

THE ROAD TO ORDER

After the end of the Second World War Sweden's foreign policy was characterized by caution which emphasized the country's policy of non-alignment. It was generally considered, however, that this non-alignment called for strong defence and, among other measures, the length of compulsory military service was extended. When Norway and Denmark joined NATO the Swedes decided to stay out of political blocks. It would have appeared that the country promoted an inward-looking and reformist social structure without any substantial interest in the rest of the world, had the Swedes not at the same time actively worked for a Nordic cooperation. This was to result in the Nordic Council which was founded in 1952 on Danish initiative. Several agreements were closed that facilitated trade and labour mobility between the Nordic countries – something which led to a considerable immigration from Finland, that had been devastated by the war, to the Swedish industrial centres in the 1950s. At the same time, a large number of Italian immigrants also came to Sweden, which needed workers for its growing industries.

The Swedes' – in all other respects – neutral foreign policy was characterized by a certain compliance towards the Soviet Union which had integrated the Baltic States into its territory after the Second World War. As a result, there was a relatively large number of Estonians and other Baltic refugees in the country. A traumatic post-war event, the so-called Baltic extradition, took place in 1946. At the end of the war a group of 167 Balts had come to Sweden. These had participated in the fighting against the Soviet Union and now that the Baltic States were occupied, the Russians demanded that the 167 refugees be extradited. The Swedish government complied with this demand, despite widespread protest.

Sweden's position as a neutral country found expression when it joined the UN in 1946, whereupon it adopted an active stance and participated in peace-keeping missions in various parts of the world. Several Swedes worked as mediators in conflicts, among them Folke Bernadotte who was murdered in Jerusalem in 1948. The Swede Dag Hammarskiöld was elected as Secretary-general of the UN in 1953. Swedish women also participated in the international peace work: for example, Alva Myrdal was elected chairwoman of the UN's Department for Social Issues. In 1960 there was a lively debate over the so-called tactical atomic weapons. Through the suggestion of a certain Östen Undén in 1961, a proposal was put forward in the UN for the founding of a nuclear-free zone.

After the pause in reform caused by the Second World War, the social democrats had presented their programme of 'the twenty-seven points' which, among other things, included proposals concerning industrial democracy, active employment policies and increased state influence over trade and industry. An expression of the general radicalization of Swedish society had been the major strike in 1945 when 120,000 engineering

industry workers went on strike in their demand for reforms. In the winter of that year several inquiries were set up to investigate the possibility of several branches of Swedish heavy industry becoming state-owned. The Swedish export industry was ready and waiting for war-torn Europe to begin reconstruction work. Products from the steel and engineering industries as well as the sizeable export of lumber answered the demands in Europe, and it was intended that the resulting income should finance the country's rising living standards.

The Parliament of 1946 ruled on increasing the state pension in order to guarantee a moderate income for older citizens. Two years later the general child allowance was introduced: every family with children under the age of 16 received a sum of money (which was gradually increased in subsequent years) that was to subsidize the augmented expenses involved in supporting a family. Despite continued building there was a need for more housing, and the state stimulated building by granting subsidized loans and housing discounts. The vacation law of 1951 stipulated that the two weeks' leave be extended to three weeks – and was eventually to be increased to five weeks.

The labour market parties closed the agreement of instituting works councils for information and counselling in trade and industry. The export industry grew, and when the Swedish krona (SEK) was devalued successfully in order to check inflation – the devaluation of 1949 was particularly great – this further increased the profits of the export industry. At the same time, cautious economies were made: the rationing of foodstuffs was kept until 1949, after which the price controls were maintained to further avoid inflation. The real wages began to climb steadily at the beginning of the 1950s, however (and were to do so for almost a quarter of century to come), which benefited the entire population. This affluence naturally led to an increase in private and public consumption. The Swedes could among other things increase their purchases of so-called durable consumer goods: vacuum cleaners, refrigerators and cars – which in turn favoured the domestic industries.

In the 1950s the Swedish population thus began to harvest the results of the economic policy that had been introduced in the latter half of the 1930s, and which was the foundation of the social structure that the social engineers attached to the social democratic party represented. The three main goals of the programme were growth, full employment and price stability. At the beginning of the 1950s there was considerable faith in the ability of the industry to create growth, and there was a unanimous conviction that it was the job of society to divide the resulting income in as equal a way as possible. There was thus consensus as to these goals: increased growth and affluence for all, and the means to accomplish this development were also accepted, i.e. increased rationalization, greater efficiency and the closure of unprofitable industries. Maximal growth could

only be achieved by increasing efficiency and by structural rationalizations. This also presumed an expanded mobility of the labour force – a circumstance which meant that the individual worker had to move with his or her family to where the profitable jobs were. As a consequence the countryside began to be depopulated.

In the 1950s people still accepted these structural rationalizations – criticism was not to surface until the late 1960s – but somewhere in the hearts of the people there lingered a nostalgia that, according to film historians like Leif Furhammar and Per Olov Qvist, among other places found its expression in many films that were set in the country, films which were either explicitly nostalgic or which romanticized the countryside. 'It would appear that the Swedish rural films contributed with some sort of fiction therapy to the psychological working through of this collective trauma ... which the popular move from the country into the cities meant',²⁹ wrote Furhammar, who distinguished three dominating film typologies that succeeded each other on the screen in the early 1950s. First, he says, there was the historical peasant film. *Driver dag faller regn* was a typical example of a film that upheld the values and traditions of the farmer communities in a national romantic form. Second, there appeared a series of farcical films which at once ridiculed and celebrated the rural way of life that was now on the verge of disappearing. A classical representative was the series of films entitled *Åsa-Nisse* (1949–68), about a Småland farmer whose pastoral adventures people never tired of watching. The critics in their turn tore their hair: the ever conciliatory Robin Hood pointed out that surveys had found that a not inconsiderable proportion of the audience had an intellect of a 10–12-year-old and 'why not indulge these backward elements in innocent amusement in the cinema as well?'³⁰ *Åsa-Nisse* – who was based on Stig Cederholm's cartoon – turned out to be exceedingly long-lived and a total of twenty films had been made by the end of the 1960s.

In the third category of rural films which P. O. Qvist has called 'contemporary dramatizations',³¹ are the films that considered life in the country with a nostalgic melancholy and which in their most genuine form expressed such a sensitivity as to warrant speaking of mourning proper. These films – writes Furhammar – portrayed life in the country as wholesome and humane as opposed to the corrupting existence in the city. The dichotomy of country–city has always been a feature of Swedish film, but this new, nostalgic dimension came about through an awareness of the obsolescence of rural life. *Hon dansade en sommar* (1951) was one such film and was to be its producer Nordisk Tonefilm's biggest box-office hit ever.

Such an upheaval as the virtual evacuation of the Swedish countryside would not have been accepted had not affluence steadily increased during the 1950s and 1960s. The working week was reduced to 40 hours and Saturdays off were introduced. In 1955 compulsory health insurance was

instigated and in 1957 the old poor relief law was substituted by the law of social assistance. A complex system of housing subsidies was developed and the country continued along the general welfare line by accepting a system of supplementary pensions (ATP), where part of every employee's salary was deducted for state pension funds and the money administered and paid as service pensions, a form of supplement to people's pensions. Through such an arrangement people were able to maintain their incomes virtually intact upon retiring. The weakness of this system was if it were to collapse due to a rise in inflation and if pension expenses were to exceed incomes – in effect contemporary pensions were financed largely through current incomes. Faith in the never ceasing growth of the Welfare State was unwavering, however, and the vehement political fight that the introduction of this system caused was about something else, namely the relationship between private initiative and government control. The conservative parties spoke warmly on behalf of a voluntary pension saving system, but the Swedes chose differently. The faith in justice and in the care of the state system's principles was strong.

What was to be called the Swedish model was thus both cause and consequence of the rapid economic growth. As of the 1950s the wage policy that showed solidarity with low-paid workers was the most important corner-stone of this model. The wages were negotiated centrally between the organizations which represented the various parties of the labour market. In order for industries to expand, the principle demanded that wage earners did not enforce such raises as they could have so that the companies could invest their profits in further expansion instead. On the other hand, this meant that companies who could not pay wages similar to the ones that the major industries could afford were at risk of being forced out of business. However, this had been anticipated by the social planners. To counterbalance this effect, society invested in various measures to facilitate mobility within the labour market: for instance, retraining and relocation grants for those workers who might be affected. In order to accomplish this, massive public funds were allotted to the expansion of the Swedish Labour Market Board (AMS): in 1950 only 1 per cent of the state's expenses went to this agency, while the corresponding figure twenty years later was 7.4 per cent.

The public sector's insurance systems, medical services and health care, child care and the schools were expanded in the 1950s and in particular in the 1960s. To be able to finance the expansion of the public sector the tax burden was increased for both individuals and companies, a policy which led to severe fights in domestic politics. In 1947 a new taxation system had been introduced, which brought some relief for low wage earners, but which involved increased taxation pressure for high earners, a feature that has been characteristic of the Swedish model ever since. As early as 1945 a practice had been introduced where tax was deducted at source.

The result of these reforms was that the state income multiplied over a short space of time. The number of public posts increased, many of which were filled by women. In 1950 only 15 per cent of married women had entered the labour market while the corresponding figure in 1980 was 64 per cent, the major part of these working in low-paid service occupations and part-time employment, however. In 1959 the comprehensive school was introduced and it is interesting to note that it was only then that one started from the old ordinance according to which the parish clergyman was to be a natural member on the board of a school. Twelve years later nine years of compulsory schooling was established. Because Scandinavian children do not start school until they are seven years old, they were to live at home at least until they were sixteen years or so, sometimes later. The entry of young people into the labour market was thus postponed by a few years. This was to have its consequences for family life, the consumer patterns of families and contributed to the spread of youth culture.

This sense of order extended right into people's homes, and an interesting document from this time is the so-called 'housewife films' which were shown for free in cinemas throughout the country on behalf of, among others, the Cooperative Wholesale Society (KF). The housewife films were exceptionally popular and the last ones were made as late as the mid-1970s. As a historical document they portray the dominant ideology in society by their focus on the home and its dependence on the Welfare State, the folkhem rhetoric. The explicit goal of these films was to educate housewives and foster them towards the ideal that had been established in the 1930s: at the centre of the folkhem is the housewife who is well trained for her task and who directs the chores and duties of the home.

The housewife films did not solely address the woman of the home, however, but also other members of the family. They did not only portray the home and its appearance but touched on its inhabitants as well. The whole family was encouraged to help around the house in order to facilitate the work of the mother who, through her ministrations, was able to make the home comfortable and cozy for everybody: 'Help your mama, change your pajamas!' Through images and narrative the family was described as a chain that - in order to maintain its strength - required that none of the links (i.e. the mother) be exposed to undue strain. The home in its turn was to be a source of rest and recreation for its members. It was important to tend to both the corporeal and the spiritual health of the family members, but it is clear that material well-being was perceived as the foundation of spiritual health.

Almost all the housewife films advertised various types of products: thus a scene about sleep and its beneficial effects would promote the planned, controlled and thoroughly tested beds and bedroom furniture of KF, and an information film about coffee would promote a certain brand as being the best and most modern kind. The word *modern* is one of the most

frequently used in the housewife films, as is the word *practical* and, self-evidently, *planning*. If the family is to fit a new kitchen, advice is asked of experts – who know best because they have conducted studies as to how the housewife works in the kitchen. Planning is long term and one saves money for part of the financing and borrows the rest. Characteristic of the rhetoric in these films is a note of caution against all kinds of wastefulness and excess: ‘On the contrary it is possible to create a beautiful frame for the meal with small means!’³³

The housewife films represent an ideal world where the order creates an overall pattern for people’s lives. They were not as humourlessly wholesome as one might easily imagine, however. Very early on these short sketches showed a filmic self-awareness that was also characteristic of the feature films produced by the industry. Thus, for instance, the characters could suddenly break the illusion of reality, and address the audience in self-ironic terms, as did the expert guide in a fruit beverage film when he introduced himself as ‘one of the men in these films wearing white coats, who knows anything and everything’.³⁴

THE FILM INDUSTRY IN THE WELFARE STATE

As the expenses of the state increased, so did the tax burden for both wage earners and industries. The film industry did not quite belong in the favoured and lucrative export category, and many of the measures that were taken to facilitate profitability for the latter – such as devaluation, price control and the general wage policy – dealt the film industry a particularly hard blow. The devaluations raised the price of raw film and made the import of foreign film more expensive, the collectively agreed raises in wages also affected production costs and price control prevented the industry from retrieving its losses through the income from ticket sales. The head of Svensk Filmindustri, Carl Anders Dymling, pointed out in a debate article in the early 1950s that production costs had increased since the end of the war by 20 per cent, while incomes had decreased by 10 per cent.

The period immediately following the end of the war heralded a decline for the cinema business as it was exposed to competition from other amusements that had been in limited supply during the war years. To a certain extent people were also beginning to save their surplus money in order to buy capital goods, not the least of which was a car. The income of the industry soon rose again, however – a case which gave the state, led by the Minister of Finance Wigforss, direct occasion to act. What was felt as a staggering blow to the film industry was the increase at the end of the 1940s of indirect taxes – among other things on wine, spirits and tobacco. This group included the entertainment tax, which was raised in 1948 from 24 per cent to 39 per cent of the income from ticket sales.

The film industry subsequently began an offensive and initiated the ‘film

stop' in the spring of 1951. No films were produced during the stop period, with the exception of *Hon dansade en sommar* directed by Arne Mattsson, which was concluded by dispensation. The remarkable and famous Bris films directed by Ingmar Bergman, for want of anything else, also date from this time: they were commercials for Bris soap and each included a subtle reference to the theatre and its conventions.

The film stop quickly achieved practical results that same spring; a state inquiry (set up by the new Minister of Finance Per Edvin Sköld) put forward a proposal that was passed by Parliament within days: 20 per cent of the state entertainment tax was to be returned in order to support Swedish film production. This was not a very large sum considering that the state share of the entertainment tax consisted of 75 per cent, while the rest went to the communities. The film industry had suggested 30 per cent, but accepted what was offered. In 1957 – one year after the introduction of television – a film inquiry was set up and it presented its report two years later. On its advice, Parliament decided to lower the entertainment tax to 25 per cent and to allow the entire state share – which was half of this tax – to be returned to the movie industry, with the provision that 20 per cent of this sum was to be allotted as quality premiums for individual films. In 1959 there were further tax reductions which resulted in a refund of 30 per cent of the state tax revenues on black-and-white films and 45 per cent on colour films.

Despite these financial difficulties during the first half of the 1950s, it still appeared as if the crowds attending the cinemas would continue. In 1956 the attendance figures were measured at 80 million. The same year the film business invested in a large number of cinemas, namely in the cities' – for example, Stockholm's – suburbs, in the newly built dormitory towns that had been completed and enthusiastically inaugurated in this period. Little did one know that the massive audiences were to be reduced by half in the following seven years, and that by 1972 the cinema audiences would be down to 22.5 million people.

In 1956 Sveriges Television (Sweden's Television) began broadcasting regularly in the country and in less than ten years the number of television licences was to exceed two million. Rune Waldekranz recounts in the 1950s section of *Svensk Filmografi* (*Swedish Filmography*) that Anders Sandrew – the head of the Sandrews group – who was one of the first to get a television set of his own, had gloomily predicted that every family would within a short space of time acquire their own television sets. Because of this he believed that the film industry faced a very uncertain future. Sandrew knew his audience and was proved right, even if television was not the only reason for the downturn in the fortunes of the movie industry. The more important reason was the diversification of the audience.

In a small country like Sweden the audience had been particularly homogeneous in the past. People shared a common frame of reference as well as similar values and laughed at the same things. A characteristic of

Swedish cinema had always been its lack of different genres which was at least partly due to the domestic audience being so small that films, in order to be profitable, had to be directed to as many people as possible. The genres that did exist – the military farce and slapstick – originated in the theatre and were considered appropriate as a source of income, but there was no interest in developing these or other genres. To the extent that a development did take place – for instance in Ingmar Bergman's productions of the 1940s and in Arne Mattsson's films of the 1950s – it met with disapproval from the critics.

Genre films were by definition considered as entertainment and, in the producer ranks as well, there was a predominant ambition to achieve artistic or 'culturally valuable' film. This often resembled what was known as 'literary cinema' and was, as discussed above, based on well-known literary works and staged in accordance with the structure and visual images of theatre melodrama. In a way it can be said that the domestic cinema was one huge genre by itself – not least because its content and modes of expression had become fairly predictable through a sort of understanding between the producers and the audience. The film director was a craftsman who carried out the plans according to the script, and in the 1930s it had not been at all uncommon to credit the script writer rather than the director in advertisements.

In the 1940s the ambitions of the professional directors began to largely change. The generation of directors who had begun their careers at the beginning of the decade wanted to express their own ideas more so than had the older generation of more craft-oriented narrators. Per Lindberg in his films of the early 1940s had experimented with expressionistic shadow play. Alf Sjöberg favoured long takes and deep focus in his literary interpretations and Ingmar Bergman had begun to explore the expressive possibilities of the cinema, to begin with as script writer, and not least, Hampe Faustman expressed his socialist stance in films such as *Foreign Port* (*Främmande hamn*) (1948). Faustman had been much influenced by the early Soviet cinema, for instance, directors Pudovkin and Eisenstein – and in his attitude towards the importance and function of the medium he heralded the 1960s generation.

The independent ambitions of the directors led to an increased mobility as regards the production companies: if the idea one had was not cleared 'at home', one approached another company. This was particularly characteristic of, for instance, Ingmar Bergman, who had the script for *The Night of the Jesters* (*Gycklarnas afton*) refused at SF, but approved at Sandrews. When the management at Sandrews began to have doubts, Bergman always found support from Lorens Marmstedt at Terrafilm, or from Nordisk Tonefilm owned by the popular movements.

Added to this mobility there were also changes in the tastes and preferences of the audience, which were no longer so predictable. The

audience was divided into at least three large groups, of which no one group alone would be quite sufficient to fill the cinemas: the general audience, the teenagers and the connoisseurs. The first group comprised the old-fashioned ordinary cinema audience, the people who were now growing older and were saving to purchase a car or a summer cottage. They preferred staying at home on a Saturday night in front of their newly acquired television sets watching *Hylands hörna*³⁵ – one of Sweden's most popular programmes ever, which went on air for the first time in 1962. The programme was presented by Lennart Hyland, who had become a famous radio personality in the 1950s.

Comedies were still popular and thus profitable, even if the old slapstick, with the exception of *Åsa-Nisse*, had disappeared from the silver screen. The 1950s comedies took place in a middle-class setting or an artistic sphere. They were often fantasies featuring song and dance routines. Towards the end of the decade it was not uncommon for the film industry – particularly in the comedies – to comment on and parody the other (competing) media. Hasse Ekman – who with his light touch had succeeded Schamyl Bauman as the director of Sickan Carlsson – directed, starred in and scripted the film *Seventh Heaven (Sjunde himlen)* (1956). In this film he presents a good-humoured parody of Hyland in the character of the radio charmer Willie Lorens in a way that had one reviewer exclaiming: 'an unusually charming chap, pleasant, friendly and in a charming way in love with his own artistic world'.³⁶ Willie Lorens ends up in hospital where he meets a young doctor with principles, Lovisa, played by Sickan Carlsson. He becomes interested in her and perhaps she in him, but she has promised to marry the major, a man of principles like herself, Ernst C:sson (i.e. Carlsson) Kruse (Gunnar Björnstrand), and to travel to Italy for the wedding. Willie joins the travel party and after many complications on the journey, he finally wins Lovisa. The film exploits a second contemporary phenomenon as well, namely the tourist travels that were becoming accessible for increasing numbers of Swedes. Thus with the scenic photography of Åke Dahlqvist the bus travels through the most beautiful of southern European landscapes.

Travel was once again a theme in the sequel to this film, *Heaven and Pancake (Himmel och pannkaka)* (1959), where Willie Lorens hosts a television show and takes a trip to Guatemala by banana boat. This time Lovisa, who is now his wife, has misinterpreted the relationship between Willie and his programme hostess. She accepts an invitation to go on a trip from Kruse, her ex-fiancé, now the chief supervisor of the banana boat. Needless to say, at the end Willie runs away with Lovisa and Kruse proposes to the television hostess. Robin Hood wrote: 'It is an excellent commercial for banana companies and banana eating, and like all excellent films it is entertaining.'³⁷ The film had a postscript in that several parties protested against the commercial promotive qualities of the film; for instance the Advertising

Agencies' Association wrote to the Movie Theatre Association claiming that they had the exclusive right to produce commercial films.

The topic of the film *Little Fridolf and I* (*Lille Fridolf och jag*) (Anderberg, 1956) was also taken from the radio. The series, about the diminutive office manager Fridolf Olsson and his tyrannical wife Selma, had begun to be broadcast on the radio in autumn 1955 and had become very popular. The film version, with the author Rune Moberg's own script, was a formidable success and made almost three million SEK. The film had three quick sequels which did not live up to the first success, however. In 1959 Douglas Håge, who had played Fridolf so superbly, died, but the character lived on as a cartoon. A similar first-time success was the debut film of Lars Magnus Lindgren, *There are no Angels* (*Änglar, finns dom . . .*) (1961) starring the young Christina Schollin and Jarl Kulle. Lindgren had previously only made short films and now he had the opportunity to demonstrate his ability with a comedy which in its basic formula was very conventional: young man enters workplace, meets a girl who is already engaged, shows his competence, is promoted and wins the girl. The film was considered unconventional however, through its immediate acting style, and its way of interweaving a serious love story with the more comic complications at the bank. *Änglar, finns dom . . .* was seen by 2.8 million people and was thus the biggest box-office hit of the Swedish film industry after *Hon dansade en sommar*. What the two films had in common were the aesthetic love scenes in the Swedish summer archipelago and the views of the countryside as a source of strength and recreation. The difference between them lay in *Änglar, finns dom . . .* having an optimistic outlook on city life in combination with the rural idyll.

The second group comprising the Swedish cinema audience was the still growing teenage audience of the cities. They were difficult to please and their preferences were increasingly for foreign film. The industry rather clumsily tried to appeal to this group by producing a number of films that have been characterized as 'young people going astray'.³⁸ The role models for these films were the American rebel films starring James Dean, but in reality these films had their predecessors in the Swedish social problem films of the 1940s. One such early film was *Youth in Danger* (*Ungdom i fara*) (Holmgren, 1947) where Svensk Filmindustri's future head, Kenne Fant, starred in the main role. *The Dance Hall* (*Danssalongen*) (Larsson, 1955) is another example. The film was a youth thriller shot at Nalen (short for National), Stockholm's most popular jazz palace. Lars Ekborg played the young gangster Dagen who, after a period in prison, tries to re-establish his 'business' and win back his fiancée, the young singer Sonja. The film's soundtrack features the music of some of the most renowned jazz musicians of the time, among them Gunnar Siljablo Nilsson singing his famous bebop song 'Sil-ja-bloo-ba-du-ba . . .'.

The film *Rockers (Raggare!)* (Hellbom, 1959) was Olle Hellbom's second main feature film (see below) and received an enthusiastic reception. The film was labelled 'neorealistic' and contained apparent references to such films as *Rebel Without a Cause* (Ray, 1955). *Raggare* referred to the young men who drove their big American cars up and down Stockholm's main street Kungsgatan at night. The film is an episodic portrayal of young people with tough façades, who took drugs; it is about high speed and sudden, suspicious death. Many reviewers were enthusiastic about the realistic nature of the film, but it also caused some people to take a moral stand: many believed that *Raggare!* encouraged young people to adopt the lifestyle it depicted.

As well as the teenage audience, children made up another group and would, in time, become an important target and source of income for domestic film. As early as the 1930s, films had been produced with a child audience in mind, among others *Andersson's Kalle (Anderssonskans Kalle)*, *Two Years in Each Grade (Två år i varje klass)*, and a number of other rascal films. However, it was only now that the film producers began to address the youngest members of their audience. Above all, the works of children's book author Astrid Lindgren became a lucrative source of income, even if filming of her works was not to reach its peak until during and after the 1960s. A remarkable phenomenon occurred after the mid-1970s when the elderly, socially committed author became all but canonized by the inhabitants of the Welfare State (the folkhem), who had almost all grown up with her books.

The first films made from Astrid Lindgren's books were her children's detective novels: *The Master Detective Blomkvist (Mästerdetektiven Blomkvist)* (Husberg, 1947) which became an immediate hit, as did its sequel *The Master Detective and Rasmus (Mästerdetektiven och Rasmus)*. Ten years later Olle Hellbom made his debut as a feature film director with *The Master Detective Lives Dangerously (Mästerdetektiven lever farligt)* (1957). Margareta Norlin explains the rise and success of the detective films by maintaining that they represent dramatic conflict which most other films of the time seemed to lack. She holds that, particularly during the war, the social dramas, for example, focused on conflict between different classes and social groups, but that these disappeared towards the end of the decade, in particular films that were aimed at younger children. The detective films presented a distinct conflict and dramatic construction that caught the audience's attention.

In *Mästerdetektiven lever farligt*, the master detective's 13-year-old friend Eva-Lotta happens to witness a murder when she is searching for a stone that a rival gang has hidden in a ruin. The shocked Eva-Lotta cannot remember much of the events, but the newspapers make the most of the story and the murderer believes himself unsafe as long as the girl is alive. He sends Eva-Lotta some poisoned chocolate which she happens to give to a

neighbour, whose dog dies when it is fed the chocolate. This appears highly suspicious to Kalle Blomkvist and he begins to enquire into the affair on his own initiative. The story has a happy ending as Eva-Lotta manages to convey a message to him, singing in the gang's secret language that the man she is talking to is the murderer: 'Mom-u-ror-dod-e-ror-e-ror.'

Despite the fact that *Mästerdetektiven lever farligt* is a film aimed at children, it contains several elements that are characteristic of other detective films of the period. The events take place in a small, sleepy town where the sun shines and the lilacs perfume the summer breeze that sweeps over the tidy houses. With their well-tended lawns and gardens they form a reassuring unlikely contrast to such powerful passions that lead to nasty murders. Thus, for example, the events of Maria Lang's – the pseudonym for the girls' school principal Dagmar Lange's – murder stories take place in a sleepy little town she calls Skoga (in reality, Lange's hometown of Nora). In 1961 Arne Mattsson directed a film based on Lang's detective novel *Kung Liljekonvale av dungen*, whose title refers to a poem by the Värmländer poet Gustav Fröding. The film was entitled *Lovely is the Summer Night* (*Ljuvlig är sommarnatten*), which is a somewhat less sophisticated – but decidedly better known – reference to a line from the popular waltz which, arranged in the minor key, accompanies the story.

A young bride, Annelie Hammar disappears on her wedding day and is later found murdered with a bouquet of lilies of the valley clasped in her hand. *Ljuvlig är sommarnatten* is an ordinary whodunit which is animated by carefully conceived camera work. In pace with the advancement of the story, it also retreats into the past, which takes shape on the screen in a dreamy fashion, with no other sound than the minor chords of the waltz. The time transfers often happen through sideways camera movements; thus for example, in a scene where the main character, detective superintendent Christer Wijk, makes a phone call from the cabin to where he has followed Annelie's tracks. He holds the receiver in his hand in the foreground of the frame, his face is in shadow and his voice faded out. The camera moves slowly to the left to take in the view through the window to a meadow, where Annelie walks slowly while the light plays in her blonde hair. After thus having confirmed Christer's suspicions the camera moves back to his face, and back to the present.

Mattsson also directed a series of the so-called Hillman detective stories – Hillman himself was played by the male idol of the 1950s Karl-Arne Holmsten – in which Mattsson applied the various codes of film narrative in a sophisticated manner, conscious of form and style. One example is *The Lady in Black* (*Damen i svart*), a mystery story where Hillman's wife Kajsa's friend feels that her life is threatened at the mansion where she is living. The couple are invited to stay one weekend to try to solve the mystery. Although events certainly take place in the country which is normally given a positive image, the film evokes a claustrophobic

atmosphere by being principally staged indoors. *Damen i svart* applies an elaborate American film noir style with deep focus and low-key lighting where the characters are trapped in the dark or are observed through various frames in order to underline their precarious situation.

The sophisticated camera work of the Mattsson films did not elude the contemporary critics, who were careful to praise photographer Tony Forsberg's work on *Ljuvlig är sommarnatten*, for example. The fact was, however, that the critics believed that such elaborate modes of expression should not be wasted on a common detective story, but ought to be used to create 'art'. When some directors neither wanted, had the ability nor were allowed to do this, they were attacked all the more fiercely. Nils Beyer wrote in *Stockholmstidningen*:

Certainly *Ljuvlig är sommarnatten* has been directed by a considerable image artist and there are deceptive devices in the very narrative technique with slides in time and space, of dream and reality. The fatal part is only – and here we come to Arne Mattson's besetting sin as a director – that this exquisite form has not been inspired by the subject at hand. He mounts a common little detective story as if he were creating a monster of beauty and marvel.³⁹

An elaborate narrative style was to be cast aside for heavy, serious or 'marvellous' subjects.

It obviously became difficult to work in such an atmosphere. Towards the end of the 1950s many directors, among them Hasse Ekman, retired because of it. The exception among the critics was the veteran Robin Hood, who was capable of seeing nuances in the film narrative as an asset for any film. He could read the meta-signals behind a certain film's transparent realism which told of an awareness of the difference between reality and fiction. Such a case was Gustaf Molander's *Sången om den eldröda blomman* (1956), for instance, which was one of the films that Molander had scripted in his youth and which he could now return to in the venture into remakes that SF had decided on. The film was described by the critics as pretentious trash, with the exception of Robin Hood, who in the opening titles of the film, in their exuberant display of colours and acting style, saw the excess which clearly signalled that this was a tribute to a genre, the former melodrama, whose time was without a doubt at an end.

Besides the old-fashioned, now falling audience and the teenagers discussed above, the third group consisted of discriminating and critical film enthusiasts who ever since its birth had cavilled Swedish cinema for its provincialism and lack of artistic ambition. This group was the most influential, in that its members had access to the printed word and a security which gave them precedence in matters of interpreting what was good or bad. The younger generation, headed by Mauritz Edström, Harry Schein, Jurgen Schildt and Hanserik Hjertén, gathered to form a broad

critical offensive, which was to pay dividends at the beginning of the 1960s in the form of an altered production ideology and state film policy. At the same time certain forces in the industry had since the late 1940s showed a desire to invest once again in a more prestigious production.

Thus, for example, Rune Waldekranz believed that Sandrews, while he was head of production, should in a time of rising production costs invest more in such films as would be internationally marketable. According to Waldekranz, it was the only way that the domestic producers would be able to count on having their investments returned. At the same time Sweden would be able to assert itself as a country with a national, artistically superior film production. In order to guarantee international success the production, in his opinion, needed to offer something novel, unexpected – even exotic – to the international market.

The Sandrews film company had expanded extensively in the late 1940s by acquiring their own studios. On top of that, the company joined Europa Film as a partner in buying a laboratory company which made them independent of outside laboratory techniques. Sandrews was thereby in a position to rent out its services to others as well. By beginning to import film it was also able to supply its extensive chain of cinemas. Production was increased in the 1950s so that some ten films were completed every year and thereby SF's position as the leading production company in the country was threatened. The cautious Sandrew pursued a more popular line of production and when this paid off he felt ready for a more adventurous series of prestigious productions. Waldekranz was also cleared for his line, where the first production was to be August Strindberg's *Fröken Julie* (1951) directed by Alf Sjöberg.

In the filming of this destructive drama of passions, where the parties take turns in humiliating one another, it is also possible to follow a theme of the voyeuristic gaze. Focusing on the look of a woman that expresses her desire is relatively rare in the world of film melodrama and always ends in disaster. At the very beginning of the film, where Julie is compared to a canary locked in a cage, her piercing gaze follows the servants' celebration of Midsummer from a distance. The object of her desire is her possibility of knowing and the consequences of knowledge: more than sexual satisfaction and love, the drama is about acquiring sexual experience and knowledge about sex.

Fröken Julie won the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival, sharing first place with Vittorio de Sica's *Miracle in Milan* (1951). Encouraged by this success, Waldekranz was to carry through several ambitious projects, among them the production of *Gycklarnas afton* (Bergman, 1953). After reading the script the advisory staff at Sandrews discouraged him from producing it, and the film was a box-office failure in Sweden – in spite of being seen by 320,000 people. However, it won the directorial award at the film festival in Sao Paulo in 1954 and was sold to a number of countries. Today the film, with its theme of humiliation, is thought to be

one of Bergman's most important works. When yet another ambitious and expensive investment in a literary theme, the movie *Barabbas* (Sjöberg, 1953) was a huge financial and critical failure, Waldekranz's ambitious programme for quality film ended.

An interesting venture that Sandrews undertook in the early years of the 1950s was the production of the film *The Great Adventure* (*Det stora äventyret*), with Arne Sucksdorff directing. Sucksdorff achieved fame for his lyrical and sensitive documentary films about animal life and had won an Oscar in 1947 for his short film *City People* (*Människor i stad*). When he suggested his idea of a feature film about animal life in the forest, loosely connected to the story of two boys who were to take care of an otter, the management at SF expressed doubts. Sucksdorff then approached Sandrews who were willing to invest in the idea. *Det stora äventyret* was the biggest Swedish box-office hit in the winter of 1953–54, quite a unique achievement for a film considered to be a documentary. The film contains extraordinarily beautiful and lyrical scenes of nature shot in black and white and founded the school for the style that stretches the definition of a documentary film to its absolute limits. It is held together by a continuous narrative where the images illustrate the voice's narration, and creates a closed world that is built on assumptions about the state of things rather than their reality.

On the prestigious side, Svensk Filmindustri invested in grand colour remakes of classics like *Herr Arnes penningar* and *Sången om den eldröda blomman*, all of which ended in disappointment. SF's backing of Ingmar Bergman in the mid-1950s was more successful, however, and the company's faith in him was now so great that his film *The Seventh Seal* (*Sjunde inseglet*) was chosen as the company's jubilee film when it celebrated its fifty years in the industry. The success at Cannes (the directorial award in 1956) with the light sophisticated comedy *Smiles of a Summer Night* (*Sommarnattens leende*) definitely established him as one of the great film directors in the world. Scores of texts would be written about him and his films – he was to be controversial, celebrated and criticized. His films were to influence the image of the Swedes abroad and the Swedes' image of themselves. But the money that his films made and which were to make him his own producer was to come from abroad. He was forever to be the director of the initiated, the enthusiasts; a magician and a wizard to people who perhaps recognize their own personal problems in his films. Birgitta Steene has found that his domestic audience appears to be fans from different classes who continuously return to the cinema where in the 1990s his films have run continuously. Possible exceptions were his last film, *Fanny och Alexander* and the opera film *Magic Flute* (*Trollflöjten*) (which was made for television) and – interestingly enough – in both films he takes a step back towards melodrama and its aesthetics of illusion.

Ingmar Bergman has had and, in retrospect, been given a place apart in the history of Swedish cinema when viewed from several angles: there has been no one to equal his genius. Or rather: no one has achieved even half of his international success. Bergman is in no way representative of Swedish film production of the 1950s and 1960s. All this is of course true – but it is important to understand that Bergman has always been a vigorous and faithful follower of the tradition of melodrama which has its roots in the bourgeois Swedish theatre and its style; the intimate chamber play (*Kammerspiel*) and the art of drama as they were developed at the turn of the century by, for example, August Strindberg and Harald Molander. Many of the films that Bergman made in the 1950s – *Sommarnattens leende*, *Gycklarnas afton*, *Ansiktet*, *Sjunde inseglet*, *Smultronstället* – bear unmistakable signs of influence from the productions of Sjöström, Stiller, and not least af Klercker – the melodrama director *par excellence*. Like them, Bergman, and later Olof and Gustaf Molander, Per Lindberg and Alf Sjöberg had received their training and scenic experience on the stage, not in the cinema.

Bergman has from the beginning been very well read in domestic literature and drama, and he began his film career as a script writer as did so many others in the industry. He is a conservative theatre director and a supporter of literary theatre and when one sees his stage productions – and for that matter, his films – it is as if Artaud, Craig, Reinhardt or Brecht never existed. There is a straight line that runs from Swedish theatre at the turn of the century – the melodrama and its effects: a well thought-out *mise-en-scène*, the play of light and shadow, extravagance in one form or other and the Strindbergian employment of dialogue (monologue) – to the films of Ingmar Bergman. It is also important to realize that it was as the representative of the earlier craftsman tradition, as a creator of an aesthetics of illusion that he was attacked in the 1960s.

It is therefore interesting that Maaret Koskinen has discovered that under this surface of an aesthetics of illusion there is a strong undercurrent which counteracts this aesthetics and creates cracks in the transparent surface. She has shown that this dichotomy is concentrated in two recurring nodal points in Bergman's production: the mirror and the play-within-the-play, through which the relationship between the performance and its audience is constantly under scrutiny.

THE GREAT CHANGE

Anders Sandrew died in 1957, as did Edvard Persson, the most popular actor in Swedish cinema and for three decades the golden goose of Europa Film. Four years later Carl Anders Dymling, the head of SF, and Karl Kilbom, the initiative force behind the foundation of Nordisk Tonefilm, also both died. Alf Sjöberg returned to the theatre after several failures

in film. Hasse Ekman and Arne Mattsson, deeply hurt by the criticism that had been directed at them, moved abroad at the beginning of the 1960s: both had, with Hampe Faustman, continuously and unfairly been compared with Ingmar Bergman who always 'won' by comparison. Faustman's career had crashed in the mid-1950s and he died in 1961. Gustaf Molander had quit the directorial profession after making *Sången om den eldröda blomman* and was only to reappear in 1967 with an episodic film, *Jewel (Smycket)*, where Ingrid Bergman plays the second lead. Gösta Stevens, who had written and co-written a large number of the scripts for Swedish cinema, retired after *Himmel och pannkaka*, and many others in the profession followed suit.

This meant that there was not only a void at the top during a period of transition, but also that a good deal of knowledge and decisive power was lost – which, however, was not to have direct consequences until the 1970s. The post-war generation who now took over had not only grown up in accumulating affluence, but had also been the first of the new teenage culture which was by definition dismissive of the adult world. This was a generation who had joined the film clubs that had been established after the war and where audiences had had access to films banned by the censors. In a filmic sense they had the wherewithal to appreciate the European films that had washed over the country in the late 1940s – for instance, the productions of Italian neorealism did not reach Sweden until the 1950s.

It was this generation of critics who, towards the end of the 1950s, so relentlessly cavilled the domestic cinema. They had maintained their high standards through their experiences before the collective selection of moving and innovative films. The young academics knew of and were influenced by the ongoing discussion in the French critical publication *Cahiers du Cinéma*, for example. The directors' fixation for the auteur-criticism suited the Swedish discussion on quality cinema exceptionally well, particularly as several films had indeed won international recognition in the early 1950s.

The 1960s in the history of Swedish cinema thus opened with a wide generation gap. The old craftsmen were retiring, leaving behind such veterans as Ingmar Bergman, who had by now been appointed artistic leader of SF. Kenne Fant, who had only ten years previously played the young rebel in *Ungdom i fara*, was appointed President of the company. On the opposing side stood the young well-educated intellectuals, who in actual age were not much younger than the generation they were attacking – Bo Widerberg was only thirteen years Bergman's junior – but the two sides' attitude and relationship to the medium were completely different.

That transition in the early 1960s in the history of Swedish film was greater than the transition to sound thirty years before. It is important to discuss at this point one of its figure-heads, Bo Widerberg, who, in the

articles he wrote, shaped the ideological and aesthetical programme which was applied virtually unchanged for twenty years or more. When in 1962 Widerberg directed his general attack at the film industry in his book *Visionen i svensk film*,⁴⁰ he had been active as a film critic for many years and had in that capacity travelled to many film festivals and had had the opportunity of seeing the advance of the French new wave at Cannes in 1959. This had obviously left a lasting impression on Widerberg. He wrote: 'One drinks water from a puddle until one has the opportunity to taste it from a well, and after one has done that one would rather go thirsty than return to the puddle.'⁴¹

Parts of *Visionen i svensk film* had been published as debate articles in the newspaper *Expressen* and were of a particularly polemic nature. Widerberg seldom attacked individuals, however (with the exception of Ingmar Bergman and Arne Sucksdorff), since he felt that the poverty of Swedish film repertory was not due to the ignorance or inability of individual directors, but that the depressing results on the silver screen were the consequences of the restrictions that the film companies imposed on the directors. Widerberg demanded that the companies should 'assume their responsibility'⁴² and make it possible for film directors to express their opinions about important issues in contemporary society. He thus called for a new contemporary committed content of films, a content that was to bring with it a new filmic style: 'a more expressive style which was to be better suited to describe the living conditions that . . . the films' characters . . . were living.'⁴³

Widerberg was convinced that the portrayal of 'ordinary people' and their actual conditions would make the films more interesting to the contemporary audience and thus lure it back to the cinemas. He also believed that the neorealistic style – which he was recommending – where films were shot on location would be far less expensive than contemporary studio productions. This could solve some of the financial difficulties that the film industry had to wrestle with.

Thematically, Widerberg's starting point or point of view was clear and admirable. He felt that everyday life in Sweden was sufficiently unique and interesting to constitute the theme for a number of films. He believed that film workers should be committed to issues that were central to the lives of 'ordinary people'; issues like unemployment – conflicts in the labour market in whatever form or shape – or, as he put it: 'questions of people's dignity and responsibility as they occur and are discussed in their own environment.'⁴⁴

As discussed above, Widerberg considered the directors in the industry to be victims more or less of the commercially dictated speculations of the producers. He attacked Bergman, however, in the latter's influential capacity as artistic adviser to the nation's largest film company. In such a position one had the possibility to create a style and act as a mentor

for new film directors. Another reason why Widerberg attacked Bergman, and Arne Sucksdorff as well, was that both of them were, according to him, in a position where they had the opportunity to shape their films independently of the production companies and their profit concerns. Despite this they failed to use their talents – Widerberg never questioned their artistry – towards discussing current problems in society.

According to Widerberg, Bergman refused to assume his responsibility as an artist by repeating in film after film his own personal problematics, which Widerberg felt were stuffy. He believed that Bergman should instead 'dare to take risks in new and innovative projects'.⁴⁵ Widerberg's view was thus highly normative and in this respect he did not differ from the earlier generations of critics. The only difference was that he now narrowed the limits even further and wanted to dictate the content of the films as well, not just their form.

Widerberg was also concerned about the kind of image Bergman's films would possibly project abroad about the Swedes: 'What Bergman exports abroad consists of mystic light and undisguised exoticism – not suggestions for alternative modes of action or of moral possibilities. Bergman reinforces the most trivial myths about Sweden and the Swedes,' Widerberg writes. He continues:

The question that Bergman poses in film after film – most likely voiced by Max von Sydow against the backdrop of dark pine woods – is whether there is a God, whether there is supreme justice. Virtually always he either directs his question upward, or – in jest – downward but less often sideways, to people. He makes vertical movies in a situation where we more than ever need a horizontal cinema, a sideways art.⁴⁶

If this 'private nostalgia'⁴⁷ was to be allowed to found a school, it would be fatal to a rising generation of Swedish films.

Ingmar Bergman was not to found a school, however. His aesthetics of illusion was dependent on the craftsmanship that had been lost in the great transition. The imitators of Bergman can be found only towards the end of the 1980s and early 1990s; for example, his own son Daniel's unfortunate attempt at filming his father's script of the film *Sunday Child* (*Söndagsbarn*) (1992) and Bille August's more successful *Best of Intentions* (*Den goda viljan*) (1992). Significantly enough, both films are based on scripts by Bergman himself. Bo Widerberg on the other hand was to belong to or perhaps even create a new wave in Sweden – and a thematic school with the young radical film workers.

When it was announced that Widerberg – who had never directed a film before and who had no proper training for this task – was to make a film, there were perhaps a few who wished for the end result to be a failure. *Raven's End* (*Kvarteret Korpen*) (1963), like the earlier short story film *The Pram* (*Barnvagnen*) (1963) which he had made with Jan Troell,

was unanimously applauded as a masterpiece. 'Kvarteret Korpen' (the Korpen (Raven) district) is a working-class district in Malmö. The story takes place at the end of the 1930s, shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, but also in the dawn of the Swedish Welfare State. Some of the actors are professionals, others are amateurs. Among them, Widerberg's own little daughter Nina contributed to a couple of charmingly improvised scenes with Thommy Berggren, who plays the main character Anders. The fact that the actors were a group of relatively unknown players from the Malmö stadsteater (the City Theatre of Malmö), such as Keve Hjelm who played Anders' father with Emy Storm as the mother, contributed to the freshness of the film.

The film employs wide-angle, deep focus and long takes according to André Bazin's concept of realism; expressive modes that allow the characters to emerge from their daily environment and at the same time give the viewer the opportunity to linger over the scene and to focus on what appears to be of momentary interest. In *Kvarteret Korpen* the director takes a clear personal stand with regard to his characters and, often as an invisible commentator, expresses his values, frequently with the aid of music, camera angles and props. At the beginning of the film for example, when Anders returns to the district, he does so accompanied by a resonant brass band (Concerto in D-major for Trumpet and Orchestra by Torelli). It is 'regal music' of sorts, triumphant and ostentatious, somewhat ironically heralding the arrival of the king, or at the very least the prince, the young man who dreams of a career as an author and of fame.

Yet another example of a personal commentary is the funeral scene at the beginning of the latter half of the film. A young boy in the district has died of appendicitis because his parents could not afford to get him to the doctor in time. The rain falls heavily on the coffin in the graveyard. As the clergyman reads the benediction and scatters earth on the coffin, the rain reduces it to mud which forms into lumps as it falls into the grave. In this scene there is no atonement: not even earth is allowed to fall smoothly on to the coffins of the poor.

If Bo Widerberg had the power to create constraints, standards and limits in the new era, then Harry Schein was its pragmatist and organizer. In his civilian profession as an engineer he had made himself a fortune through an invention that made the chlorination of water possible, and he now devoted himself to film criticism in the distinguished publication *BLM*, and to playing tennis with the future Prime Minister Olof Palme. In 1962, Schein published a book entitled *Har vi råd med kultur*⁴⁸ in which he put forward a proposal for administering the state subsidy to domestic film productions. The subsidy, which had been distributed in the 1950s in the form of a refund from the entertainment tax, was considered unsatisfactory in several circles. To begin with it only benefited the production companies, while the remainder of the film industry was effectually

left without – and towards the end of the 1950s it had become apparent that it was the cinema owners who were to end up in difficulties first. Severe criticism was also directed at the refund system itself, which was distributed in proportion to a film's box-office receipts, without taking into consideration its potential quality.

Harry Schein's proposal for film reform was passed through the relevant departments and a decision was made in Parliament by acclamation and after a minimum of discussion. A national Film Institute was to be founded in order to administer the film subsidy and other film cultural measures. The political left expressed their apprehensions about a proposal that gave a relatively substantial amount of influence to the commercial film industry. The conservatives in their turn foresaw a risk of underhand socialization.

The establishing of the foundation the Swedish Film Institute (SFI – Svenska Filminstitutet) was preceded by negotiations between the representatives of the film industry and the Swedish state, negotiations that resulted in a twenty-year agreement. The agreement took effect halfway through 1963, and prescribed that 10 per cent of the gross receipts from cinemas that gave more than five shows a week were to go to the Film Institute. The entertainment tax was abolished. Harry Schein was predictably appointed as head of this newly established organization.

On its establishment the Film Institute took over Filmhistoriska samlingarna (the Film Historical Collections), and initiated the distribution and screenings of 'culturally valuable film'. It also assumed the publication of the very active film magazine *Chaplin*, which had been started by Bengt Forslund – who was later to be appointed artistic head of the Institute. Eventually the film clubs were also to be centrally organized from SFI. The first professional school for film workers Filmskolan (the Film School) was founded and run by the Institute and the initiative to institute a Chair to enable a faculty for cinema history and theory to be established at Stockholm University was taken. Furthermore, a large studio and office building at Gärdet in Stockholm was planned: Filmhuset (the Film House), which was opened in the spring of 1971. The building looks like a perforated shoe box cast in concrete and was designed by Peter Celsing, who was also responsible for a number of other 1960s bunkers in Stockholm, including Kulturhuset (the Culture House) at Sergels Torg.

The capital that the Film Institute received ended up in various funds from which the subsidy was distributed in accordance with stipulated principles: approximately one-third of the capital was distributed as a general grant, one-third as a quality grant and one-third went to various measures that were to promote film culture in the country, part of which was the work of the Film Institute itself. Harry Schein's central idea had been to have society recognize the cinema's status as an art form with the help of this reform. An immediate consequence of this was that the

film subsidy primarily went to what was called quality film or culturally valuable film.

In negotiations between the state and the representatives of the film industry the latter had desired a general subsidy, while the state had preferred a selective one that was to be based on criteria of quality. It was prepared to invest in the 'culturally valuable', but not in 'entertainment'. There were several alternatives however: were one to decide on a general subsidy this could be distributed either in terms of the ticket revenues or as guarantees for losses, for example. The selective subsidy could be distributed as an advance in the form of production guarantees or as deferred payment in the form of quality premiums. The result was a compromise and in the years to follow SFI was to distribute all the types of production subsidies discussed above. In addition, the Swedish Film Institute would in a little over ten years after its foundation be itself accountable for the production of half of the Swedish feature films.

Initially, the quality subsidies were distributed by an appointed jury consisting of 'film experts'. The jury awarded points to the films that had premiered during the year. The criteria of the quality that the jury had to evaluate were to be found in one of the supplements to the film agreement: crucial were factors that dealt with the following:

renewal of the cinema's expressive modes and stylistic language, the degree of urgency in the film's message, the intensity or freshness of its conception of reality or criticism of society, the level of psychological insight and the spiritual plane, playful imagination or visionary strength, epic, dramatic or lyrical values, the technical accomplishment of the script, direction and acting, as well as the other artistic elements of a film.⁴⁹

The criteria are all sufficiently bombastic and nebulous to encompass everything. In time, a policy was shaped where the jurors of the different foundations refrained from motivating their decisions and any minutes have not been made public. Harry Schein writes in the Preface to the 1960s part of *Svensk Filmografi* (*Swedish Filmography*) that the jury responsible for the quality evaluations was, as a rule, despite its heterogeneous constitution, more consistent and conformist than contemporary criticism has given reason to suspect.

The quality points were put to the vote by the jury. In the eighteen-year period that this system was in operation, Ingmar Bergman's film *Whispers and Cries* (*Viskningar och rop*) (1973) received the highest score ever given: 4.05 points. Second place is held by *A Simple-minded Murderer* (*Den enfaldige mördaren*) (1982) directed by the serious comedian Hasse Alfredsson, with 3.55 points. *The Emigrants* (*Utvandrarna*) (1971) by Jan Troell received the lowest score – 1.4 points – but still merited a grant. Financially, however, these points were not fair, since there was a rule

blocking any one film from receiving more than 20 per cent of the yearly allotted means, partly because the amount of the subsidy varied from one year to the next depending on how much money the Film Institute had at its disposal. Thus, for example, *Viskningar och rop* received 317,000 SEK, while *A Respectable Life (Ett anständigt liv)* (Jarl, 1979) with its 3.45 points received 721,000 SEK.

At the same time that a film received a quality grant it could also be eligible for a subsidy covering losses. Thus *Persona* (Bergman, 1967), for instance, collected a total of 1,020,000 SEK in subsidies covering both quality and losses. It is not surprising that the films which attracted the largest audiences to the cinemas were not those which received quality grants: out of eighteen films that had more than a million viewers in the period between 1963 and 1982, only four were eligible for quality grants: *The Silence (Tystnaden)* (Bergman, 1964), *The Emigrants (Utvandrarna)* (Troell, 1971), *The Apple War (Äppelkriget)* (Danielsson, 1971) and *The Adventures of Picasso (Picassos äventyr)* (Danielsson, 1978).

The immediate effect of the film reform of 1963 however was to stimulate film production: in the years 1959 to 1963, when the recession had had time to strike severely, only seventeen films per year were produced. In the budget year of 1964 to 1965 a total of twenty-five films were produced. The overall effect was shortlived, however, as film production declined again: in the 1960s only 177 feature films were produced, only about half the number produced in the 1950s (315 films). In the Preface to the section on the 1960s in *Svensk Filmografi*, Harry Schein moreover claims that the indirect effect of the founding of the Film Institute was the opportunity for a large number of new directors to enter film production – more than one-third of the directors were new to the profession. The fact remains, however, that there was plenty of scope for new talent, as virtually everyone of the old guard had left the scene.

There was as yet no professional school for film workers. There was also a different kind of change in the background of the directors: previous generations had, as discussed, largely been men of the theatre. Now new professional groups laid claim to the job of director: authors, teachers, actors and painters. One of these, Vilgot Sjöman, was to be regarded as the *enfant terrible* of Swedish cinema for many years because of his first film *491* (1964). As with *Hon dansade en sommar*, sun, summer, glittering seas and lovers had been considered as more or less standard features of Swedish cinema. In the 1960s, however, the attitude towards sexual intercourse in films changed in an unprecedented manner: to some it was offensive, to others liberating. It was said that the 1960s broke through the sex barrier, an expression coined when *491* was reviewed.

491 was a film without illusions, where violence and sex were mixed in such a way as to awaken the attentions of the slumbering censorship agency. The film was at first totally banned; one scene in particular which

depicted sexual intercourse with an animal caused widespread offence. After this film the censors often felt compelled to consult their superior agency Filmgranskningsrådet (the Board of Film Examiners). The Board of Film Censors believed *491* had 'a brutalizing effect and caused injurious excitement'⁵⁰ by its 'presentation of what was offensive to discipline and public decency'.⁵¹ The government recommended releasing the film after a number of cuts had been made, however, a practice that was to become the norm during the 1960s.

What had happened was that the demand for realism from the film-going public had extended to include depictions of sexual intercourse, which were now longer, more detailed and – of course – realistic. Realism in this respect however came dangerously close to pornography and was therefore offensive to many. It was also the ever more frequently occurring combination of sex and violence which both the censors and parts of the audience reacted to. The film *The Virgin Spring (Jungfrukällan)* (Bergman, 1960) gave rise to a heated debate the very day after its première, and *Tystnaden* (Bergman, 1963) before its première. The negative consequences of this were that the censorship authorities remained in power, even though there had been plans to abolish the system. In 1964 a state inquiry was set up which presented a report four-and-a-half years later with a proposal to abolish adult censorship. The loud campaigns for morality that had been launched around the country in the mid-1960s resulted in the withdrawal of the proposal, however.

The later productions by Vilgot Sjöman, the *Curious* films – *I Am Curious – Yellow (Jag är nyfiken – gul)* (1967) and *I Am Curious – Blue (Jag är nyfiken – blå)* (1968) – followed the same semi-documentary line as *491*. Sjöman obtained the money to make the first film solely on the story outline he had prepared. Most of its content was improvised and put together with the help of those who participated in the film. *Jag är nyfiken – blå* premièred one year later and received considerably less attention. *Jag är nyfiken – gul* was banned by the US customs and the court of appeal only released it after having considered the matter for over a year. When it was finally released, it became the biggest Swedish box-office hit thus far in the United States, in spite of the fact that eighteen states had banned it. In just a few years it made an amazing 50 million SEK. It is doubtful whether the audience saw the film for its political message however.

Curious is a metafilm where the different planes of reality flow in and out of each other. The director Vilgot Sjöman and the drama student Lena Nyman (who act themselves) decided to make an investigative and provocative documentary film about Sweden. Lena travelled around the country interviewing people and arranging happenings, had her erotic adventures and recorded everything, keeping an impressive register of such events in her room.

They Call us Misfits (Dom kallar oss mods) (Jarl and Lindqvist, 1968) began as a student project at the newly established Filmskolan where Stefan Jarl and Jan Lindqvist were studying. The two of them had submitted an outline of the film to several producers, but no one was willing to back it. The school finally allotted the amount of 50,000 SEK and SFI came up with the remaining one-third of the finance needed to make the film a reality. The entire production costs amounted to 88,000 SEK, an exceptionally modest amount. In this film as well there was a scene containing sexual intercourse which the Board of Film Censors wanted to remove, but which Filmgranskningsrådet did not hold to be offensive to public decency. *Dom kallar oss mods* gave rise to a heated debate on the issue of society's responsibility towards young people who had gone astray, however. The politically correct criticism was enthusiastic and used expressions that were to be repeated *ad nauseam* towards the end of the period: 'sarcastic and pushingly vigorous', 'an active political action in the very here and now', 'biting and harsh language', and so on.⁵² The film was later developed into a trilogy with the addition of Part two, the sensational *Ett anständigt liv* (Jarl, 1979), during which one of the main characters of the film, Stoffe, dies from an overdose of heroin. The third and concluding part, *Det sociala arvet* (1993) tells the story of the children of the mods and is shaped like a personal coming to terms with his view of society for Stefan Jarl.

The students at Filmskolan (later Dramatiska Institutet – the College of Film, Television, Radio and the Theatre – with which it was incorporated in 1969) were the makers of several debated documentaries, of which the best known is *Den vita sporten* (1968). *Den vita sporten* was an interview and documentary film made about the demonstrations held before the Davis Cup tournament at Båstad from 3–5 May 1968. The tournament was to be played between Sweden and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), but Rhodesia was at this time the object of UN recommended sanctions. The white minority government under the leadership of Ian Smith practised apartheid and repressed the black population. The demonstrators who came to Båstad for the tournament demanded that the match be stopped, which was achieved after an altercation between the demonstrators and the police.

The film was a collective work made by thirteen students and one teacher (Bo Widerberg). It premièred in September, but during editing some conflicts arose that were energetically debated and commented on in the press. Among other things the question of who was to be considered the director of the film led to a schism between SFI and the students at Filmskolan. The students accused Bo Widerberg of having represented himself as the actual director of the film and Widerberg in his turn blamed the Film Institute. Virtually every film made occasioned debate: either they were felt to be offensive to morality, or, as in this case, there was

controversy over the origin of the film. Or it was directed by Ingmar Bergman. Or one tripped over the question of quality.

The young radical film workers, not least those who finished their education in the late 1960s (as well as the students of the newly established cinema history and theory courses) saw SFI as a representative of the establishment and therefore considered it to be their opponent. Because of its 'mixed economy', the Institute was felt to be an extension of the profit-hungry film industry. The concept 'alternative film' was developed as opposed to fictive feature film and it was felt that it ought to have been the duty of the Film Institute to support this type of film. In this context one disregarded the fact that SFI *had* in fact granted money for the production of several such films. The radical, 'free' film-makers set up a new 'alternative' distribution company which was called FilmCentrum, and which comprised the main opponents of the Film Institute when the debate was at its peak.

Harry Schein, the autocratic ruler of the Film Institute, was also its mouthpiece. His standard argument in the debates about the film subsidy was that the films produced by independent film-makers rarely exhibited such qualities as to warrant a reward. This was expressed, for example, during the so-called 'catalogue feud': the representatives of FilmCentrum applied for funds to enable the publication of a catalogue of its repertoire of films. Harry Schein thought that if SFI granted the money for a catalogue, they should be party to the decisions regarding the selection of films to go into the catalogue. FilmCentrum in its turn believed that in the name of democracy all the members of Centrum should be allowed to include all their films in the catalogue.

Schein's sarcastic and disdainful way of voicing his opinions about certain film-makers and the quality of certain films caused the debate to be quite heated at times, occasionally even spectacular. This happened, for example, when famous public debater and author Jan Myrdal took part. In 1966 Myrdal contributed to the making of a television-film called *Myglaren* (Myrdal and Hassner, 1966), about the employee of a company which is owned by the popular movements who eventually wangles his way into an influential position in society. After being shown on television, the movie was enlarged to 35 mm format and screened once in a cinema in order for it to qualify for the quality subsidy. The management at the Film Institute initially did not want to acknowledge *Myglaren* since it was a film financed by Sveriges Television and produced for television. The board of directors subsequently changed their minds, but the film did not accrue sufficient quality points. Many, with Myrdal at their head, felt that the result had been agreed before the vote was taken, and labelled Schein a 'cultural wangler'.⁵³ When the film was eventually shown in the cinemas in the regular manner, it was seen by 297 people in all. In 1977, Harry Schein concluded: 'The attendance for *Myglaren* . . . is still the total and hopefully unbreakable all-time low of Swedish cinema.'⁵⁴

The attacks on the Swedish Film Institute had the paradoxical effect of the critics appearing to seek the power of the very agency whose power they were criticizing. The generally rebellious and provocative atmosphere that had evolved among the increasingly radical culture workers was set against a deserving and idealistic background however. In retrospect, Carl Johan Malmberg has aptly written:

In the 1960s there emerged . . . a view of film which briefly can be characterized as wanting a cinema that made the reality in which people lived distinct and tangible, which penetrated beneath the surface of events and took a stand by letting reality speak for itself, realistic and unembellished. The film-makers began to regard themselves as a small but very important part of a context that far exceeded the narrow reality of the cinema and art. As film-makers of special professional abilities one had the expressed goal of rendering one's services to people and groups who had difficulty claiming their rights.⁵⁵

Apart from the rebelliousness and reality that was gripping films, a genre that had its own life prospered while creating its own intimate world, devoid of any discord: children's films. Children's film production of the 1960s is fairly comprehensive and was principally based on the books of Astrid Lindgren and directed by Olle Hellbom. During the 1950s children's films had been produced that were exciting and occasionally even threatening. The 1960s films were straightforward and clear, based on binary oppositions of good and evil, but lacked tension since the idea behind the stories was moralizing: if you are good and kind the world is good and kind in return. It is interesting to note that in this period when there was a continuous call for struggle and conflict, these features are completely absent from children's films. The demand for realism did not include the children's film.

The Saltkråkan films⁵⁶ of which five were made in the 1960s, paints the picture of an idyll in the Stockholm archipelago, involving excursions on sun-warmed rocks, picnics and pleasant adventures with or without the well-meaning and sometimes slightly crazy adults. The story about Pippi Longstocking, *Pippi on the Seven Seas (Pippi på de sju haven)* (Hellbom, 1970), instead of dealing with the anarchistic individual's rebellion against the conventions of society, contains adventure and rebellion inside certain carefully defined and safe boundaries. Such rebellion is only there to acknowledge the individual spirit in order for it to be of use to society at a later stage. The story of the rascal Emil is only too familiar – *Emil i Lönneberga* (Hellbom, 1970) – who subsequently becomes chairman of the community board.

A loss of identity characterized the film industry in the period following the stormy years of the 1960s. It was only now that the loss of the craftsmen's knowledge became evident. It was not so much a question

of how to force a production through, but of industry know-how and a feeling for narrative devices. A widespread disdain for 'commercial film' – and any and all older domestic film – quite simply made a whole generation of film workers so choosy in their visits to the cinemas that they never learned how it was done properly. They lacked the history, background and knowledge of the standard devices and conventions – and consequently had only a blurred understanding of the violation of these and what that meant.

A stylistic and thematic search was part of the period. By the end of the 1960s two of the figure-heads of the Swedish new generation, Bo Widerberg and Jan Troell, left behind the subdued, black-and-white and documentary-style films to direct in cinemascope and colour: *Elvira Madigan* (Widerberg, 1967) and *Utvandrarna* (Troell, 1971). Both directors made a name for themselves internationally with these films which received awards at festivals around the world.

Ingmar Bergman returned to the illusory world of classical narrative and had his biggest hit so far with *Viskningar och rop* in the early 1970s. Towards the end of the decade he was accused of tax evasion, brought in for questioning by the police and left the country. When he subsequently returned, he concluded his career with the excessive four-hour long *Fanny och Alexander* (1982), a tribute to the mother genre: the melodrama.

The early 1970s films of Jan Troell's *The Emigrants* (*Utvandrarna*) and *The Settlers* (*Nybyggarna*) (1972) follow the old Swedish tradition of the literary film through a cooperation between author and film director. The problem with these films (as with all epic stories) was the long timespan the story covers. Troell succeeded in solving this problem and was in Sweden celebrated as the director who had the ability to transcribe prose into images and be faithful to the original text while using the filmic medium as an independent expressive form. It could thus be said that in his work was a synthesis of the debate conducted several decades before, in the silent era.

Utvandrarna was the first of the films based on Wilhelm Moberg's emigration trilogy and was soon followed by *Nybyggarna*. Moberg's series of novels is in some quarters of Sweden considered to be the Swedish national epic (interestingly enough it recounts the story of people who left the country to go and live in America). The film starred the most renowned actors at the country in the beginning of the 1970s, Max von Sydow as Karl-Oskar and Liv Ullman as Kristina, at that time a well-known couple from many of the Bergman films. The role of Kristina's closest friend is played by the famous jazz singer and vaudeville artist Monica Zetterlund and Allan Edwall plays the priest. The film is designed as a tribute to hard-working people, to the men who through sheer force of will carry out what seem impossible tasks, and who do so despite the high price.

The emigration films may justly be called auteur films, even if Moberg was still alive and contributed his opinions to the script, and even if Troell

had Bengt Forslund as his adviser. Troell not only directed these films; he scripted, photographed and cut them. It is remarkable, however, how Troell's touch has changed the focus of the book without any objections from Moberg. What is characteristic of the novels is that although they are written by a man, the events are largely seen from a woman's point of view. Both *Nybyggarna* and *Utvandrarna* instead express the misogyny that permeates all Troell's film productions and which always focus on the struggle of one solitary man with an impossible task: nature, destiny, and so on. In a way Troell was also wrestling with an impossible task when he took on Moberg's epic.

Troell portrays poor people through simple and archaic language, and he mixes long takes with intense close-ups. Moberg's novel is largely written in monologues that describe the inner life of the characters, concepts which they are unable to express in their daily lives in which dialogue consists of abrupt lines. Troell has avoided the obvious trap and refrained from an officious voice-over which would have been the easiest solution for expressing these inner thoughts. Instead he has chosen to rely on the narrative force of the image. The rhythmic interplay between long takes and extreme close-ups is an impressive way of representing the lives and emotions of these simple people. The camera focuses on working hands: hands kneading the dough on the table, hands wielding the hammer and plough, hands weaving. And finally as people come to the end of their lives, the camera focuses on everyday objects, small details that tell of daily life put aside, like a needle pinned to a curtain, glasses left on a window-sill, saucepans on the top of a stove.

The genre films that had previously been employed on a trial basis in the search for an audience in the 1950s turned out to be one of the real hits of the 1970s. The challenge was to make a specific Swedish variant of these without imitating Hollywood action too closely. When this goal was realized, even the norm-setters found these films acceptable. Bo Widerberg directed several films based on the popular detective stories that were critical of society and written by the author collective Sjöwall and Wahlöö. *The Man on the Roof* (*Mannen på taket*) (Widerberg, 1976) was his first film in this genre and was produced by the Swedish Film Institute. The film with its troubled hero was a success and paved the way for several imitators in the action genre. Thus, for example, Jan Guillou's popular novels about the count Carl Gustaf Hamilton's adventures as a Swedish secret agent were soon made into films.

IN SEARCH OF WOMEN

The Swedish film industry had all through its existence resembled a medieval guild system where a master took on an apprentice who eventually learned the profession. This system was most patriarchal and there

were few women who had been able to establish themselves in the industry. Anna Hoffman Uddgren was the thrifty manager of a vaudeville theatre when she directed several films in the silent era, among them Strindberg's *The Father (Fadren)* (1912) – but in the following decades the female directors can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Pauline Brunius, who was head of the Royal Dramatic Theatre for a time, directed one film in the 1930s.

In the 1950s two films were directed by a woman. Barbro Boman had worked as a production assistant in the 1940s after which she wrote scripts herself and was also head of Svensk Filmindustri's script department for a period. She directed two films, of which *It's Never Too Late (Det är aldrig för sent)* (1956) was her first. It tells the story of a couple who are planning to divorce. The film is based on flashbacks that recount three generations of women: the main character Görel, her mother and grandmother, and their methods of solving their problems. As a new director, Boman was treated well and the reviewers wished her the best for the future. Only a few days after the première of *Det är aldrig för sent*, the actress Mimi Pollack brought out her first film *The Right to Love (Rätten att älska)* (1956). The film was regarded as a contribution to the debate on and an educational film about sexual issues and was to be Pollack's only directorial assignment. Bohman's second film, *Swedish Girls in Paris (Svenska flickor i Paris)* (1962), on the other hand, was condemned as a failure – it was felt among other things that the film gave a negative image of Swedish girls abroad. It also led to a controversy with Peter Weiss, the experimental film-maker and author who had contributed to its inception.

In the mid-1960s a sensational debut took place: Mai Zetterling, a popular and esteemed actress – the sweet and blonde one – premiered with a film called *Loving Couples (Älskande par)* (1964). *Loving Couples* is based on the scandalous series of novels *Fröknarna von Pahlen* from the 1930s, written by Agnes von Krusenstierna. The events take place at the turn of the century and initially the film resembles the classical melodrama: the extravagant scenery, props and costumes suggestive of the 1950s melodramas – perhaps above all *Fröken Julie* and *Smultronstället*. Furthermore, the film makes several visual references to the latter. Not entirely unimportant in this context is the fact that the film was produced by Rune Waldekranz at Sandrews.

However, even if the visual elements as to the internal relationships of the characters point towards the classical melodrama, it was only thus far that Mai Zetterling was interested in developing the genre. Instead she used the remainder of the film's modes of expression for breaking down the structure of a classical play. The story takes place at a delivery ward and is about three women, Angela, Agda and Adèle who all have some form of relationship with one another. Angela and Agda will each give birth to a baby while Adèle goes through a miscarriage. In the

film's present (the events at the clinic) the narrative is curtailed; it begins when the women arrive at the clinic and ends when the babies are delivered. Within this frame however, the action follows several parallel stories that examine memory, experience and time while revealing the background and personality of each woman. The memories of each woman are triggered by Proustian sensory perceptions. Thus, for example, Adèle panics on realizing that she is going to have to deliver her dead foetus, and runs out of the ward. Running reminds her of another time when she ran, not away but *towards* her lover out in the open air. The fleeing Adèle in her nightgown and bare feet is stopped by the nurses whose hard and unrelenting arms are cross-cut with the embrace of her lover. She is both literally and metaphorically trapped in her sexuality and its consequences, trapped in her woman's body.

Mai Zetterling's first film was received very positively. At this time it was unusual for reviewers to note a film's associates, with the exception of the actors' performances. It is thus remarkable that this time there were comments from different sources on how Zetterling had received much help and support from her (male) associates, among others Sven Nykvist who photographed the film and Ingmar Bergman who had given her much encouragement. It was as if the critics had a hard time accepting that a woman directing her first film had achieved this extraordinary success.

Zetterling directed another three films in quick succession – the last one backed by Danish and American money – where she consistently followed up on the study of the expression of time and the filmic modes of interpretation. *Night Games (Nattlek)* (1966) was perceived as controversial because of its portrayal of incest and other features. The film was the cause of much controversy during the Biennial at Venice in 1966 where the public screening was banned and the film could only be shown to the jury. *The Girls (Flickorna)* (1968) is based on Aristophanes' play *Lysistrata* and is a feminist attack on the cultural elite in Stockholm. It was considered to be a failure and scored no quality points.

Doktor Glas (1969) received devastating criticism, as it was felt that Zetterling's adaptation of Söderberg's novel was clumsy and that the film was blurred and confusing. Thereafter Mai Zetterling's career as a director was over in Sweden. She moved to England, where she played the part of dumb blondes in a number of films while simultaneously directing several interesting documentaries, among them *Scrubbers* (1982), a film about a women's prison. She was to direct a feature film in Sweden one last time, namely *Amorosa* (1986) – a film about the author Agnes von Krusenstjerna. The film, where Zetterling returns to her earlier problematics and iconography, had mixed reviews and she never had the opportunity of realizing her other film ideas.

When Filmskolan (later DI) was set up in 1964, the patriarchal guild system was destroyed and it became much easier for women to train in the

industry as photographers, editors and directors. Traditionally, professions like script girl and to a certain extent also script writers and editors had been available before to women. But it took a government institution to make the profession of director more widely accessible. Maj Wechselmann, Ingela Romare and Lena Ewert were some of the first students at Filmskolan who were later to direct a considerable number of documentaries.

In the last two decades a growing number of women have had the opportunity to go into film direction, particularly documentaries. Several important feature film directors have also come through, among them Suzanne Osten, Marie-Louise Ekman and Agneta Fagerström-Olsson. *Hjälten* (1990) was Fagerström-Olsson's first feature film. It is an inverted replica of Verdi's opera *Rigoletto*. The film emphasizes the daughter instead of focusing on the father, who loves his daughter so much that he perishes when he loses her. The (symbolic) death of the father in the film becomes meaningful through the daughter's coming of age. The film is obviously based on an opera (and uses sound and music in an exciting way), but its narrative mode is modernistic and it constantly refers to its own expressive means.

What is interesting about Swedish cinema following the mid-1980s is that the dividing line between genre film – made in accordance with the patterns of classical narrative – and 'artistic film' – which since the 1960s has been identified with modernism – is today sex typed. It would appear that the men have resurrected their slaughtered fathers and taken on action and detective films, while the women deal with problematizing the cinema's expressive modes in stories that are personal in content and open in form.

TO THE BOTTOM?

On considering the history of Swedish cinema one gains the impression that there has always been a crisis of some sort somewhere, at one time financial in nature, at another artistically related. The artistic crisis has often been accredited to a lack of good scripts. In the 1970s this explanation or accusation, depending on who voiced it – was to become permanent. The biting, fresh and urgent 'look-no-further' films became conformist relatively quickly and stopped being interesting. It was claimed that the film directors had nothing important to say and that they had no idea how to tell a story. In some quarters there were attempts to remedy the situation by arranging classes in script writing and inviting expensive American professors of film to come and share their know-how. It seemed a waste of time: the artistic successes did not happen.

There were about thirty production companies in existence in the mid-1960s but only four of these produced more than four films in a five-year period. These companies were SF, Sandrews, Europa Film and a company

called Minerva. When Anders Sandrew died, Sandrews had a new artistic leader in Göran Lindgren, who sold off some company studios, cut down production and in 1969 became president of the company. Under his management, production was reduced further, only to eventually cease entirely. Instead, Sandrews concentrated on film distribution and its cinemas. Roy Andersson's strange film *Giliap* (1975) was the last film produced by Sandrews – after about a ten-year gap, the company was to resume production again however.

In the late 1950s Europa Film had undergone an interesting metamorphosis as regards their production policy: it had turned from popular entertainment to more serious repertory – for instance, *Kvarteret Korpen* and other Widerberg films were produced by Europa Film. Gustaf Scheutz, one of its founders, still headed the company in the 1960s, but he died in 1967 and his office was taken over by a certain Ejnar Gunnerholm. Under Gunnerholm's management Europa Film stopped film production and the company decided to invest in the development of its recording studio. The company experienced a brief upswing in the 1980s when it produced a number of successful comedies. For a while it even appeared as if Europa Film would take over SF, but the opposite was eventually the case. Among other things the losses over one extravagant production – *Kalabaliken i Bender* (Åberg, 1983) – contributed to the fall of Europa Film.

The film giant Svensk Filmindustri had run into trouble in the 1970s when its owner, a large real estate company, sold SF to *Dagens Nyheter*, the country's biggest newspaper. *Dagens Nyheter* in its turn sold SF to the gargantuan publishing company Bonniers. Relying on the financial stability of Bonniers, SF launched an offensive and took over their old competitor Europa Film. But even better times were in the making for SF: as of the expansion of the video market the company was to begin a new financial era. Svensk Filmindustri was to produce the period's most popular comedies, action films and above all the Astrid Lindgren films, which was to be some of the most sought-after merchandise on the video market.

Despite the difficulties of the major companies, the number of production companies in the Swedish film industry increased by fifteen up to 1972. This was perhaps to do with the stimulating effect that the work of the Swedish Film Institute occasioned, but it might also have been the result of many of the so-called 'free' film-makers forming companies and remaining their own producers. In the mid-1970s it was also discovered that owning a company was a superb way of evading taxes and resulted in an increase in the number of small one-man companies. At the end of the 1970s some fifty film companies were registered in the country, among which the most active companies were Ingmar Bergman's Cinematograph, MovieMakers and Drakfilm. Swedish Filmproductions and Omega were the most prosperous companies producing pornographic movies. The porn

film industry had at the end of the 1960s turned out to be a lucrative export business for Sweden. Because the pornographic prohibition laws were abolished in 1972, the genre prospered. About one-fifth of the feature films produced in the country in the 1970s were pornographic. In the 1970s some twenty such films a year were produced on average.

The domestic cinema was also relatively popular during this period: the Swedish films stood their ground and were seen by some 20 per cent of the audience, a fairly satisfactory result since Swedish cinema's share of the total market in the 1970s was only a little more than 6 per cent (with the exception of 1976 to 1977 when domestic cinema laid claim to approximately 7.5 per cent of the total repertory). In comparison, Swedish cinema had twenty-five years previously (in 1951) occupied 9 per cent of the market, while after the introduction of television eight years later, it was 4.7 per cent; however, it did account for 25 per cent of the total income at that time as well.

When viewing these figures another fact is clarified, however, namely that it was primarily foreign film which was to largely finance Swedish (quality) film – the Swedish Film Institute's revenues came solely from ticket sales. In the 1970s, the to some people embarrassing fact that what contributed to the making of quality films was first and foremost pornography and so-called 'trivial films' became obvious. It was these films that attracted a large audience. Only a few domestic films were seen by a million people – usually audiences were significantly smaller than that. The most popular film of the 1960s was *The Sound of Music* (Wise, 1965) and in the 1970s it was *The Jungle Book* (Reitherman, 1967), which were both seen by 3.5 million people. The James Bond films *Goldfinger* (Hamilton, 1964) and *Thunderball* (Young, 1965) were seen by 2.3 and 1.8 million people respectively, and *Doctor Zhivago* (Lean, 1965) had 1.8 million viewers. *Foul Play* (Higgins, 1978), starring Goldie Hawn, reached 1.7 million viewers. In more recent years the attendance of foreign movies has significantly decreased as well: *Dances with Wolves* (Costner, 1990) was only to have an audience of 1.3 million.

PRESTIGE AND LOSS

The feud between the left-oriented film workers and Harry Schein entered its second decade and the controversy grew more intense because Schein did not want to listen to any potentially good advice, but rather strove to increase his power in the film industry in various ways. FilmCentrum's publication *Film & TV* contributed to the pungent criticism, as did the film department at Teaterförbundet (The Theatre Federation). Primarily because of this criticism a reorganization of SFI was undertaken in the mid-1970s where the power was, at least in appearance, divided between Schein, who continued as acting chairman of the board, and Bo Jonsson,

who was appointed president. Jonsson had been the producer of a one-man company called Viking Film. Bo Jonsson resigned after only two years however, and when Schein fired Stig Björkman, the editor in chief of the magazine *Chaplin*, who had been criticizing the management of SFI, albeit for good reason, the demands for Schein's resignation became ever more frequent. When the three major companies later agreed to form a consortium called Treklövern (The Three-leaved Clover), through which they committed to contribute half of the financing of all of SFI's film productions, others besides the left faction felt that Schein had gone too far.

In 1976 the Swedes elected a non-socialist government and thereby a change of direction at the Film Institute. The new Minister of Culture received a letter of protest signed by forty-two film directors, which enabled the ministry to act. Schein was offered a one-year contract instead of the customary three years. He declined and resigned, whereupon Liberal party member Per Ahlmark was made the new chairman of the board and Jörn Donner appointed president. Donner had been responsible for the culture section at the Film Institute since 1972, and he was an author and the *enfant terrible* of Finnish cinema through his preference for playing gynaecologists in the spectacular films he directed in the late 1960s. He turned out to be an imaginative but financially irresponsible president. He invested large amounts in, among other things, international productions that were never made. The cooperation between Ahlmark and Donner was unfortunate. Furhammar writes in a commentary: 'The management couple . . . turned out to be . . . a rather unsuccessful constellation. Donner eventually publicized his commentary on the failure of the cooperation. It was marked by perfidious eloquence. Ahlmark's comments have yet to be made public.'⁵⁷

Klas Olofsson became president of the Film Institute through political appointment after the resignation of Donner. Although Olofsson lacked experience in the film industry he was an able cultural administrator who was willing to learn. Under his management in the 1980s the finances of SFI were stabilized – video rentals also contributed to this effect. In 1989 he was offered the post of president at Sandrews, which was once again planning to venture into film production. Ingrid Edström, formerly the head of Riksteatern (the National Touring Theatre), was left in charge at SFI to face the effects of the recession when it hit.

The industry's knowledge and feeling for timing and rhythm that was so urgently called for in the debate in the 1970s, naturally existed then as well. But it was to be found primarily in the entertainment business, for example, among the makers of musicals. As usual, however, these did not count. The company Svenska Ord (Swedish Words) occupied a sort of middle ground, however, because their productions contained a sufficient amount of 'political correctness' to be acceptable. Svenska Ord was not a film company but had been established in the early 1960s through

the cooperation of two young students who worked with satire at Lund University: Hasse Alfredsson and Tage Danielsson.

Alfredsson and Danielsson went on to produce entertainment programmes for radio and television and subsequently some very popular musicals. In the mid-1960s Svenska Ord began producing films under the wing of SF. *Docking the Boat (Att angöra en brygga)* (Danielsson, 1965), one of the most intelligent comedies of Swedish cinema, is based on a simple formula: three couples plan to celebrate the opening of the crawfish season (August). Half of the participants are on an island in the archipelago with the food – the crawfish – and half of the guests are on board a boat with the alcohol. The film portrays the difficulties that arise as these two groups try to get together. More such comedies were produced in the 1970s, principally directed by Tage Danielsson: *The Apple War (Äppelkriget)* (1971), *Let the Prisoners Free – It's Spring (Släpp fångarne loss – det är vår)* (1975) and *Picassos äventyr* (1978). Towards the end of the decade Hasse Alfredsson took on a different kind of problematics in the much praised *Den enfaldige mördaren* (1982), and Danielsson directed a huge success: Astrid Lindgren's *Ronja Rövardotter* (1982). *Ronja* was Danielsson's final film, as he died of cancer shortly after the première.

Hasse o Tage, as they were called, were popular in their choice of subject for film, but also politically correct in their lighthearted portrayal of the social democratic establishment and its government. Their ideological message was closely aligned to that of Astrid Lindgren's 'use your common sense and be nice to everyone, and everyone will be nice to you' – which most people could subscribe to. Characteristic of Svenska Ord was that it favoured working with the same popular artists, and who contributed to the company's successes: for example, the jazz singer Monica Zetterlund, Lena Nyman who had become familiar to the Swedish people in the *Curious* films, Gösta Ekman (junior, the son of Hasse).

Gösta Ekman developed his comic talent in the 1980s and created his classical character Herr Papphammar in short television sketches among other things. After his collaboration with Svenska Ord ceased at Danielsson's death, Ekman continued his career in films whose success appeared to be largely the result of his cheerful presence in such varying films as *Morrhår och ärtor* (Ekman, 1986) and *Jönssonligan dyker upp igen* (Mikael Ekman, 1986). Both films were seen by close to a million people in the same year. The *Jönssonligan* films were considered to be family films, with their lovable villains of which Gösta Ekman plays the gang leader Sickan. The idea was originally Danish and the first film was called *Jönssonligan* (Cornell, 1980).

Lasse Åberg was originally a television entertainer, a graphic artist by training with few aspirations towards being a film director. His popular breakthrough took place in the 1970s in a well-loved children's programme on television, where he played 'Trazan' ('the rag'): a parody of the

character Tarzan. Åberg's formula for film followed the success of Svenska Ord and tied the simple stories of the films to phenomena that were thoroughly recognizable to all Swedish people, and preferably something that everyone had experience of or knowledge about. The mechanisms of recognition are important to Åberg's dramaturgy and the comic points of a situation are based on identification. He plays the leads himself, a nice, rather clumsy guy who is bullied by his mother, but who still wins the beautiful girl in the end. Military refresher courses (*Repmånad* (1979)), vacational trips to the Mediterranean (*Sällskapsresan* (1980)), ski trips to the Alps (*Sällskapsresan II* (1985)), and dabbling in trendy sports: (*Den ofrivillige golfaren* (1991)) were all experiences that most Swedes had had. All the films were seen by more than a million people, *Sällskapsresan* by two million.

When the Swedish Film Institute embarked on film production, it soon dominated other companies in the industry, as discussed above, and was to produce many prestigious films. Andrej Tarkovskij's last film *Offret* was made in Sweden in the summer of 1985 and was one such production. Kjell Grede's *Hip Hip Hurra!* (1987) was one of the most successful 'prestigious films' that the Film Institute ever produced. The film is about Danish painter Søren Krøyer and the artists at Skagen who founded a school at the turn of the century. Using lighting and photography, *Hip Hip Hurra!* re-creates the works of art painted at Skagen. It aestheticizes its subject but also deals with the dichotomy of vision and reality and the borderline between the two in an intelligent and ingenious way. In one scene the artist Michael Ancker paints the portrait of a blind man. The man suddenly asks: 'Michael, am I ugly?' 'No,' Ancker replies and begins to describe the man's looks in words. Besides adjectives he also uses metaphors like 'you have the nose of a king'. The blind man touches the wet, half-finished painting, feels his fingers and smells them: 'Is it sky?' he muses thoughtfully. To the blind man, the texture and pungent smell of the oil paint connote the sky. In one single condensed scene the film thus describes many of the ways of expressing reality: image, words, metaphor, smell – and ultimately film as well.

Other areas of cinema that prospered under the management of the Swedish Film Institute in the 1980s were documentaries and animated films. This was not only possible through an allocation of quotas introduced in the agreement of 1982, but was dependent on the integrity and force of initiative of the producer responsible for these areas, Lisbet Gabrielsson. Thanks to her, films like *Inughuit* (Floremán, 1985), *Pica Pica* (Kristersson, 1987) and many others found their way to the cinemas. *Pica Pica* is a feature-long documentary about the magpies on the square in the Stockholm suburb of Vällingby. The film contains no dialogue and the viewer follows the daily life of the birds to the accompaniment of their incessant chatter. Naturally this film, like all good films, is also about

something other than itself, namely man. This was a film that Lisbet Gabriellsson felt it was essential to make.

Animated films also had an upswing in Sweden in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the most noteworthy was Lennart Gustafsson's feature film *Rottis* (1990), a rock film about a teenage rat in love. *Linnea i Målarens trädgård* (Andersson and Björk, 1990) is based on a children's book in which a little girl, Linnea, visits the French painter Monet's garden and looks at his paintings.

There was relatively speaking plenty of money in the country as the Swedish Film Institute entered its second decade. In 1968 the film agreement between the representatives of the industry and the state had been revised. A new agreement was made in accordance with which the Film Institute was to be able to join as co-financier on various film productions. In 1972 the film agreement was altered once again. The state now for the first time gave direct economic support. Through this agreement the earlier quality grant was reduced by one-third. The general subsidy was dropped, as was the loss adjustment subsidy. Instead, a number of other foundations were instituted: the A-foundation gave a subsidy in proportion to ticket sales, as previously. The B-foundation, whose task it was to allocate the quality grant, remained as before; the others included the F-foundation which dealt with production loans and guarantees and the G-foundation which financed the Film Institute's own productions, and finally the H-foundation which granted what was called selective production loans and guarantees. At the start of the 1980s there were thus eight foundations and a revision was perhaps necessary.

A structural effect of the establishment of the Film Institute had been the decrease in importance of the major integrated companies as the work of the Institute became a regular feature in the industry. This trend became particularly noticeable when SFI began producing films in 1968. Many people questioned whether this development was a positive one, as the Institute was now in principle seen to be competing with others over the same production funds that it was appointed to administer and distribute. This situation was also altered in the agreement of 1992.

The faith in a strong society that was there to look after its people was still unshakeable. Both the state and the community welfare sectors offered extensive social services and several state and community agencies had the means to support cultural life in various ways. 'Increased equality' was the watchword of the social democrats in the 1960s and 1970s: the good folkhem was not to know of any 'privileged or slighted persons, nor any pets or step-children',⁵⁸ as Per Albin Hansson had once put it. In the 1970s there were yet more reforms: part-time pensions, an expansion of the health insurance scheme and parental leave of absence for the birth of children. In the 1970s a number of unpopular labour reforms were also introduced: the law concerning right of participation in decision-making

(MBL), employment security and the law concerning trade union representatives. The ominous fact was that these laws distinctly broke with the old principle which dictated that the labour market should be free of state intervention.

The year 1982 saw an increase in the problems of the Swedish model. The major devaluation of Swedish currency led to good times for the export industry and provided full employment for a while – but it also resulted in overspending and inflation. The public sector ended up in crisis because its expenses had increased dramatically and it was clear to everyone that taxes could no longer be increased. In order to avoid making unpopular cuts, the government borrowed in order to balance the budget deficit. The debt increased. It was also beginning to become clear that the force of Swedish economical expansion had been spent. The traditional products that the Swedes traded in – raw materials like ore, steel, lumber and the mechanized products of the engineering industry – were facing new competition from the Third World and elsewhere in the West. In order to take on the competition, demands for a severe restructuring and rationalization were voiced once again. But instead of an expansion in industrial areas, it was the real estate and financial markets which grew.

The weak spot of the Swedish model was its faith in never-ending growth, and now the unbelievable had happened: the growth began to decline, followed by a downturn in the nation's affluence. As the 1980s approached, the nation's dependence on the rest of the world became ever greater. Swedish companies established themselves in an increasing capacity abroad and the drain of foreign exchange escalated sharply, a situation that could only be checked by the country's decision to instigate negotiations regarding membership of the European Union. The exchange regulations were abandoned in 1989 and in one blow the possibility of pursuing an independent monetary policy vanished. After 1990 the country entered a profound recession, which continues to this day.

The period of saving that the state was forced to embark on at the beginning of the 1990s primarily meant reducing public expenditure which has principally affected low-paid women and families. Heavy industry has moved abroad, the industrial workers today have highly paid and skilled jobs and bear little resemblance to the proletarians of the 1930s: the parties that closed the agreement in the 1930s exist no more. Instead it is the low-paid women with little education and who work in the public sector who are the most vulnerable group in society. The boundary between the classes in Sweden today is no longer between certain professional categories, but between the sexes and certain age groups.

The economic development of the Swedish Film Institute follows the nation's financial situation in an interesting manner: during the economic upswing of the 1980s the Film Institute also experienced a particularly favourable development in its finances, but not through real estate or

exchange deals. Rather, it had been decided as part of the film and video agreement of 1982 that, in addition to the 10 per cent of every film ticket sold that the Film Institute received, it was also to collect a fee from every video cassette sold or rented. None of the parties to this agreement could imagine the gold mine this was to be. For instance, when the Film Institute's revenue from the film theatre fees reached approximately 50 million SEK in the budget year 1985–86, the video fees brought in approximately another 30 million. In time, it was decided that the state would also contribute a direct subsidy. Thus, for example, the corresponding figures for the budget year 1991–92 were as follows: revenue from the cinemas supplied about 76 million SEK, video fees brought in 39 million and the state subsidy amounted to 29 million SEK. Sveriges Television had for a long time contributed a somewhat more modest sum to the Institute.

As of the agreement of 1982 the foundations were formed into committees: the quality jury disappeared but there was still a jury which appointed the recipients of the Swedish counterpart of the Oscar each year: Guldbaggen (the Golden Ram). The goal of the work of the committees was specified: the committees were to distribute the funds in the following way: (1) 20 per cent of the funds were meant for the foundations' commitment to produce Swedish film; (2) 35 per cent was set aside for production guarantees for artistic film; (3) 5 per cent was to be used for the production of short films; (4) another 5 per cent was set aside for the screening of culturally valuable film; (5) no more than 25 per cent was to be used for the maintenance of SFI and film cultural ends; (6) 3 per cent was for industry promotive purposes; (7) at least 2 per cent was to be used to subsidize the production and distribution of culturally valuable film; and (8) the remainder was to go to various projects.

Through the agreement of 1992, when dark clouds were already overshadowing the nation's economy, it was decided that the state would subsidize the film cultural departments of SFI, the library, the film club (Cinemateket) and the publishing business. Within the Film Institute it was generally believed that in such difficult times cinema attendance would decline further and that perhaps the industry should refuse to relinquish its diminishing revenues. One would suspect that the work that was not connected with film production would be subject to cuts first and that the state would protect the historical and cultural areas. This faith suffered a serious blow when the state subsidy to the Film Institute was diminished in the budget cuts in 1993.

Through the new agreement SFI's film production proper ceased. The film subsidy was once again distributed in proportion to ticket sales – in practice the most successful films were to be rewarded. As of the early 1990s an 'entertainment film' was eligible for a subsidy from the Film Institute: for instance, in the budget year 1991–92 Lasse Åberg's *Den*

ofrivillige golfaren received a production grant. Instead of producing films itself, SFI employed a number of advisory officers for a limited period of time who were given a relatively free hand with the production funds at their disposal for various film projects. To a certain extent the advisory officers had their own areas to administer: one of them was to tend to the 'greenhouse' which grants funds to young film-makers to do brief short story-type films.

THE SOCIETAL MIRROR

It was in fact already in the 1970s that the Swedish model began to outgrow its creators. The country suffered from major financial difficulties even if no one (or few people) consciously understood the extent of these difficulties. The cause was partly due to the oil crisis (the rise in the price of crude oil), which not only affected the individual consumers, but to a greater extent, the heavy industries. The country found itself in a cost crisis, where high nominal withdrawals of salaries and high marginal taxes undermined the companies' market shares.

The basic premise of the Swedish model had always been the compromise between the parties of the labour market in the 1930s, which was founded on a voluntary agreement. This compromise was to be put severely to the test, however, when the issue of collective wage-earners' investment funds was addressed in the mid-1970s. The employers and the non-socialist parties were united against the proposition, which was passed in Parliament. The measure was felt to be a step towards too great a socialization and was dissolved immediately after the right-wing coalition came into government.

Against this background it is interesting to study the syndrome which had begun developing in the 1970s, namely the existence of the childhood films,⁵⁹ which feature children but are primarily addressed to adults. Childhood is a theme that has been worked into Swedish films for adults throughout the 1980s and 1990s. It is a theme whose frequency is fairly unique to Sweden and which can only be explained by the special historical phase that the country is experiencing. The childhood films are part of its ideological manifestation.

A fundamental feature of the planning and government of the social democrats has been that it has fairly singularly concentrated on future prospects without devoting itself to the past. Memories of the past, the country's history, have been traumatic. Sweden was for many centuries an imperialist state, which lost its largest dominion, Finland, in the early nineteenth century, and a little less than a century later the union with Norway was dissolved. The way the Swedes dealt with these losses was to transform its territorial imperialism into a moral imperialism, which among other things was to condemn the imperialist efforts of other countries

in especially harsh terms. The country's own past was repressed, perhaps too eagerly since imperialism strikes a discordant note with the idea of solidarity which has prevailed in the country since the 1930s.

The teaching of history has been neglected and the study of history has focused on the living conditions of the workers and ordinary people, not on the kingdom that moved the borders. For many people, Sweden began with the founding of the labour movement a hundred years ago, and the time before that is shrouded in mystery. A country's people need a history, however, and a national memory on which to found its identity. People who are deprived of their national history often seek it in a more private, individual history. How else is one to explain the almost obsessive interest in children, children's culture and the importance of childhood that took place in the mid-1970s? As an interest, it goes hand-in-hand with the interest in psychology, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis that was the origin of a large amount of popular specialist literature written and translated *en masse*. There were also children's theatre groups, children's plays written, children's books published – and children's films produced.

The movement started with *Hugo and Josefin* (Grede, 1967). In the 1970s *Elvis Elvis!* (Pollack, 1977), *Mackan* (Svensson, 1978) and *Stortjuven* (Hellner, 1979) were produced. In the 1980s the theme was encapsulated in films like *Mitt liv som hund* (Hallström, 1986), *Åke och hans värld* (Edwall, 1984), *Fanny och Alexander* and in the nineties *Söndagsbarn* (1992) and *Kådisbellan* (Sandgren, 1993) – to name but a few. At the same time a systematic production of films based on Astrid Lindgren's books was initiated, with remakes of *Mästerdetektiven Blomkvist* and the *Bullerby* films, as well as stage productions of the *Mardie* books,⁶⁰ and filming of *Lotta på Bråkmakargatan* (Hald, 1993) and *Emil i Lönneberga* had begun earlier, as had films about *Pippi Longstocking*.

A trait common to both the childhood films and the Lindgren films – which, taken together, constitute a significant share of the film repertoire in Sweden over the past twenty-five years – is that they look back, they deal with the past. But they are about a utopian past, because in reality the middle classes were almost non-existent in Sweden and the country was one of the most poor and depressed in all of Europe. The later Lindgren films in particular portray a world that is if possible even more idyllic and designed to please than the first films made in the 1940s. The events take place in a small town or in the countryside in an idyllic community at the turn of the century, usually in a middle-class environment. People live in peaceful communities where illness, hunger and war have no place. The films are well made, lavish and consummately typical of the period, and the characters conventional. Even in the films where a child is deceived, he – because it is usually a boy – survives in the end.

A possible explanation for the frequent occurrence of childhood thematics – and especially the iconography of looking back at the past,

through which this thematic is expressed – could be that it is a question of compensation for the loss of the idea of the folkhem. There is a thread connecting between the loss of a national history and its compensation in individual history: the image of the child in the past. In this image, an old trauma about the loss of national history is fused with the new trauma about the loss of the idea of the folkhem in the mid-1970s.

The idea of the folkhem (the Welfare State) has been the strongest metaphor that the social democratic rhetoric has presented to the Swedes. It was maintained that it was to be in the future, but it was not realized when that future would arrive. On the contrary the whole image collapsed. The extraordinary thing was that the metaphor of the folkhem could not be discarded, but was rather projected into the past. Both the childhood films and the Lindgren films create the concept of a utopian past and is a Swedish version of heritage cinema whose occurrence became a pan-European phenomenon in the 1980s. It is significant in this context that the childhood films are produced with such great care and financed through state funds. The images they display protect the Swedes from such repressed but real images that have now become frighteningly close. These phenomena are too contradictory to grasp, but they none the less belong together: for example, the rise of neo-Nazism in relation to the liberation of the Baltic states, questions about nationalism and the nation's identity. And racism.

As of the 1950s Sweden had been opened to immigrants from various countries – primarily from Finland, Italy and the former Yugoslavia who were attracted by the high wages earned by the Swedish industrial workers; and to political refugees from Greece, Spain and Latin America. A large number of economic and political refugees came from Turkey and the Arabic countries, and all these immigrants have contributed to the Sweden that exists today. The first feature film to portray the situation of the immigrants in a nationally heterogeneous Sweden opened in the early 1970s: *Jag heter Stelios* (Bergenstråhle, 1972) and was based on the novel by Greek author Theodor Kallifatides. Muammer Özer was one of the first immigrants to direct a feature film: *Splittring* (1984). His debut got a positive reception but was not a major success with the audience in spite of its suggestive play of symbols and topical subject.

Director Suzanne Osten has taken a militant attitude in the treatment of the immigrant issue by describing immigrants as a positive collective force in Sweden today. In *Bröderna Mozart* (1986), which is about a production of *Don Giovanni* at the Stockholm Opera house, the cleaning and repair staff are portrayed as the people who have the most authentic relationship with the music. In *Tala, det är så mörkt* (1992) Osten gives a frightening and intense portrait of a skinhead. Some of the more interesting productions are *Vägvisaren* (Simma, 1992) and *Freud flyttar hemifrån* (Bier, 1991). *Vägvisaren* takes as its subject matter the Sami

legends and *Freud flyttar hemifrån* is about a girl called Freud who comes from a Jewish family and is the first feature film in Sweden to depict Swedish-Jewish culture.

The films *One Has to Live* (*Man måste ju leva . . .*) (Vinterheden, 1978) and *Johnny Roova* (Olsson, 1985) display Swedish immigrants in Sweden. These recount the problems that people face as they are forced to move south from Norrland in the north to find employment. Forty years after the nostalgic rural films, the countryside theme has again emerged and the upgrading of the national periphery has been reversed: the countryside is viewed as either comically backward or exotic. In Colin Nutley's *Änglagård* (1992), two delinquent children from the city – Fanny and her androgynous friend Zac – visit the Värmland village which Fanny's mother had left in her youth. The villagers view the couple with suspicion, distrust, hatred and delight. The Swedish audience loved seeing their prejudices portrayed by an Englishman and went as one man to see the film and its sequel, *Änglagård – andra sommaren* (Nutley, 1995). *Jägarna* (Sundvall, 1996) is a good example of a successful application of exoticism to northern Sweden where the film has a nebulous connection with reality. A conventional story about an investigation of a group of poachers is interwoven with a passionate family drama, a combination that explodes in fire and blood on the screen. In the first four months of its première *Jägarna* was seen by more than half a million people.

Sweden, which has always been conceived of as a heterogeneous country, has – and has had for many years – many cultures within it and today they emerge as images on the silver screen.

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