

Kimmo Laine

## Kotimainen Työ\*, Lapatossu and the 1940 Olympic Games in Helsinki

Lapatossu was a railwayman who lived at the end of the 19th century and who became a legendary humorous rogue of the Finnish narrative tradition. In the 1930s Suomen Filmitoimisto (the Finnish Film Industry) revived Lapatossu by producing three films partly situated in modern times and partly based on old Lapatossu-jokes. These films present Lapatossu as a worker who does his best to avoid manual work and ends up performing in a circus instead and representing the factory sports team.

The article approaches by means of Lapatossu's character the mutual relations of different fields of the Finnish culture in the 1930s. For example, sports, entertainment and work were looking for their identity in some kind of a cultural "battle field", where all factors were interrelated. Likewise, the cinema was in search of its own as yet unestablished position in this cultural field. The identity of the cinema among other cultural areas was defined on the axes of art/entertainment, domestic/foreign and culture/economy.

While determining its position in the 1930s culture, the cinema was in search of defining its own audience. Thus, the article approaches the question of what kind of audiences the cinema — especially Suomen Filmitoimisto — tried to obtain. Suomen Filmitoimisto wanted its audience to be "the whole nation" and was eager to convince everyone that all the Finns watched its films regardless of the sex, social class and regional differences. The article also discusses whether the comparison with other cultural fields could undermine this ideal image of the homogenous audience.

"Kotimainen Työ" was the name of a society the purpose of which was to promote home trade and the selling of home products.

Translation: Annu Laukkanen

Veijo Hietala

## "If you reach for the stars ..." — Television, Olympic Games and National Psychohistory

The present article discusses the Finnish reception context of the television representation of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. In recent years we have witnessed the rediscovery of Marshall McLuhan's famous concept of the 1960s, 'global village', in post-modern media theory. On the other hand, it has been argued that the fact that people around the world watch the same, say, American soap operas does not indicate that their meaning is the same in various cultures.

The present article argues that the television representation of the Olympic Games, in spite of its internationality, is a typical example of a tv programme whose reception is nationally contextualized to a great extent.

The Finnish national identity is saturated with the overpowering sense of masochism and melancholia. Our proverbs reflect this sensibility, e.g. "If you reach for the stars, you end up in the gutter". This may be, perhaps, due to the fact that the Finnish nation has never finally gone through its Oedipal trauma, but, on the contrary, remained in a masochistic position with impending threat of castration from the Other. Consequently, the masochistic suffering figure of the long-distance runner is so popular in Finland, and great expectations are always attached to this event in the Olympics. The javelin thrower, on the other hand, is the symbol of a later stage in the national psychohistory, the hedonistic body of the welfare state.

The failure of these two metaphorical Finnish bodies in the Barcelona Olympics (Risto Ulmala did not make his way to the finals neither in 5 000 m nor in 10 000 m, Seppo Rätty got "only" silver in javelin) was framed by the worst economic depression in Finnish history. Therefore, the Olympic Games were considered almost a total disaster in the media, although the Finnish team actually reached the target set in advance as far as medals are concerned, only in the "wrong" events.

Translation: Veijo Hietala

Matti Salakka

## The national story of the long-distance run

In Finland a success in major sports contests has always been honoured. Only the gold medals in the javelin, however, equal to heroic achievements in the long-distance runs. The long-distance runs form an essential part of the mythical, national story which presents the Finns as heroes.

The latest real Finnish hero in the long-distance run is the fourfold Olympic winner Lasse Viren. A document film *Annat vain kaiken* (1982), which portrays Viren's life during the Moscow Olympic year in 1980, covers comprehensively both the stardom of a long-distance runner and the importance of the long-distance run in the Finnish reality. In the film, Lasse Viren's character and at the same time the entire mythical story of the Finnish long-distance run are described as the two opposites.

Those opposites appear incompatible but in Lasse Viren's character they are shown to unite. Viren's greatness is not only found in his phenomenal capabilities as a runner but also in his skills to combine different worlds with different realities.

Over the last ten years the Finns have not won medals in any major long-distance meets. During this time the most successful Finnish male long-distance runners have been Harri Hänninen and Risto Ulmala. Their success thus far has been comparable, but their public images turn out to be different: Harri Hänninen has been described as a success, and Risto Ulmala as a failure. Thus, their public images and the assessment of their achievements must include other, external factors apart from their performance in the athletics. The idea behind these factors could be found in Richard Dyer's 'star image' - term, which is based on the thought that a star is a cultural construction in which some characteristics are emphasized at the expense of others.

Translation: Annu Laukkanen.

**Veikko Pietilä**

## **IMPRISONING THE WORLD IN THE FRAME**

### **On the narrative dynamics of TV news**

The paper aims at developing a mode of approach for the empirical study of the TV news' narrative dynamics. It starts with the notion that, in TV news stories, one can distinguish between the narrating and narrated space. After problematizing the usual ways of comprehending the spaces — and certain related concepts like that of the narrator — the paper suggests that the spaces differ from each other essentially by the modes of presentation they employ, the narrating space being characterized by the mode of telling, the narrated one by that of showing.

Regarding the narrative dynamics, one of the central questions is how the modes of presentation interact within TV news stories. The paper is concerned particularly with the relationships between the narrative discourse (ND), representing the narrating space, and the exterior speech (ES) and pictures (EP), representing the narrated one. The hypothesis is that the ND frames, focuses and signifies the ES and EP while the latter ones, in turn, justify and authenticate what the ND says. If so, the narrating space is a workshop for constructing frames determining the meanings of what is shown in the narrated space.

Along these lines, the paper analyzes one TV news story and compares the results with those obtained in an earlier analysis of it. The approach developed in the paper proves usable; the picture one gets of the story's rhetorical addressing power is far preciser and more detailed than that of the earlier analysis. The results support the hypothesis. The ND creates a signifying frame which, then, is authenticated by the ES and EP. Most importantly, the signifying ND turns the story' detached and sporadic visuals into a coherent pictorial narrative which not only testifies that the happenings told by the ND have really taken place, but also that they mean exactly what the ND tells them to mean.

On the basis of this example it

seems that the ND occupies the most strategic position in the establishment of a seeming coherence between the narrating and narrated space. Thereby it, for instance, effaces the particular ideological viewpoint on which the story is constructed creating in this way an illusion that it is simply 'window on the world'. Because of its ideological significance the signifying activity of the ND merits, in the study of TV news, far more attention than it has gained hitherto.

Translation: Veikko Pietilä

**Ari Kivimäki**

## **THE PUBLICITY GAMES IN FILM JOURNALISM**

### **Ideology, expectations and power**

According to Pierre Bourdieu's general cultural sociological concept the publicity games in film journalism can be understood as a corrupt totality which involves exercise of power, judge's right to determine which is art and which is not. It also gives the few right to tell the rest which are good films and which bad. A film as such cannot have any internal quality factor, but when you ask the question: "Is the film N good or bad?", the question is actually whether the film N can be regarded as good or bad. Film journalists and critics have right and duty to explain the facts to their readers. The publicity game in film journalism is played following strict rules. A critic is directed more by different fields in the film culture than by his own ambitions. The game is controlled, on the one hand by prevailing theoretical traditions in film criticism and, on the other hand by the medium used by the critic, e.g. the editorial policy of a newspaper.

The publicity of Italian neorealism in the Finnish journalism at the beginning of the 1950s presents a good example of the successful publicity game. Neorealism gained an image in which essential elements were artistry and a director-centred auteur theory. As neorealism became known for the readers, the publicity campaign was not needed any more. Many more popular Italian films were distributed in

Finland with the help of the reputation created by neorealism. The beginning of the 1950s involved also the "militant film criticism" which included some ideological features as well. Its purpose was to urge people demand good films. Simultaneously the militant film criticism brought about an image building campaign for film journalists in which the good film critics were separated from the bad, renegades of their profession.

Translation: Annu Laukkanen

**Hannu Salmi**

## **"BUT HANNIBAL IS NOT A RUSSIAN — OUR ENEMY NUMBER ONE..."**

### **History, politics and Scipio Africanus**

In many European countries the closing years of the 1930's and the wartime were a period of historical films. The article compares the amount of historical films produced especially in Italy and Finland. In both countries the production of historical audio-visuals strongly increased towards the end of the 1930's.

The article takes a closer look at the historical spectacle *Scipio Africanus* directed by Carmine Gallone in 1937 and its reception in Finland. *Scipio Africanus* has often been used as an example of how a film is made to support state's political goals. *Scipio* has been said to have unequivocally legitimated Italy's expansionist policies to the south of the Mediterranean (e.g. Peter Bondanella, Gian Piero Brunetta, Jean A. Gili, James Hay). An interview in an Italian film journal 'Bianco and Nero' in 1939 revealed that even Italian child spectators were able to draw a parallel between Scipio and Il Duce. The point was not just the interpretation embedded in the film: the actual political interpretation was strongly influenced by the publicity associated with the production (newspaper coverage) and the marketing of the film as a nationalized and canonized spectacle.

The integrity of the political interpretation is not evident, however. The reception of *Scipio* in Finland offers several possibilities for critical analysis. When the distribution of *Scipio* began at the end of the 1930's in Finland, the productional background grew as important as in Italy. 'Helsingin Sanomat' wrote: Mussolini has carefully followed the film making and also Italy's official institutions have participated in the production.

As the purpose of the film was to give historical justification for the expansion policies of the 1930's, it is paradoxical that the film directly exposes its connection with the machinery of government. As Mussolini's personal contribution was openly emphasized in the films' press material, both journalists and spectators were given devices for ideological criticism. That is to say, *Scipio Africanus* heavily underlined the ideological link which, on the other hand, made criticism of that ideology possible. The critics of 'Elokuva-aitta' confirmed: Scipio echoes Mussolini's words.

The explanation for ideological frankness may be found in the fact that *Scipio's* influence was not intended to remain imperceptible: open defiance is foregrounded. Before the Italian audience the film aimed at elevating national spirit, whereas for the international audience it presented - according to senator Romei Longhena - "a serious warning". By connecting the imperial power of Ancient Rome with the political goals of modern Italy, the film rather demonstrated military strength than gave historical reasons for the expansionism. In historical disguise Italian "infantry battalions" and "cavalry regiments demonstrated their power against the "colored" Africa.

The criticism of *Scipio* in Finland resulted in questioning the reality behind the idea of national stereotyping. The fascist-orientated 'Ajan suunta' wrote that it was difficult, after all, for an "outsider" to understand why Hannibal was described as he was: "But Hannibal is not a Russian — an enemy number one — as he is for Italians". Acknowledging the ina-

bility of the Finnish audience to understand Italians' Hannibal-image, the writer implicated - perhaps without noticing it - that stereotypes convey only instrumental meaning. When comparing Hannibal with the Russians, the writer inevitably undermined the basis of the Finnish cultural stereotypes, which 'Ajan Suunta' and the Fascist-like Patriotic People's Movement among others were eagerly creating.

Translation: Annu Laukkanen

### Juhana Stedt

#### Prison film as Significant Prophylactic

In his historical survey, *Discipline and Punish* (1975) Michel Foucault discovered three different periods in the development of punishment. In the first period punishment was almost always capital and it included torture. This revenge was public and it was addressed to the spectators as a warning. The second period, the Enlightenment, meant radical changes in the technology of punishment. New technology was needed to acquire more effective, accurate and economical ways to deal with criminals. This required equality and generality in the penal system and in the courts of justice. Also the crimes had to be marked individually with the punishment. In practice this meant that the prisoners were forced to build roads etc. In this way criminals became signs to be observed by the public. Instead of pain, the duration of the punishment became the factor that was hoped to prevent others from doing crimes. This method was more efficient and while it left prisoners under the public scrutiny the punishing system itself became hidden. In the last and contemporary period criminals are transported to prisons and this way it hides the whole system of punishment.

Alan Parker's film *Midnight Express* contains all these three stages of the history of punishment. In itself the film can be seen as an example of

new technology complementing the effectiveness of the prison-based penal system. Punishment as a revenge (Hamidou beating Hayes, torture) takes place in the cellar and it functions as a lesson to be learned and it's purpose is to inflict pain. Punishment as a sign (Hamidou beating juvenile criminals) is public and it is executed in front of other prisoners. In this scene the crime (rape) is marked by the punishment (beating the feet) and its purpose is to emit signs. All this happens in a prison, the purpose of which is to hide the scum of society. But the film itself bursts open this secrecy which contains all the forgotten atrocities and in doing so it is capable of enforcing the prevailing penal system.

*Midnight Express* (and other prison films) strengthens the prison-system because it makes advantage of "virtual prisoners". Actual prisoners are behind the prison walls but virtual prisoners are on TV- and Cinema screens to be mutilated, tortured and made signs of. These virtual prisoners are real in the sense in which Deleuze reads Bergson. Possible is never real although it can be actual but it is possible that virtual is not actual though it is always real. In other words there are many actual possibilities of which some can be realized in the future. Virtualities are always real and they can be actualized in the present. These real but virtual prisoners replace real and actual prisoners because to show virtual prisoners to audiences is economical (in many cases profitable) and effective. My point is to argue that the replacement of the actual prisoner by the virtual one sustains the contemporary system because it has all the good features of the previous systems and none of the bad ones.

Virtual torture, virtual discipline, and virtual prison are real parts of the actual penal system. *Midnight Express* embodies cinema's possibility to function as a significant prophylactic.

Translation: Juhana Stedt