

# English Summaries

Timo Pärkkä

## Public Enemies and Fantastic Heroes: On the Losers and Winners in Soviet Cinema after the First Five Year Plan

This article explores the problems faced by Soviet filmmakers and authorities of film production during the years after the First Five Year plan (1929 - 1934). The First Five Year plan was a time of rapid industrialization and economic and social changes which, by re-structuring social classes, left a vacuum in the middle and upper levels of the social hierarchy that was filled by what I call "the new middle-class."

Film production was to be restructured after the industrial model, too. Boris Shumiatsky, leader of Sojuzkino, planned to locate on Krim a central unit of Soviet film production, Kinogorod or "Sovietski gollivuud" as it was also called after Hollywood. The goal was to produce a total of three hundred and later even eight hundred films per year. These plans, however, were met with difficulties: the transition to sound film turned out to be more difficult than expected and there was a lack of film stock and equipment essential for film production. In the end, Shumiatsky himself was faced with deportation and execution.

Even though the So-

viet State had made a decision to harness cinema to serve its propaganda purposes, it took years before the State could effectively use this medium, partly due to the popularity of foreign, mainly American, films. However, the fight against Formalism was sustained by public discussion, and in the late 1920s a new cadre of film critics emerged who emphasized in their articles the need for educational cinema. Although there was no official prohibition to deal with certain issues during that period and filmmakers were regularly collaborating with authorities, some films were nonetheless banned. In 1930 the State executed an operation called "The Ideological Mirror": all filmmakers were interrogated about their political views and their attitudes towards "anti-marxism" and "formalism." This operation clearly indicated the "official" attitude towards the form and content of films to be produced later in the 1930s. Censorship was further supplemented by peer-criticism. Those who gave competent criticism about their colleagues' works and simultaneously confessed their own mistakes, not only saved their careers or even their lives, but also publicly acknowledged the ideology at the core of Stalinist aesthetics. Self-criticism became a ritual during the 1930s.

The main audience of Soviet cinema in the 1930s

was constituted of "the new middle-class," white-collar workers whose attitude towards life was materialistic and consumption-oriented. The new middle-class was not a direct successor to the old middle-class but rather was born with Stalinism. Therefore they felt they had obligations to the Party and the State. Reciprocally, the State, the Party and filmmakers, more or less in collaboration, made films especially for these people. In this sense, 1930s films were not merely direct State agitation aimed at citizens. Rather, the communication process was more two-way: people also wanted to "learn" about the heroic past of the Soviet State. Indeed, undoubtedly the most common subjects of films of that era were the Revolution and the Civil War. These films supported the ritual of heroism which became part of everyday life in the 1930s as the media widely reported heroes of work (Stakhanovites) and heroic efforts.

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Jukka Kortti

## From Enlightening Appetizers to Life Style Spots: The Early History of Finnish Television Advertising

In the late 1950s and early 1960s when Finland was going through a period of

profound social changes towards a consumer society, television advertising was starting to take shape. This article traces the early history of television advertising which ties in with the history of Finnish television production. Secondly, it explores how the coming of television advertising influenced the organization and practices of advertising agencies. Thirdly, it deals with the role of Mainos TV, the sole commercial television company, as a distributor of commercials and monitoring executive of television advertising.

The first 15 years of Finnish television advertising production were spent in learning to cope with a new medium. The way in which commercials were produced was constantly changing, and it wasn't until the early 1970s that the basic formula, still in use today, had been consolidated. During this inaugural period, people involved with the production of commercials had to acquire their professional skills mainly through practical experience. Furthermore, there were almost no foreign examples to draw from, since Finland was among the first European countries to introduce television advertising. However, the regulations and business ideas of Finnish television advertising were fashioned after the pioneering example of British advertising, although adapted to our distinctive

national situation. The emergence of television as a popular medium had an impact on the organization of advertising agencies, as well as on the professional skills expected of the staff. As for production companies, the most important change was an increase in the number of advertising films produced.

The founding of Mainos TV (currently MTV) in 1957 marked a turning point in the history of Finnish advertising. In the beginning MTV was propelled to co-operation with Yleisradio (YLE), the Finnish broadcasting company. Since MTV didn't obtain its own channel until the late 1980s, it had to lease broadcasting time from YLE. Furthermore, MTV had to have its statutes regulating advertising approved by YLE.

**Martti Soramäki**

### **Film Is Art**

This paper, the empirical part of which is based on Martin Dale's demand curve model (developed in *The Movie Game*, 1997), discusses the changes in Finland's box-office numbers for both domestic and imported (mainly American) films in the 1980s and 1990s. During the period under discussion, film was regarded, above all, as a form of art in various public discourses and by state administration, contrary to the previous decades when film had more often been viewed as entertainment and a business. The transition towards the idea of film as art took place during the 1970s, although the beginnings of this development can be traced

to the 1960s. This paper argues that during the period when the conception of art took over Finnish film production and film culture, the success of Finnish films decreased remarkably in contrast to imported, mostly American, industrially produced films. The Finnish situation is also briefly compared with prevailing circumstances in Western Europe.

Moviewatching rates have dropped considerably since the 1980s. While from 1980 to 1983 there were more than 9 million admissions per year, the number had plummeted to 5,5 million per year between 1992 and 1996. The major burden of this drop was carried by domestic films whose rates fell 70 percent in contrast to the 40 percent drop in admission to foreign movies. Fur-

thermore, the change affected all domestic movies in the sense that even the most popular Finnish movies were able to attract fewer viewers than comparable movies in the 1980s.

In contrast, although attendance to the most successful imported films dropped, foreign films with moderate success had larger audiences in the 1990s than a decade before. The main reason for this development can be found in a move towards multiplex-theaters which made it possible to better synchronize the supply and demand of individual movies, including art movies, thus extending their life-span in theaters. That is, fewer movies are shown in smaller theaters for fewer people at a time but for longer periods.

## **60-LUVUN KAPINA? - TUTKIJASEMINAARI 1960-LUVUN SUOMALAISESTA ELOKUVASTA 26.-27.3.1998**

**MITÄ OLI 1960-LUVUN KAPINA? MITEN SE NÄKYI SUOMALAISESSA ELOKUVASSA? MISSÄ MÄÄRIN 60-LUVUN UUSI MUOTOKIELI, TYYLI OLI OMAA TAI LAINAA?**

**NÄITÄ KYSYMYKSIÄ KÄSITELLÄÄN 26.-27.3.1998 SEMINAARISSA, JONKA JÄRJESTÄVÄT SUOMEN ELOKUVA-ARKISTO, SUOMEN ELOKUVATUTKIMUKSEN SEURA JA SUOMEN ELOKUVASÄÄTIÖ. SEMINAARI PIDETÄÄN K13-TEATTERISSA HELSINGISSÄ.**

**SEMINAARIESITELMIEN LISÄKSI OHJELMASSA ON LYHYITÄ JA PITKIÄ ELOKUVIA 1960-LUVULTA. SEMINAARIOHJELMAA VOI TIEDUSTELLA ALLAOLEVASTA OSOITTEESTA.**

**TILAISUUTEEN ON VAPAA PÄÄSY. KOSKA PAIKKOJA ON RAJOITETUSTI, PYDÄMME ILMOITTAUTUMAAN 13.3.1998 MENNESSÄ SUOMEN ELOKUVA-ARKISTOON, PUHELIN 09-61540243 (KIRSI RINNE), FAX 09-61540242 TAI SÄHKÖPOSTI KIRSI.RINNE@SEA.FI. TERVETULOA SEMINAARIIN!**