a commercial film company; rather, “[i]ts mission was to produce films for mass consumption that would educate and inform the public about the evils of the past and address the viewer as the imaginary socialist citizen of the future.”¹⁸ Much scholarship on DEFA centres precisely on this duality: the production of popular films with artistic merit (in other words, films that were able to compete with Hollywood, West Germany and other international film cultures) co-occurring with the production of films that sought to reflect GDR ideology and the ‘correct’ socialist narratives.

Recent historical research on DEFA places less emphasis on East Germany as a national cinema and instead studies the renowned film studio’s transnational relations. Silberman and Wrage, for example, argue that one should not study East German film and television in isolation, but take into account the FDR counterparts of DEFA and DDR Fernsehen (GDR state television) as well as international competition.¹⁹ In GDR film theatres, the programming included a great many imports from other socialist countries as well as a smaller amount from the West, and East German television programming was also shaped by developments in West Germany.²⁰ The work of Seán Allan and Sebastian Heiduschke, as well as Mariana Ivanova, has further emphasized the role of international exchange and co-production practices between East and West.²¹ Similar impulses, meanwhile, have also influenced innovative television studies research on this topic.²²

Studying East German cinema from a transnational perspective thus constitutes an emerging trend, but so far there has been limited research investigating DEFA’s cultural exchange with Sweden. In terms of previous research, Ivanova traces DEFA’s cinematic exchange with Erich Mehl’s Sweden-registered film company Pandora Film and the four films it co-produced with DEFA in the 1950s.²³ Moreover, Tilo Hermann has mapped DEFA’s film exports to Sweden and their limited circulation in Swedish cinemas.²⁴ Using sources from the East German Foreign Ministry (Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes), Hermann traces DEFA’s cultural contacts with the Swedish Film Institute and the programming of screenings at film festivals and at the GDR Cultural Centre in Stockholm. However, due to the emphasis placed on theatrical film distribution and traditional film cultural outlets, the most prolific means of circulation of DEFA films in Sweden – television – remains conspicuously absent in Hermann’s study. This article aims to fill this knowledge gap and investigate how Swedish television became the primary distributor of East German film in Sweden.

In film historical literature, the relationship between film and television has frequently been framed as a war between media, wherein the new medium of television appeared and subsequently threatened the old medium’s business model and its standing as a cultural activity. For example, many film stylistic developments – from the rise of widescreen films to the upsurge in 3D film theatres – have been seen as a consequence of cinema’s battle with the small screen.²⁵ However, as Marie Cronqvist and Christoph Hilgert argue, the emphasis on “separate histories” – for example of film, radio or television – has led to a privileging of narratives of conflict and rivalry over those of cooperation and adaptation.²⁶ Within the field of media history, the theoretical and methodological impetus to move beyond national and mono-medial perspectives (focusing on one particular media form) has resulted in more holistic studies focusing on entire media systems.²⁷ Cronqvist and Hilgert build on this development in their discussion of the concept of *entangled media histories*, which the authors propose can be employed to further highlight the importance of *transnational* and *transmedial* perspectives when writing media history. “The shortcomings of single-medium studies have become obvious,” Cronqvist and Hilgert contend.²⁸ Instead, the authors argue that attention should be drawn to entanglements by focusing on “flows of content across different media products, formats, genres, channels or outlets in national or transnational environments.”²⁹

As mentioned, historical Swedish television research has predominantly centered on national, institutional perspectives rather than transnational or transmedial dimensions. Between 1993 and 2012, the Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History (Stiftelsen Etermedierna i Sverige) ran a large-scale research program on the history of Swedish public broadcast media. Within the framework of this national project, which Monika Djerf-Pierre and Mats Ekström outline in the book *A History of Swedish Broadcasting*, numerous empirical studies were produced based on primary archival research.³⁰ However, as Marie Cronqvist argues, the political context of the Cold War and the East-West divide is largely absent in this body of work.³¹ While the fact that SR was modelled after the British Broadcasting Corporation

is frequently discussed, the role of imported programmes and foreign films in Swedish television history receives remarkably little attention within The Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History's research program. Dag Nordmark's study of culture and entertainment programming on Swedish radio and television constitutes an exception, but only a few pages are devoted to the import of foreign programmes.³² However, in recent years, the transnational connections between Swedish and international broadcasting culture has increasingly come to the fore.³³ By emphasizing transnational exchange and the interconnectedness between the different media forms of film and television, this article contributes to this emerging trend adding new perspectives on the media historical entanglements between SR and DEFA, Sweden and the GDR.

3 Cultural Exchange and the Import of Film

From the late 1960s onwards, millions of Swedes watched feature films that were broadcast on television. Regular television broadcasting in Sweden began in the autumn of 1956 and right from the beginning, film constituted part of the programming. In the early days of television, Per Vesterlund writes, Sveriges Radio had a 'gentlemen's agreement' with the Swedish film industry that limited the screening of feature films to 75 per year, of which only 20 were allowed to be of Swedish origin.³⁴ The agreement, which lasted until 1969, also meant that SR needed to rent films and television programmes from abroad in order to fill out their program supply.³⁵ In December 1969, a second channel, TV2, began broadcasting – an event widely discussed as 'the channel split' (*kanalklyvningen*). Following this, the amount of feature films broadcast on television grew significantly – from 74 in 1969 to 242 in 1971.³⁶ Indeed, film on television attracted attention as an exceptionally popular cultural activity in Sweden. In the Swedish Arts Council's (Kulturrådet) sub-report *New Cultural Policy (Ny kulturpolitik)* from 1972, the viewing of feature film on television emerged as the most popular cultural activity, winning out over viewing theatre on television, borrowing books from public libraries, listening to concerts on television, going to the cinema, purchasing of music records and visiting museums.³⁷ Moreover, as Vesterlund has further argued, the feature films stood out in the contemporary television schedule,³⁸ as becomes evident when reviewing contextual information like the official programming magazine *Voices in Radio/Television* or television listings in the bigger Swedish newspapers. Unlike regular television programmes, feature films slated for broadcast on television were presented in mini-feature texts next to the listing. Moreover, the actual formatting of the television schedule in a magazine like *Voices in Radio/Television*, where film descriptions could take up as much as three quarters of an entire column,³⁹ visually demonstrates the prestige of feature film broadcasts within Swedish television.

Swedish public service television has always relied heavily on the import of media content from abroad. In the early days of television, one of every three programming hours was acquired outside of the corporation, most often from international suppliers.⁴⁰ In June 1958, Sweden joined the European exchange system Eurovision; the following year, Nordvision, a cooperative venture between the five Nordic public service providers, was launched in an effort to further stimulate regional program exchange. While SR showed great interest in these types of exchange, the results were far from impressive. During the early 1960s, the number of programming hours imported through the Eurovision exchange was more or less constant, while Swedish television's total number of programming hours gradually increased.⁴¹ Moreover, the imported Nordic programmes were often met with sharp criticism, due to both language issues and content, and the role of Nordvision diminished with time.⁴² Instead, the United States (and to a lesser extent Great Britain) filled the void and provided SR with entertainment programming. As Tove Thorslund describes in her dissertation, American programming was highly influential, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, as the country's three major companies CBS, NBC and ABC were able to offer television series at low prices on the international market, with the American western being one of the more popular genres.⁴³ Meanwhile, as Ulf Jonas Björk shows, SR made explicit efforts to decrease the 'Americanization' of Swedish television.⁴⁴ In 1966, for example, corporation officials found American series, most notably westerns, "to some extent over-represented,"⁴⁵ and opted to increase the import of European television programmes, such as "German, French, Russian, Polish... but above all English ones."⁴⁶ In 1969-1970, SR was directed by parliament to add a second TV channel, TV2, in an effort to stimulate competition between the two channels and further increase diversity on Swedish television.

The creation of a new television channel with a distinctive profile led to a great increase in resources and a large-scale recruitment of new personnel. As Leif Furhammar writes, the state authorities believed “that the sharply increased airtime allotted to societal, cultural, news, and political programmes would lead to stronger and more comprehensive societal coverage and a strengthening of democracy.”⁴⁷ Already at the planning stage of the new channel, Malin Wahlberg observes, TV2 emerged as a ‘radical’ alternative.⁴⁸ According to Wahlberg, TV2’s programming policy emphasized international contexts and principles, a more diverse representation, and the support of a politics of social change. In doing so, TV2’s policy occasionally clashed with the Radio Law, which dictated that TV programmes should “remain unbiased and informative.”⁴⁹ Making use of the archive of SR’s Control Board, Wahlberg shows that the channel split led to recurring deviations from the hitherto prevailing public service broadcasting principles, more specifically as a result of TV2’s increased emphasis on social issues programming, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s public television “made considerable room for war protests and solidarity films.”⁵⁰ The debate about public service broadcasters’ ‘objectivity’ and ‘neutrality’ continued into the 1970s, when TV2 was afforded the pejorative pet name “the red channel.”⁵¹

The growing emphasis on diversity and social change also had an impact on the import of films. Even after the channel split, Per Vesterlund reveals, US films made up a significant portion of the screened films on Swedish television, making up as much as 37% of the total film program in 1971.⁵² In a Government Official Report entitled *Society and Film (Samhället och filmen)*,⁵³ the predominance of Western film culture on Swedish television was identified as a problem, and the commission highlighted the need to screen more films from Africa, South America and Eastern Europe.⁵⁴ Moreover, as Wahlberg writes, the team in charge of selecting and scheduling international films at TV2 were committed to changing the established dynamic. For example, Magnus Roselius, part of TV2’s team in charge of international film purchases, argued internally that “special attention should be paid to film and TV productions outside Europe and the United States... A film depicting guerrilla warfare in Latin America has as much claim to transmission, and perhaps more, than a western from North America.”⁵⁵ During the 1970s, the shift towards a more diverse film programming policy became evident not only in TV2’s programming schedule, but also in SR’s intensified dialogue concerning programming transfer with the Intervision television network.

While the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) was a project limited to Europe, the socialist bloc’s programming transfer, coordinated by the Organisation Internationale de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision (OIRT), was spearheaded by the Soviet Union and was global in scope, including member countries around the world aligned with the bloc.⁵⁶ Intervision, the television network of OIRT, functioned as a means to foster programming exchange, in a similar way to the EBU’s Eurovision. Besides Finland, no countries from Western Europe were members of the Intervision.⁵⁷ However, for most of the 1970s, Sweden, a non-OIRT member, participated in numerous Intervision meetings as an observer. In a report from the Intervision conference in Potsdam in August 1970, Lars-Eric Kjellgren, a member of SR’s international department, highlighted the benefits of participation:

The expansion of the programming cooperation between Intervision and Sveriges Radio is appealing for both parties for several reasons: programming reasons, cultural policy reasons or purely political reasons. The fact that we have been invited as an observer is surely due to our country’s political neutrality ... From the channels’ standpoint, the usefulness of the programming is key. Therefore, we must first and foremost review the programmes from an artistic, informational or entertainment perspective. Besides this, the economic factor matters, and programmes are offered more or less free of charge, including costly productions like operas and ballets (even in color).⁵⁸

While Kjellgren stressed the benefits of a reciprocal exchange from both an economical and an artistic point of view, he also expressed concern about the feasibility of implementing closer cooperation, writing that “continued participation in meetings without the achievement of expected results” might risk “demands for other indications of friendship.”⁵⁹

Internal reports from the Intervision conferences show that discussions were not limited to the import and export of programs, but also focused on the possibility of East-West co-productions.⁶⁰ SR had so-called framework agreements concerning program exchange with Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, GDR, Bulgaria and Hungary.⁶¹

Four agreements, those with the Soviet Union, GDR, Bulgaria and Hungary, included “co-production clauses,” which looked different for each country. In an internal report, SR noted that several problems could arise from such cooperation:

Differences when it comes to the freedom of the press and freedom of speech, values on private and public morale, copyright issues, planned economy, lack of currency, political ideology and not least the way responsibilities are handled.⁶²

SR’s agreement with the GDR stated that they would “aim to produce a solid foundation for co-productions.”⁶³ Ivanova notes that international co-productions were highly valued in the GDR and that within DEFA there was a consistent “desire to achieve an international presence, to cut costs by cooperating with others, and, ultimately, to straddle the Iron Curtain divide.”⁶⁴ Similarly, in an internal mapping of the socialist countries’ television organizations from 1976, SR noted that the East German representatives consistently “express much interest in co-productions, something which is highlighted whenever programming content is discussed.”⁶⁵ However, besides a report by TV2 on everyday life in the Soviet Union, no co-production project seems to have passed the planning stages during the 1970s.⁶⁶

Furthermore, SR representatives repeatedly attended the Intervisio screening festivals Tele-forum and Film-forum, held in different parts of Eastern Europe. SR’s delegations were typically comprised of representatives of TV1, TV2, educational television and the central programming committee.⁶⁷ First and foremost, the films and television programs were reviewed based on artistic merit. Even so, there are examples of SR representatives questioning whether programs deemed interesting or well-made would be possible to broadcast on Swedish television given the demands for “objectivity” and “neutrality” according to the Swedish Radio Law. For example, Deutscher Fernsehfunk’s television drama *Hafengeschichten* (Klaus Gendries, 1971) was praised for being entertaining, yet also “distorted” and “propagandistic.”⁶⁸ If *Hafengeschichten* was to be imported, SR’s representative recommended that an accompanying show be broadcast along with the TV drama, problematizing it from a political and a social perspective. At SR, this was a common strategy when dealing with potentially controversial topics.

Notably, SR’s film-renting operation was not centralized, but split between different departments, which meant that the channel representatives could end up competing over the same content, something which was noted as a problem internally.⁶⁹ However, TV2’s ‘radical’ profile meant that the channel showed a greater interest in international films, including those from the Eastern bloc. Sveriges Radio Yearbook 1974–1975, a mid-year report on the corporation’s activities in the preceding fiscal year, reflected this, noting that TV1 screened films from a total of 8 countries, whereas TV2 screened films from 22 countries, “many of which from the Third World.”⁷⁰

4 Reception of East German Narratives

Following the channel split in 1969, broadcasting of East German films on Swedish television increased sharply. As Hermann has shown, East German cinema had a remarkably small share of the commercial Swedish film market, even in comparison to other minor cinemas, and only three GDR films gained theatrical distribution throughout the 1970s.⁷¹ Television was a much more significant distribution venue. During the early days of Swedish television in the 1950s and 1960s, 4 feature length GDR films were broadcast. That number grew to 21 in the 1970s and 10 in the 1980s, a period during which the GDR’s cultural contacts with the Nordic countries was particularly intensive.⁷² Among these films, the most common genres were documentaries, youth films and art films directed by the likes of Konrad Wolf and Egon Günther.⁷³

During the 1960s and 1970s, East German documentaries gained more attention in the Swedish press than East German narrative films – partly due to their explicit social criticism of the United States, West Germany and other aspects of the West, which was controversial for conservative and pro-American viewers. For example, on the morning of April 30th, 1969, the Swedish school television (Skol-TV) program *Cursive because TV-program* (Titta,

leka, lära) aired a dubbed East German film on the war in Vietnam. Following this, a disgruntled parent wrote a letter to the Gothenburg newspaper *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* to complain about the “scary images” and “intrusive narrator” having frightened their 4-year-old son.⁷⁴ Besides this, the parent expressed criticism of the film’s message, in particular its attacks on the United States and West Germany. In doing so, the letter-writer quoted the narrator verbatim: “the voice continued: ‘Look at the uniforms, remember their faces, they exist also in West Berlin and in West Germany’.” The letter continued: “Is it really possible that Swedish school children should have to take a text like this seriously?” Alongside the letter, the newspaper’s editor endorsed the criticism and added that television should not “take on the unsolicited role of judge of which wars are deemed wrong or acceptable (or even righteous).”

Later that same week, SR representatives responded that the film was part of a series on mass media and persuasion, and that children can only be taught how to detect propaganda by analysing it.⁷⁵ The representative did, however, admit that this framing choice could have been made more explicit before and after the broadcast. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the Vietnam war was a hot topic of debate, and many programmes were criticized in the press and reported to the internal audit institution Radionämnden.⁷⁶ As Margareta Borg notes, programmes about the Vietnam war occurred also on Swedish school television, and Swedish television was alternately accused of being both pro-American and anti-American.⁷⁷ In other words, what stood out about the East German film on *Watch, play, learn* was not the topic or the mode of address, but rather the linking of West Germany to US imperialism, a motif that recurred frequently in the contemporary GDR documentary production.⁷⁸

In-house screening reports from business trips to East Berlin show that SR was aware of the controversial nature of many East German documentaries. For example, the films of GDR’s most prominent documentary film team, Walter Heynowski and Gerhard Scheumann, were treated with caution by Swedish representatives. In 1965, Heynowski and Scheumann founded Studio H&S under the auspices of DEFA with the explicit aim to improve the GDR’s representation on the international film festival circuit.⁷⁹ In particular, Heynowski and Scheumann’s films’ propagandistic qualities were discussed internally within SR. For example, Thomas Alexandersson dismissed their short film *Greetings from East to West* (*Grüße von Ost nach West*, 1966) as “grossly propagandistic” and “one-sided” and the feature documentary *Witching Hour* (*Geisterstunde*, 1967) as having “a strong political undertone.”⁸⁰ When Heynowski and Scheumann’s films were purchased and broadcast on Swedish television anyway, measures were taken to tone down any propagandistic elements. For example, Swedish television screened only parts of Heynowski and Scheumann’s *The Man Without a Past* (*Der Mann ohne Vergangenheit*, 1970), a documentary about the then 34-year-old West German local politician Horst Rudolf Überlacker, a self-proclaimed national socialist. Referencing the public service broadcasters’ regulatory framework on unbiasedness and neutrality, TV2 chose to air an interview with Überlacker by journalist Bo Isaksson, as well as an interview with Heynowski and Scheumann by Ulf Gudmundsson, alongside a 30-minute excerpt from the 60-minute documentary.⁸¹ Prior to the screening of *The Man Without a Past* on Swedish television, Heynowski and Scheumann visited Stockholm together with the cinematographer Peter Hellmich, and took interviews from the Swedish press. “Almost all of their films have a political and Marxist tendency,” Sweden’s largest daily *Dagens Nyheter* wrote.⁸² The filmmakers defended their position and made clear that they were socialists making propaganda films in effort to influence “the international class struggle.”⁸³ Some newspapers questioned Heynowski and Scheumann’s documentary methods, focusing on the fact that they posed as West German journalists when interviewing the increasingly intoxicated mercenary Siegfried Müller for the film *The Laughing Man* (*Der lachende Mann*, 1966) – parts of which had been screened on Swedish television on the program *Studio 66* five years prior. While some critics found the editing together of archival material and interviews skilful,⁸⁴ others labelled the film “full scale indoctrination.”⁸⁵ The initiative to broadcast complementary interviews and commentary, however, was unilaterally praised, with *Dagens Nyheter* writing that it “made the propaganda intentions behind the film clear.”⁸⁶

In the following years, Swedish television showed three Heynowski and Scheumann features: *The War of the Mummies* (*Der Krieg der Mumien*, 1974), an internationally acclaimed film about the beginning of the Chilean junta’s brutal dictatorship; *I Was, I Am, I Will Be* (*Ich war, ich bin, ich werde sein*, 1974), which offers a glimpse into Chilean concentration camps; and *Steadfast in Fire* (*Im Feuer bestanden*, Walter Heynowski & Gerhard Scheumann, 1978), a documentary about two widows of ministers in Salvador Allende’s cabinet. These films, all on international matters, were generally praised and were not labelled as “propaganda” but rather as “reportage.”⁸⁷ Herrmann Birkendahl, the director of

the GDR Cultural Centre in Stockholm, made note of the positive response to the documentaries on Chile and wrote to East Berlin in June 1976 to ask for more Studio H&S films to be sent to Stockholm.⁸⁸ The centre would also organize free screenings of several Heynowski and Scheumann documentaries, such as *Pilots in Pajamas* (*Piloten im Pyjama*, 1968), *A Minute of Darkness Does Not Blind Us* (*Eine Minute Dunkel macht uns nicht blind*, 1976) and *Steadfast in Fire*.⁸⁹

Måndagen den 8 september 1975

Östtyskar fick göra TV-film

INIFRÅN CHILE- JUNTANS FÅNGLÄGER

TV 1 21.35

Två östtyska TV-filmare har lyckats ta sig in i två av Chilejuntans koncentrationsläger. Deras upplevelser skildras i filmen "Jag var, jag är, jag blir" i TV 1 i kväll.

— Sjukdomar, hunger, miss-handel. Fångarna lever i otrolig misär, säger Rapport-reportern Jan Sandqvist.

Jan Sandqvist har själv upplevt juntans terror på nära håll.

— Alla lider i Chile idag, säger han.

De två östtyska TV-filmarna Heynowski och Scheumann besökte Chile bl a sommaren 1974. De lyckades filma och intervjua ett stort antal politiska fångar i två av de viktigaste koncentrationslägren — Chacabuco och Pisagua. Filmingen skedde under ständig bevakning.

— Det var viktigt att kunna identifiera så många fångar som möjligt. Juntan kommer en dag att få stå till svars för var och en av dem som kan ses och kännas igen i vår film.

— Vi vet t ex att avrättningar ägt rum under vårt besök i Pisagua, säger de två östtyskarna.

De har tidigare gjort en uppmärksam film om Chile — "Mumiernas krig".

Det är svårt att idag uppskatta antalet politiska fångar i Chile. En trolig siffra är ca 6 000.



Jan Sandqvist om kvällens film inifrån Chilejuntans fångläger:

"Fångarna lever i otrolig misär"

nomiska läget är katastrofalt. I hela Chile lever människor idag under svåra umbäranden. Folk har t ex inte råd att köpa mat.

— Kyrkan har t ex ett 100-tal barnutspisningssalar i Santiago. Vi besökte ett par av dem i hemlighet. Prästerna var rädda att de kunde stängas av myndigheterna. De visar ju att det råder hunger i landet.

Idag är också 90 procent av chilena emot juntan, anser Sandqvist.

— Juntan har inget som helst stöd idag. Det hade den tidigare inte att förlämma.

— Ändå gör juntan allt för att ändra sin image. Juntaledaren general Pinochet försöker framstå som den store landsfadern. Han har t ex aldrig på sig sina beryktade mörka glasögon nu mera.

Figure 1. Heynowski and Scheumann's documentaries on Chile gained a lot of press coverage in Sweden during the 1970s. See e.g. *Aftonbladet* 8 September 1975.

For the theatrical distribution of East German documentaries, East German officials targeted the independent cooperative Föreningen Filmcentrum, which was seen as an alternative, left-wing partner susceptible to advances from the GDR. Founded in 1968 during a meeting at the Workers' Educational Association ABF in May 1968, the cooperative gathered over 80 independent filmmakers. Its explicit ambition was to create alternative avenues for distribution, privileging socially critical documentary films over fictional feature films.⁹⁰ As Stefan Ramstedt notes, Filmcentrum “was the major advocate of experimental and politically engaged cinema in Sweden... [a]s an oppositional organization and part of the counter-cultural movement of the late 1960s, Filmcentrum positioned itself against capitalist production and distribution of films, but also against the state-financed production and distribution of the Swedish Film Institute.”⁹¹ In 1973, Filmcentrum started an exhibition organization called People's Cinema (Folkets Bio), and in the following year screened the DEFA-produced compilation film *You and Some Comrade* (*Du und mancher Kamerad*, Andrew Thorndike and Annelie Thorndike, 1956) – which uses archival footage to draw connections between Imperial Germany, Weimar Germany, the Third Reich and contemporary West Germany – as well as Heynowski and Scheumann's *The War of the Mummies*. As Tilo Hermann concludes: “in Filmcentrum the GDR now had a partner that raised no objections to the propagandistic content of many productions; indeed, it expressly encouraged films that criticized capitalism or the United States.”⁹²

During the 1970s, many influential independent filmmakers associated with Filmcentrum produced socially critical documentaries. As Malin Wahlberg argues, TV2's progressive agenda and overt interest in social issues attracted a new generation of radical journalists, producers and photographers to work with television. The collaboration between TV producers and Filmcentrum, Wahlberg writes, speaks to the importance of personal networks, and many of the socially critical films on the Vietnam War produced in this context “transgressed the border between media activism and the regulated sphere of public broadcasting.”⁹³ One particular film in Filmcentrum's catalogue, Swedish filmmakers Lennart Malmer and Axel Lohmann's 23-minute documentary *Berlin – Divided City* (*Berlin – Delad stad*), is indicative of the intellectual climate within the counter-cultural film movement and its attitudes toward the GDR – a movement comprising of young, radical filmmakers and journalists, some of whom also had established connections with TV2. *Berlin – Divided City* uses several documentary strategies. The impassioned narrator, combined with didactical intertitles, presents a narrative wherein the West, through a range of different means, makes efforts to undermine the young East German state. Using a compilation of archival film and sound sources, *Berlin – Divided City* presents the historical backdrop and the central moments leading up to the division of Germany. West German attempts to lure and entice well-educated East Germans, the narrator contends, resulted in a steady stream of migration from East to West.



Video 1. *Berlin – Divided City* (*Berlin – Delad stad*, Lennart Malmer and Axel R. Lohmann, 1971), distributor: Föreningen Filmcentrum.

The visual information offered by the filmmakers supports this rhetoric. Following a markedly sceptical intertitle reading “West Berlin ‘The last outpost of freedom’,” gloomy black-and-white images show, among other things, pornographic cinemas, run-down areas of the city, massive neon advertisements and seedy bars, effectively highlighting the decay and decadence of the capitalist West. While *Berlin – Divided City* was never broadcast on Swedish television, the Swedish Film Institute awarded the film a “quality premium,” a sum of money awarded to the best films in a range of different categories.

Along with filmmakers like Ingela Romare, Lennart Malmer worked in a tradition of solidarity filmmaking with strong associations with so-called ‘militant cinema,’ a form of ideological counter-cinema with many competing definitions.⁹⁴ During the 1970s, solidarity television was a key feature on Swedish television, with Swedish television teams reporting from, among other places, Vietnam, Laos, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Chile, Peru and South Africa.⁹⁵ Several of Malmer’s socially critical documentaries produced for Swedish television were appreciated in the GDR, and during the 1970s he won awards at the Leipziger Dokumentar- und Kurzfilmwoche for the films *An American in Hanoi* (*En amerikan i Hanoi*, Ingela Romare and Lennart Malmer, 1972), *To See Vietnam – August 72* (*Att se Vietnam – Augusti 72*, Ingela Romare and Lennart Malmer, 1972) and *In Our Country the Bullets are Blossoming* (*I vårt land börjar kulorna blomma*, Ingela Romare and Lennart Malmer, 1973). It should be noted the Leipzig film festival was held in high regard, with TV2’s Magnus Roselius calling it a “manifestation of solidarity with the Third World, and as such incredibly important. Indeed, the most important film festival in the world today.”⁹⁶ That several Swedish films gained awards in Leipzig was also highlighted prominently in Sveriges Radio’s yearbooks, which indicates the cultural prestige that these politically-engaged solidarity documentaries earned for the public service broadcaster on the international stage.⁹⁷

In comparison to the documentaries, most East German fiction films got a lukewarm reception in Sweden. Notably, many of the films broadcast in a 1975/1976 GDR film series – *Professor Mamlock* (Konrad Wolf, 1961), *Lot’s Wife* (*Lots Weib*, Egon Günther, 1965), *I Was Nineteen* (*Ich war neunzehn*, Konrad Wolf, 1968), *Wolz – Life and Illusion of a German Anarchist* (*Wolz – Leben und Verklärung eines deutschen Anarchisten*, Günter Reisch, 1973), *The Naked Man on the Sportsground* (*Der nackte Mann auf dem Sportplatz*, Konrad Wolf, 1974) and *Lotte in Weimar* (Egon Günther, 1975) – were prestigious DEFA productions. While some of these films drew on parts of the German literary canon, such as Friedrich Wolf’s play *Professor Mamlock* and Thomas Mann’s novel *Lotte in Weimar*, most were based on original screenplays. Swedish critics were at odds when it came to describing the state of GDR art cinema. Prior to the broadcast of Konrad Wolf’s autobiographical coming-of-age film *I Was Nineteen*, the prolific film critic Torsten Jungstedt wrote a comprehensive article in *Voices in Radio/Television* where he explored the question “When will East German cinema blossom?”⁹⁸ While critical of DEFA’s prestige project *Goya or the Hard Way to Enlightenment* (*Goya – oder Der arge Weg der Erkenntnis*, Konrad Wolf, 1971), which he dismissed as “cold” and “too calculated,” Jungstedt noted that Wolf is more interesting “when dealing with an age that is his own,” like in *I Was Nineteen*.⁹⁹ Critics were also sceptical of the romantic drama *Lot’s Wife*. While film critic Bernt Eklundh found Günther’s film “simple minded,” Maj-Britt Baehrendtz went so far as to call it “exceptionally boring.”¹⁰⁰ Centering on the autobiography of the famous German communist Max Hoelz, *Wolz – Life and Illusion of a German Anarchist* had an overtly political theme. As Ivanova notes, historical biopics grew popular within DEFA in the 1970s and the genre asserted “the GDR as a legitimate heir to European revolutionary thought and culture.”¹⁰¹ In Sweden, *Wolz* did not raise much debate, but the Social Democratic newspaper *Arbetet* noted sarcastically that it was odd that a film from East Germany, “where it is difficult to protest these days”, thematised a subversive radical.¹⁰² The literary adaptation *Professor Mamlock*, which deals with a respected Jewish surgeon’s struggles in Nazi Germany, and the Weimar-era period drama *Lotte in Weimar* gained a more favourable reception. For example, the Gothenburg daily *Göteborgsposten* praised *Professor Mamlock* and called it “the most important part of tonight’s television schedule,” and Jungstedt called *Lotte in Weimar* “a sparkling treat” for anyone familiar with the literature of Goethe and Mann.¹⁰³

After 1971, when Erich Honecker proclaimed that “no taboos” should hamper cultural production, East German filmmakers became more free and self-reflexive,¹⁰⁴ leading to an upsurge in films dealing with contemporary life in the GDR: so-called *Gegenwartsfilme*.¹⁰⁵ Following the broadcast of the DEFA youth film *Josef, For Instance* (*Zum Beispiel Josef*, Erwin Stranka, 1974) in March 1976, television critic Inger Wahlö noted that “The era of historical dramas is over and now the psychology of every-day life is depicted.”¹⁰⁶ Several youth films broadcast on Swedish television sparked debates about equality in East Germany. For example, Herrmann Zschoche’s love story *Love at 16* (*Liebe mit 16*, 1974) tells the story of a young couple’s first sexual experiences. Feminist journalist Maria-Pia Boëthius applauded

the film for being “deeply critical of society,” yet remained doubtful of a socialism “where young people are suppressed by adults with obvious sexual neuroses.”¹⁰⁷ *Solo Sunny* (Konrad Wolf, 1980), an award-winning *Gegenwartsfilm* about a young female pop singer, was met with similarly mixed reviews. Eva af Geijerstam in *Dagens Nyheter* praised that the film deals head-on with “the problems of the East German post-war generation”, while *Svenska Dagbladet* poked fun at the film’s emphasis on “the self-fulfilment of the individual.”¹⁰⁸ In other words, Swedish film and television critics welcomed social criticism of East German society, but the *Gegenwartsfilme* generally failed to impress.

In the GDR, children’s films (*Kinderfilme*) was a prioritized genre.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, children’s television programs from the GDR, most famously the stop-motion animation show *Little Sandman* (*Unser Sandmännchen*, 1959-), were very popular in Sweden during the 1970s.¹¹⁰ One-third of the DEFA productions screened on Swedish television were features made for young audiences, such as *Adventures With Blasius* (*Abenteuer mit Blasius*, Egon Schlegel, 1975), *The Beast of Prey* (*Das Raubtier*, Walter Beck, 1977), *Sabine Kleist, Age 7* (*Sabine Kleist, 7 Jahre*, Helmut Dziuba, 1982) and *Gritta of the Rat Castle* (*Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeius*, Jürgen Brauer, 1985). Though the reviews of the GDR children’s film tended to be short, the consistent import throughout the 1970s and 1980s indicates that they enjoyed certain popularity. Besides this, numerous DEFA produced short films, predominately animations and children’s films, were screened during the studied period.

As is evident, relatively few of the DEFA fiction films screened on Swedish television were considered controversial. One exception, however, is the politically charged prestige picture about the history of the Red Orchestra espionage ring, *KLK Calling PTZ: The Red Orchestra* (*KLK an PTX – Die Rote Kapelle*, Horst Brandt, 1971), which was broadcast in three parts on TV2 in November 1972. *KLK Calling PTZ* was a co-production between DEFA and the Soviet Union film studios Mosfilm and Lenfilm. The three-hour film has an overt anti-fascist theme, highlighting the development of the resistance organization from the emergence after Hitler’s rise to power in 1933 to its violent dissolution in 1942. As Mariana Ivanova notes in her dissertation, the Ministry for State Security (Stasi) was a stakeholder in the production of *KLK Calling PTZ* and archival documents indicate that the film was modified to emphasize the role of the Communist Party of Germany in the resistance.¹¹¹ In this sense, the film contributed to the manipulation of the Red Orchestra story. However, in Sweden, this skewed narrative did not remain uncontested. In December 1972, shortly after TV2 broadcast *KLK Calling PTZ*, TV1 decided to highlight another perspective on the Red Orchestra story, by screening the West German miniseries *Die rote Kapelle* (1972) as well as an interview with Leopold Trepper, a key figure in the Red Orchestra, made by a Dutch television team. As one television critic noted: “Now we will get a depiction of the most influential communist spy organization during the Second World War from both an East German and a West German perspective... This can only happen in the wonderful world of our television channels.”¹¹² The programming of these diverging films on a similar topic highlights not only an effort to offer several perspectives on controversial topics, but also the fact that TV1 and TV2 competed actively against one another.

As mentioned, East German representatives showcased great interest in co-producing with the Swedish broadcaster in the 1970s, but few results materialized. However, in the 1980s, TV2 contributed to the production of the crime film *Women Doctors* (*Ärztinnen*, Horst Seemann, 1984) alongside the Swiss production company Monopol-Films AG and DEFA. The film, based on a play by the West German playwright Rolf Hochhuth, focuses on the cynicism of the pharmaceutical companies, and centers on a female doctor that refuses to cover up serious issues with a proprietary drug. Interestingly, *Women Doctors* also features scenes shot on location in Stockholm, and the film includes Swedish actor John Harryson in the role of a professor. In the press, little emphasis was placed on the unusual East German-Swedish-Swiss co-production. Instead, the playwright Hochhuth, who a year prior had staged the play *Women Doctors* at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, gained most interest. The film was received favourably. For example, *Svenska Dagbladet* called it “incredibly powerful” and *Aftonbladet*’s critic found it “intense.”¹¹³ Yet, I have not been able to trace any documentation of correspondence between DEFA and SVT, about this film which leaves the question of what role TV2 played in the co-production open.

To summarize, the East German films that gained the most favourable reception in Sweden were neither the art films of Wolf or Günther nor the socially critical *Gegenwartsfilme*, but children’s films and Heynowski and Scheumann’s documentaries on Chile and Vietnam. Moreover, the only GDR films that SR representatives and Swedish journalists labelled as propagandistic were documentaries that voiced sharp criticism against West Germany.

5 Conclusion

The international export of East German films was an important part of DEFA's agenda to circulate socialist narratives and to negotiate the image of GDR internationally. Meanwhile, historical research shows that Sweden was considered a key country for East German communication and propaganda efforts. Foreign films on Swedish television were a popular phenomenon, and TV2 in particular imported films from outside Western Europe and the United States. This article shows that through its observational position within Intervision, the non-OIRT member SR participated in screenings of films and television programmes from the socialist bloc during the 1970s. As such, SR representatives closely monitored the development of the audiovisual sector in these countries and evaluated content for purchase or rent. While SR had co-production clauses with several socialist countries, among them the GDR, internal reports show that considerable political and economic differences in the production climate were seen as an obstacle to more developed cooperation. Meanwhile, this did not mean that the making of co-productions was impossible or hindered, but as the case of *Women Doctors* illuminates, the Swedish broadcaster indeed co-produced a film with DEFA in the mid-1980s.

While few GDR films gained commercial theatrical distribution, Swedish television imported and broadcasted over 30 DEFA productions, making it the primary distribution window for East German film in Sweden. This study shows that TV2's 'radical' profile and emphasis on social change prompted the channel to import and screen many of Heynowski and Scheumann's socially critical documentaries. Internal screening reports reveal a wariness of propaganda elements in documentaries from the GDR where connections were drawn between West Germany and the legacy of Nazism, and measures were taken to produce impartial, objective interviews and commentary in order to balance out what was perceived as propaganda. By contrast, Heynowski and Scheumann's films on international topics like the Chilean right-wing dictatorship and the US war in Vietnam were screened without such interventions and the films generally received favourable reviews in the press. Many independent filmmakers associated with Filmcentrum combined media activism with their work for the 'unbiased' public service broadcaster SR and as such, Filmcentrum was seen as susceptible to advances from the GDR. Several SR productions that explicitly criticized United States aggressions in Vietnam, made by filmmakers associated with Filmcentrum, were celebrated at the prestigious East German documentary film festival in Leipzig. Meanwhile, the East German fiction films that were broadcast in the 1970s – from the high-art cinema of Konrad Wolf and Egon Günther to a range of youth films and *Gegenwartsfilme* – garnered an unenthusiastic reception in Sweden. Although many critics wrote positively about the initiative to broadcast films from a minor film culture like the GDR, they were overall not impressed with the GDR films' artistic vision or their entertainment value.

This article has studied only a few aspects of the relationship between the Swedish public service broadcaster and East German film and television producers. While this article builds primarily on Swedish sources, focusing on SR's import of films from the GDR, a more holistic understanding of these connections would require further archival research in DEFA and DDR Fernsehen's archives, raising questions about which strategies DEFA employed in order to export films to Sweden and Scandinavia more broadly. Notably, such in-depth network analysis demands further biographical research about the key individuals that acted as mediators in these negotiations, which I would argue is an underdeveloped trajectory in transnational film and television history.

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Notes

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- 2 See e.g. Daniela Berghahn, *Hollywood Behind the Wall: The Cinema of East Germany* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Elaine Kelly, *Composing the Canon in the German Democratic Republic: Narratives of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Elaine Kelly, "Performing Diplomatic Relations: Music and East German Foreign Policy in the Middle East during the Late 1960s," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 72, no. 2 (2019): 493-540.
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- 4 Andreas Linderoth, *Kampen för erkännande. DDR:s utrikespolitik gentemot Sverige 1949-1972* [The fight for recognition: GDR's foreign policy toward Sweden 1949-1972] (Lund: Lund University, 2002); Nils Abraham, *Die politische Auslandsarbeit der DDR in Schweden* [The political foreign work of the GDR in Sweden] (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007); Birgitta Almgren, *Inte bara Stasi...: Relationer Sverige-DDR 1949-1990* [Not just Stasi...: Sweden-GDR relations 1949-1990] (Stockholm: Carlsson, 2013).
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- 8 Waller, "Search and Re-search," 48.
- 9 Ibid., 52.
- 10 Linderoth, *Kampen för erkännande*.
- 11 Abraham, *Die politische Auslandsarbeit der DDR in Schweden*.
- 12 Andreas Mørkved Hellenes and Carl Marklund, "Sweden Goes Global: Francophonie, Palme, and the North-South Dialogue during the Cold War", *Histoire@Politique* 11, no. 35 (2018): 1-17.
- 13 Linderoth, *Kampen för erkännande*; Abraham, *Die politische Auslandsarbeit der DDR in Schweden*; Almgren, *Inte bara Stasi...*
- 14 Klaus Kreimeier, *The Ufa Story: A History of Germany's Greatest Film Company 1918-1945* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1996).
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- 23 Ivanova, *Cinema of Collaboration*, 100-104.
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- 26 Marie Cronqvist and Christoph Hilgert, "Entangled Media Histories: The Value of Transnational and Transmedial Approaches in Media Historiography," *Media History* 23, no. 1 (2017): 131.

- 27 Hans-Fredrik Dahl, "The Pursuit of Media History," *Media, Culture & Society* 16, no. 4 (1994): 551-563; James Curran, "Media and the Making of British Society c. 1700-2000", *Media History* 8, no. 2 (2002): 135-154; Siân Nicholas, "Media History or Media Histories? Re-addressing the History of the Mass Media in Inter-War Britain", *Media History* 18, no. 3-4 (2012): 379-394.
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- 29 Ibid., 134. This perspective is also key within research on intermediality, see for example Lars Elleström, ed., *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
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- 33 See for example Malin Wahlberg, "Vietnam in Transmission: Documentary Film and Solidarity Programming in Swedish Broadcasting Culture (1967–72)," *Journal of Scandinavian Cinema* 7, no. 1 (2017), 43-64; Tove Thorslund, *Do You Have a TV? Negotiating Swedish Public Service through 1950s Programming, "Americanization," and Domesticity* (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2018); Marie Cronqvist, "From Socialist Hero to Capitalist Icon: The Cultural Transfer of the East German Children's Television Programme *Unser Sandmännchen* to Sweden in the Early 1970s," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 40, no. 5 (2020): 1-16.
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- 48 Wahlberg, "Vietnam in Transmission": 46.
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- 50 Ibid.: 61.
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- 71 Hermann, "Das Sandmännchen, das aus der Kälte kam": 30.
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Biography

Emil Stjernholm is an Assistant Professor in Media Studies at the Department of Communication and Media, Lund University. His areas of research include documentary film, propaganda studies and Swedish television history. He has previously published articles in journals such as the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, *Studies in European Cinema*, *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies* and *Journal of Scandinavian Cinema*.

Appendix: DEFA films screened on Swedish television, 1957–1989

Title / Director / Year	Screening date	Production company
<i>Murderers Among Us (Die Mörder sind unter uns, Wolfgang Staudte, 1946)</i>	1957-10-17 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>The Adventures of Fridolin (Die seltsamen Abenteuer des Herrn Fridolin B., Wolfgang Staudte, 1948)</i>	1959-09-04 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Conscience in Turmoil (Gewissen in Aufruhr, Hans-Joachim Kasprzik & Günter Reisch, 1961)</i>	1966-11-29, 1966-12-2, 1966-12-6 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA), DDR Fernsehen
<i>The Kaiser's Lackey (Der Untertan, Wolfgang Staudte, 1951)</i>	1968-11-22 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>The Man Without A Past (Der Mann ohne Vergangenheit, Walter Heynowski & Gerhard Scheumann, 1970)</i>	1971-02-26 TV2	Studio H&S
<i>KLK Calling PTZ – The Red Orchestra (KLK an PTX – Die Rote Kapelle, Horst E. Brandt, 1971)</i>	1972-11-11, 1972-11-18, 1972-11-25 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>The War of the Mummies (Der Krieg der Mumien, 1974)</i>	1974-09-12 TV1	Studio H&S
<i>Love at 16 (Liebe mit 16, Herrmann Zschoche, 1974)</i>	1975-06-30 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>I Was Nineteen (Ich war neunzehn, Konrad Wolf, 1968)</i>	1975-07-19 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>The Naked Man on the Sportsground (Der nackte Mann auf dem Sportplatz, Konrad Wolf, 1974)</i>	1975-08-01 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Lot's Wife (Lots Weib, Egon Günther, 1965)</i>	1975-08-02 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>I Was, I Am, I Will Be (Ich bin, Ich war, Ich werde sein, Walter Heynowski & Gerhard Scheumann, 1974)</i>	1975-09-08 TV1	Studio H&S
<i>Wolz - The Life And Illusions Of A German Anarchist (Wolz - Leben und Verklärung eines deutschen Anarchisten, Günter Reisch, 1973)</i>	1975-10-10 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Too Lean for Love (Für die Liebe noch zu mager?, Bernhard Stephan, 1974)</i>	1975-12-28 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Professor Mamlock (Konrad Wolf, 1961)</i>	1976-01-24 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Adventures With Blasius (Abenteuer mit Blasius, Egon Schlegel, 1975)</i>	1976-03-02 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>For Example, Josef (Zum Beispiel Josef, Erwin Stranka, 1974)</i>	1976-03-22 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA), KAG Roter Kreis
<i>Lotte in Weimar (Egon Günther, 1975)</i>	1976-10-02 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Phillip the Small (Philipp, der Kleine, Herrmann Zschoche, 1975)</i>	1976-12-27 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Song International (Jürgen Böttcher, 1971)</i>	1977-01-15 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)

Title / Director / Year	Screening date	Production company
<i>Steadfast in Fire (Im Feuer bestanden</i> , Walter Heynowski & Gerhard Scheumann, 1978)	1978-09-26 TV2	Studio H&S
<i>The Beast of Prey (Das Raubtier</i> , Walter Beck, 1977)	1979-12-27 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Solo Sunny</i> (Konrad Wolf, 1981)	1981-01-10 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Nicki</i> (Gunther Scholz, 1980)	1982-09-21 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>When Unku was Ede's Friend (Als Unku Edes Freundin war...</i> , Helmut Dziuba, 1980)	1982-12-29 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Godfather Death (Gevatter Tod</i> , Wolfgang Hübner, 1980)	1982-12-07 TV2	Production company Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>The Flying Windmill (Die fliegende Windmühle</i> , Günter Rätz, 1982)	1985-01-03 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Sabine Kleist, Age 7 (Sabine Kleist, 7 Jahre</i> , Helmut Dziuba, 1982)	1985-01-04 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Women Doctors (Ärztinnen</i> , Horst Seemann, 1984)	1985-03-30 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA), Sveriges Television AB TV2, Monopol-Films AG
<i>Pianke</i> (Gunter Friedrich, 1983)	1986-03-26 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA), DDR Fernsehen
<i>Gritta of the Rat Castle (Gritta von Rattenzuhausbeins</i> , Jürgen Brauer, 1985)	1988-12-30 TV1	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)
<i>Bear Ye One Another's Burdens (Einer trage des anderen Last</i> , Lothar Warneke, 1988)	1989-02-02 TV2	Deutsche Film AG (DEFA)

Besides these feature length films, numerous DEFA produced short films (predominately animations and children's films) and DDR Fernsehen produced TV-films and mini-series were screened on Swedish television. Three East German documentaries with vague Swedish titles – *Det råder mörker* ("Darkness prevails," 1976), *Ung i Östtyskland* ("Young in East Germany," 1978) and *En bergsby i Vietnam* ("A mountain village in Vietnam," 1979) – lack metadata and have yet to be identified.