

Film Studies in Sweden

The Past, the Present and the Future

GÖRAN BOLIN & MICHAEL FORSMAN

Beside the 'three great directors' in Swedish film history, Victor Sjöström, Mauritz Stiller and Ingmar Bergman, Swedish film has not been particularly commercially or artistically successful on an international scale, although some names and directors have won international reputations over the years, for example Stefan Jarl, Vilgot Sjöman, Jan Troell, Bo Widerberg and Lasse Hallström. On the other hand Sweden has been quite successful in its promotion of actresses for international films, from Greta Garbo over Zarah Leander, Ingrid Bergman, Anita Ekberg, Ann Margret, Viveca Lindfors, Britt Ekland, Maud Adams, Lena Olin to Izabella Scorupco. Swedish actors seem to be less in demand on the international market, possibly with the exception of Lars Hansson during the early, and Max von Sydow (and maybe even Dolph Lundgren) in later years. Directors 'in exile', the most notable example being Andrej Tarkovskij and the Finnish brothers Aki and Mika Kaurismäki, during a period in the mid-1980's found artistic and financial support via the Swedish Film Institute (SFI) instead. English born Colin Nutley also recently won extensive popularity with a couple of films said to portray 'genuine Swedishness'.

A fundamental problem in exporting Swedish films and knowledge about film making has of course been the language barrier. This has also been the reason why Swedish film studies has lived its life on the margins of international (i.e. anglo-american and French) film research. With the exception of a few books on Swedish film history and Swedish film directors which have been translated into English,¹ a couple of articles in international film journals,² and the extensive (mainly US) research on Bergman, which in some cases refers to writings in Swedish,³ very little Swedish research has been able to cross the English language border. After many years of low productivity, however, an increasing number of dissertations in film studies are being presented. In the future we also have to face growing competition within the field, where film departments and units at several universities around Sweden are being founded. Our aim in this article is to describe and discuss the present situation within film studies in Sweden. In so doing, we will very briefly analyse the historical development that led

to the institutionalization of film studies as an academic discipline in four phases.⁴ We will then discuss the present situation and end the article with some speculations about the future of the field.

The first phase covers the period from the childhood of Swedish film culture, to the debates and early research in the late 1950's. At that stage Swedish film research lacked any real connections to the academic system. Research and the foundations of archives was then made by idealistic 'film buffs' in cinematic societies, by cineasts, and in privately run film archives.

The second period is framed by the decade of the 1960's. During this period the Swedish Film School and Svenska Filminstitutet (Swedish Film Institute) was founded, with filmarchives, library, film club and so on. All this was institutionalized in the newly built Film House (Filmhuset) in Stockholm in 1970. This development can also be seen as a very essential background to the fact that film studies was finally institutionalized as an academic discipline, albeit together with theatre history within Stockholm University, under the name of Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts. During the third period, 1970-1990, film studies was established within the Swedish educational system, although not primarily through traditional academic discourses. Very few dissertations and research projects emanated during this era, which saw the coming and going of two professors – Rune Waldekranz (1970-1978) and Leif Furhammar (1978-1990).

During the present, fourth period, taking its start in 1990, several changes have taken place. A new professor, Jan Olsson, has been appointed, and film studies has been separated from the department of theatre studies, and is now a separate Department of Cinema Arts. In addition to these changes there have been some fundamental changes within the Swedish educational system as well as in the Swedish media climate. Within each phase we will discuss influences and tensions on different levels; from individuals to institutions (journals, cinematic societies, disciplines and so on) as well as in different political discourses (educational politics, film politics, journalistic debates), and how these changes have affected the direction of the research process. What has been at stake in these discourses is of course also dependent on changes in the international theoretical discourse, but, as we argue, adapted to a

specific Swedish situation. One important part of this is the always present, although not always explicit, debate whether to analyse film from a sociological/socio-psychological perspective (as a mass medium), or from an aesthetic-historical perspective (as an art form). We argue that particular circumstances in the historical development have led to an emphasis on the historical-aesthetical aspects of film studies, at the expense of the relative neglect of sociological issues and questions about audiences.

Early film studies and studies of early film The first public screenings in Sweden took place at an industrial and handicraft fare in Malmö, 28 June 1896.⁵ But the real breakthrough for the new medium came a year later during the Arts and industrial fare in Stockholm, when approximately 75 000 people experienced the new technological wonder.⁶ These events were followed by a period of touring film exhibitors. However, these exhibitions were not only to be considered as purely commercial, they were often organized by sections of the emerging social movements of the period: the temperance movement, the workers movement and the religious movement. Between 1905-1910 there was a professionalization and an increased industrialization concerning both the production and distribution of film. Permanent cinematic establishments were founded in different cities around the country, beginning in Stockholm 1904. This process led to new competitive relations and to new ways to promote the cinematic events. The fact that these events included a mixture of shorter films (one reel), and that the audience primarily consisted of people from the lower social strata, i.e. those who could not afford the admission to the theatres, meant that the medium's status was soon devalued by the bourgeoisie, where it in its initial phase had stood as a symbol of modernity.⁷ The taxation on entertainment that was initiated in 1911, in which film screenings was included, further confirmed the low status of the medium as an artform.

The bad reputation of the medium did not change, as could have been expected, with the systematic and extensive production of full length feature films that soon was initiated by the production company Svenska Bio and its director Charles Magnusson – a dynamic producer of the time who is mostly known for being the man who promoted Sjöström and Stiller.⁸ In spite of taking up established and well-reputed plays and literary classics, the public reception was negative, especially among the cultural elite.⁹ The response more resembled a moral panic fuelled by the political right, as well as the left, in a furious attack on the cinematic medium, an attack that paralleled the public criticism of the contemporary so-called decadent literature.¹⁰ In the wake of this debate over the films' allegedly bad influence on it's (young) audience, the Swedish national system of censorship was institutionalized as the world's first organized attempt to regulate moving images, in 1911.¹¹ The national censorship, with its aesthetically and morally legitimating perspective, could be said to be the first institutionalized form of 'analytical' discourse on, and archive of information on, film in Sweden. This has made it a major source for film research.¹²

Another dimension of this early debate was the pedagogical discourse among school teachers with enlightening ambitions. The pedagogical possibilities of the new medium was, for ex-

ample, the point of departure for Frans Hallgren in what is considered to be the first published book on film in Sweden – *Kinematografien ett bildningsmedel* from 1914.¹³ The status of the medium rose after the World War I, due to the rise of picture palaces and to the internationally acclaimed adaptations of Swedish literary classics by Mauritz Stiller and Victor Sjöström. From this followed a demand for a heightened level of journalistic criticism. Journalistic film critique was somewhat regularly produced from around 1905, but it is hard to speak about a film critique as we know it today before the 1930's.¹⁴

Of great importance for the theoretical thinking and writing on film was Robin Hood (a pseudonym for Bengt Idestam-Almquist), leading film critic at the time. As early as 1936 he published a work on the Swedish silent cinema, and did also publish monographical works on Sjöström and Stiller in 1939.¹⁵ Rune Waldekranz, who was to become the first professor of film studies, also began his career as a film critic. He also produced an overview in popular form of the history of film in 1941.¹⁶ Alongside journalistic film critique during the 1930's, several cinematic societies (filmstudiorörelsen) emerged. This turned out to be a fertile soil for those who later would turn out to be the central persons within Swedish film research. The cinematic society in Lund was founded in 1929 by, among others, Gösta Werner, who was later to become one of the initiators of the writing of Swedish film history. Among his initiatives was a library for writings on film, a library that as early as 1935 had expanded so much that he saw himself forced to publish a catalogue over its contents (REF).

The above mentioned Robin Hood founded Stockholms Filmstudio (Stockholm's Film Society) in 1928, which in 1933 was renamed Svenska Filmsamfundet (Swedish Film Society). This association had an academic character and aimed at the aesthetic, cultural and technical promotion of the film medium. Svenska Filmsamfundet consisted of enthusiasts from the film industry, critics, cultural nobilities and academics of various disciplines within the humanities. The activities resulted in the publishing of pamphlets, sketches of film history, portraits of directors and annual reports, in which shorter theoretical texts also were included. The association also arranged screenings of film classics, thereby contributing to the canonization of certain films.¹⁷

Of great significance for film studies are, of course, film archives. As early as 1912 the city of Gothenburg set up an archive for moving images of the city for future research. The same year saw the emergence of an archive for newsreels in the regime of Svenska biografteatern on the initiative of legendary film photographer Julius Jaenzon, whose photography lent Stiller's, and above all, Sjöström's films their unique character. This archive was taken over by the Swedish Radio (Sveriges Radio) in 1964, and is today an invaluable source for historical documentaries made for television.

A broader focus and an interest in feature and fiction films signified Svenska Filmsamfundets Arkiv (Swedish Film Society's Archive). It was founded in 1934, the same year as the Film Library in New York and a year before La Cinémathèque Française, and several other archives around the world.¹⁸ In 1940, it was renamed to Filmhistoriska Samlingarna (The

Filmhistorical Collections). With its large collection of newspaper clippings, its impressive archive for film stills and its library it became a major source for journalists and also a centre for the emerging film research. The parents of Einar Lauritzen, the long time director for this archive – Holger and Thyra Lauritzen – were just like their son great cineasts. Due to Holger Lauritzen's position as a leading bank manager the couple could set up a private fund for film research in 1952. This fund sponsored the Filmhistorical Collections until 1964 when the archives were transferred to the Swedish Film Institute. The Holger and Thyra Lauritzen Foundation for the Promotion of Research into the History of the Cinema has (especially since the 1960's) for a long time been a very important part of Swedish film research, giving financial support to projects and publications.

Although many people were interested in film and involved in writing on film, three men dominated early film research: Bengt Idestam-Almquist, Gösta Werner and Rune Waldekranz.¹⁹ Their published works, ranging from overviews of the historical development of film internationally, to portraits of Swedish filmmakers and producers, laid the grounds for the future of film studies in the academy. Of great importance for this development was that all three were also involved with the actual production of film. Rune Waldekranz was from the early 1940's to the mid 1960's director for film production at Sandrews, one of the major film companies in Sweden, and Gösta Werner had directed several films. This linkage to the film production industry was an important component when the Swedish Film Institute (Svenska Filminstitutet) and the first Film School were to be founded in the early 1960's.

The Film Reform and The Swedish Film Institute

As a consequence of the enormous decline in the cinema audience in the late 1950's there was a so-called film reform in 1963.²⁰ One important outcome of this reform was the founding of Svenska Filminstitutet (The Swedish Film Institute, hereafter abbreviated SFI). The causes of the reform were at least three: Firstly, the taxation on entertainment that all cinematic screenings since 1911 had been charged with, secondly, the introduction of television in Sweden in 1956, which caused the Swedish film industry many problems, and thirdly, Ingmar Bergman.

Artistically Swedish film during the 1950's could be seen to be equally ambitious and successful as during the silent era. One indication of this is that both Alf Sjöberg's adaption of August Strindberg's *Fröken Julie* (1951) for the screen, and documentary director Arne Sucksdorff's *Människor i stad* (1946) won international awards. After the huge success of Ingmar Bergman's *Sommarnattens leende* (1956) in Cannes, however, a whole generation of Swedish coming directors where overshadowed internationally (e.g. Hasse Ekman, Hampe Faustman, Arne Mattsson and Gustav Molander). *Sjunde inseglet* (1957), *Ansiktet* (1958), *Jungfrukällan* (1960) and the 'trilogy' *Såsom i en spegel* (1961), *Nattvardsgästerna* (1963) and *Tystnaden* (1963) only further confirmed the opinion on Bergman as synonymous with 'Swedish quality film'. The

huge success of Bergman did however have some implications for Swedish film theory and research. The status of the medium increased, and the aesthetic and thematic specificity of Bergman's style provoked a vast amount of ambitious interpretations. Although there had previously been several works dedicated to the films of Sjöström and Stiller, Bergman was the first Swedish director that was analysed in accordance with auteur theory.²¹

For the younger, more 'socially conscious' directors, Bergman, however, represented something old. Bo Widerberg, who started out making films inspired by the French new wave (*nouvelle vague*) and neorealism (*Kvarteret Korpen*, 1963 and *Ådalen 1931*, 1968) and then moved on to more poetic films such as *Elvira Madigan* (1966), published a very influential pamphlet in 1962, where he among other things criticised Bergman's aesthetics, but most of all made a furious attack on the Swedish production system of the time.²² The same year Harry Schein, formerly a film critic and recognized cultural critic, published a book where he sketched out a reform of Swedish film production.²³ Schein became the main architect behind the film reform, and the publicly successful, but also highly controversial, director of the SFI during its most influential and dynamic period (1964-1979).²⁴ The purpose behind the reform was to come to terms with the crises in the film industry and to increase the quality of the products (with Bergman as the setting example). In order to do so the taxation on entertainment was terminated. It had previously been 25-40 percent of ticket sales, and had been used in state finances without reinvestments within the film industry. The second cornerstone in the reform was the foundation of a film institute. The most suitable way to organize this was thought to be in the form of a state trust – The SFI. This was to be financed through a percentage (ten per cent) of ticket sales. Out of this ten per cent, two thirds were reinvested in film production. The remaining third was used for the non-commercial activities arranged by the SFI: film archive, film restoration, film club, library, film research, publishing of books and journals. It was also agreed that the SFI should set up a course in film production. In order to secure quality there were to be few pupils, and it was explicitly stated that the education should be practical, not theoretical. The film school was started in 1964, headed by Rune Waldekranz, who had left his work at Sandrews, where he had been in charge of film production.

According to the statutes the SFI should also support research on film. The first of these projects concerned the effects of films rather than their aesthetics or history. After a public debate on effects, following a controversial decision to censor the sexually explicit depiction of youth in trouble in Vilgot Sjöman's *491* (1964), a research group was formed and coordinated by Schein. Their work resulted in a series of reports.²⁵ Following a public debate on the effects of pornography, they also put forth a proposition to the government on the disorganization of censorship for adults.

The SFI also had an important role in the publishing of literature on film, similar to that of the British Film Institute (BFI). Through an agreement with a large publisher a special series for literature on film was initiated. This promoted a more continuous writing on film, and several of those who

have come to put their mark on Swedish film research published works in this series.

The two most important research projects initiated by the SFI were the compilation of a Swedish filmography, and the foundation of a film archive. It was decided that the filmography should be published in seven volumes, each covering a decade between 1896 and 1979. These volumes document facts about all feature films shown publicly in Sweden and include production credits, abstracts, quotes from reviews, an index, a register, a list of titles in English, and so on. In addition to this each volume have a lengthy foreword, where overarching trends within the decade in question is covered. Several of the filmographies also contain essays on important directors of the time as well as summaries of the public debates.²⁶ Although minor errors can be found, the filmographies are of invaluable importance for Swedish film research.²⁷

The film archive of SFI consists of ca. 15.000 films, both international and Swedish of various formats. This archive has, as have the collection of reviews and press material, and the archive for stills and posters, been developed by incorporation of among others the material collected by the Filmhistorical Collections.

The Institutionalization of Film Studies

In the same year as the film reform was made, it became possible for the first time in Sweden to attend a course on 'the history and theory of film'. The course was given at the Department of Theatre History and was lead by Rune Waldekranz, then a long time doctoral student at the department.

In 1970 Waldekranz became the first professor of film studies. The appointment of Waldekranz was made after a long process, with lobbying from Harry Schein, the SFI (that also financed the professorship in the beginning) and the Lauritzen Foundation. The department was amalgamated with theatre history as a Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts. In the first curriculum it stated that the discipline should cover three areas: the history and theory of film; the psychology and sociology of film; and pedagogics. In his inaugural lecture Rune Waldekranz also strongly emphasized that the discipline was to be considered as belonging to the humanities.²⁸ This proximity to the humanities and to theatre studies can be seen as an indication of a research interest that was historical-aesthetical-philosophical.

But, at a very early stage in the history of the department a controversy arose concerning the direction that film studies would take. Many students advocated the pursuit of sociological theories and practical film production. In curricula and course literature from the 1970's, it is evident that media sociology was foregrounded. In addition to the courses in film history, and some minor practical exercises in 8mm film making, there were several courses in mass communication research perspectives and socio-psychologically oriented film analyses.

As a consequence of this sociological interest it was in the late 1970's and the early 1980's possible as a student to choose between either 'traditional' film studies or film studies with a 'television perspective' from the second term and onwards.

When it started in 1972 the PhD programme attracted nine students. In their, and their successors', choice of dissertation subject, a certain bias towards mass media sociology can be detected. As in many other disciplines in the academy at the time, there were strong influences from historical materialist approaches and variants of Marxist theory. Some of the doctoral students and teachers in film studies also published anthologies with, as well as studies influenced by, Marxist film theory.²⁹ Some of these belonged to a group of doctoral students from Uppsala, who formed around the journal *Filmhäftet* (founded in 1973). The quarterly journal, with its ambitious theme issues around subjects such as contemporary film in different nations, family cinema and television became – like the SFI produced magazine *Chaplin* (founded in 1959) – a platform for researchers from the critical left with an interest in new theoretical perspectives.³⁰

As well as the introduction of international film research and theoretical classics that were provided by these journals, a number of anthologies with texts by classical theoreticians such as Astruc, Balázs, Bazin, Eisenstein, Metz, Sarris, Wollen, Zavattini were also published during the 1970's.³¹

Dissertations and Projects

Much of the new research and criticism thus was produced on the margin of the department.³² Despite the heterogeneity in subjects studied, the few dissertations that were presented in the 1970's (in most cases already written within the framework of other disciplines) belonged to a mainstream research lacking any obvious theoretical perspectives and mainly focused on Swedish film history: Gösta Werner's reconstruction in minute detail of Mauritz Stiller and his films between 1912-1916; Louise O'Konor on the Swedish painter and film avant gardist Viking Eggeling; Arne Svensson on the praxis of the foreign policy norm by the National Board of Film Censors since 1914; Marguerite Engberg's dissertation on Danish silent cinema in two volumes; and Bengt Forslund's dissertation on Victor Sjöström.³³ In 1978, Leif Furhammar, former film critic and television producer with a background in Pedagogics, was appointed professor of the department. His qualifications for the post consisted of, among other things, his books on the effects of film, politics and film, Swedish film history, as well as a period as film critic and his forewords to the filmographies.³⁴ The department he took over was theoretically undefined, but also in its personnel, policy and administration, very complicated.

One of the more pleasant duties for the new professor was probably the responsibility for the research project 'Land och stad i svensk fiktionsfilm' (Town and country in Swedish cinema). The project was initiated by Waldekranz, and during Furhammar it focused on the popular films of the 1930's and 1940's, films that long since had been a laughing stock, and exemplified bad cinema among intellectuals.³⁵

In the dissertations to come out of this project one can see an attempt to study the highly successful, but somewhat populist and nostalgic films as symbolic expressions of the decline of an agricultural Sweden and a bridging of the transition to modern, industrialized and highly rationalized urban

life in a strong welfare state. Per Olov Qvist treats in his dissertation, from a perspective of *gemeinschaft* – *gesellschaft*, what he calls 'countryside film'.³⁶ These films peaked immediately after World War 2 and idealizes rural life, pastoral villages and the wildness of nature. Sometimes appearing in these films were Edvard Persson, one of the most popular Swedish actors ever. He had a very long acting career starting in the silent era, but is best known for his roles as the good hearted local patriarch in Swedish 'Heimatfilms' from the 1930's and 1940's. In his dissertation on Persson, Kjell Jerselius discusses, in a similar vein to Qvist, the populism and scepticism towards urban life and modernization that the films expresses. Jerselius does this from an empirical rather than a theoretical point of view, and thus focuses on aspects such as different periods in Perssons' career, the reviews of his films, etc.³⁷

Tytti Soila treats the same era as Qvist and Jerselius, but with quite a different subject and in a more theoretically informed way. Her dissertation analyses the status and function of images of femininity in 63 of the most popular Swedish film melodramas from the period 1929-1939. Arguing from poststructuralist and feminist perspectives she finds that within the very strong patriarchal discourse (that produces female stereotypes like the 'haughty dragon', the 'impish tomboy' and the 'kitchen boss') there are some progressive female subject positioning and even examples of subversive voices. Soila finds this most obvious in two films later remade in the USA (*Intermezzo*, 1939 and *A woman's face*, 1941).³⁸ The curricula, literature and student papers during the 1980's bear traces of the inner tensions, the turbulence and the heterogeneity of the department. Among the different theoretical groupings formed during the period one consisted of the 'soft structuralists', a group of somewhat older doctoral students, some of whom belonged to the 'Uppsala faction'. Here theoretical models could be found which used binary oppositions in their analysis of the development of the spaghetti western genre, as well as developmental-psychological discussions on Pippi Longstocking.³⁹ Another group was more semiotically informed.⁴⁰ In the mid-1980's strands of lacanian theory, poststructuralism, and 'postmodern' theory were incorporated.

One way to characterize film studies at the department in Stockholm during the 1980's is that it moved from basic research via structuralist readings of genres and thematic to an increased interest in narratology, psychoanalysis, aesthetics, and philosophical questions, for example on time, space and framing. This is notable for example in Astrid Söderbergh Widding's dissertation on the off-screen space in Tarkovsky's last three films, in which French film theoreticians as Jacques Aumont, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Chion were important sources of inspiration.⁴¹ In 1993 Maaret Koskinen presented the first dissertation about Ingmar Bergman's films in Swedish. She chose a not so exploited angle within Bergmanism, namely the aesthetics of Bergman's cinematic universe and how this had changed over the years. In the dissertation she suggested that mirror effects, different forms of framing the diegesis and other reflexive modes of address have marked the director's consciousness that film only exists in dialogue with its audience.⁴²

A dialogical perspective, although dealing with a rather different subject, is noticeable in Olle Sjögren's dissertation. In the ambition of constructing a theory to analyse ten US film comedians, from Buster Keaton to Woody Allen, Sjögren developed a model for 'psychocultural analysis', in which anthropological and folkloric perspectives met theories on identity and modernity.⁴³ Central to Sjögren's work is of course the many theories on humour, in particular irony. Cinematic irony and ironic narrative is the subject of one of the latest presented dissertations, by Örjan Roth Lindberg.⁴⁴ With the help of theories from linguistics, literature and arts studies, Roth Lindberg discusses several criteria for irony and constructs a typology of 28 different forms of irony in film. These typologies are then applied in close readings of sequences in films by Hitchcock and Kubrick. The latest dissertation to this date has been presented by Margareta Rönnerberg, also a long-time doctoral student at the department belonging to the Uppsala faction. Her primary target for critique is traditional television and effects studies, and her ambitious study is a settling of accounts with most of the older studies in mass communication, arguing for a symbolic-interactionist television theory.⁴⁵ Since the department started there have been several foreign students at the department. Some of these have presented dissertations. These, however, are harder to fit into the overall tendencies within the development of film studies, as most of them deal with film from the doctoral student's home countries.⁴⁶

The Present Situation

A certain displacement regarding choice of subject is noticeable today among the new PhD students at the department, away from the earlier studies of low-valued Swedish popular film, towards the silent era, historiography, neoformalist narratology and auteur criticism. The changes in staff and in the direction of the department are partly explained by Jan Olsson's appointment as professor in 1993. He previously had a very long and productive career as associate professor at the Unit for Drama-Theatre-Film in the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Lund. Olsson has also published much about Swedish film history, for example his dissertation on the depictions of 'foreign powers' in some 'occupation films'.⁴⁷ In this regard he is similar to his predecessors Waldekranz and Furhammar, although he has a greater interest in the silent era and a more 'pure' academic ambition. Parallel to the interest in early cinema and modernity, the possibilities of using new technologies in film research are being explored. Presently, two research projects are being conducted that aim to investigate the methodological possibilities of computer technology, for example electronic codification of images in order to subject film to meticulous analysis.⁴⁸

Tendencies for the Future

To conclude, we will point out some tendencies that can be discerned in Swedish film studies of today. Firstly, there is a growing formalization of film studies, just as in many other academic disciplines. As opposed to the situation during the 1970's and 1980's, it is today a necessity to have a doctoral

degree to be able to teach as a permanent member of staff, and at undergraduate level it is now expected that students study for four terms, since this is what is required for a MA. As a consequence the amount of MA's taken at the department has increased substantially in the 1990's. A second tendency, that is also shared by many academic disciplines, is an increasing internationalization. Swedish film researchers are today publishing articles in international anthologies and journals to a greater extent than before. Even more notable is the frequency with which internationally well reputed scholars have been visiting Stockholm. David Bordwell, Tom Gunning, Linda Williams, Jackie Stacey and Richard Dyer are some of the guests who have taught courses and delivered lectures during the last couple of years. Another dimension of this growing interaction with international film studies are the many anthologies with French, Russian, German and American film theory that has been published in Swedish recently.⁴⁹

On a national level there is, thirdly, a tendency towards decentralization of film studies in Sweden. Since the early 1970's Lund has had a Unit for Drama, Theatre and Film placed at the Department for Comparative Literature, and up until now, five dissertations have been completed there. Beside the dissertation mentioned above by Jan Olsson, there have been two other's presented in 1979 and two more in 1992.⁵⁰ Since the late 1980's, film studies is also taught at undergraduate level at several other places in Sweden.

Fourthly, in the competitive situation following this decentralization of the discipline, some kind of profile among the departments and units will no doubt emerge, even though Stockholm will probably will be keen to secure the right to define what a graduate education should contain. The Department of Cinema Studies at Stockholm also might have reason to define itself against the media education and research that is carried out at the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication (JMK), situated in the vicinity of Filmhuset. JMK, formed in 1989 by a merging of the School of Journalism and the Centre for Mass Communication Research at Stockholm University, provides two kinds of education: the mainly practical education of journalists, and degrees in Media and Communication Studies. Within the latter, there is at JMK – in addition to more traditional communications research and reception studies – a strong interest in popular culture, and research into media and everyday life. With a research interest in television, radio, film, video, music and printed media, traditional mass communications research is combined with youth cultural studies, cultural studies, cultural sociology and critical theory. Several of the teachers at JMK have a background in film studies, and some of the projects and dissertation projects are related to film.

In other words, some of the research that was done within film studies during 1970's and 1980's is now conducted by JMK. On the other hand, it is unfortunate that a broader analytical interest in television and video culture almost seems to have vanished from the Department of Cinema Studies, following the dispersal of the teachers most interested in those areas to other parts of the country. It would be unfortunate if the ambition of the leading lights of film studies were to isolate and concentrate the discipline within rigid studies of (canon-

ized) Film, since the technical, media cultural and theoretical development seems to point in quite another direction.

As most Western countries Sweden has seen a fragmentation and dispersment in the media cultural milieu during the late 1980's and early 1990's, with an exploitation of satellite channels for television and an increased segmentation of the cinema audience, concentrating on the young. It is also possible to notice a similar tendency towards narrow audience segmentation within the video rental market. When it comes to distribution of moving images, these can nowadays be seen in the cinema, at home on television, video or CD-ROM. As for the film production, the economic hegemony of the SFI has been broken, and film production is today financed through a vast array of sources of both private and public kinds. Given this development it might be understandable even for academic disciplines such as film studies to concentrate on a well defined part of the field of study. Thus the Department of Cinema Studies in Stockholm seems to have given priority to the study of early Swedish cinema, and have returned to the classic texts within film theory, if judged by the so far two published volumes of *Aura*, where one can find articles by Walter Benjamin, Sergej Eisenstein, Béla Balázs alongside newer articles by Peter Wollen, David Bordwell, Tom Gunning, Gert-rude Koch and Linda Williams, to name but some of the international contributors.

Incompatibility

However, some of the tendencies we have identified in film studies in Sweden are not compatible. The tendency towards formalization and the tendency towards decentralization are in fact contradictory, at least in the short term. There are simply not enough people with a doctoral degree to support the various departments and units. In fact there are not even enough doctors in film studies to uphold the doctoral education at the department in Stockholm.

It could therefore be questioned whether an accelerated decentralization is possible, or even desirable. The department in Stockholm has an enormous advantage. The greatest competence is concentrated there (it has most people with a doctoral degree) and, academically, Stockholm has the strongest and most widespread network of contacts. Video technologies have in many ways revolutionized film research. Compared to the regional units the department in Stockholm is, however, provided with the best material conditions, especially for historical research through its physical closeness to the SFI's library and film archive as well as to Arkivet för ljud och bild (The National Archive of Recorded Sound and Moving Images), where copies of everything that has been screened at theatres in Sweden since 1978, and most of what has been shown on television, and sold or rented out on video, are being filed. A further manifestation of the central position of the department in Stockholm is the newly launched academic film journal *Aura*, with professor Olsson as main editor, and with an advisory board of prominent international film scholars. There is also a move to get a second professorship to the department in Stockholm. The outcome of this is still uncertain. Following the tendency towards decentralization it could be argued that a

new professorship should be based at another department, for example in Lund. On the other hand, a professorship placed in Stockholm could further strengthen the research unit already present, and lead to an increased academic quality. There are several explanations for the fact that the historical and aesthetic direction has been forefronted at the department in Stockholm. One is the research interest among its professors. Waldekranz had a stated historical interest in film, so did Furhammar, and subsequently Olsson. It could also be explained by the enormous influence of the Lauritzen Foundation. The full name of the foundation is The Holger and Thyra Lauritzen Foundation for the Promotion of Research into the History of the Cinema, and time and again there have been discussions on the board about whether certain projects should get grants or not when they have lacked a historical dimension in their outline.

The phase in the 1970's and early 1980's in the department's history, when influences from mass communications theory were strong, is thus exceptional. When the subject was initiated as an academic discipline, the name chosen was Institutionen för filmvetenskap, which in direct translation would be The Department for Film Studies. However, the English name chosen was the Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts. Firstly, 'arts' connects it firmly within an historical-aesthetic tradition within the humanities. Secondly, in choosing 'cinema', instead of 'film', one excludes distributive techniques of moving images such as video, television and computers. A department of Cinema Arts could, if judged solely by the name, only study moving pictures screened at the cinema, most probably from an aesthetic point of view. This also indicates a bias towards the cinematic text which excludes studies of audiences, if not done from the perspective of textual construction or spectator positioning, in which the cinematic text is seen as the founding entity of meaning, not the historical and social subjects that experience the images. Questions of everyday media use and cinematic cult(ure)s thus become less interesting. There is also a methodological explanation for the division between the department in Stockholm and the research on film carried out at other departments, JMK included. The methods used within the department in Stockholm are mainly text oriented, while many of those who study film at other departments have more ethnographic perspectives. Questions of film production and its economic and sociological out-

comes have rendered little interest both in Stockholm and at film units elsewhere.

That the choice of new name for the department when it split from Theatre Arts was the American formulation 'Cinema Studies' instead of the British term 'Film Studies' also indicates something about its research interests and the direction it looks for theoretical inspiration. This can be interpreted as if the interest in the British, cultural studies-inspired research is limited.

If the late 1970's could be characterized by a lively discussion about the focus of study, there seems in the present situation to be a lack of reflexivity and discussion about methods, theories and research subjects, as well as a lack of interest in contemporary film culture. Considering the coming of a multi-medial future and the fact that the main medium for film today is video and television, it would be unfortunate if Swedish film research cuts itself off too much from contemporary film culture and its wide range of media forms, audiences and functions. If so, there is a risk that it will become a purely archival discipline, in a similar way to other disciplines within the fine arts. This kind of restaurative research of course has its given place within the humanities, but it must be combined with more critical hermeneutics. An example of promising efforts in this direction is that some researchers and doctoral students at the department in Stockholm has shown interest in conceptualizing early 20th century film and filmgoing within theoretical discourses on public spheres, modernity and identity formations. It would seem possible to use the same theories to the contemporary situation. Admittedly the department is involved in a technical cooperative project with KTH and systemvetenskap in order to develop CD-ROM technique as a pedagogical tool in the undergraduate education. However, today when discussions on the new multimedial environment mainly seems to be conducted solely within social sciences and technological disciplines, it would be valuable to develop interdisciplinary research projects within the humanities focusing on contemporary films and moving images. Therefore it will be of great significance to see how the bid for another professorship evolves, where this will be placed, and if it will contribute to the broadening of the field of research. A narrowing of the research focus could at worst evolve into further estrangement from other disciplines, and lead to a short-sighted elitism where alternative theories and fertile academic crossovers are suppressed.

Notes

1. Cf. Maria Bergom-Larsson: *Ingmar Bergman and Society* (London: Tavistock, 1976/1978); Jörn Donner: *The Personal Vision of Ingmar Bergman* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964).
2. Cf. Tytti Soila: 'Valborgsmässaöften: Melodrama and Gender Politics in Swedish Cinema', in Richard Dyer & Ginette Vincendeau (eds): *Popular European Cinema* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 232-244, and Tytti Soila: 'Five

Songs of the Scarlet Flower', in *Screen*, vol 35 no. 3 (1994): pp. 265-274.

3. Cf. Birgitta Steene: *Ingmar Bergman: A Guide to References and Resources* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1987).
4. There has been few such discussions in Swedish. Tytti Soila has made a short overview over Scandinavian film research (Tytti Soila: 'Skandinavisk filmforskning – en översikt', in *Filmhäftet* no. 62, 1988, pp. 58-64), and Rune Waldekranz has made an overview over early research on film in 'Filmstudier och filmforskning. En orientering i internationell och

- svensk filmlitteratur', in Gösta Werner (ed.): *Svensk filmforskning* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1982), pp. 11-80.
5. Our presentation of the early phase of film research leans primarily on texts written by the first two professors of film studies, Rune Waldekrantz and Leif Furhammar, who both, among their substansive writings, have published academically rigorous works on film history. These works offer an overview over the embryonical work in film theory as well as a mapping of the issues under debate that influenced the academic agenda of film studies in Sweden. Cf. Rune Waldekrantz: *Filmen växer upp* (Stockholm: Hugo Gebers förlag, 1941); Leif Furhammar: *Filmen i Sverige. En historia i tio kapitel* (Höganäs: Wiken, 1991).
 6. Leif Furhammar: *Filmen i Sverige. En historia i tio kapitel* (Höganäs: Wiken, 1991), pp. 12-14.
 7. Rune Waldekrantz: *Så föddes filmen. Ett massmediums uppkomst och genombrott* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1982)
 8. Leif Furhammar: *Filmen i Sverige. En historia i tio kapitel* (Höganäs: Wiken, 1991), pp. 28. The third of the great Swedish film directors, the highly productive Georg af Klercker, have after years of misrecognition been acknowledged (cf. Astrid Söderbergh Widding: 'Georg af Klercker, stumfilmstiden och forskningen', in *Filmhäftet* no. 89-90, 1995, pp. 43-48). Another neglected prominent figure in Swedish film history was Frans Lundberg, a producer with a broad production record, and active at the same time as Magnusson (Jan Olsson: *Sensationer från en bakgård. Frans Lundberg som biografägare och filmproducent i Malmö och Köpenhamn*, Lund & Stockholm: Symposion, 1988).
 9. Cf. the similar attempts to increase the status of the medium in the USA in William Uricchio & Roberta E. Pearson: *Reframing Culture. The Case of the Vitagraph Quality Films* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
 10. Cf. Ulf Boëthius: 'Youth, the Media and Moral Panics', in Johan Fornäs & Göran Bolin (eds): *Youth Culture in Late Modernity* (London: Sage, 1995), pp. 39-57.
 11. For a detailed overview of the process towards censorship, see Erik Skoglund: *Filmcensuren* (Stockholm: Pan/Norstedts, 1971). For studies on the practices of the early censorship, see Arne Svensson: *Den politiska saxen. En studie i Statens biografbyrås tillämpning av den utrikespolitiska censurnormen sedan 1914* (Stockholm: Hedengrens, 1976); Jan Olsson: *Svensk spelfilm under andra världskriget* (Lund: Liber, 1979); Jan Olsson: 'Svart på vitt: film, makt och censur', in *Aura* vol 1 no. 2 (1995), pp. 14-46.
 12. Cf. Arne Svensson: *Den politiska saxen. En studie i Statens biografbyrås tillämpning av den utrikespolitiska censurnormen sedan 1914* (Stockholm: Hedengrens, 1976, diss.); Jan Olsson: *Svensk spelfilm under andra världskriget* (Lund: Liber, 1979, diss.).
 13. Cf. Rune Waldekrantz: 'Filmstudier och filmforskning. En orientering i internationell och svensk filmlitteratur', in Gösta Werner (ed.): *Svensk filmforskning* (Stockholm: P.A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1982), pp. 11-80.
 14. Cf. Jan Olsson: 'I offentlighetens ljus – några notiser om filmstoff i dagspressen', in Jan Olsson (ed.): *I offentlighetens ljus. Stumfilmens affischer, kritiker, stjärnor och musik* (Stockholm/Stehag: Symposion, 1990), pp. 211-274. Worth mentioning is the rise of a critical left perspective that was shaped at the time (cf. Gunder Andersson, Eva Bjärlund & Ingmari Eriksson (eds): *Motbilder. Svensk socialistisk filmkritik i urval* (Stockholm: Tidens förlag, 1978). Amongst others was the Swedish author and modernist Artur Lundkvist, who wrote historically ambitious and critical essays on the montage technique of Eisenstein, as well as on the possibilities of the sound film. Cf. Artur Lundkvist: *Sett i ett strömmande bildflöde. Filmessäer i urval* (Lund: bookLund, 1988).
 15. Bengt Idestam-Almquist & Ragnar Allberg: *Vid den svenska filmens vagga* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1936); Bengt Idestam-Almquist: *Svenska filmens drama: Sjöström och Stiller* (Stockholm: Åhlén & Söners förlag, 1939).
 16. Rune Waldekrantz: *Filmen växer upp* (Stockholm: Hugo Gebers förlag, 1941).
 17. Cf. Erik Hedling: 'Filmhistoriska exkurser. Kanonbildning och dekonstruktion', in *Filmhäftet* no. 89-90 (1995), pp. 15-24.
 18. Rune Waldekrantz: 'Filmstudier och filmforskning'. Cf. Paolo Cherchi Usai: *Burning Passions. An Introduction to the Study of Silent Cinema* (London: BFI, 1994), especially the section on archives, pp. 23ff.
 19. That Swedish film history has been written by men is quite in line with the development internationally. There were, however, female writers who took on the subject, most notably film critic Gerd Osten (e.g. in books like *Det förlorade paradiset*, Stockholm: KFs Bokförlag, 1948, and *Erotiken i filmen* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1950), the last co-written with Artur Lundkvist), and various film pedagogues (e.g. Elsa Brita Marcussen: *Film*, Stockholm: Ehrlins). That the history of film production could be written differently has however been shown by Guilian Bruno, in her *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map. Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
 20. The conditions within Swedish film production before the reform is thoroughly and initiated discussed, notably in German, by Alfred Paulus: *Schwedische Spielfilmproduktion 1955-1963. Analyse ihrer Voraussetzungen und Tendenzen* (Tübingen: Narr, 1984).
 21. Cf. Jörn Donner: *The Films of Ingmar Bergman. From 'Torment' to 'All these women'* (New York: Dover, 1972). For research on Stiller, see Gösta Werner: *Mauritz Stiller och hans filmer 1912-1916* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1969). The very voluminous Swedish and international research on Bergman is inprinted by this auteur perspective. For an overview of the literature on Bergman, see Birgitta Steene: *Ingmar Bergman: A Guide to References and Resources* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1987). See also the references in Maaret Koskinen: *Spel och Speglingar. En studie i Ingmar Bergmans filmiska estetik* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1993).
 22. Bo Widerberg: *Visionen i svensk film* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1962).
 23. Harry Schein: *K* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1962).
 24. The official history about the film reform, and the following debates around it, has to a large extent been written by Schein himself in his *I själva verket* (Stockholm: Nordstedts, 1970).
 25. The reports were summarized in *Filmens inflytande på sin publik. Rapport från Svenska Filminstitutets filmforskningsgrupp*. SOU 1967: 31 (Stockholm: Regeringskansliet, 1967).
 26. Forewords and articles are often written by prominent persons within Swedish film research, such as Rune Waldekrantz, Leif Furhammar and Gösta Werner.
 27. Another important source for research is *Filmårsboken*, an annual report which under the direction of Bertil Wredlund

- has been published since 1969. These consists, in a more summarized way, of facts on all films that are handled by the National Board of Film Censors. The same author has, together with Rolf Lindfors, published similar books covering a decade each from the 1910's to the 1980's (*Långfilm i Sverige*).
28. Rune Waldekranz: 'Filmvetenskap – ett humanistiskt ämne', in Dag Nordberg (ed.): *Vetenskapliga perspektiv. Nya professorer vid Stockholms universitet presenterar sina ämnen* (Stockholm: Stockholm University 1971), pp. 99-148; Rune Waldekranz: 'Första filmprofessuren', in *Filmhäftet*, no. 89-90 (1995), pp. 78-81.
 29. Olle Sjögren (ed.): *Filmens ledbilder. Marxistiska filmanalyser* (Stockholm: Nordstedts, 1976); Örjan Roth Lindberg & Björn Nordström: *Myternas marknad* (Stockholm: AWE/Gebbers, 1975).
 30. *Filmhäftet* and *Chaplin* is by no means the only journal and magazine on film in Sweden. Other contemporary magazines are *Filmkonst*, *Filmrutan*, *Film & TV* and *Zoom*. For an historical overview over Swedish film magazines, see Leif Furhammar: 'Förord', in Kjell Jerselius, Per Olov Qvist & Lasse Svensson (eds): *Play It Again, Sam. Tjugio texter om film och TV* (Uppsala: Filmhäftets förlag, 1984), pp. 7-10.
 31. Cf. Kerstin Allroth: *Film. En antologi* (Lund: CWK Gleerups, 1971); Dag Nordmark: *Bildspråkets betydelser* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1976); Jan Olsson: *Filmteori. Filmanalys* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1981).
 32. For a discussion on the distinctions between journalistic, essayistic and academic criticism, see David Bordwell: *Making Meaning. Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema* (Cambridge, MA & London, 1989), especially p. 20.
 33. Gösta Werner: *Mauritz Stiller och hans filmer 1912-1916* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1969); Louise O'Konor: *Viking Egge-ling, artist and filmmaker* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971); Arne Svensson: *Den politiska saxen. En studie i Statens biografbyrås tillämpning av den utrikespolitiska censurnormen sedan 1914* (Stockholm, Hedengrens, 1976); Marguerite Engberg: *Dansk stumfilm I-II. De store år* (København: Rhodos, 1978); Bengt Forslund: *Victor Sjöström. Hans liv och verk* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1980).
 34. Leif Furhammar: *Filmpåverkan. Socialpsykologiska uppsatser* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1965); Leif Furhammar & Folke Isaksson: *Politik och film* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1968); Leif Furhammar: *Folklighetsfabriken. Porträtt av ett svenskt filmbolag* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1979).
 35. A description and example of this particular form of despise can be found in Jürgen Schildt: *Det pensionerade paradiset. Anteckningar om svensk 30-tals film* (Stockholm: PAN/Norstedts, 1970).
 36. Per Olov Qvist: *Jorden är vår arvedel. Landsbygden i svensk spelfilm 1940-1959* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1986). Qvist has since made further research on the period. Cf. Per Olov Qvist: *Folkhemmets bilder. Modernisering, motstånd och mentalitet i den svenska 30-talsfilmen* (Lund: Arkiv, 1995).
 37. Kjell Jerselius: *Hotade reservat. Spelfilmerna med Edvard Persson* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1987).
 38. Tytti Soila: *Kvinnors ansikte. Stereotyper och kvinnlig identitet i trettioalets melodramfilm* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1991).
 39. Bert Fridlund: 'mmmmn', in *Rörande bilder. Festskrift till Rune Waldekranz* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1981); Margareta Rönneberg: *En lek för ögat – 28 filmberättelser av Astrid Lindgren* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1987).
 40. Cf. Maaret Koskinen, Seppo Luoma Keturi & Tytti Soila: 'To see or not to be. En analys av John Carpenters *Förföljd*', in *Filmhäftet*, no. 45-46 (1984), pp. 6-27. See also several of the essays in Tilda Maria Forselius & Seppo Luoma-Keturi (eds): *Våldet mot ögat. Filmforskare om film- och videoskräck* (Stockholm: Författarförlaget, 1985).
 41. Astrid Söderbergh Widding: *Gränsbilder. Det dolda rummet hos Tarkovskij* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1992).
 42. Maaret Koskinen: *Spel och speglingar. En studie i Ingemar Bergmans estetik* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1993).
 43. Olle Sjögren: *Lekmannen i skrattpengeln* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1989).
 44. Örjan Roth Lindberg: *Skuggan av ett leende. Om filmisk ironi och den ironiska berättelsen* (Stockholm: Fischer & Co, 1995). Sjögren is one of the most productive of the contemporary film researchers in Sweden. He has for several years been editor of *Filmhäftet*, and has written countless articles both in that journal and in other magazines, many of which have dealt with the margins of popular film culture, violence, subcultures and censorship. Cf. Olle Sjögren: *Inte riktigt lagom? Om 'extremvåld', filmcensur och subkultur* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1993).
 45. Margareta Rönneberg: *TV-tittande som dialog. På väg mot en symbolisk-interaktionistisk TV-teori* (Uppsala: Filmförlaget, 1996, diss.).
 46. Behrad Najafi: *Film in Iran 1900 to 1979. A Political and Cultural Analysis* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1986); Norbert Feusi: *Das Vaterbild im Schweizer Film. Eine Studie zur gesellschaftlichen Verankerung des Patriarchates und dessen Darstellung im Schweizer Spielfilm* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1987); Igor Korsic: *Suspended Time. An Analysis of Bazin's Notion of Objectivity of the Film Image* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1988); Gunnar Iversen (1992): *Framtidsdröm og filmlek. Erik Løchens filmproduksjon og filmestetikk* (Stockholm: Department of Theatre and Cinema Arts, 1992).
 47. Jan Olsson: *Svensk spelfilm under andra världskriget* (Lund: Liber, 1979). Cf. Jan Olsson (ed.): *I offentlighetens ljus. Stumfilmens affischer, kritiker, stjärnor och musik* (Stockholm/Stehag: Symposium, 1990).
 48. Film analysis and multi media (Olsson) and Interactive educational aid via multi media (Jerselius). These projects will probably generate a couple of dissertations. Beside these projects, there are several other projects in progress: Silent cinema at the turning point (Söderbergh Widding); Women and film in Sweden (Soila); Feminism in the academy (Soila); Work and business in moving images (Walldius); Ingmar Bergman, the cinema and the theatre (Koskinen) and Ingmar Bergman and the audience (Steene). As a matter of fact, during the first twenty years of the department's history only one single project was initiated, the above mentioned project Town and country in Swedish cinema.
 49. Astrid Söderbergh Widding presents mainly classical French, German and Russian film and cultural theory, for example Siegfried Kracauer, Béla Balázs, Sergei Eisenstein and Jacques Aumont. See Astrid Söderbergh Widding: *Sätt att se: Texter om estetik och film* (Stockholm: Thomas Fischer, 1994). Erik Hedling & Lars Gustaf Andersson has put together an anthology in two volumes for undergraduate stu-

dents, with Swedish translations of articles by contemporary Anglo-American film scholars, for example Laura Mulvey, Janet Staiger, Claudia Gorbman, Mary Ann Doane and Janet Bergstrom, to name but a few. Erik Hedling & Lars Gustaf Andersson (eds): *Modern filmteori* (2 volumes) (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1995).

50. Lars Lönnroth: *Östeuropeisk animerad film* (Lund: Institut för dramaforskning, 1979, diss.); Gunnar Lundin: *Filmregi* Alf Sjöberg (Lund: Institut för dramaforskning, 1979, diss.); Erik Hedling: *Lindsay Anderson och filmens estetik* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1992, diss.); Lars Gustaf Andersson: *Ånglarnas barn* (Lund: Bokbox, 1992, diss.).